

MYTHMAGICA™



The Rules Reference

by Whitson John Kirk III

**Core Rule Book of the
Mythmagica RPG
using
The Tactic II™ System**



Mythmagica

The Rules Reference

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- John Kirk

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**This book is dedicated to my goddaughter, Evangeline.  
There are many monsters in the world, dear.  
But, if you band together with your fellow heroes,  
the monsters don't stand a chance.**

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The Rules Reference

Introduction

This book contains the Tactic II System used by Mythmagica, a fantasy role-playing game. Tactic II is a collection of generic role-playing game rules upon which any genre can be built. It is designed to provide tactically rich game play with excellent support for storytelling. Mythmagica layers a fantasy game on top of Tactic II based on the cultures of Europe and the Mediterranean theater.

Mythmagica is a tabletop role-playing game about heroism and valor and risk and sacrifice. In it, you assume the role of a character, an alter-ego, in a fictional world dreamed up by you and your friends. Although there are many different characters in the world you will be exploring, the character of a player is special. It is known as an Avatar, which is traditionally a word meaning the embodiment of a deity on Earth. In this game, though, an Avatar is a player's alter-ego in the fictional world.

You will control your Avatar to overcome many dangers. But, the game's real core is not about ancient ruins and the treasures that lay buried therein, although that is certainly an element of the fun. Rather, the beating heart of Mythmagica is deciding what it is your Avatar cares about, and then exploring how much you personally, the player, will risk to defend their interests. After playing for a while, most players become attached to their Avatars. As such, when you risk something important to your Avatar to defend something they cherish, you assume some of that risk yourself. In this way, the game allows you to personally demonstrate a tiny bit of the heroism your Avatar acts out.

For example, suppose you are playing a gruff, hardened warrior named Galen the Terrible. After one or two gaming sessions, you decide your Avatar is fiercely loyal to his companion, Diomenes, who saved Galen's life on many occasions. There are potent game mechanics pushing you to explicitly state your character's beliefs and emotional relationships, so you noted this bond on your character sheet with the phrase "Fiercely loyal to Diomenes". While exploring an old ruin, the characters encounter a many-headed hydra. In the ensuing battle, your Avatar expended much of his resources, but you avoided risking death, and the game rules say that your character *cannot* die without you willingly risking his life, regardless of the dangers they face. However, Diomenes gets into serious trouble and is likely to die without immediate help from Galen. You can provide that help, but only by gambling Galen's life. What do you do? Do you play it safe and ignore the oath of loyalty you made to Diomenes, or do you rescue him at the very real risk to Galen's very existence? The choice is yours.

The game system brings these questions up again and again, although you will not always risk your Avatar's life. At times, you may only risk his material possessions or great bodily harm. By continually challenging you in this way, the

system pushes you to explore and develop your Avatar's persona, so you know what is *really* important to them and what is mere bravado. The system continually asks an equally crucial question of you as well:

Do you have the guts to be a hero?

This question is raised at every turn, for every action your Avatar takes. Over, and over, and over again in one situation after another, the question is raised. So, what will you risk to steal that emerald necklace? Will you put your Avatar's life on the line to save their companion's daughter? How about your Avatar's *own* daughter?

The Overlord

When you get together to play this game, one player assumes the role of the Game Master, known as the Overlord in Mythmagica. The Overlord is pivotal to the game. They present a wide array of interesting scenarios to challenge the characters. While each of the other players portrays a single individual, the Overlord has the responsibility of bringing the entire rest of the world to life. As such, the Overlord controls many different characters, both minor and major, over the course of a single game session.

The Overlord also acts as the final arbiter of the rules. If a disagreement arises between players, the Overlord provides a judgment call to get the game moving again. Mythmagica is well designed, in the author's not-so-humble opinion, so it should never be necessary to actually break the rules. But, there may be gaps in the rules here and there. In such cases, the Overlord decides how to resolve any issues that arise. Once the Overlord makes a ruling, their word is law.

The Basic Conflict System

Mythmagica's Conflict System is quite flexible, and there is a lot of material that delves into the various ways it can be manipulated and used. So, before we get too far into it, let's give a very brief overview of the basics:

Mythmagica resolves conflicts by rolling twenty-sided dice (d20s). Each roll uses one or more d20s, the number of which is determined by whether the character has Edges and/or Drawbacks on their actions. The highest number (in the case of Edges) or the lowest roll (in the case of Drawbacks) is taken from all the dice. Then, adjustments for pertinent Attributes, Skills, and other considerations are added, and the result is compared to a Threshold. If the total exceeds the Threshold, the roll succeeds. What success means depends on what the character is attempting, and often there are degrees of success or failure, depending on the roll. However, a player can convert a failed roll into a bare success by spending Guts points. But, doing so is a gamble: the more Guts points a player spends, the more dire the consequences if their Avatar falls in combat. That, in a nutshell, is it.

CHARACTER MAKEUP

Character Makeup

Mythmagica is a tactical game. It is designed to present players with interesting tactical scenarios with which to demonstrate mastery over and prowess with the rules. As such, characters are endowed with a wide variety of fiddly-bits that players can use to their advantage, both in-game and out. In other words, Mythmagica provides a very flexible system with which to design a character, and then see how that character's abilities can be brought into play to win tactical victories.

That's not to say that the game shortchanges story, though. At the very heart of every Mythmagica Avatar is an attribute called Guts. This is a resource that ties the tactics of the game directly into story. Players spend Guts in conflicts to win tactical advantages, and earn it back through role-playing and by acting as an appreciative audience to their fellow players. Thus, the ever-present need to win conflicts provides a powerful incentive to imbue an Avatar with a strong personality and to recognize those efforts in the other players sitting at the table. These rewards provide a feedback loop between the players, who all participate as both actors and audience, and allows the Avatars to overcome challenges they would otherwise be unable to face

Race and Lineage

Each Avatar belongs to a race of humanoids, such as Elf, Dwarf, Goblin, Hob, Gnome, and many others. A number of the Races have sub-races as well, known as Lineages.

Not much needs to be said here about the various Races, and Lineages in the game, but they are all described in The Character Compendium. Suffice it to say that players are given the option of choosing from the playable Races and Lineages for their character. In so doing, they are essentially choosing a package deal that grants them various perks and drawbacks in one big lump. These include Baseline Attributes, Racial Skills, Gifts and/or Flaws, etc. The meaning of these various elements are described later in the various sections of this book.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes

All Mythmagica characters have Basic Attributes of Toughness (TN), Strength (ST), Agility (AG), Craftiness (CR), Perception (PC), Heart (HT), and Intelligence (IN). These attributes have numerical values, which can be either positive or negative.

Baseline Attributes

Different Races in the game have different strengths and weaknesses, which are reflected in their Attributes. As such, each Race is associated with a set of Racial Baseline Attributes that characterize it, which represents a sort of starting point for characters of the Race.

The numerical values are gauged in comparison to Humans. (How self-centered of us.) So, the human's Racial Baseline Attributes have values of zero across the board:

Human Baseline Attributes

TN	ST	AG	CR	PC	HT	IN
0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The racial Baseline for the other races are found on the [Racial Baseline Attributes Table in The Character Compendium](#). If you add up all of the Racial Baseline Attributes for a given race, they sum to zero. For example, those for a goblin are:

Goblin Baseline Attributes

TN	ST	AG	CR	PC	HT	IN
-1	-1	1	3	2	-3	-1

If you add all of these up, the sum is zero:

$$-1 + -1 + 1 + 3 + 2 + -3 + -1 = 0$$

All members of a Race don't match their racial Attribute values, though. After all, some Humans are stronger than others, some are more perceptive, etc. The same goes for Elves, Gnomes, and all the other races. So, while a character's Race strongly influences its Attributes, they do vary and improve as the character gains experience.

Basic Attributes

The Baseline Attributes aren't all there is to Attributes. The Baseline Attributes serve as a starting point for a character's Basic Attributes. As a character gains levels, though, they gain Attribute Bonuses which can be added to whatever Basic Attributes desired.

So, a character starts with their Baseline Attributes, and adds Attribute Bonuses from there. A character is given a number of Attribute Bonuses equal to their Level. (Beginning characters start with a Level of 0, which means they have no Attribute Bonus to spend initially. But, as they gain

experience, Level increases. Every time it rises, the character gains one Attribute Bonus to spend.

Most of the time, it costs one Attribute Bonus to raise an attribute by one point. However, every Baseline Attribute is associated with a Baseline Damper, which is always 3 greater than the Baseline Attribute value. Raising an attribute to a value more than the Baseline Damper costs two Attribute Bonuses for every point gained. For example, suppose an Avatar has a Baseline of 2 in Agility, but its player wants to increase that stat to have a 6. The Agility values of 3, 4, and 5 each cost one Attribute Bonus apiece. However, the final value of 6 costs an additional two Attribute Bonuses, since that is more than the Baseline Damper. If, later on in the character's career, the player decides to raise Agility by yet another point, it will cost another two Attribute Bonuses.

Most characters have some Basic Attributes that are positive and some that are negative. In game terms, these attribute values will usually be added directly to Conflict Rolls to take into account the character's strengths and weaknesses. For these situations, it makes sense that sometimes it will get a bonus (where a character is strong) and sometimes it will get a penalty (in areas it is weak).

Basic Attribute Descriptions

A character's Attributes usually enter into the outcomes of player actions. Most of a character's Attributes determine the adjustments it will make to various die rolls. For example, you will commonly hear your Overlord say, "Make an Avoidance Roll with Agility adjustments." In this situation, you will roll a 20 sided die and add your Agility and Level to the result. This way, the Attribute directly affects the game. See the [Conflict Rolls](#) section for descriptions of the various die rolls and how they are used in the game.

Here are descriptions of the various Basic Attributes:

Agility (AG):

Agility refers to a character's gross motor control, natural reflexes, and overall quickness. The quicker the character, the more easily they avoid the blows of another character's attacks. The more nimble, the greater their ability in feats of balance. So, Agility is used in Conflict Rolls in situations where a character's quick reactions aid them.

Craftiness (CR):

Craftiness gauges the deftness of a character's fingers and wrists, their fine motor control, and their ability to perform delicate, careful, and/or smooth motions. It can also pertain to how the character can employ subtlety in their dealings with others. As such, it reaches into the realms of both the physical and mental. Craftiness is the primary Attribute used in thieving Skills, such as Opening Locks, Picking Pockets, and Disarming Traps. Through the derived attribute of

Acumen, Craftiness also affects a character's proficiency in using Range Weapons.

Heart (HT):

Heart provides a gauge of your character's confidence and ability to resist fear and other emotionally difficult situations. It represents a character's mental stamina and emotional intelligence. It may manifest itself as confidence in one's self, loyalty to loved ones, or belief in religion in situations where doing otherwise would appear to be the wiser course. As such, it allows them to resist magics that influence emotion.

Intelligence (IN):

Intelligence provides a gauge on the smarts of a character. It factors in when players ask questions about the game world, and the Overlord decides that a Conflict Roll is needed to determine whether the Avatar knows the requested piece of information. In these cases, the character's Rank in a particular lore (area of knowledge) may come into play. Otherwise, the character's Knowledge ability (possessed by all sapient characters) will help determine the outcome. In all such Conflict Rolls the Avatar's Intelligence stat adjusts the roll. Intelligence also comes into play when a character participates in conflicts involving discourse with other characters.

Intelligence also helps the Overlord to determine the actions a non-player character would logically take. As much as possible, Mythmagica avoids stamping a set level of gray-matter on Avatar actions, though. After all, an Avatar is only as smart (or stupid) as the player who controls him. The Overlord should never try to change a player's mind based on their character's Intelligence. Why? "Gee, Billy, I think your character *would* stick his head in the lion's mouth. He has a negative two Intelligence, after all."

Perception (PC):

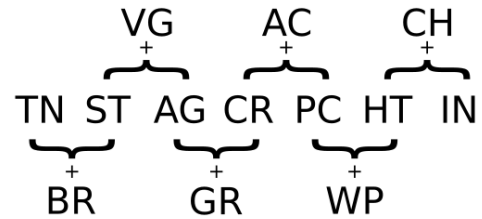
Perception indicates how well a character observes the world around him. Perception enhances attacking with Range Weapons through the derived Attribute of Acumen.

Use Perception when making Conflict Rolls for perceptive skills (such as [Finding Secret Stuff](#)) and when the Overlord needs to determine whether your character has noticed something out of the ordinary.

While we're on the subject of Perception, let's pause to consider the various senses that a character can possess. The primary sense for most creatures, including the Avatars, is vision. But, not everyone sees the world in the same way. There are five basic types of vision: [Day Vision](#), [Night Vision](#), [Dark Vision](#), [Heat Vision](#), and [Astral Vision](#). These are included in character descriptions as Gifts, which are described in detail in [The Character Compendium](#). So, we won't go into any depth about what each of these actually means. In brief, though, the basic vision types are exclusive

to one another. So, if your character has Day Vision, they don't have Dark Vision, and visa versa. These basic vision types are sometimes augmented with different senses, such as Astral Sense, Echolocation, and Heat Sense. (Again, these are described as Gifts in The Character Compendium.) Whereas the basic vision types are exclusive, sensory augments like these provide perceptive capabilities above and beyond those of the basic vision types. So, all characters perceive the world using a basic vision type that may be enhanced with additional senses.

The Attribute Spectrum



Strength (ST):

Strength refers to character's muscular build. Strength comes into play when a character must make a Conflict Roll against a force trying to overpower the character partly through Strength. Use the Attribute as an adjustment on any such rolls.

As a general guideline, the average human can barely lift 200 pounds off the floor and 100 pounds over their head. They can carry up to 1/3 of that, or 33 pounds, for long distances without making Strength checks totally unencumbered. When necessary use your character's Strength Yield value to determine your own character's limitations in comparison to these (see Attribute Values vs. Yields below for details).

Toughness (TN):

Toughness refers to a character's innate ruggedness, their ability to avoid and resist the effects of physical blows, and their resistance to the effects of poison.

Use Toughness on Conflict Rolls when a character is poisoned or when they must resist the effects of disease.

Toughness is also added in to both Defense and Stability, two crucial stats used in determining how well a character avoids physical attacks.

Derived Attributes

In addition to the seven Basic Attributes, Mythmagica uses ten more Attributes that are derived from them. The Derived Attributes, along with the formulas to calculate them follow:

- Acumen: AC = CR + PC
- Brawn: BR = TN + ST
- Charisma: CH = HT + IN
- Grace: GR = AG + CR
- Vigor: VG = ST + AG
- Willpower: WP = PC + HT

These initial six Derived Attributes tie the Basic Attributes into a coherent structure, as shown here:

The following Derived Attributes are determined by table lookup:

- Fate Points: FP
- Hit Points: HP
- Speed: SP

Finally, some additional derived attributes, of somewhat lesser importance, are derived as follows:

- Daily Healing Rate (DHR) = HP / 7
- Magic Limit = WP + 4
- Raw Defense = TN + AG + 10
- Raw Stability = TN + CR + 10

Derived Attribute Descriptions

Acumen (AC) CR + PC

Acumen determines a character's ability to coordinate the actions of their hands with the events they observe. It incorporates both the Craftiness of the character as well as their Perception. Range weapons depend on this attribute in combat. Add Acumen to the character's Attack Bonus when using Range weapons of any type.

Brawn (BR) TN + ST

Brawn evaluates a character's raw physical presence. The greater a character's Brawn, the greater their overall beefiness. It is the only factor used in determining a character's Hit Points. Use Brawn in Attribute Checks when determining whether a character can accomplish a difficult weight-lifting task for an extended period. (Such as carrying a piano up a few flights of stairs.) See the Conflict Rules section for information on how to make Attribute Checks.

Charisma (CH) IN + HT

Charisma gauges the overall power of a character's personality. It helps them in musical performances, in bartering, and in diplomacy. Use Charisma in Banding Words rolls when a character attempts to persuade other characters (NPCs) to action. See the description for Banding Words skill in the Conflict Rules section for information on how to handle these conflicts.

Fate Points (FP)

Fate Points is a resource representing the ever-changing favor of the gods and fate. It is important for all characters, as it determines how resistant a character is to defeat through cunning and trickery. In this regard, it could accurately be described as a character's spiritual Hit Points.

Fate Points are based on Willpower. To determine how many Fate Points a character has, look it up on the Fate Points Table¹.

Setback

Fate Points are expended through Setback. Setback is taken when opponents trick, maneuver, confound, or entangle a character. When an Occultist, Pagan priest, or Mystic casts a spell, they also sustain Setback.

Setback is instantly refreshed to zero at the end of every Chapter. Alternately, if a Chapter extends out for a long time, Setback is recovered at a rate of 1 point per hour.

Grace (GR) AG + CR

Grace indicates how well a character controls their body when sneaking. As such, several skills, such as Hiding in Crowds, Urban Stealth, and Rural Stealth, use Grace on Conflict Rolls.

Fate Points Table

Willpower	Fate Points	Willpower	Fate Points
-50	1	0	32
-40	1	1	35
-30	2	2	38
-29	3	3	42
-28	3	4	45
-27	3	5	49
-26	3	6	54
-25	4	7	59
-24	4	8	64
-23	4	9	70
-22	5	10	76
-21	5	11	83
-20	6	12	91
-19	6	13	99
-18	7	14	108
-17	7	15	117
-16	8	16	128
-15	9	17	140
-14	10	18	152
-13	10	19	166
-12	11	20	181
-11	12	21	197
-10	13	22	215
-9	15	23	235
-8	16	24	256
-7	17	25	279
-6	19	26	304
-5	21	27	332
-4	23	28	362
-3	25	29	395
-2	27	30	430
-1	29	40	1024
0	32	50	2436

¹ Fate Points are calculated by assuming the average human gets 32 Fate Points. The other values were calculated as percentages of these values from the Derived Attribute Yield values (see below).

Hit Points (HP)

Hit Points refers to the maximum amount of physical abuse a character can take. Whenever a character is injured by a weapon or spell, they sustain Damage. This Damage is subtracted from the character's Hit Points.

Hit Points are based on Brawn. To determine how many Hit Points a character has, look it up on the [Hit Points Table](#)².

Damage

Hit Points are expended through Damage, which can incapacitate or kill a character.

Damage indicates actual physical wounds that your character has sustained. It heals with the use of magical potions, herbal medication, and rest. You will find the healing effects these potions and herbs invoke under the various character skills that produce them. A character may also rest to allow their body to heal itself. They heal Damage at a rate equal to their Daily Healing Rate (DHR) for every day of rest. For simplicity, this natural healing is always assumed to take place immediately after a character has a complete night's rest. Hit Points never rises above the normal maximum for any character.

Daily Healing Rate (DHR)

Daily Healing Rate (DHR), which is derived from Hit Points, describes how quickly a character regains lost Hit Points (HP) due to physical wounds. They heal Hit Points at a rate equal to DHR, which has a minimum value of 1. A character can heal from 0 Hit Points to full in about a week. So, $DHR = HP/7$, rounded to the nearest integer.

Raw Defense (RD) TN + AG + 10

Raw Defense refers to a character's natural ability to leap out of harm's way. It is a major contributor to a character's overall Defense (which includes other factors such as the Parry of the weapon in hand, Shield and Armor adjustments, Level, etc.)

Raw Stability (RS) TN + CR + 10

Raw Stability refers to a character's natural ability to maintain their footing and balance. It is a major contributor to a character's overall Stability (which includes other factors such as the Parry of the weapon in hand and Level.)

Hit Points Table

Brawn	Hit Points	Brawn	Hit Points
-50	1	0	32
-40	1	1	35
-30	2	2	38
-29	3	3	42
-28	3	4	45
-27	3	5	49
-26	3	6	54
-25	4	7	59
-24	4	8	64
-23	4	9	70
-22	5	10	76
-21	5	11	83
-20	6	12	91
-19	6	13	99
-18	7	14	108
-17	7	15	117
-16	8	16	128
-15	9	17	140
-14	10	18	152
-13	10	19	166
-12	11	20	181
-11	12	21	197
-10	13	22	215
-9	15	23	235
-8	16	24	256
-7	17	25	279
-6	19	26	304
-5	21	27	332
-4	23	28	362
-3	25	29	395
-2	27	30	430
-1	29	40	1024
0	32	50	2436

² Hit Point Boosts are calculated by assuming the average human gets 32 Hit Points. The other values were calculated as percentages of these values from the Derived Attribute Yield values (see below).

Speed

Speed gauges how fast a character moves. It is calculated based on a combination of the character's natural abilities and is reduced based on how much their equipment encumbers him. It is provided as a distance, in feet, that a character travels in a single Move Action (explained later). As a rule of thumb, divide the distance traveled (in feet) in a given Round by 10 to (very) roughly determine a movement rate in terms of miles per hour.

To determine a character's Speed, you start with their Raw Speed. To find this value, add their Vigor to their Perception and use this total to look it up on the [Raw Speed Table](#)³.

A character wearing armor or using a shield has its Raw Speed reduced by the Speed Penalties of their armament to arrive at an overall Speed (see the Armor and Shield descriptions in [The Character Compendium](#) for specific Speed Penalty values).

Calculations Using Speed

If you need to find out how long it takes a character to move a specific distance, take the distance (in feet) and divide it by the Speed. That's how many Rounds it takes (each being about 10 seconds).

Note: If you are using a Battle Grid for combat, each square is 5 feet on a side. For this reason, Speed is given in 5-foot increments to easily correspond to movement on the Grid. See [The Battle Grid](#) section for further details.

When not in a rush, assume characters walk at a flat Speed of 20 feet per Round, which corresponds roughly to 2 miles an hour.

Vigor (VG) ST + AG

Vigor indicates a character's raw athletic ability. It incorporates both the strength of a character and their overall dexterity.

Melee weapons (including Entrapment weapons having a Melee range) depend on this attribute in combat. Add Vigor to a character's Attack Bonus when using these weapons.

Raw Speed Table

VG+PC	Raw Speed (feet per Move Action)	VG+PC	Raw Speed (feet per Move Action)
-50	5	0	30
-40	5	1	30
-30	5	2	35
-29	5	3	35
-28	5	4	40
-27	5	5	40
-26	5	6	40
-25	5	7	45
-24	10	8	50
-23	10	9	50
-22	10	10	55
-21	10	11	55
-20	10	12	60
-19	10	13	65
-18	10	14	65
-17	10	15	70
-16	10	16	75
-15	15	17	80
-14	15	18	85
-13	15	19	90
-12	15	20	95
-11	15	21	100
-10	15	22	110
-9	20	23	115
-8	20	24	120
-7	20	25	125
-6	20	26	135
-5	20	27	145
-4	25	28	150
-3	25	29	160
-2	25	30	170
-1	30	40	305
0	30	50	540

³ The Raw Speed values were calculated by assuming the average human has a Speed of 30. The other values are multiples of 2 to the power of one-twelfth [$2^{1/12}$], rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. The reason we used this formula is that Speed is derived from three Basic Attributes whereas most other values are derived from only two. Due to this, we wanted its effectiveness to double every 12 points rather than every 8.

Willpower (WP) PC+HT

Willpower is a character's mental brawn. It represents their fundamental ability to withstand pain, both physical and mental, allows them to plow through difficult mental challenges, and spurn magic affecting their intellectual capacities. It is also the basis for determining how much a character can stubbornly endure in guile-based contests. As such, It is the only factor used in determining a character's Fate Points.

Magic Limit

Willpower also limits the number of magical influences that may affect a character without additional side-effects.

In Mythmagica, magic subtly affects a character's mind. The primary reason for this is that magic is, essentially, a force that binds and manipulates spirits. Any magical force in proximity to a creature subtly influences that creature's spirit, even if the magical force is not specifically directed toward it. The majority of magical influences, such as most spells, fade quickly and have no lasting effect. But, longer lasting magical influences, such as Magic Items and Spellbindings, act as a low-level spiritual irritant whose effects can accumulate over time. Consequently, a character may be safely influenced by a number of Spellbindings and Magic Items equal to 4 plus their Willpower. This is known as their Magic Limit. Carrying more invites a curse.

If the character accumulates a number of magical influences above their Magic Limit, they are Jinxed (see [Jinxed](#) in the [Character Conditions](#) section for details). This happens the moment the limit is exceeded, and cannot be recovered from until the number of magical influences drops below the character's limit.

Attribute Values vs. Yields

Once you have set your character's Attributes with the preceding rules, you will quite possibly have some Attribute values that are positive and some that are negative. In game terms, these Attribute values will usually be added directly to Conflict Rolls to take into account your character's strengths and weaknesses. For these situations, it makes sense that sometimes you will get a bonus (where your character is strong) and sometimes you will get a penalty (in areas your character is weak).

However, there are a number of situations where negative values simply don't make sense. Suppose you are playing a Sprite whose Strength has a value of -16. That's a pretty hefty penalty to suffer in feats of strength, to be sure. But, if you need to know how much your Sprite character can actually lift, what do you do? In this situation, we need a way to convert from positive and negative attribute values to purely positive values that represent a character's absolute capabilities. The easiest way to accomplish this deed is through the use of a conversion table. The Attribute Yield Table⁴ provides this information.

You will see that there are actually two yield columns, the Basic Attribute Yield and the Derived Attribute Yield. The Basic Attribute Yields should be used in situations where you want to determine the level of capability of a Basic Attribute. (As a reminder, the Basic Attributes are: Toughness, Strength, Agility, Craftiness, Perception, Heart, and Intelligence.) The Derived Attribute Yields should be used in all other cases.

If you'll notice, an attribute value of 0 has an associated *Yield* of 100% in both columns. What this means is that an attribute value of 0 corresponds to 100% of the Human standard in the attribute. A quick glance over the table (which continues on the next page) shows that the Basic Attribute Yields increase more rapidly above 0 and decrease more rapidly below 0 than the Derived Attribute Yields. This is because the Derived Attributes, such as Brawn, Vigor, Grace, and the like, are combinations of the Basic Attributes. So, they often grow much bigger (either positive or negative) than the Basic Attributes.

Note that the Attribute values less than -20 and greater than +20 are provided on the table purely for illustrative purposes. It is not expected that Avatars will ever personally have Attribute values outside of the -20 to +20 range. But, at an intellectual level, it is nice to know that the system can handle the strength of a gnat just as easily as that of mighty Zeus.

⁴ The Basic Attribute Yield values in the table are calculated with the formula: $100 \times 2^{n/4}$. The Derived Attribute Yield values use the formula: $100 \times 2^{n/8}$. In both cases, n is the Attribute value.

Character Makeup

Attribute Yield Table

Attribute Value	Basic Attribute Yield	Derived Attribute Yield
-50	0.02%	1%
-40	0.10%	3%
-30	1%	7%
-20	3%	18%
-19	4%	19%
-18	4%	21%
-17	5%	23%
-16	6%	25%
-15	7%	27%
-14	9%	30%
-13	11%	32%
-12	13%	35%
-11	15%	39%
-10	18%	42%
-9	21%	46%
-8	25%	50%
-7	30%	55%
-6	35%	59%
-5	42%	65%
-4	50%	71%
-3	59%	77%
-2	71%	84%
-1	84%	92%
0	100%	100%

Attribute Yield Table (Continued)

Attribute Value	Basic Attribute Yield	Derived Attribute Yield
0	100%	100%
1	119%	109%
2	141%	119%
3	168%	130%
4	200%	141%
5	238%	154%
6	283%	168%
7	336%	183%
8	400%	200%
9	476%	218%
10	566%	238%
11	670%	259%
12	800%	283%
13	950%	308%
14	1130%	336%
15	1345%	367%
16	1600%	400%
17	1900%	436%
18	2260%	476%
19	2690%	519%
20	3200%	566%
21	3810%	617%
22	4530%	673%
23	5380%	734%
24	6400%	800%
25	7610%	872%
26	9050%	951%
27	10760%	1037%
28	12800%	1131%
29	15220%	1234%
30	18100%	1345%
40	102400%	3200%
50	579260%	7611%

Combat Characteristics

Attack Bonuses

When attacking, a character uses a stat called an Attack Bonus. This is really nothing more than any other Conflict Roll bonus used in any one of the myriad Conflict Rolls throughout the game. It is the Conflict Roll bonus used when attacking with a weapon. We give it a special name as a convenient shorthand in game because they are used so often. The Conflict system is described in detail later in this book. But, in short, the higher a character's Attack Bonus, the better its chances of hitting its opponent. Here's how to calculate a character's Attack Bonus for every weapon:

$$\text{Attack Bonus} = \text{Weapon Rank} + \text{Weapon Tempo} + \text{Attribute Adjustment.}$$

$$\text{Weapon Rank} = \text{Raw Weapon Rank} + \text{Rank Bonus}$$

The Weapon Rank is the Rank the character has attained in their weapon. It is composed of the character's Raw Weapon Rank and their Rank Bonus in that weapon. Raw Ranks are gained in individual weapons by spending XP on them. The Rank Bonus is an adjustment (between +0 and +4) based on the character's Race and/or Class(es). (Note that if a combatant hasn't gained any ranks in the weapon it is using, it can always fall back to the Melee, Ballistics, or Trickery skills that all characters possess.)

The Attribute Adjustment adds in one of character's Derived Attributes. Which attribute is added depends on the type of weapon being used:

Weapon Type	Add Your...
Melee Weapons	Vigor (VG)
Range Weapons	Acumen (AC)

Thus, a character having attained 5th Weapon Rank in shooting Long Bow (a Range Weapon with a Tempo of +1) and having an Acumen of 7 (the Attribute pertinent to range weapons) has a total Attack Bonus of +13 (5+1+7).

Defense

Defense is the stat targeted by weapons that deliver Damage. It is comprised of a number of components:

$$\text{Defense} = \text{Level} + \text{Raw Defense} + \text{Weapon Parry} - \text{Armor Encumbrance} + \text{Shield Bonus}$$

where

$$\text{Raw Defense} = 10 + \text{Toughness} + \text{Agility}$$

Weapon Parry, Shield Bonus, and Armor Encumbrance are all characteristics of whatever weaponry is being used, if any.

Level and Agility are character stats. Level is explained in detail later.

Stability

Stability is the stat that must be overcome by weapons that target a character's Fate Points. It is calculated using these formulas:

$$\text{Stability} = \text{Level} + \text{Weapon Parry} + \text{Raw Stability}$$

where

$$\text{Raw Stability} = 10 + \text{Toughness} + \text{Perception}$$

Weapon Parry is a characteristic of whatever weapon is being used, if any. Level, Toughness, and Perception are character stats. Level is explained in detail later.

Ward

Ward is a measure of how well a character resists the effects of physical attacks. It is subtracted from any damage delivered to the character through a physical blow. It is comprised of two components: Armor Ward and Natural Ward.

$$\text{Ward} = \text{Armor Ward} + \text{Natural Ward}$$

Armor Ward is a characteristic of the type of armor worn, if any. Natural Ward is based on a character's Toughness according to the Natural Ward Table. Regardless of how high the Ward value is, though, the damage of any blow can never be lowered below 1 point.

Natural Ward Table

Toughness	Natural Ward
0 and below	0
1-3	1
4-5	2
6-7	3
8	4
9	5
10	6
11	7
12	8

TRAITS

Traits

Traits are brief phrases that describe aspects of a character's personality. They are what breathes life into a character that is otherwise composed of stale numbers and statistics. They exist primarily to guide you in how to portray your Avatar and to promote role-playing within the game. Further, they give you real, tactical reasons to do so when engaged in conflicts.

The rules for what actions constitute the proper use of a Trait are intentionally vague, so as to give you the widest possible latitude in molding a character's persona. Instead, it is left to you, the players, to come up with your own interpretations as to a Trait's meaning and what satisfies a Trait as having been demonstrated. Whatever actions your character takes will have to pass the Overlord's quality standards if you want to get any benefit out of it, though.

Regardless of how you interpret a Trait, its use in a conflict always has the same mechanical effect: it refreshes your character's Guts (see [Regaining Guts as a Trait Reward](#) in the [Guts](#) section for details). This can give your character a big boost in their ability to win a conflict they are losing, so you have strong incentive to do so. However, a given Trait can be used to refresh Guts at most once in any Scene.⁵

Temporary Traits

Spells and other skills impose various effects on their targets. Some inflict Damage, others exact Setback. From a game mechanic perspective, a Scorching Effect spell and a Freezing Effect spell may look very similar to one another. However, there is no reason they should be the same from a role-playing perspective. Consequently, many effects apply Temporary Traits on their targets as well. For example, a Scorching Effect spell may compel its targets to take the Trait of "Singed" or "Smoldering" while a Freezing Effect spell may prescribe the Trait of "Shivering" or "Frosty". For characters with Guts, these Traits are actually a boon, as role-playing them can provide rewards in the same manner as any other Trait.

While most Traits are generally described by the player controlling the character, Temporary Traits are more often described by the person invoking the effect. For example, suppose a player has a Wizard character that invokes a lightning bolt on a foe, and which imposes a Temporary Trait of "Smoldering" on the target. The player may say something like, "An arc of electrical energy bursts from my character's fingertips and strikes the goblin. His body convulses and his hair stands on end, with thin tendrils of smoke rising from it." Any other player may then recognize their illustrative description, and reward them with a Guts refresh.

As with other Traits, a given Temporary Trait can be rewarded in this fashion only once per Scene by an

⁵ Well, *most* Traits can only be used once per Scene. Obsessive Traits are an exception.

individual player. As a caveat, though, players are encouraged to only reward novel descriptions. Traits are not intended to be a mechanism for rewarding repetition.

Trait Sources

Traits have many different sources. Most are selected by a player for their Avatar. However, Traits can also be imposed on characters from outside influences.

The Heroic Trait

Avatars are heroes. In fact, that is the entire premise of Mythmagica: "Do you have the guts to be a hero?" If you do not want to play a hero, then play another game. Seriously. This is a cooperative game, where the players are all expected to work toward common goals. Spurning that expectation will spoil the fun of all the other players in your group. After all, what result do you expect if your Avatar betrays the group's trust and purposefully leads them into an ambush? Enthusiastic gratitude? In some games, that is a reason for praise, but not in this one.

Now, that's not to say that you can't play an Avatar with a dark past, or who struggles with decisions pitting personal desires against party needs. It is perfectly reasonable to play a thief-type character that clandestinely pockets overlooked trinkets to illustrate their greedy nature. But, when worse comes to worst, such a character shouldn't give a second's thought when choosing between that trinket and a companion's life.

This idea is so important that all Avatars are given a Trait that cannot be altered or changed in any way, ever:

I am loyal to my party.

Of course, Avatars do not always have to follow their Traits and there is no punishment for acting against one. This is a role-playing game, and it is expected that Avatars will sometimes act against their better natures. But, if you act against this Trait very often or to an extreme, you are selfishly stealing fun from other players and are not playing within the spirit of the game. Go find something else to do.

Class Traits

Class Traits are Traits listed with a class description that must be adopted to pick up a the class. Most classes do not impose any, but some do. For example, the Sherwood Outlaw class requires a character to accept the trait: "Steal from the Rich. Give to the Poor". Only characters that already have this trait or agree to adopt it are allowed to gain the Sherwood Outlaw class.

Item Traits

Some magical items give a Temporary Trait to their possessor. For example, a dragon slayer sword might give its wielder the Trait of "Hates dragons." The Trait applies only as long as the character possesses the item.

I am the greatest swordsman in the world.
This is my preciouuus.
Distrusts Elves
Reveres Odin
Lusts for gold.

Environmental Traits

Some places are steeped in magic, mystery, or dread. By merely visiting such locales, a character is induced with a Temporary Trait as long as they remain there. For example, an ancient castle ruin haunted by the souls of those that died there in a long forgotten battle may explicitly give visitors the Trait of "Induced Fear of Ghosts" or "Induced Dread of Death". In these cases, the Overlord will specifically tell you that it has these Traits.

Induced loathing of spiders
Induced love of pixies
Induced feeling that 'Everyone is out to get me'.
Induced belief that the treasure is rightfully mine.
Induced loyalty to the king.
Induced fear that something's hiding in the shadows.

However, Environmental Traits are not limited to these. Any aspect of an environment that the Overlord describes can act as an Environmental Trait. If you leverage an environmental element in a conflict somehow, successfully or not, any other player is perfectly justified in rewarding you for doing so.

For example, the Overlord may describe a scene as follows: "You enter a room that looks like a small study with a single window to your right that is flanked by bookshelves on one side and a desk on the other. There is a fireplace directly in front of you in which a log is burning. An intricately woven Persian rug lies on the floor in front of the fireplace and a high-backed leather chair sits to the left of it facing the center of the room. A skeleton wearing a dark robe rises from the chair as you enter. It glares at you with sinister red glowing eye sockets and begins to cast a spell. What do you do?" There are any number of elements that could be used as Environmental Traits in that description. The desk, chair, bookshelves (on which there presumably are books), the flaming log, along with other things.

To continue the example, suppose a player responded with the following: "I run forward, grab hold of the rug on which the skeleton is standing, and yank it out from underneath it." Dice would have to be rolled to determine the outcome of the action, of course. But, whether the act succeeds or not, any other player could recognize the fact that they took advantage of an Environmental Trait, and reward them for their ingenuity.

In fact, it is perfectly reasonable to suggest the Overlord introduce environmental elements so you can take advantage

of them. For example, another player could ask, "Does the window have curtains?" If the Overlord agrees that this is reasonable, the player could then continue with, "Okay, I rip the curtains away from the window and use them as an improvised net, throwing them over the skeleton." Again, dice would have to be rolled to determine the outcome. But, the player could be rewarded for using an Environmental Trait, even though they suggested it in the first place.

Relationship Traits

A relationship with another named character may be described as a Trait. These are particularly valuable if they pertain to other Avatars, as they can be frequently brought into play.

I love my sister Emily more than life itself.
Baron Munchousen is a goatish fool.
Hank saved my life. I owe him big time.

Opportune Relationship Traits

Every play session, the group is allowed one spontaneous, ad-libbed Opportune Relationship Trait that can be added to one of the group's Avatars. This is added on the spot at any time during play. Of course, any such relationship must be reasonable and have the approval of the Overlord. (It would be unreasonable for a group to decide that they have an Opportune Relationship with the mummy of Tutankhamen while exploring his tomb, for example).

Opportune Relationships are intended to cut through what would otherwise be a long, boring, drawn out process of finding and establishing a contact in a new scenario, such as a city or town that the party has just entered for the first time. It is the player's responsibility to come up with a name and a background for the contact, with the Overlord's approval, so that they can act as a convenient funnel through which the Overlord can feed the group information, training, services, and possibly spells and/or other resources concerning the current adventure. The contact can also potentially be used as a means of introduction to key characters, as a reference to enable the party to quickly join an organization that would otherwise be difficult to infiltrate (e.g. a thieves' guild), or as an instrument to otherwise push the story along. Of course, while such a relationship is intended to be quite helpful in expediting the plot, the spontaneously created character should not be in a position to actually resolve or short circuit the group's adventure.

Diego, leader of the Merchant's Guild of Toledo, is an old business associate of my family.
Long ago I had a brief romantic fling with Nareena, the duchesses's handmaiden.

Me and Saleem, one of The Guild of Forty Thieves, go way back.

Obsessive Traits

An Obsessive Trait is one that indicates a character has an unhealthy predilection or belief. They are distinguished from other Traits by always starting with the word "Obsessively". Whereas common Traits can give a character benefits at

most once per Scene, an Obsessive Trait can be used up to once every Round in a conflict.

A character with an Obsessive Trait is insane. This insanity may be temporary or permanent, depending on what is imposing the Trait on the character. Some magical influences can temporarily grant a character an Obsessive Trait. For example, the skill Blood-Thirst imposes on the practitioner the obsessive trait, "Obsessively delights in freshly-spilled blood."

Like other Traits, the use of Obsessive Traits are never forced on a player. However, other effects may be dependent on a Trait's use. For example, the duration of the Blood-Thirst skill is tied to the Trait's use. As long as a character under the influence of Blood-Thirst demonstrates the aforementioned Trait, the duration continues. As soon as they stop, though, the benefits of the skill terminate.

Obsessively enjoys dancing
Obsessively fears snakes
Obsessively craves gold
Obsessively demands cleanliness.
Obsessively believes everyone hates me.
Obsessively believes enemies are lurking nearby.

Aggregate Traits

An Aggregate Trait is a trait that serves as a placeholder for a larger collection of traits. These basically act as a shorthand so that you don't have to write so much on your character sheet. Some examples of aggregate traits are Racial Traits and Faction Traits.

Faction Traits

Factions are groups of people bound by a set of common beliefs, ideals, or goals that support one another in opposing any forces that stand in the way of their common interests. If you are a member of a particular Faction, it will come with its own set of Traits. If this is so, then you gain all those traits merely by being a member of the Faction. For example, the Feudalists faction has the following Traits:

A man's quality depends on his heredity.
A nobleman's word is worth more than a commoner's.

So, merely by being a member of that Faction, you gain both Traits. (Various Factions are detailed in [The Overlord's Omnibus](#).)

Racial Traits

When you choose your Avatar's Race and Lineage, it is possible that it comes with its own set of Traits. If this is so, then you gain all those Traits merely by having that background.

LEVELS

Levels

Level and XP

The game mechanics of Mythmagica are primarily focused on presenting characters with interesting tactical challenges that they can overcome through clever wits and heroic acts. That is not to say that Mythmagica is only about tactical play, but it certainly is a big part of the game.

A character's overall experience is summed up by their Level, which is based on their Total XP.

These levels are determined by how much total experience the character has earned according to the Level Table below. If you prefer formulas to tables, there is a simple formula that you can use in lieu of the tables:

It takes 16 XP to gain 1st Level. Every level thereafter requires double the amount of XP that the previous level required.

Whenever your character earns XP, you will add it to your character's Total XP and their Unspent XP. Later on, you

will see how you can spend your XP to gain ranks in various abilities. Whenever you do so, you will subtract the spent XP from the Unspent XP value. You will never take away from the Total XP value, though. So, the total always goes up, never down.

Level Table

Total XP	Associated Level
0-15	0
16-31	1
32-63	2
64-127	3
128-255	4
256-511	5
512-1023	6
1024-2047	7
2048-4095	8
4096-8191	9
8192-16383	10
16384-32767	11
32768-65535	12
65536-131071	13
131072-262143	14
262144-524287	15
524288-1048575	16
1048576-2097151	17
2097152-4194303	18
4194304-8388607	19
8388608+	20

Max # of Classes

The total number of classes a character may possess depends on the character's Level. The character may possess a maximum number of classes equal to 1 plus half their Level (round up). For example, if a character has a Level of 5, they can have four classes ($1 + 5/2 = 1 + 3 = 4$). Note that a character may have fewer classes, if desired.

Attribute Bonuses

A character gains an additional Attribute Bonus every Level. So, a character has a total number of Attribute Bonuses equal to their Level.

ABILITIES

Abilities

Character abilities come in many flavors. These are divided into categories such as Skills, Gifts, Occult Spells, Mystical Powers, Lores, and the like. As such, it might seem a bit bewildering how to manage all that your character offers.

However, each of these categories falls into one of two major groupings. One group allows you to directly increase your character's potency in the abilities by spending Experience Points (X.P.); the other group does not. With the later, you either have an ability or you do not. Once one of these latter abilities is gained, there is no way to improve it directly, although often they can improve indirectly.

The Ability Categories Table shows the groupings of all of the various ability categories. What this table shows is that you can gain potency in Skills, Weapons, Lores, Pagan Disciplines and Mystical Disciplines by spending Experience Points. You cannot directly gain potency in Flavors, Flaws, Gifts, Pagan Spells, Mage Spells, Mystical Powers, or Weapon Proficiencies. Abilities that you cannot gain potency in directly are often enhanced indirectly through some other means. For example, a Mystic's potency in her Mystical Powers are determined by her potency in the various Mystical Disciplines. Similarly, the potency of Pagan Spells are determined by a priest's potency in their Pagan Disciplines.

Ability Categories Table

Spending X.P. in these abilities increases your character's potency in them.	You cannot spend X.P. in these abilities.
Academic Lores Eldritch Skills Fantasia Skills Martial Skills / Weapons Musical Instruments Mystical Disciplines Occult Lores Pagan Disciplines Trade Skills	Flavors Flaws Gifts Martial Proficiencies Mystical Powers Occult Spells Musical Scores Pagan Spells

Ranked Abilities

Potency in Abilities that can be improved, whether directly or indirectly, are rated in the form of *Ranks*. If a character increases their Rank in Picking Pockets, for example, they become better able to clandestinely pilfer coinage from the purses of passers-by. If they gain Ranks in Long Sword, they become a more deadly swordsman.

The Ranks of Abilities that can be directly improved are really the sum of two parts: the Rank Bonus, and the Raw Rank. The Raw Rank is determined by how much XP you spend on the ability. The Rank Bonus is determined by your character's race/lineage, and classes.

Rank Bonuses

When a Class, Race, or Lineage grants your character a Ranked Ability, it usually comes along with a Rank Bonus. This is a simple bonus number, like +1, +2, +3, etc. Rank Bonuses do not stack. So, a character's Rank Bonus for any given Ability is the highest Rank Bonus of all sources they possess. If the character's Race and Lineage gives a +1 Rank Bonus on the Skill of Rural Stealth, and the character gains a Class that gives a +2 Rank Bonus on that same Skill, the character's overall Rank Bonus is +2. If they later gain another Class that provides a +3 Rank Bonus on Rural Stealth, the character's overall Rank Bonus for that Skill is now +3.

Raw Ranks

Your character's Raw Rank in an Ability depends on how much XP you devote to it. The more XP you spend on its improvement, the higher its Raw Rank. When your character first gains a Ranked Ability, and before you spend any XP on it, they have a Raw Rank of 0 in it.

Some Skills are broader and more useful than others. The broader and more usefual a Skill, the more XP is needed to advance in it. As such, each Skill has a *Base*. This is a number that specifies the number of XP you must spend to gain a *Raw Rank* of 1. So, the smaller the Base, the easier your character can improve the Ability.

Whenever you spend Experience Points on a Skill, Lore, Discipline, or other Ranked Ability, keep track of the amount spent on each under the heading Spent X.P. next to that Ability on the character sheet.

As stated before, when a character wishes to begin mastering a Skill, they must first spend an amount of Experience Points equal to the Skill's Base. After sacrificing the requisite points, they obtain a Raw Rank of 1 in the Skill. Since you keep track of the total amount of Experience Points you spend on every Skill, it's easy to determine how much you need to spend to gain the next Raw Rank in the skill. Gaining a Raw Rank in a Skill requires your character to spend an additional amount of Experience Points equal to the total amount already spent. In other words, you need to *double* the previous amount you spent on a Skill to advance to the next Raw Rank.

For example: if your character has spent 8 X.P. to gain 1st Raw Rank in a skill, you must spend another 8 to gain a Raw Rank of 2. This means that, at a Raw Rank of 2, you have

spent a total of 16 Experience Points. If you want to advance to a Raw Rank of 3 in the Skill, you must raise the total amount of X.P. spent in the Skill to 32. This, of course, means that you must spend another 16 X.P.

The table on the next page lists all of the required total Experience Point costs to gain a Raw Rank for any given base. Notice how the total X.P. cost for any Raw Rank is *always* twice that of the previous rank.

Ability Format

All abilities, whether they be Gifts, Skills, Lores, Spells, or what have you, use a standard format as follows. Those sections that are not pertinent to a given ability are simply omitted:

Prerequisites: This section lists any requirements that a character must meet to acquire the Ability. Note that the Prerequisites can be ignored if the Ability is explicitly granted to a character by her Race, Lineage, or by a Class that they acquire.

Description: This section provides a general description of the Ability.

Defaults To: This property lists the Ability(s), if any, that a character may use in lieu of the desired Ability. This is useful if a character wants to attempt an action, does not possess the Skill to do so, but does possess a related Skill to which it defaults. In that case, use the Rank of the Default Ability in place of the desired Ability. This section is only pertinent to Ranked Abilities.

Ability Type: This field specifies Lethal Force, Non-Lethal Force, Discourse, or Utilitarian.

Base: This field specifies the amount of XP required to gain 1st Rank in the Ability. As such, this field is only pertinent to Ranked Abilities in which XP is used to gain Ranks.

Setback Cost: If present, this field details the amount of Setback that must be sacrificed to enact the Ability. This amount is subtracted form the character's Fate Points, although a character is not allowed to use a Skill if its Setback Cost would take them down to 0 Fate Points. Mystical Powers, Occult Spells, and Pagan Spells have Setback Costs. Some Eldritch Skills do as well. Setback is described further in Handling Conflicts.

Range: This field describes how far the effects of the Ability extend from the character performing the act.

Skill XP Costs Table

		Raw Skill Rank														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Base	1	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384
	2	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768
	3	3	6	12	24	48	96	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152
	4	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536
	5	5	10	20	40	80	160	320	640	1280	2560	5120	10240	20480	40960	81920
	6	6	12	24	48	96	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152	98304
	8	8	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536	131072
	10	10	20	40	80	160	320	640	1280	2560	5120	10240	20480	40960	81920	163840
	12	12	24	48	96	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152	98304	196608
	16	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536	131072	262144
	20	20	40	80	160	320	640	1280	2560	5120	10240	20480	40960	81920	163840	327680
	24	24	48	96	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152	98304	196608	393216
	32	32	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536	131072	262144	524288
	40	40	80	160	320	640	1280	2560	5120	10240	20480	40960	81920	163840	327680	655360
	48	48	96	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152	98304	196608	393216	786432
	64	64	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536	131072	262144	524288	1048576
	80	80	160	320	640	1280	2560	5120	10240	20480	40960	81920	163840	327680	655360	1310720
	96	96	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152	98304	196608	393216	786432	1638400
	128	128	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536	131072	262144	524288	1048576	2097152
160	160	320	640	1280	2560	5120	10240	20480	40960	81920	163840	327680	655360	1310720	2621440	
192	192	384	768	1536	3072	6144	12288	24576	49152	98304	196608	393216	786432	1572864	3145728	
256	256	512	1024	2048	4096	8192	16384	32768	65536	131072	262144	524288	1048576	2097152	4194304	

Affected Target: This section describes the extent to which the Ability's effects apply. It may be an actual area, a single target, a number of creatures, or any number of other specifiers.

Duration: The field describes how long the Ability's effects last. In many cases, the Duration specifies that an Ability's effects last until the end of the current Scene, in order to avoid mindless tracking of an effect's end that most likely won't have important consequences anyway. Scenes begin and end at the Overlord's discretion, and they have broad latitude in this regard to guide the story's pacing. Generally speaking, each Scene has a central conflict, and it ends once that conflict is resolved. At times, multiple Scenes can transpire sequentially in the same area if they are separated into distinct conflicts. Alternately, a Scene may cross through multiple locations if that is what is required to resolve a conflict. Chase Scenes are examples of this.

Preparation: This section describes the actions and materials needed to perform the Ability.

Other Details: This field specifies any other aspects of the Ability not already covered by the other headings.

A Skill Example

As a purely tongue-in-cheek example, the skill of Blithering could be described as follows:

Blithering

Prerequisites: If gained out-of-class, training requires an intensive one-month course of study under someone who has attained at least 5th rank in this skill.

Description: While Blithering, your character slowly confuses those to whom they speak.

Ability Type: Non-Lethal Force

Defaults To: Babble

Base: 16

Range: 40 feet

Setback Cost: 10 minus Intelligence (minimum of 1).

Affected Target: All sapient creatures within range able to understand the speaker's language.

Duration: The effects last for each target until the end of the Scene.

Preparation: The character must somehow get the attention of the targets before they begin to Blither. This may be accomplished by gesticulating wildly, jumping up and down, emitting a loud whistle, or some other equally obnoxious action.

Other Details: When your character begins to Blither, all those listening to their speech must each make an Avoidance Roll with Intelligence Adjustments against a Threshold equal to 10 plus the Skill Rank plus the blitherer's Charisma. Every target is entitled to a similar Avoidance Roll on every Round. On a failed roll, the

target takes an amount of Deluding Setback equal to 3 plus the roll's Margin, and the target gains the Temporary Trait of "Confused".

Any listener taken to zero Fate Points by this skill temporarily loses their connection to reality: The names of close relatives elude them; their home address slips from their mind—if they can even remember they have a home. While so afflicted, the targets will remain in a stunned stupor until their minds are able to wrench themselves free of their induced puzzlement, which will be when they are no longer Overcome.

Let's analyze this example according to its various sections: The Prerequisites section indicates the circumstances under which a character may acquire this skill assuming no other rule explicitly gives it to them (such as a Class granting them the ability). In this case, a character may obtain the skill with one month of training by a reasonably proficient instructor⁶.

The Description section provides a brief overview of the Skill and its effects.

The Defaults To section indicates that the Skill defaults to Babble. What this means is that a character may use Blithering even if they do not have the Skill, as long as they have the Babble Skill. In essence, a character can use the Babble Skill in place of Blithering. Their Rank using Blither in that case would equal their Rank in Babble.

Blithering has an Ability Type of Non-Lethal Force. What this means is that the Skill can be used at any escalation level of Non-Lethal Force or above. In other words, if a person uses this ability while merely talking to someone, they have escalated the conflict to a more serious level than simple conversation.

The Skill has a Base of 16. This indicates that attaining 1st Raw Rank in the skill requires an expenditure of 16 XP. Because every additional Rank demands a doubling of the number of XP spent, attaining 2nd Raw Rank requires a total of 32 XP to be spent. A Raw Rank of 3 would require a total of 64 XP, etc.

The Skill has a Setback Cost of 10 minus the speaker's Intelligence. Thus, if the speaker has an Intelligence of 4, they would take 6 Setback when performing the Skill (see [The Foundation of Magic](#) for more information about how Setback Costs work). The Setback is taken (subtracted from Fate Points) after the Action is complete. Thus, if the Skill is somehow disrupted prior to this time, no Setback is taken.

Blithering has a Range of 20 feet. This means that the target(s) of the Skill must be within 20 feet of the character for it to have any chance of affecting them.

Affected Target states that it affects any sapient creature with range that hears and understands the language of the speaker. Thus, any creature that is not sapient, is deafened,

⁶ Needless to say, a skill can only be taught by an instructor that already has the skill explicitly. So, a character that lacks the Wood Working skill cannot teach the skill of Wood Working, even if they have sufficiently high rank in the more general skill of Jack-of-all-Trades.

or which cannot understand the speaker's language is not affected, regardless of whether it is in range.

The Frequency states that the speaker is Unlimited in its use, which means the speaker can use it as often as they like. If it had been listed as “Once per Scene”, then the speaker could have used it only once for any given encounter. In essence, Frequency specifies if there are any restrictions placed on how frequently an Ability can be used, independent of other considerations.

The Duration specifies how long the effects last. In this case, the effects will cease on an individual target as soon as it is no longer Overcome. (A character is Overcome as long as either their Hit Points or Fate Points equal zero.)

The Preparation section details the conditions that must be satisfied before an Ability can even be attempted. In this case, the character must make a general nuisance of himself.

The Other Details section describes what types of Conflict Rolls are necessary for the Ability's effects to impinge on the target(s) and any other pertinent information concerning the Skill not listed elsewhere. In the example, we have a standard Avoidance Roll pitting each target's Level and Intelligence against the speaker's Blithering rank and Charisma. Generally, dice would be rolled for each individual target, although Group Conflict Rolls can be made to speed up play when desired (GM's discretion). It also specifies that the target gains the Temporary Trait of “Confused”. (This can actually be a benefit to a player, as it can potentially provide a Minor Guts Refresh, which provides rewards for role-playing a character as “Confused”. See Regaining Guts as a Trait Reward for details.)

CLASSES

Classes

A class is a collection of Gifts, Skills, and Proficiencies. Mythmagica breaks its classes into two general categories: Initiate Classes and Veteran Classes. You will usually start out by choosing one or more Initiate Classes for your starting characters (depending on how high a priority you set on your character's Beckoning on the Character Beginning Resources Priority Grid). Veteran Classes can only be obtained when your character advances in experience and meets their Prerequisites.

Example Classes

These tongue-in-cheek examples show the basic characteristics of Initiate and Veteran classes.

Town Fool (Initiate Class)

Town fools often lurk near the busiest streets in a town or city. Here they try to pick up new friends by merrily babbling about their hobbies, the weather, so-and-so's new baby, modern fashion trends, and any other meaningless topics their feeble minds can comprehend. Of course, since the IQ of a town fool barely approaches that of a sewer rat, these merry gossipers fail to grasp anything anyone says. When questioned on a particular subject, a town fool simply talks nonsense for a while, after which they give their questioner an "Any more questions?" look.

Gifts

Falling Off Walls

Martial Proficiencies

Versed (+2) in: Using Range Weapons

Trade Skills

Versed (+2) in: Blithering

Reviewed (+1) in: Beating Around the Bush

Blithering Idiot (Veteran Class)

Many players pick up this class in the mistaken notion that they are becoming true politicians. This is largely because many of the most powerful politicians also happen to be blithering idiots. A blithering idiot prides themselves in the unparalleled speaking ability of Blithering. With it, they believe they impress everyone they talk to with their brilliance and charm.

Prerequisites

The character must obtain 5th rank in both Blithering and either in using Undersize Slingshot or in Throwing any size Rock.

Martial Weapons

Specialized (+3) in: Throwing Stones, Shooting Undersize Slingshot

Trade Skills

Expert (+4) in: Blithering

Politician (Veteran Class)

Many men choose this vocation as it pays great wages for little work. All that is required of the position is for a man to convince others that they are the “right man for the job.” Unfortunately, the credentials of most applicants revolve around a straight set of teeth and a good hairdresser.

Prerequisites

5th rank in Beating Around the Bush

Gifts

Kissing Babies

Academic Skills

Versed (+2) in: Trivia

Trade Skills

Expert (+4) in: Beating Around the Bush

Explaining the Example Classes

As stated in the Prerequisites section of the Blithering Idiot class, anyone can obtain the class if they have attained 5th rank in both Blithering and Slingshot. Further, Town Fools possess the Blithering skill and are trained in the Martial Proficiency of Using Range Weapons. So, a Town Fool has the potential to become a Blithering Idiot.

Similarly, a character can gain the Politician class by meeting the Prerequisite of 5th rank in Beating Around the Bush. So, a Town Fool may choose to gain this class too

(once they obtain 5th rank in the skill). The only real distinction between Initiate classes and Veteran Classes is that Veteran classes have Prerequisites in one or more abilities; Initiate classes do not. In any case, it is entirely up to you to choose the classes your character gains—as long as you meet all requirements for a given class.

Unless otherwise stated, gaining any class usually requires one month of intensive training and study (game world time) from a teacher who possesses the class and has at least 5th rank in all of its skills and disciplines. This training time may be waived, though, if a character exceeds all prerequisites in all abilities required by the class by 2 ranks. (Initiate classes always require one month of training.) There is one major restriction to this process: Your character may accumulate a maximum number of classes (Initiate and Veteran combined) equal to 1 plus half their Level (rounded up).

Other than progressing to Veteran Classes, you need to understand only a few conventions to grasp the benefits a Class offers. First, as mentioned previously, Gifts are benefits the Class endows on a character when they become a member of the profession. Once a Gift is gained, no further advancement is possible in these Abilities. A character either possesses a Gift or they do not.

Second, different Classes emphasize the use of different Abilities and Skills. So, the training in some of the Skills is more intensive than the training in others. The degrees of concentration are indicated by making its members Expert, Specialized, Versed, or Reviewed in a particular Skill. An Expert classification indicates the highest degree of training while a Reviewed descriptor shows the lowest. (Schooled is even lower, but is never given by a class.)

Your character can pick up Abilities not given them directly by their Class. However, they cannot use these additional abilities with as great a proficiency as if they had gained them explicitly through the acquisition of a Class. When your character picks up additional Abilities in this way, they are said to be Schooled in that ability. (The Abilities themselves indicate whether they may be picked up out of Class.)

Rank Bonuses

When your character spends experience points in gaining proficiency in an Ability, they determine their Raw (or unadjusted) Rank in the skill. If the Ability was obtained out of Class or Race, that would be all there is to it. However, Abilities gained through Classes and Races get an added boost. Depending on the Training Classification of an Ability, a Rank Bonus is added to obtain the character’s overall Rank in the Ability. The Rank Bonuses for Abilities learned through Classes are determined by their Training Classifications according to the Rank Bonus Table.

Rank Bonus Table

Training Classification	Rank Bonus
Expert	+4
Specialized	+3
Versed	+2
Reviewed	+1
Schooled	+0

The Rank Bonus of all racially gained abilities is +1 (Reviewed), unless the character gains a Class that provides a higher Training Classification in it.

For example, suppose the Town Fool in the example above spends the required XP to obtain a Raw Rank of 3 in Blithering. Since the Class of Town Fool gives them a Training Classification of Versed in Blithering, the fool's overall Rank in the Skill equals 5 (3+2). (As a side note, this fulfills some of the Prerequisites for Blithering Idiot.)

After accumulating several Classes, it is quite common for a character to have more than one Training Classification specified for a given Ability. In these cases use the highest Rank Bonus specified for the Ability by all of the Training Classifications obtained by the character. For example, a Town Fool is Reviewed (+1) in Beating Around the Bush while a Politician is Expert (+4) in the same Skill. Thus, a Town Fool/ Politician is considered Expert in Beating Around the Bush, and therefore has a Rank Bonus of +4.

Schooled Abilities

A Schooled Ability is one which a character gains by meeting the Skill's stated Prerequisites, rather than having it explicitly granted by a Class or Race. Such Skills have a Rank Bonus of +0. You may assume that any Skill or Gift may be learned independent of Class or Race unless the Prerequisites state otherwise. Of course, the character must actually satisfy the Prerequisites to do so.

Martial Proficiency Overview

There are a lot of weapons in this game, many of which fall into a several categories. For example, a Large Bow is a Range Weapon. It is also a Bow, and a Shot Weapon. A Medium Longsword is a Melee Weapon. It is also a Close-Combat Weapon, a Blade Weapon, and a Sword. So that we don't have endless lists of individual weapons that the various classes provide training in, we often describe weapons in categories called Martial Proficiencies.

Characters do not gain Ranks directly in Martial Proficiencies. Rather, a Martial Proficiency provides Rank Bonuses for all weapons that fall under its umbrella. Characters always gain weapon Ranks by spending XP in individual weapon Skills, however. (The Martial root Skills of Melee, Ballistics, and Trickery are exceptions.) Martial Proficiencies always pertain to weapons of specific Size Categories, which are relative to the size of the user. An Undersize weapon is one Size Category smaller than that of the user. Proportional weapons have the same Size Category as the user, and Oversize weapons are one Size Category larger. So, if a combatant is of Medium size, an Undersize weapon is Small, a Proportional weapon is Medium, and an Oversize weapon is Large. If a Martial Proficiency does not state one or more Size Categories, then it pertains to all three: Undersize, Proportional, and Oversize.

In the example classes, a Town Fool is Versed (+2) in Using Range Weapons. What this means is that a Town Fool has a +2 Rank Bonus when using any Range Weapon, whether it is Undersize, Proportional, or Oversize. Thrown Rocks and Slingshots are types of Range Weapons, so the +2 Martial Proficiency Rank Bonus applies to those weapons. If a Town Fool takes advantage of that fact to gain 5th Rank in an Undersize Slingshot, they can use that Skill to satisfy one of the Prerequisites for Blithering Idiot. Once they do that, the Blithering Idiot class specifically gives them a Specialized (+3) Rank Bonus in Undersize Slingshot and in Throwing Rocks. So, their Slingshot rank will increase by one due to them gaining a higher rank bonus in that weapon. They also get the +3 Rank Bonus in Thrown Rocks, whether the rocks are Undersize, Proportional, or Oversize. In all *other* Range Weapons, they still have the Versed (+2) rank bonus that the Town Fool's Martial Proficiency provides them.

Gaining Classes

A character can generally pick up any class for which they satisfy the Prerequisites, assuming they have not exceeded their Class Limit. If the class is a magical class, they may also be limited in the number of magical classes they may gain, as determined by their Beckoning choice on the Priority Grid when designing their character.

Gaining a class usually requires one month of training. Although, opportunities do occasionally arise in special circumstances that allow characters to pick up classes in other ways (such as potential option listed in the Guts and Glory Tables as detailed later in this book).

Size & Weight

All characters and many items (such as weapons and shields) are assigned a size category. This size category gives a general idea about how big something is without getting into too much boring detail.

Size

Absolute Size

The various size categories are: Astronomical, Colossal, Epic, Great, Large, Medium, Small, Tiny, Ultratiny, Wee, and Zot. (Note that these are in alphabetical order from largest to smallest.) The races available to avatars are in the Tiny to Large range. Some basic descriptions of these size categories follow:

Astronomical (A)

An Astronomical creature is anything bigger than a Colossal creature, which could be the size of a mountain, planet, solar-system, or even galaxy. So, some additional description of exactly how big we're talking is warranted from any description of an Astronomically-sized beast. Creatures of this size are immune to Internal Damage from weapons of Great size and smaller. Jotuns, titans, and krakens are all on a very short list of Astronomical beings. Keep in mind that the Hit Points of Astronomical creatures is awe-inspiring. Don't expect any group of adventurers, however powerful, to actually be able to take on an Astronomical creature by brute force. These beings are truly of god-like power.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, an Astronomical creature has a footprint at least as large as a 32x32 grid area.

Colossal (C)

Colossal creatures have a height anywhere from 64 to 128 feet tall and may weigh up to 500 tons. Creatures of this size are immune to Internal Damage from Large and smaller weapons. Because of their sheer bulk, Colossal creatures are usually ocean-dwelling, as the skeletal structure of any land-dwelling creature would be truly stressed to support such weight. Many whales and giant squids, for example, are classified as this size. Colossal-sized land and air dwellers are not completely unknown, though. Rocs, which are Colossal birds, fit into this size category as do Ethiopian dragons. While it is potentially possible for a large group of extremely high-level characters to take out a creature of Colossal size by means of combat, any attempt to do so is fraught with equally gargantuan peril. Cunning strategies involving the avoidance of battle are far more likely to end with success against anything this monstrous.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, a Colossal creature has a footprint equal to a 16x16 grid area.

Epic (E)

Epic creatures weigh from 8 to 64 tons and are immune to Internal Damage from weapons of size Medium and smaller. Humanoids of this size stand from 32 feet to 64 feet tall. Four legged Epic-sized creatures will stand anywhere from 16 to 32 feet tall. Mammoths, a few large dragons, and cyclops fit into this size category.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, an Epic creature has a footprint equal to an 8x8 grid area.

Great (G)

Great creatures weigh from 1 to 8 tons and are immune to Internal Damage from weapons of size Small and smaller. Humanoids of this size stand from 16 feet to 32 feet tall. Four legged great-sized creatures will stand anywhere from 8 to 16 feet tall. Elephants and hippos are of great size. Similarly, many of the larger giant types are considered great creatures, as are most of the arboreal faeries, such as the Elder Tree, Rowan Tree, and Willow Tree.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, a great creature has a footprint equal to a 4x4 grid area.

Large (L)

Large creatures weigh anywhere from 256 pounds to 1 ton. They are immune to Internal Damage from weapons of size Tiny and smaller. Large humanoids stand to heights of about 8 to 16 feet tall. Horses, cattle, ogres, griffons, and elk are all large creatures.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, a large creature has a footprint equal to a 2x2 grid area.

Medium (M)

Medium creatures range from about 32 pounds all the way up to 256 pounds. Medium sized humanoids can stand anywhere between approximately 4 and 8 feet tall. They are immune to Internal Damage from Ultratiny weapons and smaller, because attacks of such small size are incapable of reaching their vital organs. Wolves, goats, guard dogs, humans, elves, dwarfs, deer, and donkeys are all medium size creatures.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, a medium creature has a footprint equal to a single grid square.

Small (S)

Small humanoids stand about 2 to 4 feet tall and weigh from 4 to 32 pounds. Badgers, raccoons, gnomes, hobs, and beagles are all examples of small creatures.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, a small creature has a footprint equal 1/4 of a grid square. That is, a square whose side has a length of 1/2 of a standard grid square.

Tiny (T)

Tiny creatures weigh from 8 ounces to 4 pounds and are about 1 to 2 feet long or tall. Rats, house cats, rabbits, falcons, imps, sprites, squirrels, and annoying yip-yip dogs are all examples of tiny creatures.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, 16 tiny creatures can fit in a standard grid square.

Ultratiny (U)

Ultratiny creatures weigh from 1 to 8 ounces and are about 6 inches to 1 foot long or tall. Chipmunks, kittens, common lizards, garden snakes, and robins are all examples of Ultratiny creatures.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, 64 Ultratiny creatures can fit in a standard grid square.

Wee (W)

Wee creatures can be anywhere from three to six inches long or tall, and weigh 1/8 to 1 ounce. Field mice, tarantulas, canaries, goldfish, and common centipedes are all examples of Wee creatures.

If a standard grid is used to track combat, 256 Wee creatures can fit in a standard grid square.

Zot (Z)

Zot creatures are as small as it gets in Mythmagica, as they are considered to be anything smaller than wee. At most, Zot creatures weigh up to 1/8 ounce and are up to 3 inches long or tall. Bumble bees, crickets, minnows, worms, and beetles are all examples of Zot creatures.

Relative Size

Sometimes the size of something is described in terms of its relative size to something else. Often, this is done when describing the items a character is capable of using or wielding. When an item's size is given in relative terms, it will be described as Undersize, Proportional, or Oversize.

For example, the Rogue class gives a character the gift "Focus on Undersize Melee Weapons". This provides bonuses in combat when using melee weapons that have a size category one smaller than the Rogue wielding them.

If an item is two size categories smaller or larger, it will be described as Very Undersize or Very Oversize, respectively. For every additional size category difference, another "Very" is added. So, an item that is three size categories smaller than a character will be described as Very Very Undersize, etc.

Every increase in size category essentially doubles the length, width, and breadth of an item. So, the blade of our Titan's Astronomical sword is approximately 32 times as long as the blade of a medium-sized scimitar, or 128 times as long as the blade of a sprite's tiny hairpin sword.

Very Undersize

A Very Undersize item is one which has a Size Category two smaller than what it is being related to. For a Human that is Medium size, Tiny Shields are Very Undersize. In general, characters cannot use Very Undersize items effectively.

Undersize

An Undersize item is one which has a Size Category one smaller than what it is being related to. For an Elf that is Medium size, Small weapons are Undersize.

Proportional

A Proportional item is one which has a Size Category equal to what it is being related to. For a Gnome, a Small Dagger is considered Proportional because both the Dagger and the Gnome fall into the Small size category.

Oversize

An Oversize item has a Size Category one larger than what it is being related to. For example, Warriors train in Oversize weapons. This means that, whatever the character's size, their Warrior class gives them special training in weapons that are one Size Category larger than him. So, a Warrior Sprite, which is a Tiny creature, would be able to apply their oversize weapon training to a Stiletto, which is a Small weapon.

Very Oversize

A Very Oversize item has a Size Category two larger than what it is being related to. In general, characters cannot use Very Oversize items effectively. For example, a hob character, which is Small, cannot use a Large Shield. Being two Size Categories bigger than him, the Shield would be classified as Very Oversize.

Very, Very ...

Every additional Size Category difference beyond Undersize and Oversize adds another Very term to the description. So, a Titan's Sword, which is of Astronomical size, is Very, Very, Very, Very Oversize to a Medium-Sized Human.

Weight by Brawn and Size Category

Brawn	Ultratinny (Oz.)	Tiny (Lbs.)	Small (Lbs.)	Medium (Lbs.)
-24	4	1		
-23	4.3	1.1		
-22	4.8	1.2		
-21	5.1	1.3		
-20	5.6	1.4		
-19	6.2	1.5		
-18	6.7	1.7		
-17	7.4	1.8		
-16	8	2	8	
-15		2.2	9	
-14		2.4	10	
-13		2.6	10	
-12		2.8	11	
-11		3.1	12	
-10		3.4	13	
-9		3.7	15	
-8		4	16	64
-7			17	70
-6			19	76
-5			21	83
-4			23	91
-3			25	99
-2			27	108
-1			29	117
0			32	128
1				140
2				152
3				166
4				181
5				197
6				215
7				235
8				256

Weight

It doesn't come up very often, but Mythmagica is a tactical game, so a character's weight does sometimes come into play. When it does, look up the character's weight based on its Size Category and Brawn on the Weight by Brawn and Size Category table.

The listed weights indicate minimum weights for lean characters. If a player wants to make their Avatar heavier than what is indicated for their Brawn, they may adopt any weight that is up to 2 Brawn higher than is indicated on the table.

**Weight by Brawn and Size Category
(Continued)**

Brawn	Large (Lbs.)	Great (Tons)	Epic (Tons)	Colossal (Tons)
4	724			
5	790			
6	861			
7	939			
8	1024	2		
9	1117	2.2		
10	1218	2.4		
11	1328	2.6		
12	1448	2.8		
13	1579	3.1		
14	1722	3.4		
15	1878	3.7		
16	2048	4	16	
17		4.4	17	
18		4.8	19	
19		5.2	21	
20		5.7	23	
21		6.2	25	
22		6.7	27	
23		7.3	29	
24		8	32	128
25			35	140
26			38	152
27			41	166
28			45	181
29			49	197
30			54	215
31			59	235
32			64	256
33				279
34				304
35				332
36				362
37				395
38				431
39				470
40				512

Conflict Rules

This section describes how to handle conflicts of all forms.

Negotiating Stakes

When a conflict starts, both sides may first negotiate the stakes of what happens to each side in the case of victory or defeat. In the absence of any such negotiation, it is assumed that the losers will only suffer the concessions and consequences stated on the Guts and Glory Tables listed in the Guts and Glory section, based on each character's Glory Status. When stakes are negotiated explicitly, they usually augment the outcomes of the Guts and Glory Tables. They do not supersede them, unless the negotiations explicitly state that.

Negotiating stakes takes time and adds overhead to the game. So, stakes are only negotiated when it's important to the players. And, stakes are generally negotiated at a fairly high-level, stating what one side or the other gets if they win, not what happens to an individual character if they fall or as a consequence of an individual roll. Each side in a conflict will be trying to accomplish something, and negotiated stakes explicitly declare what those goals are. Negotiated stakes do not usually override the consequences to the individuals on each side, though. It is a perfectly normal situation for the winning side of a conflict to have one or more of its members fall in battle, possibly with severe or even deadly consequences to those individuals.

If one side of a conflict is looking for a specific outcome, it behooves them to negotiate the stakes before the conflict starts. For example, one possible desired outcome that players may want in an encounter with an important named villain can be stated as: "The villain dies if he loses". This outcome needs to be negotiated up front, so that everyone involved understands what's at stake. In that case, the Overlord may want to negotiate a re-wording of the stakes to avoid confusion: "The villain dies if he loses, but may escape if he is able to do so before falling." The Overlord will want similarly dire stakes from the players, though, such as "Anyone driven to 0 Hit Points dies." or "Anyone that falls to 0 Fate Points is driven permanently insane".

While perfectly valid, the stakes "The villain dies if he loses" is not particularly interesting. Do not feel constrained by stakes dealing with physical injury and death. For example, the following may be more entertaining:

"The demon possessing the priest is exorcised if he loses, forcing the spirit to take physical form."

"If he loses, the warlord truly repents of his evil ways and frees the townsfolk he enslaved, who shortly thereafter begin to riot seeking revenge for the murders of their family and neighbors."

"If she loses, the young pick-pocket reveals to us the name of the fence she uses to unload her stolen goods."

The stakes negotiated by the players do not necessarily have to align perfectly with those of their characters. For example, you can set stakes that push the plot forward in engaging ways that seemingly contradict the goals of the characters:

“If he loses, the sorcerer must rush his demonic ritual, forcing him to sacrifice the virgin prematurely and opening the gate to hell before he can arrange his own escape.”

Keep in mind when negotiating stakes, neither side in a negotiation is obligated to agree to what the other demands. Anyone affected by the stakes can veto them if they don't agree with them. Even so, stakes negotiations should be kept brief. If an amicable agreement cannot be made within a few minutes for a given conflict, use the stakes listed on the Guts and Glory Tables by default and move on. Nobody can veto those.

To negotiate proper stakes, the players and Overlord must decide on what happens if the Avatars win, and what happens if they lose. Any such negotiations should take place *before* the outcome of an extended conflict is determined. Preferably, the stakes will be set before the first die-roll is made in the conflict. However, if the importance of a conflict expands unexpectedly, it is perfectly reasonable to negotiate the stakes of a conflict after it starts, provided everyone involved is willing to do so. If you and your Overlord have not come to any such agreement prior to the conflict's end, the stakes on the Guts and Glory Tables apply as-is. So, if you have a problem with them, speak up before it's too late.

Escalating Conflicts

There are essentially two different kinds of conflict in Mythmagica. These are Discourse and Violence. Violence can be further broken down into Non-Lethal Force and Lethal Force.

Note that most talking is just talking and doesn't involve Conflict Rolls at all. If speaking evolves into a situation where one character tries to get another to do something they wouldn't obviously agree to, it rises to the level of a conflict. At that point, Banding Words comes into play and we have a conflict of Discourse (see the Banding Words section for details).

Non-Lethal Force involves skills that primarily attack an opponent's Fate Points. (Non-Lethal force may involve small amounts of Damage, as long as the Damage is incidental, and not the primary effect.)

Lethal Force involves skills that primarily deliver Damage or otherwise physically harm the target.

A character can escalate from Discourse to Violence at any time. Once a participant has escalated to Violence, though, Discourse is no longer an option without explicit agreement from both sides of the conflict. So, a character cannot unilaterally deescalate a conflict from Violence to Discourse, although they may suggest it to their opponents at

any time (assuming they speak the same language). If both opposing forces agree to deescalate (without the need for Conflict Rolls), then it happens.

This is important because the rules for Discourse are generally handled by the Banding Words rules. However, Banding Words cannot be used in combat. The reason for this is that the Combat Rules are designed to be tactical, but Banding Words is inherently non-tactical. So, both sides can discuss and negotiate with one another only as long as both sides agree to do so. Either side can unilaterally decide that they're done talking and attack, thereafter ignoring their opponents' words until such time that they agree to listen once again.

That doesn't mean that characters can't talk in combat. Quite the opposite. In fact, characters are amply rewarded by role-playing Traits, which may involve talking to enemies in combat. Characters just can't use Banding Words in combat while doing so to attain their goals.⁷

The Cast of Characters

All characters in Mythmagica can be divided into three categories of importance. These are Named Characters, Stock Characters, and Mooks.

Named Characters

A Named Character is one that has elevated importance to the story. These include the Avatars, the major villains, and any other characters with whom the Avatars have ongoing relationships.

In folklore, names have power. The same is true in Mythmagica. Named characters are the only characters that have Guts points to spend in conflicts (see Guts and Glory below). If the Avatars defeat a Named Character, they are awarded experience points for an extended conflict.

Stock Characters (Unnamed Characters)

Stock Characters are characters that exist to provide the Avatars with significant challenges. They have very little in the way of background, other than what is immediately apparent by their form, dress, and manner. Stock characters are anonymous, in that they have no names; nor do they have distinct identities from others of their kind.

Mechanically, Stock Characters are identical to Named Characters, except they do not have Guts points to expend. If the Avatars defeat a Stock Character, they are awarded experience points for an extended conflict.

⁷ The fundamental reason for this is that conflicts of Discourse slow down tactical combat far too much. And, breaking conversations down into Rounds sucks in practice due to its herky-jerky nature. After much play-testing the alternatives, we ultimately decided the best option in a tactical game such as this one is to split the two forms of conflict entirely.

Mooks (Extras)

Mooks, also known as Extras, are the myriad other unnamed characters appearing in the world. They exist for two reasons. The first is to allow an Overlord to bring crowds of characters into the game world without imposing piles of bookkeeping on him. The other is to promote cinematic scenes where the Avatars can demonstrate their bigger-than-life natures by quickly dispatching one menial foe after another as they march relentlessly toward the major villains.

Any creature type can be treated as a Mook. They are mechanically identical to Unnamed Characters, except they are defeated when they sustain their first point of Damage or Setback. On the other hand, in order for a Mook to sustain any of these, they must fail a Conflict Roll against the harmful influence. So, an Invoke Great Cone of Grim Fire spell used against a group of Mooks will only eliminate those that fail their Conflict Rolls to avoid it. Avatars are given an experience point award for single-roll encounters when they overcome a Mook.

Dealing with Dice

Mythmagica is designed so that it can be played entirely with the use of twenty-sided dice. When making Conflict Rolls, the most you will ever roll is three of them at the same time. So, while the game can be played with a single twenty-sided die, it is more convenient to have three of them available to roll.

Throughout the game, we use a consistent nomenclature when describing the dice to roll. We use the abbreviation of d20 as a shorthand for a twenty-sided die. The only times multiple d20s need to be rolled is when one side or the other has Edges and/or Drawbacks. (For information, see [Edges / Drawbacks](#) in the [Conflict Rolls](#) section.)

CONFLICT ROLLS

Conflict Rolls

All conflict rolls in Mythmagica are handled in essentially the same way. One or more 20-sided dice are rolled, the minimum or maximum value is obtained from them, and adjustments are added to the roll. These adjustments are based on the Attributes, Skill Ranks, Lore ranks, Spell Ranks, Levels and/or magical adjustments of the character for which the roll is made. The result is compared to a Threshold, which is a number representing the difficulty of the task at hand. If the result is greater than the Threshold, the roll succeeds. If the result is less than the Threshold, it fails. If it is equal to the Threshold, the dice must be re-rolled until an explicit success or failure is determined.

A roll that succeeds or fails by 1 point is called a *Bare Success* or a *Bare Failure*. Both are *Bare Results*. A success or failure by 2 or more points is deemed to be a *Pure Success* or a *Pure Failure*. Both are *Pure Results*. Note that a success from the point of view of one side of a conflict is viewed as a failure from the other side.

The difference between the roll result and the Threshold is called the *Margin*. For example, if a Conflict Roll results in a 20 and the Threshold is a 15, then the Margin is 5. Similarly, if a Conflict Roll results in a 10 and the Threshold is a 15, then the Margin is -5. Oftentimes, the Margin is noted and used as an adjustment in subsequent related rolls.

There are a few caveats and exceptions to this basic pattern:

1. Any natural roll of 1 on the d20 automatically fails (by at least two points). This is called a *Natural Failure*.
2. Any natural roll of 20 automatically succeeds (by at least two points). This is called a *Natural Success*.
3. If a character has Guts points, their player can spend them to raise a Conflict Roll failure or a tie up to a Bare Success. However, this cannot be done for natural rolls of 1 or 20. (For more details on Guts, see the [Guts and Glory](#) section below.) They may generally do so only on Conflict Rolls in which the character is personally involved.

Both Natural Successes and Natural Failures are deemed to be Natural Results. Since all Natural Results fail or succeed by at least two points, they are at least Pure Failures or Pure Successes.

Conflict Roll Names

Conflict rolls are known by several names. These various names serve as a shorthand to quickly convey the kinds of elements that go into the rolls' adjustments and the Thresholds against which they are compared. Thus, depending on the situation, a Conflict Roll may be called an Attack Roll, an Avoidance Roll, an Attribute Check, or a Skill Roll. Oftentimes, a Conflict Roll will be simply named after a skill, such as a Sneaking Roll, or an Opening Locks Roll, to specify exactly what skill is being tested.

Example Conflict Roll

For example, Sam wants his character, Spike the Second-Story Man, to climb a brick tower using his Climbing skill to reach an open window that is about 15 feet up. George, his GM, looks at the Climbing description and sees that a brick wall requires Sean to beat a Threshold of 20. Spike has a +9 bonus with his Climbing skill. So, to climb the wall, Sam must roll a 12 or better on a d20 to get a total of 21 or more and beat the 20 Threshold. On his first roll, Sam rolls a 14 on the d20, which gives him a total of 23. This beats the 20 Threshold by a Margin of 3, so Spike scrambles up to the window without incident.

If Sam had rolled an 11 instead, this would have given Spike a total of 20, which exactly matches the Threshold. Ordinarily, this would mean that Sam would have to re-roll the die to break the tie. However, Spike needs to get to that window, so Sam decides to go ahead and spend 1 Guts point to bring the total up to a bare success of 21.

A Conflict Roll has Two Sides

In every Conflict against Leveled Opposition, one side of a conflict participates by rolling a d20 and adding adjustments while the opposing force participates by presenting a Threshold of 10 plus adjustments. However, many skills provide a full Threshold with the 10 already added in just to reduce the math burden a bit, rather than present the raw Conflict Roll adjustment. A character's Raw Defense attribute is the most visible example of this practice, as it equals the character's Toughness + Agility + 10.

Converting Rolls to Thresholds and Visa Versa

As stated above, the only difference between a Conflict Roll and a Threshold is the fact that a roll involves tossing a d20 and adding adjustments while a Threshold involves adding a flat 10 to adjustments. Because of this, it is always reasonable to convert a roll to a Threshold or a Threshold to a roll. All that is important is that a d20 roll is made from the perspective of one side, the other side is represented by a Threshold, and both sides have their appropriate adjustments added in. Which side is on the rolled side and which side is on the Threshold side is irrelevant.

So, if you are presented with a Threshold (such as Defense), and you want to convert it into a raw Conflict Roll adjustment, merely subtract 10. A Defense of 18, therefore, is equivalent to a Conflict Roll adjustment of +8. A Defense of 9 is equivalent to a Conflict Roll adjustment of -1.

Setting Thresholds against Leveled Opposition

Determining the Thresholds for Conflict Rolls is done in the same way as the Conflict Rolls themselves. The only real difference is that a flat 10 is added to the various pertinent adjustments, rather than rolling a d20. Most skills and abilities describe the adjustments that must be made to the Threshold. For those situations that aren't covered by explicit rules, the Overlord is perfectly free to make whatever adjustments they feel are appropriate to the situation at hand.

For example, let's suppose that Spike, of our previous example, hears voices coming through the open doorway of a nearby room when he reaches the open window. Hoping to avoid any confrontation, Spike climbs in through the window and sees that he has entered a bedroom. He cautiously crosses the floor to a dresser on which sees a large jewelry box. George decides that this is an ideal time to have Sam make an Urban Stealth roll for Spike. In looking at the Urban Stealth skill, George sees that the Threshold that the roll must overcome includes the opponent's Level and Perception. The person in the next room has a Level of 6 and a Perception of 3. This makes the Threshold that Spike must overcome equal 19 (10+6+3). Spike has a +7 on his Urban Stealth skill, which is added to the 13 that Sam rolls on his d20 for a total of 21. He beat the Threshold by 2. Spike sneaks across the room without making a sound.

Setting Thresholds via Overlord Fiat

Some Conflict Rolls in the game are made against the circumstances in which a character finds himself, rather than against a creature or other form of leveled opposition. In such cases, the Overlord is free to set a Conflict Roll's Threshold based solely on their estimation of the difficulty of the task at hand. For these situations, use the Overlord Fiat Threshold Table as a guide.

If the Difficulty Level of such a Conflict Roll needs to be gauged (such as for potential Experience Point awards), subtract 10 from the roll's Threshold to arrive at a reasonable approximation.

Overlord Fiat Threshold Table

Task Difficulty	Threshold
Trivial	0 (no roll needed)
Easy	5
Moderate	10
Challenging	15
Hard	20
Extreme	25
Legendary	35
Herculean	40

Degrees of Success

The Margin of a Conflict Roll indicates how well the character succeeds. For situations where the rules do not explicitly state how a roll’s Margin should be interpreted, you can refer to the Degree of Success Guidance Table for guidance.

Degree of Success Guidance Table

Margin	Degree of Success
1	The character barely manages to accomplish the task.
5	The character performs the task competently.
10	The character performs the task masterfully.
15	The character performs the task so well that only a master in the craft could distinguish the results from perfection.

Conflict Roll Inertia

Once a roll is resolved, it will tend to stay resolved until the conditions change. In other words, once a Conflict Roll has been made and it either succeeds or fails, then the action associated with that Conflict Roll will tend to continue either succeeding or failing until some new story element is introduced that could have an impact on that action’s continued success or failure.

For example, suppose Delores the Devious runs into a dark alleyway to escape a town guard in hot pursuit. She ducks behind a bunch of trash cans, and successfully uses Urban Stealth to hide just as the guard comes around the corner. Thereafter, the guard thoroughly searches the alleyway. However, the basic situation hasn’t changed; Delores is still hiding in a dark alleyway from a single guard that is looking for her. So, she does not yet need to make any additional stealth rolls. However, if another guard were to arrive and assist in the search, or the original guard were to light a lantern to illuminate the alley, then another Urban Stealth roll would be warranted since the circumstances have changed.

Attribute Bonuses Don’t Stack

Whenever you have two or more separate adjustments to a specific Basic Attribute (ST, AG, PC, etc.), magical or otherwise, take the largest of them and discard the rest. For example, if an Arthurian Knight carries a magical artifact that somehow raises their Strength by 2 points, and then has a Mental Strength spell cast on them that raises ST by 3, then only the Mental Strength spell applies until it wears off.

These adjustments will “ripple” throughout all the Derived Attributes (VG, GR, HE, etc.) normally unless the effect specifically states otherwise. For example, the Mental Strength spell specifically states that it does not affect Hit Points. However, if one of the lesser adjustments did affect Hit Points, then that lesser adjustment would “ripple” to that Derived Attribute.

If adjustments to two separate Basic Attributes both contribute to the same Derived Attribute, apply both. For example, if the above Arthurian Knight also cast the Mystic spell Mental Agility, then both the Mental Strength and Mental Agility bonuses would affect their Vigor.

Various Types of Conflict Rolls

Attack Rolls

Attack Rolls are Conflict Rolls whereby one character physically attacks another with a weapon. In these cases, the roll adjustment is the Attack Bonus of the character in the weapon used in the assault. The Threshold against which the result is compared is the target’s Defense (for weapons primarily attacking Hit Points), or Stability (for weapons primarily attacking Fate Points).

In combat situations, Attack Rolls are the most common form of Conflict Roll, which is why we take the time to pre-calculate the various Attack Bonuses and Defenses of the combatants during character creation.

Attribute Checks

Attribute Checks are Conflict Rolls in which a character pits their raw attributes against an opposing influence. Often, the opposing influence in such a roll has no motive and no sentence behind it. As such, Attribute Checks are common when trying to overcome some purely environmental obstacle. Thus, the roll is only adjusted by one or more of the character’s attributes. Ranks and levels are not involved. For Attribute Checks involving a single Basic Attribute, it is normal to apply an adjustment of double the pertinent attribute to the roll. When multiple Basic Attributes are involved, the attributes are applied singly. So a Strength Check will involve rolling a d20 and adding double the character’s ST. On the other hand, a Vigor Check (which is the sum of Strength and Agility) will add VG only once.

Avoidance Rolls

Avoidance Rolls are Conflict Rolls whereby a character pits their Level against an opposing force. Usually this is done as a defensive maneuver against an attack. Avoidance Rolls are of a general nature, so the various skills using them will describe the adjustments that apply to both the roll and the Threshold. So, if a skill states that a character must make an Avoidance Roll with Agility Adjustments, this means that both Level and Agility should be added to the d20 roll.

Skill and Spell Rolls

Skill Rolls and Spell Rolls are Conflict Rolls used when a character pits a skill or spell rank against an opposing force. For example, attempts to Open Locks, Urban Stealth, Find Secret Doors, Raise Morale, and the like all involve Skill Rolls. Since skills and spells are quite varied in nature, the adjustments and Threshold are not as easily pre-defined as are those for Attack Rolls. So, the various skills and spells that require Conflict Rolls will provide details about what

adjustments should be made to both the roll and the Threshold. However, Skill Rolls will always include the skill rank of the skill being used. Spell Rolls will always include the spell rank of the spell being used. So, if a skill states that a character must make a Skill Roll with Perception Adjustments, this means that both the character's skill rank and Perception should be added to the d20 roll.

Since the term "Skill Roll" is closely tied with skills, rules often adapt an even briefer shorthand when referring to Skill Rolls for particular skills. For example, instead of saying "Make a Skill Roll with Agility Adjustments for your Sneaking Skill", they will simply state, "Make a Sneaking Roll".

Who Rolls the Dice?

If rolling dice would provide a player with an unfair advantage merely by knowing that a roll succeeded or failed, then the Overlord should roll the dice. Such instances arise when players search for secret doors or when someone is sneaking up on their characters. In the first case, if the roll succeeds and the Overlord tells them that there is no secret door, then the player would be absolutely certain that no secret door exists. However, some doubt should remain in their mind as to whether their character merely failed the roll and further investigation may be warranted. In the second case, merely making a roll to determine whether their character notices an assassin sneaking up on their character tells the player that, in fact, *someone* is sneaking nearby. In these cases, it is prudent for the Overlord to make these rolls themselves without player knowledge of the results, or even that a roll was made at all.

In all other circumstances, players should be encouraged to roll the dice themselves. This includes both offensive and defensive rolls, even if the rolls are not made from the perspective of a character the player controls. For example, if a monster attacks a player's character, there is no reason the player should be prevented from rolling the monster's Attack Rolls. Attack Rolls are made from the perspective of the aggressor, in that it is the aggressor's adjustments that are made to the roll and the defender's adjustments that are made to the Threshold. But, having the player actually physically roll the dice only requires they be told the monster's Attack Bonus. This is knowledge their character could judge pretty well anyway as soon as they saw the monster attack.

Having players roll dice as often as possible has a number of benefits. The first is that it engages the players more in what's going on. The second is that it gives players implicit consent from the Overlord to spend Guts on any Conflict Rolls they make, without the need of incessant questions going back and forth about the matter. If the Overlord allows you to make a Conflict Roll, you can spend Guts on it. Third, it lifts much of the game minutiae from the Overlord's shoulders and distributes it among the players. This gives the Overlord more time to think about the flow of the game and, simultaneously, speeds up play.

When Should Rolls be Skipped?

Conflict Rolls are only made when there is an actual conflict. Sometimes those conflicts are against other characters; sometimes they are made against traps and other mechanical devices; sometimes they are made against Nature herself. But, if a situation has no tension, there is no conflict, and no roll should be made. That means that a Conflict Roll is necessary only when it is obviously necessary. Walking across a busy street would almost never qualify. But, even slightly more precarious situations can be handled without any rolls. If an average person is able to handle the circumstance without much difficulty, you can assume that the Avatars can do the same. For example, the average human can automatically walk along any 10 inch wide beam without any problem. Further, they can also probably fall from a height of 5 feet without taking damage. Admittedly, these are borderline cases. There is no black-and-white rule for when a Conflict Roll is required. So, when in doubt, err on the side of skipping a roll.

Edges / Drawbacks

Situations often arise where a character gains some tactical Edge over another, or suffers from some Drawback. An Edge for one is a Drawback for their foe, and visa-versa.

If a character has an Edge over another, that character may roll an additional d20 on applicable Conflict Rolls for every Edge over their opponent, up to a maximum of three d20s. In such cases, the highest roll of all the d20s is the one used on the Conflict Roll. Similarly, if a character has a Drawback with respect to a foe, that character must roll an additional d20 on applicable Conflict Rolls for every Drawback suffered, up to a maximum of three d20s. In these cases, through, the lowest roll of all the d20s is used on the Conflict Roll.

Edges and Drawbacks are often specified explicitly for a skill, spell, or other ability. However, the Overlord is encouraged to use Edges and Drawbacks liberally for tactical situations that arise. For example, an Archer may be shooting an arrow from the opposite side of a room through an open window at a target a short distance away. Rather than try to calculate some shooting penalty through convoluted logic, the Overlord can just state that the archer has a Drawback in their attempt and be done with it.

Edges and Drawbacks cancel, on a one-for-one basis. So, if a character suffers from 2 separate Drawbacks, but has an Edge of their own for some other reason, the net result is that the character suffers from 1 Drawback.

Extreme Edges / Drawbacks

Occasionally, a condition exists which puts a character at a much greater Edge or Drawback in a combat situation. Such a situation can arise, for example, if a character is asleep, which puts the character at an Extreme Drawback against anyone physically attacking them. An Extreme Edge or Drawback counts as two Edges or Drawbacks, respectively.

Common Edges and Drawbacks

There are a number of common situations that arise that can impose Edges or Drawbacks. Some of these are listed hereafter for convenience, although this list is far from exhaustive. The Overlord has the authority to impose whatever Edges and Drawbacks they choose, whenever they feel adjustments are appropriate based on current circumstances.

Attacking from a Height

Characters that make attacks from an elevated position generally gain a height Edge on those attacks. This includes characters standing atop a wall and shooting arrows down on those below as well as a horseman swinging a sword at a medium-sized or smaller creature standing on the ground.

Averting Eyes

Heroes sometimes avert their eyes from foes, due to some specific danger. For example, a character may avoid looking into the eyes of Medusa, as doing so could turn them into stone.

Whenever a character averts their eyes, they suffer from a Drawback on all attacks directed toward and against attacks made from the creature being avoided. Similarly, their gazing opponent gains an Edge. However, while doing so, the character is immune to attacks that require the character to meet the gaze of their foe.

Avoiding Interposing Obstructions

Shooting range weapons can be complicated by any obstacles interposing themselves between the marksman and their target that must be avoided. This commonly happens in combat, where friendly combatants are fending off an enemy that the marksman needs to attack. In these circumstances, the marksman suffers from a Drawback on such attacks for every obstruction in the line-of-fire that must be avoided.

Casting Spells

A character that is casting a magic spell usually suffers from a Drawback on all attacks made on them. Spells that have a range of "Melee", however, do not impose this penalty, as they are specifically geared to be used in melee situations. Similarly, some Occultist spell-casting styles (such as Hermeticus and Diablerie) are specifically geared toward combat spell-casting, and thereby forgo this Drawback.

Fighting Blind

Characters who are completely blind have an Extreme Drawback on conflicts involving sight, including attacking others and defending from attacks.

For other effects of having lost the ability of sight, see Blinded in the Character Conditions section.

Sleeping

Characters who are asleep have an Extreme Drawback against real-world combatants. However, they are immune to all forms of discourse that do not involve the practitioner entering their dreams.

In the case of someone entering a sleeping character's dreams, the character is not at any Drawback concerning their foe within the dream world due to them being asleep.

Swimming

Characters who are immersed in water, and are not native to that environment, suffer from a Drawback on most physical actions. Note that characters with the gift of Aquatic Combat mitigate this drawback.

Using Range Weapons in Combat

A character that is using a Range weapon suffers from a Drawback against anyone attacking them with a melee or range weapon.

Chaining Conflict Rolls

In many circumstances, it is reasonable for the Margin of one Conflict Roll to directly feed into the success or failure of a subsequent, related Conflict Roll or Threshold.

These kinds of situations arise, for example, when an assassin sneaks up on a guard and attempts to knock them out. In this case, the ultimate goal is for the guard to be lying prone on the ground. But, this outcome demands a string of Conflict Rolls, one after another. A Stealth Roll would be made first, followed by an Attack Roll. The guard would then have to make an Avoidance Roll against the assailant's Knocking Out skill to remain conscious. In each of these steps, the Margin of the previous roll would be applied as an adjustment to the next roll. So, if the Stealth roll succeeded by a Margin of 5, that value would be added to the assassin's Attack Roll, and if the Attack Roll succeeded by a Margin of 7, that value would count against the guard's roll to avoid being knocked out.

Obtaining Answers using Character Knowledge

Players can obtain answers about the game world based on their characters' knowledge. The degree to which a character is educated in a specialized area of knowledge is indicated by their rank in a particular lore. All other knowledge falls under the skill Knowledge. When determining whether a character can answer a question, they must utilize the most pertinent knowledge skill to make a Skill Roll with Intelligence Adjustments against a Threshold based on the difficulty of the question (GM's discretion). The Question Difficulty Guidance Table provides a guideline to set the Thresholds for various degrees of difficulty:

Question Difficulty Guidance Table

Difficulty	Thresholds
Trivial / Obvious	0 (no roll needed)
Very Easy	3
Easy	5
Moderate	10
Challenging	15
Hard	20
Extreme	25
Baffling	35
Unfathomable, Secret, Covert, or otherwise unknowable to the character	∞ (no roll needed)

The Margin of the Skill Roll determines how well the character succeeds according to the Answer Success Guidance Table.

Answer Success Guidance Table

Margin	Degree of Success
1	The character answers the basic question posed, but has no deeper insight.
2-4	The character recalls some other background information related to the question posed.
5-9	The character is well versed in the topic, and may answer most questions related to the subject without further rolls.
10+	The character has deep insight into the topic posed by the question, and may provide expert advice and knowledge on it.

Group Conflict Rolls

There are times when an entire group joins forces in making a Conflict Roll. Further, there are times when a Conflict Roll needs to be made against an entire group. These are called Group Rolls. At most, up to 4 individuals may participate in a given Group Roll.

Whether a situation is applicable for a Group Roll or not is for the Overlord to decide. For example, a knight may decide to swing their longsword in a great arc to strike three foes surrounding them in a single attack. This will make the attack more difficult, but if they succeed, they will inflict damage on all their targets.

Abilities that specify an area of effect, or which indicate that they can be used on groups of targets can fall under this rule as well, although this is not necessary unless the players want to reduce the number of dice rolls involved.

In a Group Roll, one character chosen by each side acts as the Primary Actor. Only this person's Skill Rank and/or Attribute Adjustments are added to the group's roll (or Threshold). Further, only the Edges/Drawbacks and Levels of the Primary Actors are figured into the roll, when applicable. (Those of the other participants are ignored.) Finally, only the Primary Actors on each side may spend Guts Points on the roll. So, it is not always a given that the characters with the highest skill bonuses are selected as the Primaries.

However, additional characters may participate in a group roll. To do so, they must describe (to the GMs satisfaction) how their actions are involved. They may use any abilities they possess to provide this help; they do not have to use the same skill that the primary actor is using. However, if the Primary Actor is performing an Assault Action, then all contributors must also use Assault Actions to participate. If the roll fails, the assisting characters also suffer from any potential consequences.

Assisted vs. Impeded Group Rolls

There are two types of Group Rolls: Assisted Group Rolls and Impeded Group Rolls. Assisted Group Rolls are those where larger numbers of contributors actually provide a benefit. Impeded Group Rolls are rolls where larger numbers of contributors actually hinder success.

An example of an Assisted Group Roll would be when a street gang is trying to convince a shop owner to pay tribute to keep the thugs from smashing their store to bits. The primary actor could use Bandyng Words to speak while their thuggish companions stand behind them cracking their knuckles and using the tips of their daggers to scrape dirt from under their fingernails. "Gee, ya got a nice shop here. It'd be a shame if sumthin' were to happen to it." An Assisted Group Roll gains an Edge for every doubling of people participating in the roll. So, if two people cooperate (the primary and one assistant), the roll gains a single Edge. If four participants cooperate, the roll gains two Edges.

A possible example of an Impeded Group Roll could be a group of bandits lying in ambush, but where only one of them is actually any good at Rural Stealth. The skilled bandit could likely be the Primary Actor on the roll. But, they are actually helping out the other group members by positioning them and pointing out their mistakes; the comrades aren't really helping in the process. The more people that must remain out of sight, the more likely someone is going to be spotted by approaching travelers. But, if they all roll individually, it is quite likely that multiple individuals will have to spend Guts points to remain hidden, and the overall group will still have a worse chance of going unnoticed. So, they decide to combine it all into one collective Group Roll. An Impeded Group Roll suffers from a Drawback for every doubling of people participating in the roll. So, if two or three people cooperate (the primary and one or two additional), the roll gains a single Drawback. If four actors participate, the roll suffers from two Drawbacks.

Group vs. Group

If a Group Roll targets another group, the Edges and Drawbacks of the two groups cancel each other out in the standard way. An Edge for one side counts as a Drawback for the other and visa versa. So, if the attacking group has 2 Edges due to their size and the defending group has 1 Edge due to their size, the overall result is that the attacking group has 1 Edge on the roll over the defending group.

Resisting the Raw Forces of Nature

There are times when a raw force of nature is acting on a character, and has the potential of affecting the character in some way, and you need to know how to handle the situation.

For example, an undead creature who is adversely affected by sunlight might be caught outside at sunrise. If a spell had produced the sunlight, the spell description would set the Threshold, which would include the spell rank. And, the creature would make some Conflict Roll including its Level, depending on the spell. But, the Sun has no rank. So, how do you handle sunlight from the actual Sun? What about resisting the effects of a poisonous fume coming from a volcanic vent or the smoke in a burning building? What if a character is exposed to a natural disease, such as the plague? How do you determine whether they are infected with it?

In all of these cases, no spell or skill was used to produce the effect. So, you should assume the natural force has no rank at all. In these cases, when a Conflict Roll is warranted, the character making the roll is not in a situation pitting skill against level. Rather, it is a situation pitting raw forces against each other.

Simple Attribute Checks are perfect for these cases. These are the type of Conflict Roll in which no skill or level adjustments are made by either side. Rather, it is a roll that pits a raw Threshold (based on the severity of the situation as determined by Overlord fiat) against a character's raw Attributes. (The [Overlord Fiat Threshold Table](#) in the section [Setting Thresholds via Overlord Fiat](#) gives a general guideline to the Overlord for how high they should set a Threshold for a given situation.)

VICTORY / LOSS CONDITIONS

Victory / Loss Conditions

Victories in Mythmagica occur when you have eliminated all of your opponents' options. Of course, the question then boils down to how we know when we have done that. Many times, this is a pure judgment call made by the Overlord. For example, suppose you have trapped your opponent in a steel cage through some clever ruse and they have no means of escape. The Overlord can easily declare a victory here. The same can be said if you knock your opponent unconscious, tie them up, drop them down a bottomless pit, or place them in any number of possible circumstances where their means of victory are non-existent. In such cases, you need no mechanical rule to tell you that you won.

On the other hand, conflicts can arise that are not always so quick or clear cut. To cover all other situations, this game gives each character two numbers to indicate when they have lost. These are Hit Points and Fate Points. If either of these numbers falls to zero, the character is said to be Overcome. An Overcome character is defeated and is eliminated from further participation in whatever conflicts they are currently engaged in. Once a character is Overcome, he remains so at least until the end of the current Scene, and continues in this condition thereafter until both their Hit Points and Fate Points have values of 1 or more.

Hit Points provides a rough gauge of a character's physical well-being. Whenever a character is physically injured, their Hit Points will be reduced through Damage. Damage may be healed through magic, or it may heal naturally over time. As such, Damage may persist for several Scenes.

Fate Points, on the other hand, provides a rough gauge of a character's spiritual well-being. It includes the degree to which the Fates currently regard him. In essence, it reflects any situational disadvantage currently suffered. Whenever a character is spiritually injured, their Fate Points will be reduced through Setback. Setback affects Fate Points in the same way that Damage affects Hit Points. The primary difference is that Setback is a very short-lived drawback and does not persist beyond the current Chapter's end. (A Chapter is a sequence of Scenes, and ends at the Overlord's discretion, giving them a powerful tool to control pacing.)

So, while there are two win/lose conditions in the game, there is a single over-arching conflict system in which spiritual and physical attacks can be intermixed. Needless to say, if all of the participants on one side of a conflict are defeated, then the conflict is over and the winning side is declared.

Damage and Hit Points

Hit Points are reduced through Damage. A character is removed from a conflict if its Hit Points fall to zero. For most non-Avatars (including most monsters), falling to 0 Hit Points also means the character dies. For Avatars and other named characters, the specific effects of falling to 0 Hit Points varies based on how many Guts points the character has spent. It can mean as little as having the character become temporarily incapacitated all the way up to character death. (See Guts and Glory for details on the repercussions.)

Damage is accrued by physical attacks. There are a lot of subtleties involved with how best to inflict damage on an opponent through combat. These are described in detail in the Combat Rules.

Damage comes in a variety of flavors: *Acidic, Bleeding, Blighting, Blunt, Chopping, Cutting, Crushing, Dehydrating, Electrical, Flaying, Freezing, Infernal, Internal, Metaphysical, Petrifying, Puncturing, Rending, Righteous, Rotting, Scorching, Sonic, Starving, Suffocating, Sunshining, and Toxic*. Virtually all creatures are immune, resistant, or unusually sensitive to one or more of these.

Setback and Fate Points

As stated before, Fate Points are lowered through Setback. A character is removed from a conflict if its Fate Points fall to zero. For most non-Avatars (including most monsters), falling to 0 Fate Points means the character is at the mercy of their vanquisher. For Avatars and other named characters, the specific effects of falling to 0 Fate Points varies based on how many Guts points the character has spent. It can mean as little as having the character being embarrassed all the way up to a character being captured and, potentially, entirely removed from play. (See Guts and Glory for details on the repercussions.)

Setback is a drain on Fate Points. It is inflicted on an opponent through the use of various skills and spells. Setback is (almost always) very temporary, in that it is always reset to 0 at the end of every Chapter. If a character successfully uses a skill having an Ability Type of Non-Lethal Force in a conflict, the Margin of its Conflict Roll, if any, is often applied to the target's Fate Points as Setback. Unless otherwise stated, the Margin of a Utilitarian skill involving a Conflict Roll cannot be applied to Setback. However, its Margin can often be chained into a subsequent Conflict Roll and, therefore, can influence Setback indirectly.

Just like Damage, Setback also comes in a variety of flavors: *Captivating, Deluding, Dreadful, Enervating, Entrancing, Fatiguing, Fettering, Footing, Intoxicating, Maladive, Quieting, Sedating, Tormenting, and Voluntary*. Many creatures are immune, resistant, or unusually sensitive to one or more of these.

Last Man Standing

It may seem obvious, but it doesn't hurt to be explicit: if one side of a conflict loses all of its members, that side loses the conflict. So, the side having at least one man still standing at the end of the conflict wins. See the Guts and Glory section for all the gory details concerning the consequences.

INNATE ABILITIES

Innate Abilities

An Innate Ability is an ability that all Avatars possess without the need for training and without the need to gain skill ranks. They can simply be used when the need arises. Of course, characters have many such abilities, such as the ability to walk, run, or jump. Most such abilities aren't even mentioned in any game rule, such as the ability to tie one's shoes. But, some innate abilities are complex and require some explanation. Those that do are provided in this section.

Athletics

Athletics covers a very broad spectrum of actions. Any acrobatic, balancing, tumbling or other full-body action a character might want to perform falls under the umbrella of Athletics.

Action Time: Variable. The action time to perform an Athletic feat depends on the act being performed. An Athletics attempt may even be made as part of a Move Action when trying to circumvent or overcome an interposing barrier. Doing so forces the attempt to be made with a Drawback, though. For example, if a character is trying to hop a waist-high picket fence or jump up on a table as part of a Move, they may do so by making an Athletics Rolls with a Drawback.

Most Athletic acts, such as running or balancing on a wide log, success is automatic; no roll is necessary. To perform a more difficult Athletic action, a character must make an Attribute Check. Many of the more common athletic acts are described below. For those cases that are not listed, the Overlord should decide what Attribute Check is most appropriate. (In most situations, Vigor Checks are appropriate.) When used to perform a difficult action, the Threshold of the roll is determined by the Overlord Fiat Threshold Table found in the Conflict Rules section.

On a Pure Success, the character performs the desired action without incident. On a Bare Success the character performs the act, but has a complication while doing so. In that case, the player should choose one of the following. On a failure, the action was unsuccessful. On a Bare Failure, the Overlord chooses one of the options below. On a Pure Failure, the Overlord chooses two:

- The character drops something they expect to need in the near future.
- The character attracts unwanted attention while performing their Action.
- The character temporarily strains a muscle, giving them a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Agility until the end of the current scene.
- The character sustains Voluntary Setback equal to the roll's Absolute Margin. *This option may be selected multiple times. If this drops the character's Fate Points to 0, they are incapacitated for the rest of the Scene.*

Balancing

This section covers situations where a character finds themselves in a tricky situation where balance is crucial.

Such situations arise when a character must walk along a narrow beam or tightrope.

Conflict Rolls: Under difficult circumstance, Balancing requires a Grace Check. The Threshold of the roll is determined by the Overlord Fiat Threshold Table found in the Conflict Rules section. Allow an Edge on the roll if the character uses a long pole for balance.

Success indicates the character crosses the obstacle to its other end without incident. On a failed roll, complications arise which may or may not indicate the character falls from the rope. If the roll was a Bare Failure, character made it 2/3 of the way across and the Overlord should choose one of the options listed below. On a Pure Failure, the character made it 1/3 of the way, and the Overlord should choose two of the following options.

- The character draws new unwanted attention.
- The character learns of a new nearby danger.
- The character drops something they expect to need in the near future. (The Overlord should give the player a short list of possibilities to choose from.)
- The character stance is shaky. They sustain Voluntary Setback of 7 plus the roll's Margin. *This option may be selected multiple times. If this drops the character's Fate Points to 0, they fall from the rope and suffers the consequences listed under Falling from Heights in the Natural Hazards section of The Overlord's Omnibus.*

Climbing

Climbing is an activity all adventurers must perform at one time or another.

Action Time: Climbing requires expending at least one Move Action. On every such Action, the character may climb at a rate up to half their normal land Speed.

Duration: Variable. A character can cling to a wall in a stationary position for a relatively long time, certainly until the end of the current scene and possibly longer (Overlord's discretion).

Preparation: Rough walls having plenty of hand-grips require no special equipment to climb. However, smooth walls demand the climber to use metal hand claws or similar tools.

Conflict Rolls: To perform a difficult climb, a character must make a Vigor Check. The Threshold the climber must overcome depends greatly on the surface or object they climb. A rocky cliff might have a Threshold of 10 while a smooth, polished marble wall may have a Threshold of 25. Use the Climbing Surface Threshold Table as a guideline for setting Thresholds.

Climbing Surface Threshold Table

Difficulty	Threshold
Trivial (Ladder)	0 (no roll needed)
Easy (Knotted Rope)	5
Moderate (Rocky Cliff or Unknotted Rope)	10
Challenging (Rough Hewn Wall)	15
Hard (Brick Wall)	20
Extreme (Polished Wall)	25

The standard Attribute Check assumes the climb is for a distance of 20 feet or less. For every doubling of this distance, the character gains an additional Drawback. So, for climbs of 21-40 feet, the character gains a single Drawback on the roll. For climbs of 41-80 feet, the character gains a double Drawback, etc.

On a Pure Success, the character climbs without incident. On a Bare Success the character climbs the full distance, but has a complication while doing so. In that case, the player should chose one of the options listed below. On a failed roll, the character falls. The height from which the character falls depends on how much the roll failed by. If the roll was a Bare Failure, the character fell 1/3 of the way up and the Overlord should choose one of the options listed below. On a Pure Failure, they fell 2/3 of the way up, and the Overlord should choose two of the options listed below.

- The character drops something they expect to need in the near future. (The Overlord should give the player a short list of possibilities to choose from.)
- The character attracts unwanted attention while climbing.
- The character temporarily strains a muscle while climbing, giving them a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Agility until the end of the current scene.
- The character sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 4 plus the roll's Margin. *This option may be selected multiple times. If this drops the character's Fate Points to 0, they fall.*

If they fell, the climber may suffer damage as described under Falling from Heights in the Natural Hazards section of The Overlord's Omnibus.

Contorting

Contorting is the act performed when a character wriggles and positions their body in unexpected ways. An experienced contortionist can twist and rotate their joints and flex their muscles so that their appendages bend at odd angles. With these techniques, an actor can collapse themselves into tight spaces or through small apertures. A practitioner of this art has a chance of writhing their way through any opening provided it is large enough to allow their skull passage.

Conflict Rolls: There are a couple of common uses for this action: squeezing through small holes and escaping bonds. In either case, the contortionist must make a Grace Check.

Squeezing through Holes

Sometimes, your character finds a hole, and needs to get to the other side of it. The Threshold they must overcome for squeezing through a hole depends on the size of the hole. It may range anywhere from 10, for an aperture capable of allowing their shoulders easy passage, to a 25, for a hole barely larger than their head.

In these cases, the character squeezes through the hole without incident on a Pure Success. On a Bare Success the character gets through, but has a complication while doing so. In that case, the player should choose one of the options listed on the Contortionism Complication List below. On a failed roll, the character fails to get through the aperture. If the roll was a Bare Failure, the Overlord should choose one of the options listed below. On a Pure Failure, the Overlord should choose two.

Escaping Bonds

A restrained character can sometimes wriggle their way out of the bonds holding them. In doing so, you should assume that the individual that bound them is not stupid. They will use a sturdy rope or other binding, and tie a respectable knot. As such, the Threshold that a bound character should overcome should be equivalent to a Hard Threshold (20).

In these cases, the character escapes the bindings without incident on a Pure Success. On a Bare Success the character escapes, but has a complication while doing so. In that case, the player should choose one of the options listed below. On a failed roll, the character fails to escape. If the roll was a Bare Failure, the Overlord should choose one of the options listed on the Contortionism Complication List below. On a Pure Failure, the Overlord should choose two.

Contortionism Complication List

- The character temporarily strains a muscle, causing them to suffer from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Craftiness and/or Agility until the end of the current Scene.
- The character attracts unwanted attention.
- The character breaks a piece of equipment needed in the near future. (The Overlord should give the player a short list of possibilities to choose from.)
- The character sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 4 plus the roll's Absolute Margin. *If this drops the character's Fate Points to 0, they are incapacitated and suffers the consequences listed on the Guts and Glory Tables.*

Jumping

There are times when a character needs to jump. It is assumed that a character can jump 5 feet horizontally, or 2 feet vertically without making a Conflict Roll.

A jumper may attempt to leap longer distances horizontally if they make a Vigor Check against a Threshold equal to 5 plus the number of feet jumped. So, leaping horizontally 15 feet requires beating a Threshold of 20. To do so, the jumper must have a running start for at least 10 feet on a relatively flat surface.

Similarly, a jumper may leap vertically if they make a Vigor Check against a Threshold equal to 5 plus double the number of vertical feet jumped. So, Jumping vertically 10 feet requires beating a Threshold of 25. Using a pole to help vault them skyward gives an Edge on the roll.

On any success, the character successfully jumps the distance without incident. On a Pure Success, the character gains confidence in their jumping ability, and thereby gains an Edge on their next Jumping attempt, provided it occurs before the end of the current Scene. A Natural Success gives them a double Edge.

On a failed roll, the character fails to jump the entire distance. If the roll was a Bare Failure, the character only jumped 2/3 of the way, but no complications arise other than those resulting directly from failing to jump the distance. On any other failure, the character jumped 1/3 the distance. On a Natural Failure, the Overlord must choose one of the options listed below, and the player must choose one. Otherwise, on a Pure Failure, the player must choose one.

- The character drops something they expect to need in the near future. (The Overlord should give the player a short list of possibilities to choose from.)
- The character strains a muscle. They suffer from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Agility for the remainder of the current Scene.
- *The character sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 7 plus the roll's Margin. This option may be selected multiple times. If this drops the character's Fate Points to 0, they are allowed no Conflict Roll*

to avoid the fall's full effects (if any), and otherwise suffers the consequences listed on the Guts and Glory Tables.

Throwing Grapnel

A grapnel and rope is a common piece of adventuring gear. The grapnel itself is nothing more than a small, three-pronged hook to which the rope is attached. When thrown over the top of a wall, the hook is likely to catch on any available protrusion and provide an anchor to secure the rope's end.

Whenever a character needs to throw a grapnel to secure a rope, they must make an Acumen Check. They must beat a Threshold equal to 1 per foot of height or 1 per 2 feet of distance. Thus, a wall 20 feet high requires the grapnel's thrower to overcome a Threshold of 20. Similarly, a chasm that is 30 feet wide demands the thrower beat a Threshold of 15. Of course, the Overlord is free to impose Drawbacks in situations where the available anchor points are few or non-existent, and Edges when the opposite is true.

Each such attempt requires 2 Rounds.

Bandyng Words

Bandyng Words is an Innate Ability covering any situation dealing with conflicts of the spoken word. Since *Mythmagica* is a Role-Playing Game, in which talking is a fundamental component, the rules are designed so that any character can converse with and potentially sway any other character with whom they can communicate. Even a young child could talk to a deity on relatively equal terms.⁸ As such, level and rank adjustments are never applied to Bandyng Words Conflict Rolls. So, in this game, Bandyng Words is the Great Equalizer.

Bandyng Words provides a means to use Conflict Rolls in verbal contests prior to a conflict escalating to violence. Once violence commences, a character can no longer Bandyng Words unless both sides agree to deescalate the conflict. Unfortunately, that means that Bandyng Words itself cannot be used to force the other side to calm down.

Note that Bandyng Words cannot be used after a Scene's conflict has escalated into combat, as it is a purely non-tactical ability. That doesn't mean either side is incapable of talking in combat, though, only that such actions are pure role-playing activities. Any persuasion accomplished during combat is a result of an argument that actually persuades the players involved rather than relying on die rolls to determine an outcome.⁹

⁸ Or, a reluctant hob burglar could verbally spar with a calamitous ancient dragon.

⁹ It took a lot of play-testing various discourse rules to come to this conclusion. Other solutions risk seriously bogging down combat, so be warned.

It should be emphasized that your character does not need to make a Bandyng Words roll for every little thing they say. Just like you don't need to make an Athletics check when your character walks across the street, Bandyng Words is reserved for when two opposing sides get into a verbal conflict, and when determining who actually wins or loses the debate matters to the ongoing story.

Assisting a Bandyng Words Roll

Bandyng Words usually occurs between two individuals. However, more than one person may participate on each side. If this is done, one person on each side acts as the primary contributor, and others may assist as long as they provide a reasonable explanation about what actions they are taking that serve to help their side's cause. (See Group Conflict Rolls for more details on how to handle this.)

All characters participating in such a roll are bound by its outcome. For example, suppose a band of bandits ambushes the Avatars, and the Avatars try to convince their leader to stand down and let their party pass without incident. The Overlord must first decide whether the leader has enough control over their band to order them to back down. If not, then the Overlord cannot use the group to support the bandit leader in their roll. And, if the bandit leader loses the Bandyng Words conflict and orders their band to stand down, they are likely to get an arrow in the back for their trouble while the rest of the band attacks the Avatars. On the other hand, if the entire band is used to support a Bandyng Words roll, and the leader is convinced to back down, then all participating bandits must also back down along with them.

The Uses of Bandyng Words

This section provides rules for how to handle the various basic ways in which Bandyng Words is used.

Deceiving

When a character deceives another, they convince someone to believe a lie. In order for the deception to have any chance of working, the target cannot have already encountered any hard evidence proving its falsity.

To determine if the deception is successful, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus the target's Intelligence and Perception.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of these:

- The target is deceived until the falsity of their belief is clearly exposed. Until that happens, the target(s) gain a Temporary Trait indicating their false belief, and behave accordingly. For example, they may gain the Trait, "I can trust George", or "Geodes are dragon eggs". Further, the immediate conflict is over, and the target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.

- The target is unconvinced, but has doubts. They sustain Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On a Bare Success, the target chooses one of the following:

- The target leans toward believing the speaker, but insists on seeing some proof. In this case, the target must state what proof will satisfy them. As soon as the proof is provided, the conflict is over, the target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked, and they are deceived until the falsity of their belief is clearly exposed. Until that happens, they gain a Temporary Trait indicating their false belief, and behave accordingly. For example, they may gain the Trait, "I can trust George", or "Geodes are dragon eggs". Further, the Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target is unconvinced, but has doubts. They sustain Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin.

On any Failure, the target may respond in any way they please.

Intimidating

When a character intimidates, they use the threat of violence to convince their target to do something they otherwise would not do. To determine if the target is intimidated, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus double the target's Heart.

The speaker gains an Edge on the roll for each of the following:

- The target has personally witnessed the speaker successfully deal brutal violence on someone in the past.
- The target already has a Trait indicating that they fear the speaker.

The speaker suffers from a Drawback on the roll for each of the following:

- The speaker has a Trait indicating they respect the target in some way.
- Sometime in the past, the target has seen others ignore the speaker's threats without suffering consequences.
- Sometime in the past, the target has personally ignored threats made by the speaker without suffering consequences.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of these:

- The target agrees to what the speaker demands. The conflict is over, and the target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The

Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.

- The target refuses the speaker's demand and sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On a Bare Success, the target must choose one of these:

- The target agrees to what the speaker demands. The conflict is over, and the target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s), gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target makes an Offer, agreeing to fulfill the request if the speaker satisfies some condition.
- The target refuses the speaker's demand and sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On any Failure, the target may respond in any way they please.

Mocking

Mocking attempts to coerce a violent emotional reaction from an opponent that is against that person's better interests. In effect, it forces an opponent to escalate a conflict to violence and direct that violence toward the speaker.

Mocking demands are quick quips attempting to manipulate the target's emotions. For example, a wizard's bodyguard may mock an enemy footsoldier running towards their ward with something like, "What? You're attacking *him*? I guess you're just too much of a coward to face me!"

During the contest, the mocker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments. The Threshold to beat equals 10 plus the opponent's Intelligence and Perception. Unfortunately, this roll must be made at a Drawback for the mocker (since the target knows it would be detrimental to attack the speaker).

On a Pure Success, the target immediately escalates to violence (if they haven't already), and suffers from a Drawback when attacking anyone but the speaker until the either the speaker is vanquished or the Scene ends.

On a Bare Success, the target escalates to violence (if they haven't already).

On any Failure, the target may respond in any way they please. Further, as per the Roll Inertia rules, the speaker cannot make another Mocking attempt on the target until the situation changes in some significant way.

Offering

When a character makes an offer, they are attempting to convince the target to do something or trade something they possess for something else of value. For an offer to be made at all, the thing being offered must be of value to the target.

To determine if the offer is successful, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus the target's Intelligence and Perception.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of these:

- Accept the terms as stated. The conflict is over, and the target cannot cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- Refuse the speaker's request. The conflict is over unless the target escalates to violence. Further, the target sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. The Avatar(s), gain no XP for the conflict, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.

On a Bare Success, the target must choose one these:

- Accept the terms as long as the speaker can prove they can deliver as promised. In this case, the target must state what evidence will satisfy them. As soon as the proof is provided, the conflict is over, and the target cannot cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s), gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- Make a counter-offer similar to the original offer with some limited modification (e.g. if monetary, by adjusting the offer price by an amount of +/- 20%). Any counter-offer requires an Offer Roll of its own. *If the current offer is already a counter-offer, this option cannot be chosen.*
- Refuse the speaker's offer. The conflict is over unless the target escalates to violence. Further, the target sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin.

On any Failure, the conflict is not over and the target may respond in any way they please.

As per the Roll Inertia rules, the speaker cannot make the same (or highly similar) Offer to the target until the situation changes in some significant way.

Pleading

When a character pleads, they manipulate the target's emotions to get them to do something dangerous or otherwise objectionable without compensation. To determine if the pleading is successful, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus the target's Intelligence and Perception.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of the following:

- Do as the speaker asks. The conflict is over, and the target cannot cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- Refuse the speaker's request. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence. Further, the target sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. The Avatar(s), gain no XP for the conflict, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.

On a Bare Success, the target must choose one of the following:

- Do as the speaker asks. The conflict is over, and the target cannot cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s), gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- Make an Offer, agreeing to fulfill the request if the pleader satisfies some condition.
- Refuse the speaker's request. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence. Further, the target sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin.

On any Failure, the conflict is not over and the target may respond in any way they please.

Prying

When a character Pries, they are trying to extract the truth about an event or situation out of a hesitant or unwilling target.

To determine if the Prying is successful, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus the target's Intelligence and Perception.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of the following:

- The target answers the question truthfully. The Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target lies and sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin.

On a Bare Success, the target chooses one of the following:

- The target answers the question truthfully. The Avatar(s), gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target does not answer with a lie.
- The target does not avoid answering the question.

On any Failure, the target may respond in any way they please.

Rallying

When your character uses Bandyng Words to rally their allies, they lift their spirits. They take circumstances of impending doom and present them as exciting challenges to be overcome. A skilled orator can turn a group of deserters into a determined squadron of unconquerable warriors. (Or, at least, *less* conquerable warriors.)

When using this skill, your character must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments. If successful, those allied with the orator gain the Temporary Trait of “Courageous” during the next conflict, and they gain an Edge on any Conflict Rolls against any fear-based effects.

The Threshold that must be overcome depends on the size and potency of the opposing force. Use the Rallying Threshold Table as a guideline.

Rallying Threshold Table

Degree of Risk	Threshold
The opposing force is substantially weaker than the orator and their allies. Engaging the enemy apparently poses little risk.	0
The opposing force is approximately equal in number to the orator's force and/or combating the enemy in a frontal assault poses some risk.	10
The opposing force is unknown, is somewhat larger in number to the orator's force, and/or facing the enemy apparently poses high risk.	15
The opposing force greatly outnumbers the orator's force and/or facing the enemy head on apparently poses extreme risk.	20
Meeting the opposing force is apparent suicide.	35

Seducing

When a character seduces someone, they are attempting to convince them that a romantic tryst with the speaker would be a great idea, and that it is a real possibility. However, they must be equally convinced that the opportunity is far more likely to transpire if the target will fulfill one teensy little request first. For seduction to work at all, the seducer must be of a gender the target finds sexually appealing. Further, seduction has no effect on any character having the Trait “Rebuffs _____”, where the blank is the seducer’s name.

To determine if the seduction is successful, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus the target’s Intelligence and Perception.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of these:

- The target agrees to perform the teensy little request as stated by the speaker. The conflict is over, and the target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target refuses the speaker’s request and sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker’s Charisma (if positive) plus the roll’s Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On a Bare Success, the target must choose one of the following:

- The target agrees to perform the speaker’s request, but only after the speaker engages with them in a private romantic tryst. The conflict is over, and the target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s), gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target refuses the speaker’s request and sustains Voluntary Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker’s Charisma (if positive) plus the roll’s Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On any Failure, the conflict is not over and the target may respond in any way they please.

As per the Roll Inertia rules, once a Seduction attempt is made, the speaker cannot attempt to Seduce the target again until the situation changes in some significant way.

Stalling for Time

Bandyng Words can be used to stall for time. When used in this way, the target is engaged in conversation intently listening to what the speaker says, unsuccessfully trying to make sense of what they are hearing. However, they feel compelled to provide some sort of response to the person addressing them.

When stalling for time, the speaker must make a Conflict Roll with Charisma Adjustments against a Threshold equal to 10 plus the target's Intelligence and Perception.

On a Pure Success, the target must choose one of these:

- The target listens and engages in a confused conversation as long as the speaker keeps stalling or the situation changes in some significant way. The target cannot escalate to violence in the Scene unless attacked. The Avatar(s) gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target ignores the speaker and hurries on their way. They sustain Deluding Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker’s Charisma (if positive) plus the roll’s Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On a Bare Success, the target must choose one of these:

- The target listens briefly and engages in a confused conversation for about one minute, or until the situation changes in some significant way. The Avatar(s), gain XP equivalent to a single-roll encounter, regardless of whether they are the speaker or the target.
- The target ignores the speaker and hurries on their way. They sustain Deluding Setback equal to 5 plus the speaker's Charisma (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. The conflict is over unless either side escalates to violence.

On any Failure, the target may respond however they please.

Hunch

With this ability, your character takes in all immediately available information about a subject of interest to form a gut feeling about it. Once per Scene, a player may have his character make a Hunch Roll to help guide them on their adventures. At other times, the Overlord may make hidden Hunch Rolls when the Avatars enter areas with hidden dangers or secrets, or speak with characters having dubious agendas.

Hunch attempts to bring together and illuminate all of the subtle little details that a character can observe in a world that often go unspoken during game play. If used on a person, this ability condenses the target's body language, tone of voice, eye movements, and other fine motions into an overall impression about that person's state of mind. If used to assess the threat of an encountered creature, it uses experience of similar types of creatures to estimate its strengths and weaknesses based on its observed behavior and appearance. If used on a crowd, it surveys the general mood and movement patterns to find any unusual activity. If used on an item or location, the ability takes into account cultural motifs, wear patterns, craftsmanship, and other suggestive elements to provide an overall sense of its nature and history.

If the subject is an item, creature type, location, non-player character (NPC), or mystery, the Overlord will answer the questions. If the subject is an Avatar, the person playing that character should answer. When a misleading answer is indicated, the person answering the question should strive to make the answer as believable as possible, while simultaneously being as misleading as possible.

It should be noted that hunches specifically do not apply to puzzles. If an Overlord introduces a puzzle to the players, they are expected to figure it out on their own without crutches. Hunches concerning mysteries should help guide players toward clues, in order to keep the game from bogging down when the players are uncertain about their next steps. But, a hunch can never outright solve a mystery.

Action Time: Variable. The character must have sufficient time to observe the subject about which they are trying to get a gut feeling about.

Range: Variable. The subject must be within observing distance.

Affected Target: One item, location, crowd, or individual.

Conflict Rolls: To determine whether a character gains a gut feeling about the subject, they must make a Conflict Roll adding both Intelligence and Perception. Typically, the Threshold that must be overcome is 15. But, that may vary depending on the subtleties of the situation. Use the Question Difficulty Guidance Table for advice on how to set the Threshold in these circumstances.

If the Overlord is making a secret Hunch roll for the party, this roll should be made as a single Group Conflict Roll. The primary actor for this roll will be whomever has been designated the party's leader. (If no leader has been designated by the group, pick the Avatar of one of the more inquisitive players.) On a success, the Overlord should merely indicate that there is something off about the subject or situation, but the character can't quite put their finger on what it is. This should provide a sufficient prompt for the players to investigate further. (Of course, if they don't, that's their prerogative.)

If a player has asked for a Hunch roll, success indicates their character gains some insight into the subject. The player may therefore gain truthful answers to allowable questions about the subject. A Pure Success indicates the character may ask two questions. A Bare Success indicates they may only ask one question. Normal failure indicates the practitioner gets no sense about the subject. Natural Failure implies that the practitioner gains misleading answers to two of the allowable questions. Since the practitioner may gain unfair knowledge about the truthfulness of the answer if they roll the dice themselves, the Overlord should make the roll hidden.

Other Details: Successful hunches don't lie. For example, suppose you successfully use Hunch to determine what it would likely take to convince a character to do something. In that case, the target will indeed be sorely tempted by any such offer. They automatically agree to the request unless there are unknown extenuating circumstances. At a minimum, they would have a Drawback on any Banding Words roll meeting the conditions.

Hunch about a Character

The following are the allowable questions concerning another character:

- Are they telling the truth?
- What emotion are they feeling at the moment?
- What do they want me to do?
- What is their intent?
- What would it take to convince them to agree to X?
- Who do they serve?
- What is their weakness?

Hunch about a Crowd

The following are the allowable questions concerning a crowd:

- Who is the greatest danger to me?
- Who could I take out most quickly?
- What should I be wary of?
- What is the crowd about to do?
- Who is pretending to be something other than what they are?
- Who's in charge?
- To what Faction does the crowd owe its allegiance?

Hunch about a Creature Type

The following are the allowable questions concerning an encountered creature:

- What emotion is it feeling at the moment?
- What is its greatest strength?
- What is its greatest weakness?
- What is its intent?
- Is it a threat?
- What would be a reasonable approach to eliminate it as a threat?

Hunch about an Item

The following are the allowable questions concerning an item:

- What is the item's approximate value and age?
- What culture or province did the item originate from?
- For what purpose was this item most recently used?
- How does this item pertain to our current goals and circumstances?

Hunch about a Locale

The following are the allowable questions concerning a location:

- What is my best escape route from this place?
- What happened here recently?
- What clues can this area provide me to address our current goals and circumstances?
- Where would the best place be in this area to hide something?
- What is here that would be most useful to me?
- If I were living in this location, where would the most likely place be to keep X?
- What hidden dangers does the area likely present?
- What is here that is other than what it seems?
- What is about to happen here?
- In what direction does the greatest adventure pertaining to our current goals lie?

Hunch about a Mystery

The following are the allowable questions concerning a mystery¹⁰:

- When thoroughly searching my immediate environment, what clues do I uncover concerning the mystery? (*When searching for clues using Hunch, no other rolls are needed to find them. Further, a single successful Hunch will find all easily accessible clues in the immediate area.*¹¹)
- What clues are actually red herrings?
- What previously encountered fact or item is a clue or deserves more of my attention?
- What piece of knowledge of the world do I know that might shine additional light on the mystery?
- What is a pertinent question I should be asking?

Wilderness Survival

When a character travels through the untamed lands of the wild, they must necessarily engage in a struggle with nature itself. Wilderness environments are described in the Wilderness Challenges section of The Overlord's Omnibus.

Any character(s) engaged in a Wilderness Challenge needs to make a Wilderness Survival Roll, which is an Attribute Check with Intelligence and Perception adjustments. They must overcome a Threshold equal to 10 plus the environment's Challenge Threshold (also described in The Overlord's Omnibus). The repercussions of success or failure on any such roll are detailed in the descriptions for the specific environment through which the group is traveling.

Characters may gain edges on their rolls if they possess specific gifts, such as Arctic Wisdom, Swampland Wisdom, Wilderness Wisdom, Woodland Wisdom, etc.

Further, a Wilderness Survival roll may be performed as a Group Conflict Roll (see the Group Conflict Rolls section for details). Although anyone can act as the primary in such a roll, only those characters with applicable training may assist in the group roll. Such is always the case for any character with the Wilderness Wisdom gift. Characters with specialized knowledge of the particular environment may also assist. So, gifts such as Arctic Wisdom, Grassland Wisdom, and Swampland Wisdom are applicable for their respective environments. The same is true for skills such as Desert Lore, Forest Lore, Plains Lore, and Mountain Lore.

¹⁰ GM Advice: Mythmagica's rules are not really geared toward running mysteries. Nevertheless, they do tend to crop up from time to time. Hunch can help provide clues to the Avatars, and let the players know that there are no more clues to be found in the current Scene, so they can get on with the game without sitting around being frustrated not knowing what else they need to do. In other words, when running mysteries, you should expeditiously provide the players with whatever clues are available within a Scene and then end it quickly thereafter: "There's nothing more to see here. Move along."

¹¹ If a clue is locked in a safe or chest, you'll still need to get past the lock before finding it.

Combat Rules

The sections above dealing with handling conflicts give you most of what you need to deal with combat. There are a few points that still need refining, but this section mostly exists to guide you in how to apply Conflict Rolls in a variety of situations. All of the following rules apply to both sides of any conflict. In other words, monsters have equal rights.

Most of the Combat Rules use only 9 numbers on your character sheet. These are: Attack Bonus, Level, Defense, Hit Points, Damage, Ward, Stability, Fate Points, and Guts. You will occasionally use your character's Attribute scores in various Conflict Rolls. You may essentially ignore all of the other numbers on the character sheet for most combat situations.

Initiative and Rounds

To play out any conflict, we need to know whose turn it is to perform the next action. That is, we need to know who goes when. There are many ways this can be done, but Mythmagica opts for a solution that has a minimum of fuss and, as much as possible, allows players to roll dice simultaneously with the other players. This Initiative system is not really trying to simulate anything in particular, such as who has the upper hand. Rather, it merely tries to get on with taking turns as expediently as possible.

With all that in mind, conflicts are broken up into Rounds, each of which is assumed to be about 10 seconds long. Within each Round, every side has a Go. When a side Goes, every player on that side gets a Turn.

At the beginning of every Round, the Overlord decides whether the Go order should be determined randomly or not. For example, on the first Round of any combat, it is sometimes the case that two opposing sides start out talking to one another until one character gets fed up and swings their sword at a foe. In that case, the aggressive side automatically Goes first, as they seized the Initiative. No dice are required in this case. Further, verbal conflicts involving Banding Words naturally proceed with one side instigating a demand, offer, or query. Then that side waits while the other responds, which may thereafter require the first side to follow up, in a natural back-and-forth fashion. Here, again, no dice are needed to decide who Goes when.

Combat is different, though. Usually, an Overlord will call for a random Go order in this case. If so, each side makes an Initiative Roll with a d20. So, a d20 is rolled for each side, usually with the Overlord rolling for the villains. Ties are re-rolled. The side with the higher roll Goes first. (If three or more sides battle it out, each side gets their own Go, and their own Initiative roll. Then, play proceeds from highest Initiative to lowest.)

Before each side Goes in a Round, the Overlord should briefly pause in order to answer any questions the players have about the current situation. This is the time when players should talk about the tactical situation, and

coordinate their actions. Although it may seem counter-intuitive, this discussion phase significantly speeds up game play by providing all the information the players need up front to get on with their dice rolls. Skipping this discussion forces players to wait until their Turn to ask questions. And, some players will otherwise discuss their characters actions at length when it's their turn *every Round*. Such delays waste time by keeping players from being able to make their dice rolls until they have the information they need. One or two such delayed discussions can double or triple the amount of time it takes to go around the table. As such, it is advisable to strongly discourage, or even forbid, player discussion about character actions while going around the table.

Taking Turns, Actions, and Reactions

During a character's Turn, they can perform two Actions, only one of which may be an Assault Action. (An Assault is defined as an Action that can potentially deliver Damage and/or Setback, or which requires a Conflict Roll that can have immediate detrimental effects to a foe of the person initiating the Assault.) So, one Action may involve swinging a weapon and the other may be a Move Action, if desired. Alternately, a character may perform two Move Actions, or cast one offensive spell (involving an Attack) and one non-offensive spell (say, healing a comrade). These Actions can be performed in whatever order the player chooses.

All Actions are considered to be simultaneous in a given Go. So, even if a character falls before it is their Turn, they perform their Actions for the Go regardless.

Further, on any given Round, a character can take a single Reaction during an opponent's Turn. Reactions are detailed below in the section Performing Reactions.

The Avatars' Go

When it's the Avatars' Go, all of their players decide what they're going to do and roll dice simultaneously. Then, the Overlord goes around the table, asking each player what actions their Avatar performs, and deals with their repercussions. If an Avatar moves, its miniature is adjusted to its new position on the Battle Grid during its player's Turn. The players are simply taking Turns reporting on the results of their characters' actions to make the process as expedient as possible. The Overlord determines the order in which players state their actions. If the tactical situation suggests a specific order, then go with whatever makes sense. Otherwise, it is recommended that the order go around the table in a clockwise fashion if the Avatar's won Initiative, and in a counter-clockwise direction otherwise. (The basic idea here is that all of the characters are assumed to be acting roughly *at the same time*.) Admittedly, this technique does impose an ordering on in-game events because players move their characters on their Turn, which alters character positions on the battlefield sequentially rather than simultaneously. But, the impact is usually minimal, and the technique is simple while avoiding undue favor to anyone based on the seating arrangement.

The Villains' Go

When it's the Villains' Go, the Overlord states what Actions each of the Villains takes, and declares who each Villain attacks. While doing so, they move the miniatures on the Battle Grid of any Villains that move in whatever order they want. Then, the Overlord has the players simultaneously roll the dice for the Villains' Actions to determine the repercussions. By spreading the workload around in this fashion, play is sped up considerably. So they can perform their tasks, the Overlord provides the players with whatever Villain stats they need for that Round's Actions.

Then, the Overlord once again goes around the table to gather the results.

Handling Surprise

One of the most common complications to engaging combat is surprise. Surprise arises when one or both of the combatants are unaware of the other at the beginning of combat. Any side that is unaware of the other at the beginning of combat must roll a second d20 on Initiative and take the lower of the two rolls for its Initiative Roll.

If one of the sides that was unaware of the other loses Initiative by 5 or more, it is said to be Surprised until it is their turn to go. Any attacks against them while Surprised are made with an Edge.

If one side clandestinely becomes aware of the other first, and sneaks up on their foes using stealth, Initiative need not be rolled at all, and the target is assumed to be automatically Surprised. So, if an assassin successfully sneaks up behind a guard, the guard will be oblivious until the assassin actually attacks. The guard will then be free to respond with their own Actions.

Dealing with Indecision

Players should always be paying attention and planning ahead. If a player pauses for more than a few seconds when it is their turn to state their character's next action, you need to move on. It is unfair to the other players to hold up the game because one player can't make up their mind. The Overlord should declare that the character is Assessing the Situation, and push their Turn to the end of the current Go. If they are still at a loss at that point, move on to the next Round. The player loses their Turn, but the Overlord may grant them an Edge on their next Round's Action as consolation for having carefully weighed their options. This keeps things moving, and provides the character with a useful benefit in the process. If you consistently do this, it won't take long before players learn to stay on their toes.

Attacks

Weapon attacks are made with a standard Conflict Roll, adding the aggressor's Attack Bonus to the d20 roll, and comparing that to either the defender's Defense (for weapons primarily targeting Hit Points) or Stability (for weapons primarily targeting Fate Points). This is known as an Attack Roll.

Melee and Range Weapon Attacks

Melee Weapon Attacks are attacks coming from Natural Weapons (such as claws, bites, and tentacles) and Close Combat Weapons (such as Sharp, Blunt, and Polearm Weapons, as well as a number of Entrapment Weapons).

Range Weapon Attacks are made with Range Weapons, both thrown and shot, as well as Entrapment Weapons having a range greater than Melee.

On a successful Melee or Range Weapon Attack, the attacker inflicts Damage and/or Setback effects as specified in the weapon or fighting style description.

On a Natural Success, the total Damage and/or Setback delivered by the attack is doubled. Further, the target is Pushed 5 feet in the direction opposite to the attacker, unless something occupies that space preventing them from entering it.

Damage and Setback

If an assailant successfully strikes their opponent, the blow inflicts Damage and/or Setback to the opponent. On the weapons tables in [The Character Compendium](#), each weapon is listed with the basic range of Damage and Setback it can deliver. If a creature's Hit Points or Fate Points falls to 0, it is Overcome and suffers from the consequences listed in the [Guts and Glory Tables](#) according to its current Glory Status.

Calculating the total Damage delivered by a weapon also depends on the nature of the target. Damage delivered by a weapon is divided into two basic constituents. The first is the Basic Damage, which is damage delivered regardless of any characteristics of the target. The second is Internal Damage, which is applicable only to creatures with internal organs (which include most living creatures).

To calculate the Damage delivered by a blow:

1. Determine the Basic Damage delivered by the weapon.
2. If the weapon delivers Margin Damage, add the Conflict Roll's Margin to the effect. Margin Damage delivered by a weapon is given the special name of Internal Damage, which only applies to creatures with internal organs. See the sections on [Margin Damage](#) and [Internal Damage](#) below for details.
3. If the target has a Ward value due to armor or other natural protections, subtract the Ward value from the damage. Ward can never lower the damage value below 1.

Once calculated, the overall Damage is then added to the target's sustained Damage, which has the simultaneous effect of lowering the target's Hit Points.

If the weapon is an Entrapment Weapon, you'll need to calculate the total Setback it delivers to the target as well. To determine this:

1. Determine the Basic Setback delivered by the weapon.
2. Add the Conflict Roll's Margin to the Basic Setback. See the section on [Margin Setback](#) below for details.

Once calculated, the overall Setback is then added to the target's sustained Setback, which has the simultaneous effect of lowering the target's Fate Points. Note that any armor's Ward value has no effect on Setback.

Basic Damage

Basic Damage consists of the Damage associated with the weapon, plus any magical damage adjustments possessed by the weapon, plus Strength adjustments, if applicable.

If the weapon is a Close-Combat, Polearm, or Thrown Weapon, you will add the character's Strength into the Basic Damage, if the character's Strength is 1 or greater (Strength never subtracts from Damage).

If the weapon is a Shot or Entrapment Weapon (i.e. bow, crossbow, whip, etc.), add no Strength adjustment to the Basic Damage.¹²

If the weapon is a spell or other wounding skill, add no Strength adjustment into the Basic Damage unless the spell or skill description states otherwise.

Basic Setback

Basic Setback consists of the Setback associated with the weapon, plus any magical damage adjustments possessed by the weapon, plus Craftiness adjustments, if applicable. Note that Entrapment Weapons are the only type of weapon that normally delivers Setback when used. (Although, other types of weapons can be used as tools in Trickery attempts, and can be used in causing Setback in those situations.)

Margin Damage

Margin Damage is calculated by taking the difference between the assailant's overall Attack Roll and the target's Defense. So, Margin Damage for physical blows equals the Margin of the Attack Roll.

Spells do not ordinarily inflict Margin Damage. If a spell can do so, it explicitly states the fact. (*Note: a spell may produce an effect that does apply Margin Damage to certain creatures that are particularly sensitive to the effect. For example, a Frost Giant is Highly Sensitive to Scorching Damage. As such, a Scorching Effect spell will do Margin Damage to a Frost Giant, even though its spell description does not mention Margin Damage at all.*)

¹² At the Overlord's discretion, an exception can be made for specially made bows that can only be drawn by characters having Strengths greater than 0. In that case, allow an additional Damage bonus to the bow equal to the minimum Strength required to draw it. In Homer's [Odyssey](#), the Greek hero Odysseus had such a bow that no ordinary man could string or draw.

Margin Setback

Margin Setback is calculated by taking the difference between the assailant's overall Attack Roll and the target's Stability. So, Margin Setback for an Entrapment Weapon equals the Margin of the Attack Roll.

Spells that inflict Margin Setback explicitly state the fact.

Internal Damage

Internal Damage is a special form of Margin Damage applied only to creatures with internal organs, which includes most living creatures. (If a creature is Immune to Internal Damage, its description will explicitly state this fact.) Internal Damage is intended to provide a crude gauge on the placement of a weapon's blow. Most melee and range weapons deliver Internal Damage when they strike.

For example, suppose Alvin the Archer shoots Bart the Barbarian with an arrow. Alvin makes his Attack Roll and obtains a roll of 16 on his d20. To this they add their Attack Bonus of +12 for a grand total of 28: a hit since Bart's Defense is only a 22. Since Bart is alive (and not a plant), he is affected by Internal Damage. Therefore, Bart sustains 6 points of Internal Damage (28-22) on top of the arrow's Basic Damage.

A weapon can only deliver Internal Damage to a creature if it has a reasonable chance of being able to hit a vital organ. As such, any given weapon cannot deliver Internal Damage to any creature that is three size categories or more larger than it. So, a dagger, which is a Small weapon, cannot deliver Internal Damage to an elephant, which is a Great creature.

Basic Damage from Mixed Attack Modes

Many creatures have multiple Attack Modes. The nomenclature for Mixed Attacks is to write the Attack Modes out, one by one, separated by forward slashes (/). Thus, if a creature's Attack Modes are a Beak and a Claw attack, these would be listed out as Beak/Claw. The damage used in this Mixed Attack is boiled down to a single number. So, the Damage for the Beak/Claw attack may be listed out as 9. In this case, if an attack lands, you will use this value as the Damage just as if it were a single blow that landed.

If you need to calculate the Damage value for a Mixed Attack, first sort the damage values for all the Attack Modes. Going from the highest to the lowest damage value divide each value by a divisor. The divisor starts at 1, but doubles in value for each Attack Mode. This list should then be added up for a final total. For example, a Melee Weapon/Claw/Kick Mixed Attack Mode having damage values of 6, 3, and 4 would be sorted to 6, 4, and 3. Then the values would be divided by divisors of 1, 2, and 4 to come up with values of 6, 2, and 0.75. Adding these up provides a Damage value of 8.75, rounded to 9 for the Mixed Attack Mode.

Again, all Melee Weapons, including natural attacks such as Punches and Claws, also add in Strength on top of the calculated damage. So, a character using the aforementioned

Mixed Attack Mode having a Strength of 2 would deliver 11 (9+2) Damage.

The damage of a physical attack can come in several forms, including Blunt, Chopping, Cutting, Crushing, Puncturing, and Rending. If a mixed attack contains more than one of these types, treat the whole attack as if delivering Damage of the primary type. That is, the type that delivers the most Damage. On a tie, it is the Overlord's call as to which attack mode is primary for a given creature.

Other Combat Topics

Action Topics

Boss Attacks and Attack Flurries

A character engaged in direct hand-to-hand melee with opponents of significantly lower Level may gain extra attacks in a single Round's Assault. These extra attacks are known as Boss Attacks. The initial attack along with the extra Boss Attacks are collectively known as an Attack Flurry. Despite the fact that an Attack Flurry is comprised of multiple Conflict Rolls, it is considered to be a single Assault Action.

If a combatant's first swing of a melee or natural weapon in a Round attacks a character having a Level that is 2 or more less than his, the aggressor is entitled to one extra Boss Attack. If their second swing attacks a character having a Level that is 4 or more less than theirs, they are entitled to another extra Boss Attack. If their third swing attacks a character having a Level that is 6 or more less than theirs, they are entitled to another extra Boss Attack, etc.

Further, all of the attacks within a single Attack Flurry must be made with weapons that are readied for use. Generally, this means that all the attacks must either be made with the weapon(s) that were originally used, or must be made with various combinations of those weapons and/or other natural weapons. (Natural weapons are always considered to be readied in such cases.)

For example, suppose a griffin having a Level of 7 attacks an elf having a Level of 5. After the griffin's first attack, it is entitled to an extra attack against the elf.

As a second example, suppose the same Level 7 griffin attacks three goblins of Level 2 and one of Level 5. On its first attack, the griffin swings at one of the Level 2 goblins. As such, the griffin is entitled to another attack. It swings again at another goblin (also having a Level 2). Since this second swing was against a Level of 2 (which is 4 or more Levels lower than its own Level), the griffin gains yet another attack, which it makes against the Level 5 goblin.

As a third example, suppose the next Round the same Level 7 griffin attacks the same four goblins, three of Level 2 and one of Level 5. On its first attack, the griffin swings at the Level 5 goblin. As such, the griffin is entitled to another attack in the Round, which it makes against the Level 5 goblin again. Since this is the griffin's second attack, and it

is against an opponent that is only 2 Levels lower than itself, it does not gain a third attack.

Finally, an aggressor may move between their attacks using the normal movement rules. For example, suppose a combatant would get a Boss Attack on one foe, but ends up killing them with their first swing, and the next closest opponent is ten feet away. In that case, they may move to that other foe and use their Boss Attack on them, assuming the combatant has sufficient movement left in the Round to cross the 10-foot distance.

Overlord Advice: When you make attacks for NPCs, you should probably have Mindless or purely Instinctive creatures attack whatever happens to be in front of them (or a random foe, if that's not obvious). Creatures of Animal Cunning will generally attack the most threatening foe within reach. Simpleminded Creatures will likely attack the foe that appears weakest on their first attack (to quickly cut down on the number of foes), and then attack the foe in reach that seems most threatening, if they thereafter get an extra attack. Creatures having a Cunning of Alert or better will make attacks in whatever order appears best for the given circumstance. Highly intelligent creatures will accurately gauge their opponents' abilities, and will distribute their attacks to be as tactically advantageous as possible.

Also, note that the extra attacks do not depend on whether any given attack actually hits or not. So, you can speed up play by distributing a creature's attacks among the different characters in melee with it and having the players roll the attacks on their characters simultaneously.

Defending Another in Melee

One character within Melee Range of another character may help defend that character. This gives the assisted character an Edge against all attacks that the assisting character could potentially help defend against. However, in doing so, the assisting character suffers from a Drawback against attacks directed at them.

For example, a character wielding Quarterstaff could help an ally defend against the blows of a murderous Ogre's club. But, they cannot help defend against arrows, since melee weapons cannot Parry against missile attacks. If, on the other hand, the assisting character wielded a Shield, then they could help defend against airborne missiles.

Equip Actions

An Equip Action either puts a tool in a character's hand or puts it away for later retrieval.

If the tool is At Hand, a character can perform an Equip Action either by using an Action, or by expending that Round's Reaction.

If an item is stored in a location that is not At Hand, a separate Action is required to retrieve the item or put it away.

An At Hand tool is one that is available for immediate use. These are tools that can be easily grabbed without fuss. That

is, they are stored without any barrier between the character's hand and the item. A dagger or sword in its sheath, a potion vial in an open pouch, and an arrow in a quiver slung over a shoulder are all examples of items that are At Hand. In general, a character may only have a small number of items At Hand.

Dropping an item is free, though. It costs no Action or Reaction to do so.

Forgoing Attacks to Defend

If a character concentrates more in parrying blows than in attacking, they gain additional Parry bonuses on their Defense and Stability. Every two points sacrificed from their Attack Bonus using a weapon capable of parrying gives them one point of Parry (round up). They can extend this Parry adjustment only to the point of dropping the Attack Bonus to a +0. This Active Parrying option always starts on the parrying character's Assault Action, and generally continues until their next Assault Action (unless they decide to stop doing so for some reason). On their next Assault Action, they can either choose to continue actively parrying, or not.

If the character completely sacrifices the remaining +0 attack (e.g. they make no Attack Roll at all), they gain one additional point of Parry. They can still Move, but their actions are otherwise entirely taken up by the act of parrying. When engaged in a Full Parry action like this, a character no longer threatens the space around them and cannot assist in flanking opponents.

Holding the Blow

"Holding the Blow" is an Action taken by an aggressor that temporarily stops the effects of a successful attack against an opponent, while still retaining the potential to deliver them should the aggressor choose to do so. In other words, take what would normally be an "Action", and change it into a "Reaction". In this way, a player may show mercy to a disadvantaged opponent, and potentially transform a victory of carnage into one of guile. To hold a blow, a player must state that they wish to do so after they have made their Attack Roll, but before any Damage or other effects are delivered. They may do so only against an opponent that has been surprised, is prone, or is otherwise caught off-balance. When this is done, the aggressor allows a short pause in the conflict to allow their opponent an opportunity to assess the gravity of their circumstance, thereby allowing them the option of surrender rather than be ignominiously slaughtered. As such, both parties are allowed to know the result of the Attack Roll, in order to assess the state of affairs. At any time they specify, the aggressor may deliver the effects of the held blow as normal.

For example, suppose a burglar, dagger in hand, sneaks up behind a guard patrolling the grounds of the mansion they are robbing. Further, let's suppose that the prowler makes a superb Attack Roll against their opponent. Rather than stick a stiletto into his quarry's jugular, the thief may opt to merely lay their blade against the sentry's throat and whisper

“freeze or you're dead” into his ear. Assuming the guard is not suicidal, it is likely that he will drop whatever weapon he carries and allow themselves to be gagged and tied.

The consequences of the attack may be held in check as long as the aggressor is not disturbed by outside forces. If the aggressor is provoked, though, they must make an immediate decision to either follow through with the attack or forgo its effects entirely.

Performing Reactions

A Reaction is an act taken in response to circumstances outside of the reacting character's control. Most characters may perform only one Reaction on any given Round, but may do so at any time, including during another character's turn. However, they can only perform a Reaction when a situation arises where the rules explicitly state that a Reaction is possible.¹³

The specific Reactions that a character may take usually depend on the outside influences affecting them, and are detailed in the description of those circumstances. For example, a magic spell may summon a magical fire in an area, and allow any creatures within the area when it initially arises to move out of the area as a Reaction.

Some abilities give a character the ability to perform special Reactions that are unavailable to other characters. For example, a character may possess a special Reaction ability to divert or reflect a magic spell directly targeting them.

If a creature has multiple heads, each of which acts independently of the others, then each head may perform one Reaction on any given Round, assuming a situation arises in which a Reaction may be taken.

Preparing an Action

“Preparing an Action” is a maneuver whereby a character executes all the requirements of performing an Action, save for the very final act of completing it. Instead, the character holds off the last step in preparation for some future event to transpire. When and if it does, the character immediately completes the action (transforming what would normally be an Action into a Reaction). This may be done with a weapon strike, a skill, a spell, or any other activity that would not be entirely ruined by a pause in its preparation (GM's discretion). While a character waits with a prepared action, they cannot perform any other acts, unless otherwise specified (such as allowed by some Maleficium Styles).

For example, suppose a burglar robbing a warehouse hears footsteps approaching from the hallway leading to the room in which they find themselves. Suppose they decide to surprise the approaching guard and stand right next to the doorway, dagger in hand. As the footsteps grow louder, the thief readies their dagger. However, they do not strike yet,

because the guard has not yet passed through the doorway. Instead, they stand there, ready to strike as soon as the opportunity presents itself. When the guard finally enters the room, the burglar's attack immediately triggers.

Using Magic Items

Magic items triggered by command words, actions of the owner, or other triggering event take as much time casting spells as do actual spell-casters. Therefore, combat spells cast from items require an Action to use. Additionally, magic items must be readied and triggered by the holder. These costs are not applicable to items that use a constant magic such as a flaming sword, a mace of Icy Touch, etc.

Common Missteps

Blunders

If the rules state that a character blunders, they do something that sets them back in some unspecified way. They may briefly lose their balance, slip, misstep, be deceived by an opponent's feint, or fumble in some other way. When this happens, the player has great freedom in narrating what happens. Further, the character sustains additional Voluntary¹⁴ Setback, which is a flat 5 points unless otherwise stated.

Drops

When the rules state that a character Drops something, they lose their grip on an item held in their hand. When this happens, they must make a Weighted Direction Roll. The item lands 5 feet beyond the character's Reach in the indicated direction. So, recovering it requires, at a minimum, a Move to its location and another Action or Reaction to pick it up.

Friendly Fire

At times, the rules indicate that a character strikes a comrade in battle. These are cases, known as Friendly Fire, where the aggressor could have avoided their blunder, but acted recklessly to avoid suffering from a Drawback on their Attack Roll. In these situations, Damage and/or Setback is calculated normally for a weapon of its type, with the exception that the Absolute Margin by which the roll failed is applied as if it were the Margin on a roll against the struck companion.

For example, suppose Bob the Bowman is shooting at a goblin, who is in battle with Bob's companion, Freddy the Frontline Fighter. Unfortunately, Freddy is between Bob and the goblin, who has a Defense of 20. The rules state that Bob can avoid any chance of striking Freddy if he accepts a Drawback on his Attack Roll. But, Freddy doesn't like that

¹³ Reactions were instituted to handle situations in which a character would otherwise be unable to provide a reasonable response to a foe's Action using an Action of their own due to the timing mechanisms of the Round-based conflicts rules used in the game. The rules do sometimes explicitly allow characters to expend their Reactions on more mundane acts, such as in drawing weapons. But, those situations are mere conveniences, not the primary reason Reactions exist.

¹⁴ The Setback is considered Voluntary only because nothing is Immune or Resistant to Voluntary Setback, ensuring the character is actually set back in some fashion. So, the narrating player has no motivation to describe events in a way that the character could logically avoid any meaningful blunder.

idea, and so shoots his bow recklessly with his Attack Bonus of +7. Unfortunately, Bob rolls a 1 on the d20, for a total of $1+7=8$ overall. This misses the goblin's Defense by 12 points. So, the arrow strikes Freddy in the back with 12 points of Internal Damage on top of the basic Damage it normally delivers!

Knocked Prone

When a character is knocked Prone, their current Action is interrupted and they immediately fall to the ground. They must expend an Assault Action to regain their feet. Until this time, they have a Drawback when defending from all attacks and cannot initiate another Action until they regain their feet.

While a foe cannot pass through the space of a Prone character, a Prone character no longer threatens the space around them. As such, they can be easily bypassed by a foe if no other comrade defends the areas adjacent to them.

Further, if the rules indicate that a combatant is Knocked Prone, then they suffer the mechanical detriments of the condition, even if their body form lacks feet (such as a snake, worm, etc.). In these cases, just assume the creature has been put severely off-balance, or is otherwise impeded until they expend an Assault Action to recover.

Pushed

When a character is Pushed, they are moved in a direction opposite from that of the attack, unless something occupies that space preventing them from entering it. Unless otherwise stated, they are pushed a distance of 5 feet.

Cover Bonuses

This rule is really a bit of advice to the Overlord for determining how much of a bonus a character should be allowed against Conflict Rolls when partially concealed. Rather than think of bonuses in terms of what fraction of a target's body the cover conceals, consider what fraction of the target's body is exposed. Then, round this value to the closest fraction having "1" as the numerator (e.g. "1/2 exposed", "1/3 exposed", "1/4", "1/5", etc.)

The bonus to the target's Defense equals the denominator of this fraction. So, if a target is standing behind an arrow slit shooting arrows, it has around 1/8th of its body exposed. It therefore gets a +8 against Attack Rolls. (This would be about the largest bonus that should be allowed and still let the target attack with a range weapon.)

We would ordinarily discount 1/1 if there is absolutely no cover (complete exposure). However, if there is slight cover and you merely round up to 1/1 exposure because that is closer than 1/2 exposure, then a +1 bonus is reasonable.

This rule meshes well with shield bonuses: +1 for Undersize Shields, +2 for Proportional Shields, and +3 for Oversize Shields.

Taking this to its extreme, if the target is standing entirely behind a brick wall with nothing exposed, the fraction of

exposure would be 1/infinity. The bonus against Attack Rolls would thus be +infinity, implying the target cannot be hit at all.

Dual Weapon Fighting

Some gifts and Martial Proficiencies allow a character to use a weapon in each hand. (If it does, the description will explicitly say so.) Note that Dual Weapon Fighting is only granted by some Weapon Proficiencies (such as Wielding Shields) and Gifts that explicitly state they do. Ranks gained in individual weapons do not provide this option on their own.

When allowed, a person may fight with a weapon in each hand, with whatever restrictions the Gift states. (For example, the Florentine-Style Fencing Gift states that both weapons must be Proportional or Undersize blades.) So, a Medium-sized Human would not be able to dual-wield Large Swords, regardless of their Strength.

Dual Weapon Fighting has the following effect on combat stats:

- *Attack Bonus:* When wielding two weapons, use the lower Attack Bonus of the two weapons used. If two *different* weapon types are used, add an additional +1 Synergy Bonus to the Attack Bonus. For example, Doug the Duelist dual wields a Rapier and a Stiletto using the gift of Florentine-Style Fencing. Further, Doug has a Vigor of 4. Through much diligence, Doug attained 6th rank in rapier and 7th rank in Stiletto, for Attack Bonuses of +10 and +11, respectively. Since Rapier has the lower Attack Bonus, he bases his Florentine-Style Fencing Attack Bonus on his Rapier. Since he wields two dissimilar weapons (Rapier and Stiletto), he gains an additional +1 Synergy Bonus, for an overall Attack Bonus of +11.
- *Damage/Setback:* Fighting with two weapons enhances attacking opportunities by allowing either hand to strike blows. Whenever an attack succeeds, the aggressor decides which weapon is the primary and which is the secondary. The delivered Damage equals the primary weapon's Damage plus half the secondary weapon's Damage. The delivered Setback equals the primary weapon's Setback plus half the secondary weapon's Setback. Which weapon is being used as the primary and which is the secondary may be changed on an attack-by-attack basis. (For most weapon combinations, though, the weapon doing the highest Damage is taken as the primary unless otherwise specified.) Any Margin effects of an attack are determined by the primary weapon. So, if an Entrapment Weapon is used as the primary, the roll's Margin goes to Setback. But, if a sword is used, the roll's Margin goes to Damage.

- *Parry*: Dual weapon combat helps in parrying as well. The combined parry value equals the higher parry value of the two weapons plus one.

Handling Chases

When one character flees and another pursues, a chase ensues. Playing out a chase on a battle grid using standard movement rules is possible. But, doing so can be tedious, and lacks the exciting ebb and flow inherent in cinematic chases. These rules exist as an alternative method intended to recapture some of that drama.

To determine the outcome, Initiative is rolled as normal. Both the evading force and pursuing force each make Group Conflict Rolls¹⁵ with Intelligence adjustments on their turn. The evader makes an Evasion Roll, while the pursuer makes a Pursuit Roll, as described below.

The Threshold that each roll must overcome equals 10 plus the opposing force's Level plus Intelligence.

In addition, the side with the higher Speed, if any, gains an Edge on these rolls. If that side's Speed is double or more of the slower side's Speed, they instead gain an Extreme Edge.

Evasion Terrain Bonus Table

Terrain Type	Roll Bonus
Easy (Open ground, no traffic)	+0
Moderate (rough ground, moderate traffic, light scrub)	+5
Challenging (heavy traffic, forest with little undergrowth, moderate scrub)	+10
Hard (dense crowd, forest with dense undergrowth, boulders, heavy scrub)	+15
Legendary (maze, twisty narrow tunnels)	+25

Evasion Rolls

The fleeing character has more control than the pursuer in a chase, because the pursuer mostly follows where the evader leads. As such, the evader can take greater advantage of terrain features in their attempted escape. Thus, the evader adds a bonus to their Evasion Rolls as indicated on the [Evasion Terrain Bonus Table](#).

A Pure Success on an Evasion roll indicates the fleeing character gets away by taking advantage of some terrain feature to evade pursuit, because the pursuer trips and falls to the ground, or some other reason.

On a Bare Success, the evading character stays mostly out of reach for the moment due to a complication experienced by

the pursuer. In that case, the pursuer should choose one of the following:

- The pursuer stumbles badly, giving the evader an Edge on their next chase roll.
- The pursuer suffers Fatiguing Setback equal to 7 plus the roll's Margin. *If this drops the pursuer's Fate Points to 0, the pursuer drops to the ground exhausted while Overcome.*

On a Bare Failure, the pursuer catches up to the evader. The evader should choose one of the following:

- The pursuer may attack the evader. The Attack Roll is made with an Edge, although the evader's Defense and Stability retain their Parry adjustments, if any.
- An unexpected terrain feature imposes a Drawback on the evader's next chase roll. Describe what happens.
- The evader sustains Fatiguing Setback equal to 7 plus the roll's Margin. *If this drops the evader's Fate Points to 0, they drop to the ground exhausted while Overcome.*

On a Pure Failure, the pursuer halts the evader's escape entirely. They may have run into a blind canyon, be caught with their back to a hedge wall, may be too out of breath to continue running, or may have run out of options for other reasons. In any case, they are forced to stand their ground for the remainder of the Scene. They may participate in combat as normal, but they no longer have the option to run away or retreat. Describe why this is so.

Pursuit Rolls

A success on a Pursuit roll indicates the pursuer catches up to the evader. A Pure Success indicates the pursuer stops the evader in their tracks, and forces them to stand their ground until the end of the Scene (as described above).

On a Bare Success, the pursuing character barely keeps up due to a complication experienced by the evader. In that case, the evader should choose one of the following:

- The evader stumbles badly, giving the pursuer an Edge on their next chase roll.
- The evader sustains Fatiguing Setback equal to 7 plus the roll's Margin. *If this drops the evader's Fate Points to 0, they drop to the ground exhausted while Overcome.*

On a Bare Failure, the evader gets a significant lead on the pursuer. The pursuer should choose one of the following:

- The evader may attempt to hide (using whatever Sneaking-based skill is appropriate). However, the roll must be made at a Drawback due to the hot pursuit. If successful, the evader successfully hides from their pursuers until the situation changes in some significant way. This option is only available if the terrain is Challenging or greater.

¹⁵ Note that the Overlord may elect to use specific skills on the Chase rolls rather than Level, depending on the chasing circumstances. For example, they may adapt these rules for a ship chase using the two captains' [Wilderness Survival](#) skills instead, potentially augmented with [Marine Wisdom](#).

- An unexpected terrain feature imposes a Drawback on the pursuer’s next chase roll. Describe what happens.
- The pursuer suffers Fatiguing Setback equal to 7 plus the roll’s Margin. *If this drops the pursuer’s Fate Points to 0, the pursuer drops to the ground exhausted while Overcome.*

On a Pure Failure, circumstances allow the evader to get away completely. Describe how.

Handling Swarms

Swarm is a general term for a teeming multitude of similar creatures of Tiny size or smaller. They congregate into a contiguous throng that acts with a singular will. Swarms of bees, rats, wasps, and other creatures are common.

Logically, a Swarm may consist of any creature type of size Tiny or smaller having a Cunning of Animal or less. So, rats, spiders, bats, and bees can all swarm. But, you don’t need the stats of a specimen that is so small to specify a Swarm’s stats. Rather, from a game mechanics standpoint, you derive a Swarm’s stats from a Medium-sized example of the creature (explained below).

Swarms act almost like fluids. The normal rules for movement through Defended Areas do not apply to Swarms and they can occupy the same space as any other non-swarming creature. Further, swarms cannot be maneuvered, fettered, or grappled any more than a fluid could be. Any creature occupying the same space as a Swarm has any land movement Speed reduced to a Creep (5 feet per Move).

Some creature descriptions in the various monster books provide stats for Swarms. But, you can derive Swarm stats for any creature. With the goal of keeping things as simple as possible, stats for a Swarm can be mostly taken from a Medium-sized example of the creature. If no such example exists, you can use the rules for Enlarging or Shrinking to derive the stats of a Medium-Sized example of the creature. Or, for a quick-and-dirty Swarm, just use the accompanying stats for the Default Swarm Batch.

A Swarm is made up of any number of “Batches”, each of which occupies the space of a Medium-sized creature (which may overlap that of another creature). Each Batch has stats representing it as if it were an individual creature.

Each Batch has a number of Hit Points and Fate Points equal to that of the Medium-Sized example. However, any Damage and/or Setback delivered to any portion of the Swarm is always delivered to one of the Batches in the Swarm. As soon as the Swarm takes enough punishment to take out a Batch, one of them is removed, thus reducing its extent. The particular Batch that is removed is at the discretion of the Overlord with the caveat that the Swarm cannot be split up; it must remain contiguous unless forcibly separated somehow (in which case it becomes two smaller swarms). The Swarm is defeated when all Batches are eliminated. XP is rewarded as if each Batch were a separate creature.

Default Swarm Batch Examples

Move Modes: Ambulate

Attack Modes: Nibble/Nibble/Nibble

Size: Each Batch takes up the space of a Medium sized creature, but it is comprised of myriad creatures of size Tiny or smaller.

Baseline Attributes

TN= 0; ST= 0; AG= 0; CR= 0; PC= 1; HT= -2; IN= -6

Adequate (Level 0)

TN= 0; ST= 0; AG= 0; CR= 0; PC= 1; HT= -2; IN= -6

HP=32; FP=29; Ward=0; SP=20 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+4 | 5 | 14 | 15

Decent (Level 2)

TN= 0; ST= 1; AG= 1; CR= 0; PC= 1; HT= -2; IN= -6

HP=35; FP=29; Ward=0; SP=25 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+8 | 6 | 17 | 17

Fit (Level 4)

TN= 0; ST= 2; AG= 1; CR= 0; PC= 2; HT= -2; IN= -6

HP=38; FP=32; Ward=0; SP=30 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+11 | 7 | 19 | 20

Laudable (Level 6)

TN= 0; ST= 3; AG= 2; CR= 0; PC= 2; HT= -2; IN= -6

HP=41; FP=32; Ward=0; SP=35 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+15 | 8 | 22 | 22

Outstanding (Level 8)

TN= 1; ST= 3; AG= 2; CR= 0; PC= 2; HT= -2; IN= -5

HP=45; FP=32; Ward=1; SP=35 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+17 | 8 | 25 | 25

Remarkable (Level 10)

TN= 1; ST= 3; AG= 2; CR= 0; PC= 4; HT= -2; IN= -5

HP=45; FP=38; Ward=1; SP=40 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+19 | 8 | 27 | 29

Superb (Level 12)

TN= 3; ST= 3; AG= 2; CR= 0; PC= 4; HT= -2; IN= -5

HP=54; FP=38; Ward=1; SP=40 (ambulate)

Att | Dam | Def | Stab: nibble(×3)=+21 | 8 | 31 | 33

All Swarms have 0 Reach, so they cannot attack anything adjacent to them. They cannot Flank other creatures and cannot, themselves, be flanked. However, on a successful Attack, each Batch of a Swarm delivers the stated Damage and/or Setback to all creatures in the areas it occupies. (Normal Ward rules apply against this damage.)

The Swarm retains all of the Immunities and Sensitivities of the creature type comprising it, and retains its other

properties as well. So, a Rat Swarm may inflict diseases on its targets.

However, Swarms are Highly Sensitive to all effects that affect areas, except those effects to which the creature type is entirely immune. In addition, the effects of any such abilities apply to all Batches within the area. So, a [Pitch Great Slick Fell Hailstorm](#) spell would inflict damage to each Batch in its area. (This damage would then all be redirected to one particular Batch of the Overlord's choosing).

Further, an outside assailant attacking someone occupying the same space as a swarm has a danger of striking the other combatant instead. In this case they have two options:

- Take extra care in their attacks to forego any chance of hitting the other combatant, but suffer from a Drawback on their Attack Roll.
- Strike the other combatant on any Pure Failure on their attack, as described under [Friendly Fire](#).

Missile Topics

Defense Against Missiles

Parry does not generally help in defending your character against projectiles (except in rare cases where magic is involved). Even so, targets at a distance have their Defense and Stability stats increased by a Gap Bonus simply because they are at a range. This Gap Bonus normally equals 4 points at a range greater than 10 feet. Anything 10 feet or less is known as Point Blank Range, which means the Gap Bonus equals 0. This means that the Defense and Stability of most monsters remain the same at a range since most natural attack modes (other than empty non-clawed hands) are assumed to have a Parry of 4.

Shooting Missile Weapons at Far Range

This rule only applies to Range Weapons having a Range of Medium (160 feet) or greater. Anytime a character uses such a Range Weapon at a target who is further than half of its full Range, the shooter suffers from a Drawback on their Attack Roll.

Shooting Missile Weapons in Combat

Your character may find themselves in a situation where you are tempted to shoot arrows and bolts in combat when creatures attack you directly. Nevertheless, it is difficult to knock an arrow or load a bolt while dodging the sword thrusts of an opponent. If your character shoots arrows or bolts while in combat, they have no Parry and suffer a Drawback against all physical attacks directed at them.

Shooting Missile Weapons Into Combat

If you launch projectiles into active melee, you suffer great risk in striking allies with stray shots. For most situations, shooting missiles into combat is feasible only if your

character has a clear line-of-sight to the target. Such a line of sight is automatic if the target is substantially taller than your allies (e.g. the target is a Giant or your allies are all gnomes and hobs who are fighting ordinary men).

Otherwise, range attacks are usually reasonable only if your character is at a substantially higher elevation. (The [Arching with...](#) Gift allows a character to safely lob projectiles over their comrades' heads in high arcs. See [The Character Compendium](#) for details.)

Otherwise, if you insist on shooting arrows into an active melee situation without a clear line-of-sight, you have a danger of striking the interposing combatant instead. In this case you have two options:

- Take extra care in your attacks to forego any chance of hitting the interposing combatant, but suffer from a Drawback on your Attack Roll.
- Strike the other combatant on any Pure Failure on your attack, as described under [Friendly Fire](#).

Natural Attacks

Most creatures have natural attack modes built-in to the creature's form. These are attacks a creature may use in lieu of unnatural weapons, such as swords and clubs.

Natural Weapon Attack Bonuses

Natural attack modes are used instinctively. So, the Attack Bonus of all natural attack forms is calculated using Level rather than a skill rank, as it the case for other types of weapons. In all other respects, the Attack Bonuses for natural weapons are calculated in a fashion identical to those for other weapons. So, natural melee weapons have Attack Bonuses equal to Level plus Vigor. Natural range weapons have Attack Bonuses equal to Level plus Acumen.

Mixing Natural and Unnatural Attack Modes

Natural attacks cannot be mixed with unnatural attacks, such as swinging a sword, unless the character uses a fighting style allowing mixed combat modes (e.g. [Pankration](#)).

Natural Attack Modes for Various Races

Details of the various natural attacks for the various Races in Mythmagica can be found in [The Character Compendium](#).

Special Attack Modes

Some Attack Modes used in the game fall outside the typical Melee / Range weapon categories, as described hereafter.

Binding Attack

Binding Attacks attempt to wrap up and restrain their targets with long rope-like appendages. (Animated Ropes use this Attack Mode, for example.)

Binding Attacks are handled as Restraining Attacks (described below), although they don't deliver any Damage.

Blood Drain Attack

A Blood Drain Attack occurs when a creature latches on to its prey (usually by performing a Grabbing Attack), holds on with an iron grip, and periodically sucks blood from it. The blood drain imposes an automatic fixed amount of Bleeding Damage every Round. (The Damage delivered varies from creature to creature, and is listed in its description.)

Unless otherwise stated, maintaining a grip in this way does not require any additional Conflict Rolls from the aggressor, but requires them to expend an Assault Action. Usually, such creatures will maintain their grip until completely satiated, unless they are Overcome. While the grip holds, neither combatant can Move away from their opponent.

When feasting, the blood sucker slowly balloons with blood until it has either killed its host or has delivered an amount of Bleeding Damage equal to its own maximum Hit Points. At that point, the engorged creature will release its host and either escape or attack another creature.

Every Round a creature has blood drained, it must make an Avoidance Roll with Toughness Adjustments until its first Failure. From that point until the end of the Scene, the prey suffers from lethargy. (See Lethargic in the Character Conditions section of The Rules Reference for details.)

On their turn, the creature being held has the option to fight back however they choose. This potentially includes trying to free themselves using the Grappling skill. If the held creature attacks back with a melee weapon, the blood sucker's Defense is unchanged, but the held creature gains an Edge.

Further, an outside assailant attacking someone engaged in one of these conflicts has a danger of striking the other combatant instead. In this case they have two options:

- Take extra care in their attacks to forego any chance of hitting the other combatant, but suffer from a Drawback in their Attack Roll when doing so.
- Strike the other combatant on any Pure Failure on their attack, as described under Friendly Fire.

Constriction Attack

Constriction Attacks use a long serpentine tail or body to restrain and crush their prey.

Constriction attacks are handled as Restraining Attacks. For further details, see Constricted / Crushed in the Character Conditions section.

Grab-and-Carry Attack

Grab and Carry is a form of attack in which a flying creature rapidly approaches their prey from above, grabs them, and quickly carts them off. A creature can only perform a Grab-and-Carry Attack against a target having a Size Category smaller than itself.

To perform a Grab-and-Carry Attack, the creature must approach their prey from a higher elevation and make a successful Grabbing Attack to get a grip on it (as described below). Thereafter, the grabbing creature maintains their grip without the need for any subsequent Conflict Rolls, although they must expend an Action every Round to do so. While the grip holds, the target cannot Move away from their captor as they are carried off. And, while the grabber always has the option of dropping their prey, they cannot otherwise attack them as their Actions are entirely focused on both flying and maintaining their grip.

On their turn, the creature being carried has the option to fight back however they choose. This potentially includes trying to free themselves using the Grappling skill. If the held creature attacks back with a melee weapon, the grabber's Defense is unchanged, but the carried creature gains an Edge.

Grabbing Attack

A Grabbing Attack is a Melee Attack in which an aggressor grabs hold of a target in some fashion. A Grabbing Attack is often the first step in performing a more elaborate attack sequence (such as a Restraining Attack, Grab-and-Carry Attack, or when Grappling).

A Grabbing Attack requires the aggressor to make an Attack Roll against their target's Stability. Their bonus on this Conflict Roll equals their Vigor plus a Tempo of +4 plus their Level (or skill rank when a specific skill is being used). If successful, the creature grabs hold of its target and delivers the creature's stated Damage (as Crushing Damage unless otherwise indicated) and Setback (as Footing Setback). On a Natural Success, double the Damage and Setback.

Maintaining a grip generally requires the aggressor to make subsequent Conflict Rolls of some kind every Round, and to avoid a Pure Failure when doing so. (The specifics of what those Conflict Rolls entail depends on the mode of attack being used.) Further, the target is usually allowed to expend Actions to break the grip. Doing so requires the target to attain a Pure Success on a Conflict Roll (again, whose specifics depend on the mode of attack being used). While the grip holds, neither combatant can Move away from their opponent.

Passing-Blow Attack

A Passing Blow Attack is an attack in which a creature quickly moves in on a target using part of a Move Action, performs a Melee Attack on their target without pausing their movement, and then uses the remainder of their original Move Action to move away from them. Passing-Blow Attacks can only be performed in special circumstances, and the rules explicitly call out the possibility when applicable.

A creature performing a Passing-Blow Attack foregoes any potential extra Boss Attacks that they might gain for having a superior Level to that of their target. On the other hand, they may gain a height Edge on their attack if they have a higher elevation than their target (such as when flying).

The target of a Passing-Blow Attack may respond with a single Melee Attack on the attacker as they pass by. In doing so, they may either Prepare an Action to perform the attack, or expend their Round's Reaction to do as a Reaction Attack, at their discretion. However, there is only enough time to perform a single attack in response to a Passing Blow. They cannot gain attacks for both a Prepared Action and a Reaction, and they must forego any potential Boss attacks, in cases where their Level exceeds that of their passing opponent.

Restraining Attack

A Restraining Attack is any attack in which a creature attempts to grab hold of and restrain its opponent. Most often, this is done with tentacles, tendrils, or a serpentine tail, although they are not limited to those attack forms.

Restraining Attacks first require the creature to make a Grabbing Attack (as described above).

Thereafter, the creature must make a Fettering Attack Roll every Round with a bonus equal to their Level plus Vigor against the target's Stability.

Success indicates that the target again sustains the stated Damage (if any, as Crushing Damage, unless otherwise stated) and Setback (as Fettering Setback). The roll's Margin is added as additional Fettering Setback.

On a Natural Success, double the Damage and Setback.

On a Pure Success, the aggressor may choose to break away from any physical hold their opponent has on them, if any.

A Bare Failure on the Fettering Attack Roll indicates that no additional Damage or Setback is delivered, but the grip still holds.

A Pure Failure indicates the hold is broken and the prey escapes the grasp.

Unless otherwise stated, maintaining a grip in this way requires the aggressor to expend an Assault Action. While the grip holds, neither combatant can Move away from their opponent.

On their turn, the creature being held has the option to fight back however they choose. This potentially includes trying to free themselves using the Grappling skill. If the held

creature attacks back with a melee weapon, the restrainer's Defense is unchanged, but the held creature gains an Edge.

Further, an outside assailant attacking someone engaged in one of these conflicts has a danger of striking the other combatant instead. In this case they have two options:

- Take extra care in their attacks to forego any chance of hitting the other combatant, but suffer from a Drawback in their Attack Roll when doing so.
- Strike the other combatant on any Pure Failure on their attack, as described under Friendly Fire.

Scuffling Attack

A Scuffling Attack involves grabbing hold of a foe, or some item attached to them, and pulling, pushing, twisting, or otherwise tripping them up. (Scuffling Attacks are distinguished from Restraining Attacks in that they do not involve reaching around the opponent's body and squeezing. They only involve hanging on and thrashing about.)

A Scuffling Attack requires the creature to make a Grabbing Attack against their prey's Stability every Round. Their bonus on this Conflict Roll equals their Level plus Vigor plus a Tempo of +4. If successful, the creature grabs hold of their target (or continues hanging on) and delivers the stated damage (if any, as Rending Damage) and setback (as Footing Setback).

On a Natural Success, double the Damage and Setback.

On a Pure Success, the aggressor may choose to break away from any physical hold their opponent has on them, if any.

After an initially successful Grabbing Attack, a Bare Failure on a subsequent Grabbing Attack indicates that no additional Damage or Setback is delivered, but the creature is still holding on. A Pure Failure indicates the hold is broken and the target escapes the grasp.

Unless otherwise stated, maintaining a grip in this way requires the creature to expend an Assault Action. While the grip holds, neither combatant can Move away from their opponent.

On their turn, the creature being grabbed has the option to fight back however they choose. This potentially includes trying to free themselves using the Grappling skill.

Further, an outside assailant attacking someone engaged in one of these conflicts has a danger of striking the other combatant instead. In this case they have two options:

- Take extra care in their attacks to forego any chance of hitting the other combatant, but suffer from a Drawback in their Attack Roll when doing so.
- Strike the other combatant on any Pure Failure on their attack, as described under Friendly Fire.

Shoving Attack

A Shoving Attack is a Melee Attack in which an aggressor pushes their foe directly away from them using a natural weapon. It requires the aggressor to make an Attack Roll

against their target's Stability. Their bonus on this Conflict Roll equals their Vigor plus a Tempo of +4 plus their Level (or the Strong-Arming skill rank if the creature does not have a natural Shove attack). If successful, the creature delivers an amount of Setback equal to the creature's Vigor (if positive) plus the roll's Margin. (This Setback should be treated as Footing Setback unless otherwise indicated.) Further, it moves its target directly away from it a distance equal to the aggressor's Reach. On a Natural Success, the Setback is doubled and the target is knocked Prone to the ground. Note that a creature delivering a Shoving Attack will often close the distance between them immediately afterward to retain the ground gained in the attack.

Spell Attack

Many offensive spells target individual creatures at a range. If such an attack is rolled against a Threshold that includes Gap (as is the case with both Defense and Stability), it is known as a Spell Attack. Unless specified otherwise in the spell's description, the caster's Roll Bonus on all such attacks equals their rank in the spell, plus Acumen, plus a Tempo bonus of +4.

Tail-Whip Attack

A Tail Whip is a long tail used to trip up a foe. The Attack Roll has a bonus equal to the creature's Level plus Vigor adjustments against the target's Stability. It delivers the stated damage (as Rending Damage) and setback (as Footing Setback). The Margin of the Attack Roll is added as additional Footing Setback.

Tendrils Attack

A Tendril is a long, extremely tough, vine-like appendage of a vegetal creature. It is used to grab and restrain prey, usually with the intention of drawing them toward the creature for consumption.

Tendrils are handled as Restraining Attacks, although they generally do not deliver any Crushing Damage.

Most creatures using this Attack Mode have multiple Tendrils. Such creatures may maintain their current holds without expending Assault Actions. This allows them to potentially make Grabbing Attacks against other foes while doing so.

Tentacle Attack

A Tentacle is a long rubbery appendage lined with suction cups. It is used to grab and restrain prey, usually with the intention of drawing them toward the creature's maw for consumption.

Tentacles are handled as Restraining Attacks.

Most creatures using this Attack Mode have multiple Tentacles. Such creatures may maintain their current holds without expending Assault Actions. This allows them to potentially make Grabbing Attacks against other foes while doing so.

Thorny-Tendrils Attack

A Thorny Tendril is a long, extremely tough, vine-like appendage covered in thorns. It is an attack used by some vegetal creatures to grab and restrain prey, usually with the intention of drawing them toward the creature for consumption.

Thorny Tendril Attacks are handled as Restraining Attacks. The damage they inflict on the Grabbing Attack is considered Rending Damage, while the damage they inflict on the subsequent Fettering attacks is considered Bleeding Damage.

Most creatures using this Attack Mode have multiple Thorny Tendrils. Such creatures may maintain their current holds without expending Assault Actions. This allows them to potentially make Grabbing Attacks against other foes while doing so.

Touch Attacks

If an attack is delivered by a mere touch (as is required for some spells), it is known as a Touch Attack. The target is allowed Parry against this form of attack (which is included in both Defense and Stability). The Attack Bonus for this kind of attack equals the creature's Level plus Acumen plus the attacker's Natural Weapon Tempo. The roll goes against the target's Defense, unless otherwise stated.

Using Entrapment Weapons

Weapons, such as nets, lassos, whips, and similar instruments are known as Entrapment Weapons. Their purpose is to ensnare or entangle rather than inflict damage. (Grappling is also included in this category.) Rather than target an opponent's Hit Points, Entrapment Weapons put more emphases on reducing their Fate Points, and may hinder their actions. As such, each Entrapment Weapon is associated with a Setback value. (Some Entrapment Weapons inflict both Damage and Setback on their targets.) When an Entrapment Weapon hits its target, the target suffers Setback equal to that associated with the weapon plus the Conflict Roll's Margin.

To strike, an Entrapment Weapon must overcome its target's Stability (rather than its Defense).

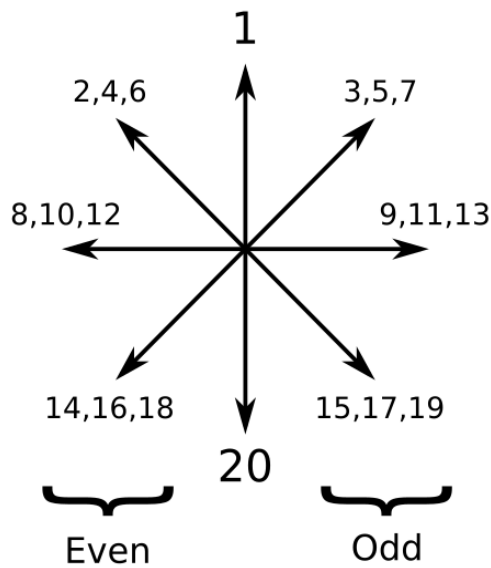
If an Entrapment Weapon drops its target's Fate Points to zero, it is Overcome and suffers the consequences described on the table Aftermath: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Non-Lethal Violence.

Using Non-Proficient Weapons

If a character uses a weapon in which they have gained no ranks, they may always default to their Melee, Ballistics, or Trickery skills, whichever is appropriate.

Weighted Direction Rolls

Characters occasionally drop weapons and other items. If you need to determine the direction in which an item is dropped, roll a d20 and consult the Weighted Direction Roll diagram. In this diagram, a roll of 1 is directly in front of the character dropping the item, while a roll of 20 is directly behind them. For numbers other than 1 and 20, an even roll is to the character's left, while an odd roll is to the character's right. A low number indicates a direction toward their front, a middle number indicates their side, and a high number indicates a direction behind them.



Weighted Direction Roll

Example Conflict

This section provides an example conflict to give a feel for how the rules fit together into a coherent whole.

Capturing a Pegasus

“After trekking across the plains, Bellerophon finally approaches the Spring of Asclepius. He sees a pair of winged horses drinking at the spring, just as the Oracle predicted,” Alice says, looking expectantly at Bob. She volunteered to act as Overlord for this campaign, and convinced the group to try out Mythmagica. They’ve played the game long enough for Bob’s character Bellerophon to have made it to 8th Level.

“The Oracle said that winged horses are skittish. I’ll want to catch them off guard. So, I’m going to sneak up to the spring,” Bob responds.

“Okay. That sounds like a Rural Stealth Roll to me.” She looks up the description for Rural Stealth and notes that the Threshold for that skill equals 10 plus the opposition’s highest Level plus its Perception. “The stallion is 6th Level and has a Perception of 2. That means the Threshold you have to beat is an 18. So, your roll plus adjustments will need a total greater than 18.”

“Bellerophon doesn’t have Rural Stealth, I’m afraid,” Bob says. “I’ll have to use Sneaking, which is the default for Rural Stealth. I’m only first rank in that, and my Grace is a 3. So, my bonus in that is a +4.”

“Unfortunately, you’re trying to sneak up on two horses. Because of the rules for Group Conflict Rolls, that means you’re rolling with a Drawback as well,” Alice says. “Good luck with that.”

Bob rolls a couple of d20s. “Crap! I rolled a 10 and a 20. What a waste of a 20. A 10 it is, then. Adding my +4 to that, it comes up with a total of 14. Since I need a total greater than 18, that misses the mark by 5 points!” Bob pauses for a moment to think. “This is too important. I’ve got to catch one, or I’ll never be able to rescue my cousin in time. I’ll spend the Guts to succeed.” Bob spends 5 Guts points to bring the Sneaking Roll total up to a 19 to beat the 18 Threshold.

“Sneaking through the tall grass, you make it up fairly close to the horses,” Alice says. “Since you succeeded on your Sneaking roll, there’s no need to roll Initiative. You have the first Go. And, they are Surprised, giving you an Edge.”

“Awesome!” Bob picks up two d20s. “I prepare my lasso, and toss it at the stallion.”

Alice nods. “Sounds good. The stallion’s Stability is a 28. The initial attack with a lasso counts as a Range Weapon. Go ahead and roll.”

Bob rolls the dice, and comes up with an 11 and an 18. “Yes! I got an 18! Thank goodness for that Edge! Adding my Acumen, lasso rank, and the lasso’s Tempo, I have an Attack Bonus of +14, that brings the total up to a 32. I beat

its Stability by 4 points. Adding that Margin to the 10 Setback of the lasso and my Craftiness of 2, that's a total of 16 Fettering Setback to the horse."

Alice jots the Setback down. "That's a really good start. The lasso drops down around its neck, and you've got hold of it. But, you've got a way to go. The stallion rears back and beats the air with its wings as it lets out a loud whinny. The mare next to it startles, and flies away. The stallion tries to get away from you and pulls hard on the rope. The lasso rules state this isn't a pure Strength Check, though, since you don't need to firmly stand your ground. You can maneuver around and just need to keep it constrained. Instead, we pit its Level and Strength against yours. I'll have you roll for it, so you can spend Guts, if you want."

Bob looks down at his character sheet. "Ummm. Belerophon has a 3 Strength and is 8th Level."

"Okay. 10 plus 3 plus 8 equals 21. So, the winged horse has to beat a Threshold of 21. Its Level is only a 6, but its Strength is an 8. So, add 14 to its roll."

Bob rolls a d20 and it comes up with a 5. "5 plus 14 ... 19 total. The horse fails by 2."

Alice says, "The horse rears up and almost wrenches the rope from your grasp. But, you manage to hang on to it. That's the end of the Round. Let's roll Initiative."

Alice and Bob both roll d20s for Initiative. Alice comes up with a 16, while Bob rolls a 12.

"The stallion wins Initiative. It's going to try to get away again. Make a roll with the same adjustments."

Bob rolls a 13 on the d20. "Uh oh. It got a total of 23. That beats my Threshold by 2. That means that I have to spend 3 Guts to hang on to the rope?"

"That's right," Alice replies.

"Okay. I'll do it. My cousin is depending on me," Bob says, "Our party needs its healer back."

"It's your Go, then." Alice says.

"Okay. I'm going to continue hanging on to the rope, and move around to try to get it wrapped around a bush or boulder or something."

"That sounds good. Now that the rope is around its neck, this roll will be a Melee Attack. So, add your Vigor rather than Acumen."

Bob rolls a d20, and comes up with a 16. "My Melee Attack with a lasso is a +14, so I got a 30 overall. I beat its Stability by 2. Adding the lasso's 10 and my Craftiness of 2, I do a total of 14 Fettering Setback."

Alice writes down the Setback. "You're doing well. It still has some fight in it, though. That's the end of the Round, so roll Initiative."

Alice and Bob both roll d20s for Initiative. Alice comes up with a 5 this time, while Bob rolls an 11.

"I win Initiative! I keep trying to finagle my end of the rope around a bush while keeping the rope taut." Bob rolls a 5 on the d20. "I got a total of 19. Ugh. I missed its Stability by 9."

"Keep in mind, once a lasso has ensnared its opponent, your opponent frees itself if you have a Pure Failure on your Conflict Roll," Alice points out.

Bob sighs. "That means I've got to spend 10 Guts to barely succeed on that roll, then, to actually beat the Threshold. In for a penny, in for a pound, I guess." Bob makes note of his Guts expenditure. "That puts me into Glory Status 4."

"That's getting up there." Alice points out.

"Yep", says Bob.

Alice continues, "Well, the horse isn't too bright, but trying to pull away doesn't seem to be working. So, it's going to attack you with its hooves. Its Attack Bonus with them is a +13."

"Wow. That's not good," Bob says as he shakes his head.

"Yeah, but the good news is that the lasso rules say that the horse has a Drawback on any actions involving its Agility. Melee attacks add in Vigor, which includes Agility. So, it has a Drawback on its attack. Go ahead and roll."

"Oh, thank goodness!". Bob rolls a 17 and a 14. "It still managed to get a 14. With its Attack Bonus, that adds up to 27. Since a Lasso gives me no Parry at all, my Defense is only a 15. So, that's 12 over what it needs to hit! I'd rather not spend the Guts, so I can save it to hang on to the rope later, if need be."

"So, you're taking the hit?" Alice asks.

"Yes"

Alice betrays a slight smile. "Okay. The hooves do 17 points of Damage. Adding in the Margin of 12, you take a total of 29 Damage."

"*Holy mother of ...* Are you serious? That takes me down to just below half in one blow!" Bob shakes his head as he notes the Damage.

"Don't forget your armor," Alice reminds Bob.

"Oh. Right. My classical armor gives me a Ward of 7. So, I *only* take 22. I'm slightly above half Hit Points."

"That's the end of the Round. Roll Initiative."

Alice and Bob each roll a d20. Alice comes up with a 14, while Bob rolls a 6.

"The horse rears up and tries to pound you with its hooves again. Roll for its attack."

Bob rolls two d20s, coming up with a 14 and a 5. "Thank goodness for that Drawback." He mentally adds the stallion's +13 Attack Bonus to the 5. "It got an 18 overall. That hits me by 3. I've got to conserve my Guts, so I'll take the hit again and cross my fingers."

"That's 20 points of damage. Subtracting your Ward of 7, that means you take 13 points."

"Ouch. I'm almost down. I can't take another hit like that."

"Your turn," Alice says.

"Thanks." Bob rolls a d20 and gets a 4. "Crap. I got an 18 overall. I missed its Stability by 10. I'd have to spend 11 just to hang on. That would put me well into Glory Status 5."

“Risky. Really bad stuff happens in 5, you know,” Alice says.

“If I don’t, the stallion will get away, won’t it?” Bob asks.

“Most likely so.”

Bob pauses for a moment. “Okay. I’ll go for it. Bellerophon couldn’t live with himself if his failure doomed his cousin. That makes it a Bare Success with a Margin of 1. Unfortunately, with a Bare Success, the lasso rules say that the lasso hangs on, but the horse takes no Setback.”

“That’s unfortunate. But, I’ve got to say that you’re demonstrating your Trait ‘I am loyal to my party’, since you’re risking a lot to save your cousin. Give yourself a minor Guts refresh,” Alice says with approval.

“Awesome! So, that drops me back down to the bottom of Glory Status 5?”

“Yes.”

Bob makes the adjustment on his character sheet.

“Roll Initiative.” Alice and Bob each roll a d20. Alice comes up with a 12, while Bob rolls an 11.

“The horse attacks you with its hooves again,” Alice says.

Bob rolls two d20s again, and comes up with an 18 and a 15.

“Oh, no! Even with the Drawback, it’s still a 15! That’s a total of 28. It hits by 13. I’ll fall if I take that hit!”

“What do you do?”

“I’ll spend the Guts to make it miss. That puts me near the top of 5! That would have been a Glory Status of 6 if not for that Guts refresh you gave me. Still, that doesn’t leave me with much to play with before I get there.” Bob says as he pauses to think.

“Glory Status 6 would mean certain death if you fell, you know. And, you’re one hit away from falling. So, what do you do?”

“I keep going. I either save my cousin, or we’re both screwed, I guess.”

“Okay. Roll Initiative.” Alice rolls a 3 and Bob rolls a 12.

“Your Go,” Alice says.

“I keep trying to secure my end of the rope.”

“Okay. Roll.”

Bob rolls a d20 and comes up with a 20. “A natural hit! That doubles the Setback! Let’s see, my overall roll was 20 plus 14, for a total of 34. That’s 6 points over its 28 Stability! The lasso does 10 setback. Adding in the margin of 6 gives a total of 16. Doubling that means the horse takes 32 Setback!”

Alice leans back and smiles. “Congratulations. That takes it to zero Fate Points. You manage to wrap your end of the rope around a nearby shrub and tie it off. You’ve captured your very first winged horse.”

“Awesome!”

XP REWARDS

XP Rewards

There are three schools of thought in how XP is awarded in the game: Encounter-based Rewards, Chapter-based Rewards, and Milestone-based Rewards. The Overlord decides which approach to take.

“Chapter” is a loosely defined term, meaning a sequence of one or more Scenes that have some bearing on the current plot-line / adventure. The Overlord decides when each Chapter ends and the next begins, based on their intuition on how they want to pace the story.

The Encounter-based XP Rewards system awards XP at the end of every Chapter based on the difficulty of the challenges the Avatars faced within that Chapter. The Chapter-based XP Rewards system awards an amount of XP at the end of every Chapter intended to promote the

characters in an incremental fashion as the story progresses, without the need to keep track of the individual challenges faced. The Milestone-based Rewards system hands out a dramatic chunk of XP when a Milestone is reached sufficient to advance each character about one Level (typically at the end of an adventure). In all these approaches, Guts are fully refreshed to 0 immediately after XP is handed out.

In all these approaches, the Overlord calculates a value for an “XP Share”. Each player takes their XP Share and multiplies it by their own Avatar’s Glory Status to get their XP Award. (The Glory Status is based purely on the number of Guts points they have spent as shown on the Glory Status Table in the Guts and Glory section.) The overall XP Award is added to both Total XP and Unspent XP. Players are then free to spend XP from their Unspent XP pool.

Milestone-based XP Rewards

The Milestone-based Rewards system requires the least effort by the Overlord. In this XP Reward system, characters are awarded Experience Points (XP) when they successfully complete a Milestone in an adventure. This system is geared toward advancing the overall party approximately one Level when they reach a Milestone.

Milestone-based XP Rewards Table

Party Level	XP Share
0	5
1	5
2	10
3	20
4	40
5	80
6	160
7	320
8	640
9	1,280
10	2,560
11	5,120
12	10,240
13	20,480
14	40,960
15	81,920
16	162,840

Typically this happens at the end of an adventure, but can happen at other times if the Overlord feels the party deserves to advance. So, this method depends entirely on the

Overlord’s intuition as to whether the Avatars have accomplished enough to warrant a Level-gain.

To figure out the XP Share in this approach, first determine the party Level by taking the highest Level of all Avatars in the party. Then, look up the XP Share on the Milestone-based XP Rewards Table. This is the amount handed out to each character participating in the Milestone.

Chapter-based XP Rewards

The Chapter-based XP Rewards system awards XP at the end of every Chapter. It provides rewards more frequently than Milestone-based rewards, but is just as simple. In this XP Reward system, characters are awarded XP at the end of every Chapter. It is geared toward giving characters a quick boost at low levels, advancing them a Level for every 2 or 3 Chapters. At higher Levels, it progresses characters about one Level for every 5 Chapters.

To figure out the XP Share in this approach, first determine the party Level by taking the highest Level of all Avatars in the party. Then, look up the XP Share on the Chapter-based XP Rewards Table. This is the amount handed out to each character participating in the Chapter.

Chapter-based XP Rewards Table

Party Level	XP Share
0	3
1	3
2	4
3	5
4	8
5	16
6	32
7	64
8	128
9	256
10	512
11	1,024
12	2,048
13	4,096
14	8,192
15	16,384
16	32,768

Encounter-based XP Rewards

The Encounter-based XP Rewards system is the most complicated of the three, but provides the Overlord with the greatest control over how XP is awarded. It is similar to the Chapter-based XP Reward system, in that the Encounter-based XP Reward system rewards XP at the end of every Chapter. But, the amount depends on the difficulty of the encounters overcome within the Chapter.

The size of the XP Share given to each character depends on the number of participants in the Chapter, the Levels of the characters, and the Levels and numbers of their opposition.

The XP Share of a Chapter using this technique is determined by the following steps:

- 1) Determine the Party Level, which is the highest Level of any Avatar in the party. (Discount any NPCs in this calculation.)
- 2) Calculate the *Encounter Level* by taking the minimum of the Party Level and the individual foe’s Level.
- 3) Determine the *XP Basis* for each foe by looking up the value on the Encounter-based XP Rewards Table.
- 4) Sum the *XP Basis* values for all foes in the Chapter.
- 5) Divide this total(s) by the number of characters participating in the Chapter to determine the XP Share.

Encounter-based XP Rewards Table

Encounter Level	XP Basis	
	Single-Roll Encounter	Extended Encounter
0	1	2
1	1	3
2	1	5
3	2	8
4	3	11
5	4	17
6	5	25
7	8	38
8	11	57
9	17	85
10	26	128
11	38	192
12	58	288
13	86	432
14	130	649
15	195	973
16	292	1,460

What all that means, is that, you must first determine the *Encounter Level* of each individual defeated foe. This equals the *Level* of the defeated foe, unless it exceeds the highest *Level* of the characters participating in the Chapter. In cases where the opponent’s *Level* beats the highest party *Level*, the *Encounter Level* equals the highest party *Level*. So, in

effect, the *Encounter Level* is the *minimum* of the party Level and the Level of the opposition.

Once you have the Encounter Level, you can determine the XP Basis for each individual foe or barrier based on the Encounter-based XP Rewards Table. The XP Basis depends on the Encounter Level and whether the encounter was a Single-Roll Encounter or an Extended Encounter. A Single-Roll Encounter is one where a barrier or foe is defeated by a single Conflict Roll. An Extended Encounter is one where one or more characters make multiple rolls to determine the encounter's outcome.

A character sneaking past a guard through the mechanic of a single Sneaking roll or a thief picking a lock by making a single roll of Opening Locks are classic examples of Single-Roll Encounters. Mooks (foes who have only a single Hit Point and Fate Point), also count as Single-Roll Encounters, since any single successful roll defeats them.

Add the XP Basis values up for all opponents and barriers in a Chapter. Once you have the XP total, divide it by the number of characters participating in the Chapter and give this value to the players as XP Shares.

In awarding XP, avoid the tendency to figure out specifically who did what to whom. Just divide the XP for the entire period among all of those that participated in it. Otherwise, some players will rightly feel cheated if their character provides more of a back-line support role than a more flashy front-line one.

XP is only for Plot-Worthy Encounters

As briefly mentioned above, Experience Points are only awarded for encounters that have some bearing on the current adventure. The point of this rule is to prevent players from selfishly taking up valuable game time performing inane acts in order to gain XP. A character should almost certainly gain no XP for any of the following acts:

- 1) Picking the lock to their own residence
- 2) Picking the pockets of random passers-by
- 3) Swindling a town guard out of their purse
- 4) Hunting for random monsters in the wild
- 5) Haggling with a merchant for a better price on mundane items

An act does not actually have to move characters closer to their end goal in order to be XP-worthy, only that the players had reasonable expectations that performing the acts would do so. For example, suppose a burglar has the goal of stealing the count's prize ruby collection, which is supposedly stored in the strongbox by the count's bed. Toward this end, suppose the thief sneaks past the guards stationed outside the count's chambers, picks the lock on the bedroom door, and disarms the trap on the count's strong box. If, after all this effort, the thief discovers that the strongbox is actually empty, they should still be awarded XP for the attempt. They may not have gained anything monetarily, but their actions were rational and had some reasonable chance of attaining their stated goals.

In general, it is the Overlord's call as to whether any given act is sufficiently pertinent to the story to be worthy of XP awards. When a given act could be judged either way, it is recommended that the players be given the benefit of the doubt.

If the players are not currently on an adventure, and have no stated goals, then everyone should stop play and discuss where they want the story to go next. Play should not resume until the Overlord has a basic scenario prepared, or at least has a sufficiently well-developed idea that they are willing to ad-lib. That will prove to be far more fruitful and respectful of everyone's time than having characters wander aimlessly through the game world performing random pointless acts.

Double XP for Victory through Guile

In order to promote variety in how players approach problems, your Overlord may wish to employ this optional rule: Whenever the Avatars defeat a foe in any way other than brute force, they earn double XP for that foe. That is if they win by driving their opponent's Hit Points to 0, they are awarded the standard XP Award. Otherwise, they gain double XP for that foe.

GUTS AND GLORY

Guts and Glory

Guts is a resource that roughly gauges how much a player has emotionally invested in the current scenario. The amount of Guts spent directly determines a character's Glory Status, which ranges from 1 to 6. A character's Glory Status directs what happens to them if they lose a conflict. The more Guts spent, the higher a character's Glory Status, and the more dire the stakes. On the other hand, the Glory Status also feeds into how many Experience Points (XP) a character gains when overcoming foes. The higher the Glory Status, the more the player risks, and the more they are rewarded. So, spending Guts has both great benefits and drawbacks. Most of the time, the stakes that a player risks and the rewards they gain are set according to the Guts and Glory Tables below.

While all Avatars have Guts, the same cannot be said of all other characters (NPCs). In fact, only the most important NPCs have Guts. In general, if a character is important enough that the players know their name, they are important enough to have Guts. (Unnamed or anonymous characters automatically die when they drop to 0 Hit Points, unless the Overlord decides their continued existence would be somehow beneficial from a story perspective.) Named characters may spend up to a maximum of 63 Guts points.

Guts points can be spent on most failed d20 rolls to bring it up to a point of barely succeeding. The cost equals one Guts point for every point that a player must raise the roll to Bare Success. So, if a character misses on an Attack Roll by 3 points, they may spend 3 Guts points to bring that failure up to a success.

During the game, you must track the amount of Guts you have spent so that you know your Glory Status and therefore know what stakes are in effect. One way to do this is to look on the accompanying Glory Status Table. Another, more convenient way to do this is to use the Guts and Glory tracker at the bottom of the Tracking Sheet page of the character sheets. Simply place a paper-clip at the appropriate location to indicate the number of Guts points spent. This will simultaneously indicate the Glory Status. (It is recommended that you print that sheet out on curable card stock rather than normal printer paper, which is far more prone to bending and tearing). If you need to spend Guts points to succeed on a roll, and thereby raise your Glory Status, you should let your Overlord know how much you are risking.

Glory Status Table

Guts Points Spent	Glory Status
0 - 3	1
4 - 9	2
10 - 18	3
19 - 30	4
31 - 45	5
46 - 63	6

Spending Guts is always a player decision; the Overlord has no say in the matter and the character's perspective is not a factor (if a fictional construct can even be said to have a perspective). You shouldn't consider that characters are even aware that such a resource exists. In other words, characters always believe their lives are at risk in combat, regardless of what stakes are in force. Further, Guts provides a way to reign in an overzealous Overlord. If you believe your Overlord is throwing too much into the game for your group to handle, you can refuse to raise the stakes beyond your comfort level. Your Overlord simply cannot kill your character if you have not agreed to risk his or her death.

If your character participates in a conflict, then the consequences of that encounter, win or lose, vary depending on the kind of conflict and the number of Guts points you have spent. Stakes may be negotiated for violent conflicts as well, but the default stakes are often adequate to the task.

In virtually any battle, there is a winning side and there is a losing side. Generally, the side whose members have all been individually defeated is considered to be the losing side. There are often also some individuals defeated on the winning side as well.

The consequences of what happens to an individual when they are defeated are determined by that character's Glory Status. As such, these consequences vary from one defeated character to the next. These consequences are independent from whether a character was on the winning or losing side of a battle. However, the characters of the losing side also suffer from overall consequences which are added on top of their individual consequences.

After-Effects, Aftermath and Aftershock

There are fundamentally different kinds of conflicts. Defeat in each of these has different potential consequences.

An individual defeat through Non-Lethal Force happens when a character is defeated by aggressive attacks, but their Hit Points have not fallen to zero. This often occurs when Entrapment Weapons are used, or where magical charms or other mind-altering abilities are employed. A defeat by Non-Lethal Force imposes the effects listed on the table *Aftermath: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Non-Lethal Force*. These are applied at the end of any Scene in which a character fell to zero Fate Points

An individual defeat through Lethal Force occurs when a character falls to zero Hit Points. A defeat through Lethal Force suffers the consequences listed on the table *Aftershock: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Lethal Force*. These are applied at the end of any Scene in which a character fell to zero Hit Points.

A Faction Defeat occurs when all of the individuals on one side of a battle are defeated. When this is done through violence, the consequences that are suffered from all members of the losing Faction (that are still present on the battlefield) are listed on the table *Aftermath: Consequences for Faction Defeat through Violence*. These are applied at the end of any Scene in which a battle is won or lost.

The winning side of a battle often does not get away without losing something, though. Anything that the winning side loses to gain victory is called a Concession. The Concessions the winning side must provide are listed on the table *Aftermath: Concessions for Faction Victory through Violence*. Again, these are applied at the end of any Scene in which a battle is won or lost.

Negotiations can also be done for any kind of conflict. (See *Negotiating Stakes* below for details.) If the players are unwilling to negotiate stakes, there are two options. The first is for one side to simply walk away. In that case, it is assumed that the character(s) walking away finds the subject to be of too little importance to debate, essentially concedes the point to their opponent, and agrees to forgo arguing about the topic in the future. The second option is for the aggressor(s) to escalate the conflict to Non-Lethal or Lethal Force.

The In-Game Ramifications of Guts

Players often go through a number of phases as they learn the Guts system. Most players are quite enamored by the system even at first, because it allows their characters to succeed where they would otherwise fail. This is true as far as it goes. However, the system has more subtle overtones, because the more Guts players spend, the more XP they are rewarded. Since the risks to the character also increase as Guts are spent, each player decides how far they are willing to tempt fate to gain the rewards. After they have decided on their tolerance for risk, players tend to spend Guts up to that level as quickly as possible, so they don't miss out on any XP. Once they reach this degree of understanding, though, it doesn't take long to notice that the best skills their characters possess actually hinder them from spending Guts quickly. Their first reaction to this realization is often negative, because it seems like they are being punished for having superior skills. However, they soon realize that they can quickly spend more Guts by either taking big chances in play, increasing the Thresholds and/or Drawbacks they must beat, or use their less developed skills. Many players eventually end up designing their characters with a wide range of skills in which they have various degrees of expertise. Play thereby ends up being far more varied and interesting than if the Guts system did not exist.

Guts and Glory Tables

Aftermath: Concessions for Faction Victory through Violence

Yes, that title is correct. This table provides concessions for the side that *wins* an argument. It lists the concessions that the winning side of a violent battle must grant, whether the battle was lethal or non-lethal. It should only be applied at the end of a violent battle, preferably at the end of a Chapter (at the Overlord's discretion). Regardless of Glory Status, the winner always gets whatever stakes were negotiated, if any. However, the ending Glory Status of the winner indicates the complications that may arise in gaining that victory. If multiple characters cooperated to attain victory, use the highest Glory Status of all winning participants that were named characters. (If there were no named characters, assume the winning side to be in Glory Status 6.)

If no victor has a Glory Status of 5 or greater after a violent conflict, then no concessions must be made. Otherwise, roll a d20. If the value is 15 or greater, the victors must make concessions, as described on the following table.¹⁶

Winning Faction's Glory Status	After-Effects
1-4	
5	Select any one option from the Faction Victory Concessions for Violent Conflicts list below in the range of 1 to 7. The option should be chosen by the Overlord.
6	Select any one option from the Faction Victory Concessions for Violent Conflicts list below in the range of 6 to 10. The option should be chosen by the Overlord.

Faction Victory Concessions for Violent Conflicts

Any time an option is chosen from the following list, it must somehow be justified by story events to the GMs satisfaction.

1. One of the winning characters loses a Trait, with the player's approval. (Preferably one that the player doesn't use often - the idea here is to gradually pare down the group's Traits to those they really care about. Once this goal is accomplished, choose a different option.)
2. The winning characters learn of a new heretofore unknown edge that their enemies have over them. Describe what this important edge is and how the characters learned about it.
3. An enemy somehow escapes with important information against the victors' best interest. Further, they grow in significance. Describe who escaped, what information they departed with, and why that information is important. If the character was previously unnamed, it gains a name. If they were named, they are now an even more significant villain. If the group did not have a mutual nemesis before, they do now. This option is only available if there was at least one sapient character in the enemy force, and one of them fled the scene.
4. The winning character having the most Guts points spent at the end of the Scene loses something important to the character in some way consistent with what happened in the scene. Describe what was lost and why it was important. (For example, the character breaks their sword or their armor is so badly damaged that it loses all of its Ward.) In the case of a tie, *all* tied characters each lose something important. If the character(s) don't have anything of significance to the story, this option cannot be selected.
5. The group loses possession of the MacGuffin to their enemies or some third faction in some way consistent with what happened in the scene, but have a clue pointing to where it is being taken. Describe how the MacGuffin was lost, why it was taken, and what clue was found concerning its destination. (If the term "MacGuffin" is unfamiliar to you, see [The Overlord's Omnibus](#) for complete details.) This option is only available if the victors were in possession of the MacGuffin at some time during the battle that was just completed, the loss of the MacGuffin would not prematurely end the story without the possibility of its recovery (e.g. the enemies would immediately smash the MacGuffin to bits), and if they have not previously lost possession of it two or more times.
6. The character(s) in the highest Glory Status suffer from one of the consequences as if having fallen in battle in a Glory Status two steps below their current Glory Status. (The Overlord should choose only from the non-italicized options.) So, if they are in Glory Status 5, they suffer the consequences as if having fallen in battle at a Glory Status of 3. If their opponents used lethal force against them at any time during the conflict, choose from the consequences

¹⁶ Overlords have complete control over when Chapters end. As such, an Overlord could establish a policy that Chapters always end whenever concessions must be made. Doing so sacrifices some control over pacing for the benefit that Chapters end unpredictably. In such a game, players will be unable to "guess" when a Chapter will end, and will therefore remain uncertain whether it is ever "safe" to spend Guts.

Conflict Rules

on the table Aftershock: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Lethal Force. Otherwise, choose from the consequences on the table Aftershock: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Non-Lethal Force. (As always, only options that make sense from a story perspective should be chosen.)

7. An agent of a character's personal antagonist (nemesis / lender / legal authority) catches up to them very soon (preferably the next scene, if it makes conceptual sense in the story). If this has happened before for this character, the force that appears will be increasingly strong. Choose which antagonist sent this force from among the character(s) in the highest Glory Status who have antagonists. This option is only available if at least one of those characters has a personal antagonist.
8. Two personal antagonists (nemeses / lenders / legal authorities) of characters in the group learn of each other somehow. If it makes conceptual sense in the story, they will join forces from now on whenever they encounter the group. This option is only available if multiple characters have personal antagonists (preferably, those characters in the higher Glory Statuses).
9. The characters win, but it is a Pyrrhic victory. That is, the characters technically defeat their foes, but in the process sacrifice so much that it feels as though they lost, or, at best, that neither side won. Determine what sacrifice the victors made, or what advantage they lost to their enemies, that makes their prevailing seem so hollow. (Don't force this. Select this option only if it makes sense within the ongoing story context.)
10. The personal antagonist (nemesis / lender / legal authority) of a character in the highest Glory Status shows up in person very soon with all the force they can muster to fulfill their goals against the character (preferably, in the next scene, if it makes conceptual sense to the story). This option is only available if at least one character in the highest Glory Status has a personal antagonist.

Aftermath: Consequences for Faction Defeat through Violence

To the victor go the spoils! The following table lists the consequences suffered by the characters on the losing side of a violent conflict, whether lethal or otherwise. It should only be applied at the end of a violent battle, preferably at the end of a Chapter (at the Overlord's discretion). Only those characters still present on the battlefield at the time of defeat suffer these consequences. Regardless of Glory Status, the winner always gets whatever stakes were negotiated, if any. However, the ending Glory Status of the loser indicates additional consequences that the entire losing side suffers. If multiple characters participated and lost, use the highest Glory Status of all the losing participants that were named characters. If there were no named characters, assume the losing side to be in Glory Status 6.

Losing Faction's Glory Status	After-Effects
1-2	The victors find nothing the losing side possesses to be worth their while. This includes finding no value in capturing or killing the characters themselves, possibly mistaking them for dead.
3	The victors search for and find much of value the losing side possesses on and near the battlefield. Every player may exclude three items from being found, or from being viewed as valuable if it is found. (An item need not be in possession of a character a player controls in order for them to exclude it.) The victors may loot whatever they choose from everything else. This includes possible capture and/or ransom of any characters that are obviously alive. All of the other characters are mistakenly left for dead.
4	The victors search for and find much of value the losing side possesses on and near the battlefield. Every player may exclude two items from being found, or from being viewed as valuable if it is found. (An item need not be in possession of a character a player controls in order for them to exclude it.) The victors may loot whatever they choose from everything else. This includes capture and possible ransom of the characters themselves. Characters in Glory Status 3 or less may be mistakenly left for dead.
5	The victors search for and find almost everything of value the losing side possesses on and near the battlefield. All players, except those having characters in Glory Status 5, may exclude one item from being found, or from being viewed as valuable if it is found. (An item need not be in possession of a character a player controls in order for them to exclude it.) The victors may loot whatever they choose from everything else. This includes capture and possible ransom of the characters themselves. Characters in Glory Status 3 or less may be mistakenly left for dead.
6	The victors search for and find almost everything of value the losing side possesses on and near the battlefield. All players, except those having characters in Glory Status 5 or 6, may exclude one item from being found, or from being viewed as valuable if it is found. (An item need not be in possession of a character a player controls in order for them to exclude it.) The victors may loot whatever they choose from everything else. This includes capture and possible ransom of the characters themselves. Characters in Glory Status 5 or greater will likely be killed, at the Overlord's discretion. Characters in Glory Status 3 or less may be mistakenly left for dead.

Aftermath: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Non-Lethal Violence

Regardless of Glory Status, the winning side always gets whatever stakes were negotiated, if any. In all cases, once a character falls in a given conflict, they are thereafter unable to influence that conflict in any way (if companions are still in the fray). The table below lists consequences for characters on an individual basis. It should be applied at the end of any Scene in which a character is Overcome through non-lethal means.

Loser's Glory Status	Aftermath: Stakes for Conflicts involving Non-Lethal Violence
1	If the character loses a conflict through non-lethal force, they simply lose the competition and suffer embarrassment. They may not have any further influence on the ongoing conflict, but may flee the scene if they desire. There are no serious long-term consequences.
2	The character's player should select any one option from the Consequences for Non-Lethal Defeat list below in the range of 1 to 5.
3	Select any two options from the Consequences for Non-Lethal Defeat list below in the range of 3 to 10. One should be selected by the vanquisher, then the other by character's player.
4	Select any two options from the Consequences for Non-Lethal Defeat list below in the range of 9 to 17. One should be selected by the vanquisher, then the other by character's player.
5	Select any two options from the Consequences for Non-Lethal Defeat list below in the range of 14 to 21. One should be selected by the vanquisher, then the other by character's player.
6	If the character loses a conflict through non-lethal force, they are either at the mercy of the victor, or, the GM's discretion, are permanently removed from the game. This may be due to summary execution by the captors in a way that resurrection is impossible (e.g. they are burned at the stake), or retire in some irrecoverable fashion (are dragged into hell, permanently goes insane, etc.). If the Overlord is feeling generous, they may only impose the consequences of the next lower Glory Status.

Consequences for Non-Lethal Defeat

Any time an item is chosen from the following list, it must somehow be justified by story events to the GMs satisfaction.

1. They are incapacitated or are knocked out at least until the end of the current Scene, and remains so thereafter until they are no longer Overcome.
2. The character gains a Relationship Trait to another character based on what happened in the scene. For example, "I am overprotective of Dylan" or "Sara is always there for me." The Trait must meet with the player's approval.
3. They suffer from some ailment for 24 hours, giving them a Drawback on all physical Conflict Rolls.
4. They suffer from mental trauma for 24 hours, giving them a Drawback on spell-casting and all mental Conflict Rolls.
5. They lose a Trait. If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player, and only they can choose the Trait to lose.
6. *They fall unconscious and their spirit wanders the astral plane, where time flows very differently to that of the mortal realm. At the character's discretion, they may gain training there to learn one of the following:*
 - a new Gift (which must be available to be learned independent of Class and Race)
 - a new Musical Score or Occult Spell (for which the character qualifies)
 - a new skill, common lore, or weapon of their choice in which they become Schooled (which must be available to be learned independent of Class and Race.).
7. *They fall unconscious and their spirit wanders the Astral Plane. There, they experience one of the following:*
 - a brief vision of their enemies' recent activities as they progress toward their ultimate goals.
 - a brief vision of the past incorporating an item in their group's possession, giving them new information on what it does and/or how it is used. (The player decides which item is involved. It is up to the Overlord's discretion on what the vision involves).
 - a spiritually cleansing revelation, causing them to lose all Personality Traits that have not been used for at least three gaming sessions -other than the permanent Trait of "I am loyal to my party". (This option is only available if there is at least one such Trait.)

8. They are incapacitated or knocked out for 8 hours.
9. Having survived despite all odds, they acquire (or modify) an existing Trait, or gain an entirely new one related to the recent conflict. If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player. Some examples are:
 - A Catchphrase: The character starts frequently using a specific phrase, such as “Did I really do that?”; “D-oh!”; “I am the greatest!”; “You may kiss my ring.”; “Father Mucker!”; “I’m surrounded by idiots!”; etc. The character may gain a Trait Reward for saying the phrase in circumstances where other players find it humorous.
 - A Characteristic Greeting: The character has a unique greeting reflecting their background, such as “Yo-yo-yo”; “Buenos Dias, Compadre”; “Top ‘o the day to ye”; “Bonjour, mon ami”; “A privilege, to be sure” etc.
 - A Superstition: The character gains an irrational belief, such as “Raps on helm to avoid tempting Fate”, “Rubs his hobbit’s foot for luck”, “The stars rule the lives of men”; “Believes in omens”; “Pick a lock for luck”; “Bad luck comes in threes”; “An unsheathed sword must taste blood”; “Coin is to be had when my palms itch”; “Crows are bad luck”; “There’s no such thing as ghosts”; etc.
 - A Soft Spot: The character gains a fondness for something, such as “Adores kittens”; “Likes frilly lace”; “Has a penchant for umbrella drinks”; “Is kind to beggars”; “Addicted to licorice”; etc.
 - Self Confidence: A Trait reflecting self-confidence, such as: “_____ thinks I am brave”, “_____ believes I am strong”, “_____ views me as a worthy companion”, “_____ respects me”, or some other Trait that illustrates confidence with respect to a comrade.
 - A Foible: The character gains a new trait or enhances an old one concerning a weakness toward one of the Seven Deadly Sins of Envy, Gluttony, Greed, Lust, Pride, Sloth, or Wrath. For example: “I deserve whatever the rich have”; “Why, yes! I *will* have another ale!”; “I’ll steal anything that isn’t nailed down”; “I deserve a good spanking!”; “I am the greatest marksman in the kingdom”; “I’d ordinarily help out, but my fakes and pains prevent it.”; “I *will* revenge my mother’s murder!”
10. They are fettered, bound, confined, or constrained in some fashion from which they are unable to free themselves. They are in no immediate danger, but must await rescue.
11. They are incapacitated or knocked out for 24 hours.
12. They suffer from some ailment for a week, giving them a Drawback on all physical Conflict Rolls.
13. They suffer from mental trauma for a week, giving them a Drawback on spell-casting and all mental Conflict Rolls.
14. They are captured, and are likely to be ransomed. While in captivity, they are subject to one consequence that is allowed by the Lethal Violence table according to their Glory Status at the time of their defeat (Overlord’s choice). This choice is only available if it makes sense in the circumstances.
15. The character suffers from the one of the consequences on the Consequences for Individual Defeat via Lethal Violence table as if having fallen in battle in a Glory Status one step below their current Glory Status. So, if they are in Glory Status 5, they suffer a consequence as if having fallen in battle at a Glory Status of 4. (As always, only options that make sense from a story perspective should be chosen.)
16. They escape the scene somehow (possibly carried off by allies that come to their rescue), but leave something important behind that they possessed. Describe what was lost, why it was important, and how they escaped. This option is available only if the character was in possession of something important to the storyline.
17. *They fall unconscious and their spirit wanders the astral plane. At the character’s discretion, they may:*
 - *Learn a new language (Modern or Ancient).*
 - *Swap one Beckoning Gift for another (e.g. trading Occult Beckoning for Mystical Beckoning), thus losing the ability to cast spells from one magical domain and gaining the ability to cast those of another.*
 - *Train in a Class for which they currently qualify.*
 - *Learn up to three new Musical Scores and/or Occult Spells (for which the character qualifies).*
 - *Speak with a Supernatural Benefactor and ask a favor of them. (This option is only available to characters having a Supernatural Benefactor. The benefactor will not mitigate the consequences of their current failures, but may assist with those of past ones, if they are able. Discuss the possibilities with your Overlord.)*
18. Their opponent becomes their nemesis.
19. They gain a strong, character-defining Trait, such as “I would kill anyone that _____”, “I would die for _____”, or, “I would sacrifice anything for _____”. If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player.
20. They become a hunted outlaw or are banished.
21. They are cursed. (See the Cursed section under Character Conditions for potential options.) The opposing player decides whether it is a physical or a spiritual curse, and the character’s player selects the specific curse.

Aftershock: Consequences for Individual Defeat via Lethal Violence

Regardless of Glory Status, the winning side always gets whatever stakes were negotiated, if any. In all cases, once a character falls in a given conflict, they are thereafter unable to influence that conflict in any way (if companions are still in the fray). The table below lists consequences for characters on an individual basis. It should be applied at the end of any Scene in which a character is Overcome through lethal means.

Loser's Glory Status	Aftershock: Stakes for Conflicts involving Lethal Violence
1	Slight Consequence: Select one option from the Consequences for Violent Defeat list below in the range of 1 to 3. (The character's player should choose.) The player may voluntarily select a non-italicized option from a higher Glory Status, if desired.
2	Minor Consequence: Select one option from the Consequences for Violent Defeat list below in the range of 2 to 7 (The character's player should choose.) The player may voluntarily select a non-italicized option from a higher Glory Status, if desired.
3	Moderate Consequences: Select two options from the Consequences for Violent Defeat list below in the range of 3 to 14. (The opponent chooses one, then character's player chooses.) The player of the vanquished character may voluntarily select a non-italicized option from a higher Glory Status, if desired.
4	Major Consequences: Select two options from the Consequences for Violent Defeat list below in the range of 12 to 20. (The opponent chooses one, then the character's player chooses one.) The player of the vanquished character may select options from a higher Glory Status, if desired.
5	Long-Lasting Major Consequences: These consequences are intended to impose a significant lasting change in the character. However, they are not intended to ruin the overall character concept of the player. The character's player and their opponent are encouraged to negotiate an impactful change to the character that is acceptable to both parties. With this in mind, select two options from the Consequences for Violent Defeat list below in the range of 18 to 32. (The opponent chooses one, then the character's player chooses one.) The player of the vanquished character may choose permanent removal of their character from the game, if desired.
6	Character Retirement: The character is permanently removed from the game. Either they die in a way such that resurrection is impossible (their brains are splattered, their body is turned to ash, etc.), or they retire in some dramatic fashion that is irrecoverable (Demons drag them into Hell; they ascend to Heaven escorted by a choir of angels; etc.).

Consequences for Violent Defeat

Any time an item is chosen from the following list, it must somehow be justified by story events to the Overlord's satisfaction. Any time a choice is called for, the person selecting the option decides. If an option is chosen, it excludes the possibility of other contradictory choices from being made for the same conflict. For example, if the choice "Character is taken prisoner ..." is selected, it excludes the possibility of "Character escapes the scene ..." from being chosen.

1. They are temporarily incapacitated, but remain conscious. They still can't engage meaningfully in any conflict. But, an incapacitated character may drink potions or perform other non-exerting actions. Incapacitation lasts until the character is no longer Overcome. So, they may attempt to escape, but are far too weak to do anything aggressive.
2. They suffer from First Degree Burns (Scorching, Freezing, or Acidic).
3. They fall unconscious for 8 hours.
4. They sprain a limb, basing which limb is affected on story events, if possible. Otherwise, roll randomly and consult the Body Zones Diagram to determine the affected area (found in the Conflict Rules section).
5. They lose or gain self-confidence and acquire one of the following Traits: "____ thinks I am a coward", "believes I am weak", "____ admires me", "____ trusts my judgment", or some other Trait that illustrates self-doubt or self-respect with respect to a comrade. If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player.
6. They lose a Trait. If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player, and only they can choose the Trait to lose.

7. They run out of ammunition; their armor is slightly damaged (losing a point of Ward until repaired); or a useful tool is damaged (imposing a Drawback when used until repaired). As this is a minor consequence, this option should only be applied to beneficial, but otherwise unremarkable, items used in the conflict.
8. Their shield shatters; they break a weapon; or otherwise lose a useful tool. As this is a moderate consequence, this option should only be applied to beneficial, but otherwise unremarkable, items used in the conflict.
9. They suffer from a Lingering Incapacitation for a day, due to poison or some other cause.
10. They are infected with some non-chronic disease having a Quality Level of 0.
11. They crack a bone, basing which bone is affected on story events, if possible. Otherwise, roll randomly and consult the Body Zones Diagram to determine the affected area (found in the Conflict Rules section).
12. *They fall unconscious and their spirit wanders the astral plane, where time flows very differently to that of the mortal realm. At the character's discretion, they may gain training there to learn one of the following:*
 - *a new Gift (which must be available to be learned independent of Class and Race)*
 - *a new Musical Score or Occult Spell (for which the character qualifies)*
 - *a new skill, common lore, or weapon of their choice in which they become Schooled (which must be available to be learned independent of Class and Race.).*
13. *They fall unconscious and their spirit wanders the Astral Plane. There, they experience one of the following:*
 - *a brief vision of their enemies' recent activities as they progress toward their ultimate goals.*
 - *a brief vision of the past incorporating an item in their group's possession, giving them new information on what it does and/or how it is used. (The player decides which item is involved. It is up to the Overlord's discretion on what the vision involves).*
 - *a spiritually cleansing revelation, causing them to lose all Personality Traits that have not been used for at least three gaming sessions -other than the permanent Trait of "I am loyal to my party". (This option is only available if there is at least one such Trait.)*
14. They suffer from Second Degree Burns (Scorching, Freezing, or Acidic).
15. They are severely poisoned, resulting in Lingering Incapacitation for a week.
16. They are infected with some severe, but non-chronic, disease.
17. They gain a heightened or expanded distrust or animosity of those just battled. Modify (or add) a Trait of that character demonstrating this mental shift. If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player.
18. They escape the scene somehow (possibly carried off by allies that come to their rescue), but leaves something important behind that they possessed. Describe what was lost, why it was important, and how they escaped. This option is available only if the character was in possession of something they believe is important to the storyline.
19. An item valuable to the character, but not critical to the storyline, is destroyed. This option is only available if the character possesses something of significant value, such as a magic item or high quality weapon.
20. They are taken prisoner. All of their valuables are taken from them, but are being kept nearby. Unless they have escaped from these same captors before, they are likely to be ransomed.
21. *They fall unconscious and their spirit wanders the astral plane. At the character's discretion, they may:*
 - *learn a new language (Modern or Ancient)*
 - *train in a Class for which they currently qualify*
 - *learn up to three new Musical Scores and/or Occult Spells (for which the character qualifies)*
 - *speak with a Supernatural Benefactor and ask a favor of them. (This option is only available to characters having a Supernatural Benefactor. The benefactor will not mitigate the consequences of their current failures, but may assist with those of past ones, if they are able. Discuss the possibilities with your Overlord.)*
22. They break a bone, basing which bone is affected on story events, if possible. Otherwise, roll randomly and consult the Body Zones Diagram to determine the affected area (found in the Conflict Rules section).
23. They gain a strong, character-defining Trait, such as "I would kill anyone that ____", "I would die for ____", or, "I would sacrifice anything for ____". If the character is an Avatar, this option can only be selected by its player.
24. They are cursed, either physically or spiritually. (See the Cursed section under Character Conditions for potential options.) The opposing player decides whether it is a physical or a spiritual curse, and the character's player selects which specific curse is imposed among those possibilities.
25. They gain a semi-permanent disability (weakened, sick, shaky, lacks confidence, blurry vision, etc.) until magically healed. This injury comes in the form of an Impairment, or, if they are already Impaired, their Impairment becomes a Maiming (See Impaired and Maimed / Torn Ligament in the Character Conditions section for details.)

26. They contract a chronic disease of some sort (chronic lycanthropy, chronic black plague, etc).
 27. They suffer from Third Degree Burns (Scorching, Freezing, or Acidic).
 28. They have a limb severed from their body, which may be restored later through magic. Roll randomly to determine which limb is severed, using the Body Zones Diagram. (Re-roll all results indicating the torso or head.) The character suffers the consequences listed under Amputation in the Character Conditions section.
 29. They undergo some major and permanent transformation befitting the situation allowing them to continue play with some delay. For example: they die but soon rise as an undead; they survive but are afflicted with chronic lycanthropy; they are magically altered to a different race; etc. Any such transformation cannot be undone without major inconvenience to the character. (An undead character gains no experience points until magically resurrected or reincarnated.)
 30. They have a change of heart and shift allegiance from one Faction (other than the adventuring party) to an opposing Faction related to the current storyline. If the character is not a member of a Faction already, they join a Faction they have previously encountered. Which faction the character joins is the player's choice.
 31. They suffer from partial amnesia. They lose one class, along with all its benefits (but may later acquire a different one in its place). Which class is lost is the player's choice. Any gifts, skills, spells, and other abilities uniquely granted by the class are completely lost. Harvest any XP spent in these lost abilities as Unspent XP.
 32. They die, but may be resurrected or reincarnated later through magic. Their death negates any and all diseases, physical handicaps, curses, and other magical influences affecting them. So, if and when they are brought back to life, they come back whole and healthy. *This option is only available to the character's player, and acts as an ultimate safety valve to ensure the integrity of their character concept.*
-

Spending Guts

Spending Guts on Failed Conflict Rolls

As stated before, Guts can be spent on failed Conflict Rolls to bring their results up to Bare Success. What this means is that if a roll fails by 3 points, a player may spend 3 Guts points to cause the roll to succeed. However, they cannot spend 4 or more Guts points in order to make it an even greater success (for example, to inflict more Internal Damage on an Attack Roll). Further, Guts points cannot be spent to alter any Conflict Roll resulting in a natural 1 or 20. A natural roll of 1 indicates automatic failure and Guts can't change that. A natural roll of 20 indicates automatic success.

What's more, a player can only raise their Glory Status by spending Guts points on failed Conflict Rolls. In other words, they cannot throw away Guts to gain more XP than is warranted by their character's actions. The system is set up this way to strongly encourage feats that would leave ordinary onlookers wide-eyed and slack-jawed in disbelief at the characters' heroic audacity. So, if you want to quickly boost your Glory Status, have your character attempt actions that are appropriately heroic and audacious.

A player can spend their character's Guts points on most failed Conflict Rolls that directly affect him. This includes both offensive and defensive rolls. The only exception to this rule is when the Overlord makes a roll in secret. This may be because the player is unaware that a roll needs to be made (such as when an opponent sneaks up on him), or when the player would gain unfair knowledge by knowing if they succeeded or failed on a roll (such as when searching for secret doors).

In fact, it is highly encouraged for the Overlord to have the players roll the d20 on as many rolls as possible, including attack rolls that opponents make on their characters. There is no reason that a player shouldn't be allowed to do this. After all, their character will have a good idea of the combat prowess of their opponent as soon as they enter melee with him. So, statistics such as Attack Bonuses and Defenses of all combatants should be considered public knowledge as soon as combat begins. If players are allowed to roll most of the dice, it frees up a great deal of the Overlord's time and allows them to focus on more important issues. Further, if this is done consistently, a player will know he may spend Guts on any Conflict Roll the Overlord tells them to make.

Spending Guts on Hidden Rolls

As mentioned above, there are times when an Overlord makes Conflict Rolls for a character. This happens whenever the mere act of rolling the d20 can provide unfair knowledge to the player concerning the conflict. For example, Conflict Rolls are sometime made to allow one character to sense if another character is lying (such as when the Hunch skill is used). In this case, if the interrogating party were to roll the d20 themselves, they could unfairly gain knowledge that their character succeeded or failed on the roll, which could bias their future line of questioning. Obviously, there will be times when a player would be willing to spend Guts points on a hidden roll such as this, but cannot normally do so because they cannot know whether the roll failed at all, much less by what amount.

In order to allow players to influence hidden rolls such as these, players may spend Guts on them. To do so, they must

first know that a hidden Conflict Roll is going to take place. When this happens, they can state that, instead of taking their chances with a random roll, they are going to Guts it instead. To do so, they must spend a sufficient number of Guts points to increase their Guts spent to the highest number in the current Glory Status. If they are already at the top of their current Glory Status, they must spend to the top of the next highest one. If they do so, the Overlord need not roll the dice. Instead, the Overlord should assume that the Conflict Roll came out as a Bare Success, just as if the d20 had been rolled and the player had spent that number of Guts to change a failure into a Bare Success.

Conflicts between Named Characters

Occasionally, two named characters (i.e. those with Guts points to spend) will come into conflict. This can arise when Avatars battle each other. But, more often, it arises when the heroes encounter a Named Villain. Like the Avatars, Named Villains are given Guts points to spend. In these situations, each side will naturally want to control the outcome of individual rolls. When both sides of a Conflict Roll have Guts and want to determine the outcome, a bidding war ensues. The person failing the roll is given the first opportunity for control, as normal. This initial bid must be for as many Guts points as the roll failed by (again, as normal). So, if the roll fell 5 points shy of succeeding, the initial bid must be for 5 points if the player wants to change the outcome. At that point, the opposing side may make their own bid, which must be at least one point higher than the previous bid. However, the opposing side gets one and only one counter-bid, so they better make it count. After this singular counter-bid, the person that failed the original roll can either choose to let their opponent win the bid, or out-bid them by one point (assuming they have sufficient Guts points to do so). If they choose the latter option, they win the bid. The winning bidder spends the Guts points they bid, and gains control of the roll. If the first bidder wins the bid, this results in a bare win for them. If the second bidder wins, the result is whatever the dice originally indicated. The losing bidder does not expend any of the Guts points they bid.

Regaining Guts

There are several means by which characters regain Guts points as described below. In these descriptions, when the bottom of a Guts category is mentioned, that refers to the lowest value in that category (Glory Status). Conversely, the top is the highest value in that category.

Major and Minor Guts Refreshes

When a rule states that a character regains Guts points, it will be described in terms of a Major Guts Refresh, or a Minor Guts Refresh.

With a Major Guts Refresh, a character's Guts points are reset to zero. That is, they are completely refreshed. Major Guts Refreshes only occur at significant points during an adventure, declared by the Overlord, and are not optional.

That is, a player is not allowed to decline a Major Guts Refresh.

With a Minor Guts Refresh, the Guts points of a character drops down to the bottom of their current Glory Status. For example, suppose a character has spent 44 Guts points, putting them near the top of Glory Status 5. If they are granted a Minor Guts Refresh, they would refresh their Guts points down to the bottom of Glory Status 5, indicating they have spent only 31 Guts. Any Minor Guts Refresh may be declined by a player, if they so desire.

Beginning-of-Adventure Guts Refresh

At the beginning of every adventure, every named character gets a Major Guts Refresh. As such, the Glory Status of all such characters is set to 1. What this means is that at the beginning of every adventure, all Avatars start in a state of absolute safety. They cannot be killed by any means, nor even be subjected to any long-lasting repercussions until their players start spending Guts. Because of this, the Overlord is given great leeway about the predicaments in which they place characters at the beginning of each adventure.

Beginning-of-Chapter Guts Refresh

Similarly, all characters get a Major Guts Refresh at the beginning of every Chapter. So, all Avatars periodically return to a state of absolute safety while adventuring. Note that the Overlord has discretion over when Chapters officially begin and end. Often, a Chapter will be declared complete after the Avatars vacate a battlefield, but this is not always the case.

Regaining Guts as a Trait Reward

Another important means by which characters regain Guts is by acting out character Traits. For example, suppose a character has a "Demands Perfection" Trait and demonstrates it by pausing in combat for a few moments to critique their opponent's swordplay: "No, no! If you want to keep me from striking, you need to hold your pommel higher. And, for heaven's sake, spread your feet further apart!" If a character does so, they may be rewarded with a Minor Guts Refresh. There is no limit to the number of Trait Rewards a player may grant other players during a game session.

A Trait Reward can be triggered at any time by any player other than the one performing the act. (This may even be done by the Overlord.) To do so, the person providing the reward, the Fan, must merely declare that they recognize that the Performer is portraying their character according to their Traits (or otherwise did something *AWESOME!*). It is preferred that they explicitly state how they demonstrated their supreme coolness. However, the Fan may just clap their hands together or declare, "Bravo!", making sure the Performer notes their appreciation. The Fan must do so, though, without having been prompted by the Performer. If these conditions are satisfied, both the Performer and Fan gain a Minor Guts Refresh. (If the Overlord gains a Guts

Refresh in this way, they may choose which of their characters earns the refresh, if any. Their only limitation is that the character must be present in the scene to gain the refresh.)

Obviously, for a player to be rewarded in this way, the other players at the table must be familiar with their character's Traits. So, the more a player demonstrates them, the more they will tend to be applauded. It is recommended for players to read through their character Traits whenever they are asked to describe their characters to new players.

A given Trait can earn a reward only once per Scene. For example, suppose "Darrik the Destroyer" has the Trait "Fears Spiders" and comes upon a room filled with spider webs. At this point, Karl, Darrik's player, takes advantage of the fact and has Darrik stand in place trembling for a few moments with a look of horror on his face. Stan, another player sitting at the table, notices this behavior and nods to Karl as he says "Fears Spiders". At that point, Karl gives Darrik a Minor Guts Refresh. Later in the same scene, though, a large spider crawls out from its hiding place in the webs, and Karl has Darrik run for his life. Unfortunately, since Darrik has already been rewarded in the scene for his "Fears Spiders" Trait, he cannot get another Guts Refresh for acting it out again, regardless of whether another player notes it or not.

A Trait Reward can be refused, if a player so chooses. To do so, the Performer needs to verbally turn it down with a "No thank-you" or similar statement. They might want to do this if the reward would not give them any benefit at the moment, and they want to reserve the right to be rewarded for using the Trait again later in the Scene.

The timing of when the Minor Guts Refresh applies may be important in some situations. Suppose a player has their character perform an act in which they spend Guts points, and another player gives them a Trait Reward for that action. In such a situation, the Minor Guts Refresh applies after the action is completely resolved. So, if the action increases a character's Glory Status because they spent Guts, the Trait Reward will only lower the character's Guts to the bottom of their new Glory Status.

Trait Rewards can be granted at any time, not just when dice are rolled. This can be used to encourage players to describe interesting outcomes to failed actions. As such, Trait Rewards may also be granted to the description of an action failure, even after all dice are rolled. For example, suppose John has his character, Graddik, swing his sword at an enemy goblin and misses. Rather than just take the whiff silently, John then explains this failure as, "I pull back on my swing just as Kaldar's head interposes itself in the heat of combat between me and my quarry." To this, Kaldar's player points to John and says, "I am loyal to my party!", granting John a Minor Guts Refresh to help out on his next action.

Finally, it is within the GM's purview to halt all Trait Rewards for the remainder of a session. They should do so only if they see Trait Rewards being frequently handed out without justification, or for acts that obviously bear no relation to the Traits for which they are being rewarded.

Regaining Guts for Awesomeness

Players may regain Guts in a fashion similar to Trait Rewards for doing something awesome. Such a reward should be given whenever a player's actions elicit an emotional outburst. Any laugh, chuckle, gasp, or "Awww!" emitted by the group deserves such a reward. Anyone may grant this reward to any other player for having elicited such a response with a statement such, "Awesome! Guts Refresh!". As in Trait Rewards, both the Performer and Fan get a Minor Guts Refresh. The reward may be refused, if desired.

As in Trait Rewards, the Overlord may halt Awesomeness Rewards for the remainder of a session if they deem them being handed out for actions that don't elicit genuine emotional responses from the players.

Regaining Guts for Highlighting a Flaw

Whenever a player highlights a Flaw possessed by a character they control in a way that affects game play, the character gains a Minor Guts Refresh.

For example, suppose Karl is playing Starblood, an elven thief. He and his companions are plundering the stronghold of a local goblin warlord. They are approaching a doorway beyond which they can hear many voices. Being the most stealthy character in the group, his compatriots ask Starblood to sneak ahead, peek through the door, and report back what he sees. Karl has Starblood slowly approach the door, meticulously oil the hinges to prevent any squeekage, and crack it open ever so gently. The Overlord reports that the room beyond is filled with two dozen goblins sitting around tables raucously enjoying a feast. After this, Karl has Starblood gently close the door and sneak back to where his friends are waiting. At this point, they ask "Well, how many are there?". Since Starblood is a Gwagedd Annwn elf, he has the flaw, "Cannot Count Beyond Five." So, Karl leans forward and responds with a simple "Five". He then sits back and gives his friends an evil grin as he refreshes Starblood's Guts.

Regaining Guts for Suggesting a Major Complication

Finally, players have one other way to earn a Major Guts Refresh. This is to suggest a major complication for the Avatars. To do so, a player must announce that they want to suggest a major complication. They must then make some specific suggestion that they believe will greatly increase the tension of the current situation. For example: "In a last-ditch effort to save my skin, I prepare to shoot my bow at the charging puma. I reach back to grab an arrow from my quiver only to discover that I've run out!" The players (including the Overlord), are free to comment and discuss alternatives that they believe will improve the suggestion. This may include negotiated consequences, such as the whole party being taken prisoner.

At any time, any player can call for a vote on the complication. When this happens, all players other than the

Overlord vote on the suggestion. If the majority of players give the idea a thumbs up, the suggestion is officially passed to the Overlord, who has the power to veto it outright for any reason. (So, you should listen carefully to any recommendations the Overlord provides.)

If the vote passes, all of the Avatars are entitled to a Major Guts Refresh. A given player may refuse the Guts Refresh for their Avatar if they so desire. However, it is an all-or-nothing kind of reward; a player can't decide they'd rather have a Minor Guts Refresh instead, for example.

There are a couple of situations ideally suited to suggesting a complication. The first is simply to liven things up when you think the game is running slowly. You have to realize that your Overlord, no matter how gifted, will have good days and bad days, just like everyone else. If you help them out in pushing the action forward by lending some of your own creative spark, you will undoubtedly earn their gratitude and regain some Guts points in the process.

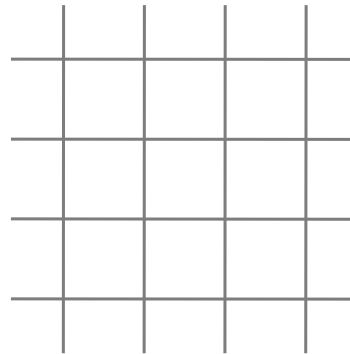
Of course, you shouldn't expect to get something without giving something significant in return. Obvious, non-imaginative suggestions such as "A monster attacks" are useless to an Overlord. So, don't be surprised if they veto such lame suggestions for their sheer lameness. Worthy suggestions provide specific details as to the nature of the complication. "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if a griffin dove out of the sky and attacked our horses!" and "Wouldn't it be spooky if a ghostly apparition appeared magically luring us to follow them into a nearby crypt!" are far better. Even these can be improved upon, though: "Hey wouldn't it be cool if a griffin dove out of the sky and snatched my character's daughter away from his arms and flew her off to its nest!". Or, "Wouldn't it be spooky if our campfire suddenly winked out and a bloody apparition of Brandon's recently murdered brother appeared beckoning us to follow them to a freshly dug grave?" These kinds of visceral suggestions are what an Overlord needs to get their creative juices flowing.

Another situation where you might want to suggest a complication is when your characters are being devastated by their opponents. For example, suppose your group is battling the captain of the guard and their two lieutenants, who are wiping the floor with you. Unfortunately, your assailants are giving no ground and all exits are blocked, so you cannot run. Despite your best efforts, most players have expended their Guts into Glory Status 5 or 6, where they risk major injury or even death if their Hit Points fall to zero. All hope is lost. What do you do? Suggest that a nearby door bursts open with half a dozen additional guards pouring through it, of course! If your fellow players and Overlord like your suggestion, everyone's Guts will drop to zero. This gives everyone a breath of fresh air, drops those in danger of dying out of the fatality range, and increases story tension all at the same time.

The Battle Grid

Battles in Mythmagica can be performed in an entirely abstract way, where the scenes are played out entirely in the players' heads without the use of drawn maps. However, combat can be much more interesting from a tactical perspective if maps are drawn out on a square grid, and miniature figures are used to represent the positioning of the various characters participating in the battle.

Toward this end, this section explains how a Battle Grid may be incorporated into game play. A Battle Grid is a mat that has a grid of ½ inch by ½ inch squares, like so:



Battle Grid mats of various sizes are usually available for purchase at your local gaming store. A mat of 3 feet by 3 feet is adequate, but it is sometimes convenient to have one even larger. These mats are usually flexible, and are fashioned from materials that allow you to draw on them with wet erase markers. This allows you to quickly sketch out a scene on which you can place miniatures so that everyone at the table has the same view of the current tactical situation of a battle.

Each square on the Battle Grid is generally assumed to be 5 feet wide on each side.

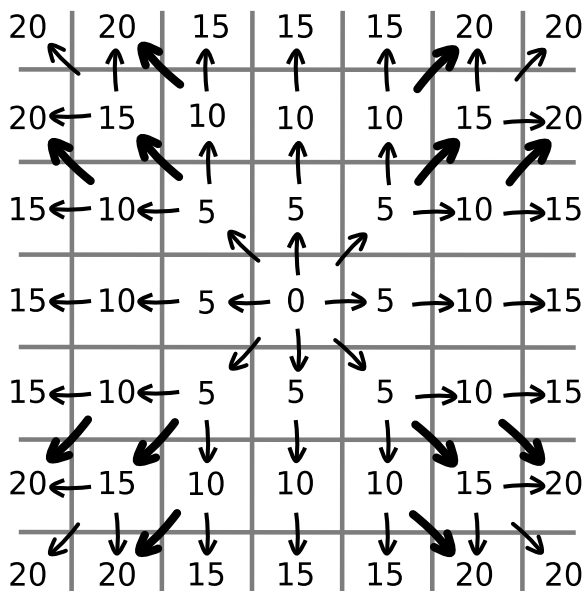
Character Placement

When a character is put on the Battle Grid at a specific location, it is said to be Placed there. If no character is placed on a square, that square is said to be Unoccupied. Otherwise, it is occupied. No two characters can be placed on the same 5 foot square.

Medium-sized and smaller creatures take up a single 5-foot square. Large-sized creatures take up a 10-foot by 10-foot square (Each side of the square thereby consisting of two 5-foot squares). Each larger size category takes up square areas having sides that are twice as long as the next smaller size category. So, Great-sized creatures take up areas having sides of a length equal to four 5-foot squares, Epic creatures take up areas that are eight 5-foot squares on a side, etc.

Path Length

The length of a path on the Battle Grid is measured in Segments. Each Segment approximates the distance needed to move from one 5-foot square to an adjacent 5-foot square. A path may follow a diagonal on the Battle Grid. However, diagonals are problematic when measuring distance on a grid. To minimize the error associated with a path length, the first diagonal Segment and all subsequent odd-numbered diagonal Segments on a given path are treated as a length of 5 feet. The second and all subsequent even-numbered diagonal Segments on a given path are treated as a length of 10 feet. The sum of all Segment lengths of a given path is known as its Path Length.



Defended Squares

Any character placed on a Battle Grid that has the capacity to physically influence the world around it is said to have Reach. Unless otherwise stated, a creature has a Reach equal to the length of the square it occupies. So, Medium-sized and smaller creatures have a Reach of 5 feet. Large-sized creatures have a Reach of 10 feet. Great-sized creatures have a Reach of 20 feet, etc.

A creature is said to Threaten a 5-foot square if the shortest Path Length to the square is less than or equal to its Reach and there is no wall or other structural element preventing it from influencing that square.

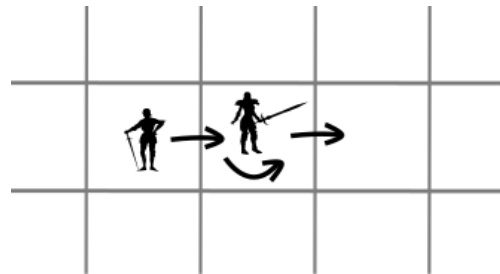
A contiguous region of Defended Squares that is reachable by a specific creature is that creature's Defended Space. So, if two creatures are sufficiently close to one another, their Defended Spaces may overlap.

Movement

A character's movement is broken down into individual Move Actions. Every time a character moves into a 5 foot square, it is called a Step. Thus, a character can take a number of steps every Move Action up to their Speed divided by 5. This corresponds to the maximum Path Length they can traverse in a single Move Action, unless otherwise specified.

Passing Through Friendly Squares

A square occupied by an ally is called a Friendly Square. Even though no two characters may be placed on the same 5-foot square, a character may pass *through* friendly squares as long as the character can move a sufficient distance within a single Move to land on an unoccupied square on which it can be Placed.



Creeping

Some situations can arise, in which a character's Move has its Path Length constrained to 5 feet (1 Step). This circumstance is called Creeping. For example, a slick surface caused by spilled oil or any icy glaze may force characters walking across it to Creep. (Creeping disallows any opportunities to extend Moves via Scrambling Rolls.)

Reaction Attacks

A Reaction Attack is a melee swing made by expending a Reaction. Such an attack is a single swing that must be made with either a Natural Weapon or with a Hand-Held Melee Weapon which is already in-hand. Further, a Reaction Attack can be made only under special limited circumstances. The rules will explicitly state when a Reaction Attack can be made.

Entering and Exiting a Defended Space in a Single Round

If a foe both enters and exits a creature's Defended Space in a single Round, that creature may immediately expend a Reaction to make a Reaction Attack on that foe.

Combining Actions

Combining Moves with Actions

Your character can walk and chew gum at the same time. That is, they can Move and perform other actions while they are moving. In general, an Action can be performed at the same time as a Move, unless the Action's description specifically states that it cannot be performed while moving.

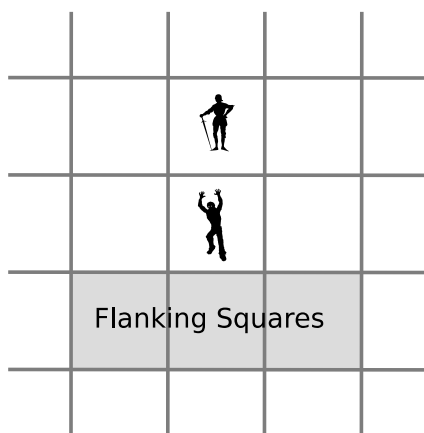
The Order of Move and Action

When a Move is combined with another Action in the same Round, the player controlling the character decides when the Action occurs during the Move. So, an Action/Move combo could be a spell casting followed by a Move, a Move followed by a sword swing, or a partial Move followed by an arrow shot followed by the remainder of the Move.

Some abilities require a character to expend a Move Action to move some puppet, automaton, or other pawn external to themselves. For example, the Occult spell Make a Scimitar Dance requires the caster to expend Move actions to move the scimitar that their magic animates. In such cases, the character is allowed to split their Move actions between themselves and their pawn. So, a Magician having a 30 Speed may move their animated scimitar 20 feet, and themselves 10 feet with a single Move Action, if they want.

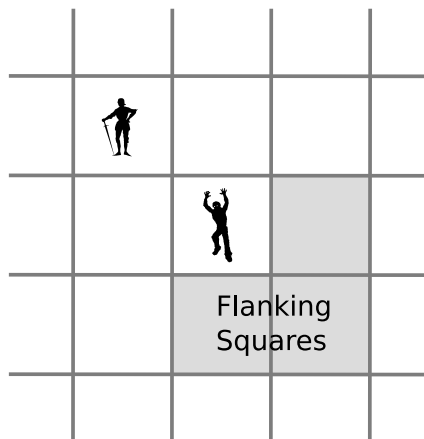
Flanking

If two allies are adjacent to and positioned on opposite sides of a foe, that foe is Flanked. The rule for determining what “opposite side” means is that the two characters must be placed on squares that directly oppose one another or are placed on squares that share an edge with squares that directly oppose one another. For two squares to directly oppose one another, you must be able to draw a line between the two squares that goes through the center of the flanked creature’s footprint.



The flanking allies each gain an Edge on all Melee Attacks on the foe.

If an individual is fortunate enough to flank the same foe twice via two different allies, they gain a Double Edge against that foe.



Handling Movement for Flying Creatures

Flight is somewhat of a conundrum in a tactical RPG. It adds a third dimension to a rule set that is otherwise largely focused on simple 2D movement. Creating rules that realistically simulate movement through 3D space is certainly possible, but doing so would over-complicate the game to an unacceptable extreme. But, the game world would feel quite lacking if flying creatures were entirely absent. So, compromises must be made to both address the issues of flight while keeping the game playable. This section attempts to provide a balance between realism and practicality.

Tracking Elevation using Miniature Stands

Some game stores sell tall clear plastic stands on which you can place the miniatures of flying creatures. These have markings on the sides that allow you to indicate the elevation of the miniature using a dry or wet erase marker. These work quite well, and are highly recommended.

Tracking Elevation using Poker Chips

Another option to track the elevation of flying creature is place small poker chips on the battle grid. To do this, poker chips are either placed on a square by themselves to represent the elevation of an area on the board, or are placed underneath a miniature to represent the elevation of the character it represents. Miniatures with chips underneath them are assumed to be flying; those without are assumed to be standing on the floor beneath the miniature.

Each white poker chip represents a Story (10 feet). Each red one represents 2 Stories (20 feet), and each blue one represents 4 Stories (40 feet). Thus, an altitude of 70 feet is represented by one blue, one red, and one white chip. The chips represent height above Ground Level (the lowest point on the battle grid). So, if a creature flying at an altitude of 30 feet happens to move over a building that is 20 feet tall, you

don't need to change the chips underneath its miniature. The creature is still flying at an altitude of 30 feet above Ground Level. The fact that the building's roof is only 10 feet below the miniature doesn't change that fact.

Regardless of its elevation, for practical considerations of managing the battle grid, only a single miniature can be placed on a given square at a time.

Defended Spaces of Flying Creatures

Medium-sized and smaller creatures only occupy and/or threaten within a single Story. However, Large-sized and larger creatures can sometimes occupy and/or threaten more than one Story due to their size and Reach. For Battle Grid purposes, assume that a creature's height equals its width. Also assume that any creature that can stand upright also has a vertical Reach of a similar value. So, a Medium humanoid, which takes up a 5 foot by 5 foot square, is assumed to have a height of 5 feet and a vertical Reach of 5 feet, Threatening the space up to 10 feet above the ground. As such, Medium humanoids and smaller fit comfortably in a single Story. A Large humanoid, on the other hand, takes up a 10 foot by 10 foot square. This means it has a 10 foot height and a 10 foot vertical Reach as well, which indicates that it Threatens up to a height of 20 feet above where it is standing. Great sized humanoids threaten to a height of 40 feet, etc.

Movement through 3D Space

For ease of play, a creature's flying Speed refers to its horizontal movement. That is, vertical movement and horizontal movement are tracked separately.

A flying creature may slowly ascend at a rate of 1 Story per Move Action at no cost. It may ascend up to 2 Stories in a single Move Action if they expend 2 Fatiguing Setback every time they do so.

Flying creatures may descend in a controlled fashion by up to 2 Stories within their normal Move at no cost. Some Move Modes increase this rate even further. (It requires no Move action at all to fall. So, the rules do not prevent a character that has been pushed off a cliff from plunging headlong to the ground.)

If a creature needs to move through squares occupied by creatures at different elevations, but the squares it is moving through are not defended at its elevation, it may do so freely. However, as stated before, it may only *end* its Move on an unoccupied square, regardless of how its elevation compares to others.

Space Occupied by Winged Fliers

Most flying creatures have wings. Such creatures require more space than ground-based units in order to stretch their wings. When flying, treat them as occupying a space one Size Category larger than their normal size. So, a winged Medium-sized creature takes up the space of a Large-sized creature when flying. A winged Tiny-sized creature occupies the space of a Small-sized creature, etc. If a winged creature

is unable to fully extend and flap its wings for any reason, it loses its ability to fly.

Finally, a winged creature's expanded footprint does not affect its Reach. In other words, its expanded footprint has no impact on the spaces it threatens.

Flying Limitations

Unfortunately, flying requires freedom of movement. As such, flying creatures cannot wear armor. Further, some creatures have flying Move Modes that have special exceptions, as described below.

Diving Caveats

Diving is a flying mode that allows a character to fly at a maximum Diving Speed equal to their Raw Speed plus 60 and a minimum Diving Speed of half that (round up).

Diving creatures essentially perform controlled falls, plummeting a minimum of 2 stories and a maximum of 5 Stories in a single Move. This descent is done at no cost to their horizontal Diving Speed. After they reach the lowest point on any given dive, they may pull out of the dive in the same Move Action with rapid horizontal movement, and even regain 1 Story of altitude at no cost to their horizontal Speed (and no expenditure of Fatiguing Setback).

To perform a dive, a creature must move at a horizontal Speed of no less than half of their maximum Diving Speed (round up). Failure to do so will result in them plummeting toward the ground a minimum distance equal to their Diving Speed. Unfortunately, a flying creature cannot perform a controlled landing while Diving. (See Falling from Heights in The Overlord's Omnibus for the consequences of hitting the ground, if applicable.)

A creature may start a Dive moving in any direction it chooses. Even so, the entirety of its Move Action must trace a straight line when looking down from above, although the movement may change direction when viewed from the side. For example, a diving attack involves descending quickly from above the target prior to an attack, and then ascending slightly after it, even though the path traced on a 2D battle grid would be a straight line.

A Diving creature may perform Grab-and-Carry Attacks and Passing-Blow Attacks, provided they start their Move with at least a 2 Story elevation advantage on their target and continue their Move for at least another 10 feet beyond the attack. (See their respective descriptions in the Special Attack Modes section for details.)

Gliding Caveats

Gliding is a flying mode that allows a character to fly at a maximum Speed equal to their Raw Speed plus 30 and a minimum Speed of half that (round up). As such, Gliding creatures cannot hover in place.

A Gliding creature may start their Move Action moving in any direction they choose. However, the entirety of the Move Action must trace a straight line through 3D space. Further, a Gliding creature must either land or move at a

horizontal Speed of no less than half of their maximum Gliding Speed (round up).

A Gliding creature may perform Grab-and-Carry Attacks and Passing-Blow Attacks provided they start their Move at least 20 feet away from their target and continue their Move for at least another 10 feet beyond the attack. Further, a Gliding creature cannot both gain elevation and perform a Passing-Blow attack in the same Move Action. (See their respective descriptions in the Special Attack Modes section for details.)

Hovering Caveats

Hovering enables a character to fly at a maximum Hovering Speed equal to their Raw Speed plus 20 and a minimum Hovering Speed of 0. In other words, Hovering allows a character to remain stationary in the air while flying.

For most situations in tracking movement in combat situations on a grid, assume fliers move in the same manner as ground-based units, albeit with the ability to move vertically as well. However, a hovering character must expend a Move Action to remain flying, even if they remain stationary in the air.

Squeezing and Stooping

Characters must sometimes move through spaces that are smaller than their normal footprints allow. For example, a Large creature, having a normal footprint of 10 feet by 10 feet, may need to wedge, cramp, and jostle itself down a 5 foot wide corridor.

When a creature is cramped from the sides, it is said to be Squeezed. When it is cramped from above and must crouch low, it is said to be Stooped.

Any creature may Squeeze and/or Stoop itself through an area one Size-Category smaller than its own Size-Category. When doing so, its Speed is cut to half normal. However, it cannot move through a passage that is any smaller than that.

A character that is Squeezed or Stooped suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Agility. A character that is both Squeezed and Stooped has a double Drawback.

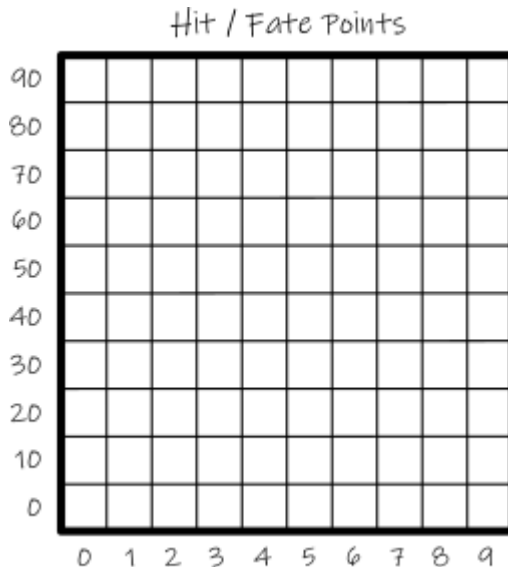
Practical Advice on the Battle Grid

It is often useful to place colored disks under the miniatures on the Battle Grid. If you do this, you can use those colors to track monster stats using colored tokens.

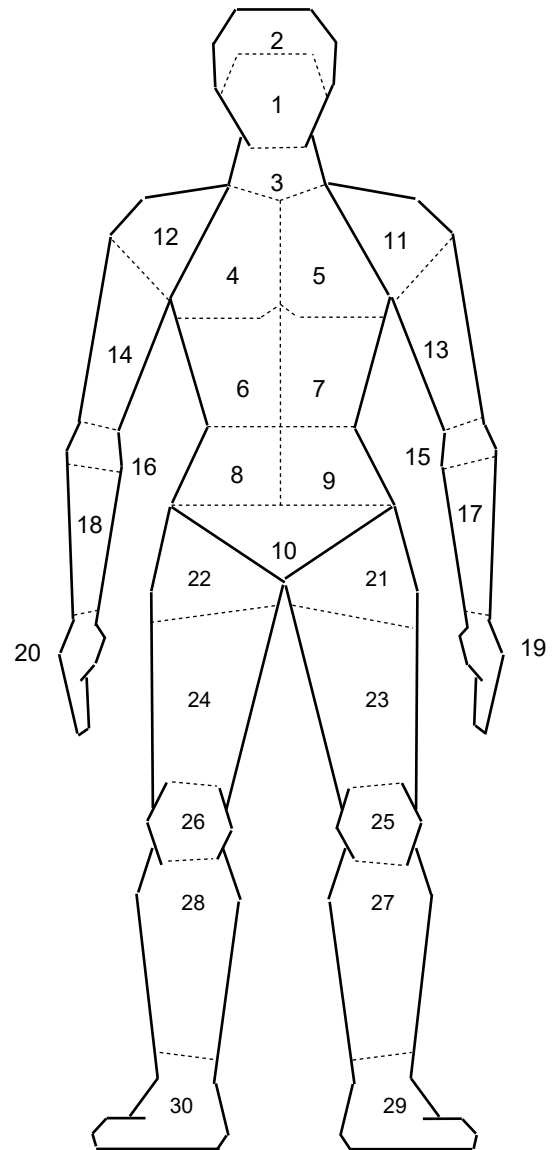
Colored disks can be easily cut from colored paper or felt. If you want to get even fancier, you can buy transparent round plastic containers that coin collectors use to protect individual coins in and place cut circles of colored felt in them. That way, you can write a character's Defense on the plastic case using a dry-erase marker for easy reference.

If your Battle Grid is big enough, you can also track Hit Points and Fate Points on the Battle Grid itself by cordoning off a section for that purpose. One way to do that is to draw the accompanying tracker on the Battle Grid using dry or wet erase markers (whatever is appropriate for your grid). Then, use colored tokens to track the monsters' Hit Points and Fate Points on it. Use a token of one shape for Hit Points, and another shape for Fate Points.

To avoid things getting visually confusing, though, you should limit yourself to a relatively small number of colors. Red, Yellow, Blue, Green, Orange, Violet, White, Brown, and Grey are recommended.



BODY ZONES



Body Zones Diagram

Body Zones

The accompanying Body Zone Diagram divides the humanoid body up into 30 numbered zones. If you need to determine a random body location, you can make a Body Zone Roll to identify it. To do so, you need to generate a number between 1 and 30. Here are some ways to do this:

- If you are lucky enough to have a $d30^{17}$, use that.
- You could roll a d6 and a d10, if those are available. If the d6 rolls a 1 or 2, add nothing to the d10. If the d6 rolls a 3 or 4, add 10 to the d10. If it rolls a 5 or 6, add 20 to the d10.
- If you only have a d20, start by rolling it three times. If the first roll is the highest of the three rolls, the head/torso region is indicated. If the second is highest, it indicates the arms. If the third roll is the highest, it's the legs. Then roll the d20 again and divide by 2 to generate a number between 1 and 10 to identify the specific body zone within that region.

¹⁷ Yes, they do exist

Common Conditions

Conditions are special states applied to areas or characters. They incorporate a wide range of effects, both short term and long lasting. In this section we list the Conditions that are mostly commonly applied to the Avatars, and to the environmental circumstances in which they may find themselves. Conditions that mostly apply to monsters are listed in The Overlord's Omnibus under the section Creature Conditions.

Area Conditions

This section describes the effects of various environmental conditions that arise in the game.

Accursed

A state that imbues an area with infernal power so that it becomes anathema to supernatural spirits such as Angels and Celestials. Any such creature entering the area sustains 2 Infernal Damage upon entering the area. At the end of their Turn on the next Round, and every Round thereafter, they sustain a cumulative 2 Infernal Damage. So, on the first Round, they take 2 Infernal Damage. On the next Round, they take 4; the next they take 6; etc.

Note that an Accursed area does not provide protection against non-spiritual hazards, even if they are wielded by spiritual beings. Thus, a Valkyrie is free to torch a sanctified temple with a magical fire as long as they personally remain out of the sanctified area. For this reason, the grounds immediately surrounding an evil temple are often Accursed as well. Of course, those spirits that are unaffected by Infernal Damage may enter the area without difficulty.

Blessed

A state that imbues an area with righteous power so that it becomes anathema to supernatural spirits such as Demons, Devils, and most forms of Undead (whether corporeal or not). Any such creature entering the area sustains 2 Righteous Damage upon entering the area. At the end of their Turn on the next Round, and every Round thereafter, they sustain a cumulative 2 Righteous Damage. So, on the first Round, they take 2 Righteous Damage. On the next Round, they take 4; the next they take 6; etc.

Note that a Blessed area does not provide protection against non-spiritual hazards, even if they are wielded by spiritual beings. Thus, a Lich is perfectly free to torch a sanctified temple with a scorching spray of magical fire as long as the Lich personally remains out of the sanctified area. For this reason, the grounds immediately surrounding a temple are often Blessed as well. Of course, those spirits that are unaffected by Righteous Damage may enter the area without difficulty.

Clouded Area

A state in which an area's visibility is extremely obscured. Such is the case for heavy fog or smoke. Visibility is so limited, it forces any attacks further than 5 feet to have a Drawback, and attacks further than 10 feet to have an Extreme Drawback, which is essentially equivalent to fighting blind (see [Fighting Blind](#) in the [Conflict Rules](#) section). The clouded area also gives similar Edges to all those Sneaking within it.

Darkened Area

A state which blocks all light within an area. Normal torches and lamps automatically have their illumination dimmed to insignificance. Unless the Darkness is counteracted in some way by a magical light source (see below), the darkness in the area is total. Even creatures with Dark Vision will be completely blind. Only creatures having vision that does not depend on light will be unhindered by the Darkened state.

Every magically Darkened area is assigned a Quality Level, which equals the skill, spell, or power rank of the ability that produced the darkening effect.

Magical lights have the power of their illumination reduced when within a magically darkened area. The amount of reduction depends on the Quality Level of the Darkness and the spell rank of the magical light source(s). In essence, the radius of the magical light's illumination is reduced by 5 feet per Quality Level of the magical darkness. If the magical darkness is sufficiently dark, then the magical light source will be completely dimmed.

If a magical light source is removed from a magically darkened area, both the light and darkness resume their normal levels of power.

Gloomy Area

A state which reduces all light within an area to half its normal levels of illumination. For example, suppose a light source would normally illuminate to a radius of 20 feet with Bright Light and then to a radius of 40 feet with Dim Light. In a Gloomy area, the same light source would only illuminate a radius of 10 feet with Bright Light and then to a radius of 20 feet with Dim Light.

Further, creatures normally adversely affected by sunlight need have little fear of roaming through Gloomy areas, as the state completely negates all drawbacks of natural sunlight. Thus, a vampire or stone troll would feel quite at home in this environment. Further, magical Sunshining effects in the area have their spell ranks cut in half.

Highly Combustible Area

A Highly Combustible Area is one in which an area's surface is so flammable that any ignition source will instantly set it ablaze. Even the smallest spark will ignite it, and the flame will quickly spread. Unless otherwise stated, if such an area is ignited, the fire will spread at a rate of 5 feet per Round from its point of ignition until the extent of the area is reached. It will burn for 5 minutes before exhausting its fuel source (again, unless otherwise stated).

Magically Combustible Areas

A Magically Combustible area is one that is created by a magical spell or power. Any such area is assigned a Quality Level equal to the skill, spell, or power rank of the ability that produced the effect.

If the area is ignited, the flame delivers Scorching Damage. Unless otherwise stated, this damage equals 1 point per 2 Quality Levels to all creatures having any portion of their bodies within the Affected Area every Round. Allow an Avoidance Roll with Agility and Toughness Adjustments against the same Threshold as above for half Damage. Failure indicates the creature sustains the roll's Margin as additional Scorching Damage. Success indicates they take no damage and may move out of the burning area as a Reaction.

Naturally Combustible Areas

A Naturally Combustible Area is one that arises due to normal environmental conditions, such as lamp oil covering a floor or a dry hay stack.

Naturally Combustible Area Guidance Table

Roll Difficulty	Threshold
Trivial	0 (no roll needed)
Easy (dry kindling / sticks)	5
Moderate (dry hay / paper)	10
Challenging (combustible oil patch)	15
Hard (kerosene patch)	20
Extreme (explosive)	25

Once ignited, the flames burn all creatures having any portion of their bodies within the area. Allow an Attribute Check with Agility and Toughness Adjustments against a Threshold set by the Overlord (see the [Naturally Combustible Area Guidance Table](#) for guidance). Failure indicates the creature sustains Scorching Damage equal to 3 plus the roll's Margin. Success indicates they take no damage and may move out of the burning area as a Reaction.

Impeding Terrain

A state which slows all movement across the surface to half normal. So, if a character has a normal running Speed of 30, they may move through the area at a Speed of 15 for every Move Action they take. A couple of examples of naturally occurring areas are regions covered with loose rubble and waist-deep stream of water.

Unless otherwise stated, an Impeding area only slows movement across its surface. It has no impact on the Speed of creatures flying above it.

Quagmire

A state in which an area's surface is a squishy mire of muck. Any creature of Small size or larger will sink to a depth of about a foot into a Quagmire, and the muck will tend to cling to them. (Creatures of Tiny size and smaller are unaffected by Quagmires.) Such is that case for mud bogs.

Any creature standing on such a surface automatically suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Agility or which may deliver Fettering Setback.

Further, walking across any such surface forces all affected creatures to automatically Creep.

Quenching Area

A state which has an extreme damping effect on fire in the area. Normal fires in the area are automatically extinguished.

Every Quenching area is assigned a Quenching Level. If it is a natural phenomenon, its Quenching Level is set by the Overlord (see the [Natural Quenching Guidance Table](#) for guidance). Otherwise, it equals the skill, spell, or power rank of the ability that produced the effect.

Magical fires compete with the Quenching effect in any overlapping areas. Unless the description of a magical fire explicitly states that it cannot be extinguished, the Quenching Area will lower the spell rank of any overlapping magical fires by an amount equal to its own Quenching Level. If that reduces the fire's spell rank to zero, it is extinguished in the overlapping area.

Natural Quenching Guidance Table

Natural Phenomenon	Quenching Level
Normal weather conditions from no precipitation up to drizzling conditions.	0
Moderate Precipitation	4
Downpour	7
Deluge	10
Completely Submerged / Underwater	∞

Silenced Area

A state which blocks all sound within an area.

Unfortunately, those in the Affected Area are unable to hear possible nearby threats. As such, they must rely more heavily on other senses to do so. As a consequence, the silence imposes a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls that at least partly involve hearing. It also means that all those within the Affected Area gain an Edge on all Conflict Rolls involving Stealth or Sneaking.

Spell-casting using verbal components automatically fails within a Silenced area. Similarly, spells producing effects through sound, such as any spells delivering Sonic Damage, automatically fail within this area.

Finally, Echolocation does not work in Silenced areas.

Slick Terrain

A state in which an area's surface is so slippery that moving across it is problematic. Such is that case for ice, and for areas covered in grease or oil.

Only creatures at least half of their footprints in the area are affected by the Slick state. So, a Large creature, whose footprint takes up a 2×2 square on a battle grid, must have at least 2 of the 4 five-foot squares it covers lie in the Affected Area for the Slick state to influence it.

If a creature attempts to climb a slick wall, they suffer from an Extreme Drawback on all Climbing rolls.

Any creature standing on a slick surface automatically gains the Temporary Trait "Unstable footing" while in the area. Further, it suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Agility or Craftiness, or which may deliver Footing Setback.

Further, any creature within a Slick area must either limit their movement to a Creep, or must make a Conflict Roll for every Move Action they take, as described below.

Magically Slick Surfaces

Magically Slick surfaces, those created by a magical spell or power, are assigned a Quality Level, which equals the spell or power rank of the ability that produced the effect. In this case, the Conflict Roll that must be made is an Avoidance Roll with Craftiness Adjustments against a Threshold of 10 plus the Slick surface's Quality Level. Failure indicates the creature sustains Footing Setback equal to half the terrain's Quality Level plus the roll's Margin.

Whether the slick surface arose naturally or was created, if a creature is Overcome as a result of the Footing Setback taken by the slick surface, they fall Prone and remain incapacitated until the end of the Scene. This may be narrated in any way that fits the story, such as them having been knocked out by the fall, being unable to gain any kind of purchase to move due to the slick environment, or otherwise.

Naturally Slick Surfaces

A naturally slick surface is one that arises due to normal environmental conditions, such as the ice covering a frozen lake in the middle of winter. In this case, the Conflict Roll that must be made is a Craftiness Check against a Threshold set by the Overlord (see the Naturally Slick Surface Guidance Table for guidance). Failure indicates the creature sustains Footing Setback equal to the roll's Margin.

Naturally Slick Surface Guidance Table

Roll Difficulty	Threshold
Trivial (normal floor / ground)	0 (no roll needed)
Easy (wet surface, viscous mud)	5
Moderate (wet flagstones, oil patch on rough stone)	10
Challenging (normal ice, oil patch on flagstones, slick mud)	15
Hard (wet ice, wet or oiled floor of polished marble)	20
Extreme (ice covered with flowing water)	25

Sticky Morass

A state in which a volume is filled with a sticky substance that clings to and binds creatures within it. Such is the case with spider webs.

Any creature within a Sticky Morass must make Avoidance Rolls with Craftiness and Strength Adjustments Adjustments in the following circumstances:

- When they enter the area (or when a Morass suddenly appears in an area they occupy).
- When they perform a Move Action.
- When they perform any action that requires rapid physical activity, such as swinging a weapon.

Every created Sticky Morass is assigned a Quality Level, which equals the skill, spell, or power rank of the ability that produced the effect, or the Level of the creature that created it.

The Avoidance Rolls are made against a Threshold of 10 plus the Quality Level of the morass. Success on the Conflict Roll indicates the creature avoids getting caught up in the Morass. Failure indicates the creature is caught in its grip. They can speak, but are unable to move their limbs. Further, unless otherwise stated, the web imposes Fettering Setback equal to 1 per 2 Quality Levels plus the roll's Margin.

While caught in a Sticky Morass, a creature's Speed drops to 0, and it suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving its Agility.

Any ensnared creature may attempt to extract themselves from the morass on their Turn. Each such attempt requires

they expend an Action to make an Avoidance Roll with the same adjustments and Threshold as described above. A Pure Success indicates they wrench themselves free and can move normally. On a Bare Success, they are able to Move at a Creeping Speed (of 5), freeing themselves only if they can move out of the area entirely. Failure on any such roll indicates they cannot Move and become even more entangled in the Sticky Morass, taking additional Fettering Setback equal to 1 per 2 Quality Levels of the Morass plus the roll's Margin.

If a creature's Fate Points falls to zero while webbed, assume it is hopelessly wrapped up in the Sticky Morass, unable to free itself without assistance.

Tangled Morass

A state in which an area is filled with intertwined vines, branches, brambles, or other barriers that impede movement through it to an extreme degree.

Any creature of Small size or larger wishing to move through a Tangled area must make Conflict Rolls every Move Action. The type of roll depends on the type of Tangled Morass, as described below. Failure on the Conflict Roll indicates the creature must Creep for that Move Action. Success indicates they may move at half their normal Speed.

Creatures that are Tiny size may move through a Tangled area at half normal Speed without any need to make Conflict Rolls. Creatures that are smaller than Tiny may move through Tangled areas unimpeded.

Constructed Tangled Morass

A Constructed Tangled Morass is one that was brought about by a magical spell or power, or which was otherwise created by a creature. Every Constructed Tangled Morass is assigned a Quality Level, which equals the skill, spell, or power rank of the ability that produced the effect, or the Level of the creature that produced it.

The aforementioned Conflict Rolls required by Constructed Tangled Morasses are Avoidance Rolls with Vigor Adjustments. The Threshold that must be overcome equals 10 plus the Quality Level.

Natural Tangled Morass

A Natural Tangled Morass is one that arose naturally without the purposeful intent of any creature. The aforementioned Conflict Rolls required by a Natural Tangled Morass are Vigor Checks. The Threshold that must be overcome is set by the Overlord (see the Natural Tangled Morass Guidance Table for guidance).

Natural Tangled Morass Guidance Table

Roll Difficulty	Threshold
Trivial (vines having a density of no more than 1 per 5' square)	0 (no roll needed)
Easy (sparse vines / vegetation)	5
Moderate (frequent vines / sparse brambles)	10
Challenging (dense vines, frequent brambles)	15
Hard (dense brambles)	20
Extreme (dense interwoven brambles)	25

Waterlogged Area

A state in which an area is submerged or soaked in water.

Any creature within a Waterlogged Area suffers from an increased risk against Electrical effects. Any such effect damaging a creature with a Waterlogged Area is conveyed to any characters within 5 feet of them who are also within the Waterlogged Area. Such an effect can only influence a given creature once, though. If a creature is already targeted by a given Electrical effect to begin with, it is not doubly affected.

Character Conditions

This section describes how to handle many of the various types of physical, spiritual and mental conditions that characters will inevitably encounter during play.

Guts Refreshes Tied to Character Conditions

Many Character Conditions are associated with some example Temporary Traits that are appropriate to the type as long as the state remains. Feel free to tweak them or come up with new ones entirely your own. Through their use, an injury can actually be transformed into a character asset providing more role-playing opportunities that can reward a player with Guts refreshes.

What is potentially even more impactful, though, is that a character gains a Minor Guts Refresh whenever they fail a Conflict Roll in which one of their Character Conditions had an influence. (A reward for having engaged in conflict despite their handicaps.) So, if a Character Condition imposes a -1 penalty on Agility, they get a Minor Guts Refresh on any failed Conflict Roll involving Agility. (The impacted character may decline the refresh, if desired.)

Character Condition Descriptions

Affected by ...

This Condition is not listed in any creature description, since it is the default. If a creature is not otherwise described as being Sensitive, Resistant, Immune, or otherwise has a special Condition that applies to an effect, then it is assumed to be Affected by it. In that case, it sustains Damage, Setback, and/or other repercussions exactly as indicated in the description of whatever spell, skill, or other ability targets the creature.

Amputation

Every so often, a character has a limb severed from their body during combat or extracts an infection so severe that amputation is necessary to save their life. Whenever such a shock is given to an individual's system, it takes a substantial amount of time to recover. Immediately following any major amputation, the character enters into a state of Severe Shock. In addition the character must make a Toughness Check against a Threshold of 10 to avoid Infection. If they survive their injuries, they will be Incapacitated for 1 month. The capabilities of the unfortunate character may thereafter be much more restricted.

Obviously, the Attributes of the amputee are affected. If the exact location of amputation is unknown, either pick something that logically fits the scenario or determine the location randomly on the Body Zone Diagram.

Once the specific location is known, reference the appropriate table below. In any case, no Attribute may ever fall below -20 due to amputation.

The tables give adjustments to the character's Attributes when no prosthetic is used. Amputees losing legs often use prosthetic legs or crutches. Those losing hands often replace them with hooks or prosthetic weapons. If a non-animate prosthetic is used to replace the lost limb, cut the Attribute adjustments on the table in half. (-5 becomes -3; -3 becomes -2; -1 stays -1.) If the character is provided with a magically animated prosthesis to replace the lost limb, it fully compensates for the disability. In these case, ignore the Attribute adjustments entirely when the prosthetic is used.

Bloody stump.
Amputee

Arm Amputation Table

Location	TN	ST	AG	CR	PC	HT	IN
at hand	0	-1	0	-4	0	0	0
at forearm/elbow	0	-1	-1	-4	0	0	0
above elbow	0	-2	-1	-4	0	0	0
at shoulder	0	-2	-2	-4	0	0	0

Leg Amputation Table

Location	TN	ST	AG	CR	PC	HT	IN
at or below knee	0	-1	-3	0	0	0	0
thigh	0	-2	-4	0	0	0	0
hip	0	-3	-5	0	0	0	0

Blind Drunk

A character that is Blind Drunk suffers from the same effects as Intoxication (see Delirious / Intoxicated). But, instead of having a single Drawback, they have an Extreme Drawback on all actions. Further, they are Highly Resistant to Tormenting Effects. Unless otherwise stated, Blind Drunkenness passes in 8 hours.

Blind Drunk

Blinded

Characters who are completely blind have an Extreme Drawback on conflicts involving sight, including attacking others and defending from attacks. In addition, their Speed is cut in half.

Since a blinded character must rely on their other senses, they may have great difficulty in distinguishing between friend and foe. In a chaotic melee situation, the Overlord

must roll randomly between those in range to see who a blinded combatant strikes. The rolls may be weighted if an enemy or comrade makes obvious and distinctive noises.

Broken Bone

A broken bone is a severe problem that characters must occasionally deal with. Shock immediately follows the breaking of a major bone. For a bone to heal normally, the bone must be set so that the broken ends are rejoined properly. The limb must then be held in place by a splint or cast. Any character with the skill of Mending can set a bone, which generally requires 6 weeks to heal. Any character with the gift of First Aid may splint and casts.

A character with a broken bone is treated as having an Extreme Drawback on all actions involving the bone until set, or for one week after breaking it if left unset. In addition, if a leg was broken, the character's Speed is reduced to 5. If the bone is set (or a week passes if left unset) the character will only have a single Drawback on all actions involving the bone until it fully heals. During this time, their Speed is cut in half if a leg was broken, and is restored to normal otherwise.

If the bone is not set within the first week, it heals improperly. The limb will be twisted and severely handicapped, giving the character a permanent Drawback on all actions using the limb, until it is healed with a Heal, Maiming spell or similar magic.

A broken cranium affects all actions involving Perception. A broken arm or hand will affect any actions involving that limb, as well as all actions involving Craftiness. A broken bone in a foot, leg or torso affects all actions involving Agility.

Broken arm
Broken leg
Broken ribs
Severe Concussion

Burned / Frostbitten

Burning occurs through exposure to either extreme heat, cold, or acid. The severity of the burn and the speed at which the body recovers from them varies with the intensity of the trauma. Burns fall into three categories: first, second, or third degree.

First-Degree Burns

First degree burns are the lightest, most common type of burn. They arise whenever a character takes burn damage, but does not fall to 0 Hit Points, or where the character falls to 0 Hit Points while in low Glory Status. Damage from first-degree burns heal at the character's normal Daily Healing Rate. After healing, such burns leave no visible marks.

Light burns

Second-Degree Burns

Second degree burns are a potential consequence listed on the Glory Status tables when a character is Overcome. If left to heal normally, second degree burns heal at the normal Daily Healing Rate, leaving slight, but noticeable scars. If healed magically, the burns leave no scars. Unfortunately, the character suffers from a Drawback on all physical actions until they heal to full Hit Points.

- Severe burns
- Slight burn scars

Third-Degree Burns

Third degree burns are a possible consequence when a character is Overcome in a high Glory Status. The burns are so severe that they cannot heal normally. Even the lowest layers of skin have been killed, leaving nothing to regenerate the damaged tissue. Shock immediately follows such a burn. While the burns remain, they risk Infection. These burns can only be healed through magical means. Even so, the burns leave deforming scars, permanently giving the character a -4 penalty on Charisma. Unfortunately, the character suffers from an Extreme Drawback on all physical actions until they heal to full Hit Points.

- Debilitating burns
- Deforming burn scars

Choking / Drowning / Suffocating

Any character choking or drowning sustains Suffocating Damage whose severity increases the longer the choking influence exists. The character suffers only 2 Suffocating Damage on the first Round of choking. On the second Round, they suffer an additional 4. The third Round delivers 6 and the fourth inflicts 8. This process continues in a like manner until the character resumes breathing or falls to 0 Hit Points.

While a spell-caster is being choked, any spells with Verbal components they invoke suffer from an Extreme Drawback.

Constricted / Crushed

Every so often, a character finds themselves in the frightening grip of a powerful constrictor snake or crushed under a heavy log or boulder. A character in this situation suffers Crushing Damage and Fettering Setback every Round. Unless otherwise stated, this damage equals 1 plus the Strength of the opposing force, and the Fettering Setback they sustain equals 1 plus the Margin of the Attack Roll. Only plate armor, a shell, or an exoskeleton can absorb this damage.

Cracked Bone

If a character cracks a bone, they should probably consider themselves lucky that the bone did not break instead. Feeling lucky, though, will undoubtedly be far from their mind. A character with a cracked bone suffers from a Drawback on any action using the cracked bone. All penalties persist until the bone heals, a process that normally requires 4 weeks.

- Injured arm
- Injured leg
- Concussion
- Cracked Ribs

Cursed

Occasionally, the effects of a Curse will befall a character. Most often, a Curse is a consequence of being defeated in a high Glory Status. Or, they may fail their Avoidance Roll against a mage’s Lunacy spell, or become greedy and carry around more magic items than allowed by their Magic Limit. To add insult to injury, each of the curses listed in this section counts as a Spellbinding on the cursed character when considering Willpower limitations.

Often, a curse will persist only until a specific triggering event occurs, such some other person falling in true love with the subject. However, the longest that a curse may linger depends on the Glory Status of the subject when the curse is imposed, as shown on the Maximum Curse Duration Table.

Maximum Curse Duration Table

Glory Status	Duration
1	1 Minute
2	1 Day
3	1 Week
4	1 Month
5-6	Enduring

Only exceptionally potent magics can lift such a curse prior to it terminating normally. Two such spells include the Pagan Ritual spell Lift Curse and the Occult spell Invoke Disenchantment.

Cursed characters gain at least one Trait reflecting the nature of the curse. Because of this, players may actually gain some benefits from a curse through role-playing.

Curses are split into two distinct categories: Physical and Spiritual. Physical Curses impose physical handicaps on their subjects, while Spiritual Curses influence their behaviors.

Handling Multiple Curses

It is possible for a character to fall under the influence of multiple curses simultaneously. In these cases, the unique characteristics of each curse will assert themselves. However, if two curses have a similar effect, then the subject of the curses suffers from that effect only once. For example, suppose a character is afflicted with both the Curse of Insatiable Hunger and the Curse of Insatiable Thirst. In this case, the character would be both insatiably hungry and thirsty, and be Sensitive to both Starving and Dehydrating Damage. However, both curses have the additional effect of Enfeebling the victim. As this specific effect is identical for both curses, it is applied only once.

Physical Curses

Curse of Abomination

The subject of the curse has some portion of their body transformed into that of a beast, or gains some other bestial characteristic, such as horns or a tail. The affected body part is transformed into the corresponding body part of the specified type of beast. So, if the subject's head is altered, it will transform into the head of some beast, rather than a leg or claw.

If the character's head is affected, they retain their normal vision and the ability to speak. If the hands are affected, they retain the ability to grasp objects and use tools. Regardless of what body part is altered, whenever their disfigurement is visible, the character suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving their Charisma.

The cursed character gains a Trait describing their deformation.

I have the head of an ass.¹⁸
My left hand is a bear claw.
I am a snake from the waist down.

If the subject ever parents a child while under the curse's influence, the curse passes to their offspring as well.

Origin: In Celtic mythology, the King of Tir na nOg heard a prophesy that he would remain king until his daughter, Niam, married. To ensure this never happened, the king cursed Niam to have the head of a pig, so that no man would ever fall in love with her.

Curse of the Dolorous Wound

Any character with this curse has a grievous wound that cannot fully heal. As such, the character is Enfeebled. If the character is magically healed, no wound remains visible on the person's skin. But, the internal pain of the old wound remains. Typically, the curse is focused around a serious wound that was inflicted in a critical battle.

The cursed character gains a Trait indicating the nature of the curse.

"It's the old wound. It will not heal."

Origin: In Arthurian Legend, the guardian of the Holy Grail committed unspecified sins against God. As punishment, the guardian, who was known as the Fisher King, received a grievous injury from the Spear of Destiny. The fateful blow, known as the Dolorous Stroke, inflicted damage that would not heal naturally, and left the man with a painful limp. He awaits a worthy person to attain the Holy Grail, so that his wound may be healed.

Curse of Insatiable Hunger

A character cursed with Insatiable Hunger can never eat enough to be fully nourished. Either their body is unable to properly derive nourishment from food, or is physically unable to eat for some reason (such as the food merely evaporating when it comes close to their mouth). While the curse is in effect, the character is Enfeebled, regardless of how much they eat (or try to). Further, they are Sensitive to Starving Damage.

"I could sure use a sandwich."
"Are you going to finish that?"

Origin: In Greek mythology, Erysichthon, the king of Thessaly, cut down a sacred grove of trees dedicated to Demeter. To punish his insolence, Demeter cursed him with insatiable hunger. He was ruined. Erysichthon spent his entire fortune on food. When he was finally destitute and unable to buy the food he craved, he devoured his own flesh. Tantalus was another Greek, cursed with both Insatiable Hunger and Insatiable Thirst.

Curse of Insatiable Thirst

The subject of the curse has insatiable thirst. While the curse is in effect, the character is Enfeebled due to dehydration, regardless of how much they drink, or due to an inability to drink. Further, they are Sensitive to Dehydrating Damage.

"Could you lend me your wine skin? Mine's empty."

Origin: In Greek mythology, Tantalus was the king of Anatolia who lived in the city of Tantalus, his namesake. Due to his evil nature in life, Tantalus was condemned to Tartarus in the afterlife. There, he forever stands in a pool of water overhung by the branches of a tree heavily laden with fruit. Anytime Tartarus bends down to get a drink, the water recedes. And, anytime he reaches to pluck fruit from the tree, a breeze blows the branches out of reach.

Curse of Lycanthropy

The subject of the curse is infected with a particularly potent form of chronic Lycanthropy. They transform into a specific type of were-creature at inconvenient times. (See the Were-Creature overlays in Celtic Creatures and Nordic Nightmares for options.) Unlike some other were-creatures, the cursed individual is totally unable to control their actions while transformed. Further, for the lycanthropy to be cured, the character must first have the curse lifted (perhaps through the Pagan spell Lift Curse), and then cured (perhaps through the Pagan spell Solemn Panacea).

¹⁸ With a tip of the hat to Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream.

The character gains a Trait indicating the type of creature they transform into. Although the cursed character cannot control their transformations, the person playing the character can make it happen if they get some other player to recognize that the infected character is acting out a trait indicating that it is happening.

Slowly transforming into a wolf.

Origin: In Greek mythology, Lycaon was the king of Arcadia. He was honored by Zeus as a guest in Olympus. To test whether Zeus was actually omniscient, Lycaon tried to trick Zeus. So, he killed his own son, Nyctimus, and served him as a stew to the gods. Before consuming the meal, the gods became aware of Lycaon's evil deed. Zeus turned Lycaon¹⁹ and his offspring into wolves.

Curse of Transformation

The subject of the curse is transformed into an Anthropomorphic beast. If the creature's stats are needed, you can look them up in one of the game's monster supplement books. If an explicit description exists for the desired form, use that. Otherwise, use the most appropriate of the various Critter descriptions found in [The Tome of Terrors](#). Look up the example having the highest Level less than or equal to the subject's Level. Use that example for all of the creature's stats, except for Intelligence (which remains unaltered). Any derived stats are altered accordingly.

Further, the newly transformed character is anthropomorphic. That is, they retain the ability to speak, to grasp objects, and to use tools.

The character gains a Trait describing their deformation.

I am an anthropomorphic boar.

I am a goat-man.

I am cursed with the body of a dragon.

If the subject of this curse ever gives birth, the curse passes to their offspring as well.

Origin: In Nordic mythology, the dwarf Fafnir murdered his own father to obtain his golden hoard. He was cursed to assume the form of a dragon by the Ring of the Nibelung the hoard contained. In Celtic mythology, Sadhbh was transformed into a deer by the evil Druid Fear Doirche as punishment for refusing his advances. While still cursed, Sadhbh later gave birth to her son, Oisín, who was born as a fawn.

Curse of Unending Torment

The subject is continually tormented by some source. While the curse is in effect, no matter what the subject does to avoid the torment, it always reappears. For example, the cursed individual may be tormented by a stinging insect. But, if one is killed, another one appears. Due to the incessant torture, the character is Devitalized. Further, they are Sensitive to Tormenting Setback.

The cursed character gains a Trait indicating the nature of the torture.

"I can't get this jingle out of my head!"
 "Can someone please fix that leak in the roof!"
 "This rash is driving me nuts!"

Origin: In Greek mythology, Io was one of Zeus's many lovers. When Hera found out about his affair, Io was transformed into a beautiful white cow (whether by Hera or Zeus is unclear). But, regardless, Hera sent a gadfly to continually sting and torment Io as punishment for her insolence.

Curse of Unnatural Age

Any character with this curse is physically older than their years would otherwise indicate. (Ageless characters, and characters who are already Elderly are immune to this curse.)

Mythmagica imposes age-related modifiers to characters through the use of various Flavors: Preadolescent, Adolescent, and Elderly (as described in [The Character Compendium](#)). Any character without one of these Flavors is assumed to be a mature adult.

The [Curse of Unnatural Age](#) alters these age-related Flavors as shown on the Curse of Unnatural Age Table.

Curse of Unnatural Age Table

Current Flavor	Replaced By
Preadolescent	Adolescent
Adolescent	no age-related Flavor
no-age-related Flavor	Elderly
Elderly	Elderly (no effect)

In all these cases, the characteristics of any current age-related Flavor are lost (if any), and those of any newly imposed Flavor are gained (if any).

Further, the cursed character gains a Trait indicating the nature of the curse.

"Cursed with Unnatural Age."

Origin: In Celtic mythology, time passes at a different rate in the Land of Fey than in the Mortal Realm. Consequently, in many Celtic legends, when a mortal visits the Land of Fey their body instantly ages as soon as they set foot in their homeland.

¹⁹ The very word Lycanthropy derives from Lycaon.

Spiritual Curses

Curse of Amnesia

A character cursed with amnesia forgets his entire personal background. They forget all about where they live, what items they possess, and their loved ones. Even the companions accompanying them when they are cursed are immediately forgotten. Any Personality Traits they possess are immediately lost as well. Fortunately, amnesia doesn't affect their ability to speak, nor does it hinder their expertise in any of their skills and professions. Further, they are able to form new memories from the point at which they were cursed. And, if the curse is ever lifted, their old memories (and Personality Traits) return.

"I can't remember my past."

Origin: In Greek mythology, souls that were to be reincarnated were required to drink from the river Lethe. This would erase from their minds all memory of their past lives. Lotus flowers had a similar effect on anyone consuming them.

Curse of Delusion

A delusional character has an unassailable belief that is firmly maintained even when presented with irrefutable evidence to the contrary (as specified by the Overlord). For example, the subject of the curse may believe they can see the future, and they continually try to convince others of their increasingly bizarre predictions. While the curse is in effect, the character is Devitalized due their distorted view of reality. Further, they are Sensitive to Deluding setback. The cursed character gains a Trait indicating the nature of their delusion.

"I can see the future. It's horrible."

Why won't anyone believe my crazy prophecies?!

Origin: In Greek mythology, Cassandra was a beautiful woman whom Apollo fell in love with. In order to woo her, Apollo gave her the gift of prophecy. But, despite his favor, Cassandra refused his advances. In anger, Apollo bestowed upon her the curse that, despite her being able to foretell the future, nobody would believe her prophecies. (Clearly, players of this game cannot predict the future. But, the social ramifications of a curse like this can be simulated by having the cursed individual believe that they can do so.)

Curse of Insomnia

This curse is characterized by irritability, anxiety, irrational panic attacks, and an inability to sleep despite their having an overwhelming need to do so. While the curse is in effect, the character is Devitalized due their exhaustion. Further, they are Sensitive to Sedating setback.

"I could use a nap right about now."

Curse of Mad Rage

The subject of the curse suffers from the flaw Easily Enraged. Further, while the curse is in effect, they are Highly Sensitive to Tormenting Setback.

"You wouldn't like me when I'm angry."

Origin: In Greek mythology, Hera was jealous that Zeus had, once again, had an affair. She cursed Hercules, the product of that affair with a mad rage in which he killed his wife and three sons. To atone for that sin, Heracles was forced to perform twelve seemingly impossible tasks.

Curse of Possession

The subject of the curse is possessed by a demon or ghost. It is identified by two or more distinct personas living within one being. The alter-ego comes complete with unique personality traits and mannerisms. This condition most commonly arises by a direct demon possession, but may be the result of other spiritual influences. Which personality comes forward is determined randomly every day. The cursed character has no control over his actions when the possessing spirit comes forward. Possession can only be cured through exorcism.

The character should maintain two sets of personality Traits: one for each personality. (The possessing personality should start with at least one Trait that is pretty over-the-top.)

I have an infallible plan to summon the Dark Lord!
"Bow before your master!"

Curse of Self-Harm

The subject of the curse is overcome with overpowering guilt for their past sins. While the curse is in effect, the character is Enfeebled due to their incessant self harm. If a character with this curse is thereafter defeated in Glory Status 6, they kill themselves.

I don't deserve to live.

Origin: In Greek mythology, Oedipus Rex unknowingly killed his own father, and married his own mother, Jocasta. He had four sons with Jocasta. Later becoming aware of the horror of his sins, Jocasta killed herself and Oedipus gouged out his own eyes.

Curse of Self-Infatuation

Unless their life is directly threatened, the subject is compelled to continually look at their reflection and primp and groom their appearance. They will carry mirrors with them for this purpose. But, if mirrors are unavailable, they will use whatever shiny surfaces are available. Due to their unending infatuation with themselves, the character is Devitalized. Further, they are Sensitive to Entrancing Setback.

"I could just kiss myself!"
"I look *fabulous!*"

Origin: In Greek mythology, Narcissus spurned the advances of the nymph Echo, who faded away in despair, leaving only her voice. In retribution, Echo's mother Nemesis cursed

Narcissus to fall in love with his own reflection. He fell into despair because he could not consummate a relationship with the object of his desire.

Curse of Unending Toil

Unless their life is directly threatened, the subject is compelled to continually perform a task that cannot be completed. If it looks like they are going to finish the task, something intervenes to undo what they have accomplished. Due to their unending frustration, the character is Devitalized. Further, they are Sensitive to Tormenting Setback.

The cursed character gains a Trait indicating the nature of the task they compulsively undertake.

I must name all the stars in the sky.
I must spin straw into gold.

Origin: In Greek mythology, Sisyphus, king of Ephyra, was condemned to Tartarus, for being a tyrant, and deceiving the gods. His task was to roll a boulder up to the top of a hill. But, whenever he almost accomplished the deed, the boulder would always roll back down, and he would have to start over.

Dead

You might think that the last thing we need to explain is the concept of “dead”. But, in a game based on folklore, in some cases, dead characters can, in fact, get better.

Death can occur in Mythmagica when a character's Hit Points falls to zero and the character has a high Glory Status. Note that unnamed characters, who have no Guts to spend at all, are always assumed to be in the highest Glory Status.

A character who dies, but who is not in the highest Glory Status, can be resurrected or otherwise revived through magic, although this is usually far from easy.

A character who dies in the highest Glory Status is permanently dead. D. E. A. D. DEAD. *Finito*. There is no further recourse, no additional chance. Their life is over. Let us emphasize this point. The character *is no more!*²⁰ The only way for this to happen is for the player to voluntarily gamble their character's very existence and lose. Deal with it.

Having said that, it is actually *possible* to continue playing a dead character for a while. That is because Mythmagica is a game about folklore, and folklore is replete with dead characters. Or, rather, it is replete with *undead* characters. If a player is insistent on continuing with the character, it is permissible to allow the character to rise as a ghost, revenant, or other ghoulish creature in order to complete one last all-important task before it finally Rests In Peace. If this is done, the task must be clearly defined, attainable within a reasonable time period, and the character can do nothing that does not push toward that end goal. While this is being done, the character has Guts, but gains no XP for any actions. If they are killed a second time before their goal is

accomplished, they are truly and permanently dead. Similarly, once they achieve their goal, they die (although, a dramatic pause for a tearful good-bye is quite reasonable).

Death is not something that should be “House Ruled” away. The possibility of character death is what gives Mythmagica much of its dramatic tension. Mess with that, and you spoil the game. So, tread lightly here.

Aaaaaarrrrrrrrrg....

Deafened

A character that is deafened has lost the sense of hearing. While Deafened, a character is immune to hearing-based effects. This includes most forms of discourse, except those that are carried out with body-language alone (e.g. Sign Language).

Note that plugging one's ears cannot protect a character from illusory sounds, as illusions are purely mind-based effects.

Delirious / Intoxicated

Sometimes the mental faculties of characters are fogged due to drugs, magic, or alcohol. Intoxicated or delirious characters are incapable of disbelieving illusions and suffer from a Drawback in all actions. In addition, Speed is cut in half. On the other hand, a character in this state is Resistant to Tormenting Effects. Unless otherwise stated, Delirium / Intoxication passes in 2 hours.

Delirious
Intoxicate

Dehydrated

Every day a character forgoes drinking, they sustain 3 Dehydrating Damage. Further, their Daily Healing Rate drops to 0 until the character is no longer Dehydrated by drinking their fill. Finally, a dehydrated character suffers from a Drawback on all actions until they regain full Hit Points.

Dehydrated

Devitalized

A character that is Devitalized has their maximum Fate Points reduced by 25%. When the character would normally regain lost Fate Points (through rest, or otherwise), they cannot be restored above ¾ of their normal maximum. Unless otherwise stated, a character will naturally recover from being Devitalized in 1 month.

Spiritually Devitalized

²⁰ With a tip of the hat to the Norwegian Blue.

Diseased

Diseases come in many forms and varieties. There is no daily check on a character's health so they are seldom sick. Any illness is a rare "treat" for the Overlord to exploit. It might as well be interesting. Since this game is set up to encourage heroic quests, we describe here only heroic diseases. Adventurers don't get runny noses.

Nobody in the Middle Ages understood how diseases spread. Some believed in infectious "vapors," others in demons and evil spirits. Inevitably, someone would accuse old hags of evil witchcraft and pacts with devils. The following descriptions sometimes list the actual forms of transmission only as an aid to the Overlord. After all, the cure of a friend's fatal disease could be a grand adventure if the disease is, in fact, caused by a demon.

Popular "treatments" for various diseases usually involved ridiculous acts. Some doctors attached leeches to their patients' bodies to draw out "bad blood." Others instructed their clients to hang garlic around their necks or run hams up flagpoles. Needless to say, these treatments accomplished little. While it may be realistic to doom a character with a particular disease to eventual, inevitable death, this is hardly fun. Consequently, each disease listed has some treatment, usually magical, that will cure the patient. Side effects from the diseases, though, may persist permanently.

Every disease is assigned a Quality Level. Unless otherwise stated, the Quality Level of a disease is determined as follows: For diseases of magical origin, the Quality Level equals the disease's spell rank (i. e. the spell rank of a Render Dire Pox spell). A disease acquired through an interaction with a creature has a Quality Level equal to the Level of the creature from which it was contracted. Treat all other diseases as having a Quality Level of 0.

The diseases that are the most difficult to eradicate are chronic ones. Chronic diseases recur again and again after treatment. Any disease can be chronic. In such cases, the word "chronic" will appear before the disease name. (Chronic Anthrax, Chronic Leprosy, chronic King's Evil, etc.) The symptom of a chronic disease can be alleviated for a period through normal curative abilities. Unless otherwise stated, a chronic disease's symptoms can be suppressed for a week with every successful treatment. But, thereafter it will recur unless permanently cured through potent ritualistic spells, such as the Pagan Ritual spell Solemn Panacea or the Mystic Sanctity power Cure Disease.

Anthrax

Anthrax creates sensitive sores on the carrier's body. The disease progresses with culmination of infected sores and a dramatic rise in temperature.

Anthrax is an extremely contagious disease spread by various animals and animal-headed demons. The chief carriers of the disease include cattle, goats, hogs, horses, sheep, and beasts and demons with the heads of any of these animals. People with frequent contact with these animals are more prone toward the disease.

Initially, the character will only suffer from a Drawback on all physical actions. However, after a few days, its symptoms will be in full effect, hitting the character with an Extreme Drawback on all actions. If the character contracted the disease in a Glory Status allowing for death, they will die if it is not treated within a few weeks. Otherwise, the character will naturally regain their health after this time.

Anthrax can be treated by the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan Healing spell Panacea, and through Bloodletting. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Seeping Sores
Extreme Fever

Black Plague

Also known as the Bubonic Plague or Black Death, Black Plague causes waves of extreme fever and severe chills. The infected individual experiences great thirst, diarrhea, and spasms of vomiting. Blood spots appear on the skin and the lymph glands of the recipient swell. Initially, the character will only suffer from a Drawback on all physical actions. However, after a few days, its symptoms will be in full effect, hitting the character with an Extreme Drawback on all actions. Unless it is treated, Black Plague results in death within 6 weeks for those victims contracting the disease in a Glory Status allowing for death. Others will naturally regain their health after this time.

The Black Plague occurs in widespread epidemics that kill entire populations. It is caused by an unfortunate alignment of the planets that causes a great pestilence to infect the air. Unfortunately, a frightened populace will often ignore the teaching of learned astrologers. They will, instead, blame the plague on lepers, foreigners, Jews, beggars, or any other vulnerable minority group that happens to be out of favor.

The plague can be treated on an individual basis by the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan Healing spell Panacea, and through Bloodletting. It can also be treated by confessing one's sins to a Catholic priest and performing whatever penance the priest prescribes. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Unquenchable Thirst
Spasms
Spots
Waves of Fever and Chills

Cowpox

Cowpox is a disease carried by cattle and other bovine-like creatures such as Taurines. It is also commonly found among those tending these beasts. Actually a mild form of smallpox, the disease causes numerous inflamed boils to appear over the body. The disease runs its course in 4 to 6 weeks. Initially, the character will only suffer from a Drawback on all physical actions. However, after a few

days, its symptoms will be in full effect, hitting the character with Lingering Incapacitation until regaining full health. Cowpox is never fatal.

The disease may be treated by a single casting of the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan Healing spell Panacea, or by Herbal Remedy. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter. If the disease is allowed to run its course naturally, the infected character will be permanently covered by small pox scars, but is thereafter immune to Cowpox, Smallpox, and the mage spell Pox.

Pox Scars

The Dancing Plague

The Dancing Plague is a disease characterized not by physical anomalies of its victims, but by an uncontrollable urge to dance. Those afflicted will continue dancing until they collapse from Exhaustion. As soon as a victim is rested enough to stand, they then resume their dancing. This may continue indefinitely. If left unrestrained, the victim will eventually dance themselves to death if the character contracted the disease in a Glory Status allowing for death. Other characters will suffer from an Extreme Drawback on all actions for a week after dropping from exhaustion, but will thereafter regain their health.

The Dancing Plague is actually caused by demonic possession. As such, it can only be cured by driving the demon from the victim, such as through an Exorcise spell. Ironically, this goal can be accomplished by a musician driving the possessing demon's Fate Points down to zero through the use of an appropriate musical score (e.g. Ode to Joy).

Uncontrollable Dancing

Infection

Infection is a general term describing infestation of bacteria into an open wound. The infestation quickly triggers the body into battle with the germs. The infected wound reddens and quickly swells. The wound itself often leaks white pus. If untreated, the infection will spread and may require amputation of the infected limb or may even cause death (to those contracting the infection in a Glory Status allowing for amputation or death).

Fortunately, any character having the talent of First Aid can easily prevent infections. If infection does occur, it can be treated by the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan Healing spell Panacea, the skill of Bloodletting, or the application of an herbal balm. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Swelling
Extreme Tenderness
Leaking Pus

Leprosy

Leprosy is a disease that causes lumps and thickening of the skin, hair loss, and bone deformities. Leprosy also deadens the nerve cells that send pain signals to the brain.

Consequently, lepers frequently find themselves inflicted with severe infections in wounds they were not even aware existed. While leprosy is not fatal, society fears those infected greatly. Lepers are usually either killed or sent off to leper colonies to prevent the disease's spread.

Leprosy imposes a Drawback on the unfortunate victim for all physical actions due to nerve damage. The disease may be treated by the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan Healing spell Panacea. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter. Even if cured, though, the disfiguring side effects are permanent.

Mottled Skin
Deformed
Patchy hair
Numbness

Lockjaw

Lockjaw, more formally known as Tetanus, causes muscle spasms and convulsions. It is usually transmitted through deep cuts caused by infected items, such as rusty swords. The spores incubate for 5 to 10 days before symptoms arise. If left untreated, lockjaw is fatal within 10 days after initial symptoms become evident for characters that contracted the disease in a Glory Status that allows death. Other characters will thereafter regain their health.

Lockjaw can be treated by the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan spell Panacea, or by Herbal Remedy. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Muscle Spasms

Lycanthropy

Lycanthropy is an infectious disease that periodically warps and mutates infected person's body into that of an animal.

It is usually spread by the bites of rabid animals and other infected people. It is transmitted through the saliva of the host when it bites another animal or human. It can also be contracted as the result of a magical curse. When first acquired, lycanthropy undergoes a 2 week incubation period during which no symptoms occur. After this incubation period, the disease induces high fevers and depression. The infected host finds themselves extremely restless and irritable. They experience excessive salivation, convulsions, and spasms of the throat muscles. After a period of 3 to 5 days after the initial symptoms arise, the victim spontaneously transforms into an animal.

The specific symptoms vary from one animal form to another. But, most of the time, the transformation takes only

5 seconds and lasts until the next sunrise. During this time, most lycanthropes act in a wild, ravenous fashion. Some will attack and eat every living creature it can consume. Upon transforming back into humanoid form, a lycanthrope is Exhausted for 1 hour and retains any wounds sustained in the altered form.

The form into which the victim changes will typically be that of the animal or lycanthrope that infected him, although the victim retains their original size, eyes, and voice. (If caused by a curse, the form is determined by the nature of the curse.) For the precise physical characteristics of the animal form, look up the corresponding creature in one of the supplementary monster books. If a specific lycanthrope write up doesn't exist for the particular form (such as a were-cobra), then use the animal characteristics of the natural form.

Lycanthropy may be treated by Herbal Remedy, if a quantity of wolfsbane can be obtained. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter. Although not a permanent cure, the diseased lycanthrope can be prematurely forced back to its original humanoid form through exhaustion (see Incapacitated / Exhausted for details).

A Mystic lycanthrope can prevent (or cause) their own transformation by making a Temperance roll against a Threshold of 20. In animal form, they can retain their own mental faculties by making a similar roll using Conviction.

Easily angered
Animal mannerisms

The King's Evil

The King's Evil is characterized by painless, black growths covering the necks of those infected. These growths multiply as the disease progresses over the course of a few weeks. These eventually burst leaving painful open sores. Once the disease has progressed to this point, any afflicted character suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Perception. Until cured, the effect will linger permanently for those in a Glory Status allowing for a permanent change to their character. Others will suffer from the disease for a few weeks, after which time they will regain their health naturally.

The King's Evil can be treated by the touch of any character having the gift of Divine Right, which includes all royal characters. In the likely case that a royal personage is loathe to directly touch the afflicted person, the disease can also be treated by royalty handing the unfortunate victim a coin stamped with a holy symbol. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Black Growths
Painful Open Sores

Malaria

Malaria is a disease that is characterized by swings between extreme high fever and severe chills, with respites of a few days between episodes. During these episodes, the character is treated as if Incapacitated. Often, the swings of temperature will abate for a while leaving the infected person with the impression that they have overcome the ailment. The periods of temperature swings may arise chronically for years before the disease finally kills its host. (The disease is only ever fatal if it was contracted while the character was in a Glory Status allowing for death.)

Malaria is caused by "bad air" (the literal meaning of its name). As such, it is most readily acquired near swamps and areas with foul smells.

Malaria may be treated through Bloodletting, the Pagan Healing spell Panacea, and the Mystic power Treat Disease. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Shaking chills & high fevers
Pounding headaches
Profuse Sweating

Rabies

Anyone infected with rabies finds themselves extremely restless and irritable. They experience excessive salivation, convulsions, and spasms of the throat muscles.

Initially, the character will only suffer from a Drawback on all physical actions from this disease. However, after a few days, its symptoms will be in full effect, hitting the character with an Extreme Drawback on all actions. Death inevitably occurs within 3 to 5 days after the initial symptoms arise if the infected character contracted it while in the highest Glory Status. Otherwise, the character instead contracts Lycanthropy.

Rabies is an acute infectious disease of animals that affects the nervous system of the host. It is transmitted through the saliva of the host when it bites another animal or human. When first transmitted, rabies undergoes a 2 week incubation period during which no symptoms occur. After this incubation period, the disease induces high fevers and depression.

Rabies may be treated by the Mystic power Treat Disease, the Pagan spell Panacea, or through Bloodletting. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

High fever & Spasms
Easily angered
Excessive Salivation

Smallpox

Smallpox is a deadly disease that produces red, swollen boils over the host's body. Initially, the character will only suffer from a Drawback on all physical actions. However, after a few days, its symptoms will be in full effect, hitting the character with an Extreme Drawback on all actions. If the character contracted the disease in a Glory Status allowing for death, they will die if it is not cured within a few weeks. Otherwise, the character will naturally regain their health after this time.

An extremely contagious disease, it may be caught merely by coming into contact with an infected individual's discarded clothing, or directly from black magic. If left untreated, death inevitably results within 3 weeks time. As such, those who contracted the disease while in a non-fatal Glory Status are, instead, infected with Cowpox.

Smallpox may be treated by the Mystic power Treat Disease or the Pagan Healing spell Panacea. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter. Even after being cured, though, the boils leave disfiguring scars.

Painful Boils
Pox Scars

St. Anthony's Fire

St. Anthony's Fire is a disease characterized by large inflamed sores scattered over the entire body. Any afflicted character suffers from a Drawback on all actions. Until cured, the effect will linger permanently for those in a Glory Status allowing for a permanent change to their character. Others will suffer from the disease for a few weeks, after which time they will regain their health naturally.

Although not a cure, the symptoms are completely alleviated as long as the afflicted resides within a noble's or royal's fortress or palace. The disease can be treated by consuming blessed food for a week, through Herbal Remedy, through the Pagan spell Panacea, or by the Mystic power Treat Disease. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Inflamed Sores

Tapeworm

A tapeworm is actually a demonic worm that lives in the intestines of its host. (Treat it as a Larva demon, as described in The Monsters of the Mediterranean.) Such demons are most attracted to individuals who indulge in the sin of gluttony.

This condition shows no visible marks on the host's body. Even so, the individual slowly becomes more and more lethargic as the tapeworm grows. The tapeworm gorges on the food eaten by the host. It does not actually eat or damage any part of the host's body. Nevertheless, the host slowly starves even as they eat greater and greater quantities of

food. After several months of possession, treat the host as Starving. If left untreated, death may result within a year. If the character ever attains a Glory Status that allows for such an outcome.

Any character afflicted with a tapeworm suffers from a Drawback on all physical actions.

Any character with the skill of Herbal Remedy may attempt to rid an infected host of tapeworm (which often includes starving the host and luring the worm with a delicately-placed "meal"). Each such treatment requires two weeks time. Panacea and Treat Disease cannot work on this infestation as it is not technically a disease (even though the populace views it as such). However, an exorcism can drive the vile demon from its hapless victim permanently.

Lethargic
Starving

Water Elf Disease

Water Elf Disease is characterized by the blackening of nails, watery eyes, and sores. It is most often caused by black magic. Any afflicted character suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving Perception. Until it is cured, the effect will linger permanently for those in a Glory Status allowing for a permanent change to their character. Others will suffer from the disease for a few weeks, after which time they will regain their health naturally.

Water Elf Disease can be treated by the skill Herbal Remedy, the Pagan spell Panacea, and the Mystic power Treat Disease. The non-chronic form of the disease is cured by such treatments. The chronic form of the disease will have its symptoms alleviated for a week by these means, but it will recur thereafter.

Black nails
Watery eyes
Open Sores

Disemboweled

See Dead.

Drenched

A state in which a character is soaked in water.

Drenched characters suffer from a Drawback against Electrical and Freezing effects. On the other hand, they gain an Edge on Conflict Rolls against Scorching effects.

Sopping Wet

Enfeebled

A character that is Enfeebled has their maximum Hit Points reduced by 25%. When the character would normally regain lost Hit Points (through rest, healing spells, or otherwise), they cannot be restored above $\frac{3}{4}$ of their normal maximum. Unless otherwise stated, a character will naturally recover from being Enfeebled in 1 month.

Physically Enfeebled

Entranced

A state in which a character has been magically induced to befriend the individual that Entranced them, hereafter referred to as their charmer.

Any Entrancement will immediately end if the charmer attacks the Entranced character (although heated discussions through Banding Words are fine).

The Entranced creature will provide any friendly favors asked of the charmer, assuming it can understand the requests. However, the Entranced character will refuse any orders to perform actions that would be obviously suicidal, acts that are against their basic nature, and acts that they would normally refuse to any friend. So, any demand of an Entranced gnome to hand over their treasure hoard would be rebuffed.

An Entranced creature will defend itself against any ongoing attacks, regardless of any orders by its charmer to do otherwise.

On the other hand, the Entranced character views their charmer as an ally. If it would be in the Entranced character's nature to defend their allies from harm, then they would defend their charmer against any such attacks, even if doing so puts them in danger.

As such, an Entranced lion would be dissuaded from attacking their charmer, and would likely follow them around and defend them as if it were a favored pet. An Entranced rabbit, though, is likely to just run away from any enemies, expecting their charmer to do likewise.

An Entrancement does not automatically provide a friendly disposition toward the charmer's companions. But, most creatures will acclimate to their presence within a few days.

Entranced by Salazar the Sorcerer

Fearful of ...

This condition always specifies a specific individual, creature type, or thing that a character fears. While this fear is not so great as to force the character to flee, they harbor an extreme wariness of the subject. The character will not willingly move toward anything they are fearful of.

Fearful of Spiders

Floundering

A Floundering character suffers from exceptionally poor coordination, reflexes, and motor control. In all combat actions, a Floundering character suffers from an Extreme Drawback and has their Speed cut in half. Unless otherwise stated, the Floundering condition passes at the end of the current scene.

Floundering

Frightened / Panicked

Characters experience fear arising from a plethora of causes. Some fears are induced by magic, others by phobias, and others by plain common sense. Obviously, any sane character will be afraid of an ogre, dragon, or troll. In most situations, though, characters overcome their anxieties and bravely face danger. Occasionally, though, the rules indicate that a character suffers from Fear or Panic. In such situations, the induced fear rises above-normal jumpiness. The individual panics and flees the cause of their hysteria with the greatest possible speed to any place of safety.

If the Fear/Panic is induced as a result of having fallen to 0 Fate Points, it is the end-result of a failed encounter. The character must hide for the remainder of the scene or flee until they drop from Exhaustion.

Otherwise, the terrified character runs in a blind panic that lasts until 3 Rounds pass. At the end of this time, they are allowed an Avoidance Roll with Willpower Adjustments to gain control of their emotions. Failure indicates that they flee until they drop from Exhaustion. The Exhaustion passes after 5 minutes of rest. At the end of this time, the character will come to their senses.

We're all going to die!

Fogged Perception

Occasionally, characters encounter experiences or magic that fog their views of the world. In these cases, the characters are not as badly afflicted as if they were blind, but neither are they fully cognizant of their surroundings. Treat these characters as suffering from a Drawback on all actions. Unless otherwise stated, the fog lifts within 2 hours.

Blurry vision
Muffled hearing

Highly Combustible

A state in which an area's surface is so combustible that any flame source will instantly set it ablaze. Even the smallest spark will ignite it, and the flame will quickly spread within seconds to the entire Highly Combustible area.

Every Highly Combustible surface is assigned a Quality Level. If it is a natural phenomenon, its Quality Level is 1. Otherwise, it equals the skill, spell, or power rank of the ability that produced the effect.

If the area is ignited, the flame delivers Scorching Damage. Unless otherwise stated, this damage equals 1 point per 2 Quality Levels to all creatures having any portion of their bodies within the Affected Area every Round for as long as it burns and they remain in the area. Allow an Avoidance Roll with Agility and Toughness Adjustments against the same Threshold as above for half Damage. Failure indicates the creature sustains the roll's Margin as additional Scorching Damage.

Unless otherwise stated, a Highly Combustible surface will burn for 5 minutes before exhausting its fuel source.

Highly Resistant to ...

A creature that is Highly Resistant to some hazard has the benefits for being Resistant to the effect, as well as having an Edge on all Conflict Rolls involving the hazard's effects.

Highly Sensitive to ...

A creature which is Highly Sensitive to some threat has a great physical adversity to the hazard. In addition to the drawbacks described under "Sensitive to...", it has the additional disadvantage of having a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving the threat.

Immune to ...

A creature which has an Immunity to some hazard cannot be affected by the hazard. For example, most undead are Immune to Freezing. This means that undead cannot be harmed through the effect of cold.

Impaired

A character that is impaired has a persistent wound that hinders them slightly. One of their basic Attributes (ST, AG, PC, etc.) has a permanent -2 penalty until the wound is magically healed. This penalty will propagate to Derived Attributes, such as Vigor, Acumen, or Willpower, if appropriate. But, it does not affect Hit Points or Fate Points.

Note that simply healing the Hit Points associated with an impairment does not heal the impairment itself. (Impairments are typically accomplished via the Pagan Healing spell Heal Impairment or the Mystic spell Mend Disfigurement). The impairment will generally impose a Temporary Trait describing it, so the player can benefit from role-playing it.

- Agility Impaired from wound on Left Leg
- Perception Impaired by wound on Head
- Toughness Impaired by wound on Torso

Incapacitated / Exhausted

Whether through extreme physical exertion, magic, or illness, characters occasionally become so worn and tired that they can hardly move. Whenever the rules indicate that a character is Exhausted or Incapacitated, that character temporarily falls under a severe set of restrictions. The character can move slowly but cannot walk. At best, they can crawl at a Speed of 5. They can feed themselves but cannot hunt. They can speak but cannot cast spells. They simply do not have the energy to perform even the simplest household tasks. The condition lasts only until the end of the current scene.

- Exhausted
- Incapacitated

Jinxed

A character automatically becomes Jinxed whenever they exceed their Magic Limit. Once Jinxed, a character will remain so until they drop below their Magic Limit for an hour or more.

A Jinxed character immediately loses attunement to all magic items to which they are attuned. And, they are incapable of becoming attuned to any magic item as long as they are Jinxed. Further, any spells thereafter cast on the Jinxed character that impose a Spellbinding on the target automatically fail on a Jinxed character. Any currently bound spells are unaffected, however.

When first Jinxed, the character begins experiencing a mild headache. If the character remains above their Magic Limit, the headache will increase over the course of a few hours to a dull throbbing that will slowly magnify into an intense migraine, giving the character warning that something is amiss. After another few hours, though, the pain will slowly subside, only to resume later at intermittent times.

Further, if a character is Jinxed, they are in serious danger of becoming cursed. A curse is not an automatic consequence to a Jinxed character. But, if the character is Overcome while Jinxed, and their Glory Status indicates a curse is an appropriate consequence on the Guts and Glory Tables, then the Overlord is strongly encouraged to select that consequence for the character. The new curse imposes its own Spellbinding on the character. If this causes the character to once again exceed their Magic Limit, the curse still imposes itself, negating one random spell affecting the character in the process.

- Jinxed

Lethargic

Lethargy is a condition that dramatically slows reflexes and motor control. In all combat actions, a Lethargic character suffers from a Drawback and has their Speed cut in half. Unless otherwise stated, the Lethargy passes at the end of the current scene.

Lethargic

Lingering Incapacitation

When a character is inflicted with Lingering Incapacitation, their movements are restricted in the same manner as normal Incapacitation (described earlier). The only difference is that this condition lingers for one week, or until the character regains full Hit Points and Fate Points, whichever comes first.

Incapacitated

Lingering Nausea

Nausea is the condition of feeling ill, with a queasy stomach and a lack of energy. It is characterized by headaches and vomiting. Any character unfortunate to have Lingering Nauseous retains this condition for a week, or until the character regains full Hit Points and Fate Points, whichever comes first. During this time, they suffer from a Drawback on all actions and have their Speed cut in half.

Nauseous

Maimed / Torn Ligament

When a character is maimed, they have a persistent wound that hinders them in some fashion. One of their basic Attributes (ST, AG, PC, etc.) has a permanent -4 penalty until the wound is magically healed. Note that simply healing the Hit Points associated with a maiming does not heal the maim itself. (Maimings are typically accomplished via the Pagan Healing spell Heal Maiming, or the Mystic power Mend Disfigurement.) The maiming will generally impose a Temporary Trait describing it, so the player can benefit from role-playing it.

Agility Maimed from wound on Left Leg
Perception Maimed by wound on Head
Toughness Maimed by wound on Torso

Maniacal

A character that is Maniacal is so enraged that they have lost all control over their own fury. This altered mental state forces the character to mercilessly attack without fear or concern for personal safety. Their demented anger forces them to swing at anything that moves; they make no distinction between friends and foes. The rage does have its benefits, though. As such, they gain an Extreme Edge on all Conflict Rolls involving up-front in-your-face melee combat. On all other Conflict Rolls, they suffer from a Drawback, though. They fight until their wounds force them to the ground, or are otherwise Overcome.

Out of control fury.

Nauseous

Poisonous gases, unpleasant odors, and the sight of a pastrami on rye the morning after a big party all cause Nausea. While highly unpleasant, the condition is not severe and will pass within 2 hours. Nausea is characterized by headaches and vomiting. If forced into combat, a Nauseous character suffers from a Drawback on all actions and has their Speed cut in half.

Nauseous

Paralyzed

A character who is paralyzed has no control over their motor muscles. They cannot walk, crawl, or even eat. Needless to say, active combat is out of the question. Unless otherwise stated, induced paralysis lasts until the end of the current scene. Paralysis does not affect the workings of vital organs and has no lasting ill effects.

Paralyzed

Resistant to ...

A creature that is Resistant to some hazard is not as easily affected by a hazard as are most creatures. The creature sustains only half Damage and Setback from the stated effect. For example, a Domavoi Hob is Resistant to Scorching Effects. Thus, whenever a Domavoi is influenced by Scorching damage, they sustain only half the normal amount.

Sensitive to ...

A creature that is Sensitive to some hazard is more harshly influenced by the hazard than most creatures. Any Damage and/or Setback delivered by the effect is doubled. For example, an Animated Tree is Sensitive to Electricity. Thus, whenever an Animated Tree takes Electrical Damage, it sustains double the normal amount from the effect.

Severe Shock

A victim of Severe Shock is treated as Incapacitated, and lasts for 2 days. If the character fell in a Glory Status that does not allow for death, the character will recover from Severe Shock at the end of this period. Otherwise, at this point the character must make a Toughness Check against a Threshold of 14. Success indicates recovery. If they fail, though, they die.

Severe shock

Shock

Shock is usually the common precipitant of a number of other injuries such as loss of blood, hypothermia, and mental assault. Pale skin, chills, and general weakness typify shock. If a character has lapsed into Shock, they are considered Incapacitated. Initially, Shock is slight and can be completely remedied within the hour by First Aid. If no First Aid is available, a character will remain in Shock for 4 hours. At the end of this period, the character is allowed a Toughness Check against a Threshold of 10. Success denotes recovery. If they fail, they slip into Severe Shock.

Shock

Slippery

A state in which a character is covered in grease or oil. Slippery characters gain an Edge against all Grappling rolls directed toward them. However, they suffer from a Drawback on all such rolls they attempt against others.

Slippery as a Greased Pig

Slowed

A state in which a character's Speed is cut in half. Note that, while it affects how far the character can move in a single Move Action, this condition has no effect on the number of Actions the character may take in a given Round.

Slowed

Slowly Suffocating

Characters finding themselves sealed in mine-shafts after a cave-in or buried in snow after an avalanche are in trouble. They will eventually suffer the effects of oxygen deprivation unless they are rescued or can somehow regain their freedom. The rate at which characters suffocate depends greatly on the volume of available air and the number of people consuming it.

A human-sized creature will consume the oxygen of approximately 10 cubic feet of air every hour. Thus, a single human trapped in a 10-foot by 10-foot by 10-foot room could, theoretically, continue breathing for 4 days before all of the oxygen is consumed. Unfortunately, the effects of oxygen deprivation will be felt long before this happens. In

fact, the suffocating person will start accruing damage when one-quarter of the available oxygen has been consumed.

When one-quarter of the oxygen supply is depleted, those in the prison will begin sustaining 2 Suffocating Damage every two hours. When half of the oxygen supply is gone, the rate of damage increases to 2 every half-hour. When three-quarters of the supply is gone, the rate increases to 2 every 5 minutes. Finally, when the entire supply is depleted, the character begins Choking. Of course, the ultimate effects for falling to 0 Hit Points are only as bad as the individual characters' Glory Statuses allow.

Until a character recovers from all Suffocating damage, treat them as Lethargic.

Characters buried in sand or snow are not entirely without oxygen as the walls of their "prison" are porous and allow some access to the air trapped within the ground itself. For game purposes, treat each such buried character as having a 20 cubic foot air supply.

Lethargic

Smoke Inhalation

While heat is a very real and immediate danger produced by raging fires, it is far from the only hazard. The smoke and fumes given off by the flames can also be deadly if the smoke condenses within an enclosed room. Any character trapped in a confined space filled with the voluminous quantities of billowing smoke generated by a large nearby fire source is in danger of losing their life. After the smoke has been allowed to build to a critical density, those trapped within it must make Toughness Checks every Round against a Threshold of 10. Failure indicates the character begins Choking (see Choking / Drowning / Suffocating for details). Further, their Speed is cut in half.

Since smoke tends to rise, characters choosing to crawl on the ground will delay the choking effects by 12 Rounds in most situations. The wise adventurer will be sure to read their fire safety guide and check for proper exit routes when entering any new dungeon area.

Gasping

Sprained / Pulled Muscle

If the rules indicate a character has a Sprain, they suffer from a pulled muscle, slightly strained tendon or ligament, or other such painful but temporary injury. While in this state, the character suffers from a Drawback on all Conflict Rolls involving the sprained limb. Further, if any portion of a leg is Sprained, the character's Speed is cut in half until it heals.

A Sprain will heal normally in a week.

Sprained Ankle
Sprained Wrist

Starving

Mundane matters, such as quickly finding a dungeon's nearest outhouse, are usually overlooked in Mythmagica due to their total lack of any heroic aspects. Nevertheless, many of these overlooked necessities can become quickly elevated to highest priority. One of these is the habit of eating. The withdrawal symptoms from breaking this particular habit can be quite dramatic. They involve weight loss and dehydration. For game purposes, every day a character forgoes eating, they sustain 3 Starving Damage. Further, their Daily Healing Rate drops to 0 until the character obtains a proper meal. In addition, a starving character suffers from a Drawback on all actions until they regain full Hit Points.

Starving

Stunned

If the rules indicate a character is stunned, they undergo some form of mental trauma. The character suffers from a Drawback on all actions and their Speed is cut in half. Unless otherwise stated, the effects of a stun last until the end of the current scene.

Stunned

Unconscious

When a character falls unconscious, they enter into a coma-like state from they cannot be awakened.

Fortunately, the state is usually short-lived. Unless otherwise stated, the effect lasts only until the end of the current scene.

Unconscious

THE FOUNDATION OF MAGIC

The Foundation of Magic

All magic in Mythmagica boils down to the ability to tap into and control the fundamental spiritual energies of the universe.

Some pagan cultures view magical energy as the “Food of the Gods”; the Greeks call it Ambrosia, and the Egyptians call it Paut Netaru. The Gods consume this food, and then use the energy and immortality it gives them to control the weather, trigger earthquakes and, in general, ensure the wheels of nature keep turning. Some of this power trickles down to the temples, Pagan priests, and followers to help them out in their daily lives.

Alchemists view spiritual energy differently. It is the Alchemists' ultimate goal to smelt the universe's primordial energy, which they believe is the purest form of gold called Quintessence. Anyone possessing even the smallest quantity of Quintessence could tap into the universe's energy pool directly. They would live forever and wield unlimited power.

In the mid-1800's Baron von Reichenbach proposed the existence of odyl, which was supposedly a form of energy contained in living beings, magnets, and crystals. Odyl acted through the “Odylic Force” to explain electricity, chemical reactions, heat, hypnotism, and other phenomenon.

The ancient Celtic beliefs in this area are more sublime. The Celts identify an energy force that flows between all living things. They call this spiritual energy “Neart”. Since all things are made up from spirits, be they elemental or otherwise, all of creation is imbued with it. That's not to say that Neart occupies all places and things to the same degree. Some areas are virtual deserts while Neart completely saturates others. The later, such as Stonehenge, are identified as holy places where they erect temples from huge stone blocks. To the Celts, these megaliths virtually hum and vibrate with magical power. The Celts even believe that Neart flows between their holy sites via ley lines, or faery paths. Indeed, the intricate looping patterns of Celtic art reflects their view of how Neart flows in currents and eddies between all things.

The Five Domains of Magic

There are four broad Domains of learned magic in Mythmagica and one Domain of innate magic. The four Domains of learned magic are Fantasia, Mysticism, Occultism, and Paganism. The fifth Domain of Eldritch magic is innate and unique to each type of creature. Eldritch abilities cannot be gained through study, although some of them lie dormant in most humanoid races until awakened. (Dream Speak and Trance are two such Eldritch abilities used by Pagans.)

The Eldritch and Fantasia Domains are covered in [The Character Compendium](#). The Occult Domain is found in [The Oculus of Occultism](#). And, the Mystic and Pagan Domains are described in [The Codex of Cultures](#).

The Neart Must Flow

Since the Celts conceive of spiritual energy in its abstract state, without cluttering it with concepts of food or gold, we will use their term of Neart when discussing it hereafter.

In game terms, the Pagan gods give their priests magical powers when they sacrifice spiritual energy in the form of Setback. The gods also harvest this spiritual energy from their devout followers when they experience religious ecstasy. This emotion is brought forth during lengthy rituals that leave the participants feeling drained.

When it comes to siphoning Neart from living beings, religious ecstasy is only one means of obtaining it. Virtually any strong emotion can act as an opening to drain Neart from a spirit for those with the ability to harvest it. Unfortunately, fear, rage, and sorrow are some of the easiest emotions to incite in others. Incubi, Nightmares, and other vampiric creatures take advantage of this regrettable fact to draw sustenance from their victims.

Occultists, on the other hand, tap into the Neart of their own bodies. Since this drains their own life-force, these spell-casters sustain Voluntary Setback in the form of lost Fate Points. Occultists use this energy to summon and control other spirits to do their bidding. Mystics, on the other hand, tap into the Neart of their souls to evoke inherit spiritual powers.

So, all magic in Mythmagica boils down to the exchange of Neart. The four major professions of spell-casting (Artist, Pagan priest, Occultist, and Mystic) all use Neart to influence spirits. Pagan priests use it to beg the spiritual agents of their deity for favors. Occultists use it to bind independent spirits to do their bidding. And, Mystics use it to bring out the innate powers of their own souls.

Artists are more subtle in their methods, though. They use their skills to evoke emotion in the materials they work to coax out the innate spirits hidden within. In their work, they put pieces of their own soul into the art, intermingling their spirit with that of the artwork, or Animus. They thereby create a kind of relationship with it. This gives the Animus new skills that it can impart to those possessing it. Those skills draw their magical energy from the possessor, however. The Neart flows from the possessor to the Animus, which utilizes it to perform its miracles. In short, Pagan priests petition, Occultists enslave, Artists befriend, and Mystics are free spirits.

That is not to say that becoming a Pagan priest, Artist, Occultist, or Mystic is the only means of performing magic. Every type of creature has its own unique spiritual abilities suited to its needs. Some Dwarfs can forge magical swords from glass, many Elves can trick the senses with glamour,

and many Hobs can vanish into thin air. These are all magical skills known as Eldritch skills, due to their ancient and inexplicable nature. But, these abilities are not merely learned; they are innate to the spirits of the races possessing these powers. These powers are analogous to the powers of the Mystics, in that a spirit either has the power or it doesn't. Mystical powers are simply the innate powers of a soul, which is a special variety of spirit possessed by a sapient mortal. So, to become a Mystic, one must be mortal. The primary difference between a Mystic's powers and those of an Elf or Dwarf are that the Mystic's powers are dormant until brought forth through rigorous training while the aforementioned Eldritch powers automatically manifest themselves. Either type can be improved through further training, though.

Indeed, if spirits did not have innate powers, Occultists would be impotent. The only real power Occultists possess is the ability to summon and bind spirits. It is the spirits that do the actual work. The differences seen in the spells between one Occultist and another merely reflect the kinds of spirits each one knows how to summon and bind to their wills. Different spirits possess different Eldritch powers, and so the spells of one Occultist often differ radically from those of their peers.

In this regard, Pagan priests are similar to Occultists. Priests also summon spirits: the minions of their deities, and beseech them to use their innate spiritual powers to perform miracles. Since gods have virtual rivers of Neart directed at them from their followers, they attract legions of spirits, be they Angels, Daemons, Valkyries, or whatnot. These agents are willing to serve the deity in exchange for Neart, which the deities demand from their priests. So, the gods maintain control by cleverly managing the Neart flow. The Pagan priests are powerless without the agents' innate spiritual abilities, and the agents don't get paid unless they satisfy the Pagans. Further, if a Pagan priest gets out of line, the deity simply revokes the Pagan's authority over their spiritual minions.

What Skills are Considered Magical?

There are a lot of gifts, skills, and powers in the game, and there are abilities that allow characters to sense when magic is being worked. So, how do you know when there is magic involved and when there isn't?

Since magic necessarily requires Neart, that Neart must come from somewhere. In game terms, a character must always provide some Neart to energize the magic. This is drawn from the character in the form of Setback. As such, any Ability that has a Setback Cost is magical.

There are also spells and skills that can permanently imbue items with magic to create magic items. Magic items have auras that can be detected. On the other hand, there are a number of Crafting skills in the game that allow a character to create high quality items. Just being of high quality does not make an item magical, though. Any skill that imbues an

item with magic will explicitly state that the created item is magical.

Spells and Powers

A spell or power is a funnel that an Occultist, Pagan priest, Artist, or Mystic uses to direct and control magical energy. The effect a magical ability has on the game world may range from merely allowing an individual to breathe water on up to the awe-inspiring destruction of entire towns through earthquakes.

As mentioned before, there are four main branches of “professional” spell-casters: fantastic, pagan, occultist, and mystical. All of these branches manipulate Nature. But, they each do it in fundamentally different ways. The systems supporting these branches emphasize their various approaches.

Each mystic, pagan, and fantastic spell is associated with a Setback Cost. This cost is deducted from the priest's remaining Fate Points resource when the spell is cast. Because these sources of magic are spiritual, spell-casters feel spiritually drained when the magical energy is expended.

Occultists, on the other hand, tap the energies bound up within their own spirits to control other spirits, whether it be to enslave or merely coerce them. Because this exerts considerable stress on their psyche, Occultists feel a general draining whenever they use magic. Thus, each Occult spell has an associated Setback Cost, taken in the form of Voluntary Setback, which is also deducted from the caster's Fate Points.

Spell Terminology

The spells in Mythmagica share a common vocabulary in describing various spell aspects, such as Duration, Range, Affected Area, etc. At present, the Occult Spells adopt these terms into their names so that the names themselves provide most of the spell's important information. This is done to alleviate most of the need to look spells up during gaming sessions, and thereby speed up play.

At present, only the Occult spells have adopted these terms into their names. But, if the practice proves successful, will be adopted universally throughout the game.

Spell Verbs and Duration Vocabulary

All (Occult) spells start with a verb. The verb itself starts with a letter that directly correlates to one of the standard spell Duration Types. These Duration Types are: Aftereffect, Brittle, Contained, Disbelieve, Enduring, Fixated, Genesis, Halted, Instant, Journey, Maelstrom / Melee, Opportune, Proximate / Persistent, Rooted, Scheduled, Travel, Unstable / Upkeep, and Willing. So, a spell with a Brittle spell Duration starts with a verb which, itself, begins with an “B”. A spell with an Enduring spell Duration starts with a

verb that begins with an “E”, etc. Definitions of the various standard Duration Types follow.

Aftereffect: The Aftereffect Duration is used for spells that target creatures and inflict Damage and/or Setback, and which have longer-lasting effects if the spell drives the targeted creatures' Hit Points or Fate Points to zero. So, an Aftereffect Duration is sort of a mix between Instant (delivering Damage and/or Setback) and whatever Duration the lingering Aftereffect has (if the target is thereby defeated).

If an Aftereffect spell is cast by a magic item, its duration is unaffected by whether the individual triggering the spell retains possession of the magic item.

Brittle: A Duration lasting until a triggering event occurs that is easily brought about without any secret knowledge. Typically, this is when the target sustains a single point of Damage or Setback.

If a Brittle spell is cast by a magic item, its duration immediately terminates if the triggering individual loses possession of it.

Contained: A Duration in which the magic of the spell is bottled up until a triggering event releases it. Once uncorked, the released magic will have its own independent Duration.

If a Contained spell is cast by a magic item, its duration is unaffected by whether the individual triggering the spell retains possession of the magic item.

Disbelief: A Duration that is only applied to Illusory spells. The spell lasts until some observing creature disbelieves what the illusion depicts.

If a Disbelief spell is cast by a magic item, its duration is unaffected by whether the individual triggering the spell retains possession of the magic item.

Enduring: An unlimited Duration, or at least one that lasts until a (possibly secret) triggering event occurs. The major difference between a permanent (or Genesis) effect and an Enduring Duration is that an Enduring spell can, potentially, be negated, which will end its effects. Even so, it takes particularly potent magic disruption spells to dispel Enduring magic. Only spells that specifically state that they can do so are capable of negating Enduring magic.

If an Enduring spell is cast by a magic item, its duration is unaffected by whether the individual triggering the spell retains possession of the magic item.

Fixated: A Duration that terminates when any of the following conditions are met:

- The caster performs an Assault Action (other than those prescribed by the spell itself).
- The caster loses concentration on the spell (such as falling unconscious).
- The caster casts another Fixated spell.
- The caster fails to spend a required periodic Setback Cost.

With a Fixed Duration, the caster is free to perform other non-Assault Actions. For example, a character who cast a Fixed spell can run, drink potions, or Move, but cannot attack with a sword.

Fixed spells do not impose Spellbindings on their targets, unless stated otherwise. So, they don't count against a character's Magic Limit.

Note that the periodic Setback Cost of a Fixed spell does not start until after the spell is cast. So, if a spell takes 5 minutes to cast, and requires a Setback Cost of 2 per Round, this expenditure does not begin until the 5 minute casting time is over.

If a Fixed spell is cast by a magic item, its duration immediately terminates if the triggering individual loses possession of it or performs an Assault Action. Further, any Fixed spell cast by a magic item negates any Fixed spell previously cast by its user (or one of their magic items).

Genesis: A Duration outside the standard Duration Hierarchy. It has characteristics of both the Instant and Enduring Duration Types, in that the magic of a spell having a Genesis duration is generally very short-lived. However, the magic imposes a permanent transformation on the game world. A permanent effect requires no magic to persist, and therefore cannot be dispelled. For example, a burn scar might be a permanent effect of a fire spell. But, the scar cannot be erased by use of a spell that disrupts magic, because the scar is a result of the fire magic, but requires no magic to sustain it. On the other hand, an Enduring blindness that was imposed and is continually sustained by magic may be negated.

For example, a Genesis spell may summon a wall of ice or a stone block. It may permanently transform a creature from one form to another, or it may permanently affix wings to a creature's back. Once the magic has done its work, its aura fades. But, the results of the magic persist in a fashion that cannot be dispelled by magic disruption spells, because the effect is a durable non-magical consequence of the Genesis spell.

Of course, all spells have side-effects of one sort or another. A cone of fire will burn anything in its Affected Area. A mesmerizing spell will hypnotize its target. But, these effects last only as long as they have ongoing magical support to sustain them. Consequently, most such spells can be dismissed by the caster. Each Genesis spell, on the other hand, has a specific way in which it permanently changes the state of the game world. As such, once one is enacted, its primary effect persists whether the caster wants it to or not.

If a Genesis spell is cast by a magic item, its duration is unaffected by whether the individual triggering the spell retains possession of the magic item or not.

Heartfelt: A Duration similar to Fixed, in that it lasts only as long as the caster is mindful of it. (Falling asleep or unconscious causes the caster to no longer be mindful of a spell.) However, Heartfelt spells requires less focused

concentration. As such, a spell-caster may perform Assault Actions without disrupting a Heartfelt spell. Further, they can maintain a number of Heartfelt spells equal to their Heart attribute, although any character with a Heart less than one can always maintain at least one Heartfelt spell. Any attempt to exceed this limit automatically fails.

Further, Heartfelt spells impose a recurring Setback Cost to keep it going. For example, the Mystical Power of Unworldly Halo requires the caster to expend 2 Setback every Round to maintain it. Note that the periodic Setback Cost of a Heartfelt spell does not start until after the spell is cast. So, if a spell takes 5 minutes to cast, and requires a Setback Cost of 2 per Round, this expenditure does not begin until the 5 minute casting time is over.

On the other hand, Heartfelt spells do not impose Spellbindings on their targets, unless stated otherwise. So, they don't count against a character's Magic Limit.

Note that Fixed and Heartfelt spells do not interfere with one another. So, a character could potentially have a Fixed spell and one or more Heartfelt spells going simultaneously.

If a Heartfelt spell is cast by a magic item, its duration immediately terminates if the triggering individual loses possession of it or performs an Assault Action. Further, any Heartfelt spell cast by a magic item counts against its user's limit on how many Heartfelt spells they can maintain at one time.

Instant: A Duration lasting 1 second.

Laborious: A Duration requiring the caster to continue performing some action to keep it going, thereby expending 1 Action per Round. This is common for Musical Scores, which require the performer to keep playing an instrument. The Laborious Duration is always combined with some other Duration type that further constrains the Duration, such as Laborious + Brittle, Laborious + Fixed, Laborious + Heartfelt, and Laborious + Unstable.

Limited: A Duration that has a fixed number of uses, typically one per two spell ranks, but which cannot last more than a couple of minutes after the caster and/or the target engages in a conflict. Each such use typically has its own duration of Instant, although others are allowable.

Maelstrom / Melee: A Duration that continues as long as the caster and/or the target engages in a conflict. (If it targets an area, the Duration continues as long as the caster participates in a conflict.)

The duration is renewed every time the caster or target engages in a Conflict Roll. The Duration ends when no such Conflict Roll occurs for one minute.

Effects with this Duration type cannot themselves impose Conflict Rolls, unless one of the following is true:

- The caster is required to expend an Assault Action for each such roll.
- The effect targets an area (rather than a creature), and it does nothing to prevent any affected

creatures from moving out of it (although it may slow them in doing so).

- The effect is used as an aftereffect of a spell that imposes Damage and/or Setback via Conflict Rolls. In such spells, if the target is defeated, the aftereffect is thereafter imposed for the rest of the Scene. (For example, a spell that delivers Sedating Setback may impose an Aftereffect on the target if its drives them to 0 Fate Points that puts them to sleep until the end of the Scene.)

For duration purposes, if a Maelstrom/Melee spell is cast by a magic item, the spell will last only as long as the triggering individual (or the spell's target) remains in a conflict.

Further, the spell lasts only as long as the triggering individual retains possession of the item.

Opportune: A Duration that lasts until canceled, which requires no initial Setback Cost to the caster, and which targets a willing creature. However, every Round in which the spell has an impact on the target, the target sustains 2 Setback. (So, it is the target that is providing the required magical energy rather than the caster.) If the target fails to expend the Setback, the spell terminates. Note that the Setback Cost is only paid once on any given Round, even if the spell has an impact multiple times during that Round. Opportune spells impose a Spellbinding on the target. (This is the Duration type used by virtually all Fantasia-based magic items.)

Persistent / Proximate: A Duration that lasts as long as the caster remains in Proximity to the spell. If the spell targets the caster himself, it lasts until they cancel it. (A caster is Proximate as long they are not dead and are within 320 feet, which is equivalent to Long Range.) A Proximate spell can only target willing creatures, items, or areas where the effects on a creature end when it leaves the area.

A caster is Proximate even while sleeping or unconscious. He is in Proximity, in both the Mortal and Astral Realms, while their spirit wanders the Astral Plane. However, if they die, their Proximity in the Mortal Realm expires along with their life.

If a Proximate/Persistent spell is cast by a magic item, the duration lasts only as long as the item is Proximate to the spell, and the item remains in the possession of the individual that triggered the spell.

Rooted: A Duration that lasts until the caster moves position (at least a 5 foot distance).

If a Rooted spell is cast by a magic item, the spell lasts only until the possessor moves or until they lose possession of the item.

Scheduled: A Duration that lasts a specified period of time, such as a minute, hour, 1 Round per spell rank, etc. Use of this duration type is kept to a minimum, since tracking time sucks. Nevertheless, some spells require it.

If a Scheduled spell is cast by a magic item, the spell will continue until its normal duration ends, even if the triggering individual loses possession of the item.

Travel: A Duration for a spell that must be associated with travel. As such, it must be associated with changing location, moving, riding a steed, or assisting a steed in its movement. The spell lasts while the traveler remains mounted or continues traveling. As soon as the traveler dismounts, stops moving, or gets to the desired location, the spell ends.

If a Travel spell is cast by a magic item, the item casting the spell must remain in the possession of the individual triggering it, and must remain Proximate to the spell it casts, or the spell will immediately terminate.

Unstable / Upkeep: A Duration lasting as long as a triggering event keeps happening or as long as a triggering event fails to happen. For example, a spell may force the target to make a Conflict Roll every Round, and will persist until the target succeeds on its roll. (The Brittle, Halted, and Journey Duration Types are special cases of this Duration type.) As another example, a spell may continue as long as the caster expends Setback every Round (as an Upkeep cost).

If an Unstable / Upkeep spell is cast by a magic item, the spell duration continues only if the triggering individual retains possession of the item.

Vanquish: A Duration for a spell, generally offensive, that must target a creature or an area. If cast on an area, the spell lasts until the caster is Overcome. If cast on a creature, the spell lasts until either the caster or the target is Overcome. Most such spells may be canceled by the caster, if desired.

If a Vanquish spell is cast by a magic item, the spell will last only as long as the triggering individual retains possession of the item. As soon as they lose possession, the spell terminates.

Willing: A Duration that lasts as long as the target welcomes the spell.²¹ As soon as the target no longer has positive emotions toward the spell, it terminates.

Affected Area and Range Terms

Most of the (Occult) spells have Ranges that fall into three categories: those that target only the caster, those that target a single item and/or creature, and those that target an area or multiple distinct items and/or creatures.

Spells that target the caster all have Ranges of 0.

Spells that benefit a single item or a willing creature generally have a Range of Touch. Spells that target a single unwilling creature (and which may or may not also be used on items), have a range of 80 feet, which is equivalent to a Short Range. In addition, targets at a range must be within view of the caster unless otherwise stated.

²¹ In general, spells cannot read minds. However, some spells utilize spirits that draw sustenance from positive emotions. These spirits have the fundamental ability to sense whether the target of the spell welcomes them or not at an emotional level.

Spells that target an area or volume, or which target a number of creatures and/or items have Ranges of 40 feet, which is equivalent to Very Short Range. The Cone is an exception to this rule. Its Origin is at the cone’s apex, which always starts at the caster (with a Range of 0) and radiates outward to the base.

Whenever an exception occurs to these rules on Range, the fact is noted in the spell.

A Range to a simple area or volume (other than a Cone), such as a Sphere or Cube, indicates the distance to its center. A Range to a complex area or volume (such as one that creates a number of blocks that can be arranged by the caster however they choose) indicates the distance to any portion of the area. The Range to a group of disjoint targets sets a limit on how far each of the spell’s targets can be from the caster. In other words, all targets must individually be within Range for such a spell to work.

Range Terms

The standard terms for Range and other distances are listed below. The County, Kingdom, and Continent ranges are designed to scale spells using them to any game world, without requiring the Overlord to draw out maps, and then go to the bother of measuring out distances on them:

Able: Distance of 5 feet per spell rank.

Bold: Distance of 10 feet per spell rank.

Capable: Distance of 20 feet per spell rank.

Dependable: Distance of 40 feet per spell rank.

Equable: Distance of 80 feet per spell rank.

A County Away: A vague unit indicating an average distance to the next County in the game world.

A Kingdom Away / Far-Away: A vague unit indicating an average distance to the next Kingdom in the game world.

A Continent Away / Far, Far-Away: A vague unit indicating an average distance to the next Continent in the game world.

Affected Area Terms

Spells often use the standard Size Category terms to describe the size of an Affected Area. These are: Zot, Wee, Ultratiny, Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Great, Epic, Colossal, and Astronomical. The table Standard Dimension for Size Category lists the various standard dimensions.

When Size Category terms are used in spell names, they always pertain to the standard dimension of the spell’s Affected Area. For squares and cubes, the standard dimension is the length of a side. For circles, cylinders, and spheres, the standard dimension is its diameter. For cones, the standard dimension is the width of its base.

Note that each standard length varies by factor of 2 from its neighbor. So, if you can remember that a Medium Size Category corresponds to 5 feet (which also corresponds to

the length of a Medium creature’s footprint on the Battle Grid), then you can figure out the length of any other Size Category.

Sometimes a spell has a variable area, rather than a fixed one, though. For these cases, the standard terms for Areas and Volumes are:

Ample: 5 feet per spell rank. This term can apply to either an Area or Volume (such as an Ample Sphere).

Broad: 10 feet per spell rank. This term can apply to either an Area or Volume (such as a Broad Radius).

Copious: 20 feet per spell rank. This term can apply to either an Area or Volume (such as a Copious Square).

Deep: 40 feet per spell rank. This term applies only to Areas and Volumes.

Standard Dimension for Size Category

Size Category	Length
Zot	2 inches or less
Wee	4 inches
Ultratiny	8 inches
Tiny	1 ¼ feet
Small	2 ½ feet
Medium	5 feet
Large	10 feet
Great	20 feet
Epic	40 feet
Colossal	80 feet
Astronomical	160 feet or greater

Expansive: 80 feet per spell rank. This term can apply to either an Area, or Volume.

Fabulous: 160 feet per spell rank. This term can apply to either a Range, Area, or Volume.

Generous: 320 feet per spell rank. This term can apply to either a Range, Area, or Volume.

Notice that these terms start with sequentially increasing letters (A, B, C, D, etc.). The word starting with A is associated with 5 feet per rank. The word starting with B is associated with 10 feet per rank. The C term refers to 20 feet per rank, etc. If you remember this rule, it is easy to interpret the terms.

Targeting Multiple Subjects

Some spells target multiple distinct subjects rather than an area. When a spell does this, its name incorporates a standard terms to describe how many subjects it can target:

a Few: Can target a number of subjects up to 1 per 3 spell ranks.

Some: Can target a number of subjects up to 1 per 2 spell ranks.

Many: Can target a number of subjects up to 1 per spell rank.

Lots: Can target a number of subjects up to 2 per spell rank.

Spell Effect Terms

The following sections describe terms used for various spell effects.

Edge / Drawback Terms

Some spells deliver Edges and/or Drawbacks on various Conflict Rolls for a variety of reasons. If a spell provides an Edge or Drawback, that fact will be noted in the spell's name using the following terms:

Apt: Provides an Edge to the target (known as an Edge Effect).

Deft: Provides a Drawback to the target (known as a Drawback Effect).

Doubly: When used in conjunction with Deft, indicates that the spell imposes a double Drawback.

Hit Point / Fate Point Terms

Many spells deliver or heal Damage and/or Setback. When a spell does this, its name may incorporate a standard term to describe how potent it is:

Adverse: Delivers Damage or Setback equal to the Conflict Roll's Margin. This is generally used in periodic effects, such as a consequence of an Aura.

Capable: Provides a 1 point benefit. For example, Capable Healing would heal 1 point of Damage.

Cruel: Delivers Damage or Setback equal to 1 point per 2 spell ranks (without adding the Conflict Roll's Margin). This is always used to augment a weapon's effectiveness.

Decent: Provides a benefit equal to 1 point per 2 spell ranks. For example, Decent Healing would heal this amount of Damage.

Dire: Delivers Damage or Setback equal to 1 point per 2 spell ranks plus the Conflict Roll's Margin.

Fell: Delivers Damage or Setback equal to 1 point per spell rank plus the Conflict Roll's Margin. If it's a single target at a range, the target gets a Conflict Roll to avoid the effect entirely. On a failure, the Conflict Roll's Margin is added to the effect. On an area effect, the target gets a Conflict Roll to halve the base effect. Otherwise, the Margin is added.

Fine: Provides a benefit equal to 1 point per spell rank. For example, Fine Healing would heal this amount of Damage.

Grand: Provides a benefit equal to 2 points per spell rank. For example, Grand Healing would heal this amount of Damage.

Grim: Delivers Damage or Setback equal to 2 points per spell rank. If it's a single target at a range, the target gets a Conflict Roll to avoid the effect entirely. On a failure, the Conflict Roll's Margin is added to the effect. On an area effect, the target gets a Conflict Roll to halve the base effect. Otherwise, the Margin is added.

Miscellaneous Terms

Nimbus: A spell that is placed on an item or creature that, thereafter, has effects that radiate outward to influence nearby creatures is known as a Nimbus Effect. Only one Nimbus Effect can be placed on an item or creature at a time. These are frequently denoted in spell names as an "Aura" or a "Halo".

Woeful: A spell that is placed on an item or creature that, thereafter, delivers harmful effects when that item or creature touches others is known as a Woe Effect. Only one Woe Effect can be placed on an item or creature at a time.

The First One's Free

Combats in which many different magical spells and/or powers are used are often more fun to play out. This is because the tactical circumstances of such battles continually change. This helps keep players on their toes and engaged with what's going on in the game. To encourage this variety, we introduce the "First One's Free" rule: A spell or power can be used at a Setback Cost of 0 (ignoring its stated Setback Cost), if the following conditions are met:

- It is the first time the spell or power has been used by the character in a game session.²²
- The spell or power takes a single Action (or Assault Action) to use.
- The spell or power does not have a Duration of Fixated, Heartfelt, Laborious, or Opportune.²³

This rule applies regardless of the domain of the spell or power, whether it be Eldritch, Fantasia, Occult, Pagan, or Mystic.

Canceling Spells

Many magical spells and powers indicate that the caster may cancel it at any time. Unless otherwise specified, canceling most spells or powers requires the caster to expend either an Action or a Reaction, at their discretion. If a spell or power has a Duration of Fixated, Heartfelt, or Laborious, though,

²² Having them refresh once per game session makes the book work easier than if we set it otherwise. Players generally have no difficulty remembering whether their character has cast a given spell in the current session. If this rule reset every Chapter, for example, players would have to note what spells their characters have cast, in case the Chapter spanned two or more game sessions, which may take place weeks apart.

²³ While spells and powers with these Duration types are often tactically appropriate, they are designed as pay-as-you-go abilities for good reason. Rewarding their use with a 0 Setback Cost would often be game breaking.

no such expenditure is needed to terminate it. Such abilities merely require the caster to forego spending whatever ongoing costs are required to maintain them.

Miscellaneous Magic Topics

Attunement

Some magic items must attune themselves to their possessors before their possessors can voluntarily trigger any of their magical powers. What this means is that some items must form a magical link to an individual to work. The items that have this limitation are those that draw their magical energy from their possessors. So, a ring that draws 6 Setback from its wearer in order to grant them Night Vision must attune itself to its possessor before they can use it.

This attuning process only requires the character to personally possess the item for an hour, while the spirit bound to the item adapts itself to its possessor's spirit. Once this is done, the item recognizes the character as its attuned possessor. The character will remain attuned to the item until they lose possession of it for an hour or more, or they are Jinxed (see Jinxed in the Character Conditions section for details). If a character loses Attunement to an item, any ongoing spells the item previously cast immediately terminate, unless those spells are Enduring in Duration.

Any magic item that does not draw energy from its possessor to enact its magic lacks this limitation. These include items such as magical potions, balms, wands, rings, and other items that have a limited number of uses before they are fully expended.

Concoctions

Concoctions are magical liquids, balms, and powders that provide some kind of magical effect to the consumer. Most are created by Alchemists, but the crafting of potions and other brews is by no means limited to that profession.

There are five broad categories of Concoctions. These are: Admixtures, Balms, Cocktails, Fragrances, and Potions. Admixtures are powder munitions (such as an Itching Powder). Balms are viscous creams that are intended to rub over one's body (such as a Flying Ointment). Cocktails are liquid volatiles that react violently on contact with air (such as a Soapy Compound that explodes in a burst of bubbles). Fragrances are brews that deliver their magic by being breathed (such as a Hallucinogenic Incense). Finally, potions are magical liquids that must be imbibed to provide their benefits (such as a Healing Elixir).

The Willpower Burden of Concoctions

Most Concoctions are usually purchased in vials, pouches, or tins holding multiple doses. Concoctions place a mental burden on their possessor depending on how many spells were used to create them, rather than on the specific number

of doses it contains. Each such spell is a separate Spellbinding. Typically, a spell will create a number of doses equal to two plus half the spell rank. For liquids, each such spell will almost certainly fit into a single vial²⁴. So, a vial of Healing Elixir will typically count as a single magic item, because it was charmed with a single spell. A gallon, though, would undoubtedly count as many, because a single spell can create only so many doses.²⁵

Drinking Potions in Combat

Assuming it is easily accessible, a single potion dose requires 1 Action to drink, unless otherwise specified by the potion's description. Nevertheless, this diverts attention from attacking opponents and reduces attention given to avoiding blows.

If a character drinks a potion while wielding a one-handed weapon, allow no attacks but do not penalize their Parry in any way. A character using a two-handed weapon cannot drink any potions with their weapon in hand.

Occasionally, a character may want to force feed a potion to an unconscious comrade. Force-feeding a single dose of a potion requires 2 Actions: one to prepare the vial and put it to their lips, and another to pour a single dose down their throat. Each additional dose fed to a character requires only a single additional Action. However, it should be noted that, if a character falls to 0 Hit Points or Fate Points in combat, they are Overcome until the next Scene, at a minimum. That means they cannot be quickly revived to reenter a battle once this happens.

Conjuring Creatures

When a creature is conjured, the caster creates it out of thin air from metaphysical ectoplasm. Any such creature obeys the mental commands of the caster, who must treat it as a Spellbinding when considering Willpower limitations as long as control is maintained.²⁶

In general, a conjured creature endures while it is Proximate to the caster, although the caster may cancel the magic of the conjuring spell at any time. However, the creature's connection to the caster is very tenuous. It is essentially a Mook. If it loses a single Hit Point or Fate Point as a consequence of failing a Conflict Roll, the conjuring is terminated. When the spell terminates for any reason, the conjured minion disappears in a puff of smoke, shower of sparkles, spray of blood, or whatever innocuous effect the controlling character finds amusing.

Conjuring is always limited to creatures having a write-up in one of the supplemental monster books of Mythmagica. The conjured creature is a generic cookie-cutter specimen of its type. It does not have any knowledge beyond that of the caster, and cannot see anything the caster does not see. If

²⁴ Usually equivalent to about ½ pint or 1 cup of liquid.

²⁵ 1 gallon = 8 pints or 16 cups. As such a gallon of Healing Elixir would typically be considered to be 16 Spellbindings.

²⁶ More often than not, they are also treated as disposable party members.

sapient, it does not have any classes or skills above and beyond what is listed in the creature's description. It is likewise incapable of using any tools or weapons not specifically mentioned in its write-up. If they are capable of wielding a weapon, they will generally be provided with a single weapon of a type specified in its description, which is a standard item of Quality Level 0. Further, while an intelligent conjured creature is capable of speaking whatever languages its creator speaks, it can only say what the caster commands it to say.

The conjured minion is otherwise of a normal sort in all respects for creatures of its type. It has a Quality Level approximately equal to the spell rank. Look at the description of the creature, and use the example having the highest Level less than or equal to the spell rank to obtain its stats. If no such example exists (i.e. the minimum Level is higher than the spell rank), then the creature cannot be conjured.

The magic of a conjuring spell creates a mental link between its summoner and the conjured creature, enabling the caster to control it directly, without the need for verbal commands. The summoner has absolute control over creatures they beget. But, such a creature can only follow one command at a time, and each new command requires the summoner to expend an Action. This Action is primarily mental in nature, being observable only as a brief pause in the caster's other activities.

While conjuring magic enables the minion to understand the caster's unspoken commands, the commands given it must be very simple. (e.g. "Kill that", "Guard this", etc.)

A single spell-caster can potentially conjure and control multiple creatures at once. Any such group of creatures may be controlled by expending a single Action, so long as the command is identical to all creatures within the group. For example, the spell-caster may command a couple of conjured creatures to attack a specific foe using a single Action. If the spell-caster wants one pair of conjured creatures to attack one foe, and another conjured creature to attack a different foe, the conjurer must expend 2 Actions to issue those commands.

Each conjured creature has its own independent Actions. In other words, the caster does not have to expend an Action of their own when the creature moves, nor do they need to expend an Assault Action of their own when the creature attacks. Rather, the conjured creature has the Actions that it would just as if it were a normal creature of its type.

It is possible to cast spells on a conjured creature to boost its abilities. However, the caster must treat any Spellbindings on the creature as Spellbindings on themselves.

If the creature has spell abilities, then any Setback Costs required by any spells that the creature invokes are drawn from the caster. If the Setback Costs are modified due to attributes, such as Occult spells having their Setback Costs modified by Intelligence, use the caster's Intelligence to

calculate those modifications rather than those of the creature.

The creature does not have Guts points of its own, even if it is given a name. However, while the conjured minion is under their control, the caster may spend their own Guts points on all Conflict Rolls involving it (assuming the caster has Guts points to spend).

Illusions

Illusory magic creates purely sensory effects by tricking the targets' minds into perceiving something that does not exist. As such, illusions can never cause Damage, although some may induce Setback.

The best illusions are those that so closely mimic common, real-world situations that you would never suspect their trickery. The most powerful illusionists, consequently, are those who limit their displays.

To use illusions properly, a trickster knows that nothing they create has any basis in reality. Simply creating the illusion of a bridge can never provide passage across a chasm or moat. Fashioning an illusory Pegasus cannot provide an instant flying steed. The recipients of the illusion's effects simply believe these objects to exist in their own minds, but actually trying to use them in the manner described immediately shows the trickery of the spell. Once an illusion has proven itself fake, the magic of the illusion dissipates. Of course, belatedly realizing their mistake won't help the poor slob who tried to cross the chasm on that bridge.

There are three fundamental types of Illusions: Delusions, Figments, and Phantasms.

Delusions

A Delusion is a firm, unshakable mental belief placed in the target's mind. Usually, this is accomplished incrementally through multiple spells, each of which imposes Deluding Setback on the target. If the illusion does not reduce the target's Fate Points to zero, a brief mental flash of the desired mental image appears in the target's mind. But, no effects other than the Deluding Setback are felt. If the target is Overcome by the spell (falls to zero Fate Points), though, it is defeated and the mental image is fixated in its mind for the spell duration. While such spells generally allow Conflict Rolls to avoid or reduce the amount of Deluding Setback sustained, the illusions thus summoned in the minds of defeated creatures cannot be dismissed by mere Disbelief attempts.

Delusions always target the minds of individuals. Any creatures who are not specifically targeted by a Delusion cannot directly observe the illusions it induces.

Figments

A Figment is an insubstantial illusion involving one or more senses. They are always bound to a specific location. Purely optical Figments behave like the holograms of science

fiction. A person can always pass their hand harmlessly through a Figment, although they may appear quite solid. Figments can potentially affect senses other than sight as well. Figments of smells, tastes, sounds, feelings of warmth or chills, and other sensory tricks can also be invoked.

Figments are environment illusions, in that any nearby creature is capable of observing them. They cannot be Disbelieved, although they are mere trickery. They can never induce pain, present true barriers, or inflict Setback or Damage of any kind.

Phantasms

A Phantasm is an illusion that is either bound to a creature or mobile object, or is of sufficient potency that it can invoke pain, pleasure, or other intense sensory input. Often, Phantasms are used to create illusions of creatures, although they can never inflict actual Damage. Rather, Phantasms are restricted to imposing painful “injuries” in the form of Tormenting Setback. (When Avatars are affected by phantasms that their players are unaware are illusory, the Overlord is within their rights to state that the phantasm delivers “Damage”, while secretly keeping track of how much Tormenting Setback each character actually took in lieu of Damage.)

Disbelieving Phantasms

The sensory potency of Phantasms makes them fragile, in that they may be “Disbelieved”. Any creature successfully Disbelieving a Phantasm breaks the spell.

Your Avatar may attempt to disbelieve anything they witness, illusory or otherwise. This is important, because successfully disbelieving any Phantasm dispels it. Any such attempt requires the character to expend either an Action or a Reaction, though, at their discretion.

In making a Disbelief attempt against any illusion, a player must specifically state what it is their character is disbelieving. Thus, if an Avatar simply enters a room and its player declares, “I disbelieve everything in the room,” their disbelief attempt can be successful only if everything in the room is an illusion. If they believe that a monster is mere fakery, they will need to declare something like, “I disbelieve the monster exists.”

Conversely, a character cannot Disbelieve a Phantasm that it has not personally experienced in some way. For example, a sword may have a spell cast on it that imposes additional illusory pain when it strikes. In this case, there is no visual nor auditory components to the illusion. So, only those struck by the weapon and actually feeling the painful effects of the illusion may attempt to Disbelieve it.

When making a Disbelief attempt, your Avatar may choose to Actively Disbelieve or Passively Disbelieve. Active Disbelief requires your character to come in physical contact with the suspected illusion²⁷, possibly suffering ill

consequences if Disbelief fails (or the Disbelieved threat actually exists). Attempting Passive Disbelief is essentially free; it requires no direct interaction with the illusion. But, only a single Passive Disbelief attempt can be made by a given character against any phantasm. Any further Disbelief attempts must be Active. No such attempt can be performed as an attack, though. Again, it is not possible to Disbelieve something you consider worthy of attacking, just in case.

Disbelief requires an Avoidance Roll with Intelligence adjustments. Active Disbelief allows your Avatar to add their Level into the Conflict Roll. Passive Disbelief forces the Conflict Roll to succeed without this benefit. In any case, the Overlord should make a Hidden Conflict Roll by rolling the dice themselves. Allowing the player to do so may unfairly provide them with information on the “reality” of a Phantasm.

Making a Disbelief attempt against any effect (illusory or otherwise) forces your Avatar to forgo any Conflict Rolls against the effect on the Round of their Disbelief attempt, treating any such effect as if the character had rolled a Natural Failure. In other words, if you attempt to disbelieve a real Cone of Grim Fire spell your Avatar will be allowed no Conflict Roll against it, and the Margin with which it was failed is calculated as if the character had rolled a 1 on the d20. The same applies for a Phantasm your character attempts to Disbelieve but fails.

This is because your Avatar cannot simultaneously Disbelieve an event *and* leap out of harm's way “just in case.” If doubt exists in their mind when attempting Disbelief, no chance of success exists. In any case, spell-casters are never affected by their own phantasms. They perceive their phantasmal creations only as ghostly manifestations.

As per the Roll Inertia rules, only a single Disbelief attempt may be made by any given creature against any specific Phantasm until the situation somehow changes. Sustaining Setback from a Phantasm is one such opportunity. So, a character may make a Disbelief attempt every time they sustain Setback from it. (Again, a Reaction must be expended to do so. So, at most, one such attempt may be made every Round.)

If a Phantasm is successfully Disbelieved by any creature, the illusion instantly fragments into a rainbow display of fading stars, scattering butterflies, swirling leaves, popping bubbles, or some other visual spectacle. Thereafter, the illusion has been broken, and can impose no further effects on any creature.

Consequences of Phantasms

If a character is “injured” by a Phantasm, they feel pain and seem to sustain whatever kind of Damage the illusion indicates: Scorching Damage for Fire Spells, Electrical

²⁷ Needless to say, it is impossible to actually come into physical contact with a non-existent illusion. But, a Disbelieving character must reach

out with their hand or otherwise try to touch the illusion to gain the benefit of an Active Disbelief attempt.

Damage for Lightning spells, etc. In reality, though, Phantasms always deliver Tormenting Setback.

Non-sapient creatures can't distinguish between actual physical wounds and the Tormenting Setback they have sustained.

Sapient NPCs should generally continue to believe they have sustained real wounds until noticing something slightly out-of-place about an illusion. At that point, they will notice the additional fact that there's *something* different about the pain they're feeling, even if they can't quite make out what that is. If an NPC is affected by an illusion that has something weird or out of the ordinary about it, the Overlord should be prompted to make a Disbelief attempt for the NPC. (Otherwise, an Overlord should set a higher bar before triggering a Disbelief attempt by an NPC. In those cases, an illusion would need to exhibit some aspect that is seriously out of kilter with normal experience before the NPC makes such an attempt.) Whether the NPC Disbelieves passively or actively is at the Overlord's discretion, based on the circumstances.

Avatars are under no such constraints. If the player of an Avatar decides something is strange about an illusion, and that prompts them to make a Disbelief attempt, nothing prevents them from doing so.

Disbelieving Instantaneous Phantasms

Some illusions are very short lived. For example, a Phantasm of an abrupt explosion would last only momentarily. Phantasms, in general, only last until someone Disbelieves them. But, if a Phantasm only lasts briefly, then it can target everyone in its Affected Area before anyone has a chance to Disbelieve it. In such cases, individuals are allowed to Disbelieve the Phantasm as it happens, and avoid its effects entirely if successful. But, their successful Disbelief has no effect on the instantaneous consequences for others in the Affected Area. Nevertheless, any successful Disbelief will terminate the Phantasm in the next moment. So, others won't feel any ongoing effects from that illusion, as it no longer exists.

What this means is that creatures in the Affected Area of an explosion will need to decide individually whether they are going to Disbelieve the explosion or not. If the explosion turns out to be real and they Disbelieve it, they forego all Conflict Rolls allowing them to jump out of harm's way, thereby suffering the full effects of the explosion. If the explosion turns out to be an illusion, there are three possibilities:

1. They decide to Disbelieve and succeed: they suffer no consequences at all.
2. They decide to do Disbelieve and fail: they will suffer the full consequences of that Phantasm, which will likely involve sustaining full Tormenting Setback.
3. They decide not to Disbelieve and, instead, jump aside: they are allowed a normal Conflict Roll to

mitigate the illusory explosion's effects. If an explosion of the type simulated by the Phantasm would normally allow for half damage on a successful Conflict Roll, a successful roll would indicate the character would only take half of the Tormenting Setback they would otherwise take from the illusion.

Recovering from Illusory Wounds

Illusory wounds are painful, but not real. What this means is that spells that heal Damage cannot heal illusory wounds. Further, if a character disbelieves a Phantasm for the trickery that it is, they become impervious to that illusion's future effects. But, it does not alleviate any Tormenting Setback they have already sustained from it. Instead, Tormenting Setback is recovered like all other forms of Setback.

Magic Items

Magic items can provide potent powers a character would otherwise not have. As such, they are highly valued. The powers of these items are as varied as the magical skills and powers listed throughout the game, which are considerable. But, not all items are usable by all characters. As such, it is important to understand who can use an item's powers.

To determine this, look at each specific power of an item. If it has multiple powers, it is possible that a character will be able to use some of an item's powers, but not all of them.

Most magic item powers require a trigger. That is, a word must be spoken, or a specific action must be taken to trigger the magic. Without first performing the triggering action, a user cannot invoke an item's power.

Next, you must determine whether the power requires the user to direct the magic or not. That is, does the power require the user to project the magic to some point in space other than himself? If using the power only affects the user himself, then it is not directed. If the power affects someone or something other than the user, then it is directed.

Most items that cast spells targeting creatures other than the item's possessor are fashioned into forms that can be easily pointed. Wands, rods, and most weapon forms are amenable to doing this. Rings are as well, since the finger on which they are placed may be used to point to a target. However, using the item itself to point is merely a convention, not a hard and fast rule. An earring could be enchanted to cast an offensive spell just as well, such as Invoke Grim Lightning Bolt. In such cases, though, the trigger action must require the user to point to the target in some fashion. (For example, "The user must point to the target with their hand and say, 'Kaboom!'".)

Once triggered, *anyone* can use a non-directed power. However, directed magic requires the user to possess a Beckoning gift corresponding to the magical power. That is, only a character with Occult Beckoning can direct an Occult spell triggered from a magic item. Only a character with Pagan Beckoning can direct the power of a magic item's

Pagan spell, etc. If these conditions are met, then a character can control a directed spell invoked from a magic item.

Polymorphism

Polymorphism is the act of transmogrifying, transforming, and shape-shifting a creature from one form into another. There are a number of faery races that have shape altering abilities of one form or another, so it behooves us to provide game mechanics that allows this to happen relatively painlessly.

First of all, to transform a creature into another target form, the caster must satisfy one of two requirements:

1. He is using a polymorphic spell that specifically states the form the target will take, or
2. He is using a more general polymorphic spell, which is capable of transforming the target into one of many possible forms. In that case, the caster must have personally seen a specimen of the target form before they can change a creature into that form. (The various Critter descriptions in [The Tome of Terrors](#) provide excellent catch-all stats for creature types that otherwise aren't written up.)

Polymorphism can only work on corporeal creatures, and can only transform them into other corporeal creatures. So, you can't polymorph a goat into a ghost, or visa-verse. Further, any spells that were affecting the target creature prior to the change will continue to do so afterward. Similarly, any magical effects due to magical equipment worn by the polymorphed creature will remain unless those effects are directly tied to its shape and/or material make-up. Whenever a spell morphs a creature's shape, there are three ways to handle the target creature's equipment, depending on the target form:

1. If the target is changed into something that is not humanoid, it is assumed that its personal equipment (worn or carried) is absorbed into that form in some fashion (e.g. it disappears) until the normal state is resumed.
2. If the target form is humanoid, then any personal equipment will essentially be altered to fit the new form and be available for use as normal.
3. If the altered form is a hybrid between humanoid and non-humanoid (such as a centaur), then the equipment that is held or worn by the humanoid portions will remain intact, while those adorning the bestial portions will be absorbed into the new form. Items with significant overlap between the two portions will be absorbed, at the Overlord's discretion.

Morphing and Sizing

To understand the mechanics of what happens when a creature is polymorphed, it is useful to split the explanation into two parts: Morphing and Sizing.

Morphing

Morphing is the part of polymorphism that deals with transforming the target into a new shape irrespective of size. The Level of the target limits the spell rank of the morphing magic. So, if a spell of rank 8 transforms a creature having a Level of 7, the resulting spell rank is reduced to 7.

To determine the physical stats of the resulting form, look up the example in the creature's description having the highest Level that is less than or equal to the resulting spell rank and use that. So, if the spell rank is 7, and the creature description has examples of Level 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14, then the resulting form will use the stats from the Level 6 example. If no example satisfies these restrictions, the magic of the spell fails. So, a spell of rank 3 could not transform the target into this same form, since no example exists whose Level is 3 or less.

Morphing alters all of the morphed creature's basic attributes except Intelligence. So, almost all of the stats of the target state are adopted by the morphed creature. (Charisma is a mix between Intelligence and Heart, so it will need to be recalculated when needed.)

The most obvious evidence of this disparity between the physical and mental characteristics is that the eyes of a morphed character retain their original appearance. A person familiar with the character in their normal form may recognize them in their altered form merely by making eye-contact. (Again, treat the morphed state as a disguise.) While polymorphism excels at making sweeping changes to a character's body, it lacks the fine control necessary for subtle modifications. So, a character that transforms themselves into a wolf will look like exactly the same wolf the next time they change to that form.

If the transformed creature has the ability to speak normally, and the target form has a mouth and tongue, you may assume it can speak in the morphed form as well.

The morphed creature adopts all of the abilities of the target form, except for magical abilities. A magical ability is any skill, gift, spell or other ability with a Setback Cost associated with it. For example, if the target form has an ability similar to the Occult spell [Invoke Great Cone of Grim Fire](#), then the morphed creature will lack this ability. It adopts all other abilities and limitations of the transformed state, including vision, Immunities, and Sensitivities.

Magic spells and other Skills may be used in the morphed state only if the form allows for it. For example, if a character wishes to cast a magic spell with Gestural requirements, they may do so only if the new form has hands.

All of the Gifts, Flavors, Flaws, Skills, Lores, and Traits possessed by the original form are retained in the target form unless the target form itself logically renders them moot.

The fraction of the morphed creature's current Hit Points relative to its maximum Hit Points is retained in any such transformation. So, a character that has only half their normal maximum Hit Points will end up with half of the maximum Hit Points of the morphed form. The same is true of Fate Points.

Sizing

Sizing is the part of polymorphism dealing with size differences between the original form and the target form. There are distinct Size Categories in the game. These are: Zot, Wee, Ultratiny, Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Great, Epic, Colossal, and Astronomical. These categories are described under the Size & Weight section of this book. A creature's size can only be altered to one of these distinct categories.

Sizing does not alter Levels in any way. So, Conflict Rolls involving them are made in the same way as in the character's original state, unless otherwise specified.

However, when a creature's Size is changed, the process alters its Basic Attributes. For each difference in Size Category, they are altered according to the Resizing Attributes Table. (Note that if a creature not only Resizes, but also adopts the form of a creature through morphing, then the stats listed in the target creature's description will already take these adjustments into account.)

Resizing Attributes Table

Attribute	Shrink	Enlarge
Toughness	-2	+2
Strength	-6	+6
Agility	+6	-6
Craftiness	+2	-2

These differences ripple through the creature's Derived Attributes as well. The result of this is that for every Size Category difference, the target creature's Hit Points will either be cut in half (for Shrinking a Size Category) or doubled (for Enlarging a Size Category). Note that Vigor (Strength + Agility), the Attribute used in most Melee attacks, is unchanged.

Any Damage sustained in the resized state transfers proportionally to the natural state. For example, suppose a creature that normally has 40 Hit Points is shrunk by two Size Categories, and thereby has 10 Hit Points in that state. If it then sustains 6 points of Damage while shrunk, leaving it with 4 remaining, the creature will end up with 16 Hit Points when it resumes its normal size.

Shrinking

When a creature shrinks from one Size Category to another, the magic doing so will generally shrink all equipment the creature carries as well, unless the spell or skill specifies otherwise. Every time a creature's size drops by a Size Category, its height is roughly cut in half. Further, its Strength is reduced by 6 points and its Toughness lowers by 2 points. Conversely, its Agility rises by 6 points and its Craftiness increases by 2. Any characteristics derived from these Attributes are thereby affected. This has the consequence of cutting Hit Points in half while increasing Defense by 4 and decreasing Stability by 2. Since Vigor and Perception do not change, Speed and Attack Bonuses with Melee Weapons do not change. On the other hand, Grace swells by 8 points while Acumen grows by 2. So, the Attack Bonuses of Range Weapons are correspondingly adjusted.

When a fashioned weapon is shrunk, and there is a similar weapon of the corresponding size appearing on a weapons table, use the stats for the most similar weapon for that of the resized weapon (Overlord's discretion). Otherwise, increase the weapon's Tempo by 1, and lower the weapon's Damage and Parry values by 1 point (to a minimum of 1 each). Shrunk Entrapment Weapons have their Setback values lowered by 1 rather than Damage (again, to a minimum of 1).

For natural weapons, just reduce the damage by 1 per Size Category (to a minimum of 1). For ease of play, do not adjust the Tempo and Parry of natural weapons.

Enlarging

When a creature enlarges from one Size Category to another, the magic enlarges all equipment it carries as well, unless the spell specifies otherwise. Every time a creature rises by a Size Category, its height is roughly doubled. Further, its Strength increases by 6 points and its Toughness rises by 2. Conversely, its Agility lowers by 6 points and its Craftiness decreases by 2 points. Any characteristics derived from these attributes are thereby affected. This has the consequence of doubling the Hit Points while decreasing Defense by 4 and increasing Stability by 2. Since Vigor and Perception do not change, Speed and Attack Bonuses with Melee Weapons are unaffected. On the other hand, Grace drops by 8 points, while Acumen drops by 2. So, the Attack Bonuses of Range Weapons are affected by the respective amounts.

When a fashioned weapon is enlarged, and there is a similar weapon of the corresponding size appearing on a weapons table, use the stats for the most similar weapon for that of the resized weapon (Overlord's discretion). Otherwise, subtract 1 from its Tempo and raise the weapon's Damage and Parry values by 1 point each. Enlarged Entrapment Weapons have their Setback values increased by 1 (rather than Damage).

For natural weapons, just increase the Damage by 1 per Size Category. For ease of play, do not adjust the Tempo and Parry of natural weapons.

MONEY

Money

Mythmagica denotes prices in coinage. Coins come in a variety of sizes and in various metals. The standard monetary unit is the Medium-sized silver piece (sp.). This coin is also known as a silver ounce (s.oz.), because all Medium-sized coins weigh an ounce (or 1/16 of a pound). When a price is explicitly specified, it is listed in silver ounces, for easy comparison. However, silver is not the only type of coin in circulation in the game. The following table lists the common coin types and their values.

Although Medium-sized coins are the standard, coins of smaller or larger size categories are sometimes used. Every size category larger size doubles the dimensions of the coin. So, a large-sized coin is 2 inches in diameter. A great-sized coin is 4 inches in diameter, etc.

Coin Value Table

Coin Type ²⁸	Abbreviation	Value
Tin Piece	tp	1 tp = 1/64 sp
Copper Piece	cp	1 cp = 1/8 sp
Silver Piece	sp	Standard = 1 oz.
Electrum Piece ²⁹	ep	1 ep = 8 sp
Gold Piece (Yellow Gold)	gp	1 gp = 64 sp
Orichalcum Piece (Red Gold ³⁰ , True Copper Piece)	op	1 op = 64 sp
Nobilium Piece (True Silver Piece)	np	1 np = 512 sp

As you can see on the Coin Value Table, each higher value coin type is exactly 8 times the value of the next lower coin type. (Although, Orichalcum and Gold are equal in value.) Since an increase in size category doubles the dimensions of the coin, that means that increasing the size category of a coin multiplies the weight by 8 times (2x2x2). What this means is that a medium-sized Gold Piece has a value equal to a large-sized Electrum Piece, which is equal to the value of a great-sized Silver Piece. So, conversions between size categories is easy should the need arise.

Since “ounce” is abbreviated as “oz.,” “Oz³¹” is often used as slang for Medium-sized coin.

Needless to say, carrying 128 silver ounces in a purse is impractical since it weighs 8 pounds. Of course, the equivalent value in electrum can be carried by most characters without great difficulty, as it only weighs about 1 pound, while an equivalent value in gold weighs 2 ounces.

Pieces of Eight

When a buyer lacks exact change for their purchase, and a merchant cannot provide correct change, it is a common practice for coins to be cut in halves, quarters, and eighths. Most merchants will have a sturdy chisel and hammer ready for this purpose. To ensure fairness, the standard process is that the buyer or merchant cuts the coin, and the other party chooses which piece(s) to keep. When coins are cut into eighths like this, they have the general shape of a pizza slice and are called “Pieces of Eight”, as in “Gold Pieces of Eight”, “Silver Pieces of Eight”, etc.³²

Since coins of various types are valued in multiples of 8 with respect to one another, it is easy to convert the value of a Piece of Eight of one metal to that of another. For example, a Gold Piece of Eight has the same value as a Silver Piece; a Silver Piece of Eight has the same value as a Copper Piece, etc.

²⁸ The platinum piece that is so ubiquitous in other fantasy games is missing from this table. That is because platinum is not one of the seven true metals recognized by the alchemists of centuries past. As such, platinum does not exist in Mythmagica.

²⁹ Electrum is an alloy of yellow gold and silver.

³⁰ A number of Nordic and Slavic legends speak of Red Gold, a form of gold with a reddish tint. No explanation is given concerning what Red Gold is, so Mythmagica equates it with Orichalcum, or True Copper.

³¹ *The Wizard of Oz* is often seen as a metaphor for money. The yellow brick road represents bricks of gold, and Dorothy’s silver slippers represent silver coins traveling along the road of gold. Even the name of Oz is the abbreviation for ounce, the standard measure of gold and silver. Finally, the emerald city is an analogy for a civilization fueled by green paper bills whose value is an illusion created by the Fed’s slight of hand. (“*Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!*”)

³² This is the reason pirate’s treasure is often referred to as “Pieces of Eight”.

GLOSSARY

Glossary

The Glossary contains brief descriptions of the specific meanings of the myriad terms used in the game.

Acid Effect

Anything including acidic or caustic effects. Also, any Occult spell requiring Bile Lore to cast.

Action

An Action is any distinct activity performed to result in a desired outcome (although the *actual* outcome may be something other than what was desired). If an Action aggressively targets a foe, the target will respond with a Reaction (which itself does not expend an Action). The success or failure of an individual aggressive Action and its subsequent Reaction from the target is often determined by a single Conflict Roll.

Aerial Effect

Any effect involving a physical projectile traveling through the air.

Aftermath

Refers to the effects that befall a character when their Fate Points fall to zero. (See Guts and Glory for details).

Aftershock

Refers to the effects that befall a character when their Hit Points fall to zero. (See Guts and Glory for details).

Ageless

A living creature that never ages, but can be killed. The Ageless have spirits rather than souls.

Air Effect

Anything including sonic, wind or electrical effects. Also, any spell requiring one or more of the following Occult Lore to cast: Air, Hot, Sky, Summer, Wet, or Wind.

Amulet

A magical piece of jewelry. An Amulet is a type of Ornatum (wearable magic item).

Angel

An Eidolon in the service of the deity of a monotheistic religion.

Animal

A living creature having internal organs. In general, animals can be affected by Internal Damage.

Arctic Animal

An Arctic Animal is any animal traditionally found in a frigid, icy environment. For game purposes, these are: Tiny Arctic Hares; Small and Medium Arctic Wolves; Ultratiny and Tiny Birds (Arctic Terns, Snow Geese, Puffins, Seagulls, Snowy Owls etc.); Tiny Ermines; Tiny and Small Arctic Foxes; Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards; Large Muskox; Medium and Large Polar Bears; Medium and Large Reindeer; Small and Medium Seals and Sea Lions; Large Walruses.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Assault

A sequence of one or more Actions that can potentially deliver Damage and/or Setback, or which requires a Conflict Roll that can have immediate detrimental effects to a foe of the combatant initiating the Assault. Usually, an Assault is comprised of a single Action. However, the extra Boss Attacks afforded a combatant of significantly superior Level to it opponent extend an Assault with additional attacks.

Attack Roll

A special form of Conflict Roll made from the aggressor's perspective in which the aggressor makes a physical attack.

Attribute Check

A special form of Conflict Roll that only involves character attributes (i.e. it does not involve any levels or skill ranks).

Avoidance Roll

A special form of defensive Conflict Roll that incorporates the character's Level, potentially along with other adjustments. This is often used to defend against a foe's combat skill.

Axe

A chopping weapon having a long handle topped with a broad heavy blade. Examples within the game are Great Axe, Large Axe, Medium Axe, Small Axe, Poleaxe, and any other weapon that the Overlord decrees to be an axe.

Barnyard Animal

A Barnyard Animal is any animal traditionally raised on a Medieval farm or ranch either for their eggs, meat, milk, or wool or for riding or pulling plows. For game purposes, these are: Large Bovines (Cows and Oxen); Tiny Chickens; Tiny Ducks; Medium and Large Equines (Donkeys, Horses, Mules, and Ponies); Tiny and Small Geese; Small and Medium Goats; Small and Medium Hogs and Pigs; and Small and Medium Sheep.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some

other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Blade Weapon

Any sharp weapon sporting a blade that delivers Cutting Damage. Examples within the game include all weapons on the Sharp Close Combat Weapons table except Stiletto (which actually has a triangular cross-section). A large number of polearms can also be classified as blade weapons. These are Poleaxes, and Spears.

Blight Effect

Anything including blight, fungal, or rotting effects. Also, any Occult spell requiring both Chaos Lore and Moon Lore to cast.

Blowgun

A blowgun is a poison delivery device. It consists of a long hollow tube into which a poisoned dart is placed. When air is blown in one end, the dart is expelled toward its target.

Blunt Weapon

Any weapon that primarily delivers damage without slicing, stabbing, or chopping. Examples within the game include all weapons on the Blunt Close Combat Weapons table. The Lucerne Hammer is a blunt polearm.

Bolas

A bolas is a weapon consisting of two or more weights connected by cords to a central point. The user swings it over their head and then releases it toward their target. The weights splay out as the weapon whirls through the air. When it strikes, the cords wrap around the legs of the target to impede its movement.

Bow

A range weapon having a long curved strip of wood or ivory whose ends are strung taut, which is used to launch arrows. Bows are an entirely separate category of weapon from crossbows. Examples within the game are Great Bow, Long Bow, Short Bow, and any other weapon that the Overlord decrees to be a bow.

Bright Light

Bright light refers to an intensity of illumination roughly equivalent to that of daylight.

Captivating Effect

Anything including effects that exert spiritual control over the target, including Setback that pushes a creature toward a state of enforced obedience to its enslaving master. Captivation is generally only effective against non-living creatures

Cat-o-Nine-Tails

A Cat-o-Nine-Tails is an Entrapment Weapon consisting of a handle to which nine knotted cords are attached at one end. It delivers painful wounds when it strikes, and so is often used on naval vessels to inflict punishment on insubordinate crew members.

Close Combat Weapon

Any melee weapon which is designed to injure an opponent up close and personal. In the game, this includes all melee weapons except Polearms.

Club

A club is a thick round pole used as a weapon. It is an extremely cheap weapon, as it is usually made from a sturdy length of wood and little else.

Conflict Roll

A roll of a number of d20s that determines the success or failure of a single Action within a conflict. A standard Conflict Roll uses a single d20, but the number of d20s used in a roll is adjusted by the number of Edges and/or Drawbacks applied to the roll's aggressor and target.

Construct

Any creature that is a construct or magically animated being mimicking the form of some living creature. This includes automatons, golems, and homonoculi. It does not include creatures that were mutated into a monstrous form from an original living form, such as a grotesque or gargoyle.

Crossbow

A range weapon having a horizontal bow affixed to a wooden bar containing a groove in which a bolt is placed. A crossbow contains a mechanism to draw the bow back and to release the bolt. Crossbows are an entirely separate category of weapon from bows. Examples within the game are all crossbows found on the Shot Weapons Table.

Dagger

A dagger is a sharp weapon with a short, broad blade, a handle, and possibly a hand guard. Daggers are similar in structure to swords. In game terms, what distinguishes a sword from a dagger is that a sword's blade is significantly longer than its hilt. A dagger's hilt takes up at least one third of the weapon's overall length.

A dagger is a one-handed weapon. So, a Medium Dagger (which is proportionally sized for a medium-sized human) has a hilt that is a little longer than the width of a big man's hand. Based on the game's sizing rules, a Large Dagger is twice as long since every size increment doubles an item's dimensions.

Some daggers are single edged, while others are double edged. One exception is that of the stiletto, which doesn't have a true edge at all.

Examples of daggers are:

Dirk: A double-edged medium-sized Dagger with a straight broad blade.

Jambiya: A curved single-edge Dagger, common in Arabian areas.

Knife: A single-edged Small Dagger.

Kris: A Dagger with a wavy double-edged blade that tapers slowly to a point.

Misericorde: A Dagger with a very thin blade straight tapering down to a sharp point. It was thin enough to fit through the gaps of armor, and could therefore deliver the death blow to a fallen and suffering knight. As such, its use was considered a mercy. Very similar to a Poignard.

Parrying Dagger: A dagger with a significant crossguard or hand guard. (See the Parrying Dagger definition for more information.)

Poignard: A double-edged Dagger with a very thin straight blade that tapers down to a sharp point.

Stiletto: A dagger whose "blade" has no true edge. Rather it has a triangular cross section that tapers down to an exceptionally sharp point. Despite this difference, the stiletto is still considered a dagger within the game due to the similar way in which it is wielded.

Dart

A dart is a thrown missile weapon. It consists of a short shaft with a sharp point on one end and possibly feather fletching on its tail. Although it resembles an arrow or crossbow bolt, its shaft is shorter and thicker. Faery Darts, which consist of nothing more than a stone arrowhead, also fall into this category. Whatever their form, Darts are thrown at their targets rather than shot from a bow of some kind.

Deluding Effect

Anything including hallucination, illusion, or glamour effects. Also, any spell requiring one of the following Occult Lores to cast: Hearing, Smell, Taste, Touch, or Vision.

Demon

An evil Eidolon.

Devil

A fallen angel. Devils are demons who were once in the service of the deity of a monotheistic religion, but ended up betraying their faith, and were consequently cast out.

Desert Animal

A Desert Animal is any animal traditionally found in an arid environment. For game purposes, these are: Small and Medium Baboons, Tiny Badgers, Ultratiny and Tiny Bats, Large Camels, Small and Medium Cats (Cougars, Leopards, Lions, etc.), Large Elephants, Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards, Ultratiny Mice, Small and Tiny Raptors (Falcons, Hawks, Vultures, etc.), Tiny Rats, Large Rhinos, Tiny Snakes (Cobras, Vipers, etc.), Tiny Tortoises, Large Zebras.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Dim Light

Dim Light refers to an intensity of illumination roughly equivalent to that of moonlight on a clear night with a full moon. The various vision type descriptions specify how far a creature with that vision type can see in this light (found under [Gifts](#) in [The Character Compendium](#)).

Divination Effect

Anything include scrying, prophecy, or detection effects. Also, any Pagan spell from the category of Divination.

Draft Animal

A Draft Animal is any animal traditionally bred and trained to work specific tasks on a Medieval farm or ranch. For game purposes, these are: Large Camels; Small and Medium Dogs; Medium and Large Equines (Donkeys, Horses, Mules, and Ponies); and Large Oxen.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Drawback

A Drawback is any detriment one opponent has to another on a Conflict Roll. Mechanically, a Drawback forces one side or the other on a conflict to roll an additional d20 on a Conflict Roll, and take the lower result. However, a Drawback can be negated by an Edge, on a one-for-one basis. So, a Drawback a character suffers because they are Nauseous from poison may be negated because they have an Edge by attacking from an elevated position.

Drawback Effect

A Drawback Effect is a type of magic on a creature that gives it a Drawback on limited types of Conflict Rolls. So, a spell that gives a character a Drawback on Conflict Rolls involving Agility has a Drawback Effect. Drawback Effects do stack. So, if a character has succumbed to multiple Drawback Effects, they may suffer from multiple Drawbacks on any given Conflict Roll (with the caveat that a maximum of 3d20 are used on any given Conflict Roll).

Dreadful Effect

Anything including fear or depression-inducing effects, which generally accumulate Dreadful Setback that pushes a creature toward losing self-control in some fashion.

Earthen Effect

Anything including rocky, dusty, or sandy effects, including any weapons fashioned from raw earth, such as boulders and primitive flint-head arrows and axes. (This does not include any earthen materials forged in fire, such as bronze or steel. It also does not include wood, which contains Phlogiston, a form of dormant Fire.) Also, any spell requiring one or more of the following Occult Lores to cast: Autumn, Cold, Dry, Earth, Land, or Matter.

Ectoplasm

Ectoplasm is metaphysical substance from which Astral entities are formed. It is encountered in all states: solid, liquid, gas, and plasma. (In liquid form, it is often referred to as Ichor.)

Edge

An Edge is an advantage one opponent has over another on a Conflict Roll. Mechanically, an Edge allows one side or the other on a conflict to roll an additional d20 on a Conflict Roll and take the higher result. However, an Edge can be negated by a Drawback, on a one-for-one basis. So, an Edge a character has because they are attacking from an elevated position may be negated by a Drawback imposed because they are Nauseous from poison.

Edge Effect

An Edge Effect is a type of magic that gives a creature an Edge on one or more types of Conflict Rolls. So, spells that give characters an Edge when swinging swords or on Perception Checks are Edge Effects.

Eidolon

A purely astral spirit, whether angelic or diabolical. These include angels, daevas, daemons, and devils. They do not include elementals.

Electrical Effect

Anything including effects produced by the flow of electricity. Any spell incorporating lightning falls into this category, as does any Occult spell requiring one or more of the following Occult Lores: Jupiter, Spring, Sky, or Wet.

Any character in a Drenched state suffers from a Drawback on Conflict Rolls against Electrical Effects.

Further, any sizable non-magical item fashioned from non-alchemical metal, such as a sword or helmet, acts as a lightning rod. Any target possessing such an item typically suffers from from a Drawback against Electrical Effects.

Elemental

An earthly spirit representing one of the cardinal elements of Air, Earth, Fire, or Water. These include the sylph, genomus, salamander, phoenix, undine, vulcanus, zephyr, and djinni.

Encumbrance

Refers to Defense penalty armor imposes on its wearer.

Energating Effect

Anything including effects that drain spiritual energy, which generally accumulate Setback that pushes a creature toward a state of Torpor.

Entrancing Effect

Anything including effects that exert mental control over the target, including Setback that pushes a creature toward a state of willing obedience to its enslaving master. Entrancing is generally only effective against living creatures

Equine

An Equine is any member of the horse family. For game purposes these include Donkeys, Horses, Mules, and Ponies.

Faction

A group that shares common beliefs, or Traits, putting them in opposition to other factions with differing beliefs.

Faery Effect

Any Eldritch ability of a faery creature, or anything which summons or otherwise specifically interacts with a faery creature. Also, any spell requiring one or more of the following Occult Lore to cast: Autumn, Spring, Summer, or Winter.

Falcata

A falcata is a curved sword which is edged on the inside of the curve. Its blade is wider at the end than at its base, so it is end-heavy, allowing it to deliver greater chopping force when swung, but making it a bit more unwieldy than it would otherwise be. As such, falcatas are primarily used for chopping rather than slicing or thrusting.

Fettering Effect

Anything including effects that physically constrain a creature's movement. Fetter effects often involve accumulating Setback that pushes a creature toward a completely restrained state.

Flaying Effect

Anything including effects that deliver damage by roughing, grating, or lashing the target's surface without deep penetration. Blasts of sand, whirlwinds, and cat-o-nine-tails are examples of Flaying effects.

Footing Effect

Anything including effects that physically trip or maneuver a creature.

Freezing Effect

Anything including cold, ice, or frost effects. Also, any spell requiring the Occult Lore of Cold or Winter.

Creatures in a Drenched state suffer from a Drawback on Conflict Rolls against Freezing Effects.

Garrote

A Garrote is a weapon used to choke someone. It may consist of nothing more than a length of chain or a scarf. Sometimes, a garrote has tabs attached to its ends to help its wielder maintain a good grip.

Ghost

An undead spirit with a connection to the Mortal Realm that is so tenuous that it cannot affect physical objects directly. Ghosts cannot deliver damage, and have no Hit Points to damage. They have Fate Points, though, and can be defeated through Setback.

Glory Status

A number (1 through 6) indicating how much risk a character is taking in a given scene. The higher the Glory Status, the greater the risk, but also the greater the reward for success. Glory Status is determined purely by the number of Guts points a character has spent. (See Guts and Glory for more details.)

Grassland Animal

A Grassland Animal is any animal traditionally found on grasslands. These include both Savannah and Steppe environments. For game purposes, a list of the animals native to both these environments follow.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the Tome of Terrors, or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the "natural" keyword.

Savannah Animal

Small Anteaters, Small and Medium Antelope, Small and Medium Baboons, Tiny Badgers; Ultratiny and Tiny Bats; Medium Bears; Ultratiny and Tiny Birds (Doves, Ducks, Falcons, Hawks, Owls, Pigeons, Robins, Sparrows, etc.); Small, Medium, and Large Cats (Bobcats, Lions, Lynxes, Panthers, Tigers, etc.); Tiny and Small Foxes; Ultratiny and Tiny Frogs and Toads; Large Giraffes, Small and Medium Hyenas; Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards; Ultratiny Mice; Tiny Rabbits; Tiny Snakes; Tiny Turtles; Tiny Weasels, Medium and Large Zebras.

Steppe Animal

Small Anteaters, Small and Medium Antelope, Small and Medium Baboons, Tiny Badgers; Ultratiny and Tiny Bats; Medium Bears; Ultratiny and Tiny Birds (Doves, Ducks, Falcons, Finches, Grouses, Hawks, Pigeons, Quails, Sparrows etc.); Small, Medium, and Large Cats (Bobcats, Lions, Lynxes, Panthers, Tigers, etc.); Tiny Ferrets; Tiny and Small Foxes; Ultratiny and Tiny Frogs and Toads; Tiny Ground Squirrels; Large Horses; Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards; Ultratiny Mice; Tiny Prairie Dogs; Tiny Rabbits; Tiny Snakes; Small and Medium Wild Sheep; Tiny Weasels, Medium Wolves.

Guts

A major resource in the game. Guts points are spent to convert failed Conflict Rolls into barely successful ones. The more Guts a character spends, the higher their Glory Status. The higher the Glory Status, the more X.P. the character earns from successful encounters, but the greater the consequences should an encounter fail. (See Guts and Glory for more details.)

Hammer

A hammer is a melee weapon with a handle topped by a heavy head (usually made of metal). Hammers come in three basic forms. The first has a broad blunt striking surface and is designed to do damage through the sheer weight of the head. These are basic hammers. The second form, known as a maul, has a head in the form of a heavy wedge (which is also very useful in splitting wood). The third form of hammer, known as a Warhammer, has a long tapered head resembling a pick or spike. These are designed primarily to pierce helmets and plate armor. Examples of hammers within the game are all the Hammers, Mauls, and War Hammers on the Blunt Close Combat Weapon table, and the Lucerne Hammer found on the Polearm weapon table.

Harpoon

A harpoon is a heavy thrown weapon similar to a Throwing Spear. The primary difference is that the harpoon is tipped with a barbed head, making it difficult to extract from any target it strikes.

Humanoid

A humanoid is any creature that walks upright and has a single head, a torso, two arms, two legs, and possibly wings and/or a tail. So, elves, dwarfs, trolls, and pixies are humanoids. Centaurs and two-headed ogres are not. (Although centaurs and two-headed ogres are both humanoid-like.)

Hybrid

Any creature with distinctive characteristics of two or more creatures. These include pegasi, griffins, chimeras, hippogriffs, arachnidae, ta-bit-jet, hermanubi, and harpies.

Iaculum

An Iaculum is a weighted gladiator net, held in one hand and swung to entangle an opponent's legs in combat.

Ice and Snow Effect

Any effect associated with all forms of frozen water, including hail, blizzards, and tumbling snow-packs.

Ilk

The broadest category of Creature below just simply "Creature". All members of an Ilk share some common characteristics, typically Immunities and Sensitivities. The various Ilk categories in the game are: Constructs, Eidolons, Elementals, Living, and Undead.

Illusion

A spell affecting the senses. Also, any effect based on an Eldritch Skill that defaults directly or indirectly to Glamour, or any spell requiring one of the following Occult Loaves to cast: Hearing, Smell, Taste, Touch, or Vision.

Ignition Effect

Any effect that can set combustible materials aflame. When the effects of a skill or spell incorporate an ignition effect, any Highly Combustible material it contacts will automatically ignite. Other combustible materials will ignite on a failed Conflict Roll, but will fail to ignite on a successful one.

Immortal

A being that never dies and cannot be killed, although they can be defeated. The gods and Eidolons are Immortal.

Infernal Effect

An effect involving unholy or diabolical energy. These effects are associated with demons, devils, Hell, Tartarus, the Abyss, and other damned regions of the Astral Realm. Heavenly creatures, such as angels and celestials, are particularly sensitive to any such effect.

Intoxicating Effect

Anything including effects that cause a creature to become intoxicated, or lose physical coordination and mental clarity. Intoxication generally involves Setback that pushes a creature toward a state of Torpor.

Khopesh

A khopesh is an oddly shaped curved sword, originating from ancient Egypt. The blade is straight at its base, but has a sudden curve like a hook. The blade is edged on the outside of this curve, giving it the rough outline of an axe, but with an edge all the way down to the hilt. As such, it is an excellent chopping weapon, but poor at thrusting and slicing.

Kin

The category of Creature below Ilk. Members of a Kin share additional characteristics beyond those of an Ilk, including possibly Immunities and Sensitivities. The Kin categories for the various Ilks are:

Constructs: Anthropomorphic Object, Automaton, Golem, Statue

Eidolons: Angel, Celestial, Demon, Devil

Elementals: Air, Earth, Fire, Water

Living: Blooded, Grotesque, Vegetal

Undead: Ghost, Revenant, Specter

Lasso

A lasso is a long rope with a loop at one end tied with a slipknot. When looped around a target and pulled taught, the slipknot tightens the loop around its body. The lasso will remain taught as long as tension is held on the rope.

Lineage

A humanoid sub-race sharing common cultural characteristics. Examples within the game are the Tuatha de Dannan elves, the Duergar dwarfs, the Coblynau gnomes, and the Redcap goblins, among many others.

Longsword

A longsword is a double-edged sword with a straight blade. Its name comes from the fact that it has both a long blade and a long hilt, allowing the weapon to be wielded by one or two hands. Its long blade and cross guard make it a good parrying weapon as well. Longswords are decent at thrusting, chopping, and slicing.

Examples of Longswords are:

Bastard Sword: A Large Longsword.

Cruciform Sword: A medium Longsword commonly used by medieval knights. Also known as a Knightly Sword.

Claymore: A Great Scottish Longsword with a forward sweeping crossguard.

Flambard: A Longsword with a wavy edge fashioned to give the appearance of flame.

Flammenschwert: A Great German Longsword with a wavy edge fashioned to give the appearance of flame.

Zweihänder: A Large German Longsword, literally "Two-Hander".

Mace

A mace is a melee weapon consisting of a club with a heavy head. What distinguishes a mace from a hammer is that the head of a mace is radially symmetric so that blows can be easily delivered regardless of the weapon's orientation. One special type of mace is known as a morning star, which has sharp spikes radiating out of the business end. Sometimes these spikes protrude out from a metal ball or cylinder affixed to the end of the club, while cheaper varieties are

little more than clubs with long nails driven through them. Maces are a category of weapon entirely separate from Mace and Chains.

Examples of maces are:

Flanged Mace: A mace whose head has several metal plates radiating out from the head. The flat plates are cut so that they all have the same silhouettes, often with an artistic flair.

Morning Star: A mace with a round ball attached to its end with spikes radiating out from it. These are typically Large weapons.

Mace and Chain

A mace and chain is a melee weapon consisting of a heavy head affixed to a handle via a chain. The head sometimes has spikes radiating from it, in which case the mace and chain is sometimes (inaccurately) called a morning star. The head is often swung over the assailant's head to build up momentum before striking. Mace and Chains are a category of weapon entirely separate from Maces. Examples of these weapons within the game include all of the Maces and Chains of various sizes found on the Blunt Close Combat Weapons table.

Maladive Effect

Any effects imposing disease, illness, feebleness, or other unwholesome physical changes without delivering actual Damage. Maladive effects are generally only effective against living creatures.

Maul

A maul is a melee weapon consisting of a handle with a very heavy wedge-shaped head.

Melee Weapon

A Melee Weapon is any weapon that is generally used for up-front hand-to-hand combat, as opposed to a Range weapon, which is used from afar. As a general rule, Melee weapons make a direct connection between the wielder and the target. (There is a fuzzy boundary between the two categories with some Entrapment weapons. While a whip is considered to be a Melee weapon, a Lasso is considered to be a Range Weapon. Any flexible weapon having a Range greater than Point Blank is considered to be a Range weapon.)

Mental Effect

Anything including hallucination, illusion, glamour or behavioral effects. Also, any spell requiring one of the following Occult Lores to cast: Hearing, Mind, Smell, Taste, Touch, or Vision

Metaphysical

Anything dealing with or affecting the ectoplasmic bodies of Astral beings. Metaphysical Damage inflicts harm on such beings, which are collectively known as Metaphysical beings. These include all Astral Beings having Hit Points, including Undead Specters and Eidolons, but does not include Ghosts (which lack Hit Points entirely). Metaphysical beings can only be affected by magic weapons.

Mountain Animal

A Mountain Animal is any animal traditionally found in the European Mountains. For game purposes, these are: Medium Bears; Tiny and Small Beavers; Ultratiny, Tiny, and Small Birds (Doves, Eagles, Falcons, Geese, Hawks, Owls, Pigeons, Robins, Sparrows, Vultures, etc.); Small and Medium Cats (Bobcats, Lynxes, Panthers, etc.); Small and Medium Deer; Tiny Ferrets, Tiny and Small Foxes; Medium Mountain Goats; Tiny Marmots; Ultratiny Mice; Tiny Otters; Tiny Raccoon; Ultratiny and Tiny Squirrels; Tiny Snakes; Medium Wolves.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Mortal

A living creature that will eventually die of old age if it survives long enough. Sapient Mortals have souls. Non-sapient mortals and the Ageless have spirits.

Natural Weather Effect

Any effect associated with normal weather conditions. This includes the blazing heat of the hottest desert and the icy-cold temperatures of arctic blizzards. However, it does not include any effects that are magically induced.

Net

A net is an Entrapment Weapon comprised of a twine mesh. Examples of nets within the game include the Iaculum, Large Net, and any weapon decreed to be a net by the Overlord.

Nimbus Effect

A Nimbus is a field of magic surrounding a creature that produces a magical influence on nearby creatures. For example, an undead may have an aura of fear that induces anxiety and terror in nearby living creatures, which is considered to be a Nimbus Effect. A creature may radiate only one Nimbus effect at a time.

Nonsapient

A creature with a Cunning of Bestial or less.

Nonsentient

A creature with a Cunning of Instinctive or less.

Oasis Animal

An Oasis Animal is any real-world animal traditionally found in a desert oasis or near a fresh-water river in North Africa. For game purposes, these are: Large African Lions; Small or Medium Baboons; Large Camels; Tiny Cobras; Large Elephants; Large Hippopotamuses; Medium Hyenas; Small Jackals; Tiny Mongooses; Large Rhinoceroses; Ultratiny and Wee Scarabs; Small or Medium Vultures.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Organism

A living creature with internal organs. Organisms are affected by Internal Damage.

Ornatum

An Ornatum (plural Ornata) is a wearable magic item, such as a garment (Vestis), or piece of jewelry (Amulet).

Outfit

An outfit is any collection of garments that covers all parts of the body except the head, hands, and feet. In other words, it covers most areas from the shoulders to the ankles. So, a long-sleeved tunic and pants can be considered an outfit, as can a simple robe.

Overcome

As soon as a character’s Hit Points or Fate Points drops to zero, it is said to be Overcome. Unless otherwise stated, this condition lasts at least until the end of the current Scene, and persists thereafter until both Hit Points and Fate Points have values of 1 or greater.

Overlay

A standard collection of modifications allowing a Overlord to transform a creature of one type into another. Examples in the game include the Skeleton and Ghost Overlays, which provide instructions on how to transform living creatures into undead versions of those creatures. Overlays are found in the game’s monster supplements.

Oversize

Refers to the size-category of a tool, such as a weapon, in regards to the creature using it. An oversize tool is one size category larger than its user.

Parrying Dagger

A Parrying Dagger is a type of Dagger, with a short blade and a handle that takes up at least one-third of the weapon's overall length. It may be either single or double-edged. It is distinguished from other daggers by some type of significant crossguard or other other protrusion that is used to block or capture an opponent's weapon.

A Parrying Dagger is a one-handed weapon, that is often used in the off hand primarily for the purpose of parrying. As such, it is often called a left-hand dagger.

Examples of Parrying Daggers are:

Main Gauche: A Dagger with a long crossguard and a broad hand guard. It is similar in form to a Rapier, but with a much shorter blade.

Swordbreaker: A Dagger with a long crossguard and deep notches cut into one side of the blade with which to trap an opponents weapon. Note that the term swordbreakers is a misnomer, as the weapon did not actually break an opponent's sword.

Trident Dagger: A dagger with a main central primary straight blade, and two secondary blades protruding out at an angle. When sheathed, the two secondary blades fold up and lie flush along the length of the central blade. When a mechanism is triggered in the hilt, though, the two secondary blades spring out. The weapon is also known as a Triple Dagger.

Pick

A pick is a mining tool comprised of a handle topped by a heavy tapered bar used to strike and fracture stone. Being a weighty blunt instrument near at hand by those professions employing them, picks are also often adapted for use as as melee weapons. Examples of picks various sizes are found on the Blunt Close Combat Weapons table.

Plant

A living thing lacking internal organs. In general, plants cannot be affected by Internal Damage.

Poison Effect

Anything including toxic effects or involving poisons.

Polearm

A polearm is any combat arm comprised of a weapon mounted at the end of a long pole. Examples within the game include Poleaxes, Spears, and Tridents.

Poleaxe

A type of polearm, comprised of a long pole with an axe head at the end. In the game, poleaxes are distinguished from battle axes in that the head of a poleaxe must necessarily be light weight. As such, the head of a poleaxe either does not extend far from the pole, or has a width that is a small fraction of the pole length. Examples of poleaxes in history include the Halberd and the Lochaber Axe.

Examples of Poleaxes are:

Epsilon Axe: A polearm with a broad shallow curved axe head. The blade has two semi-circular cutouts to lighten its weight, giving the blade a shape resembling the Greek letter epsilon (€).

Halberd: A polearm with a narrow axe head on one side of the pole, and an optional small dagger-like blade on the other. Often tipped with a spear-point or sharp spike protruding out the top.

Lochaber Axe: A polearm with a broad shallow axe head on one side of the business end of the pole.

Proportional

Refers to the size-category of a tool, such as a weapon, in regards to the creature using it. A proportional tool has the same size category as its user.

Quarterstaff

A quarterstaff is a pole weapon, made of hardwood and sometimes tipped with metal caps. The term probably refers to the production technique used to make one, whereby the hardwood is obtained by quartering a tree, rather than from an inferior branch. Examples of quarterstaves are found on the Blunt Close Combat Weapons table.

Race

A humanoid species sharing common physical characteristics. Examples within the game are human, elf, goblin, dwarf, and hob, among other.

Range Weapon

Any personal weapon designed to inflict injury on an opponent from a distance (as opposed to a Melee weapon, which is used up close). In the game, this includes all weapons found on the Shot and Thrown Weapons tables. It also includes Entrapment weapons that are thrown. (There is a fuzzy boundary between the two categories with some Entrapment weapons. While a whip is considered to be a Melee weapon, a Lasso is considered to be a Range Weapon. Any flexible weapon having a Range greater than Point Blank is considered to be a Range weapon.)

Rapier

A rapier is a sword with a long thin straight blade with a diamond cross-section to provide stiffness. It may be either single or double edged. It is very lightweight for a weapon of its size, and is exceptional in thrusting attacks, although it is only mediocre in slicing and positively awful at chopping. Because the blade is so thin, it easily slides between the links of chain and banded mail armor. Its hilt is short, allowing the weapon to be wielded by only one hand, and often has a basket covering the hand for protection.

Examples of Rapier are:

Court Sword: A small lightweight Rapier. Its name derives from the fact that it was commonly worn in royal court in the late Renaissance. Also known as a dress sword, or a small sword.

Flamberge: A Rapier with a wavy blade fashioned to look like flame.

Foil: A blunted edge-less version of a Court Sword used for fencing training.

Hairpin Sword: A Tiny Rapier resembling a hairpin.

Reaction

The response to an Action by a foe. The results of an Action and its subsequent Reaction are resolved through a single Conflict Roll. Actions are limited in how many may be expended during combat, while Reactions are not.

Rending

Tearing, shredding, or pulling apart a target. Bites and claws are examples of Rending weapons.

Revenant

An undead with a physical form. A Revenant without flesh is generally referred to simply as a Skeleton, but is more properly referred to as a Skeletal Revenant to distinguish it from the skeletons of the living.

Righteous Effect

An effect involving heavenly or holy energy. These effects are associated with angels, celestials, Heaven, Elysium, and other blessed regions of the Astral Realm. Hellish creatures, such as demons and devils, are particularly sensitive to any such effect.

Sapient

A creature with a Cunning of Simpleminded or better.

Scant Light

Scant Light refers to an intensity of illumination roughly equivalent to that of starlight on a clear moonless night. The various vision type descriptions specify how far a creature with that vision type can see in this light (found under [Gifts](#) in [The Character Compendium](#)).

Scimitar

A scimitar is a single-edged sword with a long curved blade, which is edged on the outside of the curve. Its hilt is short, allowing the weapon to be wielded by only one hand. It is an excellent slicing weapon, but only mediocre at thrusting, and poor at chopping.

Scorching Effect

Anything including flame, fire, heating, or drying effects. Also, any spell requiring one or more of the following Occult Lores to cast: Autumn, Dry, Fire, Hot, Plasma, Summer, or Sun. Some Scorching Effects are accompanied by ignition effects, in that the flame associated with it can ignite combustible materials. However, not all Scorching Effects will do so. Further, any character in a Drenched state gains an Edge on Conflict Rolls against Scorching Effects.

Scythe

A scythe is a two-handed tool used by peasants to harvest their crops. Despite its agrarian origins, it is often utilized by peasants as a handy weapon when needed. A scythe consists of a long gently curved pole with two grips perpendicular to it. One grip is near one end of the pole while the other is in the middle. A long curved blade is fixed perpendicular to the pole at the far end.

Sea Animal

A Sea Animal is any real-world animal traditionally found in a salt-water sea. For game purposes, these are: Ultratiny and Tiny Crabs; Medium Dolphins; Tiny and Small Eels; Tiny and Small Electric Eels; Tiny, Small, and Medium Fish (Angelfish, Barracuda, Blue Marlin, Cod, Grouper, Puffer, Sailfish, Sturgeon, Sunfish, Tuna, etc.); Tiny Lobsters; Medium or Large Manta Rays; Ultratiny and Tiny Sea Horses; Small or Medium Seals; Small, Medium or Large Sharks; Tiny or Small Sea Turtles; Tiny or Small Sting Rays; Large or Great Whales.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Sedating Effect

Anything including effects that cause a creature to become drowsy, generally causing Setback pushing it toward a state of Torpor.

Sentient

A creature with a Cunning of Bestial or better.

Shady Effect

Any effect that casts a shadow.³³ The swing of a sword or a whip casts a shadow (in the presence of light). So, both are

³³ Some creatures, such as undead Shadows, can only be affected by Shady Effects.

shady effects. Effects that emit light are Non-Shady. So, fire and lightning are both Non-Shady Effects. Similarly, effects that neither emit light nor cast shadows are Non-Shady. So, music and the raucous noise of a blaring trumpet are also Non-Shady Effects. Note that any effect that is performed in total darkness is automatically Non-Shady. For an effect to be a Shade Effect, it must *actually* cast a shadow.

Shield

A shield is a flat or slightly curved plate with a handle in its center. When held in combat, it provides a barrier that an opponent much somehow circumvent to injure its holder.

Examples of iconic shields are:

Aspis: A Medium Shield used by the Spartans that weighed about 30 pounds. It had a bronze front and an inch thick wooden backing.

Scutum: A Large rectangular semi-cylindrical Shield used by Roman Legionnaires.

Short Sword

A Short Sword is a double-edged sword with a straight blade and little to no crossguard. Its blade is shorter than that of a longsword of the same size category. Its hilt is similarly short, restricting the weapon to being wielded by only one hand.

Examples of Short Swords are:

Akinaka: A short sword used by the Scythians, Persians, and, later, by the Greeks. Its guard is made of two rounded lobes, giving it a kidney-like shape. They came in many sizes.

Gladius: A Medium-sized short sword used as the primary sword of the Roman foot soldiers.

Sickle

A sickle consists of a straight pole with a long curved blade fixed perpendicular to one end, having a very similar appearance to a scythe.

Skill Roll

A special form of Conflict Roll in which a character's rank in a skill is used.

Sling

A Sling is a simple range weapon originating in antiquity. It consists of a length of twine with a loop on one end, a tab on the other, and a small pouch in the middle. The loop is placed over the thumb or middle finger and the tab is held between the thumb and index finger. A stone is placed in the pouch, and the sling is twirled over the slinger's head. At the right moment, the slinger lets go of the tab and sends the stone hurling toward its target.

Since it is cheap to make, extremely lightweight, and its ammunition can be easily picked up from the ground after marching to a battlefield, slings are popular weapons with soldiers of almost all ancient cultures.

Spear

The oldest form of polearm, comprised of a long pole with a long sharp tip. Examples of spears within the game include the Short Spear, and Long Spear on the Polearm Weapons table.

Specter

An undead spirit with a strong enough connection to the physical realm that it can physically harm those in the Mortal Realm. Although non-corporeal, Specters have Hit Points, and can be damaged.

Spellbind

Any strong link of a spell to a creature, which is common in long-lasting spells, is known as a Spellbinding. This is important because a creature's Willpower limits how many magic items and spellbinds it can support without going insane.

Spell Roll

A special form of Conflict Roll in which a character's rank in a spell is used.

Stabbing Weapon

Any sharp weapon with a very thin sharp tip whose primary mode of attack is piercing. Stabbing weapons have such an extreme taper that they require almost no pressure to puncture flesh. Consequently, the damage from stabbing weapons do not include Physical Strength damage. Stabbing weapons are distinguished from Thrusting Weapons not in the way they are wielded (which is similar), but in that their form is sufficiently thin to easily slide through mail armor with no resistance. Examples within the game include Court Sword, Hairpin Sword, Poignard, Rapier, and Stiletto.

Staff Sling

A Staff Sling is a simple range weapon having a sling attached to the end of a staff. One end of the sling is tied securely to the end of the staff, just below a shallow notch. The other end of the sling has a loop that is placed in the notch. After a stone is placed in the sling's pouch, the slinger swigs the staff, and the loop slips out of the notch, releasing the stone toward its target. The staff allows the slinger to hurl stones with more force and over a longer range.

One advantage of the Staff Sling is that the staff itself is a perfectly serviceable Quarterstaff if the slinger is pressed into hand-to-hand combat. Ranks in Staff Sling only apply to the weapon's use at a range, however. Quarterstaff ranks must be gained separately.

Surprise Roll

A special die roll made at the beginning of a conflict to determine which participants, if any, gain a temporary upper hand due to surprise.

Swampland Animal

A Swampland Animal is any animal traditionally found in a swamp. For game purposes, these are: Ultratiny and Tiny Bats; Tiny Beavers; Ultratiny, Tiny, and Small Birds (Cranes, Ducks, Eagles, Falcons, Hawks, Herons, Owls, Pigeons, Robins, Sparrows, etc.); Small and Medium Cats (Bobcats, Lynxes, Panthers, etc.); Medium and Large Crocodiles; Tiny and Small Foxes; Ultratiny and Tiny Frogs; Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards; Ultratiny Mice; Tiny Otters; Tiny Rats; Tiny Snakes; Tiny Turtles.

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Sword

A weapon with a long blade, hilt, and hand-guard. Swords come in a wide variety, with forms primarily designed for chopping, stabbing, and slicing. Examples within the game are Bastard Sword, Court Sword, Cruciform Sword, Cutlass, Falchion, Hairpin Sword, Khopesh, Longsword, Poignard, Rapier, Sabre, Scimitar, Great Sword, Short Sword, Viking Sword, and any other weapon that the Overlord decrees to be a sword.

Talisman

A magic item that is held or otherwise carried rather than worn. So, a magical wand, rod, dagger, or staff is a Talisman. A magical hat, robe, broach, or ring is not. Talismans generally have arcane symbols on their surfaces, which usually convey the command words or phrases required to activate their powers.

Taxing Spell

A spell that demands a periodic expenditure of Setback from its caster. Such spells have a Duration Type of either Fixed or Heartfelt.

Threshold

The target number that a Conflict Roll must exceed in order to succeed.

Thrusting Weapon

Any weapon with a sharp broad tip whose primary mode of attack is piercing. Thrusting weapons are distinguished from Stabbing Weapons not in the way they are wielded (which is similar), but in that their form is sufficiently broad that they cannot easily slide through mail armor without resistance. This added breadth, however, enables a thrusting weapon to deliver the additional Physical Strength damage that Stabbing Weapons do not. Examples within the game include Short Spear, Spear, and Trident.

Torpor

A comatose state, similar to that of hibernation, from which a creature cannot be roused until some predefined condition arises.

Trait

A stated belief or characteristic reaction used to help guide character actions in role-play.

Trident

A trident is a weapon consisting of a pole to which three prongs are fixed at one end.

Undead

A being that was once living, but is now in a state between life and death. The undead were once alive, but are still animate.

The driving force of the undead is the soul or spirit of the deceased. Often the spirit remains disembodied and haunts its environment as a ghost. At other times, the spirit re-inhabits its original body, which has the effect of animating it. Some forms of undead, such as vampires, may have an outward appearance perfectly mimicking life. However, all undead lack the inner vitality and spark of living creatures.

Undead cannot be killed, since they are not alive. But their physical form, if any, can be defeated and made inanimate. All undead have a spirit or soul, which can also be defeated and potentially banished to the Astral Realm.

The undead include zombies, vampires, ghouls, ghosts, and revenants. It does not include astral or elemental spirits such as demons, and elementals. Nor is it comprised of children dressed up in Halloween costumes.

Undersize

Refers to the size-category of a tool, such as a weapon, in regards to the creature using it. An Undersize tool is one size category smaller than its user.

Vegetal

A living plant creature, capable of movement. As they have no internal organs, Vegetal creatures are immune to Internal Damage.

Very Oversize

Refers to the size-category of a tool, such as a weapon, in regards to the creature using it. A very oversize tool is two size categories larger than its user, making it useless for that individual.

Very Undersize

Refers to the size-category of a tool, such as a weapon, in regards to the creature using it. A Very Undersize tool is two size categories smaller than its user, making it useless for that individual.

Vestis

A magical garment. A Vestis (plural Vestes) is a type of Ornatum (wearable magic item).

Voluntary Setback

Voluntary Setback is a unique type of Setback in the game. It is setback a character voluntarily accepts either to perform some action (such as casting a spell), or to avoid other difficulties (such as dropping a weapon or getting knocked to the ground). In the case of spell-casting, it is simply part of the mechanics of performing the act and is assumed to be a form of mental draining. In other cases, Voluntary Setback is an abstract narrative placeholder for “something bad happens”. In these cases, it is strongly suggested that the player accepting the setback narrate what happens that sets their character back. Since Voluntary Setback is never imposed without the character’s consent, no creatures in the game are Highly Sensitive, Sensitive, Resistant nor Immune to it.

Ward

Refers to the protection provided by armor to its wearer. The Ward rating of armor is subtracted from the damage of physical blows affecting the wearer.

War Hammer

A war hammer is a blunt weapon with a handle and a heavy head. The head tapers to form a spike. When it strikes plate armor, the spiked head will often punch right through it.

Watery Effect

Any effect including water, ice, or snow. This includes any weapon fashioned purely from water (such as a hammer made of ice.) Also, any spell requiring one of the following Occult Lores to cast: Cold, Fluid, Sea, Spring, Water, Wet, or Winter.

Whip

A whip is an Entrapment Weapon consisting of a short handle to which a long braid of leather straps is attached. When used in combat, the whip’s wielder tries to wrap the braid around their foe’s legs, causing them to fumble and trip.

Woodland Animal

A Woodland Animal is any non-magical animal traditionally found in wooded areas. These include both Forest and Jungle environments. For game purposes, a list of all the animals satisfying these conditions follow. (In other words, if it’s not on one of these lists, it doesn’t qualify as a Woodland Animal.)

If stats are needed for any such creature, either use one of the Critter descriptions in the [Tome of Terrors](#), or use some other creature example in the various monster supplements that fits this list, and has the “natural” keyword.

Forest Animal

Tiny Badgers; Ultratiny and Tiny Bats; Medium Bears; Tiny Beavers; Ultratiny and Tiny Birds (Doves, Falcons, Hawks, Owls, Pigeons, Robins, Sparrows, etc.); Small and Medium Boars; Small and Medium Cats (Bobcats, Lynxes, Panthers, etc.); Medium Deer; Large Elk; Tiny and Small Foxes; Ultratiny and Tiny Frogs and Toads; Ultratiny and Tiny Hedgehogs; Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards; Ultratiny Mice; Tiny Rabbits; Tiny Snakes (Bull Snake, Copperhead, Garden Snake, etc.); Tiny Squirrels; Tiny Turtles; Tiny Weasels; Small and Medium Wolves.

Jungle Animal

Medium and Large Apes; Ultratiny and Tiny Bats; Ultratiny and Tiny Birds (Birds of Paradise, Parrots, Toucans, etc.); Small Capybaras; Small, Medium, and Large Cats (Lions, Jaguars, Leopards, Lynxes, Panthers, Tigers, etc.); Small and Medium Chimps; Medium and Large Crocodiles; Large Elephants; Ultratiny and Tiny Frogs and Toads; Ultratiny and Tiny Hedgehogs; Large Hippos; Small and Medium Hyenas; Tiny Lemurs; Ultratiny and Tiny Lizards; Ultratiny Mice; Tiny Mongooses; Tiny and Small Monkeys; Large Rhinos; Small Sloths; Tiny, Small, Medium, and Large Snakes (Cobras, Mambas, Pythons, etc.); Tiny Turtles; Tiny Weasels.

Woe Effect

A Woe is a type of magic on a creature or weapon that produces a harmful effect on the target of anything it physically contacts. So, a sword that delivers magical fire damage whenever it hits a foe has a fire Woe effect. Only one Woe effect may be active on a creature or item at a time.

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