

DOMINION RULES™

FANTASY ROLEPLAYING SYSTEM • VERSION 1.0



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Preface to the New Edition

This edition of the Dominion Rules roleplaying system is a mix of old and new. First, the old. Apart from very minor changes, this text contains DR 1.0 as first released publicly in April 2000. Dominion Games, supported by the Dominion Games Development Team, is now at work on Dominion Rules 2.0, which we hope to have ready sometime this winter. You can follow our progress, or join the team, by visiting us at <http://www.dominiongames.com>.

Now, the new. This is a completely reformatted and newly illustrated version of Dominion Rules 1.0. It is a great improvement on the PDF document we originally distributed on our site. Besides looking much nicer, it is easier to print out and use. But there's more: with this release, Dominion Rules 1.0 becomes a truly Open Source Roleplaying product, released under the terms of the Dominion Rules Licence (DRL). The DRL grants you, the players and developers of Dominion Rules, vast new rights to copy, modify and distribute Dominion Rules and distribute DR-compatible dominions. The idea behind Open Source Roleplaying is to encourage the game's experts—you the players—to contribute to DR's growth and development. We believe the DRL will encourage even more players and developers to adopt DR as their fantasy roleplaying system.

Since Dominion Games first opened its web site in November 1999, the Dominion Rules roleplaying system has attracted supporters from all over the world. In particular, we have benefited from spontaneous acts of generosity and creativity by roleplayers and open source advocates. These kind strangers, most of whom we have only ever known by e-mail, have contributed to the development of Dominion Rules in countless ways. We cannot possibly thank all of you by name; you are too numerous. We have tried to acknowledge your efforts in a small way on the Dominion Games Honour Roll, which can be found at <http://www.dominiongames.com/development/roll.html>.

An example of the generosity and creativity that keeps Dominion Games going is the document before you now. It has been produced entirely through the collaboration of our friends and supporters across the internet. They deserve personal thanks.

Maggie Wang and all the talented artists of the Illuminators Guildhouse (<http://www.illuminatorsguild.com>) have contributed the fabulous fantasy art you'll find throughout the text. A list of artists' credits is given at page [add web link and cross-reference]. We would like to thank Doug Anderson, Amy Brown, Gin May, Jennie Seay and Maggie Wang for their wonderful work.

The development of the Dominion Rules Licence owes a great deal to Jason Burke, whose commitment to the open source movement was an inspiration to us. Jason deserves our especial thanks. Thanks are also due to Ryan Dancey, who encouraged and assisted us in our open source plans in their early days.

Finally, we would like to thank Clay Dowling. We thank him on our behalf, but also for you, because without him you would not be reading this fabulous new edition of Dominion Rules. Clay created the new PDF from scratch, working tirelessly and without grumbling as we requested endless style changes and tweaks. Quite apart from his heroic efforts on the PDF, Clay created and hosts the web message boards where the Dominion Games Development Team swaps ideas about DR 2.0. Thank you, Clay, for your remarkable efforts.

Michael Bourland
Dominion Games

Artistic Credits

This version of Dominion Rules 1.0 is illustrated by the artists of the Illuminators Guildhouse (<http://www.illuminatorsguild.com>). We would like to thank Doug Anderson, Amy Brown, Gin May, Jennie Seay and Maggie Wang for their wonderful work. To learn more about each of these artists, visit their web sites at the addresses given below.

Doug Anderson (<http://www.catspawcomics.com>): Cover; Priest Praying (p 93); Male Warrior (p 7); Troll (p 222); Giant (p 215); Fallen Knight (p 67).

Amy K. Brown (<http://www.heatherwind.com>): the Soldier; the Rogue (p 9); the Witch (p 10); Three Nations (p 81).

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Maggie Wang (<http://www.magyss.com>): Azzlan (p 4); Celtic Elf (p 225); Cleric (p 8); Delorean (p 47); Elowyn (p 44); Sloan (p 79); Sydrian (p 19); Synne (p 112); Tiernacol (p 50); Vamptor (p 42).



Chapter 1

Introduction to Dominion Rules



BEFORE YOU GET STARTED on the rules themselves, read this introduction. Here we answer some basic questions about roleplaying, tell you what you need to play the game, and explain some Dominion Rules terminology. We also set out our vision of what Dominion Rules should be: an exciting, vibrant fantasy rules system.

1.1 Welcome to Dominion Rules

Dominion Rules is a rules system for fantasy roleplaying games (RPGs). This is DR 1.0: version 1.0 of the Dominion Rules roleplaying system. We think you'll find that DR represents a refreshing new approach to fantasy roleplaying. This introductory chapter serves to explain some of the basic concepts of roleplaying and Dominion Rules.

1.2 What's a Roleplaying Game?

For those of you who don't know, a roleplaying game is a game in which players assume imaginary 'roles' or characters, like actors in a play. The players then guide their characters through an imaginary world controlled by the game's referee, known in Dominion Rules as the Games Master.

Dominion Rules is the rules system for a very popular type of RPG: a fantasy RPG. Fantasy RPGs take place in mediaeval, mythological settings such as King Arthur's Britain or the Middle Earth of JRR Tolkien's novels. Other RPGs take place in science fiction, gothic, and many other settings. Dominion Rules was created with fantasy RPGs in mind. But it is a readily adaptable system. You can create sci-fi, gothic, cyberpunk, and other versions of DR under the terms of the Dominion Rules Licence.

1.3 What's Dominion Games

Dominion Games™ is the roleplaying company that created Dominion Rules. The most up-to-date versions of Dominion Rules can be downloaded free from the Dominion Games web site at <http://www.dominiongames.com>. Also available from the Dominion Games web site are DR-compatible dominions (see section 1.5, Rules vs Dominions, below).

1.4 What's the Dominion Rules License?

The Dominion Rules Licence (DRL) is a legal document granting you generous rights to distribute and modify Dominion Rules 1.0. In exchange for the rights granted to you by the Licence, you grant certain rights over your modifications to Dominion Games and others.

The DRL fulfils Dominion Games' commitment to Open Source Roleplaying. We don't believe in the old top-down model of roleplaying, where the game company creates the game and the players take whatever they're given. Instead, we encourage you, the players, to make the game your own. This is what we call Open Source Roleplaying. The DRL is what gives you the legal rights to contribute to the development of the Dominion Rules fantasy roleplaying system.

If you think you might be interested in developing new rules for DR, or creating DR-compatible dominions, you should read the DRL. If you just want to play DR as is, you can safely ignore the DRL.

For more on the DRL and Open Source Roleplaying, visit <http://www.dominiongames.com/opensource>.

1.5 Rules vs Dominions

We make a distinction between the game's rules system and the game's dominions.

The rules system is simply the game mechanics: how to play the game, no matter which dominion you play in. The rules are the same for all dominions. Our rules system is Dominion Rules (DR for short). You are reading the Introduction to DR now.

The dominion is the world your characters inhabit. It's what is known in other games as the campaign setting. You can create your own dominions, or use the dominions created by Dominion Games. To learn more about DG dominions, go to our web site at <http://www.dominiongames.com>.

1.6 What You Need to Play DR

To play DR, you need the following:

- A copy of Dominion Rules.
- Paper and pencils.

- At least two, but preferably three or more players. One player will serve as Games Master (GM).
- At least one twelve-sided die.

That's it. Be sure to read the rules before playing, though you can always consult them for details during the game.

1.7 The Twelve-Sided Die

DR is based on a twelve-sided die. One twelve sided-die is enough, but it's better for every player to have his own. You can get a twelve-sided die from the local hobby shop, or order one from internet games shops.

In Dominion Rules, a roll of 12 on the twelve-sided die is always a failure. It's the worst roll you can get. Whatever you are trying to do, you fail when you roll a 12. Never forget this: a roll of 12 always fails.

1.8 Character Records

Copies of DR Character Records are available on the web at the Dominion Games web site (<http://www.dominiongames.com>). The Character Record is generic: it is meant to serve the needs of any player. But you may want to create your own Character Record. If you do, we suggest you post it on the internet for other players to use. You can post it on your own site, or submit it to Dominion Games and we'll post it on ours.

1.9 DR Terminology

Before getting in to DR's actual rules, you need to understand some of the key terms we use.

First there's the distinction between rules and dominions. See section 1.5, Rules vs Dominions.

Roleplaying games always have one referee and several players. We call the referee the Games Master, or GM. GMs are especially important in DR, because DR gives a lot of freedom to players. The GM's role is to allow players to enjoy their freedom without giving them so much freedom that the game is no longer a challenge. The DR system puts a lot of faith in the talents of GMs. Live up to the responsibility! For more on GMing, see chapter 15, Notes For Games Masters.

Like other RPGs, we call the personalities the players use 'player-characters' (PCs), or simply 'characters'. But 'characters' may also refer to characters controlled by the GM; these are known more accurately as Games Master characters (GMCs). In Dominion Rules, most every rule that applies to PCs applies also to GMCs.

Figure 1.1: Azzlan



do this to distinguish between the technical DR sense of the word and its everyday meaning. For instance, the phrase, 'Gunther Blocked' means Gunther used his Block Skill somehow; the phrase, 'Gunther blocked' means he got in someone's way somehow. When you see a word capitalised that doesn't normally take a capital, you'll know we're using the word in its DR sense.

Two final points. First, we make frequent use of the abbreviation *ie*. In case you don't know, *ie* means 'that is'—*ie* when we use '*ie*' we are elaborating upon the point that came immediately before.

Finally, throughout DR we try to use gender neutral language. We do this by varying our pronouns. Rather than always saying, 'He Struck the guard', we make a point of also saying, 'She fought back.' We do this because RPGs have been male-dominated for too long. Women should be encouraged to play them. We hope gender inclusive language helps.

In DR we make an important distinction between a stat and a roll. Stat is short for statistic: a numerical figure used to measure a character's ability in some way. A roll is the number produced by rolling the twelve-sided die. Usually in DR, characters must roll less than or equal to their Skill stat in order to succeed at the task they are attempting. The result of the roll will then be used in play. Sometimes, however, it is the stat rather than the roll that is important. Be sure not to confuse stats with rolls.

When we talk about dice rolling to determine the results of actions, we sometimes use the word 'resolve'. For example, we may say 'Resolve any remaining Skills now.' When we say resolve, we mean finish everything up: roll the dice, add or subtract any modifiers, and see what happens.

Many of the terms we use in DR are written with the first letter capitalised. We

1.10 Units of Measurement

Dominion Rules measures sizes and distances in metres. If you are more familiar with imperial measurements, please consult this table to make conversions.

Table 1.1: Units of Measurement

<i>When you know...</i>	<i>Multiply by...</i>	<i>To Find...</i>
inches	25	millimetres
inches	2.5	centimetres
feet	30	centimetres
feet	0.3	metres
yards	90	centimetres
yards	0.9	metres
rods	5.0	metres
miles	1.6	kilometres

1.11 Examples

Throughout Dominion Rules, you'll find text giving examples of the rules we are explaining.

EXAMPLE

Here is an example of an example.


1.12 Legal Notice

Dominion Rules 1.0 is ©2000 Dominion Games.

Dominion Rules 1.0 will soon be released under the terms of an Open Source licence. To learn more about this, visit the Dominion Games web site at <http://www.dominiongames.com>. In the meantime, Dominion Games continues to assert traditional copyright over this product.

Chapter 2

Creating a Character

 CHARACTERS ARE THE HEART of roleplaying. Each player designs a persona for himself through which he experiences the fantasy world governed by the Games Master. Creating a character is the one of the most imaginative and most fun parts of roleplaying. Dominion Rules are designed to allow players to create characters any way they want them—unburdened by unnecessary limitations to their skills, powers, or personalities.

2.1 Thinking About Your Character

To create a DR character, start by thinking about the sort of character you want to roleplay. These questions may help you think about who you want your character to be.

What kind of personality do you want your character to have? Perhaps you want to play an honourable gentleman, loyal to his king and reverent of his god. Or perhaps you want a character who is skeptical of authority and loves to push his luck. You may choose to play a recluse, full of idiosyncrasies and not too good with people. An intellectual. An artist. A religious zealot. Whatever you choose, be sure to decide upon the sort of personality you would like to roleplay before you determine your character's stats.

What is your character's background? Fantasy worlds are often places where hierarchies of class and power are clearly defined: emperors, kings, aristocrats, and religious authorities often rule over the common people. Where does your character fit in the scheme of things? Is he a peasant, landless and poor? Or a titled aristocrat? Also, consider your character's life. Most players create characters that are at least twenty years old. Many are much older. What has your character been doing all these years? What country does she come from, and what city or village? Where is her family, or does she have any?

What motivates your character? Chances are, your character will risk his life on a routine basis. Why does he do it? Is it love of money? The desire for glory? To avenge a death, or right a wrong? Or is your character simply a thug who likes to beat on things? Perhaps your character would rather live a quiet life, but just can't keep out of trouble. Knowing

your character's motivation will make it easier to make good decisions at crucial points in the game.

2.2 Character Styles

In some roleplaying games, characters' abilities are strictly limited by the 'class' or profession they choose. A wizard, for example, may not be allowed to wield a sword. These limitations on player creativity are not to be found in Dominion Rules. Any character can learn and engage in any Skill—though the more Skills you try to cultivate, the weaker you are likely to be at any one of them.

For this reason, DR characters will usually specialise in particular Skills, associated with certain character styles. Here are some examples of common character styles.

2.2.1 The Soldier

The Soldier style of character is one who lives for battle. They are professional warriors, expert in the arts of armour, weaponry and tactics. They will often choose to master particular weapons such as bows (an Archer), blades (a Swordsman), or siege engines (an Engineer).

Soldiers specialise above all in Combat Skills. Besides these crucial Skills, they often possess other Skills related to their main interest, such as Blacksmithing, Heraldry (always useful for telling friend from foe!), or Fortification. Many soldiers also specialise in Horsemanship.

A further variation of the Soldier style is the Knight. Knights are the premier soldiers, schooled not only in the basics of soldiering, but also in such skills as Etiquette, History, Literacy, Falconry, and Jousting. Most importantly, though, knights are expert horsemen. Their horses are more than just mounts; they are weapons of war. Male knights are styled 'Sir'. Female knights are styled 'Dame'.

2.2.2 The Crusader

The Crusader style of character is a holy warrior, a character whose faith in his god motivates his every act. Crusaders attempt to spread their religion by travelling to heathen

Figure 2.1: Male Warrior



lands, conquering their peoples, and establishing churches and shrines to the True Faith (whatever that may be).

Crusaders specialise in Combat Skills as Soldiers do, but they also dabble in Priestcraft. Since it is very difficult to be both a successful warrior and an effective Priest, most Crusaders tend to specialise in only a few Priestcraft Skills, such as Bless and Heal.

2.2.3 The Priest

The Priest style of character is one who devotes his life entirely to the service of his deity. Priestcraft is, of course, the specialisation of Priest-style characters, and its rigours are such that characters specialising in Priestcraft rarely advance far in other Skills.

Usually, Priests attempt to master all Priestcraft Skills. Yet some Priests will gain renown for particular Skills. The Bless Skill tends to be the speciality of Clergymen, whose ability makes them revered by their flocks. More prized than these are Healers, the greatest of whom can make the blind see and the crippled walk again. Prophets are at once revered and suspected by the common folk, and thus tend to be solitary types. But those great Holy Men who master the Resurrection and Work Miracle Skills are celebrated throughout the ages.

See chapter 10, Priestcraft for details on Priestcraft Skills and playing Priests.

2.2.4 The Monk/Nun

The Monk or Nun style of character is above all an intellectual. Monasteries and nunneries are places of devotion and worship, but they are equally places of study, renowned for their libraries and learning. Monks and their monasteries are the guardians of knowledge.

In spite of their outwardly religious appearance, monks and nuns tend to specialise more in worldly Skills than in Priestcraft. They can often read, write, and speak several languages. They are also knowledgeable in such fields as History, Literature, Medical Lore, Geography, and Philosophy. Monks and Nuns also tend to possess more practical Skills such as Animal Husbandry, Farming, Wine-making and Brewing. Due to their great learning, Monks and Nuns are valuable companions when adventuring in foreign lands.

2.2.5 The Merchant Adventurer

Merchant Adventurers are businessmen with attitude. They live for wealth and the luxury (and power) it can bring. The challenge of making a profit inspires Merchant Adventurers to travel the world

Figure 2.2: The Cleric



in quest of new, untapped sources of wealth. These sources may be gold, spices, natural resources, religious artifacts or (amongst the worst Merchant Adventurers) slaves. In general, the Merchant Adventurer does not let moral quibbling get between him and a bit of coin. Pirates, a seafaring cross between Merchant Adventurers and Rogues (see below), are particularly notorious for their cutthroat techniques.

Merchant Adventurers tend to specialise in Combat Skills above all else. But they also prize foreign languages and some find such Agility Skills as Sleight-of-Hand and Pick Pockets useful in the course of financial transactions.

2.2.6 The Rogue

Merchant Adventurers generally operate within the law. They may push at its edges occasionally, but for the most part they are considered law-abiding (and tax-paying) subjects of their princes, kings or emperors. Rogues are different. They are villains for hire (though some are self-employed!). Most Rogues are Thieves, be they highwaymen (who prey on travellers), burglars (who specialise in breaking into secure areas and stealing from them), or cut-purses (petty thieves who make their living by stealing from unsuspecting victims in crowded places like streets and pubs). Spies are another type of Rogue. Spies are hired by the rich and powerful to keep an eye on their enemies—rival kings, merchants, or even priests. Spies who work for princes, kings, and emperors are known as Diplomats or Ambassadors. The worst type of Rogues are Assassins, who have no qualms about killing total strangers in return for a handsome wage.

Not all Rogues are evil, however. Some Thieves steal from the rich to give to the poor. Some Spies hold high office in the service of kings. You don't have to be an ethical monster to be a Rogue, but it helps!

Rogues prize stealth very highly, and thus specialise in Agility Skills. For the most part, Rogues would rather stab someone in the back than fight face-to-face. Yet they also specialise in Combat Skills.

Figure 2.3: The Rogue



2.2.7 The Fool

The Fool style of character is one who trusts in his Luck and little else. Fools are experts in the art of survival and in such entertainments as Music, Poetry, and Acrobatics. Yet they are rank amateurs at almost everything else. Fools are thought to be insane, and they often are. It is impossible to get a straight answer out of them. They prefer to rhyme and sing than to speak sensibly, and they can be terrible cowards (though many, after frequent beatings by those who do not appreciate their constant insubordination, have quite good Combat stats). Yet in spite of their many shortcomings, Fools are prized by kings and emperors. They often possess secret abilities, and their sudden insights at unexpected times can be the difference between life and death. A Fool will always surprise you, for better or for worse.

A quick glance at the character record of a Fool will usually reveal a character with a very high WithIn stat, a few high stats in such trivialities as Music and Dance, and hardly any other stats beyond 4. Look more closely, however, and you will see that the Fool has 20 APs in reserve for Lucky Breaks! (See section 3.9.1, Lucky Breaks, on page 20). Some, too, may surprise you with a bit of Witchcraft! They are powerful companions—if you can bear to be around them.

2.2.8 The Witch

Witches go by many names: sorcerers, magicians, alchemists, wizards. Call them what you will, the Witch style of character is the most difficult to play and perhaps also the most powerful.

In most societies, to be accused of Witchcraft is a death sentence. The Witch's arts are almost universally feared and reviled by humankind. Witchcraft is perceived by almost every religion as a challenge to its authority, so churches are particularly eager to persecute Witches. Witches are forced either to live as hermits, far away from human society, or to lead double lives, pretending to be something they are not. This makes Witches particularly challenging characters to play.

Figure 2.4: The Witch



And yet Witchcraft Skills are very powerful. Even a mediocre Witch has powers that can scatter armies. An expert Witch has dominion over all of nature. It is said of the greatest Witches that the gods themselves have descended from heaven to destroy them—lest the gods themselves be destroyed.

For more on Witches, see chapter 11, Witchcraft.

2.2.9 Other Styles

Players should not feel obliged to use one of these styles. The DR system is designed to allow players the freedom to be whatever they want to be. If you want to create your own style, do so. Then submit it to us and we'll share it with other Dominion Gamers!

2.3 Generating Attribute Stats

Once you have determined who your character is, you can generate his or her Attribute stats (see chapter 3, Attributes). Follow these directions:

1. Assign a minimum score of 1 to each of your character's six Attributes. (No character can have less than 1 in any Attribute stat.)
2. Roll the twelve-sided die three times and record your results.
3. Calculate the average of your three rolls. This is done by adding the three rolls together and dividing the resulting number by three. The result is the number of Attribute Points you have to distribute between your six Attributes. Make note of the remainder, if you get one.
4. Assign your Attribute Points as you like between the six Attributes.

That's it. Your character's Attribute stats are determined.

EXAMPLE

Merv is creating a character named Raven, a merchant adventurer with a bad habit of stealing things. Merv follows the four steps given above:

1. Merv assigns Raven a starting stat of 1 in each of the six Attributes.
2. Merv rolls the twelve-sided die three times. The results are 4, 9, and 10.
3. Merv calculates the average of the three rolls: $4 + 9 + 10 = 23$. $23 \div 3 = 7$ remainder 2. Merv has 7 Attribute Points to assign to Raven. He notes his remainder (2).
4. Merv gives Raven the following stats:
VIG: 2 AGI: 3 INTU: 2 STA: 2 INTE: 2 LUCK: 2

Table 2.1: Character Generation Table (Human)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Result</i>
1	Gifted: +3 to any Attribute
2	Gifted: +2 to any Attribute
3	Gifted: +1 to any Attribute
4	Talented: Starting stat of 6 in the Skill of your choice
5	Talented: Starting stat of 5 in the Skill of your choice
6	Talented: Starting stat of 4 in the Skill of your choice
7	Tough: Starting Withstand Injury stat of 5
8	Tough: Starting Withstand Injury stat of 4
9	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 5
10	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 4
11	Experienced: +10 Advancement Points
12	Experienced: +5 Advancement Points

2.4 Character Generation Tables

Once you have determined your character's Attribute stats, you are allowed one roll—or possibly two—on one of the Character Generation Tables. These tables give perks to starting characters. They also reflect racial differences of starting characters.

There are four Character Generation Tables: Human, Elven, Dwarven, and Hobbit. Use the table that corresponds to your character's race. (To determine what races are available to starting characters, consult your GM. See also Chapter 14, Player-Character Races.) If your character is none of these races, use the Human table.

Characters with 5 or more Starting Points roll once on their Character Generation Table. Characters with 4 or less Starting Points roll twice. If you roll twice and your second roll is the same as your first, ignore that roll and roll again.

EXAMPLE

Merv had 7 Starting Points. Thus, he is permitted one roll on the Character Generation Table. He rolls an 11: +10 Advancement Points.

2.5 Generating Composite Stats

Next, the player must determine his character's Composite stats. There are three Composite stats: the Combat Composite, the Priestcraft Composite, and the Witchcraft Composite. Corresponding to these three Composites are three sets of Skills: Combat Skills, Priestcraft Skills, and Witchcraft Skills.

All characters must determine their Combat Composite, because all characters are likely to be involved in Combat—often against their will! But players of characters who do not intend to practice Priestcraft or Witchcraft needn't bother working out their character's Priestcraft and Witchcraft Composites.

Table 2.2: Character Generation Table (Elven)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Result</i>
1	Agile: +3 to Agility
2	Agile: +2 to Agility
3	Lucky: +2 to Luck
4	Stealthy: Starting Stealth stat of 5
5	Alert: Starting Alertness stat of 5
6	Swift: Starting Movement stat of 5
7	Charmed: Starting Withstand Magic stat of 5
8	Charmed: Starting Withstand Magic stat of 4
9	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 5
10	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 4
11	Experienced: +10 Advancement Points
12	Experienced: +5 Advancement Points

Table 2.3: Character Generation Table (Dwarven)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Result</i>
1	Vigorous: +3 to Vigour
2	Vigorous: +2 to Vigour
3	Tough: +2 to Stamina
4	Muscular: Starting Muscle stat of 5
5	Keen: Starting Direction Sense stat of 5
6	Fit: Starting Climbing stat of 5
7	Tough: Starting Withstand Injury stat of 6
8	Tough: Starting Withstand Injury stat of 5
9	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 5
10	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 4
11	Experienced: +10 Advancement Points
12	Experienced: +5 Advancement Points

Table 2.4: Character Generation Table (Halfling)

<i>Roll</i>	<i>Result</i>
1	Lucky: +3 to Luck
2	Intelligent: +2 to Intellect
3	Intuitive: +2 to Intuition
4	Stealthy: Starting Stealth stat of 5
5	Keen: Starting Direction Sense stat of 5
6	Alert: Starting Alertness stat of 5
7	Learned: Starting Literacy stat of 5
8	Perceptive: Starting Lie Detection stat of 5
9	Quick: Starting Timing stat of 5
10	Experienced: +15 Advancement Points
11	Experienced: +10 Advancement Points
12	Experienced: +5 Advancement Points

EXAMPLE

Merv has designed Raven as a Merchant Adventurer style of character. Merv will definitely need to figure out Raven's Combat Composite, but he doesn't bother with the other two Composites.

If for some reason, however, an established character that has never worked out his Priestcraft or Witchcraft Composites one day needs to do so, he can.

EXAMPLE

If Merv's character, after years of play, decides to retire from the world of commerce and take up Holy Orders, Merv can then work out Raven's Priestcraft Composite just as if the character was new.

To learn more about what Composite stats are and how to determine them, see the following sections: section 7.2, The Combat Composite; section 10.4, The Priestcraft Composite and section 11.6, The Witchcraft Composite.

2.6 Starting Advancement Points

All characters start with at least 45 Advancement Points (APs). Advancement Points are used to improve Skill stats and to equip your character. To learn how to apply APs to your Skill stats, read the chapter 5, Advancement. To learn how to use them to equip your character, see section 2.7, Equipping Your Character, below.

If you had a remainder when calculating your Starting Points, that remainder is converted into an equivalent number of starting Advancement Points (APs).

EXAMPLE

Merv had a remainder of 2. These are converted into 2 extra Advancement Points which he can apply to Raven's Skills.

Note that sometimes starting characters will gain Advancement Points both from their Starting Point remainder and from the Character Generation Table.

EXAMPLE

Merv gained 2 APs from his Starting Point remainder. He also gained 10 APs from rolling 11 on the Character Generation Table. And of course Merv's character has 45 APs to start with.

So Merv's character starts out with a total of 57 APs: 45 (standard starting Advancement Points) + 10 (from the Character Generation Table) + 2 (Merv's remainder from his Attribute stat rolls) = 57.

Some players will want to spend all their character's starting APs developing Skill stats and equipping their characters. Some, however, may want to keep a few aside to use for Lucky Breaks. To learn about Lucky Breaks, see section 3.9.1, Lucky Breaks.

2.7 Equipping Your Character

In most RPGs, players roll dice to determine what their character's social status is. In many cases, the 'luck of the roll' method of equipping characters leads to unequal starting positions. Random generation removes decision-making power from those who should be making the decisions: the players and the Games Master. DR attempts to re-empower players and GMs by placing decisions in their hands rather than binding them to a hard and fast set of rules and dice rolls.

When you create a character, it is assumed that your character has all of the basic equipment she needs (subject to GM approval, of course). Basic equipment includes: rope, torches, lanterns, backpacks, clothes and various other items adventurers need. There will be differences in the types of equipment deemed appropriate by the GM, but these differences do not affect game mechanics. By supplying your character's most basic needs up-front, and without resorting to money, DR assures that all starting characters enjoy a fairly even footing.


The only sort of equipment that is not simply given to characters upon their creation is weaponry and armour. To acquire those items, you must spend some of your starting Advancement Points. How many you choose to allot to equipment is up to you. We recommend 10-15 APs. The 'price' of items, measured in APs, is given on the two tables below.

Table 2.5: Initial Equipment Price in APs

<i>Item</i>	<i>AP Price</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>AP Price</i>
SUITS OF ARMOUR		WEAPONS	
No Armour	0	Dagger	1
Armour Grade Light	2	Club	1
Armour Grade Medium	3	Mace	2
Armour Grade Heavy	4	Quarterstaff	2
Armour Grade Mighty	5	Shortsword	2
OTHER ITEMS		Sling with 20 bullets	2
Helm, any	1	Flail	3
Gorget	2	Hand Axe	3
Boots, leather	1	Morning Star	3
Boots, mail	2	Longbow with 20 arrows	3
Gauntlets	1	Longsword	3
Buckler	1	Spear	3
Shield	2	Warhammer	3
Great Shield	3	Bastardsword	4
		Crossbow with 20 quarrels	4
		Greatsword	5
		Battle Axe	5
		Maul	5

Chapter 3

Attributes

 EVERYONE IS BORN with innate talents and abilities. Some people are particularly strong. Others are notably intelligent. Still others just seem lucky. DR calls these innate abilities Attributes. Attributes determine a character's starting-point for skill development; they answer the question, How easy is it for my character to learn to do new things?

3.1 The Six Attributes

Every character in the DR system possesses six Attributes that define his or her basic qualities. They are: Vigour, Agility, Stamina, Intuition, Intellect, and Luck. These Attributes are measured on a scale of 1-12—though in almost all cases these numbers range from 1 to 4. These measurements are called Attribute statistics ('stats' for short).

Players determine their characters' Attribute stats when they create their characters. A character's Attribute stat never changes: it cannot be improved upon or diminished.

3.2 Attributes & Skills

Characters in the DR system possess Skills that derive from their Attributes. Skills are simply things your character knows how to do. For instance, a character's ability to read is a function of his Literacy Skill, which derives from his Intellect Attribute; a character's ability to swim is measured by her Swimming Skill, which derives from her Vigour Attribute; and so on.

Skills are also measured in terms of stats. But unlike Attribute stats, Skill stats increase and improve over time. This is known as Advancement (see chapter 5, Advancement). Also unlike Attributes, Skill stats have no maximum: they can be as high as you can make them. Note, however, that a roll of 12 on a twelve-sided die always fails—even if your character's Skill stat is 18.

When you create your character, her Skill stats start out equal to the Attribute stat from which the Skills derive. You then improve Skill stats with Advancement Points.

EXAMPLE

You have just created a new character with the following Attribute stats:

VIG: 2 AGI: 1 STA: 3 INTU: 2 INTE: 1 LUCK: 3

All your character's Vigour Skills start at 2. All your character's Agility Skills start at 1. All Stamina Skills start at 3. And so on for all six Attributes. You can then use Advancement Points to improve your character's Skill stats. But his Attribute stats will never change.

3.3 Composites

There are three sets of Skills that derive not from one Attribute, but from the average of two Attributes. They are: Combat Skills, Priestcraft Skills, and Witchcraft Skills.

The combination of two Attributes into one creates a Composite. There are three Composites.

- The Combat Composite, upon which Combat Skills are based, combines the Vigour and Agility Attributes.
- The Priestcraft Composite, upon which Priestcraft Skills are based, combines the Stamina and Intuition Attributes.
- Finally, the Witchcraft Composite, upon which Witchcraft Skills are based, combines the Intellect and Luck Attributes.

For more on these Composites and the Skills associated with them, see the chapters on Combat (chapter 7), Priestcraft (chapter 10), and Witchcraft (chapter 11).

3.4 The Vigour Attribute

Vigour is a measure of a character's inherent physical ability. Vigour is an expression of how big, strong, and powerful your character is naturally. Note, however, that even characters that are naturally inclined to be small and weak (those with a Vigour of 1) can advance their Vigour Skills very high. It just takes them longer. Vigour is part of the Combat Composite.

There are several Vigour Skills. These are described in chapter 4, Skills.

3.5 The Agility Attribute

Agility is the measure of how dextrous and nimble a character is. Agility is an important quality for a good warrior, but is also greatly valued by spies, thieves, and other sneaks. Agility is part of the Combat Composite.

There are many possible Agility Skills. One particularly important Agility Skill is Timing. For more on Agility Skills, see chapter 4, Skills.

3.6 The Stamina Attribute

Stamina is the measurement of a character's fitness, endurance, and general health. Of course, a sickly person can take measures to improve his health and fitness (by improving Stamina Skills), but the Stamina Attribute stays the same, for health is to some extent predetermined. For example, a very fit person may nonetheless be prone to colds, or may fall victim to an hereditary disease. Stamina is part of the Priestcraft Composite.

There are only a few Stamina Skills, but they are very important to game play. See chapter 4, Skills.

3.7 The Intuition Attribute

The Intuition Attribute is a measure of a character's intuition. Intuition is the ability to perceive or know things without conscious use of reasoning. It is in some ways the opposite of the Intellect Attribute: it is the power to know without reasoning, whereas Intellect is the power to know by reasoning. Religious impulses are closely tied to irrational ways of knowing. Faith might be defined as an irrational knowledge of the truth. Therefore, Intuition is part of the Priestcraft Composite.

There are only a few Intuition Skills so far, but many more are possible. See chapter 4, Skills.

3.8 The Intellect Attribute

Intellect covers all facets of a character's intelligence: reasoning, memory, wit, understanding, perception, and so on. Intellect is part of the Witchcraft Composite.

There seems to be an endless number of possible Intellect Skills. One particular Intellect Skill, Medical Lore, is very useful for adventurers. For more on Intellect Skills, see chapter 4.

Figure 3.1: Sydrian



3.9 The Luck Attribute

Some people are just lucky. Others seem cursed. The Luck Attribute is a measure of how kindly Fate is inclined to treat a character. Luck is part of the Witchcraft Composite.

There are no Luck Skills, for Luck is almost the opposite of Skill. Yet even without Skills, Luck is an extremely useful Attribute. Luck governs two important aspects of DR: Lucky Breaks and Favourable Rounding.

3.9.1 Lucky Breaks

Lucky Breaks are a way for characters to get out of a jam. A Lucky Break increases a character's Skill stat in any Skill or Skills he makes a Skill roll for that round. The amount of the increase is equal to the character's Luck stat. Lucky Breaks can be a lifesaver (literally!) when things get tough.

You can't just get a Lucky Break any time you like. To get one, you must have a spare Advancement Point to spend on it (see chapter 5 for an explanation of Advancement Points). If you don't have an AP in reserve, you cannot get a Lucky Break. See section 5.2.2, on Advancement Points in Lucky Breaks.

You can declare a Lucky Break at any time in a round; you do not have to declare it the Strategy Stage. But keep in mind that a Lucky Break only lasts for one round. That means that if you declare it in the Resolution Stage (the last Stage of a round), you will only get the benefit of it during that Stage and until the end of the round. But if you declare it at the start of the Timing Stage (the first Stage of a round), you'll get Lucky Break bonuses to everything your character does in that Stage and the other three Stages of the round. (On Stages, see chapter 6, Order of Play).

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice failed her Strike roll this round. And now she has been hit with a Strike roll of 7! If she doesn't make her Withstand Injury roll (4), she'll be Defeated. She decides this would be a good time to get a Lucky Break!

Dame Beatrice has a Luck of 3, so she gets a Lucky Break bonus of +3 to her Within stat. Now she can roll a 7 or less to Withstand the Strike: 4 (Dame Beatrice's Within) + 3 (Dame Beatrice's Lucky Break Bonus) = 7. She rolls a 3: success!

Note two things: (1) Beatrice had 3 spare APs before the Lucky Break, but now has only 2; (2) Actions Beatrice took this round before declaring her Lucky Break do not get the benefit of her +3 Luck bonus. For example, Beatrice still fails the Strike throw she attempted earlier in the round.

A Lucky Break is not considered an action. So characters do not incur an Action Penalty for giving themselves a Lucky Break (see section 4.3, Action Penalties).

EXAMPLE

Sir Derek Cape declares 2 Strikes this round. Thus, he incurs an Action Penalty of -1 for the duration of the round.

Sir Derek's Strike is normally 9, but right now it's 6 because of a -3 Injury Penalty. So Sir Derek needs to roll 5 or less to make his Strikes: $9 \text{ (Sir Derek's Strike)} - 3 \text{ (Injury Penalty)} - 1 \text{ (Action Penalty)} = 5$. Sir Derek decides to give himself a Lucky Break. He spends 1 AP and adds his Luck stat (3) to all subsequent Skill rolls this round.

Sir Derek now needs to roll 8 or less to Strike successfully.

It is possible to get double, triple, or even greater Lucky Breaks.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice is in a jam. She has 2 APs to spare. She decides to use them both to get a double Lucky Break. Dame Beatrice's Luck stat is 3. By using 2 APs instead of one, she gets to add 6 to all Skill rolls for the duration of the round: $3 \text{ (Beatrice's Luck)} \times 2 \text{ (number of APs spent)} = 6$.

Keep in mind, however, that a roll of 12 always fails.

3.9.2 Favourable Rounding

Luck is also used to determine Favourable Rounding. There are situations in DR when a stat must be rounded either up or down (because you can't roll 3.5 on a twelve-sided die!). In such cases, a character's Luck stat determines whether the number will be rounded in his favour (usually up) or not (usually down).

A Luck stat of 3 or higher entitles the character to Favourable Rounding, meaning that the number will be rounded in the player's favour. Otherwise, it will not.

EXAMPLE

Merv has created a character. He has given the character a Vigour of 3 and an Agility of 2. He is now determining his character's Combat Composite. The Combat Composite stat is the average of a character's Vigour and Agility. The average of Merv's character's Vigour and Agility is 2.5 ($3 + 2 = 5$; $5 \div 2 = 2.5$). But you can't have a stat of 2.5; it must be either 2 or 3.

Since Merv's character has a Luck of 3, he enjoys Favourable Rounding. So the Combat Composite stat is rounded up to 3. If Merv's character had a Luck of 1 or 2, his character would not have Favourable Rounding, and so his Combat Composite would have been rounded down to 2.

Chapter 4

Skills

WHAT DISTINGUISHES YOUR character from the rest is the things she knows how to do: her Skills. There are some Skills all characters need to be proficient in. But there are many more that are a matter of personality—yours and your character's. DR's Skill rules are intentionally open-ended: while there are some Skills defined by the rules, most are left for players and GMs to create themselves. Characters in DR have the freedom to develop any skill they put their minds to—just like the real world.

4.1 How Many Skills Are There?

There is no limit to how many Skills characters may create and use. Any ability or talent a player wants his character to specialise in can become a Skill. Players and GMs are free—and encouraged—to define new Skills. See section 4.12, Creating New Skills.

Most Skills are left to players to create on their own. However, there are certain Skills that are essential to the DR system. These Skills are given here.

4.2 Skill Rolls and Modifiers

There are some Skills your character can perform automatically (for example, walking). Others require a successful Skill roll to be used. Skill rolls are rolls on the twelve-sided die to determine if a character succeeds or fails to do the thing he wishes to do. Skill rolls are the core of the DR system: they are the main way that players and GMs determine the results of actions.

To make a Skill roll, simply roll the twelve-sided die. If the result you roll is less than or equal to your Skill stat, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail.

EXAMPLE

Cedric wants to break a door down. He must use his Muscle Skill (a Vigour Skill) to do it. His Muscle stat is 4. He rolls a 10. He fails to break the door down.

Very often, the difficulty of making a successful Skill roll is increased or decreased by modifiers. Modifiers are temporary bonuses and penalties to Skill stats, making Skill rolls easier or harder.

EXAMPLE

Cedric wants to break a very flimsy old door down. His Muscle stat is 4, but the GM gives him a +5 modifier to his Muscle stat because of the door's weakness. Cedric now need to roll 9 or less to succeed. He rolls a 7: success!

4.3 Action Penalties

Characters can attempt to do two or more things at the same time—that is, they can make more than one Skill roll at a time. This is particularly desirable in Combat where, for example, a character may want to Strike twice and Parry.

For every Skill a character attempts to use at the same time beyond the first, all Skill stats are modified by -1. This is called the Action Penalty. It is one of the most important modifiers in the DR system. It is meant to reflect the difficulty of doing two or more things at the same time.

When we say 'at the same time', we mean during the same round of play. To know what a round is, see chapter 6, Order of Play.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice (Strike 6 Dodge 5) wants to do two things this round: Strike the soldier who is attacking her and Dodge his attack. Since she is using two Skills in one round, she suffers an Action Penalty of -1 to all Skill stats. So she must roll 4 or less to Dodge successfully (5 (Dame Beatrice's Dodge) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 4) and 5 or less to Strike successfully (6 (Dame Beatrice's Strike) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 5).

4.3.1 Non-Skill Actions

The GM may also assign an Action Penalty where a character attempts to do two or more things at the same time, one of which is not a Skill. The GM must consider whether the non-Skill action hinders the use of the Skill. If so, she may assign an Action Penalty.

EXAMPLE

Cedric wants to Parry his opponent's attack while also untying the rope which binds his feet. Parry is a Combat Skill. Untying things is not a Skill; it's just one of those things (like walking) that everyone knows how to do. Yet the GM rules that Cedric's attempt to untie the rope will get in the way of his attempt to Parry his opponent's attack. So the GM assigns an Action Penalty.

The Action Penalty is only -1, because Cedric is only trying to do two things: Parry and untie the rope.

4.4 Unhoned Skills

What happens when a character is forced to attempt something he has never done, or knows nothing about? In cases where characters have not honed the Skill they are attempting to use, the relevant Attribute stat serves as the character's Skill stat for that new Skill. (The GM will determine the relevant Attribute.)

EXAMPLE

Cedric the Initiate has never learnt Croellic. He now is trying to read a book in that language. The GM informs him that if he had it, the Croellic Skill would be an Intellect Skill (like all language Skills). So Cedric uses his Intellect stat (3) to try to read the book. He rolls a 5. He cannot read the book.

4.5 Failing Skill Rolls

What happens when a character fails a Skill roll? Can he try again, and keep trying until he succeeds? Or is he forever incapable of doing the thing he has tried to do?

It depends on the Skill. With many Skills, the character who has failed the first time may try again.

EXAMPLE

Sir Gavin Strong attempted to use his Strike Skill (a Combat Skill) in battle. But he failed his Strike roll. Does this mean he is incapable of ever Striking this opponent? Of course not! Sir Gavin just tries again next round. He'll get him yet!

For other Skills, however, failure is more-or-less permanent. The character who has failed cannot try again unless circumstances somehow change.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice (Croellic 6) attempts to read a scroll written in Croellic. She fails her Skill roll, rolling an 8. She cannot try again. Otherwise, she could just keep trying until she succeeded.

Later, Dame Beatrice comes across a dictionary of Croellic. The dictionary gives her a +2 bonus to her Croellic Skill. Circumstances have changed: she now has a new tool to help her decipher the scroll. So the GM lets her try again. She rolls a 5: success!

Characters who have failed their Skill roll for one of these 'more-or-less permanent failure Skills' can try them again after improving their Skill stat with Advancement Points.

EXAMPLE

The last time Otto tried to pick this lock, he couldn't do it: he failed his Skill roll. But that was some time ago, and Otto's Pick Locks stat is better now. So the GM lets him try again, using his newly acquired talents.

So how do you know if you can try again or not? To put it another way, how do you know what the Failure Rules are for any particular Skill? If the Skill is described here, check its description. It will tell you the Skill's Failure Rules. If the Skill is one you created, ask your GM. She'll make the ruling.

4.6 Vigour Skills

There are as many Vigour Skills as players can dream up. A few Vigour Skills are given below. Players are encouraged to create more (see section 4.12, Creating New Skills on page 35).

Climbing

Vigour

Description: Characters use the Climbing Skill to scale walls, climb trees, pull themselves up ropes, etc.

All characters are able to climb simple obstacles like ladders and trees with many branches. The Climbing Skill is only necessary when the thing to be climbed is especially challenging, such as a sheer wall or cliff face.

Some obstacles can only be climbed using climbing tools like ropes and hooks. Your GM will tell you whether these tools are needed, or if they offer any bonuses to your Skill roll.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: If you fail a Climbing roll, you fall from the thing you were climbing. Falls can cause Injury (see section 8.7, Hazard Injury, on page 72). A character who falls is free to try the climb again.

Grip

Vigour

Description: The Grip Skill measures the strength of a character's grip. The stronger a character's Grip, the less likely it is that the character will accidentally drop or let go of something. The GM will call on you to make a Grip roll whenever there is a risk that your character will drop or let go of something (for instance, when hanging by your fingertips from a cliff!).

In Combat, the Grip Skill acts as a modifier to Disarm attacks. For details of how Grip works in Combat, see section 7.3.7, Disarm.

Skill Roll Rules: When using Grip outside of Combat, roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

For details of how Grip works in Combat, see section 7.3.7, Disarm.

Failure Rules: A failed Grip roll means you have dropped or let go of the thing you were gripping.

Muscle

Vigour

Description: Muscle is a catch-all Skill used whenever a character needs to do something that requires nothing more than pure muscle. Examples include breaking down doors, bending bars, and crushing objects.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again. You simply aren't strong enough to do whatever you are trying to do.

Swimming

Vigour

Description: The Swimming Skill represents how adept a character is at both keeping himself afloat and at moving through the water. Every character will have some ability to keep himself afloat (represented by the Vigour stat where the character's Swimming Skill is Unhoned; see section 4.4, Unhoned Skills on page 24). But it takes practice to become a proficient swimmer.

A successful Swimming roll will allow the character to remain afloat and move up to a number of metres equal to her Swimming stat. Swimming resembles the Movement Skill in that a character's Swimming roll may be modified by Injury and Action Penalties, but the number of metres moved following a successful Swim roll is always equal to her Swim stat.

EXAMPLE

A soldier is thrown overboard by a cannon blast. He suffers a -1 Injury Penalty. His Swimming stat is 6. This means he needs to roll 5 or less to Swim this round: 6 (Soldier's Swim) - 1 (Injury Penalty) = 5.

He rolls a 3: success! With this successful roll, he is able to Swim 6 metres, ie the number of metres equal to his Swim stat.

When the need arises, characters may choose to Sprint-Swim. This is resolved in the same manner as Sprint Movement, except that the Sprinting character's Movement stat is substituted with his Swim stat. Note, however, that unlike the Movement Skill, the Swimming Skill always counts as an Action for Action Penalty purposes. See section 7.3.13, Sprint Movement on page 60 for details.

When a character fails a Swimming roll, he makes no headway for that round and simply splashes about getting nowhere. Should the character fail consecutively for a number of rounds equal to his Swimming stat, he is pulled under water. He must then Hold his Breath while under water, or eventually die (see Hold Breath on page 30). The submerged character can get back to the water's surface with a successful Swimming roll.

Where a character's modified Swimming stat is less than 1 (as a result of Injury, rough water, or any other reason), it is impossible for her to Swim and she sinks under water immediately.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: See the Skill Description, above.

4.7 Agility Skills

There are all sorts of possible Agility Skills (see section 4.1, How Many Skills Are There? on page 22). Agility Skills are particularly useful for thieves and other mischievous types.

A few Agility Skills are given below. To create more, see section 4.12, Creating New Skills on page 35.

Horsemanship

Agility

Description: Horsemanship is a character's ability to ride, train, and select horses. Characters with strong Horsemanship stats can do more than simply ride their horses. They can train them to do useful things.

There are several ways to use Horsemanship. The most common way is a simple Skill roll. The GM may call upon you to make a Horsemanship roll whenever something happens that requires adept Horsemanship.

A case in point is Bolting. A horse may Bolt (panic and run away) when frightened. A horse will always Bolt when Injured in Combat. When a character's mount Bolts, the character must make a Horsemanship roll. If she succeeds, she regains control of the horse before it runs away. If she fails, the horse Bolts and flees whatever has frightened it. The horse will keep running for five rounds or until the rider makes a successful Horsemanship roll. (The rider can only try once per round.)

Characters who have Horsemanship stats of 5 or higher are allowed to spend their Advancement Points improving their mount's stats. But a character may not improve her mount's stats beyond her own Horsemanship stat, or beyond the maximum stat (if any) indicated for that stat in the Bestiary. (For more on horses, see Horse in chapter 13, The Bestiary.)

EXAMPLE

A rider uses a Noble War Horse as his mount. The horse's Timing stat is 5. The rider's Horsemanship stat is 6.

The rider may spend 6 Advancement Points to raise the horse's Timing from 5 to 6. But the rider may not raise the horse's Timing to 7, because 7 is higher than the rider's Horsemanship stat. Similarly, the rider may not raise the horse's Timing stat higher than 7, because a Noble War Horse's maximum Timing stat is 7.

Finally, characters with Horsemanship stats of 7 or higher are automatically able to pick out the best horse (ie the one with the highest stats). This is useful when buying or selecting a horse.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers. Or see above.

Failure Rules: See above, or consult your GM.

Pick Locks

Agility

Description: With Pick Locks, characters can use tools to open locked doors or other locked objects.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers. Lock-picking tools can give bonuses to your Pick Locks stat.

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again. You are unable to pick this lock.

Pick Pockets

Agility

Description: This Skill measures a character's aptitude at stealing from people's pockets or from elsewhere on their person.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: The person you are trying to rob discovers you!

Stealth

Agility

Description: Stealth measures the character's ability to move without being detected by others. This is a combination of moving silently, making wise use of available cover and knowing when to move and when to stay still.

A character who makes a successful Stealth roll imposes a Stealth Penalty on the Alertness stats of anyone within earshot, sight-range, etc. A character who fails her Stealth roll has the option of not moving that round—even though she declared movement in the Strategy Stage.

EXAMPLE

A spy attempts to sneak past a nightwatchman at Raith Hall. His Movement stat is 8 and his Stealth stat is 7.

He rolls his Stealth: a 10. Failure! He must decide immediately whether to risk it and move without the benefit of Stealth, or stay put and try again next round.

He decides that he's in no hurry and would rather play it safe. So he doesn't move at all this round, but simply rests motionless, trying not to attract anyone's attention.

Having made a successful Stealth roll, it is up to you to determine how Stealthy you want to be. The Stealth Penalty you choose to impose upon the Alertness stats of people nearby will also apply to your own Movement stat, thus slowing you down to the same degree as it conceals you. It's up to you to decide how Stealthy you need to be, and how slow you can afford to be. You can never impose a Stealth Penalty higher than your own Stealth stat.

EXAMPLE

Next round, the spy tries again. This time he makes a successful Stealth roll with a 5. Now it is up to him to decide how Stealthy he wants to be. He guesses that the nightwatchman is probably a fairly Alert person. So he decides to play it safe and move very Stealthily—and therefore very slowly. He sets the Stealth Penalty at 5.

The nightwatchman now suffers a -5 Stealth Penalty to this Alertness for the duration of the round. But the spy also suffers a -5 Stealth Penalty: to his own Movement stat. Thus, the spy moves only 3 metres this round: 8 (Spy's Movement stat) - 5 (Stealth Penalty) = 3.

Skill Roll Rules: Declare your Stealth Skill in the Strategy Stage and the direction in which you intend to move. Roll less than or equal to your Stealth stat in the Modifier Stage. Recall that if you fail your Stealth Skill, you have the option of aborting your movement for that round (see above).

Failure Rules: See above.

Timing

Agility

Description: Timing is an especially important Agility Skill in DR, for it is used to determine the order of play. For more about Timing in the Order of Play rules, see section 6.4, The Timing Stage.

Apart from this special way of using Timing, it can be used in any situation that requires rapid reactions. Your GM will tell you when to make a Timing roll.

Skill Roll Rules: To know how to use Timing to determine the order of play, see section 6.4, The Timing Stage.

To use Timing in other ways, roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: A failed Timing roll usually means you were slower than someone or something. Your GM will explain the consequences of failing your Timing roll.

4.8 Stamina Skills

There are only a few Stamina Skills, but they are very important to game play. Stamina Skills are measures of a character's fitness, endurance, and capacity to withstand deprivation.

Stamina Skills are unlike all other Skills in one crucial way: Stamina Skills are never subject to Injury Penalties. To know more about Injury and Injury Penalties, see chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

EXAMPLE

Raven the Unscrupulous is suffering from a -3 Injury Penalty. This penalty modifies all Raven's Skills—except his Stamina Skills. In particular, Raven rolls his Withstand Injury and Withstand Magic Skills without the -3 modifier.

Three Stamina Skills are described below: Hold Breath, Withstand Injury, and Withstand Magic.

Hold Breath

Stamina

Description: Anyone can hold his breath. The problem is that you can only do it so long before you die. The Hold Breath Skill measures how long a character can go without oxygen.

All characters can go without breathing for a number of rounds equal to their Hold Breath stat without suffering any adverse consequences. After that time, characters must make a successful Hold Breath roll every round. For every round they fail, they suffer 1 Injury Point. Eventually the character must breathe again or die.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: You take 1 Injury Point.

Withstand Injury

Stamina

Description: One of the most important Skills in the DR system is Withstand Injury (WithIn for short). WithIn is used to determine whether dangerous actions or events, such as being Struck with a broadsword or falling from a cliff, result in Injury.

When a character suffers some dangerous turn of events such as a Strike or a fall, she must make a WithIn roll. If she rolls less than or equal to her WithIn stat, she Withstands the Injury and suffers no real harm from it. That is not to say that it didn't hurt; it may very well leave a bruise or a scar. Nonetheless, it does no serious harm. However, if the character rolls higher than her WithIn stat, she fails to Withstand Injury and is Injured.

Characters can give themselves bonus to their WithIn stats by wearing armour. See chapter 9, The Armoury.

For a detailed explanation of Withstand Injury and Injury in general, see chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: A failed WithIn roll means you are Injured. For more, see chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

Withstand Magic

Stamina

Description: Another important Stamina Skill is Withstand Magic (WithMag for short). Characters use WithMag to resist the effects of magic. The magic's source may be from Witch Spells, magically-endowed objects, or magical creatures.

If the magic at play is capable of causing Injury (such as Sorcery Spells and the magic of some magical creatures), use WithIn instead of WithMag to resist the Injury.

In most cases, a person or creature against whom magic is used may make a WithMag roll and attempt to resist the Spell's effects. There are some forms of magic, however, that are impossible to resist.

A person or creature can always decline to make the roll if he doesn't want to Withstand the Magic (for instance, when the magic involved benefits him somehow).

The GM may ask a character to make a WithMag roll without explaining why. The reason will be clear enough if, for example, the character is battling a Witch. But the character may not know that there is a Witch, or a magical creature, or someone using a magical item, in the area. If that is the case, and the character makes a successful WithMag roll, she'll know only that someone or something tried to use magic upon her. If she wants to know who or why, she'll have to find out for herself.

For more on Withstand Magic and Spells, see section 12.0.12 Withstand Magic.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: You are affected by the magic. The GM will tell you the magic's effect.

4.9 Intuition Skills

Intuition Skills are not as obvious as Vigour or Agility Skills. For Intuition is about hunches and gut feelings, rather than learnt abilities. Yet Intuition Skills do exist. A few are given below.

Intuition can be faulty. Sometimes our hunches and gut feelings turn out to be wrong. We don't find out, of course, until it's too late. That's why GMs usually make secret Intuition Skill rolls, hiding the result from the player using the Intuition Skill. If the GM makes a successful Skill roll, he tells the player the truth. If he fails the roll, he tells the player

that she has no intuition about the matter. But if the GM fails the roll with a 12, he secretly tells the player something wrong and misleading. So beware: you can't always trust your instincts!

Alertness

Intuition

Description: This Skill measures a character's innate ability to sense danger or other irregularities in the world around him.

When a character is confronted with a potential threat or oddity of which she is unaware, the GM may choose to allow her an Alertness roll. A successful roll means the character is Alerted to the source of the danger or abnormal circumstance. She may act immediately by using any Defensive Combat Skill or any non-Combat Skill. However, she may not respond with an Offensive Combat Skill until the next round.

Use of the Alertness Skill is involuntary (see Skill Roll Rules, below). Therefore, it does not count as an action for the purpose of Action Penalties.

Skill Roll Rules: Since Alertness is a sort of 'gut feeling' or 'sixth sense', it works passively. A character need not declare his Alertness Skill to use it. Instead, the GM simply informs the player to make an Alertness roll (or, if the GM really wants to be really sneaky, she will make the roll secretly herself). The player or GM will attempt to roll less than or equal to the character's Alertness stat, subject to any modifiers the GM sees fit to impose.

Failure Rules: A failed Alertness roll means simply that the character is not Alerted to the danger or abnormality in question. There may be no consequence to this at all. Or it may cost the character his life!

Direction Sense

Intuition

Description: Direction Sense is the ability to tell north from south, east from west without consulting the stars, examining moss growth on trees, or employing other rational methods.

To use Direction Sense, tell the GM that you want to use your intuition to determine which way is which. He will make the Skill roll secretly. He will either tell you 'That way is north', etc. or he will tell you that you cannot tell. But beware: if he rolled a 12, he will tell you the wrong direction.

Skill Roll Rules: Tell the GM your Direction Sense stat. He will then make a Skill roll, attempting to roll less than or equal to your Skill stat (subject to any modifiers).

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again right away. You are unable to sense direction at this time or in this place. The GM may allow you to try again later.

Lie Detection

Intuition

Description: Lie Detection is the ability to judge whether a person is lying or telling the truth. Some people have an uncanny knack for sensing when they are being told a lie.

To use Lie Detection, inform your GM that you think someone may be lying. He will then make your Lie Detection roll secretly, and report back to you. He will tell you that you think you are being lied to, or you think you are being told the truth, or you cannot tell.

Skill Roll Rules: Tell the GM your Lie Detection stat. He will then make a Skill roll, attempting to roll less than or equal to your Skill stat (subject to any modifiers).

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again about the same supposed lie. But you can attempt to detect other lies that you suspect that same person of telling.

Weather Sense

Intuition

Description: Weather Sense is the ability to predict the weather. Some people say they can 'feel it in their bones'.

To use the Skill, to your GM you want to use it. He will then make your Weather Sense roll secretly, and report back. He will either tell you what you think the weather will be, or say you cannot tell.

Skill Roll Rules: Tell the GM your Weather Sense stat. He will then make a Skill roll, attempting to roll less than or equal to your Skill stat (subject to any modifiers).

Only weather coming in the near future can be predicted using Weather Sense. The GM will impose high penalties upon characters who seek to predict next week's weather, or the weather for some day several days from now.

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again about the same weather you tried to predict. You can, of course, try again on another weather pattern.

4.10 Intellect Skills

There is an unlimited number of possible Intellect Skills. Anything a character desires to put his mind to (and spend Advancement Points on!), she can learn. Three Intellect Skills are included here: Heraldry, Literacy, and Medical Lore. You are encouraged to make new Intellect Skills. Here are some examples of Intellect Skills.

- Any language (other than a character's native tongue) can be learnt as an Intellect Skill.
- Social skills such as Etiquette, Dance, Song, and playing musical instruments can make a character more popular with his fellows—in a king's court or a common pub.

- Navigation and Astronomy are essential for seafaring characters. Geography is also useful.

Heraldry

Intellect

Description: Heraldry is the art of reading, interpreting, and creating heraldic devices. Heraldic devices include coats of arms, flags, and banners. Heraldry is especially useful for soldiers in battle, who use the Skill to tell friend from foe.

A successful Heraldry roll may reveal not only the name of the person wearing the colours, etc. but also his genealogy and place of origin.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers. More obscure coats of arms such as those from faraway lands may attract a penalty.

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again.

Literacy

Intellect

Description: Literacy is the ability to read texts written in your native language. Any character with a Literacy stat of 3 or more is considered Literate: he can read most texts in his mother tongue without making a Literacy roll. The GM will only ask Literate characters to make Literacy rolls if the text they are trying to read is especially difficult to understand.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers. Usually unnecessary for Literate characters.

Failure Rules: You cannot try the Skill again. You are unable to read the text.

Medical Lore

Intellect

Description: Medical Lore increases the rate at which Injured characters heal. The Skill is explained in detail in section 8.12, Natural Healing With Medical Lore.

Skill Roll Rules: See section 8.12, Natural Healing With Medical Lore.

Failure Rules: See section 8.12, Natural Healing With Medical Lore.

4.11 Luck Skills

There are no Luck Skills. But Luck is still a very useful Attribute. To know why, see section 3.9, The Luck Attribute on page 20.

4.12 Creating New Skills

Creating new Skills is easy. Start by coming up with the Skill you want to create. Let's take Juggling as our new Skill. Next, determine which Attribute the new Skill relates to. You should consult your GM about this if you're not certain. Juggling is clearly an Agility Skill. Finally, write up a brief description of what the Skill does, how you roll it, and what happens if you fail your Skill roll. Et voil: a new Skill.

Juggling

Agility

Description: Juggling allows characters to keep a number of objects (such as balls, knives, or flaming torches) in the air continuously. In the most simple form of juggling, the juggler uses three balls. More complex forms involve many more objects, or objects that are much more difficult to throw and catch.

Skill Roll Rules: Roll less than or equal to your Skill stat, subject to any modifiers.

Failure Rules: You drop one or more of the items you attempted to juggle.

Chapter 5

Advancement

ONE of the most satisfying parts of roleplaying is watching your character improve. And one of the least satisfying parts of other RPGs is the level-based advancement system. Dominion Rules takes a different approach to character advancement. DR characters advance not by great leaps from one level to the next, but by steady improvement of individual skills.

5.1 Attributes and Skills: A Reminder

Remember, your character's six core Attributes never change. If your character's Agility stat is 3, it will always be 3. But that character's Horsemanship Skill (an Agility-based Skill) may improve as you apply Advancement Points to it.

5.2 Advancement Points (APs)

Advancement Points reward successful adventures. (You may also get them for failed adventures, though you probably won't get as many!) APs are assigned by the GM, usually at the end of the playing session, though GMs may give them out at any time.

New characters will always start out with some APs (see chapter 2, Creating a Character to know how this happens). Your character will also get them during or after adventures. Once you get some, what do you do with them?

There are two ways to spend APs: Skill Improvement and Lucky Breaks.

5.2.1 Skill Improvement

To explain Skill Improvement, let's take the example of Scott's character, a warrior by the name of Sir Gavin Strong. Sir Gavin gained 8 APs in his most recent glorious exploit. But Sir Gavin also got pretty badly beaten up in that adventure, and Scott doesn't want that to happen again. So Scott decides to improve Sir Gavin's Dodge Skill, so that Sir Gavin will

have a better chance of Dodging attacks. (Dodge is a Combat Skill; to learn more about it, see section 7.3.11, Dodge).

Sir Gavin's Dodge stat is currently 3. To improve a Skill, one must spend a number of APs equal to the current stat of the Skill one wishes to improve. Thus, Scott must spend 3 of his 8 APs to raise Sir Gavin's Dodge stat from 3 to 4.

Scott does this, and Sir Gavin's Dodge stat is now 4. But Scott still has 5 APs to spend. He decides to raise Sir Gavin's Dodge stat again. This time, Scott must spend 4 APs to increase Sir Gavin's Dodge from 4 to 5.

Scott has now spent 7 APs improving Sir Gavin's Dodge stat from 3 to 5. But Scott has 1 AP left. What can he do with it? He cannot spend it to increase Sir Gavin's Dodge, because it now takes 5 APs to improve that Skill.

As it turns out, Sir Gavin has no Skills with a stat of 1. This means Scott can't spend his remaining 1 AP on anything. So Scott simply records the spare AP on his Character Record. He can use it the next time the GM assigns him more APs.

5.2.2 Lucky Breaks

Or—to continue our example—Scott can use his spare AP to get a Lucky Break the next time Sir Gavin gets into a tight spot. A character cannot get a Lucky Break unless he has at least 1 AP to spend on it. Note that the AP is expended whether the Lucky Break is helpful to the character or not.

To know more about what a Lucky Break is and how you can get one, see section 3.9.1, Lucky Breaks.


5.3 Limits to Advancement

There is no limit to how high a character may advance a given Skill. A player may choose, for instance, to advance his character's Strike stat to 15. That way, the character would have a good chance of hitting his target even with a -7 Strike Penalty.

Keep in mind, however, that a roll of 12 always fails. Even if a character's Pick Locks stat is 16, a roll of 12 means he failed. See section 1.7, The Twelve-Sided Die.

Chapter 6

Order of Play

 COMPLEX ACTIONS such as Spellcasting and Combat will require a lot of dice-rolling. Players will need to keep track of various stats and modifiers. To make this quick and easy, Dominion Rules use a straightforward system which divides play into rounds and stages. Swifter characters act before slower ones, and Injury is resolved immediately.

6.1 What Are the Order of Play Rules?

Simply put, the Order of Play rules are rules that tell players and the GM who goes first, who goes last, who goes in between, and whose actions affect or do not affect other characters. This will make more sense as you read on.

6.2 When to Use the Order of Play Rules

An adventure can be divided into two types of play: ‘roleplaying’ and ‘roll-playing’.

Roleplaying (with an e) is the sort of interaction between characters and the Games Master that requires all involved to play a role, like actors in a play.

EXAMPLE

Sir Gavin is trying to gain entry to Broadkeep Jail. His friends languish inside, unjustly imprisoned by the crooked captain of the Broadkeep City Guard. Sir Gavin is played by Scott. Scott decides that rather than attacking the guards, Sir Gavin will try to talk his way past them. In other words, Scott is going to try to roleplay through the situation.

‘I walk up to the guards’, says Scott, playing the role of Sir Gavin. ‘May I help you, sir?’ responds the GM, playing the role of one of the guards.

‘I am Sir Gavin Strong, His Majesty’s Inspector of Prisons’, declares Sir Gavin—telling a little white lie! ‘I am commanded to inspect this prison. You have, of course,

been informed of my visit.'

'First I've heard of it, mate', replies the guard, 'I can't let you in without authorisation.'

'This is outrageous!' replies Sir Gavin, 'I command you to step aside, in the name of the king, or I shall see you both sacked.'

'Sacked? Er...will you wait a moment, sir? I'll check with the sheriff.'

You do not need to use the Order of Play rules when roleplaying. You just act out the parts as needed.

Roll-playing (with an l) is determining the consequences of character action by rolling the twelve-sided die: making Skill rolls, Timing rolls, WithIn rolls, applying Action Penalties and other modifiers to these rolls, and so on. This can get complicated. The way to keep it simple is to use the Order of Play rules.

But just because you are rolling the die doesn't mean you must use the Order of Play rules. If the die-rolling is simple to resolve, don't bother using them.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice and her party find themselves in the ruins of an ancient castle. Dame Beatrice discovers writing in Croellic carved round a stone door-way. She wants to try to read it, so she will use her Croellic Skill (6). The other party-members take no actions.

This is a simple situation: only one player is acting, and the action is straightforward. There is no reason to use the Order of Play rules here. The GM simply tells Dame Beatrice that there is a -1 penalty to her Skill roll caused by the difficulty of reading the worn stone. Dame Beatrice rolls a 4: she succeeds. The writing says, 'The entrance is easy; the exit is perilous!'

Usually, Order of Play rules will only be necessary in Combat (regular as well as magical and priestly) or when several characters are acting at roughly the same time—especially when their actions are somehow in competition.

EXAMPLE

Otto the Rat spies the key hanging on a hook on the south wall. But so does the drunken sailor! To determine who gets to it first, use the Order of Play rules.

The Order of Play rules apply somewhat differently when catching up with retreating characters. See section [sec:catchingupwithretreatingcharacters](#), *Catching Up With Retreating Characters* on page 64.

6.3 Rounds and Stages

Character action in DR can be divided into periods called rounds. Some actions will be complete in one round (for example, racing a drunken sailor to a key hanging on the wall). Other actions, especially Combat, will last many rounds.

A round consists of four Stages. They are the Timing Stage, the Strategy Stage, the Modifier Stage and the Resolution Stage.

In the Timing Stage, characters determine Timing Order for the round by making Timing rolls. Timing Order is the order in which characters act in the Strategy and Resolution Stages.

In the Strategy Stage, characters declare what actions they will take this round based on the Timing Order: from the slowest character to the fastest.

In the Modifier Stage, characters roll all Skills that produce modifiers (penalties or bonuses) to other Skills. These include all Defensive Combat Skills, some Priestcraft Skills and certain Spells.

In the Resolution Stage, characters resolve all Skills declared this round and not resolved in the Modifier Stage (notably Offensive Combat Skills). Skills are resolved in reverse Timing Order: from the fastest character to the slowest. Injury is resolved the moment it occurs.

Each Stage is explained at length below.

6.4 The Timing Stage

A round begins with the Timing Stage, in which characters determine their Timing Scores for the round.

To determine your Timing Score, roll the twelve-sided die and add your character's Timing stat to the result.

EXAMPLE

Alas, Sir Gavin's attempt at a peaceful entry into the Broadkeep Jail has failed. The guards don't believe his story. Oh well, Sir Gavin prefers a fight anyway. . . .

There are two guards, Brutus and Groth. Brutus's Timing stat is 3. Groth's is 4. Sir Gavin's is 6. Brutus rolls 5 on the twelve-sided die, so his Timing Score this round is 8: 5 (Brutus's roll) + 3 (Brutus's Timing) = 8. Groth also rolls a 5. His Timing Score is 9: 5 (Groth's roll) + 4 (Groth's Timing) = 9. Finally, Sir Gavin rolls 10. His Timing Score is 16: 10 (Sir Gavin's roll) + 6 (Sir Gavin's Timing) = 16.

Use the Timing Scores to establish the Timing Order for the round. The Timing Order goes from slowest score to the fastest score.

EXAMPLE

The Timing Order for this round is Brutus (8), Groth (9), and finally Sir Gavin (16).

The Timing Order determines two things: the order in which characters declare their Strategies in the Strategy Stage; and the order in which characters resolve Strike or Brawling attacks in the Resolution Stage.

When characters' Timing Scores are tied, the tied characters roll again.

EXAMPLE

A soldier and his drunken mate attack a merchant in Norsidal. The Soldier gets a Timing Score of 10. The Drunk and the Merchant both end up with Timing Scores of 7, so they roll again.

Note that characters who did not get tied Timing Scores do not roll again.

EXAMPLE

The Merchant rerolls his Timing Score and gets a 9. The Drunk rerolls and gets a 6. The Timing Order is as follows: the Drunk (6), the Merchant (9), and the Soldier (10).

Timing rolls are like all other rolls in that a roll of 12 always fails. This means that a character who rolls 12 on his Timing roll goes to the bottom of the Timing Order. Note that only a rolled 12—before adding the character's Timing stat—is an automatic failure. If a character's Timing Score equals 12, that is not an automatic failure.

EXAMPLE

Had Sir Gavin rolled a 6, his Timing Score would have been 12 ($6 + 6 = 12$). But this would not put him at the bottom of the Timing Order, because he did not roll a 12.

Some weapons force their wielders to forfeit their Timing stat when calculating their Timing Scores. For more on this, see chapter 9, The Armoury.

6.5 The Strategy Stage

In this Stage, characters declare their Strategy for the round. To declare your character's Strategy is simply to announce what your character proposes to do this round.

Characters declare their Strategy in Timing Order: from the slowest character to the fastest. This means that characters with poor Timing Scores have to declare their Strategy before characters with good Timing Scores. So characters with good Timing Scores have the advantage of waiting to see what others (especially their opponents) intend to do before deciding what they themselves will do. This is especially important in Combat.

EXAMPLE

The Timing Order is Brutus, Groth, and Sir Gavin. So Brutus declares his Strategy first: he intends to Strike Sir Gavin once. Groth declares next: he intends to Strike Sir Gavin once as well, while also using his Heraldry Skill to identify his attacker by the colours he wears. It is now Sir Gavin's turn to declare his Strategy. Knowing that both his opponents have declared Strikes against him, he declares a Dodge.

Once a character has declared his Strategy, he cannot change it during the rest of the round.

EXAMPLE

Groth declared a Strike against Sir Gavin, while also using his Heraldry Skill to identify his attacker. If, during the Resolution Stage, Groth successfully identifies Sir Gavin and decides he doesn't want to Strike such a famous knight, that's too bad. He

cannot change his Strategy now. He should have thought of that during the Strategy Stage, before he declared a Strike.

6.6 The Modifier Stage

Figure 6.1: Vamptor



used to protect oneself against Offensive Combat Skills. The way Defensive Combat Skills protect characters is by producing modifiers that make Offensive Combat Skills harder. In the Modifier Stage, combattants who declared Defensive Combat Skills in the Strategy Stage make rolls for those Skills. Like most Skills, Defensive Combat Skills are only successful when the character rolls less than or equal to her Skill stat.

EXAMPLE

Of the three combattants in our example, only Sir Gavin declared a Defensive Combat Skill: he declared a Dodge. Sir Gavin now makes his Dodge roll. His Dodge stat is 5. If he rolls higher than 5, his attempted Dodge is unsuccessful. But if he rolls 5 or under, his Dodge succeeds. Sir Gavin rolls: a 4! A successful Dodge.

6.6.1 Defence Penalties

When a Defensive Combat Skill roll succeeds, the result of the roll is applied in the Resolution Stage as a modifier to the rolls of attacking opponents. These modifiers are called Defence Penalties. Defence Penalties last only for the duration of the current round.

EXAMPLE

Sir Gavin rolled 4, a successful Dodge. So the guards are assigned a Defence Penalty which will modify their Offensive Combat actions in the Resolution Stage. The Defence Penalty lasts only until the end of the current round. The penalty is -4 (because Sir Gavin rolled a 4).

If a character rolls two or more successful Defensive Combat Skills in the same round, the Defence Penalty is equal to the sum of the successful rolls.

EXAMPLE

Let's imagine that Sir Gavin declared two Dodges this round, and that he rolled a 4 and a 1. Both these were successful Dodge rolls. So the total Defence Penalty created by Sir Gavin's Dodges this round would have been -5: -4 (first Dodge roll) + -1 (second Dodge roll) = -5.

It may sometimes happen that a Defence Penalty makes an action impossible that round.

EXAMPLE

We will see below that Brutus' Strike stat is 5. But what if it were 4? The Defence Penalty is -4. So Brutus could not possibly Strike Sir Gavin this round: $4 - 4 = 0$, and you can't roll 0 on a twelve-sided die! This would mean that Sir Gavin had totally outmanoeuvred Brutus this round. Brutus would just have to wait and try again next round.

Defence Penalties apply only to Offensive Combat Skills. No other Skill is subject to Defence Penalties, even if the Skill seeks to cause Injury (for example, a Sorcery Spell) or cause harm in some other way (for example, the Priest's Smite with Infirmity Skill).

6.7 The Resolution Stage

The last Stage of a round is the Resolution Stage. It is called the Resolution Stage because it is the Stage in which characters 'resolve' (complete or finish) all the actions declared in the Strategy Stage that haven't yet been dealt with. These actions include any Offensive Combat Skills declared this round (if the characters are in Combat), and any other Skills they declared (such as reading a text, Smiting an opponent, or picking a pocket).

Offensive Combat Skills are subject to any Defence Penalties established in the Modifier Stage, as well as any other applicable modifiers determined then. No other Skills are subject to Defence Penalties.

In the Resolution Stage, all rolls are made in reverse Timing Order: the fastest goes first, the slowest goes last.

EXAMPLE

Figure 6.2: Elowyn



We are now in the Resolution Stage. The reverse Timing Order is Sir Gavin (16), Groth (9), and finally Brutus (8). So Sir Gavin goes first.

But Sir Gavin has not declared any actions this round other than his Dodge, which was dealt with in the Modifier Stage. So we skip to Groth.

Groth has declared a Strike and a Heraldry Skill action. He can roll either one first; it doesn't matter.

Groth's Strike roll is subject to a -4 Defence Penalty created by Sir Gavin's Dodge. Groth is also subject to a -1 Action Penalty for doing two things in one round: a Strike and a Heraldry Skill action. Groth's Strike stat is 7. But it drops to 2 because of the Defence and Action Penalties: $7 \text{ (Groth's Strike)} - 4 \text{ (Defence Penalty)} - 1 \text{ (Action Penalty)} = 2$. So Groth needs to roll 2 or less to Strike Sir Gavin this round. He rolls a 7. He misses Sir Gavin.

Groth now rolls his Heraldry Skill. His Heraldry stat is 6. It is not affected by the Defence Penalty because it is not an Offensive Combat Skill. But it is affected by the Action Penalty. So Groth needs to roll 5 or less to use his Heraldry Skill successfully this round. He rolls: 11, a failure.

Now it's Brutus' turn. Brutus' Strike stat is 5. The Defence Penalty is -4. So Brutus needs a 1 to Strike Sir Gavin. He rolls: a 1! Incredibly, he manages to Strike Sir Gavin.

6.7.1 Injury

Of the four Offensive Combat Skills, two are capable of causing Injury: Strike and Brawling. Injury can also be caused by other means: see section 8.6, Magical and Priestly Injury, on page 72 and section 8.7, Hazard Injury, on page 72.

No matter how they are caused, Injuries are always dealt with immediately, before moving on to resolve the next action.

EXAMPLE

Groth's Strike attempt failed. But had it succeeded, any injury it might have caused Sir Gavin would have been determined immediately—before moving on to Brutus.

Why determine Injury immediately? Because of Injury Penalties. Injury Penalties are modifiers to Skill stats caused by Injury. They must be determined immediately because they can affect a character's actions later in the Resolution Stage.

EXAMPLE

Imagine that Sir Gavin had declared a Strike against Groth this round.

The reverse Timing Order is Sir Gavin, Groth, and Brutus. So Sir Gavin goes first. He successfully Strikes Groth, causing a -2 Injury Penalty.

Now, Groth rolls for his Strike and Heraldry attempts. But both these rolls are subject to a -2 Injury Penalty. This would render Groth's Strike impossible: 7 (Groth's Strike) - 4 (Defence Penalty) - 1 (Action Penalty) - 2 (Injury Penalty) = 0.

Injury Penalties, and Injury in general, are explained in detail in chapter 8, Injury, Defeat, and Death.


6.8 The End of the Round

The Resolution Stage continues until all the characters have resolved the actions they declared in the Strategy Stage—including any Injury caused by those actions.

When that's done, the round ends. A new round now begins, starting with the Timing Stage.

Chapter 7

Combat

OMBAT is one of the most exciting parts of roleplaying. Combat in DR is no exception: combattants strike and parry, feint and dodge in battles that are as challenging to the players' minds as they are to the characters' bodies. DR Combat strives for a workable mix of simplicity, strategy, realism and fun.

7.1 Order of Play

To understand Combat, you must first understand the Order of Play rules. If you have not already done so, read chapter 6, Order of Play now.

7.2 The Combat Composite

The actions used in Combat—running, jumping, lunging, swinging, aiming, and so on—test a character's strength and nimbleness. In DR terms, Combat tests a character's Vigour and Agility. The Skills that Combat requires cannot be said to be exclusively Vigour- or Agility-based; rather, a good sword attack or a successful parry of an opponent's blow relies on both Attributes. That's why DR's Combat Skills are not founded solely on either the Vigour or Agility Attribute, but rather are based on something called the Combat Composite.

Every character has a Combat Composite. It is determined by taking the average of a character's Vigour and Agility stats, and, where needed, rounding the result either up or down according to the rules of Favourable Rounding (see section 3.9.2, Favourable Rounding, on page 21).

EXAMPLE

Raven the Unscrupulous has a Vigour of 2 and an Agility of 3. To find out Raven's Combat Composite, add his Vigour (2) to his Agility (3) and divide the sum (5) by 2. The result is 2.5. But you can't have a stat of 2.5, so Raven has to round the number up or down. Since Raven's Luck score is only 2, he does not benefit from

Favourable Rounding. Thus, Raven rounds the number down to 2. Raven's Combat Composite is 2.

7.3 Combat Skills

Combat Skills are simply Skills based on the Combat Composite—in the same way that Intellect Skills are based on the Intellect Attribute, Vigour Skills on the Vigour Attribute, and so on. The Combat Composite is the starting stat for all Combat Skills—in the same way that a characters' Attributes are the starting stats for all related Skills. These stats can then be improved in the same way as other Skills (see chapter 5, Advancement).

EXAMPLE

Raven's Combat Composite is 2. Thus, all his Combat Skills start at 2.

7.3.1 Melee Combat and Missile Combat

Combat comes in two forms: melee and missile. Melee is Combat using up-close and personal weapons like swords, maces, hammers, and pole-arms. In melee, the combattants are no more than a sword's reach (or quarterstaff's reach, or pole-arm's reach...) away from each other. But Missile Combat is battle from a distance using missile weapons such as crossbows, catapults and slings. The combattants may be as far away from each other as the range of their missile weapons allows.

Some Combat Skills can be used only in melee Combat. Others can be used in both melee and missile Combat. Whether a Combat Skill can be used in missile Combat is noted in the Skill's description.

7.3.2 Offensive and Defensive Combat Skills

There are nine Combat Skills: Strike, Missile Strike, Feint, Disarm, Brawling, Parry, Block, Dodge, and Movement. The first five of these are Offensive, and the rest are Defensive.

Figure 7.1: Delorean



Offensive Combat Skills are used to Injure or otherwise harm an opponent. They are aimed at a particular target or opponent, and can be performed more than once in a round.

EXAMPLE

Raven the Unscrupulous and Otto the Rat have attempted to mug a man in a dark alley. Little do they know, their intended victim is the famed knight Sir Derek Cape! The three men are in Combat. Otto and Raven have declared one Strike each. Sir Derek has declared a Dodge.

A Strike is an Offensive Combat Skill: it is aimed at a particular target, and can be performed more than once in a round. Sir Derek is the target of Otto and Raven's Strikes. Both attackers declared only one Strike each. But they could have declared two, three, or more Strikes this round.

Defensive Combat Skills are used to protect oneself against Offensive Combat Skills. Unlike Offensive Combat Skills, they have no particular target or victim. They affect anyone who attacks them in the current round. But like Offensive Combat Skills, they can be performed more than once in a round.

EXAMPLE

Knowing Otto and Raven would Strike him (because he had the best Timing Score), Sir Derek declared a Dodge.

A Dodge is a Defensive Combat Skill. It has no particular target. Rather, the Dodge is effective against any attacker. Sir Derek's Dodge created a Defence Penalty of -4. This penalty applies to both Otto and Raven.

Note, too, that Sir Derek could have chosen to Dodge twice, or to Dodge once and Parry once. Doubling up like this would have improved his chances of making a successful roll. It could also have produced a bigger Defence Penalty. But it would also have attracted an Action Penalty.

If a character rolls two or more successful Defensive Combat Skills in the same round, the Defence Penalty is equal to the sum of the successful rolls.

EXAMPLE

Let's imagine that Sir Derek declared two Dodges this round, and that he rolled a 4 and a 2. Both these were successful Dodge rolls. So the total Defence Penalty created by Sir Derek's Dodges this round is -6: -4 (first Dodge roll) + -2 (second Dodge roll) = -6.

7.3.3 Strike

A Strike is an Offensive Combat Skill by which a combattant attempts to hit his opponent with a melee weapon such as a sword, a hammer, or a pole-arm.

To make a successful Strike, a combattant must declare a Strike in the Strategy Stage and roll less than or equal to her Strike stat (subject to any modifiers) in the Resolution Stage. A roll of 12 always fails.

<i>Range</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Short	No modifier
Mid	-3 to Strike
Long	-6 to Strike

Table 7.1: Range Penalties

The combattant must have a melee weapon to use the Strike Skill. If he has only a missile weapon, he must use the Missile Strike Skill. If he has no weapon, he can still attack, but he must use the Brawling Skill (see section 7.3.8, Brawling, on page 56).

EXAMPLE

Otto is about to try to Strike Sir Derek. Otto's Strike stat is 6. Normally, then, Otto would need to roll 6 or less to Strike. But Sir Derek's Dodge created a -4 Defence Penalty. So Otto's Strike stat is 2: 6 (Otto's unmodified Strike) - 4 (Defence Penalty) = 2.

Otto rolls an 11. He misses.

A successful Strike can result in Injury or worse. To learn how this works, see chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

7.3.4 Missile Strike

A Missile Strike is an Offensive Combat Skill by which a combattant attempts to hit his opponent with missile weapon such as bow or a sling.

To make a successful Missile Strike, a combattant must declare a Missile Strike in the Strategy Stage and roll less than or equal to his Missile Strike stat in the Resolution Stage, subject to any modifiers (notably Range Penalties). A roll of 12 always fails.

Range Penalties are modifiers to Missile Strike imposed to represent the greater difficulty of hitting targets that are far away. Range Penalties are shown in table 7.1.

What counts as short, mid, or long range depends on the type of missile weapon used. See chapter 9, The Armoury for the ranges of different missile weapons.

EXAMPLE

Geoffrey Sureshot declares two Missile Strikes with his long bow against the oncoming bandits. The GM determines that the bandits are at Mid Range.

Geoffrey's Missile Strike stat is 10. This is modified by a -3 Mid Range Penalty and a -1 Action Penalty. So Geoffrey needs to roll 6 or under.

A successful Missile Strike can result in Injury. See chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

Missile Strike (and missile weapons) cannot be used in melee. To attack someone in melee, use Strike or Brawling.

Defence Penalties generated by Dodge and Parry Skills do not apply to Missile Strikes. Defence Penalties created by Blocks do apply, however. Characters who want to defend themselves against Missile Strikes must use the Block Skill.

A combatant must have a missile weapon to use the Missile Strike Skill.

Missile Strikes work just like Strikes, except for the differences described here. Unless otherwise noted, rules that apply to Strikes also apply to Missile Strikes.

7.3.5 Called Shots

Strikes (including Missile Strikes) are attacks made without aiming for any particular part of the opponent's body (ex. the guard's left hand) or any particular spot on the general target (ex. the small hole in the tree trunk). When Strikes against people or creatures are successful, they are deemed to hit their victim's torso (if the creature has a torso!). When Strikes against targets are successful, they are deemed to hit the target's most exposed spot (ex. the trunk, but not the hole).

A Called Shot is a more specifically aimed Strike. To make a Called Shot, a player simply declares in his Strategy that he is aiming for a particular target, such as the guard's left hand or the hole in the tree trunk. The GM will assign a Called Shot Modifier reflecting the extra difficulty to Strike it.

If the character rolls equal to or less than her modified Strike stat, she hits her target (ex. the left hand; the hole in the tree trunk). If she rolls equal to or less than her unmodified Strike stat, but higher than her modified Strike stat, she hits the general target but not the particular target (ex. the guard, but not the guard's left hand; the tree, but not the hole in the trunk). If she rolls higher than her unmodified Strike stat, she misses altogether (ex. misses the guard or the tree entirely).

A Called Shot counts as an action for the purposes of Action Penalties. So a character who declares a Strike with a Called Shot makes his Strike with a -1 Action Penalty. A character may declare 2 Strikes, one with a Called Shot and one without (-2 Action Penalty), 2 Strikes both with Called Shots (-3 Action Penalty), etc.

EXAMPLE

Geoffrey Sureshot is competing in an archery tournament. He is at short range from a target. He declares a Called Shot on the target's bullseye. Geoffrey's Missile Strike is 10, so he needs to roll a 9 or under to hit the target: 10 (Geoffrey's Missile

Figure 7.2: Tiernacol



Table 7.2: Called Shot Modifiers for Body Parts

<i>Location</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Eyes	-5
Neck	-4
Head	-3
Hands	-2
Feet	-2
Limbs	-1

Strike) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 9. But to hit the bullseye, the GM assigns a Called Shot Modifier of -7.

If Geoffrey rolls over 9, he misses the target altogether—very embarrassing! If he rolls between 3 and 9, he hits the target but does not hit the bullseye. If he rolls 2 or less, he hits the bullseye.

EXAMPLE

No one was injured in the first round of Combat between Sir Derek and the rogues. This round, Sir Derek gets the lowest Timing Score, and Raven gets the highest.

Sir Derek declares a Disarm attack against Raven. Otto declares a Feint. Raven declares a Called Shot to Sir Derek's head.

(In the Modifier Stage, Otto makes a successful Feint roll and Raven makes a successful Grip roll. We will explain both these rolls below.)

Raven's Strike stat is 5. The GM assigns a Called Shot Modifier to Strike Sir Derek's head of -3 (based on the Called Shot Modifier diagram, below). So Raven must roll a 1 to hit the knight's head: 5 (Raven's Strike) - 1 (Action Penalty for the Called Shot) - 3 (Called Shot Modifier) = 1. If he rolls between 2 and 5, he misses Sir Derek's head, but makes a normal Strike (his Strike falls on the knight's torso). If Raven rolls higher than 5, he misses Sir Derek altogether.

Raven rolls an 11. He missed the knight completely.

Diagram 1 shows the Called Shot Modifiers to Strike for commonly aimed-for body parts. In the case of parts of the body with modifiers of -3 or greater (head, eyes and neck), special Injury rules apply (see section 8.5.1, Called Shots to Vulnerable Area, on page 70).

Called Shot Modifiers are suspended against Defeated characters. See section 8.5.2, Defeat, on page 71.

7.3.6 Feint

A Feint is an Offensive Combat Skill. It consists of a pretended blow, evasion, or attack intended to confuse an opponent. To be effective, a Feint attack must be used in conjunction

with a Strike. This is because a successful Feint attack enhances the Feinting character's Strike stat that round. (A Feint cannot be used to enhance a Missile Strike.)

To make a Feint attack, declare both a Strike and a Feint in the Strategy stage. (Note that declaring two or more actions in the same round gives rise to an Action Penalty; see section 4.3, Action Penalties, on page 23). In the Modifier Stage, make your Feint roll. If your Feint fails, roll your Strike normally. If your Feint roll is successful, make your Strike roll with a Feint Bonus to your Strike stat equal to your Feint stat. Note that the Feint Bonus is equal to your Feint stat, not your Feint roll; the Feint roll only determines whether the Feint is successful. As always, a Feint roll of 12 automatically fails.

EXAMPLE

Otto (Strike 6 Feint 4) declared a Feint and a Strike against Sir Derek. Because of the -1 Action Penalty Otto incurs for taking two actions this round, Otto must roll 5 or less to Strike and 3 or less to Feint.

In the Modifier Stage, Otto makes his Feint rolls a 3, a successful Feint.

Otto now needs a 9 or less to Strike Sir Derek: 6 (Otto's Strike) - 1 (Action Penalty) + 4 (Otto's Feint stat) = 9. Otto rolls a 10. Bad luck for Otto!

EXAMPLE

Had Otto's Feint roll failed, he would have needed to roll 5 or less to Strike Sir Derek this round: 6 (Otto's Strike) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 5.

A successful Feint roll modifies only one of the Feinting character's Strikes that round. If the Feinting character declares one Feint and two or more Strikes, the Feint (if successful) modifies only the first Strike. If the Feinting character declares two Feints and three or more Strikes, the Feints (if successful) modify the first and second Strikes, respectively. And so on.

EXAMPLE

Frederic the Faker (Strike 8 Feint 6) declares one Feint and two Strikes. Frederic needs a 4 or less to Feint: 6 (Frederic's Feint) - 2 (Action Penalty) = 4.

In the Modifier Stage, Frederic rolls 4—a successful Feint.

In the Resolution Stage, Frederic's modified Strike stat for the first Strike is 12, ie he needs to roll 12 or less to Strike: 8 (Frederic's Strike) + 6 (Feint Bonus) - 2 (Action Penalty) = 12.

But for Frederic's second Strike, he needs to roll 6 or less: 8 (Frederic's Strike) - 2 (Action Penalty) = 6. The Feint Bonus applies only to the first Strike.

To enjoy Feint Bonuses on both his Strikes, Frederic needed to declare two Feints: one for each Strike.

A character can declare no more than one Feint for each Strike he declares. She may not, for instance, declare three Feints and one Strike.

EXAMPLE

While Frederic can declare one Feint and two Strikes (as he did in the previous example), he cannot declare two Feints and one Strike. He can never declare more Feints than Strikes in the same round.

Strike attacks improved by successful Feints remain subject to Defence Penalties (see section 6.6.1, Defence Penalties, on page 43).

EXAMPLE

Frederic the Faker is attacking Dodgy Dirk.

In the Timing Stage, Dirk gets the best Timing Score.

In the Strategy Stage, Frederic (Strike 8 Feint 6) declares a Strike and a Feint. Dirk (Dodge 9) declares a Dodge.

In the Modifier Stage, Dirk makes a successful Dodge roll of 6 and Frederic makes a successful Feint roll with a 3.

Finally, the Resolution Stage. Frederic's Strike stat is 8. So Frederic needs to roll 7 or less to Strike Dirk this round: $8 \text{ (Frederic's Strike)} - 1 \text{ (Action Penalty)} + 6 \text{ (Feint Bonus)} - 6 \text{ (Dirk's Dodge)} = 7$.

Feints are generally performed by armed combattants only. It is possible to Feint without a weapon, but the unarmed attacker is subject to a -5 Weaponless Penalty to his Feint roll. This is because unarmed Feints are less convincing.

EXAMPLE

Had Otto (Strike 6 Feint 4) attempted to Feint without a weapon, the Feint would have become impossible. This is because he would have needed to roll -2: $4 \text{ (Otto's Feint)} - 1 \text{ (Action Penalty)} - 5 \text{ (Weaponless Penalty)} = -2$. You can't roll less than 1 on a twelve-sided die. So the action is impossible.

7.3.7 Disarm

A Disarm attack is an Offensive Combat Skill by which an attacker attempts to knock his opponent's weapon out of his hand(s). The attacking character can attempt to Disarm his opponent with or without the use of a weapon, but there is a penalty for weaponless Disarm attacks.

To make a successful Disarm attack, a combattant must declare a Disarm attack in the Strategy Stage. The intended victim of the Disarm attack then rolls his Grip Skill in the Modifier Stage (Grip is a Vigour Skill: see Grip on page 25). If the Grip roll is successful, it produces a Grip Penalty equal to the Grip roll. The combattant attempting to Disarm must then roll less than or equal to his Disarm stat in the Resolution Stage, subject to any Grip Penalty. A roll of 12 always fails.

EXAMPLE

In the Strategy Stage, Sir Derek declares a Disarm attack against Raven.

In the Modifier Stage, Raven rolls his Grip Skill to defend against the Disarm attack. Raven's Grip stat is 7—an excellent grip! If Raven rolls higher than 7, he fails his Grip roll and Sir Derek suffers no penalty to his Disarm stat. If Raven rolls 7 or less, the result of that roll becomes a Grip Penalty that is deducted from Sir Derek's Disarm stat. Raven rolls a 3: a successful Grip roll.

In the Resolution Stage, the knight must roll a 4 or less to Disarm Raven: 7 (Sir Derek's Disarm) $- 3$ (Grip Penalty) $= 4$. Sir Derek rolls 2: the Disarm attack succeeds and Raven loses his sword.

EXAMPLE

Had Raven rolled a 7 for his Grip roll, it would have been impossible for Derek to Disarm Raven this round. Why? Because 7 (Sir Derek's Disarm stat) $- 7$ (Grip Penalty) $= 0$, and you can't roll less than 1 on a twelve-sided die.

Note that the defending character does not incur an Action Penalty for using his Grip Skill against a Disarming attacker.

The Grip Skill is not the only defence a character has against the Disarm Skill. The Defence Penalties created by Blocks and Dodges are deducted from the Disarming character's Disarm stat, too. Furthermore, Defence and Grip Penalties are cumulative in effect.

EXAMPLE

Had Raven declared a Block this round, producing a Defence Penalty of -2 , Sir Derek would have needed to roll a 2 or less to Disarm Raven.

Here's the math: 7 (Sir Derek's Disarm stat) $- 3$ (Grip Penalty) $- 2$ (Defence Penalty) $= 2$.

The Parry Skill is not effective against a Disarm attack. Rather, a character attempting to Disarm an opponent who is Parrying enjoys a $+1$ bonus to his Disarm stat. This is because using a weapon to Parry oncoming blows exposes that weapon to Disarm attacks. Clever combattants will take advantage of good Timing Scores by attempting to Disarm those who Parry unwisely.

EXAMPLE

Charles the Clever is dueling Bruto the Brash. Bruto's Timing Score is lowest, so he declares first. He unwisely declares a Parry. 'Aha!', thinks Charles, and declares a Disarm attack.

Charles' Disarm stat is 5, but because Bruto is Parrying this round, Charles gets a $+1$ bonus to his stat. So Charles's Disarm stat (for this round only) is 6.

When a combattant is Disarmed, his weapon falls to the ground. It is for the GM to determine exactly what happens to it (for instance, perhaps it falls over a nearby cliff), but usually it will fall somewhere nearby where it can be retrieved. To retrieve a lost weapon, the combattant must declare this action in his Strategy. Any other combattant (notably the one who Disarmed the character!) may also attempt to retrieve the weapon. Of those characters who attempt to retrieve the weapon, whoever has the best Timing Score that

round will get to it first. Retrieving a weapon is an action for Action Penalty purposes. It takes place in the Resolution Stage.

EXAMPLE

Next round the knight and the rogues make their Timing rolls. The resulting Timing Order is Sir Derek, Otto, Raven.

Since Sir Derek's Timing Score was lowest, he has to reveal his Strategy first. He knows he hasn't been fast enough to beat Raven to the fallen sword, so he declares a Strike on Raven. Otto declares a Strike on Sir Derek, and Raven declares he will Dodge Sir Derek's Strike and retrieve his weapon.

In the Modifier Stage, Raven fails his Dodge throw (which was lowered by a -1 Action Penalty).

In the Resolution Stage, Raven acts first and retrieves his weapon. Otto misses his Strike. Sir Derek then attempts to Strike Raven. But he rolls 12, an automatic miss.

EXAMPLE

Imagine for a moment that Raven had the lowest Timing Score this round, and so had to declare his Strategy before knowing what Sir Derek was going to do. Had Raven declared he would retrieve his sword, Sir Derek would most likely have declared the same thing, and since Sir Derek had the better a Timing Score this round, he would have beaten Raven to it. Given this, Raven would probably be forced to consider some other option: drawing another weapon (if he had one) or Retreating, or anything else he could come up with!

A Disarm attack is only possible using a melee weapon. A character can attempt to Disarm an opponent armed with a missile weapon, but only if that opponent is in melee.

EXAMPLE

A bandit armed with a sword proposes to Disarm his opponent, Geoffrey Sureshot. Geoffrey is armed with a long bow. But Geoffrey is standing 50 metres away! The bandit cannot Disarm him; he's not in melee. But were Geoffrey—still armed with his long bow—in melee, the bandit could attempt to Disarm him. That's not very likely to happen, however. Why would Geoffrey wield his long bow in melee?

In all the examples above, the Disarming character carried a weapon. It is possible, however, to Disarm an opponent without using a weapon. But it is harder to do. Characters attempting to Disarm their opponents without a weapon are subject to a -3 Weaponless Penalty.

EXAMPLE

In Example 1 (above), had Sir Derek attempted to Disarm Raven with his bare hands, he would have been subject to a -3 Weaponless Penalty.

This would have lowered Sir Derek's Disarm stat to 1. Here's the math: 7 (Sir Derek's Disarm) - 3 (Grip Penalty) -3 (Weaponless Penalty) = 1.

7.3.8 Brawling

Brawling is an Offensive Combat Skill by which a combattant attacks without weapons. Punches, kicks, wrestling moves of all types, even bites and head-butts: these are the sorts of actions covered by the Brawling Skill.

To make a successful Brawling attack, a combattant must declare a Brawling attack in the Strategy Stage and roll less than or equal to his Brawling stat (subject to any modifiers) in the Resolution Stage. A roll of 12 always fails.

A successful Brawling attack can result in Injury. To know how Injury works, see chapter 8, Injury, Defeat and Death.

EXAMPLE

Bully (Brawling 4) attacks Yobbo with his bare hands. Yobbo takes no defensive action, so Bully needs a 4 or under to attack Yobbo successfully. He rolls 3: a successful Brawling attack.

It goes without saying that Brawling is a melee Skill only.

7.3.9 Parry

A Parry is a Defensive Combat Skill that consists of countering a Strike with one's weapon. For example, a character may avoid being struck by her opponent's quarterstaff by Parrying the blow with her broadsword.

To make a successful Parry, a combattant must declare the Parry in the Strategy Stage, then roll less than or equal to his Parry stat in the Modifier Stage. As always, a roll of 12 automatically fails.

Recall that because Parry is a Defensive Combat Skill, it is effective against all attackers—it is not necessary to declare whose attack one is Parrying. See section 7.3.2, Offensive and Defensive Combat Skills, on page 47.

A successful Parry imposes a Defence Penalty on the Striking character (see section 6.6.1, Defence Penalties, on page 43).

EXAMPLE

This round, the Timing Scores produce the following Timing Order: Raven, Otto, Sir Derek.

Both the rogues declare a Strike against Sir Derek. Sir Derek declares a Parry.

Sir Derek's Parry stat is 5. If Sir Derek rolls higher than 5, he fails to Parry, and the rogues make their Strike rolls without the hinderance of a Defence Penalty. Sir Derek rolls a 5! So Raven and Otto's Strikes are subject to a -5 Defence Penalty this round.

Otto's Strike stat is 6. But it is subject to the -5 Defence Penalty. So Otto needs a 1 to Strike: $6 \text{ (Otto's Strike)} - 5 \text{ (Defence Penalty)} = 1$. Otto rolls a 3: his Strike was Parried.

Raven's Strike stat is 5, and since $5 \text{ (Raven's Strike)} - 5 \text{ (Defence Penalty)} = 0$, Raven's Strike automatically fails.

Parrying is effective only against Strikes and Brawls. It has no effect against Feints or Missiles Strikes. For the effect of Parrying Disarm attacks, see section 7.3.7, Disarm, on page 53.

If a combattant declares a Parry, and that Parry becomes unnecessary because the Parrying combattant is not attacked that round, the Parry is simply ignored. Action Penalties apply normally, however.

EXAMPLE

Imagine that Raven declared a Strike and a Parry, that Otto declared a Strike, and that Sir Derek declared a Parry. In that case, Raven's Parry is totally unnecessary: he expected the knight to attack him, but the knight did not. In such a case, Raven's Parry is simply ignored, and no Parrying Penalty applies. However, Raven's Strike is still subject to a -1 Action Penalty because Raven took two actions this round: a Parry (which turned out to be unnecessary) and a Strike.

A Strike cannot be Parried unless the Parrying character has a weapon with which to Parry the attack. Some weapons cannot be used to Parry; the wielder must change weapons to use his Parry Skill, or go without it. Furthermore, some weapons grant their wielders bonuses to Parry, while others impose penalties. See THE ARMOURY for details.

A Brawl can be Parried with a weapon or without one.

There are three Combat Skills that create Defence Penalties: Parry, Block, and Dodge. You may wonder why you should choose Parry over the others (or, for that matter, why you should avoid Parry in favour of the others). There are pros and cons to the Parry skill:

Pros

- Some weapons give characters a bonus to their Parry stat. This means that you can improve your Parry stat without APs by picking a good Parrying weapon. The same is not true of Dodge or Block.
- You can do it with both hands engaged. By contrast, Blocking requires that at least one hand carry a shield. This rules out two-handed weapons for characters who want to Block.

Cons

- Parrying Strikes requires a weapon. If you have no weapon, you can't Parry Strikes. (But you can Parry Brawling attacks with your bare hands.) By contrast, you can Dodge with or without a weapon.
- You can't Parry Missile Strikes. But you can Block them.
- Some weapons impose penalties to Parry. If your favourite weapon is among them, you may prefer to Dodge or Block.
- Parrying doesn't work against Disarm attacks. And there's always the risk of being Disarmed if you Parry foolishly.

7.3.10 Block

A Block is a Defensive Combat Skill whereby the Blocking character attempts to counter a Strike, Missile Strike, Brawling, or Disarm attack with his shield. You must have a shield, or some shield-like object, to use the Block Skill.

To make a successful Block, a combattant must declare the Block in the Strategy Stage and roll less than or equal to his Block stat in the Modifier Stage. A roll of 12 always fails.

Because it is a Defensive Combat Skill, a Block is effective against any attack received that round; it is not necessary to declare whose attack one is Blocking. See section 7.3.2, Offensive and Defensive Combat Skills, on page 47.

A successful Block imposes a Defence Penalty on the attacking character equal to the Block roll.

EXAMPLE

Next round, the Timing Order is Sir Derek, Raven, and Otto.

Sir Derek declares a Strike on Raven. Raven declares he will try to Block the Strike with his shield. Otto declares a Strike.

Raven's Block stat is 4. He rolls a 1: a successful Block, creating a -1 Defence Penalty.

Otto rolls a 7: his Strike misses.

Sir Derek's Strike stat is 9, but is lowered to 8 this round by the -1 Defence Penalty. Sir Derek rolls an 11. Another miss! This is not Sir Derek's day.

If a combattant declares a Block which becomes unnecessary because there is no attack to Block, the Block is ignored. Action Penalties apply normally, however.

Blocks are impossible without a shield or some shield-like object. Shields do not give bonuses to Block, though they do increase characters' Withstand Injury stats. Shields require a free hand. So characters who want to use two-handed weapons cannot use the Block Skill. See chapter 9, The Armoury for details.

Blocking and Parrying are quite similar: both are means of countering an oncoming attack, one with a weapon or hand, the other with a shield. But there are three important differences between Block, Parry and Dodge. To help explain these differences, here is a summary of Block's pros and cons:

Pros

- It is effective against Disarm attacks. The same is true of Dodges, but not of Parries.
- It is effective against Missile Strikes. Dodges and Parries do not work against Missile Strikes.

Cons

- It requires a shield or some shield-like object. If you don't have one, you can't Block.
- Shields never give Block bonuses the way some weapons give Parry bonuses.

- You need a free hand to hold your shield. This means that you can't use a two-handed weapon and Block.

7.3.11 Dodge

A Dodge is a Defensive Combat Skill to evade enemy Strike, Brawling or Disarm attacks by moving out of their path.

To make a successful Dodge, a combattant must declare the Dodge in the Strategy Stage and roll less than or equal to his Dodge stat in the Modifier Stage. A roll of 12 always fails.

Recall that because Dodge is a Defensive Combat Skill, it is effective against all attackers—it is not necessary to declare whose attack one is Dodging. See section 7.3.2, Offensive and Defensive Combat Skills, on page 47.

A successful Dodge imposes a Defence Penalty on the attacking character equal to the Dodge roll (see section 6.6.1, Defence Penalties, 43).

EXAMPLE

The Timing Order this round is Otto, Raven, and Sir Derek.

Otto and Raven both declare one Strike against the knight. In response, Sir Derek declares a Dodge.

Sir Derek (Dodge 8) rolls a 5: a successful Dodge. Raven and Otto's attacks are now modified by a -5 Defence Penalty.

Raven's Strike stat is only 5, and Sir Derek's Dodge created a -5 Defence Penalty. So Raven can't hit the knight at all this round. Otto needs to roll 1 to Strike: 6 (Otto's Strike) - 5 (Defence Penalty) = 1. Otto rolls a 6: his Strike is Dodged.

If a combattant declares a Dodge which becomes unnecessary because there is no attack to Dodge, the Dodge is ignored. Action Penalties apply normally, however.

Dodges are not effective against Missile Strikes.

There are three important differences between Block, Parry and Dodge.

Pros

- It is effective against Strikes, Brawls, and Disarms. The same is true of Blocks, but not of Parries.
- You can do it in the nude. (Blocking requires a shield, Parrying—at least against Strikes—requires a weapon.)
- You can do it without hands. Blocks require one hand holding a shield. Strike Parries require at least one hand on the weapon being used to Parry.

Cons

- It is not effective against Missile Strikes. Only Block can protect you from arrows and other missile weapons.

- You can't get Dodge bonuses from weapons or other items. But you can get Parry bonuses from some weapons.

7.3.12 Movement

The Movement Skill determines how far a character can move in one round. Characters can move a number of metres equal to their Movement stat per round. Characters moving at this rate incur no Action Penalty for doing so while using another Skill; the movement is not considered an action. Furthermore, characters move at this rate even if they suffer from Injury Penalties. A character's Movement rate, as determined by her Movement stat, is not subject to Injury Penalties.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice (Movement 5) can move up to 5 m this round. This is true even though she has a -1 Injury Penalty. She does not incur an Action Penalty for moving like this.

There are two variations on the Movement Skill: Sprint Movement and Retreat Movement. These are not separate Skills; they are simply types of Movement.

Movement—whether used normally, or in its Sprint and Retreat forms—is a Defensive Combat Skill.

7.3.13 Sprint Movement

Characters who need to move faster can attempt Sprint Movement. To Sprint, declare a Sprint and roll less than or equal to your Movement stat, subject to any modifiers (including Action Penalties and Injury Penalties). If successful, add the result of your roll to your (unmodified) Movement stat. The sum is the number of metres you move this round. Sprint Movement counts as an action for Action Penalty purposes.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice (Movement 5) wants to Sprint this round.

In the Strategy Stage, she declares a Sprint. She declares no other action, so she incurs no Action Penalty.

In the Modifier Stage, she needs to roll 4 or less to Sprint: $5 \text{ (Dame Beatrice's Movement)} - 1 \text{ (Injury Penalty)} = 4$. If she fails, she will only move 5 m this round. If she succeeds, she will move $5 + X$ m, where X is her Sprint roll. She rolls a 2—success! So she moves 7 m this round: $5 \text{ (Dame Beatrice's Movement stat)} + 2 \text{ (her Movement roll)} = 7$.

Sprint Movement occurs immediately, ie before the start of the Resolution Stage of the current round. Usually it will not matter when the movement occurs. But sometimes it can be important.

EXAMPLE

Dame Beatrice's 7m Sprint takes place immediately, ie before the start of the Resolution Stage. So what? So nothing, usually.

But the reason Dame Beatrice wanted to Sprint was because she was within long range of an attacker's bow shot. By Sprinting 7 m this round, she got out of his range. That means that the shots he declared in the Strategy Stage, and which occur in the Resolution Stage, cannot possibly Strike her this round. She Sprinted out of range.

Characters cannot Sprint out of melee (though they can Sprint out of missile range, as the example above illustrates). To flee melee, characters use another variation on the Movement Skill called Retreat.

7.3.14 Retreat Movement

To Retreat, declare Retreat Movement in the Strategy Stage. Then, in the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Movement stat, subject to any modifiers (including Action Penalties and Injury Penalties).

If you make a successful Movement roll, your character moves out of melee immediately (ie before the Resolution Stage) and moves a number of metres equal to your Movement stat plus your Movement roll.

Retreating in the Modifier Stage nullifies all melee actions (melee Strikes, Feints, Brawls, and Disarm attacks) declared against you that round. Missile Strikes remain possible so long as the Retreating character is within range. See section 7.3.4, Missile Strike, on page 49. Similarly, some some priestly and magical attacks are not negated by a successful Retreat. See section 10.6, Priestcraft Skills & Retreats on page 107, and section 12.0.4, Spells and Retreats on page 117.

EXAMPLE

Raven is starting to think he has made a mistake! The knight is too hard to hit. So Raven decides to Retreat.

The combattants make their Timing rolls. Raven gets the best Timing Score. Sir Derek's Score is the second best, and Otto's is the worst.

In the Strategy Stage, Otto declares a Strike against Sir Derek. The knight declares two actions: a Parry and a Strike against Raven. So his actions will be subject to a -1 Action Penalty. Raven declares a Retreat.

In the Modifier Stage, Sir Derek fails his Parry roll. Now Raven rolls his Retreat Movement. His Movement stat is 4. He rolls a 3: success! Raven breaks off melee and moves a total of 7 m: 4 (Raven's Movement stat) + 3 (Raven's Movement roll) = 7.

Now the Resolution Stage begins, but with one less combattant than it had last round! The Strike Sir Derek declared against Raven is nullified, because he's no longer there. However, there is still Otto's Strike against Sir Derek. It misses.

If you fail your Movement roll, your character remains in melee—and thus may be exposed to more attacks—until the end of the Resolution Stage, when he breaks away and moves a number of metres equal to his Movement stat.

EXAMPLE

Had Raven failed his Retreat Movement roll, he would still have been able to Retreat. But he would only have moved 4 m away (because his Movement stat is 4) and he would not have left melee until the end of the round. So Sir Derek would have had one more chance to Strike him before he Retreated.

In the two examples, the Retreating character had a better Timing Score than his opponent. This meant that he declared his Retreat after his attacker declared his actions. The attacker had no way of knowing that his opponent was about to Retreat. It is a great advantage to Retreat during a round in which your Timing Score is better than those of your adversaries.

When the Retreating character has a worse Timing Score than his attacker, the attacker learns of the Retreat before declaring his Strategy. The attacker may then react to the Retreat by declaring that he will attempt to prevent it by using his own Movement Skill. This is called Closing In.

To Close In on a Retreating character, declare Closing In Movement in the Strategy Stage. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Movement stat. If you move a number of metres equal to or greater than the distance travelled by the Retreating character, you prevent the Retreat and the would-be Retreater remains in melee. This can happen in either the Modifier Stage or in the Resolution Stage.

(Note that if the Closing In character moves further than the Retreating character, this does not mean the Closing In character ran past the Retreater! The extra distance is ignored.)

EXAMPLE

Next round, Otto sees that Raven has fled and decides to do the same. The two remaining combatants make their Timing rolls: Otto is slower, so he reveals his Strategy first.

Otto declares Retreat Movement. In response, Sir Derek declares that he will Close In on Otto to prevent his Retreat, and also Strike.

Otto's Movement stat is 5, so he must roll 5 or less to Retreat successfully. Otto rolls a 1: he Retreats, moving 6 m: 5 (Otto's Movement stat) + 1 (Otto's Movement roll) = 6 . But Sir Derek (Movement 4) also gets a Movement roll in the Modifier Stage. He needs a 3 or less: 4 (Sir Derek's Movement) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 3 . He succeeds with a 3. So moves 8 m: 4 (Sir Derek's Movement stat) + 3 (his Movement roll) = 7 .

The result is that Otto's Retreat failed because Sir Derek Closed In on him. (Strictly speaking, Sir Derek moved 1 m past Otto. But we ignore this extra movement. You never run past the person you are chasing!)

The Resolution Stage begins. Otto declared no actions, but Sir Derek declared a Strike. He rolls his Strike (subject to the -1 Action Penalty). He misses.

EXAMPLE

In the previous example, Sir Derek prevented Otto's Retreat by Closing In on him in the Modifier Stage. But he could also have done so in the Resolution Stage. Let's replay Example 3, but this time make the Closing In Movement occur in the Resolution Stage.

Timing Stage: Otto sees that Raven has fled and decides to do the same. The two remaining combatants make their Timing rolls: Otto is slower, so he reveals his Strategy first.

Strategy Stage: Otto declares Retreat Movement. In response, Sir Derek declares that he will Close In on Otto to prevent his Retreat, and also Strike.

Modifier Stage: Otto's Movement stat is 5, so he must roll 5 or less to Retreat successfully. Otto rolls a 6: he fails. So he will only move 5 m, and he won't do so until the end of the Resolution Stage. Now Sir Derek (Movement 4) rolls his Closing In Movement. He needs a 3 or less: 4 (Sir Derek's Movement) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 3. He succeeds with a 2. So Sir Derek moves 6 m this round: 4 (Sir Derek's Movement stat) + 2 (his Movement roll) = 6. He doesn't move now, however; if he did, he'd be too far away to Strike Otto! Sir Derek only Closes In when Otto Retreats.

Resolution Stage: Otto declared no actions, but Sir Derek declared a Strike. He rolls his Strike (subject to the -1 Action Penalty). He misses. We've reached the end of the Resolution Stage, so Otto moves 5 m. Sir Derek Closes In on Otto with his 6 m of movement. So at the end of the round, Otto and Sir Derek are still in melee. Otto's Retreat attempt failed—mainly because he got the lowest Timing Score this round.

(Note that strictly speaking, Sir Derek's Closing In Movement took him 1 m past Otto. But we ignore this extra movement. You never run past the person you are chasing!)

Sometimes, the Closing In character may not even need to roll his Movement to Close In on the Retreating character.

EXAMPLE

Let's replay the previous example, but give Sir Derek a Movement stat of 5 (instead of 4).

Timing Stage: Otto sees that Raven has fled and decides to do the same. The two remaining combatants make their Timing rolls: Otto is slower, so he reveals his Strategy first.

Strategy Stage: Otto declares Retreat Movement. In response, Sir Derek declares that he will Close In on Otto to prevent his Retreat, and also Strike.

Modifier Stage: Otto's Movement stat is 5, so he must roll 5 or less to Retreat successfully. Otto rolls a 6: he fails. So he will only move 5 m, and he won't do so until the end of the Resolution Stage. Now Sir Derek (Movement 5) is supposed to roll his Movement to Close In on Otto. But there's no need. For even if Sir Derek fails his

Movement roll, he will still move 5 m at the end of the round. And 5 m is all that is needed to Close In on Otto.

Resolution Stage: Otto declared no actions, but Sir Derek declared a Strike. He rolls his Strike (subject to the -1 Action Penalty). He misses. We've reached the end of the Resolution Stage, so Otto moves 5 m. Sir Derek automatically Closes In on Otto with his 5 m of movement. So at the end of the round, Otto and Sir Derek are still in melee.

Once a character has Retreated, melee attacks of all sorts are impossible against her. But Missile Strikes continue to be effective as long as the Retreating character is within the missile weapon's range. See section 7.3.4, Missile Strike, on page 49.

Since Movement is a Defensive Combat Skill, a Retreat is effective against all attackers. One does not Retreat from a particular attacker, but from the entire battle. See section 7.3.2, Offensive and Defensive Combat Skills, on page 47.

Retreat is a melee Skill; it cannot be used against missile weapons. To flee missile attacks, combatants need simply get out of their attackers' range. They can do this using normal Movement or using Sprint Movement.

7.4 Catching Up With Retreating Characters

The Closing In Movement described above prevents a character who wants to Retreat from doing so. That is not the same thing as catching up with a character who has Retreated successfully. To catch up with a Retreating character, you must simply run him down using Sprint Movement. If you catch up with the Retreating character, you return to melee.

We use a pared down version of the Order of Play Rules here; Timing is irrelevant and there is no Resolution Stage, but it is essential to keep track of how many rounds have passed.

EXAMPLE

A new round begins.

Timing Stage: Otto gets a better Timing Score than Sir Derek.

Strategy Stage: Sir Derek declares two Strikes. Otto declares a Retreat.

Modifier Stage: Otto rolls a successful Retreat Movement and gets away, running 8 m.

Resolution Stage: Sir Derek's Strikes are negated. There's no one left to Strike.

Melee Combat has ended. Raven Retreated two round ago and Otto left last round. Sir Derek doesn't have his long bow with him, so he cannot take any missile Strikes against the two Retreating low-lives. Sir Derek decides to try to catch up with Otto. (He gives up on Raven, who's too far away now.)

Otto has an 8 m lead on Sir Derek. Both characters declare Sprint Movement. Otto (Movement 5) rolls 7, a failed Movement roll, so he only moves 5 m this round. Sir Derek (Movement 4) rolls 4, a great roll! So Sir Derek moves a total of 8 m this

round: 4 (Sir Derek's Movement stat) + 4 (Sir Derek's Movement roll) = 8. So Otto has advanced 13 m, and Sir Derek has moved 8 m.

Next round, Otto again fails his Movement roll. Sir Derek makes his again, with another 4! By round's end, Otto has advanced 18 m, and Sir Derek has sprinted an amazing 16 m. Sir Derek has almost caught up with Otto.

Next round, Otto again fails his Movement roll. Speedy Sir Derek succeeds again, rolling 3. By the end of this round, Otto has moved 23 m, and Sir Derek 23 m, too. So Sir Derek has caught up with Otto. They return to melee next round.

7.5 Combat Conditions

Certain conditions can have adverse effects on Combat Skills. These conditions and their effects are described below.

Darkness. Total darkness imposes a -5 Darkness Penalty on all Combat Skills. Partial darkness creates penalties ranging from -1 to -4, at the GM's discretion.

Fog or poor visibility. Fog and other conditions which reduce visibility hinder Combat Skills. The GM can impose a Visibility Penalty on all Combat Skills. The penalty ranges from -1 to -4, at the GM's discretion.


Water. Partial submersion in water also hinders Combat Skills. Depending on how submerged the combattants are, a Submersion Penalty from -1 to -4 can be imposed by the GM. Total submersion (ie underwater Combat) is very difficult. A -5 Underwater Penalty applies to all Combat Skills.

Stormy weather. Very stormy weather—heavy winds, driving rain, snowfall, etc.—can create Weather Penalties ranging from -1 to -4 to all Combat Skills.

Mud or snow. Combattants who fight on snowy or muddy terrain may be hindered. The GM may impose Mud and Snow Penalties to a maximum of -3 to all Combat Skills.

Chapter 8

Injury, Defeat & Death

ART OF THE THRILL of roleplaying is the danger: risking your character's life and limb in pursuit of justice, glory, or loot. In Combat or in other ways, characters stand to injure others and to get injured themselves in the course of an adventure. DR emphasises injury and defeat over death. Death happens, of course, but you don't have to kill your adversary to beat him. Nor will your adversary necessarily kill you—but he might!

8.1 How to Get Injured

There are essentially two ways to get Injured in Dominion Rules: in Combat, or outside of Combat. Because DR's Combat system emphasises realism, Combat Injury is quite common. That is why we focus on it in this section. But the Injury rules work exactly the same way for other types of Injury.

8.2 A Reminder About Order of Play

Remember, Injuries (whether caused by Strikes, Brawling, or any other way) are always resolved immediately, before resolving other actions. See section [6.7.1](#), Injury, on page [44](#).

8.3 Injury: An Overview

Later in this section we will discuss specific types of Injury arising from Combat, Priestcraft Skills, Witchcraft Skills, and Hazards. But first we must explain how Injury works in general.

One of the most important Skills in the DR system is a Stamina Skill called Withstand Injury (WithIn for short). WithIn is used to determine the consequences of potentially

Figure 8.1: Fallen Knight



Injurious actions or events upon PCs and GMCs. Over time, characters can make themselves more resistant to Injury: WithIn stats can be increased with Advancement Points (see chapter 5, Advancement).

When a character suffers a Strike from an enemy's sword, a dragon's maul, a wizard's lightning strike, a thirty-foot fall, or any other dangerous turn of events, the character must make a WithIn roll.

If he rolls less than or equal to his WithIn stat, he Withstands the Injury and suffers no real harm from it. That is not to say that it didn't hurt; it may very well leave a bruise or a scar. Nonetheless, it does no serious harm. You might say the sword blade 'only grazed him', or that the wolf bite is 'only a flesh wound'.

EXAMPLE

Cedric's WithIn stat is 4. He is hit with a falling rock. But he makes a successful WithIn roll, so he Withstands the Injury: the rock does him no real damage.

However, if the character rolls higher than his WithIn stat, he fails to Withstand Injury and is Injured. The amount of harm done is measured by Injury Points and the Injury stat.

8.4 Injury Points & The Injury Stat

When a character is Injured, he suffers a number of Injury Points. The number depends on the nature of the Injury. Serious Injuries do more Injury Points than minor ones.

Injury Points are deducted from the Injured character's Injury stat. The Injury stat is a special stat related to the Withstand Injury Skill. The Injury stat is not a Skill; it is simply a stat used to keep track of how Injured a character is.

An unInjured character's Injury stat is equal to his Withstand Injury stat.

EXAMPLE

Cedric's WithIn stat is 4. Cedric is currently unInjured. So Cedric's Injury stat is also 4.

When a character is Injured, his Injury stat drops by the number of Injury Points he has suffered. As explained in section 8.5, Combat Injury on page 69, those Offensive Combat Skills which cause Injury (Strike, Missile Strike, and Brawling) do a number of Injury Points equal to the attacker's Skill roll.

EXAMPLE

Cedric (WithIn 4 Injury stat 4) is Struck with a roll of 1. He fails to Withstand the Injury. So he takes 1 Injury Point. This lowers Cedric's Injury stat to 3: 4 (Cedric's Injury stat) - 1 (Strike roll) = 3.

8.4.1 Injury Penalties

When a character's Injury stat falls below 0, the character suffers an Injury Penalty to all Skills (except Withstand Injury: see below). The Injury Penalty is equal to the character's

current Injury stat. The Injury Penalty remains in place until the character heals.

EXAMPLE

Cedric's Injury stat is 3. He has no Injury Penalty, because his Injury stat is still above 0. Later he takes 4 more Injury Points, so his Injury stat drops to -1. Now, all Cedric's Skill stats are modified by an Injury Penalty of -1 until he heals.

When a character's Injury Penalty is greater than one or more of his Skill stats, he is Partly or Totally Incapacitated. See section 8.8, Incapacitation, on page 74.

When a character's Injury Penalty is greater than or equal to his highest Combat Skill stat, he is Defeated. For more on Defeat, see section 8.5.2, Defeat, on page 71.

Recall, however, that Stamina Skills (notably Withstand Injury and Withstand Magic) are not affected by Injury Penalties. This rule is crucial, so don't forget it! See section 4.8, Stamina Skills on page 30.

EXAMPLE

Cedric is currently suffering a -1 Injury Penalty to all his Skill stats—except his Stamina Skills. This means that if Cedric is attacked again, he will still roll 4 or less to Withstand the Injury, because WithIn is a Stamina Skill.

8.4.2 Death

When a character's Injury stat falls to -12 or lower, he dies. This is true even if the character has Skills with stats greater than 12.

8.5 Combat Injury

We now turn to the specific case of injuries caused by Combat. Of the five Offensive Combat Skills, only three are capable of causing Injury: Strike, Missile Strike, and Brawling.

When a Strike, Missile Strike, or Brawl is successful, the result of the attack is determined immediately, before resolving other characters' actions that round. Any Injury Penalties resulting from the attacks take effect immediately.

EXAMPLE

Sir Derek caught up with the Retreating thief Otto the Rat. The two characters are now back in melee.

In the Timing Stage, Sir Derek gets the best Timing Score.

So Otto declares his Strategy first: he will Strike once and Dodge. Sir Derek, angry now, declares three Strikes.

In the Modifier Stage, Otto rolls a 3: a successful Dodge.

We now move to the Resolution Stage. Sir Derek's actions are resolved first. Sir Derek (Strike 9) needs 4 or less to Strike: $9 \text{ (Sir Derek's Strike)} - 2 \text{ (Action Penalty)} - 3 \text{ (Defence Penalty)} = 4$.

Sir Derek rolls his first Strike: a 10. He misses. He then rolls his second Strike: a 3. He hits! The characters determine the result of this Strike immediately, even before rolling Sir Derek's third Strike.

The target of a successful attack now makes a Withstand Injury roll to determine whether or not he is Injured by it. (For more on Withstand Injury, see section 4.8, Withstand Injury on page 30.)

EXAMPLE

Otto must make a WithIn roll against Sir Derek's second Strike. Otto's WithIn is 5. He rolls a 2: a successful WithIn roll! So Otto Withstands Injury from Sir Derek's second Strike. We might say the Strike 'only grazed him', or (as Monty Python might say) it was 'only a flesh wound'.

Now Sir Derek makes his third and final Strike roll. He rolls a 4: another Strike!

Otto must Withstand Injury again. He rolls a 10: he fails! He has been Injured.

An Injury generated by an Offensive Combat Skill such as Strike, Missile Strike, or Brawling lowers the Injured character's Injury stat by a number of Injury Points equal to the attacker's roll.

EXAMPLE

Otto was previously unInjured, so his Injury stat was equal to his Withstand Injury stat: 5. Now that Otto has been Struck by Sir Derek, Otto's Injury stat falls to 1: 5 (Otto's Injury stat) - 4 (Sir Derek's Strike roll) = 1.

Once the result of a successful attack has been determined, the round's remaining actions are resolved, taking into account the Injury Penalty (if any) produced by the successful attack.

EXAMPLE

Sir Derek's two successful Strikes have been dealt with. Now Otto makes his Strike roll. Since Sir Derek's attacks did not give rise to an Injury Penalty, Otto Strikes normally. (If Otto did have an Injury Penalty as a result of the attacks, his Strike would be modified by that Injury Penalty.)

Otto (Strike 6 Dodge 5) needs a 5 or less to Strike: 6 (Otto's Strike) - 1 (Action Penalty) = 5. He rolls an 8: he misses.

8.5.1 Called Shots To Vulnerable Areas

Called Shots to those parts of the body that carry a -3 or more Called Shot Modifier are particularly deadly. These areas are the neck, head, and eyes; see the diagram in section 7.3.5, Called Shots, on page 50. They are known as Vulnerable Areas: they are more vulnerable to significant Injuries than are the torso and the limbs.

When a Called Shot is successful against a Vulnerable Area, the Called Shot Modifier becomes an equivalent number of Injury Points, and is deducted from the victim's Injury stat along the Strike (or Missile Strike, or Brawling) roll.

EXAMPLE

Next round, Otto gets the lowest Timing Score, so he declares his Strategy first. He declares a Dodge. Sir Derek declares a Called Shot to Otto's head, a Vulnerable Area with a -3 Called Shot Modifier.

Otto's Dodge is successful, giving rise to a -3 Defence Penalty.

Sir Derek (Strike 9) needs to roll 6 or less to Strike Otto: 9 (Sir Derek's Strike) - 3 (Defence Penalty) = 6 . He needs to roll 3 or less to make a successful Called Shot to Otto's head: 6 (Sir Derek's modified Strike) - 3 (Called Shot Modifier) = 3 .

A roll of 4, 5, or 6 results in a normal Strike—a Strike to Otto's torso. A roll higher than 6 is a miss. Sir Derek rolls a 2: he Strikes Otto's head.

Otto's WithIn is 5. He rolls an 11: he fails to Withstand Injury. So Otto's Injury stat drops from 1 to -4: 1 (Otto's Injury stat) - 2 (Strike roll) - 3 (Called Shot Modifier) = -4 .

8.5.2 Defeat

When a character's Injury stat is greater than or equal to his highest Combat Skill stat, it is impossible for him to perform any Combat Skills. This is known as Defeat. In Dominion Rules, melee Combat tends to end in Defeat rather than in Death.

EXAMPLE

A new round begins.

Timing Stage: Otto again gets the lowest Timing Score (even though his Timing roll is now subject to his -4 Injury Penalty).

Strategy Stage: Otto declares a Dodge, which, theoretically at least, he can still perform because his unmodified Dodge stat is 5. Now, however, the Injury Penalty brings it down to 1. Sir Derek declares one Strike.

Defence Stage: Otto fails his Dodge roll.

Resolution Stage: Sir Derek makes his Strike roll with a 6. Otto needs to roll 5 or less to Withstand the Injury: he rolls 7! So Otto's Injury stat drops from -4 to -10: -4 (Otto's Injury stat) - 6 (Sir Derek's Strike roll) = -10 .

Otto doesn't have any Combat Skills higher than 6; thus, all his Combat Skills are now impossible to perform. Otto cannot attack or defend himself until he is healed. Otto is Defeated.

Because he cannot attack or defend, a Defeated character is easy prey to those so unscrupulous as to attack him. All Called Shot Modifiers are suspended against Defeated characters (see section 7.3.5, Called Shots, on page 50). Thus, slitting a Defeated man's throat is easy; the -4 Called Shot Modifier to Strike the neck does not apply. But that wouldn't be a very nice thing to do, would it?

Note that characters who can attack by Witchcraft or Priestcraft may be able to continue to fight with Spells and Priestcraft Skills even when they cannot fight with Combat Skills.

This happens when such a character's Injury Penalty is equal to or greater than his highest Combat Skill stat, but still lower than his highest Witchcraft or Priestcraft Skill stat. We say these characters are 'Defeated in Combat'. But they aren't Defeated in Priestcraft or Witchcraft. So don't start celebrating yet! See section 8.6, Magical and Priestly Injury, on page 72.

8.5.3 Death

When a character's Injury stat falls to -12 or lower, he dies.

EXAMPLE

Were Sir Derek to attack Otto again, a Strike roll of 2 or more would lower Otto's Injury stat to -12 or worse (assuming Otto failed his Within roll). Otto would then die. But Sir Derek spares Otto, because mercy is a chivalrous virtue.

8.6 Magical and Priestly Injury

The Injury rules described above apply in exactly the same way when the Injury is caused by Priestcraft Skills, Witchcraft Skills (ie Spells), or other forms of magic. A few points about Priestly and Magical Injury should be made, however.

Only two Priestcraft Skills are capable of causing Injury: Smite and Wrath. One version of the Smite Skill, Smite with Infirmity, causes Infirmity without causing Injury. The Curse Skill cannot be used against the Injury stat because it applies only to Skills; the Injury stat is not a Skill. The Work Miracle Skill cannot be used to cause Injury.

In Witchcraft, only the Sorcery Skill can cause direct Injury. This means that only Sorcery Spells, or Composite Spells involving Sorcery, can cause direct Injury. Other Skills and Spells may be capable of causing Injury indirectly, however.

Priests and Witches can be Defeated in Combat like any other character (see section 8.5.2, Defeat on page 71), yet remain very active (and deadly) in Priestcraft or Witchcraft. But Injury Penalties can also cause a Priest to be Defeated in Priestcraft, or a Witch to be Defeated in Witchcraft. When a Priest's Injury Penalty is equal to or higher than his highest Priestcraft Skill stat, he is incapable of performing Priestcraft Skills: he is Defeated in Priestcraft. And when a Witch's Injury Penalty is equal to or higher than her highest Witchcraft Skill stat, she is Defeated in Witchcraft.

Forms of magic other than Sorcery can cause Injury. Magically endowed weapons can cause Injury, as can magic-using creatures. Magical Injury works exactly like other forms of Injury.

8.7 Hazard Injury

There are infinite ways of getting Injured other than by Combat, Priestcraft, or Witchcraft Skills. We group these other sources of Injury under the heading of Hazards. Hazard

Injury works just like other forms of Injury. Hazards inflict Injury Points which may give rise to Injury Penalties, Incapacitation, and even Death.

No rules system can hope to predict all the Hazards which may befall characters. But here are some rules covering three common Hazards: falls, falling objects, and fire.

Falls Experienced roleplayers know that characters have an unfortunate tendency to fall from great heights. The fall itself does no harm (apart from being terrifying), but the landing can be deadly. Falling characters are allowed WithIn rolls, subject to the Falling Penalty.

The Falling Penalty is -1 for every 3 m fallen. Characters fall 15 m per round, making a -5 Falling Penalty per round. So a character who falls 60 m must make a Withstand Injury roll subject to a -20 Falling Penalty. The chances of coming out of such a fall unscathed are pretty slim.

As for characters who fail their WithIn rolls, a fall reduces a character's Injury stat by 1 Injury Point for every 3 m fallen, ie the same rate as the Falling Penalty. Again, characters fall 15 m per round, making 5 Injury Points per round of falling. So a character who falls 60 m must make a WithIn roll at -20 or suffer 20 Injury Points of Injury four rounds after she falls.

Because it can be so deadly, falling is an excellent occasion to use a Lucky Break (see section 3.9.1 on page 20). But remember that a Lucky Break lasts only one round. Be sure to declare it during the round when you will land. For it's no good to you in mid-air!

Falling objects Another common Hazard for adventurers is being struck by falling objects. A falling object does 1 Injury Point for every 3 m that it has fallen, plus a number of Injury Points for the thing itself. This last number varies depending on the object. It is for the GM to decide. Again, characters are allowed WithIn rolls against falling objects—with occasionally miraculous results.

EXAMPLE

A stone the size of a fist that has fallen 15 m might do a total of 6 Injury Points: 5 Injury Points for the fall plus 1 Injury Point for the stone itself.

A boulder that has fallen 15 m would also do 5 Injury Points for the fall, and then do 8 more Injury Points just for being a boulder.

Fire Another common form of Injury outside of Combat is burns. For DR purposes, there are three degrees of fire intensity: normal, red-hot, and white-hot.

A normal fire inflicts 2 Injury Points per round of exposure. Characters exposed to normal fires make WithIn rolls against them for every round that the exposure lasts, subject to a -1 Difficulty Penalty. A successful WithIn reduces the Injury caused by the fire that round from 2 Injury Points to 1.

A red-hot fire inflicts 4 Injury Points per round of exposure. Characters exposed to red-hot fires make WithIn rolls against them for every round that the exposure lasts, subject

to a -2 Difficulty Penalty. A successful WithIn reduces the Injury caused by the fire that round from 4 Injury Points to 2.

Finally, a white-hot fire inflicts 6 Injury Points per round of exposure. Characters exposed to white-hot fires make WithIn rolls against them for every round that the exposure lasts, subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty. A successful WithIn reduces the Injury caused by the fire that round from 6 Injury Points to 3.

8.8 Incapacitation

If an Injured character's Injury Penalty is greater than one or several of his Skill stats, the character becomes unable to perform those Skills until he is at least partially healed, ie until his Injury Penalty is again lower than the Skill stat in question. This is called Partial Incapacitation.

If an Injured character's Injury Penalty is equal to or greater than all his Skill stats, the character becomes unable to perform any Skills until he is at least partially healed: until his Injury Penalty is again lower than at least some of his Skill stats. This is called Total Incapacitation.

(Defeat, as described in section 8.5.2, Defeat and section 8.6, Magical and Priestly Injury, is really just a form of Incapacitation.)

EXAMPLE

Ned Luckless (WithIn 3 Injury stat 3) decides to go rock-climbing. This is a bad decision, for Ned's Climbing Skill is only 2! He soon fails a Climbing Skill roll, and slips 60 ft.

A 60 ft fall does 6 Injury Points. Ned fails his WithIn roll, so his Injury stat plummets to -3: $3 \text{ (Ned's Injury stat)} - 6 \text{ (Injury Points from fall)} = -3$.

Ned has some Skill stats of 4. But most of his stats are 3 or lower. So he is now Partially Incapacitated. If he takes another Injury Point, he will be Totally Incapacitated.

8.9 Illness & Disease

Characters can fall ill and contract diseases. This can happen in many ways: adventuring in dank dungeons, contracting disease in plague-ridden countries, being attacked by a creature with poisonous venom, and so forth.

A character exposed to an Illness makes a WithIn roll to determine whether he catches it. If his roll succeeds, he doesn't get it. If the roll fails, he gets the Illness. The effect of an Illness is to reduce the Ill character's Injury stat by a certain amount.

EXAMPLE

Horatio Yellowbeard, the famous navigator, sets sail for the distant lands of Tul-Qir Ac. Conditions on his ship are not very sanitary. The Green Pox ravages his craft.

The Green Pox is an Illness which does 3 Injury Points to those who fail to Withstand Injury.

Horatio (WithIn 7 Injury stat 7) rolls an 8, failing his WithIn. So he comes down with the Illness. His Injury stat falls to 4: 7 (Horatio's Injury stat) - 3 (Green Pox) = 4.

The Games Master will describe any important symptoms of your character's Illness.

A Normal Illness will heal naturally with the passage of time; see section 8.11, Natural Healing. A Lingerin Illness heals differently. For a Lingerin Illness, the Ill character must make a successful WithIn roll every day that he is Ill in order to heal naturally from it.

EXAMPLE

Were the Green Pox a Normal Illness, Horatio would heal naturally in 3 days' time. But the Green Pox is a Lingerin Illness. So the next day, Horatio must make a WithIn roll to heal naturally (ie, to gain +1 to his Injury stat that day).

Horatio makes a successful WithIn roll. So his Injury stat rises from 4 to 5.

The next day, Horatio fails his WithIn roll. So his Injury stat stays at 5.

The third day, Horatio makes his WithIn roll. His Injury stat rises to 6. He's almost better now.

But Horatio fails his WithIn roll three times over the next three days! He doesn't finally get well until the seventh day of his Illness, when he finally makes a successful WithIn roll, restoring his Injury stat to 7.

A character exposed to a Disease makes a WithIn roll to determine whether he contracts it. If his roll succeeds, he Withstands the Disease. If the roll fails, he contracts it.

The effect of a Disease is to reduce the Diseased character's Injury stat by a certain amount initially, and by that same amount, or by a different amount, for every day, week or month (depending on the gravity of the Disease) that the Diseased character fails his WithIn roll against it. This is called Spreading.

EXAMPLE

Landing in Tul-Qir Ac, Horatio is exposed to a strange foreign Disease called Mung's Rage. The Disease immediately lowers a character's Injury stat by 3, then lowers it by 3 for each day the character fails her WithIn roll.

Horatio must make a successful WithIn roll to avoid contracting it. He rolls a 10! He has contracted Mung's Rage. Horatio's Injury stat falls to 4: 7 (Horatio's Injury stat) - 3 (Mung's Rage) = 4.

The next day, Horatio fails his WithIn roll again! The Disease is Spreading. Horatio's Injury stat falls to 1: 4 (Horatio's Injury stat) - 3 (Mung's Rage) = 1.

The Disease will continue to Spread every day until Horatio dies or is healed.

Characters may be healed from Illness and Disease by Natural Healing, Medical Lore, and the Heal Skill; see section 8.11 Natural Healing, section 8.12 Natural Healing With Medical Lore, and the Priestcraft skill Heal (p 98).

8.10 Infirmary

Characters can also succumb to Infirmary. An Infirmary is any permanent but not life-threatening affliction, disability or impairment. Blindness, lameness, paralysis, and missing limbs are all examples.

An Infirmary is 'permanent' in the sense that it will not heal naturally. For instance, a blind man will always be blind. But Infirmarys can be healed by mighty Priests; see Priestcraft Skills: Heal: Heal Infirmary (p 100).

8.11 Natural Healing

Characters can heal naturally or with the assistance of Priestcraft. On Priestly Healing, see section 10.5.9, Heal, on page 98.

Natural Healing occurs in two ways: by the passage of time, or with the assistance of the Medical Lore Skill.

A resting character will heal naturally at the rate of +1 to his Injury stat per day. Resting means bed-rest: no Combat and no movement. Injured characters suffering from Injury Penalties will see those penalties reduce as their Injury stat climbs back towards zero.

EXAMPLE

Otto the Rat has been Injured in Combat. His Injury stat is -10. After one day of rest, Otto's Injury stat rises to -9: -10 (Otto's Injury stat) + 1 (one day's natural healing) = -9. Otto's Injury Penalty (formerly -10) is now -9.

After nine more days of rest, Otto's Injury stat reaches 0. His Injury Penalty disappears. But he is still Injured; he will not be fully healed until his Injury stat is again equal to his Within stat (5). This will require 5 more days of rest.

Characters heal much more quickly when under medical attention, ie in the care of someone proficient in the Medical Lore Skill.

8.12 Natural Healing With Medical Lore

Medical Lore is an Intellect Skill which allows the Skill-using character to heal an Injured character much faster.

The Medical Lore Skill works like this. There is a doctor (the Skill-using character) and a patient (the Injured character). The doctor must roll equal to or less than her Medical Lore Skill. If the doctor's Medical Lore roll succeeds, the patient's Injury stat rises by the amount rolled.

EXAMPLE

Sir Gavin Strong (Injury stat 1) is cared for by Dame Beatrice (Medical Lore 6). Dame Beatrice must roll 6 or lower to help Sir Gavin. She rolls a 3: success! Sir Gavin's Injury stat is now 4.

Note that Medical Lore can never bring an Injured character's Injury stat above his WithIn stat.

EXAMPLE

Sir Gavin's WithIn stat is 5. This means that his maximum Injury stat is also 5. Even if Dame Beatrice had rolled a 6, Sir Gavin's Injury stat would have risen no higher than 5.

If the patient has an Injury Penalty, the doctor's Medical Lore roll is modified by that Injury Penalty.

EXAMPLE

Had Sir Gavin's Injury stat been -2, Dame Beatrice would have needed to roll 4 or less to make a successful Medical Lore roll: 6 (Dame Beatrice's Medical Lore) - 2 (Sir Gavin's Injury Penalty) = 4 .

A doctor can only attempt to heal a patient once a day. So if a doctor's Medical Lore roll fails, the patient must wait until the next day before the same doctor, or another doctor, can attempt to heal him again. (The doctor, however, may continue attempting to heal other patients.) Note that the passage of a day's time will also partially heal the patient (see section 8.11, Natural Healing).

EXAMPLE

Let's say Dame Beatrice rolled a 9, and so failed to heal Sir Gavin (Injury stat -2). Sir Gavin's Injury stat remains at -2 until the next day, when it rises to -1 by natural healing. Dame Beatrice can now try her Medical Lore skill again. She now needs to roll 5 or under: 6 (Dame Beatrice's Medical Lore) - 1 (Sir Gavin's Injury Penalty) = 5 .

She rolls a 4. Sir Gavin's Injury stat rises to 3 as a result of Dame Beatrice's medical knowledge.

Characters cannot use the Medical Lore skill to heal themselves.

Chapter 9

The Armoury



WELCOME TO THE ARMOURY. Here you will find DR's general weapons and armour rules, as well as specific rules for each weapon and type of armour.

9.1 Objectives of the Armoury

We set out three objectives in creating the Armoury. They are:

1. To design a weapons and armour system that complemented and enhanced Combat game play.
2. To design a balanced rules system that reflected reality.
3. To design a rules system that would encourage players to use a variety of weapons and armour, thereby encouraging players to define their characters.

9.1.1 Enhancing Combat Game Play

DR's Combat system is unique in that the armour and weapons rules are directly linked to Striking and Withstanding Injury. In many other RPGs, a player will roll "to hit" and then roll "to damage". Not so in Dominion Rules. A Strike score represents both hitting an opponent (when an attacker rolls a successful Strike) and damaging an opponent (when a defender rolls an unsuccessful WithIn roll). Moreover, the quality of the Strike (how much damage is done) is determined by the initial Strike roll, not by rolling again.

In short, a successful Strike roll combines the attacker's Strike Skill with the weapon used, while a successful WithIn roll combines a character's WithIn Skill with the armour used.

9.1.2 Game Balance and Realistic Combat

Figure 9.1: Sloan



Game designers are always looking for a balance between detail, which makes the game more colourful, and generality, which makes the game easier to use. We believe DR's Combat rules strike that balance well in this way: DR does not use a random damage system.

In other fantasy RPGs, a character will hit an opponent and then roll to see how much damage is done. There are modifiers and other rules to consider, but in the end, the die roll is random, so anything can happen. Now, imagine that a hulking barbarian carrying a massive battle axe is squaring off against a lowly thief wielding a dagger. Under a random system, it is possible for the dagger to do the same amount of damage as the battle axe because the players involved can both roll "1s".

That is not a realistic representation of how much damage one weapon can do relative to another. Since DR's Combat system stresses realism, our weapon rules are set relative to one another. A dagger is a small, fast, short-bladed weapon. A battle axe is a large, slow, cumbersome

weapon with a massive blade. Therefore, it makes sense that the thief with a dagger would be able to make several small, quick blows while the barbarian would strike more slowly, but would do more damage with each one. Similarly, armour can affect how well a person can move. As with DR's weapon rules, DR's armour rules are set relative to one another, for the same reasons. A person with no armour has little in the way of protection, but is more able to avoid blows. By contrast, a warrior wearing interlocking plate armour is heavily protected but suffers from constrained movement.

9.1.3 Variety

When a weapon has a randomly-determined damage code, it affects how players choose equipment and develop skills. The natural tendency of player is to pick the weapons that offer the highest possible damage and use them to the exclusion of all else. Consequently, each "class" of character tends to look the same after a while. This inhibits role-playing and discourages players from creating unique characters.

The weapons and armour rules in DR are designed to reintroduce variety into roleplaying. The armour and weapon characteristics are meant to make players think about what their characters need in specific situations. Obviously, if a character is riding into a massive battle against an enemy army, heavy weapons and armour are a reasonable choice. However, would the same character be inclined to wear plate armour and carry a two-handed sword, if she were at sea and ran the risk of falling overboard? In DR, there are specific advantages and drawbacks to using certain weapons and armour. Some of these are minor while others can seriously inhibit characters' Skills. It is up to individual players to decide

Table 9.1: The Weapons List

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Type Weapon</i>	<i>Strike Modifier</i>	<i>Parry Modifier</i>	<i>Disarm Modifier</i>	<i>Timing Modifier</i>	<i>WIP</i>	<i>Armour Penalty</i>
Dagger	1H	-4	+2	+2	+4	0	0
Club	1H	-3	0	0	+3	0	0
Mace	1H	-1	+1	0	-1	-1	-1
Flail	1H	+2	†	1	-2	-2	-1
Hand Axe	1H	+1	-2	-2	-1	-2	-2
Shortsword	1H	-2	+1	+1	+2	0	0
Longsword	1H	+2	+1	+1	-3	-1	0
Scimitar	1H	-2	0	+2	+2	0	0
Morning Star	1H	0	0	-1	-2	-2	0
Morning Star	2H	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-1
Bastardsword	1H	+2	-1	-1	-4	-1	0
Bastardsword	2H	+3	-1	-1	-4	-2	-1
Warhammer	1H	+1	+1	+1	-3	0	0
Warhammer	2H	+1	+1	+1	-3	-1	-1
Musket	2H	+4	†	†	-1	+1	-2
Greatsword*	2H	+5	-2	-3	Forfeit	-3	-3
Battle Axe*	2H	+6	-4	-4	Forfeit	-3	-3
Maul*	2H	+7	-5	-5	Forfeit	-3	-3
Quarterstaff	2H	0	+1	+1	+1	-1	0
Spear	2H	+4	+1	-1	-2	-2	-2
Spear	1H/M	+2	†	†	0	-2	-1
Longbow	2H/M	+4	†	†	-3	-2	-1
Crossbow	2H/M	+2	†	†	-3	-2	-1
Sling	1H/M	+2	†	†	+2	-1	0

†Indicates that the weapon cannot be used to perform this Skill.

*Indicates that only characters with a Vigour stat of 3 or higher can use these weapons. Others can lift and carry them, but cannot wield them.

what is in their character's best interest.

9.2 The Weapons List

Here is the Weapons List: a list of all weapons currently available in Dominion Rules, with their Characteristics. To understand Weapons Characteristics, see section 9.3, Weapon Characteristics, below.

9.2.1 Type of Weapon

There are three types of weapons: one-handed weapons, two-handed weapons, and weapons that can be used with either one or two hands. The type of weapon is indicated on the

Weapons List in the column marked Type of Weapon.

One-handed weapons are lighter and easier to wield, thus allowing a character uninhibited use of his free hand. The disadvantage of one-handed weapons is that they are not as likely to cause Injury, or to cause such serious Injury, as two-handed weapons. One-handed weapons are indicated on the Weapons List by the abbreviation 1H.

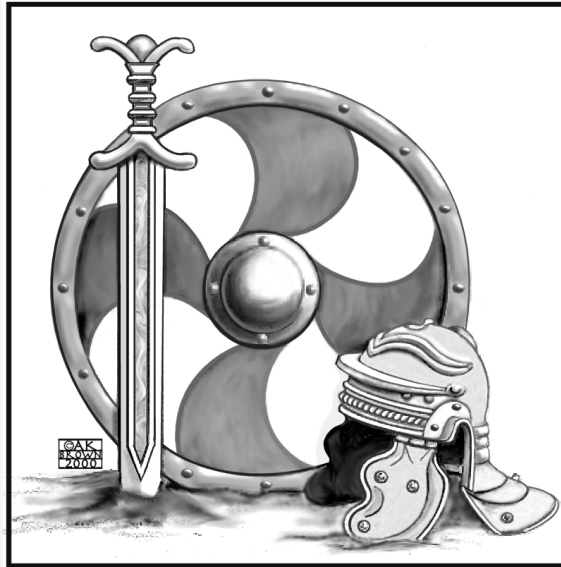
Two-handed weapons are capable of inflicting severe Injury to their unfortunate victims. But they are slow and cumbersome to use. Moreover, characters who wield two-handed weapons do not have a free hand for shields, other weapons, or anything else. Two-handed weapons are indicated on the Weapons List by the abbreviation 2H.

Those weapons which can be used as either one-handed or two-handed weapons appear on the Weapons List twice.

The letter M in the Type of Weapon column indicates that the weapon is a missile weapon, ie a weapon that projects missiles such as arrows or bolts. Missile weapons like melee weapons may require either one or two hands to use. (See section 7.3.1, Melee Combat and Missile Combat, on page 47 for the distinction between melee and missile weapons; see table 9.2 for the ranges of the various missile weapons.)

One weapon, the Spear, can be used both as a two-handed melee weapon and as a one-handed missile weapon.

Figure 9.2: Three Nations



9.2.2 Forfeit

When a character uses a weapon with the word 'Forfeit' in its Timing Modifier slot, he does not get to make a Timing roll when determining in the Timing Stage of Combat (see section 6.4, The Timing Stage on page 40). Instead, the character's Timing Score is equal to his Timing stat; he forfeits the Timing roll which he would usually get to add to his Timing stat when determining his Timing Score.

This is to represent the slowness of these weapons.

9.3 Weapon Characteristics

Different weapons affect different aspects of Combat. To reflect this, each weapon is assigned a set of Weapon Characteristics that modify some of the wielder's key stats. These

Weapon Characteristics are described below. When comparing the Characteristics of different weapons, note that each one has its own advantages and disadvantages. No weapon on the Weapons List is useless.

There are six Weapon Characteristics: the Strike Modifier, the Parry Modifier, the Disarm Modifier, the Timing Modifier, the WithIn Penalty (WIP), and the Armour Penalty.

9.3.1 The Strike Modifier

The Strike Modifier affects how easily the wielder of the weapon Strikes and harms his opponent. Generally, large, heavy weapons will have high Strike Modifiers while small, light weapons will have low Strike Modifiers.

9.3.2 The Parry Modifier

The Parry Modifier determines how well a weapon can be used to Parry attacks. Generally, weapons that are sturdy, well-balanced and quick will have high Parry Modifiers while large, slow, cumbersome weapons will have low Parry Modifiers. Further, some weapons cannot be used to Parry attacks at all.

9.3.3 The Disarm Modifier

The Disarm Modifier indicates either that the weapon is especially effective in Disarm attacks. It may be specially designed for Disarming opponents (such as a bull whip) or it may have some modification, such as a barbed, basket hilt, that makes it particularly effective for Disarm attacks. Barring such design considerations, light and quick weapons will have high Disarm Modifiers while large, slow weapons will have low ones. Indeed, some weapons cannot be used to Disarm opponents at all.

9.3.4 The Timing Modifier

Light and fast weapons lend themselves to Striking quickly while heavy and slow weapons do not. The Timing Modifier denotes how using a given weapon affects a character's Timing stat.

9.3.5 The Withstand Injury Penalty

While the Strike Modifier takes into account an attacker's Strike Skill, it does not consider the sheer physical damage certain kinds of weapons can inflict. This extra damage is measured by the Withstand Injury Penalty (WIP). We call it the Withstand Injury Penalty because it is always a penalty (ie a negative modifier). The WIP represents how much a Strike from this sort of weapon penalises a defender's Withstand Injury stat, if at all.

EXAMPLE

A Crusader and a Heathen are engaged in a fight to the death. The Heathen has successfully Struck the Crusader with his Great Sword (WIP 3). The Crusader must make a Within roll or be Injured. His Within is 10—normally a very high stat. However, since the Heathen’s sword imposes a WIP penalty of -3, the Crusader must roll 7 or less to avoid Injury: $10 \text{ (Crusader’s Within)} - 3 \text{ (WIP)} = 7$.

9.3.6 The Armour Penalty

The Armour Penalty is similar to the Withstand Injury Penalty except that it applies only against Armour Bonuses. (To know more about Armour Bonuses, see section 9.7, Armour Characteristics, below.) Some weapons are so devastating (such as battle axes and mauls) that they act almost as though the defender’s armour is not there. Other weapons (such as arrows and quarrels) are specially designed to pierce armour.

The Armour Penalty works by penalising the defender’s Within stat, just like the WIP. But there are two big differences between the Armour Penalty and the WIP:

1. The Armour Penalty has no effect upon defenders who are not wearing armour.
2. The Armour Penalty cannot lower a defender’s Within by a number greater than his Armour Bonus.

The following examples illustrate these two differences.

EXAMPLE

An assassin has broken into the Marquis of Ogthen’s sleeping chamber to kill him in his sleep. But the Marquis heard him coming, and the two are now in Combat.

The Marquis is wearing no armour: only his bedclothes! The would-be assassin wields a battle axe with a WIP of -3 and an Armour Penalty of -3. The assassin successfully Strikes the Marquis. The Marquis’s Within is subject to the -3 WIP. But it is not subject to the -3 Armour Penalty, because the Marquis is not wearing any armour.

EXAMPLE

Raven the Unscrupulous finally has the upper hand on Bradas Greytooth. They are both fighting savagely, but the tide has turned in Raven’s favour. He Strikes Bradas powerfully with his maul.

Bradas is wearing Medium armour, so he has a +4 Armour Bonus to his Within stat (see section 9.7, Armour Characteristics, below). Unfortunately for Bradas, the maul has an Armour Penalty of 4, thus negating his Armour Bonus entirely: $4 \text{ (medium armour’s Armour Bonus)} - 4 \text{ (maul’s Armour Penalty)} = 0$.

Had Bradas been wearing Light armour (ie. armour which bestows only a +2 Armour Bonus), the maul’s Armour Penalty would still negate his Armour Bonus: $2 \text{ (Light armour’s Armour Bonus)} - 4 \text{ (maul’s Armour Penalty)} = -2$. But the extra 2

Table 9.2: Missile Ranges

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Short Range</i>	<i>Mid Range</i>	<i>Long Range</i>
Longbow	3-30	31-80	81-130
Crossbow	3-40	41-100	101-160
Sling	3-30	31-70	71-110
Spear	3-10	11-20	21-30

All ranges are expressed in metres. Any range less than 3m constitutes melee range. Missile weapons cannot be used in melee range.

points of Armour Penalty would have no effect. It would not be applied against Bradas's Within.

9.4 Missile Ranges

A character's Missile Strike stat may be modified by the range at which he aims for his target. To read more about this, see section 7.3.4 Missile Strike, on page 49.

Ranges vary from weapon to weapon. The Missile Ranges Table provides the range of each missile weapon. All distances are expressed in metres.

For the purposes of missile weapons, any range of less than 3m constitutes melee range. Missile weapons cannot be used in melee.

9.5 The Armour List

The Armour List describes the five Armour Grades and the Armour Characteristics that apply to each. Also included on the Armour List are rules for the use of helms and shields.

9.6 Armour Grades and Types

The Armour List defines and gives examples of five Armour Grades. The five Armour Grades are: No Armour, Light, Medium, Heavy, and Mighty. These grades apply to suits of armour only, not to other protective devices like shields, helms, and gauntlets. Various types of armour come under the latter four Armour Grades. Regular clothing and other non-protective items come under the first Armour Grade: No Armour.

9.6.1 No Armour

This Armour Grade applies to characters wearing no armour at all. Such characters may wear normal clothing of one variety or another. Characters who do not wear armour enjoy

Table 9.3: The Armour List

<i>Armour Grade</i> Armour types	<i>Armour</i> Bonus	<i>Agility</i> Penalty	<i>Movement</i> Penalty	<i>Parry</i> Penalty	<i>Dodge</i> Penalty
SUITS OF ARMOUR					
No Armour	0	0	0	0	0
Light <i>Leather armour</i> <i>Padded armour</i>	+2	0	-1	0	-1
Medium <i>Chainmail</i> <i>Scalemail</i> <i>Banded armour</i>	+4	-1	-1	-1	-1
Heavy <i>Partial plate armour</i>	+6	-2	-2	-1	-1
Mighty <i>Full plate armour</i>	+8	-2	-2	-2	-2
OTHER ITEMS					
Helm, open-faced	+1 to head	0	0	0	0
Helm, close-faced	+1 to head, +2 to eyes	-1	0	0	0
Great Helm	+2 to head, eyes & neck	-2	0	0	0
Gorget, leather	+1 to neck	0	0	0	0
Boots, leather	+1 to feet	0	0	0	0
Boots, mail	+2 to feet	-1	-1	0	0
Gauntlets	+1 to hands	-1	0	0	0
Buckler*	0	0	0	0	0
Shield*	+1†	0	0	0	0
Great Shield*	+2†	0	0	0	0

*Characters must have a shield, or some-shield like object, to use the Block Skill. See section 7.3.10, Block, on page 58.

†These Armour Bonuses only apply if the shield-using character has successfully Blocked this round. See section 7.3.10, Block, on page 58.

complete freedom of movement with no encumbrance.

9.6.2 Light

Armour Grade Light describes characters wearing 'soft' armour such as leather-based armour and padded armour. Such armour affords basic protection with a minimum of inhibition and encumbrance.

9.6.3 Medium

Armour Grade Medium applies to characters wearing lighter types of metal armour, including chainmail, scalemail and banded armour of any kind. Such armour offers good protection but is semi-restrictive and moderately encumbering.

9.6.4 Heavy

Armour Grade Heavy describes characters equipped in strong forms of metal armour such as plates attached to lighter elements such as chainmail and leather. Heavy Armour such as this offers a very high level of protection. But the wearer is also greatly encumbered and restricted in her movements.

9.6.5 Mighty

Armour Grade Mighty is the highest of all grades. It involves full suits of plate armour, often with interlocking plates. Such armour affords the best possible protection from attackers. Yet it is also extremely weighty, bulky, and awkward.

9.7 Armour Characteristics

Different types of armour have different advantages and disadvantages. Lighter armour allows for freedom of movement but does not provide much protection. Conversely, heavy armour restricts mobility but does provide a high degree of protection. To reflect these differences, Armour Characteristics are assigned to different types of armour. There are five categories of armour, each of which has different Armour Characteristics.

There are five Armour Characteristics: the Armour Bonus, the Agility Penalty, the Movement Penalty, the Parry Penalty, and the Dodge Penalty.

9.7.1 The Armour Bonus

The Armour Bonus is the bonus to Withstand Injury enjoyed by the character wearing or using the armour. Thus, a character with a WithIn stat of 5, wearing padded armour (Armour Grade Light ie +2 Armour Bonus), has a modified WithIn stat of 7: $5 [\text{WithIn}] + 2 [\text{Armour Bonus}] = 7$.

9.7.2 The Agility Penalty

The Agility Penalty measures how inhibiting or encumbering armour is. The bulkier and weightier the armour, the greater the Agility Penalty. The Agility Penalty applies to all Agility Skills attempted by the character while wearing or using the armour in question (including Timing). But it does not apply to Combat Skills—even though these are a Composite of Agility and Vigour. Separate armour-based penalties apply to the Combat Skills of Movement, Parry, and Dodge (see below).

9.7.3 The Movement Penalty

The Movement Penalty measures how much a given type of armour reduces the foot speed of a character. This becomes especially important when a character is chasing or fleeing and enemy. For more on the Movement Skill, see section 7.3.12, Movement, on page 60.

9.7.4 The Parry Penalty

Rigid armour prevents a character from performing the rapid movements required to Parry opponents' attacks. The Parry Penalty measures how much a given type of armour inhibits the Parry Skill of its wearer. For more on the Parry Skill, see section 7.3.9, Parry, on page 56.

9.7.5 Dodge Modifier

Obviously, wearing armour impedes characters from making the erratic manoeuvres necessary to Dodge effectively. This is represented by the Dodge Penalty. For more on the Dodge Skill, see section 7.3.11, Dodge, on page 59.

9.8 Armour Bonuses and Suits of Armour

The suits of armour given in the Armour List cover the wearer's arms, legs and torso. They do not cover the wearer's head (including eyes), neck, hands, or feet.

This is important, because a character Struck by a Called Shot to a part of the body not covered by suits of armour does not enjoy the same Armour Bonus to WithIn for that attack as he would have if the attack had Struck a part of his body covered by the suit of armour.

EXAMPLE

A soldier wearing a suit of chain mail (Armour Grade Medium, ie Armour Bonus +4) is Struck by a Called Shot to his neck. The suit of armour only protects his arms, legs, and torso; it does not cover his neck. However, he is wearing a Great Helm. This gives him a +2 Armour Bonus to his head, eyes and neck.

So the soldier makes his WithIn roll subject to a +2—not a +4—Armour Bonus.

9.9 Helms, Shields and Other Items


Since suits of armour do not cover the whole body, other protective items such as boots, gauntlets, and helms are desirable. Also desirable are shields, which are required by characters who want to use the Block Skill.

Helms, gorgets, gauntlets and boots are only relevant to Combat when an attacker makes a successful Called Shot against another's head (including eyes), neck, hands or feet. See section 7.3.5, Called Shots, on page 50. Otherwise, the Armour Bonuses generated by these items are ignored.

Characters must have a shield, or some shield-like object, to use the Block Skill (see section 7.3.10, Block, on page 58). The smallest and lightest shield, the Buckler, has no Armour Bonus. The two larger shields do have Armour Bonuses. But these bonuses are only effective if the character wielding the shield has successfully Blocked that round. A character who declares a Block in the Strategy Stage, fails her Block roll in the Modifier Stage, and is Struck in the Resolution Stage may not apply her shield's Armour Bonus to her WithIn roll.

Chapter 10

Priestcraft

OME CHARACTERS devote themselves to a higher calling. Rather than satisfy their own greed, or serve an earthly master, they dedicate their lives to religious worship. The most devoted of the faithful are Priests. Through prayer and meditation, Priests learn to harness Divine energy and channel it for religious purposes. Minor Priests are powerful allies. The greatest Priests seem to have the gods at their beck and call. Unless—heavens forfend!—their god forsakes them.

10.1 Gods & Religions

Religious belief occurs in all societies. It seems almost instinctive for intelligent beings to contemplate their origins and their fate, and to ascribe it all to divine forces. In Dominion Rules, specific religions are described in guides to dominions. The Priestcraft rules found here apply to all Priests, no matter what their religion or which dominion they play in. For Priestcraft rules and information specific to your Priest's deity, consult the guide to your dominion.

Throughout this section, we speak of the Priest's relationship with his or her deity. This may suggest that Priests must worship and serve only one deity. That is true in religions which recognise only one god (monotheistic religions). But other religions recognise many gods. In these polytheistic religions, Priests may serve more than one god. Usually, however, Priests of polytheistic religions will devote themselves especially to one god in the pantheon.

10.2 Priests

Many characters have religious convictions. But most don't have priestly powers like Blessing and Healing. So what is the difference between a character with religious beliefs and a Priest-style character?

What distinguishes a Priest from these other religious characters is this: while other characters worship their gods, Priest-style characters both worship and channel their gods. In *Dominion Rules*, to channel is to harness or transmit the god's powers through one's own body and soul. Channelling is what allows Priests to use Priestcraft Skills. Unlike Combat and Attribute Skills, Priestcraft Skills are abilities that the Priest himself does not actually have; he merely Channels them from his deity. Without his god, a Priest-style character is powerless to use his Priestcraft Skills.

Because Priests are so dependent upon their gods for their Skills, they must be sure to be always in favour with their gods. The player must constantly demonstrate fidelity and reverence towards his deity. This may involve observing rituals, performing charitable deeds, ministering to believers, and similar religious work. A Priest who falls out of favour with his god may find himself Forsaken: see section 10.7, Forsaken Priests, on page 108.

We have referred here to 'Priests' and 'Priest-style characters'. Recall that there is no class or profession system in *Dominion Rules*. When we say 'Priest' we simply mean any character who specialises in Priestcraft Skills. If you have not already done so, read section sec:characterstyles Character Styles, beginning on page 7.

Characters who have not dedicated themselves to lives of religious worship and contemplation cannot Channel Priestcraft Skills. Such characters are treated by the gods the way Forsaken Priests are treated: their appeals to divinity are ignored.

EXAMPLE

Otto the Rat is no Priest! The last time he went to church, it was to steal a sacramental chalice. But if Otto works out his Priestcraft Composite (which turns out to be 1) and rolls 1, can he Bless someone?

No. The god to whom Otto appeals ignores him. No god would allow his powers to be Channelled through such an unworthy vessel.

Figure 10.1: Lark



10.3 Priests in the Order of Play

Priests use their Priestcraft Skills just as other characters use Combat or Attribute Skills. This means that, when the Order of Play rules are being used, Priests make Timing Rolls in the Timing Stage, declare their Strategy in the Strategy Stage, and make their Skill rolls in either the Modifier or the Resolution Stage.

The following Priestcraft Skills are rolled in the Modifier Stage: Bless, Consecrate, Curse, and Defile. All other Priestcraft Skills are rolled in the Resolution Stage.

Priestcraft Skills are never subject to Defence Penalties, even when the Skill they use seeks to cause Injury. The reason is simple: the gods are not fooled by Dodges and Parries!

10.4 The Priestcraft Composite

Priestcraft Skills are Composite Skills, just like Combat and Witchcraft Skills. Like these two other Composites, the Priestcraft Composite is determined by taking the average of two Attributes and, where needed, rounding the result either up or down according to the rules of Favourable Rounding (see section 3.9.2, Favourable Rounding, on page 21).

The two parts of the Priestcraft Composite are Intuition and Stamina (see section 3.7, The Intuition Attribute on page 19 and section 3.6, The Stamina Attribute on page 19).

A Priest's Stamina is significant because, by invoking the gods, the Priest invites his deity to operate through his own body. This is known as Channelling and it can be a wearisome experience—not for the faint-hearted!

Channelling is just as wearisome on a Priest's soul. The second part of the Priestcraft Composite, Intuition, serves here as a measure of the Priest's spiritual strength.

For more on Channelling, see section 10.5.4, Channel, on page 92.

EXAMPLE

Cedric the Initiate is a cleric of the deity Vengeant. The Priestcraft Composite is the average of the Stamina and Intuition Attributes. Cedric has a Stamina of 3 and an Intuition of 2. This gives a Priestcraft Composite of 2.5: $(3 \text{ (Cedric's Stamina)} + 2 \text{ (Cedric's Intuition)}) \div 2 = 2.5$.

But you can't have a stat of 2.5. Cedric must either round the number up or down, depending on whether he has Favourable Rounding. Indeed he does: Cedric's Luck stat is 3. So Cedric rounds up: his Priestcraft Composite is 3.

10.5 Priestcraft Skills

Priestcraft Skills are Skills based on the Priestcraft Composite, in the same way that Combat Skills are based on the Combat Composite. A character's Priestcraft Composite stat is the starting stat for all Priestcraft Skills. Priestcraft Skills can be improved in the same way as other Skills (see chapter 5, Advancement).

EXAMPLE

Cedric's Priestcraft Composite is 3. So all his Priestcraft Skill stats begin at 3. He may then improve them with Advancement Points.

There are eleven Priestcraft Skills. They are: Channel, Bless, Consecrate, Curse, Defile, Heal, Smite, Wrath, Prophecy, Resurrect, and Work Miracle. These eleven Skills are available to all Priests, unless forbidden by their deities (as described below). Some deities may make available to their Priests other Skills not listed here. Specialised Skills such as these are described by your GM or in the online guide to your dominion.

10.5.1 Within Rolls

Some Priestcraft Skills cause Injury. Others, such as Bless, grant benefits to the recipient.

When the effect of a Priestcraft Skill is to cause Injury, the victim may make a Withstand Injury roll to Withstand the Injury (see Withstand Injury on page 30 and section 8.3 Injury: An Overview on page 66).

When the effect of the Skill is beneficial, no WithIn roll is needed.

10.5.2 Action Penalties

As is true for all Skills, Action Penalties apply to Priestcraft Skills. Whenever a Priest declares two or more Skills in a round—be it two or more Priestcraft Skills, or a Priestcraft Skill and some other Skill—Action Penalties apply.

For more, see section 4.3, Action Penalties on page 23.

10.5.3 Difficulty Penalties

Some Priestcraft Skills are particularly powerful. The most powerful Skills are also the most difficult to master. Difficulty Penalties are penalties imposed upon certain Priest Skill rolls, making those rolls harder. The purpose of Difficulty Penalties is to reflect the mastery and devotion required of a Priest to Channel his god's greatest powers.

Difficulty Penalties often put the Skills to which they apply out of reach of all but the most advanced Priests. But remember that Lucky Breaks can be used to improve Skill stats, if only temporarily. See section 3.9.1, Lucky Breaks on page 20.

10.5.4 Channel

As explained above, Priestcraft Skills are different from other Skills in Dominion Rules because they are Channelled. To use a Priestcraft Skill, the Priest calls upon his deity to use his body and soul as conduits of divine power. In a way, Priests don't really possess Priestcraft Skills; they merely possess the ability to Channel these Skills through themselves.

Figure 10.2: Priest Praying



Channelling is an exhausting experience for the Priest's body and soul. A Priest can only Channel so often before he is exhausted and must Rest. The number of times a Priest can Channel Priestcraft Skills before requiring Rest is measured by the Channel Skill.

Like the Withstand Injury Skill, which is divided into the WithIn and Injury stats (see section 8.4, Injury Points and the Injury Stat, on page 68), the Channel Skill has two parts. First there is the normal Channel stat. It may be improved like any other Skill. Then there is the Fervour stat. The Fervour stat is a special stat related to the Channel Skill. Like the Injury stat, the Fervour stat is not a Skill; it is simply a stat that is used to keep track of how often a Priest may Channel before he must Rest.

A Rested Priest's Fervour stat is equal to his Channel stat. Each time a Priest successfully uses a Priestcraft Skill, his Fervour stat drops by 1.

EXAMPLE

Cedric's Channel stat is 5. He is Rested, so his Fervour stat is also 5. Cedric then Channels his deity (in other words, uses one of his Priestcraft Skills). So Cedric's Fervour stat drops to 4, but his Channel stat stays at 5.

Note that a Priest's Fervour stat only drops if he is successful in his attempt to Channel the Skill. If he fails, no Channelling occurs and his Fervour is untouched.

EXAMPLE

Cedric (Fervour 4) attempts to Bless his companion Sir Adrien Stout. But he rolls 12 for his Bless roll: an automatic failure! So he does not Channel the Blessing, and his Fervour remains at 4.

When a Priest's Fervour stat falls below 0, she suffers a Fervour Penalty to all Priestcraft Skills. The Fervour Penalty is a reflection of the Priest's bodily fatigue and need to replenish herself spiritually through meditation and prayer. The Fervour Penalty is equal to the character's Fervour stat. The Fervour Penalty remains in place until the Priest Rests. (Rest is explained below.)

EXAMPLE

Cedric's Fervour stat is 4. He Blesses a companion: his Fervour drops to 3. He Heals another companion: his Fervour drops to 2. He Smites an enemy twice: his Fervour drops to 0. He Heals his own Injury: his Fervour drops to -1.

Cedric now has a Fervour Penalty of -1. The next time he attempts to use a Priestcraft Skill, the penalty will apply.

Cedric (Consecrate 4) attempts to temporarily Consecrate his companion Theophilus' staff. He must roll 3 or less to do so: 4 (Cedric's Consecrate) - 1 (Fervour Penalty) = 3.

He rolls a 2: success! But success has its price, for now Cedric's Fervour has dropped to -2. He will soon need Rest.

When a Priest's Fervour Penalty is greater than one of his Priestcraft Skills, he becomes unable to use that Skill until he Rests. When a Priest's Fervour Penalty is greater than his highest Priestcraft Skill stat, he becomes unable to use any Priestcraft Skills until he Rests. This is similar to the concepts of Defeat and Incapacitation described in chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

Note that no Priest can continue to Channel Priestcraft Skills with a Fervour Penalty of -12—even if the Priest has Priestcraft Skill stats higher than 12. At -12 Fervour, a Priest must Rest.

For purposes of the Fervour stat, Rest involves a night's sleep and time for prayer and meditation. Some religions may also demand certain religious ceremonies or rituals as part of a Priest's Rest. The effect of Rest is to restore a Priest's Fervour stat, making it equal to the Priest's Channel stat. Nothing but Rest will restore a Priest's Fervour.

10.5.5 Bless

The Bless Skill allows Priests to bestow Blessings on people and creatures. Blessed characters enjoy temporary bonuses to Skills rolls, reflecting the favour which the Priest's god has shown (at the Priest's request) for the Blessed character. Blessings apply only to one Skill, which the Priest specifies.

To Bless a character, declare a Bless Skill, as well as the recipient of the Blessing and the Skill stat to be Blessed. Then roll less than or equal to your Bless stat in the Modifier Stage. A roll of 12 always fails. If the Bless roll is successful, the number rolled becomes a Blessing Bonus to the Blessed character's Skill stat. The Blessing Bonus lasts for this round only.

EXAMPLE

Cedric and his party are crusading in the distant lands of Tul-Qir Ac. Cedric's companion, Sir Adrien Stout, is locked in Combat with a Tulqir infidel. Cedric wishes to Bless Sir Adrien in his righteous battle.

Cedric (Bless 5 Fervour 5) declares he will attempt to Bless Sir Adrien to improve his Strike stat.

In the Modifier Stage, Cedric must roll 5 or less to Bless Sir Adrien and temporarily increase his Strike stat. Cedric rolls a 4! Aunu be praised.

Now, in the Resolution Stage, Sir Adrien enjoys a Blessing Bonus to his Strike stat of +4. The bonus lasts until the end of this round.

Cedric's Fervour stat is now 4.

A character may have several Blessings improving his Skills at the same time. The Blessings may affect the same Skill or different Skills.

EXAMPLE

Cedric could have declared two Blesses upon Sir Adrien this round. Had he done so, and had he rolled both Skills successfully, Sir Adrien might have had an even higher Strike Bonus. Or, Sir Adrien might have had both a Strike Bonus and a Feint Bonus, etc.

The Bless Skill cannot be used on Injury stats or Fervour stats. The reason is that Bless can only be used on Skills; the Injury and Fervour stats are not Skills (see section 8.4, Injury Points and the Injury Stat on page 68, and section 10.5.4 Channel on page 92).

However, the Bless Skill can be used to temporarily increase a character's WithIn stat. This improves a character's chances of Withstanding Injury. But it has no effect whatsoever upon the character's Injury stat.

EXAMPLE

Next round, Cedric turns his attention to another of his companions, the warrior-monk Theophilus (WithIn 5 Injury stat -3). Cedric declares he will attempt to Bless Theophilus to improve his WithIn stat temporarily.

In the Modifier Stage, Cedric (Bless 5 Fervour 4) rolls a 2, a successful Bless. For the duration of this round, Theophilus' WithIn stat is 7, making him more likely to Withstand Injury. Note, however, that Theophilus' Injury stat remains at -3. At the end of the round, Theophilus' WithIn stat returns to 5.

Cedric's Fervour stat is now 3.

Characters with Blessed WithIn stats can still be Injured, of course.

EXAMPLE

Theophilus is Struck with a roll of 4. Thanks to Cedric's Blessing, Theophilus only needs a 7 or lower to Withstand Injury. But he rolls a 9! So his Injury stat drops to -7: -3 (Theophilus' Injury stat) - 4 (Strike roll) = -7.

Priests can bestow Blessings on any person or creature they know or know of. The person or creature to be Blessed need not be in the Priest's presence.

EXAMPLE

If Cedric wanted, he could attempt to Bless King Peter the Just. Cedric does not personally know the king, and is not in his presence. But he knows of the king; he knows the king exists. That is all he needs to know. His god will take care of the rest.

Priests can Bless themselves in the same way as they Bless others.

10.5.6 Consecrate

The Consecrate Skill is very similar to the Bless Skill, with one big difference: to Consecrate is to bless an object rather than a person or creature. Holy swords, sacred amulets, saintly relics, and other religious artifacts are examples of Consecrated objects.

Objects can be Consecrated temporarily or permanently. The Consecrated object gains a bonus improving its performance or increasing its power.

To Consecrate an object temporarily, declare your Consecrate Skill and the object to be Consecrated. Also declare the desired effect of the Consecration on the object. Then, in the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Consecrate Skill. A roll of 12 always fails. The bonus possessed by a successfully Consecrated object is equal to the Consecrate roll +2. The temporary Consecration lasts for the rest of the current round.

EXAMPLE

Cedric (Consecrate 4 Fervour 3) declares that he will attempt to temporarily Consecrate Sir Adrien's sword, endowing it with a bonus to Parry.

In the Modifier Stage, Cedric succeeds with a roll of 2. Sir Adrien's sword is now endowed with a temporary +4 Parry Bonus. The bonus will last until the end of this round. Note that it is the sword, not its user, that has is Consecrated. So anyone using Sir Adrien's sword this round will benefit from the +4 Parry Bonus. Likewise, Sir Adrien does not enjoy a Parry Bonus this round unless he uses the Consecrated sword.

Cedric's Fervour stat is now 2.

The Consecrate Skill cannot be used to invest objects with powers they do not normally have. For example, a Priest may Consecrate a shield, endowing it with a WithIn Bonus. But she may not use the Consecrate Skill to endow it with a Literacy Bonus, because shields cannot read.

Objects may also be Consecrated permanently. This is much harder to do. To endow an object with a permanent bonus of any sort, a Priest must roll less than or equal to his Consecrate Skill, subject to a -12 Difficulty Penalty. Most Priests are not able to Consecrate objects permanently, for one's Consecrate stat must be at least 13 even to attempt a permanent Consecration. (And as always, a roll of 12 is an automatic failure.)

If a Priest does make a successful Consecrate roll, the Consecrated object is permanently endowed with a bonus equal to the Consecrate roll.

EXAMPLE

Church history records that Lucian Comoran, a mighty priest of Vengeant, Consecrated a finely crafted longsword and gave it to the famously devout king, Matthias II. The sword is now lost.

Let us imagine that Lucian is Consecrating the sword to give it a bonus to Strike. Suppose that Lucian's Consecrate Skill is 18. He would need a 6 or less to Consecrate the weapon: 18 (Lucian's Consecrate) - 12 (Difficulty Penalty) = 6.

Lucian rolls a 3: he permanently Consecrates the sword with a +3 Strike Bonus.

Whether the Consecrate roll is successful or not, the attempt to permanently Consecrate an object generates a Permanent Consecration Penalty which reduces the Priest's Channel stat by 1. Note that it is the Channel stat, not his Fervour stat, that is reduced.

EXAMPLE

Lucian Comoran (Channelling 16) has just permanently Consecrated a sword for King Matthias. This is an act of great generosity. For it has cost Lucian 1 point of his Channel stat. His Channelling is now 15: 16 (Lucian's Channelling) - 1 (Permanent Consecration Penalty) = 15.

Had Lucian failed his Consecrate roll, he would still lose one point from his Channel stat just for trying.

To Consecrate an object permanently or temporarily, the Consecrating Priest must touch the object while using the Skill.

10.5.7 Curse

The Curse Skill is the opposite of the Bless Skill. It works in exactly the same way as the Bless Skill, except that Cursed people or creatures suffer penalties—not bonuses—to Skill stats. Anything you can do with a Bless Skill, you can do in reverse with a Curse.

To Curse a character, declare a Curse Skill, as well as the recipient of the Curse and the Skill stat to be Cursed. Then, in the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Curse stat. A roll of 12 always fails. Victims of a Curse may make WithIn rolls.

If the Curse roll is successful, the amount rolled becomes a Curse Penalty to the Cursed character's Skill stat. The Curse Penalty lasts until the end of the current round.

A character may have several Curses penalising his Skills at the same time.

The Curse Skill cannot be used on Injury stats or Fervour stats. The reason is that Curse can only be used on Skills; the Injury and Fervour stats are not Skills (see section 8.4, Injury Points and the Injury Stat on page 68 and section 10.5.4, Channel on page 92).

However, the Curse Skill can be used to temporarily decrease a character's WithIn stat. This reduces a character's chances of Withstanding Injury. But it has no effect whatsoever upon the character's Injury stat. Characters with Cursed Withstand Injury stats continue to be Injured normally. When the Curse expires at the end of the round, the Cursed character's Withstand Injury stat returns to normal. This works exactly the same way as Blessing the WithIn stat; see section 10.5.5, Bless.

Priests can Curse any person or creature they know or know of. The person or creature to be Cursed need not be in the Priest's presence.

It is theoretically possible for Priests to Curse themselves. But it's hard to see why a Priest would ever do this.

Some deities may not permit their Priests to channel the Curse Skill, or may impose restrictions on its use. See section 10.8, Forbidden and Restricted Priestcraft Skills on page 109. Others may allow the Skill, but may Forsake the Priest if she uses it too often or in an unholy manner. See section 10.7, Forsaken Priests on page 108.

10.5.8 Defile

The Defile Skill is the opposite of the Consecrate Skill. It works exactly the same way as the Consecrate Skill, except that Defiled objects are invested with temporary or permanent penalties, not bonuses.

To Defile an object temporarily, declare your Defile Skill and the object to be Defiled. Also declare the desired effect of Defiling the object (ie what sort of penalty will attach to it). Then, in the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Defile Skill. A roll of 12 always fails. The penalty possessed by a successfully Defiled object is equal to the Defile roll. The temporary Defile Penalty lasts until the end of the current round.

The Defile Skill cannot be used to divest objects of powers they do not already have. For example, a Priest may Defile a bow, imposing a Missile Strike Penalty upon it. But he may not use the Defile Skill to endow it with a Juggling Penalty, because bows can't be used to juggle.

Like the Consecrate Skill, Defile may be used to Defile objects permanently. To endow an object with a permanent penalty of any sort, a Priest must roll less than or equal to his Defile Skill, subject to a -12 Difficulty Penalty (see section 10.5.3, Difficulty, on page 92). Most Priests are not powerful enough to Defile objects permanently, for one's Defile stat must be at least 13 even to attempt it. (And as always, a roll of 12 is an automatic failure.) If a Priest does make a successful Defile roll, the Defiled object is endowed with a penalty equal to the Defile roll. Whether the Defile roll is successful or not, the attempt to Defile an object permanently generates a Permanent Defile Penalty which reduces the Priest's Channel stat by 1. Note that it is the Channel stat, not his Fervour stat, that is reduced.

To Defile an object permanently or temporarily, the Defiling Priest must touch the object while using the Skill.

Some deities may not permit their Priests to Channel the Defile Skill, or may impose restrictions on its use. See section 10.8, Forbidden and Restricted Priestcraft Skills on page 109. Others may allow the Skill, but may Forsake the Priest if he uses it too often or in an unholy manner. See section 10.7, Forsaken Priests on page 108.

10.5.9 Heal

Heal may be the most important Priestcraft Skill. Characters who possess the power to Heal are constantly sought after by the Injured, the Diseased, and the Infirm. Religions celebrate great healers in their sacred texts and religious art. In some faiths, famous healers of the past are even made saints—almost worshipped as gods themselves.

The Heal Skill may be used in three ways: to Heal Injury; to Heal Illness and Disease; and to Heal Infirmary. In each case, the person to be Healed must be within the Priest's line of sight.

Heal Injury

The Heal Skill can be used to Heal Injury. To learn about Injury, read chapter 8, Injury, Defeat & Death.

To Heal an Injured character, declare your Heal Skill and the person to be Healed. Then, in the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Heal stat. A roll of 12 always fails.

The effect of a successful Heal roll is to improve the Injured character's Injury stat by the amount of the Priest's Heal stat. Note that this is the Heal stat, not the Heal roll. The roll only determines whether the Priest is able to use the Skill.

(Notice that a Priest who is determined to make a successful Heal roll will do so, sooner or later. He may just have to keep trying. If the Priest is in no hurry, this is not a problem. Indeed, if there is no urgency, the GM may tell you not to bother rolling at all; why bother rolling when everyone knows you will eventually succeed? But when the Priest is in a hurry—say, when he is trying to Heal a companion before he receives what would be a fatal blow from an enemy—then the question of when the Priest succeeds becomes very important.)

EXAMPLE

The battle with the Tulqir infidels is now over, and Cedric's party has taken shelter in a cave to tend to their wounds. Theophilus (WithIn 5) was very seriously Injured; his Injury stat is -7. Sir Adrien (WithIn 7) was also Injured, but less seriously. His Injury stat is 4.

Cedric (Heal 4 Fervour 2) declares he will Heal both his companions. First he uses his Heal Skill on Theophilus. Cedric's Heal Skill raises Theophilus' Injury stat from -7 to -3: -7 (Theophilus' Injury stat) $+ 4$ (Cedric's Heal stat) $= -3$. Cedric then uses his Heal Skill again, raising Theophilus' Injury stat to 1: -3 (Theophilus' Injury stat) $+ 4$ (Cedric's Heal stat) $= 1$.

Cedric's Fervour stat is now 0.

Note that the Heal Skill cannot be used to make a character's Injury stat higher than his WithIn.

EXAMPLE

Finally, Cedric (Fervour 0) Heals Sir Adrien, raising his Injury stat back to where it should be—equal to his WithIn. Here is the math: 4 (Sir Adrien's Injury stat) $+ 4$ (Cedric's Heal stat) $= 8$, but we make this 7 because a character's Injury stat cannot be higher than his WithIn stat.

Cedric's Fervour stat is now -1. His Priestcraft Skills are subject to a -1 Fervour Penalty.

Priests can use their Heal Skill to Heal themselves. But note that their Heal roll is subject to any Injury Penalty they may have.

Heal Illness & Disease

The Heal Skill can be used to Heal Illness and Disease.

To Heal an Ill or Diseased character, declare your Heal Skill and the person to be Healed. Then roll less than or equal to your Heal stat in the Resolution Stage. A roll of 12 always fails.

The effect of a successful Heal roll on an Ill character is exactly the same as for Injured characters (see section 10.5.9, Heal Injury).

The effect of a successful Heal roll on a Diseased character is to stop the Disease from Spreading (if it has already begun to Spread) or to prevent it from Spreading (if it hasn't yet Spread). Once the Spreading has stopped or been prevented, the Diseased character will heal naturally. Or the Priest can use his Heal Skill on him, in the same way as Injured characters are Healed (see section 10.5.9, Heal Injury).

For more on Illness and Disease, see section 8.9, Illness & Disease on page 74.

Heal Infirmary

The Heal Skill can be used to Heal Infirmary. An Infirmary is any permanent but not life-threatening affliction, disability or impairment. Blindness, paralysis, and missing limbs are all examples. See section 8.10, Infirmary on page 76.

Healing Infirmarys is very difficult. Healers who are capable of it are revered as miracle-workers. To Heal an Infirm character, declare your Heal Skill and the person to be Healed. Then roll less than or equal to your Heal Skill, subject a -12 Difficulty Penalty. Most Priests are not powerful enough to Heal Infirmary, for one's Heal stat must be at least 13 even to attempt it. (And as always, a roll of 12 is an automatic failure.)

The effect of a successful Heal Infirmary roll is that the Infirmary disappears: the blind woman sees, the paralysed man walks, the missing limb instantly regenerates, etc.

10.5.10 Smite

The foremost attack Skill of a Priest is Smite. To smite means to hit or strike hard or to defeat, punish, destroy, or kill. (To smite may also mean to inspire with love, as in smitten with her charms—but that is not the sense we are using it in!) Smite is in some ways the opposite of the Heal Skill, for it seeks to cause Injury rather than cure it.

The form taken by a Smite Skill depends upon the deity from which the power is Channelled. Some deities may cause bolts of lightning or fire to shoot from the Priest's hands. Others may animate a Priest's rod or sword. Or the Smite may manifest itself differently every time it is Channelled. Your GM will determine the form taken by the Smite Skill.

To Smite an enemy, declare your Smite Skill and the person to be Smitten. Then, in the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Smite stat. A roll of 12 always fails. Victims of Smite attacks make WithIn rolls.

The effect of a successful Smite attack is to inflict a number of Injury Points equal to the Priest's Smite roll + 2.

EXAMPLE

Cedric's party rests in a cave, taking shelter from the rain and gathering their strength before continuing their mission amidst the heathen Tulqirs. Suddenly, from the shadows at the cave's end arise the bones of a long-dead wolf, animated by Tulqir witchcraft!

The combattants determine the Timing Order and declare their Strategies. Cedric (Smite 6 Fervour -1) declares a Smite against the unholy beast. Cedric needs a 5 or less to Smite: $6 \text{ (Cedric's Smite)} - 1 \text{ (Fervour Penalty)} = 5$.

In the Resolution Stage, Cedric rolls 4: a successful Smite! A blast of blue flame shoots from Cedric's hands and Smites the bone-wolf.

The monster fails its Within roll. So Cedric's Smite reduces the monster's Injury stat by 6 Injury Points: $4 \text{ (Cedric's Smite roll)} + 2 \text{ (Smite Skill)} = 6$.

Cedric's Fervour stat is now -2. His Priestcraft Skills are subject to a -2 Fervour Penalty.

Priests can only Smite people or creatures whose location is known to them. A Priest must know the victim's location first-hand and with absolute certainty. Usually, being able to see the victim suffices.

EXAMPLE

Consider the following scenarios:

1. Cedric has good reason to believe that his would-be victim is at home in bed. After all, it's 2 am. Cedric knows where his victim lives, and has even seen his bedroom. Can he Smite him?

No. He is not sufficiently certain of his victim's location. His victim may not be in bed at the moment. He may be availing himself of the chamber pot.

2. Sir Adrien tells Cedric that the Tulqir archers are camped behind the grove. Cedric can see the grove, but he cannot see the archers. But Sir Adrien saw them there just moments ago. Sir Adrien is certain they are there. Can Cedric Smite them?

No. Second-hand knowledge of the victim's location is not good enough. Cedric must see them with his own eyes.

3. Cedric sees his enemy standing in a field. There is nothing to obstruct Cedric's view of his enemy save one tree. Cedric sees him go behind the tree and hide there. Once he is hidden, Cedric can no longer see him. Can Cedric Smite him?

Yes. Cedric knows with absolute certainty where his enemy is: he is hiding behind the tree. Cedric does not need to see his enemy to Smite him. He must only know with perfect certainty where his enemy is.

Some deities may not permit their Priests to Channel the Smite Skill, particularly in its Smite with Disease and Smite with Infirmary variants (see below). Or they may impose

restrictions on the Skill's use. See section 10.8, Forbidden and Restricted Priestcraft Skills on page 109. Others may allow the Skill, but may Forsake the Priest if she uses it too often, or uses its terrifying variants. See section 10.7 Forsaken Priests on page 108.

There are two variations on the Smite Skill: Smite with Disease and Smite with Infirmity.

Smite With Disease

To Smite with Disease is to use the Smite Skill to inflict a Disease upon one's victim. It is a powerful Skill, and therefore difficult to Channel. To Smite an enemy with Disease, declare your Smite Skill and the person to be Smitten. Then, in the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Smite stat, subject to a - 6 Difficulty Penalty. A roll of 12 always fails. Victims make WithIn rolls.

EXAMPLE

Cedric's Smite stat is 6, so even when he has no Fervour Penalty, he is incapable of Smiting with Disease: $6 \text{ (Cedric's Smite)} - 6 \text{ (Difficulty Penalty)} = 0$.

But as Cedric's Smite stat improves, he will be able to Channel this Skill—unless his deity forbids it.

The effect of a successful Smite with Disease roll is to reduce the victim's Injury stat by the amount rolled, and by that same amount once a day afterwards until the victim is healed or succumbs to the Disease.

Smite With Infirmity

To Smite with Infirmity is to use the Smite Skill to inflict an Infirmity upon one's victim. (See section 8.10, Infirmity, on page 76) Smite with Infirmity is a very powerful Skill, and equally difficult to Channel.

To Smite an enemy with Infirmity, declare your Smite Skill, the Infirmity to be produced, and the person to be Smitten. Then, in the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Smite stat, subject to a - 12 Difficulty Penalty. A roll of 12 always fails. Victims are allowed WithIn rolls—even though the Skill causes no Injury (see below).

The effect of a successful Smite with Infirmity roll is to cause the victim to suffer the Infirmity declared by the Priest. No Injury is caused by the Skill; the victim's Injury stat is unchanged. Yet he may now be blind, paralysed, missing a limb, etc.

10.5.11 Wrath

Another potent—but also very difficult—attack Skill for Priests is Wrath. When a Priest uses his Wrath Skill, he brings the Wrath of his god upon his enemy.

The form taken by a deity's Wrath is for the deity, not the Priest, to decide. It tends to change every time. This makes the Wrath Skill somewhat unpredictable. Will a swarm of locusts attack the victim? Or hailstones rain down from the sky? Perhaps the earth opens

up and swallows him. Or a divine hand, wielding a hammer or sword, reaches down from the heavens and smashes the miserable creature. The GM will tell you the form taken by your god's Wrath.

The effect of a successful Wrath attack is twofold. First, it imposes a Wrath Penalty to the victim's WithIn roll equal to the Priest's Wrath roll. Second, if he fails to Withstand Injury, it inflicts a number of Injury Points equal to the Priest's Wrath stat. Note that here we are concerned with the Wrath stat, not the Wrath roll.

To bring Wrath upon an enemy, declare your Wrath Skill and the intended victim. Then, in the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Wrath stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty. Recall that a roll of 12 always fails.

Victims of Wrath attacks make WithIn rolls.

EXAMPLE

Cedric (Wrath 4 Fervour -2) attempts to bring the Wrath of Vengeant upon this unholy creature. Normally, he would not be capable of it, for his Wrath stat is too low: $4 \text{ (Cedric's Wrath)} - 4 \text{ (Difficulty Penalty)} = 0$, not to mention his -2 Fervour Penalty!

But Cedric had declared that he will spend two Advancement Points this round on a Lucky Break. Cedric's Luck stat is 3, so all his Skill stats improve by 6 for this round only: $3 \text{ (Cedric's Luck)} \times 2 \text{ (Advancement Points spent)} = 6$.

Now Cedric needs to roll 4 or less to bring Vengeant's Wrath upon the bone-wolf: $4 \text{ (Cedric's Wrath)} + 6 \text{ (Lucky Break)} - 4 \text{ (Difficulty Penalty)} - 2 \text{ (Fervour Penalty)} = 4$.

Cedric rolls: a 5! He fails his Wrath roll, and wastes two APs doing it! But at least his Fervour didn't drop any lower. Because he failed to Channel the Skill, it remains at -2.

Had Cedric's succeeded in Channelling the Wrath Skill, the bone-wolf would have made its WithIn roll subject to a Wrath Penalty equal to Cedric's roll. Had the creature failed to Withstand Injury, it would have taken 4 Injury Points (because Cedric's Wrath stat is 4).

Priests can only bring Wrath against people or creatures whose location is known to them. The 'first-hand, absolute certainty' rule described in section 10.5.10, Smite, applies here, too.

Most deities permit their Priests to Channel the Wrath Skill. Some may not, however, and others may impose restrictions on its use. See section 10.8, Forbidden and Restricted Priestcraft Skills, on page 109. Some deities will judge for themselves whether the intended victim of the god's Wrath is deserving or not. If the god deems him undeserving of such punishment, the god may refuse to empower the Priest to use the Skill. See section 10.7, Forsaken Priests on page 108.

10.5.12 Prophecy

The Prophecy Skill allows the Priest to call upon his deity to reveal the future to him. The Prophecy given to the Priest may touch upon the immediate or distant future, and may concern either the Priest's own future or the future generally.

(Note the difference between the verb to prophesy [pronounced praw-fe-sigh], meaning to tell the future, and the noun prophecy [pronounced praw-fe-see], which is a declaration of what the future holds.)

To use the Prophecy Skill, determine something about the future that you would like to know, then seek divine revelation on the matter by using the Prophecy Skill. Unlike most Priestcraft Skills, which players roll for themselves, with the Prophecy Skill the GM makes the roll and hides the result from you.

If the GM rolls less than or equal to your Prophecy Skill, he is obliged to reveal something about the future. The Prophecy he gives must relate to the question or matter the Priest put to his deity; it cannot be off-topic. But the gods are inscrutable. The GM's Prophecy need not be easy to make sense of. The GM is certainly not obliged to give yes or no answers. But the Prophecy must be a genuine, accurate, and useful answer or commentary.

If the GM fails the roll, his god has refused to reveal the future about this matter. The Priest may not attempt to Prophecy upon this matter again.

And if the GM rolls a 12, he must give a False Prophecy. The GM tells the Priest he has successfully Channelled the Prophecy Skill, then gives the Priest misleading or inaccurate information intended to lead the Priest astray. This is why the GM makes the roll himself: if the Priest knows he rolled a 12, he knows the Prophecy is False and will ignore it!

10.5.13 Resurrect

With the Resurrect Skill, the Priest calls upon his deity to restore the life of a dead person. This is, of course, one of the most powerful Priestcraft Skills.

To Resurrect the dead, a Priest must roll less than or equal to his Resurrect Skill, subject to a -12 Difficulty Penalty (see section 10.5.3, Difficulty Penalties, on page 92). As always, a roll of 12 is an automatic failure.

If a Priest does make a successful Resurrect roll, the Resurrected person is returned to life with an Injury stat of 0. The Resurrection also removes any Infirmary which afflicted the Resurrected person while alive (see section 8.10, Infirmary on page 76).

EXAMPLE

Though Cedric and his party consider the Tulquirs to be little more than savage infidels, they are in fact a very advanced people. Tulqir religious traditions include many stories of a miraculous healer named Alq-Habbid.

Alq-Habbid's greatest power was that of restoring life to the dead. He is most famous for having raised the slain warrior Khordulam, who lost his arm repelling an invasion of Vengeant crusaders, and died of his wounds.

Alq-Habbid's Resurrect stat was 17. He needed a 5 or less: 19 (Bruno's Resurrect) - 12 (Difficulty Penalty) = 7. He rolled a 3: success!

Khordulam resurrected with an Injury stat of 0. His arm was completely restored. Khordulam went on to lead a mighty uprising against the barbarous foreigners.

If a Priest fails his Resurrect roll, he may try again. But note that each time a Priest attempts a Resurrection—whether successful or not—he suffers a Resurrect Penalty which reduces his Channel stat by 1. Note that it is the Channel stat, not the Fervour stat, that is reduced. Again, the Priest suffers this penalty whether or not he succeeds in Resurrecting the dead person.

EXAMPLE

Alq-Habbid's miracle came with a price. His Channel stat (12) fell to 11 as a result of his attempt to Resurrect Khordulam.

It is equally possible to resurrect creatures, be they monsters, animals, even insects. This works in exactly the same way.

10.5.14 Work Miracle

The Work Miracle Skill allows the Priest to perform Miracles. A Miracle is an event or action that seems to contradict known natural or scientific laws. The event or action is impossible, yet it occurs—by act of god.

The principal rule about the Work Miracle Skill is that it can only be used to work true Miracles; the Skill cannot be used simply to do strange, difficult, or unlikely things. The GM will rule on whether the thing the Priest proposes to do is truly a Miracle. The GM will use this test: would the event or action be impossible—not unlikely, not difficult, not impossible for the Priest but possible for someone else, but truly impossible—without divine intervention? If the answer is Yes, the GM will allow the Priest to proceed. If the answer is No, the GM will forbid the Priest from attempting to Work a Miracle, because the thing the Priest wants to do is not a Miracle.

EXAMPLE

Consider these proposed uses of the Work Miracle Skill.

1. Cedric (Strike 3) wants to hit a bullseye. He is at long range from the target, so he has a -6 Long Range modifier to Strike. He also suffers from a -2 Injury Penalty. And the GM assigns a Called Shot Modifier of -12. Altogether then, he has a -20 penalty to Strike. He can't do it, of course. His Strike stat is only 3. He proposes to Work a Miracle to hit the bullseye.

The GM rules that this is not a Miracle. It is only a very very hard thing to do. If Cedric had enough APs to spare, he could give himself a huge Lucky Break and maybe get it. Furthermore, just because it's impossible for Cedric doesn't make it a Miracle. Geoffrey Sureshot might be able to pull this off, for example. Cedric's god will not intervene to compensate for Cedric's low Strike stat.

2. Cedric proposes to walk on water to cross a river.

The GM rules that this is a Miracle. Walking on water is a natural impossibility. It cannot be done without divine intervention.

3. Cedric proposes to become pregnant, carry a child, and give birth to it.

The GM rules that this is a Miracle. Cedric is male, and it is impossible for men to conceive and give birth. Normally, the Miracle rules dictate that if the proposed Miracle is impossible for the Priest, but possible for someone else, it is not a Miracle. (For example, Cedric vs. Geoffrey Sureshot, above.) But this is different: the fact that Dame Beatrice (a woman) can conceive and give birth does not mean that for Cedric to do so is not a Miracle. In cases like this, the GM must use his judgment.

As a general rule, if the thing the Priest proposes to do with the Work Miracle Skill can be done by Witchcraft, but not by any other way, the GM will rule that it is a Miracle. But the GM may make exceptions to this rule if he sees fit.

EXAMPLE

Cedric proposes to turn water into wine. Turning water into wine is possible by Witchcraft. But it is impossible by any other way; for water to turn into wine is contrary to natural and scientific laws.

The GM rules that this is a Miracle, even though a Witch might be capable of it.

The Work Miracle Skill cannot be used to do things the Priest could do with other Priestcraft Skills if she had high enough stats in those Skills. A blind man might certainly exclaim, 'It's a miracle!' when healed by a Priest. But that Priest could not use his Work Miracle Skill to do it; he must use his Heal Skill. Furthermore, the Work Miracle Skill cannot be used to kill, defeat, or cause Injury, even indirectly. Miracles can never lower Injury stats. To do so would be to use the Work Miracle Skill as a replacement for Wrath, Smite, or Curse Skills.

EXAMPLE

Cedric and his party continue to struggle with the bone-wolf. It would no doubt be a miracle if the bone-wolf were suddenly to turn to stone. But that would also kill the wolf. The Work Miracle Skill cannot kill, Defeat, or Injure other characters or creatures. So Cedric cannot use his Work Miracle Skill to do this.

But Cedric could use his Wrath Skill against the beast, and if he succeeded perhaps petrification would be the form taken by his god's Wrath.

To Work a Miracle, the Priest declares his Work Miracle Skill and the Miracle he proposes to perform. The GM then rules on whether what the Priest proposes to do really is a Miracle. If it is, the Priest must roll less than or equal to his Work Miracle stat, subject to a Difficulty Penalty. A roll of 12 always fails.

The size of the Difficulty Penalty is determined by the GM, using his judgment. But it will be at least -6 (for a small Miracle) and at most -12 (for a great Miracle). In deciding the size of the Difficulty Penalty, the GM should consider, relatively speaking, how astonishing the Miracle is. Miracles are by definition astonishing, of course. But some may be even more amazing than others. The GM should also take into account the following factors:

- Will the Miracle's effect be temporary or permanent? Miracles with permanent effects should have higher Difficulty Penalties.
- How many people will the Miracle effect? The more people are affected, the higher the Difficulty Penalty should be.
- What is the religious significance of the Miracle? Will it put the fear of the Priest's god in its viewers? Will it make them into believers? Or will no one but the Priest and his companions know the Miracle ever happened? Miracles which might encourage belief in the Priest's deity should be somewhat easier than those that will not.

The effect of a successful Work Miracle roll is to make the Miracle come true.

The duration of the Miracle depends entirely on what sort of Miracle it is. Some Miracles are by their nature instantaneous: they happen and they end. Others may last a certain period and then disappear. There are no fixed rules here. It is for the GM to decide. She should do so before assigning the Difficulty Penalty, because the duration of the Miracle is one of the factors to consider when assigning the penalty. In ruling on the duration of a Miracle, the GM should keep in mind what the purpose of the Miracle is.

EXAMPLE

Let us take the example mentioned earlier of a Priest who proposes to walk on water. Let us say that he wants to do this because he is fleeing a giant and has come to an impassible river.

The GM rules that walking on water is a Miracle. She now determines the Difficulty Penalty. In doing so, she considers how long the Miracle should last. Clearly the Priest doesn't want to be able to walk on water from now on; he's just trying to get away from the giant. And the Priest's deity wouldn't be helping him much by letting him sink and drown half-way across the river. What's also clear is that the Priest isn't planning to walk on water across the river, then turn round and walk on water back again. So she rules that the Miracle will last as long as it takes for the Priest to get across the river, and no longer.

10.6 Priestcraft Skills & Retreats

Retreat is a way of using the Movement Combat Skill to withdraw from melee and, effectively, run away. See section 7.3.14, Retreat Movement, on page 61. A successful Retreat

removes the character from melee in the Modifier Stage, thus nullifying all Offensive Combat Skills declared against the Retreating character that round.

The effect of a successful Retreat on Priestcraft Skills varies from Skill to Skill. The following Priestcraft Skills are not adversely affected by a successful Retreat: Bless, Curse, Heal (unless the Retreating character leaves the Priest's line of sight), Smite and Wrath (unless the location of the Retreating character becomes unknown to the Priest). However, the Consecrate and Defile Skills are made impossible by a Retreat because the Priest must touch the item to be Consecrated or Defiled, and cannot do so if the character who holds the item has Retreated. Retreats have no effect at all, of course, on Prophecy, Resurrect, and Work Miracle Skills.

(By the way, a failed Retreat keeps the Retreating character in melee until the end of the Resolution Stage. Priestcraft Skills declared against the Retreating character that round operate normally.)

10.7 Forsaken Priests

As we have said before, a Priest's power derives from his god. It is of the utmost importance, then, that the Priest retain the favour and confidence of his deity. For if his deity grows angry with him, she may Forsake him: she may abandon him and refuse to allow him to Channel her powers.

A deity will Forsake a Priest who has greatly angered or disappointed her. Usually this occurs because the Priest has acted contrary to the tenets of his religion. He has done an evil act, neglected his church, or disobeyed his god. Sometimes a deity who is angered with her Priest will come to the Priest in a vision, or send some omen of her displeasure, to warn the Priest that if he does not repent she will Forsake him. Other times, the god gives no warning. The Priest will only learn he has been Forsaken upon failing to Channel a Priestcraft Skill—even though he made his Skill roll.

A Forsaken Priest loses the use of all his Priestcraft Skills. His Skill stats remain the same; they do not drop to 0. But even though he still has his Priestcraft Skills, he cannot use them. For his god ignores his pleas. The Priest will remain powerless until he regains his god's favour through acts of penitence such as prayer and meditation, seclusion in a monastery, a pilgrimage to a holy site, or a quest.

If the Priest succeeds in winning back his deity's favour, he returns to normal; he uses his Priestcraft Skill just as he always did. But some Priests are Forsaken by their gods forever. These Priests retire from the priesthood and take up a new life, or perhaps become Priests of a rival deity.

Sometimes gods will Forsake their Priests only temporarily by refusing to Channel a certain Skill. Usually the Skill is one which the god considers evil because of the harm it does to its victim. Other times the god may wish to protect the would-be victim; the god may think him undeserving of punishment. Or a god may refuse to allow a Priest to Bless or Heal an irreligious or unholy person. It will not always be clear to the Priest why his god has Forsaken him, or for how long. This can be a troubling experience for a Priest!

10.8 Forbidden and Restricted Priestcraft Skills


Some gods will forbid their Priests to use certain Priestcraft Skills. Usually these are Skills the Priest considers evil because of the suffering they bring: Curse, Defile, Smite—especially in its more severe forms, Smite with Disease and Smite with Infirmary—and Wrath. But some gods may forbid other Skills, too. For instance, one religion may consider Resurrection an affront to divine will.

Sometimes, rather than forbidding a Skill, a deity will impose restrictions on its use not found in these rules.

Your GM will inform you if any Priestcraft Skills are forbidden or restricted by your deity. Or you may find this information in the online guide to your dominion.

Chapter 11

Witchcraft

 ITCHCRAFT is the power to invoke and manipulate the supernatural forces of magic. Magic is beyond the perception of the vast majority of player- and Game Master-characters. Yet some characters pursue the arcane arts of Witchcraft, with fearful results. DR's Witchcraft rules allow Witch-style characters the maximum freedom to determine how to use their powers. Players are encouraged to invent new Spells and to share them with others on our web site. DR gives Witches the power to do most anything... if they are creative enough!

11.1 Magic

Magic is the word for those supernatural forces which operate in the world and cannot be explained by recourse to normal experience or scientific reasoning. Some say that there is no such thing as magic; in their adventures, characters will surely encounter those who do not believe in it. That is understandable, for magic is an obscure and hidden thing. But it does exist, and its most disciplined and serious students can tap it and control its powers.

Magic comes in many forms. Some creatures possess (or are said to possess) magical powers. Magically-enchanted items, from amulets to wands, are occasionally discovered by adventurers. But the most usual source of magic is Witchcraft, as practiced by Witches.

11.2 Witches

Witches are people who make a study of the magical arts, learning to master—if only tenuously—its great powers. What we call a Witch in Dominion Rules goes by many other names: wizards, warlocks, sorcerers, magicians, alchemists, occultists, enchanters, and more. Players are free to describe their character's chosen profession as they wish. For DR purposes, however, we will call all these magic-using characters Witches.

Only a character who has devoted himself to the study of magic can use Witchcraft

Skills. Magic is a demanding and even dangerous exercise. Characters who meddle carelessly in the magic arts will get nowhere, if they're lucky. If not, they may hurt themselves.

EXAMPLE

In chapter 10, Priestcraft we saw that Otto that Rat is incapable of Channelling Priestcraft Skills. The gods ignore his appeals. Can Otto now turn his attention to Witchcraft? Say he works out his Witchcraft Composite (1) and roll 1 when trying to cast a Fly Spell. Can Otto now fly?

No. If Otto's lucky, the Spell will simply fizzle and produce no result. If he's unlucky, his attempt to cast a Spell will go horribly wrong. For instance, he may accidentally cast Wizard Trick instead, turning himself into a newt. Or he may somehow Injure himself or others. It takes long patient study to master Witchcraft. Unless Otto gets serious about it, and puts his mind to it properly (the way a starting Witch does), he'll never be able to use Witchcraft Skills.

As is described in section 2.2, Character Styles on page 7, the Witch style of character is difficult to play, for most societies fear Witchcraft. Witches are persecuted by religious and civil authorities on a regular basis. Why is this so? The reason is clear: Witches possess mighty, and potentially terrible, powers.

In almost all dominions, Witches must be careful to keep their true natures secret. Once they are known to be Witches, they are sure to be arrested, tried (usually unfairly), and condemned. Keep this in mind if you play a Witch; your indiscretion may cost you dearly!

Some Witches protect themselves by assuming the guise of a scholar (for much supernatural wisdom has been set down in manuscripts and tomes). Others abandon society, becoming hermits or encouraging people to think they are mad. Others still pretend to be perfectly normal people: shopkeepers, soldiers, peasants, and so on. This propensity to lead a double life means that the most unlikely people, from all stations of life, may turn out to be Witches.

11.3 Spells & Spellcasting

Witches summon and shape supernatural forces into perceptible manifestations of Magic called Spells. Spells are the form Magic takes when unleashed by Witches. (Magic can also take other forms; see section 11.1, Magic).

Every Spell derives from one or more of eight Witchcraft Skills. The eight Witchcraft Skills represent eight basic types of magic. You may wonder what the difference is between a Witchcraft Skill and a Spell. A Spell is a specific way of using a Witchcraft Skill; it's a particular form taken by the Skill.

For example, Enchantment is a type of Magic which bestows unnatural or magical qualities on people, creatures, places, and things. A Witch rolls her Enchantment Skill stat when casting Enchantment Spells, such as Farseeing (which Magically enhances a person's eyesight), Enchant Weapon (which bestows a Magical bonus upon a weapon), or Fly (which bestows the power of flight upon the Spell's recipient).

11.4 Known Spells & New Spells

Figure 11.1: Synne



There is a simple distinction in DR between Known Spells and New Spells.

A Known Spell is a Spell whose description and rules are described in The Spell Books, a section of Dominion Rules devoted to Spells and spellcasting. Known Spells are Spells that have been cast by Witches over and over, possibly for hundreds of years or more. Players and GMs alike learn how to use Known Spells by reading about them in The Spell Books.

A New Spell is one which is not to be found in The Spell Books because the Witch has created it himself. Any player can create a New Spell, in collaboration with the GM. The player can create it in his spare time. Or he can create it right in the middle of a game session to get himself out of a jam. To learn more about New Spells and how to create them, go to Book **XI**, New Spells, on page **194**.

A New Spell becomes a Known Spell when its rules are established and published in The Spell Books. Players and GMs are strongly encouraged to create New Spells. When you do, submit them to us and we'll post them here!

11.5 How To Cast A Spell

Detailed rules on spellcasting can be found in section **I**, General Spellcasting Rules. But in essence, spellcasting is just like Skill use: declare the Spell and roll less than or equal to the relevant Witchcraft Skill stat, subject to any applicable modifiers. Some Spells are rolled in the Modifier Stage. Others are rolled in the Resolution Stage.

11.6 The Witchcraft Composite

Witchcraft Skills are Composite Skills, just like Combat and Priestcraft Skills. Like these two other Composites, the Witchcraft Composite is determined by taking the average of

two Attributes and, where needed, rounding the result either up or down according to the rules of Favourable Rounding (see section 3.9.2, Favourable Rounding, on page 21). The two parts of the Witchcraft Composite are Intellect and Luck.

EXAMPLE

Ursula the Witch has an Intellect of 2 and a Luck of 3. To find out Ursula's Witchcraft Composite, add her Intellect (2) to her Luck (3) and divide the sum (5) by 2. The result is 2.5. But a stat of 2.5 is impossible, so Ursula has to round the number up or down. Since Ursula's Luck score is 3, she benefits from Favourable Rounding. Thus, Ursula rounds the number up from 2.5 to 3. Ursula's Witchcraft Composite is 3.

A Witch's Intellect is significant because a Witch's grasp of the arcane knowledge that makes spellcasting possible is very demanding on a Witch's mind, particularly his memory. See section 3.8, The Intellect Attribute on page 19.

A Witch's Luck is important for two reasons, one theoretical and the other practical. Theoretically, Luck is important for Witches because the supernatural powers invoked by Witches are often random and unpredictable; a character with good fortune is more likely to be successful in controlling them. Practically, Luck is important because some Spells (called Composite Spells) depend upon combinations of Witchcraft Skills. A Witch with Favourable Rounding will round Skill stat averages up, improving her chances of success.

For more about Composite Spells, see book X, Composite Spells. On Luck, see section 3.9, The Luck Attribute.

11.7 Witchcraft Skills

Witchcraft Skills are Skills based on the Witchcraft Composite, in the same way that Combat Skills are based on the Combat Composite. A character's Witchcraft Composite stat is the starting stat for all Witchcraft Skills. Witchcraft Skills can be improved in the same way as other Skills (see chapter 5, Advancement).

EXAMPLE

Ursula's Witchcraft Composite is 3. Thus, the starting stat for all her Witchcraft skills is 3. She may then improve them with Advancement Points.

There are eight Witchcraft Skills. They are: Alchemy; Arcana; Conjuring; Enchantment; Hex; Illusion; Sorcery; and Summoning. Let us briefly describe each one.

11.7.1 Alchemy

Alchemy is the power to change one thing into another. Alchemy is chiefly associated with attempts to turn base metals into gold. But it includes any transmutation of a person or thing to another. The classic example is the witch that turns a man into a frog. Changes wrought by Alchemy Spells are usually temporary. But powerful Witches can also use Alchemy to make permanent changes to people and things.

See Book II, The Book of Alchemy for more about Alchemy Spells.

11.7.2 Arcana

Arcana are secrets, mysteries and hidden tidbits of knowledge understood by only a few. Magic is a good example of arcana, for its secrets are closely guarded and accessible only to a few highly skilled practitioners. But any hidden knowledge or information counts as Arcana for DR purposes. Witches use Arcana Spells to know secret, hidden, or obscure things. In particular, Witches use them to detect supernatural phenomena, and to read people's hearts and minds.

See Book [III](#), The Book of Arcana, for more about Arcana Spells.

11.7.3 Conjuring

Conjuring is the creation of something out of nothing; the bringing into being of something that did not exist before, or was not previously there. Things produced by Conjuring Spells are called Conjurations. Conjurations behave like the real things they mimic. A Conjured bridge, for example, looks and feels like any other bridge and will support the same weight as a real bridge of the same type. But though they behave exactly like the real thing, Conjurations are not the real thing. They are temporary magical creations and in time they will usually disappear.

See Book [IV](#), The Book of Conjuring for more about Conjuring Spells.

11.7.4 Enchantment

To Enchant a person, creature, place or thing is to give it unnatural or magical qualities. Abilities, powers, or characteristics that do not normally belong to something or someone can be bestowed upon them by Enchantment. Witches use Enchantment Spells to temporarily enhance Skill stats, to make themselves fly, to create magical items, and much more.

See Book [V](#), The Book of Enchantment for more on Enchantment Spells.

11.7.5 Hex

To Hex someone or something is to make it unlucky, flawed, dangerous, or otherwise undesirable. The Hex Skill is in many ways the opposite of the Enchantment Skill: it invests people and things with penalties and disabilities, instead of new or expanded powers.

See Book [VI](#), The Book of Hexes for more on Hex Spells.

11.7.6 Illusion

Illusions are magical distortions of perception. Illusion Spells can distort the appearance of things, people, and places, making them look, sound, and feel different than they really are. They can also deceive people's thoughts and emotions, tricking them into having thoughts and feelings they would not otherwise have.

See Book [VII](#), The Book of Illusion for more on Illusion Spells.

11.7.7 Sorcery

Sorcery is the only type of magic capable of causing direct Injury. For this reason, Sorcery is the most feared and despised sort of Witchcraft. Its practitioners are seen by almost all societies as enemies of peace, religion and law. This is why Sorcery is also known as Black Magic.

Sorcery Spells are used by Witches to cause Injury to their adversaries. Some Sorcery Spells also cause Disease and Infirmary. (On Injury, Disease and Infirmary see chapter 8 on Injury, Defeat and Death.)

See Book VIII, The Book of Sorcery for more about Sorcery Spells.

11.7.8 Summoning

To summon is to call on the assistance of a magical or non-magical being. The summoned creature may act as the Witch's servant, advisor, guard, spy, and more. The summoned creature may also share its abilities with the Witch. Summoning Spells usually have only temporary effects.

Witches use Summoning Spells to call familiars, to provide protection for themselves, and generally to make use of the creatures who come under their influence. Summoning Spells have as many uses as the beings they summon. Those beings may be as great as a devil or as humble as a mouse.

Summoning Spells cannot cause direct Injury, though the creatures summoned by Summoning Spells can.

See Book IX, The Book of Summoning for more on Summoning Spells.

11.7.9 Composite Spells

Composite Spells are Spells which combine two Witchcraft Skills into one Spell. See Book X, Composite Spells for more on Composite Spells.

11.8 Where to Go From Here

Continue now to The Spell Books where you'll find detailed rules about spellcasting as well as descriptions of dozens of Spells.

Chapter 12

The Spell Books



WELCOME TO THE SPELL BOOKS, in which you will find everything you need to know about Spells and spellcasting. The Spell Books include a description of each Known Spell, with its casting rules, the effects of Rites and Charms, and more. The Spell Books also give instructions on creating and submitting New Spells.

Book I

General Spellcasting Rules

SPELLCASTING IS NOT to be taken lightly. The magical powers that Witches tap are unpredictable and dangerous. But players of spellcasting characters invariably find the rewards of Witchcraft worth the effort. In Book I you'll find general rules for spellcasting, applicable to all Spells unless otherwise stated. You'll also find all the familiar elements of the DR system, making spellcasting easy to learn and use.

12.0.1 Spells and Skill Use

A Spell is simply a way of using a Witchcraft Skill. If you're ever unsure when or how to use a Spell, just remember that it's essentially a Skill, and should be used like any other Skill.

12.0.2 Spells and Action Penalties

Since Spells are just ways of using Skills, Action Penalties apply to them. Whenever a Witch declares two or more Skills in a round—be they two or more Spells, or a Spell and some other Skill—Action Penalties apply.

To know how Action Penalties work, see section 4.3, Action Penalties, on page 23.

12.0.3 Spellcasting in the Order of Play

Witches cast Spells (ie, use their Witchcraft Skills) just as other characters use Attribute and Composite Skills. This means that when the Order of Play rules are being used, Witches make Timing Rolls in the Timing Stage, declare their Strategy in the Strategy Stage, and make their Spell rolls in the Resolution Stage.

Spells are never rolled in the Defence Stage. That Stage is for Combat Skills—more precisely, Defensive Combat Skills—only. Furthermore, no Spell is ever subject to Defence Penalties.

Unless otherwise stated in the Spell Description, a Spell declared in the Strategy Stage is cast in the Resolution Stage of the same round.

For more on the Order of Play Rules, see chapter 6, Order of Play.

12.0.4 Spells and Retreats

Retreat is a way of using the Movement Combat Skill to withdraw from melee and, effectively, run away. See section 7.3.14, Retreat Movement, on page 61. A successful Retreat removes the character from melee in the Modifier Stage, thus nullifying all Offensive Combat Skills declared against the Retreating character that round.

The effect of a successful Retreat upon a Spell will depend on the Spell. Any Spell that requires the caster to touch its target, or to be in melee with him, will become impossible to cast; the Spell fizzles. But most Spells will continue to be applicable against a Retreating character until he has left the Spell's range, as described in the Spell Description. If you're unsure, ask your GM. He will consider the question and make a ruling.

12.0.5 The Spell Description

The rules for casting Known Spells are to be found in the Spell Description. Below is an explanation of the elements of a Spell Description.

The Spell's Name Appears Here

The Witchcraft Skill used to cast it is given here

Description: An overview of the Spell. See the following sections:

- Section 12.0.6, Victims, Recipients & Targets.
- Section 12.0.7, People, Beasts and Creatures.

Casting Rules: The rules for casting the Spell, including any modifiers to the caster's Skill stat. See the following sections:

- Section 12.0.8, Difficulty Penalties.
- Section 12.0.9, Spell Range.

Duration: How long the Spell lasts. See the following sections:

- Section 12.0.10, Duration.
- Section 12.0.10, Permanence & Permanence Penalties.

Maintenance Rules: Rules on maintaining the Spell beyond its normal duration. See section 12.0.11, Maintenance Rules.

Resistance: Rules on the ability of targets to Withstand Magic or Withstand Injury as a result of the Spell, and the consequences of doing so. See the following sections:

- Section 12.0.12, Resistance: Withstand Magic.
- Section 12.0.12, Resistance: Withstand Injury.
- Section 12.0.12, Resistance: Resistance Rules.

Failure Rules: Rules on the consequence of failing the Spell roll when attempting to cast the Spell.

Restrictions: Restrictions on the powers or use of the Spell.

Rites & Charms: Any Charm or Rite bonuses associated with the Spell, including whether a Charm used when casting the Spell is consumed in casting or not. See section 12.0.13, Rites & Charms.

Roll of 12: The possible consequences of rolling 12 when attempting to cast the Spell. See section 12.0.14, Rolling 12.

12.0.6 Victims, Recipients & Targets

In the Spell Descriptions, the person or creature affected by the Spell is alternately referred to as the Spell's victim, recipient, or target. 'Victim' is used when the Spell does the person or creature harm. 'Recipient' is often used where the Spell grants a bonus or power of some sort to the person or creature affected by it. Finally, 'target' is used when neither 'victim' nor 'recipient' seems appropriate. But the three words all refer to the same thing: the person or creature affected by the Spell.

For the vast majority of Spells that affect persons or creatures, the Spell can only affect one target at a time. Unless a Spell indicates otherwise, it can only be cast upon one person or creature. (To affect more than one person or creature, simply cast the Spell more than once.)

A Witch can cast any Spell upon herself, unless doing so is forbidden by the Spell Description.

12.0.7 People, Beasts and Creatures

Unless otherwise stated or implied in the Spell Description, the Spell works on both people and beasts.

Beast means any animal, monster, faery, or non-humanoid being. See chapter 13, The Bestiary for details, especially on the distinction between mythical and common beasts. People means humanoids of all description. Humanoid races vary from dominion to dominion. Consult your GM or the guide to your dominion.

The word creature is used to refer to both people and beasts.

12.0.8 Difficulty Penalties

Usually, the more powerful a Spell is, the more challenging it is to cast. Like Priestcraft Skills, Spells may be assigned Difficulty Penalties reflecting their power or complexity.

In Spell Descriptions, Difficulty Penalties are given in the Casting Rules. With New Spells, Difficulty Penalties are determined by the GM.

12.0.9 Spell Range

Some Spells require that the person or thing to be affected by the Spell be within a certain range of the caster. The range may be a distance ('within 10m of the caster', 'within the caster's line of sight') or may be more abstract (as in Spells that are effective only upon people known to the caster).

A Spell's range is given in the Spell Description under Casting Rules.

12.0.10 Duration

Unless otherwise indicated in the Spell Description, a Spell goes into effect the moment it is cast. This will depend on whether the Spell is one which is cast in the Modifier Stage or the Resolution Stage.

EXAMPLE

Ursula the Witch is fighting three warrior-monks who are attempting to arrest her on charges of Witchcraft.

In the Timing Stage, Ursula gets the highest Timing Score.

In the Strategy Stage, after hearing the Monks' Strategies, Ursula declares a Dark Spell and a Retreat. Dark Spells are cast in the Modifier Stage.

In the Modifier Stage, Ursula makes a successful Spell roll, rolling 2. From that moment, the area goes dark. The Dark Spell takes effect immediately. The Darkness Penalty to the Monks' Combat Skills applies immediately.

A Spell's duration is usually measured in rounds. But it may also be measured in hours, days, or some other measure. Many Spells have a duration of only the current round. Another common duration is 'A number of rounds equal to the caster's X stat', where X is the Skill upon which the Spell is based. Sometimes the duration will be a number of rounds equal to the caster's Skill roll.

In any case, when the Spell's duration is given in a number of rounds, start counting with the round in which the Spell is cast, ie the current round.

EXAMPLE

Ursula's Conjuring stat is 5. So the Dark Spell's duration is 5 rounds. That means 5 rounds starting this current round. The Spell lasts for the duration of this round and four more rounds.

Some Spells have a special duration: they last until the victim of the Spell makes a successful Withstand Magic roll. For this duration, the Spell's victim is allowed to make one Withstand Magic roll per round. The roll is made at the very end of the Resolution Stage. If the victim fails the roll, the Spell's effects continue. If the victim makes the roll, the Spell is broken: its effects cease. Spell Descriptions indicate this duration with the phrase, 'Until broken by WithMag.' Spells that can be broken by WithMag cannot be maintained.

Permanence & Permanence Penalties

Most Spells have only temporary effects. But they can usually be made to apply permanently. A Witch who wants his Spell to apply permanently must make his Spell roll subject to a -12 Permanence Penalty.

Clearly, most Witches are incapable of making successful rolls with a -12 penalty. This is as it should be. For Magic is fleeting and elusive by nature; only the most powerful Witches can seize its powers forever.

By the way, don't take the word 'permanent' too literally. Where the Spell's duration is given as permanent, this means 'permanent unless undone somehow'. The Spell's effect may be undone by magic, by someone's action, or even by nature. The point is that the Spell's magic will not expire, as happens with temporary Spells.

EXAMPLE

The Reshape Object Spell can be used to magically remove all the limbs from a tree. This effect is 'permanent' in the sense that the limbs will not reappear in five or ten rounds; the magic's effect does not expire.

But the tree's limbs will grow back in a few years time. The Spell does not prevent this.

12.0.11 Maintenance Rules

Some Spells can be Maintained past their regular duration. This is indicated in the Spell Description.

To Maintain a Spell beyond its normal duration, declare you are doing so in the Strategy Stage. There is no roll to make; the Spell is automatically Maintained. But to Maintain a Spell counts as an Action for the purpose of Action Penalties. Thus, the use of any other Skill that round will give rise to an Action Penalty.

A Witch cannot alter in any way the behaviour of a Spell he is Maintaining. He can only Maintain it as is. A Witch can only Maintain a Spell which he himself cast. He may

start Maintaining it at any time before it expires (he need not Maintain it from the minute he casts it).

If the Spell which the caster proposes to Maintain specifies the Spell's range (see section 12.0.9, Spell Range), the caster must remain within that range to Maintain the Spell. If the caster or the person/object affected by the Spell leaves the Spell's range at any time, the Spell ends.

Note that a Spell that is broken by WithMag cannot be maintained. See section 12.0.10, Duration.

12.0.12 Resistance

Withstand Magic

The Withstand Magic Skill is a Stamina Skill used to give characters (PCs and GMCs alike) the chance to resist the effects of magic. The magic may come from Spells or from other sources, such as magical creatures and items.

Unless stated otherwise in the Spell Description, a person or creature against whom a Spell is used may make a Withstand Magic roll and attempt to resist the Spell's effects. A person or creature can always refuse to make the roll if he doesn't want to Withstand it.

EXAMPLE

Ursula the Witch declares an Enchant Person Spell upon her companion to give a temporary magical boost to his Strike stat. Technically, he is free to make a Withstand Magic roll. But he chooses not to, for the Spell will benefit him.

WithMag is used only against magic that does not seek to cause Injury. If the Spell causes direct Injury to the person or creature affected by it (ie if it is a Sorcery Spell or a Composite Spell involving Sorcery), use the Withstand Injury Skill instead (see section 12.0.12, Withstand Injury).

Recall that Injury Penalties do not apply to Stamina Skills like Withstand Magic. Resistance Penalties may apply to WithMag rolls, however. See section 12.0.12, Resistance Rules.

For more about Withstand Magic, see section 4.8, Withstand Magic, on page 31.

Withstand Injury

Only one Witchcraft Skill is capable of causing Injury directly: the Sorcery Skill, as used in Sorcery Spells and in Composite Spells involving Sorcery. Other Witchcraft Skills can cause Injury only indirectly, such as by making something heavy fall upon an enemy.

Whenever a Witch uses a Witchcraft Skill to cause Injury, whether directly or indirectly, the victim makes a WithIn roll to attempt to Withstand the Injury.

EXAMPLE

A Sorcerer attacks a Ranger with a Lightning Strike Spell. Lightning Strike is a Sorcery Spell; it causes direct Injury to those who fail to Withstand it. So the Ranger uses

his Withstand Injury Skill, not his Withstand Magic Skill, to attempt to Withstand the attack.

The Sorcerer then uses an Enchantment Spell to send a nearby boulder tumbling towards the Ranger. If the boulder hits him, he uses WithIn, not WithMag. For the Enchantment Spell is being used to cause him Injury indirectly; it is the boulder, not the Spell, that threatens to Injure him.

Finally, the Sorcerer uses an Illusion Spell to make the Ranger believe there's a hideous monster on his chest eating him alive. The Ranger uses WithMag to determine whether he falls for the Sorcerer's Illusion. There is no question of using WithIn here, because the Illusion is not directly Injuring the Ranger.

The Ranger fails his Withstand Magic roll and falls for the Illusion. He then stabs himself in the chest with his dagger (meaning to attack the monster). Now he uses WithIn—not WithMag—to Withstand the dagger attack. Again, it is the dagger, not the Spell, which is Injuring the Ranger, and dagger attacks are resisted with WithIn.

Note that there is a difference between a Spell which does Injury and one which does harm. In the example above, the Illusion did not Injure the Crusader. But it did harm him, for it tricked him into turning his own weapon against himself.

For more on the Withstand Injury Skill, see section 4.8, Withstand Injury on page 30, and section 8.3, Injury: An Overview, on page 66.

Resistance Rules

The Resistance Rules are the rules governing the application of Resistance Penalties. A Resistance Penalty is a penalty to a Witch's Spell stat that arises when a Witch attempts to cast a Spell on a person or creature that has already made a successful Withstand Magic roll against the same Spell, cast by the same caster.

EXAMPLE

Ursula the Witch (Enchantment 6) attempts to cast a Slumber Spell on a sailor whose boat she'd like to borrow for a while. She rolls 4: she successfully casts the Spell. But the sailor (WithMag 2) gets to make a Withstand Magic roll. He rolls a 2! He Withstands the Magic and remains awake.

Ursula can try again. But this time, her Enchantment stat will be subject to a -1 Resistance Penalty resulting from the sailor's successful Withstand Magic roll.

Note that the Resistance Penalty applies only if Ursula tries again to cast the Slumber Spell on the sailor. If she casts another Spell on the sailor, the penalty does not apply. Nor does it apply if she casts Slumber on someone else.

The Resistance Penalty starts at -1 and lowers by 1 each time the Spell's target makes a successful WithMag roll. This means that if the target of the Spell Withstands Magic often enough, it will become impossible for the caster to use the Spell on him.

EXAMPLE

Ursula tries again. This time she needs to roll 5 or less to cast the Spell: 6 (Ursula's Enchantment) - 1 (Resistance Penalty) = 5. She rolls a 3.

The sailor (Withstand Magic 2) rolls to Withstand Magic. He rolls a 1! He's done it again.

Ursula's Slumber Skill is getting harder and harder to cast. But she decides to try again. Now she must roll 4 or less to cast the Spell: 6 (Ursula's Enchantment) - 2 (Resistance Penalty) = 4. She rolls a 5—a miss!

She tries yet again, still needing to roll 4 or less. She rolls 2.

The sailor rolls his WithMag. He rolls a 12! He fails, and falls into a deep sleep.

There are some Spells for which Resistance Rules do not apply. In particular, Resistance Rules do not apply when a Witch who fails his Spell roll is forbidden to try again. To know whether Resistance Rules apply, see the Spell Description under Resistance.

12.0.13 Rites and Charms

To cast a Spell, a Witch need only declare the Spell she wishes to cast and do what is indicated in the Spell's Description (usually, roll less than or equal to the relevant Skill stat). However, many Spells will have stronger effects, or be easier to cast, if the Witch performs certain Rites, or includes specified Charms, when casting the Spell.

A Rite is a ceremonial or customary act performed by the Witch to enhance the power of his Spell or make it easier to cast. Examples include: uttering magical words; making hand signals or other bodily movements; and drawing prescribed shapes and characters on the ground, around the Spell's target, or elsewhere.

A Charm is any trinket, token, or other object used in spellcasting to enhance a Spell's effect or make it easier to cast. Examples include: rings, amulets, and other jewellery; symbolic items related to the Spell, such as a feather in a Flight Spell; and rarities such as gems and precious metals. Some Spells consume Charms in casting: the Charm disappears into the Spell's magic. Other Charms survive and may be used repeatedly. When a Witch fails his Spell roll, and has used a Charm while attempting to



cast the Spell, the Charm is not consumed.

The effect of a Rite or Charm is given in the Spell Description. Where the Description refers to a Charm Bonus or a Rite Bonus, this means a bonus to the caster's Skill stat, improving her chance of casting the Spell.

EXAMPLE

A +2 Charm Bonus to a Sorcery Spell improves the caster's Sorcery stat by 2 when making her Spell roll. A +1 Rite Bonus to a Composite Spell improves the caster's Composite Spell stat by 1.

If a Spell's effect or ease of casting can be enhanced by Rites or Charms, these are indicated in the Spell's description. But Rites and Charms are always optional; a Witch who has forgotten the Rites and has no Charms may still cast Spells. But she will not enjoy the benefits Rites and Charms provide.

There is another benefit of using Rites and Charms. Witches who follow the Rites and Charms prescribed in the Spell's Description are spared the nasty consequences of rolling 12. See section 12.0.14.

No extra Action Penalty is incurred by using a Charm or observing a Rite while casting a Spell.

12.0.14 Rolling 12

Witchcraft involves meddling with supernatural forces. These forces are unpredictable, to put it mildly! When a Witch fails a Spell roll by rolling a 12, things may go horribly wrong.

Spell Descriptions will usually describe what might happen when a Witch rolls a 12. But the Roll of 12 section of the Spell Description is only meant to give examples of what could go wrong; the final say on what happens when 12 is rolled is left to the GM. Sometimes a 12 will produce a harmless, even comic, result. Other times, a 12 can be disastrous. It's up to the GM.

Witches who follow the Rites and Charms proscribed in the Spell's Description are spared the nasty consequences of rolling 12. A roll of 12 is still a failure, but the side-effects don't occur. See section 12.0.13, Rites and Charms.

Book II

The Book of Alchemy

ALCHEMY IS THE ART of transmutation: changing things into other things through the use of magic. Alchemy is chiefly associated with the practice of turning baser metals into gold. But Alchemy encompasses all sorts of magical transformations. Alchemists can turn a man into a child, a pumpkin into a coach, or a prince into a frog.

Notes On Alchemy

The most important thing to remember about Alchemy—especially when writing new Alchemy Spells—is that it is about turning one thing into another. It is not about creating something out of nothing (that's Conjuring) or making something look different (that's Illusion), or making something act different (that's Enchantment). Rather, Alchemy is about making something become something else.

There is a special substance that acts as a Charm with a +1 Charm Bonus to any Alchemy Skill (unless otherwise noted in the Spell Description). The substance is known as philosophers' stone. It is exceedingly rare, and it cannot be conjured using Conjure Object. Casters who wear philosophers' stone anywhere on their person enjoy the +1 Charm Bonus and are protected from the results of rolling 12 when casting Alchemy Spells. Philosophers' Stone is not consumed in casting.

The Alchemy Spells listed here are roughly divided: some are rolled in the Modifier Stage, the rest in the Resolution Stage. Be sure to confirm which Stage the Spell is rolled in before declaring it.

Alchemy Spells

Alchemical Gold

Alchemy

Description: With this Spell, the caster turns an amount of base metal (such as iron, aluminum, nickel, or alloys such as brass and bronze) into an equivalent amount of gold or silver. (Amount is measured by weight.)

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the metal to be transmuted, and whether it is to be transmuted into gold or silver. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat modified by a -4 Difficulty Penalty for gold, or a -3 Difficulty Penalty for silver.

The caster must be within touching distance of the metal.

Duration: Permanent.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The metal cannot be transmuted. No further attempt may be made with this metal.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: Difficulty Penalty eliminated if the Spell is cast in a fully equipped laboratory, the metal to be transmuted is soaked in mineral water for 3 hours prior to casting, and the caster follows the recipe for transmuting base metals (as found in certain books on Alchemy).

Roll of 12: The metal turns into a lump of stone.

Magic Door

Alchemy

Description: With this Spell, the caster creates a door in any wall. Characters can then go through the door to enter a building, pass into the next room, leave the building, etc.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and where the door will be. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat.

The door must be placed within the caster's line of sight. Duration A number of rounds equal to the caster's Alchemy stat. Characters caught in the doorway when the Spell ends are bounced back into the room or place from which they came.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try again on that wall. She may try on another.

Restrictions: The archway of the door can be no more than 1 m thick. However, the Witch can cast a second Magic Door on the remaining wall, and so forth until he gets out. For example, three successive Magic Doors will create a three-door passage through a wall 3 m thick.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster holds a key made of gold in his hands as she casts the Spell. The key survives the casting.

Roll of 12: The door may be locked. Or it may be too small to pass through.

Reshape Object

Alchemy

Description: With this Spell, the caster may change the shape of an object. The shape may be changed however the Witch likes, so long as the object remains that object. For instance, the Spell can be used to sharpen a sword, or curve its blade. But it may not be used to turn it into an axe. (To do that, use Transmute Object.)

Casting Rules: Declare the object to be reshaped and the shape it will take. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat.

The object must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Permanent.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The object may not be reshaped. The caster may try again on a similar object, however.

Restrictions: If the object is Enchanted, the object's Enchantment Bonus (if any) is subtracted from your Alchemy stat. Ex. $6 \text{ [Alchemy stat]} - 2 \text{ [Enchantment Bonus]} = 4 \text{ [modified Alchemy stat]}$.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if caster carries a blacksmith's hammer. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The object takes an undesired shape.

Transfigure Person

Alchemy

Description: Transfigure Person changes a person's appearance, while keeping the basic form of the person intact. The person can be aged, or made more youthful; weight can be added or removed; her nose or teeth or eye colour or the length of her limbs can be changed; and so on.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the person be transfigured, and how. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat.

The person must be within the 10 m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Alchemy stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The Spell cannot be used to make essential changes to the person's form. For instance, the person cannot be given wings or a third eye. But he can be given a greatly extended arm or be made four feet shorter. The Spell can only change a person's appearance; it cannot change a person's basic form (one head, two arms, two legs, no wings, etc).

Rites & Charms: +1 Rite Bonus if the caster speaks the person's entire name—including any middle names—backwards while casting. +1 Charm Bonus if the caster holds a warped mirror. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: Some undesired transfiguration may occur. Or a different person altogether may be transfigured.

Transmute Beast or Person

Alchemy

Description: This Spell transmutes living beasts and people into other living beasts or people.

Transmuted creatures retain all their Attributes and Skills. In the case of player-characters and humanoid GMCs, their clothing, weaponry, and carried items disappear, but return to the transmuted character when the transmutation ends.

Casting Rules: Declare the beast or person to be transmuted, and what it is to become. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat, subject to a -5 Difficulty Penalty.

The person must be within the 10 m of the caster.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Note that transmuted beasts and persons suffer no Injury from this Spell. Their Injury stats are untouched. Their WithIn stat also remains the same, no matter what they are transmuted into.

Use of any Skill which requires the transmuted character to use his own body is suspended until the Spell ends. For example, if the victim is a creature who normally attacks with claws, and becomes a creature without claws, he cannot perform claw attacks until the Spell has ended. Furthermore, transmuted Priests become incapable of Channelling, and transmuted Witches become incapable of casting Spells.

However, the transmuted person or creature gains certain Skills enjoyed by the living thing into which he has been transmuted. For example, a man turned into a hummingbird can use his wings to fly.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster has a bit of fur, hair, wing, etc. of the creature he intends to change his victim into. The Charm disappears when the Spell is cast.

Roll of 12: The intended victim may change into something totally unexpected—and possibly deadly to the caster. Or the Spell may change someone else—possibly one of the caster's companions!

Transmute Object

Alchemy

Description: This Spell transmutes an object into some different object. For objects, there are two types of transmutation: inherent and radical. Inherent transmutations are easier to perform than radical ones.

An inherent transmutation changes a thing from what it is to what it will eventually be, or what it can possibly be. This is called inherent transmutation because the new thing was inherent in the old thing.

Examples of Inherent Transmutation

1. An alchemist attempts to transmute a lump of coal into a diamond. This is an inherent transmutation, because diamonds come from coal. The coal will become a diamond naturally, given time.
2. Ursula the Witch attempts to transmute water into fog. Fog is water vapour. It's water in a gaseous form. So this is an inherent transmutation: fog is a form which water can naturally take. Similarly, if Ursula wanted to transmute the water into ice (water's solid form), this too would be an inherent transmutation.
3. The Spell can be used to turn a bag of fresh apples into a bag of rotten apples. This is an inherent transmutation: the apples would rot naturally, if left to do so. The Spell has merely triggered and sped up a naturally occurring process.
4. A wizard wants to transmute a fallen branch into a bow. A bow can be carved out of a piece of wood such as the branch. So this is an inherent transmutation: it is making the branch into something that the branch is capable of becoming. (But note that only the bow is made; the bow-string must be found somewhere else, or produced by a radical transmutation, because string is not inherent in wood.)

A radical transmutation changes a thing into something it cannot or would not naturally become. Radical transmutations change a thing into utterly different and unrelated new thing.

Examples of Radical Transmutation

1. An alchemist attempts to transmute a lump of coal into a fishing hook. Fishing hooks cannot be made out of lumps of coal. A fishing hook is in no way inherent in a lump of coal; the two things are totally unrelated, and the one cannot be said to be a form of the other. So this is a radical transmutation.
2. What if Ursula wants for some reason to turn two pails of water into two pails of milk? Water and Milk are both liquids. They can both be drunk. Nevertheless, one is not inherent in the other. Water does not turn to milk naturally, nor can milk be made naturally out of water. Milk cannot be said to be a form of water. So this would be a radical transmutation.
3. Apples have water in them. If an alchemist wants to turn apples into water, is this an inherent or a radical transmutation? The answer is radical. Just because apples have water in them doesn't mean that this is an inherent transmutation. Apples have water in them, but apples are not a form of water like ice or vapour. Apples will not turn into water through natural processes. Only the supernatural process of radical transmutation can turn apples into water.

4. A wizard wants to transmute a fallen branch into a bow, complete with bow-string. Wood does not naturally turn into string; string is not another form taken by wood the way that ice and fog are forms of water. Nor is it possible to make string out of wood. So to change the branch into a completed, strung bow, requires a radical transmutation.

Casting Rules: Declare the object to be transmuted, and what it is to become. Roll the Spell in the Resolution Stage.

For an inherent transmutation, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat subject to a -2 Defence Penalty.

For a radical transmutation, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat subject to a -4 Defence Penalty.

The object must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Permanent.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster is incapable of transmuting the object. He cannot try again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster has a bit of the thing into which he wishes to transmute the object. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The thing has been transmuted into something other than what was intended by the caster. Or some other thing has been transmuted.

Wizard Trick

Alchemy

Description: Wizard Trick is the classic Spell of turning a person into a small, unappealing animal of some sort. It is essentially an easier version of the Transmute Creature or Person Spell.

The caster may select an animal from the Wizard Trick Results table, or he may leave it to chance. If the caster wants to turn his victim into some other animal, he must use the Transmute Creature or Person Spell.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and who is to be changed. Declare, if you wish, the creature into which your victim will change. Or roll on table 12.1. Then, in the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Alchemy stat.

The person to be changed must be known to the caster or, if the caster does not know him, he must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Table 12.1: Wizard Trick Results

1	A frog
2	A newt
3	A rat
4	A snail
5	A mouse
6	A cat
7	A toad
8	A white rabbit
9	A hedgehog
10	A badger
11	A garden snake
12	A dachshund named Colin

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The victim suffers no Injury from the Spell. His Injury stat is untouched. His WithIn stat also remains the same, even if he goes from a burly soldier to a humble snail. But use of any Skill which requires the victim's own body is suspended until the Spell ends. For example, the victim will lose his power of speech, because speech requires human vocal chords. Furthermore, transmuted Priests become incapable of Channelling, and transmuted Witches become incapable of casting Spells.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster has a newt eye. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The intended victim may change into something totally unexpected—and possibly deadly to the caster. Or the Spell may change someone else—possibly one of the caster's companions.

Book III

The Book of Arcana

ARCANA CAN UNLOCK the mysteries of magic, nature, and people's hearts. It is the art of knowing the unknown, of learning secrets and exposing hidden things. In particular, Witches use Arcana to shape and control the greatest secrets of all: the secrets of magic and the supernatural.

Notes on Arcana

One of the most commonly used Arcana Spells is Dispel Magic. The Spell is used to negate or undo the effects of magic. Most Spells can be dispelled by Dispel Magic. If a Spell is not subject to Dispel Magic, the Spell's Description will say so. Note, however, that if the GM rules that a given Spell cannot be dispelled, and the Spell's Description says nothing about Dispel Magic one way or another, the GM's ruling is final.

All the Arcana Spells given below are rolled in the Modifier Stage.

Arcana Spells

Comprehend Language

Arcana

Description: For the duration of this Spell, the caster understands a foreign language spoken to him or to others.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the language or person you wish to understand. The GM will then make your Arcana roll in the Modifier Stage, hiding the result. If he rolls equal to or less than your Arcana stat, you succeed. If he rolls 12, see below.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Arcana stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The person or people understood by the caster do not get Withstand Magic rolls.

Failure Rules: The caster cannot understand the language. She may try again in one day's time.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 bonus if the caster uses his left hand to flip backwards through the pages of any dictionary, glossary, or lexicon while casting. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The caster thinks he understands, but in fact misunderstands completely. The GM gives a false translation.

Conceal Magic

Arcana

Description: The Spell shields the magical nature of any person, creature or object from the detection of Expose Magic Spells. The Spell can be dispelled using Dispel Magic. Expose Magic can then be used normally.

Casting Rules: Declare what is to be concealed. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat.

The thing concealed must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Arcana stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: If the target is a person or creature, she may attempt to Withstand Magic, if desired. Resistance Rules apply.

If the target is an object, no resistance is possible. Failure Rules

If the target is a person or creature, the caster may try the Spell again.

If the target is an object, failure means that the caster cannot conceal the object's magical nature. She may not try again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster uses the shell of any nut in casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The magic becomes easier to detect. Expose Magic Spells are cast with a +1 bonus.

Counter Spell

Arcana

Description: Counter Spell is used to destroy a Spell which is currently being cast by another spellcaster. If you make a successful Counter Spell roll, the opposing spellcaster must make a successful Withstand Magic roll or lose his Spell that round. The Spell simply fizzles, as though he had failed his Spell roll.

You must have a higher Timing Score than the opposing Witch to cast Counter Spell. Otherwise, you won't know for sure that the other Witch is casting a Spell. You are not allowed to declare that you will Counter 'any Spell cast by X'.

EXAMPLE

Two Witches, Ursula and Aginon, are battling each other.

Timing Stage: Ursula gets the best Timing Score.

Strategy Stage: Aginon declares Fire Strike (a Sorcery Spell). Ursula declares she will Counter Aginon's Fire Strike.

Modifier Stage: Ursula rolls her Arcana. She rolls a 2: success! Aginon (Withstand Magic 4) must now make a successful Withstand Magic roll or he will lose his Spell. He rolls a 6: failure! Aginon's Fire Strike fizzles. He'll have to try again next round.

Casting Rules: First, be sure you have beaten the opposing spellcaster in the Timing Stage. Otherwise you can't use Counter Spell. Then declare the Spell and the spellcaster whose Spell is to be countered. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat. If the opposing spellcaster rolls his Spell in the Modifier Stage, too, roll before he does. The opposing spellcaster must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Maintenance Rules: No maintenance is possible. To use Counter Spell again, you must recast it.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. If the target fails his Withstand Magic roll, he loses his Spell. If he makes his Withstand Magic roll, he keeps his Spell.

Resistance Rules: do not apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try again next round. In the meantime, the Spell which the caster tried to Counter operates normally.

Restrictions: You cannot cast Counter Spell more than once per Spell cast by the opposing Witch.

EXAMPLE

In the example above, Aginon only declared one Spell: Fire Strike. So Ursula could only declare one Counter Spell. Ursula could not have declared three Counter Spells, all directed against Aginon's single Fire Strike.

However, if Aginon declares two Fire Strikes next round, Ursula can declare two Counter Spells: one for each Fire Strike.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The opposing spellcaster gains a +2 bonus to cast his Spell this round.

Dispel Magic

Arcana

Description: With this Spell, the caster removes or suppresses magical effects of Spells and other temporary forms of magic.

Permanent forms of magic, such as magical weaponry and armour, is not affected by Dispel Magic.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its target. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat subject to a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Instantaneous; the Spell lasts just long enough to Dispel (or fail to Dispel) the magic. This means that the effect of a Dispel Magic Spell cannot be undone by another Dispel Magic Spell purporting to Dispel the Dispel Magic Spell.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster cannot dispel the magic. He may not try again.

Restrictions: Some Spells and types of magic are not affected by the Spell. See the Spell Description or consult your GM.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The magic that was supposed to be Dispelled may grow stronger, or may increase in duration.

Expose Magic

Arcana

Description: This Spell will reveal magical forces at work within a 15 m radius of the caster. The Spell is not very precise. It reveals the presence of magic upon or around a person, creature, or thing. But does not always reveal the exact nature of the magic, its purpose, or its source. It is for the GM to decide how much information the Spell imparts to the caster.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. The GM will then make your Arcana roll, attempting to roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat. He will roll in the Modifier Stage. He will hide the result from you. To know why, see Roll of 12, below.

Duration: Instantaneous; the Spell lasts just long enough to make the caster aware of the presence of magic and any other details about the magic revealed by the Spell.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again in this area. She may try again elsewhere, however.

Any magical object which was in the area where the caster failed her Spell roll last time, and which is now in the area in which she proposes to try again, may be exposed this time round.

Restrictions: Expose Magic cannot detect magic created with Illusion Spells or Composite Spells involving Illusion. Illusion is much harder to detect than other forms of magic. To detect Illusions, use Reveal Illusion.

Rites & Charms: The Witch can know exact details of the Magic if he holds a feather from the wing of a flightless bird to his forehead while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

The details revealed may include: what it does; who cast it or created it; its duration; whether it can be dispelled by a Dispel Magic Spell; and, in the case of Spell Magic, the Spell's name and Description.

Roll of 12: Some non-magical item is 'exposed' as magical.

False Charm

Arcana

Description: This Spell can be used in conjunction with any Spell which benefits from the use of a Charm. Some Spells give special bonuses or extra benefits when cast using a Charm of some sort. If the Witch does not have the required Charm he can cast False Charm in the same round as the other Spell to simulate the Charm.

EXAMPLE

Ursula wants to cast Expose Magic, but has no feathers from a flightless bird. To get the extra information yielded by the Charm, she declares Expose Magic and False Charm in the same round. (Note that she is subject to a -1 Action Penalty.)

If she makes both Spell rolls, the Expose Magic Spell operates as though she had the feather. If she fails the False Charm roll, but makes the Expose Magic roll, the latter Spell is cast normally (ie without the Charm benefits). If she makes her False Charm roll, but fails her Expose Magic roll, nothing happens. And of course, if she fails both roll, nothing happens.

Casting Rules: Declare False Charm and the Spell it is to enhance. The two Spells must be declared in the same round. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat to cast False Charm. Then roll for your other Spell as indicated in the Spell Description.

Duration: Instantaneous; the amount of time taken to cast the other Spell. False Charm must be cast in the same round as the Spell it is meant to enhance.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: No False Charm is created. The other Spell operates normally (assuming the caster made a successful Spell roll for it). The caster may try False Charm again.

Restrictions: False Charm can only serve as the needed Charm or Charms for one Spell; to provide False Charms for two Spells being cast in the same round, the Witch must also cast two False Charm Spells that round, for a total of four Spells.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: A roll of 12 on a False Charm roll is always very bad news. Something goes seriously wrong with both Spells. Your GM will determine the gory details. But be warned: rolling 12 on False Charm is a leading cause of Witch fatality.

Know Heart

Arcana

Description: This Spell reveals to the caster the heart of the person upon whom it is cast. By 'heart', we mean the emotions and aspirations which motivate the person, particularly any emotions the person may have for the caster and his friends.

Note that this Spell is not the same as Read Mind, for it does not reveal a person's thoughts. Rather, it reveals the person's deeper feelings and motives.

Though we refer here to the 'person' upon whom the Spell is cast, it will in fact work upon any creature.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person whose heart you seek to know. Tell the GM your Arcana stat. He will then roll for you in the Modifier Stage, hiding the result.

If he rolls less than or equal to your Arcana stat, he will reveal the person's heart to you. If he rolls above your stat, he will tell you that you have failed your roll and therefore cannot know the person's heart. If he rolls 12, he will tell you you have succeeded, then give you wrong or misleading information about the person's feelings and motives. These lies may not strike the caster as obviously wrong, but they are likely to prove wrong in time.

The person must be someone known to the caster or, if the caster does not know the person, he must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Instantaneous. The caster knows the other's heart immediately (and before proceeding to the Resolution Stage).

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The person whose heart the caster seeks to know can attempt to Withstand Magic. If she succeeds, she feels inexplicably odd without knowing what has happened. Resistance Rules do not apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again on this target. The person's heart is unknowable to him (at least by means of a Know Heart Spell).

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: When casting the Spell on a person, there is a +3 Charm Bonus for using a piece of a human heart. The Charm consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The caster thinks he has succeeded in knowing the person's heart. But in fact he gravely mistakes the person's feelings, ambitions, and motives.

Know Secret

Arcana

Description: By casting this Spell, the caster makes himself privy to secret knowledge otherwise hidden from him. He must have some specific secret in mind to cast the Spell; he cannot just cast the Spell and wait to see what secret is revealed to him.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the secret you wish to know. Tell the GM your Arcana stat. He will then roll for you in the Modifier Stage, hiding the result.

If he rolls less than or equal to your Arcana stat, he will tell you the secret. If he rolls above your stat, he will tell you that you have failed your roll and therefore cannot know the secret. If he rolls 12, he will tell you you have succeeded, then tell you something useless or deceptive about the secret. The 'secret' will not be obviously wrong, but it will prove wrong in time.

Duration: Instantaneous. The caster learns the secret immediately (and before proceeding to the Resolution Stage).

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: There is no Withstand Magic roll available against this Spell because the secret is not known by reading anyone's mind or knowing anyone's heart.

Failure Rules: If the caster fails the Know Secret roll, he cannot try again. The secret is unknowable to him (at least by means of a Know Secret Spell).

Restrictions: The secret must truly be a secret; it cannot simply be something the caster doesn't know. For example, the caster may not know how many 36 year old men there are living in the next village. But that's not a secret; that's just something he doesn't know. He could easily find out by travelling to the next village and asking around. No one would hide this information from him, so it doesn't count as a secret for the Know Secret Spell.

Similarly, the Spell cannot be used to predict the future. The future is not a secret, because nobody knows it.

Rites & Charms: +1 to your Arcana stat if you place your hand over your mouth and whisper into someone's ear while casting the Spell.

Roll of 12: The caster thinks he has succeeded, and thinks he knows the secret. But in fact he only knows some useless or deceiving information given to him by the GM.

Read Mind

Arcana

Description: With this Spell, a Witch can know a person's thoughts word for word—if he thinking in words; otherwise, the Witch can know and perfectly understand the person's abstract impressions and ideas.

The Spell only allows the Witch access to what is going through the person's mind for the duration of the Spell. The Witch may not probe for answers to particular questions, or search for feelings, upon which the person is not currently reflecting.

EXAMPLE

A jailed Witch (Arcana 5) wants to know where the key to his cell is kept. He attempts to read his jailer's mind, hoping to get the information that way. The Witch's

Read Mind roll is successful. The jailer fails to Withstand Magic. So the Witch reads the jailer's mind for the next five rounds.

But alas, the jailer spends the next five rounds thinking about dinner! The Witch learns nothing about the keys. He should have used Know Secret.

While we have referred to the 'person' upon whom the Spell is cast, it will in fact work upon any intelligent creature.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person whose mind is to be read. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat.

The person must be someone known to the caster or, if the caster does not know the person, he must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules do not apply.

Failure Rules: If the caster fails the Read Mind roll, he cannot try again. The person's mind cannot be read him.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: If the caster is trying to read a person's mind, a bit of human brain, preserved in a vial or jar, yields a +1 Charm Bonus. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The caster accidentally reveals his own mind to the person whose mind he was trying to read. The other person inexplicably knows the caster's thoughts until the caster breaks the Spell by a successful WithMag roll, or casts Dispel Magic upon himself.

Reveal Illusion

Arcana

Description: Reveal Illusion is much the same as Expose Magic, except that it works on Illusionary magic, ie. magic created by Illusion Spells or Composite Spells involving Illusion. Expose Magic is not powerful enough to expose illusions, which are far more difficult to detect than other forms of magic.

The Spell will reveal illusions at work within a 15 m radius of the caster. The Spell identifies things that are not what they seem, but it will not identify the thing's true nature. For instance, Reveal Illusion will identify a rug on the floor as illusionary. But it will not reveal that beneath the illusionary rug lies a 5 m pit with spikes in the bottom.

To know an illusion's true nature, the caster must cast Dispel Magic upon the illusion, or follow the Rites & Charms rules given below.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. The GM will then make your Arcana roll in the Modifier Stage, attempting to roll less than or equal to your Arcana stat subject to a -4 modifier. The GM will hide the result from you. To know why, see Roll of 12, below.

Duration: Instantaneous; the Spell lasts just long enough to make the caster aware of the presence of the illusion and any other details about it revealed by the Spell.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again in this area. She may try again elsewhere, however.

Any illusion operative in the area where the caster failed her Spell roll last time, and which is now in the area in which she proposes to try again, may be exposed this time round.

Restrictions: Reveal Illusion cannot detect magic created with Spells other than Illusion Spells or Composite Spells involving Illusion.

Rites & Charms: The caster can know not only that the thing revealed is illusionary, but also the true nature of the illusionary thing, if he rubs powder from a crushed ruby on his eyelids while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: Some real thing is 'revealed' as illusionary.

Book IV

The Book of Conjuring

CONJURING IS THE POWER to create things. But rather than creating things out of other things as painters, builders, and chefs do, the Conjuror creates things out of nothing but magic. Witches who master the art of Conjuring are useful allies—or troublesome enemies.

Notes on Conjuring

The Conjuring Skill allows Witches to create something out of nothing: to bring into being something that was not previously there. Things and conditions can be Conjured. Living creatures cannot. (But they can be Summoned).

Things that are Conjured are called Conjurations. Conjurations behave like the real thing they mimic. A Conjured bridge, for example, looks and feels like any other and will support the same weight as a real bridge of the same type. But though they behave exactly like the real thing, Conjurations are not the real thing. They are temporary magical creations and in time they will disappear.

When using Conjuring Spells, remember that Conjuring is about making something out of nothing. Conjuring cannot be used to animate or otherwise control something that is already there.

Most Conjuring Spells are rolled in the Modifier Stage. Some, however, are rolled in the Resolution Stage.

Conjuring Spells

Adaludanon's Blade

Conjuring

Description: Nearly two hundred years ago, the swordsmith Adaludanon crafted swords and other bladed weapons famous for their master craftsmanship. Even today, Adaludanon's creations are prized by swordsmen and collectors. Indeed, they perform so well that they are often mistaken as magical. They are extremely rare.

This Spell was created by an admirer of Adaludanon to conjure a sword resembling Adaludanon's handiwork. The blade created by this Spell performs as a longsword with a +3 bonuses to Strike and Parry. The blade appears in the caster's hand or, if his hands are full, on the ground immediately before him.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat modified by a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the Witch's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Only one Adaludanon's Blade may be in play at any time.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: A normal longsword appears.

Call Weather

Conjuring

Description: This Spell allows the caster to conjure forms of weather. The spell can create the weather effects described in table 12.2

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the type of weather to be conjured. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Anyone struck with a hailstone gets a WithIn roll.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The caster has to be outdoors to cast the Spell.

Table 12.2: Weather Conditions Conjured By Call Weather

<i>Weather</i>	<i>Area of effect</i>
Overcast skies or clear skies	Anywhere within the caster's line of sight
Rain showers	Over no more than one acre of land
Thunderstorm	Over no more than half an acre of land
Hailstorm (small hailstones)	Over no more than half an acre of land
Hailstorm (large hailstones)	Affecting five people or less over no more than half an acre
Heat wave	Anywhere within the caster's line of sight
Gusting winds	Over no more than one acre of land
Windstorm	Over no more than half an acre of land
Snowfall	Anywhere within the caster's line of sight
Snowstorm	Over no more than half an acre of land

Small hailstones do no Injury. Large hailstones can cause indirect Injury, but no more than 1 Injury Point per round (no matter how many hailstones strike the victim).

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster takes five full rounds to prepare the Spell.

Roll of 12: A rain cloud breaks over the caster.

Conjure Object

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell a Witch can conjure any object which exists, or could exist, in his dominion and about which he knows. The Witch need not have in-depth knowledge of the object. But he must at least be able to recognise it when he sees it.

EXAMPLE

Ursula wants to conjure a dagger with the inscription 'Ursula the Magnificent' on the blade. Daggers certainly exist in Ursula's dominion. A dagger with this inscription may not exist, but it could. Ursula knows what a dagger is, and knows what one with such an inscription would be like. So she can conjure the object.

Unless otherwise specified by the caster, the conjured object has the characteristics of a typical version of that object.

EXAMPLE

Unless she specifies otherwise, the conjured dagger will be a normal, typical dagger. Some daggers are sharper than others; some are longer than others; some are heavier than others. This dagger will be of average sharpness, length, and weight.

The object will appear in the Witch's hand or, if it is too big or heavy to go there, on the ground before him.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the object to be conjured (including any particular characteristics of the object). In the Resolution Stage, roll equal to or less than your Conjuring stat.

Duration: A number of hours equal to the Witch's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: If the caster fails his Conjuring roll, he is incapable of conjuring the object or any variations upon it. The caster may not try again for one day.

EXAMPLE

Ursula failed her Conjuring roll. She cannot conjure a dagger inscribed with the words 'Ursula the Magnificent'. Indeed, she cannot conjure any dagger; she cannot get round her failed Conjuring roll by changing the inscription to 'Ursula the Great' or making any other slight change. She can try to conjure a sword, however.

Restrictions: Witches cannot conjure magical items using this Spell. Nor can they conjure philosophers' stone with it.

Rites & Charms: If the caster habitually wears a hat, he gains a +2 Charm Bonus for removing that hat and drawing the conjured object from it when casting the Spell. This will not work with just any hat; it must be a hat the caster wears regularly. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: Another object appears instead, or the object that appears is faulty.

Dark

Conjuring

Description: The Dark Spell conjures an area of utter darkness within a 10 m radius of the caster. The Spell extinguishes any fires and covers any other light sources within the Spell's radius for the Spell's duration. These light sources return to normal when the Spell ends, or when the Spell's radius of effect moves beyond them. All attempts to reestablish light sources (such as lighting a torch) fail for the duration of the Spell and within the Spell area.

The darkness created by the Spell counts as total darkness for the purpose of the Combat Conditions rules. See COMBAT CONDITIONS for the effects of darkness on Combat.

The Spell's effect can be negated by Dispel Magic or a Light Spell.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Conjuring stat.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 to Conjuring if the caster throws a pot of black ink into the air while casting. The pot and its contents are consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: A Light Spell is cast.

Fire Ring

Conjuring

Description: This Spell encircles its victim(s) in a ring of fire. The flames may be as high as 2 m (at the caster's discretion). The ring is exactly 1 m away from each person trapped within it.

Characters trapped in the ring may leave it by stepping through the fire. A character stepping through the fire must Withstand Injury or suffer 2 Injury Points.

The ring's flames and smoke obscure the vision of characters trapped in it. This creates a -2 Strike Penalty to all Missile Strikes. (Melee Strikes are unaffected, but for a character inside the ring to Strike a character outside it exposes the Striking character to the risk of fire injury, as described above.)

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The victim(s) must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Characters who make contact with the fire must Withstand Injury or take 2 Injury Points.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster wears a ring made of asbestos on any finger. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The ring's flames rise only a few centimetres high. Characters 'trapped' within the ring step out of it easily and suffer no Injury or Strike Penalty from it.

Light

Conjuring

Description: The Light Spell perfectly illuminates an area within a 10 m radius of the caster. Nothing can bring darkness to the illuminated area except a Dark Spell or Dispel Magic.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Conjuring stat.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 to Conjuring if the caster wears a necklace with a highly polished glass medallion pendant. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: A Dark Spell is cast.

Renald's Fortress

Conjuring

Description: Renald's Fortress is a square or rectangular stone structure around the caster. The structure may have no more than four walls of a combined length of 10 m. The walls are 75 cm thick (or less if desired). The structure may be no more than 4 m high. It has no roof. It comes with a ladder long enough to climb out of the fortress.

Renald's Fortress may include, if desired, crenelations at the top and a ledge 2 m from the top. The crenulations and ledge can be used by archers. Hiding behind a crenulation acts as a -1 Defence Penalty.

The fortress behaves exactly like a non-magical structure of this type, except that it may be negated by Dispel Magic.

Any Spell whose effects would be blocked by a normal wall will be hindered by Renald's Fortress, unless otherwise noted in the Spell Description.

Renald was a stonemason and carpenter (and secretly a wizard, of course). He created many Spells related to masonry and construction. Most have now been lost.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the desired dimensions of the Fortress. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat modified by a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 to Conjuring if the caster carries on his person a mason's mortar board. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The fortress is cast with a stone roof, imprisoning its occupants as though the caster had cast Renald's Jail.

Renald's Jail

Conjuring

Description: Renald's Jail is a square or rectangular stone structure with a stone roof and a small iron door. It may be cast upon a single person, or upon an area where a person or people are standing. The effect of the Spell is to imprison the Spell's target(s) in the jail for the duration of the Spell, or until it is Dispelled. Since the Spell is rolled in the Modifier Stage, it can render impossible the declared actions of its prisoners.

Each of the jail's four walls may be no longer than 3 m long. The walls and roof may be no more than one foot thick. The entire structure may be no more than 3 m high and contain a maximum of 5 prisoners. The caster is free to lessen any of these dimensions. The key to the door appears in the caster's hand upon successfully casting the Spell.

The jail behaves exactly like a structure of this type, except that it may be negated by Dispel Magic.

Any Spell whose effects would normally be blocked by a stone structure such as this will be hindered by Renald's Fortress, unless otherwise noted in the Spell Description.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, its targets, and the desired dimensions of the jail. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat modified by a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the 10 m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Each would-be prisoner makes a Withstand Magic roll to avoid being imprisoned. Successful characters are flung out of the jail's area of effect. If all would-be prisoners make their Withstand Magic rolls, the Spell fizzles and no jail is conjured.

Non-targetted characters standing at the structure's perimeter (ie where the walls appear) make Withstand Magic rolls. If they succeed, they are flung from the area and not imprisoned. If they fail, they are flung into the jail (unless it is already full).

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 to Conjuring if the caster carries on his person a mason's mortar board. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: A structure similar to Renald's Wall—complete with ladder—is conjured. Or the key winds up in the hands of one of the prisoners.

Renald's Wall

Conjuring

Description: Renald's Wall is a stone wall which can be conjured to block an entrance, divide a room, protect characters from Missile Strikes and other air-borne attacks (including some Spells), or do anything else a wall can do.

The wall is 1 m thick (or less, if desired). It may be no more than 6 m long and 3 m high. If a longer, higher, or thicker wall is desired, the caster must cast the Spell twice and place the second wall on top of, next to, or up against the first one. The wall may wind, but it may never corner (ie bend at a 90 angle). Note also that 6 m of winding wall may cover much less than 6 m of space, depending on how windy the wall is.

Renald's Wall acts just like a normal wall, except that it can be dispelled by Dispel Magic. Any Spell whose effects would be blocked by a normal wall will be hindered by Renald's Wall, unless otherwise noted in the Spell Description. Likewise, any actions declared in the Strategy Stage that are rendered impossible by the appearance of the wall in the Modifier Stage are negated by the Spell.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the desired dimensions of the wall. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Conjuring stat.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 to Conjuring if the caster carries on his person a mason's mortar board. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The wall's dimensions may come out wildly wrong.

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

(The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.)

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1 m of the door to cast the Spell. Duration The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of conjuring the key to this door.

Restrictions: The Spell will only conjure keys to doors. It will not work upon chests, locks, or other items opened by key.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster uses a bit of stone quarried from the Myllset Slopes of the Shield mountainrange, Gwenil. The charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: A key appears, but it doesn't fit the lock.

Book V

The Book of Enchantment

ENCHANTMENTS ARE MAGICAL enhancements of reality. They add abilities, qualities, and conditions to people and things. Or they dramatically improve powers which nature first instilled. Enchantment Spells—those listed here, and those yet to be written by you—are some of the most versatile found in Dominion Rules.

Notes on Enchantment

The most obvious sort of enchantment is that which bestows a bonus to some Skill or other. These are no doubt very powerful Skills. But witches—especially those who write their own Enchantment Spells—should remember that enchantment is more than just producing Skill Bonuses. It's also about adding new qualities and powers.

For example, the Breathe Water, Fly and Levitate Spells don't bestow Skill Bonuses. They bestow entirely new powers.

All the Enchantment Spells given below are rolled in the Modifier Stage.

Enchantment Spells

Animate Flame

Enchantment

Description: Animate Flame allows the caster to control the behaviour of a fire, or part of a fire, for its duration. Under his control, the caster can make flames jump (to a maximum of 3 m from the fire source), dance, and increase or decrease in size. Any Injury produced by a fire controlled by the caster is determined using the fire rules found in section 8.7, Hazard Injury, in page 72.

The caster controls the fire's behaviour from round to round. He declares what he wants it to do in the Strategy Stage of each round.

Animate Flame cannot put the fire out, nor can it increase the fire's intensity (see section 8.7, Hazard Injury, on page 72).

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the fire to be controlled, and what you want it to do this round. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat.

The fire must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: This round only (but longer if maintained).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable. (However, characters burnt by swayed flames may make WithIn rolls; see section 8.7, Hazard Injury, on page 72.)

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The fire or the part of the fire swayed may be no larger than a normal camp-fire.

Rites & Charms: Flames can be made to jump up to 6 m from their source if the caster uses a lizard's tongue. The Charm is consumed in casting.

: Roll of 12 If the caster is within range of the fire (3 m without Charm, 6 m with), it may jump and burn him.

Animate Object

Enchantment

Description: This Spell gives the caster the power to control the movement of any object, no matter how large or heavy. The caster can make the object move up to 10 ft per round in any direction (including up).

The caster can also magically manipulate certain objects, folding them or bending them or breaking them. But he can only use the Spell to manipulate magically objects which he is capable of manipulating naturally. For instance, if the object is a twig that the caster could

break with his own hands, or a vase he could smash against the floor, he can do those things magically using Animate Object. But the Spell can't be used to punch a hole in a thick wooden door, or cut a boulder in two, because those aren't things the caster could do with his bare hands.

The object animated must be within the caster's line of sight to be the target of the Spell.

The caster controls the object's behaviour from round to round. He declares what he wants it to do in the Strategy Stage of each round.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the object to be controlled, and what you want it to do this round. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat. For objects larger than the caster, the GM may assign a Difficulty Penalty ranging from 1 to 12, depending on the object's size and weight.

The object must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: This round only (but longer if maintained).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster cannot animate the object. He cannot try to cast the Spell upon it again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster wears a lambskin glove on his right hand while casting the Spell and for its duration. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The object does something entirely different than what the caster declared when casting the Spell, then stops moving.

Animate Water

Enchantment

Description: Animate Water permits the caster to control the behaviour of three normal-sized buckets worth of water (or less). The caster can make the water move in any way, heat to the boiling point, cool to the freezing point, or evaporate into an equivalent amount of water vapour.

The caster controls the water's behaviour from round to round. He declares what he wants it to do in the Strategy Stage of each round.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the water to be controlled, and what you want it to do this round. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat.

The water must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: This round only (but longer if maintained).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Animate Water cannot increase or decrease the total quantity of water controlled (even though the water may contract when frozen and expand when evaporated). Nor can the Spell change the water's colour or any of its qualities other than as described above.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The water does something other than what the caster declared it was meant to do this round.

Breathe Water

Enchantment

Description: The target of this Spell becomes capable of breathing water like a fish.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be enchanted. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. If he opts to do so, Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again. Restrictions None.

Rites & Charms: +2 to Enchantment if the Witch uses a fish gill in casting the Spell. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell works, but the target of the Spell develops fish gills on the left and right sides of his neck. The gills remain for 2 to 24 rounds after the Spell has expired.

Deftness

Enchantment

Description: The recipient of this Spell can use up to three Skills in one round without incurring Action Penalties. The fourth Skill creates a -1 Action Penalty, the fifth a -2 Action Penalty, and so on.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be enchanted. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Enchantment stat modified by a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The may not try the same Spell on the same person again for one day.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: The caster can make the Spell last two rounds with a hair from a unicorn's beard. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The recipient of the Spell suffers an automatic -4 Action Penalty on any Skill he uses that round. If he uses two Skill that round, the Penalty is -5, if he uses three Skills, the Penalty is -6, etc.

Enchant Armour

Enchantment

Description: The caster of Enchant Armour bestows an Armour Bonus equal to her Enchantment stat upon the armour targetted by the Spell. The Armour Bonus improves the WithIn stat of the character wearing the armour.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the armour to be enchanted. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Enchantment stat. If you succeed, the result of your successful roll becomes a temporary Armour Bonus.

The armour must be within 10 m of the caster

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster cannot (or can no longer) enchant the armour. She may try again in one day's time.

Restrictions: A suit or item of armour can only bear one Enchant Armour Spell at a time. Extra Enchant Armour Spells cast on an item that is already enchanted have no effect.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster sprinkles a pinch of powdered silver upon the armour while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as a Hex Armour Spell with an Armour Penalty of -2.

Enchant Person

Enchantment

Description: The Enchant Person Spell bestows a temporary Enchantment Bonus to a Skill stat of the enchanted person. It is up to the caster to declare which Skill will benefit from the bonus.

The bonus is equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the person to be enchanted, and the Skill to be improved by the Enchantment Bonus. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Enchantment stat.

The target must be within 10m of the caster

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. If he opts to do so, Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Only one Skill can benefit from an Enchantment Bonus at a time. The same person can benefit from several Enchantment Bonuses at once, but each bonus must apply to a different Skill.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as a Hex Person Spell with a Hex Penalty of -2. The Skill penalised is the one which the caster intended to improve.

Enchant Weapon

Enchantment

Description: The Enchant Weapon Spell bestows a Weapon Bonus upon the weapon targetted by the Spell. The Weapon Bonus is equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

There are five possible Weapon Bonuses: bonuses to Strike (including Missile Strike), Disarm, Feint, Parry, and Timing. It is for the caster to decide what sort of Weapon Bonus the Spell creates.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the weapon to be enchanted, and the type of Weapon Bonus the Spell will bestow. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat. If you succeed, the targetted weapon gains a bonus equal to your Enchantment stat.

The weapon must be within 10m of the caster

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The weapon's wielder may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster cannot enchant the weapon. He may try again in one day's time.

Restrictions: A weapon can only bear one Enchant Weapon Spell at a time. Extra Enchant Weapon Spells cast on a weapon that is already enchanted have no effect.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster sprinkles a pinch of powdered gold upon the weapon while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as a Hex Weapon Spell with a Weapon Penalty of -2. The type of Weapon Penalty is the same as the type of Weapon Bonus intended by the caster.

Farhearing

Enchantment

Description: This Spell dramatically improves the caster's hearing, or that of another. The enchanted person becomes capable of hearing sounds within a 150m radius of himself as though they were within only a few steps away. He can also hear through walls, ceilings, floors, and other barriers within a 50m radius.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be enchanted. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: The radii are extended to 300m for normal hearing and 100m for hearing through barriers if the caster uses a rabbit's ear in casting. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The caster is deafened for a number of rounds equal to her Enchantment stat.

Farseeing

Enchantment

Description: This Spell dramatically improves the caster's vision, or that of another. The enchanted person becomes capable of seeing things a 150m radius of himself as though they were only 5m away. He can also see through anything (walls, forested areas, even clothes) within a 50m radius.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat.

The target must be within 10m of the caster

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: The radii are improved to 300m for normal vision and 100m for seeing through barriers if the caster holds an eyeglass to his eye both while casting the Spell and for its duration. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The caster is blinded for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Fly

Enchantment

Description: The target of this Spell becomes capable of flying. He may fly no higher than 100 ft in the air. His flight speed is unremarkable: about the same as a large bird.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be enchanted. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Enchantment stat modified by a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the same Spell on the same person again for one day.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +5 rounds to the Spell's duration if target of the Spell holds a sparrow feather in each hand while the Witch casts the Spell. The feathers are consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell works, but the target is struck with a terrible fear of flying. The target must make a successful Withstand Fear roll (a Stamina Skill) or suffer a -5 Fear Penalty to all stats while flying.

Levitate

Enchantment

Description: Levitate allows the caster to make a person, creature, or thing levitate for the duration of the Spell. The levitating thing rises in the air to the height indicated by the caster (no higher than 15 ft) and stays there until the Spell's end, at which time the levitating object returns safely to the ground.

If the caster wants to control the height of the levitating thing for the duration of the Spell, she may do so, but she will suffer an Action Penalty in subsequent rounds as though she were Maintaining the Spell.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person, creature or thing to be levitated. Declare the levitation height or, if you want to control the height from round to round, declare this. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Enchantment stat modified by a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

If, when the Spell is about to end, the caster chooses to Maintain the Spell, while still controlling the height of the levitating thing from round to round, this counts as two actions: one to Maintain the Spell and one to control the height from round to round.

Resistance: Not applicable to levitating objects.

For people and creatures, the target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: The caster can control the height of the levitating thing without suffering an Action Penalty if he draws a circle round the thing with chalk while casting. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The target rises 3 m into the air, then drops to the ground. This can cause Injury to a person or creature (see section 8.7, Hazard Injury, on page 72) or damage to an object. Additionally, the caster becomes incapable of casting Levitation for one week.

Slumber

Enchantment

Description: The target of a Slumber Spell falls into a long and deep sleep. The slumberer may be woken by non-magical means, but only with great effort: repeated loud noises and vigorous prodding.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its target. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Enchantment stat.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of hours equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 to Enchantment if the caster yawns loudly enough for the target to hear while casting. The yawn need not be real, but it must be a good imitation.

Roll of 12: The caster casts the Spell on himself. He must make a Withstand Magic roll or fall asleep.

Book VI

The Book of Hexes

A HEX IS A SORT of magical curse. To hex someone or something is to use magic upon it to make it unlucky, flawed, or somehow undesirable. Hexes are in some ways the opposite of Enchantments. When they fail, some Hex Spells actually produce Enchantment Spells, and vice versa. Yet Hex Spells have their own distinctive flair—a flair for causing confusion, misfortune, and even disaster.

Notes on Hex Spells

Hex Spells very often prey on character Skills, temporarily weakening them or making them go awry. So when you use Hex Spells, you must understand Skills and the Skill rules. In particular, remember that the Injury stat and the Fervour stat are not Skills. They are stats associated with Skills (Withstand Injury and Channel, respectively). But they are not Skills themselves. Therefore, a Hex Spell which applies to any Skill does not apply to the Injury and Fervour stats.

All the Hex Spells given below are rolled in the Modifier Stage.

Hex Spells

Baffle Language

Hex

Description: This Spell makes its victim incomprehensible to others in any language he speaks. The victim's attempt at speech result in utter gibberish.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +3 Charm Bonus if the caster ties a snake's tongue in a knot while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell effects another target.

Bewilderment

Hex

Description: This is a potent Spell which confuses its victim to no end. First, the Spell imposes a penalty to all the victim's Skills (except Stamina Skills) equal to the victim's Intellect Attribute. Second, the Spell reduces the victim's Timing stat even further; the amount is determined by the caster's Hex roll. Finally, if the victim enjoys Favourable Rounding, he loses it—along with all benefits it gives, including raised Composite stats—for the duration of the Spell.

Besides doing all these nasty things, the Spell leaves its victim dizzy and bewildered.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex roll. Note this is the Hex roll, not the Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The Spell works only against people; beasts are not affected by it.

Rites & Charms: The Spell will last for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat if the caster touches the victim's temples with his fingertips, looks him in the eyes, and blinks vigorously.

Roll of 12: The caster bewilders himself.

Catastrophe

Hex

Description: Catastrophe reduces all its victim's Skill stats (save WithIn and Withstand Magic) by an amount equal to the caster's Hex stat. The Spell's effects can be reversed by Dispel Magic, a Priest's Bless Skill, or the passage of time.

The Spell's victim falls to the ground trembling. This negates any actions declared by the victim this round. The trembling lasts for this round only, unless the victim is Defeated as a result of the Spell. In that case, the victim trembles uncontrollably for the duration of the Spell.

Catastrophe is a more powerful version of Misfortune.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a -5 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of ever casting Catastrophe on this person or beast.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as a Misfortune Spell against the caster.

Godsbane

Hex

Description: Godsbane works only against Priests. The Spell disrupts communication between a Priest and his god, making Channelling impossible. The Priest's appeal to his deity fall on deaf ears, as though the Priest's god has Forsaken him. In fact, the deity simply fails to perceive the Priest's appeal. The Priest does not know this, however, and may assume (entirely reasonably) that his deity has Forsaken him.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the victim Priest. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a Difficulty Penalty equal to the Priest's Channel stat. The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster holds a religious symbol of the Priest's deity. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Priest's deity discovers what the caster is trying to do. The deity responds by Channelling his Priest a Wrath Skill directed at the caster.

The Priest need not roll his Wrath Skill; the Skill works automatically by divine intervention. The Wrath occurs immediately (ie in the current Stage of the current round, immediately following the roll of 12) and causes no Action Penalty or other adverse affect on the Priest.

The caster does not get a WithIn roll.

Note that this effect occurs even if the deity normally does not permit Wrath Skills.

Hex Armour

Hex

Description: The caster of Hex Armour imposes an Armour Penalty equal to her Hex stat upon the armour targetted by the Spell. The effect of the Armour Penalty is to decrease the WithIn stat of the character wearing the armour.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the armour to be hexed. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat. If you succeed, the result of your successful roll becomes a temporary Armour Penalty.

The armour must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster cannot hex the armour. She may try again in one day's time.

Restrictions: A suit or item of armour can only bear one Hex Armour Spell at a time. Extra Hex Armour Spells cast on an item that is already hexed have no effect.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster throws a pinch of metal rust towards the victim while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as an Enchant Armour Spell with an Armour Bonus of 2.

Hex Place

Hex

Description: Hex Place imposes a Hex Penalty equal to the caster's Hex roll upon an area indicated by the caster but no more than 10 m wide and 10m deep. The penalty may affect any one Skill stat.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the area to be hexed, and the Skill stat to which the Hex Penalty applies (for example, Timing). In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat.

The caster must be standing within the area to be hexed. If the Spell is successful, the caster is himself affected by the hex until he leaves the area.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: People who enter the hexed place may attempt to Withstand Magic. Those who fail are affected by the hex.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +3 Charm Bonus if the area is indoors and the caster opens an umbrella and sets it down while casting. He may retrieve it after casting. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: Curiously, the things you do to cast this Spell are rather similar to the Enchantment Spell Breathe Water. On a roll of 12, Hex Place often results in a Breathe Water Spell upon the caster or one of her companions—complete with gills.

Hex Person

Hex

Description: The Hex Person Spell imposes a temporary Hex Penalty to a Skill stat of the hexed person. It is up to the caster to declare which Skill will suffer from the penalty.

The penalty is equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the person to be hexed, and the Skill to be penalised. In the Modifier Stage, roll equal to or less than your Hex stat.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster.

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Only one Skill can suffer from a Hex Penalty at a time. The same person can suffer from several Hex Penalties at once, but each penalty must apply to a different Skill.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as an Enchant Person Spell with +2 Enchantment Bonus. The Skill upon which the bonus is bestowed is the one which the caster intended to penalise.

Hex Weapon

Hex

Description: Hex Weapon imposes a Weapon Penalty upon the weapon targetted by the Spell. The Weapon Penalty is equal to the caster's Hex stat.

There are five possible Weapon Penalties: penalties to Strike (including Missile Strike), Disarm, Feint, Parry, and Timing. It is for the caster to decide what sort of Weapon Penalty the Spell creates.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the weapon to be hexed, and the type of Weapon Penalty the Spell will impose. Then roll equal to or less than your Hex stat. If you succeed, the targetted weapon suffers a penalty equal to your Hex stat.

The weapon must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: This round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The weapon's wielder may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: A weapon can only bear one Hex Weapon Spell at a time. Extra Hex Weapon Spells cast on a weapon that is already hexed have no effect.

Rites & Charms: +1 Rite Bonus if the caster holds the weapon while casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell operates as an Enchant Weapon Spell with a +2 Weapon Bonus. The type of Weapon Bonus is the same as the type of Weapon Penalty intended by the caster.

Misfortune

Hex

Description: Misfortune reduces all its victim's Skill stats (save WithIn and Withstand Magic) by an amount equal to the caster's Hex roll. The Spell's effects can be reversed by Dispel Magic, or a Priest's Bless Skill. The Spell can also be broken by a successful Withstand Magic roll.

If the Hex Penalty created by the Spell Defeats its victim, she falls to the ground trembling, and remains in that state for three rounds, after which time she regains control of herself (but remains Defeated until the Spell expires).

Misfortune is a weaker version of Catastrophe.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules do not apply; see Failure Rules, below.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of casting the Spell on this victim.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The Spell's effects apply against the caster himself, but last only one round.

Priestbane

Hex

Description: Like Godsbane, Priestbane is another Hex Spell aimed at Priests. The Spell creates a Hex Penalty, equal to the caster's Hex roll, which applies to all the victim's Priestcraft Skills. In essence, Priestbane has the effect of a Fervour Penalty. But the effect is temporary, and the Priest's actual Fervour stat is untouched by the Spell.

If the victim Priest currently suffers from a Fervour Penalty, the Hex Penalty created by Priestbane is cumulative with it.

A Priest can dispel Priestbane with a successful Bless Skill cast upon himself.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the Priest to be hexed. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Hex stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again. Restrictions None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster holds a religious symbol of the Priest's deity. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Priest's deity discovers what the caster is trying to do and responds by Channelling his Priest a Smite Skill directed at the caster.

The Priest need not roll his Smite Skill; the Skill works automatically by divine intervention. The Smite occurs immediately (ie in the Modifier Stage of the current round, following the roll of 12) and causes no Action Penalty or other adverse affect on the Priest. The Smite does a number of Injury Points equal to the Priest's Smite stat -2. The caster does not get a WithIn roll.

Note that this effect occurs even if the deity normally does not permit Smite Skills.

Spell Bounce

Hex

Description: With this Spell, the caster erects a magical field around herself called a Spell Bounce field. The Spell Bounce field is spherical and translucent, but faintly green. When a Spell is cast by an opposing Witch with the caster of Spell Bounce as its target, the opposing Witch must make a successful Withstand Magic roll or suffer Spell Bounce: the opposing Witch's magic bounces off the Spell Bounce field and strikes its caster. A Bounced Spell has exactly the same effects upon its caster as it was supposed to have against its intended victim.

The opposing Witch does not get a Withstand Magic roll against the Bounced Spell—even if the intended target of the Spell would have got one. The only Withstand Magic roll the opposing Witch gets is the one which determines whether the Spell bounces.

If the opposing Witch makes a successful Withstand Magic roll, the Spell ignores the Spell Bounce field and strikes the intended target. The Spell is totally unaffected by the Spell Bounce field and behaves normally.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. Roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

Duration: Current round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The caster can only cast Spell Bounce upon herself. It cannot be used to protect others.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The hex turns on the caster. Until the caster breaks his own Spell with With-Mag, he is not permitted to make Withstand Magic rolls against Spells. They affect him automatically.

Unlucky Break

Hex

Description: This Spell uses its victim's own spare Advancement Points against him. When the caster casts this Spell, 1 spare AP is deducted from the victim. That spare AP is then expended on an Unlucky Break, imposing an Unlucky Break Penalty on all actions taken by the victim for the rest of the current round. The Unlucky Break Penalty is equal to the victim's Luck stat.

If the victim declared by the caster has no spare APs, the Spell fizzles.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Hex stat subject to a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

The victim must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: Current round only.

Note: this means that the caster should choose a victim with a worse Timing Score than him this round. Otherwise, the victim will resolve his Skills before the caster makes her Spell roll; in that case, even if the caster succeeds, the Unlucky Break will have no effect.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again. Restrictions None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster uses the tail of a black cat in casting. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell uses one of the caster's own APs to cause the Unlucky Break. Or the Unlucky Break strikes the caster, but using the victim's spare AP.

Book VII

The Book of Illusion

ILLUSIONS ARE TRICKS played on the senses and the mind. Victims of illusions think they see things that don't exist and believe things that are not true. Their minds are captive to the will of the Illusionist whose Spells have duped them. The power of Illusion Spells is their subtlety; by the time characters realise what has come over them, it's often far too late.

Notes on Illusion Spells

As you may have noticed when reading The Book Of Arcana (p 131), illusions cannot be detected by Expose Magic. The Spell used to expose illusions, Reveal Illusion, is much harder to cast than Expose Magic is. This is the great power of Illusion Spells: they are very hard to detect, compared to other magics.

As you read the Illusion Spells given below, you will note that they concern both sensual illusions—meaning those which deceive our senses of sight, hearing, touch, etc—and

mental illusions. Mental illusions are illusions which deceive not our senses, but our minds. For example, the Mesmerise Person spell deceives its victim into giving up control of her reasoning and thought to the caster.

The Illusion Spells given below are all rolled in the Modifier Stage (but see the Rites & Charms rules for Phantom Wound).

Illusion Spells

Charm Beast

Illusion

Description: With this Spell the caster can charm any beast. A charmed beast becomes favourably disposed towards the caster. It will not attack the caster, except in self-defence. It may be shy about approaching the caster, but it will not flee from her. The beast will not obey the caster's commands, but it will assist her in any reasonable way. The beast may attack the caster's enemies, but only if it does not fear for its own life by doing so.

Charmed beasts suffer a -2 Charm Penalty to their Withstand Magic stat when attempting to resist the Mesmerise Creature Spell. If a charmed beast successfully resists Mesmerise Creature (ie makes its Withstand Magic roll) it automatically gets another Withstand Magic roll against the Charm Beast Spell. If the creature makes its Withstand Magic roll this time, the Charm Beast Spell abruptly ends.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the beast to be charmed. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster.

Duration: Current round only.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The beast may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Rite Bonus if the caster touches the creature while casting the Spell.

Roll of 12: The beast becomes angry with the caster and inclined (or more inclined) to attack her.

Charm Person

Illusion

Description: With this Spell the caster can charm any person. A charmed person becomes favourably disposed towards the caster and will cooperate with him. The charmed person

does not become the caster's slave; she will not obey his orders or submit to his every wish. But she will endeavour to please the caster and to assist him in any reasonable way.

The charmed person will not attack the caster, save in self-defence. If she was formerly in Combat with the caster, she will offer a truce and respect it so long as she is not attacked or harmed in any way. The charmed person may even go into Combat to protect or assist the caster, but only if she does not fear for her own life or limb in doing so.

Charmed people are more susceptible to Mesmerise Person Spells: they suffer a -2 Charm Penalty to their Withstand Magic stat when attempting to resist them. If a charmed person successfully resists Mesmerise Person (ie makes her Withstand Magic roll), she automatically gets another Withstand Magic roll against the Charm Person Spell. If the person makes her Withstand Magic roll this time, the Charm Person Spell abruptly ends.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be charmed. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a Difficulty Penalty equal to the person's Intellect stat.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Rite Bonus if the caster touches the person while casting the Spell.

Roll of 12: The person becomes determined not to cooperate with the caster. If the person is in Combat with the caster, he declares a Strike or Brawling attack against the caster next round and gains a +2 Strike or Brawling Bonus.

Crisis of Faith

Illusion

Description: This Spell causes a Priest to believe that his deity has Forsaken him. Believing such, the Priest will not attempt to use his Priestcraft Skills. Crisis of Faith effectively prevents Priests from Channelling for the duration of the Spell.

The Spell is rolled in the Modifier Stage. If the Spell roll is successfully cast against a Priest who declared a Priestcraft Skill that round, he will abandon it.

It is important to note that Priest is not Forsaken during the Spell's duration; he just thinks he is.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a Difficulty Penalty equal to the victim Priest's Channel stat.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +5 Charm Bonus if the caster uses some item of religious significance belonging to the Priest in casting. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The Priest's deity discovers what the caster is trying to do and responds by Channelling his Priest a Smite Skill directed at the caster.

The Priest need not roll his Smite Skill; the Skill works automatically by divine intervention. The Smite occurs immediately (ie in the Modifier Stage of the current round, following the roll of 12) and causes no Action Penalty or other adverse affect on the Priest. The Smite does a number of Injury Points equal to the Priest's Smite stat -2. The caster does not get a WithIn roll.

Note that this effect occurs even if the deity normally does not permit Smite Skills.

Disguise

Illusion

Description: With this Spell the caster can magically disguise himself or another person. The disguise donned can change the target's age, gender, height, weight, skin colour, hair colour, and clothing. It can also create or conceal any visible Infirmity.

Disguise cannot be used to disguise a person as a creature (ex. a sleeping cat) or a thing (ex. the fire by which the cat sleeps).

Remember that the disguise is an illusion, not an alchemical transmutation like Transfigure Person. The person disguised appears to be other than he is, but in fact he is not changed.

Recall also that the disguise is an illusion and not a conjuration. For instance, a hat created as part of the illusionary disguise does not behave like a real hat (as it would do were it a conjuration). The disguised person cannot remove his hat and hang it on a hat-rack. For it has no function but to disguise the Spell's target; it will disappear if used in any other way.

Disguises can be dispelled by Dispel Magic.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the person to be disguised, and the disguise to be created. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Illusion stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. If he opts to do so, Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster eats a clove of garlic while casting the Spell. The Charm is consumed—literally—in casting.

Roll of 12: A disguise other than that declared by the caster arises.

Fright

Illusion

Description: The victim of a Fright Spell must Withstand Magic or succumb to a deathly fear of someone or something indicated by the caster.

In the Resolution Stage of the round in which the Spell is cast, the victim will have terrifying visions of the frightful person or thing. The victim's fear immobilises him; he cannot perform the actions he declared that round. (He can, however, make WithIn and WithMag rolls.)

Next round, the victim will attempt to run away. If he is not in Combat, he will run away and keep running away from the fearful person or thing until the Spell ends. If he is in Combat, he will declare nothing but Retreat Movement this round. (Victims of Fright enjoy a +3 Fear Bonus to their Movement stats.) If he Retreats successfully (whether in the Modifier Stage or at the end of the round), he will continue fleeing until the Spell ends.

If the victim cannot Retreat (because his opponent Closed In on him), he will continue to attempt Retreats each round until he succeeds or the Spell ends. He will declare no other actions.

Before using this Spell, be sure that you or your GM is familiar with Retreat Movement. See section 7.3.14, Retreat Movement, on page 61.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, its victim, and the frightful person or thing. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The Spell works on people only; beasts are not taken in by it.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster uses bat wings in casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: If the caster indicated a person for the victim to be afraid of, the Spell goes awry and makes that person deathly afraid of he who was supposed to be the Spell's victim. If the caster indicated a thing for the victim to be afraid of, the thing—no matter what it is—melts into a puddle and is destroyed.

Illusionist's Party

Illusion

Description: This Spell creates an illusionary band of men and/or women that accompany the caster wherever he goes. They cannot fight for him. They cannot even pick a thing up for him or hold a door for him. But to all who see them, they look perfectly real.

The caster may decide how many people are created by the illusion, but they may number no more than the caster's Illusion stat. The caster may decide how they are dressed and roughly what they look like. (He cannot specify their appearance too accurately, however. For instance, he may declare 'Three strong-looking men and a beautiful maiden', but if he declares that the maiden should be 1.78 m tall with green eyes and painted red fingernails, the Spell will most likely ignore these details.)

The illusionary figures will follow the caster where he goes. If they are ever separated from the caster by more than 5 m, they disappear. The figures will engage in small talk with the caster or with others, but someone who engages them in conversation too deeply will soon realise that they know very little about anything.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the number of people in your party, and their general description. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Illusion stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The illusion created by this Spell works on people and mythical beasts. It does not work on common beasts, including witches' familiars. They do not even see the illusion; they do not know it is happening.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: There are many possibilities. The figures may appear, but be utterly different than described by the caster. Or their outfits turn out wildly and embarrassingly wrong. They may turn out to be identical to the caster. Or they may look fine, but say compromising or ridiculous things.

Invisibility

Illusion

Description: With this Spell the caster makes himself, another person, or an object invisible.

If the Spell is used on an object, that object may be no larger than 2m cubed.

When the Spell is used on a person, the invisibility extends to all clothing worn by the Spell's target, and any items held by him (including weapons).

Note that for both people and objects, the Spell only makes the target invisible; it can still be heard, smelt, and felt.

Attackers suffer a -4 Invisibility Penalty to Strike or Brawling stats against invisible opponents. The penalty also applies to Sorcery Spells and Composite Spells involving Sorcery.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be made invisible. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Illusion stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic, if he so desires. If he opts to do so, Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Witches' familiars are not affected by the Spell. They see the 'invisible' person normally. (But see Rites & Charms, below.)

Rites & Charms: The Spell can be made to work on familiars by using a lizard tail in casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: When used on an object, the object may not only become invisible, but disappear entirely. When used on a person, the Spell may turn someone else invisible.

Mesmerise Beast

Illusion

Description: To mesmerise is to place someone in a hypnotic state for the purpose of inducing him to think or act as directed. The Mesmerise Beast Spell puts beasts into such a state. The caster may then tell the beast what to do. The mesmerised beast understands the caster's suggestions and commands magically, even if he would not understand them otherwise.

Mesmerised beasts may be directed to act in any way—including ways that are contrary to their own self-interest—so long as they are not told to take actions that endanger their lives. A beast instructed to kill himself, or to fight a battle in which it might be gravely injured, will ignore the command.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the beast to be mesmerised. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

When the Spell ends, the mesmerised beast realises that it has been subjected to magic. Understandably, it will not be happy about this!

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Charmed beasts suffer a -2 Charm Penalty to their Withstand Magic stat when attempting to resist the Mesmerise Beast Spell.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm bonus if the caster uses a pinch of catnip while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The beast becomes angry with the caster and, if it is not already doing so, attacks her. If it is already attacking the caster, it resolves to fight to the death; it will not Retreat for any reason.

Mesmerise Person

Illusion

Description: To mesmerise is to place someone in a hypnotic state for the purpose of inducing him to think or act as directed. The Mesmerise Person Spell puts people into such a state. Once mesmerised, the caster may control the person's actions by telling her what to do. The mesmerised person understands the caster's suggestions and commands even if she does not speak the caster's language.

Mesmerised people will agree to act in ways contrary to their own self-interest, so long as doing so does not imperil their life or violate their private morals. For instance, a mesmerised person instructed to kill a defenceless person may refuse to do so not from fear of death but because murder is contrary to the person's moral belief.

A mesmerised person instructed to endanger himself or violate his moral code gets a Withstand Magic roll. If she succeeds, the Spell is broken.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the person to be mesmerised. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within 10 m of the caster.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

When the Spell ends, the mesmerised person realises he has been subject to the caster's suggestive powers. He will not necessarily realise that she has been under the influence of magic, but he may. He will not be at all pleased with the caster!

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Rite Bonus if the target watches as the caster gently motions back and forth with her hand or with some swinging object (such as a necklace bearing an amulet or a key attached to string) while casting. If an object is used, it survives the casting.

Roll of 12: If the caster fails a Withstand Magic roll, he is mesmerised by his own Spell. This is not readily apparent to the Spell's intended target or other characters. But orders and suggestions made to the caster for the Spell's duration will be followed by the caster (subject to the limitations described above).

Phantom Wound

Illusion

Description: This Spell causes its victim to believe that he is gravely wounded. This belief results in a Phantom Wound Penalty to all the victim's Skill stats for the Spell's Duration. In essence, this Spell makes its victim act as though he had an Injury Penalty.

Keep in mind that Phantom Wound has no effect whatever on its victim's Injury stat.

Casting Rules: Casting without the Rite: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty.

Casting with the Rite: Declare the Spell, a Strike, and the target of both. In the Resolution Stage, make your Strike roll first. After resolving any Injury caused by the Strike, roll less than or equal to your Illusion stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty (and, if the Strike was successful, a +2 Rite Bonus).

The target must be within 10m of the caster.

Duration: Until broken by WithMag.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Magic. Resistance Rules apply.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Rite Bonus if the caster Strikes the victim with any weapon before, but in the same round as, casting the Spell. The Rite is effective even if the victim of the Spell makes a successful WithIn roll against the caster's Strike. But the Strike itself must be successful; a failed Strike roll will not generate the Rite Bonus.

Roll of 12: A harmless explosion of blue and yellow light at arms' length from the caster yields a common duck and a spool of blue thread. (Both are illusionary and disappear in 10 rounds' time.)

Book VIII

The Book of Sorcery

OF ALL MAGICS, SORCERY is undoubtedly the most feared. For while most any magic can be put to evil uses, the art of Sorcery is devoted exclusively to the infliction of Injury, Disease, and Death. Practitioners of this Black Magic are reviled by every society as the enemies of peace, religion and law. But the forces of order and civilisation are not the Sorcerer's only enemy. They must also fear their own dark craft. For even the mightiest Sorcerers are eventually killed by their own hand, or driven mad by their own magic.

Notes on Sorcery Spells

Sorcery is the most difficult magic to master. First there is the constant risk of exposure, with the almost certain death such exposure brings. Next there is the magic itself. Even the simplest Sorcery Spells come with high Difficulty Penalties, and the most powerful Spells can be cast only by the greatest Witches. Finally there are the risks inherent in Sorcery itself. Rolling 12 on a Sorcery roll can result in grave Injury to the caster, not to mention madness. These great obstacles to casting Sorcery Spells drive many Witches to forget about Sorcery and specialise in other magics. But those Witches who persevere are rewarded with terrifying powers.

Sorcery is the only form of Spell-based magic capable of causing direct Injury. Characters attempting to resist Sorcery Spells, or Composite Spells involving Sorcery, make Withstand Injury rolls instead of Withstand Magic rolls.

Most Sorcery Spells are rolled in the Resolution Stage. The odd one (ex. Halobenunon's Prank) is rolled in the Modifier Stage.

Sorcery Spells

Disease Strike

Sorcery

Description: This Spell inflicts a Disease upon its victim. The Disease reduces the victim's Injury stat by an amount equal to the caster's Sorcery roll, and by 1 Injury Point per day afterwards until the victim is healed or succumbs to the Disease.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the 10m of the caster.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Disease Strike cannot be dispelled by Dispel Magic. But diseases inflicted by the Spell can be Healed by Priestcraft.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The caster must make a successful Withstand Magic roll with a -4 Difficulty Penalty or go mad. The madness lasts 6 months. It is curable only by a Priest using Heal Infirmary.

Fire Strike

Sorcery

Description: With this Spell the caster shoots a thick burst of flames from his hands. The flames will travel up to 10m in any direction. But they will not pass through objects or bodies.

There are three variations of the Spell, corresponding to the three degrees of fire intensity described in section 8.7, Hazard Injury, in page 72.

A Normal Fire Strike does a number of Injury Points equal to the caster's Sorcery roll +2.

A Red-Hot Fire Strike does a number of Injury Points equal to the caster's Sorcery roll +4.

A White-Hot Fire Strike does a number of Injury Points equal to the caster's Sorcery roll +6.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and either the direction it will travel or the person it will strike. Also declare the degree of fire intensity. Make your Spell roll in the Resolution Stage.

For a Normal Fire Strike, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -2 Difficulty Penalty.

For a Red-Hot Fire Strike, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty.

For a White-Hot Fire Strike, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -6 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the 10m of the caster.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: The effects of a roll of 12 are eliminated if the caster wears asbestos gloves in casting. The Charm survives the casting.

Roll of 12: The fire explodes, burning the caster. The caster does not get a WithIn roll. For a Normal Fire Strike, the caster suffers 2 Injury Points. For a Red-Hot Fire Strike, the caster suffers 4 Injury Points. For a White-Hot Fire Strike, the caster suffers 6 Injury Points.

Gunther's Noxious Cloud

Sorcery

Description: With this Spell the caster suspends a cloud of poisonous gas over a specified area. Characters within that area must Withstand Injury each round that they are exposed to the cloud or suffer 1 Injury Point. The cloud also decreases visibility for those within it, imposing a -1 Visibility Penalty to all Combat Skills and any other Skill that requires good visibility.

The cloud may cover an area up to 4 m across and 4 m deep. Once cast, the cloud is immobile. It cannot be moved by the caster nor blown by wind.

(Heilas Gunther was convicted of witchcraft several years ago. He was hanged.)

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the dimensions of the cloud, and where it is to appear. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The caster may place the cloud no further than 10m away from him.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Sorcery stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Characters exposed to the cloud make Withstand Injury rolls each round. If they fail their roll, they suffer 1 Injury Point.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The cloud can be Dispelled by Dispel Magic.

Rites & Charms: The Spell's duration is increased by three rounds if the caster uses a coin minted in the Trade Lands. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The cloud appears over the caster and his companions.

Gunther's Throwing Stones

Sorcery

Description: This Spell causes a number of magical, fist-sized stones to appear, one after another, in the caster's hand. When thrown towards the caster's opponents, the stones explode in the air. Every person or creature within a 2 m radius of the stone when it explodes must Withstand Injury or suffer 3 Injury Points.

The number of stones appearing is equal to the caster's Sorcery roll. At first, only one stone appears in the caster's hand. As soon as she throws it, a new one appears in her throwing hand until she has thrown them all. She may throw no more than one stone per round, however. The act of throwing the stones does not count as an action for Action Penalty purposes.

The caster may throw the stones up to 10 m away from herself. She need not worry about aiming; the stones automatically go where she wants them to go.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty. If successful, you may throw the first stone immediately.

The caster may throw the stones up to 10 m away from herself.

Duration: The Spell takes effect instantaneously. A new stone appears each time a stone is thrown, until there are no stones left.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The target(s) may attempt to Withstand Injury.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: The Spell's duration is increased by three rounds if the caster uses a coin minted in the Trade Lands. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: A number of stones equal to the caster's Witchcraft Composite stat are created. The first one appears and explodes in the caster's hand before he can throw it. The caster and anyone within a 2m radius of him must Withstand Injury or suffer 3 Injury Points. The next stone then appears. It too will explode in the caster's hand, in the Resolution Stage of the next round, unless the caster successfully casts Dispel Magic upon himself that round. This goes on until all the stones have exploded, or the caster (or someone else) manages to Dispel Magic.

Halobenunon's Calamity

Sorcery

Description: Halobenunon's Calamity inflicts its victim with one grave Injury after another, each one more deadly than the last, until the victim Withstands Injury, dies, or is shown mercy by the caster.

When the Spell is cast, the victim must Withstand Injury or suffer a number of Injury Points equal to the caster's Sorcery roll. Next round, the victim must Withstand Injury or suffer the number of Injury Points inflicted by the Spell last round +2. The following round, the victim must again Withstand Injury or suffer the number of Injury Points inflicted by the Spell in the previous round +2.

EXAMPLE

Ursula declares Halobenunon's Calamity against a Monk who is attempting to arrest her on charges of witchcraft.

Ursula makes a successful Sorcery roll with a 3. The Monk fails to Withstand Injury. He takes 3 Injury Points.

Next round, the monk must Withstand Injury or suffer 5 Injury Points.

The round after that, the Monk must Withstand Injury or suffer 7 Injury Points.

And so on, until the Monk dies or breaks the Spell by Withstanding Injury, or until Ursula shows him mercy.

The name Halobenunon has been associated with several Spells, (mostly Sorcery Spells) over the last century. It is unclear whether Halobenunon is a very long-lived wizard, or the pen name of a coven.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the 10m of the caster.

Duration: By default, the Spell continues until its victim dies. But the Spell is broken by a successful Withstand Injury roll against it. It will also end if the caster decides to end it.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The Spell may only be cast once per round. It cannot be cast a second time until its effect from the first casting has ended.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster uses a giant's nose bone in casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The Spell goes awry. Unless he Withstands Injury, the caster suffers a number of Injury Points per round equal to his Witchcraft Composite stat.

Halobenunon's Prank

Sorcery

Description: When this Spell is cast, anyone attacking the caster enjoys a Strike Bonus (or Brawling Bonus, or Claw Bonus, etc.) equal to the caster's Sorcery roll. This bonus lasts for the same number of rounds.

But there's a catch. For the duration of the Spell, the caster makes a Withstand Injury roll each time he is attacked. If he makes a successful roll, nothing happens. If he fails his roll, the Injury that results is done to the attacker, not the caster.

EXAMPLE

Ursula declares Halobenunon's Prank.

She makes a successful Sorcery roll with a 2. Effective immediately and for the next 2 rounds, the Monk who is attacking her enjoys a +2 Strike bonus.

Next round the Monk seizes the opportunity and declares three Strikes. Ursula declares no actions.

The Monk's first Strike is successful with a 5. Ursula fails her WithIn roll. But the result of Halobenunon's Prank is that it is the Monk, not Ursula, who suffers 5 Injury Points. Note that the Monk does not get a WithIn roll; Ursula made 'his' WithIn roll already. The Monk realizes that something has gone horribly wrong. But he can't break off his attacks now. He declared three Strikes, and he has to roll them.

The Monk's second Strike is also successful, with a 4. This time, however, Ursula makes a successful WithIn roll. That's unfortunate for her, because the Injury would have been inflicted on the Monk, not on her. But Ursula does not have the option of voluntarily failing her WithIn rolls. She just has to hope she fails them!

The Monk's third Strike misses with a 10. Again, more bad luck for Ursula! But again, Ursula does not have the option of throwing herself at her attacker. The best she can do is to refrain from declaring Defensive Combat Skills or other actions that will decrease her opponent's chances of hitting her.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Sorcery roll.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: Attackers do not get to make WithIn rolls. See the Example given in Description, above.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The prank fails: all attackers enjoy a bonus against the caster, but Injuries caused are taken by the caster, not his assailants.

Icy Blast

Sorcery

Description: With this Spell the caster sends a blast of frost and ice from his hands. The blast will travel up to 10 m to reach its victim, though it will not pass through intervening objects or bodies.

The effect of an Icy Blast is to reduce the victim's Injury stat by a number of Injury Points equal to the caster's Sorcery roll, as well as imposing a Frost Bite Penalty equal to the caster's Luck stat. The Frost Bite Penalty applies to all Combat and Agility Skills. It lasts 2 rounds.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -3 Defence Penalty.

The Spell's victim must be within the 10 m of the caster.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster uses a handful of snow or ice in casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The caster is himself frostbitten by the Spell. He suffers no Injury, but suffers the Frost Bite Penalty for two rounds. He gets no Withstand Magic roll.

Infirmity Strike

Sorcery

Description: Infirmity Strike causes its victim a permanent Infirmity (such as blindness, paralysis, loss of limb, mental deficiency, etc; see section 8.10, Infirmity, on page 76). No Injury is caused by the Spell.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the Infirmity to be inflicted, and its victim. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -8 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the caster's line of sight.

Duration: Permanent.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. She is incapable of casting Infirmity Strike upon the victim, ever.

Restrictions: Dispel Magic will not remove Infirmities caused by this Spell.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The caster must make a successful Withstand Magic roll with a -8 Difficulty Penalty or go mad. The madness renders the caster incapable of performing any Witchcraft or Intellect Skills, and imposes a -4 Madness Penalty upon all other Skills. The madness is curable only by a Priest using Heal Infirmity.

Lightning Strike

Sorcery

Description: Lightning Strike sends bolts of lightning from the caster to the victim. The victim must Withstand Injury or suffer a number of Injury Points equal to the caster's Sorcery roll +2.

If the victim rolls 12 when making his WithIn roll, he suffers a further 3 Injury Points of electrical damage.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

The target must be within the 10 m of the caster.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury. If the victim rolls 12 when making his WithIn roll, he suffers a further 3 Injury Points of electrical damage.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again. Restrictions None.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster rubs a bit of fur along a small glass rod when casting. The fur is consumed in casting, but the rod survives.

Roll of 12: The Spell fizzles but the caster suffers 3 Injury Points of electrical damage (unless she makes her Withstand Magic roll).

Pall of Udulek

Sorcery

Description: This terrible Spell kills its victim outright. In game terms, the Spell reduces its victim's Injury stat to -12. The Spell works by creating a magical pall which appears in the caster's hands, and which she then places over the victim. Upon making contact with the victim, the pall tightens around him and kills him by constriction. The pall disappears when the victim is dead.

Figure 12.2: Chaos



(A pall is a velvet covering, usually black or purple, placed over coffins, hearses, and tombs.)

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its victim. In the Resolution Stage, roll less than or equal to your Sorcery stat subject to a -10 Difficulty Penalty.

To place the pall, the caster must be within 2m of her victim.

Duration: Instantaneous; the constriction occurs the moment the victim fails his WithIn roll.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The target may attempt to Withstand Injury. The victim makes his WithIn roll when the pall first touches him. If he makes a successful WithIn roll, the pall cannot harm him and instantly disappears. Furthermore, a successful WithIn roll means that the caster may not use the Spell upon him ever again.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again. (But once the intended victim makes a successful WithIn roll, the caster may not use the Spell upon him, ever.)

Restrictions: The pall cannot be used on any victim other than the one declared by the caster. If the intended victim Retreats, disappears, dies before the caster can use the pall, etc. the pall cannot be used on others. It will disappear as soon as it is clear that it cannot be used against its intended victim.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The caster must make a successful Withstand Magic roll with a -10 Difficulty Penalty or go mad. The madness renders the caster incapable of performing any Witchcraft or Intellect Skills, and imposes a -5 Madness Penalty upon all other Skills. The madness is curable only by a Priest using Heal Infirmity.

Book IX

The Book of Summoning

SUMMONING IS THE POWER to command the attention, protection, or service of other beings. Those summoned may be entranced peasants, fabulous monsters, common beasts, the souls of the dead, and more. Whatever their nature, once summoned to the caster they are under his control and subject to his will.

Notes on Summoning Spells

Summoning is a powerful and difficult form of magic. Nor is it well understood, not even by its greatest practitioners. Where do the summoned beings (known as summonings) come from? Do they even exist independent of the Spell that summoned them? For some Spells, the answer is clearly yes. For others, one cannot be so sure.

Summoning Spell names tend to distinguish between a call (as in Call Familiar) and a summons (as in Summon Champion). Calls bring summonings that stay with the caster for a long time. Casting call-type Spells tends to take a long time. Summon-type Spells bring summonings which perform a single service for the caster, then leave. They are also much easier to cast: like most Spells, they can usually be cast in one round.

Calls don't usually use the Order of Play rules, because they take several rounds or more to cast. Other Summoning Spells are usually rolled in the Modifier Stage.

Summoning Spells

Call Familiar

Summoning

Description: With this Spell the caster summons a familiar: a small animal of some sort which acts as the witch's servant and companion.

Typical examples of creatures attracted by the Call Familiar Spell include: cats, bats, crows, frogs, toads, owls, ferrets, rabbits, skunks, rats, mice, even songbirds. The witch may express a preference, but the choice is ultimately for the GM. Familiars are always small, lightfooted (or lightwinged) animals. The creature attracted by the Spell has no special qualities or skills; it is just a normal owl, cat, rabbit, etc.

Witch and familiar are bound by a magical form of empathy: each knows the other's feelings and desires instinctively, without further communication. Indeed, no further communication is possible, for the familiar cannot speak or conceive of things in a manner intelligible to its witch. But usually this more elaborate form of communication is unnecessary. For example, if the familiar senses that the witch wants to know what lies ahead, it will go find out (unless it senses that the witch wants it to stay with her). Conversely, the witch senses when the familiar is frightened, worried, or hungry.

The Witch cannot see what her familiar sees, smell what it smells, or hear what it hears. Yet she knows what it sees, smells, and hears. There are limitations imposed by the familiar's mental abilities, however. For instance, the creature will likely know the difference between one man and several, many and few. But it may not be capable of counting them. Similarly, it can tell a man from an animal, but it cannot tell a sheriff from a butcher. (However it can recognise similarities between, for example, the men it sees ahead and the man who attacked the witch earlier.)

A witch can have only one familiar at a time. The familiar will remain with the witch for the rest of its life, unless the witch mistreats it. If ever the familiar becomes separated from the witch, it will try very hard to return to her but, if that proves impossible, it will leave her. Whenever a familiar decides to leave its witch, the empathic bond between the two ends.

A witch whose familiar leaves her because of mistreatment becomes permanently incapable of successfully casting Call Familiar. Dispel Magic cannot break the bond between witch and familiar.

Casting Rules: Casting the Spell takes 4-6 hours. To cast it, declare the Spell and roll less than or equal to your Summoning stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty. (The Order of Play rules don't apply here.)

If successful, the familiar will appear within a week of casting.

Duration: The Spell is cast instantaneously. The familiar remains with the caster as explained in Description, above.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try again for a week.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster uses the feather, fur, etc. of another Witch's familiar. The Charm does not work if the caster attacked or killed the familiar to get it. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: No negative effect.

Call Henchman

Summoning

Description: With this Spell the caster attracts a humanoid servant to himself. Usually he or she will be of the same race and nationality as the majority of people in the caster's area (but the decision rests with the GM).

A person called by a Call Henchman Spell is in a magical trance. When the Spell hits him, he suddenly forgets all about his own life and feels compelled to seek out the caster. He invariably finds the caster, for the Spell acts as a sort of magical homing beacon. Having found the caster (whom he recognises immediately), the henchman introduces himself and declares, 'I have come to offer myself to you in service.' If the caster rebuffs him, the Spell breaks and the henchman is restored to normal (but left wondering what came over him). If the caster accepts the henchman, he enters into the Witch's service.

The henchman will remain in the Witch's service for up to a year. Throughout that time, he will remain in the Spell's trance. He does not reflect upon his past life or his present state. He does not at first realise that his master is a Witch, but he does not dwell upon the fact once it becomes known to him. He shows little humour or personality. Truth be told, summoned henchmen are terrible bores.

A henchman will under no circumstances engage in Combat for his master. If asked to do so, he will refuse. If ever his life is endangered by the caster, or by association with him, the Spell breaks and the henchman returns to normal (and thereupon flees in confusion).

Note that henchmen are not like familiars. There is no bond of empathy, and generally much less devotion. A henchman is an entranced, almost thoughtless thing, whereas familiars are lively and sensitive.

Physically and mentally, Henchmen are unremarkable specimens. Most of their Attribute stats are 1, with the occasional 2. They have no Skill stat higher than 3 and no Combat stat higher than 2. These stats can be improved, however; players can use their own character's APs on their character's henchmen to improve their stats. Henchmen themselves cannot gain APs, however.

Call Henchman produces one henchman. To call more, cast the Spell repeatedly. A Dispel Magic Spell cast upon a henchman will break the Spell and return the henchman to normal.

Casting Rules: Casting the Spell takes 6 hours of game time. To cast it, declare the Spell and roll less than or equal to your Summoning stat subject to a -5 Difficulty Penalty. (The Order of Play rules don't apply here.)

If successful, the henchmen will appear one by one of the course of a week.

Duration: The Spell is cast instantaneously. The Spell remains in effect upon the henchman for no more than one year. The Spell may be broken in the ways explained in Description, above.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable. The GM will determine who is affected by the Spell.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again in a month's time.

Restrictions: A Witch can have a number of henchmen equal to his Summoning stat. He may have no more than that number. If a henchman dies, returns to normal, or otherwise leaves the Witch's service, the Witch may cast the Spell to call a replacement.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The henchman comes, but tries to murder the caster. If asked why he wants to do this, he has no answer.

Séance

Summoning

Description: In a Séance, the caster summons the spirits of the dead for the purpose of communicating with them. The caster must summon the spirit of some dead person or people in particular; she cannot summon just any spirit. But she does not need to know the spirit's identity. For instance, she may summon 'The person to whom this sword last belonged' (assuming that person is dead).

The spirits summoned appear as ghostly images of who they were when alive. They cannot touch or feel anything. Nor can they do anything other than speak with the caster and her companions. They will only answer questions about their own lives or the lives of people they knew. They will refuse to answer all other questions. The Spell forces them to stay for at least one question. They may stay longer, or they may not.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and whose spirit is to be summoned. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Summoning stat subject to a Difficulty Penalty of at least -3. The GM can raise the Difficulty Penalty if he considers the spirit especially hard to summon.

Duration: See Description, above.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell cannot be maintained.

Resistance: The spirit summoned cannot resist.

Failure Rules: The caster is incapable of summoning this spirit, ever. (Or 'ever again', if the spirit is one the caster has summoned previously.)

Restrictions: The caster may summon several spirits at a time, up to a maximum of X (where X equal the caster's Summoning stat).

The same spirit cannot be summoned by Sance more than once a year.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster holds some item possessed by or strongly associated with the spirit. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: The spirit of someone else is summoned.

Summon Champion

Summoning

Description: This Spell summons an armed warrior who will fight to the death on the caster's behalf.

The warrior appears between the caster and his opponents. He is controlled completely by the caster. The caster's player declares the champion's actions and makes his rolls.

If, when the champion appears, he finds no need for himself—if the battle is already over, or the caster summoned him even though he was not under attack—the champion will disappear. Otherwise the champion disappears when the battle is done, or when he is Defeated, or when the Spell ends (whichever comes first). If he dies, his body instantly disappears.

The champion's arms and armour are determined by the GM. His stats are as shown in table 12.3.

The champion will usually not speak. When he does, he speaks to the caster only, and only says things like 'Watch out' or 'Behind you'.

The champion can be dispelled by Dispel Magic, but only if he fails his Withstand Magic roll. The champion has no Advancement Points, so he cannot get Lucky Breaks.

Casting Rules: The Spell takes 3 rounds to cast, during which time the caster must not be disturbed. Casting begins in the Strategy Stage of the first round, when the caster declares the Spell. Then in the Modifier Stage, the caster must roll less than or equal to his Summoning stat subject to a -4 Difficulty Penalty. If successful, the caster must be undisturbed

Table 12.3: Champion's Stats

Stat	Value
All Combat Skills	*
All Vigour Skills	5
Withstand Injury	†
Timing	†
Withstand Magic	*
Favourable Rounding?	No
All other Attribute stats	2
All other Skill stats	3

*Stat is equal to caster's Summoning stat.

†Stat is equal to caster's Summoning roll +3.

for the rest of this round and the entirety of the next round, during which he performs the rites required to Summon the Champion. The Champion appears in the Timing Stage of the third round. He makes his Timing roll and henceforth behaves as a normal combattant.

If the caster is interrupted while casting the Spell—even if it's only to make a WithIn or WithMag roll, the caster must make a successful Summoning roll or lose the Spell.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Summoning stat, or when Combat ends, or when the champion dies or is Defeated—whichever comes first.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Characters attacked by the champion make WithIn rolls as they do against any other combattant.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: Instead of the champion from table 12.3, use 'Bruce' from table 12.4.

Summoner's Trick

Summoning

Description: This is the classic Witch's trick of pulling a rabbit (or what have you) from a hat. With this Spell, the caster makes some small animal appear out of thin air.

The animal will not attack or defend on the caster's behalf. Indeed, it won't do anything that a naturally-appearing animal of the same type wouldn't do.

Table 12.4: Bruce's Stats

Stat	Value
All Combat Skills	2
All Vigour Skills	1
Withstand Injury	3
Timing	2
Withstand Magic	1
Favourable Rounding?	No
Knitting	7
Papier maché	4
All other Attribute stats	1
All other Skill stats	1

The champion's armour consists of a lovely wool pullover. He is armed with an unfinished tea cozy.

Table 12.5: Summoner's Trick Results

ROLL	ANIMAL
1	A rabbit
2	A cat
3	A rat
4	A squirrel
5	A small dog
6	A garden snake
7	A songbird
8	A turtle
9	A hedgehog
10	A frog
11	A mouse
12	A frightened skunk

The caster may choose one of the animals on the table below, or pick another (with the GM's approval).

The animal appears in the caster's hand or wherever else he indicates within a 10m radius of himself.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Summoning stat.

Duration: Permanent.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster draws the animal from his hat. It must be a hat he wears regularly. The Charm survives casting.

Roll of 12: An animal is summoned. The animal promptly bites (or scratches, or makes a mess on) the caster.

Book X

Composite Spells

COMPOSITE SPELLS are Spells that combine the magic of two different Witchcraft Skills into one powerful Spell. Composite Spells tend to be harder to cast than normal Spells because they force the caster to be advanced in two Witchcraft Skills rather than just one. But Composite Skills also have the potential to be extremely powerful. They're worth the effort!

Explanation of Composite Spells

A Composite Spell is a Spell which draws on two Witchcraft Skills instead of just one. Composite Spells combine different types of magic to make complex and powerful Spells.

Composite Spells work just like normal Spells. To cast a Composite Spell, roll less than or equal to your Composite Skill stat. Here's how to determine your Composite Skill stat:

1. Determine which two Witchcraft Skills are used by the Composite Spell you wish to cast. This information is given in the Spell Description.
2. Take your Skill stats for those two Skills and add them together.
3. Divide the sum by 2.

4. If you get a remainder (0.5), round it up if your character enjoys Favourable Rounding. Otherwise, round it down. (See section 3.9.2, Favourable Rounding, on page 21)

EXAMPLE

Ursula declares Gem Trap, a Composite Spell which combines Illusion and Sorcery. Her Illusion stat is 6. Her Sorcery stat is 3. To determine her Composite Skill, she does a bit of math:

$$6 + 3 = 9$$

$$9 \div 2 = 4.5$$

But you can't roll 4.5 on a twelve-sided die. Ursula rounds 4.5 up to 5, because she has Favourable Rounding. So Ursula's Composite Skill to cast Gem Trap is 5.

Composite Spells

Conjure Enchanted Weapon

Composite Spell: Conjuring & Enchantment

Description: This Spell conjures an enchanted weapon. The type of weapon conjured is for the caster to decide. The enchantment possessed by the weapon is a Weapon Bonus equal to the caster's Enchantment stat.

There are five possible Weapon Bonuses: bonuses to Strike (including Missile Strike), Disarm, Feint, Parry, and Timing. It is for the caster to decide what sort of Weapon Bonus the Spell creates.

The weapon appears in the caster's hand. Anyone may use it.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell, the weapon to be conjured, and the type of Weapon Bonus it will have. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Composite Skill stat subject to a - 3 Difficulty Penalty.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: None.

Roll of 12: The weapon appears, but its Weapon Bonus turns out to be a Weapon Penalty. However, in the hands of any adversary of the caster, the penalty becomes the bonus it was meant to be. So the caster cannot just throw the weapon away, for fear that it will be picked up and used against him.

False Friend

Composite Spell: Arcana & Illusion

Description: False Friend combines the magics of Arcana and Illusion to create the illusion of a friend or relation of any person indicated by the caster. This False Friend can then be controlled by the caster to deceive the person targetted. The caster might use the Friend get some information from the target (ie information that the target would be unwilling to tell the caster) The caster might employ the Friend to distract the target, or take him away from his post. Anything is possible, so long as the caster plays the role of the Friend convincingly.

The caster need not know anything about the person targetted by the Spell or the Friend mimicked by the Illusion. The Arcana magic provides this information by tapping the target's mind. The Spell gives a few essential details about the Friend, such as his name and appearance, how he knows the Spell's target, an anecdote about their relationship (ex. 'They used to frequent the Blue Boar pub'), and any other minor details the GM cares to pass on. But note that the Spell does not allow the caster to read the target's mind outright. Only the details described here are provided by the Spell. As for the rest, the caster may have to improvise.

The caster controls the illusionary Friend throughout the Spell's duration. He is responsible for the friend's movements, speech, decisions, etc. He enjoys a sort of empathic link with the Friend for the duration of the Spell: he sees and hears what the Friend sees and hears.

The Spell ends if the Friend is separated from the caster by more than 20m.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and its target. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Composite Skill stat. The False Friend appears immediately, and may be used in the Resolution Stage of the current round. Because the Friend is controlled by the caster, all his actions occur at the same time as the caster's; the Friend does not make Timing rolls.

Duration: A number of rounds equal to the caster's Illusion stat. (See also Restrictions, below.)

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally.

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: The caster cannot cast any new Spells, or perform any Skills, while the Spell is in effect. He must give his entire concentration to the interaction between the target and the Friend. If the caster is forced to cast a new Spell or perform a new Skill during the False Friend Spell, or if he fails to Withstand Magic or Injury during it, he loses his concentration and the Spell is broken.

Like the illusionary figures created by the Illusionist's Party Spell, the False Friend cannot fight, hold things, or generally take actions that require flesh and blood. But the False Friend looks and feels real to all who encounter him.

Only one False Friend Spell may operate at a time.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster knows the name of the friend impersonated by the Spell and has some item associated with her (such as a piece of clothing or some other possession). The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The 'friend' turns out to be a sworn enemy of the target. The target may refuse to speak or listen to the 'friend', or even attack him. The Spell cannot be cast again with this target.

Gem Trap

Composite Spell: Illusion & Sorcery

Description: This Spell creates the illusion of a small pile of precious gems. When approached for inspection, the gems appear to explode. Everyone within 2 m of the gems must Withstand Injury or suffer 5 Injury Points.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell. Place the gems. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Composite Spell stat subject to a -3 Difficulty Penalty.

Duration: The Spell ends when the illusionary gems explode. The illusion of the gems lasts for a number of days equal to the caster's Illusion stat.

Maintenance Rules: Not applicable.

Resistance: The victim(s) make WithIn rolls to resist the Injury. The illusion of the gems cannot be resisted.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: None.

Rites & Charms: If a rare gemstone of any sort is used in casting, the Spell will last for a number of months equal to the caster's Illusion stat.

Roll of 12: The gems appear and explode before the caster can place them, potentially injuring the caster and those around him.

Illusionist's Guard

Composite Spell: Illusion & Sorcery

Description: This is a much more powerful version of the Illusion Spell Illusionist's Party. The Spell creates an illusionary male or female guard to protect the caster. The guard wears no armour, but is armed with one (unenchanted) weapon (as chosen by the caster).

Being an illusion, the guard is incapable of even the simplest tasks, such as opening doors and holding things. But he looks perfectly real. He will follow the caster where he goes. If he is ever separated from the caster by more than 5 m, he disappears and the Spell ends. The guard can engage in small talk with the caster and others, but knows nothing.

The guard will not attack, even if ordered to do so by the caster. But if the caster is attacked, the guard will come immediately to his defence. The guard has Strike and WithIn stats equal to the caster's Sorcery stat. His Timing stat equal to the caster's Illusion stat. All his other Combat stats are 1. He will declare nothing but Strikes against the caster's assailant. He will declare as many as he can per round while still having a good chance of success.

The guard will disappear (and the Spell will end) when his Injury stat drops below 0. He can also be dispelled by Dispel Magic.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the type of weapon used by the guard. In the Modifier Stage, roll less than or equal to your Composite Skill stat subject to a -5 Difficulty Penalty. The guard comes into play immediately, ie he can attack in the Resolution Stage of the current round.

Duration: Out of Combat: a number of hours equal to the caster's Illusion stat.

During Combat: until the guard's Injury stat drops below 0.

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may not be maintained.

Resistance: Characters Struck by the guard make WithIn rolls, etc. just as though the guard were a normal combattant.

Failure Rules: The caster may try the Spell again.

Restrictions: Only one Illusionist's Guard Spell may operate at a time.

Rites & Charms: +1 Charm Bonus if the caster uses the sole of a soldier's boot while casting. The Charm is consumed in casting.

Roll of 12: The guard appears and immediately attacks the caster.

Book XI

New Spells

DOMINION RULES' SPELL SYSTEM is built to grow. And you, the players, are in the best position to make it grow. Players are strongly encouraged to create new Spells. Write them in your spare time and test them in play. Or make them up on the spot to get out of a tight jam. Then submit it to the Dominion Games™ web site (<http://www.dominiongames.com>) where you can share it with players everywhere!

12.0.15 What is a New Spell?

A New Spell is one which is not to be found in The Spell Books because the Witch has created it himself. Any player can create a New Spell, in collaboration with the GM. The player can create it in his spare time. Or he can create it right in the middle of a game session to get himself out of a tight spot.

The opposite of a New Spell—that is, one that is published in The Spell Books—is a Known Spell. You can make your New Spell a Known Spell by submitting it to the Dominion Games™ web site at <http://www.dominiongames.com>.

12.0.16 Talk To Your Games Master

As you work on your Spell, run your idea by your GM and get her comments on it. Your GM will (hopefully!) know Dominion Rules well, and she may be quite experienced. Her assistance can be very helpful.

Don't forget that your GM will have the final say on the Spell. If she thinks it's too powerful, or that it makes no sense, she may not let you use it. To avoid disappointment, involve your GM in all stages of New Spell development.

12.0.17 Thinking About Your Spell

To create a New Spell, start by thinking about it. What do you want it to do? How long do you want it to last? What Witchcraft Skill(s) does it rely on? Can those affected by it resist its effects? Is it a very powerful Spell, and therefore difficult to cast? Or is it relatively easy?

You don't have to know the answer to all these questions now. We'll return to each of them one by one as we write the Spell. But even if you don't know the answers, at least think about the questions.

EXAMPLE

MO'S NEW SPELL

Mo's character is Theobald, a locksmith who secretly dabbles in Witchcraft! Theobald is pretty handy at picking locks. But he'd like a Spell that creates a key to fit any locked door he comes across.

Mo hasn't figured out the details yet, but he has a good idea. That's enough for now.

12.0.18 Follow the Spell Description

The easiest way to write a Spell is to start with a blank Spell Description, like the one below, and just fill in the blanks.

[Spell Name]

[Skill or Skills used]

Description:

Casting Rules:

Duration:

Maintenance Rules:

Resistance:

Failure Rules:

Restrictions:

Rites & Charms:

Roll of 12:

For the rest of Book XI, we'll walk through the Spell-writing process step by step, following the Spell Description.

12.0.19 Step One: The Spell's Name

The first thing that appears in a Spell Description is the Spell's name. If you have good idea of what you want the Spell to do, you can probably think up a name for it now. Tip: it's nice to include your character's name in the Spell—especially when it's published at www.dominiongames.com!

MO'S FIRST STEP: NAMING THE SPELL

I'll call this Spell Theobald's Key.

Theobald's Key

[Skill or Skills used]

:

It's sometimes easier to leave the name until last. You can always skip Step One and come back to it.

12.0.20 Step Two: What Kind of Spell is it?

Beneath the Spell's name is written the Witchcraft Skill or Skills used by this Spell. (To refresh your memory on the relationship between Spells and Witchcraft Skills, see section 11.3, Spells and Spellcasting, on page 111)

Remember that some Spells draw on only one Witchcraft Skill, but others (called Composite Spells) use two. Ask yourself, Which Skill or Skills would my Spell be? To help you along, use the descriptions of the eight Witchcraft Skills given in chapter 11, Witchcraft.

MO'S SECOND STEP: WHAT KIND OF SPELL IS IT?

I'll just read up on the eight Skills and see which one fits.

Alchemy

Alchemy is the power to change one thing into another. Alchemy is chiefly associated with attempts to turn base metals into gold. But it includes any transmutation of a person or thing to another. The classic example is the witch that turns a man into a frog....

My Skill creates a key. It doesn't turn a door into something else. It's not an Alchemy Spell.

Arcana

Arcana are secrets, mysteries and hidden tidbits of knowledge understood by only a few. Magic is a good example of arcana, for its secrets are closely guarded and accessible only to a few highly skilled practitioners. But any hidden knowledge or information counts as Arcana for DR purposes. Witches use Arcana Spells to know secret, hidden, or obscure things....

I guess you could learn secret and obscure things by opening a locked door. Still, that's not quite right.

Conjuring

Conjuring is the creation of something out of nothing; the bringing into being of something that did not exist before, or was not previously there. Things produced by Conjuring Spells are called Conjurations. Conjurations behave like the real things they mimic. A Conjured bridge, for example, looks and feels like any other bridge and will support the same weight as a real bridge of the same type. But though they behave exactly like the real thing, Conjurations are not the real thing. They are temporary magical creations and in time they will usually disappear.

Now that's more like it. My Spell creates a key out of nothing. A key that fits the door I want to open. I'll keep Conjuring in mind. But I'll have a look at the others first.

Enchantment

To Enchant a person, creature, place or thing is to give it unnatural or magical qualities. Abilities, powers, or characteristics that do not normally belong to something or someone can be bestowed upon them by Enchantment. Witches use Enchantment Spells to temporarily enhance Skill stats, to make themselves fly, to create magical items, and much more. . . .

No. I'm not giving the key or the door any unnatural qualities or powers. It'll be a regular key—just one that happens to open the locked door in front of the caster. My Spell isn't an Enchantment.

Hex

To Hex someone or something is to make it unlucky, flawed, dangerous, or otherwise undesirable. The Hex Skill is in many ways the opposite of the Enchantment Skill: it invests people and things with penalties and disabilities, instead of new or expanded powers. . . .

No. It's clearly not a Hex.

Illusion

Illusions are magical distortions of perception. Illusion Spells can distort the appearance of things, people, and places, making them look, sound, and feel different than they really are. They can also deceive people's thoughts and emotions, tricking them into having thoughts and feelings they would not otherwise have. . . .

My Spell doesn't create the illusion of an unlocked door; it really unlocks it. And the key isn't illusionary, it's real. This can't be it.

Sorcery

Sorcery is the only type of magic capable of causing direct Injury. . . .

Definitely not. My Spell can't cause Injury.

Summoning

To summon is to call on the assistance of a magical or non-magical being. The summoned creature may act as the Witch's servant, advisor, guard, spy, and more. . . .

I'm not summoning a being, I'm 'summoning' a key. It's definitely not a Summoning Spell.

It must be a Conjuring Spell. Conjuring is the only Skill that fits. But is it a Composite Spell, a combination of Conjuring and some other Skill? I don't think so. No other Skill even came close.

Theobald's Key is a straightforward Conjuring Spell.

12.0.21 Step Three: Description

The next step is to write a description of the Spell. In your description, exclude any rules that will be covered in the other boxes (such as casting rules, failure rules, etc.) unless it's clearer to put them here and in the other box.

You can also include a bit of background on the Spell's author, especially if the Spell bears his name.

Remember that the more specific the Spell is, and the more limited its powers, the easier it will be to cast. So try to keep things simple.

MO'S THIRD STEP: THE DESCRIPTION

The point of the Spell is to be able to unlock locked doors by conjuring a key for them. But I suppose the Spell could also produce a key to lock unlocked doors, if that's what you wanted to do.

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

12.0.22 Step Four: Casting Rules

Next you must determine how the Spell is cast. Whenever a character wants to use a Skill in Dominion Rules, he must declare it in the Strategy Stage (but see section 6.2, When to Use the Order of Play Rules, on page 38). So the first thing the caster must do is declare the Spell. He might also need to declare the person or object that the Spell will affect, and relevant details about the Spell. Be sure to note these.

Mo has already determined which Witchcraft Skill his Spell uses: Conjuring. To cast the Spell, then, the caster must roll less than or equal to his Conjuring stat. But when does the caster do this: in the Modifier Stage or the Resolution Stage? This is the next thing to be determined. There are no fixed rules here. Do what seems best. Here are a few guidelines.

- If you want the Spell's effect to be available from the very beginning of the Resolution Stage, no matter what the caster's Timing Score is that round, the Spell should be cast in the Modifier Stage. Otherwise, it should be cast when the caster's turn to roll comes up in the Resolution Stage.
- Most Sorcery Spells are cast in the Resolution Stage. This is because they tend to work like magical weapons, and Offensive Combat Skills are resolved in the Resolution Stage. Enchantments and Hexes are usually cast in the Modifier Stage, because they

produce bonuses and penalties which apply at the start of the Resolution Stage of the same round. Arcana, Illusion, and Summoning Spells are usually cast in the Modifier Stage. Conjuring and Alchemy Skills vary.

- If it doesn't seem to make any difference, opt for the Modifier Stage.

Next you must determine whether any modifiers—penalties or bonuses—apply to the Skill roll. The most usual sort of penalty is a Difficulty Penalty (see section 12.0.8, Difficulty Penalties, on page 119). But other penalties might apply, depending on the nature of the Spell. When assigning any penalty, keep in mind the following factors:

- how powerful the Spell is; the more powerful it is, the more difficult it should be to cast;
- whether the caster can try again if she fails her Skill roll (see section 12.0.26, Step Eight: Failure Rules, on page 203);
- whether the caster can improve her Skill roll with a Charm Bonus (see section 12.0.28, Step Ten: Rites & Charms, on page 205) or any other bonus.

Your GM may decide to increase or decrease the penalties and bonuses applying to the Spell.

The final element of the Casting Rules is the Spell's range: Does the caster have to be within a certain distance of something else in order to cast the Spell? See section 12.0.9, Spell Range, on page 119.

MO'S FOURTH STEP: CASTING RULES

I think my Spell should require nothing more than a simple Conjuring Skill roll in the Modifier Stage. My GM agrees. She wants me to add, however, that the caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

12.0.23 Step Five: Duration

The next step is to give the Spell's duration: how long the magic it unleashes lasts. See section 12.0.10, Duration on page 119 and section 12.0.10, Permanence and Permanence Penalties on page 120. The usual Spell durations are:

- Instantaneous
- Permanent
- A number of rounds equal to the caster's X stat (where X is the applicable Witchcraft Skill stat)
- A number of rounds equal to the caster's X roll (where X is the applicable Witchcraft Skill stat)
- Until broken by WithMag
- Current round only

However, some Spells will require a more defined duration.

MO'S FIFTH STEP: SPELL DURATION

There's no point in my Spell lasting longer than it takes to unlock the door. But then, if for some reason the caster doesn't ever get around to unlocking the door—if, for example, he is slain before unlocking it—does the key last forever? Permanent conjurations are much harder to cast than temporary ones, so I don't want that. Let's see...

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

12.0.24 Step Six: Maintenance Rules

Closely related to the Spell's duration is the section called Maintenance Rules, which explains whether or not the Spell can be maintained past its normal duration. (For more, see section 12.0.11, Maintenance Rules, on page 120)

Spells that can be maintained are more powerful—and more convenient—than those that cannot. Unless you are concerned that your Spell might become too powerful—and therefore attract a big Difficulty Penalty—it is best to allow the Spell to be maintained.

With some Spells, particularly those with an Instantaneous duration, maintenance is not an issue. If that is the case, just put 'Not applicable.'

MO'S SIXTH STEP: MAINTENANCE RULES

What if the caster wants to keep the key so he can use it again later? Of course, he could always just cast the Spell again. But maybe he would fail his Spell roll. Let's just say the caster can maintain it if he likes.

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

12.0.25 Step Seven: Resistance

The next question is whether people or beasts affected by the Spell have a chance to resist its effects. There are two ways to resist a Spell. For most Spells, characters resist the magical effects by using the Withstand Magic Skill. But for Sorcery Spells and Composite Spells that involve Sorcery, characters resist using Withstand Injury.

If your Spell does not have effects on people or beasts, just write 'Not applicable'.

MO'S SEVENTH STEP: RESISTANCE RULES

My Spell doesn't affect people or creatures. So...

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1 m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

Resistance: Not applicable.

If your Spell can be resisted using Withstand Magic, you must consider what happens if a character or creatures makes a successful Withstand Magic roll. There are two options:

1. The caster may be incapable of casting the Spell on this target; or
2. The caster may be allowed to try the Spell on the same target again, subject to Resistance Rules.

For a reminder of what Resistance Rules are, see section [12.0.12](#), Resistance Rules.

12.0.26 Step Eight: Failure Rules

This is where you state the consequences of the caster failing his Spell roll. Usually, there are two possibilities. Either the caster is incapable of casting the Spell upon this target (be it an object, a person, a creature, or a place), or the caster may simply try the Spell again.

Note that if you allow the caster to try the Spell again, he is bound to make a successful roll eventually. So to allow the caster to try again is essentially to allow him to cast the Spell at will. He may not be able to cast it at precisely the time he wants to cast it. For instance, he may want to cast it this round, but end up casting it two rounds from now because he fails his Skill roll twice. Nonetheless, he will eventually cast it.

So when determining the failure rules, decide whether you want the caster to have only one shot at this, or whether you want casting the Spell to be just a matter of time.

MO'S EIGHTH STEP: FAILURE RULES

I'd like to be able to keep trying the Spell until I make my Conjuring roll. But my GM says that would mean the witches could open most any door! She'll probably slap a great big Difficulty Penalty on the Spell if I do it my way, so...

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of conjuring the key to this door.

Please note the difference between Failure Rules and Resistance. The Failure Rules box tell you what happens when you fail your Skill roll. The Resistance box tells you what happens when you make your Skill roll, but the target of the Spell resists it using Withstand Magic or Withstand Injury.

12.0.27 Step Nine: Restrictions

This is where you explain any restrictions upon the Spell's powers which you haven't already mentioned elsewhere. Spells with restrictions are less powerful than Spells without. This makes them easier to cast.

Possible restrictions include:

- Dispel Magic doesn't work against the Spell;
- the Spell can only be cast once per round;
- the Spell works only on people, not on beasts (or vice versa);
- only one of these Spells can affect the target at a time.

If there are no restrictions, just write 'None.'

MO'S NINTH STEP: RESTRICTIONS

My GM suggests I make the Spell easier to cast by restricting it to doors.

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of conjuring the key to this door.

Restrictions: The Spell will only conjure keys to doors. It will not work upon chests, locks, or other items opened by key.

12.0.28 Step Ten: Rites & Charms

Here is where you describe any Rites or Charms which can enhance the Spell's effect somehow. Rites and Charms are optional; you are free to include none at all (write 'None'). But they add a bit of colour to the Spell, so consider using them.

The most usual way for a Rite or Charm to enhance a Spell is by a Rite or Charm Bonus (see section 12.0.13, Rites & Charms). But Rites and Charms can also increase the Spell's duration, improve its range, or make just about any change you want to how the Spell works.

No matter what the Rite or Charm does, it will always have at least this effect: use of a Rite or Charm as indicated in the Spell Description negates the effect of a roll of 12 (see Step Eleven). When deciding whether to include a Rite or Charm in your Spell, consider

whether you want the caster to be able to avoid the negative effects of rolling 12. If not, don't include any Rites or Charms.

If you do include a Rite or Charm, you should make it challenging. Remember, the Rite or Charm grants the caster a bonus to cast your Spell, or some expanded Spell powers. These shouldn't come easily. So make the Rite difficult to perform. Or make the Charm hard to find. The more powerful the bonus or improvement bestowed, the more elusive the Rite or Charm should be.

It's usually best to pick a Rite or Charm that is somehow related to the Spell you are writing. Bread crumbs have nothing to do with invisibility. So if you're writing a Spell that turns something invisible, it would be strange to make bread crumbs your Charm.

If you include a Charm, you must indicate whether the Charm survives the casting process (and so can be used again) or is consumed in casting, ie disappears in the Spell's magic.

MO'S TENTH STEP: RITES& CHARMS

I'll include a Charm that has something to do with my home, Myllset. That'll add a bit of personality to my Spell.

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1 m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of conjuring the key to this door.

Restrictions: The Spell will only conjure keys to doors. It will not work upon chests, locks, or other items opened by key.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster uses a bit of stone quarried from the Myllset Slopes of the Shield mountain range, Gwenil. The charm is consumed in casting.

12.0.29 Step Eleven: Roll Of 12

Finally, you must consider the effect of the dreaded 12 on your Spell. All witches know that Spells can sometimes go wrong, with humorous or horrifying results. (For more, see section 12.0.14, Rolling 12.) What happens when the caster rolls a 12 on his Spell roll?

The more powerful the Spell is, the more catastrophic the result of a 12 should be. Spell rolls of 12 often do exactly the opposite of what the caster intended. (With Sorcery Spells, this often means that the caster causes himself Injury.) Or sometimes a roll of 12 means the Spell is cast, but in a ridiculous or useless way.

When writing your suggestion for Roll of 12, remember that it is just a suggestion. The GM always has final say about the result of a roll of 12. Usually the GM will use the result described in the Spell Description. But she is free to make up her own result.

MO'S ELEVENTH STEP: ROLL OF 12

Let's see...

Theobald's Key

Conjuring

Description: With this Spell, the caster conjures a key to any door he encounters. The key appears in the caster's hand. It can be used to unlock the door if it is locked, or to lock it if it is unlocked.

The Spell is named after the locksmith Theobald Quickprint.

Casting Rules: Declare the Spell and the door for which a key will be conjured. Roll less than or equal to your Conjuring stat.

The caster must be within 1m of the door to cast the Spell.

Duration: The Spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's Conjuring stat, or until the caster uses the key (whichever comes first).

Maintenance Rules: The Spell may be maintained normally. The caster must inform the GM that he intends to maintain the Spell (ie, keep the key) after using it. Otherwise, the key will disappear (see Duration, above).

Resistance: Not applicable.

Failure Rules: The caster may not try the Spell again. He is incapable of conjuring the key to this door.

Restrictions: The Spell will only conjure keys to doors. It will not work upon chests, locks, or other items opened by key.

Rites & Charms: +2 Charm Bonus if the caster uses a bit of stone quarried from the Myllset Slopes of the Shield mountainrange, Gwenil. The charm is consumed in casting.


Roll of 12: A key appears, but it doesn't fit the lock.

12.0.30 Presto! A New Spell

That's it! Your New Spell is complete. All that remains is for you to submit it to the Dominion Games™ web site (<http://www.dominiongames.com>) where you can share it with players everywhere!

Chapter 13

The Bestiary

ANTASY GAMING MEANS fantasy creatures: dragons, giants, mermaids, unicorns, and more. What makes these creatures so alluring is their rarity. Just tracking down a centaur, or discovering a troll's lair, is a worthy challenge. To survive the encounter that ensues is an even greater feat! Fantasy roleplaying suffers when orcs and zombies become as common as cats and dogs. Inspired by fairy tales and mediaeval legend, DR beast rules aim to keep mythical beasts as rare as they are powerful.

13.1 What is the Bestiary?

The Bestiary is the chapter of Dominion Rules concerning beasts. A beast is DR's term for monsters, faeries, wild and domesticated animals, and creatures of all sorts. The Bestiary explains the rules for encountering and combatting beasts in DR.

The Bestiary provides the framework rules for using beasts in DR play. Also included in the Bestiary are Beast Descriptions for beasts commonly encountered in fantasy RPG settings. The DR Bestiary does not include rules for beasts that are specific to particular dominions. For instance, there are certain varieties of giant encountered only in Dominion Games' Kingdom of Gwenil™ dominion. You can read about these in the Folklore section of the Gwenil Gazette at <http://www.dominiongames.com/gwenil/folklore.html>.

Players and GMs are strongly encouraged to develop their own beasts for Dominion Rules. You may then add these beasts to DR under the terms of the Dominion Rules Licence, or submit them for publication by Dominion Games™ at <http://www.dominiongames.com>.

13.2 Mythical & Common Beasts

Dominion Rules makes a simple distinction between two types of beasts: mythical and common.

Mythical beasts are the stuff of legend. They are depicted in song and story, but are rarely seen. People who do claim to have seen them are derided by some as mad, but they always find believers. Any creature that is not generally acknowledged as real qualifies as a mythical beast. Obvious examples include dragons, unicorns, faeries, sea monsters, and trolls.

Common beasts are those beasts whose existence is undisputed. But note that this does not mean these creatures have no magical or fabulous powers. A common beast is 'common' only in that it is commonly acknowledged to exist. Its abilities and behaviour may be quite uncommon.

13.3 Beasts In Dominion Rules

The creators of Dominion Rules believe that monsters and magical creatures should be used sparingly in game play. Other fantasy RPGs have so saturated their campaign worlds with murderous monsters and all-too-human demihumans that such creatures have lost their power to amaze. Dominion Rules aims to restore to fantasy roleplaying the wonder and excitement that other RPGs have lost.

Mythical beasts should be rare and powerful. For they are the stuff of mythology and legend. But even so-called common beasts may harbour secret powers. This is in keeping with popular mediaeval belief. It is also in keeping with Dominion Rules which is, after all, a fantasy game!

13.4 Roll-Playing Beasts

Elsewhere in these rules we make the distinction between roleplaying and roll-playing, where the latter means making Skill rolls and generally applying the rules of the game. Here are the rules for using beasts in the game (especially in Combat).

Beasts work in much the same way as player-characters and GMCs. They have Vigour, Agility, and Stamina Attributes. (The Intellect, Intuition, and Luck Attributes do not apply to beasts.) From these Attributes derive certain stats, including WithIn and WithMag, Combat stats, and other relevant stats. We don't call these Skill stats (it would be a bit odd to refer to a dragon's Firebreathing Skill). They are just called stats. But they work just like Skill stats: beasts must roll less than or equal to their stats to perform actions, and a roll of 12 always fails. Action Penalties apply to beasts just as they do to PCs and GMCs.

In Combat, beasts attack and defend like PCs and GMCs. The GM controls them just as he controls GMCs, declaring their Strategies and making their rolls. Most beasts do not use such humanoid Combat Skills as Strike, Parry, Feint, etc. Instead, they have Offensive

Combat stats such as Bite, Kick, Claw, Breathe Fire, Spit Poison, and more. Like all Offensive Combat actions, these are rolled in the Resolution Stage. Some beasts only have one type of attack. Others have several. Most beasts also have at least one Defensive Combat stat: Retreat Movement. Others can Dodge, Rear, Block with Shell (where the beast blocks a Strike with its Shell), and much more. Defensive Combat actions are rolled in the Modifier Stage, just as in normal Combat.

Some beasts possess magical powers. These beasts have a Magic Attribute, and may also possess spellcasting abilities. Usually, though, magical beasts do not cast Spells; they simply use magical powers inherent in them. And yet some of these powers work exactly like known Witchcraft Spells. Others are peculiar to the creature who possesses them.

In sum, beasts fit seamlessly into the general framework of Dominion Rules.

13.5 Beast Descriptions: A Few Examples

Here are a few examples of beasts and their Descriptions. Use these examples to write your own rules for beasts, then add these beasts to DR under the terms of the Dominion Rules Licence, or submit them for publication by Dominion Games™ at <http://www.dominiongames.com>.

Deer

VIG 3	AGI 5	STA 3	COMBAT 4	MAGIC 0
	Timing 8	WithIn 4	Kick 4	Movement 6
		WithMag 3	Horn (stags only) 4	

Description: Deer are small hoofed, cud-chewing animals, brown or spotted brown in colour with white undersides. The males of the species, called stags, bear horns. The females (does) do not. With their light builds and strong legs, deer are capable of running and leaping great distances.

Behaviour: When they hear hunting dogs, deer move upwind to hide their scent. Yet they are fascinated by the sound of pipes, and can be lured by them. When scared they go rigid, making them an easy mark for archers. The offspring of deer (fawns) vanish from sight at a nod from their mother.

Deer are the enemies of snakes. When tired or weak, they draw snakes from their holes and eat them until restored. The snake's venom does not harm them. After eating a snake, deer run to a spring and, drinking from it, shed their coats and all signs of old age.

Habitat: Deer love woods and are fearful of crossing water. They are common to forested lands everywhere.

Frequency: Encounters with deer are quite common, especially at dawn.

Intelligence: Deers have high animal intelligence, supplemented by powerful abilities of perception.

Combat: Deer avoid Combat at all times.

Magic: Deer horns can be burnt to ward off snakes. The right horn is better for medicinal purposes. The rennet of a fawn killed in its mother's womb is a marvellous remedy against poisons. Ointments from deer marrow reduce sick people's temperatures, for deer never grow feverish.

Dragon

VIG 8-14	AGI 6-9	STA 6-9	COMBAT 7-12		MAGIC
	Timing 8-11	WithIn 8-16	Front Claw 7-9	Bat Wings 7-9	See below
		WithMag 6-12	Kick (hind legs) 7-12	Movement 10-16	
			Bite 9-12		
			Breath 10-18		
			Tail 7-12		

Description: Dragons are great winged reptilian beasts of huge proportions. They vary in size, form and colour greatly. Generally they are between 8 and 20 m long from end to end, ie from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail. Their wingspans vary proportionately, from 6 to 16 m. Most can fly, though some have only small wings (relative to the rest of their bodies) and are thus flightless. Some dragons have particular features such as forked or barbed tails, webbed or unwebbed claws, horned or unhorned heads, and so on. Dragons are believed to be very long-lived. Some are even thought to have lived for centuries.

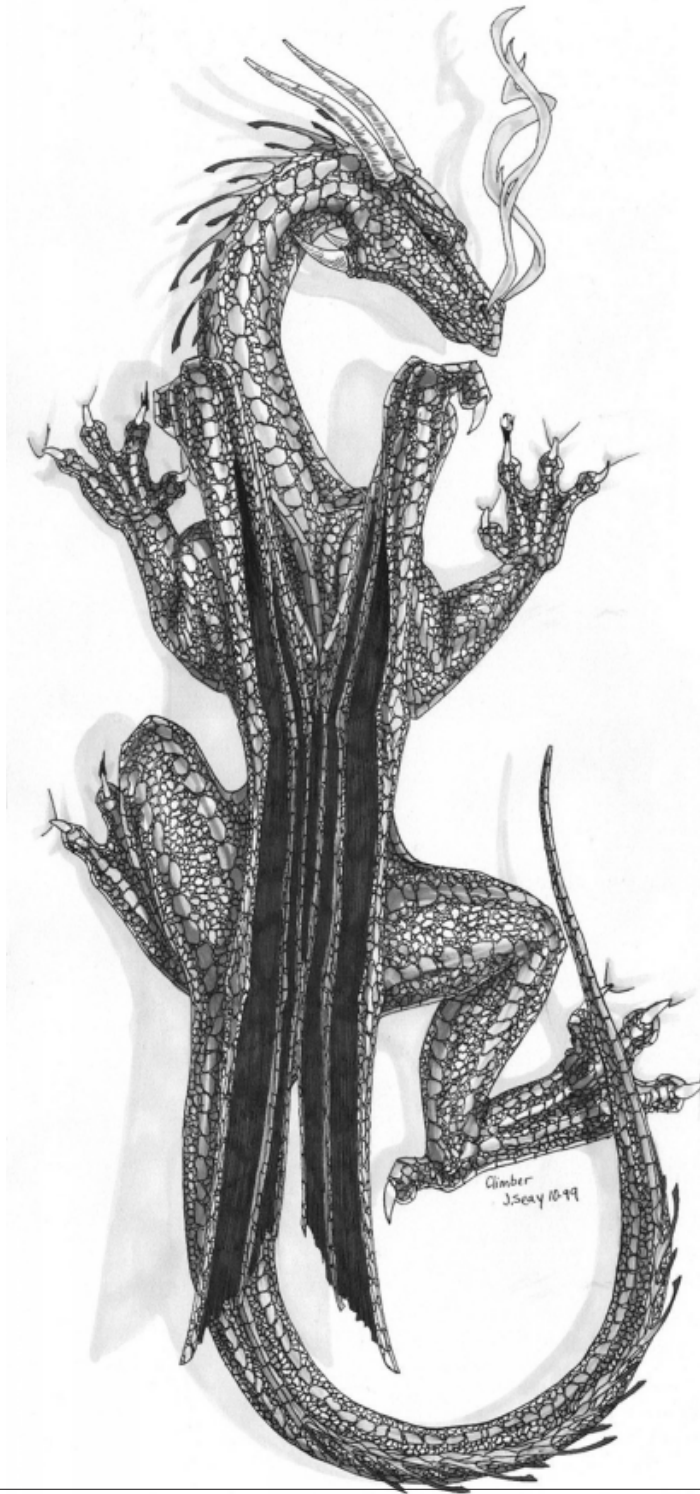
Behaviour: The behaviour and habits of dragons are almost as varied as those of people. Some are reclusive and private. Others are bold, and seem even to take an interest in the affairs of people. Some hoard wealth and treasures, while others have no use for such trinkets. Some are vicious to the point of cruelty, while others seem almost good-natured. But all dragons share a fierce independence and a desire not to be disturbed in their ways.

Habitat: Again, dragons vary from breed to breed, and even from individual to individual, in choice of habitat. All seek distant and sheltered places where they may enjoy their privacy. Some prefer mountain lairs. Others love caves and dungeons. Still others nests in the treetops of the most ancient forests, or make their homes in ruins and abandoned structures.

Frequency: Dragons are generally only rarely encountered—and thankfully so, for they are terribly dangerous! But the frequency of dragons may vary from dominion to dominion. Dragons appear to be extinct in certain dominions, and there is a sense that their numbers are generally dwindling.

Intelligence: Many dragons appear to be no more intelligent than horses or other large animals. But certain breeds of dragon are clearly as intelligent, or more intelligent, than

Figure 13.1: Climber



people. Many give the impression of great wisdom. All dragons are cunning, as well as fierce, adversaries.

Combat: Dragons are terrifying adversaries. Most are capable of attacking with their two front claws as well as delivering deadly kicks with their hind legs. They can also bite with their great jaws and long teeth. A dragon's greatest strength lies in its tail, in which it wraps enemies and suffocates them.

But the dragon's most fearsome weapon is its Breath. Once per round (and no more), dragons may breathe noxious substances from their mouths and nostrils, spreading it across a 4 m, 135 radius. The nature of the substance varies. Most commonly, dragons breathe fire. Some breathe deadly gases, or even frost. Characters exposed to dragon breath suffer a number of Injury Points equal to the dragon's Breath roll. Usually dragons are immune to the effects of their own Breath, though fire-breathing dragons may be capable of burning themselves with their own flames.

For Defensive Combat action, all dragons are capable of Retreat Movement. Those that are not flightless can also bat their wings, creating a strong wind which hinders attackers.

Magic: It is clear that some dragons possess magical abilities. What is not clear is whether these powers are innate, or whether magical dragons are in fact practitioners of Witchcraft. The answer is probably both: some have innate power, others learn Witchcraft, and others still may have both innate and learned magical powers. The most common forms of magic encountered in dragons correspond to Illusion, Sorcery, and Enchantment.

Dragons with innate magical powers never have Witchcraft Skill stats above 6. Dragons that study Witchcraft are capable of unlimited advancement.

Giant

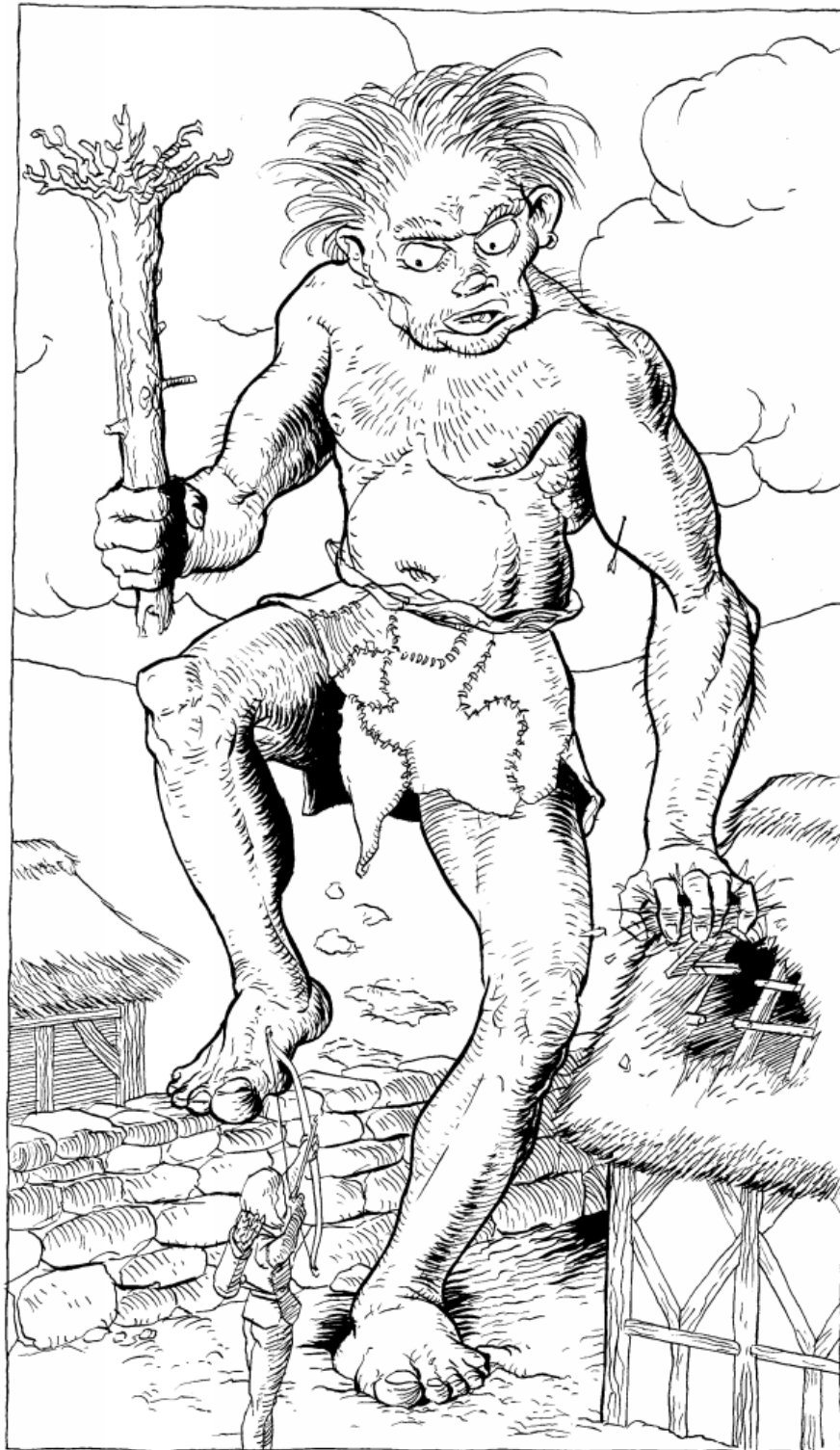
VIG 6-8	AGI 3	STA 6	COMBAT 4-5	MAGIC 0
	Timing 6-8	WithIn 8-10	Strike 8-10	Dodge 4-6
		WithMag 6	Throwing 7-9	Movement 8
			Brawling 8-10	

Description: Giants are enormous humanoid creatures of great strength and low intelligence. They are on average 3 to 4 m tall. They tend to be hairy, ugly, and appallingly smelly.

Behaviour: Almost without exception, giants are thoroughly rotten creatures. They are violent without cause as well as being cruel. Their only joy is in smashing and killing things. They are very dangerous, not only to people but also to other creatures.

Habitat: Giants make their homes in most wilderness climes. Forests and mountains are especially favoured by giants, who do not like plains or similar open spaces. Some giants make lairs in caves, but they are not generally subterranean creatures.

Figure 13.2: Giant



Frequency: Giants are by no means common. Nonetheless they are much less rare than trolls, dragons and many other mythical beasts. Unlike these others, the existence of giants is widely accepted by civilised peoples. Foresters, mountaineers, and rangers sometimes form bands of adventurers with the mission of destroying giants when their presence becomes unbearable to local townfolk or peasantry.

Giants are usually encountered alone. Encounters with female giants are especially rare.

Intelligence: Giants seem to be of very limited intelligence. Some are capable of rudimentary speech, but many are not. All create tools, though primitive ones.

Combat: Giants arm themselves with homemade weapons or weapons they take from the bodies of their victims. They generally prefer blunt weapons to edged ones, but some do use swords. They often attack by throwing things they find near them, such as stones and logs. They also have devastating Brawling attacks. Defensively, they can Dodge and Retreat. They are not very agile, but their long legs make them swift runners.

Magic: Giants do not possess magical abilities.

Horse

There are three kinds of horse. One is the Noble War Horse, capable of carrying heavy weights. The second is the everyday kind (the Pack Horse), used for drawing loads but unsuitable for riding. The third is a new kind, the Light War Horse. They are less capable of carrying heavy weights but more agile and intelligent. Each is described below.

A good general description of horses is to be found in *The Equine*, a celebrated text on horsemanship.

From *The Equine*

“The main colours to be found in horses are: bay, golden, rosy, chestnut, tawny-red, pale yellow, blue-grey, dappled, light grey, brilliant white, ordinary white, piebald, black. After these come variegated colours based on black or bay. In choosing a horse, one should look for three things: form, beauty, and temperament.

“As to form, the body should be sound and firm; its height consistent with strength; long and narrow in the flank; haunches, large and rounded; broad chest; the entire body knotted with the thickness of its muscles; dry hooves, supported by a curved frog.

“As to beauty: its head should be small and dry; the skin taut against its bones; the ears, short and neat; the eyes, large, the nostrils broad and the neck erect; the mane, and tail, thick; the hooves firmly curved.

“As to temperament: it should be bold of spirit, light-footed, with quivering limbs—a sign of courage; it should be easy to rouse when it is at rest, and once

it has been put to the gallop, it should not be difficult to control. You can judge the pace of a horse by the pricking of its ears, its mettle from the quivering of its limbs."

A plus sign (+) beside a stat indicates that the stat can be improved by training (see Horsemanship). Varied stats (ex. Kick 7-9) indicates that the stat varies from horse to horse. Any stat without a plus sign (+) can not be improved.

Noble War Horse

VIG 6	AGI 4	STA 5	COMBAT 5	MAGIC 0
	Timing 4+ (7)	WithIn 5+ (10)	Kick 7-9	Movement 12+ (15)
		WithMag 5	Bite 5	

Description: The Noble War Horse is a large and heavily built animal. It averages 1.70 m at the withers (between the shoulders) but can reach as high as 1.80 m. The Noble War Horse can carry a knight in full armour. They are steady and sure-footed, but slow and difficult to manoeuvre.

Behaviour: The best Noble War Horses are unswervingly loyal to their masters. Some will let no-one on their back except their master. Others have been known even to defend from their master's corpses from plunder. When Jurianon of Helanoch was killed, his horse starved itself to death. Some Noble War Horses are said to weep for their slain or dying masters. It is said that the Noble War Horse alone weeps for men and feels the emotion of grief on their account.

Habitat: The Noble War Horse is found only in captivity, for it was produced by careful breeding. It can be found amongst all civilised peoples, but some peoples specialise particularly in their breeding, for use in warfare, tournaments and pageants.

Frequency: Uncommon, but by no means rare. A promising young Noble War Horse is a valuable creature and will fetch a high price.

Intelligence: The Noble War Horse is not as intelligent as the Light War Horse. It is reliant upon its master for command and instruction.

Combat: Noble War Horses are calm and steady in Combat. Riders of Noble War Horses enjoy a +2 bonus to their Horsemanship stats when determining whether their mount Bolts (see Horsemanship, page 27). Their size and weight make them slower than other horses, however, as indicated in their Movement and Timing stats.

Magic: Noble War Horses have no magic abilities.

Pack Horse

VIG 6	AGI 4	STA 5	COMBAT 5	MAGIC 0
	Timing 5	WithIn 5-6	Kick 6-8	Movement 15
		WithMag 5	Bite 5	

Description: A Pack Horse is simply an everyday, domesticated horse used for drawing loads, tilling fields, etc.

Behaviour: Pack Horses are easily unnerved by small animals or loud sounds. Skittishness in a Pack Horse can indicate a sudden turn in the weather, or even an eclipse. They refuse to allow riders on their backs.

Habitat: Pack Horses are to be found most everywhere, though other beasts of burden, such as donkeys and camels, are preferred in some lands.

Frequency: Pack Horses are commonly encountered, particularly in cities but also amongst wealthier farmers.

Intelligence: Low. Other domesticated animals (particularly dogs and pigs) are noticeably more intelligent.

Combat: Pack Horses are hopeless in Combat, for they Bolt at the slightest threat or danger. They cannot be ridden.

Magic: Pack Horses have no magical abilities.

Light War Horse

VIG 6	AGI 4	STA 5	COMBAT 5	MAGIC 0
	Timing 6+ (10)	WithIn 5+ (8)	Kick 6-8	Movement 15+ (21)
		WithMag 5	Bite 5	Ballade 5+ (10)
			Levade 5+ (8)	
			Capriole 5+ (8)	

Description: The Light War Horse is much smaller than the Noble War Horse, averaging 1.50 to 1.60 m at the shoulder. It is short-backed with a naturally arching neck and fine legs. It is too small to carry a man in full armour. But it is extremely brave, swift, agile and intelligent. It is found in all colours but grey and bay are the most prevalent.

Behaviour: What is most notable about the behaviour of a Light War Horse is its willingness to learn and be trained. Like the Noble War Horse, the Light War Horse is extremely loyal to its master. The relationship between a Light War Horse and its master is a powerful bond, so much so that a Light War Horse separated from its master will refuse to perform—or perhaps even forget—the skills its master has taught it.

Habitat: The Light War Horse is a creation of careful breeding and training by a small number of master equestrians working out of schools of horsemanship. The schools that breed these creatures tend to be private and secretive.

Frequency: Light War Horses are very rare. They can occasionally be found for sale in larger cities and in regions close to schools of horsemanship in which they are bred. Even there, however, they are rare and costly. Light War Horses are becoming more popular, and more common, however.

Intelligence: These horses exhibit an intelligence superior to that of all other horses. In particular, they can be trained to perform remarkable feats of bravery and agility (see Combat, below).

Combat: Light War Horses have weaker WithIn and Kick stats than Noble War Horses. But they make up for this with much higher Timing and Movement stats, as well as possessing Offensive and Defensive Combat Skills not available to Noble War Horses.

Levade A Levade is an Offensive Combat Skill by which a horse rears high into the air upon its hind legs. This action gives force to the rider's Strike: the rider enjoys a +2 Levade bonus to his Strike stat for that round. A Levade ends at the end of the round. Only one Levade per round is possible.

Capriole A Capriole is an Offensive Combat Skill which consists of an upward leap and kick with the horse's rear legs. A horse that Caprioles lands in the same spot: he does not move forward. A successful Capriole combined with a successful Kick produces a Kick Bonus equal to the horse's Capriole roll.

Ballade This is a Defensive Combat Skill which consists of a standing forward jump by the horse. A successful Ballade grants a +2 Ballade bonus to the rider's Dodge stat that round, and a +2 bonus to any Retreat Movement taken by the horse that round.

Magic: Some speculate that the most advanced horse-and-rider combinations are the product of Witchcraft. An established horse and rider partnership move and fight so harmoniously that one wonders whether they are not reading each other's thoughts. Some schools of horsemanship may also be, it is sometimes suggested, schools of Witchcraft.

Troll

VIG 5	AGI 3	STA 4	COMBAT 4	MAGIC ?
	Timing 5-7	WithIn 6-8	Claw Strike 6-9	Sorcery ?
		WithMag 4	Bite 6	Movement 6-8

Description: Trolls are foul-looking, foul-smelling, disease-ridden humanoids. They resemble decomposing, gangrenous men. Their bodies are lanky and disgustingly thin. Their skin is a pale green-blue, and marked everywhere with scars, warts, and open sores. Their eyes, teeth, and nails are a sickening yellow. They tend to be about 2m tall, though their backs are often stooped. They are sometimes encountered naked, but usually wear clothing taken from the bodies of their victims.

Behaviour: Trolls are perverted, evil creatures. Their habits, apart from hunting people and livestock and consuming them alive, are unknown. Indeed it is thought that they do nothing else than murder and sleep. They generally kidnap their victims rather than killing them, for they prefer the taste of live flesh.

Habitat: Trolls live in humid terrains such as swamps, marshes, caves and remote sea-shores. It is believed that they seek out such places for the moisture, which may soothe their sores or preserve the meat of their victims.

Trolls appear to live alone, for they are never seen in groups. It is not known how (or if) they reproduce. Some speculate that they do not need to, for they are creations of black magic.

Frequency: Thankfully, these monstrosities are only very rarely encountered. Indeed, most civilised peoples do not believe in trolls, or believe them to be extinct. Sadly, these unbelievers are wrong.

Intelligence: The intelligence of trolls is not to be underestimated. They are crafty and devious creatures who apply their intellects only to cruel ends. However, they are not known to speak.

Combat: Trolls fight without weapons. Instead, they attack with putrid claws and vicious bites. The most dangerous thing about troll attacks is the Diseases they spread. Each time a troll successfully Claw Strikes or Bites a victim, the victim is exposed to a Troll Disease. He must then roll WithIn to avoid contracting the Disease (see section 8.9, Illness and Disease, on page 74). Victims who fail WithIn rolls against Troll Disease suffer 2-5 Injury Points immediately. The Disease will then Spread at a rate of 2-5 Injury Points for every day the victim fails his WithIn roll. (Once a victim has contracted a Troll Disease, he cannot contract one from that same troll again until he is healed.)

Defensively, trolls are surprisingly agile. They are capable of making swift Retreats when needed, and they will usually attempt to Dodge attacks.

Magic: It is unclear whether trolls possess innate magical powers, or are capable of practicing Witchcraft. Some trolls may have magical abilities akin to Sorcery.

Whale

VIG 12	AGI 8	STA 10	COMBAT 10	MAGIC 0
	Timing 8	WithIn 12	Bite 18	Movement 12
		WithMag 10	Tail 12	
			Ram 10	

Description: Whales are enormous fishlike sea creatures with small front flippers and a flat, horizontal tail. They are grey, dark blue, and black in colour. They have huge mouths with which they swallow people, and even small craft, whole. They are believed to reach as long as 40 m. Whales are among the largest creatures in existence.

Behaviour: Many whales are reclusive and generally peaceful. Some, however, seem bloodthirsty; they attack sailing ships without provocation and swallow mariners alive. Whales can be found travelling in groups called pods, or alone.

Habitat: Whales are found along isolated coasts and in the high seas. They appear to migrate in pursuit of fish.

Frequency: Whale sightings tend to be rare, not because the beasts themselves are hard to find, but because mariners do not dare get too close. However, some brave (or foolish!) seamen hunt whales for their bones, teeth, and the great quantities of oil contained in them. This oil is believed to have magical and medicinal properties.

Intelligence: Whales are regarded as intelligent by animal standards.

Combat: These huge creatures attack with their devastating bite and their powerful tail. They are also known to ram the sides of ships with their bodies, and swallow the men that fall from them. Men are often swallowed whole, and some are said to have survived in the whale's belly until disgorged.

Magic: Whales are not known to cast Spells or possess magical abilities.

Figure 13.3: Troll



Chapter 14

Player-Character Races



DOMINION RULES is built to accomodate all sorts of fantasy environments and styles of play. This chapter describes the four most common player-character races for fantasy roleplaying: humans, elves, dwarves and halflings. Other player-character races will be added to this chapter as DR develops.

14.1 Player-Character Races in Dominion Rules

Dominion Rules is designed to support all sorts of fantasy roleplaying. With DR, you can run a human-centred adventure in a low-magical setting, or a classical fantasy campaign where humans co-exist with elves, dwarves, and halflings, or even a pure fantasy game in which humans don't exist at all. The availability of the player-character races described in this chapter will depend on the type of dominion you play in.

The races described below are those most commonly associated with fantasy roleplaying: human, elves, dwarves, and halflings. As Dominion Rules develops, new player-character races will be added. Some of these races may be developed with specific dominions in mind, and therefore not fit well in other settings. It is for the GM to decide which races exist in your dominion and are available for you to play.

The descriptions given below are overviews only. Great variation between cultures, customs, languages, and even physical appearance may be found within the same race. Similarly, a limitless range of sub-categories might be added to each race. These descriptions serve only as a general indication of the features and habits common to all members of a given race.

14.2 Races and Character Creation

The character creation rules of Chapter 2 includes specific tables for each race. For more on the effect of race on character creation, see Chapter 2, Creating a Character.

14.3 Player-Character Races

14.3.1 Humankind

Average Attribute and Skill Stats

VIG 1 AGI 1 STA 1 INTU 1 INTE 1 LUCK 1
 WithIn 3 Various Skills 2-5

Average Composite Stats

COMBAT 1 PRIESTCRAFT 0 WITCHCRAFT 0
 Strike 2 Dodge 3
 Movement 3

Description Humankind is a race found in most fantasy roleplaying settings. We all know what humans are like, so there is no sense in describing them. A few points are worth recalling, however. A typical human lifespan is 65 (earth) years or so, though some live past 100. Adult humans are typically between 1.4 and 1.8 m tall, though extremes at either end of the spectrum are not unheard of. Humans vary in skin colour and facial features, and have a regrettable tendency to take these differences much too seriously.

The average human has learned a few useful Intellect Skills with which he or she earns a living, entertains people, or simply satisfies his or her own thirst for knowledge. The average human is also reasonably capable of defending him- or herself in a fight.

Habitat One of humankind's most remarkable features is its adaptability. Humans seem capable of living in almost every habitat and climate. They are to be found in polar lands and deserts, in jungles and plains, in forests and swamps. Many humans are agricultural peoples who cultivate arable lands. But some are nomadic. And others, though sedentary, provide for themselves by means other than farming, such as hunting and fishing.

Frequency Given humankind's great resourcefulness, humans are very frequently encountered in most dominions. They are often the most common race by far. In some dominions, humans so outnumber other races that they have ceased to believe that other races exist.

Magic Humans have no innate magical abilities. However, Priestcraft is practiced by almost all human societies, and powerful priests may wield extraordinary powers. Witchcraft is also practiced in some human societies, though it is more rare. Commonly, humans shun Witchcraft and persecute its practitioners.

14.3.2 Elvenkind

Average Attribute and Skill Stats

VIG 1 AGI 1 STA 1 INTU 1 INTE 1 LUCK 1
 Timing 3 WithMag 3 Various Skills 2-5

Average Composite Stats

COMBAT 1 PRIESTCRAFT 0 WITCHCRAFT 0
Strike 2 Dodge 3
Movement 3

Description Elves are a mystical humanoid race famed for their gracefulness and beauty. They are typically extremely long-lived (500 year old elves are not uncommon) yet ageless in appearance. They have sharp but elegant features, most notably their pointed ears. They have clear, bright complexions and beardless faces. They are very tall (1.8 to 2.1 m) and even more slender. They are always fair, and often beautiful. When in their forest habitat, elves move almost without sound.

The typical elf possesses a few notable Intellect Skills, good Timing and Movement, and a natural inclination for Withstanding Magic.

Habitat Elvenkind is almost exclusively a woodland race. They are most at home in deep forests far removed from human or other society. Some elven nations build whole cities in forest treetops, imperceptible to travellers passing beneath them. Elves are also fond of rivers, and may dwell along riverbanks in remote areas. Though they sometimes build great sylvan cities, elves are by inclination nomadic. Even those who dwell in ancestral forests may often have no permanent shelter, but make their homes from night to night in groves or treetops.

Frequency The frequency of any race depends mainly on the type of dominion in which you play. In typical fantasy settings, elves are only rarely encountered amongst humankind or other races. Yet they enjoy the company of halflings and take an interest in the affairs of humans. (They are much less interested in—or patient with!—dwarves.) Usually elves are encountered in their woodland habitats.

Magic Elves are not innately magical though they do enjoy a certain innate tolerance of magic. It is rare for elves to practice either Priestcraft or Witchcraft, though they are more likely to dabble in the latter than the former. Elves are fascinated by magical objects. Thus, elven wizards tend to specialise in Enchantment.

Figure 14.1: Celtic Elf



14.3.3 Dwarvenkind

Average Attribute and Skill Stats

VIG 1 AGI 1 STA 1 INTU 1 INTE 1 LUCK 1
Muscle 3 WithIn 3 Direction Sense 3 Various Skills 2-5

Average Composite Stats

COMBAT 1 PRIESTCRAFT 0 WITCHCRAFT 0
Strike 3 Dodge 1
 Movement 1

Description Dwarves are everything elves are not. They are short and stocky (1.1 to 1.35 m), whereas elves are tall and lean. They are earthy creatures with bulbous noses and great beards (male and female alike), whereas elves possess an ethereal beauty. It is not surprising, perhaps, that dwarves and elves have so little sympathy for each other. Indeed, dwarves have little patience for any peoples but themselves, except those who share their passion for precious stones and metals, and the arts of the stonecutter, the jeweller, and the blacksmith.

The average dwarf is strong but slow, with good Muscle, WithIn, and Strike stats, but low Dodge and Timing. Dwarves have a knack for sensing direction, and usually possess a few good Intellect Skills. A normal dwarven lifespan is 200-250 years.

Habitat Dwarves are subterranean peoples. They are to be found in the mountainous regions of all non-tropical lands. They sometimes carve settlements out of steep rockfaces. More usually, however, dwarves live deep within their mountains, in labyrinthine cities of their own creation. They are superb miners. Indeed, it may be dwarves' fondness for quarrying stone and mining gems and metals that inspires them to make their homes in such forbidding places.

Frequency Dwarves' love of gold, gems, and metalcraft occasionally takes them travelling to the cities of humans and other races. Similarly, their wars with other mountain-dwelling creatures, such as giants, goblins, and trolls, take them out of their mountain lairs and into the light. Otherwise, however, dwarves keep to their mountains and their own peoples.

Magic Witchcraft is not practiced amongst dwarves, for such esoteric arts do not intrigue them. Priestcraft is found amongst dwarves, though usually not to any great degree. Dwarves have no innate magical abilities.

14.3.4 Halflingkind

Average Attribute and Skill Stats

VIG 1 AGI 1 STA 1 INTU 1 INTE 1 LUCK 1
 Stealth 3 WithIn 2 Alertness 3 Various Skills 2-5

Average Composite Stats

COMBAT 1 PRIESTCRAFT 0 WITCHCRAFT 0
Strike 2 Dodge 2
Movement 2

Description Halflings are lively, sociable people resembling something between a human and a dwarf. They are slightly taller than dwarves (1.2 to 1.4 m) and quite a bit thinner, though they often have pot bellies and fat cheeks. They are usually unbearded, but have thick hair on the top of their feet. Their feet are also remarkably tough; halflings go barefoot over almost any terrain, and move almost without sound through the clearings and grasslands they make their home.

The typical halfling is a warm, chatty person of clear intelligence and keen senses. Halflings are peaceful creatures with no great fighting prowess. They have a voracious appetite for song, books (particularly family histories) and gossip. A normal halfling lifespan is 120 years.

Habitat Halflings were originally hole-dwellers, and many still live in elaborate shallow holes dug into hillsides and pastures. But increasingly halflings live in villages consisting of cottage-like homes with small gardens. They build these villages in grasslands and rolling countryside. Some live near rivers and are capable of swimming and boating. More usually, though, halflings shun water.

Frequency Of all the non-human races described here, halflings are the least shy about meeting other peoples. They are suspicious of humans, but get along with them. They have a certain fellow-feeling for dwarves, though they find them terribly dour. Many halflings are fascinated by elves, though elves themselves take little interest in them. What makes halflings uncommon, in spite of their good relations with other peoples, is that they are quite content to keep to themselves and let the world pass them by.


Magic Remarkably, halflings appear to have almost no religious beliefs. Priestcraft is unheard of among halflings. When they encounter priestly magic, they ascribe it to Sorcery and other disreputable forms of Witchcraft. Generally halflings are suspicious of Witchcraft, but some practice it. This is not surprising considering halflings' fondness of books and learning. Certain forms of Witchcraft, namely Alchemy, Arcana and Hex, appeal to halfling wizards more than others. Sorcery is feared by halflings and hardly ever practiced by them. Halflings have no innate magical abilities.

Figure 14.2: Two Sisters



Chapter 15

Notes For Games Masters

LEXIBILITY IS A primary goal of the Dominion Rules system. This makes the Games Master's task both particularly challenging and especially rewarding. Whether you use a pre-made dominion or create your own, GMing DR is about bringing fantasy worlds alive. A good GM is not just someone who knows the rules inside out. He must also be the creative force behind the game.

15.1 The Games Master's Role

The Games Master (or GM) is the master of the players' universe. As GM, you control and determine everything in the game, except players' actions and the result of dice rolls. You play every character not controlled by the players themselves, be they allies, enemies, people in the streets or monsters in their lairs. You describe the characters' surroundings: the layout of their prison cell, the weather on the seas they sail, the slope of the mountainface they are trying to scale.

You also implement and enforce the rules. Dominion Rules strives to be a clear, comprehensive rules system. But every system will eventually prove faulty in some way. When that happens, it is up to you, the GM, to fill in the gaps.

So the GM has two broad responsibilities: to create a world and make it live; and to make Dominion Rules work. In other words, the GM must roleplay and rule-play.

15.2 Roleplaying

Experienced players and GMs will know all about the GM's roleplaying role. A good GM can take the parts of dozens of different characters in a single session: barmen at a pub, up-tight city guardsmen, damsels in distress, enraged giants, magically-charmed shopkeepers, riotous peasants, studious monks, annoying jesters, sailors in a sinking ship...and on and on and on.

But long before the session begins, the GM must prepare his adventure. This can involve a lot of work (though the best GMs are great improvisers). To avoid slowing down the pace of play, GMs should be sure, before the session begins, to have at least recorded the stats of creatures and characters the players will encounter. The best adventures, however, are planned much more deeply. In these, the GM has thoroughly sketched the adventure's plot, its main characters, its locales, and its important scenes.

Another roleplaying responsibility of the GM is to control the dominion. 'Dominion' is our word for what other RPGs call the campaign setting (see 1.9, DR Terminology, on page 3). You can either create your own dominion, or use dominions available from DR developers such as Dominion Games™ (<http://www.dominiongames.com>). GMs who create their own dominions are encouraged to publish them on the web under the terms of the Dominion Rules Licence.

15.3 Rule-Playing

To be Games Master, you must have a good working knowledge of Dominion Rules. Be sure to read the rules closely and get the hang of them before trying to play a session. Try the combat system out with a friend. Make a character just for practice.

Encourage your players to read the rules, too. But remember that ultimately, you are the GM: if ever there is a dispute about the rules, you'll be the final judge. Hear your players out, of course. And have a copy of the rules ready to consult. But do not hesitate to disagree with your players, so long as you are sure that your interpretation of the rules is correct. (You can always contact us for rule clarifications.)

In interpreting the rules, keep the purpose of Dominion Rules in mind: to have fun. DR is a game, after all. If ever the rules are unclear, favour (if possible) an interpretation which makes the game more fun. Also remember that the game is meant to be a challenge. At first your players may enjoy beating the daylight out of every enemy and monster they meet. But they'll quickly get bored if they think they can never lose. So don't be shy: kick the stuffing out of your players every once in a while!

Figure 15.1: Briar



15.4 Assigning Advancement Points

Players improve their characters' Skill stats with Advancement Points (see section 5.2, Advancement Points (APs) on page 36). As the GM, you are responsible for assigning APs to each player. This is an important responsibility. Here are some guidelines on how to do it.

First as a rough estimate, each session of play (meaning 3-5 hours of solid play) should result in each character gaining 8-15 APs.

Second recall that DR is designed so that Skill stats become harder to improve as they increase. For instance, it costs 4 APs to go from a Skill stat of 4 to a Skill stat of 5, but 9 APs to go from 9 to 10. GMs shouldn't give out more APs to characters with very high (8 or higher) stats just because advancing such high stats is costly; it's supposed to be hard to advance that high. Characters seeking to advance very high stats will just have to play more, play better, or be patient.

Third use APs to reward especially good play. What is good play?

GOOD PLAY IS . . .

Inspired roleplaying Players who really get into their characters should be rewarded for it. A good player thinks like his character, speaks and acts like his character, and stays in character at all times.

Heroic acts Players who put their character's life and limb on the line for the benefit of the party should be rewarded for their heroism. (Note, however, that being foolhardy is not a way to gain APs.)

Clever ideas Players who come up with solutions to difficult problems, who dream up wild and inventive schemes, and who generally think on their feet should be highly rewarded.

Background work Some players are not great at roleplaying or thinking on the spot, but instead show their enthusiasm for their characters and the game by doing lots of background work in preparation for adventures. Such preparation can include: fleshing out their character's biography, personality, weaponry, etc.; familiarising themselves with the rules and their dominion; creating new Skills or Spells; or even painting figurines and sketching pictures of the party's characters. Background work such as this enriches the game and should be rewarded with APs.

Fourth use APs to punish bad play. If a player didn't pull his weight, or endangered the party, or just didn't get into the game, penalise him (if only lightly). Be sure to tell him why you have penalised him, so that he can learn from his mistake.

Fifth use APs to balance out weaknesses in your players' party. If, for whatever reason, one player's character seems to be falling far behind the others, grant that player a few extra APs to bring his character up to speed.

GMs are free to grant APs at any time during a gaming session. You may find, however, that it's easier to grant APs at the end of the session, once you know how everything has worked out. If, however, you decide to grant some APs during the session, be sure to keep track of how many you give out, so that you don't give out too many at session's end.

15.5 Player Use of Advancement Points

When a player gets more APs, how may he spend them? Usually, the GM should not interfere with the player's AP use; it's up to the player to shape her character as she wishes. But as the GM, you can disallow your players from spending APs on Skills that their characters simply could not learn.

EXAMPLE

Brad wants to spend some APs improving his character's Croellic Language stat (currently 1). But Brad's character has never been to Croell, has no contact with anyone from Croell, has no books about the Croellic language, and has never even heard it spoken. The GM rules that Brad may not spend his APs this way, for there is no way his character could ever have learned the language.

This power to prevent characters from spending APs on Skills they could not have learnt is particularly relevant to Priestcraft and Witchcraft Skills. Characters who are not Priests or Witches may be tempted to work out their Priestcraft or Witchcraft Composite and advance a Priestcraft or Witchcraft stat. As GM, it is fully within your power not to forbid this, for the same reason you may forbid Brad from improving his character's Croellic language stat.

For more on this, see section 2.2.3, Priests on page 8, and section 2.2.8, Witches, on page 10.

15.6 Game-Mastering Witches

In Dominion Rules, Witches have the potential to be very powerful—even too powerful. It is the GM's job to make sure Witch PCs do not become so powerful as to imbalance the game. DR contains two significant checks on the power of Witches. Be sure to use them.

The first check on the power of Witches is simply that everyone hates them. Witches are forced to hide their true vocations for fear of persecution. This need to conceal themselves

forces Witches to use their powers discretely and with caution. As GM, it is up to you to make sure that this check on Witches' power is applied. Don't hesitate to use it (for instance, by sending out soldiers to arrest the Witch if she uses her powers too publicly.)

The second check on Witch power in DR is that spellcasting can go horribly wrong. This occurs when a Witch rolls 12 while casting. The consequences of a roll of 12 vary greatly. Generally, the more powerful the Spell, the more dire the consequences of a roll of 12. (This is very clearly illustrated by Sorcery Spells.) Each Spell Description gives suggested consequences of a roll of 12. But as GM, you are free to make up your own consequence instead. If you do so, remember what the Roll of 12 rule is meant to do: it is meant to act as a check on Witches' power. Having said that, keep in mind that the consequence of rolling 12 should fit the Spell the Witch has tried to cast, or the situation the Witch is in. For instance, rolling 12 while casting Baffle Language should not result in 5 Injury Points to the caster. Why? Because it doesn't fit. There's no clear connection between the Spell and its result.

15.7 Game-Mastering Beasts

The rules on Beasts are still very much in development. Later releases of Dominion Rules will expand the existing DR Bestiary.

Beasts may vary widely in powers and abilities. This means that when Game-Mastering Beasts, GMs must use their judgment. Say a knight is in Combat with a dragon. The knight declares a Parry. The dragon declares Fire Breath. Is it possible to Parry Fire Breath? There is no clear rule on this, so you must use your judgment. In this case, we suggest that you cannot Parry a Fire Breath attack, so the knight's Parry should not be applied as a Defence Penalty against the dragon. (The knight could, however, Block the attack: he could protect himself from the Fire Breath by hiding behind his shield.)

Note also that Beasts in DR do not have any sort of armour stat. The strength of a Beast's armour (natural or worn) is included in its WithIn stat.

15.8 Some Tips For GMs

Below is a list of unrelated tips for GMs.

- Players very often become attached to their characters. As GM, you should encourage this. Write adventures that involve the characters' lives: their backgrounds, their motives, their friends or enemies. The best adventures are ones which become personal quests for your players. Hesitate before killing a player's character. If you do kill a player's character, make it a glorious or momentous death. Allow the player's next character to attempt to avenge his old character's death (if the player wants).
- A very handy roleplaying aid is a small notepad with which to write notes to players. Notes can contain secrets which only one player knows, giving that player knowl-

edge that his companions don't have (unless or until he shares it). Or the notes can contain things that only one or some of the players are aware of. The player to whom the note is given can then share the knowledge, in character, with her companions.

EXAMPLE

The GM passes a note to Christine, who is playing Dame Beatrice. The note reads, 'You see three figures heading down the corridor.'

Dame Beatrice informs her party: 'Quick! There's someone coming!'

'Who?' asks Sir Gavin, as the party takes cover and readies its weapons.

'I don't know', whispers Dame Beatrice, 'but I saw three of them.'

- Another useful trick for GMs is to make secret rolls. For most Skill rolls, Combat rolls, etc. there is no need to hide the result of the roll. But for some Skills (for example, Prophecy on page 104), you are required to hide the result. For others still, you are not required to hide the result, but it might be a good idea.

GM's must be careful not to make too many secret rolls, of course. But keep the option in mind, especially for Intellect and Intuition Skills.

- It's generally best not to allow GMCs (Games Master Characters; see section 1.9, DR Terminology, on page 3) not to use Lucky Breaks. This saves you from having to keep track of how many APs your characters have. And it also gives players a bit of an advantage—which is precisely what the Lucky Break rule is meant to do. (For more, see section 3.9.1, Lucky Breaks, on page 20).
- It can become difficult to keep track of the stats of GMCs. This is especially true in Combat with many GMCs (say three or more). When determining the stats of GMCs, make life easier on yourself by using standardised stats. For instance, if the players are battling six Tresden soldiers, give them all (save perhaps the leader) the same WithIn, Strike, Timing, Dodge, etc.
- If you're really using a lot of GMCs in Combat, or in any other dice-intensive situation, you may want to give all your GMCs (or at least most of them) the same Timing roll each round. But be careful: this means that all the GMCs act at the same time, which can make for less exciting play. A better solution might be to break large groups of GMCs into smaller squads for Timing purposes. For instance, 15 GMC soldiers could make Timing rolls in three squads of five.

Appendix A

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