

ComStar Games Presents

Magic Quest



Ed Fleming

Powered by the Action! System



MAGIC QUEST

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Dedication

MagicQuest is lovingly dedicated to my brother Luke, who died in our youth.

Quested to see the best in all situations and allowed for me to see the best in myself.

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MAGIC QUEST

Magic Quest

Introduction



Fantasy was the first genre in role-play gaming and the most popular. Many game systems have a fantasy setting of some sort. Before games, most players enjoyed and are excited by fantasy books and novels in which predates games by hundreds of years. Also, some were introduced to the genre through film, television and radio. Due to this fascination of fantasy many have role-played and not have known it, like playing Robin Hood or King Arthur in the yard while others played cops and robbers. *MagicQuest* is a set of guidelines for you to run your favorite fantasy book, film, television program or other medium with you and fellow players as the stars. The only difference is that the scene is played out at a table and the use of one's imagination instead of real action; no one wants to get hurt doing the real thing.

Historical Accuracy

Fantasy settings are generally, but not always, set in a medieval time of earth. Although *MagicQuest* focuses on this, it can be easily changed for any time period. How accurate should the GM be? That's up to each GM to decide. It can be fully accurate to be on a world totally unlike earth in any time or sub-genre. Some research into what the GM or players like is always a good start.

What Is MagicQuest?

MagicQuest is a fantasy role playing game. Fantasy is, by definition, characterized fiction with fancy and supernatural elements to a high degree. A roleplaying game is where the action is determined by die rolls and detailed by a GM. In roleplaying games, like this one, fantasy is based on various books set in a medieval time, usually, with various magical and supernatural elements. Fantasy is, like many things, not something set in stone. Fantasy has three main elements: Magic, Technology and the World.

MAGIC

Magic is one main requirement for a fantasy adventure or campaign. Magic has various levels and importance depending on the game the GM wishes to run. At times one may find magic unreliable or non-

existent. For more information about magic, see the Magic Chapter.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology usually, but again not always, goes hand in hand with magic. Most high tech games have low magic levels, while low tech ones have high magic. Some use this to bring balance to their games. Although a GM can balance a pistol or blaster with a fireball, the GM must define the level of technology to help set the scene of his world and game.

THE WORLD

The GM defines the world. It could be nothing more than a parallel world to our own, one where magic exists, to one that is nothing we here would recognize. Each has advantages and disadvantages to each. A parallel one has a defined geography, meteorology, political systems, history and the like. The major disadvantage is that most players know this too well which may bring boredom or use unknown character knowledge which may disrupt a game. Some GMs can deal with this better than others. On the other hand, a new world brings its own problems as well. New worlds require much more work to the GM that is already defined in our own.

Genres

Fantasy has several sub and cross genres. While there are too many to list in this text, but some of the more common ones are here for players and GMs for ideas and can identify with. Sub-genre is one with fantasy as the primary genre and has other minor genres that combine with it, like action. A cross genre is one where fantasy has another genre at almost equal level, like modern fantasy.

Action

The action sub genre is one of the most commonly used. The flashing of swords and casting of spells keeps the player's attention. There are many examples of these such as *Lord of the Rings*, *Three Musketeers*, and *Braveheart*. Usually used with Adventure.

Adventure

Adventure, the word alone makes the mind have visions of the high seas, long walks along a dirt trail finding where X marks the spot. Labyrinth, Secret of Nymph, Pirates of Penance are good representations of adventure associated with the action genres.

Animated

Animation may contain one or multiple sub genre elements, but usually allowing the characters a little more flash and flair with lesser consequences. Sometimes, the characters are world-renowned or placed in positions of more importance usually saving the city is a standard adventure. Slayers, Ruin Warriors, Sol Bioncia show what being animated is all about.

Comedy

Comic relief is always something every genre should have. Usually there is a class clown in any group of players, usually the character follows suit. Some things in comedic games include: Anthromorphic, human looking and acting, beasts; contracting attributes (hardheaded, low INT/high STR, fighters; ultra brilliant weak, high INT/low STR, but psychologically challenged wizards and the like), and magic with comical side effects. Dragon's Lair is an example.

CRIME

Not seen as a sub genre in itself, but can be an element of an adventure. Enforcing the law of the land is what is expected. Some examples are Three Musketeers, Robin Hood, and the Lone Ranger comes to mind.

DRAMA

Most fantasy games and stories have dramatic elements woven throughout them. Drama allows a deep flavor and background. Harry Potter, Firestarter, Steven King's Gunslinger series have dramatic themes in them.

Epic

Epic level games have some major or grand elements. Epic stories may have all or only one of these elements. These elements can be any of the ones listed here or one the GM comes up with. The characters have free will to do as they wish and follow their fate. The GM uses fortune telling, encounter and the world to determine the fate of the characters. The characters are generally heroic and good in nature. Epic games always have high stakes and powerful opponents for the characters to overcome, making the games exciting. Sometimes in epic stories there is one or a group of characters that are normal everyday people in the world that in thrust into the grand adventure. Possibly are the only ones to save their world. The epic world is one well-defined rich natural one. Lush forests, bare sun bleached deserts and the like that are

perfect in the eyes of Mother Nature. The characters in this genre are well defined, black or white, good or evil. Generally, the characters of epic stories have to sacrifice something with great or major importance to all or one of them. Wizards in these stories are usually powerful, wise and all knowing. In Epic stories, the odds are against characters, but with some luck and sacrifice the characters can overcome overwhelming odds.

High, Low, Swords & Sorcery

This genre defines the importance, frequency and power of magic in a fantasy story. In high fantasy stories, magic is so common anyone may use it everyday tasks, magic shops in every town in some shape or form, and wizard, priests and other spell casters are extremely powerful. Dungeons tend to be the place the characters explore in high fantasy games. There are also many pantheons and gods that are worshiped and have direct affect on the world. In high fantasy, there are more types animals, beasts, creatures, monsters and races than anyone could imagine. High fantasy games are generally tilted slightly in the characters favor, but the characters still will have much to overcome.

In contrast to low fantasy, the characters will have more of a harder time to survive. Low fantasy stories and games are darker, grimier and more dangerous than that of high fantasy, where mire surviving a night in the wilderness maybe adventure in itself. Mages and other spell casters are no powerful than a sage, where a sword maybe a handy backup when a spell fails.

Swords & Sorcery is the middle ground of high and low fantasy. Most characters have a barbaric attitude. Magic, though more powerful than in low fantasy is still slow and difficult to cast. Characters tend to be more selfish and out for themselves, having an "only the tough survives" attitude; goals are short term and greed rules.

Horror

Horror in itself is on par with fantasy, containing many of the same elements. The difference is that horror tends to use fear to inspire the characters to the goal either by the fear itself or to fight it. In horror, death is a fact of life and a character may die at anytime and they know this. Personal demons of the character may become a tangible and attack the character. In horror-based games, nothing is out in the open nor obvious to the character. The horrors sneak up or are hidden waiting for the right moment to attack.

Understanding horror brings psychological problems with it and no one will believe the character, maybe even their own friends. Magic in horror games can be dangerous in itself. Magic usually has side effects like draining mind-based attributes making them more vulnerable to the horrors to come. The characters should not count on anything in a horror-based game, not even their senses or abilities. *Black House*, *Night Shift* and *Nightmare on Elm Street* brings the horror to the, usually unwilling, characters of the story.

Humanity

Humanity is an important element in any fantasy game or story. Even the absence of humans does not mean there is no humanity, just in a different form.

Intelligent Animals

Some fantasy stories have intelligent animals like *Mr. Ed*, the talking horse from the television program of the same name. Sometimes with everyone or at time with one of the party, making the others wonder about one's sanity.

Modern

Sometimes referred as urban fantasy, some prefer to set their game in a more familiar time, the present. Magic in this genre is hidden and little known secret for the most part. There are a few magical creatures; usually small or tiny unnoticed to most, fairy folk are the most common example. Some experiment into techno-magic a combination of magic and technology. Most of these stories have many of the same elements except most PCs are generally human and magic tends to be lower than in other genres. Some everyday things maybe looked on as magic to the characters while normal to the population at large, like the magic of nature or of a smile and there effects on people. *Harry Potter* and *Hell Boy* come to mind.

Mystery

Usually just an element in an adventure, this involves deducing and solving a puzzle. High perception and deduction skills are just as important as any combat based ones. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Alan Quartermain*, and *Dr. Strange* are some of main ones.

Representation & Symbolism

This element is one where something represents something else. Usually found in religious fantasy stories, but can be found in others.

Romance

Like the others, there are romantic elements in fantasy as well as a genre. The soap opera "Passions" is one.

Science Fiction

Science fiction is full of supernatural elements. At times, science fiction is thought of as synonymous with fantasy. In many respects it's a future fantasy. Examples include *Star Trek*, *Star Wars* and *Stargate SG-1*.

Thriller

Thrills are a requirement for most fantasies. *Bilbo* nearly possessed by the power of the ring, for example. Suspense and excitement gets the players more involved.

Tragedy

These games focus on the disadvantages of the characters and the ability to overcome them,

War

Braveheart and the *Lord of the Rings* are examples of good versus evil that can get any wartime adventure started.

Western

Native American spirituality elements can be explored in a western or setting, such as a vision quest. Also, undead have been appearing in some western stories, *Jonah Hex* comic is one and *Stephen King's The Gunslinger* is another great western fantasy.



The Basics



In this section we present a quick overview of the most basic rules and items to play the game.

Dice

The game uses six-sided dice. It's common to write in shorthand fashion, for example, "three six-sided dice" by writing "3d6." In this example, the first number, "3", is the number of dice being used (3 for this example) and the second number represents the number of sides a die has. This case for "d6" means "six-sided die or standard cube die". Some listings include a bonus or penalty after this listing, like "3d6+2". This is figured after the roll is made. Since the Action! System use the same die type, the die type, "6", being redundant is dropped for this book. The examples of "3d6" will be listed as "3d" or "3d6+2" is listed as "3d+2".

Six-sided dice are the vary common, the cube-shaped dice, that are found in many board games. They can also be purchased in many general department stores or where you purchased this book, but chances are you have at least three of these dice somewhere in your house, in other games.

There are options and variants of other numbers and kinds of dice, which are discussed later, under optional rules. For now all you need to play the game is a minimum of 3d—three six-sided dice.

The GM

The GM, Game Master, assumes the role of director or referee. The GM set the story, describes the setting and roleplays all other characters, creatures, and other beings called Non-Player Characters or NPCs, for short.

The GM is the judge, and judgments are the final word to any dispute or contradiction in the rules or play. The GM also has the option to limit, remove, or add any rules to the game to improve the game and fun.

Players & Characters

Each player plays a fictional character, called a Player Character or PC that the player will use during the game. Players are the people in the real world.

Players are not really actually doing the action, but describing what the actions of the characters. Characters are pretend. Think of the player as an actor, and the PC as a role that the actor is playing in a movie or play, and you will begin to get the idea.

Attributes & Skills

Each character has attributes and skills that represent the character's personal ability or aptitude in various areas or for performing certain tasks.

Each attribute and skill has a numerical score. This score tells you how strong or proficient the character is in that area. Most characters will have scores from 1 to 10, which represents the normal human range of ability.

ATTRIBUTES

There are nine attributes, which are arranged into three groups: Body, Mind and Magic.

Each group contains a Power Attribute, an Aptitude Attribute and a Resistance Attribute.

SKILLS

Each character also has skills, which represent the character's general ability or aptitude in various tasks. There are skills for arts and crafts, using weapons, and even diplomacy. Skills reflect how good your character is at what he knows.

Skills are also arranged into groups. Each group contains from 5 to 8 related skills.

Each skill is associated with a specific Attribute Group. Persuasion, for example, is associated with the Mind Group, whereas the Swords skill is associated with the Body Group.

When a character attempts a simple task, such as walking or opening an unlocked door, the player doesn't need to roll dice. When a character attempts an action that has a chance of failure, however, such as attacking an opponent or maneuvering a car through an obstacle course, the player must make a skill roll.

Skill Rolls

Skill rolls are used to determine if a character is successful at some attempted action or task.

Players decide if they want their character to perform an action. An action can be as simple as walking through a door, which would not require a skill roll. Sometimes there is a level of skill involved in performing the action, however, so the player may need to make a skill roll for his character. The GM decides about whether an action requires a skill roll.

Character Creation



The game system itself is a tool for creating and role-playing fictional characters to tell a story. In this section we present a recap of the of the character creation rules, including important table and charts, so that you do not have to flip back and forth to various pages throughout the book.

Characters have numerical scores that define their capabilities. Each character has attributes, traits, benefits and skills. These are described in detail below.

Character Concept

The first step in creating a character is to think of a concept. What kind of character do you want to play? To simplify things, start with a single idea.

Ed is creating a character for a realistic fantasy game, something like one of the fantasy shows that are so popular on television. Ed only needs one idea to start. He thinks about it for a moment and into his beads pops "Bamph the Short." In this one idea we know two things: the character thinks of himself as Bamph, and he is short.

Where to go from here? Think about the five Ws: Who, What, Why, Where, and When?

Who is Bamph? We decide that Bamph is his given name. Does Bamph have a last name? Yes. We decide that Oakenshield fits as a fantasy last name. So we know that Bamph Oakenshield is short. Ed says that Bamph is very

short. Only non-humans are short to any extreme degree and decide to a Halfling.

What does Bamph do and where is he now? This doesn't have to be Bamph's job. It can be a hobby or even a talent that Bamph possesses. We give it some thought and decide that Bamph is a priest. Ed records the character's basic information on the character sheet.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are numeric scores that define the character's physical, mental and magical abilities.

Type / Group	Body	Mind	Magic
Power	Strength	Presence	Aura
Aptitude	Reflexes	Intellect	Influence
Resistance	Health	Will	Spirit

BODY GROUP

The Body Group is separated into three types Strength, Reflexes and Health.

Strength (STR)

Strength (STR) is the body's physical power or force of the character. STR defines what a character can lift or push or pull or carry.

The table below shows specifically what a character can do with their STR. One can carry at x½ what they can lift. Also, one can *drag, push or pull* at x2 the lift capacity. STR affects the character's TGH and MOV.

A player has a character has a STR of 4. He can dead lift 200 kilograms (about 400 pounds), he can carry 100 kilograms (200 pounds), and he can drag or pull up to 200 kilograms (400 pounds)!

STR Table

Score	Drag (kg)	Dead Lift (kg)	Carry (kg)	Damage	Flat Damage	Dead Lift Example
0	0	0	0	1d3	2	Air
1	10	5	2.5	1d6	3	Human infant
2	50	25	12.5	1d6+2	5	Human child
3	100	50	25	2d6	6	Human young adult
4	200	100	50	2d6+2	8	Human adult
5	300	150	75	3d6	9	Black bear cub
6	400	200	100	3d6+2	11	Piano
7	500	250	125	4d6	12	Black bear, deer
8	600	300	150	4d6+2	14	Polar bear cub
9	700	350	175	5d6	15	Giant black bear
10	800	400	200	5d6+2	17	Polar bear

at a cost of 5 CPs for each additional point of DEF. A character's DEF score may not exceed 20 in Realistic-level games, though it may be higher than 20 in Cinematic and Extreme level games.

Initiative (INI)

Initiative represents how quickly a character can act in a turn.

A character's Initiative equals his (REF + INT)/2, rounding up. At the beginning of each combat turn (or any other time the GM calls for the players to determine initiative), each player rolls 1d6 and adds the number rolled to his character's INI score.

The character with the highest INI total acts first in a turn. In cases of a tie, the character with the higher INT goes first. If both characters have the same INT, then the characters act simultaneously.

For more information about how Initiative works, see the section on *Combat*.

Initiative may be increased at a cost of 3 CPs for each additional point of Initiative. A character's Initiative score may not exceed 10 in Realistic-level games, though it may be higher in Cinematic and Extreme level games.

Toughness (TGH)

Toughness represents a character's resistance to blunt force damage, such as from a punch, a baseball bat, or auto collision and the like.

A character's starting TGH equals (STR + WIL)/2, rounding up.

When a character suffers damage from a blunt attack, subtract the character's TGH score from the damage, then subtract the remaining damage (if any) from the character's Life (LIF) points (see *Life*, below). If a character suffers an amount of damage that does not exceed his TGH score, he suffers no loss of LIF; he

has completely shrugged off the attack.

For example, Diana has a Health of 8 and a Toughness of 8. In a fistfight with a bad guy, Diana is hit by her opponent, and the GM rolls 19 points of damage. She subtracts Diana's Toughness of 8 from the damage, leaving 8 points of damage.

Toughness may also be used to decrease the damage suffered from some forms of *Special Damage* at the GM's discretion (see *Damage*, page 70).

Toughness may be increased at a cost of 5 *Character Points* for each additional point of Toughness. A character's Toughness score may not exceed 10 in Realistic level games, though it may be higher in Cinematic and Extreme level games.

Life (LIF)

Life points are used to keep track of damage a character suffers during an adventure. Any time a character suffers damage, he temporarily loses several Life points equal to the points of damage inflicted.

A character's LIF points equal (HLT x 3) + (WIL x 2).

Continuing from the example above, Diana has a Health of 8 and Willpower of 8, so she has $24 + 16 = 40$ Life points. Albert subtracts the 8 points of damage from her character's Life points. After getting punched, Diana has 32 Life points left.

Stunning and deadly damages are both subtracted from a character's LIF (see *Damage*, page 70). When a character reaches 0 LIF from lethal damage, they are dying. If a character suffers combined stunning and deadly damage that exceeds the character's LIF, the character is unconscious but not dying.

Diana has 40 LIF points. She has suffered 11 points of stunning damage from a punch and then a short time later she is shot (Diana's had a hard day) and suffers 8 points of deadly damage. Diana has suffered 11 points of stunning damage and 8 points of deadly damage, for a total of 19

BASIC MOV TABLE

Speed (m/tn)	Mph	Kph	Example
1	1.2	0.7	
2	2.4	1.4	Leisurely walk
3	3.6	2.1	
4	4.8	2.8	Average walking speed
5	6.0	3.5	
6	7.2	4.2	Brisk walk
7	8.4	4.9	Power-walk
8	9.6	5.6	Jog
9	10.8	6.4	Running a 9-minute mile
10	12.0	7.1	
11	13.2	7.8	
12	14.4	8.5	
13	15.6	9.2	
14	16.8	9.9	Running a 6-minute mile
15	18.0	10.6	
16	19.2	11.3	
17	20.4	12.0	Running a 5-minute mile
18	21.6	12.7	
19	22.8	13.4	
20	24.0	14.1	
21	25.2	14.8	
22	26.4	15.5	Running a 4-minute mile
23	27.6	16.2	
24	28.8	16.9	
25	30.0	17.6	
26	31.2	18.4	
27	32.4	19.1	
28	33.6	19.8	
29	34.8	20.5	
30	36.0	21.2	
32	38.4	22.6	
36	43.2	25.4	

DERIVED ATTRIBUTE

FORMULA TABLE

Derived Attr	Formulas	Bampb's Scores
DEF	REF + 10	12
INI	(REF + INT) / 2	3
TGH	(STR + WIL) / 2	5
LIF	(HLT x 3) + (WIL x 2)	25
MOV	REF + (STR + HLT) / 2	6
SWM	MOV / 3	2

Additional Character Points

After purchasing the character's attributes, players get additional character points for races, professions, traits, and skills. A GM has the option for the player's to roll for their CP instead of a flat amount.

Campaign Level	Max Score	Starting CP	CP Roll
Realistic	6	50	8d6+2
Cinematic	8	75	12d6+2
Extreme	10	100	16d6+2

CHOOSE A RACE

This is only if the GM is not running a human only campaign (see the Races section for more information). Any negative Attribute, Talents, and Skills must be bought to at least 1. Realistic level campaign generally is human only.

Ed chooses to be a Halfling, fitting the short persona getting an additional 15 CP to spend for a total of 85 CP (70 + 15).

Racial Templates

Dwarf

Attributes: STR +1, HLT +1

Advantages: Good Sense of Direction (Underground) [2], Hard to Kill (magic) [2], Long Lived (~400 years) [3], Night Vision (Ultraviolet) [10]

Disadvantages: Psychological (Hatred of Orcs) [-5], Psychological (Temperamental) [-2]

Skills: Mining +2

CP: 32 (*Attributes:* 20 + *Advantages:* 17 + *Disadvantages:* -7 + *Skills:* 2)

Description: A dwarf is a short humanoid

creature in Norse mythology, fairy tales, and fantasy fiction and role-playing games. Dwarves are much like humans, but generally living underground or in mountainous areas. Here they have heaped up countless treasures of gold, silver, and precious stones, and pass their time in fabricating costly armor. They are famed miners and smiths although, like humans, they specialize in any number of trades. Generally shorter than humans, they are on average stockier and hairier, usually sporting full beards. Dwarfish smiths created some of the greatest and most powerful items of power in Norse mythology, such as the magic ribbon that bound the Fenris wolf.

Elf

Attributes: REF +1, INT +1

Advantages: Acute Sight +3 [2], Immunity (Mind spells) [2], Invisibility (Native area) [2], Lightsleep [2], Long Lived (~1600 years) [10], magic (Conv.) [2], Night Vision (Ultraviolet; Gift) [10]

Disadvantages: Psychological (Hatred of Orcs; Peril) [-10]

Skills: Animal handler (Canines, Equines & Felines) +2; Archery +2; Art (Spec) +2, magic (Spec) +2, Survival (Spec) +2, Weapons, Melee (Weapons, Melee (Swords, Long & Short) +2; Weapons, Missile (Bows, Short & Long) +2

CP: 60 (*Attributes:* 20 + *Advantages:* 30 + *Disadvantages:* -10 + *Skills:* 20)

Description: An elf is a mythical creature of Germanic mythology that survived in northern European folklore. Originally a race of minor gods of nature and fertility, elves are often pictured as youthful-seeming men and women of great beauty living in forests and other natural places, underground, or in wells and springs. They have been portrayed to be long-lived or immortal and magical powers have been attributed to them. Following the success of J.R.R. Tolkien's epic *The Lord of the Rings*—wherein a wise, angelic people named elves play a significant role—they have become staple characters of modern fantasy.

Elf can be pluralized both as elves and elfs. Something associated with elves or the qualities of elves is described by the adjectives elfin, elven, elfish, or elvish.

Gnome

Attributes: STR -2, HLT +1, PRE +1

Advantages: Long Lived (200 years) [2]

Disadvantages: Psychological (Greedy) [-5], Psychological (Hatred of Orcs; Peril) [-10], Short

(~1m) [-5]

Skills: Engineering +2, Mining +2

CP: -14 (*Attributes:* 0 + *Advantages:* 2 + *Disadvantages:* -20 + *Skills:* 4)

Description: A gnome is a mythical creature characterized by its small stature and subterranean lifestyle. According to Paracelsus, gnomes are the most important of the elemental spirits of the earth element, and they move as easily through the earth as humans walk on it. The sun's rays turn them into stone. In other traditions, they are simply small, mischievous sprites or goblins. Some sources claim they spend the daytime as toads instead of in stone.

Often featuring in Germanic fairy tales, including those by the Brothers Grimm, the gnome often resembles a gnarled old man living deep underground and guards buried treasure. Because this, Swiss bankers are sometimes disparagingly called the Gnomes of Zurich. Gnomes feature in the legends of many of central, northern and eastern European lands by other names: a kaukis is a Prussian gnome, and barbegazi are gnome-like creatures with big feet in the traditions of France and Switzerland. In Iceland, gnomes (vættir) are so respected that road is re-routed around areas said to be inhabited by them. Further east, tengu are sometimes called winged gnomes.

Individual gnomes are not very often detailed or featured as characters in stories, but in Germanic folklore, Rubezahl, lord over the underworld, was sometimes called a mountain gnome. According to some traditions, the gnome king is called Gob.

Rudolf Steiner, and other theosophists before him, lectured at length on gnomes, and especially their supportive role in the development of plant life (and biodynamic agriculture). Rupert Sheldrake has written a good deal about morphogenic fields, an idea Terry Pratchett used in his *Discworld* books many times.

Halfling

Attributes: STR -2, REF +1, PRE -1

Advantages: None

Disadvantages: Short (~1m) [-5]

Skills: Throwing (Stones) +2, Weapons, Missile (Slings) +2

CP: -21 (*Attributes:* -20 + *Advantages:* 0 + *Disadvantages:* -5 + *Skills:* 4)

Description: Halfling is another name for J. R. R. Tolkien's hobbit and is a fictional race sometimes found in fantasy novels and games. In many settings, they are similar to humans except about half the size.

Originally, 'Halfling' was an old Scottish word, pre-dating *The Hobbit*. It meant an awkward rustic teenager, who is neither man nor boy, and so half of both. Another word for Halfling is hobbledehoy.

Some fantasy stories use Halfling to describe a person born of a human parent and a parent of another race, often a human female and an elf. Terry Brooks describes characters such as Shea Ohmsford from his *Shannara* series as a Halfling of elf-human parentage.

Human

Attributes: No modifiers

Advantages: None

Disadvantages: None

Skills: None

CP: 0 (Advantages: 0 + Disadvantages: 0 + Skills: 0)

Description: Human beings define themselves in biological, social, and spiritual terms. Biologically, humans are classified as the species *Homo sapiens* (Latin for "wise man" or "clever human"): a bipedal primate belonging to the superfamily of Hominoidea, with all the apes: chimpanzees, bonobos, gorillas, orangutans, and gibbons.

Humans have an erect body carriage that frees the upper limbs for manipulating objects, a highly developed brain and consequent capacity for abstract reasoning, speech, language, and introspection. One current hypothesis within the scientific community is that the human evolution of bipedalism (two-legged locomotion) occurred in response to a need for long-distance running. Humans are said to be one of a short list of animals with such a capacity.

Orc

Attributes: STR +1, HLT +1, INT -1, WIL -1

Advantages: Bite (+1d3 P/L) [1], Claws (+1d3 P/L) [1]

Disadvantages: None

Skills: None

CP: 4 (Advantages: 2 + Disadvantages: 0 + Skills: 2)

Description: Orc (sometimes spelled Ork) comes from the Latin word *Orcus*, a title of the god Pluto, and the king of the underworld. It was later used to refer to the underworld itself. The word appears later in the Germanic languages without its Latin ending, in the more familiar form of "Orc". J. R. R. Tolkien then revived it in his fictional stories of Middle-earth as the name of a race of creatures that are often used

by evil forces as soldiers.

Half-breeds and mixed races

This will give players and GMs alike more choices and add more flavor to a campaign world. To accomplish this one only needs to average the two races one wishes to combine. Like all things, this needs GM approval before proceeding.

New & Animalistic races

Like half-breeds and mixed races, this will add more spice to a game. GM's approval is needed for this optional rule. Creating new races are similar to creating a character; all the costs are the same. Making races from the *AnimalQuest* section, one must do the following: 1) Attributes, subtract each attribute by 4; 2) Advantages and Disadvantages transferred at equal values; 3) Skills that are over +2 are reduced to +2.

Select a Profession

This is what the character is doing for a living at the start of the campaign (see Profession section for more information. Any skills requiring a Specialty the bonus may be spread into any number of specialties up to the total bonus (e.g. Animal Handling +8, can be distributed into many specialties, one Spec at +8, 8 Spec at +1, 4 Spec at +2, etc.). A profession is an option, unless required by the GM.

The GM has Ed select a Profession and his character being physically weak selects to be a Priest. The CP total is -8 (85 - 93).

Bard

Attributes: No modifiers

Advantages: None

Disadvantages: None

Skills: Arts & Crafts (Spec) +10; Conversation +2; Knowledge: Legends & Lore +2, Folklore +2; Literacy +2; Oratory +2; Persuasion +2; Society (High) +2

CP: 14 (Attributes: 0 + Advantages: 0 + Disadvantages: 0 + Skills: 14)

Description: A bard is a poet and singer, in religious or feudal contexts.

Druid

Attributes: WIL +1

Advantages: Magic (Nature) [25]; Membership (Church) [2], Perk (License to Marry) [2]

Disadvantages: Psychological (Devotion to the Nature) [-10]

Skills: Animal handling (Spec) +8; Area (Spec)



+2; Knowledge: Druidism +2, Flora & Fauna +2, Herbalism +2; Magic, Nature +2; Oratory +2; Persuasion +2; Professional: Druid +2; Survival (Spec) +2; Weapons, Simple Melee +2

CP: 96 (*Attributes:* {10} + *Advantages:* 29 + *Disadvantages:* -10 + *Skills:* 28)

Description: Druid denotes the priestly class in ancient Celtic societies, which existed through much of Western Europe north of the Alps and in the British Isles. Druidic practices were part of the culture of all the tribal peoples called “Keltai” and “Galatai” by Greeks and “Celtae” and “Galli” by Romans,
Paladin

Attributes: STR+1, REF+1, HLT+1, WIL+1, PRE+1, AUR+1

Advantages: Paladin Advantages [20]

Disadvantages: Psychological (Devotion to the God(s)) [-10]

Skills: Combat skills +8, Knowledge: Religion +2, Literacy +2, Weapons, Simple Melee +2 & Missile +2

CP: 86 (*Attributes:* {60} + *Advantages:* 20 + *Disadvantages:* -10 + *Skills:* 16)

Description: A paladin is the prototypical “knight in shining armor,” a hero of sterling character and courage, who rights wrongs and defends the weak and oppressed.

Paladin Traits

Area of Protection

Area of protection makes the paladin and those around him harder to hit by diabolical intended creatures.

CP Cost: 13 (*REF-1* {10}, *Area:* 10m radius {5}, *Disadvantage:* *Versus diabolical intended creatures only* {-2})

Cure Diseases

Cure diseases allows the paladin to cure non-magical inflictions, one time per week.

CP Cost: 5 (*Edge*) (*Die 2d6* (*transform diseased being to well person*) {20}; *Increased disadvantage:* *Time* (1x/hr) {-15})

NOTE: The paladin must make a combat roll versus the target, if unwilling. The Die roll must be more than twice the character’s HLT for the transform to take effect.

Detect Diabolical Intent

This does not only detect evil aligned people and beasts, if the alignment option is used, but also those with intent to do an evil deed or an evil thought. What a paladin thinks is dependent on the character’s personality and god of worship. If the target is an undead spell caster or a “mass” criminal modify the TN by +3.

Target Numbers:

Easy (TN 12): Misdemeanors, skeleton, etc.

Germanic tribes.

Professional warriors are people who are paid money for engaging in military campaigns and fall into one of two categories: Soldiers; when fighting for their own state, or Mercenaries; when offering their services commercially and unrelated to their own nationality. The classification of somebody who is involved in acts of violence may be a matter of perspective, and there may be disagreement whether a given person is a hooligan, a terrorist, a rebel, a mercenary or a soldier.

Wizard

Attributes: INT +1

Advantages: Magic (Spec) {10}

Disadvantages: None

Skills: Knowledge (Arcane Legend & Lore) +2, Knowledge (Spells) +2, Literacy +2, magic (Spec) +2

AP: 1, **CP:** 18 (*Advantages: 10 + Disadvantages: 0 + Skills: 8*)

Description: A wizard is a practitioner of magic, especially in folklore, fantasy fiction, and fantasy role-playing games. In popular use during 16th century England, “wizard” was used to denote a helpful male folk magician, a cunning man as they were usually called. The word does not generally apply to Neopagan, or to stage magicians (properly termed illusionists) like David Copperfield, Paul Daniels, or James Randi.

Wealth

Purchasing of items and equipment commonly done though a barter system, but coinage shows how one item compares to another in value. The amount of starting wealth one has to spend depends on the character’s wealth. Wealthy and poverty traits affect the starting value. The Wealth Table below details the random and flat amounts of silver pieces (SP) a character starts with. GMs may restrict some professions, like priest or paladins, wealth and how much coin those characters retain after purchasing weapons, armor and equipment. It takes about 100 coins, regardless of type, weighs 1 kilogram or .01 kilograms per coin.

WEALTH TABLE

CP Cost	Description	Starting Silver Pieces (flat)	Starting Silver Pieces (random)
-10	Destitute	90	3d6x10
-9	Lower-lower class	117	3d6x13
-8	Lower-middle class	135	3d6x15
-7		162	3d6x18
-6		171	3d6x19
-5	Poor	180	3d6x20
-4	Lower-upper class	315	3d6x35
-3		405	3d6x45
-2	Below Average	450	3d6x50
-1	Upper-lower class	675	3d6x75
0	Middle Class	900	3d6x100
1	Above average	1800	3d6x200
2	Upper-middle class	4500	3d6x500
3		6750	3d6x750
4	Well to do	9000	3d6x1000
5	Upper-lower class	13,500	3d6x1500
6	Upper class	18,000	3d6x2000
7		54,000	3d6x6000
8	Rich	90,000	3d6x10,000
9	Upper-upper class	495,000	3d6x55,000
10	Filthy Rich	900,000	3d6x100,000

There are all kinds of metal coins that can be used. The most common during the middle ages, which most fantasy stories are set, were bronze (BP), copper (CP), silver (SP) and gold (GP); silver being the most commonly used.

COIN TABLE

	Bronze	Copper	Silver	Gold
Bronze	1	.1	.01	.001
Copper	10	1	.1	.01
Silver	100	10	1	.1
Gold	1000	100	10	1

Skills

SKILL GROUPS

Skills are organized into Skill Groups, representing collections of skills with a logical common theme. Think of it in terms of a “skill tree,” in which Groups are the “branches,” with individual Skills being the “leaves.”

In simpler, “rules-light” games, only *Groups* are used. In many games, however, *Groups* and specific *Skills* (as well as sub-categories, called *Specialties* and *Types*) are used. Whether you use some or all these in your game is up to you.

Game Type	Groups	Skills	Spec/Type
Very simple	X		
Moderate		X	
Detailed		X	X
Very detailed	X	X	X

Why Skill Groups?

Buying levels in Skill Groups are a cost-effective way of increasing the character’s proficiency with all the skills in the Skill Group. The cost is generally less (and at most the same) as buying levels with each individual skill, presenting a “discount” to players who wish to increase their character’s scores for a group of related skills.

Skill Group Scores

A score in one level is applied to the score for all other levels below it, but does not add to the score of any higher level. So, a score of 1 in a Group adds +1 to the score for any Skill or Specialty in that Group. This is called a “cascade bonus,” and is written as a

second score, with any cascade bonus added in, in parenthesis after the basic score for that level. A score of 4 in a Skill does not add +4 to the score of the governing Group, however; Cascade bonuses only apply downward, not upward.

Goor the Barbarian has a score of 2 in the Melee Combat Group and he have the Swords Skill at +4. He would record the skills like this: Melee Weapons +2, Swords +4 (+6).

When a character buys levels in a Skill Group, any skills within that group that requires a “Type” must be defined when the group’s levels are purchased. Skill Group levels apply only to the specific Skill “Type” selected by the character, not to all possible “Types” for that skill.

Mike buys two levels in the Arts & Craft Skill Group. Because the specific skills Art and Craft both require a Type, Mike selects Art (Painting) and Craft (Silk-screening).

SKILL LEVELS

The score reflects the level of competence or knowledge a character possesses for that skill. Skills are listed on the character sheet only if the character has levels in them. These are written on the character sheet as “Skill + #,” where “#” is the level of skill.

Marge is playing in a modern conspiracy game. Her character, Special Agent Glenn, has the Driving skill at level 3, so Marge writes it on her character sheet as “Driving +3.”

The definitions below are not absolute, but meant as a guideline for players and GMs. To see the proficiency each level of skill represents compared to consult the *Skill Levels* table (next page).

Specialties

Some skill names are followed by “(Spec).” These skills include several related specialties within the skill.

Players may buy additional levels with one specialty when purchasing the skill (see *Buying Skills*). The character pays 1 point for every 2 levels in a specialty. These levels are added to the basic skill score when making skill rolls involving the specialty.

Specialties are listed on the character sheet only if the character has levels in them. These are written on the character sheet as “Skill + # (Specialty + #),” where “#” is the level of the skill or the bonus in that specialty. Otherwise, only the base skill is listed.

Marge is playing her character, which has the Writing skill with a specialty of Reports. Having a score of 4 in the base skill and she has the two extra levels in the specialty

BUYING SKILLS

You get several points to divide among the character's skills based on the campaign level, the table shows that below.

Campaign Level	Max Score*	Starting Points
Realistic	5	50
Cinematic	8	75
Extreme	N/A	100

* Doesn't include bonuses for applicable traits.

Groups cost 5 points per level. Skills (including Skills requiring a specific "Type") cost 1 point per level. A Specialty costs 1 point for 2 levels. Levels in a specialty may only be purchased in pairs (i.e., a character cannot purchase 1 level in a Specialty).

The cost for each level of skill is shown below.

Level	Character Points /Level	Weapon Skills	Character Points/Level
Group	5/1	All	10
Skill	1/1	Category (i.e. Melee)	5
Skill (Type)	1/1	Group (i.e. Swords)	2
Skill (Specialty)	1/2	Generic (i.e. Swords, Broad)	1

Here's an example of how you might record some of your character's skills on your character sheet. We will just use one Skill Group—the Arts & Crafts Group—in this example. In this example, the player has purchased 2 levels in the Arts & Crafts Skill Group, 2 levels in the Cooking skill.

Name	Level	Total
Arts & Crafts	2	+2
Art (Painting)		+2
Cooking	2	+4
Jeweler		+2
Smith		+2



Skill Roll Modifiers

COMPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Sometimes a character's knowledge of a particular subject can help with a skill roll for another skill. For instance, any character with the Appraisal skill can appraise an antique vase. But a character with specific knowledge of antique vases, knowledge of the culture from which the vase originated, of glazing techniques, or of the family that owned the vase may have the particular insights into the history of the vase, thus allowing the character to more accurately determine its value.

When one skill helps with a task that uses a different skill, it is called a Complementary Skill. When a skill is Complementary to another skill, the player receives a bonus to the skill roll equal to one half of the Complementary Skill's score, rounding down.

At the GM's option, the bonus from a complementary skill can remain in affect for the duration of an event or task.

OFF-HANDED

Characters are either right- or left-hand dominant (player's choice) by default. The character's non-dominant hand is his "off hand." Using your off hand incurs a -3 penalty to any skill rolls requiring manual dexterity, such as shooting a gun, throwing, writing, and so on.

Characters with the Ambidexterity trait suffer a reduced penalty or no penalty at all, depending on the level of the trait.

TIME

Every task requires a certain amount of time to complete, as determined by the GM. If a character takes about time than usual to perform a task, he receives a bonus or penalty to the Target Number,

respectively.

When determining the bonus or penalty for about time has taken on a task, refer to the *Time Chart*, below. Simply find the level on the Time Chart that is closest to the amount of time the task normally takes. The GM should determine the average length of time normally required to perform the task, and then consult the *Time Chart*. If the time required to perform a task is longer than the closest level on the Time Chart, then use the next greater time increment as the default level.

Pat's character is picking a lock. The GM thinks that picking a lock should take an average person about 20 seconds. "20 seconds" is more than 1 turn but less than the "30 seconds" level, so the base time level for Pat's character's lock picking attempt is "30 seconds" for purposes of determining any bonus or penalty for taking extra time or rushing the task.

Time Chart

1 turn (3 seconds)
30 seconds
5 minutes
1 hour
1 day
1 week
1 month
1 quarter (3 mos.)
1 year
1 decade
1 century
1 millennium

Taking Extra Time

Characters can take more time than normal to perform a task to improve their chance of success. By taking more time than normal, the task becomes easier. For each lower level down the *Time Chart* (i.e., for each larger period of time took), the skill roll receives a +3 bonus.

Pat's character needs to pick a lock that he knows to be very tough. The GM has decided that picking the lock is a Challenging task (TN 18). Since there is no immediate danger and his companions are watching the passageway, Pat decides to take his time and concentrate. The referee decides that if Pat spends 1 hour on the task he will get a +6 bonus



to his skill roll because “1 hour” is two steps lower on the *Time Chart* than 30 seconds. Not wanting to take quite that long Pat decides to take 5 minutes and gets a bonus of +3, making it equivalent to a *Tricky* task (TN 15).

Rushing

Characters can attempt to perform a task more quickly than normal. By taking less time than the “base time” for a task, the task becomes more difficult. For each higher level up the *Time Chart* (i.e., for each smaller period of time the skill roll incurs a -3 penalty.

*Pat’s character picks the lock and makes his way into a stable where he finds a horse. Pat decides his character is going to try to ride the horse out of the city. Unfortunately for Pat the horse is not saddled and his character is not very knowledgeable about horses and riding gear, so the GM tells Pat that he will need to spend 5 minutes and make a *Challenging Riding* roll (18) using INT to saddle properly the horse.*

*The city guards can also be heard nearby. Pat does not want his character to be found and captured, so he decided his character will rush the saddling of the horse, taking only 30 seconds to throw the saddle on and secure it as well as he can before riding off. Pat will suffer a -3 penalty for rushing, making the task a *Difficult* one (TN 21)!*

REPEATED ATTEMPTS

Characters who fail at a skill roll may make another attempt, with conditions.

A character that attempts a task again after failing it once may make a new skill roll, but is at -3 for each successive attempt. This penalty is cumulative and is besides any other modifiers for taking extra time or rushing (see *Taking Extra Time*, page 36).

*Pat fails his skill roll to saddle the horse. But he really wants to get the task accomplished and soon, so Pat tells the GM that even though his character failed the first time, he is going to try again. The GM tells Pat that he can try another skill roll but this time at a -3 penalty. Pat decides to go for it, and he chooses to rush yet again. His character spends another 30 seconds on the task, the same as last time. Pat can makes another skill roll, but this time with a -3 penalty for a repeated attempt, plus an additional -3 penalty for rushing, making the normally *Challenging* (TN 18) skill roll equivalent to a *Demanding* one (TN 24)!*

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

Some skills do not require equipment for their use. The use of specialized equipment with these skills may provide a +3 bonus to the skill roll, at the GM’s

discretion.

Some skills, on the other hand, require the character to have access to specific equipment to use the skill at all. Examples include a forge, for *Blacksmith*, or a weapon, for a *weapon* skill. If the character doesn’t have the necessary items he cannot use the skill.

Other skills normally require tools of some kind but can be used with improvised tools. If a skill can be used with improvised tools, at GM’s discretion, the character may attempt the task but suffers a -3 penalty.

WHICH SKILLS TO USE?

Note that not all the skills listed will be appropriate for all campaigns. We have presented several skills that can be used in most settings. It is up to the GM to determine which skills will be allowed in a game. Several sample skill lists for different genres are provided in the back of this book (see *Optional Skill Lists*). The recommended skills for a specific setting or genre will be listed in published genre and setting books.

Generic Fantasy Skill List

The following is a skill list. That is, it’s not created for any particular fantasy setting or genre. GMs are encouraged to make up their own setting- or genre-specific skill list for their games, omitting or adding skills as necessary. For guidelines for creating your own skill list for your game, see the *Skills* chapter.

Italicized skill names show a universal skill. All characters receive universal skills at +2 for no cost. Characters with no points spent on a universal skill still receive the +2 bonus. Any points spent on a universal skill add to this default level.

* Indicates a suggested common skill for surfs.

+ Indicates a suggested common skill for male nobles.

++ Indicates a suggested common skill for female nobles.

Common skills are skills common to all characters of a certain setting or genre (as determined by the published product or by the GM). Those skills marked with an asterisk are suggested common skills for fantasy settings.



SKILL DESCRIPTERS

The following section provides descriptions for the skills listed on the Generic Fantasy Skill List in the previous section.

Arts & Crafts Skill Group

Arts & Crafts skills are those primarily concerned with the creation of tools and knickknacks, entertainment and pleasurable pursuits.

ART (TYPE)

Characters with this skill are adept at creating works of art in a particular medium (REF). They also understand the finer points of artistic expression (INT) and can appreciate works of art more than the average person (PRE).

A type of must be selected when this skill is bought. This skill may be purchased more than once, each time for a different type of Art.

Successful use of this skill means the character creates a high quality work of art, recognizes the creator of the work, or appraises the quality or value of such works created by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the work; the higher the effect number the better the quality, and, thus, the better the viewer's impression of the work.

This skill may also be used as a complementary skill to Social skills in the appropriate circumstances,

such as if the character is giving a work of art as a gift (at the GM's discretion).

Types: Painting, Pottery, Sculpting, and Sketching.

COOKING (SPEC)

The skill of creating meals, from simple edible dishes to elaborate, gourmet meals (INT) including even artistic presentations of food (PRE).

Specialties: Cuisine, Ethnicity (e.g., Elvish, Gnomish), Gourmet.

CRAFT (TYPE)

Characters with this skill is adept at some craft, as defined by the player, and understand the finer points of their craft, including common tools, patterns, and methods associated with it (INT). The character is able to create attractive and functional items (depending on the defined craft) and earn a living with his craft (REF).

Types: Candle-making, Glazing (i.e., lacquering), Cobbling, Shipwright, Tanning, or any other reasonable craft that the player and GM agree on.

JEWELER

This is skill of crafting fine jewelry from precious metals (silver, gold, platinum, etc.), stones and gems (REF). Characters can also appraise the quality and value of such items, create rings, necklaces, brooches,

inspiring troops in battle) and Persuasion.

Specialties: Bard, Command (i.e., leadership), Speeches.

PERSUASION (SPEC)

This is the skill of using one's voice, logic, expression, body language, or some combination, to influence others. Persuasion can be as an intimidating glare, a boastful challenge, batting one's eyes (seduction), stroking a cheek (consolation), grasping the handle of one's sword in a threatening manner, or invoking the name of one's superior (or even God).

The character makes a contested Persuasion roll against the subject's WIL + Concentration roll. If the character's roll is higher than the person he is trying to persuade, then he is successful. The other person sees things the persuader's way (at least somewhat) and will act accordingly.

The GM should allow skills appropriate to the situation to be used as complementary to the Persuasion roll. A character may also add one half of his Fame or Infamy score to the roll, if appropriate (GM's discretion). The GM may also award a bonus of +1 to +3 to the player's roll for good roleplaying.

Tim's character, Harcourt, is confronted by a would-be robber who has demanded Harcourt's purse. Harcourt grasps his sword handle, telling the robber "If you value your life, sir, get thee back. Retreat or I will run you through and leave you to be devoured by dogs, so help me God!" The GM gives Tim a +2 bonus to the Persuasion roll for good roleplaying. Tim makes a Persuasion roll and adds the +3 bonus, for a total of 24! The GM makes a Persuasion roll for the robber, totaling 17. The robber is "persuaded" not to accost Harcourt and, in fact, runs for his life!

Specialties: Bribery, Fast Talk, Intimidation, Propaganda, Romance, and Seduction.

POETRY

Characters with this skill are adept at composing (INT) and reciting poetry (PRE). They also understand the finer points of poetic expression and can appreciate poetic recitals more than the average person (PRE).

Successful use of this skill means the character performs in a manner that moves the audience (PRE), or appraises the quality of such writing or performances by others (INT). The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the performance; the higher the effect number the better the performance, and, thus, the better the audience's reaction.

This skill may also be used as a complementary skill to Persuasion in the appropriate circumstances (at the GM's discretion).

WRITING (SPEC)

Characters with this skill are capable of composing creative written works (INT). They also understand the finer points of written expression and can appreciate compositions within their specialty more than the average person (PRE). It is an important skill for bards and anyone wishing to create original songs. The appropriate performance skill is required to perform actually the composition.

A specialty must be selected when this skill is bought.

Successful use of this skill means the character composes a high quality work, or appraises the value or quality of such compositions by others. The effect number of the roll determines the quality of the composition; the higher the effect numbers the better the writing, and, thus, the better the audience or reader's reaction and impression.

This skill may be used as a complementary skill to the appropriate skill when the composition is performed. For example, writing (Music) is complementary to the Instrument skill; writing (Speeches) is complementary to Orate, and so on.

