

The cover art depicts a chaotic battle scene in a forest. In the center, a knight in blue armor is mounted on a brown horse, brandishing a sword. To the right, a large, muscular ogre is leaping through the air, holding a spear and a battle-axe. In the foreground, a warrior with a red plumed helmet and a shield is engaged in combat with a dark, horned creature. To the left, a character with a beard and a staff of fire is attacking. In the background, a caravan is being attacked by a goblin archer. The scene is set against a backdrop of tall trees and a large, pale moon in a cloudy sky.

WARHAMMER[®]

THE OLD WORLD

ROLEPLAYING GAME

PLAYER'S GUIDE

GRIM AND GLORIOUS ADVENTURES IN THE WORLD OF LEGEND

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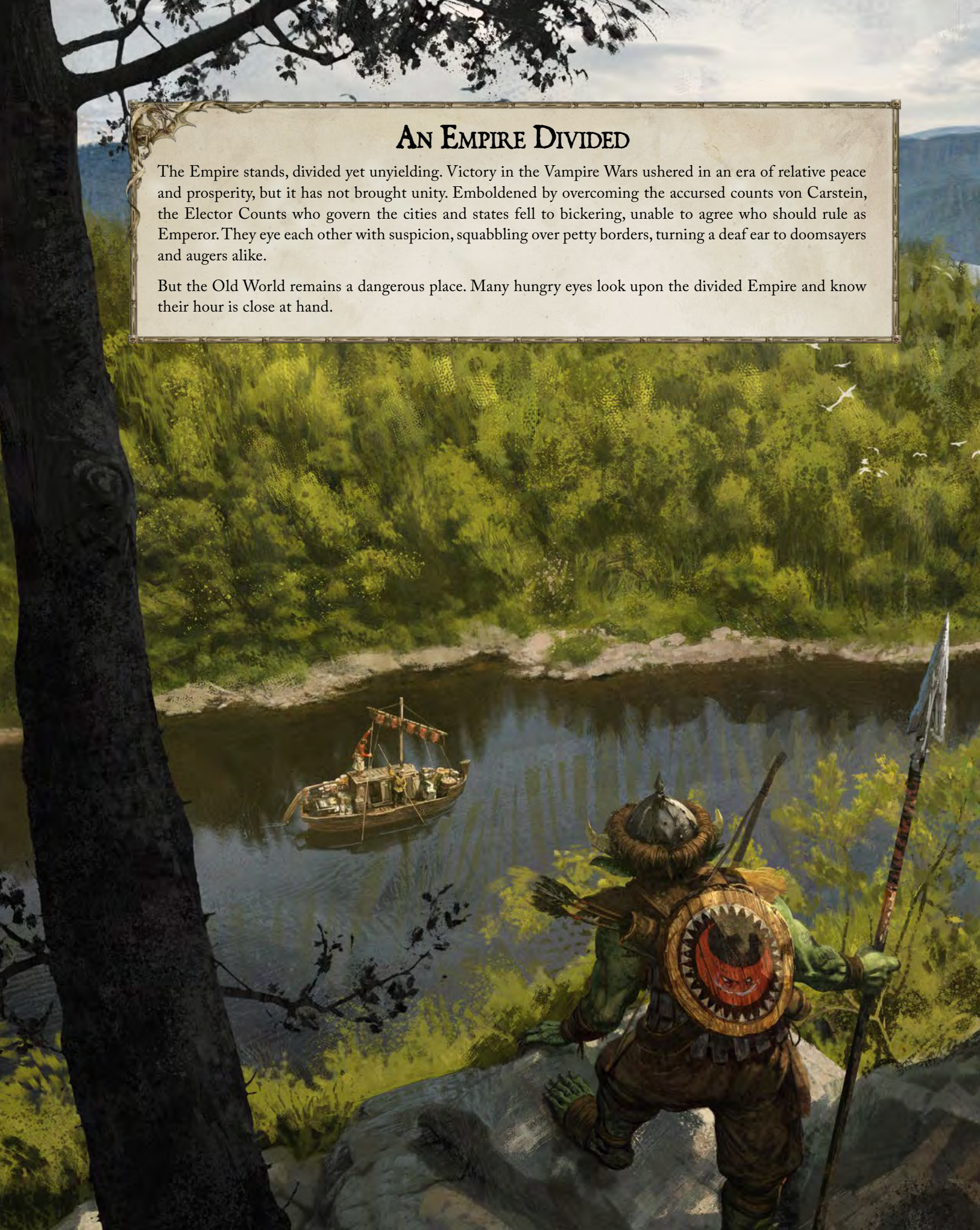
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AN EMPIRE DIVIDED

The Empire stands, divided yet unyielding. Victory in the Vampire Wars ushered in an era of relative peace and prosperity, but it has not brought unity. Emboldened by overcoming the accursed counts von Carstein, the Elector Counts who govern the cities and states fell to bickering, unable to agree who should rule as Emperor. They eye each other with suspicion, squabbling over petty borders, turning a deaf ear to doomsayers and augers alike.

But the Old World remains a dangerous place. Many hungry eyes look upon the divided Empire and know their hour is close at hand.







STREETS OF TALAGAAD

There are dozens of towns like Taalagad across the Empire — centres of trade and commerce, their walls offering safety, and teeming streets providing opportunities that cannot be found in far-flung villages. And yet, no two are exactly alike. A fortified port on the Talabec river, Talagaad is a town of merchants and artisans, of thieves and vagabonds. Though a great deal of trade passes through, little of that wealth remains for long, for the town exists in the shadow of mighty Talabheim, and the capital's nobility lay claim to every coin they can.

As a result, few have time to spare for concerns beyond their immediate needs. And yet, they should...





...for there are terrors in the shadows. Things that must go about their fell work in secrecy, for they know their hour, though close, has not yet come. Some are abominations so terrible that most cannot bring themselves to recognise them for what they are. Others are cunning beasts or corrupted men and women who wear false smiles and tend their secrets with care.

Some secrets cannot be learned, however, without them learning something of you in return, and an unfortunate few have stumbled into the plans of monsters. Drawn into a web of horrors, they are themselves marked, never to return to the quiet comforts of an ignorant life. They must resist this fate, for if they cannot overcome it they will never know peace, save that offered by the cold earth of Morr's gardens.



INTRODUCTION



I saw it by Morrslieb's foul light — their dancing madness at the crossroads, the pit they dug, and the thing they helped crawl out of it. They cleaned the muck from its wicked form and gave it clothes, dressed it as a man, but I knew it for what it was. Yes, I set that den of corruption alight. I would do it again. You have condemned me to the gallows, but I have saved you all.

— *The final words of Elsé Hochdel, convicted arsonist and murderer*

The Old World is closer to annihilation than any dare realise. In the midst of what some would name a gilded age, the once mighty Empire has grown fractured, riven by internal divisions. It looks inward and concerns itself with petty politics, its nobles distracted by the pursuit of personal grandeur. To its north, beyond the Sea of Claws, an unknown power grows — one that will soon threaten the entire civilised world. Servants of these Ruinous Powers grow daily in strength and depravity alike. For now the will of their dark masters can be heard as little more than a whisper. It will not remain so for long.

Day by day, night by night, the festering servants of evil grow more daring. By the forsaken light of Morrslieb they praise their nameless gods. Ferocious Beastmen, the true children of Chaos, prowl the woods in ever greater numbers. Orcs and Goblins grow bold once more, spurred on by urges they barely understand and lack the wit to question. Vampires, who some think were driven far from the borders of the Empire, linger still. The cursed blood of Lahmia flows in the veins of more than one secretive noble or bloodthirsty warrior, and their dark hunger is slaked on those whom none will miss.

All of these horrors and more prey upon the citizens of the Empire. Their leaders are more concerned with their own political fortunes and dynastic ambitions than the well-being of their subjects, and so most are left to fend for themselves. Many ordinary folk emulate their betters, turning away from the growing omens of darkness to concern themselves with more pressing matters of daily survival.

You, however, have no choice but to face the growing darkness, for by fate or happenstance, fell forces have turned their gaze upon you. Perhaps you were witness to unnatural murders and are now marked by chittering killers as their next victims. Maybe you have become embroiled in the intrigues of the high lords, betrayed and cast aside by those you once swore fealty to. You may have even heard the distant drums from the forest's heart, and know the beasts of the forest are no Geheimnisnacht tale, but a growing tide of bestial fury that stands ready to devour the world.

This is your story, told in the last years of a dying peace, before the rising tide of Chaos engulfs the world. What will you make of it?









NEW TO ROLEPLAYING GAMES?

Warhammer: the Old World Roleplaying Game is a tabletop roleplaying game, sometimes shortened to RPG or TTRPG. This book provides the rules for everything you need to get started. If you are new to RPGs, you can find more information, free adventures, and other releases on our website, www.cubicle7games.com.

The Warhammer: the Old World Roleplaying Game Starter Set is a particularly good place to start for those new to roleplaying games, and the **Gamemaster's Guide** is a great addition if you want to take on the role of Gamemaster and expand your adventures in the Old World.

USING THIS BOOK

This book contains everything you need to create your character, and all the rules you need to play. There is very little information in this book that could be considered a spoiler, so all players are encouraged to read it and learn about the Old World and the rules of the game.

-  **Character Creation:** The very next chapter, this contains everything you need to create your character.
-  **Abilities:** Find out what your character can do.
-  **Equipment:** Outfit your character with everything they need.
-  **Rules:** Learn the rules of the game.
-  **Between Adventures:** Earn some coin, improve your skills, and see to other matters.
-  **Religion:** Gods of the Empire, along with prayers and miracles of those favoured by the divine.
-  **Magic:** Cast powerful spells, or perish as magic escapes your grasp!
-  **A Guide to the Old World:** Discover The Empire, the Grand Duchy of Talabec, and the town of Talagaad.

The companion to this book is the **Gamemaster's Guide** which contains lots of additional information on antagonists, magic items and equipment, information about useful contacts, the town of Talagaad, its denizens' hidden agendas and devious plots. It's the perfect tool for those who wish to take on the role of Gamemaster, but other players may wish to avoid reading it until they are ready to run games of their own!

READING DICE

This game uses ten sided dice, also known as d10. If you are asked to roll 3d10, that means you roll three 10 sided dice and read the number shown on each one. If you are asked to d100, you roll two dice - one is the 'tens', the other is the 'units'—decide which is which before you roll. A roll of '1' and '4' would give a result of 14, while a roll of '7' and '9' would give a result of 79.

Game Text

This book uses some standard ways of presenting important information.

Acronyms: A number of acronyms appear regularly throughout this book, such as GM (Gamemaster), PC (player character), and NPC (non-player character).

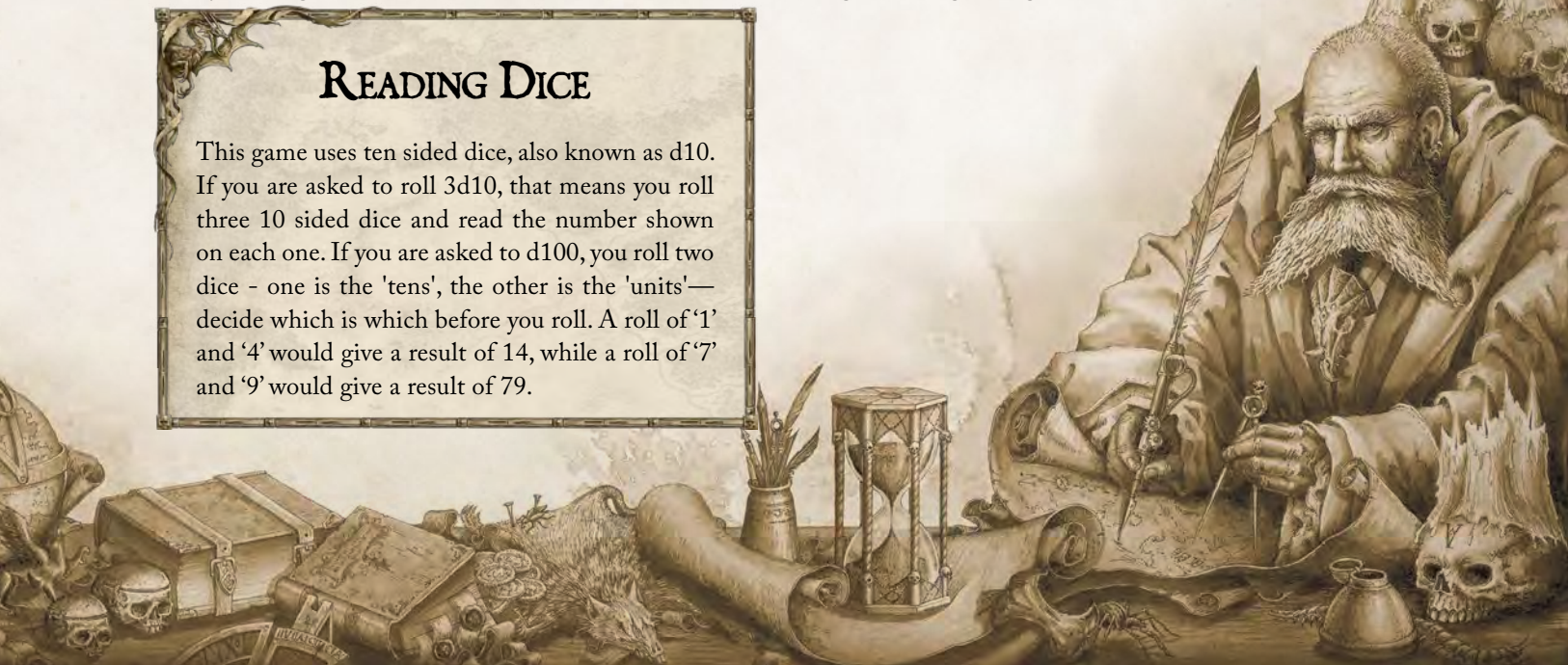
Boxes: Box-outs appear regularly throughout the book. These usually contain guidance, additional information, and snippets of lore about The Old World.

Game Terms: Important game terms are capitalised, so you know when you need to use all of your skill, or when you need to use a Skill.

Individual Items: Some game terms are categories that include other game terms. In these cases we capitalise and italicise the term. For example, Talents include all the various Talents you can choose from, such as *Defensive Stance* or *Faith*; and Conditions include the afflictions you can suffer, such as being *Blinded* or *Ablaze*.

Marginalia: Some chapters use marginalia. If a word or piece of text has an associated marginalia note, it is presented in red and bold. These are often rules clarifications, in-world insights, or page numbers directing you to associated information.

Tests: When you are required to make a Test it is bolded; for example, when making a **Difficult (-1d) Athletics** Test to leap across a wide gap, or a **Very Difficult (-2d) Shooting** Test to fire your bow at a bestial Ungor dashing through the underbrush.



CHARACTER CREATION



On Talagaad's own docks, those on the left bank of the Talabec River, you can often run into Weird Muntz. Dismissed as an endlessly chattering, slow-witted vagabond, he has nevertheless predicted every major fire in the town for the last twenty years. None have realised that's because he's started each and every one. In the back of the Boyar's Rest, Angela von Hagen nurses an ale most nights. Known for poultices as potent as they are pungent, few are aware she learned her trade tending to the wounds of Tilean Mercenaries in a city whose name few denizens of Talagaad could pronounce. And then there is the proprietor of that establishment herself, whose ale is always pleasantly chilled, and whose sister stands frozen, ageless, in a court of ice.

The Old World is full of intriguing characters, each with their own story to tell, and with many more adventures lying ahead. This chapter shows you how to create an unforgettable character of your own — perhaps a cunning noble, a scheming witch, a valorous soldier or a cynical thief. Characters are made up of some game information — characteristics, skills, equipment, and more — as well as a compelling personality. You'll make the decisions that will bring to life a character you'll be excited to play, and your fellow players will be excited to meet.

THE BASICS

So that you understand the choices you're making, the main game concepts will be explained in this chapter. They are fully explained in the Rules Chapter (page 106) if you'd like more detail.

It helps when creating your character to understand the impact of your character's abilities during the game. The most common way you'll use them is when you need to know if your character succeeded when they attempted an action. We do this with a dice roll known as a Test, which uses a Characteristic and a Skill. These each have a number attached that tells you how good your character is in these areas. A starting character's ratings are between 2 and 5.

The Characteristic tells you how many 10-sided dice to roll. The Skill tells you the number you need to roll equal to or less than to succeed. Tell everyone how many successes you have achieved — the more you get, the better your character has done!

Example: *Gunter is surrounded by a trio of State Troopers out for his blood. He decides to leap out a nearby window to escape so the GM calls for an Athletics Test. Gunter's Agility Characteristic is 3, so he rolls 3 dice, and his Athletics Skill is 5 — he needs to roll 5 or less to succeed. Gunter's player rolls 3 dice, and gets a 4, a 5 and a 7. That's two successes (the 4 and the 5), quite impressive, so the GM rules Gunter lands deftly on his feet. The State Troopers bellow curses after him, and give chase. Gunter had better hope his luck holds out...*

Gunter is Testing Athletics, so he rolls three dice — equal to his Agility Characteristic of 3.



FAILURES



SUCCESSES

His Athletics skill is 5, so the 4 and 5 are successes! The result is two successes. If an effect made the Test Glorious, Gunter could roll any failures again in the hopes of gaining additional successes. If the Test was Grim, he'd instead have to reroll his successes...

OTHER USEFUL TERMS

There are a few other terms you may wish to understand before creating your character. An **Exacting Tests** is a Test that requires several rolls over a period of time, keeping track of your total successes. When you **Help** another character, you make a Test to grant them bonus dice. **Endeavours** are activities you undertake between adventures, increasing your Skills as you do so.

STEPS OF CHARACTER CREATION

1. Determine your Origin (page 13)
2. Determine your Career (page 24)
3. Determine your Contacts (page 57)
4. Apply finishing touches (page 61)
5. Begin play with your Grim Portent (page 64)

ORIGINS

Your character's Origin describes where they started out in life, the species they belong to and the culture they grew up in.

Your Origin determines your character's starting Characteristics (page 68), Skill Ratings (page 68), Talents (page 73), Lores (page 82) and Fate score (page 111).

You may choose your Origin, or determine it randomly. If you allow the dice to decide, gain 1 XP!

RANDOM ORIGIN TABLE

1d10	Origin
1	Brettonian (Human)
2-3	Dwarf
4-7	Empire (Human)
8	Halfling
9	High Elf
10	Wood Elf

The table above assumes your game is set in the Empire. The distribution of Origins found in other regions, such as Bretonnia, the Border Princes, or as far afield as Ulthuan, would be quite different!

Learning a Lore associated with a specific Origin means you also know that culture's language. For example, the High Elf Realms Lore grants a character the ability to speak Eltharin, the Elven language. All characters know the language common to the game's starting location. For games set in Talagaad, this is Reikspeil, the tongue commonly spoken throughout much of the Empire.

STARTING CHARACTERISTICS

Origin	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Re	Fel	Fate
Dwarf	3	2	3	4	2	2	3	2	2
Elf	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	1
Halfling	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	2
Human	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3

CHARACTERISTICS

Your starting characteristics are set by your Origin. Elves tend to be faster than Humans, while Dwarfs are typically Tougher. Halflings are quick with a joke or a disarming smile, grinning even as they pick your pocket. Use the table below to determine your starting Characteristics.

Each character has their own areas of strength — few people are exactly as fast or as strong as all their kin. To reflect this, increase three of your Characteristics by +1 — decide which by rolling on the Characteristic Modifiers table. Each Characteristic cannot be increased by more than +1 during this stage of Character Creation. If you duplicate any rolls of 1-9, reroll until you have distinct values. When you roll a 10, you cannot choose a Characteristic that has already been increased. Note that Fate is not strictly a Characteristic, but you may modify it in this step as though it were one.

CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

d10	Characteristic
1	+1 Weapon Skill (WS)
2	+1 Ballistic Skill (BS)
3	+1 Strength (S)
4	+1 Toughness (T)
5	+1 Initiative (I)
6	+1 Agility (Ag)
7	+1 Reason (Re)
8	+1 Fellowship (Fel)
9	+1 Fate
10	+1 to a Characteristic of your choice

If you don't like the results the dice have given you, go ahead and increase any three different Characteristics by +1 instead. However, if you do stick with the results that fate has chosen, gain 1 XP!

13 MAGIC

WIZARD LEVEL _____ CASTING TEST DICE POOL _____

MISCAPT POOL

MISCAPT EFFECTS

14 OTHER CHARACTERS

SPELLS						
CV	Target	Range	Duration	Formalised	Memorised	Effect
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

15 GRIM PORTENT

16 EXACTING TEST PROGRESS

17 CLUES & INSIGHTS

NOTES

18 FAVOURS OWED

9 Weapons (page 92)

Weapons are used on Attack Tests (page 118). Initially determined by your Career. New weapons can be purchased by spending Coin (page 92).

10 Wounds (page 121) and Conditions (page 122)

Debilitating effects inflicted by enemy attacks or environmental hazards. Your character acquires Wounds and conditions in-play — some are easily recovered from, others leave a lasting scar.

11 Trappings (page 92) and Assets (page 102)

Your character's equipment and possessions. Initially determined by your Career.

12 Contacts (page 56)

Influential NPCs your character has a useful relationship with. Initially determined by your Career. New Contacts can only be acquired by earning their patronage in an adventure.

13 Magic and Spells (page 152)

Characters with the *Wizard* Talent (page 81) have a Wizard Level, Casting Test dice pool (usually Willpower), Miscast Pool (page 157), and space to mark effects caused by Miscasts (page 158).

14 Other Characters

The names of the other player characters, and the relationship you have with them (page 63).

15 Grim Portent (page 64)

The inciting event that bound your party together, and how you intend to combat the villain responsible.

16 Exacting Test Progress (page 110)

Progress made on Exacting Tests that stretch between sessions, such as the Craft Trapping Endeavour (page 133).

17 Clues and Insights (page 128)

Important information discovered, or deduced, in the course of investigating a mystery.

18 Favours Owed

Debts owed to, and from, important NPCs, such as those gained through the Aid Contact Endeavour (page 132).



BRETONNIAN

To the west of the Empire, between the Grey Mountains and the Middle Sea, lies the kingdom of Bretonnia. Here, gleaming white stone spires of Bretonnia's mighty cities rise towards the heavens in imitation of the ancient High Elf towers that stretch along the nation's coast. Up close, this impression falters — the cities of Bretonnia are overcrowded by a stifling throng of peasant labourers, and rife with disease and poverty.

Bretonnia is divided into numerous fiefdoms, where the peasantry toils to fulfil the needs of the nobility. The realm's feudal lords are dedicated to notions of honour and chivalry. Most view their subjects much as they do their lands — a valuable resource, but one to be used as they see fit. In return, when the kingdom is threatened by Orc incursion or Norscan raids, the nobility solemnly embrace their duty and ride out to face the threat. From atop mighty warhorses, clad in gleaming armour, sharp steel in hand, the knights of Bretonnia are a force whose prowess is sung of across the Old World. Less frequently celebrated are the peasant soldiery who accompany them in war, the hardships of campaigning and their expendability on the battlefield leaving them longing to return to their toil in the fields.



All of this impoverished majesty is held together by a singular belief in the Lady of the Lake, a goddess whose faith permeates every aspect of life in Bretonnia. All toil and every sacrifice is justified, so long as it be in service of the Lady. Bretonnians rarely venture outside their beloved homeland, save on crusade or, occasionally, in exile. As exiled knights often take their peasant labourers with them, it is not unheard of for Bretonnians of any caste to find themselves aboard in the Empire, at once impressed and horrified by that mighty nation and its crass citizenry.



“Bretonnians? Manlings in the Empire have at least a smidgen of Sigmar’s good sense, but in Bretonnia they lack even that. I think all the elf-blood we spilled in that land long ago has sent them a bit wrong in the head. And the smell! I don’t know which smells worse — the Manlings or the horses.”

— Grubni Ironmeld, Dwarf Miner

“I’ve never met a Bretonnian I liked, but I think it was mutual – there’s a reason they’re not part of the Empire! They’re either uppity knights or snivelling peasants afraid to look you in the eye. They’re always going off on quests and prattling on about some Lady or other, too. Stay well clear, is my advice.”

— Gars Fichenbuch, Empire Merchant

“Bretonnians? Oh, they’re alright. Fine horses, or at least so they look from down here. There must not be a lot of Halflings in Bretonnia, as they don’t seem to know much about us. Makes it a lot easier to pick their pockets, believe you me!”

— Honsillia Underbrush, Halfling Cook

“They live among the ruins of our people and think themselves kings, but such is the arrogance of men. Still, they have more honour than most of their kind, and their cavalry are effective if vainglorious. Their merchants are unsophisticated, but vastly preferable to the cutpurses and charlatans in the Empire.”

— Elys Einthriel, High Elf Trader

“What is there to say? At times we have made war. Less often, we have been allies. For the most part they leave our people alone, and we pay them the same courtesy.”

— Dhanas, Wood Elf Waywatcher

DWARF

The Dwarfs are a proud people, producing talented artisans and mighty warriors in abundance. Once they held dominion over much of the Old World, but a ruinous war with the Elves and the centuries of misfortune that followed have eroded much of the might of the Dwarfs. Many of their ancestral mountain holds have been lost, and this forced exodus has created a far-flung Dwarfen diaspora.

In those holds that have endured millennia of misfortune, the stubborn pride of the Dwarfs is far from extinguished. Karaz Ankor, as they call their mountain realm, remains as resolute and unyielding as ever. To the Dwarfs, their old homes are bastions of honour, strength and courage in a world assailed by dark forces, and the Empire of Man but an upstart, a nation barely civilised, and even then, only with Dwarfen aid.

Nevertheless, the old alliance between Men and Dwarfs holds strong. Many Dwarfs found new homes among the cities and towns of the Empire, where Dwarfen communities are afforded respect and a measure of independence. Their industrious nature and skilled artisanship has repaid the Empire many times over. Among their own kind, those who have made their home in the Empire are known as Imperial Dwarfs.



Dwarfs are quick to anger, inclined to take offence at the slightest provocation, and never forget a grudge. Nevertheless, once their favour has been earned, one could not hope for a more stalwart friend or ally, as the Empire has learned time and again.



“One may as well argue with a stone as with a Dwarf. It is not that they cannot be reasoned with, but they are too adept at reasoning themselves into a course of action that, no matter how ill-advised it may be, even they cannot argue themselves out of.”

— Sir Renard the Unshakeable, Knight of Bretonnia

“Ma used to say they’re our ancient allies, a friend to all citizens of the Empire. She should have seen what the one with the orange hair did when he caught up with those drunken sailors...”

— Alisa Verdt, Empire barkeep

“Ale’s a bit on the strong side for my liking, but they knew their way around a good stew. I could have died happy right then and there. Would it kill them to crack a smile though?”

— Marigold Dewslipper, Halfling farmer

“Elves, as a rule, outlive Dwarfs, but their grudges are so enduring they will surely outlive us all. They lack perspective. Were they as enlightened as we, they would realise the world has moved on without a care for their trivial grievances. I prefer not to think of them at all.”

— Sheranel of Talshunar, High Elf navigator

“They torch the woodlands not just to fuel their monstrous artifice; I think there is malice behind it. Their hearts are hard and small, but an arrow will pierce them all the same.”

— Rinodan Oakfletcher, Wood Elf Glade Guard

EMPIRE (HUMAN)

The Empire lies at the heart of the Old World. Even fractured, it remains the most powerful of all Human realms. Its citizens are well aware of this, to the point of complacency. Ferocious foes lurk on the Empire's borders and within them, and though it has almost been torn asunder by the machinations of power-hungry Elector Counts and lesser nobles, there is an abiding belief that the Empire Sigmar founded can weather any storm.

Humans of the Empire vary widely. Those born in cities may have been raised in relative safety, learned trades, and only ever witnessed the marshalling of powerful armies dispatched to fight distant wars. Those who make their lives outside tall city walls, in the isolated villages of the Great Forest or on the wind-swept shores of the north coast, know that danger is always close, and that an army appearing on the horizon is rarely a welcome sign.



Wherever they hail from, most citizens are superstitious, clutching the talismans of old gods and new, cursing the witch when times are good, but turning to practitioners of forbidden magic when the dark closes in. There are honest and principled heroes too, but for every noble soul there is a murderous cutthroat lurking in nearby shadows.



"The nobles are cowards, the peasants ungrateful, and the horses ill-bred. No wonder their Empire is falling apart."

— Sir Gordon Politaire, Bretonnian diplomat

"A thousand years since they last agreed on a leader, but the fools still think of themselves as one people. There's something admirable in that. I figure it's like panning for gold in nightsoil — stick with it long enough, you might find something worth a damn. In recent times, it's been brown nuggets all the way. Lacklustre rulers make for thirsty citizens though — there's the spot of gold!"

— Skunda Jarlagrim, Dwarf Brewguard

"They're slow, stupid, self-important warmongers, and we'd be absolutely lost without them. Every score needs a mark."

— Oliver Grinburrow, Halfling thief

"They have potential. Under our influence, we could mould them into something useful, make of them a weapon in the one true war. If we ignore them, if we leave them to the Dwarfs, I promise you we will regret it."

— Elabor the Visionary, High Elf Mage

"They could have built something beautiful in these woods, instead of this monument to stupidity. I cannot explain how they've prospered as worthier civilisations have fallen; I can only assume a terrible doom awaits them. But the forest will outlast their failure."

— Dolvynoc of Cythral, Wood Elf lorekeeper

HALFLING

The Halflings of the Mootland are a peculiar folk. Shorter in stature than Dwarfs, and with a girth that has very little to do with muscle, Halflings are often forgotten and are easily overlooked in most matters. This suits them quite well, as being overlooked makes it far easier to make off with any valuables that have carelessly been misplaced in other people's pockets. Indeed the Halfling folk would be consigned to the footnotes of Imperial life were it not for the fact that they rule their own minor province within the Empire, the Mootland. How exactly this came about is widely debated, involving either deft political wrangling or gross incompetence, depending on who you ask.

Though they can primarily be found within the borders of the Moot, where they make their homes in burrows that could charitably be described as 'rustic', Halflings do live throughout the Empire. They are widely considered to be thieves and ruffians of the worst sort but are just as renowned for their culinary skills as they are for their disdain for notions of personal property.



Their short stature and peerless appetites mean they are hardly natural warriors, but they are nevertheless dangerous when cornered. A Halfling armed with a sling or short bow is a threat that is easy to underestimate. This is especially true of Fieldwardens, dedicated Halflings who guard the borders of the Moot, without whom the province would surely have been swept away long ago.



"An exotic curiosity, one of many that might be found in foreign lands like the Empire. Such a funny little creature would be a splendid gift to the Duke on my return."

— Sir Leona of Mousillon, Bretonnian knight

"Greedy, grasping, dirty little blighters. No backbone, no respect. Hold onto your coats. By Grungni, hold onto your undergarments!"

— Konn Hardhelm, Dwarf Ranger

"I've seen Halfling archers shoot harpies out the sky, Halfling thieves vanish from Imperial dungeons, and Halfling scouts rip an Ungor limb from limb. You think they're a joke? That's what they want you to think."

— Agnesa Strateroff, Empire mercenary

"They wish to be ignored, and we are happy to ignore them. Disagreeable as they are, they are amongst the least worrisome of the smaller, subtle creatures that inhabit your so-called Empire, just beyond the fringes of your dull perception."

— Enamala Torwin, High Elf Shadow Warrior

"They slip through our world more surely than Dwarfs or Humans, but their instincts are only to consume. That is a dangerous combination."

— Ilatoc the Sentinel, Wood Elf guard

HIGH ELF

The High Elves were once the masters of the mortal world. The empire of the Phoenix Kings spanned continents, upheld by the strength of their armies and their mastery of magic. Their deeds in those days have become the stuff of legend, and the cities they raised were gleaming alabaster monuments to pride and achievement. But the centuries have not been kind, and the history of the High Elves is one of majesty and tragedy in almost equal measure.

Today, the High Elf Realms are reduced to the kingdoms of Ulthaun and a few scattered colonies, the ruins they left behind a grim reminder that all things must perish. For long centuries they retreated from the wider world, abandoning much of their holdings in the wake of a ruinous war with the Dwarfs. Though voyages of exploration and trade never entirely ceased, only of late have they begun to look outward once again under the auspices of Phoenix King Finubar the Seafarer. Garrisons have been established on islands off the coast of the Old World, and relations have been strengthened with the realms of men. High Elf diplomats and merchants can be found throughout the Empire.



High Elves are proud, long-lived, masters of warfare and magic both, but the zenith of their strength is almost certainly behind them. Though sundered by war and secluded upon the island continent of Ulthaun, the pride of the High Elves, and their duty to the world they have helped shape, both remain.



“All she said was ‘You will turn back’, and that was that — the Captain ordered us to cast off, and sail right back into the storm. Whatever power the Elves are sheltering off the coast of our fair kingdom, it frightens our lords, and that frightens me.”

— Jean de Navires, Bretonnian sailor

“Keep to your little ships and your island hideaways. You don’t belong on this continent, and if you try to return, you remember what’ll happen.”

— Lufta Grindaxe, Dwarf Quarreller

“They call themselves seafarers, so Taal only knows what they’re doing as far inland as Talagaad. I suppose there’s something here that they’re after. That can’t be good.”

— Lennard Gusseldorf, Empire state trooper

“You know how some humans reckon they’re heroes out of some story, here to save the world? High Elves are like that, but more so.”

— ‘Fish’ Patterdock, Halfling merchant

“After centuries of neglecting these lands, they are now determined to interfere however they can. We hoped isolation would teach our cousins humility, but apparently we will have to educate them.”

— Dhocio Elmarest, Wood Elf Spellsinger

WOOD ELF

When the Elves left the Old World behind, relinquishing their claim to it and allowing their colonies to crumble, some could not abandon all they had built there. There were those who remained, hidden in the far mountains and deep forests of the Old World, and attempted to endure. Most perished, but some endured and prospered. The greatest of these realms is Athel Loren, nestled between the land of Bretonnia and the Grey Mountains. The Elves struck a bargain with the spirits of that ancient forest, protecting its borders and its denizens from outsiders, and Athel Loren has sheltered them in return. Wood Elves also reside in Laurelorn Forest, in the north of the Empire, and allegedly possess magical means to travel between any forest in the Old World.

Most outsiders view the Wood Elf Realms as malignant, and perhaps they are right, for both the forests and their protectors care not for the lives of Men nor Dwarfs. Any who come to Athel Loren seeking fortune or plunder find only death. The lucky perish on an arrow's point, while the unlucky are torn to shreds by terrifying forest creatures.



Wood Elves only rarely leave their home to explore the lands of the Empire or beyond, and never do so without reason — or prey. Some are diplomats, others spies, and indeed there is often little difference between the two. The enemies of Athel Loren roam far and wide, and so too must the forest's protectors.

Wood Elves are mercurial by nature, shifting from passive consideration to joyful elation or murderous anger in a heartbeat. By human standards, most are expert archers and unnaturally stealthy — to the Wood Elves, these are the skills of childhood, as natural as breathing.



“There is something wondrous in Athel Loren, something beautiful and pure. But that power is horrific as well, beyond the right of kings to meddle with, and the Wood Elves will kill us if we try.”

— Jolene Endrame, Bretonnian Prophetess

“It’s the joy they take in killing honest miners that really sticks in the craw. We should have finished the job thousands of years ago, when we had the chance.”

— Molgo the Wronged, Dwarf pioneer

“There’s nothing ‘natural’ in how those creatures live. Theirs is the magic of the dark, haunted woods, places no Human were ever supposed to venture. They’re as lost from Father Taal’s sight as are the beasts that walk like men.”

— Ernsta Volk, Empire priest

“Aye, I’ve seen ‘em, seeing me seeing them. Watching and waiting seems to be their sole passion. Wore me out after a while. I went back to my potatoes. That’s my name for Humans. It’s much easier to poach from potatoes.”

— Stannily Kooper, Halfling scout

“They have endured better without the Phoenix King’s leadership than one might have reasonably expected. Perhaps if we annex the Wood Elf realms, they could be restored to something truly worthy of our common ancestry.”

— Caldafar the Generous, High Elf Dragon Prince

BRETONNIAN ORIGIN OPTIONS

d10	Random Talent	d10	Random Talent
1	Allies in Arms	6	Secret Bloodline
2	Defensive Stance	7	Iron Gut
3	Golden Voice	8	Steer Clear
4	Hardy	9	Vanguard
5	Resistance to Corruption	10	Wild Attack

Roll twice on the Talent Table above, rerolling duplicates. You may swap one of these Talents for *Honour Bound* (page 77)

Skill Ratings: Your skills begin at 2. Raise Melee, Toil and any two other skills of your choice to 3. You may wait until you determine your Career before choosing.

Lores: You begin with Lore: Kingdom of Bretonnia, as well as Lore: High Society or Lore: Farming.

Fate: Your starting Fate is 3.

Suggested Names: Gilles, Jaques, Perrin, Marcel, Raoul, Estienne, Henri, Bertran, Odo, Thomin, Monique, Ysabeau, Thomasse, Perrette, Gisele, Genevieve, Margot, Simone, Juliete, Beatrice

DWARF ORIGIN OPTIONS

d10	Random Talent	d10	Random Talent
1	Armour Bane	6	Iron Gut
2	Hardy	7	Longbeard
3	Hatred	8	Night Dweller
4	Honour Bound	9	Rapid Reload
5	Intense Scrutiny	10	Resolute

Roll twice on the Talent Table above, rerolling duplicates. You must swap one of these Talents for *Magic Resistance* (page 79)

Skill Ratings: Your skills begin at 2. Raise Melee, Toil, Endurance and Willpower to 3.

Lores: You gain Lore: Dwarf Mountain Holds and Literacy. Imperial Dwarfs have Lore: The Empire. Those from the Mountain Holds have Lore: Subterranean.

Fate: Your starting Fate is 2.

Suggested Names: Alrik, Kettri, Snorek, Hergar, Karazin, Ulfar, Skoth, Duregar, Gradni, Nargo, Lenka, Britta, Hunni, Magdarit, Eldrida, Kobalta, Gronden, Freda, Loga, Winnifer

EMPIRE (HUMAN) ORIGIN OPTIONS

d10	Random Talent	d10	Random Talent
1	Exceptional Hearing	6	Thirst for Knowledge
2	Faith	7	Steer Clear
3	Hardy	8	Taunter
4	Hold the Line	9	Rapid Reload
5	Honour Bound	10	Touched by the Winds

Roll twice on the Talent Table above, rerolling duplicates.

Skill Ratings: Your skills begin at 2. Raise any three skills of your choice to 3. You may wait until you determine your Career before choosing.

Lores: You gain Lore: The Empire, and any City Lore or Provincial Lore of your choice.

Fate: Your starting Fate is 3.

Suggested Names: Lars, Gotfrit, Reinhard, Wolfgang, Ulthar, Friedrich, Walther, Kedric, Dieter, Gustaf, Gertrun, Freda, Erika, Olga, Katherin, Agnes, Lina, Bertha, Ingrid, Thora

HALFLING ORIGIN OPTIONS

d10	Random Talent	d10	Random Talent
1	Careful Aim	6	Lightning Reflexes
2	Defensive Stance	7	Lucky
3	Feigned Flight	8	Allies in arms
4	Iron Gut	9	Taunter
5	Keen Eyed	10	Vanguard

Roll once. You also gain Resistance to Corruption and Short Size.

Skill Ratings: Your skills begin at 2. Raise Shooting, Stealth, Dexterity, and Charm to 3.

Lores: You gain Lore: Provincial (Mootland) and Lore: Cooking.

Fate: Your starting Fate is 3.

Suggested Names: Horatio (Ray), Broderick (Brod), Beauregard (Bo), Demetrius (Demy), Cornelius (Neil), Maximilian (Max), Nathaniel (Nate), Clementine (Clem), Annaliese (Ann), Francesca (Fran), Edwardine (Eddie), Imogen (Mo), Alexandra (Alex)

HIGH ELF ORIGIN OPTIONS

d10	Random Talent	d10	Random Talent
1	Acrobatic	6	Polymath
2	Deep Formation	7	Secret Bloodline
3	Exceptional Hearing	8	Touched by the Winds
4	Golden Voice	9	Stand and Shoot
5	Keen Eyed	10	Valour of Ages

Roll twice on the Talent Table above, rerolling duplicates. You must swap one of these Talents for *Lightning Reflexes* (page 79)

Skill Ratings: Your skills begin at 2. Raise Awareness, Athletics, Willpower, Recall, and any other skill to 3.

Lores: You begin with Lore: High Elf Realms, Lore: Literacy, and another Academic Lore of your choice.

Fate: Your starting Fate is 1.

Suggested Names: Gilles, Jaques, Perrin, Marcel, Raoul, Estienne, Henri, Bertran, Odo, Thomin, Monique, Ysabeau, Thomasse, Perrette, Gisele, Genevieve, Margot, Simone, Juliete, Beatrice

WOOD ELF ORIGIN OPTIONS

d10	Random Talent	d10	Random Talent
1	Acrobatic	6	Golden Voice
2	Careful Aim	7	Keen Eyed
3	Deep Formation	8	Spiteseer
4	Exceptional Hearing	9	Touched by the Winds
5	Feigned Flight	10	Vanguard

Roll twice on the Talent Table above, rerolling duplicates. You must swap one of these Talents for *Lightning Reflexes* (page 79).

Skill Ratings: Your skills begin at 2. Raise Survival, Awareness, Athletics, and Stealth to 3.

Lores: You gain Lore: Wood Elf Realms, Woodcraft, and either Lore: Kingdom of Bretonnia or Lore: Beastman Brayherds.

Fate: Your starting Fate is 1.

Suggested Names: Caeroth, Mendas, Feneloc, Darahu, Kinwik, Mertoc, Valahan, Luric, Gartoth, Tralan, Saula, Farlac, Morlanna, Thestra, Avaryn, Skendda, Gladwyth, Aestra, Otolri, Hanadda

CAREERS AND STATUS

Every Career has an associated Status, either Brass, Silver, or Gold, that defines your place in the social hierarchy that dominates much of the Old World, and certainly the Empire.

- ❖ Brass characters are the unwashed masses of the Old World, beleaguered, uneducated, and poor. They mostly spend brass shillings, or barter for what they need.
- ❖ Silver characters are skilled artisans, educated scholars, or practice some valuable trades that keep them in relative comfort, though most are still of common birth. They often have a pocket full of silver shillings.
- ❖ Gold characters were born into a titled family or have been lavished with their favour, receiving all the privileges that confer. They carry gold coinage or simply expect a retainer to deal with things like currency.

Your status also determines how easy or hard it is for you to afford ordinary items. Brass Characters must account for every penny spent, while for Gold Characters most purchases are a trivial matter that requires no bookkeeping.

LIFE IN DISGRACE

If you wish, your character may begin play with a lower Status than their Career normally confers, e.g. a disgraced Noble or an apprentice Artisan. If you do, you gain 1 bonus XP. Your trappings and Assets remain at your Career's normal tier, but your claim or access to them is likely tenuous, as you may owe debts, or had your reputation ruined. You should discuss how your character ended up in this situation with the GM. It may be possible to increase your Status by clearing your name, repaying a debt, advancing in rank, or reclaiming your honour.

CAREERS

What does your character do for a living? Do they earn their coin through hard graft, specialist expertise, or bloodshed? Perhaps their wealth and status comes from an inherited title or thriving business? Their Career determines your Character's place in the Old World, how others see them, and the sorts of activities they are most skilled at.

Your Career determines your Character's starting Skills, Lores, trappings, Talents and Status, and determines which Characteristics they will find easiest to advance during play. It also influences what types of Contacts you are likely to know — Rat Catchers mix with very different sorts of people than the nobility, after all!

Start by rolling d100 and look up the result in the column for your Origin on the Random Career Table. If you choose to stick with the result, you gain 1 XP. Alternatively, you can disregard the result and choose any Career that is listed as applicable for your Origin, but don't gain this bonus XP.



RANDOM CAREER TABLE

Career	Brettonnian	Dwarf	Halfling	High Elf	Empire (Human)	Wood Elf
Apothecary	01-05	01-05	01-10	01-05	01-05	01-08
Arcane Wizard	06-07	-	-	06-10	06	-
Artisan	08-12	06-15	11-15	11-15	07-14	09-13
Boathand	13-17	16-17	16-18	16-25	15-19	14-15
Bounty Hunter	18-20	18-20	19-23	26-28	20-22	16-23
Brewguard	-	21-25	-	-	-	-
Brigand	21-23	26-27	24-28	29-30	23-25	24-31
Charlatan	24-25	28-29	29-33	31-32	26-28	32-33
Courtier	26-30	30-32	34-36	33-37	29-31	34-36
Engineer	31-32	33-37	37-38	-	32-33	-
Entertainer	33-37	38-40	39-46	38-40	34-36	37-39
Hedge Wizard	38-39	-	-	-	37-39	40-44
Knight	40-47	-	-	41-43	40-41	45-46
Knight-Exile	48-52	-	-	-	-	-
Labourer	53-62	41-50	47-56	44-53	42-51	47-54
Lothorn Sea Guard	-	-	-	54-58	-	-
Merchant	63-67	51-60	57-64	59-68	52-56	55-59
Noble	68-69	61-62	65-66	69-73	57-58	60-61
Priest	-	-	-	-	59-63	-
Rat Catcher	70-74	63-65	67-71	-	64-68	-
Road Warden	75-79	66-67	72-73	74-75	69-71	62-64
Scholar	80-82	68-70	74-76	76-80	72-74	65-67
Shadow Warrior	-	-	-	81-85	-	-
Sharpshooter	83-87	71-78	77-84	86-90	75-79	68-77
Slayer	-	79-83	-	-	-	-
Soldier	88-92	84-93	85-87	91-95	80-87	78-82
Thief	93-95	94-95	88-95	96-97	88-92	83-85
Townwatch	96-100	96-100	96-100	98-100	93-100	86-90
Waywatcher	-	-	-	-	-	91-95
Wildwood Ranger	-	-	-	-	-	96-100

You can change Careers during the course of a game, but it's not easy — you have to dedicate time to the Change Career Endeavour (page 133). As prerequisites, you need to first learn your new Career's mandatory Lores, acquire any essential trappings, and have a solid narrative justification for making the change (most Imperial citizens cannot simply choose to become a Noble!) In return, you gain the Status, Career Talent, Favoured Characteristics, and Assets of your new Career, replacing that provided by your old Career.

APOTHECARY

“An hour with the leeches, one drop of Elf blood, and a smear of my special paste and you’ll be good as new! Coin only, no credit.” – Margot Hausenbaker

The often bizarre flora and fauna of the Old World exhibits a range of incredible naturally occurring properties, from regenerating Trolls, to poisonous Khemrian asps, to hallucinogenic Mad Cap Mushrooms. With the right combination of natural ingredients, Apothecaries can channel these remarkable abilities into elixirs for consumption or manual application. Many potions are of dubious effectiveness, or trigger unfortunate side effects. But for every quack and con-artist, there is at least one genuine practitioner, quietly providing curative poultices to needy villagers.

Apothecaries in Talagaad often work as doktors, brewers, or, less frequently, professional peddlers of poison. A handful keep small beehives by the town’s southern walls, where the odd marshflowers imbue the insect’s harvest with strange properties. Many faiths, such as the Cult of Rhya or the faithful of Isha, freely share their knowledge of the natural world to those with the wit to listen and learn.



MARSH POX

From time to time, outbreaks of Marsh Pox run riot through Talagaad, and there is a standing bounty for any practitioner of leechcraft who can find a cure for it. Oddly, the outbreaks always seem to originate on the opposite shore to the marshlands, leading some to think the disease may be misnamed...

Apothecary

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Strength, Initiative, Reason	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Defence, Survival, Awareness, Dexterity, Stealth, Recall		
Lore	Concoction, Anatomy <i>or</i> Zoology <i>or</i> Environment Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Sling <i>or</i> shortbow, dagger, travelling clothes, worker’s leathers, concoction set and either
Assets	Laboratory <i>or</i> brewery or shop	Contacts	The Common Folk, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Personal Recipe: As long as you have the right ingredients, you can produce chemicals and compounds in record time. Outside of downtime, each time you have a night’s rest or similar length of time free to work your trade, you can undertake the Craft Trapping Endeavour (page 133) to brew a concoction without using an Endeavour. The material requirements to produce the concoction are the same, and any concoctions produced expire and lose effectiveness by the start of the next downtime.		

ARCANE WIZARD

"Call it what you will—a horror, an abomination, an affront to Taal. It just saved your life. Though if you'd perished, I could certainly have made use of your corpse..."

- Catrinne Baumann, Necromancer

Witchcraft is a crime in Talabec, as in the rest of the Empire, but a few gifted magicians find sanctuary in the employ of a wealthy patron or as an apprentice to a more experienced practitioner. Titles like alchemist, astronomer, lorekeeper, and more provide Wizards with a pretext to practice magic, so long as it serves their patron's interests. Some Wizards have official sanction, at least within their native kingdom, like the Bretonnian Damsels of the Lady, or High Elf Mages trained in the White Tower of Saphery.

In Talagaad, several Wizards operate with the Duke of Talabec's tacit endorsement, or at least appear to do so. Those associated with the Hexengilde are the quickest to lean on this modicum of legitimacy, a fact that the Duke is no doubt aware of. Nevertheless, practicing magic in the streets is far from wise, as even the most enlightened view it as akin to waving a loaded blackpowder weapon about, a notion reinforced by tales of those practitioners who take to the field in times of war. Of course, this implicit sanction does little to protect Wizards who do not remain discrete, nor does it spare them from those witch hunters who hold more faith in Sigmar than the authority of the Duke.



MUTUAL INTERESTS

Whilst most Wizards are solitary by nature, some do convene to share knowledge, recruit apprentices, or keep an eye on rivals. Around Talagaad, some swear oaths to the so-called Hexengilde. This secret society welcomes magical practitioners of all kinds. It has pretensions of being a guild like any other, but in truth it is far from being a unified organisation. Nevertheless, it can be a useful tool for making connections or finding a noble patron, though membership often brings unwanted attention.

Arcane Wizard

~ Silver ~

Origins

Bretonnian, High Elf, *or* Empire (Human)

Favoured Characteristics

Initiative, Reason, Fellowship

Skill Bonuses

+1 to four of the following: Defence, Awareness, Willpower, Recall, Leadership, Charm

Lore

Magic Lore (choose one), Literacy, High Society *or* Cult Lore (choose one)

Trappings

Staff, dagger, burgher's apparel, arcane paraphernalia, writing kit

Assets

Library *or* secret society membership *or* heirloom wargear

Contacts

The Great and the Good, Wanderers and Wastrels

Career Talents

Arcane Study: Your research or training has taught you to wield your magic with a measure of discipline. You are a Level 1 Wizard (page 81) with a grimoire inscribed with 3 spells from your Magic Lore (choose which). You gain +1d on the *Formalise Spell* Endeavour (page 134).

ARTISAN

"I don't know nothin' about fightin' Beastmen, but I do know this: if you take this sword into battle, you'll break long before it does." – Heida Lanfriede, Artisan

Every passable weapon, tool, or artwork in the Old World was hand-crafted by an Artisan of one kind or another. They turn raw materials into processed goods, and restore old or damaged pieces to their former glory. The majority learn their trade by long and arduous apprenticeship. They may be weaponsmiths, runescribers, jewel crafters or barrel wrights, and most form themselves into often ruthless guilds that abhor competition.

Artisan Guilds hold sway in Talagaad like they do in every Empire town, licensing who can and cannot practice their trade. There are always exceptions though — black market dealers, exiled Karak clanfolk, Elven aesthetes — who refuse to be beholden to Guild law.



THE STEEL TITHE

Duke Ludwig fears that armouries of the Grand Duchy are not as well appointed as they might be, and has ordered a tax from all citizens that can be paid either in coin or useful metals. There is a brisk trade in old pots and pans as a result, but most of Talagaad's smiths agree the Duke's armourers will struggle to make even halfway decent blades from rusted cookware.

Artisan ~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	All		Strength, Toughness, Initiative
Skill Bonuses	1 to four of the following: Melee, Brawn, Toil, Endurance, Awareness, Dexterity		
Lore	Smithing <i>or</i> Arts <i>or</i> Textiles <i>or</i> custom Trade Lore (see page 88)	Trappings	Warhammer <i>or</i> sword, burgher's apparel, worker's leathers, trade tools to match your Trade Lore
Assets	Workshop <i>or</i> armoury <i>or</i> shop	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, The Common Folk
Career Talents	Trust Your Tools: You place greatest faith in goods you crafted with your own hands. When making a Test using a trapping you created yourself, you do not generate Complications, no matter how many successes you roll. In addition, when you use a weapon you crafted yourself, the first Attack Test you make with it each battle gains +1d.		

BOATHAND

"Those High Elves might think themselves masters of the sea, but I've yet to meet one who could bellow a good shanty!"

– Humphrey Lagantaag, Boathand

Most settlements of the Old World are near a river or coast. Their inhabitants include fisherfolk, ferry operators, dock workers, and stevedores, as well as visiting sailors. Boathands see to everything, from the business of moving cargo to and fro, to ensuring a ship's rigging is taut and its hull watertight. It's a tough life, where sudden storms or hungry River Trolls can thrust a crew into danger without warning. But the waters can also be generous to the bold or opportunistic.

Talagaad offers plenty of work for those comfortable on the water, from honest trade, to black market blockade runs, or outright piracy. The town has even been visited by the seafarers of Ulthuan, though many are deeply suspicious why the High Elves would journey so far to visit a port as benighted as this one.

THE LISTIGSTRAAB

Not far from Talagaad, hidden just beneath the water, is a sandbank that locals refer to as the Listigstraab. Boats and barges frequently run aground atop it, caught unawares by the obstruction to the famously deep waters of the Talabec. Some claim the Listigstrand is home to a river spirit that must be appeased to safely navigate this stretch of the Talabec.



Boathand

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Ballistic Skill, Strength, Toughness	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Shooting, Toil, Survival, Endurance, Dexterity, Athletics		
Lore	Riverways <i>or</i> Sailing, Music <i>or</i> Blackpowder	Trappings	Axe <i>or</i> sword, warbow <i>or</i> pistol, travelling clothing, light armour <i>or</i> hunting kit <i>or</i> blackpowder kit
Assets	Rowboat <i>or</i> river barge <i>or</i> ship's passage	Contacts	The Common Folk, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	<p>Sea Legs: A life spent tossed around by roiling waves and currents has made you unusually steady on your feet. Whenever you would be knocked <i>Prone</i> by an enemy attack, Difficult Terrain, or other effect, you may choose to grit your teeth and power through. If you do so, you suffer the <i>Burdened</i> condition instead of the <i>Prone</i> condition, which you can remove by sacrificing your free move for the turn. You can't use this Talent if you're already <i>Burdened</i>.</p>		

BOUNTY HUNTER

"By midseason's eve, I'll have your son back — or whatever the Orcs have left of him."

– Brutte Sonnenbraag, 'retrieval specialist'



Bounty Hunters pursue fugitives, runaways, heretics, and monstrous beasts, tracking elusive creatures with a price on their heads. They examine trails, investigate leads, interrogate witnesses, and set traps to prepare for the confrontation with their quarry. It's a dirty business, even disregarding the black market for paid assassinations. But setting a bounty may be the only recourse for victims of crime or monster attacks.

As long as smugglers, river pirates, and Talabheim exiles continue to hideout in Talagaad, Bounty Hunters will reliably find work there. Some specialise as witch hunters, occasionally sponsored by the cults of Morr or Sigmar. The practice of magic is more accepted in Talabec than elsewhere, but dangerous witches often have a bounty on their head. Spellcasters are useful, however, and they often fetch a higher bounty alive than dead.

HARD MEAT

Slab, an Ogre Mercenary who arrived in Talagaad last spring, has a bounty on his head worth a staggering amount of gold, put up by a Osterlunder noble, the contents of whose stables Slab devoured. Three Bounty Hunters have attempted to claim the price on Slab's head, and the sole survivor is still recovering. The bounty has since been doubled.

Bounty Hunter

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Strength, Initiative, Agility	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Shooting, Throwing, Awareness, Athletics, Leadership		
Lore	Provincial Lore (choose one) <i>or</i> Cult Lore (choose one), Criminal Underworld <i>or</i> Monster Slayer (choose one)	Trappings	Warbow <i>or</i> crossbow, axe <i>or</i> sword, weighted net, light armour, hunting kit <i>or</i> monster slayer's arsenal
Assets	Horse and stables <i>or</i> temple <i>or</i> secret hideout	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	In My Sights: You are single-minded in pursuit of your prey, putting the capture or destruction of your quarry above all else. Once per session, you may choose to designate a single creature as your quarry. You gain +1d on all Tests to track, pursue, or attack your target. However, such is your focus that the quarry applies the Distracted condition upon you, inflicting a -1d penalty on any Test not targeting them. When the condition is removed, which you can do freely at any time, the effect ends.		

BREWGUARD

"Limp along now, manling, and thank your gods it was me and not another of my kin that caught you, or you'd already be a head shorter." – Farl Evenhand

Brewguards are a staple of Imperial Dwarf communities throughout the Empire. Long ago, when some Dwarfs sought refuge there, the need arose to protect Dwarf breweries and their produce from thirsty human thieves. As a result, some Dwarfs became adept at dealing with disagreements between the two allies. Known as Brewguards, they can now be found across the Empire, protecting Dwarfen enterprises, and doing what they can to protect the alliance between Dawi and Sigmar's heirs.

In Talagaad, Brewguards protect shipments of ale, hops, and barley destined for brewing purposes, and find a warm welcome in any pub or tavern. The Boyar's Rest has set aside a keg of fine Dwarfen ale for them alone. Brewguards also handle the prickly business of the taxes and tariffs charged on the way to Talabheim, as many Dwarfs feel these outrageous fees amount to thievery of another sort.



THE BREWGUARD'S GRUDGE

Most Brewguard in Talagaad keep to themselves, protecting Dwarf business interests and otherwise keeping clear of controversy. Not so Stunlig Ranulfsson, who has come into repeated conflict with the town watch, who the Dwarf has loudly decried as a bunch of wastrel layabouts not fit to lick his boots. Quite what set the Dwarf off is unknown, but it's likely to come to blows if the matter is not settled soon.

Brewguard

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	Dwarf only		Strength, Reason, Fellowship
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Brawn, Endurance, Willpower, Leadership, Charm		
Lore	Provincial Lore (choose one), Cooking <i>or</i> Accountancy	Trappings	Axe <i>or</i> warhammer, crossbow, light armour, traveller's pack <i>or</i> cooking set
Assets	Tavern <i>or</i> brewery <i>or</i> map of the underground	Contacts	The Great and the Good, The Common Folk
Career Talents	Troublemakers Out! You've learned to recognise who can handle their cups, and who needs turfing out before they start to cause trouble. When someone is drinking alcohol, you can tell who is partaking conservatively, who can handle their drink, and who is about to get rowdy. Additionally, when you force an enemy to Give Ground, they suffer the <i>Prone</i> condition after Giving Ground.		



BRIGAND

“Let me put it like this. You can give me those jewels out of the generosity of your heart, or I can pay you for them in lead and steel. Your choice.”

– Olga, Brigand of the Old Forest Road

The settlements of the Old World are separated by long stretches of lonely roads and rivers. Along these trails, where the influence of the law and order fades to irrelevance, a traveller is only entitled to whatever they're strong enough to defend. Brigands test this readiness with traps and armed robberies, taking what they need to survive in the wilderness. Many work alone, but others rove in bands of outlaws, leaving no witnesses of their brutal attacks.

Many Brigands hunt along the Old Forest Road and the River Talabec, returning to Talagaad periodically to offload their ill-gotten gains to merchants who ask no questions. Some Brigands are even sponsored by the masters of Talagaad — to disrupt the trade of their political rivals, and provide advance warning of Goblin or Beastmen raids.

THE GREEN MEN

Talagaad's town watch have always had an unspoken arrangement with brigands, highwaymen, and other criminals who target travellers — you're welcome to spend your ill-gotten gains in Talagaad so long as you keep your thievery away from the town and its citizens. This alliance, though uneasy at best, has lasted longer than many claimants to the Imperial Throne.

Brigand

– Brass –

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Ballistic Skill, Strength, Agility	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Shooting, Brawn, Awareness, Stealth, Leadership		
Lore	Provincial Lore (choose one), Criminal Underworld <i>or</i> Blackpowder	Trappings	Axe <i>or</i> sword, axe <i>or</i> shield, crossbow <i>or</i> pistol <i>or</i> blunderbuss, light armour, game set, traveller's pack <i>or</i> blackpowder kit
Assets	Secret hideout <i>or</i> horse and stables <i>or</i> mark of honour	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	<p>Prey on the Weak: You employ bullying tactics and dirty tricks to steal what you need to survive. When using Leadership to intimidate someone, you may roll dice equal to your Strength instead of your Fellowship — if you do, your target rolls dice equal to their Toughness rather than their Reason when they Oppose you with Willpower. In addition, when making Melee or Brawn attacks against an enemy your outnumber, you gain +2d instead of +1.</p>		

CHARLATAN

"A mark's just a friend you haven't robbed yet."

– Filiberta Ehrenstein, liar

Every moneyed individual in the Old World is surrounded by sycophants who hope to help themselves to some of that fortune. Charlatans take this jealousy and greed to a professional level, slipping between courts, manors and Guildhouses to con, grift, charm, blackmail, and steal whatever they can. Their relationship with their marks is parasitic — between jobs, they have nothing to their name, but whilst playing a part they enjoy all the privileges of their assumed station.

In Talagaad, the Wizard's Way is lined with Charlatans offering crooked dice games, needless but expensive guide services, or assistance in carrying heavy goods they then run off with. So long as they keep their grifts away from Talagaad's locals, they are broadly tolerated in the town.



A BRIDGE TO SELL

A common recurrent grift involves a Charlatan pretending to be a businessman charged with the job of destroying the Wizard's Crossing so that a larger bridge can be built in its place, and looking to find a buyer for the unusually cheap Dwarf-cut stone that will result from its demolition. As absurd as this is, someone falls for it at least once a year, and in Talagaad 'Bridge Buyer' is a common slang term for a fool.

Charlatan

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	All	Toughness, Initiative, Fellowship	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Awareness, Dexterity, Recall, Leadership, Charm		
Lore	Criminal Underworld, High Society or Cult Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Dagger, peasant's garb, burgher's apparel, lordly attire, concealing clothing, game set, grooming kit or thief tools
Assets	Secret hideout or secret identity or symbol of office (forged)	Contacts	The Great and the Good, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	<p>Master Manipulator: You've learned how to play off people's prejudices to get what you want. You double the number of bonus dice you roll for conforming to the expectations of your apparent Status (page 89). In addition, when you betray someone who thought you were trustworthy, and they find out, they suffer the <i>Distracted</i> and <i>Staggered</i> condition.</p>		



COURTIER

“Very wise, my lord. Although, reneging your treaty with the Dwarfs would lose your soldiers their arms... and leave the Ravenfeld vineyards defenceless... and deprive you of your favourite vintage. I'm sure you've accounted for those considerations already?” – Ebelos of Saphery, advisor

Lords and Ladies typically hold court and travel about with extravagant retinues of heralds, advisors, page boys, ladies-in-waiting, bean counters, and standard bearers. These adjutants bask in the reflected glow of the powerful, jockeying for positions where they can discretely exert the greatest influence. In return, they cater to their patron's every whim, stay abreast of courtly intrigue, and spy on rivals.

Courtiers may be dispatched from court to gather intelligence, represent their master, supervise distrusted vassals... or be ejected in disgrace for behaving discourteously. Most hope to return to their lord's side, especially after receiving as ignoble a posting as Talagaad, but escaping the dangers that lurk outside the halls of power is easier said than done.

FLAWED BY DESIGN

Litigant Arnth Fritzin keeps his offices near Talagaad's Market Square, and is adept at finding loopholes in Talabheim's notoriously complex tax laws. Few know that Fritzin has used his contacts in the court to have some of these loopholes added intentionally, and is always on the lookout for a flexible Courtier to aid him in his next scheme.

Courtier

~ Gold ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	All		Agility, Reason, Fellowship
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Defence, Awareness, Stealth, Recall, Leadership, Charm		
Lore	High Society, Academic Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Sword <i>or</i> axe, light armour <i>or</i> lordly attire, grooming kit, writing kit
Assets	Luxurious apartments <i>or</i> symbol of office <i>or</i> horse and stables	Contacts	The Great and the Good, The Common Folk
Career Talents	<p>Skeletons in the Closet: You are adept at ferreting out the deepest, darkest secrets. When you successfully Scrutinise (page 129) an NPC, the next Test you or an ally makes against them gains +1d. In addition, you may choose to ask the following alternate question: ‘What are you trying to hide from me?’ The GM does not have to divulge all the NPC's secrets, but must at least hint at their vulnerability.</p>		

ENGINEER

“There’s some who’ll argue with the barrel of a gun... but not many that’ll argue with a multi-barrelled hand cannon.”

—Thorago Thulgdotir, Dwarf engineer

The Empire is the most technologically advanced Human nation in the Old World. Whilst Bretonnia and the Elven realms cleave to outdated methods, the Imperial Engineers School of Nuln pushes the boundaries of Human engineering, prototyping repeater guns, rocket batteries, and steam-powered vehicular behemoths. They seek to emulate the creations of the Dwarf Engineers Guild, an august body with generations of wisdom they seldom share with outsiders.

Unfortunately, genius is rarely recognised in one’s own lifetime, and it only takes a single notable accident to make an Engineer suddenly unwelcome. Student dropouts, guild exiles, and amateur inventors flock to Talagaad for its ready access to raw materials... and stay when they realise the opportunities for field testing weaponry are equally plentiful.



THE POWDER MILLS

Keen to reduce reliance on Nuln’s black powder, but not wishing to house such dangerous work within the Taalbaston, multiple efforts have been made to establish a powder mill in Talagaad. Each has ended in disaster, with much of the blame landing on the builders. This does not sit well with the town’s few resident Engineers, however, who have blamed everything from unreliable apprentices to sabotage.

Engineer

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
Bretonnian, Dwarf, Halfling, <i>or</i> Empire (Human)		Ballistic Skill, Initiative, Reason	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Shooting, Throwing, Toil, Dexterity, Athletics, Recall		
Lore	Engineering, Smithing, Blackpowder	Trappings	Sword <i>or</i> warhammer, pistol <i>or</i> handgun, burgher’s apparel, worker’s leathers, engineering kit, blackpowder kit, writing kit
Assets	Workshop <i>or</i> armoury <i>or</i> horse and stables	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Extra Modifications: You push the limits of what is technologically possible. When you succeed on a Dexterity Test to reload a ranged weapon, you can choose to make small tweaks and experimental adjustments to optimise its performance. If you do so, the next Attack Test with the weapon gains +2d. However, the next Test to reload the weapon is Grim.		

ENTERTAINER

"No plate too big, no tankard too full! Come gawk at the gratuitous glutton of Grenzstadt!"

– Patsy Pepperfoot, ringleader



Entertainers find levity in a grim, violent world, raising the spirits of those sunk to their lowest ebb. They sing and dance, play folk tunes, perform plays, and compete in bloodsports. Different cultures prize different forms of entertainment, and Entertainers adapt to suit their audience. Whilst mining chants and drinking contests might be popular in the Karaks, they'll earn little repute in the courts of Athel Loren.

In Talagaad, Entertainers of all sorts can find a ready audience, if not a particularly generous one. The Roaring Badger is their favoured haunt, and its grubby stage has been graced by talentless troubadours and peerless poets alike. It is even said that Duke Ludwig XII himself sometimes attends, in disguise of course, though this may merely be a rumour put about by the Badger's owner to drum up business.

SONGS OF THE OLD COUNTRY

Every singer, poet, and musician in Talagaad knows that, if you want to get the patrons of the Boyar's Rest to open their coin purse, then songs and tales of the steppe are an Entertainer's best friend. It's best to be careful with the pronunciation of Kisvelite words, however, as getting these wrong is as likely to anger as it is to delight.

Origins		Entertainer ~ Brass ~		Favoured Characteristics	
All				Strength, Agility, Fellowship	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Throwing, Brawn, Awareness, Dexterity, Athletics, Charm				
Lore	City Lore (choose one) <i>or</i> Provincial Lore (choose one), Music <i>or</i> Literacy		Trappings	Dagger, throwing knives, stage costume, grooming kit, musician's gear <i>or</i> writing kit	
Assets	Theatre <i>or</i> travelling stage <i>or</i> secret identity		Contacts	The Common Folk, Wanderers and Wastrels	
Career Talents	<p>Play to the Crowd: Your art is so compelling you can use it to subtly manipulate your audience. When undertaking the Distract action (page 129), you never suffer difficulty modifiers for the size of your audience. You and your allies gain +1d on Tests against creatures you have <i>Distracted</i>, for as long as you maintain the distraction.</p>				

HEDGE WIZARD

“The spirits have revealed to me the plans of our foe. They beg for me to give them form. I am inclined to grant their request, but be warned — they are voracious this night.”

— Christoph van Hochendhal, Elementalist

Few practitioners of magic within the Empire possess a great library of arcane manuscripts or enjoy the support of a noble patron. Far more common are the hermetic druids and wizened elders who practice arcane arts derived from folk tradition, spiritual insight, and occult ritual, or those naturally talented – or cursed – individuals with the capacity to unravel these mysteries themselves. Some are feared and respected amongst their community, though they always remain outsiders. Others are outcasts driven into the wilds by peasant mobs or remorseless witch hunters.

Pariahs, hermits, and village shamans all pass through Talagaad, following the River Talabec or the Winds of Magic themselves. Most go unnoticed, assiduously avoiding using their arcane gifts where they might be witnessed. Some reveal brief glimpses of their magic, hoping to draw out the so-called Hexengilde (page 154) and petition to join its secretive ranks.

THE MARSH COVEN

There have long been rumours of witches who gather on the northern marshes on nights when Morrslieb hangs gibbous in the sky above Talagaad. There they work dread magics, curse the honest folk of the town, and make fell pacts with nameless things. Or so it is said, for none have seen the marsh witches in a generation — at least, not until last month, when their witchlights were seen once again hanging above the foetid waters of the marsh.



Hedge Wizard

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
Bretonnian, Empire (Human), <i>or</i> Wood Elf		Toughness, Initiative, Reason	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Survival, Awareness, Stealth, Willpower, Recall		
Lore	Concoction, Magic Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Staff, dagger, peasant's garb, concealing clothing, arcane paraphernalia, concoction set
Assets	Secret hideout <i>or</i> secret identity <i>or</i> religious shrine	Contacts	The Common Folk, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Wisdom of the Hedge: Away from prying eyes, you have tested the limits of your magical power through trial and error. You are a Level 1 Wizard (page 81), and begin play having memorised three spells from your Magic Lore (choose which). You do not begin play with a grimoire. You gain +1d on the <i>Memorise Spell</i> Endeavour (page 135).		



KNIGHT

"...When the clarion call is sounded, I will ride out and fight in the name of liege and Lady. Whilst I draw breath the lands bequeathed unto me will remain untainted by evil. Honour is all..." – The Bretonnian Knight's Vow

A stout lance, a fine destrier, and a solid suit of armour have ever been an asset on the battlefield, but there is more to a Knight than these things alone. The Empire's Knightly orders have long been part of what binds the fractured Empire together, with many of them answering to a higher calling than that of any petty baron or pretender to the throne. They are an even more essential part of Bretonnian society, where Knightly virtues are expected of every noble, and contributing to the defence of the realm is seen as a matter of personal honour as much as it is a matter of practical necessity.

All the Empire's great Knightly Orders visit Talagaad periodically: the Ulrican Knights of the White Wolf, the studious Knights of the Blazing Sun, and the secular unifiers of the Knights Panther. The Order of the Waning Moon is based in Talagaad, though its fortunes have much diminished since the death of Ludwig XI, which the order's knights failed to prevent.

WOLFENSTAG SHRINE

The Knights of the White Wolf keep a small shrine to Ulric in Talagaad, just off the Docks, as it is said to be the location where a White Wolf once slew a Great Stag, reminding all of the primacy of Ulric. Followers of Taal tell a very different account of the story, in which the Stag gored the wolf and bore its pelt atop the great beast's antlers for a season. When such theological disagreements have become heated, it has fallen to Talagaad's own Knights of the Waning Moon to defuse the tensions — and riots — that can result.

Knight

- Gold -

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
Bretonnian, High Elf, Empire (Human), <i>or</i> Wood Elf		Weapon Skill, Strength, Agility	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Defence, Brawn, Athletics, Willpower, Leadership		
Lore	High Society, Military, Literacy	Trappings	Lance <i>or</i> greathammer <i>or</i> greataxe <i>or</i> greatsword, sword, shield, heavy armour
Assets	Horse and stables <i>or</i> chapterhouse <i>or</i> full plate armour	Contacts	The Great and the Good, Comrades in Arms
Career Talents	Sally Forth: Your martial code dictates that you lead from the front, striking hard and fast. The first Attack Test you make as part of a Charge each battle is Glorious.		

KNIGHT-EXILE

"...Though my time within the lands of the Lady has come to pass, my time serving her has not. By my hand and her mercy, my honour shall be restored, even if it is to be my final quest in this life..." – The Bretonnian Exile's Vow

The Code Chivalric is an unyielding commitment, and not every Bretonnian knight can meet those staunch expectations. Those who so disgrace themselves are banished from their homeland. Others choose self-imposed exile when they feel their honour is falsely impugned, choosing the Exile's Vow over an unjust penance.

Despite their expulsion, most Knight-Exiles still serve their kingdom after a fashion. They confront threats on the borders of Bretonnia, or hunt the enemies of the Lady. Many are drawn to foreign ports like Talagaad where knaves and scoundrels multiply — either to hold those villains to account, or throw their lot in with them.



THE POOL OF THE MARSHGRAIL

Though far from Bretonnia, and with apparently very little to recommend it, the town has drawn quite a few Bretonnian exiles in recent years. Though it is rarely spoken of, this is partially due to a rumour that, in the marshes beyond northern Talagaad, one pool in particular sometimes shows a reflection of a beautiful glade far removed from the sodden swamp around the pool. Some think this a sign of the Lady's blessing to fortify her exiled sons and daughters.

Knight-Exile

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	Bretonnian only		Weapon Skill, Toughness, Agility
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Defence, Endurance, Athletics, Willpower, Leadership		
Lore	Literacy, Military <i>or</i> Criminal Underworld	Trappings	Lance <i>or</i> greathammer <i>or</i> greataxe <i>or</i> greatsword, sword, shield, heavy armour
Assets	Horse and stables <i>or</i> ship's passage <i>or</i> mark of honour	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	The Exile's Vow: Only through great, heroic deeds can you hope to reclaim your honour. When you defeat a Champion or Monstrosity with a Melee Attack, all Attack Tests you make for the rest of the battle are Glorious.		



LABOURER

"Gotta roof overhead, boots with soles in 'em, and extra flavour bits from me floor to go in tonight's rat stew. What more could a wretched soul ask for?"

– Rahel the mud fisher

The unwashed masses of the Old World are, for the most part, neither mighty leaders nor fearless warriors, but toiling peasants whiling away their lives in manual labour. Whilst Dwarf miners or High Elf vintners might enjoy a modicum of dignity, the farmhands, lumberjacks, fishermen, and stevedores of the Empire are poor, uneducated, and superstitious wretches universally reviled by their betters. They perform backbreaking labour in villages, docklands and feudal estates, never more than one bad season away from starvation.

Talagaad is awash in cheap labour, all vying for the few jobs to be found that might put food on the table. As in any fortified town, Labourers are frequently offered militia training in return for an oath to defend the city in times of war. Such poorly equipped forces typically die in droves, but more than one haughty knight has spilt their lifeblood upon the pitchfork of a bewildered member of the militia.

THE LABOURER'S TRIBUTE

Talagaad's temple of Shallya refuses aid to none who ask for it, but the needy have ever outnumbered the alms available. It is not uncommon for labourers, hoping to earn the temple's favour, to volunteer a day's work a month to the temple. The Shallyan nuns invariably claim that services need not and cannot be bought, but the practice is well ingrained in those who are a single injury away from abject poverty.

Labourer

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Strength, Toughness, Agility	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Brawn, Toil, Endurance, Athletics, Stealth		
Lore	City Lore (choose one) <i>or</i> Provincial Lore (choose one), Farming <i>or</i> Cooking <i>or</i> Waterways	Trappings	Axe <i>or</i> dagger, peasant's garb, worker's leathers <i>or</i> travelling clothes, hunting kit <i>or</i> trade tools to match your Trade Lore (if applicable)
Assets	Farm and grazing herd <i>or</i> market stall <i>or</i> hand cart	Contacts	The Great and the Good, The Common Folk
Career Talents	Doing My Part: You are accustomed to lending your aid to others, as well as keeping them on their feet when toil threatens to overcome them. When you successfully Help an ally, they gain an additional +1d on their Test. Additionally, when you Recover to remove the <i>Staggered</i> or <i>Prone</i> conditions from yourself, an ally in Close Range may remove one or both of those conditions as well.		

LOTHERN SEA GUARD

"They have earned the displeasure of Finubar the Seafarer. Cover your eyes, child."

– Ilaebin Stormfoot, Lothern Sea Guard

When voyagers from Ulthuan visit the Old World, they prepare for the worst, with a corps of professional soldiers marshalled to protect them. The Lothern Sea Guard claim themselves the most disciplined and ubiquitous of these formations, flexible enough to fight at range or in melee, on land or at sea. They protect the mercantile and political interests of travelling High Elves, and establish safe harbour for their vessels.

Despite distrust of the High Elves' interest in Talagaad, the town's masters have not dared turn the Lothern Sea Guard away, permitting them a small embassy. As the most visible representatives of the Phoenix King, these warriors are expected to build cordial relationships with the locals — whilst maintaining readiness if the need arises for sudden action.



OLD GRUDGES

A small High Elf embassy exists in Talagaad, its security assured by a contingent of Lothern Sea Guard whose presence has always warded away most trouble. Of late, however, the town's Dwarfs have taken more public issue with the embassy, claiming its existence a violation of the millennia-old truce between Dwarf and Elf.

Lothern Sea Guard

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	High Elf only		Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Reason
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Defence, Shooting, Athletics, Willpower, Leadership		
Lore	Military, Sailing	Trappings	Spear, warbow, shield, light armour, uniform
Assets	Ship's passage <i>or</i> armoury <i>or</i> mark of honour	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, The Common Folk
Career Talents	Naval Discipline: You are an expert with both bow and spear, specialising in repelling borders before they get too close. The Optimum Range of your warbow is Short - Long Range. You also gain +1d on any Melee or Shooting attacks against targets at Short Range.		



MERCHANT

"Your offer wounds me! Downright breaks my heart, so it does. We've been friends for years, even afore we met, I reckon. Now, howabout half that for an old pal?"

– Beverleigh 'Bev', Halfling Merchant

Merchants bring goods to market from as far as Ulthuan or Grand Cathay, buying where there is ready supply and selling where there is high demand. Others position themselves at the great crossroads of trade, meeting with suppliers and cutting shrewd deals with themselves as middlemen. Some merchants will sell anything that they think may turn a profit, while others specialise in one type of good — wine, perhaps, or arms and armour — which they best understand. The most successful Merchants can become obscenely wealthy, but wealth cannot buy class. Even the most petty noble will look down their noses at the most successful merchants. In turn, many merchants covet the influence the high-born possess, often unable to accept that some things simply cannot be bought.

RIVER TRADES

Most merchants in Talagaad spend about half their time in search of a good deal, and the other half searching for a way to avoid the many tariffs and taxes levied upon them. Some have taken to striking deals on barges and riverboats out of port, as the waters of the Talabec know no Emperor, as the saying goes. Such deals are a common target for river pirates and wreckers, hoping to claim one merchant's cargo and the other's coin at once.

Talagaad is a nexus of trade, sitting on the confluence of the Talabec and the Old Forest Road. Grain and livestock make their way from the rich farmlands to the south to the port town, and from there on to the hungry cities of Nuln, Altdorf, Middenheim, and others. Some merchants are drawn to Talagaad not by the town itself, but by its proximity to Talabheim. There is a market for almost everything in Talabheim — food, drink, metals, lumber, and more — but a Merchant's success is often defined by their skill at evading the many taxes levied by Talabheim rather than the specifics of what they bring to market.

Merchant

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Initiative, Agility, Fellowship	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Defence, Awareness, Dexterity, Athletics, Recall, Charm		
Lore	City Lore (choose one) <i>or</i> Provincial Lore (choose one), Literacy <i>or</i> Accountancy	Trappings	Dagger, light armour <i>or</i> burgher's apparel, writing kit <i>or</i> grooming kit
Assets	Shop <i>or</i> trustworthy banker <i>or</i> trade cart	Contacts	The Great and the Good, The Common Folk
Career Talents	Hard Bargain: You're always looking for an angle, spending money to make money. When situated in a suitable trading hub, you may make a Charm Test to recover your Coin. Each success regains one Coin, up to however many you started the adventure with (3 by default). You cannot make this Test again until after your next downtime.		

NOBLE

'As I always say whenever I'm caught — never send a noble to do noble work!'

— Viscount Leopoldo Poppelfunder, noted 'Wit'

The Old World is ruled by families of aristocratic elites, from Elven Highborn to Dwarf Royal Clans. Such titles are inherited, and only rarely awarded by merit to those of lesser bloodlines. Nobles live lives of relative luxury, enjoying the fruits of other people's labours, in exchange for a wisdom of rulership that only a handful are blessed with the faculties to provide.

Some Nobles seclude themselves in fortified estates, but just as many choose to throw their weight around and get their hands dirty. They scrutinise their subjects in person, hunt strange monsters, travel to distant lands, and collect trophies to brag about at court. All these antics, as dangerous as they are, serve as useful experience to prepare a Noble for the merciless brutality of Imperial Electoral politics. There's little better to dispel the naivety of a young lord or lady than facing a charging Bestigor.



THE TALAGAAD TRIAL

Gambling is a passion for many nobles, but their wealth means that betting for coin alone is often uninteresting. Among the nobility of the Grand Duchy, a frequent forfeit for a lost bet is the Talagaad Trial, meaning that the loser must make their home in Talagaad for a year. Most balk at the disgrace, but some who endure it are known to boast of the experience for years afterwards.

Noble

~ Gold ~

	Origins		Favoured Characteristics
	All		Weapon Skill, Initiative, Fellowship
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Defence, Shooting, Willpower, Recall, Leadership, Charm		
Lore	High Society, Literacy	Trappings	Sword <i>or</i> axe, longbow <i>or</i> crossbow, light armour, lordly attire, grooming kit
Assets	Noble estate <i>or</i> coach <i>or</i> heirloom wargear	Contacts	The Great and the Good, Comrades in Arms
Career Talents	<p>Commanding Presence: You were raised to believe in your inherent superiority, naturally adopting a position of leadership. Brass and Silver Status NPCs always expect you to seize command in any social situation — as usual, you gain +1d on Fellowship Tests when you conform to expectations, assuming a Test is even necessary. In addition, when you successfully use Leadership to Persuade (page 129) an NPC, they are <i>Distracted</i> until they have finished enacting your instructions to the letter.</p>		



PRIEST

“My eyes have been opened by Sigmar’s light. Nothing escapes my sight, nor His judgement.”

– Reinhard Karhäusel, Priest of Sigmar

All the great Cults of the Empire have Priests to shepherd the faithful, proselytise to the faithless, and denounce their god’s enemies. Their exact duties vary according to their patron — many are tasked with defending holy ground or sacred relics, whilst warrior gods like Ulric and Sigmar demand their Priests seek evil proactively.

It is said the most devoted Human Priests can ask their gods to intercede directly, making their divine will manifest. Whilst cynics might assume these are desperate inventions of the superstitious masses, rumours of miracles throughout the Empire have increased sharply in recent years, and are becoming difficult to ignore. The wise wonder if these events herald the dawn of a glorious new age... or the start of a very dark one.

THE ANTLER’S BOND

One form of marriage proposal among the faithful of Taal, whose worship is common in Talagaad, involves the offering of an antler, carefully carved to reflect what the offerer intends to bring to the marriage — a home, a large family, wealth and so on. A gift of fruit or grain — symbols associated with Taal’s wife, Rhya, indicate the offering has been accepted, while an empty bowl marks rejection.

Priest

~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	Empire (Human) only		Toughness, Reason, Fellowship
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Toil, Endurance, Willpower, Leadership, Charm		
Lore	Cult Lore (your God’s Cult), and your God’s Favoured Lore (see Chapter 7)	Trappings	Silver weapon (choose one), dagger, travelling clothes <i>or</i> light armour, traveller’s pack <i>or</i> writing kit
Assets	Religious shrine <i>or</i> temple <i>or</i> symbol of office	Contacts	The Great and the Good, The Common Folk
Career Talents	True Faith: You gain a rank of the <i>Faith</i> Talent (page 75), which awards the Favour of your God (see page 138) if you didn’t have <i>Faith</i> already. You reduce the XP Cost of acquiring the <i>Faith</i> Talent again by 1.		

RAT CATCHER

“Aww, that means he likes yer! Or it means you got rat on yer. Hey, you ain’t got rat on yer, do yer? Givvit! Givvit the rat!”
 – Mad Old Holliver

Rats are a menace to all the cities of the Old World, to say nothing of ship cabins, docklands warehouses, Dwarfen Karaks, and rural granaries. Where they thrive, they foster disease and famine. Extermination is the only answer.

Rat Catchers fight on the front lines of this foetid war, making a modest living tracking vermin into the filth-encrusted warrens they call home. They are experts in hunting and trapping their preferred prey, learning to think like rats themselves. In Talagaad, they patrol not only the river banks, but also the tunnels of the Taalbaston. They say dark things dwell within those lightless burrows, far bigger and more dangerous than your common scurrying rodent.



THE RATTEFLUT

Each spring, when the Talabec swells with meltwater from the distant mountains, the river overflows its banks. On particularly bad years, this washes into the lower reaches of houses throughout the town, flooding the nests of vermin and ushering them into the often wealthier homes further from the river. This is known as the Ratteflut, beloved of Rat Catchers and despised by almost everyone else.

Rat Catcher

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
Bretonnian, Dwarf, Halfling, <i>or</i> Empire (Human)		Weapon Skill, Initiative, Agility	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Shooting, Survival, Dexterity, Stealth, Willpower		
Lore	City Lore (choose one), Subterranean	Trappings	Spear <i>or</i> sling, dagger, peasant's garb, lighting kit, hunting kit
Assets	A small but vicious dog <i>or</i> market stall <i>or</i> map of the underground	Contacts	The Common Folk, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Set Traps: You're as cunning as a rat, with the expertise to ensnare much larger prey than conventionally-sized vermin. When you have a night's rest or similar length of time to set traps in your vicinity, make a Dexterity Test. You rig a number of Zones equal to your number of successes. The traps are a Hazard (1) if lethal, or inflict the <i>Prone</i> and <i>Burdened</i> conditions if non-lethal. Creatures that enter the Zone can avoid the traps if warned beforehand, or if they pass an Awareness Test.		



ROAD WARDEN

"Yield the highway, citizen — or face the wrath of Nuln!"

— Rolfa Meierstadt, Old Forest Rider

The Empire's roads are prone to attack from bandits and — some claim — things from the deep woods fouler than even the most depraved thieves and highwaymen. Patrols of Road Wardens offer a modicum of safety, keeping vital trade links open, and enforcing what law they can in the often lawless stretches of wilderness between distant towns and villages. Road Wardens frequent fortified inns and coach houses, but often live off the land as they must, relying on their survival skills, a deft blade, and a swift horse to see them through to the next warm meal and roaring fire. Among their own people, the Glade Riders of Athel Loren and the Ellyrian Reavers of Ulthuan perform a similar role, keeping the roads open and the beasts of the wilds at bay.

Talagaad is a frequent stopping point for Road Wardens, lying as it does along the vital Old Forst Road. Trade is an important consideration for Road Wardens, most of whom are actually in the pay of Nuln. They are hired to keep the roads clear so that the city-state can continue to profit from its trade in black powder, cannons, and other machines of war. While assigned to the roads around Talagaad, they trade tales of Goblins, Beastmen, and worse things they have encountered in the course of their duties — harrowing stories most townsfolk dismiss as simple braggartry.

THE ROARING BADGER

Along the south bank not far from the docks is the Roaring Badger, a tavern famed for its hospitality. It is also the favourite haunt of Road Wardens, who are treated well by its proprietor, Vartolis Skint. He is always quick to listen to a Road Warden's tales from the wilderness and never charges them for either a warm bed or a modest meal.

Road Warden

~ Silver ~

	Origins	Favoured Characteristics
	All	Ballistic Skill, Agility, Fellowship
Skill Bonuses	+1 to any four of the following: Shooting, Survival, Awareness, Athletics, Recall, Leadership	
Lore	Provincial Lore (choose one), Military or Blackpowder or Woodcraft	Trappings Longbow or crossbow or two pistols, cavalry spear or heavy armour, sword, travelling clothes, traveller's pack, hunting kit or blackpowder kit
Assets	Horse and stables or coach or symbol of office	Contacts Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Final Warning: Out on the frontier, you are judge, jury, and executioner. When you test Leadership during a battle to order an enemy to stand down or flee (such as part of a Persuade or Distract action), any enemies who refuse you are marked for judgement. You gain +1d on attack Tests against marked targets for the rest of the battle.	

SCHOLAR

“You’ve never read Brunhaur’s second thesis on the Lives and (Regrettable) Habits of Goblins, but call yourself an expert? Find a quill and mark my words, lest your ignorance overpower us both. You can at least write, I assume?”

– Mulli Stonecarver, Lorekeeper of Clan Brandal

Scholars dedicate their lives to the pursuit of knowledge. For some, scholarship is a means to an end. Advocates learn the Empire’s many laws to justify their fees, while simple scribes pen letters for the illiterate. For others, it is a vocation, a drive to uncover lost truths or discern new meaning. Dwarfen Scholars are especially well regarded, their treatises exacting in detail, if incredibly dry.

Scholarly life is not without its hazards. Asking the wrong questions can make powerful enemies, and some truths are dangerous to know. They have been burnt at the stake for their purported study of daemonology or witchcraft, though admittedly such accusations are sometimes correct.

Many Scholars find opportunities in Talagaad to trade their knowledge of the Grand Duchy’s varied laws and codes for coin, acting as advocates for those caught smuggling goods, most of whom are denied entry and tried in the port rather than allowed into the city proper.



THE GLASSBLOWER’S CRAFT

Scholars, their eyes strained by long hours spent reading by candlelight, often have a need for spectacles to aid their ailing eyes. Ilsabe Baderin is the finest glassblower in Talagaad, her skills far more refined, in fact, than one would expect to find in such a squalid town. Though as abrasive as the sand she uses to polish her work, her lenses are among the best in the Empire.

Scholar ~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Initiative, Agility, Reason	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Survival, Awareness, Athletics, Willpower, Recall		
Lore	Literacy, High Society <i>or</i> any Academic Lore (choose one) <i>or</i> any Enemy Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Dagger, writing kit, burgher's apparel, light armour <i>or</i> physicker's kit
Assets	Library <i>or</i> printing press <i>or</i> secret society membership	Contacts	The Great and the Good, The Common Folk
Career Talents	General Knowledge: You read widely enough to know a little something about everything. When using an Academic Lore to gain bonus dice, you gain an extra +1d. In addition, once per session, you may count as knowing an Academic, Cultural, or Enemy Lore you haven't learned. You can use this Lore to gain one of the usual benefits: automatically succeed on an eligible Test, qualify for a Test you otherwise wouldn't, or gain +1d on a Test you're making anyway.		

SHADOW WARRIOR

"Leave no survivors. The dead shall communicate our intentions clearly enough."

– Crael Winterheart of the Night Vultures

Millennia ago, the High Elves were sundered by civil war. Though the lord of Nagarythe attempted to seize control of Ulthuan, some of his subjects remained faithful to the Phoenix King, sabotaging the traitors with a vicious guerilla warfare campaign. Their descendants are now known as Shadow Warriors, and they retain their ancestors' grim resolve, deadly accuracy, infiltration expertise, and dispassionate cruelty.

Shadow Warriors work as scouts and spies beyond Ulthuan's borders, tracking targets of interest and eliminating them where possible. As warriors, they offer little in comradery, but plenty in murderous efficiency. Many are drawn to Talagaad, either hoping to find a means of entry to Talabheim or to sift through the gossip that makes its way through the port town every day.



THE BLADEMAKER

Though fine Elf steel dulls but slowly, all blades eventually require repair, and no Dwarf smith worth their beard would touch an Elgi blade save to snap it in two. As a result, Shadow Warriors abroad in the Empire must see to their own weapons, or rely on inferior human craftsmanship to maintain them. Not so in Talagaad, as the Dwarf smith Tordi Trondottir will see to any work put before her, holding all her clientele in equitable disdain.

Shadow Warrior

~ Brass ~

	Origins	Favoured Characteristics
	High Elf only	Ballistic Skill, Initiative, Agility
Skill Bonuses	+1 to any four of the following: Shooting, Survival, Awareness, Athletics, Stealth, Leadership	
Lore	Military, History	Trappings Longbow, sword, uniform, light armour, traveller's pack
Assets	Secret hideout <i>or</i> ship's passage <i>or</i> mark of honour	Contacts Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Merciless: Even amongst your kin, you are renowned for your stony heart and ruthless methods, showing no remorse for killing when you have to. You inflict +1 Damage on Shooting attacks against Staggered enemies. When you inflict a Wound on an unopposed attack, roll +1d on the Wound Table.	

SHARPSHOOTER

“Nay lad, you’re thinking of a man with a gun. I’m a sharpshooter. There’s quite the difference, and if you stop squirming, stand still, and balance that apple on yer head, I’ll show you.” – Mattock Gunnerson, Dwarf Quarreller

The term Sharpshooter is claimed by many but deserved by few. In Bretonnia, archers are looked down upon by the Knightly class, but in the right hands even a simple peasant’s bow may be lethal. Elves are perhaps best known for prioritising individual accuracy over the massed fire of human archers, with Wood Elf Glade Guards especially regarded. In the Empire, the hunters of Hochland are the most storied Sharpshooters, their infamous long rifles the bane of forest game and battlefield officers alike.

Off the battlefield, Sharpshooters may be hired to escort a ward through adverse terrain, their keen eyes scanning for approaching threats. They also make fine hunters, stalking their prey with patience and skill. A few turn to darker pursuits, and more than one noble lord or wealthy merchant has been assassinated by hidden Sharpshooter. In Talagaad, many Sharpshooters find employment as duellists. The practice of duelling is outlawed in Talabheim, so many nobles settle matters of honour in the muddy streets of Talagaad instead. Some nobles fight their own battles, and often die for it, while the more prudent hire a proxy who possesses more talent than they with a duelling pistol. Some Sharpshooters enjoy a genteel agreement with others of their fraternity, never aiming to kill, but many have no such compunctions.



THE HUNTSMARCH

Taal is a hunter’s god, and festivals to him often involve a hunt of some sort. Around Talagaad, a festival to Taal, the Huntsmarch, is held the day after the first moonless night of Nachgeheim. By that evening, whoever offers the finest beast to the Temple of Taal is declared the victor and by tradition, though not by law, can hunt any land they wish until the following year.

Sharpshooter

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Ballistic Skill, Toughness, Initiative	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to any four of the following: Shooting, Survival, Awareness, Dexterity, Athletics, Stealth		
Lore	Military, Woodcraft <i>or</i> Blackpowder <i>or</i> Music	Trappings	Longbow <i>or</i> crossbow <i>or</i> handgun, dagger, travelling clothes, traveller’s pack, hunting kit <i>or</i> blackpowder kit
Assets	Armoury <i>or</i> secret hideout <i>or</i> mark of honour	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Called Shot: You have the expertise to make trick shots that elude lesser marksmen. When you make a Shooting Test with bonus dice from the Aim action, you ignore difficulty penalties on your Shooting Test.		



SLAYER

"Doom has come! For you, firebreather, or for me!"

— Yngrid Oathbreaker, Giant Slayer

A Dwarf that shames himself and his ancestors through unforgivable misdeeds can only atone by taking the Slayer's Oath. They dye their hair flame-red and are marked with ritualistic tattoos — so anointed, they abandon their homes, and seek to combat the deadliest monsters in the Old World. Their hope is that tales of their deeds will eclipse their dishonour. Death is a small price to pay for redemption.

A Slayer may be drawn to Talagaad not just for the monsters that haunt the nearby Great Forest, but in search of work to earn coin for their bread and ale. There is little honour to be found in starving, after all. Some come also for the companionship of the other reprobates that dwell there. Though a Slayer can accept little comfort until their doomed quest is complete, all seek a witness to tell tales of their heroic deeds — and a Slayer in Talagaad is certainly a worthy topic of conversation.

COLD LODGINGS

More than a few Slayers have found their way to Talagaad over the years, intent on finding a worthy doom with the unnatural beasts that are said to haunt the depths of the Great Forest. Viewed with suspicion by most, many Slayers have found lodgings only through the intervention of Belegol Hargrimsnev, a stern Dwarfen bounty hunter much respected among the folks of Talagaad.

Slayer

~ Brass ~

	Origins	Favoured Characteristics	
	Dwarf only	Weapon Skill, Strength, Toughness	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Brawn, Survival, Endurance, Athletics, Willpower		
Lore	Troll Slayer <i>or</i> other Monster Slayer Lore (choose one), Mountaineering <i>or</i> other Environment Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Axe, greataxe <i>or</i> second axe
Assets	Religious shrine <i>or</i> map of the underground <i>or</i> heirloom wargear	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	<p>Living Doom: You seek death fighting the largest monsters you can find, striking with certainty that the bigger they are, the harder they fall. You always count as dealing enough Damage to inflict a Wound if your successful Attack Test results in 3 or more successes. Additionally, when you Wound a Monstrosity with a melee Weapon, you inflict one additional Wound. Finally, should you perish, you may make one last, Glorious Melee Attack against whoever slew you.</p>		

SOLDIER

“Stand to attention! The Sergeant’s on the way. I want neat lines, close order, and every trace of Ratter’s Dice disappeared or it’s twenty lashes!”

– Corporal Frederick Clauser, Talagaad Longsights

Soldiers are drilled and uniformed professional fighters, outfitted by a lord or paymaster to defend their employer’s dominion. They are the rank and file of the Old World — Empire state troops, Imperial Dwarf mercenaries, the Eternal Guard of Athel Loren, and other professional warriors. Though billeted in regiments, individual soldiers may be dispatched by their commanders as bodyguards, heralds, or military liaisons. In battle, they put their training into practice, forming tight formations that offer mutual support to their fellow infantry.

The luckiest Soldiers see little combat, establishing garrisons in port towns like Talagaad. Veterans however, are scarred by their experience, knowing all too well that their homes are only one Orc Waaagh!, undead uprising, or Beastmen war-raid away from annihilation.



TALAGAAD LONG SIGHTS

The Talagaad Long Sights are a unit of State Troopers raised from the town and act as its garrison — at least, they do so when Talabheim is not asserting its control over the port. Their leadership is of notably mixed quality and dedication, and soldiers can often wander away from their posts for days at a time. So long as a decent excuse or, preferable, a generous bribe is forthcoming, many officers are happy to look the other way.

Soldier ~ Silver ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
All		Weapon Skill, Toughness, Reason	
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Defence, Endurance, Athletics, Willpower, Leadership		
Lore	Military, Textiles, Music <i>or</i> Literacy <i>or</i> Blackpowder	Trappings	Silver melee weapon (choose one), dagger, shield, light armour, uniform, textiles set, game set <i>or</i> musician’s gear <i>or</i> blackpowder kit
Assets	Barracks <i>or</i> armoury <i>or</i> mark of honour	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, The Common Folk
Career Talents	Close Order: You are drilled to fight in formation, achieving more as a unit than you ever could apart. Whilst you are in Close Range of an ally, you and that ally gain +1d on Defence Tests.		



THIEF

“And I’ll take yer dagger too. You can have it back blade-ways if yer signal the watch.”

– Helga Hafenlogen, Thief

Thieves steal to survive. They lurk in the shadows of the Old World’s towns and cities — picking pockets, cutting purses, robbing pedestrians, and burgling townhouses. When opportunities are scarce, they do favours for local kingpins, or beg on the streets. Thieves typically live on the edge of poverty and starvation, only one run-in with the watch away from incarceration or execution.

Talagaad has always been a den of thieves. The amount of money flowing from the river to Talabheim, and the relative poverty of the port it passes through, is a recipe for resentment and crime. Thieves take special notice when someone is trying to move goods quietly, which can be dangerous — uncovering a smuggling ring of Khemrian treasures or heretical pamphlets can bring unwelcome attention from foes far more dangerous than the watch.

THE EYE OF THE FOREST

The Eye of the Forest is the somewhat poetic name for all that lies within the Taalbaston — the city of Talabheim and its surrounding lands. It is also the name given to a particularly stunning emerald found in tunnels beneath the Taalbaston twenty years ago. Traded, stolen, lost and found a dozen times, many think the stone is cursed. It was last known to be the possession of a thief who claimed to have buried it somewhere in Cold Side, though some say this was a ploy merely to spare him from the gallows. If so, it failed, and the Eye of the Forest remains unaccounted for.

Thief

~ Brass ~

Origins		Favoured Characteristics	
	All		Initiative, Agility, Reason
Skill Bonuses	+1 four of the following: Melee, Throwing, Awareness, Dexterity, Athletics, Stealth		
Lore	Criminal Underworld, City Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Dagger, throwing knives, peasant’s garb, concealing clothing, thief tools
Assets	Secret hideout <i>or</i> secret identity <i>or</i> map of the underground	Contacts	The Common Folk, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Without a Trace: You operate unheard and unseen to avoid the consequences of your criminal activities. When fighting at night, or concealed by terrain, cover, or shadow, you may use the Stealth Skill to oppose incoming attacks. In addition, you can always tell without a Test which objects in the immediate vicinity are the most valuable.		

TOWN WATCH

“Alright you scum, pay up! You know justice ain’t cheap.”

– Waltram Schönberger, Townwatch

There is little resembling a universal legal code in the Empire. Powerful nobles, military leaders, and even the leaders of notable cults make and enforce local laws as they see fit, the only check to their power being those of equivalent rank or station. Most hire guards to enforce their will. The best of these function as a disciplined and uniformed force, often trained to fight fires and watch the borders, as well as keep the peace. The worst are so corrupt they amount to a glorified protection racket.

Alongside common criminals, members of the watch sometimes stumble across conspiracies, spy rings, Sigmarite cults, and secret practitioners of magic in the course of their work. Even if they turn a blind eye, they could attract the attention of those who can permit no witnesses. In Talagaad, toll collectors, customs inspectors, and guards are all equally likely to disappear if they end up in the wrong place at the wrong time.

THE BLOOD PRICE

The Talagaad Watch are, depending on who one asks, either a dedicated group doing the difficult work of keeping the peace, or merely the best equipped of the towns many gangs. As with most things, the truth is somewhere in the middle. Most of the Watch will take a bribe to overlook petty crimes, but anything that could disrupt trade through the port is ruthlessly pursued — after all, failing to do so would invite the ire of Talabheim or the Duke, either of which could be ruinous to the otherwise profitable business of the Watch.



Town Watch

~ Brass ~

Origins

Favoured Characteristics

All

Weapon Skill, Initiative, Fellowship

Skill Bonuses

+1 to four of the following: Melee, Brawn, Endurance, Awareness, Athletics, Leadership

Lore

City Lore (choose one) *or*
Provincial Lore (choose one)

Trappings

Brass *or* Silver melee weapon (choose one),
dagger, light armour, uniform, lighting kit

Assets

Armoury *or* symbol of office
or mark of honour

Contacts

Comrades in Arms, The Common Folk

Career Talents

Shine a Light: Your natural suspicion keeps you on guard for anything that disrupts the peace. When a murder, fire, or other serious incident happens in an area you have a City or Provincial Lore for, word of it always reaches you quickly, and you gain +1d on Tests to glean Insights about what happened.

WAYWATCHER

"Follow the arc of my arrow and you'll find the sorcerer you seek." – Sollin, Waywatcher

Some Wood Elves find no comfort around the halls and hearths of their kin. Only in the depths of the forest do they feel peace, living in perfect synchronicity with nature, and leaving no trace of their passing. These wanderers are known as Waywatchers, as there are no surer guides through the twisting paths of the Wood Elf Realms. They also serve their lords as scouts, sentries, and long range assassins.

Waywatchers may travel far from their homes, following trails known only to them, in an elusive pursuit of true purpose. Some even develop an echo of affection for the strangers they meet on the way, despite their solitary nature. Waywatchers of the Serac Kinband have been sighted in Talagaad, claiming to have an interest in a Beastmen warherd that bears the antlers of Taal's own chosen stag as a grisly icon. Most suspect them of being spies. This is not incorrect, but the Kinband's interest in the Beastmen is genuine.



THE SERAC KINBAND

The Serac Kinband are a wandering band of Wood Elves who walk the ancient paths that once connected many Elven settlements in the Old World, most now long vanished. Of late their wanderings have drawn them to the outskirts of Talagaad. They are viewed with suspicion by most, though their skill with a bow earns them some respect among Taal's faithful.

Waywatcher

~ Brass ~

	Origins		Favoured Characteristics
	Wood Elf only		Ballistic Skill, Toughness, Agility
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Shooting, Survival, Awareness, Athletics, Stealth, Willpower		
Lore	Concoction, Magic Lore (choose one)	Trappings	Longbow, sword, travelling clothes, traveller's pack, hunting kit
Assets	Secret hideout <i>or</i> enchanted arrows <i>or</i> map of the Worldroots	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Strike From Nowhere: You are an expert of woodland ambush, shattering cohesion and morale with precision shots. Once per battle, when you make a successful unopposed Shooting attack, you inflict the <i>Broken</i> condition on the target. If the target is defeated by the attack, their nearest ally who witnessed their demise is <i>Broken</i> instead.		

WILDWOOD RANGER

“Monster or not, your fate is sealed. Better an innocent perish than the Wildwood’s madness infects this town.”

– Aelsa Thornsong of Cythral

Malicious nature spirits inhabit Athel Loren and other ancient forests, hostile to creatures of flesh and blood. The Wildwood Rangers maintain borders of magical waystones to contain these dangerous entities. When a spirit slips its bonds, as is known to happen, the Wildwood Rangers pursue them — into the realms of Human, Dwarf, if necessary. Those who get in their way often face death on the edge of the rangers’ glaives.

Many Wildwood Rangers found their calling after losing kith or kin to the dangers of the Wildwood. Some victims are slain outright, others consumed in mind or body by the wayward spirits. It is a terrible fate to witness, and one that has driven many to take on a life of vengeance, often one that leads far beyond the borders of Athel Loren. Within the Empire, Wildwood Rangers have a reputation for slaying monsters, though they do not always win thanks for it. Some Wildwood spirits are changelings, able to adopt whatever shape is best to spread havoc among creatures of flesh and blood. More than one Wildwood Ranger has tracked and slain their quarry, only to find themselves the enemy of those taken in by the spirit’s deceptions.



THE BITTERBARK

Long ago, the Elves lived in colonies across the Old World, and made many pacts and treaties with the ancient spirits of continent-spanning forests. In the wake of the war with the Dwarfs most fled, spirit-pacts among the least of their concern. The Bitterbark is a spite possessed of rare malice, who holds a bitter grudge against the Elves who made fine promises only to abandon it, alone, for centuries. Today it haunts the woods of the Great Forest, making prey of all it finds, most especially any wayward Elves it stumbles upon.

Wildwood Ranger

~ Brass ~

	Origins		Favoured Characteristics
	Wood Elf only		Weapon Skill, Strength, Initiative
Skill Bonuses	+1 to four of the following: Melee, Defence, Survival, Awareness, Athletics, Willpower		
Lore	Military, Monster Slayer (Spite Slayer)	Trappings	Ranger’s glaive, dagger, light armour, uniform, hunting kit, shield <i>or</i> monster-slayer’s arsenal
Assets	Secret hideout <i>or</i> mark of honour <i>or</i> map of the Worldroots	Contacts	Comrades in Arms, Wanderers and Wastrels
Career Talents	Guardian of the Wildwood: Your vigilant hunt for changeling monstrosities has primed you for ambush and betrayal. The first Test you make to Oppose an incoming attack each battle is Glorious. In addition, you gain +1d on Melee attacks against creatures with the Fearsome or Terrifying ability.		



CONTACTS

Your Character knows two notable non-player characters (NPCs) called Contacts. The nature of this relationship varies — you may be good friends, bitter rivals, or one of you may simply owe the other a favour. You might have fought together against an Orc incursion, or met one evening at the River Run Inn and ended up sharing rich boasts over cheap ale.

✘ Contacts connect your Character to the Old World, providing information and occasional guidance, perhaps expecting you to do the same for them. If you find yourself at a loss over what to do about a particular situation or where to start looking for information on an unfamiliar topic, a Contact should be your first port of call.

To determine who your Contacts are and how you know them, roll twice on the Contact Tables listed under your Career. You may roll once on each table or twice on whichever one you prefer. Reroll any duplicate results. If your campaign is set in Talagaad, use the tables on the following pages. If not, your GM will let you know what to do.

If you are not happy with the results, and if your GM agrees, you may swap one of your Contacts for another of your choice. For example, if you are playing a High Elf, you may wish to choose a Contact who shares your Origin. There is no bonus XP for determining Contacts randomly. More about the Contacts listed here, and how GMs can use them in play, can be found in the Gamemaster's Guide.

WAIT, I'VE MADE A MISTAKE!

If you regret a choice you made when creating your character, don't worry. Perhaps you increased the wrong Characteristic, picked the wrong Talent, or you've simply changed your mind. Go ahead and make the change, the most important thing is to end up with a character you're excited to play! Just remember to remove any bonus XP you got if the original decision was made randomly.

THE GREAT AND THE GOOD

The ruling classes of the Old World cultivate networks of spies, retainers, and allies of convenience to suit their political agenda. They have the most formidable resources of all Contacts, but are thrifty in how they employ them, never permitting their agents to grow entitled or complacent. Characters with one of these Contacts rarely enjoy a relationship of equals — the link might well be severed if the character ceases to be useful.

KAROLINE VON KASSEL

Baroness of Hermsdorf, seeing to mercantile interests in Talagaad (Archetype: Lord)

d100 Relationship

01-05	You stand to inherit some of their dominion, if you prove worthy of their favour
06-10	You shared a drink, on Mittherbst eve or some other occasion; they expect this tradition to continue.
11-15	You are their secret agent, enacting their will from afar, trusted with things no-one else can know
16-20	You were once a regular in their court and a trusted advisor, but retired after a very public scandal

GISELBERT ALMAYDA

Scholarly magician, reluctant member of the Hexengilde (Archetype: Arcanist)

d100 Relationship

21-25	They claim you are mystically connected to the Eight Winds somehow, so they keep an eye on you
26-30	You connected them with a powerful sponsor, so they could work magic without fear of persecution
31-35	You help them to source arcane items that further their understanding of magic
36-40	Their magic saved you from a horrific fate one Geheimnisnacht or other auspicious occasion

AMBROSIA WAXWING

Halfling librarian, studying the threat of the northern marauders (Archetype: Lorekeeper)

d100 Relationship

41-45	They pay you to bring them information, be it local gossip or scrolls from the Great Library of Altdorf
46-50	They are slowly teaching you everything they know, so you can continue their legacy
51-55	You trade information transactionally, building your own separate repositories of lore
56-60	You enjoy debating the finer points of niche trivia that bewilder everyone else

EASCYLLA SERETH

Agent of the High Elf ambassador in Talabheim, a devious spymaster (Archetype: Conspirator)

d100 Relationship

61-65	You are somehow embroiled in their schemes, be they engaging in forbidden worship, or plotting to replace the Graf of Middenheim
66-70	You are a trusted spy, rewarded handsomely for the secrets you uncover
71-75	When you were desperate, their schemes saved you — now you owe them, which makes you useful
76-80	They are blackmailing you to aid their political agenda, and if you refuse, you will be ruined

HORST VON SCHMETTOCH

Illegitimate son of Duke Ludwig of Talabec, a wastrel and a scoundrel (Archetype: Disgraced noble)

d100 Relationship

81-85	You're one of their few remaining friends at court — they need your help to get back into high society
86-90	They're an old friend — you risk your reputation to share a meal on Festag or other occasions
91-95	You met them after their disgrace, helping to lift them up when they were at their lowest point
96-100	Their dishonour has tarred you by association, and now you're out in the political wilderness too

COMRADES IN ARMS

Experienced soldiers know that the chain of command can only get you so far, and that quiet deals and off-the-books favours are a standard feature of military life. They also know that relationships forged in the fire of battle are the unbreakable of all, something a mere civilian could never understand. Of all Contacts, these warriors are most likely to answer calls for aid in person, or at least dispatch a squad of subordinates.

HUNTER LORD LEONARD VAN OBELMANN

Commander of the Talabheim 11th regiment occupying Talagaad (Archetype: General)

d100	Relationship
01-05	They ignored your advice and lost a critical battle as a result — a fact you never let them forget
06-10	They see you as a natural leader, and hope to guide you into a position of command
11-15	You fought on opposite sides of a war, until they offered you a chance to switch sides
16-20	You refused to follow their orders, but they spared you the noose

LIEUTENANT DANYA KLOSSNER

Lieutenant in the Talagaad Long Sights (Archetype: Officer)

d100	Relationship
21-25	You are their trusted deputy, offering counsel and executing their will
26-30	You saved their life in battle and they have promised to repay the debt
31-35	You spent many a night together, rank forgotten, perhaps sharing Bugman's best, or Talabec's worst
36-40	You constantly challenge their authority, but they respect you

MANFREDA SKOVGAARD

Warrior priest of Ulric, a defector from Middenheim (Archetype: Veteran)

d100	Relationship
41-45	You worked together once to defeat a common foe
46-50	They see in you the potential to follow in their footsteps
51-55	You bonded over your mutual disdain for needless rules and the quibbling of cowardly officers
56-60	You share stories of triumphs old and new, each of you ever seeking to outdo the other

COX FLUMMERY

Cheerful Halfling bouncer, a local legend with criminal connections (Archetype: Scout)

d100	Relationship
61-65	You have followed them in and out of trouble countless times
66-70	They rescued you, perhaps from the deepest Drakwald or haunted Barren Hills, and never let you forget
71-75	They tell you spellbinding stories about the wider world, some of which are even true
76-80	They spotted you doing something incriminating, but have kept quiet for now

ROSAMUNDE NEMEVIH

An impoverished deserter, formerly of the Free Companies (Archetype: An Old Soldier)

d100	Relationship
81-85	They recount their harrowing war stories to you, and are glad of your company
86-90	You respect their deeds, and they respect you in return, helping when they can
91-95	Orcs, Chaos Marauders, or a rival province's soldiers — you've battled the same foe and bonded over it
96-100	You've said something to offend them, and you're trying to make it right

THE COMMON FOLK

The unwashed masses of the Old World have little enough to share with their neighbours. Yet even so, they persevere, offering mutual support to their friends, or teaming up for doomed attempts to get ahead. What these Contacts lack in resources, they make up for with practical information. Local gossip spreads like wildfire through towns and villages, and those in the know are a vital source of intelligence.

YURY KAGAN

Influential Kislevite elder, still feared and respected (Archetype: Elder)

d100	Relationship
01-05	You fetch them a fresh loaf on Backerstag or other occasions, sharing tales and gossip before you go
06-10	Their wisdom helps you answer questions you'd never thought to ask before
11-15	They've been looking out for you as long as you remember, and you're not sure why
16-20	They tolerate your disrespect because they recognise in you their younger self

AMELINDA HERTWIER

Priestess of Taal, trying to unite Talagaad against the greater enemy (Archetype: Preacher)

d100	Relationship
21-25	You have confessed your darkest sins to them, receiving absolution
26-30	You got up to all sorts of mischief together, before they found their true calling
31-35	You frequently disagree on spiritual matters, but find the debate stimulating
36-40	They bless you or your home on Geheimisnacht, or other occasions when threatened by dark forces

TORDI TRONDOTTIR

Imperial Dwarf master crafter, vigilant for suspicious goings-on (Archetype: Veteran)

d100	Relationship
41-45	They created something for you — a sturdy blade, a finely made ring — and you still owe them for it
46-50	You've been selling them something, be it good iron, Kemperbad brandy, or simply your own labour
51-55	They took you on as an apprentice — it didn't work out, but you parted on good terms
56-60	You accidentally besmirched their work, and are trying to make up for it

LOTTI BABKINA

Landlady of The River Run inn, gregarious and welcoming (Archetype: Host)

d100	Relationship
61-65	Be it from a Goblin raid or roaring flames, you saved their establishment and will always be welcome
66-70	You were once trapped inside their establishment, perhaps by foul weather or besieging Beastmen
71-75	They need you to help keep their establishment going, otherwise it will sink
76-80	You still owe them for the problems you caused on your last visit

OLENA GENEZZO

Herbalist with powers beyond her understanding (Archetype: Healer)

d100	Relationship
81-85	Whatever treatment they gave — a draught of schlafenkraut or a pinch of tarrabeth — it saved your life
86-90	They provide effective treatment for a persisting ailment.
91-95	They failed to save a loved one, but you know they tried their best
96-100	They diagnosed you with something incurable — supposedly it will kill you one day

WANDERERS AND WASTRELS

Those on the edge of society live desperate, dangerous lives — and knowing a guy who knows a guy can be the difference between survival and a lonely demise. These Contacts know the most about what is happening beyond your community's borders, but are least likely to offer material assistance. In fact, some might even be relying on you to put bread on their table.

JAIME DE SABATIN

Bretonnian tomb robber, antiquarian, and swashbuckler (Archetype: Vagabond)

d100	Relationship
01-05	You've been following their career for some time, taking inspiration from their adventures
06-10	You trade information about where opportunities for excitement can be found
11-15	Your previous work together ended in a double-cross, but neither of you took it personally
16-20	Perhaps unknowingly, you helped them steal something valuable — Khemrian scrolls, or the Duke's signet ring

WYLDAROC FLEETRIDER

Free-spirited Wood Elf bard, spurning his duty (Archetype: News bearer)

d100	Relationship
21-25	Their deliveries are the lifeline between you and a distant loved one
26-30	You're the first person they tell when they learn something scandalous
31-35	They repeat everything you say far and wide — something you know you can use to your advantage
36-40	They learned something embarrassing about you and kept it to themselves

MALKO MATASCA

A reputed druid, tortured by visions of dark futures (Archetype: Mystic)

d100	Relationship
41-45	When you are lost, they offer you guidance, and set you on the right path
46-50	Every Geheimisnacht they see a vision of you, and seek to understand its meaning
51-55	You were friends before you came to understand the powers at their disposal
56-60	You have fought alongside them, and seen what happens when they get angry

GRUGINN DOKRILSON

Resourceful Imperial Dwarf, trades in goods of dubious origin (Archetype: Smuggler)

d100	Relationship
61-65	They travel the length of the Old World (down the Talabec, or over the Grey Mountains) to find what you need — at a price, of course
66-70	You tip them off about where to find 'merchandise', in return for favours
71-75	They stole from you, you stole right back... eventually, you came to an understanding
76-80	Back in the day, you used to run heists together




VALDA KRACHT

Devoted of Sigmar, spreading the proscribed faith in secret (Archetype: Heretic)

d100	Relationship
81-85	You sympathise with their heretical creed more than you'd admit in public
86-90	Their faith is strange to you, but they don't deserve death for it — you shelter them when you can
91-95	Be they a fanatic of Sigmar, Ahalt the Drinker, or stranger gods still — you believe you can save them
96-100	They help you because they are convinced one day you will join them... or die

FINAL STEPS

By hard learned lessons, an unexpected inheritance, or ingrained experience, you gain an additional boon. Choose one of the following:

-  Increase a Skill from 3 to 4, or two Skills from 2 to 3.
-  Gain another Talent, by rolling on your Origin's Talent table (reroll if you generate a Talent you already have).
-  Roll on the Random Asset Table. Use the column that corresponds to your Status. If you wish, you may spend 1 XP to roll as though your Status was one step higher than it actually is. Be aware, assets of a higher Status than your own often become targets for theft or confiscation by one's social betters.



After completing this step, you should note your Speed (Average, unless an ability says otherwise) and determine your Resilience by adding your Toughness to any bonus granted by your armour or trappings (page 97)

You may also wish to spend any of the potential four bonus XP that you gained during Character Creation by randomly determining your Characteristics, Origin, or Career, or by reducing your Status. See page 66 to learn how.

RANDOM ASSET TABLE

d100	Brass Tier	Silver Tier	Gold Tier
	Hand cart	Trade cart	Coach
01-15	To transport your meagre possessions	Spacious and sturdy, but the repairs cost a fortune	Your personal vehicle, emblazoned with your heraldry
	Trade cart	River barge	Ship's passage
16-25	It creaks and smells, but it's never let you down	Docked in port, and you're behind on your harbouring fees	A ship your family paid for, or a captain loyal to you
	Rowboat	Market stall	Chapterhouse
26-35	A leaky boat, perhaps the one you learned to fish on	Losing money after that new shop opened across town	Home to a knightly order, proud but falling on hard times
	Ship's passage	Shop	Barracks
36-45	A favour owed from a drunken sailor	Losing money after that new stall pitched up in the market	To plan the manoeuvres of the small regiment you lead
	Religious shrine	Tavern	Theatre
46-55	Tended in a remote location, humble and personal	Favoured by a regular crowd of lowlifes and mischief-makers	Sponsored by yourself, as a patron of the arts
	Secret hideout	Laboratory	Library
56-65	Where you last escaped attention	Still scorched from your last failed experiment	Your family collection, shared with promising academics
	Workshop	Brewery	Luxurious apartments
66-75	A workbench with salvaged tools, added to over generations	Festooned with traps to keep out the rats	Modest size, but well-furnished, and near the heart of the action
	Armoury	Temple	Noble estate
76-85	A key you're not supposed to have	Your generous donations are rewarded with special favour	Large and expensive to run, has its own small army of servants
	Mark of honour	Printing press	Symbol of office
86-95	Your most treasured possession, or a haunting reminder	For the distribution of news, propaganda, or ideology	Empowers you to represent your lord and act in their name
	Secret identity	Secret society membership	Heirloom
96-100	The name you're known by in certain circles	Where you scheme to advance your interests	A magic item, discovered by a crusader ancestor

DETAILS AND CONNECTIONS

Now decide your character's personal details: their name, their age, their height and build, and any other relevant details of their backstory. You might even start to think about personal habits and vocal inflections, things that could help distinguish when you're talking in character. You can decide any of these details yourself, but the tables provided can provide inspiration.

Though you'll already have generated two Contacts, there might be other NPCs who play a role in your character's life. Many of these characters will appear for the first time in play, but you could start thinking about some of these questions now:

Even the most high-ranking lords of Ulthuan have sworn loyalty to a prince or king. Who is your lord and master? How often do you see them? What is your relationship?

Few Careers are practiced alone — you likely have a boss or superior officer, suppliers and customers, or maybe even subordinates answering to you. Who works alongside you?

Most denizens of the Old World have dependents to look after, people who will suffer if they fail to put food on the table. Who is waiting for the character at home? Do you have a spouse? Children? A Longbeard grandparent with staunch expectations?

Were you born into this community, or did you grow up somewhere else? If the latter, what family, friends, or mortal enemies remember you back home?

The most pertinent relationships are those you have with the other player characters. It's possible to start play with no pre-established history — your Grim Portent is shared, and will tie you together soon enough. But having an existing connection with some or all the characters can add some interest to your earliest sessions. See the Character Relationship table for ideas.

PHYSIQUE

d10	Dwarf	Elf (High Elf or Woof Elf)	Halfling	Human (Empire or Bretonnian)
1-2	Red-nosed, vigorous, bright as steel	Pale and fey, like an illusion	As muddy as a piglet	Big, lethargic, or leisurely
3-4	Unremarkable, no-nonsense, plain as dirt	Sharp and thin, like a dagger	As soft-footed as a mouse	Ragged, starved, or lanky
5-6	Muscled, solid, hard as gromril	Severe and attentive, like a Great Eagle	As hairy as a peach	Hard, weathered, or battle-scarred
7-8	Leathery, scarred, rough as granite	Eyes wide and glittering, like starlight	As quick as a fox	Crooked, malformed, or charmless
9-10	Grey-haired, venerable, worn-down as pebbles	Tall and radiant, like a Flamespyre roost	As round as a turnip	Handsome, fair, or charming

DEMEANOUR

d10	Dwarf	Elf (High Elf or Woof Elf)	Halfling	Human (Empire or Bretonnian)
1-2	Cunning, inventive, flexible as brass	Cold and distant, like a white moon	As merry as punch	Cautious, scholarly, or introspective
3-4	Eager, attentive, warm as coal	Cryptic and bitter, like dark waters	As bitter as lemon	Brash, loud, or demanding
5-6	Stoic, dutiful, true as oathgold	Bright and fierce, like Sun Dragon fire	As light as grapes	Sharp, quick-witted, or opportunistic
7-8	Angry, vengeful, fierce as brightstone	Refined and alluring, like gemstones	As cheeky as cheesecake	Warm, gregarious, or welcoming
9-10	Maudlin, harsh, grim as obsidian	Fickle and taunting, like a Deepwood trail	As serious as pie	Cold, harsh, or embittered

QUIRKS & ACCESSORIES

d10	Brass Tier	Silver Tier	Gold Tier
1	Missing finger	Broken nose	A nose wart
2	Rotten teeth	Battle scars	Wooden teeth
3	An itchy rash	An old aching injury	A dashing duelling scar
4	Caked-on mud stains	Faded blood stains	Cape lined with heraldry
5	Torn rags	Patched jacket	A flamboyant feathered hat
6	Soleless shoes	Freshly polished boots	A mask or veil
7	Your lord's coat of arms	Guild license/mercenary contract	Personalised jewellery
8	Candle dripping wax	Wax seal and parchment	Patent of nobility
9	Bird feet and a wolf's paw	Battle trophy (e.g. Orc teeth)	Hunting trophy (e.g. a Gor horn)
10	A crude religious carving	Bones of a sainted figure	A gilded skull

CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS

d10	Relationship	Existing Relationship with Other Character
1	Family	You are related by blood, marriage, adoption, or a friendship as close as family. <i>Who else in your shared family puts pressure on you to get along?</i>
2	Comrade	You both fought on the same side of a fight — be it a coaching inn brawl, or a battle against Beastmen. You lost. <i>What did it cost you?</i>
3	Old Friends	You've been friends for as long as you remember, though you're not as close as you used to be. <i>Why did you fall out of touch?</i>
4	Congregation	You belong to the same cult, order, or secret society, proscribed or otherwise. <i>What tenet of your shared creed do you disagree on?</i>
5	Neighbours	You live or work in the same part of town, and are used to seeing each other about. <i>What problem in the neighbourhood is troubling you both?</i>
6	Travellers	You've both travelled beyond the borders of your community in the same river boat, coach, or merchant caravan. <i>What dangers did you overcome on the journey?</i>
7	Business	You are partners in business — they're a customer, supplier, investor, or employee. <i>Which of you owes the other money?</i>
8	Rivals	You are in competition for an exclusive job, a public office, or a powerful lord's favour. <i>What are you competing for?</i>
9	Suspicion	You've had your eye on each other for a while, wondering what dubious activities they're involved in. <i>What have they done to attract your distrust?</i>
10	Old Enemies	You fought on opposite sides of a fight — perhaps a back alley shakedown, or even a border skirmish between Imperial claimants. <i>Which side won?</i>

GRIM PORTENT

Most inhabitants of the Old World never realise they are fortunate to live in an age of relative peace and prosperity, with many threats that have blighted the world defeated, dormant or diminished. In the Empire, the Vampire Wars are long since won, and all those of the von Carstein's cursed bloodline destroyed or driven off. Beastmen, Orcs, and Goblins are surely just a threat to the borderlands, and tales of corpses beyond counting stalking the sands of Nehekara are surely the boastings of haughty knights and their scurrilous squires.

Diminished as they may be, few of these dread powers are without ambition, reach or power. Moreover, those who pay attention to prophecy and foretellings have begun to notice patterns. Dire warnings of evils growing in power, putting plans in motion and testing the strength of those who would oppose.

This is where your story begins, as your characters' fates become irrevocably bound by a Grim Portent of things to come.

NO GOING BACK

A Grim Portent is a bit different to the adventures that follow. The outcome of your adventures are as yet unknown, even to the GM. You might triumph over a fallen witch hunter who sees corruption everywhere she looks, or find yourself slain beneath a dozen rusting Goblin blades. At least one outcome of your Grim Portent is fixed—it explains how your characters were forged into a group, setting up the many grim and glorious adventures to come.

During a Grim Portent, you gain the attention of a powerful foe. Perhaps you have stumbled across a secret so dangerous that its architects will stop at nothing to silence you. You may have unintentionally disrupted an intricate plot simply by learning of its existence. You may simply have seen too much to be allowed to live. Some examples could include;

- During an ill-advised journey on Geheimnisnacht, you are dragged from your coach and tied to a profane altar by malicious cultists. Escaping before their ritual is complete, you are beset by terrible dreams, and the cultists cannot allow you to speak of the things you have seen.

- You uncover a plot by the Baron to dismiss Beastmen incursions as mere bandit raids, in order that he might seize more lands and power in the war to come. You must be silenced before you gather evidence to bring to one of the Baron's many rivals.

- Made to bear witness to a witch burning by a fanatical Sigmarite, you and all those present are cursed by the powerful witch as she writhes atop a pyre. Now all those present are meeting with untimely ends, and the witch's coven are gathering to punish those who escape their sister's hex.

Whatever the precise nature of your Grim Portent, it has the same impact upon all of your characters' lives—for as long as these forces remain undefeated, they are coming after you. There is no negotiation, there are no deals to be made, and nowhere you can run that they will not track you down. You have seen the threat, and it has marked you in turn. It's them or you.

Though the Old World has ever been beset by foes, most think them well understood and contained, or simply not their problem to deal with. This complacency can make finding outside assistance difficult. Few are likely to believe your tale of woe and may simply accuse you of fearmongering. Those who do believe you typically have problems of their own. Whatever the nature of your Grim Portent, it must be faced down alone.

PLAYING YOUR GRIM PORTENT

Your Gamemaster will guide you through your Grim Portent, but there's lots you can do as a player to make the most of this session. It's not a normal game session, and players are encouraged to help build the world with the Gamemaster, adding details that bring the setting to life and make the characters an integral part of it.

Make it all about (all of) you—your Grim Portent is the story of how your characters became closely bound to each other. Look for ways to reinforce those bonds. If you know the same Contact, did you all meet in the same way, or do you both have very different relationships with them? If you are both regulars at the same inn, do you know each other from tales swapped over the years? Did you both apprentice under the same engineer in Nuln, or were you both once almost drowned in the Talabec by the same drunkard ferryman?

Perhaps you both fought in the Battle of Gisoreaux Gap — albeit maybe on opposite sides — and still recall the stench of black powder and the screams of injured horses. Look for ways to connect with each other and the setting. If you need inspiration, roll on the Character Relationships table (page 63).

Go with the flow — the pacing of this adventure might be a little different, for example, skipping over periods of time to highlight important episodes taking place months apart. Let the GM guide you through, don't get lost trying to fill in all the blanks if it's distracting you from exploring the important parts of the story. Above all else, remember that the function of the Grim Portent is to connect you with the other player characters. Make choices that unify you, and give you a common purpose.



INSIDE THE GRIM

At the end of the session, your characters' lives have been changed forever. They won't know the full picture of what they've stumbled into, but they will know that they are involved in something serious, something they can't back away from. Something that is coming for them.

What happens next is up to you. They will probably go back to their lives, nervously looking over their shoulders, jumping at shadows. At any sign that their enemy is moving against them, they gather together to survive the coming attack. If they seek aid they will often be disbelieved and mocked. If someone does believe them, will they refuse to get involved, fearing for their own safety? Or if they bravely pledge to help, how guilty will they feel if their ally becomes the next victim...

Sooner or later your characters will have to deal with the threat once and for all, as a matter of their survival. When their investigations begin in earnest, they might discover that what they have experienced is the tip of a horrific wyrdstone-laced iceberg.

A WORD OF WARNING...

Perhaps you are starting to appreciate the severity of the danger you're in. You have made a powerful enemy, with formidable resources, and defeating them is a matter of life and death. When confronted with such daunting odds, it's understandable to employ every weapon in your arsenal, and seek aid from any force that offers it willingly.

But beware. There are entities in this world that prey on the doomed and the desperate, and offer shortcuts to power. You may know little of daemons, of Chaos, and of the Ruinous Powers, besides what you've gleaned from folk tales and sermons. Perhaps you think little of these superstitions and believe yourself strong-willed enough to wield the power of Chaos and remain uncorrupted. Many fallen heroes believed the same thing — before their inevitable descent into darkness and damnation.

In the course of your adventures you may be exposed to corruption, as you battle mutated horrors, thwart blasphemous rituals, or miscast magic spells. You may attempt to resist these corrupting influences... or choose to embrace them. Those with the ear of the dark gods enjoy generous gifts of unnatural power, but these gifts do not come without a price. Defying the temptations of evil at every turn is your only defence. Without the power offered by the ruinous powers, you may lose your life, but at least you will retain your soul...



ADVANCEMENT

By the time you've finished Character Creation, you should have generated a capable if perhaps inexperienced character, ready to test their skills against the worst the Old World has to offer. However, your characters do not remain as they were created forever. During play, your character may improve their Abilities by acquiring Experience and undertaking Endeavours — hopefully acquiring new capabilities faster than they acquire gruesome injuries!

EXPERIENCE

After a whole session of play, a character receives 1 Experience Point (XP). At the GM's discretion, you might earn a second Experience Point, if you achieved an especially significant victory.

For purposes of XP accumulation, a session is assumed to be around 3 hours of play. If you played in an unusually long session, the GM may award you extra XP — if the session was particularly short, you might not get any.

During Downtime (page 131), you may spend any or all of the unspent XP you have accumulated so far. XP can be spent to increase Characteristics or acquire new Talents.

- ♣ To increase a Characteristic (page 68) by 1, spend XP equal to the new value of that Characteristic. If you're increasing a Favoured Characteristic (conferred by your Career), reduce the XP cost by 1.
- ♣ To acquire a new Talent (page 73), spend XP equal to the XP Cost of the Talent. This typically ranges between 1 and 5. You cannot purchase the same Talent more than once, unless the Talent specifies otherwise.

Stats derived from other Abilities are updated at the same time. For example, increasing Toughness increases your Resilience, and re-purchasing the *Wizard* Talent (page 81) increases your Wizard Level.

You may finish Character Creation with some XP already, depending on the choices you made. If so, you may spend that XP immediately, or wait until your first Downtime.

MAXIMUM CHARACTERISTICS

Most Characters, save for some exceptional individuals, cannot exceed certain maximum values for their individual Characteristics. Unless the GM says otherwise, you cannot advance your Characteristics beyond the values shown below.

Origin	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Re	Fel
Dwarf	7	6	6	7	5	5	6	5
Elf	7	7	5	3	6	6	7	6
Halfling	5	6	4	4	6	7	6	7
Human	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

Skills are increased by undertaking Endeavours (page 132) rather than spending XP. You may not normally increase any Skill beyond 6.

ENDEAVOURS

A character's other Abilities cannot be altered with XP, but may be increased by efforts undertaken during Downtime. The rules for Endeavours (page 132) explain these options in full, but as a summary:

- ♣ To increase a Skill (page 68), Test that Skill during your Downtime Endeavours. Each die that doesn't generate a success for your dice pool is marked on your character sheet on that Skill's Improvement Track. When the Improvement Track exceeds your current Skill rating, your Skill rating increases by +1 and the Improvement Track is reset to zero.
- ♣ To learn a new Lore (page 82), you must pursue the *Study Lore* (page 136) Endeavour during downtime.
- ♣ Whilst you can buy new trappings (page 90) during your adventures, acquiring Assets (page 102) and more expensive trappings require you to undertake the *Invest Money* (page 134) or *Change Career* (page 133) Endeavour.
- ♣ To change your Status (page 89), you must take the *Change Career* (page 133) Endeavour.

ABILITIES

“The first of ‘em got away afore ever I got there, clambered right up the side of the building like a cat, the neighbour said. Another vanished into the shadows almost as I watched. Don’t know how she did it. The last though, big chap, he stood ‘is ground. Drew his blade, looked me dead in the eye, and asked which way up I wanted to be buried. I let ‘im go, m’lud. Between the glint in eye and the gleam of ‘is blade, I can tell you, I’m not paid enough for any o’ that.”

— Dargin Thale, Talagaad Town Watch

Some of what your character can do is decided solely by you — crossing the street, downing an ale, or asking questions of a passerby don’t need any additional rules. Simply let the GM know what your character is doing or saying. Some of what your character can do, however, and how good or bad they are at it, are defined by their Abilities. Your character has several different types of Abilities:

- Characteristics — your core capabilities — tell you how many 10-sided dice you roll in a Test.
- Skills — your training or expertise in a specific area — tell you the number you must roll equal to or less than to score a success on each die rolled in a Test.
- Talents — knacks, techniques, or abilities that provide special bonuses or unique options.
- Lores — specific areas of knowledge.
- Status — your position in the social hierarchy of the Old World.



CHARACTERISTICS & SKILLS

Every Test uses a Characteristic and a Skill. Each Characteristic is listed here as they appear on your character sheet, alongside the two Skills most commonly associated with it. When you Test a Skill, you'll usually use the Characteristic that appears alongside it. If you should use a different Characteristic, the GM will let you know before any dice are rolled. Each Skill lists suggestions for Complications and extra effects that could be triggered on a successful Test — see Extra Consequences (page 109) for when they'd apply.

WS WEAPON SKILL

Weapon Skill is your aptitude in landing and avoiding blows in close combat. It is distinct from brute strength, and is dependent on speed of action, flexibility, careful footwork, instinct, and muscle memory.

Melee

Melee is used to attack a target with a dedicated close combat weapon. It is important to anyone whose duty, inclination, or bad luck sees them frequently drawn into battle. Most ordinary close-combat weapons can be used by anyone without penalty, but some weapons require a corresponding Lore to use correctly.

Melee is mostly used on Attack Tests (page 118), where Complications and bonus effects do not apply.

Defence

Defence is used to physically block incoming attacks and is important to anyone who wants to emerge from a scrap unscathed.

You can use Defence to Oppose a Melee attack from a foe you're aware of, so long as you're wielding a weapon or shield to deflect the blow. If you are holding a shield then you may use Defence to Oppose a Shooting or Throwing attack — otherwise you must use Athletics to dive out of the way.

Defence is mostly used to oppose attacks, so Complications and bonus effects do not apply. If you use Defence to resist the effects of a Hazard, a Complication might force you to drop something you are holding, while an Extra Effect could allow you to grant a +1d bonus to an ally attempting to navigate the same Hazard as well.

HAZARDS

Hazards are environmental dangers of some kind that pose a risk to you just by themselves. Examples include high falls, burning buildings, hidden traps, and magical vortices. You avoid Hazards either by staying well away, or by making a Test — the GM will let you know which Skill to use.

BS BALLISTIC SKILL

Ballistic Skill is your capability to use a ranged weapon smoothly and accurately. Elves are among the most renowned archers in the Old World, though Dwarfen crossbows, Empire handguns, and massed Bretonnian longbow fire can be just as deadly on the battlefield.

Shooting

Shooting is used to fire a ranged weapon such as a bow or handgun. It's used to attack enemies before they can close into Melee range. Shooting weapons cannot be used whilst an enemy is in Close Range, with some exceptions like pistols.

Some ranged weapons require a corresponding Lore to make Shooting attacks with them — most notably, pistols and handguns, which require the Blackpowder Lore.

Shooting is rarely used except to make attacks, where Complications and bonus effects do not apply. In a competition such as an archery tournament, a Complication might see a string break, costing you time, while an extra effect might allow you to split the last arrow to strike the bullseye!

Throwing

Throwing is used whenever you need to hurl something with accuracy, be that planting a dart in the bullseye, tossing loot to a nearby ally, or landing a razor-sharp axe in a goblin's skull.

When using a throwing weapon (page 96), you may use this Skill as you would use Shooting to attack with another ranged weapon. As with Shooting, Throwing is most often used to make attacks, so Complications and extra effects are rarely required, save in contests of skill.




S STRENGTH

Strength is used for brute force, stamina, and might. Strength is added to damage inflicted by close combat weapons — stronger characters have a better chance of turning a solid hit into a grievous injury. Strong characters are muscular and often tall or well-built.




Brawn

Brawn is used when an immediate feat of strength is called for. It's Tested when smashing through a physical obstacle, lifting a heavy object or hauling an incapacitated character to safety. You also Test Brawn to grapple or make an unarmed attack against a foe within Close Range, Opposed by the target's Athletics or Endurance. If you succeed, you inflict the *Staggered* condition (page 123), shove them to a location within Short Range, or drag them from their steed or vehicle if they were mounted.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

-  Drop an item you were carrying.
-  Cause unwanted damage to something nearby.
-  Suffer the *Staggered* condition.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:




-  Disarm a foe you grappled.
-  Lift something heavy with impressive ease.
-  Render a target *Prone* instead of *Staggered*.

Toil




Toil is your ability to undertake prolonged manual labour — build a wall, dig a ditch, work the land, or extract wealth from the soil. Toil can also be used to craft or customise equipment that requires strength to assemble, so long as you have the corresponding Trade Lore, such as Smithing or Engineering.

As a general rule, if a physically challenging task can be done swiftly, Test Brawn. If it will require long hours of work, Test Toil instead.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

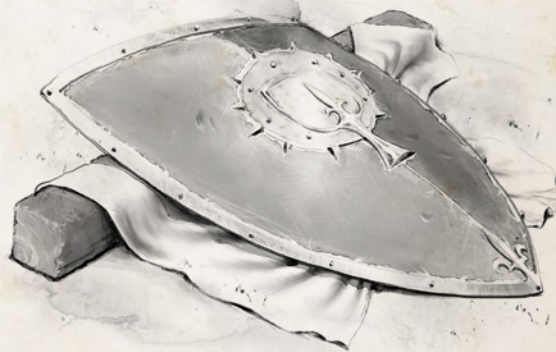
-  Suffer the *Drained* condition.
-  Produce or harvest fewer usable resources.
-  Construct something that works temporarily.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

-  Finish early, with time to rest or Help an ally.
-  Harvesting extra resources or expending fewer materials.
-  Produce works of impressive quality.

T TOUGHNESS




Toughness is your resistance to physical trauma. Combined with your outfit or armour, it measures your capacity to absorb incoming attacks, so you're *Staggered* instead of *Wounded*. Dwarfs are renowned for their Toughness, often shrugging off wounds that would leave others fit only for internment in a Garden of Morr. Characters with high Toughness are hardy, resilient, and require very little to be comfortable. Those who lack it are frequently ill or injured, and often rely on equipment or possessions over their own grit.






Survival

You Test Survival when you need to navigate the wilds of the Old World, such as the deep forests or remote mountain ranges, swiftly and without injuring yourself. You also Test Survival to avoid injury from exposure to weather-related hazards like dangerous heat or icy cold, or to find or build a shelter from the wind and rain. Survival works well alongside Environment Lore, which aid you in avoiding the worst hazards the wilds have to offer.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

-  Suffer the *Drained* or *Burdened* condition.
-  Lose time and expend extra resources on your journey.
-  Attract the attention of a nearby predator or expose yourself to infection.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

-  Aid an ally, providing +1d on their own Survival Test.
-  Travel quickly and efficiently, in good shape for whatever comes next.
-  Immerse yourself in the environment, getting the drop on an enemy.

Endurance

You Test Endurance when you need to overcome pain, hold your ground against another character, reduce the severity of Wounds, or resist a poison or disease. Some magical effects can also be opposed with an Endurance Test, as can many types of Hazard.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

- ☠ Suffer the *Staggered* or *Prone* condition.
- ☠ Lose track of what is going on around you.
- ☠ Suffer -1d on your next Action.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

- ☠ Temporarily ignore a Wound or condition.
- ☠ *Stagger* an enemy that attempted to *Stagger* you.
- ☠ Raise the morale of your allies with your bloody-minded stubbornness.

I INITIATIVE

Your Initiative reflects your speed of thought and perception of your surroundings. It's used for both reflexive reactions and close examination. Characters with high Initiative pay attention to the details others miss, and react faster to changing circumstances. Those who lack it are slow off the mark, miss much of what goes on around them, and lack the patience or skill for detailed work.

Awareness

You can Test Awareness to sense what is going on nearby. When used to Scrutinise (page 129) a target, it can read body language and tell more about what another person is thinking. Awareness tells you what's hidden, what's lost, or what's going unsaid. The GM may ask you to Test Awareness to detect ambushes, search a scene, or find a secret.

Awareness Tests sometimes require a corresponding Lore (Environmental Lore especially), as it's hard to pick out critical details unless you know what you're looking for first.

SCRUTINISE

Scrutinise is a social action you can take to tell more about how another character or NPC is feeling, where their loyalties might lie, or what they might be about to do next. See page 129 for more.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

- ☠ Focus on a specific detail, and miss the bigger picture.
- ☠ Provide an enemy with a chance to Scrutinise you.
- ☠ Tip off a hidden enemy that you've spotted them.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

- ☠ Deduce something more from the details you've spotted.
- ☠ Anticipate an upcoming threat in time to act first.
- ☠ Gain +1d to Oppose an incoming attack.

Dexterity

You Test Dexterity when you need to undertake a task that requires a steady, patient hand, and good hand-eye coordination, tasks in which quick fingers and a shrewd perception are both critical. Test Dexterity to disarm traps, pick pockets, slip bindings, or operate a complex mechanism. You may also use this skill to catch a thrown or falling item that passes within reach.

Like Toil, Dexterity can be used to craft items — specifically if you're relying on delicate patience rather than brute force, and have the relevant Trade Lore.



SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

- ☠ Leave behind something incriminating, to be discovered later.
- ☠ Construct something of lesser quality, or consume more resources (time, money, materials) doing so.
- ☠ Damage the machine you're operating.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

- ☠ Recover a disarmed trap and take it with you.
- ☠ Steal goods of higher value.
- ☠ Produce something unusually intricate, beautiful, and desirable.

Ag AGILITY




Agility determines how quickly and surely you move around, allowing you to clear obstacles and get away from danger. Elves are especially renowned for their spectacular Agility. Characters with high Agility are swift, sure-footed, silent and assured. Those with low Agility are often clumsy or awkward.

Athletics




Athletics is for Tests when you need to move as fast as possible. You Test this Skill when running, jumping, climbing, swimming, and riding a mount — any situation when you cross distances and clear obstacles at speed. You also Test Athletics when retreating from battle, and when chasing a fleeing enemy. Many Hazards can be also avoided with the Athletics Skill.

Athletics can also be used to Oppose most enemy attacks, as quickly diving out of the way is almost always a valid option to avoid a threat! When you Oppose an attack in this way, Complications and extra effects do not apply.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

-  Suffer the Prone or Drained condition.
-  Stumble to a location within Short Range.
-  Give your enemy +1d on their next attack against you.




SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

-  Remove, or choose to gain, the Prone condition.
-  Move to a location of your choice within Short Range.
-  Gain +1d to attack an enemy you've encircled.




Stealth

Stealth is any slow, careful movement that requires coordination and doesn't attract attention. It's Tested when crossing a narrow beam, hiding stolen objects, concealing a knife on your person, or escaping the notice of sentries. Catching an enemy unawares means they cannot Oppose your attacks — but you can't disappear without cover and concealment to hide behind, and you can't make unopposed attacks from the same spot twice.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

-  Leave behind something incriminating, to be discovered later.
-  Trap yourself somewhere you can't leave without exposing yourself.
-  Take a long time to get where you're going.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

-  Slip an extra weapon past the guards.
-  Knock out and tie up a guard, rather than just slipping past them.
-  Get where you're going very quickly.

Re REASON




Reason is a combination of intelligence, self-control, and your ability to correlate information. Characters with high reason have a sharp mind, while those who lack it are flighty, easy to trick or coerce, and are often predictable.






Willpower

Willpower is Tested when you need to resist social or other psychological coercion. It is often used to Oppose Fellowship Tests, or defy magical or spiritual manipulation. It's also Tested when trying to channel the Winds of Magic, or serve as a vessel for a god's power.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

-  Suffer the *Staggered* condition.
-  Hyperfixate and lose track of everything else.
-  Scream, grunt, or exclaim — making a scene or giving away your position.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

-  Temporarily ignore a Wound or condition.
-  Learn someone is trying to manipulate you.
-  Inspire your allies with your heroism.

Recall

Recall allows you to remember specific information in stressful circumstances. Your knowledge can help to find a weakness, decipher a clue, identify a stranger, or assemble an improvised device. Recall is usually paired with a Lore, but can also be used for memory Tests or general trivia. You don't need to Test Recall every time you consult your Lores — only obscure facts, or recollections under pressure, require a successful Test.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

- ☠ Take a moment to catch up, nearly missing an opportunity.
- ☠ Recall partial, or misleading, information.
- ☠ Appear boorish, pedantic, or dense.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

- ☠ Take +1d on your next Test interacting with the subject.
- ☠ Recall extra information, suggesting a useful opportunity.
- ☠ Appear distinguished, informed, well-educated, or devious.

Fel Fellowship

Fellowship measures your confidence in social interaction, and how skilled you are in getting other people to do what you want. It incorporates appearance, presentation, charisma, and personal magnetism. Fellowship is often Tested in social encounters (page 129). Characters with high Fellowship are charming, attractive, commanding and admirable — or at least, appear to be. Characters with low Fellowship may seem boring, unconvincing, nervous, or simply aloof.



Leadership

Leadership is Tested when you need to leverage your force of personality, whether that's barking an order or intimidating an enemy. It uses physical presence and social dominance to coerce obedience and requires you to flaunt your Status, lead by example, or act aggressively. It can be used to Persuade (page 129), Distract (page 129), or remove the *Broken* condition from an ally.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

- ☠ Make an example of someone before the rest will listen.
- ☠ Foster long-term resentment in whoever follows your orders.
- ☠ Appear as a ruthless, tactless bully.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

- ☠ Inflict the *Staggered* condition, or remove extra conditions.
- ☠ Compel the target's long-term obedience.
- ☠ Appear as a dauntless, beloved commander.

Charm

Charm employs subtlety and guile to make friends and influence people. It's used to tempt, reassure, deceive, or entertain. Charm is an unassuming Skill, slower to compel obedience than Leadership, but often with more long-lasting effects. It can be used to Persuade (page 129), Distract (page 129), or fake an allegiance or even an entire identity.

SUGGESTED COMPLICATIONS:

- ☠ Spend money, or lose hours, buttering up your target.
- ☠ Learn only part of what you needed from your target.
- ☠ Appear as a weedling, insincere sycophant.

SUGGESTED EXTRA EFFECTS:

- ☠ Distract your allies from their troubles.
- ☠ Secure assurances from your target that they'll do you another favour.
- ☠ Appear as a good-natured, trusted confidante.

TALENTS

Talents are special abilities that provide bonuses on Skill Tests, compliment your Lores and Status, or do extraordinary things like cast spells or invoke a god's power.

Talents are chosen during Character Creation (page 12), or purchased with XP (page 66) at the listed cost. Your character must meet all the listed requirements to purchase a Talent with XP, but not if they gain it for free during Character Creation. Talents can only be purchased once unless specified, and cannot be upgraded.

Accelerated Recovery

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Toughness 5+

You bounce back from grievous harm with impressive speed. When you are Wounded, any Tests made to treat, heal, or prevent infection of those Wounds are Glorious.

Acrobatic

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Agility 4+

Your heightened mobility allows you to spin around the battlefield, leaving your foes grasping at air. Enemies do not block your movement, not even when you Give Ground — you simply slip past them with ease. You halve the Hazard rating of any fall, rounding down, to a minimum of zero.

Allies in Arms

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Fellowship 4+

Fighting together, you can overwhelm threats that you could never vanquish alone. When you Help an ally, you or that ally may remove the *Staggered* condition.



Armour Bane

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None

You know where to strike enemy armour so that its protections are undone. When attacking with a weapon that provides bonus Damage against armoured enemies (e.g. greataxes) or that ignores armour entirely (e.g. handguns), each successful attack reduces the target's Resilience by 1. Apply the reduction only after determining if the target is Wounded by this attack. This Talent cannot reduce a target's Resilience to below its Toughness — a target whose Resilience is no higher than its Toughness is no longer considered armoured.

Bash Attack

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Strength 5+

With the butt of your weapon or a swing of your shield, you knock enemies off-balance, leaving them open to a punishing strike. When you inflict the *Staggered* condition using Brawn, you may immediately make a free Melee attack against the *Staggered* target.

Back in the Saddle

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Agility 4+

You recover quickly when you're knocked from your steed, getting back on your feet and racing into action. When you are dismounted, you can always choose for your steed to remain in Close Range of you. In addition, you can stand from *Prone* and mount your steed as part of the same move or Recover action.

Battlefield Musician

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Musician's Gear

Your music cuts through the fury of combat, leading your allies onwards to victory! During your combat turn, you can play your instrument without using up an action, to announce your presence to an ally, or sound a retreat. Alternatively, as an action, you may play your instrument and make a Leadership Test. Each success inspires one ally within Medium Range who can hear your music. Each time an inspired character is attacked before your next turn, ties on the Opposed Test are broken in favour of your ally — if both attacking and defender roll the same number of successes, the attack fails.

Blessings of the Lady

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Bretonnian (Human)
Origin, High Society Lore, *Honour Bound* Talent

The Code Chivalric implores a Bretonnian Knight to begin each battle by praying for the Lady's protection. Your devotion and temperance have been rewarded with a measure of her grace.

Seeking the Lady's Blessing is an action, which can only be undertaken in the first turn of a battle or immediately before it. Once during this battle, you can invoke the Lady's Blessing to negate a Wound as per a Near Miss (page 112).

You lose the Lady's Blessing if you gain the *Broken* Condition. If you act in a way that violates your vows, the Code Chivalric, or the Rules of Knightly Honour (see page 77) you lose the Lady's Blessings and additionally may not seek them again until the GM agrees you have made amends for your transgressions.

Careful Aim

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Reason 4+

Your weapon is an extension of your being — nothing stills your nerves like taking the time to line up the perfect shot. When you take a successful Aim action, you may remove the *Staggered* Condition.

Cleaving Blow

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Strength 5+

You trust the broad arc of your weapon to prevent you from being overwhelmed by sheer numbers. When you inflict a Wound with a two-handed weapon, you inflict the *Staggered* condition on all other enemies in Close Range of you.

Combat Surgeon

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Anatomy Lore

You're used to treating injuries in the field, making do with whatever resources you have to hand. When you treat a Wound that has an ongoing effect until it is healed, make a Recall Test. If you succeed, the ongoing effect is ignored for the rest of the battle. In addition, you do not need specialist medical facilities to attempt surgery. You can attempt surgery in the middle of a battle, though this is an Exacting Dexterity Test requiring 8 successes, and each Test costs an action.

Deep Formation

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** None

There is little to oppose a cavalry charge quite so well as a stout spear, save perhaps a stout-hearted soldier to hold it steady. If you are holding a Spear or other Short Range melee weapon, and an ally in your Zone is Charged, they gain +1d to their Test to Oppose their attacker's Melee Test.

Defensive Stance

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Weapon Skill 3+

You fight cautiously, minding your footwork, and trusting you have the stamina to triumph in a longer battle. When you successfully Oppose a Melee attack with Defence, you may opt not to inflict the *Staggered* condition on your foe. If you do, you may remove the *Staggered* condition from yourself.

Dispeller

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Wizard Talent

You are as adept at unbinding the Winds of Magic as you are at casting your own spells. Once per round, you may Test Willpower to Oppose the Casting Test of an enemy within Long Range. Each success you gain reduces your enemy's successes by 1. If you achieve more successes than your opponent, they add a die to their Miscast Pool.



You may end an ongoing spell before its duration expires by making an Exacting Willpower Test, requiring successes equal to the spell's CV, with each Test costing an action. If a spell has been bound within an object, you must also destroy the object to end the spell. If the wizard that cast the spell is in Long Range, they may Oppose any Tests you make to end an ongoing spell with Willpower.

Any Willpower Tests to disrupt spellcasting, dispel an ongoing spell, or maintain an ongoing spell, generate Miscast dice by rolling 9s in the exact same way as Casting Tests (page 156).

Exceptional Hearing

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Initiative 4+

Your hearing is unusually acute. So long as you are not *Deafened*, you can make Awareness Tests to hear whispers, mechanical ticks, and conversations through walls that are inaudible to most characters. You do not suffer penalties for being *Blinded* when making Melee attacks or Opposing attacks.

Faith

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Empire (Human) Origin

Your belief in your god is so formidable you can invoke some measure of their divine power. Outside of Character Creation, you cannot purchase this Talent unless you have undertaken some trial or quest that proves your devotion to that deity.

Choose one of the gods in the Religion chapter (page 137). So long as you abide by that god's tenets, you gain the benefits of that god's Favour (page 138).

You can purchase this Talent multiple times, each time making another show of devotion. If you already have your god's Favour, you can purchase it again to gain access to their Prayers (page 138). If you already have your god's Prayers, you can purchase it a third time to gain access to their Miracles (page 139). A Miracle can only be used once. You may perform another Miracle by purchasing the *Faith* Talent again.










Familiar

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Wizard Talent

You are in possession of an arcane familiar, a magical entity bound to your will (at least, so you hope). Your familiar must always stay within Long Range of you, and will magically appear by your side if somehow brought beyond this range. If it is destroyed, your familiar can be re-summoned by spending an Endeavour performing a suitable ritual and making a Willpower Test. Familiars may resemble a small, imp-like creature, an unusual animal, or almost anything the Wizard wishes. Your Familiar is never any more intelligent than you, and may be capable of speech if you wish. However, its words are comprehensible only to you.

Possession of a Familiar is not without its drawbacks. Most find their appearance disturbing, and there are few more obvious markers of a practitioner of magic. In the Reikland, it is said that a witch's Familiar should be driven off with the same torch that is used to set their master aflame.

When you first take this Talent, choose one of the effects from the following list. You may take this Talent several times, each time choosing an additional effect from this list.

-  **Armoured:** Your familiar is well armoured, and capable of interposing itself between you and your foes. While it is nearby, your Resilience increases by 1.
-  **Babbler:** Your familiar mutters constantly, a stream of consciousness that seems drawn from your own mind. You gain +1d when you take the *Memorise Spell* Endeavour (page 135).
-  **Bookrest:** Your familiar has an appendage capable of holding your grimoire for you, freeing up your hands in battle. Additionally, you gain +1d when you take the *Formalise Spell* Endeavour (page 134).
-  **Chaos Sink:** Your familiar changes form constantly, appearing to shift and mutate whenever it is not observed. You may reroll any one die when you roll on the Miscast Table. You must accept the new result.
-  **Combatant:** Your familiar is a boon to you in combat, distracting enemies and drawing their ire from you. You count as two individuals for the purposes of Outnumbering or being Outnumbered by your foes (page 118). Additionally, if you would suffer a Wound, you may allow your Familiar to be slain instead.
-  **Flight:** Your familiar can fly, either sprouting wings to do so or by entirely unnatural means.
-  **Linked:** Your familiar can leave your side for a time, travelling several miles away. While it is away, you can focus your attention to see and hear through its senses.
-  **Poison Tongue:** Others can comprehend your familiar's speech, and you gain +1d to Tests to Dispel — see the *Dispeller* Talent on page 74.
-  **Skulker:** Your familiar can disappear into another realm — you know not where — until you wish for them to return.

Feigned Flight

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** None

You flee in apparent disorder, quickly rallying to set up a trap or catch an enemy out of position. When you succeed in Opposing an enemy attack, you may choose to Give Ground. You may only Give Ground once per turn, as normal.

Fight As One

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None

You are so closely attuned to your steed that you fight together in unison. When you make an Attack action whilst mounted, you may take a second action to attack with your steed. This second attack must use a different weapon (belonging to your mount), and have a different target, than the first attack. If your steed already allows you to make a second attack with one of its weapons, you may make a third attack with one of its other weapons, if it has one.

Frightening

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** None

You cultivate an aura of deadly menace — enemies are desperate to keep their distance. When your Melee or Brawn attacks cause an enemy to Give Ground, they suffer the *Broken* condition. Enemy creatures who are *Fearsome* are immune to this effect, but you are not immune to the *Fearsome* Ability yourself.

Golden Voice

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Fellowship 4+

Your voice is your instrument, one you can manipulate with superlative skill. You can manipulate your voice to perfectly imitate any sound you have heard, including that of another person's voice. You do not need Musician's Gear to practice the Music Trade Lore.

The Grail Vow

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** *The Questing Vow* Talent

A Bretonnian Knight who drinks from the Grail is transformed by its purity, gaining power and prowess beyond that of mere mortals. You may only choose this

Talent if you have completed the Grail Quest during your adventures, a formidable ordeal that tests your character's courage, commitment, and worthiness.

You are immune to the Broken condition. Your attacks count as magical. You always have the *Blessings of the Lady* (page 74), and can spend Fate to achieve a Near Miss, if you wish to invoke the Lady's blessing more than once per battle. Your Maximum Characteristics (page 66) are all increased by 2. You are *Honour Bound* (page 77) to fight and defend all sites that are sacred to the Lady.

Hardy

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Toughness 4+

You are made of tougher stuff than most, shrugging off wounds that would see most on their way to the Garden of Morr. When you suffer a Wound, roll one fewer die on the Wounds Table, to a minimum of 1 die rolled.

Hatred

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None

You bear a terrible resentment against characters of a particular Origin, faction, or region. Specify the group that you hate when you purchase this Talent, e.g. Orcs, High Elves, Westerlanders, the town watch. You gain +1d on Melee Tests against all creatures of that type. However, whilst enemies of that type are in line of sight, you suffer the *Distracted* condition.

Hold the Line

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Fellowship 4+

You issue the command to stand fast, refusing to surrender any ground to the enemy. You may make a Leadership Test as part of a Recovery action to remove the *Staggered* Condition from allies in Medium Range, one ally per success. You cannot make another Test (to treat Wounds or remove a condition) as part of the same action.



Honour Bound

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None








One's word is their bond, but your vows are more severe — a pledge to a higher power, that you would sooner die than violate. When you choose this Talent, detail the moral code or binding oath you are committed to upholding. Examples include a god's strictures (page 139), faithful service to your lord, the arcane laws of the Hexengilde (page 154), or the Code Chivalric and Rules of Knightly Honour followed by the knights of Bretonnia.

You may activate this Talent once per session. Activating the Talent whilst making a Test to fulfil your oath makes the Test Glorious; alternatively, you may spend Fate (instead of burning Fate) to make the Test an Unmitigated Success (page 111). Other Talents may allow you to activate *Honour Bound* to achieve different effects.






Should you break your oath, you cannot activate the Talent again until you have undertaken a suitable penance, agreed with the GM. Known oathbreakers are viewed with disgust, perhaps met with drawn blades by those most committed to the cause.

Bretonnian Knights swear the Knight's Vow, a pledge that commits them to uphold the Code Chivalric and the Rules of Knightly Honour. A Knight-Exile might consider themselves exempt from the latter, but usually attempt to uphold the former.

The Code Chivalric

-  To serve the Lady of the Lake.
-  To defend the land and those that dwell upon it.
-  To protect the weak from the wicked.
-  To always oppose the enemies of virtue and order.
-  To never give up the fight, your foes unvanquished.
-  To never break faith with a friend or ally.
-  To always display honour and courtesy.







The Rules of Knightly Honour

-  A knight must honour the purity of hand-to-hand combat. An honourable knight must never meet a foe with slings or arrows.
-  A knight must strive to accept every challenge to personal combat.
-  A knight must never draw sword against a fellow knight, except in trial by combat or tourney.
-  A knight must never submit to being taken captive.
-  A knight must never retreat in fear, only to replace a shattered lance or retire a wounded mount.

Intense Scrutiny

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Initiative 4+

When you have a chance to closely inspect someone, you can lay their soul bare. When you take the Scrutinise (page 129) action, you may choose to ask one of the following questions about your target, rather than the usual options.

-  Are they being truthful?
-  What is their strongest emotion right now?
-  What do they most covet or desire?
-  What are they most afraid of?
-  Who do they answer to?
-  Who answers to them?

The target is not compelled to answer any question aloud, but by reading their expression and demeanour you discern the truth of the matter, and the GM must reveal the target's actual thoughts or feelings.

Interceptor

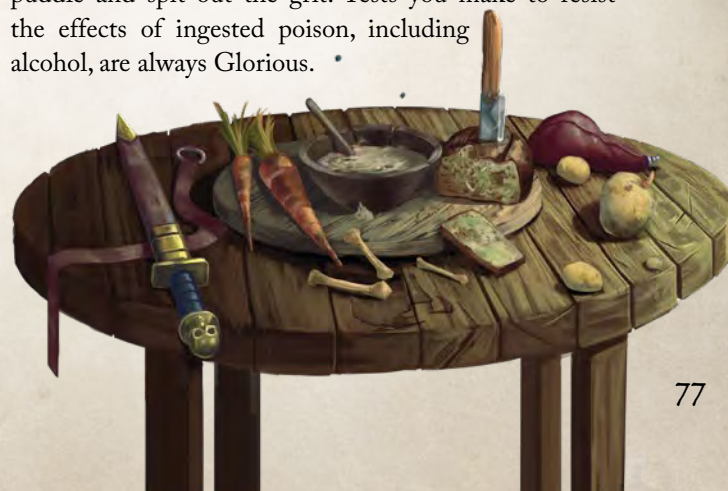
Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Agility 5+

Like a hunter running down their prey, you refuse to let any enemy escape your wrath. Once per round, when an enemy Gives Ground into or out of the Zone you're in, you may intercept them. Move to within Close Range of their new position and make an immediate Melee attack against them. You cannot intercept if you are *Staggered* or have an enemy in Close Range of you.

Iron Gut

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Not a High Elf or Wood Elf Origin

Your stomach can digest almost anything you care to swallow. You never become ill from eating even the most questionable foodstuffs, and can drink from the muckiest puddle and spit out the grit. Tests you make to resist the effects of ingested poison, including alcohol, are always Glorious.



Keen Eyed

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Initiative 4+

Your sense of sight is incredibly refined. So long as you are not Blinded, you can make Awareness Tests to spot distant threats, tiny details, and telltale signs of forgery that other characters could not perceive. Additionally, you can read lips so long as you're familiar with the language spoken.

Lightning Reflexes

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Initiative 5+

Your reaction speed is incredibly fast, allowing you to dodge threats you aren't consciously aware of. Unless you are Defenceless, you can always Oppose an incoming attack with Athletics. In addition, you take your turn before your enemies in battle, even if they execute an ambush (page 79). You take subsequent turns at the same time as other allies without *Lightning Reflexes*.

Longbeard

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Dwarf Origin only, can only be taken in Character Creation

It is said that Dwarfs become tougher and more irascible with age, their grumbling criticism shaming their allies into meeting their formidable standards. You gain +1d on all Tests to remove a condition from yourself or an ally. During social encounters with Dwarf NPCs of any Status, you are expected to be wise, worthy of respect, and impossible to please. You defy their expectations when you argue for embracing new trends or doing things differently to your ancestors.

Lucky

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** None

Fate shines in your favour — someone up there likes you. The first time you spend Fate each session is free, even if your Fate score is 0. Additionally, Tests you make to gamble in games of chance are always Glorious.

Magic Resistance

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None

You are unusually resistant to magic, your very presence calming the Winds of Magic. Any cast spell that affects you reduces its Potency by 1. If this reduces the spell's Potency to 0, the spell has no effect at all.



Mighty Blow

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Strength 4+

You are strong enough to confidently wield heavy weapons that would encumber less stalwart fighters. When you wield a weapon in two hands, you ignore any dice penalties that weapon would impose on your Melee Tests (e.g. the -1d penalty imposed by greataxes, or the -2d penalty for wielding a flail whilst *Staggered*).

Night Dweller

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** None

You do not fear the dark, negotiating it with the ease of a nocturnal predator, whilst others blunder around obliviously. You can see up to Long Range in darkness. When attacking an enemy in the dark that cannot see you (and that you can see clearly), you gain +1d, and inflict the Broken condition anytime you Wound them or force them to Give Ground.

Polymath

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Reason 4+

You have cultivated such a wide sphere of knowledge that you can approach your problems from multiple angles. If you have multiple Lores that would provide bonus dice on a Test, you can trade in all of those bonus dice to make the Test Glorious instead.

The Questing Vow

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Blessings of the Lady Talent

The ultimate test of any Bretonnian Knight is to seek out the Grail and sup from its waters, becoming an immortal guardian of the Lady's dominion. You are *Honour Bound* (page 77) to set aside your lance and dominion, and to follow the search for the Grail wherever it leads.

You are immune to the *Distracted* condition. If you gain the *Broken* condition, you may immediately spend Fate or activate *Honour Bound* to remove it — you retain the *Blessings of the Lady* if you do so.

Quick Change

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Grooming Kit

With some rapid adjustments you can appear at home in any social setting. You only need a minute, and a successful Dexterity Test, it will be enough to appear unrecognisable to those who don't know you well, and to temporarily masquerade as a Status different to your own.

Quick Throw

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Weapon Skill 4+, Ballistic Skill 4+

A moment after launching your throwing weapon, you have a melee weapon drawn and ready to fight with. When you Charge, if you attack with a throwing weapon, you may then make a Melee attack as a second action.

Rapid Reload

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Ballistic Skill 4+

You have trained with your weapon so many times that handling it is second nature. When you succeed on a Dexterity Test to reload a weapon, you may immediately Aim or Attack with the weapon as a second action. You cannot use this Talent if you are *Staggered*, or if you move this turn.

Resistance to Corruption

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** None

The purity of your soul is proof against the manipulations of the Ruinous Powers. Any Willpower Tests you make to resist exposure to Chaos are Glorious. Full rules for corruption are in **The Old World Gamemaster's Guide**.

Resolute

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Reason 4+

You make the enemy bleed for every scrap of ground they seize from you. When you Give Ground, you may choose to move to a location within Short Range, instead of an adjacent Zone. In addition, if you Give Ground into a Zone with enemies, you only suffer the Broken condition if you move to within Close Range of an enemy.

Riposte

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Weapon Skill 5+

You excel at turning your enemy's strength against them, blocking their attacks and striking back with frightening speed. Once per round, when you successfully Oppose a Melee attack with Defence, your attacker must choose to Give Ground, fall *Prone*, or suffer a Wound.

Secret Bloodline

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Can only be taken in Character Creation

The circumstances of your birth have the chance to significantly complicate your life. You might have been the illegitimate child of a noble, raised by a heretic, or descended from a notorious historical figure. Work out the details with your GM: why it has remained secret, who would aid or respect the character if they learned the truth, and who would become a deadly enemy.

When you reveal your heritage in a social encounter, you are expected to behave similar to your infamous ancestor, for good or ill. You defy expectations when you attempt to break out of your ancestor's shadow.

Short Size

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Can only be taken in Character Creation

Your diminutive height makes it easier to squeeze into gaps and escape attention, at the cost of raw might. When you make an Agility Test to Oppose enemy actions, you break ties if you roll an equal number of successes. However, when you make an Opposed Strength Test, your target breaks ties and wins a Marginal Success if you roll an equal number of successes.

You can slip into places others simply can't, such as through small gaps or windows, and can Test Stealth to hide in plain sight of larger folk: ducking beneath their legs, diving behind a piece of furniture, etc.

If you carry a two-handed Melee weapon, you suffer the *Burdened* condition.

Snake Charmer

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None

You use calm, reassurance, and even basic mesmerism to try and defuse a violent situation. When a creature you have *Distracted* makes a Test against you, you may Oppose the Test with the same Skill you used to apply the condition. If you use this ability against a beast or monster, your Opposing Test is Glorious.

Spiteseer

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Wood Elf Origin only

The forests of the Old World are nested with spites, small cavorting nature spirits of mischievous intent. Some Wood Elves are wise to the presence of these creatures, daring to strike bargains and enlist their aid.

You are instinctively aware of any spites in Medium Range. If a spite has used illusory magic to conceal itself, you may Test Awareness to perceive them. Spites see much and collect secrets, and you can attempt to Persuade (page 129) them to help you. Even if you succeed, the spite demands a bizarre payment — the contents of your pocket, the loss of a specific memory, or even a sacrifice of blood.

Stand and Shoot

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Initiative 4+

You meet the assault of a rampaging foe with a shot right between the eyes. If you are Charged by an enemy you Aimed at in your last turn, you may make a Shooting attack against them before they make their attack, using the bonus dice from your Aim Action. You can make your attack at any point in their Charge move, e.g. to capitalise on your weapon's Optimum Range.

Steer Clear

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** None

You are a safe pair of hands on the reins or at the tiller, driving your passengers out of harm's way. As part of a Manoeuvre (page 117) action, if you succeed on an Athletics Test to control a steed, or a Driving Skill Test to control a vehicle, you may choose one character mounted on the steed or on board the vehicle to recover from the *Staggered* condition.

Taunter

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** None

You know how to get under someone's skin, poking at their hidden vulnerabilities, or enraging them with obscene gestures. If an enemy you have *Distracted* attacks a creature other than you, that attack is Grim.

Thirst for Knowledge

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Reason 4+

Learning excites you like nothing else — you cannot be misled from your vocation. You can apply bonus dice from Lores even if you are *Drained*, and ignore any penalties from being *Drained* or *Distracted* whilst Testing to discover Insights. When you discover a Clue, remove the *Drained* and *Distracted* conditions.

Touched by the Winds

Cost: 2 XP **Requirements:** Not a Dwarf or Halfling Origin

You can perceive the Winds of Magic and their subtle effects on the world... perhaps working a little spellcraft yourself, even if you aren't aware of it. You may Test Awareness to tell when someone is casting magic, or under the effect of a spell. You can identify magical items by touch, unless illusory magic disguises its nature.

When you acquire this Talent, choose a Magic Lore. You may cast Improvised Spells at a Petty Level for that Lore, even if you have not learned the Lore.

You cannot acquire Formal Spells without the *Wizard* Talent (page 81), but you reduce the cost of that Talent by 1 XP each Level, and gain +2d on Tests to learn your chosen Magic Lore (*Study Lore*, page 136).

Unbreakable

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** *Resolute* Talent

Perhaps you have grown callous in the face of danger, or perhaps you never had the capacity for it at all, but fear is a foreign concept to you. You are immune to the *Broken* condition.

Valour of Ages

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** High Elf Origin only

The Elves of Ulthuan know that the fate of the world must surely lie in their hands alone, and they refuse to dishonour the work of past generations by showing weakness before their lessers. You do not suffer the *Broken* condition when you Give Ground into a Zone with an enemy, so long as there is an ally in that Zone. In addition, when you are *Broken*, you may undertake the Recover action whilst in a Zone with an enemy, so long as there is at least one ally in that Zone.

Vanguard

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Agility 4+

You operate as an advanced scout, using stealth or dense terrain to cover a rapid infiltration, or beat a hasty retreat to your allies. When you Move Quietly or Move Carefully as part of a Manoeuvre (page 117), you may also move to an adjacent Zone.

Vouch For Them

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Silver or Gold Status, Fellowship 4+

You're prepared to stake your reputation for the sake of your friends. When you introduce an ally to an NPC, the NPC's expectations for that ally are set by your Status, rather than your ally's. However, any disgrace your ally suffers in the eyes of that NPC impacts their opinion of you as well.

Wild Attack

Cost: 3 XP **Requirements:** Strength 4+

You rain down a furious barrage of blows, battering through your enemy's defence. If you do not have the *Staggered* condition, you may choose to make your next Melee Test Glorious. If you do, you immediately suffer the *Staggered* condition before any dice are rolled.

Wizard

Cost: 4 XP **Requirements:** Not a Dwarf or Halfling Origin, Magic Lore (any)

You are a trained (or self-taught) spellcaster, channeling the Winds of Magic to enforce your arcane will. You may cast spells you have improvised (*Improvised Spells* page 160), memorised (*Memorise Spell* page 135), or formalised by inscribing in your grimoire (*Formalise Spell* page 134). See full rules for spellcasting on page 156.

You may take this Talent up to four times — the number of times you have taken this Talent is referred to as your Wizard Level. Higher Wizard Levels can achieve more with Improvised Spells, and can channel more magic without causing a Miscast (page 157), which is necessary to cast powerful spells safely.

LORES

Lores record what a character has learned or studied. They are gleaned from education, apprenticeships, and a character's life experiences. They define much of what a character knows, what languages they can speak, their background, education, familiarity with different customs and people, and a good deal more.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

You know facts related to each Lore you possess that those without it either couldn't know or must pass a Test to figure out. You do not need to pass a Test to recall this sort of information. For example, if you have The Empire Lore, you know the town of Ubersreik is located in Reikland, and if you have Lore (Blackpowder) you can tell a Hochland Long Rifle from a common handgun at a glance.

If you are in a stressful situation, such as combat or in the midst of tense negotiations, you must pass a Recall Test to bring the correct information to mind. Even if you fail, once the stressful situation has passed the information comes to you.

Obscure Information

Some information is especially obscure, such as the name of the Duke of Ludwig XII's third cousin, or which street in Talabehim a particular bookbinders is on. To see if you know this kind of information, the GM may call for a Recall Test even under ordinary circumstances and may impose a penalty to this Test. If you fail, possessing the right Lore at least tells you how to find out this information — who to ask, or which library to check. Such Tests cannot even be attempted by those without a pertinent Lore.



Specialist Skills

A Lore can allow you to make a Skill Test to do something no one without the Lore can do. For example, a character with the Blackpowder Lore can Test Dexterity to reload a blackpowder weapon. Others simply wouldn't know where to start, and might well get into trouble if they try. Various trappings, especially trade tools, can only be used if you have the Lore that corresponds to them, and without the Literacy Lore it is simply impossible to read.

Bonus Dice

A Lore can provide +1d on a Test where you can leverage your learning to make the task easier. This must be a task which anyone could attempt, but which your specialist Lore could help you to do more easily. For example, anyone may use Awareness to spot that someone is limping, but this would be particularly obvious to someone with the Anatomy Lore. Unless specified otherwise, you never gain a bonus to Attack Tests just by having the right Lore.

Other Effects

Lores grant all sorts of other bonuses, from ignoring the penalties of certain kinds of Difficult Terrain to being able to cast different kinds of spells or join certain guilds. These benefits are described in the entry for each Lore.

ACADEMIC LORES

Academic Lore are learned from books and other educational sources, ideally with the assistance of a tutor. True centres of scholarship are rare in the Old World, but the Cult of Verena (page 147) operate schools and libraries to combat the scourge of ignorance.

Accountancy

You know your sums, and can perform even complex mathematical calculations if you have paper or an abacus to work with. You can talk shop with merchants, bankers, and tax collectors, and recognise when you're being ripped off. You know how to make investments, obscure a paper trail, exploit loopholes, and pay bribes to reduce your tax bill.

Anatomy

You understand the anatomical makeup of the human body, as well as that of outwardly similar creatures like Elves, Dwarfs and Halflings. You can treat illnesses, patch up injuries, and undertake surgeries with the right tools and something to strap your patient to (page 121). You have seen enough dead bodies to determine roughly how and when someone died unless the cause of death was especially obscure or unusual.

History

You know the broad strokes of the Old World's history, as it is taught in the institutions of your people. Historians of the Empire teach of the coming of Sigmar and the empire he built, while Dwarfen histories teach of ancestor gods who walked the world in ages past, as well as the many grudges borne by their people. You know the dates of historical events, and the names of people who participated in them. You recognise famous relics of a time long past, and can estimate their provenance.

Law

You can persuasively defend or prosecute an accused criminal. You know local laws and legal procedures, along with how they should be administered, and how they might be circumvented. You know the names and reputations of important figures within the judiciary and law enforcement, including who enforces the Duke's laws without question, and who might be more flexible.

Literacy

You know how to read and write in any language you can speak. When you learn to speak a new language, you recognise basic written words in that language too.

Zoology

You recognise wild animals and other beasts common to the Old World and know the common means of hunting or evading them. You know if, and how, a creature might be tamed, and how to treat their wounds. You can identify most animals by their tracks alone, and examine an animal's corpse to tell roughly how it died, and when.

WHAT QUALIFIES AS BASIC?

The more specific a Lore is, the more generous the GM should be in deciding what counts as a basic fact. The Empire Lore grants basic facts about the Grand Duchy of Talabec — for example, that the grimy port town of Talagaad exists on the River Talabec — but a Recall Test would be required to know much more. If you have City Lore (Talagaad), however, you automatically know where the town is, what its major landmarks are, which inn is the most comfortable or welcoming of strangers, and so on.

CULTURAL LORES

Cultural Lores relate to an Origin, social group, or regional community. Their benefits are mostly interpersonal — knowing who can help you, where to find them, and what you can offer in return — but also cover the culture's history, politics, language, and belief systems. Books and study can provide a little background information, but learning a Cultural Lore almost always requires living amongst the people you want to learn about.

City Lore (specify)

Suggested Options: Talagaad, Talabheim, Hergig, Ravenstein, Küsel, Ahlenhof, Nuln, Altdorf, Middenheim, Marienburg

You are very familiar with a specific city, port, town, Dwarf Karak, or large fortress, and never get lost within its bounds. You know where to find an NPC who'll put you up for the night, buy or sell unusual goods, and help with any common problem. You know the city's public figures by name and sight, along with its recent history, founding myths, looming threats, and any odd laws or customs of the city's inhabitants.

You're also familiar with the quirks of city life more generally, standing apart from the country bumpkins who wander in come market day. When you arrive in a new town, it doesn't take you long to find a place to eat, stay, or find odd-job employment. You can instinctively tell when you're in a rough part of town, or somewhere you're not not welcome.

EXAMPLE: TALAGAAD

You know all Contacts and major NPCs in Talagaad by name and sight, even if you don't have a personal relationship with them. You're up-to-date on the latest tolls to cross the river or enter Talabheim. You have suspicions about which NPCs are informing for the hated Knarlrotters of Talabheim, and which NPCs are working to undermine them. You know there are secret smuggling tunnels under the mighty crater walls of the Taalbaston, but don't necessarily know how to access them.

Criminal Underworld

You know what to wear, how to talk, and how to act to be recognised by career criminals as one of their own. On your home turf, you know the territories of local gangs, and who they're expected to pay tribute to. Even when you arrive somewhere new, you can quickly access any black market, and arrange a meeting with anyone connected to the criminal underworld. You can always ferret out any local gossip about your fellow ne'er do wells, and can spot common cons and grifts without needing to make a Test.

Cult Lore (specify)

Suggested Options: Taal, Rhya, Ulric, Sigmar, Manann, Morr, Shallya, Verena, Ranald, Myrmidia, Grimmir, Grungni, Valaya, Asuryan, Isha, Kurnous, Lileath

You know what to wear, how to talk, and how to act to be recognised as a specific god's devotee. You're familiar with their most obscure holy days and tenets of your chosen god's worship, and with doctrinal splits within the faith. You know the leaders of the cult by name, and where to find your god's nearest communal place of worship. You recognise fanes and relics that are sacred to your chosen god, and miracles enacted by invoking their power.

EXAMPLE: CULT OF TAAL

You know how to find the nature shrine closest to your home, and how to observe the ceremonial rites practised there. When you call on a Priest of Taal to bless your hunt, they will do so.

Dwarf Mountain Holds

You have lived in the Karaks of the Dwarfs, ancient underground holds of hardy clansfolk. You are numerate, can converse in the Khazalid language, and can read and inscribe the Klinkarhun (the Dwarf runic alphabet). You know the lords of your clan and hold, and can recall their trade, the deeds of their ancestors, and the grudges they are most eager to settle. You know how to show reverence to Grungni, Grimmir, Valaya, and the other ancestor gods. You recognise the works of evil creatures like Orcs, Goblins, living dead, and the creatures of Chaos, along with other wretched subterranean creatures that most Humans assume to be apocryphal.



The Empire

You have lived in the mightiest human realm of the Old World, a fractured Empire of provinces and city-states defended with faith, steel, and gunpowder. You can converse (but are not necessarily literate) in Reikspiel, the primary language of the Empire, and can recognise common coinage. You can recall the great personages of the Empire, historic and current, and know the rough makeup of provinces, major riverways, and so on. You know a little of the old enemies of the Empire: the Undead, along with Orcs and Goblins, but likely think them a threat of the past or of far-off lands alone. You know the basic tenets of the Empire's most commonly worshipped gods (page 137), and various superstitions regarding manifestations of heresy, such as magic, mutation, and the violation of the dead.

High Elf Realms

You have lived in Ulthuan, the sanctuary of the Elves and realm of the Phoenix Kings. You can converse and write in Elthárin, the language of Elves, and are decently schooled in arithmetic, and the history and geography of the known world. You know the name and heraldries of the ten Princes of Ulthuan, and keep abreast of the political intrigues between their agents. You know the names and tenets of the Elven pantheon, especially the Cadai that rule in the heavens. You recognise the works of evil creatures like Orcs, Goblins, and living dead, but are especially wary of the threat of Chaos and the corruption it brings.

High Society

You know what to wear, how to talk, and how to act like a noble, to get by in the company of aristocracy or royalty without embarrassment. You recognise the heraldries of all the great families, and know their dominions, histories and current political allegiance. You keep up with gossip at court. You can secure an invite to any noble's social function.

Kingdom of Bretonnia

You have lived within the bounds of Bretonnia, a feudal kingdom west of the Empire, and a land of peasant serfs and chivalric lords. You can converse (but are not necessarily literate) in the Bretonnian language, and recognise the common coinage of the land. You know your king and duke by name, and could recognise your local lord by face. You know the tenets of the Lady of the Lake, and the legends of Gilles de Breton and the Grail Companions. You've learned various superstitions regarding monsters inimical to the kingdom: Orcs and Goblins, Beastmen, mutants, sorcerers, and the living dead.

Military

You know what to wear, how to talk, and how to act like a soldier, ingratiating yourself with officers or the rank-and-file. You can recognise a soldier's rank and regiment by sight, and can recall any famous or recent engagements that regiment fought in. You know the basics of battlefield tactics, and understand the logistics of military campaigning.

Provincial Lore (specify)

Suggested Options: Talabecland, Mootland, Hochland, Middenland, Ostland, Stirland, Reikland, Westerland

You have lived, worked, or regularly travelled within a rural province, about the size of a Bretonnian dukedom, High Elf kingdom, Wood Elf realm or Elector Count's dominion. You know its roads and rivers, its coaching inns and ferries, along with all the nearest villages, watchtowers and larger settlements. You know the quirks and sub-cultures of its resident population, along with who holds power, and what they're threatened by.

More generally, you know how to mind your manners around country folk, and can tell where you're not welcome.

EXAMPLE: TALABECLAND

You know all of Talabecland's lords and ladies by name and by sight. When travelling on the River Talabec or Old Forest Road, you trade gossip with passing locals, and know the best place nearby to stop and rest. You always have an ear out for news of marauding Sigmarites, Osterlund raiders, forest Goblins, or Beastmen.

EXAMPLE: MOOTLAND

You know all the best spots in the Mootland for a picnic, a quiet fishing trip, or an outdoor snooze. Whilst laying low in the Mootland, you quickly hear if any outsiders have been asking after you.

Wood Elf Realms

You have lived in Athel Loren, Laurelorn Forest, or another dominion of the Wood Elves. You can converse (but are not necessarily literate) in Elthárin, the Elven language, and know at least a little of the lore of trees and spirits. You know the wards or kingdoms of your forested realm, and which lords hold dominion over them. You know the names and tenets of the Elven pantheon, and how to treat with spites and other nature spirits. You recognise the works of creatures like Orcs, Goblins, and living dead, but are especially wary of Chaos corruption, in all its subtlest guises.

ENEMY LORES

Enemy Lores arm a character with knowledge of common foes of the civilised lands of the Old World. It covers common forms that foe may take, such as types of creatures or soldiers one might find among them. It also covers the basics of that foe's hierarchy — if they have one — and common tactics and behaviours in battle. Much has been written about the enemies of civilisation, and even more passed into folklore — but the best way to learn an Enemy Lore is to confer with those who've met them in battle, and gain experience fighting them yourself.

Beastmen Brayherds

You know the hunting grounds of Warherds in your area, and how to tell when they are on the move. You recognise Beastmen ritual detritus, Herdstones, and the pyres that summon the Warherds together. You are on-guard for Beastmen ambushes, and know what will bait them to raid a specific location.

Monster Slayer (specify)

Suggested Options: Witch Slayer, Vampire Slayer, Spite Slayer, Troll Slayer, Giant Slayer, Dragon Slayer, Daemon Slayer

You have trained to battle a single type of creature with a dedication few can match. You know how they hunt, how they fight, and what their vulnerabilities are. If a creature's body parts can be repurposed as magical or alchemical ingredients, you know how to harvest them. Unlike most Lore, having the appropriate Monster Slayer Lore grants +1d on Attack Tests against your chosen prey.

EXAMPLE: SPITE SLAYER

You recognise Spites, nature spirits, and other elemental creatures, as well as the influence they have on nature. You have a sixth sense for when these entities are present, unless they use magic to go unseen. You know how to coax aid from mercurial elemental spirits, or chase away those that are annoying you. You can pick up on subtle cues that indicate if a creature is a Wildwood Spirit in disguise.

EXAMPLE: TROLL SLAYER

You know the different types of Troll, and where they make their homes. You know that Trolls regenerate, but are vulnerable to fire. You know how to strip a Troll's corpse, for useful ingredients in rejuvenating tonics. You can treat Wounds from Troll vomit by neutralising their acidity.

Orc & Goblin Tribes

You know the Orc and Goblin tribes in your area, and when they are on the move. You recognise the different types of animals they favour as steeds (boars, wolves, spiders), as well as their monstrous allies (Ogres, Trolls, Giants) and ramshackle creations. You know to dispose of Orc and Goblin bodies with fire, as it is said to slow their spread. You can tell enthusiastic but ineffectual raids from the far larger threat of a nascent Waaagh!

The Undead

You know of the places near your location where Morr's grip grows slack, and the dead do not easily rest. You quickly learn rumours of the dead returning to life, and recognise the telltale signs of a vampire or necromancer preying nearby. You know the superstitions that supposedly keep the undead at bay (fire, silver, the light of the sun). You can decipher Nehekharan hieroglyphics and recognise burial wards.

Warriors of Chaos

You know of the tribes that reside in the Chaos Wastes and Norsca, and the threat their raids pose to the Old World. You recognise the aftermath of Chaos ritual and sorcery, and know precautions to protect against mutation or daemonic influence. You know the four gods the tribes pledge loyalty to (the Hound, the Crow, the Serpent, and the Eagle), and how to tell when a Chaos Champion has a particular god's favour.



ENVIRONMENT LORES

Environment Lore teaches you how to survive in natural environments, and recognise the directions of fellow travellers. It is learned by immersing yourself in that environment, ideally with a guide to its flora and fauna. Unlike Cultural Lore, which are tied to specific population centres, an Environment Lore can be applied just as well to similar environments halfway around the world from your original home.

Mountaineering

You know how to trek, climb, or ski across mountain ranges and hilltops. You can scabble for food, find safe caves for shelter, and anticipate landslides or sinkholes. You ignore Difficult Terrain from rocky scree or steep elevations. You recognise the hunting grounds of Stone Trolls, Wyverns, and other highland monsters.

Sailing

You know how to operate an ocean-going vessel. You're familiar with the shorthand and jargon of sailors, commonly used from the Sea of Claws to Sartosa. You can tie knots, find the wind, and catch your bearings from the stars. You know that dreadful beasts lurk beneath the waves, and that they may be kept at bay by offerings of gold, silver, or blood. Above all, you know that Mana, god of the sea, is fickle and easily offended.

Subterranean

You know how to make your way in the dark when travelling underground, without getting lost or claustrophobic. You can scabble for food and shelter, and anticipate cave-ins, earthquakes, and pockets of bad air. You recognise valuable minerals buried beneath the earth. You recognise the presence of Night Goblins and have heard stories of other, fouler creatures that lurk far from the surface.

Waterways

You know how to row, sail, and dock a riverboat. You can plot a route to avoid bad weather or river patrols, and ignore Difficult Terrain from all but the most sucking bogs. You recognise when a stream or marshland is disturbed by a passing monster, and when it is unnaturally still. You can talk shop with harbour masters, find smugglers to supplement your income, and pick up gossip from passing riverfolk. You can fish, swim, and tread water.

Woodcraft

From the heart of the Drakwald to the midst of the Great Forest, you are at home in temperate woods and forests and recognise common woodland plants and animals. You can plot routes, discover shortcuts, and ignore Difficult Terrain caused by all but the most unnavigable woodlands. You know how to cover your tracks, and make simple tools and shelter from twigs and trees. You can anticipate ambushes from the sudden quieting of birdsong, and track fugitives from the trail they leave through foliage.

MAGIC LORES

Magic Lore are distinct disciplines of magic, categories of effects a wizard can achieve by channelling the Winds of Magic into spells. A character cannot learn a Magic Lore unless they have the *Touched by the Winds* (page 81) or *Wizard* (page 81) Talent. To learn a Magic Lore, you need a safe or secret place to practice without persecution, and some kind of tutor — be they a Mage of Saphery, the grimoire of a liche, or an elemental spirit companion.

Rules for the Lore most commonly found in the Empire — those of Battle Magic, Elementalism, Illusionism, and Necromancy — can be found in the Magic chapter (page 152). Knowing any Magic Lore allows you to tell when someone is casting magic, or under the effect of a spell. You can also identify magical items by touch, unless illusory magic disguises its nature.



TRADE LORES

Trade Lore teaches you how to create something useful from raw materials. Characters with Trade Lore have a network of buyers and suppliers they can rely on to practice their trade. However, a character cannot do so without the corresponding trade tools (page 99).

Whilst the Lore below represent the most common practical options for characters in **The Old World Roleplaying Game**, there are hundreds of trades practiced in the Empire — if a character's specific specialty isn't listed, they can always create a new Trade Lore, subject to the GM's approval.

Arts

You know how to produce competent works of writing, painting, sculpture, or another art form — choose one when you take this Lore. You can critique the artworks of other creators, and recognise influential artists. You can interpret the message a piece of art is meant to convey. You can forge a replica of someone else's creation.

Blackpowder

You can load, aim, recognise, and reliably discharge portable blackpowder weapons like pistols and handguns. You can safely store and maintain shot and powder. You do not panic when a blackpowder weapon is fired. You can craft improvised explosives from blackpowder and mundane trappings.

Concoction

You know how to brew and administer herbal remedies or poisons. You can produce alchemical compounds that are disinfective, adhesive, volatile, or otherwise reactive. You can identify useful ingredients by sight and by taste. Even without magical gifts, you can harness the inherent properties of rare magical ingredients to brew Healing Potions and Enhancement Potions (see **The Old World Gamemaster's Guide**).

Cooking

You know how to turn edible ingredients into a satisfying meal. You can identify useful ingredients — and poisonous ones — by sight and by taste. You can recall dozens of common recipes, and likely a few more exotic ones suitable for those of higher or lower Status than you. You can start a campfire even if the weather and environment is not accommodating.

Engineering

You can invent, operate, and build prototypes of experimental mechanisms, often clockwork or steam-powered. These creations are unreliable and prone to malfunction, but superior to their common counterparts when functioning as intended. You are also familiar with the creations of other inventors like yourself, and can operate machines and siege weapons.

Farming

You know how to work the land to plant and harvest crops. You recognise the warning signs of blight and famine. You can herd domesticated animals, and treat their common ailments. You know how to secure a plot against vermin, natural predators, and poachers. If all else fails, you can put food on the table.

Music

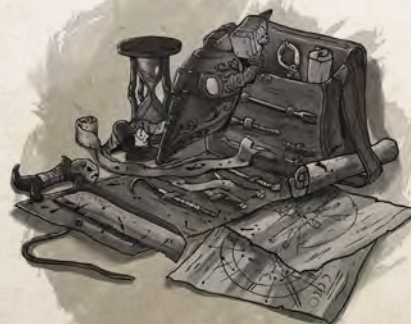
You know how to write, compose, and perform music to excite or shame your audience. You can play any instrument you turn your hand to, and know all the most popular folk songs of your Origin and local area. You can maintain a steady rhythm for a marching regiment, row crew, or work gang. You are a great dancer.

Smithing

You know how to work metal to produce weapons, armour, or tools. If metalworks are rusted, damaged, or disassembled, you can repair or remake them as good as new. You can craft plates to reinforce or fortify a structure. You're trained to work a forge safely, and recognise the handiwork of other smiths.

Textiles

You can patch, produce, and accessorise clothing and footwear, so that people who wear them make a good impression. You can make old clothes look new, make cheap clothes look stylish, and patch battered clothes to provide better coverage and protection. You can sew secret pockets into clothing, and produce disguises that fit a fake identity.



STATUS

Status determines a character's position in Old World society, along with the resources they command, and the social expectations placed upon them. There are three tiers of Status: Brass, Silver, and Gold. A player character's Status is determined by their Career — to change Status, you must undertake the *Change Career Endeavour* (page 133).

Status has a number of effects. First, it determines what expenses you can afford, as outlined in the Equipment chapter (page 90). Second, it sets expectations for how non-player characters expect you to behave in Social Encounters (page 129). Meeting these expectations may require you to be selective about what trappings you carry, what Assets you operate, and what establishments you visit. Characters who act like lower-class citizens are targets of mockery and social exclusion by their peers. Those who live beyond their means are likely to be robbed and may find that those truly of higher Status seek to put them back in their place.

STATUS TIERS

Characters with Brass Status are typically poor, barely educated, and of common birth, with few rights or privileges. They most certainly work for their coin, toiling in the mines, fields, or workshops of the Empire and beyond to earn their bread.

The luckiest have their own little hovel, or a domicile they tenant in at their lord's pleasure. Some don't even have that, and must scavenge in the wilds or on the streets to survive.

Characters with Silver Status are the monied middle class: merchants, artisans, and professional soldiers. They have a profitable trade or specialist skillset that provides a dependable source of income. They live in a townhouse or other well-appointed dwelling, when not barracked with their fellow workers. They enjoy a few, modest luxuries, but lack the titles and respect afforded to the aristocracy.

Characters with Gold Status are the top of the social order, with disposable wealth and a standard of living unimaginable to most. They may come from old money, and most enjoy titles inherited from forebears who earned them generations ago. They might have multiple residences, often fabulously furnished. Even those nobles who are rich in status yet poor in actual coin enjoy the other privileges of their rank, skirting laws and customs that bind their lessers.

Though no denizen of the Old World would use these game terms, all know their place in the social order, and intrinsically understand the costs of stepping outside it. Nevertheless, little is fixed, and those of the lower classes do sometimes rise up, lofted high by good fortune or heroic deeds. Conversely, even the most powerful Graf or Baroness might find themselves cast down from their birthright by the whims of political manoeuvre.



EQUIPMENT



“You have a keen eye for quality, my lady. That is one of Artur von Schenzeit’s finest works, a three-barrelled black powder handgun that will see off any foe, and their two closest comrades as well! The powder is loaded first, and then... I see you are already familiar with the process, bravo, my lady! One arms it by pulling back on that lever, of course, but please refrain from... Ah, I see. Well, at least take some oil and a rag as well, it is one thing to rob me, and yet another to have such a fine specimen go ill-maintained.”

— Klaus Wenlock, Armourer



Keen wits, well-honed abilities and a touch of luck are all well and good, but without the right weapons, armour, and other trappings you are certain to end up in a tight spot eventually. Your character gains the basic necessities of their Career during Character Creation, but you begin to confront the things that lurk in the shadows of the Old World, your needs will grow. Little in the Old World is free, however, and anything useful can only be procured at a price. Depending on your Status, the ordinary necessities of living — a decent meal, a roof above your head, and perhaps even a mug of warm ale — may well tax your resources as well.

SPENDING COIN

Currency in the Empire varies by region, with each claimant to the throne, and often the rulers of even minor baronies, striking their own coins. However, they can broadly be broken down into gold crowns, silver shillings, and brass pennies. These denominations echo your character’s Status. Those of Gold Status, such as Nobles, mostly spend gold crowns in their day-to-day life and are impacted very little by expenses that can be accounted for in shillings or pennies. Those of more modest means, such as a Brass Status Labourer, must spend their pennies more carefully.



PURCHASING GOODS & SERVICES

You do not need to keep track of every crown, shilling, and penny your character has to hand. Instead, the amount of currency you have to hand is referred to simply as Coin, which can be either Brass, Silver, or Gold. You begin play with three Coin of the same Status as your character, which is enough to make three substantial purchases of equivalent Status to your character.

During each Downtime, your Coin resets to three. Any excess Coin you ended the adventure with is lost, spent on necessities like patching the roof of your cottage, or gambled away at the nearest tavern. If you ended the adventure with less than three Coin, you regain it by working your Career. Depending on your career, this might reflect time spent catching rats, guarding nervous merchants, or taxing the peasants that work your estate. You do not need to take a special Endeavour (page 132) to earn this income — it reflects work done alongside or as part of your chosen Endeavours.

You might earn some additional Coin during the course of an adventure, perhaps by picking pockets, earning a reward from a grateful neighbour, or finding someone willing to lend you the money. You may raise your stash of Coin higher than three, but remember that it will all be spent during your next Downtime unless you use an Endeavour to invest it (page 134).

Coin & Status

Just like your character and their Coin, each good or service has a Status — Brass, Silver, or Gold. During each adventure, you can purchase three goods or services with a cost that matches your Status. For example, a Silver Status character could acquire a sword, buy dinner in a Silver Status tavern, and bribe a Silver Status guard.

When you spend money on trappings or services of lower Status, the cost is trivial and doesn't need to be tracked. For example, a Silver Status character doesn't spend one of their three Coin if they bribe a Brass Status beggar. A character can make as many lower Status purchases as they like, though the GM may judge that they collectively amount to a higher Status purchase. For example, buying a round for the table is a Silver expense, but buying a round for the whole tavern is a Gold expense.

Characters cannot afford trappings or services of higher Status unless they have some way to lay their hands on enough Coin or find something to offer in exchange.

BARTERING

A character may barter to reduce the cost of something for one of two reasons:

- ☠ A character wants to buy something at their Status level, but can't or won't use their Coin.
- ☠ A character wants to buy something at the Status level above them. Successfully bartering reduces the Status of the purchase by one step, allowing you to purchase it with lesser Coin. Brass characters cannot purchase a Gold tier items in this way

Bartering to reduce prices requires a Charm Test. The seller Opposes this Test with their Willpower. If a barter Test fails, the character may still make the purchase by spending Coin as usual, if they have the relevant Status and an expense spare.

If the price seems too good to be true, it usually is. Anything acquired at a reduced price due to bartering has one of the hidden costs below, chosen by the GM.

- ☠ The goods or services are a poor quality substitute, liable to fail at a critical moment.
- ☠ You're handling stolen goods, and the rightful owner wants it back.
- ☠ The seller expects a favour in return.

SELLING TRAPPINGS AND LOOT

During an adventure, a character may discover treasure, loot valuables, or earn prizes from games or contests. If you sell these trappings, the GM rates their resale value in the same way they do other trappings and services — for example, the ring stolen from a noble's finger is worth Gold Coin. You need not sell everything you find each Downtime, so holding on to such treasures is a means of gathering wealth. Of course, you must be wary of thieves and tax collectors should you start to accumulate a horde of such items.

☠ Denizens of the Old World expect their social equals to dress, use tools or weapons, and employ services appropriate to their level of Status. Whilst the trappings listed here indicate their minimum Status level, it is usually possible to find equivalents of a higher Status level, with a finish or embellishment suitable for a high Status character. Any trappings or Assets a character starts with are assumed to match their Status, unless the item's minimum cost exceeds their own Status.

If a character is wearing clothes or wielding weapons of lower Status, they may draw derision from their peers, applying difficulty modifiers to social Tests (page 129). A character openly carrying trappings of higher Status than their own is painting a target on their back for robbers and thieves.

☠ It's not unusual for lower Status characters to ask higher Status characters to pay for things they couldn't otherwise afford. Whether your ally agrees to bankroll you is up to them! That a higher Status character habitually pays the way for others will eventually be noticed, and lower Status characters may find that they are assumed to be the retainers, servants, or embarrassing relatives of whoever holds the purse strings.

☠ Unless an item is unusually easy to resell (jewellery, precious metals, or a stash of foreign currency), second-hand items are worth less than what it might cost you to acquire them, as merchants are wary of their own bottom line and the perils of handling stolen goods. For example, a new Sword is a Silver trapping, but the notched and bloodstained blades recovered from a trio of defeated bandits might only be worth a Silver Coin between them.

TRAPPINGS

Trappings are physical items small enough for a character to carry on their person, and commonplace enough to replace if they're lost. To buy a trapping, you must find someone willing to sell it to you. In busy ports like Talagaad, finding a seller for most trappings is straightforward. In villages and small towns, Gold tier trappings and trappings that require a special Lore to use are almost never available. In Talagaad, however, at the conflux of the Talabec and the Old Forest Road, most trappings can be found for the right price.

Trappings each have their own minimum Status, but if you want to commission a custom piece from an artisan, then the Status is increased accordingly. You can also commission an artisan to repair damaged equipment. Restoring a Gold tier trapping is a Silver expense, and restoring a Silver tier trapping is a Brass expense. Brass tier trappings are so crudely constructed that it's usually cheaper to buy new than restore them.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

You can wear a set of clothing and a suit of armour, carry a number of weapons equal to your Strength (of which one may be two-handed), and bear as many trappings about your person or in a bag on your back as you and the GM agree is reasonable. If you exceed this limit or are carrying something unusually heavy or bulky, such as a sack of grain or a wounded comrade, you suffer the *Burdened* condition. If you find yourself in need of bearing heavier burdens than this, consider an Asset (page 102) such as a Coach, Cart, or Mount to put things in.

MELEE WEAPONS

A sharp blade, a stout spear, or just a good solid club — melee weapons have been a fixture of life in the Old World for longer than even the Dwarfs might care to recall. These weapons use the Melee Skill (page 68) when making Attack Tests (page 118). Their damage is usually determined by your Strength along with a modifier, written as S+X. Melee weapons can only attack an enemy within its maximum range — usually Close (within arms reach), but sometimes Short (in the same Zone as you). Some melee weapons have an additional effect of some kind, such as an Axe's ability to rend armour or a Sword's fine parrying ability — these are known as Traits.

You may hold a single two-handed (2H) melee weapon, or as many one-handed (1H) melee weapons as you have hands to wield them. A character holding two one-handed (1H) melee weapons may dual wield them, using both to assault their foes. While dual wielding, you may apply the Traits of either or both weapons to your Attack Tests. If both weapons provide a bonus to the same Test, those bonuses are added together.

Unarmed. Bereft of anything better, or simply seeking to enjoy an honest brawl, you punch, bite, and kick to inflict damage on your foes. Unarmed Attack Tests are made with the Brawn Skill (page 69) rather than Melee, and you cannot use Defence to Oppose attacks whilst unarmed.

Knuckledusters. A band of metal worn around a clenched fist, Knuckledusters allow your Unarmed Attacks to inflict Damage as normal. Knuckledusters cannot be used to Oppose attacks with Defence.

Dagger. Small blades, from crude kitchen knives to elegant stilettos, are favoured by thieves and assassins. They can be carried into situations where a more obvious weapon might be noticed.

Staff. Staffs are solid lengths of wood that will support weight when negotiating slopes and tricky terrain. Travellers may fit their staff with a metal cap or a leather grip. Wizards often festoon theirs with talismans.

Foot Spear. The signature melee weapon of Elven citizen levies are long wooden poles with a sharpened point or metal speartip. They are easy to make, easy to use, and effective when deployed en masse.

Cavalry Spear. Skirmishing light cavalry like Wood Elf Glades Riders wield their spears offensively rather than defensively, like a stripped-down version of the lances wielded by their armoured counterparts.

Axe. Axes affix a sharp, curved blade atop a wooden handle. They are a practical weapon beloved by Dwarf warriors, as effective at chopping trees and demolishing obstacles as smashing apart armour.

Pickaxe. Pickaxes use a curved spike in place of a bladed axehead, the better to splinter rock and bone. Though principally a mining tool, they are used by proud Dwarf miners as a battlefield weapon.

Sword. A trusty, well-balanced blade is the weapon all others are measured against. Swords deal cutting and puncturing wounds, whilst parrying return strokes.

- ♣ **Warhammer.** Warhammers use blunt, metal heads atop a wooden handle to pulverise enemies who fail to avoid its heavy swings. They are emblematic of blacksmiths and devotees of Sigmar.
- ♣ **Morning Star.** A spiked ball and chain is a lethal weapon when swung in a wide arc to build momentum. It is also tiring to use and loses effectiveness over time.
- ♣ **Polearm.** Polearms are crude, long-shafted weapons that combine the properties of a spear and halberd. They are often seen among Bretonnian Men-at-Arms who accompany their lords to war.
- ♣ **Flail.** Two-handed morning stars are terrifying to face, and even more exhausting to fight with.
- ♣ **Billhook.** Billhooks are specialist anti-cavalry polearms, with curved blades designed to wrench a mounted warrior from their steed. Some are adapted from farming implements, such as those wielded by Bretonnian Men-At-Arms.
- ♣ **Halberd.** Halberds mount a spiked metal axehead atop a sturdy two-handed pole. They are popular

in the Empire's State armies for their flexibility.

- ♣ **Glaive.** Glaives affix their blade edge atop a long handle, so they can be wielded in two hands with dexterity. They are the trademark weapon of the Wood Elf Wildwood Rangers.
- ♣ **Greataxe.** Dwarf veterans and Norse marauders both favour two-handed axes, often double-headed to maximise their lethality on reverse strokes.
- ♣ **Greatsword.** Two-handed swords are the eponymous weapon of the bodyguards that defend the generals of the Empire. Imperial greatswords incorporate a distinctive flame-bladed undulating design.
- ♣ **Greathammer.** Two-handed warhammers mount an even heavier head on a reinforced shaft. They are rarely wielded except by Dwarf Hammerer bodyguards and the Cult of Sigmar.
- ♣ **Lance.** The weapon of a knight is a long reinforced spear that impales foes with a devastating impact. A Bretonnian Knight famously sets aside their lance when they undertake the quest for the Grail.

MELEE WEAPONS

Name	Cost	Max Range	Damage	1H / 2H	Traits
Unarmed	n/a	Close	n/a	n/a	Attack with Brawn, successful attacks inflict the <i>Staggered</i> condition instead of Damage
Knuckledusters	Brass	Close	S-1	1H	+1d to Stealth to conceal, attack with Brawn
Dagger	Brass	Close	S-1	1H	+1d to Stealth to conceal
Staff	Brass	Close	S	1H	+1d to Athletics when crossing Difficult Terrain
Foot Spear	Brass	Short	S	1H	+1d to Defence when Opposing Charge attacks, +1 Damage if wielded in two hands
Cavalry Spear	Brass	Short	S	1H	+1d to Melee on Charge attack whilst mounted
Axe	Brass	Close	S	1H	+1 Damage against enemies wearing armour
Pickaxe	Brass	Close	S+1	2H	+1d to Toil when harvesting resources
Sword	Silver	Close	S	1H	+1d to Defence when not <i>Staggered</i>
Warhammer	Silver	Close	S	1H	+1d to Melee against <i>Staggered</i> enemies
Morning Star	Silver	Close	S+1	1H	-1d to Melee whilst <i>Staggered</i> , cannot dual wield
Polearm	Silver	Short	S	1H	+2 Damage if wielded in two hands
Flail	Silver	Close	S+3	2H	-2d to Melee whilst <i>Staggered</i>
Billhook	Silver	Close	S+2	2H	+1d to Melee against mounted enemies
Halberd	Silver	Close	S+2	2H	+1 Damage against enemies wearing armour
Glaive	Silver	Close	S+2	2H	+1d to Defence when not <i>Staggered</i>
Greataxe	Silver	Close	S+3	2H	-1d to Melee, +1 Damage against enemies wearing armour
Greatsword	Gold	Close	S+3	2H	-1d to Melee, +1 to Defence when you're not <i>Staggered</i>
Greathammer	Gold	Close	S+3	2H	-1d to Melee, +1d to Melee against <i>Staggered</i> enemies
Lance	Gold	Close	S+1	1H	+1d to Melee and +1 Damage on Charge attack whilst mounted, cannot dual wield

RANGED WEAPONS

Why wait for an enemy to get close enough to do you harm, when you could take care of them at range? Bows and crossbows have been a mainstay of combat for untold centuries, but blackpowder has redefined a great deal of warfare across The Old World.

Ranged weapons attack with the Shooting Skill. Unlike melee weapons, the Maximum Range of all one handed ranged weapons is Long, while two handed ranged weapons have no Maximum Range other than what the GM considers reasonable. However, all ranged weapons have an Optimum Range, and attacks against targets not within this band suffer a -1d penalty.

You may not use ranged weapons at all if an enemy is in Close Range, unless you're using a ranged weapon that counts Close Range as Optimum. When you attack an enemy in Close Range, they may Oppose your Attack Test with Melee if they wish, and you suffer the *Staggered Condition* if you miss, as with a Melee Attack.

Though some ranged weapons are one-handed (1H), you cannot attack with two shooting weapons as part of a single attack. But it's useful to have a backup ready to fire, so you don't have to reload first!

Ranged weapons come with enough ammunition to last for all of a character's adventures, so long as they spent their last Downtime somewhere ammunition can be bought or made, or thought to stock up before leaving civilisation behind.

Some ranged weapons must be laboriously reloaded between each shot. This is an Exacting Dexterity Test, with each Test made requiring one action. The target number of successes required varies between weapons — if a number of successes to reload is not listed, the weapon can be reloaded for free as part of the attack.

- ❧ **Sling.** Slings consist of a braided cord or rope, with a cradle for a bullet of stone, clay, or lead. A projectile swung with sufficient speed can bring down foes many times the user's size.
- ❧ **Shortbow.** The lightest bows prioritise ease of use — they can be shot quickly whilst controlling a steed, making them an appealing choice for light cavalry like Bretonnian Yeoman or High Elf Ellyrian Reavers.

- ❧ **Warbow.** Useful for both hunting and combat, warbows are a dependable choice for archers who need a long-ranged but practical weapon they can easily craft from common materials.

- ❧ **Longbow.** A longer draw on a bow improves range and stopping power. Wood Elf Glade Guard are masters of the longbow, but these weapons are still formidable in the hands of High Elf levies and even Bretonnian peasants.

- ❧ **Crossbow.** Crossbows are easier to aim than bows, and don't depend on the user's draw strength, but lack a trained archer's rate of fire. They are the practical choice for Dwarf Quarrellers and Tilean mercenaries.

- ❧ **Pistol.** Pistols are the smallest available blackpowder weapon, sometimes custom crafted as duelling weapons for Imperial nobles. Because they take so long to reload, a pistolier might carry more than one.

- ❧ **Handgun.** The metal barrel and wooden stock of a handgun emits a roar of smoke and death when fired, devastating armoured enemies. Dwarf handguns are the most sophisticated, and the most prized.

- ❧ **Blunderbuss.** A blunderbuss can be loaded with shots, nails, broken glass, small rocks, or just about anything else that fits, blasting out a short-ranged but deadly cloud of debris.

- ❧ **Hochland Long Rifle.** An intricate array of stands and telescopic sights confers the extravagantly proportioned Long Rifle incredible range, accuracy, and lethality when fired by a trained sniper.

- ❧ **Repeater Handbow.** A one-handed crossbow with a multi-bolt magazine, repeater handbows have found popularity with elite assassins and paranoid nobles prepared to defend themselves at a moment's notice.

- ❧ **Repeater Crossbow.** Seldom used in the Old World, the repeater crossbow's extended magazine combines a bow's rate of fire with a crossbow's ease of use, but can be awkward to maintain.

- ❧ **Repeater Pistol.** Repeater pistols are experimental engineering marvels that combine multiple pistol barrels into one weapon. Each barrel can be fired individually to conserve ammunition, or in a single furious volley.

- ❧ **Repeater Handgun.** A sized-up version of the repeater pistol, repeater handguns wreak even greater havoc on the battlefield, but take even longer to reload.

RANGED WEAPONS

Name	Min Cost	Optimum Range	Damage	1H / 2H	Traits
Sling	Brass	Medium	S	1H	
Shortbow	Brass	Short - Medium	3	2H	+1d to Shooting against targets in Short Range
Warbow	Brass	Medium - Long	3	2H	
Longbow	Silver	Medium - Long	4	2H	
Crossbow	Silver	Short - Long	4	2H	+1 Damage against armoured enemies, 2 successes to reload
Pistol	Silver	Close - Short	5	1H	Ignores armour, 3 successes to reload
Handgun	Silver	Medium - Long	5	2H	Ignores armour, 3 successes to reload
Blunderbuss	Silver	Short	4	2H	Max range is Medium, +2d against targets in Short Range, creatures in Close Range of a hit target are <i>Staggered</i> , 3 successes to reload
Hochland Long Rifle	Gold	Medium - Extreme	6	2H	Must Aim before Attacking, ignores armour, +1d on Wounds Table, 4 successes to reload
Repeater Handbow	Gold	Close - Short	4	1H	May add +1d to one Shooting Test but the weapon then requires 3 successes to reload
Repeater Crossbow	Gold	Short - Medium	4	2H	May add +1d to one Shooting Test but the weapon then requires 3 successes to reload
Repeater Pistol	Gold	Close - Short	5	1H	Ignores armour, may add +2d to one Shooting Test but the weapon then requires 3 successes to reload
Repeater Handgun	Gold	Short - Long	5	2H	Ignores armour, may add +3d to one Shooting Test but the weapon then requires 5 successes to reload

Blackpowder firearms — including blunderbusses, Hochland long rifles, and pistols and handguns of all kinds, all require Lore (Blackpowder) to use.










THROWING WEAPONS

From a well-aimed rock to a hail of thrown spears, throwing weapons are common to less-organised forces, as well as in vicious street brawls and subtle assassinations.

Attack Tests made with throwing weapons use the Throwing Skill. You may attack with a throwing weapon as part of a Charge (page 117) instead of making a Melee attack, treating the attack as within Optimum Range. Throwing weapons have Optimum Range like ranged weapons do, but the Optimum Range of throwing weapons is extended by one step (e.g. from Short to Short - Medium, or from Short - Medium to Short - Long) if the user's Strength is 4 or greater. Unlike ranged weapons, throwing weapons cannot be used to attack targets beyond their Optimum Range.

You may recover most throwing weapons if you get the opportunity, with the exception of Oil Flasks and other, similarly volatile weapons.

-  **Rock.** Stones or similar projectiles might not be designed for combat, but can still deal gruesome cuts or bruises when thrown with force.
-  **Throwing Spear.** Also known as javelins, these weapons are sometimes employed by Norse Marauder horsemen and other skirmishing cavalry to provide cover as they charge into melee.

-  **Throwing Axe.** Though indelicate by the standards of other thrown weaponry, a lightweight axe, balanced for flight, can be used by Dwarf rangers as viable hunting weapons.
-  **Weighted Net.** A web of cords and rope with metal weights at the edge may be used by trackers to hunt game and capture fugitives alive.
-  **Throwing Knives.** Knives, stars, and other throwing blades are short ranged but deadly in the hands of a skilled infiltrator. The price reflects a set of light, well-balanced knives — enough that you don't need to worry about keeping track of how many you have and who they're stuck in.
-  **Oil Flask.** Fitted with a makeshift rag and set alight before being thrown, an Oil Flask can be used to set targets Ablaze. Care must be taken, of course, as fires are quick to spread.
-  **Blasting Charge.** Rare in the Empire, these are used by Dwarf Miners to quickly expand a mine, or clear a particularly stubborn piece of rock — or, as it happens, a particularly stubborn foe.



THROWING WEAPONS

Name	Min Cost	Optimum Range	Damage	1H / 2H	Traits
Rock	n/a	Short - Medium	n/a	n/a	Cannot Wound (except by <i>Staggering</i> a <i>Staggered</i> enemy)
Throwing Spear	Brass	Close - Medium	S	1H	
Throwing Axe	Brass	Short	S+1	1H	+1 Damage against enemies wearing armour
Weighted Net	Brass	Close - Short	n/a	2H	Successful attacks inflict the <i>Burdened</i> condition instead of Damage
Throwing Knives	Silver	Short	S	1H	Set includes enough knives for a whole battle
Oil Flask	Silver	Short - Medium	n/a	1H	Successful attacks inflict the <i>Ablaze</i> condition on target and all within Close Range of them.
Blasting Charge	Gold	Short - Medium	n/a	1H	Successful attacks immediately inflict Hazard (3) on all creatures in target's Zone (resisted with Endurance), failed attacks explode in attacker's Zone instead

CLOTHING & ARMOUR




The denizens of the Old World dress as their station and funds allow, with the peasantry wearing simple fabrics roughly stitched together, even while the wealthy don expensive imported silks from far-off Grand Cathay. More practical sorts concern themselves with function over fashion, wearing armour that will both deflect enemy attacks and make a daunting impression.

Your armour protects you from injury, adding together with your Toughness to determine your overall Resilience (page 97). Shields are held rather than worn, but are included here as they serve a similar function to armour.

Outfits, even more so than other trappings, are expected to match your Status. Whilst most non-armoured outfits are available at Brass Status, few Silver or Gold characters would be seen dead in clothing that does not reflect their elevated position.

As with any trapping, most outfits can be bought at a higher Status than the minimum listed cost, the extra Coin going towards expensive fabrics, gold embroidery, or other fashionable affectations. Any outfits a character starts play with always matches their Status.

Some weapons inflict bonus damage against armoured enemies — which is any enemy wearing armour, carrying a shield, or affected by any other property that increases their Resilience above their Toughness. If an attack ignores armour, the target's Resilience is reduced to their Toughness value for that attack.

-  **Peasant's Garb.** Brass tier characters wear a simple shift, a shirt and trousers, a hempen dress, or similarly basic clothing. This may be complimented by a cap or hood, or even well-worn furs in colder climes. The outfit is usually held together by a belt of leather or rope, from which simple tools, pouches, or weapons may be hung.
-  **Burgher's Apparel.** Though fashion varies across the Old World, clothing worn by merchants, scribes, and other urban professionals commonly feature, puffy sleeves, cod pieces, garish jewellery and other ostentatious imitations of lordly dress. Outfits usually feature at least one accessory, such as an oversized hat, fine shoes, or a modest cape.
-  **Lordly Attire.** Upper classes and their most favoured servants dress in expensive fabrics, with cloth of gold trim, complicated cuts, and awkward accessories. Such clothing is designed to make an impression. Practicality is a secondary concern.

ARMOUR & OUTFITS

Name	Min. Cost	Resilience	Traits
Peasant's Garb	Brass	T	+1d to Charm to appear harmless
Burgher's Apparel	Silver	T	+1d to Charm when haggling with Silver characters
Lordly Attire	Gold	T	+1d to Leadership when ordering around Brass and Silver characters
Uniform	Brass	T	+1d to Leadership when ordering around civilians, may be worn under armour
Worker's Leathers	Brass	T	+1d on Tests to avoid physical Hazards, may be worn over outfit
Travelling Clothes	Brass	T	+1d on Tests to avoid environmental Hazards and conditions
Concealing Clothing	Brass	T	+1d to Stealth in one chosen environment, may be worn over outfit
Stage Costume	Brass	T	+1d on Tests to attract attention
Shield	Silver	+1	Carried not worn, use Defence to Oppose Shooting attacks
Light Armour	Silver	T+1	
Heavy Armour	Gold	T+2	-1d on Agility Tests, Burdened unless Strength 3+
Barding	Gold	+1	Horses only, -1d on Agility Tests for mount and rider

- ❏ **Uniform.** The hard-wearing uniforms of military regiments, Knightly Orders, and watch houses are typically brightly dyed to reflect the allegiance of the unit in question. More costly examples may include various honours and medals, proud feathered plums, or other features certain to draw the eye, and occasionally an arrow too.
- ❏ **Worker's Leathers.** Butchers, foundry workers, Shallyan healers, and many others wear protective covers thick enough to protect from splinters and splatter, sometimes treated to be fire-proof.
- ❏ **Travelling Clothes.** Experienced travellers wear heavy boots, thick cloaks, and warm gloves, built to withstand the wind and rain. They are festooned with straps and pouches that keep useful tools within easy reach.
- ❏ **Concealing Clothing.** Criminals and spies wear hoods or masks to hide their faces, a cloak to disguise their shape, and gloves that leave no trace. They may be dyed to better camouflage the wearer in their surroundings.
- ❏ **Stage Costume.** Stage costumes are the mark of a performer, often flamboyant in colour and shape to catch the attention of passing foot traffic. Masks, props, and hidden pockets may all be part of the show.



- ❏ **Shield.** Every army in the Old World uses slabs of wood or metal to intercept incoming attacks. Shields are carried with one hand, and can therefore be used in combination with any other outfit or armour.
- ❏ **Light Armour.** Chain shirts, padded jackets, and tough hide wrappings are designed to protect against blows without impeding mobility. They may be paired with an open metal helmet or leather cap for extra security.

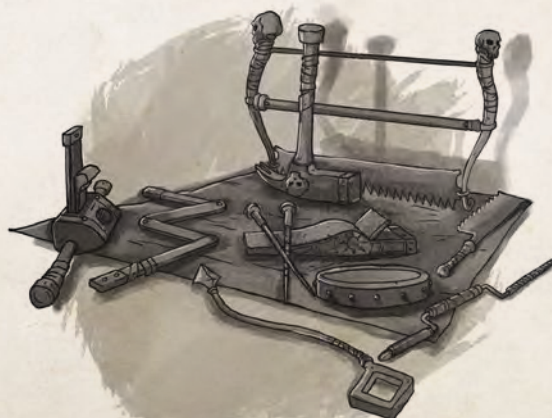
- ❏ **Heavy Armour.** A heavily armoured warrior wears a set of mail armour covering most of the body, with a closed helm, metal sleeves, and thigh armour. They are prohibitively awkward and expensive for most warriors, but employed by Dwarf throngs extensively.
- ❏ **Barding.** Warhorses may be armoured for battle in heavy cloth draperies, or formed and fitted armour plates. In addition to providing the creature with +1 Resilience, any character riding a horse with barding gains +1 Resilience as well. Barding for demigryphs and pegasi are also available.

TOOLS & KITS

Characters making their way in the Old World don't just need weapons to fight with — they need tools of more general utility. You might depend on these trappings whilst exploring the depths of the Great Forest, or prowling the Talagaad docks after dark. Rather than track these practical items individually, they are combined into kits and sets that can be purchased, and carried, collectively.

Each set lists a selection of items you might find within, though these examples are illustrative, not exhaustive. At the GM's discretion, you may be able to buy individual items from these sets at a lower Status tier, if the whole collection is outside your budget.

Tools and kits allow you to make Tests and attempt actions that would otherwise be impossible. Your GM may allow you to improvise with makeshift materials instead, but this will always impose a difficulty penalty. Having the right toolkit doesn't usually provide bonus dice, but will circumvent this penalty, assuming you have the right Lores to use them.



TOOLS & KITS

Name	Min. Cost	Example Contents	Relevant Tests	Required Lore
Game Set	Brass	Dice, cards, chits, playing pieces	Tests to gamble or pass the time	
Arcane Paraphernalia	Brass	Animal remains, gemstones, brews, scrolls, runestones, crystals	Spellcasting Tests	Magic Lore (any)
Lighting Kit	Brass	Lantern, candle, flint and steel	Tests to move or inspect in darkness	
Hunting Kit	Silver	Traps, snares, fishing rod, bait, skinning knife	Tests to hunt or trap wild game	
Traveller's Pack	Silver	Walking stick, waterskin, rations, bedroll, rope, tinderbox, cooking pot	Survival Tests for overland travel	
Climbing Kit	Silver	Rope, harness, pitons, hooks, chalk	Tests to ascend or descend sheer surfaces	
Thief Tools	Silver	Lockpicks, tweezers, matches, sack, hood or mask	Tests to break locks and disable traps	
Writing Kit	Silver	Sheets of parchment, writing quill, ink pot	Writing Tests	Literacy
Grooming Kit	Silver	Comb, razor, hand mirror, make-up, perfumes	Tests to adjust appearance	
Physicker's Kit	Gold	Needles and sutures, bandages, scalpel, saw, draughts, herbs, poultices	Tests to treat or diagnose injuries	Anatomy
Cartography Kit	Gold	Maps, charts, pencils, compass, telescope	Orienteering or navigation Tests	Environmental Lore (any)
Monster Slayer's Arsenal	Gold	Variable — silver bullets for vampires, cold iron for Wildwood Spirits, etc.	Tests to combat unnatural powers	Monster Slayer (any)

TRADE TOOLS

Trade tools are kits that correspond to a specific Trade Lore (page 99). You cannot use your Trade Lore to craft trappings unless you have the necessary tools. If your GM has allowed you to practice your own custom trade, you will need trade tools appropriate to that discipline as well.

TRADE TOOLS

Name	Min. Cost	Example Contents	Relevant Tests	Required Lore
Farming Tools	Brass	Sickle, basket, plough, spade, scythe, shears, pitchfork, rake, crock	Tests to harvest from farmland	Farming
Cooking Set	Brass	Pots and pans, cutlery, cups, special ingredients	Tests to prepare a quality meal	Cooking
Textiles Set	Brass	Needle, thread, pins, bodkin, lace	Tests to sew or patch clothing	Textiles
Concoction Set	Brass	Cauldron, ladle, beakers, tubes, special ingredients	Tests to brew a potion or poison	Concoction
Artist Tools	Silver	Variable — paints and brushes for painting, chisels and hammers for sculpture, etc.	Tests to produce a quality work of art	Arts
Smithing Tools	Silver	Hammer, chisel, tongs, vice, whetstone, crucible	Tests to forge or repair wargear	Smithing
Blackpowder Kit	Silver	Shot, powder, flask, cloth wad, ramrod	Reloading a blackpowder weapon	Blackpowder
Musician's Gear	Silver	Musical instrument, busker's cup, replacement picks, reeds, and strings	Tests to perform for an audience	Music
Engineering Kit	Gold	Hammer, tongs, measuring rod, tweezers, raw materials	Tests to tinker with machinery	Engineering

SERVICES

Coin must be spent not only on goods, but also on services of one sort or another. Be it paying for a barber-surgeon to remove an overgrown beard or a ruined limb, a ferryman's fare, or for a night in an inn, everything has its price. The ordinary cost of living — food, drink, and a place to call home — are covered so long as you are gainfully employed in your career, but all expenses during an adventure must be tracked.

HIRED HELP

No matter how paranoid you may be about enlisting the aid of others in sometimes clandestine affairs, there are some things you simply cannot do alone. Paying a non-player character to do a job for you is sometimes the best option — especially if they have time, equipment, or expertise you do not. Employing an NPC is an expense paid for in the same way as acquiring a trapping. A few example services are shown in the General Assistance table. Generally:

- ☛ Paying an NPC to look the other way, do you a favour, or perform a quick job for you, is an expense equal to the NPC's Status.
- ☛ Paying an NPC to do something time-consuming, costly, illegal, or dangerous, increases the Status of the expense by one tier.
- ☛ Anything outside of an NPC's routine employment requires a Persuade Test (page 129), resisted by the NPC's Willpower.
- ☛ If you ask an NPC to perform a service, they may ask for a favour in return, instead of accepting payment. This is especially common for Contacts or Gold tier NPCs who might have little use for even more money.

FOOD & LODGING

Establishments set their costs and prices to suit their clientele. When you stay at a coaching inn, tavern, or other communal establishment, the cost to frequent the space is equal to the Status of its usual patrons. Effectively, establishments have their own Status tier, and if a character from a different Status visits the space, they're likely to stand out.

Similar to tools and kits, the services listed combine the cost of multiple small services into a single expense. A meal for one at The River Run inn counts as a single Silver expense — you don't have to itemise everything you ate individually.



GENERAL ASSISTANCE

Service	Brass	Silver	Gold
Manual Labour	Stvedores unload your barge; nightsoil collection	A work gang transports and depots your goods overnight	Butlering at an aristocratic function
Escort	A local scoundrel shows you the sights of Talagaad	A local guide leads you safely through the Great Forest	A herald introduces you in an Elector Count's court
Information Exchange	Buy a round for a crew of gossipy sailors; make it known you're looking for someone	Access the State Troop's latest military intelligence; peek at Guild accounts	Learn the latest gossip at court; learn the secretive customs of the Karak Royal Clans
Message Delivery	A precocious child runs your letter across town	A professional courier service delivers your package to a neighbouring town	The Lothorn Sea Guard delivers your entreaty to an island off the coast

FOOD & LODGING

Service	Brass Tier	Silver Tier	Gold Tier
Meal for One	Wormy bread, grains or lentils; odd dried meat chunk or root vegetables	A decent stew; cheese, fresh mutton and bread; fresh fruits and vegetables	Multiple courses of fine dining; game from a recent hunt; rare sauces and spices
A Round of Drinks	Cheap beer; sour wine; bitter herbal tea	The local ale and house wine; half-decent spirits	Crystal bottled wine; honey mead; Dwarf specialty ales
Overnight Lodging	The common room floor, with a post for your mule; the hay bales in the barn	A small room at the inn, with stables for your horse; barrack with the State Troops	The master bedroom to yourself, with a shed for your coach; clean bed, no mites
A Night's Entertainment	A pit fight; a tavern cellar's card and dice games	Seated tickets to a joust, race, or theatrical production	A night at the opera in Nuln's Staatsoper Theatre

SPECIALIST LABOUR

Whilst all expenses first require you to find someone who can sell to you, specialist labour is especially hard to come by — most villages of the Empire do not have NPCs sufficiently blessed or educated to cater to all a player character's needs. Towns and cities can better cater to such demand, although ports like Talagaad are frequented by the most dubious, desperate, or morally compromised practitioners.

SPECIALIST LABOUR

Service	Brass	Silver	Gold
Academic Services	A scribe to read a letter aloud for you	A lawyer to act as your advocate at trial	A scholar's examination of an archeological find from Khremi
Religious Services	Manann blesses a new ship; a Dooming for a newborn	A grave in the Garden of Morr; Taal blesses your hunt	A grand cathedral wedding ceremony
Medical Services	A back-alley barber surgeon pulls a tooth; a dubious tonic from a village herbalist	A battlefield doktor administers first aid; a Priestess of Shallya prays for you	A renowned surgeon operates on you in a public anatomy theatre
Magical Services	Curse a rival (non-specific)	Divine the likely outcome of an undertaking (unreliably)	Divine the likely outcome of an undertaking (semi-reliably)

TRANSPORTATION

Travelling around the Empire on foot is time-consuming, exhausting, and dangerous. The best way to avoid unfortunate complications is to make journeys as short as possible. This is especially true for those moving cargo from town to town, as their caravans are susceptible to raids from bandits or Beastmen. If a character has not acquired a vehicle Asset (page 102), they can rent the services of a boater, coachman, or other NPC. Example expenses for this service has been approximated in the Transportation table, but this cost may be altered substantially by circumstantial factors, including the distance travelled, time of year, number of passengers, and extra cargo.

TRANSPORTATION

Service	Brass	Silver	Gold
Travel by Land	A coach ride across Talagaad, when time is of the essence.	Sharing a licenced routemaster coach to visit the next town.	Hiring a personal coach to take you to the Duchess' ball.
Deliveries by Land	Sending produce from your farm into town via horse and cart.	Sending goods with a merchant caravan from Talabecland to Averland.	Delivering goods from the port of Talagaad into Talabheim, including all tolls and permits.
Travel by Water	Cross the River Talabec by ferry; smuggled in a ship's hold.	Ride downriver on a barge; a hammock in the ship's galley.	A private pleasure cruise; personal cabin on a sailing ship.
Deliveries by Water	Ferrying goods across the river Talabec.	Transporting cargo up or down the river by barge.	Commission your own river barge; space in a ship's hold.

ASSETS

Assets are special types of equipment that demand investment of time or money to maintain. Unlike trappings, they are often too large to carry — some are in fact whole buildings — and cannot be cheaply repaired or easily replaced. Despite these inconveniences, they are likely the most valuable thing a character owns, without which they cannot practice their Career or sustain their standard of living. For this reason, Assets often become choice targets for a character's enemies.

Assets cannot be bought with Coin like trapping or services. To acquire an Asset, you must begin play with it, receive it as a reward or in another way that makes narrative sense, or save up for it using the Invest Money Endeavour (page 134). It should be rare for a character to sell or abandon their Assets, but they might trade one Asset for another, most commonly as part of the Change Career Endeavour (page 133). Characters might not legally own the physical Assets on their sheet — they could be licenced to operate the Asset under lease, or have access to it by special arrangement, perhaps with a Contact.

The effects of an Asset are many and varied. Similar to Lores, an Asset can allow you to make a Test when you otherwise wouldn't be eligible, or gain bonus dice on relevant Skill Tests when their facilities could be useful. Other Assets have more detailed rules, like Mounts and Vehicles (page 124).

Like trappings, Assets have their own Status tier, and certain Assets are not available below a certain Status tier. Characters are expected to maintain Assets at the level of their Status. This is even more critical than wearing trappings of suitable Status. A lower Status Asset reflects poorly on the character, imposing penalties on social Skill Tests until they raise the quality of the Asset to something befitting their class — for example, a supposed noble living in a thatched cottage will have a hard time being taken seriously by their peers. Equally, an Asset of higher status than your own can make you a target, both for thieves and for those of higher Status, who may simply force you to hand the Asset over should they take a liking to it.

If an Asset is damaged, e.g., if a vehicle suffers a Fault, paying someone to repair the damage costs one Coin equal to the Asset's Status per Fault or issue.



ANIMALS & VEHICLES

Animals and vehicles make travel in the Old World faster, safer, and relatively comfortable. Even a proud Dwarf warrior, who distrusts animal mounts and maritime travel, will condescend to use a mule cart to transport heavy goods.

Full rules for mounts and vehicles, along with vehicle profiles, can be found on page 124. Profiles for other animals you might domesticate can be found in **The Old World Gamemaster's Guide**.

ANIMALS & VEHICLES		
Name	Status	Description
A Small but Vicious Dog	Brass	A rat catcher's best friend. When a Dog's master makes a Melee or Brawn attack, if they don't have the <i>Staggered</i> condition, they can direct their dog to clamp down on their enemy's leg, preventing them from Giving Ground. Higher tier dogs might be trained to perform other tricks, like guard, fetch, or hunt for prey.
Hand Cart	Brass	Hand carts are small wheeled carriages you can push around to transport grains, baskets, or maybe human remains. They are meagre, but the best many travelling pedlars or peasants can afford.
Trade Cart	Brass	Trade carts have a single beast of burden to pull them, and may be open-topped or covered with canvas. Mostly used by travelling merchants, the condition of the cart varies according to the owner's Status and their business' current fortunes.
Travelling Stage	Brass	Painted carriages with two beasts to pull them are used to transport and house travelling entertainers, and fold out as a raised platform for performances. Higher Status stages are well-stocked with Stage Costumes (page 98), Musician's Gear (page 99), performing animals, and other props.
Rowboat	Brass	Rowboats are small boats without sails. Brass Tier rowboats are cramped and unstable, just about good enough to fish on. Gold Tier rowboats include personal gondolas and other pleasure craft.
River Barge	Brass	Long transport ships with one or two sails are used to ferry cargo along rivers. Brass Tier denotes you are paid to captain a barge on its owner's behalf, Silver and Gold that you own your own barge (of varying quality).
Ship's Passage	Brass	You have a standing arrangement for you and your friends and cargo to travel by sea. Brass Tier indicates regular work as a sailor. Silver Tier indicates a merchant house or naval officer's commission. Gold Tier indicates a private charter in your family's name.
Horse (p 124) and Stables	Silver	You have a domesticated steed and facilities to stable them. Silver Tier horses are stabled in a livery yard, Gold Tier horses have their own stables and trainers. Horse owners with an Elf or Bretonnian Origin begin play with an Elven Steed or Bretonnian Warhorse respectively.
Coach	Silver	Coaches are enclosed carriage pulled by two or more horses. Silver Tier stagecoaches are operated under lease for a coaching house, and licenced to stop for repairs and lodging at coaching inns along their routes. Gold Tier coaches may be the character's own personal coach.

BUILDINGS & ESTABLISHMENTS

Every character has a home where they can rest and relax, near to their campaign's main setting. If playing in Talagaad, this means a modest house in town, or in one of the villages circling the Taalbaston. These accommodations are proportional to the character's Status, with Brass tier characters lucky if they have a roof overhead, and Gold tier characters enjoying whatever luxuries the Old World has to offer.

Buildings that qualify as Assets are a different proposition. They provide resources or protections a typical residence does not. They may be an essential part of pursuing a Career, or shelter a character on the run from their enemies. These locations could provide the background for many scenes, as a secure space to plot the next move, or mount a desperate defence.

BUILDINGS & ESTABLISHMENTS

Name	Status	Description
Farm and Grazing Herd	Brass	You have a field for growing crops and grazing cattle or sheep, partitioned by an enclosure. Brass farms belong to your liege lord, who permits you to work the soil and take a portion of the proceeds. A Silver farm is your own small plot, perhaps a chicken or mushroom farm. Gold buys many acres of farmland, with serfs to work it.
Market Stall	Brass	You have a stand and awning to set up wares in your local square, with the licence to a specific plot. Status corresponds to the value of the trappings you sell — from Brass buckets, to Silver textiles, to Gold spices.
Shop	Brass	You have a small storefront where you sell wares in day time, and store stock overnight. If it's rural, you own the property; in town, it's cheaper to rent, unless the facilities are also your home. Status corresponds to the value of the trappings you're selling.
Armoury	Brass	You can access a guarded storehouse of weapons, ammunition, and armour, with quartermasters to catalogue them, and smiths to repair them. Brass characters have access conditionally — when their lord permits it, or when no-one is paying attention. Silver characters have permission to access State Troop facilities. Gold armouries denote a private collection.
Workshop	Brass	You have space to craft tools, wargear, and artwork. Also used as a shopfront and storage for trade tools and raw materials. Brass characters make do with a toolbench, or work as apprentices. Silver workshops belong to Guild licenced craftworkers. Gold workshops include a master crafter to produce trappings as you commission them.
Laboratory	Brass	You have space to craft potions, elixirs, and alchemical compounds. Also used as a shopfront and storage for trade tools and raw materials. Brass characters work in their home's kitchen with local herbs. Silver characters have a separate hut with specialist ingredients. Gold laboratories are elaborate facilities stocked with bizarre resources, including warpstone.
Brewery	Brass	You have space to craft beers, with storage for trade tools and raw materials. Brass breweries are managed from your home — when your batch is fresh, you leave a broom outside to signal you're open for business. Silver breweries are run by professionals who belong to a local guild. Gold breweries include great Dwarf brewhouses, like the dearly missed Bugman's Brewery.
Tavern	Brass	You run a venue where folks eat, drink, and are merry, with cooking sets (page 99) and boarding facilities. Brass taverns are raucous affairs that serve commoners cheap swill and culinary staples. Silver taverns include coaching inns, soldier's mess halls, and fortified lodges. Gold taverns are rare, but include the feast halls and kitchens of Dwarf Karaks.
Theatre	Brass	You have access to a stage for plays, music, bloodsports, or other performances. Brass theatres include tavern basements or a patch in the market square. Silver theatres are dedicated facilities, with their own wardrobe of stage costumes (page 98) and props. Gold theatres include gilded opera houses and cavernous amphitheatres.
Secret Hideout	Brass	You have a space to lay low and camp out for a while, known only to your most trusted allies. Brass hideouts are little more than a covered hole in the ground. Higher tier hideouts are much larger, better hidden, and contain supplies to last you weeks or longer in hiding.
Religious Shrine	Brass	You maintain a small site sacred to your chosen god, marked with holy symbols and religious offerings. Status determines the significance to your faith — Brass shrines are sacred to you alone, whilst Gold shrines attract pilgrims (and generous offerings) from across the Empire.
Temple	Silver	You help to maintain a holy site where the devoted of your faith can worship. Silver characters run, guard, or minister the temple, and receive blessings. Gold temples are truly magnificent — you have the favour of the priests who work there, or seniority within the cult.
Barracks	Silver	You can access lodgings and secure offices for State Troop or other military officers, to review intelligence, plan strategy, or relax with the troops. Silver barracks are muster halls where large numbers of soldiers lodge together. Gold barracks include officer quarters and planning rooms you have exclusive access to.
Library	Silver	You may consult a large collection of books, scrolls, and other accumulated lore. Silver libraries might be specialised to a specific subject, or only accessible at certain times. Gold libraries are vast, private collections, available at any time, catalogued by your personal librarian.
Luxurious Apartments	Silver	You have enviable accommodations in the centre of town, an excellent place to host guests and talk business in privacy. Silver apartments include comfortable beds and large wardrobes. Gold apartments include a bathtub and a house servant to run it for you.
Chapterhouse	Gold	You have a seat at the table of a Knightly Order, with stables, feast hall, armoury, and fortifications. It is an excellent place to coordinate a military campaign, whilst attended by squires, servants, and men-at-arms.
Noble Estate	Gold	You own a villa in a major city, or a fortified manor overseeing acres of farmland. Attended by servants, labourers, and guards. An excellent place to host a large social occasion.

OTHER ASSETS

Not all Assets are too large to carry. Some resemble trappings in form or function, but are much rarer, more expensive, or simply not available to purchase. Other Assets aren't really physical objects at all, but represent something more nebulous — like a social position that defies the usual hierarchy of Brass, Silver, and Gold Status.

OTHER ASSETS

Name	Status	Description
Secret Identity	Brass	You have an alias you use for work, known and recognised by those in the know, or a second life you can retreat to in case of emergency. The Assets' Status usually corresponds to the Status of your alternate identity, but also the quality of forged documents — Brass identities have no paperwork to verify them, Gold identities are almost beyond reproach.
Map of the Underground	Brass*	You own an accurate record of nearby subterranean routes: smugglers tunnels, paths through the Dwarfen Underway, or sewer systems for the few cities that have them. Brass maps cover only the immediate surroundings, Gold maps extend to neighbouring nations.
Mark of Honour	Brass	You have earned a medal or trophy that denotes valorous service in a State Troop regiment or other military outfit. Brass characters are likely ex-soldiers. Silver characters might still be serving, with comrades to watch your back. Gold characters are serving officers, with troops to boss around and complete objectives in your absence.
Symbol of Office	Brass	You carry a badge or pin that denotes you are entitled to conduct official duties on your lord's behalf. Brass characters have limited, specific duties, such as dockland inspectors or town watches. Silver characters are empowered to collect taxes, requisition accounts, or press gang militia. Gold characters are de facto rulers in their lord's absence.
Enchanted Arrows	Silver	Unique to the Wood Elves, these arrows are ensorcelled to make shots that would otherwise be impossible. As a Silver tier asset, they grant one type of enchanted arrow: Hagbane Tips (inflict the <i>Drained</i> condition on hit targets), Moonfire Shot (inflict the <i>Ablaze</i> condition on hit targets), or Trueflight Arrows (ignore Shooting penalties for cover or concealment). Gold tier provides access to all kinds of enchanted arrow. Your supply is sufficient to shoot one type of each arrow per session without penalty. If you use more, you must spend one of your Endeavours replenishing your supply.
Map of the Worldroots	Silver**	You own an accurate map of the invisible trails that allow Wood Elves and their allies to translocate as spirits do, to forests outside Athel Loren. Silver maps mark a single branch — the GM explains where two or three connective nodes are (they will be nearby). Gold maps extend to neighbouring nations.
Secret Society Membership	Silver	You belong to of a cult, order, intelligence network, or magic circle (e.g. the Hexengilde) of dubious provenance. You collectively conspire to achieve your aims — members may aid or enlist you, perhaps incriminating you if they are exposed. Gold membership indicates senior leadership within the society.
Printing Press	Silver	You own a mechanical tool that pressures ink onto parchment, used to produce pamphlets, news-sheets, religious tracts, and propaganda. Gold presses are full facilities with a team of workers, who can mass-produce prints on an industrial scale.
Trustworthy Banker	Silver	You have the right to hold your Coin somewhere trustworthy, such as the Counting House in Marienburg or the vaults of the Temple of Taal in Talabheim. You do not need to take the <i>Bank Money</i> Endeavour to lodge and withdraw Coin as you wish during downtime, or when you would reasonably have the opportunity to do so. Gold banks have branches where you can withdraw your funds all over the Old World.
Full Plate Armour	Gold	You own an enclosed set of heavy platemail, with optional visored helm. Commissioned specially for Dwarf royals, Greatsword bodyguards, and Knights of the Inner Circle. Your Resilience is equal to T+3, but you take -1d on Agility Tests, and apply the Burdened condition unless your Strength is 4 or higher.
Heirloom Wargear	Gold	You have inherited a blessed or magic item from your ancestors. Discuss its nature with your GM — they may award you something from the Magic Items chapter in The Old World Gamemaster's Guide . Otherwise, you can unleash its power once per session when you're using the wargear to make a Test Glorious.

**If playing in Talagaad, Brass maps of the underground detail a smuggler's route that will get the character through the Taalbaston and into Talabheim. Higher tier maps show how the Taalbaston's tunnels connect to the Dwarfen Underway.*

***Silver maps of the Worldroots provide access to the spirit paths connecting the stone circle south of the Taalbaston, with the Greenkeep waystone north of the Barren Hills, and the Earthspar waystone west of Lohrafurt. Gold tier maps connect to the Forest of Shadows, Drakwald, Laurelor, or even Athel Loren itself.*

RULES



“The laws of the Phoenix King keep us civilised and keep us safe. Without law, we’d be no better than animals or Men.”

— *Ulfolas Duskreader, Lothorn Sea Guard*



Most of the time, you only need to describe your character’s actions, and the Gamemaster will narrate the consequences. Walking the Old Forest Road brings you into the town of Talagaad. Glancing around the Boyar’s Rest reveals all the patrons of the tavern. Conversing at the bar catches you up on the latest gossip. You don’t need to touch the dice if a character’s actions are routine, uncontested, and without a dramatic outcome.

However, when the consequences are uncertain and the result is significant, it’s time to pick up the dice and make a Test. The simplest Tests are those unopposed by another character, where it’s immediately obvious if you have succeeded or failed.

If you roll a success, your Test achieved the outcome you wanted it to. If you don’t roll any successes, your Test has failed, and the GM narrates what happens.

Take a look at **Rolling Dice** on page 107. In that example, the dockworkers would have found Alfonse. The GM may decide they are willing to attack him in public, leading to a fight, or perhaps they would notice a watch patrol on the way, and merely warn him that he won’t be so lucky next time. A failed Test should usually lead to another dramatic moment, rather than leading to a narrative (or literal) dead end.

You only need a single success to overcome a Basic Test, but in some cases, it’s important to know exactly how well you have done. In these situations, you can look at Extra Consequences on page 109.

All Tests correspond to a Skill, and its paired Characteristic. You can learn more about Skills in **Chapter 3: Abilities** (page 67), but the next table provides a summary. It’s usually clear which Skill is most appropriate. If it’s unclear, players may suggest a Skill they want to use, but the GM makes the final decision.



ROLLING DICE

Tests are made by rolling a number of 10-sided dice (d10s). You roll your dice pool, and look for numbers that are equal to or less than the Skill being tested. In most situations, just 1 die showing the result you need is enough to succeed, but sometimes you might need more to outdo a rival or succeed with an additional benefit.







Alfonse is searching a crowd for a pair of dockworkers he's fairly certain have been sent to kill him. The GM agrees the outcome of this action is dramatic and its outcome uncertain — Alfonse may be able to spot them, or perhaps not. The GM calls for an Awareness Test — one of the skills governed by the Initiative Characteristic. Alfonse's Initiative is four, and his Awareness is five. This means he rolls four dice, with any result of a five or less being a success.

Alfonse gets two successes — the 3 and the 5 — meaning he has succeeded. Note that, on most d10s, a result of 10 is shown by a 0. Alfonse spots the dockworkers, boathooks in hand, searching for him and slips away before they can find him.

DICE MODIFIERS

Dice are sometimes added or removed from the pool before a Test, when unusual circumstances benefit or impede the Testing character. This is denoted as +1d (or +2d) for extra dice, and -1d (or -2d) when removing dice.

-  Beneficial circumstances, like corroborating intelligence or a useful vantage point, apply +1d.
-  **Difficult** circumstances, like obstructive weather or advanced security, impose -1d. **Very difficult** circumstances, where several obstacles (or a great obstacle) impede a character, impose -2d instead.
-  Many Abilities, such as Lores, Talents, trappings, and Status expectations, detail the circumstances in which they impose dice modifiers, as do Wounds and conditions.
-  Help from an ally may provide bonus dice (see below).

Unless stated otherwise, a character can never roll more dice on a Test than twice their Characteristic. If a dice pool is reduced to fewer than 1 die, you still roll 1 die — but it only counts as a success if it rolls a 1.

If a character's circumstances are more challenging because another character is acting directly against them, make an Opposed Test (page 109) instead of applying a dice modifier.

SKILL TABLE

Characteristic	Skill	Description
Weapon Skill (WS)	Melee	Strike an opponent with a weapon or your bare fists.
	Defence	Parry an attacker's thrust, or catch an arrow on your shield.
Ballistic Skill (BS)	Shooting	Attack an enemy with a ranged weapon.
	Throwing	Throw an object.
Strength (S)	Brawn	Heft a heavy load, make an unarmed attack, or grapple an enemy.
	Toil	Put in a hard day's work, toiling in the mines or harrowing the earth.
Toughness (T)	Survival	Thrive in the wilds, or find shelter and food in the deep woods.
	Endurance	Ignore a painful blow, or resist the effects of an ingested poison.
Initiative (I)	Awareness	Spot a lost brass penny on a busy street, or a thief eyeing up your coin.
	Dexterity	Pick a lock, repair an intricate timepiece, or tie an excellent knot.
Agility (Ag)	Athletics	Running, jumping, swimming, or playing a round of Middenball.
	Stealth	Keeping out of sight, or looking unobtrusive.
Reason (Re)	Willpower	Resist fear and terror, cast spells, or invoke the blessings of your god.
	Recall	Remember something important under pressure.
Fellowship (Fel)	Leadership	Inspire or intimidate others.
	Charm	Get your way with subtlety and guile — tempt, deceive, or entertain.

Helping With a Test

If your Test receives direct assistance from an ally — be that an extra pair of hands, confident supervision, or a lookout to watch your back — they make their own Test to Help you. Their Help Test may use the same Skill, or another if the GM decides that's appropriate. For each success your ally scores on the Help Test, you gain +1d on your Test.

GRIM & GLORIOUS ADVENTURE!

Some Test modifiers are especially consequential. If you've made foolish choices, or dark forces are at work with hope dwindling fast, your Test is Grim. If a situation is heavily weighted in your favour, the Test is Glorious. These modifiers apply very rarely, usually only after suffering a catastrophic failure, or when a mystical force is at work like magic, the judgement of gods, or the fickle whims of fate.

Unlike bonus dice, multiple Grim and Glorious effects do not stack on top of each other — they either apply, or they don't. If a Test is both Grim and Glorious, the two effects cancel out, and no dice are rerolled.

EXTRA CONSEQUENCES

A character only needs one success to succeed on a Test overall. However, if a GM wants to add extra nuance to a Test's outcome, they can optionally count successes to determine what extra consequences apply.

GRIM & GLORIOUS TESTS

If you're making a Grim Test, you must reroll all successes in your dice pool. If you're making a Glorious Test, you may reroll any failures in your dice pool. The result of a die is determined by its second result. A rerolled die cannot be rerolled again.



Lina, a devout Sigmarite, stands guard over a shrine to her god, her life's blood wetting the slabs beneath her feet. The Orc who wounded her grins maliciously and steps forward. She could escape and leave the shrine to be befouled, but hammer in hand, a prayer to Sigmar on her lips, she rushes forward to swing at the beast. The GM decides her faith should be rewarded, and declares that the Test is Glorious. Lina swings, rolling three dice for her Weapon Skill, looking for results of four or less, as her Melee skill is four. Her result of 8 is a failure, but as the Test is Glorious, she rolls this dice again — a 2! The result is three successes. A fine strike — perhaps Sigmar was with her after all?




TEST OUTCOMES TABLE

Successes	Result	Outcome
0	Failure!	You do not achieve the desired outcome, and suffer the consequences. You'll need a new plan or a different approach.
1	Marginal Success	You manage to do what you set out to, but only just. The GM may choose to add a Complication , if one seems appropriate to the situation.
2	Success	You did what you set out to do!
3+	Total Success!	Not only have you succeeded, but you've done so with exceptional skill, aplomb, or perhaps just excellent luck. You may suggest to the GM an additional positive effect from your Total Success .

These outcomes usually only apply to Basic Tests. They aren't used on Tests where the number of successes rolled are important in some other way, such as Help Tests, Attack Tests, or Exacting Tests.




Complications

Complications temper a character's success, but do not negate it entirely. Good Complications include:

-  **Expenditure.** You have to spend money, use up resources, expose an ally, or waste precious time to succeed (if the price is too high, you can choose to fail instead).
-  **Obfuscation.** You only get part of what you wanted, or get an incomplete view of the situation.
-  **Embarrassment.** You appear flustered, unskilled, obnoxious, or desperate, in front of someone you hoped to impress.

Total Success!

Total Success should still be within the bounds of what seems reasonable. Good options include:

-  **Efficiency.** You complete the Test faster, more discreetly, or with fewer resources.
-  **Information.** You learn more about your surroundings, or another character in your vicinity.
-  **Impressiveness.** You delight, intrigue, or intimidate someone who witnesses your success.

Specific examples of Complications and extra effects can be found in **Chapter 3: Abilities**.

OPPOSED TESTS

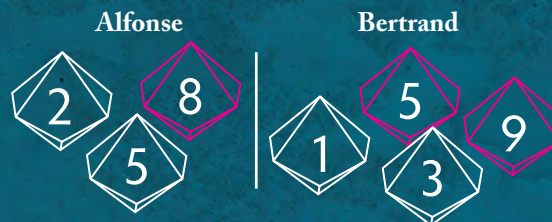
When a Test involves two characters in direct competition, both characters make a Basic Test, and whoever generates the most successes is the winner.

Ties are broken by whoever initiated the Opposed Test, whoever is attempting to change the current state of affairs, or whoever has the highest Skill rating. Ties on Attack Tests (page 118) go to the attacker. If neither character generates any successes, there is no tie-breaker — both fail, and the situation deteriorates for all involved.

To determine extra consequences of an Opposed Test, count how many more successes the winner scored than their opponent, and consult the Test Outcome Table on page 108. Winning on a tie-breaker is a Marginal Success. Extra consequences do not apply on Attack Tests, or Tests to Oppose an Attack.

TO THE DEATH!

Alfonse and Bertrand are caught in a duel to the death, trading blows as an enterprising street tout nearby takes bets on the likely outcome. Alfonse attacks Bertrand by making a Melee Test with his Weapon Skill of 3 and Melee of 5. Bertrand defends himself by opposing Alfonse's Test. The Bretonnian's Weapon Skill is 4, as is his Defence.



Both achieve two successes each. However, as Alfonse is the attacker, he wins the Test, and his blow strikes. It's only enough to stagger Bertrand, however — had Alfonse achieved more successes, or used a more lethal weapon, perhaps he might have wounded the belligerent Bretonnian. Bertrand prepares to strike back...





OPPOSED TEST SKILL EXAMPLES

Attacker Skill	Defender Skill
Melee, to strike with a warhammer.	Defence to parry, or Athletics to dodge.
Brawn, to grapple with an enemy.	Endurance, to break your enemy's hold.
Stealth, to sneak into a State Troop barracks.	Awareness, to remain vigilant for intruders.
Awareness, to search for an infiltrator.	Stealth, to hide until the search is called off.
Athletics, to pursue a street thief on foot	Athletics, to escape the townwatch on foot
Charm, to barter for a cheaper bed at the inn.	Willpower, to refuse smooth-talking chancers.
Leadership, to kickstart a prisoner revolt	Leadership, to bully the prisoners back in line

Not every Test targeting another creature is necessarily Opposed. If a character tries to Charm an incidental Halfling bartender, the GM may choose to just resolve it as a Basic Test instead. Opposed Tests are best saved for NPCs who are particularly formidable, or have their own conflicting agenda.

EXACTING TESTS

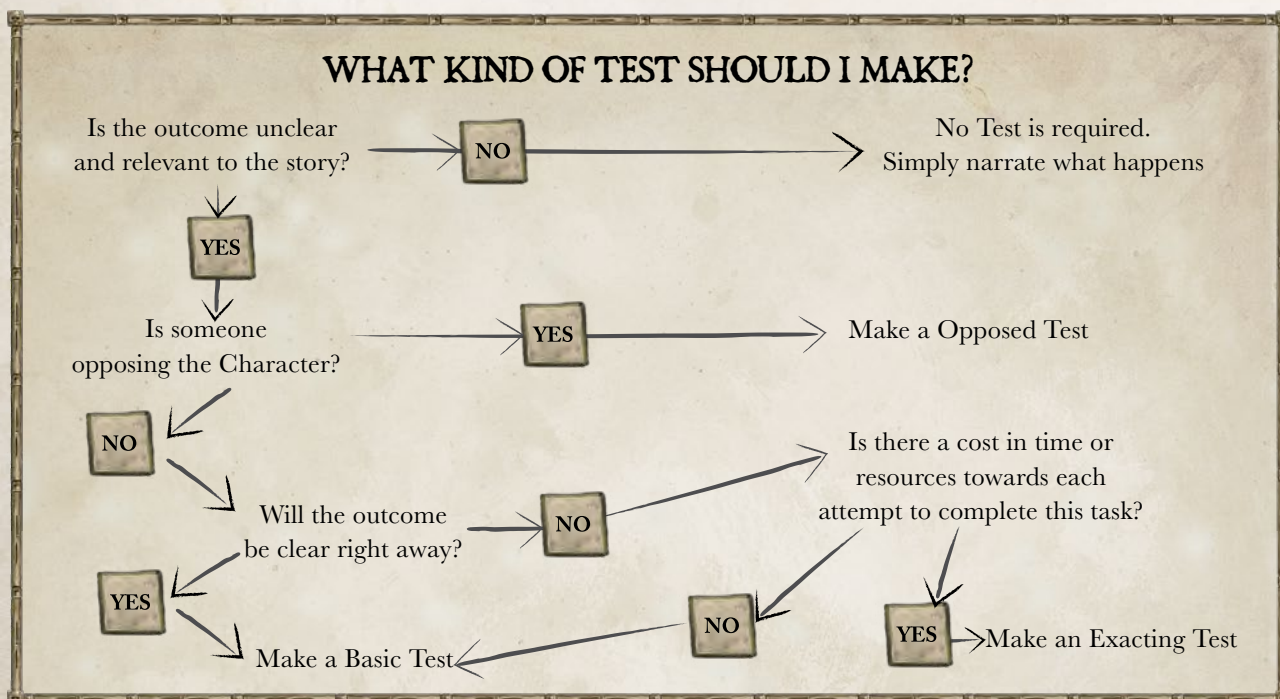
Some tasks are especially costly in time, resources, or mental commitment — trekking across the Barren Hills, forging a sword, or casting a spell. These Exacting Tests require several successes to complete. You can make several Basic Tests as part of an Exacting Test, or even collaborate with other characters making their own Tests, with the successes on all Tests contributing to the running total. However, contributing to an Exacting Test always takes its toll, with a price attached to every Test the character makes. Suitable prices include:

-  **Time.** Each Test uses up a combat turn, costs an Endeavour, diverts attention from other opportunities, or gives your enemy an opportunity to make their move.
-  **Coin.** If you're crafting or repairing something, each Test could use up money or other resources.
-  **Risk.** Each Test exposes you to more danger, from magical backlash, natural hazards, or enemy action.
-  **Favour.** Each Test uses up a favour to an NPC, or places you in another NPC's debt.

In high-pressure situations, such as a battle, time spent on the Test is costly enough. If time is not especially pressing, GMs should demand a different price — or just resolve the situation as a Basic Test, if no other cost seems relevant.

If your contribution to an Exacting Test is Opposed, reduce the number of successes you generate by your opponent's number of successes. If you succeed with a tie-breaker, add 1 success to the running total. If you fail, do not reduce the number of successes in the running total — you simply make no progress.

The GM will let you know how many total successes are required to complete an Exacting Test. 4 successes requires commitment from all but the most proficient characters. 8 successes is a costly trial for any character. Truly onerous undertakings might require 12 successes or more.



FATE

To survive a Grim Portent (page 64) and go on fighting takes a special kind of commitment, divine favour, or dumb luck. This reserve of motivation or heroic destiny is called Fate, an Ability unique to player characters.

Your Fate rating determines how many times you can spend Fate each game session. In an unusually long session, like an all-day marathon, your GM may let you refresh Fate after a mid-session break. Unspent Fate does not carry over to the next session, so use it whilst you can!

You can use Fate tokens such as those found in the **Warhammer: the Old World Roleplaying Game Starter Set** to keep track of how many times you have spent Fate each session.

USING FATE	
Spend Fate to...	Burn Fate to...
Make a Test Glorious (reroll failures)	Succeed on a Test outright
Take a second, different action on your Turn	Negate a Wound you just suffered
Act as rearguard so you and your allies can retreat	Sacrifice your life in a heroic last stand

SPENDING FATE

All player characters can spend Fate in the three ways below. Talents or magic items may provide other options to spend Fate.

Glorious Test

You can spend Fate to make your Test Glorious, letting you reroll any failures in your dice pool. You may spend Fate to make a Test Glorious after your initial dice roll, but before the GM has described the outcome.

Grim and Glorious effects cancel each other out — so if you're spending Fate on a Grim Test, you must do so before you reroll the successes in your dice pool.

You can't spend Fate on a Test that is already Glorious, or spend Fate to reroll dice multiple times on the same Test.

Second Action

When you take your turn during a battle, you can spend Fate to take a second, different action (e.g. Aiming then Attacking). The order of your actions, along with any other 'free' actions you take, are up to you.

Your second action cannot be the same as the first (you cannot Manoeuvre twice, or Help two different allies), nor can it be used to make a second attack (you cannot Charge then make a regular Attack), but your GM may also allow you to Improvise twice, if you Improvise a different way each time. You cannot spend Fate again this turn to take additional actions beyond the second.

Tactical Retreat

In desperate times, you can spend Fate to act as your group's rearguard, as you safely retreat from battle. Retreating is explained in more detail on page 120. If you decide to retreat, but no-one has Fate left to spend on providing a rearguard, the GM will extract a steeper price instead.

BURNING FATE

For truly extraordinary effects, you may burn your Fate, permanently reducing your Fate rating by 1. You may burn Fate even if you have spent all your Fate for this session — in this case, the penalty to how much Fate you can spend applies from the next session.

Unmitigated Success

You can burn Fate to narrate the best possible outcome from your Test. It doesn't matter if you burn Fate before or after any dice are rolled — your Unmitigated Success supersedes the usual rules for calculating Test outcomes.

The outcome should still be something realistically possible if the dice had gone in your favour. When attacking, you can't burn Fate to kill multiple enemies, or inflict several Wounds. But you can count on a Total Success (page 108). You can agree with your GM how exceptional the outcome is before you commit to burning Fate.

Near Miss

When you suffer a Wound, after rolling on the Wounds Table (page 190), you can burn Fate to negate that Wound entirely. Describe how your character avoided their brush with serious harm, be that a split-second dodge, or surge of sheer willpower.

A negated Wound does not add dice to future rolls on the Wounds table. If you were *Staggered* when you were Wounded, and choose to negate that Wound, you retain the *Staggered* condition.

Near Misses can spare you lethal, critical, or permanently mutilating Wounds, but they cannot prevent another enemy from inflicting the same Wound again. The safest way to avoid future Wounds is to Retreat (page 120).

Last Stand

During a desperate battle, if you have suffered a Wound, you can burn Fate to achieve a feat of exceptional valour without Testing. After accomplishing this final, mighty task, you die.

The scope of your final action is beyond even that of an Unmitigated Success, but should still fit the tone of the game. Your achievements should stretch the limits of what is possible for you, but not outright break them. Nevertheless, your death may well become the stuff of legend — or at least the talk for the town for a season or two. You might:

- ☠ Deal a heroic blow that inflicts enough Wounds to kill the Beastlord outright.
- ☠ Crash your barge into the harbour, setting off an explosive chain reaction.
- ☠ Hold a blood-soaked chokepoint at the cost of your life, allowing your allies to escape.
- ☠ Cast a groundshaking spell beyond your usual Wizard Level, at maximum Potency (page 157).
- ☠ Ask the gods to help you perform a Miracle (page 139).
- ☠ Make a sacrifice that moves an Elf Prince to aid your allies.
- ☠ Disrupt a profane ritual utterly, at the cost of your own soul.

Your GM might adjust your action if they think it is necessary, but is encouraged to be indulgent. This is your final scene, after all.

COMBAT

Nowhere in the Old World will ever be truly safe. Whether you seek battle or not, sinister forces are aware of you now, and will not stop until you are silenced. Sooner or later, you will have no choice but to fight.

A battle starts when someone reaches for a weapon, starts channelling a combat spell, or signals hostile intent. The free-flowing course of the story's narration switches to a regimented structure of rounds, turns, and actions.

Every character in the fight gets one turn per round. Every turn, each character takes one action (e.g. an Attack), along with other incidental actions like moving into an adjacent Zone.

To determine the turn order, split the participants into two sides of the conflict: the player characters and their allies; and anyone else opposed or indifferent to them. By default, the player characters' side goes first. The players collectively choose the order in which their characters take their turn, which can change from round to round. A character must complete their turn in its entirety before handing off to another character.

After that, the players' enemies take their turn, in whatever order the GM chooses (which can change from round to round).

AMBUSH

If the player characters are caught unawares by a sudden ambush or surprise betrayal, the usual turn order is flipped: the enemy acts first, followed by the PCs and their allies. This order continues for all subsequent rounds. In the first round of combat, ambushed characters cannot Oppose attacks — often leading to a one sided encounter.

A merciful GM may let a player character Test Awareness to anticipate an upcoming ambush, and warn the rest of their company. If they succeed, the player characters act just before the ambush is launched. Environment Lores can be used to automatically anticipate surprise attacks — it's hard to launch a forest ambush against a seasoned woodsman!

THE BATTLEFIELD

To track the positions and distances between characters, the battlefield is broken down into Zones and Ranges, with extra Battlefield Features that can be exploited for tactical advantage.

SKIRMISH IN THE GREAT FOREST

Deep in the heart of the Great Forest, Alfonse, Bertrand, and Lina finally track down a small party of Beastmen they have been tracking for days, and battle is quickly joined.

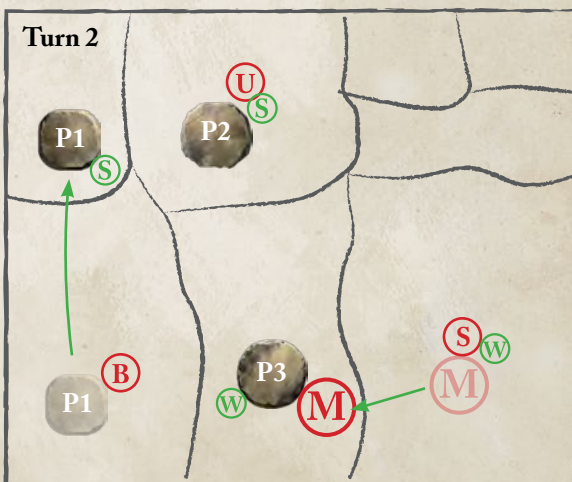
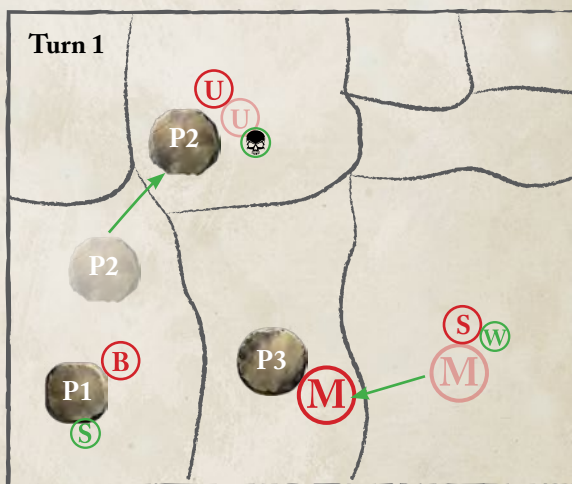
The maps here show a quickly drawn diagram of the battlefield, dividing it into several Zones. You can just describe the scene, but a quick drawing can help players visualise the situation, or if you have miniatures, you can use those too!

The GM determines where the Beastmen are — a Shaman, a Minotaur, a Bestigor and two Ungors armed with bows. The GM allows the players to place their characters in either of two Zones.

The players go first. Bertrand swings at the Bestigor, but fails to hit, suffering the *Staggered* condition for his troubles. Eager not to let the Ungors pick them off at range, Lina charges them, inflicting a Wound with a blow of her hammer that slays one. Alfonse decides to put his crossbow to use, shooting at the Shaman and Wounding it. Unfortunately, the twisted beast is a Champion capable of enduring several Wounds, so hangs on.

On the Beastmen turn, the Minotaur charges Alfonse, who quickly moves to defend himself against the hulking beast. However, the blow strikes through, and he suffers a Wound, a jarring blow to his sword arm. Lina parries a poor blow from the Ungor, *Staggering* it — she grins, intending to cut the vulnerable beast down on her next turn. Bertrand fails to beat back a blow from the Bestigor, which manages to *Stagger* the warrior.

As he is already *Staggered*, Bertrand has a choice — stand his ground and suffer a Wound, or Give Ground to the Beastman, falling back under its blows. As the Bestigor has not yet moved, the GM ponders what the beast would do — chase down the Bretonnian and press the advantage, or challenge Lina before she slays any more Ungors. In the distance, the howls of more Beastmen can be heard, drawn to the sound of combat, and the Wounded Shaman begins to channel its own dark magics...



Zones

Wherever a battle is fought, it is broken up into Zones. Zones have no set size or shape, and are formed along natural divides or breaks in the environment such as walls, doors, roads, clearings, or river banks. Height or depth can also divide two Zones, such as a city wall overlooking a tattered hovel, or the sky above the forest canopy where flying enemies soar.

Generally, if characters are fighting indoors, each room is its own Zone. Outside, characters have more freedom of movement, and Zones tend to be larger — maybe up to ten yards in diameter. Nautical battles are fought across vast leagues of empty ocean, with larger Zones still. Most battlefields have several Zones, with complex environments having a dozen or more.

POSITION

Zones are a quick way to abstract movement or an explosive's blast radius, but that doesn't mean a character's position within a Zone doesn't matter. Your use of obstacles within a Zone may provide cover and concealment (page 115), or block line of sight, even to an enemy that has clear sight of the rest of the Zone. Surrounding an ally can protect them from Melee engagement, whilst surrounding an enemy prevents them leaving combat. Use common sense to work out what is and isn't possible within a Zone — your GM has the final say.

It's useful to have a visual aid of the battlefield during play, particularly if there are a lot of combatants. You might quickly sketch a map on plain paper, or move digital assets around a virtual tabletop, with lines to mark the borders between Zones. Fighting over a board with painted terrain and miniatures is the dream, as anyone engaging with the wider Warhammer hobby can attest!

Range

Determining the distance between two characters is not measured in yards or metres, but by counting the number of Zones between them. The descriptors below are used to summarise these range bands.

CLOSE RANGE: WITHIN ARM'S REACH

Close Range is required to attack with most Melee weapons, treat a Wounded comrade, or loot their corpse. To touch something, you usually have to be in the same Zone, unless you and the target are at the very edge of adjacent Zones.

SHORT RANGE: SAME ZONE

Short Range is applicable if you're on opposite sides of a room from someone, or marching in the same regimental formation. Moving to something at Short Range is usually trivial, unless you're blocked from moving entirely.

MEDIUM RANGE: 1 ZONE AWAY

At Medium Range, you need to raise your voice to be heard — it's the distance between the stage and the audience, between a noble's dinner hall and their servants in the next room. Medium Range is as far as most creatures can move in one battle turn, unless they sacrifice their action to perform a Manoeuvre.

LONG RANGE: 2 ZONES AWAY

Communicating at Long Range means shouting; passing on an object requires a powerful throw. Moving up to Long Range in one turn requires the Manoeuvre action, unless you're a Fast creature (like a horse).

EXTREME RANGE: 3+ ZONES AWAY

At Extreme Range, your target might still be visible, but too far away to usefully interact with. A character who focuses entirely on movement on their turn can move up to three Zones, or even further at Fast Speed

A RANGE OF OPTIONS

Most ranged effects aren't used at Extreme Range, as characters are more likely to be engaging with targets close enough to look in the eye. That said, Bretonnian peasant bowmen and Nuln artillery crews both train to fire at targets hundreds of yards away. The GM may allow characters who take the time to Aim (page 116) to make Shooting attacks against targets at Extreme Range, but should apply an appropriate penalty if that range would be a complicating factor.



Speed

Characters move at one of three Speeds:

- ❏ Slow creatures can move to a location within Medium Range each turn, but cannot use the Manoeuvre action to Run, Charge, Move Quietly or Move Carefully. Few Human-sized creatures are Slow, but undead minions or cumbersome vehicles might be.
- ❏ Normal creatures can move to a location within Medium Range each turn, and may choose to move extra Zones with the Manoeuvre action. This is the default Speed for all player characters.
- ❏ Fast creatures can move to a location within Long Range each turn, and may choose to move extra Zones with the Manoeuvre action. Cavalry, flyers, and most Monstrosities are Fast.

Besides Speed, other effects or conditions may affect a character's movement. The *Burdened* condition prevents even Normal or Fast characters from undertaking Manoeuvres. The *Prone* condition prevents creatures from leaving their Zone. The *Defenceless* condition prevents creatures from moving at all.

Speed may also be relevant outside of battle — in chase scenes for example. A creature with higher Speed will always, given enough time and distance, overtake a creature of lower Speed. If characters have the same Speed, or a character with lower Speed has a decent headstart, make Opposed Athletics Tests to determine the outcome.

Battlefield Features

Zones are rarely featureless plains. They are littered with points of interest, natural features or discarded remains that can be used as a barrier, obstruction, or improvised weapon.

COVER AND CONCEALMENT

If you're facing a hail of arrows, get out the line of fire! Many Zones have ways for you to avoid incoming projectiles, by ducking behind a wall, covering yourself in foliage, or retreating into fog. An attacker whose visibility is impeded by the target's cover or concealment takes -1d on Shooting Attack Tests.

In addition, a character can Manoeuvre behind concealing features whilst Moving Quietly, to hide themselves from view. If cover is marginal, such as the rise of a hill or a low wall, they might need to fall Prone to be protected.

If you're fighting in darkness, you can't see anything at Long or Extreme Range. It's rarely sensible to attack someone you can't see, but if you do so anyway, you count as Blinded, meaning the Test is Grim.

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Zone features that obstruct movement — muddy ground, thick foliage or debris — are referred to as Difficult Terrain. If you move through Difficult Terrain on your turn, make an Athletics Test. If you fail, you fall Prone immediately after crossing the Difficult Terrain. The Move Carefully Manoeuvre (see page 117), and certain Environmental Lore, allow you to bypass this Test.

On a turn when you Test to move through Difficult Terrain, you cannot also Test Athletics to move an extra Zone when you Run (page 117) or Charge (page 117) — the obstruction prevents you from reaching your top speed.

HAZARDS

Some Zones feature dangerous Hazards. They may be lined with traps, or impose a steep fall, or contain a roaring fire. Serious weather conditions, like extreme heat or cold, might dictate the entire region counts as a Hazard.

If you're exposed to a Hazard, you must Test to avoid suffering its effects. If you fail, you suffer a Wound, and/or a relevant condition determined by the GM.

Especially dangerous Hazards have a rating. To avoid these Hazards, you must score successes on your Test equal to the Hazard's rating. If you fail, you suffer a Wound, rolling dice on the Wounds table equal to the difference between the Hazard rating and your number of successes (plus extra dice for untreated Wounds, as normal).








EXAMPLE HAZARDS


Hazard Type	Skill Tested	Test Frequency	Hazard Rating	Failure Effects
Falling Damage				
Jump from a moving vehicle	Athletics	Once	1	Wound, <i>Prone</i>
Pushed out a second storey window	Athletics	Once	2	Wound, <i>Prone</i>
Traps				
Bear trap	Awareness	Once	1	Wound, <i>Burdened</i>
Snare trap	Awareness	Once	1	<i>Defenceless</i>
Natural Hazards				
A burning building	Endurance	Per turn	2	Wound, <i>Ablaze</i>
Drowning underwater	Endurance	Per turn	2	Wound, <i>Drained</i>
Travel Hazards				
An exhausting day's march	Survival	Per day	1	<i>Drained</i>
Travel in extreme weather	Survival	Per day	2	Wound, <i>Drained</i>

Since the Wounds table assumes the character is suffering an injury from a physical blow, some results might be unsuitable for Wounds inflicted by fumes, poisons, or climate conditions. The GM may choose another nearby result on the Wounds table instead, or even create their own Wound specific to the Hazard.

COMBAT ACTIONS

When a character takes their turn in a battle, they undertake one of the six combat actions. You might gain a second action on your Turn by spending Fate or using a Talent. Regardless, you cannot perform more than two actions on your turn, and you cannot perform the same action more than once per turn (except by Improvising in two different ways). In addition, a character may take a reasonable amount of other incidental actions. These free actions include:

-  Move to a location within Medium Range (one Zone away). Fast creatures can move to a location within Long Range (two Zones away) instead. Make this free move only once per turn. Instead of moving, you can remove the Prone condition from yourself or an ally in Close Range.
-  Draw a weapon, catch a tossed item, or swap what items you're holding.
-  Nock an arrow in your bow, or prepare any missile weapon that doesn't require a Test to reload.
-  Drop Prone (page 120).
-  Shout a warning to an ally, or a threat at an enemy.

-  Pick up, consume, or interact with a simple object in Close Range — e.g. opening a door, or pulling a lever. Use the Recover action to do this while in Close Range of an enemy.

Incidental actions don't usually require a Test to achieve, but there are some exceptions — e.g. Testing Athletics to move through Difficult Terrain.

Common sense determines how many incidental actions you can perform on your turn, but the GM is the final arbiter. Some options may be allowed outside your turn, like spitting curses at a heretical enemy!

If you've got the drop on an enemy, you can take a turn of 'setup' actions before they're even aware of you — Aiming your bow, Helping to set a trap, Manoeuvring into striking range, etc.

Aim

Make an **Awareness** Test to aim a ranged weapon at an enemy. Each success adds +1d on the next ranged attack you make against that target, so long as you take no other actions in between. In addition, Aiming may allow you to make attacks against targets at Extreme Range (see page 114).

Attack

Make an Attack Test to injure your enemy with a suitable pairing of Skill and weapon. If your target is aware of you, they Oppose with Athletics or another appropriate Skill. If your Attack Test succeeds, your target is *Staggered* or *Wounded*. Full rules to resolve attacks are on page 118.

Help

Per the usual rules for Help (page 117), Test a relevant Skill that can assist an ally on an upcoming action. You might call out a weak spot to aid an attack, intercept a blow to bolster an ally's defence, or raise your team's confidence with morale-boosting sermons. For each success you score, your ally gains +1d on their upcoming Test.





To overcome an especially dangerous foe, it is rarely effective for every character to make their own separate Attack Tests. Instead, Help each other to make fewer, more powerful attacks, with big dice pools to overwhelm your enemy's defence.

Improvise

You use one of your Skills, spells, or another Ability in the same way you would outside of combat. Often this will allow you to apply a condition, such as using *Brawn* (opposed by *Endurance*) to knock an enemy *Prone*, or using *Leadership* to admonish an attacker and inflict the *Distracted* condition. When facing enemies, skills might resolve conflicts without combat — using *Brawn* to disarm attackers or *Charm* to turn foes into allies, with GM approval. However, these creative approaches aren't guaranteed; only defeating opponents or rendering them *Defenceless* truly neutralizes threats.

Manoeuvre






You focus your turn solely on moving around the battlefield. Choose one of these options:

-  **Run** an extra Zone, on top of the free move you get each Turn. You may Test Athletics to try and move a second extra Zone, but if you fail you suffer the *Staggered* condition if you aren't already *Staggered*.
-  **Charge** into combat! Choose an enemy within Medium Range, move to within Close Range of them, then make an attack against the target (taking +1d if this is a Melee attack). You may Test Athletics to try and Charge an enemy at Long Range — if you fail you stop short 1 Zone away from the target, cannot attack, and suffer the *Staggered* condition if you aren't already *Staggered*. You cannot Charge if you begin your turn in Close Range of an enemy.
-  **Move Quietly** by making a Stealth Test, Opposed by your most vigilant enemy's Awareness. If you succeed, and there is cover or concealment you can use your free move to duck behind, you disappear from view. Your next attack from this position is unopposed.
-  **Move Carefully** to ignore the effects of Difficult Terrain. You may also Test Awareness search your surroundings for a hidden opportunity, secret weakness, or concealed enemy.



Recover

After a moment to regather your wits, you gain each of the following benefits:

-  Remove the Staggered condition from yourself or an ally in Close Range.
-  Remove the Prone condition from yourself or an ally in Close Range. If you are not Prone, you can mount your steed instead, if it is within Close Range.
-  Treat a Wound (page 121), or Test to remove another condition, from yourself or an ally in Close Range.
-  Remove one die from your Miscast pool (page 157).
-  Grab or interact with a dropped weapon, healing potion, or other object, even if an enemy is within Close Range.

At the end of a battle, when you have a chance to catch your breath, the survivors automatically Recover — they are no longer Staggered or Prone, and succeed on all Tests to treat a Wound or recover from a condition.

ATTACK TESTS




Attack Tests aim to incapacitate or kill an enemy target. The attacker uses a skill appropriate to their weapon: Melee for melee weapons, Shooting for ranged weapons, Throwing for thrown weapons, Brawn for unarmed attacks.

Most attacks are Opposed Tests (page 109). The defender resists with Athletics, or Defence if they are suitably armed. If the attacker gains at least as many successes as the defender, the attack succeeds. If the defender gains more successes than the attacker, the attack fails.

An unaware or *Defenceless* target may not oppose incoming Attack Tests, meaning even one success is enough for an attack to hit. Attacking an unaware target draws attention to your presence — you must Move Carefully to a new hiding spot to make attack unopposed again.

Attack Modifiers

Many weapons (page 92) provide bonuses on Attack or Defence Tests, and Wounds, Help, Talents, and other Abilities may apply modifiers as well. In addition, the following modifiers apply to Melee and Brawn attacks:

-  +1d on attacks made during a Charge (page 117).
-  +1d if you outnumber your foe in your Zone. To calculate this, add together all the allies in your Zone (including yourself), and add together all the enemies in your Zone (including your target) — if there are more of the former than the latter, you get the bonus. Mounted enemies count as one fighter; Defenceless or defeated fighters, or non-combatants, don't count at all.
-  +1d if you are attacking from higher ground. This applies if you are fighting atop elevated terrain, or the target is Prone. Being a bigger creature, or mounted on a steed or vehicle, does not provide the bonus by default.

COMBAT EXAMPLE

Bertrand rushes into combat with an Orc Warrior, aiming to split him from waist to shoulder. He makes a Melee Attack Test — his Melee is 5, and his WS is 4, but he gets +1d because he's attacking as part of a Charge. Bertrand rolls a 2, 4, 4, 7, and 10, for 3 successes in total.






Example:

The Orc is prepared for battle, and carrying a brutal choppa he can use to defend himself. Testing his Defence of 4 with his WS of 3, the Orc rolls a 3, 4, and 9, for 2 successes in total.

Because Bertrand scored at least as many successes as the Orc, his attack strikes true! See the Damage Example box on page 119 for how to see what happens next.

The following modifiers also apply to Shooting and Throwing attacks:

-  -1d if you are attacking a target who is not in your weapon's Optimum Range (page 94).
-  -1d if your target is obscured by cover or concealment (page 115).
-  -1d if your target is Prone (page 123).

GMs may withhold these modifiers where they seem inappropriate, e.g. withholding the outnumbering bonus if you only outnumber 7 to 6.

ATTACK MODIFIERS

Melee/Brawn Attack Modifiers

- +1d if attacking as part of a Charge
- +1d if you outnumber in your Zone
- +1d if attacking from higher ground

Shooting/Throwing Attack Modifiers

- 1d if attacking outside Optimum Range
- 1d if target is obscured by cover or concealment
- 1d if target is *Prone*

Failed Attacks

Whilst attacking at range is relatively safe, failing to attack an enemy in Close Range leaves you open to counter attacks — if you aren't Staggered already, you suffer the Staggered condition. If you're already Staggered, no additional penalties apply.

Successful Attacks

Successful attacks inflict Damage. Each weapon has its own Damage value, sometimes derived from the attacker's Strength. This base Damage is increased by how many more successes the attacker scored than the defender on their Attack Test (or the total number of successes, for unopposed attacks).

Damage is compared to the defender's Resilience. Resilience is equal to the target's Toughness, plus any bonuses they gain from armour, shields, or other Abilities.

If the attacker's Damage exceeds the target's Resilience, the defender suffers a Wound (page 121).

If the attacker's Damage is equal to or lower than the target's Resilience, the defender is Staggered. If the target is already Staggered, they must choose either to Give Ground, fall Prone, or suffer a Wound.

DAMAGE EXAMPLE

Bertrand's player calculates the result of his successful attack. His sword inflicts Damage equal to Bertrand's Strength, which is 4. However, Bertrand's Attack Test generated 1 more success than the Orc's Defence, so the attack inflicts 5 Damage in total.

The Orc's Toughness is 4, but the Orc is wearing light armour, which provides +1 Resilience. The Orc's total Resilience is therefore 5 as well.

Because Bertrand's Damage does not exceed the Orc's Resilience, his attack does not deal enough damage to Wound the Orc. However, the attack does inflict the Staggered condition. If the Damage had exceeded the Orc's Resilience it would have inflicted a Wound. As the Orc is only a Minion (page 191) this would have been enough to defeat it. However, as the Orc is Staggered, it is more vulnerable to further attacks.

GIVING GROUND

Giving Ground puts space between you and your attacker, before they can press the advantage. Move away from your attacker into an adjacent Zone of your choice. You may only Give Ground once per round.

If you Give Ground into a Zone containing an enemy, you gain the *Broken* condition (page 122).

Whilst Giving Ground, you cannot move through enemies, obstacles, or areas you treat as Difficult Terrain. You cannot Give Ground if you are Prone or unable to leave your Zone. If these restrictions make Giving Ground impossible, you cannot choose to Give Ground, and must fall Prone or suffer a Wound instead.

Giving Ground is a useful way to avoid injury, so canny fighters always have an escape plan. Try to avoid getting surrounded in combat. Alternatively, get behind your enemies so they aren't able to escape you!

DROPPING PRONE

Dropping to the ground inflicts the Prone condition, as you're knocked off your feet or dive out of harm's way. Full rules for the condition are on page 123 — you're more vulnerable to close combat attacks, better protected against missile attacks, knocked from a steed or vehicle, and unable to leave your Zone until you stand.

Prone characters cannot fall Prone again or Give Ground. If you're Staggered again whilst Staggered and Prone, you suffer a Wound.

Dropping Prone is not a terrible response to ranged fire, but does leave you very vulnerable to Melee attacks. Lying Prone in the face of an armed opponent might grant you bonus dice when begging for your life though!

RETREAT

If a battle is going poorly, the players may determine that discretion is the better part of valour, and surrender the field to their enemies. If the players are in unanimous agreement, they may sound the retreat at the start of a round (or when it is their side's turn to act, if their enemies act first). Otherwise, the battle continues, perhaps with some characters Manoeuvring to safety.

To retreat, one character must spend Fate to act as the group's rearguard, covering their unguarded backs as they peel off from the fighting. If the group has spent all their Fate, the GM extracts the price another way: in blood (inflicting a Wound), materiel (dropping a valuable trapping), or misfortune (conferring their enemies a golden opportunity).

If the enemy is pursuing, every player character makes an Athletics Test to try and extricate themselves from the battle without incident. GMs may allow characters with suitable Lores to succeed automatically — using Woodcraft to effortlessly disappear into the Great Forest, for example. Enemies may Oppose a retreating character's Test, especially if their Speed is higher. Some enemies might choose not to pursue — their priority might be to protect their territory, care for their wounded, or finish a ritual.

For each character that fails, rolls 1d10 on the Run For Your Lives! table, and add the results together. If multiple characters generate Complications, the GM may call for a 1d10 roll on the table, even if everyone succeeded.

Retreat protects the player characters from harm, but offers no such assurances to NPCs they're escorting or loot they intended to steal — their fates are left to the GM's discretion.

RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

Result	Effect
1-3	Lost. You are chased into unfamiliar territory. Making your way back home takes time, during which your enemies act unhindered.
4-6	Mocked. This is not your finest moment, and rivals or bystanders are present to witness it. People gossip. Your reputation will suffer.
7-9	Indebted. Another war party or an authority figure rescues you. Now you owe them, and repaying that debt won't be easy.
10-12	Marked. Your enemies have caught your scent, stolen your plans, or seen behind your masks. Next time you move against them, they'll be ready.
13-15	Exposed. Your enemies stalk you back home. They know where you live and who shelters you. They know how to strike where you're weakest.
16-18	Hunted. Your pursuers are right behind you. So long as you lay low, lick your wounds, and stay hidden, you're safe. When you move again, the hunt is on.
19-21	Robbed. You abandon your heaviest trappings for a quicker getaway. The GM determines what each character has lost to the enemy.
22-24	Surrounded. You run straight from one enemy into another. It'll take skillful manoeuvre or negotiation to prevent another conflict.
25+	Trapped. There's no clean way out. The GM explains the cost of escape — your rearguard might suffer Wounds, or be captured by the enemy.

WOUNDS & CONDITIONS

When a player character is seriously injured, they roll on the Wounds Table to determine the effect. For ease of reference, the Wound Table can be found on page 190, at the very back of this book. Roll 1d10, plus another d10 for each untreated Wound you already have, and add together the results and consult the table below to see what ill has befallen you.

Wounds trigger a rush of adrenaline through your body, masking your pain and surging you forwards. When a *Staggered* character suffers a Wound, they immediately remove the *Staggered* condition.

RECOVERING FROM WOUNDS

Besides increasing the severity of future Wounds, most Wounds have other ongoing negative effects. Some effects are temporary, others apply until the Wound is treated with basic first aid, and some apply until the Wound is fully healed. Treatment can be attempted by any character in the field, but healing from a Wound takes time, and potentially even surgery.

Treatment

The first step to recover from injury is addressing the immediate symptoms: stopping the bleeding, resetting dislocated limbs, and getting back on your feet. If a Wound is treated, it no longer applies +1d when you roll on the Wounds Table for future injuries. In addition, penalties from that Wound that apply ‘until it is treated’ are discounted.




During a battle, you can use the Recover action to treat a Wound suffered by yourself or an ally in Close Range. This requires a Recall Test to remember and administer the right treatment — if you have the Anatomy Lore, you succeed automatically. Other Lores might be relevant when treating specific Wounds — e.g. a Troll Slayer might automatically succeed when neutralising the acid of troll vomit.

At the end of a battle, if you have the chance to catch your breath, you automatically Recover and treat all your Wounds without any Test required. If you suffer Wounds outside of battle, you can treat them as soon as you’ve escaped the Hazard or threat that inflicted the injury.

You can only treat an injury if you have the right trappings to do so, like sutures to close a wound, or bandages to wrap a field dressing. A well-stocked Physicker’s Kit (page 99) contains all the tools needed to mend most common injuries — otherwise you might need to improvise, making a Survival or Awareness Test to find supplies. Your GM may apply difficulty modifiers when you Test to treat your own Wounds.

Healing

Treatment can address symptoms, but only time can cause a Wound to fully heal, ending all non-permanent effects. Each Wound specifies a duration that must elapse before the Wound is healed.

-  **Catch Your Breath:** The least serious Wounds cease to be of concern once the immediate danger has passed. This happens automatically at the end of a battle or dangerous encounter, assuming the characters aren’t thrust straight into another hazardous situation.
-  **A Night’s Rest:** Moderate Wounds require you to take it easy and enjoy an early night — you’ll feel better in the morning.
-  **Rest and Recovery:** The deadliest Wounds cannot just be walked off — they require the character to hang up their boots, and devote themselves entirely to physical rehabilitation. This is usually only possible during Downtime, when the character undertakes the *Rest and Recovery* Endeavour (page 136). If a Wound requires surgery, you cannot even begin your recovery until after that procedure.

Even when a Wound is healed, some effects might remain: a disfiguring scar, aches and pains, psychological trauma. But besides the permanent changes like lost limbs, the penalties listed for that Wound no longer apply.

The exact times for healing are not rigidly defined, but rarely of particular significance. If the timing is significant (e.g. you’re meeting the Count in three hours, and want the benefit of a night’s rest before then), your GM may allow you to make an Endurance Test to heal the Wound in advance of that deadline.

There is little conventional medical treatment can do to accelerate healing, but it might make the process more comfortable. Spells and potions that accelerate healing are exceptionally rare, and highly sought after.

SURGERY

The most severe Wounds require surgery, which is always a difficult and dangerous procedure. Usually, this means paying an NPC to perform the service during downtime, as part of a *Rest and Recovery* Endeavour.

A character with the Anatomy Lore may attempt the surgery themselves. To do this safely requires a theatre to operate in, specialist medical tools, time to work, and crutches and prostheses to support the patient's recovery. It also requires a successful Dexterity Test, with failed Tests carrying the risk of permanent disfigurement or death.

Even successful surgeries permanently transform a character, as they learn to reckon with a new disability. But veterans of the Old World's wars are famously resourceful, employing hook hands and peg legs to keep up with their unscarred comrades. Each injury specifies the permanent consequences of post-surgical Wounds, and suggests how a character might mitigate them, if only partially.

Healing potions, rejuvenating spells, and prayers to Shallya may accomplish the work of surgery through supernatural means. Few citizens of the Empire have access to these methods, and those who trade in them are often assailed by the sick, the needy, and the desperate.

Infection

Poor hygiene, unanticipated side-effects, and low standards of medical education can all cause Wounds to become more serious than initially diagnosed. At the end of a day when you have suffered any Wounds — even if your Wounds have been treated or healed — you must make an Endurance Test. If you score fewer successes than the number of Wounds you received that day, you gain a Festering Wound.

Festering Wounds count as untreated Wounds, applying +1d when rolling on the Wounds Table as normal. They cannot be treated, and require the *Rest and Recovery* Endeavour to heal.

Before Testing for infection, a character with the Anatomy Lore can make a Recall Test, to identify the warning signs and take action before the Wound festers. For each success they gain on their Test, they may choose themselves or an ally to automatically succeed on their Endurance Test to avoid infection.

CONDITIONS

Conditions impose penalties or limitations on your actions. You may only have one of each condition at a time — you cannot become *Broken* twice, for example. Some conditions do trigger effects when you receive them a second time (such as the *Staggered* condition). If a Talent or other effect allows you to choose between several conditions, you cannot choose one you already have.

Each condition suggests a way to remove it, and certain Abilities provide other options for removing them. However, if a condition is applied by an ongoing effect (e.g. a Wound, an illness, extreme weather), you cannot remove it until the underlying cause is addressed (e.g. by healing the Wound, or finding shelter).

If removing a condition requires a Test, this must be done as part of the Recover action (page 118). Some conditions are removed automatically when you take that action, but you may only test to remove one condition or treat one Wound when you Recover.

Ablaze

You are on fire, scorched by flames that burn your clothes and sear your flesh.

Effect: At the end of each turn, Test Endurance to avoid a fire-based Hazard (2).

Removal: Athletics Test to stop drop and roll; douse yourself in water.

Blinded

You cannot see — you're stumbling around in the dark, trying to orient yourself.

Effect: Any Tests with a visual component (including attacks, Opposing attacks, movement, and Awareness) are Grim, and all Tests that rely on sight entirely fail.

Removal: Awareness Test to recover your wits; remove the blindfold or Wound that inflicted the condition.

Broken

Your courage has failed, and all you can think of is retreating to a place of safety.

Effect: You must spend your turn moving to a Zone without an enemy as fast as possible, undertaking Manoeuvres if necessary. Once you are in a Zone without an enemy, you may attempt to Recover.

Removal: Willpower Test to find your courage; another character's Leadership Test to restore your discipline.

Burdened

You are encumbered by heavy equipment, binding restraints, or an incapacitating injury.

Effect: You cannot use the Manoeuvre action.

Removal: Brawn Test to break free of the burden; reduce the weight you're carrying.

Critically Injured

Your wounds are so severe you might expire from blood loss, shock, or suffocation.

Effect: At the end of each turn, Test Endurance. If you fail, you gain the *Defenceless* condition. If you already have the *Defenceless* condition, you die.

Removal: Recall Test to treat your Wound.

Deafened

You can't hear anything, or are subjected to a loud noise that drowns out other sounds.

Effect: You cannot hear words, noises, or other sounds. You cannot use the Help action, automatically fail Tests that rely on hearing exclusively, and cannot be affected by abilities that depend on you hearing them.

Removal: Awareness Test to recover your wits; remove your earplugs, silence the drowning noise, or wait for your hearing to return.

Defenceless

You are entirely at your enemy's mercy.

Effect: You cannot move, take actions, or Oppose Tests. You can only make Tests when a condition or other debilitating effect prompts you to do so. If asleep or unconscious, you cannot talk. Any successful attack inflicts a Wound instead.

Removal: Variable — may be removed just by waking up, or may require an ally to treat your Wound.

Distracted

Your attention wanders to feelings of doubt, rage, shame, or desire, instead of focussing on the task at hand.

Effect: You take -1d on Tests (including Opposed Tests) focused on anyone or anything besides whatever you are distracted by.

Removal: In battle, Test Willpower to refocus your attention; otherwise wait until the distracting character is defeated or out of sight. If you are Distracted again the original condition is replaced by the new one.

Drained

Your concentration and fighting strength is compromised by sickness or exhaustion.

Effect: You cannot gain bonus dice on Tests. No Tests you make are Glorious, unless you spent Fate to make them so. Dice penalties and the Grim effect still apply as normal.

Removal: Test Endurance to recover from short-term debilities; rest and relax to recover from ongoing fatigue or illness.

Prone

You are knocked flat, lying down, or kneeling on the floor.

Effect: Melee attacks against you gain the benefit of higher ground, adding +1d. Shooting attacks against you take -1d. If you knocked *Prone* whilst mounted on a steed or vehicle, you are dismounted. You cannot move out of your Zone whilst *Prone*.

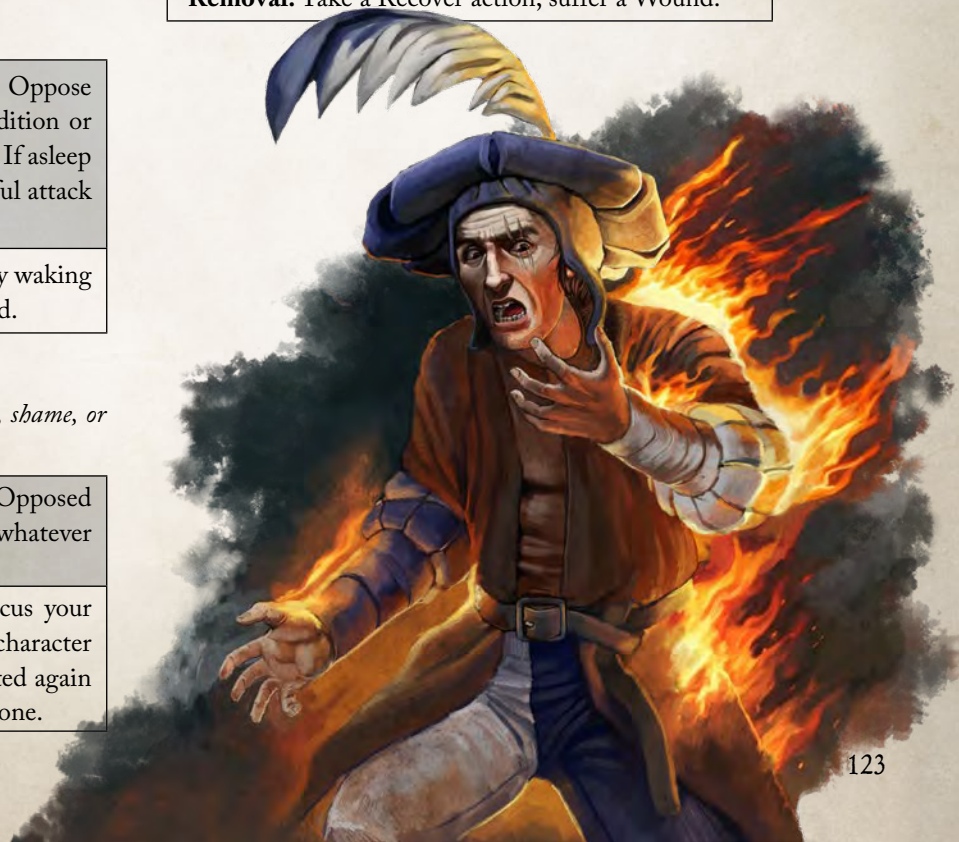
Removal: Take a Recover action; sacrifice your free move for the turn.

Staggered

You are battered, bruised, or otherwise reeling from an enemy attack.

Effect: No effect by itself, but if you are *Staggered* again you must choose: Give Ground into an adjacent Zone (once per round); suffer the *Prone* condition; or suffer a Wound.

Removal: Take a Recover action; suffer a Wound.



MOUNTS & VEHICLES

Between the Old World's towns and villages, bandits and predators haunt the wilderness. Few undertake these journeys on foot if given a choice. Trekking on horseback, in carts, or sailing along riverways is both faster and safer, but often costly.

MOUNTED CAVALRY

Horses and other steeds have their own NPC profiles (listed in the **Gamemaster's Guide**), but when ridden, mount and rider are treated as a single entity — using the Characteristics, Skills, and other Abilities of the rider, but with additional Abilities conferred by their steed.

A mounted creature trained to accept a rider follows its master's instructions. When attempting a physically difficult manoeuvre, the rider makes an Athletics Test. If a mount is confronted by something frightening, the rider makes a Leadership Test to retain control.

Cavalry in Battle

In battle, mounted animals do not take a turn, but move and act together with their rider. Many animals have an Ability they confer to creatures riding them — most commonly, increasing their collective Speed to Fast.

An mounted warrior can use a weapon they're equipped with (with their own Abilities), or one of their mount's attacks (using the mount's Abilities). It's usually better to rely upon the rider's combat prowess, unless their steed is especially fearsome! Some mounts have Abilities that improves their rider's attacks.

When a mounted warrior is attacked, it is assumed that harm is directed to the rider. If the rider is aware of the attack, they Oppose as normal with Athletics (or Defence, if suitably armed). If a warrior is mounted on a Monstrosity — a truly ferocious steed, such as a Griffon or Dragon — attackers may single out the Monstrosity and attack them as a separate character. The Monstrosity uses its own Abilities to defend itself.

A rider may choose to dismount as part of their move. They are forcibly dismounted if they fall Prone, are dragged from the saddle, or fail an Athletics Test to jump over an obstacle. A dismounted steed is controlled by the GM, and can take its own battle turn. However, it is common for dismounted steeds to take no actions at all, besides quitting the field, running around in confusion, or pawing at their fallen rider.

Horses

Many creatures of the Old World are ridden into combat, from the giant boars, wolves, and spiders favoured by Orcs and Goblins, to the furious Hippogryphs of Bretonnia. But the most common steed in civilised lands are horses — including thoroughbred Bretonnian warhorses, and Elven Steeds. Full rules for other creatures that can be tamed as mounts are included in the **Gamemaster's Guide**.

HORSE							
WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Re	Fel
3	0	3	3	3	4	2	1
Speed		Resilience			Type		
Fast		3			Minion		
Skills: : Default 1, Melee 3, Brawn 4, Endurance 3, Awareness 3, Athletics 4, Willpower 3							
Attacks: Hooves (Close, 3d/3, Dam 3)							
Protection: Athletics 4d/4							
Noble Steed: A character mounted on a Horse gains +1 Resilience, increases their Speed to Fast, and automatically inflicts the Prone Condition (before the target can Give Ground) on any successful Charge attack against a creature that isn't a Monstrosity.							
Typical Trappings: Horse shoes, saddle, and tack							
Bretonnian Warhorse (Optional): A character mounted on a Bretonnian Warhorse ignores Agility penalties from heavy armour or barding when Testing to control their mount or Oppose incoming attacks.							
Elven Steed (Optional): A character mounted on an Elven Steed gains +1d on Athletics Tests to control their mount or Oppose incoming attacks.							

VEHICLES

Vehicles use many of the same rules as cavalry. They do not act or move unless they have a driver, to tack the wind, lead a row crew, or direct a team of animals. Driving doesn't usually require a Test, unless you're pushing a vehicle to its limits (e.g. chasing another vehicle, navigating Difficult Terrain). See the Driving Skill Table to determine the most relevant Skill.

Vehicles are expensive Assets (page 102) that require substantial maintenance. A license to operate one on behalf of a coaching house, shipping consortium, or navy, is more likely than owning a vehicle yourself. Renting a vehicle bigger than a rowboat or cart for private use is a Gold expense, unless the vehicle is in deplorable condition.

Vehicles in Battle

If a vehicle has a driver, they can move the vehicle on their turn (along with all attached animals and passengers) using their free move or the Manoeuvre action (page 117). The vehicle moves at its own Speed, and if its movement would require an Athletics Test, use the driver's relevant driving Skill instead. Only one character can drive a vehicle at a time, and only one character can move a vehicle each turn, even if the driver changes.

When a vehicle driver attacks, they use one of their weapons (using their own Abilities), an attack from an animal pulling the vehicle, if applicable (using the animal's Abilities), or an attack from the vehicle itself (using the vehicle's Abilities as specified). Most vehicle attacks are 'Ram' attacks, which can only be used whilst Charging.

When a vehicle is attacked, the attacker may target a visible character on board, or the vehicle itself (including any leashed animals). Ranged attacks against passengers often suffer penalties for cover or concealment. A passenger that's knocked Prone might fall off the vehicle, depending on how securely they're fastened.

VEHICLE DAMAGE

When attacking the vehicle itself, any successes count as a hit — the Test is not Opposed. However, vehicles are immune to all conditions except Ablaze, so being Staggered has no effect. For an attack to affect a vehicle, your Damage must exceed the vehicle's Resilience to 'Wound' it. Attacks against a vehicle that 'ignore armour' inflict +1 Damage against armoured vehicles, but gain no further benefit.

When a vehicle is Wounded, it suffers a Fault — structural damage that compromises the vehicle's integrity. Each vehicle has a maximum number of Faults before it is wrecked. When a vehicle is wrecked, everyone on board suffers the Staggered and Prone condition — if the vehicle was travelling at speed, they must Test Endurance to avoid a Hazard (2).

If a Fault does not wreck a vehicle, roll 1d10 on the Vehicle Faults table to determine collateral damage. The GM may adapt the result to suit the specific vehicle or current situation. Effects which apply bonus dice on the Wounds table have no effect on the Vehicle Faults table.

DRIVING SKILL TABLE

Circumstance	Suggested Skill or Lore
Carriage (cart, coach, wagon, chariot)	
Steering the reins to avoid upcoming obstacles	Dexterity
Getting skittish animals under control	Leadership
Row boat	
Rowing a boat	Toil (or Riverways/Sailing Lore)
Leading a row crew	Leadership (or Riverways/Sailing Lore)
Sail boat	
Charting a course	Recall (or Riverways/Sailing Lore)
Adapting to prevailing weather conditions	Awareness (or Riverways/Sailing Lore)

VEHICLE FAULTS TABLE

1d10	Damage	Description
1-3	Scratched Paintwork	The damage is superficial, perhaps a wobbling wheel or loose hatch.
4-5	Rough Ride	Passengers are thrown around the vehicle. Everyone on board must make an Endurance Test or suffer the <i>Staggered</i> condition.
6-7	Lost Luggage	The GM chooses a trapping or Asset to be knocked flying. Unless a character with their hands free makes a Throwing Test to catch it, it lands behind the vehicle.
8-9	Fallen Passenger	The platform bearing a random passenger collapses. They fall from the vehicle and suffer the Staggered and Prone conditions. If the vehicle was travelling at speed, they must Test Endurance to avoid a Hazard (2).
10	Locomotive Failure	Sails tear, oars break, wheel spokes splinter, or an animal breaks free. The vehicle's Speed reduces one step. If the vehicle was already Slow, it cannot move until it is repaired.

Repairing a vehicle is difficult work. During downtime, you can pay for a cartwright, shipwright, or other craftsworker to do the job. During an adventure, GMs may allow characters with the relevant Lore and trade tools (and a few hours spare) to attempt a Toil Test to remove a Fault or two.

Carriages

A simple cart only needs a single animal to pull it. Heavier carriages require two, three, or even more animals to drive at full Speed. Each animal you're missing reduces the vehicle's Speed by one step — if a Slow carriage loses an animal, it cannot move at all.

An enclosed carriage, like a stagecoach, completely protects passengers, though usually not the driver, from ranged attacks as long as the vehicle has not lost all of its Wounds. Even open platforms, like chariots, usually have shields or railings along the sides that provide its occupants with cover (page 115).

Ram attacks from a carriage can only be made when the driver Charges. The Attack Test is made using the driver's Dexterity, and inflicts the vehicle's listed Damage.



COMMON CARRIAGES

Vehicle	No. of Animals	Max Occupants	Speed	Resilience	Wounds	Ram Damage	Description
Trade cart	1	6	Normal	5	3	3	Transports food, ale, mining supplies, etc.
Light chariot	2	2	Fast	6 (armoured)	4	4	Used in battle by High Elves, Tomb Kings, and Goblins
Chariot	2+	3	Fast	7 (armoured)	5	5	Used in battle by High Elves, Beastmen, and Orcs
Personal coach	2	6	Fast	5	4	4	Transports wealthy nobles around town
Stagecoach	2+	8	Fast	6	4	5	Transports customers from town to town
Travelling stage	2	6	Normal	5	5	3	Transports troupes of entertainers
Baggage wagon	2+	8	Normal	5	6	3	Supplies armies and trading caravans

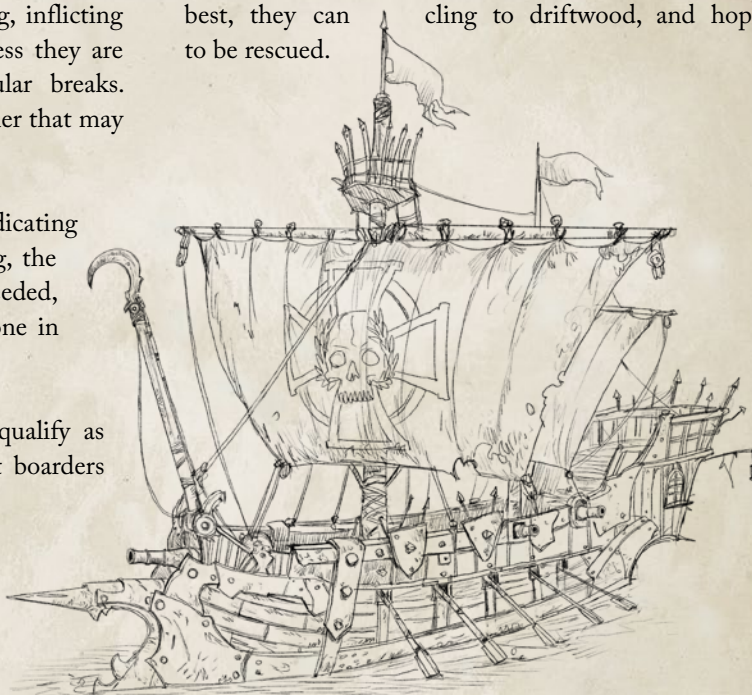
Boats

Boats may be pushed along a line, pulled by beasts along a riverbank, or propelled using experimental steam-powered boilers. But the most common methods are rowing and sailing, and both require a crew. Rowing is physically exhausting, inflicting the *Drained* condition on its crew unless they are exceptionally strong or afforded regular breaks. Sailing is susceptible to prevailing weather that may temporarily reduce the vessel's Speed.

If a boat doesn't have enough crew dedicating their full attention to rowing or sailing, the boat cannot move. If a driving Test is needed, any member of the crew (usually the one in charge) can make the Test.

The largest boats are big enough to qualify as Zones in their own right, a space that boarders can move onto.

If fighting on the open sea, the Zones between ships are much larger than usual, and moving between Zones is only possible in an ocean-going vessel. A character who falls overboard cannot swim to catch up — at best, they can cling to driftwood, and hope to be rescued.



COMMON BOATS

Vehicle	No. of Occupants	Row Crew	Sail Crew	Speed	Resilience	Wounds	Ram Damage	Description
Rowboat	3	1	n/a	Slow (row)	6	2	n/a	Fishing boat or life raft
River ferry	12	2	n/a	Slow (row)	6	3	3	River crossing or floating market
River barge	8	4	3	Slow (row or sail)	6	4	4	Transports cargo along rivers
Patrol boat	15	12	4	Normal (row or sail)	9 (armoured)	5	5	River warden or pirate battle boat
Longboat	32	30	4	Fast (row), Normal (sail)	7 (armoured)	5	6	High-speed ocean raider
Trade cog	15	n/a	8	Fast (sail)	8	6	5	Ocean-going merchant ship
War galley	50	30	16	Fast (sail), Normal (row)	10 (armoured)	8	6	Mid-sized navy battleship

INVESTIGATION & EXPLORATION

The shadows concealing your Grim Portent are fathoms deep and ruthlessly defended. Your struggle to thwart their murderous conspiracy is doomed if you cannot illuminate the forces arrayed against you. Learning more about your foes, and uncovering their schemes, is dangerous but necessary.

CLUES & INSIGHTS

Whether investigating the remains of a Beastman raid or scouring the depths of the Great Forest for signs of a notorious bandit, any search for information involves following the Clues and uncovering Insights.

Clues are the essential details apparent to anyone examining the location. They're the critical puzzle pieces you need to cut to the heart of the mystery you face. Characters should never have to Test to discover a Clue. Interpreting the Clue might be harder, especially if you don't have anything else to go on.

Insights are the extra details and observations that help to put the Clues together. Insights include hidden evidence, corroborating information, and deductive leaps of logic. An Insight can better explain what's going on, or confer some other reward — like loot, social leverage, or a subtler way forward. You may have to Test to uncover an Insight, though having the right Lore or asking the right questions can also be sufficient.



Of course, characters have a firsthand perspective of a scene, unlike the players controlling them. If you don't think to search for an Insight that your character might have spotted, your GM will prompt you to make a Test. On the other hand, if you think to ask to search a specific location, the GM may reward your initiative by giving you any Insights hidden there without a Test!

Some examples of Clues and Insights could be:

- ❧ The muddy footprints leaving the forest are an obvious clue that someone came this way. A successful Awareness Test could grant the insight that the prints are so deep, that whoever made them must have been carrying a lot of weight.
- ❧ A pool of blood in the middle of a cellar is a rather obvious Clue to nefarious goings-on. That it contains more blood than could be extracted from one person and should have coagulated hours ago is an Insight available to anyone with Anatomy Lore.
- ❧ A splintered wooden door, clearly broken down, is a Clue. However, if a player thinks to ask from which side the damage was done, they would gain the Insight that someone didn't break their way into this room, but rather smashed their way out.

Chasing Leads

Once you have gathered the right Clues and put together enough Insights, you should have at least one Lead to follow. Leads are something that point the direction forward in an investigation — the name of a potential witness, a description of the perpetrator, a recently cut trail through the woods, or the name of a book of fell magic. A Lead might not bring you right to the conclusion of the adventure, but it should at least bring you to the next set of Clues. More on Clues, Insights, and Leads can be found in the **GM's Guide**.

CATEGORISING CLUES & INSIGHTS

If information is essential to investigating a mystery or finding the next part of the story, GMs should consider it a Clue. Anything else that is useful but not absolutely necessary is categorised as an Insight. If in doubt, lean in favour of being generous with information — what is obvious to a GM presenting the mystery will seldom be as obvious to the players.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

A well-argued point can settle a disagreement long before it comes to blows, and the dissemination of a carefully crafted lie can be just as lethal as the sharpest blade. In most situations, social encounters with NPCs require very few rules. You will just say whatever your character wishes to, and the GM will respond naturally, speaking for the NPC you're talking to. However, sometimes the outcome of a demand, inquiry, or quickly spun lie can be in question. During such social encounters, making use of the following social actions can be helpful for players who want to add the weight of their character's skills to their own words.

GMs may allow social actions to be used in combat, within reason. You might persuade a High Elf merchant to surrender after his guards have been defeated, but negotiating with a bear is far harder.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS & CLUES

Remember that Clues (page 128) should always be put in front of the players, but that Insights may be hidden behind a test or a player's thoughtful inquiry. The same is true during social encounters. Some information — for example, that the baker Wolfgang claims to have witnessed a murder — should not be hidden. Using one of the actions below, however, may grant the insight that Wolfgang is lying about some aspect of his story...

Persuade

You try to convince an NPC to do what you want or agree with your point of view. Test Charm or Leadership. If the target is suspicious or doubtful, they may Oppose with Willpower. The character must be able to present a credible reason for the NPC to agree with them, be that a tantalising offer, or threatening repercussions for disobedience. The GM should bear in mind other influences that might be working on a given NPC and apply penalties as appropriate, or simply rule that the NPC cannot be persuaded at all.





Distract

You attract a character's attention with words (Charm or Leadership), or misdirect them with physical action (Brawn, Athletics or Dexterity). The target Opposes with Willpower. If you succeed, you apply the Distracted condition, removing any Distracted conditions inflicted by another character. When distracting a group of people, the number of successes on your Fellowship Test indicates what portion of your audience is Distracted — the GM may apply difficulty modifiers for distracting a larger group of people.

Player characters cannot use the Persuade action to convince another player character to do what they want, but they can use the Distract action to implore, annoy, or guilt-trip another PC. Talk to your group about their tolerance level for using social Skills in this way — they may be grateful to have an intermediate option before drawing swords against each other!

Scrutinise

You study a character's behaviour (Awareness), or convince them to open up to you (Charm). The target usually Opposes with Willpower. If you succeed, you gain an understanding of the character's nature, personality, or beliefs. For each success you get, you may ask the GM one of the questions below (chosen by you).

-  What do they expect me (or another character) to do next?
-  What could I offer the NPC to help persuade them to do what I want?
-  What could I say or do to make them angry?
-  What could I say or do to calm them down?

Suffering a Complication while scrutinising a target usually means they notice your interest, or discern your intent.

THE CLASS DIVIDE

Status is important in the Old World, an inescapable aspect of daily life and implicit in almost every social interaction. A stark warning issued from one Gold Status noble to another is far more likely to be taken seriously than the mumblings of a Brass Status peasant farmer. Equally, few peasants would ever believe a noble has their best interests at heart, and will be reluctant to speak frankly with them, despite any assurances they might give.

The Status Expectations table shows how most denizens of the Old World view others.

These are generalisations, and individuals may vary in their views, but the GM can use this table as a guide to the most common prejudices players will encounter. When initially dealing with an NPC during a social encounter, a player who acts within these expectations gains +1d on Fellowship Tests. When they defy these expectations, they take -1d on Fellowship Tests. Over time an NPC might reassess their view of you, especially if you hold leverage over them or have aided or opposed them many times in the past, and these bonuses and penalties may cease to apply.

STATUS EXPECTATIONS

Status	Brass Characters to be...	Silver Characters to be...	Gold Characters to be...
Brass NPCs expect...	Resourceful and practical, expect and ask little of others, and stay out of other peoples business.	Bossy, selfish, and protective of their material goods.	Aloof, condescending, dismissive, and heedless of the suffering of others.
Silver NPCs expect...	Unreliable, without valuable skills, and ideally silent.	Crafty, confident, and opportunistic.	Entitled, complacent, and neglectful — but also easy to flatter.
Gold NPCs expect...	Stupid, vulgar, filthy, and poor — but ultimately obedient.	Uncultured, uneducated, but skilled in their trade and glad of a noble's patronage.	Courteous, respectful of rank and privilege, and utterly dismissive of the peasantry.

Example: *Josep, a Brass Status Labourer, wants to warn the Gold Status Lady von Klickhoff, of a rival noble's plot to spy on her. Should he merely start explaining this, he would suffer a -1d penalty on his Charm Test, as von Klickhoff would likely think him far too stupid to have uncovered such a plot. However, if he claimed the rival had paid him to spy on her, but that Josep would refrain from doing so for a modest payment, he would gain +1d instead. He does look poor, after all, and likely stupid enough to think such a request would be met favourably, she thinks. Of course, this approach would likely cause other problems for Josep, but such is the peril of dealing with nobles.*

The expectations others have of Elves, Dwarfs, Halflings, and others, can vary somewhat from the above. Most citizens of the Empire expect Elves to be strange, aloof, and untrustworthy, think all Dwarfs to be capable but stubborn, and view Halflings with a level of distrust reserved for vagabonds or unruly children. At the GMs discretion, characters meeting or defying such expectations may incur the bonuses or penalties described above.

BETWEEN ADVENTURES

If your characters escape the machinations of their enemies, they gain a fleeting respite — the calm before the next storm. This period of downtime is a precious commodity for characters, as it provides a chance to recover from serious injury, fulfil the obligations of their career, improve their Skills, and prepare for the next appearance of their Grim Portent. All of these activities are Endeavours, broad activities that cover several days or even weeks of effort, but which are not played through in detail. Characters might earn some coin, repay a debt, or train alongside the local militia — and perhaps pick up some local gossip along the way.

BURYING THE LEDE

The GM should summarise the results of a player's Endeavours, feeling free to describe what locals are gossiping about, describe brief encounters with NPCs who might return later, or set the scene for upcoming adventures by talking about the changing seasons, annual festivals, or other thematic events. However, if an event is intriguing enough that players might prefer to explore it further, it should probably happen during an adventure instead!

DOWNTIME STRUCTURE

By undertaking Endeavours, players explore the more normal (or at least, less lethal) parts of a character's life. This usually takes place when they have returned to their home town, such as Talagaad, or another settlement where they can rest, train, reach out to Contacts and find work. The Gamemaster determines when the characters have a sufficient reprieve for downtime — typically once every 2-3 sessions.

EVENTS

Each period of downtime begins with an Event — typically something that affects the local area and its people and often includes the character's Contacts. It might be a destructive fire, a scandalous crime, a bumper harvest, or something else that has the locals gossiping. If the group is based in Talagaad, the GM rolls on the Talagaad Events table in **The Old World Gamemaster's Guide**. If not, the GM may adapt these Events to the setting of their campaign, or create one of their own.

The GM can also relate any common gossip, news or occurrences of importance to the players and the ongoing plots surrounding them.



ENDEAVOURS

Each player chooses Endeavours for their character to pursue in downtime. You can take one Endeavour for every game session since the last downtime, up to a maximum of three — your enemies will never allow you more respite than that.

Most Endeavours require a Test to undertake successfully. The suggested Skill is in the Endeavour's description, but different Skills may be used instead depending on how the character approaches the Endeavour, and if the GM approves it. Certain Endeavours involve Exacting Tests — if you don't score the necessary number of successes in your Endeavour, you may save them, choosing the Endeavour again to continue to progress towards your goal.

Improving Skills

During downtime, when you have time to practice and learn from your mistakes, your Skill ratings increase. Each time you make an Endeavour Test, count the number of failures in your dice pool (i.e. how many dice did not roll equal to or under your Skill rating). Mark them on the tally next to the Skill on your character sheet. When the tally of failure dice you have for a Skill is higher than your current Skill rating, you erase all tally marks against that Skill, and increase your Skill rating by 1. Any extra tally marks are lost — there is only so much one can learn from each failure. You cannot normally increase a Skill rating beyond 6.

Example: *It's been two sessions since Hanna's last downtime, so she can pick two Endeavours — she decides to Gather Information twice about the upcoming Bugman's ale shipments. Each Endeavour involves an Awareness Test, using her Initiative and Awareness (both rated at 3), as Hanna keeps a wary eye out at the docks.*

On her first Test, Hanna scores a 4, 7, and 8. She has no successes, which provides no useful information, but 3 failures that she can mark against her Awareness Skill, to increase its rating. Her second Test results in a 2, 2, 10. The two successes provide her with decent information, whilst the 10 marks her 4th failure — 1 higher than her Skill rating — raising her Awareness Skill from 3 to 4.

REGAIN COIN

The final step of downtime is to reset your Coin — you start the next adventure with three Coin of your status Level — gold, silver, or brass. Any that weren't spent in the last adventure, or used as part of the character's Endeavours, are lost. If you have quite a bit of Coin, it can be worth spending it on a Trapping or Asset before downtime begins. Alternatively, you may wish to use one of your Endeavours to make use of it rather than lose it, such as *Bank Money* (page 132) or *Invest Money* (page 134).

ENDEAVOURS

These Endeavours are usually available anywhere in the towns and cities of the Old World, unless the GM rules otherwise.

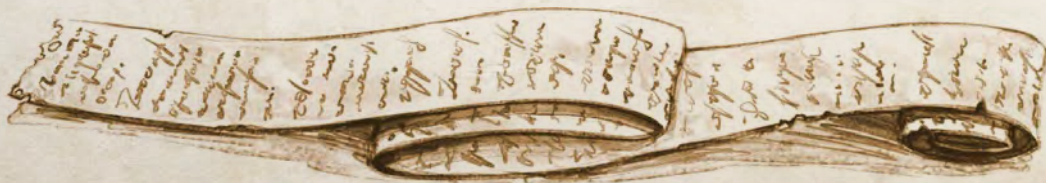
AID CONTACT

Suggested Skills: Contact's primary Skill

You find opportunities to assist one of your Contacts, to repay or earn a favour with them. You might be asked to work for them in town, escort them along the River Talabec, or introduce them to someone else you know. The GM determines what help the Contact requires and which Skill is Tested to aid them (often the Contact's primary Skill).

If you succeed, you do as your Contact asked, and repay the favour you owed them. If you don't owe a favour to your Contact, they now owe you a favour instead. A Contact that owes you a favour can repay it by risking their safety, or spending time and resources on your behalf. Each Contact has their own forms of support available — their aid could impact how your next adventure unfolds, or it could provide you with trappings, Clues, or bonus dice on a Test during a future Endeavour.

Contacts prefer not to let debts linger, so they might insist you take this Endeavour if your debt is unpaid too for long, or thrust a gift on you unexpectedly to repay a debt that's outstanding for a while.



BANK MONEY

Suggested Skills: Charm

The banking system in the Empire is as fractured as the nation itself, with an array of private money lenders, charlatans, and even cult temples offering to keep money safe from theft, war, and often, taxes. Knowing who can be trusted to hold on to your money, and for how long, is an art in and of itself. If you have Coin left over after an adventure, you can take this Endeavour to bank it with one of these dubious sorts so that it is available to you in future. Make a Charm Test — for each success, you may place one leftover Coin of your Status with a banker. With three successes, you may bank one leftover Coin of Status higher than your own. The rest is lost, spent on fees or swindled out of you by charlatans.

You may recover your money by taking this Endeavour again, though no Test is required to withdraw your Coin.

CHANGE CAREER

Suggested Skills: Any — GM chooses most relevant Skill for new Career

You seize an opportunity to take your life in a different direction. Choose another Career to replace your current one. Your new Career must be available to your Origin, you must already know all the mandatory Lores provided by the new Career (for Lores with an either/or option, you only need one), and you must own any essential trappings for the Career (like trade tools for mandatory Lores). The GM must also agree that the new Career is suitable for the character's circumstances. Most citizens of the Empire cannot simply choose to become a Noble, unless embroiled in some very dangerous scheme indeed.

Test the Skill the GM decides is most relevant to your new Career. If you succeed, you may spend 3 XP to change your Career. If you do not currently have 3 XP to spend, the GM may allow you to repay this 'debt' over the next few sessions, especially if it would be dramatically appropriate for the career change to happen now.

Once you have swapped Careers, make the following changes to your character:

- ☠ You lose the Favoured Characteristics and at least one Asset from your old Career.
- ☠ You gain the Favoured Characteristics, Career Talent, and a choice of Asset from your new Career.

- ☠ You retain the Career Talent, Lores, trappings, and Contacts of your old Career.
- ☠ You do not gain new Lores, trappings, or Contacts from your new Career.
- ☠ Your Status changes to match your new Career.
- ☠ You do not adjust your Skill ratings.

Example: *Frederik is tired of following orders, casting aside his life as an honourable Soldier for that of a Brigand. He meets the prerequisites for his Origin and Lores — the Lores for Brigands are a Provincial Lore (which he has from his Origin) and either Criminal Underworld or Blackpowder (he gained Criminal Underworld during a previous downtime). Frederik only has some of the Brigand's trappings, but none of them are essential. The GM calls for a Stealth Test as Frederik deserts his regiment, which scores a success.*

Frederik changes his Favoured Characteristics from Weapon Skill, Toughness, and Reason to Ballistic Skill, Strength, and Agility. He gains the Brigand Career Talent Prey on the Weak. He loses access to his old regiment's armoury, but he gains a secret hideout. He retains all his old Talents, Lores, trappings, and Contacts, and decreases his Status from Silver to Brass.

CRAFT TRAPPING

Suggested Skills: Dexterity, Toil

You employ the trade skills your Guild or clan elders taught you, to create a Trapping for personal use or resale. You need an appropriate Trade Lore and corresponding trade tools (e.g. Smithing Lore and smithing tools to craft a sword).

Crafting a Trapping is an Exacting Test, allowing one Test each time you take this Endeavour. If you have a suitable workplace Asset, such as a workshop or laboratory, it provides +1d on the Endeavour's Test. Crafting a Brass Trapping requires 2 successes. Crafting a Silver Trapping requires 4 successes, and each Test costs a Brass expense in materials expended. Crafting a Gold Trapping requires 8 successes, and each Test costs a Silver expense in material expended.



FORMALISE SPELL

Suggested Skills: Recall

You bind the wild Winds of Magic into words of power, inscribed within your Grimoire. You must have the Wizard Talent and the Literacy Lore to use this Endeavour. The spell you formalise can be one you've witnessed another wizard cast, read about in another wizard's Grimoire, or cast yourself as an Improvised Spell. It must also correspond to one of the Magic Lores you know.

Formalising a spell is an Exacting Recall Test requiring 4 successes, with one Test per Endeavour. If you succeed, the spell is inscribed in your Grimoire, and can be cast as a Formal Spell whilst you're holding open your Grimoire. If you successfully formalise an Improvised Spell, the Casting Value is now half what it used to be. If it's a Formal Spell from another wizard, the Casting Value is unchanged.

GATHER INFORMATION

Suggested Skills: Recall, Awareness, or Leadership

You search for more information about a specific subject. This could be a person, faction, place, or magic item you are interested in — perhaps you're gathering evidence of a Knight of the Waning Moon's ignoble deeds, or tracking the location and layout of a wandering Hexengilde tower. Tell the GM how you are gathering information, and they will tell you which Skill to Test. You might employ research and study (Recall), physically search for clues (Awareness), or command a network of spies to inform you (Leadership).

If your Test succeeds, you learn something about that topic. The effects of this are varied — the GM may simply pass along a useful fact — or you may uncover secrets that can be used to bribe or blackmail one of your foes. If, during your next adventure, a Clue (page 128) appears related to the subject of this Endeavour, the GM should provide you with any Insights (page 128) related to that Clue without requiring a Test.

HELP ALLY

Suggested Skills: Any — Skill must plausibly assist the upcoming Test

Karak miners, rowing crews, and street thieves all know they can achieve more together than apart. You lend your support to another character's Endeavour. Discuss with the GM how you're helping, and which Skill Test best represents your assistance — it may be the same Skill your ally is using, but doesn't have to be.

As per the Help action (page 108), for each success you score on your Test, the character you Help gains +1d on their upcoming Endeavour Test, up to the usual maximum.

INVEST MONEY

Suggested Skills: Dexterity, Charm

You stake your money on a risky venture, hoping to generate a return. If you have 3 unspent Coin from your previous adventure, you can spend them to make a Test determined by the nature of your investment. You might Test Charm to negotiate a precarious business deal, or Dexterity to profit through cheating at dice games.

If successful, the investment pays off. You acquire an available trapping or service at a Status tier one higher than the cheapest Coin you invested, without bartering or accepting a hidden cost. If your investment Test fails, you receive no return, and the Coin you spent is lost.

At the GM's discretion, you might attempt to acquire a new Asset, at the Status tier of the cheapest Coin you invested. However, this is an Exacting Test, with each Test costing 3 Coin and an Endeavour. Your GM determines how many successes are needed, or if acquiring the Asset is even possible. Acquiring a hand cart might only require 2 successes, full plate armour might require 4 successes, and your own tavern might need 8 success or more!

If you don't have enough Coin to afford an investment alone, you can ask other players if their characters will contribute, or go to a loan shark or other moneylending NPC. Moneylenders expect to be repaid, with interest, and are notoriously unsympathetic to failed investments.



LAY LOW

Suggested Skills: Awareness, Stealth

You take measures to keep your head down and avoid attracting attention, while still getting on with your life. Test Stealth to stay out of sight, or Awareness to see your enemies coming — you gain +1d if you have a Secret Hideout Asset. If you succeed, you stay one step ahead of debtors, the town guards, unwanted visitors, along with your other enemies.

The effects of this Endeavour vary quite a bit depending on your circumstances, so you should discuss it with the GM beforehand. It is most effective against the sort of enemies who will be out on the streets looking for you. If a Beastman Warherd is gathering beyond the gates to torch the town and drag you screaming from your bed, there is little use to be had in lying low. It is also of little use against magical scrying, curses, and other supernatural phenomena — unless you have the right magic Lore to employ arcane defences of your own!

MEMORISE SPELL

Suggested Skills: Recall

You commit a spell to memory, no longer needing to improvise it or recite from your Grimoire. You must have the Wizard Talent to use this Endeavour. The spell you memorise can be one you've witnessed another wizard cast, read about in another wizard's Grimoire, written in your own Grimoire, or cast yourself as an Improvised Spell. It must also correspond to one of the Magic Lores you know.

Memorising a spell is an Exacting Recall Test requiring 8 successes, with one Test per Endeavour. Memorising a spell inscribed in your own Grimoire only requires 4 successes. If you succeed, you can now cast the spell as a Formal Spell, without consulting your Grimoire. If you successfully memorise an Improvised Spell, the Casting Value is now half what it used to be. If you memorise a Formal Spell, the Casting Value is unchanged.

PROLONGED LABOURS

Suggested Skills: Any

You dedicate yourself to work, toiling far beyond what is normally expected of you. Choose a Skill relevant to practicing your Career — a Slayer might use Survival to prowl the nearby wilderness for beasts, whilst a Thief might use Stealth to pickpocket with impunity. If your Skill Test succeeds, you begin the next adventure with +2 Coin at your Status level. If your Skill Test fails, you begin the next adventure with +1 Coin instead.

PRACTICE SKILL

Suggested Skills: Any

You train your sword arm with the local militia, spend long hours on the archery range, commit yourself to your arcane studies, or otherwise spend time doing nothing but practising a skill of your choosing. The GM should narrate some details of your efforts, and you are encouraged to be inventive in ways you've found to practice the skill in question. Make a Test of your choosing, counting any failed dice and making the tally next to the tested Skill as normal, along with one additional mark for taking this Endeavour.

REKINDLE FATE

Suggested Skills: Any

You meditate upon the gruelling ordeals faced in your adventures, and recommit yourself to the battles to come. You may only choose this Endeavour if your Fate score is lower than its starting rating, due to Burning Fate (page 111) in play.

Make an Exacting Test requiring 4 successes. You may make one Test per Endeavour, and each Test requires you to spend Fate. The Skill Tested depends on your form of meditation. A Knight-Exile might Test Endurance, undergoing days of fasting whilst praying for the Lady's grace. A Sharpshooter could Test Dexterity whilst field stripping their weapon, constantly repeating the motion as a comforting ritual.

When you succeed on the Test, your Fate rating increases by 1, up to its starting maximum.



REST AND RECOVERY

Suggested Skills: Endurance

You resign yourself to bedrest and medical treatment, allowing your body to heal. Make an Endurance Test. If you succeed, you heal one of your Wounds, and recover from any Festering Wounds. Many injuries require surgery before you can undertake this recovery, which may require hiring a doktor (page 101).

STUDY LORE

Suggested Skills: Recall

You seek knowledge and practical opportunities to learn more about a general subject. Choose a specific Lore (page 82) you want to learn. Each type of Lore (Academic, Cultural, Enemy, Environment, Magic, and Trade) details its own prerequisites for learning it. For example, Academic Lores require access to books (and ideally a tutor), Cultural Lores require you to live within that community, and Magic Lores require a tutor.

Learning a new Lore is an Exacting Recall Test requiring 4 successes, with one Test per Endeavour. This is usually a Recall Test to commit the relevant information to memory, but you might use Survival to learn Woodcraft in the Great Forest, Toil to master smithing, Willpower to master Necromancy, etc.

Magic Lores are especially exacting to learn, with the arcane teachings of many traditions contradicting those of other lores. Magic Lores require an additional 4 successes for each Magic Lore you already know.

TEST MIGHT

Suggested Skills: Melee, Brawn, Athletics, Shooting, Throwing

You enter a contest to prove your physical prowess, the nature of which is decided by your Career and Status. The sport or activity determines the Skill Tested — jousting tournaments require Melee Tests, pitfighting rings involves Brawn Tests, racing up the Talabec is an Athletics Test, and archery contests use Shooting Tests. The GM makes an Opposed Test for the NPC they consider the fiercest competition.

If you succeed, you acquire a reputation locally as a winner. Once, during the next adventure, you may use your reputation to make one Fellowship Test Glorious. This bonus can only be applied on a Test involving an NPC who would plausibly be impressed by your deeds. If you fail your Endeavour Test, your fiercest competition triumphs instead, and will enjoy lording it over you when next you meet.

WANDER THE WILDS

Suggested Skills: Survival

You immerse yourself in the wilderness, gathering supplies and useful information about paths, terrain, inclement weather, and indigenous threats. Make a Survival Test. If you succeed, for the duration of the next adventure, you temporarily gain access to the most relevant Environmental Lore or Provincial Lore that corresponds to the area you scouted. If you already have that Lore, you gain an additional +1d to Tests using it during the next adventure.



RELIGION & BELIEF

The Empire is a land of faith. Citizens of the Empire usually revere one god or another, and most make offerings to several as the situation demands. The temples of the major Cults of Ulric, Taal, or Sigmar are unmistakable landmarks of any town and city. Old regional folkloric beliefs in minor deities of local rivers or looming mountains are honoured and passed down from parent to child to grandchild. Warriors lay a cask of wine at the feet of a statue of Myrmydia on the eve before a great battle and then weave a basket of reeds to beseech Rhya for a fine harvest should they return home alive. Almost all will praise or curse the name of Morr throughout their lives — the Empire's most prominent god of the dead is often near, and his ravens are ever watchful.

Worship can be a purely practical matter, a respectful hedging of one's bets, but it can also be a source of true succour in an otherwise indifferent world. For a few, belief is a matter of fanatical devotion and terrible trials undertaken to secure a god's favour. Some abandon all comforts and take to the wilds, such as the Wolf-kin of Ulric. Others take up the mantle of Flagellant, pursuing piety through suffering. Still others join a militant order within their faith, such as the Templars of Morr, who pursue the often thankless task of rooting out necromancers and laying to rest the undead they spawn.

Far from the eyes of most of the faithful, religion and politics are, as ever, intertwined. Most major cults back one or another claimant to the title of Emperor, and have been granted various favours in return. These most often take the form of additional rights and privileges, as well as exemptions from taxation and other obligations. Largely, the most politically aware among the priesthood gravitate towards larger cities, the better to wield their influence and advance their own position. Simpler people of faith can be found in rural towns and villages, where their lack of political acumen — or disgust with the secular focus of their peers — is of little hindrance.

THE WILL OF THE GODS

The gods are remote, their will often inscrutable, and their presence is felt mainly through the actions of their followers and the influence of their cults. Most priests are officiants, scholars, community leaders or unapologetic charlatans, but a celebrated few wield the true power of their god. When Beastmen raiders threatened Talabheim, Taal blessed his priest Umst with a glorious white stag to carry a warning from the distant Barren Hills in a single night's journey. In Shallya's name, Abess Lissandra restored the sight of all those blinded by the wizard's duel at Ravenstein when even magic could not. And tales are still told of how Lector Münhause held off the Orcs of Lugrok Mansplitta for three days and nights, his hammer blazing with Sigmar's might.

If your character has the *Faith* Talent, they are just such a figure, favoured by the gods and able to wield power in their name. Though you need not be a Priest, most who experience the undeniable power of their chosen deity are drawn to that vocation.

WORSHIP IN TALAGAAD

Talagaad, as with all of Talabecland, is broadly tolerant of most gods. Taal, god of beasts and wild places, and Rhya, goddess of fertility and the harvest, are held in the highest regard. The Cult of Ulric is also influential — in the past, Talabheim was home to the Cult's leadership and the centre of its worship, and though both now reside in Middenheim, faith in the god of winter, war, and wolves endures.

The only exception is the worship of Sigmar, whose followers are seen by most as fanatics bent on causing trouble. The most ardent Sigmarites sometimes take their hatred of witches and witchcraft to provinces beyond their borders and are anything but discerning. More than one Taalite priest has found themselves atop a pyre laid by pious Sigmarites of the Order of the Silver Hammer, and as such, worship of Sigmar is all but banned in Taalagad.

BLESSINGS OF THE GODS

Characters with the *Faith* Talent are in some way favoured by one of the gods. They are most often pious followers of that deity though some, notably the trickster god Ranald, are thought to have a sense of humour in this matter. Each time you acquire the *Faith* Talent, you grow in your understanding of your chosen deity and become able to beseech from them ever more powerful intercessions on your behalf.

It is not possible to have the favour of more than one god, nor is it possible for those touched by the winds or otherwise capable of spellcasting to gain this Talent. The gods are jealous when it comes to those who would act in their name, and most seem wary — sensibly so, it could be said — of dealing with spellcasters.

ACQUIRING THE FAITH TALENT

As noted under the Talent description on page 75, acquiring the *Faith* Talent is not merely a matter of spending XP but also of undergoing a trial of faith. The details of this can vary but typically involve doing a great service in the name of your chosen god or otherwise embodying their principles. It also usually involves joining that cult's priesthood — the gods seem to favour those who would dedicate their lives to their worship.

The more times the *Faith* Talent is acquired, the greater the trial that must be undertaken. Acquiring the *Faith* Talent for the third time required a truly momentous achievement, undergoing a punishing trial or winning a mighty victory in the name of the chosen god. Individuals capable of such a thing are rare indeed, and their deeds and legacy are the stuff of legends.

Favour

The first time you acquire the *Faith* Talent, you are said to have gained the favour of your chosen deity. The effects of this vary by god and are described on the following pages. A god's favour is most often a subtle thing, its effects easily dismissed as skill or happenstance. Indeed, some who bear a god's favour are likely ignorant of the fact.

Prayers

The second time you acquire the *Faith* Talent, you gain the ability to willfully invoke your god through prayer. Most with the pious devotion required to do this are drawn to the priesthood of their chosen god, though some may refrain from doing so, seeing the larger cult as either unnecessary or hopelessly corrupted by politics and other mundanities.

Praying for your god's aid is always an intentional act. A priest of Ulric might howl their petition aloud whilst striking the butt of their axe into the ground, while a priest of Taal might run gold aloft a carved antler, recalling the virtues of Taal as their fingers mark each prong. Some Sigmarites believe no prayer that does not draw blood can be answered, and flagellate themselves mercilessly while screeching an agonised prayer.

When you take the *Faith* Talent for the second time, you gain access to all the Prayers of your god and may perform each one as often as you wish. Prayers require you to take an action to speak aloud, form a holy symbol with your hands, meditate, or otherwise commune with your god. If a prayer has an ongoing effect, it lasts until the end of battle, or for a few minutes, unless stated otherwise.

The gods take a dim view of those who would abuse their gifts, and withhold their favour from those who squander them on trivialities.



Miracles

Those who acquire the *Faith* Talent a third time are capable of performing miracles in the name of their chosen god. Miracles are true displays of a deity's power, a feat associated with their domain that can turn the tide of a battle or set the foundation for a legend that will be repeated for years to come. While the effects of a god's favour may be easy to dismiss, and even their Prayers are possible to account for by exaggeration or some minor capacity for magic, it is difficult for any who witness a miracle to mistake it for anything other than the will of the divine.

Those who attain this level of ability become quickly known throughout their faith, if not the Empire itself, and are likely to attract followers of their own. Some will be requested to join a crusade in the name of their god, or to share their wisdom and understanding with the faithful at an established church or monastery. They will also attract enemies, some political, others who are less mundane, and who seek to sacrifice a faithful servant of a loathed god to the dark powers they serve.

The effects of a Miracle are described in more detail on the following pages. A Miracle can only be used once. You may perform another Miracle by purchasing the Faith Talent again.



Strictures of the Gods

Most gods have strictures, a set of rules or ideals by which their followers are expected to live. For most, these are of little consequence outside the personal. Devoted followers of Morr know that one should never injure a raven, but in times of famine, few birds are spared by those who can trap them. The fate of those who gnawed the flesh from a raven's carcass seems no better or worse than any other's.

The same is not true of a god's favoured servants who, while enjoying the blessings of their chosen deity, are also expected to embody their strictures. Failing to abide by these rules immediately strips a character of all of the benefits of the *Faith* Talent. A character must undertake a trial of some sort and prove their renewed dedication in order to make amends and regain their god's favour. Those who make a habit of breaking their god's strictures lose access to this Talent entirely, never to be regained. Some of those so slighted may turn to other, darker powers.

ROLEPLAYING THE FAITHFUL

If your character truly believes in a god, whether or not they have taken the *Faith* Talent, then their god's Strictures become an excellent roleplaying guide. They are not a set of rules to be cleverly circumvented or cynically argued against, but a guide to your god's values and principles. They should shape your character's approach to most situations, and though they need not become overbearing, they should always be close at hand.

Of course, they are also the means by which your character forms a relationship with their god and from which any faith-given powers derive. These can be stripped away should you fail to embody your god's chosen virtues, though even the act of redeeming one's faith and making amends for such transgressions can be the stuff of memorable roleplaying experiences.

If you would like to play a character dedicated to a God, without necessarily being blessed by their favour, the *Honour Bound* Talent (page 77) offers a way to do so.






ULRIC

Favoured Lore: Mountaineering

Ulric is a furious deity who holds dominion over warfare, winter, and wolves. Worship of Ulric is widespread but especially prominent in the Grand County of Osterlund generally and the city of Middenheim most especially. His cult is often championed by Grand Count Sigismund Ulric. Ulric is the favoured god of many warriors, and many knightly orders revere him as their patron. He is said to despise weakness, trickery, and deceit and favours a direct approach in all matters. His favour is said to fall upon warriors who are hearty and hale, only to abandon them when injury or age leaves them weak and helpless.

Ulric is the brother of Taal and is said by his followers to be the king of all the gods. Indeed, Sigmar worshipped Ulric during his life, a fact Ulricans are often keen to point out.

STRICTURES OF ULRIC

-  Obey your betters.
-  Defend your honour in all matters, and never refuse a challenge.
-  Stand honest and true; outside an ambush, trickery and deception are forbidden.
-  Only wear pelts from wolves you have slain with weapons crafted by your own hands.
-  Black powder, helmets, crossbows, and technology are not Ulric's way.



Ulric's Favour

The Favoured of Ulric are equally at home on blood-soaked battlefields or amidst the cruellest winter blizzard. You never suffer penalties due to the cold, and wild wolves never mistake you for anything other than a fellow hunter and potential rival. When you suffer a Wound in combat, you are filled with Ulric's fury, and your next Melee attack during that battle becomes Glorious.

Prayers of Ulric

HOARFROST'S CHILL

You scream an angry prayer, and cold Ulric answers. The air about you grows unnaturally cold, frost forms atop your hair, and your eyes take on a frosty hue. Anyone you inflict the *Staggered* condition on must immediately pass a Willpower Test or suffer the *Broken* condition. This effect lasts until the end of the current battle.

HOWL OF THE WOLF

You howl for Ulric's Aid, and one of his servants answers. A spectral white wolf joins you in combat, emerging from the mists and leaping upon your foes. Use the Wolf profile on page 128 of *The Gamemaster's Guide*. The Wolf vanishes at the end of the battle, returning to the frost-strewn forests of Ulric's realm.

WINTER'S BITE

You recount a verse of Ulric's mighty battle deeds and of Blitzbeil, his ever-thirsty axe. An axe you are holding grows icy cold, mist forming around its head, its edge growing blue with frost. The weapon inflicts +1 Damage and counts as magical for the purposes of damaging ghosts and other unnatural foes. This effect lasts until the end of your current battle.

Miracles of Ulric

You make the case to Ulric that you are worthy of his aid or your foes most deserving of his judgement. A winter's storm might emerge from a clear sky, multiple packs of hungry wolves take to the field to rend apart your foes, or a hated enemy's blood might slow in their veins, robbing them of all their strength. As with all Miracles, talk to the GM about what is possible.






TAAL

Favoured Lore: Woodcraft

Taal is the Patron deity of the Grand Duchy of Talabec. A god of nature and wild places, the Cult of Taal is particularly prominent throughout Talabecland and lends its support and backing to Ludwig XII. Taal is the favoured deity of many trappers, hunters, outriders, and others who spend a great deal of time in the forests of the Old World. Taal is often invoked by those seeking to travel safely through the wilderness and by hunters in search of their next meal. His favour can mean the difference between a safe trip and a full belly, or slow starvation, alone and lost in the wilderness, prey for bandits or worse.

Taal is the husband of Rhya, a Goddess of summer, fertility, and abundance, and said by some to be the brother of Ulric, the god of war, winter, and wolves.

STRICTURES OF TAAL

-  Offer a Prayer to Taal for every animal taken.
-  Spend a week alone communing with the wilderness each year.
-  Eschew metal armour and clad yourself only in the hides of Taal.
-  Rely on your own skill, not the advances of gunpowder or cold technology.
-  Never harm an animal except in self-defence or for food or sacrifice.



Taal's Favour

The Favoured of Taal are at home in wild places and find them more comfortable than stifling towns and cities. Any Tests you make to hunt, track, or pass stealthily through the wilderness are always Glorious. Additionally, you always know when you are being followed in the wild.

Prayers of Taal

LORD OF THE WILD

You command a beast with the authority of Taal. Make a Willpower Test. If successful, the beast does as you wish within the bounds of its understanding of the world. Taal looks poorly on those who abuse his animal subjects, so commands that place the beast in great danger or which take it a long way from its natural hunting grounds will not be obeyed. Any Complications on this test usually indicate that the beast has misunderstood your intentions, but it will attempt to fulfil your orders as best it can nevertheless.

STAG'S LEAP

You ask Taal to bless you with the speed and agility of a mighty stag. In battle, your speed becomes Fast, and you may jump the height of a single-story hovel with ease.

TANGLEFOOT

You invoke Taal's dominion over the thickets and brambles of the wilds to trap and ensnare your foe. Choose a zone within Long Range. As long as it contains some vegetation — even a well-manicured lawn is sufficient — a thicket of brambles sprouts from the earth. The zone becomes Difficult Terrain for anyone other than you or another who bears Taal's favour.

Miracles of Taal

You plea with Taal for a mighty miracle to aid you or to visit his wrath upon your foes. You and your allies might vanish into a thicket of trees and instantly emerge into a forest miles away, summon a mighty beast to come to your aid or erase every path and road through the forest within miles of your current location. As with all Miracles, talk to the GM about what is possible.





RHYA

Favoured Lore: Farming *or* Cooking

Rhya is a mother goddess who has a domain over summer, farming, and fertility. It is said her worship is among the oldest of all human faiths, going back to the first tribes to settle the lands that would one day be the Empire. She is worshipped across the lands, especially by peasant farmers who eke out a living from the soil. Few nobles pay her heed, but many nevertheless encourage her faith — it is far easier to tell a starving peasant to pray to Rhya, after all, than it is to reduce their rent.

Rhya is wed to Taal, with whom she is often asked to intercede. While her husband represents the wilder and sometimes crueller aspects of nature, Rhya represents the nurturing aspects of field, hearth, and harvest. At times, their faiths have been intertwined, but in Talabecland, her Cult is independent of Taal's and of modest influence.

STRUCTURES OF RHYA

-  Defend families, children, and crops from all harm.
-  Feel no shame for the flesh Rhya has given you.
-  Life is sacred — do no harm unless it is to save another.
-  Do not withhold your bounty if you have enough to share.

Rhya's Favour

Rhya bestows her favour broadly, for it is said to fall on any land where crops are harvested and folks find shelter. Nevertheless, she sometimes shows particular attention to one of her adherents. You find nourishment in even the most meagre of fare and need only a single modest meal each day — a bowl of thin soup, an apple or a piece of bread — to feel satisfied. Additionally, you always know which home in any given settlement will be the most welcoming of you and your companions.



Prayers of Ryha

RHYA'S SHELTER

In the wilds, you pray to Rhya for a sanctuary from her husband's trials and are granted one. Less than a minute's walk from your current location, in whatever direction you choose to travel, you come across a site of natural shelter. It might be a cave, a conveniently fallen tree, or some other site of relief from the wind and rain. The means of starting a fire will not be far away. The shelter lasts as long as you choose to rest there, never to be found again once you depart.

RHYA'S HARVEST

You utter a prayer for sustenance and Rhya answers. At a touch, a bounty of fresh fruit, vegetables, and mushrooms erupt from the soil around you. There is sufficient fare to feed yourself and a handful of companions. This prayer will not be answered again until all food so created has been consumed or returned to Rhya's good earth.

RHYA'S CHILDREN

You call upon your common connection as children of Rhya to sense the presence of living things within Short range. You may make a Willpower Test to increase the range of this ability by one Zone for each success. You learn how many individuals are nearby, their current location and their species, but gain no insight into their actions, thoughts, or motivations.

Miracles of Rhya

You summon the nurturing power of Rhya to enact a miracle to aid her children. This might involve prompting a fruit tree to bear ripe fruit in the dead of winter, a barren field to spring into life and grow ready for the harvest, or a frozen lake to thaw and allow safe fishing.

Rhya's miracles are never harmful, though she does not judge her followers for pursuing violence where other paths have failed. As with all Miracles, talk to the GM about what else is possible.

SIGMAR






Favoured Lore: History of Orc & Goblin Tribes

Sigmar is the Patron god of the Reikland and, to hear his followers claim it, the rightful god of the Empire itself. In life, he was the first Emperor and unifier of the tribes, his birth heralded by a twin-tailed comet. In death, he wandered out of the pages of history and into the realm of the gods themselves. His chosen weapon is mighty Ghal Maraz, a war hammer like no other, and he is a bane to all Orcs and Goblins. Sigmarites are sometimes seen as fanatics, but he has many more moderate followers who pray for this guidance and protection and often claim to receive it. The Hammer is the wider symbol of this faith — the comet, last seen over cursed Mordheim centuries ago — is revered only amongst the most fanatical.

In life, Sigmar was a worshipper of Ulric, before taking his place alongside him. Beyond the Reikland he is often thought of as subservient to Ulric because of this, a demigod at best, and foolishly venerated by fanatics over far more deserving deities. Though the Dwarfs do not worship him as a god, they recall Sigmar as a Dwarf friend, and maintain their alliance with the Empire in large part due to his aid to their people.



STRUCTURES OF SIGMAR

-  Obey your orders.
-  Aid Dwarf-folk, never do them harm.
-  Promote the unity of the Empire.
-  Bear true allegiance to the Imperial throne.
-  Show no mercy to Orcs and their kin, the worshippers of dark gods, or to foul witches.

Sigmar's Favour

Those favoured by Sigmar are possessed of a righteous heart and a strong will. Once per battle, recover from the *Staggered* condition on your turn without using an action. Additionally, any hammer you wield — be it a mighty war hammer or a humble carpenter's mallet — inflicts +1 damage.

Prayers of Sigmar

HAMMER OF SIGMAR

You chant a benediction to Sigmar's might. A hammer you are wielding is wreathed in holy fire, though you are not burned. For the duration of the battle, the weapon counts as magical for the purpose of damaging ghosts and other unnatural foes. Additionally, the first foe struck by it is immediately set *Ablaze*.

HEED NOT THE WITCH

You call on Sigmar to protect those around you from the fell influence of sorcery. Any Test made to cast a spell that affects you or an ally within Short Range becomes Grim.

BEACON OF RIGHTEOUS VIRTUE

You bellow prayers in Sigmar's name and become infused with the fire of his righteousness. You and any allies within Short Range lose the *Broken* Condition. Additionally, make a Willpower Test. For each success you achieve, remove the *Staggered* condition from yourself or an ally within Short Range.

Miracles of Sigmar

Sigmar's Empire may be fractured, but his might remains and can sometimes be called upon to aid his truest servants. A miracle of Sigmar might cause a minor twin-tailed comet to appear in the sky, rallying the faithful or striking the earth to lay low his foes. It might also imbue a hammer with an echo of the power of Ghal Maraz, allowing it to vanquish daemons in a single blow or repulse lesser servants of dark powers. As with all Miracles, talk to the GM about what is possible.

MANANN

Favoured Lore: Riverways or Sailing

Manaan is a volatile god of the sea and, some claim, any body of water deep enough to drown in. He is the master of storms and is widely known for his foul moods and erratic temper. Almost anyone who takes to the sea will make an offering to Manaan, but he is notoriously easy to offend. It is said that an offering of a fish with a single missing scale is enough to invite disaster. He is the Patron deity of the Barony of Westerland, and his cult's chief temple is in Marienburg. Even those who never set foot aboard a boat would do well to offer a prayer to Manann, for he is said to send floods to punish those who fail to do so. At times, mighty waves have swept whole coastal villages into the Sea of Claws, a warning to those left behind to pay Manann his due.

Manaan is the son of Taal and Rhya and is most often depicted as a broad-chested man with a crown of black iron upon his troubled brow.

STRICTURES OF MANANN

- ☠ No whistling or swearing when at sea or on holy ground.
- ☠ Never harm an albatross.
- ☠ The first catch goes to Manann.
- ☠ A silver and fish to every Manannite temple and shrine you pass.
- ☠ Hunt down the servants of Stromfels, shark-god and ship-wrecker, wherever they may hide.



Manann's Favour

Though his favour is fickle, Manann generally assures safe passage to any ship bearing one of his favoured followers. You do not suffer from sea sickness, and if you fall into open water, you will not drown. If cast adrift, a gust of wind or hidden current will eventually haul you to the nearest boat or scrap of dry land. Additionally, you can fish with your bare hands and suffer no penalties for fishing without a net or rod.

Prayers of Manann

DROWNED MAN'S FACE

You utter a prayer in memory of all those drowned in Manann's waters and plead that one more join them. You point to a foe within Long Range. Their lungs immediately begin to fill with water, and their limbs are slowed as though they were submerged. Make a Willpower Test, Opposed by your target's Endurance. If you succeed, your target becomes *Staggered* and may not Give Ground until the end of their next turn. Those slain by this prayer appear to have drowned.

WINDS FAIR & FOUL

Manann holds dominion over the winds that fill or foul a ship's sails, and your prayers beseech his aid. You may lay Manann's blessings on a boat, ensuring that it will enjoy favourable winds for its next journey. Whatever that voyage is, it will be completed promptly and safely, at least as far as natural events are concerned — pirates and wreckers may still do as they will. Alternatively, you may cause the winds to becalm any ship you can see. The winds around it die down, and any vessel that relies purely on wind to travel is marooned for at least an hour after you can no longer see it.

WATERWALK

You call on Manann's master of the waters to buoy you across them. You can walk across the surface of any body of water exactly as though it were the ground.

Miracles of Manann

You summon Manann's foulest humour to visit ruin upon the world. You might call upon a great wave to swallow a seaside village or for floods to inundate a larger town. A ship pursuing your own might run aground on a sandbank or rocks miles from any shore, a trickling stream might swell enough to make crossing impossible, or the mighty Talabec might be stilled until the sun next rises. As with all Miracles, talk to the GM about what is possible.







MORR

Favoured Lore: The Undead

Morr is the god of the dead, and it is said that he guards the souls of all the deceased. It is sometimes said that his domain extends into dreams, for sleep is nothing if not the shadow of death. Morr is worshipped throughout the Old World, especially within the Empire, where his priests provide a foretelling of death known as a dooming to all upon reaching adulthood. Morr's cult is present throughout the Empire, as it is fated that all must die, and, though influential, rarely takes a side in political matters. His priests are often stoic by nature, offering only the coldest of comforts. When death takes the aged and the infirm, they offer prayers in his name. When famine or plague claims whole villages, young and old alike, the prayers they offer are no different.

Morr loathes necromancy, and his followers keenly pursue any rumours of the undead or vampires abroad in the Empire. The Knights of Morr, an armed order within the Cult, are especially vigilant in this regard and can be found across the Old World prosecuting Morr's war on undeath, protecting the souls of all those who die in his good grace. Morr is husband to Verena, goddess of Wisdom, and father to Myrmidia and Shallya. It is sometimes blasphemously claimed that he is a brother to Khaine, the god of murder, whose worship is banned in all civilised lands

STRICTURES OF MORR

-  Respect and honour the dead.
-  Harm not a raven, for they are fellow servants of Morr.
-  Hunt down Necromancers and the Undead wherever they may gather.
-  Pay heed to your dreams.
-  Never interrupt a funeral service or refuse to conduct one if so ordained.
-  At no time be a party to raising the dead unless allowed by Morr.

Morr's Favour

The favoured of Morr are never unnerved by death, for they know that, no matter how violent, it is a natural part of life. You always know if a person you are speaking with is close to death. Additionally, by touching a corpse, you learn how long it has been since they died. Weapons you wield always inflict +1 Damage against Undead.



Prayers of Morr

LAST RITES

You incant prayers for the dead over a corpse, ensuring that no necromancy can return it to unlife. If the target is an undead Minion within Close Range, it is instantly destroyed. Other undead creatures suffer a Wound instead.

STAY MORR'S HAND

You beseech Morr to cause his ravens to tarry and spare a dying soul for a moment longer. By laying your hands upon someone, you prevent them from dying, no matter how grievous their wounds or dire their affiliations. This does not spare them from pain, suffering, or further injury, but it does prevent them from dying for as long as you remain conscious and keep your hands on them.

PORTAL'S THRESHOLD

By drawing a line in the ground and uttering a prayer to Morr, you invoke an aspect of the portal to his realm. This line may be a circle, a straight line, or any other shape of your choosing, so long as it does not cross or enclose more than two zones. Until the following dawn, no mindless undead creature can cross this line, and sentient undead must make a Willpower Test, Opposed by your own Willpower, to do so. Even if they succeed, the creature becomes Drained until they have returned back across the threshold.

Miracles of Morr

Death is final, and Morr is loath to make any exception. Even so, minor infractions to this rule are possible. This might allow you to summon up the shade of a deceased individual to answer your questions or to return a fallen hero to life to fight one final battle. As with all Miracles, ask the GM what is possible. Remember that Morr's realm is said to include dreams as well as death.

RANALD

Favoured Lore: Criminal Underworld

Ranald is the trickster patron of thieves, rogues, and charlatans. His worship is proscribed in most civilised lands, but to his devout followers, this is hardly a hindrance. It is said of Ranald that he was once mortal, having tricked his way into immortality by first stealing the heart of Shallya. More of a trickster than an outright criminal, Ranald prefers cunning over violence and loves to bring sorely needed humility to the prideful. His temples are always hidden, and even his symbol — a simple cross — is easy to mistake for common graffiti or defacement. Public worship of Ranald is rarely tolerated, but neither is it banned. Those who attempt to proscribe his worship outright often suffer untimely accidents and swiftly change their minds. Whether this is due to divine intervention or simply the administration of a swift and merciless beating — many Ranaldans view their master's prohibition on violence as among his most flexible strictures — is often unclear.

Ranald is thought to be disliked by most of the gods, who view him more as a decadent trickster and lover of riddles than a fellow deity. This is also true of his priesthood. Some maintain, however, that Shallya still bears some love for Ranald, and indeed, it is her temples alone that do not turn away those known to worship him.

STRICTURES OF RANALD

- ☞ One coin in 10 belongs to Ranald.
- ☞ Never betray another to the authorities: there is no greater sin than informing.
- ☞ Violence is prohibited except in self-defence.
- ☞ It is better to live free and die than endure under oppression.
- ☞ There is no honour among thieves, but there is among Ranaldans.



Ranald's Favour

Outside of a few secretive orders, Ranald has little in the way of a formal priesthood, but his favour finds those who exemplify his strictures all the same. Those who enjoy Ranald's favour can find the opportunity to gamble in any environment and treat any fall Hazard as being half its given rating. Additionally, if you are caught engaging in any nefarious activity, witnesses will never be able to agree on your exact description.

Prayers of Ranald

AN INVITATION

You recite one of Ranald's favourite riddles concerning doors and if there is a difference between a closed one and a wall. A knot, lock, or latch of your choosing within Short Range is undone, exactly as if it had been opened by a careful hand or matching key.

RICH MAN, POOR MAN, BEGGAR, THIEF

You smile at Ranald as you cheekily ask if wealth and status really matter all that much after all. By adjusting your clothing, changing your gait, and perhaps putting on a bit of an accent, you may appear to fit in anywhere you find yourself. This might be a noble's ball, a mangey flop house, or in the middle of a mustering army. You may make a Willpower Test to include others in your ruse — add one additional ally within Short Range for each success you achieve. Of course, as many Ranaldans have found, they fit in quite well in a jailhouse just as they are.

RANALD'S LUCK

You invoke Ranald's superlative luck, relying on it to save you. At the beginning of each session, you may invoke this prayer to engage in a short game of chance with the Gamemaster. If you win, you begin the session with an extra point of temporary Fate. This point may be spent as normal but may not be burned.

Miracles of Ranald

You make Ranald an offer he cannot, you hope, refuse. Miracles of Ranald are always subtle, appearing to others as incredibly unlikely coincidences or impossible twists of fate. You and your allies might vanish into the sewers of one town, only to emerge in that of the next town over. With Ranald's hand at your back, you might steal an artefact from the depths of the vaults of Talabheim or place one marked penny in the purse of every noble in the city. Successful thieves should be wary, however, as Ranald likes little more than humbling the prideful — his own followers included.

VERENA

Favoured Lore: Law

Verena is the Patron deity of scholars, lawyers, engineers and, some claim, wizards. She is the goddess of wisdom and is worshipped throughout the Old World, especially in the south. She is said to value truth, learning, and justice. Her priesthood is one without rigid formal ranks, for it is said that the truth is self-evident and available to any who would seek it — what need, then, of a hierarchy? As a result, her cult is not terribly influential, but various Verenan orders do wield power as respected judges and arbitrators. Despite this reputation, an ardent Verenan can be a merciless judge. They often favour simple truths over nuanced complexity, and their rulings are often cold and frequently brutal.

Verena is wed to Morr, god of the dead, and together are said to hold judgement over both the living and the dead. Their daughters are, Shallya, goddess of Mercy, and Myrmidia, the goddess of strategy.

STRICTURES OF VERENA

- Never refuse to arbitrate a dispute when asked.
- Always tell the truth without fear or favour.
- Protect knowledge at all costs.
- Combat must be a last resort when all other approaches prove fruitless.
- Never become a tool of injustice or heresy.



Verena's Favour

Favoured Verenans are typically at home among dusty tomes and teetering towers of books or amidst terrible disputes, attempting to bring order and judgement. So long as you only speak the truth, you are inherently credible. Anyone who hears your voice knows what you say is true, though they may draw their own conclusions based on the facts you relay. In a library or similar vault of knowledge, you always know just where to find the reference you require.

Prayers of Verena

SHACKLES OF TRUTH

You point to a target within short range and command them to speak no lie. As long as you hold their gaze, they may tell no lie, though they are not compelled to tell the truth. They may lie by omission, obscure the truth through verbal trickery, or otherwise attempt to deceive or fluster you, but no lie may pass their lips.

SWORD OF JUSTICE

You channel Verena's fury at the unjust through a blade. A sword you are wielding gleams suddenly with a piercing light. The sword ignores Armour, and if those Wounded by it are criminals (as determined by the GM), they are immediately rendered *Defenceless* or otherwise defeated. Verena regards any crime inflicted upon an unconscious criminal as a willful breaking of her strictures.

TRUTH WILL OUT

You invoke Verena's dominion over truth and wisdom to tell when you are being deceived. When you invoke this prayer, you instantly become aware of any deception around you. This includes spoken lies, misleading writings, and even magical illusions or miraculous tricks by the likes of Ranald's followers. You do not necessarily discern the truth of the matter, but you are aware that you are being deceived.

Miracles of Verena

You plead with Verena for her intercession. This might allow you to uncover knowledge long thought lost to the world, show you the truth amidst a web of lies, or pass her stringent judgement on a known criminal, spiriting them swiftly to her husband's realm. As with all Miracles, ask the GM what is possible.

MYRMIDIA






Favoured Lore: Military

Myrmdia is a goddess of honourable warfare, strategy, and honest soldiery. Though worship of Myrmdia is far more prevalent in the distant land of Tilea, her faith is widespread throughout the Empire. Many soldiers, especially veterans, pay homage to her over even Ulric or Sigmar, for it is said that Myrmdia prefers honour and victory over fury and glory. The Cult of Myrmdia holds little outright political power but is not without influence. Shrines to Myrmdia can be found in most towns. Some act as training grounds for local militias, while others act as meeting houses for older veterans to trade stories and advice in exchange for alms. Often, this is the only succour injured veterans will find, their usefulness as soldiers long spent.

Myrmdia is the sister of Shallya, the goddess of healing. It is said that she shared her sister's pacifism until living for a time as a mortal woman. Confronted with the indignities of life, she took up a spear and laid low those who had harmed her. The spear remains a symbol of Myrmdia and a favoured weapon among her followers.



STRUCTURES OF MYRMIDIA

-  Act with honour and dignity in all matters.
-  Respect prisoners of war, and never kill a foe who surrenders.
-  Show no mercy to unrepentant enemies of Humanity.
-  Obey all honourable orders.
-  Preserve the weak from the horrors of war.

Myrmdia's Favour

The favoured of Myrmdia are as often leaders and military commanders as they are priests. Those so blessed are adept at strategic thinking and outmanoeuvring their foes. As long as you are holding a shield, you never count as outnumbered in combat. Additionally, any spear you wield inflicts +1 Damage.

Prayers of Myrmdia

EAGLE'S EYES

You pray to Myrmdia for her insight over a battlefield and summon a spectral eagle, a common symbol of her worship. It flies high above you and moves as you direct it. While this prayer is in effect, you see through the eagle's eyes rather than your own. You may direct it anywhere within a mile of your current location.

BLAZING SUN

You pray to Myrmdia, calling upon her to scour the battlefield of dishonourable foes, and a blinding flash of light bursts forth. Everyone else in your Zone is inflicted with the *Blinded* condition until the end of your next turn.

SHIELD OF MYRMIDIA

You call upon Myrmdia to bolster your defences and those of your allies. Until the end of the current battle, you gain +1 Resilience, as do any allies who remain within Short Range of you.

Miracles of Myrmdia

You summon the power of Myrmdia to guide you in your actions and to bring defeat to your foes. Miracles of Myrmdia are often subtle yet far-reaching. One might allow all those under your command to hear your voice, regardless of the distance between you or the din of battle that might surround them. Another might hide an entire war host for the eyes of their enemies, allowing them to spring forth in ambush from the midst of a barren field or karst hillside. As with all Miracles, talk to the GM about what else is possible.






SHALLYA

Favoured Lore: Anatomy or Concoction

Shallya is the goddess of healing, mercy, and compassion. She is said to grant her mercy to all, without exception, and indeed, very few are ever turned from her temple's doors. Her followers can be found throughout the Empire, especially where suffering is greatest. For many, the healing offered at her temples is the only medical attention they will ever receive. Though her followers are often gifted healers, they are few compared to the demands placed upon them. Most who attend her shrines can only hope for a warm meal and a damp cloth across their forehead. Her followers also offer aid and charity of other sorts, and many hospices, orphanages, and charities are run entirely by Shallyans. Though the mercy of Shallya is said to be endless, that of her followers is often not — some grow callous in the face of the unending suffering they are sworn to address. Others grow cruel.

Shallya is the daughter of Verena, goddess of wisdom, and sister to Myrmidia, goddess of strategy. Typically portrayed as a young, smiling woman, her symbol is the dove, a stark contrast to the dark ravens favoured by her father Morr, the god of the dead.

STRICTURES OF SHALLYA

-  Render assistance without judgment, based only on need.
-  Never kill except in self-defence or when facing followers of the Fly Lord.
-  Hunt down those who swear themselves to gods of suffering and decay.
-  Shallya's work is never done, so turn not to self-indulgence.
-  Never take up arms; a walking stick and courage will suffice.

Shallya's Favour

It has been observed that the favour of Shallya can be as much a curse as it is a blessing, for though Shallya herself is merciful, the Old World is most certainly not. Nevertheless, you bear a touch of her innocence. Though you are not immune to violent intent, most human attackers will choose another victim over you if one is available. Additionally, Tests you make to identify, treat, or alleviate an injury or illness are always Glorious.

Prayers of Shallya

BITTER CARTHASIS

You draw a poison or disease out of another individual and into yourself, relying on Shallya's mercy to purge it. You must touch the unfortunate target and make an Endurance Test. For each success, you cure one disease or counteract one poison. On a Complication, you suffer the symptoms yourself until the following dawn.

MARTYR

You pray to Shallya to allow you to take on another's suffering in their stead. Choose a target within Long Range. Until the end of the battle, if they would roll on the Wounds Table (page 190), you must do so instead.

SHALLYA'S TEARS

You pray to Shallya to take pity on a wounded individual and heal their wounds, your fervent tears falling upon the wounded individual. Choose a Wounded target within Close Range and make a Willpower Test. Consult the table below to determine the result.

Successes	Result
0	The target's injury is beyond Shallya's mercy, at least for now. You may attempt this prayer again after the next dawn.
1	The target's injury is improved. They recover after the next downtime without a <i>Rest and Recovery</i> Endeavour.
2	The target's injury is much improved and is healed after a single night's rest.
3+	The target is instantly healed of one Wound of your choice.

This prayer may only be used successfully once for any specific injury. A severed limb cannot be restored by this miracle, but all other injuries are within its grasp.

Miracles of Shallya

Shallya's mercy is boundless, but so too is the suffering to be found in the Old World. This miracle can heal even the most grievous injury, including lost limbs, so long as the victim still draws breath and their body is mostly intact (or at least, all in one place). All the sick and injured in a temple of Shallya might find themselves cured or the population of a town protected from a plague that is otherwise ravaging the lands. It cannot restore the dead to life, however, for Shallya respects the boundaries of her husband's domain. As with all Miracles, ask the GM what is possible.

GODS BEYOND THE EMPIRE

Faith is just as important beyond the borders of the Empire. In the southern lands of Estalia, Tilea, and beyond, many of the same gods are worshipped. The Cult of Myrmydia is particularly strong in Estalia, where her followers claim the city of Magritta as her birthplace. Of course, many Tilean theologians claim that artefacts in the Grand Temple of Myrmydia in Remas prove the goddess was born in the lands of Tilea. The Estalian pantheon differs somewhat from the Empire's, though whether the variations imply distinctly separate entities or are merely different names and descriptions for familiar deities is a matter for the priests.

Amongst even the more learned of the Empire's citizens, very little is known of other lands at all, let alone the particulars of their faiths. It is sometimes said that in Kislev, the people worship bears or perhaps the snow itself. Some claim that the people of Grand Cathay worship dragons. Far to the north, beyond the sea of claws, lies Norsca, where the gods are many, strange, and typically bloodthirsty. Each tribe seems to know them by a different name, but all are thought to be fickle, offering their blessings only to those who earn them by great or grievous deeds.

The Border Princes attracts outsiders and the dispossessed, many of whom bring their gods with them. However, that land makes a mockery of faith and ambition alike, and few cults have established a lasting presence there.

The Lady of the Lake

In the lands of Bretonnia, it is the worship of the Lady of the Lake that holds sway. Some other gods are still recalled here and there, but all pale in comparison to the Lady's prominence. She is the patron god of Bretonnia, and her virtues are chivalry and honour. It is the sworn duty of all knights to serve her. Some are further charged to seek her out, questing to earn her favour, and drink of the Grail from which her blessings flow.

The Lady of the Lake has no priests or acolytes. Instead, her emissaries are the Fey Enchantress and the Grail Damsels, who serve under her. They are possessed of potent magical abilities, undeniable gifts that differ from the miraculous abilities attributed to some devout priests of other gods.

The Fey Enchantress is considered the living embodiment of the Lady and stands beside the king of Bretonnia, advising him in all things. The Grail Damsels lend their guidance to the kingdom's knights in a similar way, guiding them, despatching them on quests, and lending them their aid when needed.

The peasantry of Bretonnia only rarely catch a glimpse of the Lady's servants, but their faith is nevertheless sincere, and every village has its own humble shrine and traditions. Some make pilgrimages in the Lady's name, travelling to sites where she is said to have appeared or joining her knights in crusades to distant lands, rarely to return.

ELVES

The Elves' ancient pantheon is extensive, with different groups of deities being held as important by Wood Elves and High Elves. Loosely, there are two groups of gods, the Cadai and the Cytharai. The Cadai rule the heavens and have strong connections to their Elven followers, who directly help where they can. The selfish Cytharai rule the underworld and care little for the Elves. A few stand apart from these distinctions, the most prominent being Morai-Heg the Crone, Goddess of Fate and Death.

The High Elves favour the Cadai and believe that Asuryan, the God of Creation, is king of all the gods and able to pronounce judgement upon them all. Also of great importance to them is Mathlann, god of the sea and storms, as they are a seafaring nation and often subject to his whims.

The Wood Elves recognise the role all gods have to play in their lives, as well as many other spirits and spites, constructing small shrines to them throughout their woods. By far, the most important deity to the Wood Elves is Isha, the goddess of nature. The Queen of the Woods, Ariel, is her avatar and, therefore, among the most powerful Wizards in the Old World. Ariel's consort, Orion, is a being of mortal flesh and divine spirit, his life tied closely to the seasons. Each winter, he dies, only to be reborn again when spring renews the world.



Elven Priests

The Elves do not worship their gods in the way that humans do. They honour them, seek to learn from their teachings and recognise their dominion over various aspects of creation, but most Elves seek to learn from them rather than praise them merely for existing. Elves consider human faith to be naive in this respect, and most consider this a weakness that further opens them to corruption by darker powers.

There are Elven priests among both the High Elves and Wood Elves, but even the most devout do not perform miracles as some devout humans do. Instead, they seek to embody some aspect of their chosen deity, and many are powerful Wizards in their own right, seeing their mastery over magic as a gift far more worthy than any petty miracle. These they often attribute to some latent magical ability or the work of a wayward spirit.

DWARFS

The Dwarfs venerate their ancestors, some of whom they count as gods in their own right. Though the time of the Ancestor Gods is long past, the Dwarfs have long memories, and records still exist of Grungni, Grimnir, Valaya, and many others.



Grungni

Grungni, along with the other Ancestor Gods, is said to have been forged by earth, stone, and metal upon the anvil of some older, nameless entity. He is revered by miners, artisans, and smiths as a god of the forge and all well-made things. He is often named the father of the Dwarfs, who led them to their holds beneath the earth.

Valaya

Valaya is the god of home and hearth, the wife of Grungni, and holds dominion over life in the hold. She is said to have invented the runes Dwarfs use for writing, and her visage is often depicted above libraries and places of learning. Her strength is invoked by any Dwarf who stands in defence of their home, and the image of her shield and rune-axe, Kradskonti, often flies high above a Dwarf hold's stalwart defenders.

Grimnir

Grimnir, it is said, protected the Dwarfs on their long migration to the first holds. He is seen as a warrior, proud and vicious, a stout Dwarf before whom no enemy could stand. This is how most of his icons depict him, but Grimnir is also remembered in another way — as the first Slayer. It is said that he ventured into the Chaos Wastes to find a glorious doom and never returned.


Dwarf Priests

Dwarf priests keep safe the lore of an Ancestor God, recalling their lives and teaching young Dwarfs their deeds and wisdom. Dwarf priests wield neither miracles nor magic but have no need of either. Some practice the Runecrafting of the Dwarfs, inscribing powerful runes that recall the might of their chosen Ancestor God.

HALFLINGS

Trying to deduce the Halfling's attitude to religion is akin to interrogating a stirpike as to how birds might fly. Halflings may well have gods of their own, but they rarely speak on the matter with much sincerity. Should a Taalite priest visit the Mootland, every Halfling they meet will regale them with stories of how they always preferred Taal over the other gods and indeed may have met him once by a brook just over yonder. Should a Sigmarite priest visit the following day, they are just as likely to be told about how much every Halfling appreciates a well-made hammer.

If pushed, most Halflings would admit that they believe in the gods just as much as the situation, or opportunity, demands. Needless to say, there are few Halfling priests.



MAGIC IN THE OLD WORLD

Magic is a potent force in the Old World, rarely understood and often feared. At its most spectacular it can turn the tide of battle. Enchanted arrows can spread hungering eldritch fire, mighty fortifications can be laid low with deafening blasts of power, and the courage of stout-hearted soldiers can be shattered by visions of death, defeat, and horror. Used with subtlety, magic can beguile, misdirect, and subvert. It can be used to build wealth, power, or influence — or wrest these things away from the unwary. Those who can wield its power are highly sought after, but they are also feared. Even in the most enlightened provinces of the Empire the practice of witchcraft is at best tolerated, and even then only for as long as it is useful.

Fear of witches and spellcraft is deeply ingrained in most common folk, for the Winds of Magic are not to be trifled with and errant sorcerers have brought doom upon themselves and all those around them. Tales are still told of the Vampire Wars, and the necromantic spells that woke the dead from their rest and blotted out the sun for months on end. To this day, few practices of magic are as reviled within the Empire as the Necromancer's art.

Magic does not only take the form of spells. It is sometimes bound up in arcane artefacts, valuable relics traded only rarely. These are often held for decades in a noble family's armoury, and many an ensorcelled blade or rune-inscribed armour lies entombed alongside the vaunted warrior once bore it into battle.

THE WINDS OF MAGIC

The Winds of Magic flow across the world, entering from the poles and washing across the continents before vanishing into the great vortex at the heart of Ulthuan. Here and there, the winds gather, shepherded by the ancient system of waystones maintained by the High Elves or drawn to places with which they resonate. To those with the gift to witness such things, a jade green wind murmurs through the deep forests. Around the massive pyres on which fallen soldiers are burned, a roiling red wind blusters, and across the endless battlefields, a cold, purple mist hangs.

In all, eight distinct hues are discernible to those gifted with mage-sight, eight different Winds of Magic. Usually, they pass by unremarked. A sudden gust of the amethyst Wind of Death might cause a toiling peasant to shudder as though their grave had been trodden on, but the Winds of Magic are beyond the reach of most. Most scholars of magic consider this a kindness, for, they claim, only those of truly formidable mental might can hope to bend the powers of magic to their will. Lesser persons would be consumed in an instant, their souls torn apart by terrible energies.

MAGIC OF THE OLD WORLD

In the Old World, the Elves know the winds best of all and work some of the most powerful spells. They view magic as a spiritual force, its nature closely tied to that of their gods. Ulthuan's High Elves teach the lore of magic to dedicated apprentices over many decades. With painstaking care and dedication, they learn to wield the winds in harmony, naming their practice of the arcane arts High Magic. This slow process of mastery they view as necessary, for the Elves remember well the ruin that magic has brought upon the world. Their oldest records still recall the Old Ones and the collapse of their great polar gates, and the deluge of raw magic that this unleashed upon the world. Such was the damage to the geomantic web, and so desperate were the means by which this devastation was contained, that the High Elves know well the world could not survive a second cataclysm of such magnitude.

In the sundered provinces of the Empire, things are very different. Humans have a lesser natural aptitude for magic than Elves, but they are by nature far more daring and reckless. The status of Wizards varies greatly from

one province of the Empire to another. In the Reikland magic is universally outlawed and its practitioners, when caught, are burnt at the stake as witches. In Talabecland, by contrast, Wizards enjoy greater freedom to practise their craft. Yet, wherever Wizards reside, superstition and distrust of their powers is rife amongst common folk, leading most sensible Wizards to seek the favour and protection of Imperial nobles and military officers. As such, practitioners of magic can be found in courts and barracks across the Empire, masquerading as wise advisers and trusted counsellors, only revealing the extent of their powers when called upon to do so in battle.

MAGIC OF AGES PAST

There are Human practices of magic older by far than the Empire. Hedge Magic, as it is sometimes called, is of obscure origin, but seems to have its roots in traditions that date back to the first Human tribes to settle what is now the Empire. Far to the south of the Empire, beyond the Border Princes, lies Nehekara, the land of the dead. There, hubris and magic once intertwined so fully that an entire civilisation was consumed by necromantic magic, a quest for eternal life culminating only in endless, undying existence amidst the blighted sands. The Khemrian dead still march north to make war upon the living, and the living sometimes venture into those wastelands, but very few return. The lore and artefacts of the Tomb Kings are nevertheless valued among Wizards, the lingering curse of undeath an insufficient hazard to ward off the curious or the reckless.

With a few notable exceptions, such as the Wizards and Alchemists Guild of Middenheim or Kislev's sisterhood of Ice Witches, there are few formal ways a suitably gifted Human can learn magic. Some seek an apprenticeship at the hands of a learned master, but many Human Wizards are self-taught — a perilous way to attempt to control magic. Many of these hidden adepts attend to other work in public. Here and there, a small forge might be lit by the arcane touch of its otherwise unremarkable blacksmith. A fallow field might be brought to harvest not by hard work and honest prayers of Rhya but by the secret witchcraft of its owner.

THE HEXENGUILDE

Distrust and persecution makes it dangerous for Wizards to convene; should one fall beneath the ministrations of a witch hunter's instruments, others quickly follow. Most Wizards practice their craft in isolation, keeping to the traditions handed down to them, studying dusty tomes, or experimenting in private sanctuaries. And yet rumours persist of arcane cabals, from covens of witches gathering beneath Morrslieb's foul grin, to facetious tales of a secretive school of magic in Marienburg. Within the Grand Duchy of Talabec people whisper of the Hexengilde, a vast conspiracy schooling aspirants in profane ritual and sorcery.

The Hexengilde is a far cry from the deft and sweeping organisation subject to such paranoid gossip, and indeed it is more a loose association than its somewhat aspirational title would suggest. Its members meet but rarely to exchange information, seek apprentices, and share insights. Some are learned scholars who speculate on the nature of the Winds of Magic while cataloguing their knowledge in dense grimoires. Most are Hedge Wizards of various creeds, sharing rites passed down through generations or learned through years of trial and error.

The Hexengilde is nominally overseen by Alfred Alvensleben, though he is rarely seen in Talagaad — or indeed, at all. He has focused the group's efforts on securing noble patronage, and has met with some success. Alvensleben is said to serve Duke Ludwig XII, but none know in what capacity. Members are held to few rules — none may speak of another Wizard's secrets, and none may judge the magical works of their fellows. At best, this keeps jealous Wizards safely out of each other's way. At worst, it has allowed dangerous magical practices to spread unchecked.

The High Elves, who for an age kept to the shores of Ulthuan, have learned of the state of Human magical practices with concern. When not adroitly restrained, magic is a corrupting force by its very nature, twisting the practitioner in profane ways and birthing unnatural phenomena. A few High Elves, however, have noted the magical potential of Humans. Their ways are crude, yes, but they are often ultimately effective. Yes, many will perish as they learn their craft, but as luck would have it, there are far more Humans than Elves.

Dwarfs, whose memories span longer than many Human nations, recall the damage done to their realm by the magics and daemonic legions of old. They nevertheless have found a way to bend magic to their will by brute force alone. They use this runecraft to contain powerful spells within honest stone or steel, empowering their creations with potent effects.

Halflings, if they are even capable of learning magic at all, seem simply not to bother with it.

THE EIGHT WINDS

Once the Winds of Magic were as one and appeared to those with the gifts to sense them as strands of silver power, which boiled black beneath the influence of Chaos. When the cataclysm struck and the Geomantic Web of the Old Ones was shaken to its foundation, the Winds of Magic began to shine in many hues, divided as though by a prism into eight distinct colours. Elven mages found these strands of magic easier to work by far, and their knowledge and understanding of magic grew.

To those with the wit and gift to see them, the Winds of Magic now echoed the world around them. The purple pall of the amethyst wind gathered around death, while the red wind was driven to bilious gusts around mighty bonfires and gentle breezes around simple candle flames. Those with the will and instruction to do so could reach for these winds as only the most erudite minds could before, and by drawing on their power, influence the world around them.

Not all effects can easily be traced to a single wind, however. Though the amethyst wind marshalls time and death, it is not possible to raise a corpse and create a zombie with this wind alone. It must be mixed — a touch of the amber wind to impart a mind into the corpse, a wisp of the jade wind to bring about a simulacrum of life, or a zephyr of the grey wind to wreath the body in life's pallid shadow. Mixing winds in this way is dangerous. If the conflicting sources of power are not kept carefully separated by the will of the Wizard, they can become what the High Elves term *Dhar*, a dark and corrupt power that twists all it touches. Nevertheless, some careless or reckless Wizards take the risk not to achieve extraordinary effects but merely to empower spells with whatever magical energy can quickly be grasped. Others embrace the nature of *Dhar* entirely, dabbling in blood magic and daemonology, thirsty for power at any price.

For some spells, and indeed for entire lores of magic, it is difficult to determine which winds have been weaved together to achieve a particular effect. Often, even the Wizard in question may find this difficult or impossible to explain. Petty self-thought practitioners of magic can be found in every land, barely comprehending the powers they wield or the dangers they court, and even among the more established traditions there is little concord. Elementalists speak of elemental spirits rather than winds, for example, and in this they are echoed by the arcane practitioners of Grand Cathay. Similarly, the Ice Witches of Kislev claim their power is drawn from the land itself, though some High Elf scholars dismiss their frigid craft as little more than an oddly limited application of Azyr. In Bretonnia the magic of the Lady of the Lake and her Handmaidens is viewed as a gift from the Lady herself. Like the wilderness itself, Wood Elves are varied in their practices of magic, with some maintaining the Elven practice of High Magic, while others weave songs that urge the trees themselves into motion.

Suffice it to say, the practice of magic in the Old World is varied and often perilous, bringing with it the taint of Chaos, poised to corrupt even the most well-intentioned Wizard — many of whom, in their search for knowledge, end up perusing texts unfit for mortal minds.

MAGIC IN PLAY

Whilst the ability to perceive and manipulate the Winds of Magic is a gift of birth, using that gift without the care born out of long study can easily prove fatal. Those who do run great risks, as since the corporeal world has been opened to the ravages of the Ruinous Powers, Daemons can find ways to return. The easiest of these is through a rent in the mind of a careless magician. The rules, opportunities, and pitfalls of magic can be found on the following pages. The GM, and any player who wishes to play a Wizard, should have a good understanding of these rules. Others are free to pass them by — after all, any fool knows magic is left well enough alone.

Characters with the Wizard Talent can manipulate the Winds of Magic, casting spells of their own creation, or which they have learned through careful study. The spells one can cast and the effects a Wizard can achieve are determined by the Lores they have learned and the Level of the Wizard Talent they possess.

WIZARDS AND TERMINOLOGY

For the purposes of this chapter, the word Wizard is used to describe anyone capable of casting a spell. However, each tradition of magic has its own preferred term for its practitioners, be that witch, shaman, mage, or something more esoteric — among Ogres it is said that it falls to the tribe's butchers to enact their spellcraft.

THE ANATOMY OF A SPELL

Spells vary vastly in their effects, but a number of aspects are common to each. These are as follow:

CV: Casting Value, or CV, is the number of successes required to cast the spell. Lower CV spells are easier and quicker to cast. As long as you have any Level of the Wizard Talent and the appropriate Lore, you can learn any formal spell, regardless of its CV.

Target: The subject of the spell. This can be Self, meaning the Wizard themselves, Creature, Zone, Object, or something else entirely. Spells are only effective when a valid target is chosen.

Range: all spells have a Range (page 114). You cannot cast a spell at a target beyond this range.

Duration: How long the spell lasts. After the Duration has elapsed, the spell ends. A Duration of Battle means the spell lasts for several minutes, long enough for the current situation or battle to conclude.



CASTING A SPELL

Should a Wizard mispronounce a single word, the magic they are wielding might shatter its bindings in a burst of energy. At other times, the Wizard may channel the Winds of Magic with near-perfection, and the magic will burst forth irresistibly.

A character who wishes to cast a spell must make an Exacting Willpower Test, requiring a number of successes equal to the Casting Value (CV) of the spell or effect they are attempting to achieve. This is known as a Casting Test and each individual Test made as part of a Casting Test requires the use of an action.

You need not declare what spell you are attempting to cast before making a Casting Test, only what Lore it will be drawn from, as you must gather the correct Winds of Magic to fuel your arcane efforts. Wizards often use this flexibility to match a spell to the changing situation of a battlefield, gathering arcane power before unleashing it at an opportune moment.

Wearing armour or holding a bulky item, such as a shield, interferes with the deft movements and careful marshalling of the Winds of Magic required to cast a spell. Casting Tests made under such circumstances are always Grim.



INTERRUPTED CASTING

Holding on to arcane power is inherently dangerous, especially if you are not actively channelling it into a spell. Once you have begun casting a spell you must continue to do so or add one Miscast die (page 157) for each Casting Test you 'skip.' If you wish to end your attempts to cast a spell prematurely you may do so, but in doing so you suffer a Miscast, rolling all the dice in your Miscast Pool (page 157) — once a Wizard has begun to gather power they would be well advised to find something useful to do with it.

***Example:** Frederick von Bhal, a Hexengilde Wizard, is attempting to cast a spell with a CV of 4. He makes a Casting Test, achieving two successes. Unfortunately, Frederick is surprised by a cackling Goblin, though he thankfully manages to avoid its poisoned arrows! On his next turn, Frederick considers his options. He intends to cast a powerful spell to send the whole pack of Goblins running but needs more time to do so. Luckily, Frederick brought a backup plan. He uses his action to fire his Pistol at the Goblin, slaying it. As he did not use his Action to make a Casting Test, Frederick automatically gains a Miscast die. The plucky Wizard hopes this won't cause him any trouble down the line...*

Once you've made a Casting Test, if you have enough successes on the Exacting Test to match or exceed that spell's CV, you may choose to cast it immediately. If you do so, you resolve the spell's effects, and lose all successes you've accumulated on your Casting Test so far. The next spell you cast must be started from scratch.

Spell Potency

The final roll of your Casting Test decides the Potency of the spell. Your spell's Potency is equal to the number of successes you rolled in the Test immediately before casting the spell, regardless of CV of the spell you are trying to cast, or the total number of successes gathered over the Exacting Test.

Example: *Frederick is attempting to cast a CV 4 spell. On his first turn he gathers 3 successes. On his second turn of casting, he achieves 2 more, resulting in a total of 5. The spell is cast, and as Frederick achieved 2 successes on the final roll required to cast the spell, its Potency is 2.*

WAIT FOR IT!

Shrewd Wizards will wait until the Winds of Magic blow in their favour before unleashing a crucial spell. If you have achieved enough success to cast a spell, but your latest roll was poor and would result in a low Potency, you can always hold off on casting it this turn, making another Casting Test on a future turn with hopefully a greater degree of success. This does increase the risk of gaining more Miscast dice, but it may well be worth it to achieve just the right magnitude of arcane success.

MISCASTS AND THE RULE OF NINE

For reasons that are unclear to all save those schooled in the darkest secrets of magic, the number nine is ill-omened in matters of the arcane. When making a **Casting Test**, any result of a 9 on a die threatens to invoke disaster.

The Miscast Pool

When casting a spell, make a note of any die which shows a 9. These dice are immediately added to your Miscast Pool — you may not reroll them, even if the Test is Glorious. If, after a Casting Test, the number of dice in your Miscast Pool exceeds your Level in the Wizard Talent, this triggers a Miscast. Your grasp on the Winds of Magic slackens, and raw eldritch power escapes your grasp, often with disastrous results. Take all the dice in the Miscast Pool and roll them. Add the results together, and consult the Miscast Table (page 159) to see just how badly things have gone.

If you achieved enough successes on your Casting Test to cast a spell, you may do so before rolling on the Miscast Table, but you are not required to. Some results on the Miscast table will allow you to continue casting, keeping all the accumulated successes you have so far. If a result would end your attempt to cast a spell, this will be noted on the Miscast table.

Once you have resolved the effect of a Miscast, reduce your Miscast Pool to zero. If your Miscast pool contains no dice you cannot suffer a Miscast, even if a spell or other effect would cause you to do so.

PORTENT OF DOOM

When your Miscast Pool contains dice equal to your Wizard Level you are on the very cusp of losing control, and the arcane forces around you become apparent to all if they were not already so. The effect varies from Wizard to Wizard, and is influenced by whatever Lore of Magic you were attempting to draw from. Elementalists might be surrounded by crackling lightning or fire, while Illusionists might seem to almost vanish into a pall of growing shadow. Such effects can even come to leave their mark upon a Wizard indefinitely.

Skilled Witch Hunters have come to know the meaning of such displays of barely constrained power, and are quick to target Wizards on the verge of losing control of their abilities.



Disposing of Miscast Dice

When a battle or other tense situation reaches its conclusion, and you have a little while to catch your breath, you may safely dispose of any residual magic you have conjured. This empties your Miscast Pool, and discards any successes you have accumulated on a Casting Test, without causing a Miscast. During a battle, or when time is otherwise a factor, you may take a Recover action to reduce your Miscast Pool by one.

MIXING THE WINDS

When casting a spell that draws upon more than one of the Winds of Magic, a Wizard must be cautious. Many of the effects employed by Wizards require the use of more than one wind, but mixing the winds recklessly can cause their bright hues to blend into a dark miasma of corruption, which the High Elves name Dhar. This is the stuff of dark magic. It is innately hazardous, though mixing the winds in this way can also be a source of forbidden power.

Before rolling any dice a Human Wizard may choose to add any number of bonus dice to a Casting Test. However, for each die added in this way they must add one die to their Miscast Pool. The normal limits on how many bonus dice you can gain on a Test (page 107) apply. After the Casting Test has been made, check for a Miscast as usual.

MISCAST TABLE

If, after making a Casting Test, your Miscast Pool exceeds your Wizard Level, you must immediately roll on the Miscast Table. Roll your entire Miscast Pool and add the results together to determine the effect. Then remove all dice from your Miscast Pool.

MISCASTS AND SPECIFIC LORES

The following table is suitable for use by any Wizard. However, if the GM wishes, they may tailor these results to reflect the effects of whatever Lore the Wizard was attempting to, or has more recently, cast.



MISCAST TABLE

Total	Result
1-2	All those within Medium Range feel a sudden sense of loss, though they cannot say exactly what they have misplaced.
3-4	A sickly wave of magic escapes your grasp. Anyone within Short Range of you feels a sudden sense of nausea, but there is no other effect.
5-6	1d10 random small objects within Short Range — a few coins, a half-burned candle, or an old key — are transfigured into various small creatures which scuttle away in random directions.
7-8	A hideous chittering is heard from a nearby shadow. Until Mannslieb next hangs full in the sky, you continue to hear this disturbing noise at frequent but entirely unpredictable intervals.
9-10	All fresh food within Long Range is spoiled — milk turns sour, vegetables rot, and meat turns to stinking mush. Dried, salted, pickled, or otherwise preserved food remains palatable.
11-12	Arcane power spills forth from you in every direction. You are <i>Staggered</i> , and a minor effect associated with a Lore you know occurs within Short Range of you. A small flame might kindle, an illusionary creature may scuttle towards an ally, or a slain foe may begin to chatter in horror.
13-14	A hideous stench erupts from you. All those within Short Range of when you rolled this Miscast must immediately Give Ground or suffer a -1d penalty to their next Test. All your Fellowship Tests are Grim until you can next bathe.
15-16	The weather changes suddenly and unnaturally in the local area, with malefic storms appearing out of clear skies, or frigid snows falling in the middle of Sommerzeit.
17-18	You are suddenly transported to a random Zone within Medium Range of your current location.
19-20	Your eyes become blind to the good light of the sun, and you can only see by torchlight or other artificial or arcane illumination, as though it were the dead of night. This lasts until your next downtime.
21-22	An unnatural wind whips up around you. Anyone within Short Range, including you, falls <i>Prone</i> unless they are a Monstrosity.
22-23	A random spell you have recently cast is immediately cast again with a Potency of 1. The target of this spell is decided by the GM.
24-25	The Winds of Magic twist your tongue, robbing you of the ability to tell a lie. Until your next downtime, you may only speak the truth as you understand it.
26-27	Your eyes are overwhelmed by stray arcane energies. Until Morrslieb next hangs full in the sky, you can perceive only the Winds of Magic, not the natural world. Most normal Awareness Tests become Grim for you, but all Tests to detect magical phenomena are Glorious instead.
28-29	Magic surrounds you, wreathing you in an illusion drawn from the deepest recesses of your mind. You take on the appearance of whatever foe you most fear. This effect lasts until the end of the battle, or for the next few minutes.
30-31	Magic rips through your body, causing a great deal of internal damage. You immediately suffer a Wound — roll on the Wound Table, adding any additional dice for existing Wounds as normal.
32-33	The Winds of Magic swirl around you, threatening to set clothes alight, sunder flesh, or pluck unwary eyes from their very sockets. Your current Zone becomes a Hazard until the end of the current Battle, with a rating equal to the number of Miscast dice you rolled. Those in the Zone may resist its effects with either Endurance or Athletics.
34-35	An unnatural screech erupts from your lips, audible for miles around, damaging the hearing of those nearby. You and anyone within Short Range suffer a Wound: specifically, the 'Ears ringing' Wound (result 11 on the Wounds table, page 190).
36	You open a rift in reality that leads to the Realm of Chaos, and a Daemon erupts forth. The Daemon's precise nature is up to the GM, but it is entirely hostile, seeking either to beguile, corrupt, or destroy the caster and their allies. The GM may use any stat block they wish from the Gamemaster's Guide to represent this unnatural horror. It may act immediately, or it may flee, biding its time while it plots the caster's downfall. The entity returns to the Realm of Chaos when it, or the caster, are destroyed.
37	You open a rift in reality that leads to the Realm of Chaos, in a Zone of the GM's choosing within Long Range. Those who witness it must pass a Difficult (-1d) Willpower Test or become fascinated by the strange vistas glimpsed through the howling portal. Those who fail are drawn to enter the rift unless restrained in some way. The rift closes only once someone has entered it, or something has emerged.
38+	Magic overcomes you in a truly spectacular miasma of unnatural energy, ripping your body apart and spreading it over every Zone within Medium Range. You are dead, your body beyond salvation or reanimation, the fate of your soul left to the whims of the Winds of Magic.

FORMAL SPELLS

Formal spells are those means of working magic that have proven successful, and which have been tested, refined, and copied down into books of magic called grimoires. Some of these are finely honed works of art, such as the spells shared amongst the Elves of Ulthuan, while others are profane rituals of bloody portent that, nevertheless, are frighteningly effective. Formal spells often allow lesser Wizards to achieve more powerful effects, as they lean on the learning and expertise of those who have gone before them. However, they should still be wary, as the higher CV of such spells means that Miscasts are more likely.



Your character may cast any formal spell they have memorised or, if they can read and write, which they have transcribed into their own grimoire. Casting a spell from a grimoire in the midst of combat is dangerous, as the grimoire must be held open in one hand, and an unwary Wizard may be disarmed. Most Wizards take the time to memorise a few useful spells, just in case — see Endeavours on page 135.

Each Wizard records spells in their own way, however, and spells cast from an unfamiliar grimoire are always Grim, until you take the *Formalise Spell* Endeavour (page 134) to copy it into your own grimoire.

MAGIC FOR SALE!

Grimoires are only occasionally made available for sale through private auction, and are often smuggled by dubious traders at great risk and expense. As a result, they are always at least Gold Status items, and typically count as an Asset (page 102). Getting your hands on a new grimoire is never an easy task, and may require making unsavory contacts, paying exorbitant sums, or owing a fellow spellcaster a favour. Occasionally, an otherwise ordinary book may contain one or more spells enciphered within it, a means of transferring occult knowledge in plain view.

IMPROVISED SPELLS

Most Wizards in the Empire practice their magic in secret, spending long hours in darkened rooms studying their arcane arts by candlelight. Many pretend to be something other than a caster of spells, choosing instead the guise of a learned scholar, devoted star-gazer, or esoteric artisan. Many craft and learn their spells by dangerous trial and error, feeling out the patterns favoured by the Winds of Magic and applying their wit and experience to determine what is possible.

An improvised spell is one cast intuitively by a Wizard using whatever magic they can command. Such an approach is typically employed either by complete novices or true experts, as those with enough understanding to comprehend the risks of exploring magic in this way do so only in times of utmost need, or if they are supremely confident in their abilities.

Discuss what you want to achieve with the GM. Lore descriptions include some examples of what is possible. You must have the appropriate Wizard Level to achieve the effect you desire — the greater the effect, the better an understanding required. These effects are broken into various categories, as explained in the Improvised Spell CV Table. The Range of an Improvised spell is Close if the spell inflicts harm, or Short if not.

The CV of improvised spells is always higher than a formal spell, but they allow Wizards far greater flexibility. This can be further increased by ambitious Wizards attempting to increase the range of a spell, the number of targets it affects, or its duration. The effects described below are cumulative, so choosing two options from the +2 row adds a total of +4 CV. If an effect requires you to double the CV of a spell, do so after all other modifiers have been applied.

KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE

The rules for improvised spells allow Wizards to be truly flexible, reaching for the Winds of Magic to achieve whatever effect they might require, so long as they know the right Lore. However, they are more complex than the rules for formal spells. If they prefer, the GM can accommodate an entirely satisfying wizardly experience by restricting characters to formal spells, or by allowing the creation of new improvised spells only during downtime rather than in the midst of play. After all, if you cannot work out the nature of a spell in a minute or two, it is clearly too complex to be improvised on the fly — discuss it with the GM during your next downtime, and consider defining the spell in advance with a suitable endeavour (page 135).

IMPROVISED SPELL CV TABLE

Effect	CV	Example	Typical damage	Requirements
Petty	2	Light a flame (Elementalist) or throw a stone as fast as a bullet (Battle Magic)	4+Potency to a single target, or inflict a condition.	<i>Wizard 1</i>
Cardinal	4	Burn with a touch (Elementalist) or vanish into shadows (Illusionist)	Single target 5+Potency, or 3+Potency to a target and others in Close Range. May also inflict a condition.	<i>Wizard 2</i>
Advanced	8	Blast a group of enemies (Battle Magic) or raise an unprepared corpse as a Zombie (Necromancy)	6+Potency to a single target, or 4+Potency to all those in a Zone. May inflict +1d on the Wounds table or multiple conditions.	<i>Wizard 3</i>
Master	12+	Freeze a lake solid (Elementalist) or create a monstrosity of undead flesh and bone (Necromancer)	8+Potency, or 6+Potency to all those in a Zone. May inflict multiple additional Wounds or several conditions.	<i>Wizard 4</i>

IMPROVISED SPELL MODIFIER TABLE

CV Modifier	Example
+1	Increase Range to Medium, or inflict a minor condition.
+2	Increase Range to Long, create a Hazard, or inflict a serious condition
+3	Increase the area of effect by one Zone
Double	Do something extraordinary

Skilful Wizards who take the time to do so can formalise an improvised spell, turning it into a formal spell ready to cast again or pass on to others. Formalising a spell halves its Casting Value. See Endeavours on page 132.

THE LORES OF MAGIC

There are many paths to the understanding of magic, from the High Elf practice of High Magic, said to blend all the winds in perfect harmony, to the abhorrent practice of Dark Magic, which mixes the winds haphazardly to produce tainted power of terrible potency. Most practice of magic within the Empire falls somewhere between these approaches, sometimes employing only a single wind of magic to achieve a desired effect, at other times blending two more to achieve more powerful, if less stable, results.

Each Lore of Magic represents a particular approach towards the study and use of magic, giving each a particular character reflected by the spells within it. Each Lore has its own understanding of the underlying principles of magic, many of which are mutually exclusive. Elementalists, for instance, speak of Elemental Spirits rather than the Winds of Magic. Nevertheless, all seem to be efficacious to some degree.

BATTLE MAGIC

It is a common view throughout the Empire that magic is inherently dangerous. Some Wizards contest this — albeit, often in private — and speak of the benefits magic can bring. They claim spells could be used to for everything from watering crops to raising mighty towers or allowing the dead a chance to speak their final words. Practitioners of Battle Magic do no such thing, instead embracing the lethality of magic and honing it upon the myriad battlefields of the Old World. There are few Wizards as welcomed by generals and soldiers alike, as they bring the battlefield a power to rival the finest cannons of Nuln or the most vicious beasts to emerge from the forest's depths.

Those who wield Battle Magic draw their power from wherever it might come, caring not for the dangers of mixing the Winds of Magic so long as they can rain ruin down upon their foes. Fire springs forth from the red wind, while the green wind armours their allies with the strength of oak. Such Wizards rarely have difficulty in finding steady employment, but theirs is a perilous life, for they must contend with both the metaphysical hazards of witchcraft and the all too real danger of meeting a bloody end upon the battlefield.

CURSE OF COWARDLY FLIGHT

CV: 3 Target: Zone

Range: Long Duration: Instant

Effect: You reach into the minds of your enemies, tapping into their fears and causing them to feel as though death is close at hand. Enemies in the target Zone must immediately Give Ground if they can. Additionally, they must make a Willpower Test — if they do not score at least as many successes as the spell's Potency, they gain the *Broken* condition.

FIREBALL

CV: 3 Target: Creature

Range: Long Duration: Immediate

Effect: With a snap of the fingers, you summon forth a roiling ball of magical flame and hurl it at a nearby foe. Target a creature in Long Range. The target, and all creatures within Close Range of them, suffer 5+Potency Damage. Any affected creatures that aren't a Monstrosity also suffer the *Prone* condition (before they have a chance to Give Ground).

FLEETFOOT

CV: 2 Target: Zone

Range: Long Duration: Potency turns

Effect: You use the Winds of Magic to lend strength to an ally's legs, or twist time itself unnaturally. A number of creatures up to the spell's Potency in the target Zone have their Speed increased to Fast.



HAMMERHAND

CV: 1 **Target:** Zone
Range: Self **Duration:** Potency turns

Effect: You chant an invocation, your fists becoming like mighty hammers to fall upon your foes with terrible power. Your unarmed attacks deal S+Potency Damage instead of inflicting the *Staggered* condition. Additionally, your fists count as magic weapons.

IGNITE MISSILES

CV: 2 **Target:** Handful of arrows/bolts
Range: Close **Duration:** Potency turns

Effect: You weave the Winds of Magic around ammunition for a bow or crossbow. In flight, they burst into flame, inflicting 1 extra damage, and causing anyone *Staggered* or *Wounded* by them to suffer the *Ablaze* condition.

OAKEN SHIELD

CV: 3 **Target:** Self
Range: Short **Duration:** Battle

Effect: You summon the branches of a mighty spectral oak around yourself and your allies, warding off the attacks of your foes. This spell affects yourself and Potency allies within Short Range when the spell is cast. Those not wearing other armour gain +2 to their Resilience, while those who are wearing armour gain +1 Resilience. Armour gained from this spell does not interfere with spellcasting.

PIT OF DESPAIR

CV: 4 **Target:** Zone
Range: Long **Duration:** Varies

Effect: You cause the earth itself to open up and swallow your foes — and indeed anyone else unfortunate enough to stand nearby. All creatures within the target Zone must make an Athletics Test, requiring at least as many successes as the Potency of this spell. Those who fail are swallowed by the earth up to their shoulders, while those who pass suffer the *Prone* condition. Ordinary creatures trapped in this way must be dug out by someone else with a Brawn Test or, eventually, perish. Monstrosities trapped by this spell may still attack but are unable to move unless they spend a turn wresting themselves free.

RALLY

CV: 2 **Target:** Zone **Range:** Long
Duration: Potency turns

Effect: You fan the flames of bestial rage in the hearts of your allies, spurring them to valour in the face of terrifying opponents or overwhelming odds. A number of creatures up to the spell's Potency in the target Zone may immediately make a Willpower Test to remove the Broken Condition. Additionally, for the duration of this spell, they may make Willpower Tests to remove the Broken Condition even if they are not in a Zone without an enemy.

SMASH

CV: 1 **Target:** Object
Range: Close **Duration:** Instant

Effect: A mundane object you touch is severely damaged, and can no longer function as intended. The item may be as large as you are, though you may destroy parts of a larger object, such as cracking the wheel of a cart or blasting a hole through a wall. The spell's Potency determines the extent of the effect — a single success is enough to blow the hinges off a door, while 3 or more successes would blast it into splinters. If someone is holding an object you wish to destroy, they may oppose your Casting Test with their Athletics.

STAUNCH

CV: 2 **Target:** Creature
Range: Long **Duration:** Instant

Effect: You reach for the jade wind and use it to knit flesh and set sundered bone. You immediately treat one of the target's Wounds. If the spell's Potency exceeds the number of Wounds suffered by the target, you may choose to heal one of their Wounds instead, though you may not heal any Wounds that require surgery.

IMPROVISED BATTLE MAGIC

Battle Magic is, in many ways, the most eclectic school of magic, and its practitioners are ever experimenting with new ways to turn arcane energies towards a destructive end. Powerful bursts of flame or lightning char foes alive, while intricate spellwork shatters weapons, spurs allies to fight harder or longer, or lends strength to tired arms and flagging spirits. All these effects fall within the common practices of Battle Magic. On the other hand, the school cares little for spells that provide utility away from battle, though most who practice this form of magic have little interest in such effects in the first place.

Effects

Creation: Spells of creation usually summon harmful phenomena of some kind to wreak havoc on the battlefield — consuming fires, obscuring mists, or even foetid smells are all common. These effects might also be imbued into weapons.

Control: Spells of control spur others to flight or fight, strengthen or destroy arms and armour, or ward the Wizard and their allies from hazards on the battlefield.

Divination: Spells of divination sense harmful intent in others, let the Wizard know if they are being spied upon, or allow the Wizard a sixth sense to detect danger or hidden hazards.

IMPROVISED SPELL CV TABLE

Effect	CV	Example	Requirements
Petty	2	<p>Creation: Pluck a sword out of thin air, or send an enemy reeling with a touch.</p> <p>Control: Sharpen a dull blade to a razor's edge, or cause a grubby uniform to become parade ready.</p> <p>Divine: Determine if anyone within Long Range means you harm, or learn the location of the nearest person who wants you dead.</p>	<i>Wizard 1</i>
Cardinal	4	<p>Creation: Hurl a burst of force at a target at Medium Range, dealing 5+Potency Damage, or clad yourself and your allies in gleaming armour.</p> <p>Control: Lend a sudden burst of speed to your allies, or cause yourself to leap high into the air and land without injury.</p> <p>Divine: Learn how skilled a target is with their chosen weapon, or find every hidden weapon on a person or in a room.</p>	<i>Wizard 2</i>
Advanced	8	<p>Creation: Create a solid fortification from the surrounding materials, fit for a regiment to rest within, or conjure a cloud of choking smoke and putrescence.</p> <p>Control: Dull the sound of a raging battle, or curse an enemy's armour to become brittle and their sword arm to weaken.</p> <p>Divine: Learn the location of the nearest battle or the history of a weapon since its forging.</p>	<i>Wizard 3</i>
Master	12+	<p>Creation: Summon a wall of fire to burn or block one's foes, or conjure a mist to hide an entire army on the march.</p> <p>Control: Allow a regiment to stand fast in the face of certain death, or cause all their weapons to ignite with magical flame.</p> <p>Divine: Learn the names of all those who want you dead or the number of armed individuals in an entire province.</p>	<i>Wizard 4</i>

ELEMENTALISM

While other Wizards may coax or cajole the Winds of Magic to do their bidding, Elementalists understand magic as an elemental force possessed of its own spirit, to be cajoled or bound as they please. They call upon the elementals to serve them, summoning torrential downpours, ferocious gales, roaring flames, or reshaping the very bones of the earth to suit them. Some view the elements they summon as animalistic, living things, and use fetishes of bone or fur to channel their powers, while others take an almost scientific view. Elementalists are rightly feared, though their plying of spirits is often mistaken for Necromancy, drawing undue revulsion from the common folk. They are nevertheless sought out in times of need, bringing rain to arid soil, warm relief from a long and bitter winter, or ruinous fire to the battlefield.

Many of the most prominent Elementalists in the Empire hail from Nuln, where, it is claimed, the practice of Elementalism began almost a millennia ago under the guidance of one Berthold Fessbinder. True or not, a school of Elementalist practices endures in Nuln to this day, though the prominence of its alumni has faded as many turn to gunpowder and steel over the far less reliable practice of trafficking with spirits.

COMFORT

CV: 1 **Target:** Potency Zones **Range:** Medium
Duration: Until the next sunrise or sunset

Effect: You summon spirits of warmth to make an area more hospitable. Each Zone becomes comfortably warm, even if it was previously deathly cold or exposed to the elements. If you prefer, you may instead summon spirits of the chill air or frozen earth to make these Zones uncomfortably cold — useful if you wish to preserve foodstuffs, or encourage unwelcome guests to be on their way.

CREATE SPRING

CV: 1 **Target:** Zone
Range: Short **Duration:** Until Dawn

A small spring is created in the target Zone, bubbling with fresh, clean water. The small stream of water flows naturally, seeking a path downhill and filling minor depressions. Its volume varies by Potency — Potency 1 is enough to sate you and your travelling companions, whilst Potency 3 is sufficient water to slake the thirst of a village or small town. This spell cannot be cast again in the same area until after the next rainfall.

EYE OF THE STORM

CV: 2 **Target:** Potency Zones **Range:** Medium
Duration: Until next sunrise

Effect: You quiet the spirits of air that rage around you, erecting a haven of stillness and peace. Foul weather — be it wind, rain, or snow — is supernaturally calmed within the spell's area of effect, protecting all those within. Additionally, those within the target Zone gain the benefit of cover and concealment (page 115) against ranged attacks from outside the target Zones.

FIRE BREATH

CV: 2 **Target:** Zone
Range: Medium **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You belch forth a gout of flames, incinerating your foes, heating armour unbearably and scorching exposed flesh. Choose a Zone within Medium Range. A number of foes in that Zone equal to the Potency of this spell suffer 3 Damage, or 4 Damage if they are unarmoured.

FIERY AEGIS

CV: 1 **Target:** Creature
Range: Close **Duration:** Battle

Effect: You wreath a target, which may be yourself, in protective flames, rendering them immune to mundane flames. This includes immunity to injury due to entering a *Hazardous Zones* where the hazard is due to fire or heat. Damage caused by magical fire is reduced by the Potency of this Spell.

FLAMING SWORD

CV: 2 **Target:** Object
Range: Short **Duration:** Potency Turns

Effect: With a simple gesture you channel the heat of the forge into a weapon, causing eldritch flames to erupt from its surface. A melee weapon of your choosing becomes wreathed in flames, though the weapon's wielder is untouched by them. Foes *Staggered* or *Wounded* by this weapon suffer the *Ablaze* condition.

LIGHTNING BLAST

CV: 2 **Target:** Creature
Range: Long **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You summon a gout of crackling power and hurl it at a foe. The Target suffers 4+Potency Damage, or 5+Potency Damage if they are armoured.

PLAGUE OF RUST**CV:** 2 **Target:** Zone**Range:** Long **Duration:** Permanent

Effect: You summon spirits of decay and entropy to degrade an object, turning gleaming swords into rusted relics or fine clothing into a tattered mess. When you cast this spell, you may choose a number of objects in the target Zone up to the spell's Potency. Those objects become aged, rusted, and older in appearance. Weapons inflict 1 less Damage, armour provides 1 less Resilience, and complex mechanisms such as clockwork simply cease to function. This spell only affects mundane objects, and repairing the damage caused by this spell can be achieved by mundane means. Repeated castings of this spell destroy an object completely, leaving only dust, mould, or rust behind.

**SUMMON EARTH SPIRIT****CV:** 5 **Target:** Zone**Range:** Long **Duration:** Battle

Effect: You reach into the aetheric netherworld, summoning an elemental spirit of earth and stone. The spirit manifests as an unnatural rumbling in the ground, the inexplicable movement of natural or carved stone, or as waves in sand or soft soil.

The spirit answers your commands as best it understands. At your word, it can transform its Zone into Difficult Terrain, raise boulders from the earth to provide cover or cause a Zone to become a Hazard. The Hazard rating is equal to the spell's Potency, resisted by Athletics.

As an action, you may make a Leadership Test to instruct the spirit to move to an adjacent Zone, or take any action other than the ones above that the GM considers reasonable for the entity. If you fail, the spirit rebels against your control, and moves into a Zone of the GM's choice — possibly your own!

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION**CV:** 2 **Target:** 1**Range:** Medium **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You reach inside your foe's body with your magic, seeking to fan the flames of the invigorating fire said to run through the veins of all mortal creatures. The target suffers the *Ablaze* condition. The condition's Hazard rating is equal to your spell's Potency.

If you use this spell to target an object, its Potency determines how large an object you may set ablaze; 1 for small objects such as an item of clothing, 2 for a tree or cart, or 3 or more for larger objects such as buildings.

WIND BLAST**CV:** 3 **Target:** Zone**Range:** Long **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You summon the power of a mighty storm to batter your foes, pelting them with frigid rain and sending them reeling with powerful gusts. Choose up to Potency adjacent Zones, all of which must be within Long Range of you. All those within each Zone suffer the *Prone* condition unless they are somehow sheltered from your unnatural gale.

IMPROVISED ELEMENTALISM

Improvising spells of the Lore of Elementalism is a dangerous proposition, as mistakes frequently result in powerful gouts of flame setting things alight, dangerous gusts toppling teetering buildings, or lethal blasts of lightning erupting from clear skies. Nevertheless, Wizards who practice this lore can rarely be kept from their experiments, urged on by the elemental spirits they sometimes speak with, whose advice sometimes proves insightful, at other times, ruinous.

Effects

Creation: Elemental spells of creation conjure elemental forces such as fire, wind, or lightning into existence from the aether itself.

Control: Spells of control affect already existing phenomena, such as calming a storm, snuffing out a fire, or turning a minor flame into a mighty blaze.

Divination: Divinations of Elementalism can determine the location of specific elemental phenomena, such as a fire or a vein of ore, but they also allow the Wizard to reach out to the capricious elemental spirits that inhabit the aether.



ELEMENTALISM IMPROVISED SPELL EXAMPLES

Effect	CV	Example	Requirements
Petty	2	<p>Creation: Conjure a flame at your fingertips, summon a pleasant breeze, or warm yourself during a frigid night outdoors.</p> <p>Control: Snuff out a candle flame, etch words into solid stone with your fingertip, or cause a seed to sprout into a small plant or sapling.</p> <p>Divine: Determine the temperature with precision, know the location of the nearest animal, or tell the origin of a stone or a muddy footprint.</p>	<i>Wizard 1</i>
Cardinal	4	<p>Creation: Throw a mote of fire at a target at Medium Range, dealing 5+Potency Damage, summon a gust of wind to fill a ship's sails, or draw a stone mace from the wet clay beneath your feet.</p> <p>Control: Reshape stone or metal into a beautiful or useful form, rust the armour of a foe at Short Range, or snuff out a fireplace.</p> <p>Divine: Speak in the haphazard tongue of beasts, see in a pitch-black room, or cast your gaze through a nearby flame.</p>	<i>Wizard 2</i>
Advanced	8	<p>Creation: Conjure a bonfire that sets an entire Zone alight, or summon a spirit of the wind to lift you from the ground and carry you to the top spire of a Sigmarite chapel.</p> <p>Control: Snuff out a blazing bonfire, or bend an elemental creature to your will.</p> <p>Divine: Discover a node that connects to the World roots, Geomantic Web, or other mystical pathway, or determine the location of the nearest elemental creature.</p>	<i>Wizard 3</i>
Master	12+	<p>Creation: Summon a powerful elemental spirit with its own will and agenda, or conjure a powerful storm centred on your location.</p> <p>Control: Calm a raging storm, cause a minor fortress to rise out of the bare earth, or banish a powerful elemental creature back to the aether.</p> <p>Divine: Commune with the most distant or powerful distant elemental spirits, or determine the weather for the next month with precision.</p>	<i>Wizard 4</i>

ILLUSION

Those who understand little of magic fear Necromancers, Witches or Elves. Those who know a little more about magic fear Illusionists, for theirs is an art that is both subtle and devastating, beguiling the mind and making foes out of even the staunchest of allies.

Illusionists use the Winds of Magic to remake the world to their liking — if only on the surface level. They mix the white wind of light, the grey wind of shadows, and occasionally the purple wind of death to make others see and hear just what the caster wishes them to. Many travel the Old World, hiding their art behind stagecraft, posing as simple if skilful entertainers, using carefully crafted charms to befuddle the minds of those around them. Some do this for simple gain, robbing their smiling victims blind while shuffling entirely illusionary cards or swallowing non-existent fire. Others have far more ambition than this, inveigling themselves into positions of power, wielding the fear or love of others to make themselves wealthy and influential beyond the dreams of most.

Nevertheless, Illusion is among the most dangerous lores for its practitioners, for the most cunning of Wizards can slowly come to believe their own lies, becoming lost in a world of their own creation.

BILOCATION

CV: 5 **Target:** You

Range: Close **Duration:** Battle

Effect: Using your mastery of illusions, you create an illusory copy of yourself that appears so real that even you are unsure which you are — the original, or the copy. Both instances of you act exactly as you wish — either may well be you, after all — but the 'copy' will not take any risks you would not.

During a battle, both instances of you may act, though each turn only one of you can take an action that interacts physically with another character, such as handing over an item, attacking, casting a spell, and so on. You may both channel magic on the same turn, but any Miscast dice on either roll are added to the same Miscast Pool.

Whichever instance of you first suffers a Wound or is killed is revealed to be an illusion, which then fades away to mist, typically uttering words to the effect of *'I thought I was me,'* or looking briefly confused, then horrified. You may not cast this spell again before the end of its duration.

If an instance of you causes a Miscast, that Miscast occurs twice — once to you, and once to your illusionary self — potentially affecting others near both instances.

COLUMN OF CRYSTAL

CV: 2 **Target:** You

Range: Close **Duration:** Potency turns

You summon a column, wall, or another barrier of crystal that any who see believe to be utterly impenetrable. It is large enough to prevent passage between two Zones. The barrier appears to be entirely impassable to any who observes it. It is not possible to see through the barrier. Ranged attacks, thrown items and so on pass through the barrier, though they appear to observers to bounce off or ricochet appropriately. Those who know or suspect the barrier to be illusionary can step through it, though they will appear to be stopped by those watching — a discomforting impossibility for their minds to contend with. Only if the caster steps through the wall is the illusion dispelled.

FRIENDLY FACE

CV: 3 **Target:** Creature

Range: Close **Duration:** Permanent

Effect: To cast this spell, you must grasp the target firmly by the hand, slap them on the back, or otherwise make contact with them in a jovial manner. The target of your greeting is left with the vague but strong sense that they know you from somewhere, quickly agreeing with any plausible explanation for this former acquaintance which you offer. These false memories persist, requiring a skilled Wizard to detect and remove, but do not grant you any supernatural degree of control over the target beyond that which might be requested by a friend. If the GM rules that a Fellowship Test is required while interacting with the target of this spell — perhaps because you've asked them to do something illegal or unusual, but which they still might plausibly do — you gain a number of bonus dice equal to the spell's Potency.

Though Orcs, Goblins, servants of the Ruinous Powers and the like are affected by this spell, it will not cause them to act out of character. Most Orcs will slay any Human they come across, and it matters little if they do it with a smile or a grimace. Equally, servants of the Ruinous Powers do not value anything so mundane as comradery — most will have slain at least one erstwhile friend long before they met you.

FOOL'S GOLD

CV: 1 Target: Object

Range: Close Duration: Battle

Effect: You infuse an object with the essence of shadows and illusions, willing it to appear more valuable than it really is. Brass coins appear to be gold, a tattered old wagon appears to be a sturdy coach, or a ragged uniform appears ready for parade. Only those who pass an Awareness Test with as many successes as the spell's Potency spot your deception; characters who can see the Winds of Magic treat this Test as Glorious. After the spell expires, the object returns to its original appearance — often invoking the wrath of anyone duped by your arcane deception.

GLAMOUR

CV: 2 Target: Creature

Range: Close Duration: Battle

Effect: You wrap yourself or another in the Winds of Magic, accenting the target's best features and hiding any blemishes — or alternative doing just the opposite, highlighting old scars, stains, and pockmarks. Your target becomes more or less physically attractive, influencing the opinions of others as the GM decides. At the GM's discretion, this may apply bonus dice or difficulty modifiers to social Skill Tests, up to the spell's Potency.

Along with the right choice of clothing, you may use this spell to increase or decrease the apparent Status of the target by one step in either direction. A Brass status Labourer dressed in a torn old waistcoat could appear to be of Silver status Merchant, for example, while a Silver status character with the right wardrobe could appear as either a Brass or Gold status Character. This illusion confers no ability to act like someone of the appropriate Status, however, and others become suspicious if the subject is not careful to behave appropriately, nor can this spell confer the appearance of another specific person.

GLITTERING ROBE

CV: 1 Target: You

Range: Close Duration: Potency turns

You wreath yourself in shimmering light, deceiving and confusing your foes. When you make an Opposed Test to avoid an attack, you win any ties. However, you automatically fail any Stealth Tests you make while under the effect of this spell.



MIND RAZOR

CV: 2 **Target:** Creature
Range: Long **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You conjure torturous illusions that grip your foe, assailing them with images of death and horror that only the strongest of wills can resist. The target suffers 3+Potency Damage, which ignores armour, and must pass a Willpower Test or suffer the *Broken* Condition.

MORR'S APPARITION

CV: 3 **Target:** Creature
Range: Short **Duration:** Varies

Effect: You inflict visions of grievous, mortal wounds upon your target, convincing them they have suffered a horrendous injury and are on the threshold of death. NPCs react as determined by the GM, perhaps running for safety, falling to the ground, or occasionally charging the nearest foe in an attempt to go out in a blaze of glory. Characters should roll 3d10 on the Injury Table and act as though they have suffered the resulting Wound.

Those affected by this spell may make a Willpower Test at the end of each turn — if they score as many successes as the spell's Potency, they realise the deception. Characters who can see the Winds of Magic treat this Test as Glorious. An ally may use Leadership to convince the target to snap out of their delusion.

SHIMMERING BEAST

CV: Varies **Target:** Zone
Range: Long **Duration:** Battle

Effect: A creature appears in the target Zone. It looks and behaves normally, but is entirely illusionary — objects pass through it without difficulty. The caster may decide how the creature acts — if they do not specify, it behaves as normal for one of its kind. Only those who pass an Awareness Test with as many successes as the spell's Potency spot your deception. Characters who can see the Winds of Magic treat this Test as Glorious.

THROW VOICE

CV: 1 **Target:** Zone
Range: Medium **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You use magic to carry your voice to a distant location, making it appear as though the sound comes from there instead.

You need not speak to cast this spell — you need only think the words you wish to say, and they will be heard from the target location. You may attempt any accent or otherwise alter your voice as you might while speaking normally. You may extend the effect of this spell by 1 Zone beyond Medium Range for each level of Potency.

IMPROVISED ILLUSION

The creation of new spells is particularly common among Wizards who seek to master the Lore of Illusion, for this allows them to tailor their magic to the specifics of the task at hand. This is especially true when crafting spells that influence the minds of others, for no two people are quite alike, with each requiring a specific approach to influence or beguile. In this way, Illusion is not unlike any other kind of charlatantry. While tried and tested scams may work on many, a properly tailored approach is required to pull off the biggest scores.

Effects

Creation: Illusion spells of creation conjure convincing images, sounds, and sensations, drawing on the illusion's own experiences or those of their target.

Control: Illusion spells of control slip into the minds of others, altering their perceptions, or even their memories. If an illusion seems especially outlandish, or too good to be true, the target may Test to perceive the magic behind it, but this Test requires as many successes as the spell's Potency (characters who can see the Winds of Magic treat the Test as Glorious).

Divination: Divinations of Illusion involve piercing magical misdirection or obfuscation, locating carefully warded strongholds, decoding arcane secrets, or unmasking the Illusions of others.

SHIMMERING BEAST EXAMPLES

CV	Example
1	A small creature, such as a rabbit or bird.
2	A substantial beast, such as a horse, dog, lion, or wolf.
3	A Human, Elf, Dwarf, or other intelligent, human-sized creature.
4	A mighty beast, such as a Dragon, Wyvern, or Griffon.

It is considered especially dangerous to create the image of a Daemon or another denizen of the aether with this spell, as occasionally they prove not to be illusionary at all.

ILLUSION IMPROVISED SPELL EXAMPLES

Effect	CV	Example	Requirements
Petty	2	<p>Creation: Conjure a pigeon out of thin air, pluck a coin from behind someone's ear, or perform an 'impossible' card trick.</p> <p>Control: Allow a person to see in the dark, or make them overlook an important detail at a crime scene.</p> <p>Divine: Determine if there is an illusion in use within Long Range.</p>	<i>Wizard 1</i>
Cardinal	4	<p>Creation: Create a convincing image of a fine work of art, or detach your shadow and have it follow another person until nightfall.</p> <p>Control: Cause others to ignore you, or draw all attention to yourself. Inspire a strong emotion in another person with a touch.</p> <p>Divine: Find the location of the nearest illusion, or determine who around you is pretending to be someone they're not.</p>	<i>Wizard 2</i>
Advanced	8	<p>Creation: Create a realistic illusion of a person, garb yourself or another in entirely illusionary clothes, or create an illusionary blade real enough to cut.</p> <p>Control: Plant a subtle memory in the mind of another, make one person mistake you for someone else.</p> <p>Divine: See through the 'eyes' of one of your illusions.</p>	<i>Wizard 3</i>
Master	12+	<p>Creation: Create an illusionary castle, or craft an illusionary person real enough to touch and interact with.</p> <p>Control: Curse someone with a phobia, or implant a substantial new memory in their mind.</p> <p>Divine: Touch a person and experience their most recent memory of joy, fear, elation, or another strong emotion.</p>	<i>Wizard 4</i>

NECROMANCY

Few mages are as feared or reviled as Necromancers, those who would parlay with dead spirits, breathe false life into corpses, or stitch together horrors from rotting flesh and twisted magic. Nevertheless, they are among the most sought after of all practitioners of magic, for their craft promises to overcome that which neither mountains of gold nor the loftiest titles can — death itself.

Necromancers use the Winds of Magic to call upon the spirits of the dead or to animate the remnants of their mortal forms. They can summon spirits from Morr's realm or, in most cases, banish wayward gheists back to the underworld. Many are those who have sought out to settle some matter of inheritance or lineage by calling upon the spirits of the departed, and hired a Necromancer to perform the act. Some have enough sense to tell their patron what they wish to hear, while others deliver the cold truth with a bitter indifference matched by the dead themselves.

In battle, Necromancers often call upon spirits or animated corpses to aid them, and can drain the life from their enemies, ageing them to decrepitude with a touch. For this, they are rightly feared and often persecuted. The Knights of Morr take a special interest in this last duty, as they see all attempts to interfere with the normal processes of death as an abomination before Morr. Even those who believe they harness the powers of Necromancy to serve a common good, communing with lost spirits on behalf of their loved ones and respecting the sanctity of mortal remains, avoid the death god's merciless servants wherever they can.



CURSE OF YEARS

CV: 3 **Target:** Creature
Range: Short **Duration:** Instant

Effect: You infuse your target with the essence of death itself, causing dead things to draw near. They feed hungrily upon the victim's vital living energy, ageing them rapidly. Roll a number of d10 equal to the Potency of this spell — your target ages that many years. The shock leaves your target *Drained* until the battle's end — or for the rest of their life, if you have added a sufficient weight of years upon their shoulders.

DESTROY UNDEAD

CV: 3 **Target:** Potency undead creatures
Range: Short **Duration:** Battle

Effect: The knowledge of invigorating the undead also includes the knowledge of how to efficiently destroy them. You sever the ties of foul magic that animate a corpse, removing the false life Necromancy has length it. Mindless undead creatures such as zombies or skeletons are destroyed by this spell, becoming a mundane corpse or pile of bones. Undead who have retained their mind, or undead Monstrosities such as Necrolith Bone Dragons, instead suffer 8+Potency Damage from this spell.

THE DWELLERS BELOW

CV: 1 **Target:** Zone **Range:** Long
Duration: Potency Turns

Effect: You channel dark magics through the earth, and summon skeletal hands to grasp the living who dare walk across their resting place. The target Zone is now Difficult Terrain. Any who fall *Prone* here cannot stand until the spell has ended. Those who perish here are dragged beneath the earth, their bones to join the rest.

FACE OF DEATH

CV: 2 **Target:** Self **Range:** Self
Duration: Battle

Effect: Your face takes on the visage of death itself, becoming a leering skull that causes fear in any who gaze upon it. As well as terrifying most ordinary folk, when your Melee or Brawn attacks force an enemy to Give Ground, they suffer the *Broken* condition. To remove this condition, the *Broken* target must score as many successes on their Willpower Test as the spell's Potency.

THE FINAL ACT

CV: 2 **Target:** Corpse
Range: Close **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You infuse a corpse with a modicum of power, not raising it as a true zombie, but giving it enough life to act out its dying moments one final time. The corpse does not speak, nor can it respond to you in any way, but it will stand and act out its dying moments — struggling with unseen attackers, taking a sip of a cup it did not know was poisoned, or perhaps merely taking a few steps before clutching its chest and falling once more into death's grasp. If there are multiple corpses in Range, you can briefly revive a number of corpses equal to the spell's Potency.

INVIGORATING VITAE

CV: 3 **Target:** Vial of Blood
Range: Close **Duration:** Potency Days

Effect: You draw out the lingering life essence of a recently slain corpse, trapping it in a vial of the victim's own blood. If you are of the same species as the victim, consuming the entire vial fills you with stolen vigor. This removes the *Drained* or *Burdened* Conditions, and treats any untreated Wounds you are suffering from. However, this foul practice is a potential source of Corruption (*Gamemaster's Guide*, page 128).

RAISE THE DEAD

CV: 3 **Target:** Potency Corpses or Skeletons
Range: Close **Duration:** Potency Days

Effect: The pinnacle of the Necromancer's art, calling a corpse back from its eternal rest, creating a skeleton warrior (*Gamemaster's Guide*, page 128) from its remains. These creatures act as you direct, following simple commands to the best of their limited ability. Anything beyond 'Guard' or 'Kill' is likely to be met with utter incomprehension.

Raising the dead, even as unthinking skeletons, is a complicated procedure — even moreso if you wish to retain control of your creations. You can control as many undead minions as your Wizard Level. Creatures created in this way become corpses once again when the spell's duration ends. Increasing the number of undead you can control or their longevity can be achieved by various profane rituals, often undertaken during Geheimnisnacht or another inauspicious time.

Wandering around the Empire with such creatures under your control is bound to draw attention from the Cult of Morr, not to mention most other civilised folk. While some Necromantic practices might be overlooked, this is not one of them — most right-thinking folk will reach for the torches and pitchforks or run screaming if they should witness such a thing. This foul practice is a potential source of Corruption (**Gamemaster's Guide**, page 128).

SCREAMING SKULL

CV: 3 **Target:** Potency Skulls

Range: Close **Duration:** Battle

Effect: You infuse the skull of a thinking being with magic, wreathing it in dark flames. The skull hovers at your side, acting as you direct it. Each turn, a single Screaming Skull can fling itself at any enemy using the profile below, destroying itself if it hits, or returning to your side if it misses. Any attack which strikes a Screaming Skull — a single success is sufficient — destroys it. You do not need to use your action to direct a skull, you need merely speak — or cackle — your wishes, and the skull obeys.

Attacks: Skull Bash (Long, 3d/3, Dam 6, successful attacks inflict the *Ablaze* Condition)

SEANCE OF THE STOLEN VOICE

CV: 3 **Target:** A spirit whose name you know

Range: - **Duration:** Immediate

Effect: You call upon the spirits of the recently departed to join you, granting them your voice through which to speak. You may only summon a spirit whose name you know, and even then only if you are holding something they valued in life — this might be a beloved trinket, the hand of a loved one, or even the spirit's own corpse. Your voice is given over to the spirit, and so you may not talk. Anyone else attending the seance may ask up to Potency questions of the spirit. It is not bound to answer truthfully, though it may only speak in answer to one of these questions, and no spirit can be made to speak of Morr's realm. The chosen questions should be asked swiftly, for if the spell goes on for too long the spirit may steal your voice as its own, robbing you of the ability to talk until the moon Mannslieb next rises.

SPECTRAL STEED

CV: 2 **Target:** Object

Range: Close **Duration:** Until the next sunrise

Effect: As you chant words of dark power, a ghostly steed forms from the air, and you summon the spirit of a departed mount to bear you. You may summon up to Potency entites, typically horses, though you may summon the spirits of other beasts if you possess their skulls. The spectral steed bears you or others you appoint as if they were mundane creatures of their type. Whilst mounted, your Speed increases to Fast, and you gain +1 Resilience. On nights when Morrslieb is visible, your mounts may fly, though it is best to land before dawn breaks. If you cast this spell again any entities you have already created with this spell vanish.

VANHEL'S DANSE MACABRE

CV: 2 **Target:** Potency undead creatures

Range: Long **Duration:** Battle

Effect: You grant a normally ungainly creature unnatural speed, seeing their crumbling forms lurch across the battlefield at a terrifying pace. Zombies and Skeletons targeted by this spell have their Speed increased one step (to a maximum of Fast) and gain +1d to any Melee attacks for its duration.



IMPROVISED NECROMANCY

Necromancers are, for the most part, rampant experimenters. Far away from civilised eyes, many dabble in their macabre craft obsessively, mixing reagents, trying new invocations, and pouring over ancient and forbidding writings dating back to the earliest days of the Empire or beyond. While some seek to practice an 'honest' craft, setting spirits to rest, prolonging life, or warding homes against the undead, others read of the vast hordes of undead commanded by the Von Carstein's during the ancient Vampire Wars and wonder how they might claim some of that power as their own.

Effects

Creation: Necromantic spells of undeath breath false life into corpses, in part or in whole, often stitching choice bodyparts into a greater, more horrifying whole.

Control: Spells of Control command undead to action, ward them off, or summon up or put down ghosts or other spirits.

Divination: Necromantic divinations can recall knowledge from corpses, locate undead creatures or artefacts, or allow a Wizard to see through the eyes their undead servants.

NECROMANCY IMPROVISED SPELL EXAMPLES

Effect	CV	Example	Requirements
Petty	2	<p>Creation: Make a living person appear dead, or numb a wounded limb.</p> <p>Control: Enchant a corpse so that it may never be used for Necromancy, command a spirit to reveal itself, or have a corpse repeat its dying words.</p> <p>Divine: Tell how someone died, or discover what was important to a spirit while they still lived.</p>	<i>Wizard 1</i>
Cardian	4	<p>Creation: Curse someone to be haunted by the dead, or to return as a spirit should they perish.</p> <p>Control: Invigorate undead creatures with speed, strength, or wits, or ward an area from undead intrusion.</p> <p>Divine: Gain a brief and cryptic vision of how someone will die, or learn if someone or something is cursed.</p>	<i>Wizard 2</i>
Advanced	8	<p>Creation: Rot or wither a target's flesh with a glance, or create a simple undead from a suitable corpse.</p> <p>Control: Take control of mindless undead without a master, or banish the necromantic magic animating an undead creature.</p> <p>Divine: See visions of a corpse's life and death, or see through the eyes of one of your creations.</p>	<i>Wizard 3</i>
Master	12+	<p>Creation: Stitch together an abomination of necrotic flesh and bone, and animate it to serve you.</p> <p>Control: Pit your will against another Necromancer to steal them of their servants, or stay death's hand until the next sunrise.</p> <p>Divine: Witness scenes of death that occurred many years ago, or reveal such visions to others.</p>	<i>Wizard 4</i>



THE OLD WORLD



The Old World is a continent that has, time and time again, been torn asunder by strife and conflict. From the fertile farmlands of civilised nations to the untracked wilderness, armies have arisen, shed blood, won glorious victories and suffered ignominious defeats at the hands of their rivals. From these war-scoured lands, mighty kingdoms have been forged, only to be found wanting and fallen into dust. Their remnants can still be seen, scattered across the lands, scoured clean of life, their forgotten relics awaiting perfidious tomb robbers or the end of the world — whichever should find them first.

In the mountains, there are Dwarfen Holds whose graven records recall ancient times when the ancestor gods still walked among their children. Their denizens have memories long enough to know that any peace is fleeting. They recall ancient grudges and know that old enemies wait at the edges of civilised lands and within them, eager to once more visit blood and ruin upon the world.

Far across the sea, and within the deepest forests of the Old World, the Elves endure, their power formidable, but much diminished by ancient warring. They are long-lived by nature, and some have witnessed the rise and fall of civilisations now resigned to only the most obscure history books in the colleges of Altdorf. For long years they have kept to themselves, but the Elves of Ulthuan, at least, look outward once again, eager to learn of the Empire of Man and gauge how it might serve them.

To the ordinary folk of the Empire, however, tales of vast wars and ancient grudges are fit only to be scoffed at by the fire. These are the obsessions of scholars too effete to take up a more worthy pursuit, such as pig farming or soldiery. They are only rarely touched by the sort of war upon which whole realms might rise or fall, and their lives are defined by dreary rain, thick mud, and near-endless drudgery. Most content themselves with a warm fire, a cold ale, and a brief respite from their labours. Their hopes are modest — a better harvest, a profitable day's trading, or simply a serviceable pair of shoes.

They know a little of Orcs and Goblins, but most consider these a concern of far-off provinces, if not the distant past. Monsters like Beastmen and Undead creatures are a threat consigned to the deepest woods and isolated hillsides, if not outright fiction, useful only for scaring children into swift obedience. Far more concerning are the rumours of the martial expedition the local belligerent Graf is plotting and the newest taxes. Most will never roam far beyond their villages and towns, nor will they ever seek to — what could one find in the wider world that their village doesn't offer, aside from trouble?

A BITTER TRUTH

A few embittered Soldiers who have seen battle and managed to live through its horrors know the truth, though few wish to hear it: there is much to fear beyond the firelight. Brutish Orcs and wicked Goblins who live only to make endless war. Lurching corpses and shimmering apparitions which yearn to feed upon the living. From the north come iron-clad butchers, who seek never-ending carnage and embrace madness to appease their Dark Gods. Further southward their raids push every year, sensing weakness and divided lands ripe for slaughter.

And the things in the forests, far worse than mere outlaws, do not always stay there.

The Old World lives up to its name; it has been worn down, and its grandeur has faded. To many folks, the weather is more concerning than distant wars, even if they do come closer each year. Yet courage shines all the brighter as darkness encroaches. Champions rise unbidden, their voices ringing true over the din of cannon fire or the baying of nameless beasts, rallying others with their valour and bold deeds. There are grim forces in motion that seek to usher in a reckoning of blood and slaughter, but that fate has not yet been decided.



THE EMPIRE



“What’s to be said of the Empire’s citizens to recommend them? Precious little. They eat offal unfit for baiting Merwyrms and quaff vinegar and name it wine. There are, however, a lot of them, and if they could be convinced to aid us, then Ulthuan might wield this Empire as a shield against what is to come. Still, in the meantime, it is I who must put up with their stink...”

— Eascylla, High Elf Spymaster

The Empire has stood for over two thousand years, the most powerful and populous of the human nations within the Old World, but lesser than it was of old. The mighty Sigmar, chief of the Unberogen tribe, united the warring tribes of humanity under one banner to drive all enemies from their lands. Sigmar had the friendship of the Dwarfs, for he saved their High King Kurgan Ironbeard from a vicious Orc warband. At the legendary Battle of Black Fire Pass, Sigmar and his allies defeated a seemingly endless horde of Orcs and Goblins, though at a terrible cost. On this great victory was the Empire founded, and Sigmar became Emperor.

After a long and prosperous reign, Sigmar relinquished his throne and set off into the east, his final fate unknown. His chieftains chose to avoid infighting by electing one of their number to take the place of Emperor in Sigmar’s stead. The descendants of these chieftains would see their power to elect an Emperor formalised in the title of Elector Counts, each ruling one of the various provinces of the Empire. Sigmar was deified, named the patron god of the Empire.

The Empire remained united for over a thousand years, standing against any enemy that dared oppose it, but time can erode any bond. The unity of the provinces slowly withered as their interests began to diverge. Eventually, it became difficult for the Elector Counts to settle on a successor. Since the time of Emperor Boris Hohenback, the Empire has declined greatly. It has fractured into multiple independent regions, their alliances often tense and always shifting. Open warfare is rare, but far from unheard of, and minor border skirmishes often threaten to evolve into outright war. The Imperial system has been defunct for close to three centuries.

What unity remains is due in large part to the stubborn spirit of its people, or due to overwhelming necessity. The last time the Empire briefly united was over a century ago, to bring a conclusion to the dread Vampire Wars.

That memory of unity, however fleeting it may have been, has inspired hope in some that the Empire might soon be united once again. In the ambitious and the powerful, however, this promise has fanned the flames of avarice, for if there is to be one Empire once again, there must also be but one Emperor to rule it.

CLAIMANTS TO THE THRONE

There are presently four serious claimants for the imperial throne, each certain that, if the Empire is to be united again, it should only do so only under their rule. Each nominally controls a large portion of the Empire’s lands.

The Grand County of Osterlund is controlled from the great city of Middenheim by Count Sigismund Ulric, a descendant of the so-called Wolf Emperors of the north. His realm encompasses large portions of Middenland, much of Ostland, and all of Hochland – forested, mountainous lands which border the Sea of Claws and Kislev. The folk of Osterlund are fiercely independent, however, and there the Count’s control is far less assured than he would like.

The Barony of Westerland is ruled by Empress Elspeth Magritta VI from the wealthy port city of Marienburg. Westerland now encompasses much of Nordland and a large part of what was formerly Middenland as well. It is widely known that the rich Burgomeisters of Marienburg and the somewhat erratic cult of the Sea God Manann greatly influence the young Empress of Coin and though she nominally controls the Empire’s most prosperous region, she is rarely taken seriously by her rivals.

Prince Wilhelm I rules the Principality of Reikland, the heartland of the Empire, forged from the tribal lands of Sigmar’s own Unberogens. The Cult of Sigmar holds a great deal of sway here, and Reiklanders are frequently regarded as being uncomfortably fanatical in their faith. They look askance at the Duchy of Talabec, which they accuse of being a haven for witches.

As to the fourth claimant...



DUKE LUDWIG XII

“ If Ludwig was half the fool he pretends to be, much of Talabecland would be in Wilhelm’s hands by now, and the rest pleading to join it. No, watch that one carefully, he’s as canny as an old fox and twice as dangerous. Me, on the other hand, you can trust... ”

— Karoline, Baroness of Hermsdorf

Ludwig is the direct descendant of Grand Duchess Otilia of Talabecland, the ruler some Reikland historians accuse of dividing the Empire when she named herself Empress in 1360 and declared war on Stirland. Some judge this to be a rather unfair charge as the Empire had been increasingly fractious at that point since the death of Emperor Mandred Skaven Slayer nearly two centuries before. The Grand Duchess was a cunning strategist and turned this discord to her own benefit, plying the Cult of Ulric to lend her its support over riotous objections from her rivals. Nevertheless, Otilia was crowned Empress by the Ar-Ulric’s own hand, an antecedent now used to legitimise Ludwig’s claim to the title.

“ A scant few centuries pass, and they forget their own history. Do they think Mandred Skaven Slayer, who put a thousand Raki to the sword himself, was nought but a common ratcatcher? They think all talk of rats that walk like men madness, and heed not our warnings. If the rat-men were not so consumed with infighting, they would put this Empire to the torch, and there is precious little we might do to stop them. Best to profit from the Manlings while we still can... ”

— Gruginn, Dwarf Smuggler

The line of Otilia has ruled Talabecland for over nine hundred years, ‘steady as the turning of the seasons’ as Talabeclanders like to say. Certainly his line’s stability is part of Ludwig’s claim to the title of Emperor. His many critics suggest Ludwig Grunermensch looks and acts nothing like an Emperor, whatever his descent. A large man in his fifties, with a neat greying beard, Ludwig spends his days hunting in the forest, in rough-spun clothes, never venturing far from Talabheim. Affable, swift with a jest, and swifter still to reach for a flagon of ale, many fail to take him seriously – which is exactly as he wills it. Ludwig hides a cunning mind behind an amiable façade. He far prefers that his rivals underestimate rather than recognise him as the shrewd politician who has firmly ruled the Grand Duchy of Talabec for decades. He wields his Runefang with a deft hand, yet sends trusted generals to lead his armies into battle as needed, preferring private politicking to ostentatious displays.

Outsiders who do not understand the subtle game Ludwig is playing mistake what they see for simplicity. His regularly chosen garb is an ongoing supplication to the Priesthood of Taal and a quiet acknowledgement of his desire for their support. Over the years he has subdued every rival or threat to his rule with cunning and political acumen. The result is a web of subtle plots, deals, favours, and alliances, all of which require constant attention to maintain. Correspondingly, Ludwig cannot stray far from Talabheim for very long, as anyone else capable of handling the Duke’s affairs properly would represent too great a threat to his ongoing rule.

Chief amongst these, at least in Ludwig’s estimation, is Count Woldemar Feuerbach, whose recent attempts to secure a political marriage with the Ludenhofs of Osterlund has drawn the Duke’s suspicion.

For his part, Ludwig publicly claims he seldom leaves the city because the hunting is simply too good.



RIVAL POWERS

Ludwig considers his chief rival for the throne to be Prince Wilhelm of Reikland, regarding Count Sigismund as lacking true power beyond Middenheim, and the Sea Empress as clever, but far too young and erratic to be capable of truly uniting the Empire. This may be among Ludwig's few political blindspots, due in no small part to the vicious rumours that his father was assassinated by Wilhelm's. True or not, Talabeclanders have been engaged in regular border skirmishes with Reikland troops since the day Ludwig became Duke and he deeply distrusts Sigmarites, regarding them as too fanatical by far. Due to the greatly disparate regions Ludwig ostensibly controls, and his need to stay near Talabheim, he is forced to rely on agents and envoys to see his will done throughout the Grand Duchy of Talabec. The only threat to the Empire beyond disunity that Ludwig acknowledges is that of the surging Beastmen Brayherds, a problem that he intends to deal with promptly once he is acknowledged as Emperor.

THE GRAND DUCHY OF TALABEC

Duke Ludwig XII outwardly rules the vast and most widely varied region of the Empire as it presently exists. The Grand Duchy of Talabec contains all of Talabecland and Stirland, portions of Ostermark, and such that still remains of cursed Sylvania. All the ruling nobles within the duchy owe allegiance to the Ottilian Emperor, and certainly, Ludwig declares they are his. However, many of them handle their own affairs and are, to a greater or lesser degree, self-governing. So long as they show proper public fidelity to his cause and send along the expected remuneration for his largesse, Ludwig lets this state of affairs continue. Several defiant rulers have swiftly learned that while Ludwig seldom leaves Talabheim, his agents are everywhere and his reach is long.



STIRLAND

Stirland lies immediately south of Ludwig's own Talabecland. Stirlanders are famed as a superstitious lot, slow of speech, and resentful of Halflings who they hold as having stolen their best land over 1300 years ago. Most of the Empire, and every right-thinking Dwarf, holds them to be savages for their barbarous practice of drinking their ale hot, and 'beer-boiler' is a frequent term of disparagement for Stirlanders

Bounded by the Stir, Aver, and Reikland Rivers, the province is a rural one of greatly varied terrain. To the west rises the Stirhügel, an old hill country, home to grand flocks of sheep and mist-filled vales which conceal the many hidden tombs of the ancient Asoborn tribe that once lived here. The villagers warn travellers not to interfere with the cursed barrows of the old kings as no good ever comes of it. Still, enough tales speak of the riches and potent weapons Asoborn heroes bore of old that a band of would-be treasure hunters disappears every few seasons. The provincial capital of Stirland, Wurtbad, sits within the southern edge of the Great Forest along the Stir and at the northern terminus of the Old Dwarf Road. A town famed for wool, wine, and hot springs, the many inns of Wurtbad are justifiably famous for their hospitality. Correspondingly, trade negotiations, clandestine assignations, and peculiar intrigue are so common here that many gossip the town holds two amorous spies for every merchant.

THE BORDER REGIONS

The east of Stirland is considered a cursed place, for there lies dread Sylvania and the marsh Hel Fenn, sinister still though the Vampire Counts may have fallen. Here, the valiant town of Siegfriedhof rises along the edge of the ill-omened Hunger Wood. Overseen by Morrian Templars of the Raven Knight Order, Siegfriedhof keeps a wary eye east, welcoming, and offering support to, any willing to pit themselves against Necromancers and the undead. Duke Ludwig has little interest in the blood-soaked land, save the taxes that are his due. Their collection is considered among the worst duties of Ludwig's court, an appointment reserved for those who have fallen into disfavour.

The portions of Ostermark that the Grand Duchy of Talabec claims are mostly those along the River Talabec, in the region known as the Gryphon's Wood. Technically, portions of the infamous Deadwood wherein lie the ruins of Mordheim are also part of the Duke's lands — a fact he regularly deigns to forget.



THE SOUTHERN FREE STATES

The rulers of the Empire's bounteous southern states are pragmatic, realizing they have no real claim to the throne or interest in angering any of the northern claimants. Rather, they attempt to maintain good relations with all, using coin and trade to secure military aid as needed.



“*Sigmar was a true friend of the Dwarfs, and his kinsfolk have a hard enough time living up to the standard he set. Manlings from beyond the Empire are an even worse lot if you ask me. I’ve heard in Tilea they pay mercenaries to do all their fighting, and have put merchants in charge instead of finding an honest Thane to rule them. No wonder they’re always at war with themselves.*”

—Tordi Trondottir, Imperial Dwarf Smith



AVERLAND

South of Stirland lie the sun-drenched plains of Averland. Descendants of the fierce Brigundian tribe, Averlanders are passionate, straightforward, and generally held to lack subtlety. They fiercely defend their honour, claiming that their word, once given, is absolute – but they are also known to be superstitious, contradictory, and swift to change their minds.

Averland lacks the great forests that cover so many of the other provinces of the Empire. It is bounded on the north by its namesake river, the Aver, by the Upper Reik to the west, and the Blue Reach to the east. Much of Averland is prone to great annual floods which grant extremely fertile fields, but frequently damage any settlements near the rivers. ‘Taal’s price for our bounty,’ as the saying goes. Much of the west and central Averland is given over to tenant farmers raising crops or nobles raising strong, swift horses or herds of famed Averland Longhorn cattle. Averland’s east is highly regarded for its viticulture and winemaking. The region’s wines are some of the best regarded in the Old World, drunk from Marienburg to Tilea and, rumour has it, even in distant Ulthuan.

THE TOWN OF LONINGBRUCK

One of the crossroads of southern Averland is the town of Loningbruck, situated along the northern bank of the Upper Reik and home to the busiest stockyards in Averland save those of Averheim. The Barons of Loningbruck are famous for their interest in esoteric scholarship and welcome those with unusual educations to their tables. With their patronage, the temple of Verena is the largest in town. Few know that the Verenian Order of Mysteries maintains a chapterhouse within, from which to continue their pursuit of various relics and items of legend.

Averheim is an ancient city, settled well before Sigmar’s time, set on a high bluff above the Aver. The never-fallen fortress, the Averburg, sits at the highest point of the city. Averland’s capital is famed as being the centre of wine culture within the Empire and enormous sums are spent in the markets there to secure supplies of its standard fare and rare vintages alike. It is also well-known for its massive stockyards, which stretch out for leagues about the city. The business-end of the stockyards are aligned with slaughterhouses that stand a stone’s throw from the city’s docks, a highly efficient system for shipping freshly butchered, salted, and cured meats down the Aver.



WISSENLAND

Wissenland stretches from the Grey Mountains in the west to the Black Mountains to the east along the southern banks of the River Reik. Wissenlanders have been greatly influenced by the Dwarfs of the neighbouring mountains since the time of their ancestral tribe, the Merogens. They are famously laconic, stoic, dependable, and notorious for speaking with a somewhat depressing monotone.

Wissenland’s present makeup was greatly affected by one of the darkest chapters in Empire history. In 1707, a massive Waaagh! led by the infamous Orc Warboss Gorbald Ironclaw laid waste to much of the eastern Empire and destroyed the former imperial province of Sollard to such a degree that its lands were quietly absorbed into eastern Wissenland. Such was the devastation that the ruins of villages and towns can still be seen there over five centuries later. Much of mountainous western Wissenland is given over to mining, though the wise do their best not to stray from the agreements long since made with the Dwarfs of Karak Norn.

The east has excellent farming in the fertile lands nearer the Reik, and rolling grasslands beyond that produce sheep with revered wool. A great deal of hunting happens in the foothills and heights of the Black Mountains as the fur of the creatures there is of exceptional quality. The Dwarfs of Karak Angazhar sponsor an annual hunt with generous prizes given to those who offer up the finest pelts, along with smaller prizes for those who offer up the greatest number of fresh Orc and Goblin heads.



NULN

The most significant settlement of Wissenland is not, in fact, part of the province. Where the Aver and Reik rivers meet at the northernmost point of Wissenland rises the free city-state of Nuln. Widely considered the Empire's premier city for the arts and social life, many believe that to grow bored of Nuln is to grow bored of life. Nulners vary wildly from their fellow Wissenlanders. They are inclined to brighter clothing, the best jewellery they can afford, and are far more expressive, given to rapid speech, as much with their hands as their mouths.

“ Oh, I know a poem about Nuln! Now let me remember how it goes... ‘There was a young lady from Nuln, whose face was perpetually sullen...’ ”

— Cox, Halfling Entertainer

The renowned Imperial Gunnery School, the premier manufacturer of black powder weapons within the Empire, is synonymous with Nuln, and cannons are prominent in the city-state's heraldry. The Imperial Gunnery School not only produces guns, but also trains engineers, artillery crews, and soldiers on how to maintain and wield them. While this clearly gives Nuln's forces an advantage on the battlefield, the city has always made a point of selling their guns, black powder, and the knowledge of how to use both to anyone willing to pay their considerable fees. In doing so Nuln maintains a veneer of neutrality – though few doubt that they keep the best armaments for themselves. Combined with their control over a great deal of southern trade, this puts Nuln in a very powerful position. In part to ensure their hegemony in the south, Nuln sponsors a wide network of Road Wardens who patrol throughout the southern Empire, operating as far north as Talabheim along the Old Forest Road, and are even allowed to operate on the roads of the Reikland.

The black-and-gold clad Road Wardens are empowered to enforce the local laws of wherever they may be, and regularly face down outlaws, Goblins, Beastmen, and sometimes worse. Though travellers find them a welcome sight on any road, it is no secret that their first mandate is to ensure Nuln's trade flows uninterrupted.



SUDENLAND

The portions of former Solland about the Soll River are actually their own province, Sudenland. Southernmost of the Empire's provinces, Sudenland shares a great deal of Wissenland's character and few folks have even heard of it, confusing it with tales of old Solland.



THE MOOT

East of Averland, beyond the Blue Reach River, lies the fair province of Mootland, or as its notably less beautiful Halfling inhabitants call it, the Moot. Imperial history teaches that Emperor Ludwig the Fat created the electoral province for Halflings as a pointed slight against the then-Elector Count of Stirland in 1010 IC. Mootlander Halflings are clannish and disdainful of outsiders, whom they are quick to mock and even quicker to rob. Those better inclined towards the Halflings point out that their large families and close living quarters — most dwell within burrows of one kind or another — give them a rather lax attitude towards property rights and ownership that some mistake for theft. Others suggest that Halflings would merely prefer if you worked for their coin rather than engage in the tiresome exercise of earning it.

“ The Moot. Well, there's a reason I left it behind, friend. It's a fine place if all you like doing is sleeping, eating, and making merry. But if you want to get something done with your life, you have to strike out into the world, I say! Not that I don't still long for a proper pie. What they cook up around these parts we wouldn't feed to pigs. Er, no offence. ”

—Ambrosia, Halfling scholar

The Moot is a fertile farmland of gently rolling hills with few settlements of any notable size. Its most famed crops are wide varieties of tobacco, which are routinely shipped throughout the Empire. Most other folk avoid the Moot, to the approval of its inhabitants. Mootlanders are said to regard Duke Ludwig XII well, as he insists their Elder receive a vote in Imperial matters — a state of affairs that is reliant upon that vote being used to further the Duke's own cause.

Though sharing a border with dread Sylvania, the Moot itself consists of a good deal of fine farming land and has often seemed an attractive target to bandits and raiders. It is the policy of most Halflings to introduce lone bandits to good, and probably stolen, Averland steel, and leave their bodies for the wolves. More significant incursions are held at bay largely by the courage of the Moot's Fieldwardens. The province's standing militia and border patrol, Fieldwardens have earned uncommon respect beyond the Moot's borders, though they are often viewed with disdain as busybodies and fearmongers by their less motivated kin. It is the Fieldwardens who keep the peace and eliminate undead or otherwise unwelcome visitors. In the last few years, the Fieldwardens have taken a keen interest in the Altern Forest, the only real woodland of the Moot which holds the last ancient traces of the trees which once blanketed the Mootland entire. It is a grim, cursed place, famously haunted by spirits and, it is said, strange followers of old ways. Whatever the truth, odd sounds erupt from the forest's depths on foggy nights, when most denizens of the Moot know to keep to their burrows. Of late, several Fieldwardens and a few visitors to the Moot have felt called by the forest. Those who have answered the call and returned are not the same, claiming to be able to perceive things that others cannot, and most are now viewed with a degree of suspicion.

TALABECLAND

The Duke rules Talabecland with a firmer hand than the other portions of his massive duchy. This is no small feat as Talabecland is immense. Its borders stretch from the outskirts of Altdorf in the west to the first saplings of the Gryphon's Wood in the east. Its southern boundary is marked by the River Stir. A great deal of trade flows both east and west along the Talabec and Stir, as well as moving north and south along the Old Forest Road, which runs directly through central Talabecland, passing by Talabheim before heading north.

Sigmar granted all the lands between the Talabec and Stir to the Taleuton tribe, a people deeply faithful to Taal and far more comfortable in the deep woods than most of the other folk of Sigmar's burgeoning Empire. The great chief of the Taleuten, Krugar, was supposedly led by a vision to the Great Crater, a massive depression in the earth surrounded by a vast wall pierced by a single tunnel. Krugar declared it a gift from Taal, founding the city of Taalahim, now Talabheim, within the walls of the crater.

TALABECLANDERS

The folk of the other provinces regard Talabeclanders as somewhat barbaric and uncouth. To many, their manners are brusque, and they do not suffer fools civilly. A humble folk, Talabeclanders prefer direct action over needless speech and are swift to share credit for a task well done. To most Talabeclanders it matters more that a deed was accomplished than who should claim the glory for it. They value scholarship, but not above woodlore. They are religious folk, revering all of the Empire's gods, though they hold Taal and Rhya first, followed by Ulric. The Reiklanders' burning obsession with Sigmar causes them to look askance at their westerly neighbours and frequently leads to tension between the provinces — in Talagaad, as well as in many other towns throughout the province, worship of Sigmar is all but outlawed. Talabeclanders favour practical clothes over finery and mistrust dandies. They are famously hard drinkers, capable of consuming rotgut so powerful it could knock anyone but a Dwarf dead. At their best, they are honourable and gruffly kind. At worst, belligerent and mean.




“You can sit wherever you like, friend, but mind you leave our regulars to their own business. Talabeclanders are a friendly folk, but we have little patience for foolish questions or idle chatter. Say what you want and you'll have it, say any more and you can share your meal with the dogs.”

— Lotti, landlady of The River Run Inn

The Great Forest

Talabecland is dominated by the Great Forest which covers the length of the province. The Forest of Shadows and the Drakwald both have darker reputations within the Empire, but only a fool takes the dangers of the Great Forest lightly.

It is an ancient wood, part of the primordial forest that once covered the Empire entirely, and though the Talabeclanders are justly proud of their skills at woodcraft, they wisely fear the deep places of the woods. Beastmen lurk in its depths, as do tribes of Forest Goblins, and even worse things which have no names in the tongues of men, but who were old even in the time of Sigmar Unberogen. The northern woods are mainly darker evergreen pines, whereas the southerly woods are formed of vast oaks, pale birches, and sturdy beech trees. Natural clearings and rocky outcroppings are rare, save in the central hills. Here a few isolated villages of woodsfolk can be found, with far more along the banks of the rivers.



“Great,’ they name this forest, but they should have walked it in days past. It is vast, yes, but riven through with darkness. These men of Talabec think it home to raiders, bandits, and fanatics, and indeed it is, but not to them alone. There are twisted things of Chaos there, inhuman beasts, monsters of myth, and Orcs and Goblins aplenty. If tomorrow they all rose up as one, the Empire would be scoured clean, and even Athel Loren and the Laurelorn would be hard-pressed to endure. It is well, then, that unity is as unknown among these beasts as it is among the citizens of this so-called Empire.”

— Cox, Hafling Entertainer

Hills and Highlands

A central spine of highlands runs throughout the province, with three regions distinct enough to each have their own character. To the east, near Ostermark, are the Kölsa Hills. Few venture here lightly, for the region is largely uninhabited, but along the hills rise ancient stone monuments which stretch along spiralling paths between summits. Odd mounds formed in inexplicable and sometimes disturbing shapes, sit between the hills. None alive can say why they were built, but Elementalists are drawn here, sometimes deriving strange insights as they wander among the hills. The priests of Taal declare the Kölsa Hills are sacred to their god, though some scholars believe they are more likely connected to a far older faith.

In the middle of Talabecland rise the Färlic Hills, which see a great deal of traffic regularly passing along the Old Forest Road. The road is well maintained, with many portions having a stone or gravel surface.



“We were ordered up into the Barren Hills once. Forty of us to accompany one witch, in search of Morr knows what. We camped one night beneath a twisted elm, and when we awoke there were but ten of us left. Worse still, none of us could remember the names of any of our comrades who had vanished, nor their faces, nor aught of the witch we’d been set to guard. There’s one of them lads I dream of still, I think, but I cannot say for sure.”

— Rosamunde, formerly of the Free Companies

It boasts a number of fortified inns and a few tollhouses, which raise coin for road upkeep. Nuln directly supports Duke Ludwig’s efforts in maintaining the road as a viable trade route and various liveried Road Wardens are a common sight. The Heart of the Forest, a massive fortified inn closer to a fortress, and a raucous vibrant place at nearly all hours, acts as a central headquarters for Road Wardens operating in both Talabecland and Stirland to the south.

The western Barren Hills are widely considered to be cursed. Old folktales speak of a time when they were called the Green Hills, which many believe refers to a time before any curse fell upon them. Among the elders of certain nearby settlements, however, it is claimed that the name is derived from the odd colour the hills glow on ill-omened nights. It is a region barren of natural life — what grows there is stunted and unseemly. Many whisper that mutants thrive there. The few foolish enough to enter, following old rumours of lost treasure, report that the baleful moon of Morrslieb is always full and grinning when gazed upon at night from these cursed hills.

Küsel

A day’s journey upriver from Talabheim is the town of Küsel, the provincial capital of Talabecland. It is a bustling port, with great amounts of lumber and fish regularly passing its docks. In principle, a State Parliament consisting of various noble representatives from the grandest fiefs and influential burgomiesters are to regularly meet here with Duke Ludwig to advise him on how best to direct Talabecland’s affairs. In practice, Ludwig rules from his grand townhouse in the Manor District of Talabheim and can only reliably be found in Küsel once every two years when he attends the regular grand tournaments held there. The tournaments are wildly popular, drawing warriors from far afield to compete with Talabecland’s finest knights.

TALAGAAD

A dismal port of dubious reputation, Talagaad sprawls across the Talabec River, its two ends connected by an ancient stone bridge, the Wizard's Crossing, which serves as part of the Old Forest Road. If all river trade to Talabheim did not pass through its docks, Talagaad would be considered a miserable backwater to be avoided by all upstanding folk. As things stand, it is a miserable backwater, but one where there's money to be made by bold and enterprising sorts, with a vibrancy that few will ever publicly acknowledge.

Goods and people coming from the eastern Empire and beyond do so down the deep Talabec River, and much of this invariably passes through the docks of Talagaad.



“*Ab, what is there to say about Talagad that one cannot already smell when the wind blows from the docks? It might be a boil on Talabheim's backside, but few of those city-folk would be comfortable to admit how much they rely upon the port. Half of everything that ends up inside the Taalbaston winds its way through these streets, and if we ever got organised about it, they'd be the ones bemoaning our taxes. Which is precisely why they'll never let that happen.*”

— Horst, disgraced noble

It is a port built on hopeful immigrants and desperate refugees. The muddy streets of Talagaad are filled with merchants, labourers, ne'er-do-wells, smugglers, hunters, sellswords, fishers, and enough thieves to test the endurance of even the most dedicated hangman, or so it is said. Those of Kislevite descent make up a good deal of Talagaad's populace, often labouring at the very docks they or their ancestors arrived at.

The poor of Talagaad, and there are many, have mostly come from the surrounding countryside, all seeking a better life or fleeing a terrible one. Many turn to petty crime to get by, picking pockets or poaching game from the Duke's lands nearby. Those with ambition turn to smuggling, for which there are endless opportunities in Talagaad.

THE DOCKS

There is never a time when the docks of Talagaad are not busy, for while honest trade ends with sunset, the smugglers take over not long after night falls. Every morning sees the docks awash with would-be labourers searching for work, honest or otherwise, and fights are common if a given day's opportunities prove to be scarce. There are docks and quays on both sides of the river, but their character is distinctly different, for while Talabheim controls the south docks, astute legal manoeuvring by Duke Ludwig established that the northern bank is his.




The southern bank's docks offer the best access to the city; however, they are a shambles of poor construction and rotting wood, in constant need of repair and the city's Excise officers vary wildly in their attentions from meticulous to utterly corrupt. The northern bank's docks are far sturdier and well-maintained. The Duke's tax agents are proficient, infamously unbribable, and charge fairly reasonable assessments. Docking on the north bank, though, means negotiating with Talagaad's crooked ferrymen or dealing with the latest taxes for passing over the Wizard's Crossing to get your goods to Talagaad's Market Square or on to Talabheim. The present outrage is the Leg Tax which, though exorbitant for most, is set just low enough to avoid discouraging crossings entirely.

A short distance from the southern end of the Wizard's Crossing, at the edge of the docks, rises a bulky two-storied tavern widely famed in song, the Roaring Badger. The tavern is run by the wily rogue Vartolis Skint, a man who claims to hail from nowhere in particular, but who is well known for being able to flawlessly change his accent at will. Much of the ground floor is given over to a wide stage, surrounded by clever Dwarf-made lighting. The Roaring Badger is famed for its entertainment, which changes from night to night, with no one ever knowing what they might get: macabre skeletal marionettes, sonorous Dwarfen war ballads, or scandalous limericks from the Moot.

A LEG UP

Though instated with heavily laden carts in mind, which are typically pulled by many horses and would thus attract a larger fee, the leg tax has instead become a burden borne most onerously by the poor of Talagaad. Simple farmers pay dearly for what meagre livestock they would bring to market, driving up the cost of food in the town. Meanwhile, those with larger families are essentially stuck on whichever side of the river they found themselves upon when the Duke's decree was issued.

The tax has been a boon to the ferry keepers however, as well as a small industry of wounded soldiers turned carters who, equipped with wooden limbs, provide one of the cheapest ways to move goods across the bridge.



“ *The Hexengilde keep a presence in Talagaad, of course. Could I point you to it? Aha, if I could, I'd be directing witch hunters and zealots to it too. We work more subtly, leaving our marks where those with The Sight will notice it, and convening only when necessary. You would like to join us? I could certainly make introductions, if you could perhaps first make it worth my while?* ”

— Giselbert, Hexengilde Arcanist

The stage and part of the bar beside it still bear scorch marks from a particularly spectacular evening and a somewhat drunk Elementalist. If a patron is willing to attempt entertaining the tavern, they will immediately be pushed up on stage and their efforts judged by the crowd. Those that succeed have their ale covered for the rest of the evening and may even see some coin out of it. Those that fail are tossed into the Talabec.

THE FISCHMARKT

Talabheim claims several fishing villages along the shores of the Talabec and it is here where the fisher-folk and their families do a brisk business moving their wares. The market resides along the southernmost tip of the south bank's docks. The smell of fish pervades everything here, and those who work at the Fischmarkt are never entirely free of it. Large racks of fish are smoked here day and night, while barrels of salted fish are unloaded from or to barges for shipping elsewhere. The locals favour fresh river fish, though what counts as fresh varies depending on one's means. The freshest are stored in buckets of ice and whisked away to noble tables in Talabheim or elsewhere, the ice often more expensive and harder to procure than the fish.

A fair number of servants from noble houses personally travel to shop at the Fischmarkt every morning from Talabheim to fetch this fare, mixing with Talagaad's locals. As a result, the latest gossip from the city and beyond moves quicker here than a fish can swim.

THE MARKEBUNDT

On the southern side of the Talabec, immediately beyond the docks, is where the bulk of Talagaad's business is truly done. The Markebundt covers most of the southside of Talagaad. It is entirely dedicated to merchant shops and warehouses. Where the Old Forest Road passes into Talagaad, it runs along the edge of the Markebundt, with one branch locally known as the Wizard's Road heading through the port towards the river and the other splitting off to head upwards in a series of switchbacks along the Taalbaston crater wall called the Wizard's Way.

Every day sees countless shipments passing from the Markebundt up the Wizard's Way, which is wide enough to accommodate several wagons travelling side-by-side and leads to the single heavily-guarded passage into Talabheim – a city the greater bulk of Talagaad's populace will go their entire lives without ever laying eyes on.

The heart of the Markebundt is the Market Square, an open-air market where local farmers and traders from lands as distant as fabled Grand Cathay regularly sell their goods. This practice started long ago, as Talabheim's convoluted laws regulating entry into the city to conduct business caused such frustration that many merchants gave up and decided Talagaad was close enough. The market is officially held three times a week, but trading never truly ends here. The majority of business happens out of the backs of carts, but those who can afford it may erect stalls, tents, or even grand pavilions on occasion. There is no telling what one may find in the Market Square of Talagaad, for nearly anything imaginable might be for sale here. Talagaad's corrupt watch has little interest in patrolling the market, and theft is common, so the Market Square has fairly competent guards paid for by merchants with contributions from Talabheim to keep things from getting out of hand.



“ Ah, the closest thing to a home away from home one can find in these soft southern lands. Kislevite blood runs through the veins of Talagaad, and, at times, through its streets and gutters too. Follow the Talabec far enough upriver and you will find my homeland, son of the Empire, but I wouldn't advise it. The bears would feast well upon one as soft as you. ”

— Yury Kagan, Talagaad Elder

KISLEVITES IN TALAGAAD

Talagaad has ever been home to a substantial population of Kislevite descent, who either came down the river aboard boats and barges from their distant homeland or are descended from those who did. Alongside typical Empire fare such as jellied eels, smoked fish, or stewed chicken, one can find inns and taverns serving pickled vegetables of every kind, along with fresh kvas — a Kislevite delicacy that is used as cooking stock, beverage, and cure-all. At night, songs of oblasts can be heard across the town, accompanied by the distinctive sound of balalaikas.

Kislevites are generally welcoming of others, as hospitality means a great deal to them. Nevertheless, they find many Southerners to be soft, if not outright naive. Kislevites have never forgotten the threat of Chaos, for they have never truly been spared the fury of its followers. Raids from the north are frequent, and the sons and daughters of Kislev have learned harsh lessons that most scholarly folk from the south would be swift to scoff at.

Among the Kislevite population in Talagaad, there is a seer named Lady Yekrina who has supposedly lived here for centuries. She is near impossible for outsiders to find unless they have done something noteworthy to help the folk of Talagaad, but her insight is said to be uncanny and her advice, priceless.



BEYOND THE EMPIRE

The Empire is vast, but despite what some of its citizenry might prefer to believe, there are lands beyond it. Some are human realms, from nearby Tilea, Kislev or Estalia, to distant Grand Cathay and Ind. Others are the domain of Elves, Dwarfs, or Ogres. Some are host to entirely inhuman or unliving entities, vast swaths of land made inimicable to civilisation their aggressive inhabitants, ancient curses, or festering corruption.

The Dwarfen Mountain Holds

The Empire is surrounded by three great mountain ranges: the Grey Mountains to the west, the Black Mountains to the south, and the massive peaks of the World's Edge Mountains to the east. Together they are home to Karaz Ankor, the ancient mountain realm of the Dwarfs, whose holds once stretched unbroken across the continent. While each Karak has its own rulers, they all owe allegiance to High King Balun Alriksson of the Everpeak, Karaz-A-Karak. The High King holds dear the ancient oaths of support between his people and the Empire. His forces stand ever ready to march against their mutual enemies, though they pointedly avoid taking sides in human feuds.



Kislev

To the immediate north of the Empire lie the frozen steppes of Kislev, land of a valiant people who stand as a bulwark against the forces of Chaos. Kislev is ruled by Tzarina Mishenka Romanoff, known as the Ice Queen, an honorific granted to the female rulers of Kislev due to their mastery of rare Ice Magic. The Kislevites are fierce warriors and widely considered the greatest horsemen in the Old World. They are often thought savage by their southerly neighbours, whom they deem ungrateful, for it is Kislevite courage and spilt blood that has protected the Empire from regular attacks by Chaos marauders for over six centuries.

Brettonnia

“ Ah, sweet Brettonnia, whose fields are green, whose cities shine, and whose banners rise resplendent above all others! It is the Lady's land, and sweeter still for it, but I can call it home no longer. It is why I say I am already dead, no? For I have been cast out of paradise, and all else seems akin to death. Still, if we are already dead men, why not raise another toast, eh? If we must be dead, let us not be sober too. ”

— Jamie, Bretonnian exile



West of the Grey Mountains lies Brettonnia, land of chivalry. A kingdom heavily divided between noble knights and deprived peasants, Brettonnia is even so famed as a bastion of justice and decency. The Bretonnians' patron goddess is the Lady of the Lake, a fay deity who grants strength and courage to those who embody the ideals of chivalry and honour. All Bretonnian Knights hope to one day quest to seek her out and drink from her legendary Grail, which grants wisdom, strength, and longevity to the worthy. Most folk only meet Bretonnian Knights when they set out on a crusade, a fanatical quest, or are exiled for either good cause or pride – meaning their opinions of Bretonnian Knights are often unkind.



The Border Princes

South of the Black Mountains lay the rough lands of the Border Princes, the frontier edge of the civilized world, for beyond lie the Badlands and, if you travel far enough south, the infamous Land of the Dead. The Border Princes are named for their ever-churning succession of rulers, would be tyrants or saviours all, who seize power only to eventually be overthrown in turn. It is mostly a lawless land, where cruelty is the common coin and everyone who intends to see the next sunrise must learn to wield a weapon. Yet, it is also a land to lose a troubled past in and make a new start – a region where the bold, if they are fortunate or ruthless enough, can change their destiny.

The Wood Elf Realms

There are lands within the Old World where humanity has no power, ancient realms held by Elves who refused to leave the continent and broke from the rule of distant Ulthuan and its Phoenix King.



A large portion of Bretonnia's south is covered by the vast forest of Athel Loren. Outsiders who venture there do not survive, for the trees there are said to walk and attack any interloper. The living forest is home to many Wood Elves, led by their Eternal Queen, Ariel, and her consort, the King in the Woods, Orion. The fierce Elves of Athel Loren seldom leave their hidden kingdom and then only to eliminate any who would harm their forest realm. There is a similar realm in the northern Empire, centred in the magical Laurelorn Forest; however, the Eonir of Laurelorn have better relations with humanity and maintain some diplomatic contact with the realms around them. Though much of the Laurelorn lies within territory claimed by Empress Magritta, it is Count Sigismund Ulric who is said to have the firmest treaty with the Elves of the Laurelorn, and their scouts are known to occasionally visit his court unannounced to bring news of the movements of Beastmen.



Ulthuan

To the distant west, across the Great Ocean, lies the island continent of Ulthuan, the proud realm of the High Elves. Little is known of Ulthuan by outsiders, other than its armies are exceptionally effective, filled with powerful warriors, potent spell casters, and dragons are rumoured to ride in their vanguard. Ulthuan's fleets are acknowledged as the greatest in the Old World and since the coronation of the present Phoenix King Finubar of Lothorn, the fleets of the Sea Guard have been actively patrolling the oceans for pirates and marauders from the north. Ulthuan's ambassadors have appeared in many courts of late, offering their extensive knowledge, while subtly suggesting unity and cooperation are the way forward for humanity, even as they look to the north with unsettled eyes.

Tilea

South of Bretonnia, beyond the Irrana Mountains, is the land of Tilea. Once a united republic centered on the city of Remas, Tilea has long since fractured into a series of city-states bound by complex trade agreements and elaborate treaties, beset by generations-long vendettas. Tileans do not believe in inherent nobility and suffer no kings. Their city-states are ruled by powerful mercantile dynasties whose strength is measured by what forces they can buy or most often, rent. Tilea is considered the birthplace of the Dogs of War, professional mercenary regiments whose only true loyalty is to coin. Tileans are famed explorers, but envious observers suggest this is only due to their constant greedy search for new trading partners and riches.



Estalia

A warm land of ancient kingdoms that mostly look inward in all matters save for trade, the realm of Estalia lies to the southwest of Bretonnia. Known abroad for affable merchants and talented duellists as quick with their wits as their flashing blades, the Estalians are proud of their beautiful cities and old traditions. Their two greatest kingdoms, rugged Bilbali in the north, and gentle Magritta in the south, share an epically romantic and tragic history of alliances, betrayals, marriages, and assassinations. As much as Estalians love a crisp wine, they love weighty drama more.

Norsca

North of the Sea of Claws, the last land before the dread Chaos Wastes, is the bitter cold peninsula of Norsca. A realm of jagged mountains, warped beasts, and icy forests, Norsca has produced a hardy tribal folk famed for their adventurous spirit and infamous for their bloodthirsty raiders. The Norscan tribes each follow their own king or queen, warring against one another unless an outsider enemy unites them. While their far travelled merchants are cautiously welcomed in many ports, their pillaging warbands are justly feared, for it is widely rumoured that many Norscans worship Dark Powers.

Beyond the Horizon

Far beyond the continent are lands considered more mythic than real by the few folk of the Empire that have even heard of them. In the distant west, farther even than fabled Ulthuan, are said to be two continents: the bleak lands of Naggaroth, of which the Elves will not speak, and the sweltering jungles of Lustria, legendary land of gold cities and swift death. South of the rough lands of the Border Princes are the Orc and Goblin filled Badlands, beyond which lie the deserts of the ancient Land of the Dead and the fabled trade cities of Araby. To the east, over the World's Edge Mountains, are the terrible Dark Lands a cursed region that supposedly borders a mountainous domain where Ogres rule supreme and further still, on the edge of the world, distant Grand Cathay, a vast human empire supposedly ruled by dragons, though few take such tales seriously.

RAVENING HORDES



Most citizens of the Empire are convinced the majority of the great evils that once plagued their people have been defeated. What remains in the hinterlands are bare shadows compared to what their ancestors once stood against. No, more dangerous by far the machinations of the nobility, whose lust for stature and influence might well see them having to take up arms against their fellow citizenry in one pointless border skirmish or another.



“I have seen them, braying in the night. Gathering in endless hordes that stretch from horizon to horizon. The good earth cannot hold the bodies of the dead, and the frigid north will not constrain them. We live on the cusp of disaster, though all are blind to it. Even I cannot name the time nor know the nature of our doom, but it comes. I see a comet in the sky, twin-tailed, but if it foreshadows doom or salvation, I cannot say. I see the plains of Kislev, alight, corrupted, Ursan's strength buckling against what is to come. I pray I do not live to see it in truth.”

— Malko, prophet

Those best versed in the inhuman threats the Empire faces are frequently soldiers, Road Wardens, and others whose duty sees them roving through deep forests or isolated mountain vales. Those who have managed to fight such foes and survive rarely offer more than fragmented accounts of what they directly experienced, often tinged by superstition or anguish. Some of the Knightly Orders and various groups of Templars keep more accurate records on the beings they have fought, but they seldom share such with outsiders. As a result, there is a great deal of ignorance among the common folk as to the myriad threats they face.

Most accept that Orcs and Goblins are very real. Indeed, they managed to burn the old province of Solland entire, long ago. Forest Goblins are a real threat which enough soldiers have faced that tales about them are common, though most folk scoff at the thought that some of them ride about on wolves or giant spiders. Orcs are far more seldom seen in the Empire proper and thought by most folk to be a problem for those poor sods in the Border Princes.

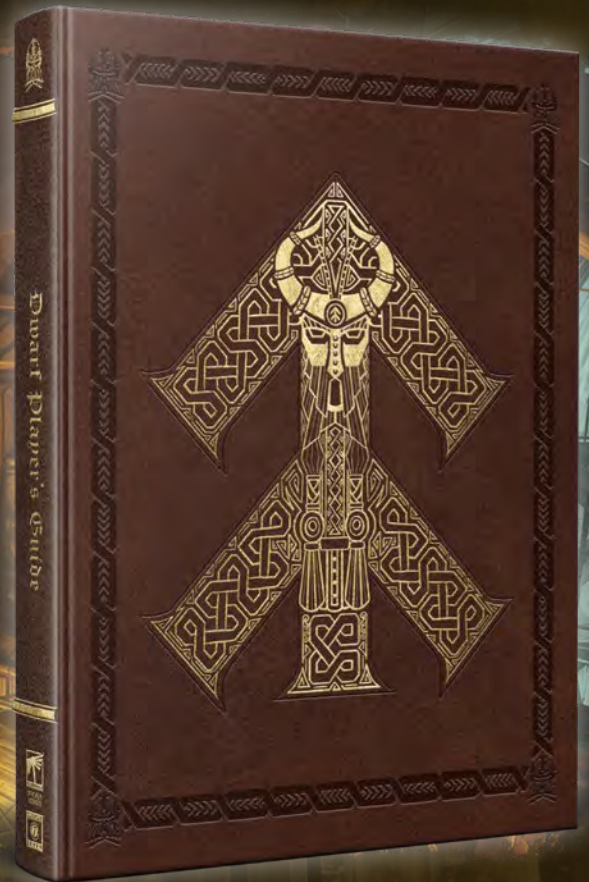
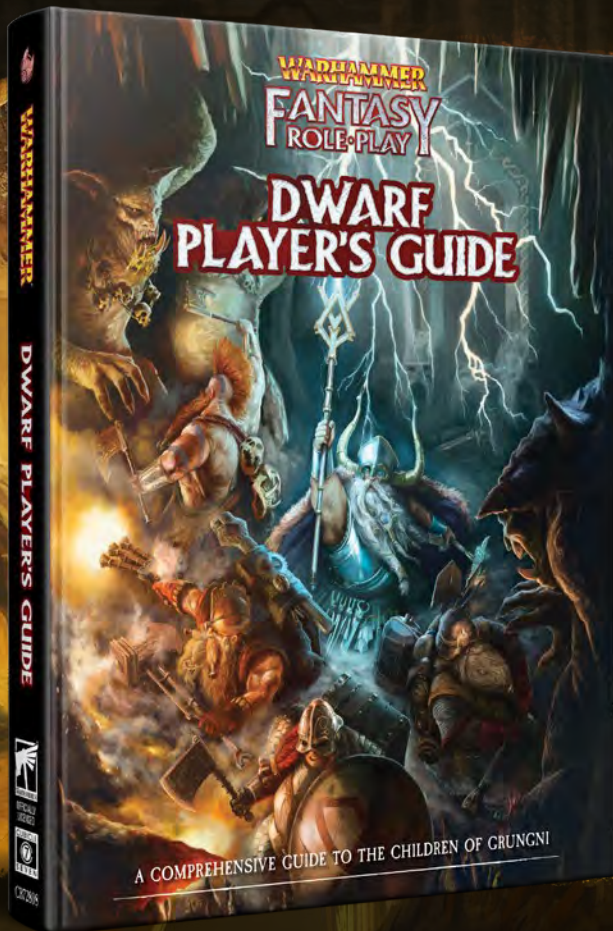
While the occasional animated skeleton or horrific apparition may haunt the borders of Sylvania, most think the threat of undead legions stalking the lands ended with the destruction of Mannfred von Carstein over a century ago, at the Battle of Hel Fenn. Some have heard tales of distant lands where the dead still walk the land, paying homage to strange, long-dead monarchs, but few pay them any heed. Most think the threat of undeath is well within the hands of the Knights of Morr, who keep a watchful gaze upon the Gardens of Morr for any signs of Necromantic magics.

There are certainly dangerous beasts in the forests, which is why anyone with a lick of sense avoids going too deep into them. Goat-headed Beastmen, and worse sorts, are said to lurk there. Mutants are a problem, a horrible tragic lot, but it was someone's sin that made them so. A swift killing is surely a mercy on them.

And what of Chaos? There are certainly tales of marauders from the north, but these are regularly confused with Norscan raiders and malevolent pirates. While acknowledged to be dangerous, they're thought of mostly as only a problem for folk along the coasts. After all, goes the tale, if the barbarous Kislevites and soft Wastelanders can see them off, they cannot be that much of a threat.

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WOUNDS TABLE

When a player character is seriously injured, they roll on the Wound table to determine the effect. Roll 1d10, plus another d10 for each untreated Wound you already have, and add together the results and consult the table below to see what ill has befallen you.

Wounds trigger a rush of adrenaline through your body, masking your pain and surging you forwards. When a Staggered character suffers a Wound, they immediately remove the Staggered condition.

Result	Wound	Description	Healing
1-3	Superficial injury	The shallow cut or nasty bruise is a lucky escape, all things considered. You suffer no consequences besides the usual penalties for untreated Wounds.	Catch your breath
4	Nicked arm	The shock of a shallow cut or bracing impact loosens your grip. Test Endurance to avoid dropping what you are holding in a random hand.	Catch your breath
5	Battered leg	Your legs buckle as the impact threatens to pitch you to the floor. Test Endurance to avoid suffering the Prone condition. You can remove this condition by using your free move, or the Recover action.	Catch your breath
6	Stomach blow	Your splutter and gasp as the wind is knocked out of you. You are Drained until the end of your next turn.	Catch your breath
7	Gashed brow	A cut to the forehead turns your vision red, as you try to blink the blood out of your eyes. Test Endurance to avoid being Blinded until the end of your next turn.	Catch your breath
8	Shaking grip	Shock or temporary nerve damage jolts down your arm. Drop what you are holding in a random hand. Until this Wound is treated, you cannot use the Aim action.	A night's respite
9	Leg spasm	A crash against your leg or pelvis sweeps you clean off your feet. You suffer the Prone condition. You can remove this condition by using your free move, or the Recover action. Until this Wound is treated, all movement counts as Difficult Terrain.	A night's respite
10	Crushed rib	A hideous crunch from your ribcage heralds a burst of pain. Your next Test is Grim. Until this Wound is treated, you suffer the Drained condition.	A night's respite
11	Ears ringing	A blow to the skull leaves you stumbling around the battlefield in a confused daze. Test Endurance to avoid losing 1d10 teeth. Until this Wound is treated, you suffer the Deafened condition.	A night's respite
12	Smashed hand	There's a hideous snap and a spray of blood. Through your sundered flesh, you see the glint of white bone. Drop what you are holding in a random hand, and Test Endurance to avoid losing a finger. If you use your injured hand before the Wound is treated, you suffer the Critically Injured condition.	A night's respite
13	Torn leg	Blood gushes down your calf. It's a bad idea to try walking until you're patched up. You suffer the Prone condition. You can remove this condition by using your free move or the Recover action, but if you do so before the Wound is treated, you suffer the Critically Injured condition.	A night's respite
14	Internal injury	A hideous blow causes damage to an organ you probably cannot name. Until the Wound is treated, if you take any action besides Recover, you suffer the Critically Injured condition. Until the Wound is healed, you suffer the Drained condition.	A night's respite
15	Scarring strike	Flesh tears across your face, leaving a scar that will remain for the rest of your life. Until the Wound is treated, if you take any action besides falling Prone, dropping what you're holding and clutching your ruined face, you suffer the Critically Injured condition. Until the Wound is healed, you suffer the Staggered condition.	A night's respite
16	Slashed forearms	Deep cuts along the length of your arm (randomise which) leave it fitfully spurting blood. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Critically Injured condition. Until the Wound is healed, you cannot use the arm at all.	Rest and Recovery

Total Result	Wound	Description	Healing
17	Shattered knee	Blood and cartilage is torn from your leg in a crimson fury. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Prone and Critically Injured conditions. Until the Wound is healed, you suffer the Burdened condition.	Rest and Recovery
18	Spilling guts	Your torso opens up in a burst of blood. Unless you immediately drop what you're holding in one hand and clutch at your stomach, you'll lose consciousness (becoming Defenceless) in seconds. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Critically Injured condition. Until the Wound is healed, you suffer the Burdened and Drained conditions.	Rest and Recovery
19	Blacking out	The blow hammers into your skull, and the next few seconds are a disorienting blur. Test Endurance to avoid losing an eye (randomise which). Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Blinded and Critically Injured conditions. Until the Wound is healed, you suffer the Staggered condition.	Rest and Recovery
20	Severed arm	One of your arms (randomise which) has been sliced from your body, or will need to be amputated. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Defenceless and Critically Injured conditions. Your arm is lost forever, but if you acquire a prosthetic after the Wound has healed, it can restore some functionality.	Surgery, Rest and Recovery
21	Severed leg	One of your legs (randomise which) has been sliced from your body, or will need to be amputated. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Defenceless and Critically Injured conditions. Your leg is lost forever, reducing your Speed to Slow, but if you acquire a prosthetic after the Wound has healed, you might attempt some Manoeuvres with a difficulty penalty.	Surgery, Rest and Recovery
22	Ruptured organs	Your body is a ruin and you are hovering on the edge of death. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Defenceless and Critically Injured conditions. From now on, any physical attack that inflicts the Staggered condition inflicts a Wound on you instead — once the Wound has healed, you may Test Endurance to prevent this effect from activating.	Surgery, Rest and Recovery
23	Ruined eyes	Your skull cracks and your life flashes before your eyes, amidst a sea of inexplicable colours and shapes. It's the last thing you'll ever see. Until the Wound is treated, you suffer the Defenceless and Critically Injured conditions. You are Blinded permanently, but after the Wound has healed, you can slowly adapt to your disability, applying the penalty to unsighted Tests less often at the GM's discretion.	Surgery, Rest and Recovery
24	Appalling strike	One limb is utterly crushed, and at least one more is severed from your body in a spray of bloody viscera. You expire an instant later, your soul consigned to any god that would have you.	n/a
25	Bisection	A swing across your waist cuts you in half or smashes your bones to dust. A single spray of arterial fluid stains the ground beneath you. You are dead before you hit the ground.	n/a
26	Pierced heart	A grievous wound cleaves your chest in two, puncturing your organs with broken bones. You have time for 1d10 dying words and no more.	n/a
27+	Decapitation	Your head is struck from your body — if your killer is in Close Range, and has a hand free, they may opt to catch your head and hold it aloft as a trophy. You are dead.	n/a

The **Gamemaster's Guide** covers the rules for Wounding NPCs, but the principles are summarised here.

Most NPCs are **Minions** — ordinary people, or the rank and file of the ravaging hordes. A Minion is defeated when they suffer a Wound. The attacker decides if they are killed, knocked out, or disarmed and forced to surrender, subject to the GM's discretion.

Brutes are tougher opponents with some grit to their name. They suffer Wounds, but do not roll on the Wounds Table.

Instead, their profile details what happens when they're Wounded, and how many Wounds are needed to defeat them.

Champions are leaders and figureheads, with a name and their own agenda. They suffer Wounds in the same way player characters do, rolling on the Wounds Table.

Monstrosities are gargantuan beasts, the terror of the Old World. Their profile details what happens when they're Wounded, and how many Wounds will defeat them. Some even become more dangerous when they're injured!