

Freebooters on the Frontier

**HARDSCRABBLE ADVENTURE
IN A FANTASTICAL WORLD**



VOLUME I

Basic Rules



THIS IS A PLAYTEST DOCUMENT

As such it currently includes the essential rules, but not a lot of explanation about how they all work together. You will need at least a passing familiarity with “Powered by the Apocalypse” RPG—*Dungeon World* is the closest relative to *Freebooters*—to grasp how all of this stuff works in play.

HERITAGE

These works had significant influence on the development of this game.

The Dying Earth stories

Jack Vance

Various publishers, 1950-1984

Dungeon & Dragons

Dave Arneson & Gary Gygax

Tactical Studies Rules, 1974

Ready Ref Sheets

Wilderlands of High Fantasy

City-State of the Invincible Overlord

Bob Bledsaw & Bill Owen

Judges Guild, 1977

Apocalypse World

D. Vincent Baker & Meguey Baker

Lumpley Games, 2010

Dungeon World

Sage LaTorra & Adam Koebel

Sage Kobold Productions, 2012

Dungeon starters

Marshall Miller

Fine Mess Games, 2012

The DCC RPG

Joseph Goodman

Goodman Games, 2012

full-bleed illo of adventurers in dramatic situations, struggling and dying

Read the Intro

Freebooters on the Frontier is a game where 3-5 people sit down together at a table (a real one if you're meeting face-to-face, a virtual one if you're meeting online) and play a game of make-believe, in the form of a conversation. You can play with more than 5 people, but you'll probably want to get comfortable with the rules before doing so, because more players can slow things down.

One of the participants is the **Judge**, whose job is to describe the imaginary world, guide the conversation, and adjudicate any open questions that arise. If you're the one who bought this book, that's probably going to be you. The Judge is the final arbiter and ultimate authority what happens in the game, but a good Judge listens to the other people at the table, taking their suggestions and opinions into account before making a call.

Everyone else takes the part of **player-character** or "**PC**" in the game, which is to say, one of the main characters of the story you're going to be telling together. The Judge is a player too, but for the sake of clarity, the term "player" hereafter refers to anyone in charge of a PC.

The game itself takes the form of a conversation. The Judge describes the imaginary situation, and the players describe what their characters do within that situation. When you say what your character does, you can describe it or act it out, whatever feels comfortable in the moment. We call everything that happens in the imagined world **the fiction**.

After the players say how their characters respond to the fictional situation, the Judge describes what happens, and so on—that's the basic pattern of play. The Judge doesn't have all of the answers, though! Sometimes, the Judge will look to the players for input, inviting them to invent or embellish some part of the fiction about which their characters might have some knowledge. More often, when a PC does something without a clear and obvious outcome, the Judge will ask the player to roll some dice to determine what happens. That's what the rules in this book are mostly about: when to roll dice, which dice to roll, and how to interpret the results.

SETTING

The fiction is set in a world roughly equivalent to our own in the 12th or 13th century, but where fantastical things like magic, gods, and demons are real. It's a fantasy world largely of your own creation—think wizards and warriors, elves and goblins, dungeons and dragons—but not the kind of fantasy where great heroes team up to fight some dark power that threatens civilization. Your story could *become* that kind of story, but at the outset the PCs are lowly folk, maybe not so talented or special, who have chosen an exceedingly dangerous career in hopes of striking it rich and escaping from a life of medieval drudgery into one of comfortable retirement.

We call these PCs **freebooters**. Brave (or foolhardy, or perhaps unhinged) souls who venture out from the relative safety of a settlement on the wild frontier into the largely uncharted lands beyond, in search of treasure. The wilderness is a scary place, full of monsters and other threats, but laden with crumbling ruins and other mysterious sites—the vestiges of ancient civilizations, ripe for plunder.

CHARACTERS AND THE PARTY

Unless they're starting their careers as lowly villagers (see *Volume Zero: The Funnel*), each PC belongs to one of four different classes: **fighter**, **thief**, **cleric**, or **magic-user** (see page **XX** for descriptions of each class). Creating a freebooter is relatively simple, but you'll have limited control over their final form. As was already mentioned, the competency, personality, motivation, and even appearance of your character will be determined mostly at random, by rolling dice. If you're playing a PC, your job is to make the best of the hand you're dealt, so to speak—to find something to enjoy about this random character and play them to the best of your ability. If you roll up someone who is physically weak, or stupid, or evil, take that as a challenge: what can you do to make sure this person succeeds and survives? That question drives the game.

There's strength in numbers when exploring dangerous places, which is why freebooters usually organize themselves into a team, or **party**, in order to navigate the unknown, overcome its challenges, and abscond with the spoils. Because beggars can't be choosers when it comes to assembling such a team, a party will be comprised of individuals with differing moral and ethical priorities (described by their **alignment**), which may complicate whatever endeavor lies at hand.

Take an interest in your character, get attached to them, but also know that they may die. Death comes easy on the frontier, especially to the callow and the foolish. Against these odds, success is all the more sweet. The life of your fictional counterpart is at stake when they leave the relative safety of town, so exercise caution, but don't fret if they meet an untimely end; you can always roll up a new alter ego for the next adventure.

Hopefully, you'll learn to savor the dramatic tension generated by a tenuous fictional mortality. If not, this game may not be for you.

SESSIONS AND THE CAMPAIGN

A **session** of *Freebooters* commonly lasts 3–4 hours, and a series of connected sessions is called a **campaign**. A campaign is comparable to an episodic television series, in that it follows a particular cast of characters in a persistent fictional setting, although that cast may shift and change as individuals die off or retire, and new folks join the roster. You can play *Freebooters* as a **one-shot**—a standalone story played from start to finish in a single session—but the best way to experience the game is through campaign play. If you want to run the game as a one-shot, see page **XX** for tips.

During the first session, players will roll up their characters, collaborate on establishing the shared imaginary setting (explained in detail starting on page **XX**), and embark on their first adventure. You have two options for this first session: if you want to start the PCs off as lowly, hapless villagers who'll only graduate to become freebooters if they survive their initial adventure, follow the rules in *Volume Zero: The Funnel*; if you want to start out of the gate as novice freebooters on the hunt for treasure, use the rules in this book.

Between the first and second sessions, and between other sessions over the course of the campaign, the Judge may take the opportunity to prepare, or **prep**, important aspects of the setting. *Freebooters* can be played entirely improvisationally, without any prep on the Judge's part, but prepping can ease the pressure of improvisation and give your game world a stronger foundation. It can also be a creatively satisfying endeavor in its own right.

PCs will live and struggle and die over the course of a campaign. A rare few—blessed, in all likelihood, with both skill and luck—may retire in comfort after socking away sufficient silver. Characters will come and go, and a campaign may continue as long as everyone involved stays interested, perhaps even following successive generations of freebooters. At some point, however, the Judge and players may feel like bringing the whole thing to a close. Suggestions for how to manage this are offered starting on page **XX**.

FLOW OF PLAY

In each session after the first, the conversation goes like this: the Judge describes the fictional situation in which the PCs find themselves; the PCs say what they do; the results of their actions are determined; the Judge describes the new situation, and so on. This is the basic pattern, but it's not just a strict back-and-forth—players may discuss their options as a group or ask clarifying questions of the Judge, the Judge may ask questions of the players, digressions may occur, etc. The conversation can go in any direction, but part of the Judge's job is to guide it back on track if it strays too far afield. As a general rule during this conversation, the players are responsible for what their characters do, say, feel, and know, as well as for rolling any dice that need rolling. The Judge is responsible for everything else.

When a character does something in the fiction and the outcome is obvious, the Judge just describes that outcome. However, when the outcome is not obvious, or in certain other circumstances, special rules called **moves** kick in. Each move is a self-contained procedure that resolves an unanswered question and points the fiction in a new direction. Each move happens when certain conditions are met, and we refer to these conditions as **triggers**. See the next section for an explanation of moves and how they operate in play.

Within the fiction, the PCs will travel from place to place, and these places can be divided into three general categories: a **settlement** is a village or town or city where the party can rest, recuperate, and gear up for their next expedition; **wilderness** is the land across which they navigate in search of riches; and a **dungeon** is any site (ancient tomb, ruined temple, network of caves, etc.) that might hold said riches. Play goes wherever the PCs take it, but the most common arc of movement is from settlement through wilderness to dungeon, and then back again.



illo of adventuring party traveling through wilderness toward dungeon entrance as monster(s) look on from the shadows.

During a given session the PCs will likely follow some portion of this pattern, exploring and interacting with the fictional world as they hunt for treasure and try to stay alive. They might go from settlement to dungeon and back again in a single session, or they might spend an entire session negotiating a particularly treacherous stretch of wilderness terrain on their way to a dungeon. When a play session comes to an end, the Judge will look for a good place to wrap things up and pause the action until the next time you play. Before everyone parts ways, though, you'll go through some steps to figure out how many **experience points (XP)** the PCs earned during the session. When a character accumulates enough XP, they **level up**, improving their skills and capabilities. The higher your level, the better your odds of survival on future expeditions.

FICTIONAL TIME

During play, the pacing of fictional time slows down in proportion to dramatic intensity or player interest. In a fight, for instance, where lives are on the line and every choice has significant impact, the conversation may focus on describing and resolving actions in detail, moment-by-moment.

Each type of location has a default “speed” at which events tend to unfold: downtime in a settlement is usually resolved a week at a time; travel across the wilderness is measured out in terms of days; and exploring a dungeon—a tense and potentially deadly undertaking—is described hour-by-hour or minute-by-minute.

No matter where you are, though, the time scale is flexible. You can zoom in or out according to the needs of the conversation. If a PC is haggling with a shopkeeper in town over a particularly valuable item, you may want to zoom in to cover the specifics of that interaction; if the party has decided to camp for a few days in the midst of an underground temple, it might make sense to zoom out to resolve the passing of time more quickly.

BOOTY AND RETIREMENT

Although each freebooter (and/or the party as a whole) may develop personal aspirations over the course of a campaign, their default goal is to accumulate the stuff of which their job title is made: booty! Measured in terms of **silver pieces (sp)**, booty can be spent on new and improved gear to better a PC's chances of survival, but it's also a potential source of XP. When a character chooses to **stash** some treasure instead of spending it, the stashed treasure is converted into XP. Thus, the acquisition of material wealth tends to drive PC planning and decision-making. When you manage to sock away 10,000 silver pieces, your character can retire from a life of adventuring.

DEATH AND YOUR SCORE

PCs will die. As mentioned earlier, you'd better get used to it. It's not all broken hearts and rivers of tears, though—when your character bites the dust, your **score** is equal to the number of silver units you managed to stash, which also determines the amount of bonus XP your next character starts with. Can you beat your high score the next time around? Can you do better than your fellow players? The gauntlet has been thrown!

THE END

A *Freebooters* campaign is meant to evolve over time, with no pre-set conclusion. Perhaps a great nemesis will emerge to oppose the PCs, and upon defeating that enemy (or being defeated by them), it will make sense for your story to come to an end. Perhaps a rotating cast of PCs live and die and retire as the world changes around them, and your campaign runs on indefinitely. Perhaps things just peter out as interest wanes or real life makes scheduling impossible. As long as you follow the choices of the PCs as they make their way through the fictional world, you're doing it right.

ASK, SAY, OR ROLL

Over the course of each session and campaign, the players, the Judge, and the dice will collaborate to flesh out your fictional world. I boil this process down to the dictum, “Ask, say, or roll,” prioritized in that order.

The players and the Judge will **ask** each other lots of questions about the world and their characters. The most common question is, “What do you do?”, asked by the Judge when it’s unclear what the PCs are going to do next. But everyone at the table should get comfortable asking each other questions, about anything that interests them.

A player gets to answer questions about what their character knows—their childhood, past experiences, skills, folklore, rumors they’ve heard, etc.—and the Judge is responsible for everything else. This division of knowledge should be respected, but if a player introduces something that the Judge feels is too at odds with plain logic or constraints of the imaginary setting, the Judge has veto power. Part of the Judge’s job is maintaining the integrity of the fictional reality, and sometimes that means shooting down ideas that might compromise that integrity. If you find yourself in that position, be polite, and offer an alternative idea.

If there’s an open question to which no PC has the answer, and the answer is clear to the Judge, it’s the Judge’s job to **say** it. When the fiction needs to advance, the Judge uses their understanding of the setting and improvisational instincts to flesh out the world and describe what happens next. Among the responsibilities of the Judge is that of narrative failsafe: they take up the threads spun by everyone at the table and weave them into the greater whole.

But when no one knows the answer—when player and Judge alike are wondering what happens next—we **roll**. Most moves are resolved by rolling dice, the results of which dictate fictional outcomes, and you’ll be rolling lots of dice on various tables designed to provide clear answers or inspiration. We consult the dice as we might consult an oracle; to seek a way forward into the unknown.

BE THE JUDGE

As Judge, you have a hierarchical set of guidelines to rely upon as you run a session or campaign of *Freebooters*. Your **agenda** is a set of overarching directives which together describe the big-picture aspects of your job. Your **principles** together form the foundation of play on your side of the table; use them to guide your conduct and improvisation during play. Your **moves** comprise a menu of actions that allow you to complicate the situation and advance the fiction.

THE JUDGE’S AGENDA

- Make the world feel real
- Fill their lives with adventure
- Play to find out what happens

• MAKE THE WORLD FEEL REAL

Put yourself there, in the world you’re creating, and imagine what it might really be like. Consider different senses when you describe things—What does the light of a lantern look like on a misty moor at midnight? What does it smell like when the magic-user casts Ojobulon’s Delicate Halo?—and give details that make the scene or situation feel believable. You don’t need to understand how a medieval economy works, or the details of a particular monster’s ecology; invent details as you need them, or ask the players to do so, and build things out one step at a time. As you paint the picture on the surface and find connections between things underneath, the world will feel more real. The more real the world feels, the more invested in it you and your players will be.

• FILL THEIR LIVES WITH ADVENTURE

Look for sources of interest and excitement, and turn the fiction toward them: rumors to be chased, mysteries to be solved, treasure to be claimed. Between their forays into danger, allow the PCs time to enjoy some well-earned rest and recuperation, but let no lull go undisturbed. When you sense things lagging, look to your prep or the dice or your instincts, and introduce an enticing or unavoidable opportunity.

• PLAY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS

This is not a game about following a sequence of predetermined scenes that lead to a climactic confrontation, so forget about “plot.” Instead, create *situations*: arrangements of places, people, monsters, and/or treasure with which the PCs can interact as they see fit. Set the stage with interesting characters and props, but throw out the script. Describe the situation, and after you ask, “What do you do?” follow their lead, no matter where it goes. They can’t go “off the rails” because there are no rails in a wide-open world, full of possibility. When no one person knows what’s going to happen next and everyone wants to find out, you’re doing it right.

THE JUDGE'S PRINCIPLES

- Adjudicate impartially
- Be a fan of the characters
- Make things gritty and fantastical
- Address the characters, not the players
- Ask questions and build on the answers
- Begin and end with the fiction
- Give every creature life
- Commit, and follow through
- Look for connections, and make them
- Think offscreen, too
- Read between the rules

• ADJUDICATE IMPARTIALLY

Evaluate the results of player decisions as fairly as possible, according to what's already been established. Always be clear about what's at stake, and follow through if consequences are suffered. If there's a question about how something turns out and no move suits the situation, consider asking a PC to **Get Lucky**. When in doubt, defer to the dice.

• BE A FAN OF THE CHARACTERS

They're the protagonists of whatever story you're going to end up telling, so care about them. Ask them questions about their background, their belongings, their thoughts and feelings as they deal with hardship and success. Being a fan doesn't mean you need to shy away from endangering, hurting, or killing them; those things will happen naturally as you play the game. It just means that you'll care more about them as they're endangered, hurt, and killed. The more you care about them, the more the game is worth playing.

• MAKE THINGS GRITTY AND FANTASTICAL

Magic and gods and demons and monsters are real. At the same time, the prevailing society is medieval, where common folk lead lives of toil and drudgery. Highlight the ways in which the supernatural impacts the natural world and societies of your setting, but look at them through the smudged lens of the filth and struggle of everyday existence. Contrasted with the mundane, the fantastical becomes all the more wondrous.

• ADDRESS THE CHARACTERS, NOT THE PLAYERS

When you describe a situation, use the fictional names of PCs and ask *them*—the in-game personae of the real people sitting around the table—what they do next. This tiny conversational adjustment helps the players put themselves in their characters' shoes, and by extension helps the fiction come that much more alive.

• ASK QUESTIONS AND BUILD ON THE ANSWERS

As Judge you'll prep and improvise a lot of setting detail, but your players are a great resource of creativity. Ask them questions about anything their characters might know, and not just external things like what fearsome beast is known to lurk in the Bleakwood; when a companion meets an untimely end, ask what the survivors are thinking and feeling. Then, going forward, look for ways to act on their answers. They come across telltale tracks at the edge of the forest; a bird takes flight into the evening sky, reminding them of their dead friend.

• BEGIN AND END WITH THE FICTION

The fiction is spun through conversation at the table, and a move kicks in when the right condition—its trigger—is met. The conversation then shifts momentarily away from the fiction to follow the mechanics of the move. Once the results of the move are known, it's your job as Judge to shift things back by incorporating the results into the fiction. This weave of fiction to move to fiction is what gives the game momentum and keeps everyone wanting to know what's going to happen next.

• GIVE EVERY CREATURE LIFE

The NPCs and monsters in *Freebooters* are not information kiosks or loot dispensaries. They are inhabitants and participants in your shared world, with their own motives and lives that carry on when the PCs aren't around. When these inhabitants are encountered, describe them in terms of memorable sensory details, but also consider the situation from their perspective and have them behave accordingly. The alignment and trait systems are in place to help guide your decision-making in this regard. When at a loss, though, you can always **Check Reaction** (page XX).

• COMMIT, AND FOLLOW THROUGH

As Judge, you'll find yourself constantly making decisions: what's the weather like here in the mountains, how much is that magic sword worth, is there an ogre behind that door? Regardless of how you arrive at your answer—asking a knowledgeable PC, consulting your prep, rolling some dice—stick to it and ride out the implications. Whether you do it far in advance or off the cuff, each time you commit to a choice, you make a thing true in your world.

• LOOK FOR CONNECTIONS, AND MAKE THEM

As your setting emerges from the combination of collaborative improvisation, prep, and what the dice say, notice when a thing might connect to another, previously-established thing, and tie them together. Omalara the fighter secretly worships Irunpupa the Fire God and you roll a random NPC whose occupation is "cultist;" *obviously*, they have something in common! The more you do this, the more coherent and believable your setting will start to feel.

• THINK OFFSCREEN, TOO

While no one has the capacity to track everything that happens outside of the players' purview, maintaining a the sense of a "living world" increases engagement, curiosity, and surprise. Whether this means deciding how a monster stalks the party when it's no longer in plain sight, or figuring out if the bandit chief the PCs apprehended has managed to escape from jail while they were out of town, consider what might be happening "offscreen." Threads (see page X) are a useful tool for this purpose.

• READ BETWEEN THE RULES

The rules laid out in these books are meant to be followed. At the same time, you will find some areas of play that are either vague or undefined. There's not a rule for everything, and this is by design. How your particular play group chooses to navigate contingencies is part of the process of making the game your own. Give the index a once-over if you're looking for the answer to a specific question, but if you can't find it, invent something to cover that base. In these and any other gray areas, the Judge makes the final ruling.

THE JUDGE'S MOVES

- Say the consequences and ask
- Show signs of a threat
- Reveal an unwelcome truth
- Endanger them
- Delegate your move
- Offer an opportunity
- Put someone in a spot
- Demonstrate a downside
- Use up their resources
- Turn things back on them
- Separate them
- Deal damage
- Mark a thread

• SAY THE CONSEQUENCES AND ASK

Yes, they can do that thing, but there'll be a price to pay. Tell them what it is, and let them decide whether it's worth it.

• SHOW SIGNS OF A THREAT

Things are about to go south. Big tracks in the underbrush, ominous drumming in the distance, the stone floor beginning to crack underfoot. What do you do?

• REVEAL AN UNWELCOME TRUTH

To their dismay, something is not as it seemed. The gold is iron pyrite; that wound becomes infected; the prisoner is a demon in disguise.

• ENDANGER THEM

When the time is right—or when it's all wrong—confront them with a Danger. Choose it based on established information, make up something new, or roll it up on the Danger tables

• DELEGATE YOUR MOVE

When the situation warrants, make a move belonging to a relevant NPC, monster, location, or prop.

• OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY

Think about the strengths and proclivities of the individual party members, and choose one as the basis for action. Make that character an offer. The fighter, a master of the longbow, notices one of the enemy is scurrying away; the cleric, faithful to the Goddess of Nature, senses a blight corrupting the local plant life.

• PUT SOMEONE IN A SPOT

Force them to make a tough choice by putting them (or someone they care about) in in a dangerous or difficult position.

• DEMONSTRATE A DOWNSIDE

Everything has a weakness. Identify one in a character, a piece of equipment, or a perfect plan—and then bring it to the fore.

• USE UP THEIR RESOURCES

They need their stuff to survive, and their stuff is limited. You might break an *unreliable* piece of gear, decide that 1d4 rations have spoiled, or mark 1 duration on any active durations.

• TURN THINGS BACK ON THEM

Counter their move with a move made in kind. The fighter ambushes the goblin leader, but an NPC companion is captured; The thief steals a gem, but later the party discovers their campsite's been ransacked.

• SEPARATE THEM

Things get confusing in the heat of battle. Difficult terrain or shifting dungeon architecture can break up the party.

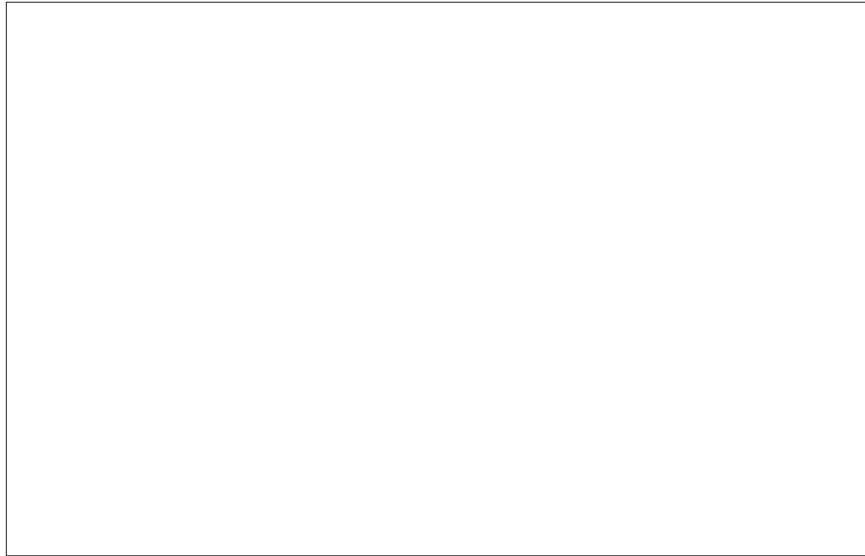
• DEAL DAMAGE

Inflict HP damage when someone suffers a physical blow, or ability damage when the wear and tear of adventuring takes its toll: a character might suffer 1 point of Constitution damage from an arduous journey, 1d4 points of Strength damage from sustained physical strain, or 1d6 Wisdom damage when confronted by a *terrifying* monster.

• MARK A THREAD

When no other move seems applicable, or whenever it makes sense, mark one of your active threads. If they would be aware of the event, describe what they know; otherwise, just let them know something happened offstage.

Build a World Together



GATHER SUPPLIES

In order to play *Freebooters on the Frontier*, you'll need the rules (this book and its companion volumes), and these other supplies:

- 3-5 players.
- Pencils for everyone (there'll be lots of erasing).
- Scratch paper or index cards for taking notes.
- Ideally, each player will have their own set of **dice**: three six-sided dice (3d6), one four-sided die (1d4), one eight-sided die (1d8), percentile dice (1d100), and one twelve-sided die (1d12); but one set for everyone to share will work too.
- A set of 4 character playbooks for each player (one each of **fighter**, **thief**, **cleric**, and **magic-user**). These are reproduced starting on page XX. A player will only use one playbook, but they won't know which one until they create their character, so it's good to have plenty on hand for the first play session. Save extra unused playbooks for new characters in the future.
- A blank piece of paper on which to draw an initial map map of your world. At least 8½" x 11", but bigger would be better.

LAY THE FOUNDATION

The first session of a *Freebooters* campaign consists of creating the setting collaboratively, rolling up characters, and embarking on your first adventure. Make sure you have the following on hand:

- Pencils
- Dice: plenty of d6 and d12s, along with some d4s, d8s, and d10s
- Blank paper
- 1 copy of each playbook per player

Everyone should grab a pencil. Choose one person to take notes on one of the blank sheets of paper. Set another sheet in the middle of the table so everyone can reach it; this will be your map.

1 Introduce the concept of the game. Before you start the world creation process, make sure that everyone knows what they're getting into. Read the following introductory text, or—better yet—paraphrase it in your own words.

At the edge of civilized lands lies the wild frontier, a vast and perilous wilderness full of deadly monsters, ancient wonders, and—if the stories hold true—great wealth. You are a band of treasure hunters, misfits and outcasts considered unhinged by most folks because you seek to venture into that wilderness. They think you're crazy, but who wants a life of drudgery ordained by the ruling class? You're willing to risk everything for some of that legendary treasure, because with enough of it socked away, you'll be able to retire in comfort.

You're not heroes—not yet. You're hardscrabble adventurers. Just scraping by at the moment, but if you keep your tinderbox dry, your knife sharp, and your wits about you, there may be a manor house in your future. If you're not careful, though, your bones will join those of other foolhardy fortune-hunters who dared the wilds.

In other words, the tone of *Freebooters on the Frontier* is gritty and unforgiving, with character death a real possibility. Once everyone is on board with this basic premise, you're ready to lay the groundwork for the dangerous and wondrous world which your characters will call home.

2 Determine the local climate. Will your adventures begin in colder latitudes, under the scorching sun of equatorial deserts, or in some temperate zone between these extremes? Discuss the options listed in the **CLIMATE** table at right and choose one as a group, or let the dice decide by rolling 1d12. Knowing the local climate at this stage is useful because it'll inform other world-building decisions and help you begin to visualize your setting and local cultures.

CLIMATE

1d12	CLIMATE
1-2	frigid
3-4	temperate verging into frigid
5-8	temperate
9-10	temperate verging into torrid
11-12	torrid

3 Determine playable species. Most fantasy RPGs follow an established convention when it comes to types of people in the world: humans, dwarves, halflings, elves, orcs, goblins... you know the drill. Decide whether you'll abide by this standard or make up your own species. The advantages to using established conventions are that everyone starts with basic assumptions about the different species, and these rules were written taking those conventions into account. The advantages to making up your own are that you'll feel more invested in them, and the world will feel more special to your group. The only drawback is that it'll take a bit more work to develop the details of your invented species. Also note that, even if you go the conventional route, you'll have the opportunity to define the different species in ways unique to your world. [\[Rules for creating custom species to come\]](#)

4 Establish naming conventions. Next, agree upon a linguistic basis for proper nouns in your game. By default you can go with plain English for everything, but for more flavor you may wish to assign a different real-world language to each distinct culture in your setting. Using online name generators and translation tools, you'll be able to give names to characters and places that will have a consistent ring to them. When naming places, just start with a one- or two-word description in plain English before translating. Edit all results to suit your taste (see **EXAMPLE** at right).

5 Set the tone. As you know by now, *Freebooters on the Frontier* is designed to be gritty and unforgiving in its handling of character mortality. But there's still plenty of room to give your campaign a particular feel. This is the point at which everyone at the table has a conversation about the kind of game they want to play. Do you want to play in a high-fantasy setting, where chivalry is a noble virtue and the age of the elves is waning? Or perhaps in a gothic realm, where witch hunters prowl dark forests and church inquisitors seek to purge the civilized world of evil?

6 Consider the big picture. Ask everyone to think of things, from their own imagination or from favorite fantasy stories, which they'd like to see in the campaign. Discuss how those things might impact the world and play experience. Take your time, take notes as you go, and check to make sure everyone's on board with a given element before you commit to it as a group. If the conversation doesn't flow easily, roll once or twice on the **CAMPAIGN FEATURE** table (page [XX](#)) to get some ideas. Discuss and modify the results until everyone is satisfied.

My group decides that since dwarves in our world live in a mountainous, cold region, we'll use Finnish as the linguistic basis for proper nouns in dwarf culture. We then decide to use Hungarian for the main human and halfling tongues, and Yoruba for the elves. Using an online name generator, we get dwarf names like Jouni and Toivo; human/halfling names like Miksa and Sándor; and elf names like Omayeni and Dayo.

Then, using a translation tool, we find that the dwarf capital of "High Home" translates to Korkea Koti; the halfling tradition of the "Summer Feast" translates to Nyári Unnep; and the "Moon Tower" in elven lands is called Osupa Oso in the elven tongue.

CAMPAIGN FEATURE

1d100	FEATURE
01-02	A comet—harbinger of doom or great change—streaks slowly across the sky.
03-04	A great deluge has drowned the lowlands, leaving many settlements underwater.
05-06	A terrible plague sweeps the land, decimating centers of population.
07-08	A new mineral has been discovered which, when properly processed, extends life.
09-10	Long ago, terrible earthquakes created great chasms that divide the lands.
11-12	Islands drift across the sky, accessible only by winged or wizardly means.
13-14	The moon broke and fell to earth in pieces, leading to war over its celestial treasures.
15-16	The civilized lands are experiencing a golden age of chivalry.
17-18	A great war has broken out between the sorcerer-lords.
19-20	A demon-lord has wrested control of one of the great kingdoms.
21-22	A demigod rules the most populous city.
23-24	Outlander tribes, united under a new war chief, and have begun raiding in force.
25-26	A messianic figure has appeared in the outlands, promising immortality for all.
27-28	An ancient order protects the civilized world from the forces of chaos.
29-30	Magical portals connect the great cities of the world.
31-32	Due to recent events, tensions between certain species have reached a boiling point.
33-34	An enigmatic ruler demands the annual sacrifice of child from each community.
35-36	The first folk left long ago, passing beyond the nether-lands, but now they return.
37-38	The great merchant cities are ascendant.
39-40	Arcane tempests of unknown origin sweep across the land.
41-42	The world is pocked by zones, large and small, where magic does not work at all.
43-44	Planar rifts have begun to open in unexpected places.
45-46	The practice of unsanctioned magic is a criminal offense in most civilized settlements.
47-48	The spirits of departed ancestors have begun to appear with increasing frequency.
49-50	The dead will always rise unless appropriate precautions are taken.
51-52	A great conclave of witches is imminent, at which a new leader will be chosen.
53-54	There is a great arcane university is where all "legitimate" magic-users learn their art.
55-56	Strange crystals have begun to sprout and spread, but only under certain conditions.
57-58	An unknown force is replacing people with changelings.
59-60	The rulers of old have begun to rise from their tombs.
61-62	A vast empire seeks to expand further.
63-64	A dominant religion persecutes sages and philosophers as enemies of the church.
65-66	Primordial mystery-cults wage a secret war for the fate of the free lands.
67-68	Ancient constructs have begun to animate and emerge from their subterranean vaults.
69-70	A great lord is dying; without a strong leader, their realm has fallen to turmoil.
71-72	An alchemical concoction with explosive properties is changing the face of warfare.
73-74	Dark forces gather in the outlands, mustered under the banner of some fell master.
75-76	Open war has broken out between two dominant and opposing religions.
77-78	One of the civilized, non-human cultures has recently chosen to isolate itself.
79-80	The magical beacons that ward off the forces of darkness have begun to fail.
81-82	Feuds between the gods are fought out by titans in the mundane world.
83-84	An intercultural council of honorable rulers strives to maintain peace.
85-86	A dominant religious order has declared one of the great rulers a heretic.
87-88	The towering war-suits of the ancients litter the wilderness.
89-90	In the wake of a great cataclym, the survivors have begun to rebuild society.
91-92	Periodic meteor showers bring madness and mutation from beyond the stars.
93-94	Magic spells can only be cast by use of a certain gemstone.
95-96	The civilized species have at last united, but forgiveness does not come easily to all.
97-98	The undead are commonly exploited for economic or strategic gain.
99-100	Winter has not passed as it should have; the frost-roots are spreading.

ROLL UP A CHARACTER

To create a new character, follow these steps. When told to “choose or roll,” go with the option that best suits the tone of your campaign, as established during setting creation.

- Choose or roll your CLASS** (see table at right), and grab a copy of the corresponding playbook.
- Choose or roll your HERITAGE**, according to your class, using the table below. Record the result along with the associated **HERITAGE MOVE** in the “Heritage” area on the first page of your playbook.
- Roll your ability scores.** Roll 3d6 for each ability listed in the right-hand column on the front of your playbook, in order: Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and Luck. Write the total for each score in the box labeled “**MAX**.” Write lightly in pencil, because some numbers might get moved around.
- Swap ability scores.** Switch any one ability score with any one other score. You’ll usually want to put your highest score in an ability that will be useful to your class (see **USEFUL ABILITIES** key, opposite).
- Apply your heritage bonus.** If you’re human, increase any two different abilities by 1 point each. If you’re not human, you may increase any two different favored abilities by 1 point each, or one favored ability by 2 points (see **FAVORED ABILITIES** key on the opposite page). No ability score may be raised above 18.
- Set your ability modifiers.** Consult the **ABILITY MODIFIER** table (opposite, and included on the front page of your playbook). Record each ability’s modifier in the “**MODIFIER**” brackets running down the right side of the front page of your playbook.

CLASS

1d12	CLASS
1-5	fighter
6-8	thief
9-10	cleric
11-12	magic-user

CHARACTER HERITAGE

FIGHTER/CLERIC		THIEF		MAGIC-USER	
1d12	HERITAGE	1d12	HERITAGE	1d12	HERITAGE
1-7	human	1-7	human	1-8	human
8	halfling	8-10	halfling	9	halfling
9-11	dwarf	11	dwarf	10	dwarf
12	elf	12	elf	11-12	elf

HERITAGE MOVE

human	When you <i>Wrap Up</i> , mark 1 ability of your choice.
halfling	When you <i>eat an extra ration</i> , take +1 forward.
dwarf	When you <i>are underground</i> , take +1 ongoing to Perceive.
elf	When you <i>move</i> , you have perfect balance and a feather-light step.

- Roll your hit points.** The “Hit Die” area at the bottom of the front page of your playbook indicates which die you’ll use for rolling hit points. Roll your hit die now and add your CON (the Constitution modifier you determined in step 6, not your full Constitution score) to the result. A total of less than 1 is treated as 1. Write the total in the box labeled “**MAX**” in the Hit Points area of your playbook. You may at this point burn 1 point of Luck (see page **XX**) to increase your HP by 1.

- Choose or roll your ALIGNMENT**, according to your class, using the table below. Record the result in the area provided on the front page of your playbook. In that same area, write down the **ALIGNMENT GOAL** associated with your alignment. Also note the number of **VIRTUES** and **VICES** assigned to you based on your alignment; these come into play on the next step.

ABILITY KEY

USEFUL ABILITIES

fighter	Strength, Constitution, Dexterity
thief	Dexterity, Intelligence, Luck
cleric	Wisdom, Charisma, Strength
magic-user	Intelligence, Constitution, Luck

FAVORED ABILITIES

human	Any
halfling	Dexterity, Constitution, Luck
dwarf	Strength, Constitution, Wisdom
elf	Dexterity, Intelligence, Charisma

ABILITY MODIFIERS

SCORE	MODIFIER
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

CHARACTER ALIGNMENT

FIGHTER		THIEF		CLERIC		MAGIC-USER	
1d12	ALIGNMENT	1d12	ALIGNMENT	1d12	ALIGNMENT	1d12	ALIGNMENT
1-2	<i>evil</i>	1-2	<i>evil</i>	1-2	<i>evil</i>	1-3	<i>evil</i>
3-5	<i>chaotic</i>	3-6	<i>chaotic</i>	3-5	<i>chaotic</i>	4-8	<i>chaotic</i>
6-8	<i>neutral</i>	7-10	<i>neutral</i>	6-7	<i>neutral</i>	9	<i>neutral</i>
9-10	<i>lawful</i>	11-12	<i>good</i>	8-10	<i>lawful</i>	10	<i>lawful</i>
11-12	<i>good</i>			11-12	<i>good</i>	11-12	<i>good</i>

ALIGNMENT GOAL & TRAIT ASSIGNMENT

ALIGNMENT	ALIGNMENT GOAL	VIRTUES	VICES
<i>evil</i>	Inflict harm on another for personal gain.	0	3
<i>chaotic</i>	Disrupt a prevailing order.	1	2
<i>neutral</i>	Satisfy a personal need or correct an imbalance.	1	1
<i>lawful</i>	Impose or maintain order in the face of chaos.	2	1
<i>good</i>	Help someone in need at your own expense.	3	0

*illo of a crowd
of diverse characters
stretching across page spread,
behind tables*

9 Roll your TRAITS. Referring to the **TRAIT** table at right, roll a number of **VIRTUES** and **VICES** dictated by our alignment. Record the results in the “Traits” area on the first page of your playbook. These adjectives encourage you to play your certain ways, but you’re not required to do so. Each time you Level Up, you’ll have the opportunity to change a trait.

10 Roll your APPEARANCE. Using the column for your class on the table on the opposite page, roll up 3 physical details for your character. You may choose your apparent gender or use the result of your first roll to determine it (even=female, odd=male, doubles=nonbinary/ambiguous). Then, drop 1 physical detail if you wish, and summarize your appearance in the appropriate area on the front page of your playbook. These are meant to get you thinking—embellish and add more details as you wish.

TRAITS

1d100	VIRTUE	VICE
01-02	<i>ambitious</i>	<i>addict</i>
03-04	<i>benevolent</i>	<i>aggressive</i>
05-06	<i>bold</i>	<i>alcoholic</i>
07-08	<i>brave</i>	<i>antagonistic</i>
09-10	<i>charitable</i>	<i>arrogant</i>
11-12	<i>chaste</i>	<i>boastful</i>
13-14	<i>cautious</i>	<i>cheater</i>
15-16	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>covetous</i>
17-18	<i>confident</i>	<i>cowardly</i>
19-20	<i>considerate</i>	<i>cruel</i>
21-22	<i>cooperative</i>	<i>decadent</i>
23-24	<i>courteous</i>	<i>deceitful</i>
25-26	<i>creative</i>	<i>disloyal</i>
27-28	<i>curious</i>	<i>doubtful</i>
29-30	<i>daring</i>	<i>egotistical</i>
31-32	<i>defiant</i>	<i>envious</i>
33-34	<i>dependable</i>	<i>gluttonous</i>
35-36	<i>determined</i>	<i>greedy</i>
37-38	<i>disciplined</i>	<i>hasty</i>
39-40	<i>enthusiastic</i>	<i>hedonist</i>
41-42	<i>fair</i>	<i>impatient</i>
43-44	<i>focused</i>	<i>inflexible</i>
45-46	<i>forgiving</i>	<i>irritable</i>
47-48	<i>friendly</i>	<i>lazy</i>
49-50	<i>frugal</i>	<i>lewd</i>
51-52	<i>funny</i>	<i>liar</i>
53-54	<i>generous</i>	<i>lustful</i>
55-56	<i>gregarious</i>	<i>mad</i>
57-58	<i>helpful</i>	<i>malicious</i>
59-60	<i>honest</i>	<i>manipulative</i>
61-62	<i>honorable</i>	<i>merciless</i>
63-64	<i>hopeful</i>	<i>moody</i>
65-66	<i>humble</i>	<i>murderous</i>
67-68	<i>idealistic</i>	<i>obsessive</i>
69-70	<i>just</i>	<i>petulant</i>
71-72	<i>kind</i>	<i>prejudiced</i>
73-74	<i>loving</i>	<i>reckless</i>
75-76	<i>loyal</i>	<i>resentful</i>
77-78	<i>merciful</i>	<i>rude</i>
79-80	<i>orderly</i>	<i>rutless</i>
81-82	<i>patient</i>	<i>self-pitying</i>
83-84	<i>persistent</i>	<i>selfish</i>
85-86	<i>pious</i>	<i>snobbish</i>
87-88	<i>resourceful</i>	<i>stingy</i>
89-90	<i>respectful</i>	<i>stubborn</i>
91-92	<i>responsible</i>	<i>vain</i>
93-94	<i>selfless</i>	<i>vengeful</i>
95-96	<i>steadfast</i>	<i>wasteful</i>
97-98	<i>tactful</i>	<i>wrathful</i>
99-100	<i>tolerant</i>	<i>zealous</i>

APPEARANCE

1d100	FIGHTER	THIEF	CLERIC	MAGIC-USER
01-02	big feet	broken nose	big feet	acid scars
03-04	big mouth	chin whiskers	blazing eyes	aged
05-06	braids	clean-shaven	bright eyes	bald
07-08	broad shoulders	clear-eyed	bushy eyebrows	black teeth
09-10	broken nose	crooked teeth	clean-shaven	booming voice
11-12	chiseled	curly hair	clear-eyed	burn scars
13-14	clear-eyed	dark skin	cleft chin	bushy eyebrows
15-16	cleft chin	deep voice	crooked teeth	chin whiskers
17-18	crooked teeth	disfigured	curly hair	crooked teeth
19-20	curly hair	disheveled	dandruff	curly hair
21-22	dark skin	gap-toothed	dark skin	dark skin
23-24	deep voice	gaunt	deep voice	discolored skin
25-26	gap-toothed	goatee	flagellant scars	disfigured
27-28	goatee	hirsute	gaunt	forked tongue
29-30	grubby	lazy eye	goatee	gaunt
31-32	high cheekbones	limp	gray hair	glowing eyes
33-34	hirsute	little mouth	heavyset	gnarled hands
35-36	lantern jaw	long fingers	haunted eyes	goatee
37-38	large ears	matted hair	high forehead	gray hair
39-40	large hands	missing eye	hirsute	haggard
41-42	large head	missing finger	large hands	hairless
43-44	long-legged	missing teeth	long beard	high forehead
45-46	matted hair	narrowed eyes	missing teeth	hooded eyes
47-48	missing ear	notable chin	notable nose	hunchback
49-50	missing eye	notable nose	notable smell	limp
51-52	missing finger	overbite	pale skin	long beard
53-54	missing teeth	pale skin	perfect posture	long fingernails
55-56	notable facial hair	pencil mustache	piercing gaze	long hair
57-58	notable nose	perfect posture	pockmarked	lumpy skull
59-60	notable smell	pockmarked	ragged	mismatched eyes
61-62	perfect posture	pointy chin	rosy cheeks	missing teeth
63-64	pockmarked	poor posture	scarred	no eyebrows
65-66	raspy voice	raspy voice	shaved head	oily skin
67-68	rosy cheeks	red-rimmed eyes	shining eyes	pale skin
69-70	scarred	scarred	smelly	piercing gaze
71-72	squinting gaze	scruffy	smiling	pockmarked
73-74	tattoos	shifty eyes	square chin	raspy voice
75-76	shaved head	small hands	square-shouldered	sallow
77-78	smelly	smelly	strange marks	scarred
79-80	smiling	squint	stubble	skeletal hands
81-82	squint	stubble	tattoos	smelly
83-84	steely gaze	stubby fingers	thundering voice	strange marks
85-86	stubble	tattoos	tonsure	striking nose
87-88	tattoos	twitchy	unblinking gaze	sunken eyes
89-90	unibrow	unsmiling	unwashed	tattoos
91-92	unsmiling	unwashed	warty	terrible posture
93-94	well-scrubbed	well-groomed	well-fed	warty
95-96	wild hair	whispery voice	well-scrubbed	white hair
97-98	youthful	widow's peak	wild-eyed	wild hair
99-100	roll on THIEF	roll on MAGIC-USER	roll on FIGHTER	widow's peak

11 Review your class moves. Open your playbook and read over the left-hand page to familiarize yourself with the special things your class can do, and make any decisions required. If you're a fighter, choose your signature weapon from those listed in the melee weapon or ranged weapon sections of the Marketplace (pXX). If you're a wizard, roll up the names of your spells using the **SPELL NAME** table on page XX.

12 Determine your capacity. On the back page of your playbook, under the first box in the "Capacity" area, you'll see a notation that looks like "STR +X." Add your STR (Strength modifier) to the number indicated, and enter the result in the box. This is an abstract measure of how much weight you can carry before you are hindered.

13 Take inventory. To determine what stuff you start with, use the **STARTING GEAR** guide on page XX. Record your gear in the space provided on the back page of your playbook, noting any relevant details (weight, tags, etc.). Refer to the Marketplace list on page XX for item details.

14 Go shopping. Roll 2d6 and add the total to your Luck score (not LUC). If you're not a thief, you start with this many silver pieces (sp). If you are a thief, you start with twice this amount. Write the number down on the pouch on the back page of your playbook. Then, you may use these starting funds to purchase items from the Marketplace. This part may take a few minutes as you discuss plans with your fellow freebooters and consider what supplies you might need for your first foray into the unknown.

15 Name thyself. During setting creation, you and/or the Judge established what sort of naming conventions will be used for the campaign. Name your character according to that decision—make something up, use an online generator, or roll on the name tables provided on pages XX-XX. Then, fold an index card in half, write your character's name on one half, and "tent" the card on the table in front of you with the name facing out so that everyone can remember at a glance what to call you.

16 Introduce thyself. Take turns with the other players describing your characters. Ask the other players questions about the attitude and appearance of their characters so that you can build a mental image of each. If you feel inclined, draw a portrait of yours in the area provided on the front page of your playbook.

17 See the frontier. The cast of main characters is now complete; you should have a ragtag band of freebooters, hungry for treasure. The only thing left to do is invent the world laden with booty! Follow the directions in the "See the Frontier" section, starting on page XX.

illo of characters shopping, trying on gear, introducing themselves, etc.

SPELL NAME

Roll 1d12 for **SPELL NAME TEMPLATE**, then 1d100 for each part.

1d12	SPELL NAME TEMPLATE	1d12	SPELL NAME TEMPLATE
1-2	[NOUN] [FORM]	9	[WIZARD NAME]'s [ADJECTIVE] [FORM]
3-4	[ADJECTIVE] [FORM]	10	[WIZARD NAME]'s [ADJECTIVE] [NOUN]
5-6	[ADJECTIVE] [NOUN]	11	[WIZARD NAME]'s [FORM] of [NOUN]
7	[FORM] of [NOUN]	12	[WIZARD NAME]'s [NOUN] [FORM]
8	[FORM] of [ADJECTIVE] [NOUN]		

1d100	FORM	NOUN	ADJECTIVE	WIZ.NAME 1	WIZ. NAME 2
01	Armor	Acid	All-Knowing	A-	-ak
02	Arrow	Aether	All-Seeing	Ab-	-alto
03	Aura	Air	Arcane	Aga-	-ana
04	Bane	Anger	Befuddling	Alha-	-anti
05	Beast	Ash	Binding	Appol-	-aris
06	Blade	Avarice	Black	Apu-	-ark
07	Blast	Balance	Blazing	Arne-	-asta
08	Blessing	Blight	Blinding	Asmo-	-balia
09	Blob	Blood	Bloody	Baha-	-bus
10	Blood	Bone	Bright	Bal-	-by
11	Bolt	Bones	Cacophonous	Barba-	-cas
12	Bond	Brimstone	Cerulean	Bol-	-ce
13	Boon	Clay	Concealing	By-	-derol
14	Brain	Cloud	Confusing	Can-	-deus
15	Burst	Copper	Consuming	Cinni-	-din
16	Call	Cosmos	Crimson	Cir-	-dok
17	Charm	Dark	Damnable	Cyn-	-dor
18	Circle	Death	Dark	Cyto-	-dred
19	Claw	Deceit	Deflecting	Dar-	-driar
20	Cloak	Despair	Delicate	Darg-	-dula
21	Cone	Destiny	Demonic	De-	-dun
22	Crown	Dimension	Devastating	Des-	-dustin
23	Cube	Doom	Devilish	Dra-	-er
24	Cup	Dust	Diminishing	Dul-	-fant
25	Curse	Earth	Draining	Elez-	-fia
26	Dagger	Ember	Eldritch	Ely-	-fonse
27	Dart	Energy	Empowering	Ez-	-gad
28	Demon	Envy	Enlightening	Fal-	-gax
29	Disturbance	Fear	Ensnorcelling	Faral-	-glana
30	Door	Fire	Entangling	Flo-	-goria
31	Eye	Fog	Enveloping	Fol-	-goth
32	Eyes	Force	Erratic	Gaili-	-heer
33	Face	Fury	Evil	Garg-	-houlik
34	Fang	Glory	Excruciating	Gast-	-ia
35	Feast	Gluttony	Expanding	Gil-	-iala
36	Finger	Gold	Extra-Planar	Gy-	-iana
37	Fissure	Greed	Fearsome	Haz-	-ingar
38	Fist	Hate	Flaming	Heca-	-ista
39	Gate	Hatred	Floating	Her-	-jan
40	Gaze	Health	Freezing	Hog-	-jobulon
41	Glamer	Heat	Glittering	Hur-	-kan
42	Globe	History	Gyrating	I-	-kang
43	Golem	Hope	Helpful	Ik-	-konn
44	Guard	Ice	Hindering	Ilde-	-lah
45	Guide	Iron	Icy	In-	-leius

1d100	FORM	NOUN	ADJECTIVE	WIZ.NAME 1	WIZ. NAME 2
46	Guisse	Justice	Illusory	Jas-	-leo
47	Halo	Knowledge	Incredible	Jir-	-leou
48	Hammer	Lead	Inescapable	Ju-	-lin
49	Hand	Lies	Ingenious	Krak-	-lonia
50	Heart	Life	Instant	Kul-	-lonius
51	Helm	Light	Invigorating	Laf-	-loo
52	Horn	Lightning	Invisible	Long-	-lume
53	Lock	Lore	Invulnerable	Ma-	-ma
54	Mantle	Love	Liberating	Mer-	-mas
55	Mark	Lust	Maddening	Mercu-	-mast
56	Memory	Metal	Magnificent	Mor-	-mia
57	Mind	Might	Many-Colored	Mune-	-miel
58	Mouth	Mist	Mighty	Munno	-motto
59	Noose	Moon	Most Excellent	Murz-	-moulian
60	Oath	Mud	Omnipotent	Naf-	-mut
61	Oracle	Nature	Oozing	O-	-nak
62	Pattern	Oil	Penultimate	Osh	-nia
63	Pet	Pain	Pestilential	Pande-	-nish
64	Pillar	Perception	Piercing	Pander-	-nob
65	Pocket	Plane	Poisonous	Par-	-o
66	Portal	Plant	Prismatic	Per-	-ol
67	Pyramid	Poison	Raging	Quel-	-ool
68	Ray	Quicksilver	Rejuvenating	Ra-	-pa
69	Rune	Revulsion	Restorative	Ragga-	-pheus
70	Scream	Rot	Screaming	Rhi-	-phim
71	Seal	Salt	Sensitive	Satan-	-por
72	Sentinel	Shadow	Shimmering	Satur-	-quint
73	Servant	Sight	Shining	Semi-	-ramis
74	Shaft	Silver	Silent	Sera-	-rezzin
75	Shield	Smoke	Sleeping	She-	-ro
76	Sigil	Soil	Slow	Shrue-	-rrak
77	Sign	Soul	Smoking	Sloo-	-ry
78	Song	Souls	Sorcerer's	Sol-	-sira
79	Spear	Sound	Strange	T'-	-sta
80	Spell	Spirit	Stupefying	Tcha-	-te
81	Sphere	Stars	Terrible	Tol-	-teria
82	Spray	Steam	Thirsty	Tub-	-thakk
83	Staff	Steel	Thundering	Tur-	-thalon
84	Storm	Stone	Trans-dimensional	U-	-tine
85	Strike	Storm	Transmuting	Vag-	-toomb
86	Sword	Sun	Ultimate	Val-	-torr
87	Tendrill	Terror	Uncontrollable	Vance-	-troya
88	Tongue	Time	Unseen	Ver-	-tur
89	Tooth	Treasure	Unstoppable	Vish-	-tuva
90	Trap	Truth	Untiring	Wa-	-u
91	Veil	Vanity	Vengeful	Win-	-valva
92	Voice	Venom	Vexing	Xa-	-vance
93	Wall	Vermin	Violent	Yu-	-vilk
94	Ward	Void	Violet	Za-	-wink
95	Wave	Water	Viridian	Zal-	-xa
96	Weapon	Will	Voracious	Zan-	-yop
97	Weave	Wind	Weakening	Zili-	-zant
98	Whisper	Wisdom	White	Zim-	-zark
99	Wings	Wood	Wondrous	Zuur-	-zirian
100	Word	Youth	Yellow	Zza-	-zred

STARTING GEAR

Record each item and its listed weight (wt) as indicated by your class, below. Roll your **RANDOM ITEM** using the table opposite.

FIGHTER

You start with your **avored weapon** (as chosen in step 11; see the Marketplace on page X for its weight), 1 **RANDOM ITEM**, a **backpack** (wt 0), **waterskin** (wt 0), **rations** (1d6 uses, wt 1), a **knife** (wt 0), and 1 thing from each of the following tables:

1d6	GARB	WT	1d6	ARMOR	WT	1d6	OTHER ITEM	WT
1-3	poor clothes	0	1-2	leather armor	1	1-3	buckler	1
4-6	common clothes	0	3-4	scale armor	3	4-5	shield	2
			5-6	chainmail	2	6	adventuring gear	2

THIEF

You start with 1 **RANDOM ITEM**, a **backpack** (wt 0), **waterskin** (wt 0), **rations** (1d6 uses, wt 1), a **knife** (wt 0), and 1 thing from each of the following tables:

1d6	GARB	WT	1d6	WEAPON	WT	1d6	OTHER ITEM	WT
1	rags	0	1-2	dagger	0	1	flint & steel	0
2-3	poor clothes	0	3	blackjack/sap	0	2-3	lockpicks	0
4-5	common clothes	0	4	club/cudgel	1	4-5	leather armor	1
6	quality clothes	0	5	shortsword	1	6	adventuring gear	2
			6	sling	0			

CLERIC

You start with your **holy symbol** (as chosen in step 11; wt 0), 1 **RANDOM ITEM**, a **backpack** (wt 0), **waterskin** (wt 0), **rations** (1d6 uses, wt 1), and 1 thing from each of the following tables:

1d6	GARB	WT	1d6	WEAPON	WT	1d6	OTHER ITEM	WT
1	rags	0	1-2	knife or staff	0/1	1	collection cup, 1d6sp	0
2	hooded tunic	0	3-4	dagger or club/cudgel	0/1	2-3	holy book	1
3-5	cap & cassock	0	5	mace or warhammer	1	4-5	leather armor	1
6	priestly vestments	0	6	flail or spear	2	6	chainmail	2

MAGIC-USER

You start with your **spellbook** (wt 1), 1 **RANDOM ITEM**, a **shoulder bag** (wt 0), **waterskin** (wt 0), **rations** (1d6 uses, wt 1), and 1 thing from each of the following tables:

1d6	GARB	WT	1d6	WEAPON	WT	1d6	OTHER ITEM	WT
1-3	shabby robes	0	1-2	knife	0	1	antitoxin	0
3-5	common robes	0	3-5	staff	1	2-3	writing kit	0
6	quality robes	0	6	dagger	0	4-5	1d4 books	1 ea.
						6	1d6 uses of spell components	0
			1d6	HEADGEAR	WT			
			1	turban	0			
			2	skullcap	0			
			3-4	hood	0			
			5-6	pointy hat	0			

RANDOM ITEM

1d100	ITEM	1d100	ITEM
01	abacus (5 sp, 0 wt)	51	heirloom walking stick (1 wt)
02	bag of salt (5 sp, 1 wt)	52	herbs & poultices (10 sp, 1 wt)
03	battered helmet (2 sp, 0 wt)	53	hoe (2 sp, 1 wt)
04	battered shield (18 sp, 1 wt)	54	holy symbol (1d6 sp, 0 wt)
05	broken sword (1 wt)	55	hourglass (12 sp, 0 wt)
06	bestiary (5 sp, 1 wt)	56	hunting dog (15 sp)
07	bird cage & pet bird (4 sp, 1 wt)	57	hunter's horn (2 sp, 0 wt)
08	book (8 sp, specify subject, 1 wt)	58	iron shackles (1 wt)
09	bottle of perfume (1d4 sp, 0 wt)	59	jar of pickled monster part (1 wt)
10	box of candles (2 sp, 0 wt)	60	jar of narcotic (10 sp, 0 wt)
11	bucket of pitch (1 sp, 1 wt)	61	lute (10 sp, 1 wt)
12	bundle of furs (1d6x10 sp, 3 wt)	62	music box (12 sp, 0 wt)
13	cask of grog (4 sp, 2 wt)	63	nautical chart (0 wt)
14	cast iron pot (2 sp, 1 wt)	64	notable cloak/robes (0 wt)
15	cheap jewelry/locket (1d4 sp, 0 wt)	65	notable gloves/gauntlets (0 wt)
16	child's doll (1 sp, 0 wt)	66	notable hat/cap/hood/helmet (0 wt)
17	clay jar of honey (3 sp, 0 wt)	67	notable shoes/boots/sandals (0 wt)
18	clay pipe & bag of tobacco (3 sp, 0 wt)	68	ocarina/flute (6 sp, 0 wt)
19	clay pot of lard (1 wt)	69	pet mouse/rat/cat/snake/crow (0 wt)
20	coded message (0 wt)	70	piece of jewelry (1d6x5 sp, 0 wt)
21	coin pouch (holding 3d6sp, 0 wt)	71	pitchfork (2 sp, 1 wt)
22	copper lantern & lamp oil (21sp, 1 wt)	72	pouch of bandages (1 wt)
23	cow (30 sp)	73	pouch of gold dust (1d10 sp, 0 wt)
24	crate of wine (25 sp, 4 wt)	74	pouch of knucklebones (0 wt)
25	donkey (25 sp)	75	prayer book (0 wt)
26	eyepatch (0 wt)	76	preserved monster paw (0 wt)
27	fancy belt/girdle (5 sp, 0 wt)	77	promissory note (0 wt)
28	<i>fine</i> dwarven hammer & chisel (6 sp, 1 wt)	78	retainer/sidekick (roll NPC)
29	<i>fine</i> dwarven warhammer (24 sp, 1 wt)	79	rope (50') & grappling hook (2 wt)
30	<i>fine</i> elven quiver & arrows (16 sp, 0 wt)	80	riding horse (150 sp)
31	<i>fine</i> elven shortbow (32 sp, 1 wt)	81	rusty key (0 wt)
32	<i>fine</i> leather armor (60 sp, 1 wt)	82	sack of grain (2 wt)
33	<i>fine</i> whetstone (2 sp, 0 wt)	83	sack of jerky (1d6 rations, 1 wt)
34	fishing net (4 sp, 1 wt)	84	shiny stone (0 wt)
35	fishing pole & basket (4 sp, 1 wt)	85	signet ring (1d4x10 sp, 0 wt)
36	flask of home remedy (0 wt)	86	skeleton key (0 wt)
37	flawed gemstone (1d4x5 sp, 0 wt)	87	small drum (2 sp, 0 wt)
38	fur-lined cloak (6 sp, 0 wt)	88	small humanoid skull (0 wt)
39	gardening tools (5 sp, 1 wt)	89	soapstone idol (0 wt)
40	good luck charm (0 wt)	90	spell scroll (must be deciphered, 0 wt)
41	hand mirror (3 sp, 0 wt)	91	strange egg (0 wt)
42	hand of glory (8 sp, 0 wt)	92	taxidermied creature (1 wt)
43	handful of strange seeds (0 wt)	93	tinderbox & 1d6 torches (1 wt)
44	handsaw (3 sp, 1 wt)	94	tinker's kit (4 sp, 1 wt)
45	hatchet (10 sp, 1 wt)	95	traveling trunk (3 wt when full)
46	heirloom banner (2d6 sp, 1 wt)	96	treasure map (0 wt)
47	heirloom chalice (1d12 sp, 1 wt)	97	vial of strange fluid (0 wt)
48	heirloom healer's kit (24 sp, 1 wt)	98	wanted poster (0 wt)
49	heirloom shield (25 sp, 2 wt)	99	wooden figurine (0 wt)
50	heirloom sword (18 sp, 2 wt)	100	wooden mask (0 wt)

MARKETPLACE

All prices listed are silver pieces (sp). Generally speaking, you can sell things at market for half their listed value. If you want a better deal than that, you'll need to **Negotiate** (pX).

TAGS & TERMS

<i>awkward</i>	difficult to use with grace and expediency
<i>burn</i>	inflicts 1d6 damage on its victim periodically until extinguished
<i>close</i>	target must be within a sword's reach
<i>far</i>	target must be within sight
<i>fine</i>	well-crafted and worth twice the amount of its common equivalent
<i>forceful</i>	can force a foe back
<i>hand</i>	target must be within arm's reach
<i>near</i>	target must be within a stone's throw
<i>precise</i>	roll +DEX instead of +STR to Fight
<i>rare</i>	hard to come by
<i>reach</i>	target must be just beyond a sword's reach
<i>reload</i>	takes time to reload after each use
<i>slow</i>	takes a while to take effect
<i>small</i>	cannot protect against all attacks
<i>stun</i>	may stun or knock out target when properly applied
<i>throw</i>	can be thrown effectively
<i>worn</i>	does not require hands to carry
2h	Two-handed: requires two hands to wield in combat
ammo	an abstracted quantity of ammunition
duration	an abstracted length of time, to be marked off at Judge's discretion
heal	the number of hit points restored by one use
pierce	amount of armor ignored by damage roll
power	amount of increase to casting power

WEAPONS • MELEE

TYPE	COST	DAMAGE	WT	TAGS/NOTES
punch/kick	-	1	-	<i>hand</i>
blackjack/sap	3	1	0	<i>hand, stun</i>
staff	4	1d4	1	<i>close, 2h</i>
knife	6	1d4	0	<i>precise, hand</i>
dagger	10	1d4	0	<i>hand, precise, 1 pierce</i>
hatchet	12	1d6	1	<i>throw, close, near</i>
club/cudgel	8	1d6	1	<i>close, stun</i>
mace	12	1d6	1	<i>close, forceful, stun</i>
shortsword	12	1d6	1	<i>close</i>
warhammer	12	1d6	1	<i>close, 1 pierce</i>
pick	18	1d6	1	<i>close, awkward, 2 pierce</i>
axe	16	1d8	2	<i>close</i>
sword	18	1d8	2	<i>close</i>
spear	16	1d8	2	<i>throw, reach, near</i>
flail	20	1d8	2	<i>close, forceful</i>
polearm	24	1d10	3	<i>reach, awkward, 2h</i>
great hammer	26	1d10	4	<i>close, forceful, rare, 2h</i>
great axe	30	1d10	3	<i>close, rare, 2h</i>
great sword	38	1d10	3	<i>close, reach, rare, 2h</i>

illo of various pieces of gear

WEAPONS • RANGED

TYPE	COST	DAMAGE	WT	TAGS/NOTES
throwing knife	8	1d4	0	<i>throw, and, near, precise</i>
sling	6	1d4	0	<i>near, far</i>
shortbow	16	1d6	1	<i>near, far, 2h</i>
light crossbow	20	1d6	1	<i>near, far, reload, 1 pierce, 2h</i>
longbow	24	1d8	1	<i>near, far, 1 pierce, 2h</i>
heavy crossbow	30	1d8	1	<i>near, far, reload, 2 pierce, 2h</i>

AMMUNITION

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
slingstones	1	1	3 ammo, ammunition for sling
arrows	6	1	3 ammo, ammunition for bow
bolts	12	1	3 ammo, ammunition for crossbow

ARMOR & SHIELDS

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
leather armor	30	1	1 armor
scale armor	60	3	2 armor
chainmail	90	2	2 armor
splint armor	120	4	<i>awkward</i> , 3 armor
plate armor	200	6	<i>awkward</i> , rare, 4 armor
buckler	15	1	<i>small</i> , +1 armor
shield	25	2	+1 armor

CLOTHING

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
poor clothes	1	0	<i>worn</i>
common clothes	3	0	<i>worn</i>
quality clothes	10	0	<i>worn</i>
official vestment	20	0	<i>worn</i>
winter cloak	5	0	<i>worn</i>
exquisite clothes	50	0	<i>worn</i>

GEAR

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
adventuring gear*	12	2	3 uses
rope	3	1	50 feet
animal snare	2	1	-
bedroll**	2	1	-
animal trap	4	1	-
finshing net	4	1	-
fishing pole	3	0	-
grappling hook	7	1	-
tent	7	3	-

* Each use of adventuring gear produces an item of situational utility worth 4sp or less.

** When you Pass the Night with a bedroll, you heal 1 additional ability point in the morning.

CONTAINERS

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
waterskin	1	0	-
belt pouch	1	0	-
large sack	1	0	-
shoulder bag	2	0	-
backpack	5	0	-
scrollcase	2	0	-
quiver	4	0	-
saddlebags	7	1	-

PROVISIONS

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
rations	4	1	7 uses
spirits (1 pint)	15	0	-
grog (1 quart)	1	1	-
fine wine (1 pint)	10	0	-
poor meal	1	-	feeds 3
hearty meal	1	-	-
feast	12	-	feeds 6

ILLUMINATION

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
tinderbox	3	0	includes flint, steel, tinder
candles	2	0	<i>dim</i> , 3 duration, 5 uses
torches	3	1	3 duration, 3 uses
lantern	15	1	5 duration, needs oil
flask of lamp oil	5	1	<i>burn, fragile</i> , 2 uses

TOOLS

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
whetstone	1	0	-
prybar or shovel	5	2	1d6 damage, <i>close, awkward</i> , 2h
pole	2	1	10' long
lockpicks	10	0	-
writing kit	10	0	-
crafting tools	20	1	specify craft
mapping tools	12	0	-

SPECIALTY ITEMS

TYPE	COST	WT	TAGS/NOTES
antidote	10	0	cures specific poison, 1 use
bandages	4	0	<i>slow</i> , heal 1, 3 uses
herbs & poultices	10	1	<i>slow</i> , heal 1d4, 3 uses
healer's kit	16	1	<i>slow</i> , heal 1d6, 3 uses
healing potion	50	0	<i>rare, fragile</i> , heal 1d8, 1 use
book*	uses x5	1	1-20 uses, grants +1 to Establish or Find Answers
spellbook	<i>priceless</i>	1	<i>rare</i> , magic-user starting gear
spell component**	2	0	<i>rare</i> , 1 use, grants +1 power

* Each book must be given a title (*Herbs & Berries of the Lowlands*, *Customs of the Nomads*, *Elemental Magic*, etc.), and grants the reader +1 to Establish or Find Answers about things related to that subject.

** An ingredient or reagent (mandrake, owl feathers, toad slime, etc.) that is used up in the casting of spells, granting the magic-user +1 power for that spell.

CONCOCTIONS

To create a poison or other substance, name it and describe its form, application, effect and speed. Work with the Judge to determine the level of effect. The cost of 1 dose is determined by **effect** multiplied by **speed**:

Effect: *minor* (8sp), *moderate* (16sp), *major* (40sp), *fatal* (80sp)
Speed: *slow* (x1/2), *fast* (x1), *instant* (x3).

LODGING

TYPE	COST	TAGS/NOTES
camping/squatting	-	heal 2d4 +CON per week
<i>poor</i> inn	8 -CHA/week	meals included, heal 2d6 +CON per week
<i>modest</i> inn	16 -CHA/week	meals included, heal 2d8 +CON per week
<i>comfortable</i> inn	32 -CHA/week	meals included, heal 2d10 +CON per week

SERVICES & WAGES

TYPE	COST
repairs	1/4 list cost of item
custom item	2x listed cost of item
hireling	1 share of the booty
porter	1/day
unskilled laborer	8/week
town watch	10/week*
soldier	12/week*
skilled laborer	14/week
healer	16/week
specialist	18/week
"companion"	10-CHA/night
entertainer	1-3/performance
armed escort	
<i>safe</i> route	2 per guard per day
<i>unsafe</i> route	4 per guard per day
<i>dangerous</i> route	8 per guard per day
<i>perilous</i> route	10 per guard per day
common murder	25
assassination	120

* Room and board included.

TRANSPORT

TYPE	COST	TAGS/NOTES
donkey/mule	25	cap. 12, 8 hp
packhorse	40	cap. 18, 12 hp
riding horse	150	cap. 14, 10 hp, <i>fast</i>
warhorse	300	cap. 22, 16 hp
cart	40	cap. 32
wagon	80	cap. 40
raft/sledge	30	cap. 16
barge	100	cap. 52
river boat	200	cap. 80
merchant ship	5,000	cap. 500
war ship	20,000	cap. 250
passage		
<i>safe</i> route	1/day	-
<i>unsafe</i> route	5/day	-
<i>dangerous</i> route	10/day	-
<i>perilous</i> route	20/day	-

REAL ESTATE

TYPE	COST	TAGS/NOTES
hovel	50	-
cottage	250	-
house	2,500	-
manse	10,000	-
keep/tower	75,000	-
castle/citadel	250,000	-
grand castle	500,000	-
upkeep	1% of cost per month	

illo of bustling town

MARKETPLACE NOTES

Items and services on the Marketplace list have the expected or agreed-upon effect within the fiction, further defined in some cases by their tags. However, several may be in need of further clarification.

PUNCH/KICK

These cost-free fighting actions are included here for comparison purposes. Generally, unarmed combat creates fictional effects or results without relying on damage rolls to incapacitate an opponent. ‘

BUCKLER VS. SHIELD

What’s the difference? They each grant an +1 armor, but the buckler is *small* and cheaper. A buckler is employed more actively to parry blows and incoming missiles, while a shield is a more passive barrier. Consider these factors—relative size, weight, and active vs. passive use—when evaluating the effects of each of these defensive tools within the fiction.

ADVENTURING GEAR

This special kind of equipment allows you to produce mundane items when you need them. When you mark off a use of adventuring gear, you reach into your pack and pull out anything on the Marketplace list that’s worth 4sp or less. This abstraction cuts down shopping time since you don’t have to hem and haw over every little piece of equipment. Once you turn a use of adventuring gear into a specific item, that item exists in the game world.

BEDROLL

As described by the **Pass the Night** move, getting a restful sleep in the wild allows you to recover a small amount of hit points and/or ability points. When you’ve got a bedroll (or the equivalent) and get a restful sleep, that extra comfort allows you to recover 1 additional ability point of your choice.

*Akyon the fighter gets into an altercation at a roadside trading post and wants to make an example of a local tough by knocking him out quickly. Is it possible? Sure. We go to the **Fight** move and Akyon rolls an 8: “you deal your weapon’s damage or effect but suffer the enemy’s attack in return.”*

I say, “Okay, you go at it, expecting to make short work of him, and you clock him a good one, but then he comes at you hard, knocking you back into a muddy ditch. You jump back to your feet, covered in muck, and he’s laughing through bloody teeth. A crowd has gathered. What do you do?”

BOOK

Every book has a title, which describes or suggests its contents. Whenever a character makes the **Establish** or **Find Answers** move, and the subject of that move falls within the range of content suggested by a book’s title, the character can mark 1 use of that book before rolling to take +1 to that roll.

*Zahraa the magic-user and Jaad, her hired porter, are searching the Devilwood for a place called the Crypt of the Shivering Finger. I tell Zahraa that she’ll need to **Find Answers** with Wisdom, but she counters that she’d like to **Establish** the location of the Crypt based on her studies of the Devilwood. “Sounds good, go for it.”*

***Establish** is a +INT roll, and Zahraa has +2 INT. She **Calls for Assistance** from Jaad, which grants another +1. Then she says, “I have this book Poets of the Frontier in my satchel. I think there’s a poem in here about the Crypt that might give me clues to its whereabouts. Can I mark a use to take another +1?”*

I love the idea of Zahraa reading a poem aloud as they search the spooky woods, so yeah—that’s another +1, which maxes out her roll modifier to +4. She rolls a 7+4 = 11: “Okay, between your previous studies, Jaad being on the lookout, and clues gleaned from the poem, you find the entrance to the Crypt in the face of an overgrown rock formation within a few hours. Jaad’s looking nervous though, now that you’re deep in the woods. What do you do?”

SPELL COMPONENT

These are special ingredients employed by wizards, sorcerers, and thaumaturges to increase the potency of their spells: eye of newt, skin of swamp snake, flakes of orichalcum, that kind of thing. As with everything else, it’s up to you how they work in the fiction of your campaign (e.g., perhaps specific spells call for specific components), but the basic mechanical effect is that marking 1 use of given component grants +1 to the magic-user’s power level for a single instance of **Casting a Spell**.

CONCOCTION

This category of item includes poisons and alchemical mixtures of all kinds. Determining the effect, cost, and drawbacks of a given concoction is left up to negotiation between the Judge and PCs, with the guidelines included here intended to give you a head start.

*Roja the thief wants to buy a tasteless poison that can be mixed into food and will put anyone who eats it to sleep within an hour or so. Does such a thing exist? I ask her to **Establish** its existence, and she rolls a 7: “there’s a caveat or complication of the Judge’s choosing.” Okay, so it is indeed a thing, but I’m going to wait until we sort out its details to declare the complication.*

Together we agree that its effect is moderate (16sp base value) and its speed is slow (x1/2 multiplier), so a single use will cost 8 silver pieces. Now I mull over potential complications. Maybe it’s not tasteless? Maybe it takes a longer time to kick in? I decide that it’s just expensive, and double the price-per-dose to 16sp.

I ask Roja what this stuff is called. “At those prices, I want to call it ‘king’s nap’ or hmm, how about ‘silversleep?’” Perfect. I add this new concoction to my campaign notes.

SEE THE FRONTIER

This section is addressed to the Judge.

After the players have created their freebooters, the steps in this section will guide you through the creation of the world in which they will live, loot, (hopefully) retire, and possibly (okay, probably) die. As we saw earlier during setting creation, this process is largely collaborative, with you acting as a steward. Be prepared to take notes as you play, since environmental details and the seeds of future adventures will likely prove important to your campaign.

As you guide everyone at the table through this procedure, keep these principles in mind:

- **Ask questions** about anything that arouses your curiosity. This is particularly useful in the early stages of campaign, because it helps establish the flavor of your world. When someone adds something to the map, you can decide to let it stand without further inquiry, allowing details to be discovered during play, or you can ask the players for more information about it and take note of their responses.
- **Look for connections** between things as they are added to the world. Good world-building gives the various parts a sense of coherence and interconnection. Even though much of the material in *Freebooters* is generated randomly, we are pattern-seekers by nature, so it's usually pretty easy to find connections between random things.
- **Embrace the fantastic** when creating the environment. Magic and the gods are real in this world, so imagine the strange reality that implies. Perhaps that forest is comprised of crystalline trees, or that mountaintop stronghold belongs to a demigod, or the dinosaurs that roam the jungle can be domesticated and used as pack animals.

Before you proceed through the following steps, you might want to read the following introduction, which will give everyone a sense of what they're about to get into:

You have come here, to the utmost edge of civilized lands, to seek your fortune in the wild. Few have dared venture into that territory, and fewer still have returned, but those who live to speak of it tell great tales, indeed: of ancient, rubble-choked ruins; of terrible beasts; of great riches awaiting plunder.

Society offers order, with everyone in their proper place. The obedient enjoy duty, labor, and protection. You want none of these things. Nor do ancient ruins and terrible beasts interest you overmuch.

You seek only riches.

1 Start with a blank map. It can be a blank sheet of paper, or a map with terrain already on it; just make sure nothing's been named or labeled yet. Ask everyone to imagine a human homeland—a civilized kingdom or empire that is mostly off the map, and ask the player to your left to draw an outline of the small part of this realm that reaches onto it. This line is the border between civilized lands and the unexplored wilderness. A quarter to one-third of the map should be civilized land; the rest comprises the wilderness in which the characters will be starting their adventures.

2 Define the homeland. When you have time later, you can use the guidelines for culture creation in *Civilization & Savagery* to flesh out the homeland. For now, ask the players its prevailing alignment—*evil, chaotic, neutral, lawful*, or *good*—and give the homeland a name. As mentioned previously, one easy way to do this is to give it a descriptive name in English and then translate it into the relevant game language.

EXAMPLE

We've decided that Hausa is the equivalent of the common tongue in our world. After some discussion we name our kingdom "Golden Land," which translates to "Kasar Zinariya."

3 Add their home settlement to the map. Ask the next player in clockwise order to draw a settlement just inside the civilized border, and ask them whether it's a village, keep, or town. Perched on the frontier, this settlement will act as the party's home base between expeditions. Have that same player draw a dashed line from the steading to the nearest map edge: this is the road back to the capital city. Then, ask that same player to decide how many days or weeks of travel by foot it would take to reach the capital, and note that at the map edge.

4 Define the settlement. On pages [XX-XX](#) of *Settlements & Citizens* you will find tables for generating each of the settlement types. Find the table for the settlement type chosen in step 3, show it to the players, and tell them to take turns choosing or rolling **FEATURES** and **PROBLEMS** until the requisite number are generated.

Discuss the implications of the results, asking questions and taking notes as necessary (for instance, if the steading is built around a temple, what's the higher power to which the temple is devoted?). If the results indicate new things that would logically be added to the map, ask players to draw those things in. Ask more questions and encourage discussion about any other potentially interesting details or ideas. Finally, name the settlement, the same way you named the homeland.

EXAMPLE

Our home settlement is a keep, with the features "site of arrival of noble" and "resource (building material)," and the problem "disease." We decide that the keep was established by a relative of the ruling family because there was a source of white limestone nearby, and that all of the structures are built with that material. Someone suggests "White Stone" as the obvious name, which translates to "Dutse Fari," which we decide to shorten to "Tsefari."

full-bleed illo of someone looking out over the wilderness from the safety of town.

5 Define their home base. Ask the next player where the party meets to plot their next excursion. Is it an inn, tavern, abandoned building, campsite, or some other place? This is where they'll regroup, recover, and recount their exploits and losses after returning from the wilderness. Ask some questions about their home base, and take note of the answers. Possible questions include:

- What about its appearance sets this place apart from its surroundings?
- If there's a proprietor, who are they, and what's noteworthy about them?
- What sort of folk frequent this place, if any?
- What are the signature sights, smells, and sounds of this place?

6 Look to the horizon. Ask all the players together what type of terrain dominates the frontier, stretching away from civilized lands as far as the eye can see. Is it dark forest? Misty wetlands? A crystalline waste? There will be pockets and regions of other types of terrain, but when people in this world think of the frontier, they think of this terrain. If the players can't reach consensus on this decision, you decide. Whatever is decided, make a note of it on the map.

7 Describe what was lost. Ask the next player to describe an ancient civilization that is said to have once flourished in the wilderness, or to roll on the **LOST CIVILIZATION** table (page XX) if they wish. Ask these questions about the result, and take notes:

- Who were the civilization's founders? Humans? Lizard people? Something else?
- Who or what ruled these people? A
- According to legend, how did their great society meet its end?
- What remnants of their existence now lie scattered throughout the wilderness?

Then, ask everyone else if there were any other lost civilizations in the area, and follow the same procedure. Two or three civilizations will give you a rich and varied treasure hunting.

8 Map the wilds. Ask the next player to name one region within the wilderness defined in the preceding step, and draw this region's outline on the map. If a prompt is needed, roll up a name using the **RANDOM REGION** table on page XX. For this region, ask that same player to do the following, and record the results:

- Choose the defining terrain of the region (forest, hills, alpine meadowland, etc.).
- Recount a fact or rumor about the region.

Go around the table and repeat this step at least once for each player. Then, if you feel like the map needs more stuff, keep going around until the playing field is rich with possibility, but still largely unknown. If the wilderness closest to their home settlement is undefined, ask players to flesh it out a little bit by adding regions there; the locals would naturally know more about these areas because of their proximity to civilization.

9 Note the landmarks. Ask each player to add a landmark to the map. It might be a ruined tower, dead tree, distinctive mountain—any relatively permanent feature that would be known and used as a reference point by the locals. If an idea is needed, roll one up using the **RANDOM PLACE** table on page XX. If you want more landmarks, go around the table again.

10 Share information. Describe the current scene at the player-characters' home base, how they're gathered, perhaps around a table, discussing what lies beyond the frontier. Then, ask at least one of the following questions of each person. If they feel like it, they can give their answer in character. Feel free to ask the same question of different people if you want to know more. Take notes about the answers, on the map or elsewhere.

- From whence do you hail, and what brings you to the frontier?
- Where is the nearest ruin, and who is said to have built it long ago?
- What creature, among those known or rumored to inhabit the nearby wilderness, do the locals speak of most fearfully? Where is the last place such a creature was sighted?
- What remarkable treasure was recently brought back by an expedition into the wilderness, and where is it said to have come from?

11 Make a plan and sally forth! Ask them about their plans for their first expedition, sit back, and let them sort out the details. If you feel like it's taking too long and no natural leader is emerging, ask them to elect a leader—who has the highest Charisma?—and look to that person for answers when you need to move things forward.

If you're out of time, the first expedition will need to wait until your next game session. Since you know where they're headed, you'll be able to prepare some things ahead of time and give a little more thought to the region before you sit down to play again. If you still have at least an hour of play time left, and you're comfortable improvising, you can just launch into the first expedition right away.

illo of a party setting off on an expedition

(sky/clouds/birds)

illo of a ancient ruins in jungle/mountains

LOST CIVILIZATION

Roll 1d12 once on each column and imagine the story that connects them.

1d12	FOUNDERS	RULER	CAUSE OF RUIN
1	humans	alien/extraplanar entity	decadence/corruption
2	humans	demigod	entropy/chaos
3	humans	demon-king/queen	exhaustion of resources
4	BEAST people	merchant-king/queen	extraplanar incursion
5	BEAST people	necromancer-king/queen	wrath of the gods
6	BEAST people	philosopher-king/queen	civil war/FACTION rebellion
7	dwarves/gnomes	priest-king/queen	invasion
8	dwarves/gnomes	seer/oracle	natural disaster
9	elves	sorcerer-king/queen	plague/disease
10	giants	warlord/chieftain	hubris
11	alien colonists	witch-king/queen	supernatural/arcane disaster
12	roll 1d10, add <i>high</i>	council of FACTION	war with LOST CIVILIZATION

BEAST

1-2	WATER-GOING	3-5	AIRBORNE	6-12	EARTHBOUND
1	whale	1	pteranadon	1	dinosaur/megafauna
2	squid/octopus	2	condor	2	elephant/mammoth
3	dolphin/shark	3	eagle/owl	3	ox/rhinoceros
4	alligator/crocodile	4	hawk/falcon	4	bear/ape/gorilla
5	turtle	5	crow/raven	5	deer/horse/camel
6	clam/crab/lobster	6	heron/crane/stork	6	cat/lion/panther
7	fish	7	gull/waterbird	7	dog/wolf/boar/pig
8	frog/toad	8	songbird/parrot	8	snake/lizard/armadillo
9	eel/snake	9	chicken/duck/goose	9	mouse/rat/weasel
10	clam/oyster/snail	10	bee/wasp/hornet	10	ant/centipede/scorpion
11	jelly/anemone	11	locust/dragonfly/moth	11	snail/slug/worm
12	insect/barnacle	12	gnat/mosquito/firefly	12	termite/tick/louse

FACTION

1d12	FACTION TYPE
1	commoner/peasant
2	criminal/corrupt
3	revolutionary/subversive
4	military/mercenary/security
5	religious/theological
6	craft/guild
7	trade/mercantile
8	labor/industrial
9	nationalist/loyalist
10	outsider/foreign
11	academic/arcane
12	roll 1d10+1 twice

RANDOM REGION

When you need to create a new region and need inspiration, roll one up. First, roll 1d12 for the **REGION NAME TEMPLATE**. Then, roll for each component of that template until you have a complete name. Rewrite or re-roll any result you don't like.

1d12	REGION NAME TEMPLATE			1d12	REGION NAME TEMPLATE		
1-4	(The) [ADJECTIVE]	[TERRAIN]		9-10	(The) [NOUN]	[TERRAIN]	
5-7	[TERRAIN] of (the) [NOUN]			11	(The) [NOUN]'s [ADJECTIVE]	[TERRAIN]	
8	The [TERRAIN] [ADJECTIVE]			12	[ADJECTIVE] [TERRAIN] of (the) [NOUN]		
1d100	TERRAIN	ADJECTIVE	NOUN	1d100	TERRAIN	ADJECTIVE	NOUN
01-02	Bay	Ageless	[Name]*	51-52	Morass	Forgotten	Life
03-04	Bluffs	Ashen	Ash	53-54	Mounds	Forsaken	Light
05-06	Bog	Black	Bone	55-56	Mountains	Frozen	Lord
07-08	Cliffs	Blessed	Darkness	57-58	Peaks	Glittering	Mist
09-10	Desert	Blighted	Dead	59-60	Plains	Golden	Peril
11-12	Downs	Blue	Death	61-62	Prairie	Green	Queen
13-14	Dunes	Broken	Desolation	63-64	Quagmire	Grim	Rain
15-16	Expanse	Burning	Despair	65-66	Range	Holy	Refuge
17-18	Fells	Cold	Devil	67-68	Reach	Impassable	Regret
19-20	Fen	Cursed	Doom	69-70	Sands	Jagged	Savior
21-22	Flats	Dark	Dragon	71-72	Savanna	Light	Shadow
23-24	Foothills	Dead	Fate	73-74	Scarps	Long	Silver
25-26	Forest	Deadly	Fear	75-76	Sea	Misty	Skull
27-28	Groves	Deep	Fire	77-78	Slough	Perilous	Sky
29-30	Heath	Desolate	Fury	79-80	Sound	Purple	Smoke
31-32	Height	Diamond	Ghost	81-82	Steppe	Red	Snake
33-34	Hills	Dim	Giant	83-84	Swamp	Savage	Sorrow
35-36	Hollows	Dismal	God	85-86	Sweep	Shadowy	Storm
37-38	Jungle	Dun	Gold	87-88	Teeth	Shattered	Sun
39-40	Lake	Eerie	Heaven	89-90	Thicket	Shifting	Thorn
41-42	Lowland	Endless	Hell	91-92	Upland	Shining	Thunder
43-44	March	Fallen	Honor	93-94	Wall	Silver	Traitor
45-46	Marsh	Far	Hope	95-96	Waste	White	Troll
47-48	Meadows	Fell	Horror	97-98	Wasteland	Wicked	Victory
49-50	Moor	Flaming	King	99-100	Woods	Yellow	Witch

* Choose a name appropriate to your setting; or, if you have a name list, roll one up.

RANDOM PLACE

When you need to create a new place and are at a loss, roll one up. First, roll 1d12 for the **PLACE NAME TEMPLATE**. Then, roll for each component of that template until you have a complete name. Rewrite or re-roll any result you don't like.

1d12	PLACE NAME TEMPLATE			1d12	PLACE NAME TEMPLATE		
1-2	The [PLACE]			7-8	(The) [NOUN]'s [PLACE]		
3-4	The [ADJECTIVE] [PLACE]			9-10	[PLACE] of the [ADJECTIVE] [NOUN]		
5-6	The [PLACE] of (the) [NOUN]			11-12	The [ADJECTIVE] [NOUN]		
1d100	PLACE	ADJECTIVE	NOUN	1d100	PLACE	ADJECTIVE	NOUN
01-02	Barrier	Ancient	[Name]*	51-52	Meadow	Hidden	Heart
03-04	Beach	Ashen	Arm	53-54	Mountain	High	Hero
05-06	Bowl	Black	Ash	55-56	Pit	Iron	Hope
07-08	Camp	Bloody	Blood	57-58	Post	Jagged	King
09-10	Cave	Blue	Child	59-60	Ridge	Lonely	Knave
11-12	Circle	Bright	Cinder	61-62	Ring	Lost	Knight
13-14	City	Broken	Corpse	63-64	Rise	Low	Muck
15-16	Cliff	Burning	Crystal	65-66	Road	Near	Mud
17-18	Crater	Clouded	Dagger	67-68	Rock	Petrified	Priest
19-20	Crossing	Copper	Death	69-70	Ruin	Red	Queen
21-22	Crypt	Cracked	Demon	71-72	Shrine	Screaming	Sailor
23-24	Den	Dark	Devil	73-74	Spire	Sharp	Silver
25-26	Ditch	Dead	Doom	75-76	Spring	Shattered	Skull
27-28	Falls	Doomed	Eye	77-78	Stone	Shifting	Smoke
29-30	Fence	Endless	Fear	79-80	Tangle	Shining	Souls
31-32	Field	Fallen	Finger	81-82	Temple	Shivering	Spear
33-34	Fort	Far	Fire	83-84	Throne	Shrouded	Spirit
35-36	Gate	Fearsome	Foot	85-86	Tomb	Silver	Stone
37-38	Grove	Floating	Ghost	87-88	Tower	Stalwart	Sword
39-40	Hill	Forbidden	Giant	89-90	Town	Stoney	Thief
41-42	Hole	Frozen	Goblin	91-92	Tree	Sunken	Troll
43-44	Hut	Ghostly	God	93-94	Vale	Thorny	Warrior
45-46	Keep	Gloomy	Gold	95-96	Valley	Thundering	Water
47-48	Lake	Golden	Hand	97-98	Village	White	Witch
49-50	Marsh	Grim	Head	99-100	Wall	Withered	Wizard

* Choose a name appropriate to your setting; or, if you have a name list, roll one up.

full bleed illo of panoramic landscape, peppered

BASIC MOVES

BOND

When you *gain a bond with someone*, write their name in the **Bonds** area of your playbook and draw a circle next to it. If their name is already there, draw another circle next to it (to a maximum of 3).

When you *mark a bond*, cross off or fill in one of the empty circles next to the name of the relevant person.

When you *refresh a bond*, clear one of the marked circles next to the name of the relevant person.

When you *make any roll to assist, defend, or avenge a person with whom you have a bond*, before rolling you may mark bonds with that person to improve your roll by +1 for each bond marked.

BURN LUCK

When you *have made ANY ROLL except a +LUC roll*, you may burn 1 Luck to raise or lower the result of that roll by 1.

CHECK REACTION

When you *encounter a person or creature that has no particular predisposition toward you*, roll +nothing; **on a 10+**, they react as positively to your presence as their alignment allows; **on a 7-9**, they react warily, waiting to see what you do first; **on a 6-**, they react with as much hostility as their alignment permits.

ESTABLISH

When you *introduce a potential fact* and the Judge agrees that it might be true, say how you heard about it. When its truth is tested (now or later), roll +INT: **on a 10+**, it's just as you say; **on a 7-9**, you were right, but there's a caveat or complication of the Judge's choosing; **on a 6-**, mark Intelligence, and the Judge makes a move.

FIND ANSWERS

When you *seek more information than is readily apparent*, ask the GM a question and roll...

...+WIS to sense or discern
...+INT to recall or study
...+CHA to ask around

On a 10+, the Judge gives you a clear and thorough answer, and you may ask follow-up questions; **on a 7-9**, the Judge's answer is cryptic or incomplete, but they'll tell you how to learn more; **on a 6-**, mark the ability used, and the GM makes a move.

GET LUCKY

When you *hope things will go your way*, roll +LUC: **on a 10+**, they do, at least for now; **on a 7-9**, they do, but there's a trade-off of the Judge's choosing; **on a 6-**, the Judge will say how your hopes are dashed.

When you *have the highest current Luck of everyone present and a windfall occurs*, you're the one who benefits most.

When you *have the lowest current Luck of everyone present and a misfortune occurs*, you're the one who bears the brunt.

HELP OR HINDER

When you *assist or interfere with someone making a move*, explain how you do so before they roll any dice. If the Judge thinks your explanation is reasonable, the rolling player takes +1 or -1 to their roll, your choice.

LEVEL UP

When you *have XP greater than 5+(5x your current level)*, and enough time to reflect on your experiences and hone your skills, do the following:

- 1) Increase your level by 1.
- 2) Regain burned Luck equal to your new level.
- 3) If your new level is even (2, 4, 6, etc.), choose a new **Advanced Move** from your playbook.
- 4) If your new level is odd (3, 5, 7, etc.):
 - Mark 2 different abilities of your choice (excluding Luck)
 - Increase your maximum hit points by one roll of your hit die, +CON (minimum 1 hit point).

LIVE AND LEARN

When you *mark an ability*, mark the next unmarked circle under that ability on your playbook. When you *mark an ability's last unmarked circle*, raise that ability's maximum by 1 (to a maximum of 18), adjust its modifier if necessary, and erase all of its marks. When you *would raise an ability but it's already at 18*, mark XP instead, and erase all of its marks.

BASIC MOVES (continued)

MAKE A SAVING THROW

When you *act in the face of danger*, roll...

- ...+STR to use sheer might
- ...+DEX to use speed, agility, or finesse
- ...+CON to resist or endure
- ...+INT to think fast, focus, or remember
- ...+WIS to use intuition or willpower
- ...+CHA to charm or impress

On a 10+, you do it, as well as one could hope; on a 7-9, you do it, but there's a catch—the Judge will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice; on a 6-, mark the ability used and the Judge makes a move.

If you feel the need for a +LUC saving throw, use **Get Lucky** instead.

NEGOTIATE

When you *want something from someone that they don't want to give up*, make your case and roll...

- ... +STR to intimidate them
- ... +INT to appeal to their sense of reason
- ... +CHA to charm or deceive them

On a 10+, they'll do it; on a 7-9, they'll do it, but only if you concede something meaningful in return; on a 6-, mark the ability used, and they'll have none of it—time to try another approach.

SHOULDER BURDEN

When you *carry more weight than your Capacity but no more than twice your Capacity*, you suffer -1 ongoing until you lighten your load. You cannot carry more weight than twice your Capacity.

RISE TO THE OCCASION

When you *assume the role of a follower after you Bite the Dust*, choose a follower and fill in a new playbook for them. Follow the usual instructions for making a freebooter, but use the follower's name and what you know about them to choose (instead of roll) their appearance, alignment, and traits. You start with whatever gear the follower had and XP equal to their Luck.

WRAP UP

When you *reach the end of a session*:

- *If you're multiclassing*, choose which of your classes to use for marking XP.
- *If you're a fighter*, mark XP if you solved a problem with physical prowess.
- *If you're a thief*, mark XP if you solved a problem with stealth or trickery.
- *If you're a cleric*, mark XP if you acted according to your cause.
- *If you're a magic-user*, mark XP if you solved a problem with magic.
- *If you fulfilled at least one trait in a memorable way*, mark XP.
- *If you fulfilled your alignment goal at least once*, mark XP.

Then, answer these questions as a group. For each "yes" answer, everyone marks XP.

- Did we make an exciting discovery?
- Did we overcome a difficult obstacle?
- Did we acquire some memorable booty?

Then, you have the option to lose 1 trait, gain 1 trait, and possibly change alignment:

- 1) Choose 1 of your traits. If you did not act on it this session, you may erase it.
- 2) If you acted on a different trait listed on the **TRAIT** table, and everyone agrees, you may gain that trait.
- 3) In the end, you must have 2 or 3 traits; if you have only 2, 1 must be a vice and 1 must be a virtue.
- 4) Check to see if your new traits result in an alignment change. If so, record your new alignment and alignment goal.

ALIGNMENT	VIRTUES	VICES
evil	0	3
chaotic	1	2
neutral	1	1
lawful	2	1
good	3	0

Finally, decide together what you want to do next session and tell the Judge your plan, so they can prep accordingly.

BATTLE MOVES

BITE THE DUST

When you *have zero or fewer hit points*, you're incapacitated and probably dead, but if someone rolls you over to check within a few hours, roll +LUC: **on a 10+**, it's a miracle!—you're alive with 1 HP, and choose 2 from the list below; **on a 7-9**, you're alive with 1 HP, and choose 3 from the list; **on a 6-**, you're gone. Which is also the case if no one rolls you over to check within a few hours.

- You're unconscious until you heal up to half your total HP
- You'll die within CON+1 hours (minimum 1) without proper treatment
- You've incurred a major, permanent injury of Judge's choice
- You suffer 1d6 ability score damage to each of 2 abilities (Judge's choice)

When you *die*, you may **Rise to the Occasion** now, or wait until you get back to town and **Sign Up** as a new character.

CHECK MORALE

The first time you *reduce an enemy's headcount or hit point total to less than half its original value*, roll +nothing: **on a 10+**, they attempt to flee or surrender, whichever seems best to them; **on a 7-9**, they attempt to flee or surrender if they're *cautious*, but otherwise continue fighting; **on a 6-**, they will fight to the bitter end. *Fearless* and *mindless* enemies are immune to this move.

FIGHT

When you *face a foe in personal combat*, roll +STR: **on a 10+**, you deal your damage or intended effect; **on a 7-9**, you deal your weapon's damage or effect but suffer the enemy's attack in return; **on a 6-**, mark Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity (your choice), and the Judge makes a move.

LEAD THE RETREAT

When you *urge your comrades to follow your example and run for their lives*, burn 1 Charisma and then roll +CHA: **on a 10+**, each person who runs (including you) takes +1 ongoing until they stop fleeing from the threat; **on a 7-9**, your allies take +1 forward to whatever they do next; **on a 6-**, mark Charisma, and the Judge makes a move.

SHOOT OR THROW

When you *attack a target with a ranged weapon*, roll +DEX: **on a 10+**, you inflict damage; **on a 7-9**, you inflict damage after choosing 1 from the list below; **on a 6-**, mark Dexterity, and the Judge makes a move.

- Mark off 1 ammo (a thrown weapon becomes irrecoverable)
- Bad angle—roll damage twice and use the lower roll
- You attract unwanted attention

ALLY MOVES

These moves come into play when NPC freinds, associates, and followers become part of the fiction.

CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

When *an ally helps you do something*, take +1 to any roll involved, but the ally is exposed to any risks or consequences.

When you *inflict damage on a single target with that aid of one or more allies*, roll each participant's damage dice along with yours and use the single highest result. Then, increase the damage inflicted by 1 for each person participating in the attack (including you).

DO SOMETHING

When *an ally does something chancy*, roll +competence: **on a 10+**, they do it, as well as one could hope; **on a 7-9**, they do it, but with lesser effect, greater cost, or unforeseen consequence of the Judge's choosing; **on a 6-**, the Judge makes a move.

GIVE ORDERS

When you *demand or expect an NPC ally to do something they really don't want to do*, roll +CHA: **on a 10+**, they do it, now; **on a 7-9**, they do it, but the Judge chooses 1 from the list below; **on a 6-**, mark Charisma, and the Judge makes a move.

- They do the thing poorly and take -1 to any roll involved
- They complain about it, and demand something in return
- It takes them longer than desired due to fear, caution, or laziness

RECRUIT

When you *go looking to hire help*, tell the Judge how many people you're looking for, and what skillsets would be ideal. If the Judge says those sorts of folks can't be found hereabouts, adjust your requirements or look elsewhere. If there's a chance you might find them here, roll +SIZE: **on a 10+**, you locate some likely candidates; **on a 7-9**, you locate some candidates, but the Judge chooses 1 from the list below; **on a 6-**, the Judge makes a move.

- They demand better compensation
- They have a need that must be met first (permission, etc.)
- They don't have quite the skillset you're looking for

The Judge will choose or roll their specifics as needed (see NPC generation rules starting on page **XX** of *Settlements & Citizens*), to be discovered through play.

SETTLEMENT	SIZE
hamlet	-3
village	-2
keep	0
town	+1
city	+3

TRAVEL & EXPLORATION MOVES

These moves become available whenever you travel a significant distance. Some reference the **safety** of the region, area, or route which you're traversing:

REGION TAG	SAFETY
<i>safe</i>	+3
<i>unsafe</i>	+2
<i>dangerous</i>	+1
<i>perilous</i>	+0

ORGANIZE THE PARTY

When you *are about to travel or explore a group*, take a moment to decide how the party is organized: who's on lookout, who's bringing up the rear, what the watch order will be, how your gear is distributed, etc. This will be your default plan until the next time you Organize the Party.

SET OUT

When you *embark on a journey*, say where you're headed. The Judge will indicate 1-3 potential routes, their known advantages and drawbacks, and how many **legs** comprise each. Choose which route to take, and which player will make the roll.

When you *start the next leg of a journey*, choose someone to roll +safety: **on a 10+**, you complete the leg in good time, consume the expected amount of rations, and any player may choose to **Keep Company**; **on a 7-9**, there's an **INCIDENT** at some point along the way—the Judge will say what it is or ask you to roll for it; **on a 6-**, the Judge makes a move.

After you resolve any interruption, the current leg is considered complete.

STAY SHARP

When you *are on the lookout and something approaches*, roll +WIS: **on a 10+**, you get the drop on it, and are able to act before it notices you; **on a 7-9**, you've been spotted, but you have time to alert everyone and prepare; **on a 6-**, mark Wisdom, and the Judge makes a move.

FORAGE

When you *spend a day seeking food in the wild*, roll...

- ...+DEX to do it stealthily
- ...+INT to recall useful knowledge
- ...+WIS to intuit the best spots

On a 10+, gain 1d4+1 uses of rations, plus another 1d4+1 uses if you have the gear to hunt or trap; **on a 7-9**, the 10+ result applies, but you must first deal with an **INCIDENT**; **on a 6-**, mark the ability used, and the Judge makes a move.

MAKE CAMP

When you *take a break from your travels to eat and sleep*, decide if you're going to have a campfire: if you do, take +1 to Pass the Night, but your location may be visible at a distance to interested parties. Then, each party member consumes 1 use of rations, and any player may choose to **Keep Company**.

PASS THE NIGHT

When you *settle in to sleep*, set the watch order and choose someone to roll +safety: **on a 10+**, everyone gets restful sleep, and those who ate and drank the night before gain both benefits on the list below; **on a 7-9**, everyone gets restful sleep, and those who ate and drank the night before each choose 1 from the list; **on a 6-**, the Judge makes a move.

- You heal 1 +CON (minimum 1) worth of hit points and/or ability points (excluding Luck)
- You awaken refreshed; take +1 forward to your first roll of the day

Then, if you have any injuries, check with the Judge to see if they've healed.

When you *fail to get a restful sleep and/or did not eat and drink the night before*, you suffer 1 point of ability damage to an ability of your choice.

KEEP COMPANY

When you *spend time conversing with a companion*, say who it is and roll +bonds you have with that person: **on a 10+**, the conversation goes well—play it out or summarize it, and choose 2 from the list below; **on a 7-9**, play it out or summarize, and choose 1 from the list below; **on a 6-**, mark XP, and the other person describes how the conversation goes poorly; you must make amends on their terms before you can Keep Company with them again.

- You gain 1 bond with them (max. 3)
- They gain 1 bond with you (max. 3)
- Refresh all marked bonds each of you has with the other

When you *spend time alone with your thoughts*, share your internal monologue. If everyone agrees your thoughts are meaningful, take +1 forward to act upon them.

full bleed illo of wilderness/exploring/camping

SETTLEMENT MOVES

These moves become available whenever you spend time in a village, town, city, or other settled community.

ACQUIRE

When you *go looking for something specific and uncommon*, say who you ask about it and roll +size: **on a 10+**, they know where you can find it; **on a 7-9**, they know where you can find it, but the Judge chooses 1 from the list below; **on a 6-**, it's nowhere to be found, and the Judge makes a move.

- It'll cost more than expected
- It'll be a poor substitute
- You'll need to jump through some hoops before you lay hands on it
- Someone else recently acquired it

SETTLEMENT	SIZE
<i>hamlet</i>	-3
<i>village</i>	-2
<i>keep</i>	0
<i>town</i>	+1
<i>city</i>	+3

FIND A BUYER

When you *seek to convert valuable objects into coin*, roll +size: **on a 10+**, someone will take it off your hands, but you'll need to **Negotiate** on price; **on a 7-9**, no one's buying today, but you can try again next week; **on a 6-**, the Judge makes a move.

SIGN UP

When you *start a new character from scratch after your previous character died*, roll them up as usual. Then, for each stash circle you had marked off on your previous character, gain 1 XP or 10 silver pieces (your choice). Finally, **Level Up** as many times as your XP dictates, and use your silver to purchase additional starting gear.

BANK IT

When you *stash booty*, for each 100 silver pieces worth of treasure you put away, mark 1 XP and 1 circle on your stash. Stashed booty may be retrieved, but loses half its value: each point of stash you erase converts back to 50sp. You may stash a valuable, even if you don't know how much it's worth; the Judge will tell you how many XP and stash circles to mark after you've socked it away.

When you *die*, your final score is the number of boxes checked in your stash box.

When you *mark your last stash circle*, it's finally time to retire from the life of a freebooter. Tell everyone how you spend your stash and bow out with the satisfaction of having lived to tell the tale.

PASS TIME

When you and your companions *spend one week of downtime in a settlement*, each of you pays one week's cost of living, and a volunteer rolls +peace (see below): **on a 10+**, nothing unusual occurs, and you may each make any one downtime move; **on a 7-9**, you may each make any one downtime move, but a settlement event occurs at the end of the week; **on a 6-**, a settlement event occurs 1d6 days into the week. A settlement event always centers on the person who volunteered to roll.

FOOD & LODGING	COST
camping/squatting	0
<i>poor</i> inn	8 -CHA/week
<i>modest</i> inn	16 -CHA/week
<i>comfortable</i> inn	32 -CHA/week
SETTLEMENT	PEACE
<i>hamlet</i>	+2
<i>village</i>	+1
<i>keep</i>	0
<i>town</i>	-1
<i>city</i>	-2

DOWNTIME MOVES

These moves become available when you **Pass Time**.

GET A JOB

When you *work for pay*, choose the ability best suited to that job, and roll +that ability: **on a 10+**, you outperform expectations and earn bonus pay; **on a 7-9**, you earn the standard amount; **on a 6-**, mark the ability used, and the Judge makes a move.

JOB	PAY	BONUS
unskilled labor	8/week	+1d4
skilled labor	12/week	+1d6
specialist	18/week	+1d8

Note that you'll need to find employment before you can work a job. Ask the Judge how you might go about doing that.

RECOVER

When you *rest for a week*, you heal hit points, ability points, and/or injuries (at the Judge's discretion) according to your lodging:

LODGING	POINTS HEALED
camping/squatting	2d4 +CON
<i>poor</i> inn	2d6 +CON
<i>modest</i> inn	2d8 +CON
<i>comfortable</i> inn	2d10 +CON

When you *Recover in the care of a skilled healer*, double the result of your roll.

TRAIN

When you *spend a week honing an ability*, say how you go about it; if the Judge agrees your plan is feasible, burn 1d4 of that ability and roll +that ability's modifier: **on a 10+**, mark 2 on the ability used; **on a 7-9**, mark 1; **on a 6-**, mark XP, and the Judge makes a move.

WORK ON A PROJECT

When you *spend a week researching a subject, learning a new skill, or making something*, consult with the Judge to make sure you have what you need to get started or continue working on the project. If you're crafting an item and need to buy supplies, use the item's market value (based on the Marketplace price list) to estimate the **supply cost**:

Supply cost = market value/2 (round up)

Ask the Judge how many **work weeks** it should take to reach your goal. If you're crafting an item, use the item's market value to estimate the number of work weeks:

Work weeks = market value/10 (round up)

Multiply the number of work weeks by two, and create a **progress** thread with that number of knots.

Then, choose the ability best suited to the task, and roll +that ability's modifier: **on a 10+**, mark 3 progress; **on a 7-9**, mark 2 progress; **on a 6-**, mark 1 progress, mark the ability used, and the Judge makes a move.

Regardless of the result of your roll, you may burn 1d4-1 of the ability used to mark 1 additional progress.

When you *mark the last progress*, you've reached your goal.

PLAYTEST RULES CLARIFICATIONS

2D6 MODIFIER LIMITS

Any given modifier for a 2d6 roll may never be greater than +4 or less than -4. Treat any modifier greater than +4 as +4, and any less than -4 as -4.

ROLLING FOR THE GROUP

When more than one character might make a roll in a given situation, only one character rolls. Which character does so depends on the situation:

When two or more characters team up to accomplish the same task, the character with the best modifier rolls. Everyone else can Help (to the maximum modifier of +4).

Alakos the fighter (+3 STR) and Thekla the magic-user (-2 STR) are attempting to push a boulder off a cliff. Alakos Makes a Saving Throw with his +3 modifier, but gets an additional +1 because Thekla is helping.

When two or more characters are trying to avoid the same risk, the character with the worst modifier rolls. A character who is not making the roll can still Help, if the Judge agrees that it makes sense within the fiction.

Alakos (+0 DEX) and Thekla (+1 DEX) are trying to sneak by Andronikos the Giant without being noticed. Alakos has to Make a Saving Throw with his +0 modifier, and Thekla doesn't roll at all. Thekla says she tries to help Alakos by gesturing for him to be quiet, but I (as Judge) don't think that's enough to justify the +1, so Alakos has to roll at +0.

ONE AGAINST MANY, MANY AGAINST ONE

If a single combatant deals damage to multiple targets at once, roll damage for each target individually.

When two or more attackers deal damage to the same enemy, roll damage for each attacker, keep only the highest roll, and add 1 to the result for each attacker.

Dhareef the fighter charges into battle against three desert ghouls, declaring that he attacks them all at once instead of focusing on a single target, and rolls an 8 to Fight: "you deal damage but suffer the enemy's attack in return." He rolls 1d8 three times for his scimitar and gets a 1, a 2, and a 3; each ghoul takes only 1 point of damage. "You charge in swinging, but they leap away from you, suffering only minor cuts!"

Since he must also "suffer the enemy's attack in return," I declare that immediately after bounding away, the creatures spring back to mob him all at once. The ghouls roll 1d6 for damage, so the fighter rolls three times and gets a 2, a 5, and a 6. We take the highest roll and add 3 because there are three ghouls, so poor Dhareef suffers 6+3=9 points of damage. His chainmail and shield together block 3 of those points, but things are not looking good.

MULTICLASSING

When you take an advanced move that allows you to multiclass (e.g., the fighter's **Templar** move, or the thief's **Menace to Society** move), you gain the basic moves for that class immediately, and gain the option to choose an advanced move from that class whenever you have the option to gain a new advanced move.

Thereafter, you continue to use the XP and level track of your original playbook, but your hit die may change, as indicated by the specific multiclass move you chose.

JUDGE MOVES

You make one of these moves when:

- Common sense dictates
- They look to you to see what happens
- They give you a golden opportunity
- A 6- result says to do so

START OR MARK A THREAD

When no other move seems applicable, or whenever it makes sense, start a new thread or mark an active one. If they can perceive the effect, tell them what's up; otherwise, just say something happened offstage.

DELEGATE

When the situation warrants, look to the tags and/or moves of a relevant NPC, monster, place, or prop, and use it as a springboard to change the situation.

OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY

Consider the strengths and proclivities of the individual party members, choose one to focus on, and make that character an offer. The fighter, a master of the longbow, notices an enemy scurrying away; the cleric, faithful to the Goddess of Nature, senses a blight corrupting the forest.

PUT SOMEONE IN A SPOT

Force them to make a tough choice by putting them (or someone they care about) in a dangerous or difficult position.

DEMONSTRATE A DOWNSIDE

Everything has a weakness. Identify one in a character, a piece of equipment, or a perfect plan—and then describe how that weakness changes things for the worse.

USE UP THEIR RESOURCES

They need their stuff to survive, and their stuff is limited. You might break an *unreliable* piece of gear, decide that 1d4 rations have spoiled, or mark duration on anything that has it.

SAY THE CONSEQUENCES & ASK

Yes, they can do that thing, but there'll be a price to pay. Tell them what it is, and let them decide whether it's worth it.

SHOW SIGNS OF A THREAT

Things are about to go south. Big tracks in the underbrush, ominous drumming in the distance, the stone floor beginning to crack underfoot. What do you do?

REVEAL AN UNWELCOME TRUTH

To their dismay, something is not as it seemed. The gold is iron pyrite; that wound becomes infected; the prisoner is a demon in disguise.

ENDANGER THEM

When the time is right—or when it's all wrong—threaten their safety. Choose the threat based on established information, make up something new, or roll for inspiration on the CREATURE or HAZARD tables.

TURN THINGS BACK ON THEM

Counter their move with a move made in kind. The fighter ambushes the goblin leader, but an NPC companion is captured; The thief steals a gem, but later the party discovers their own campsite ransacked.

SEPARATE THEM

Things get confusing in the heat of battle. Difficult terrain or shifting dungeon architecture can break up the party.

DEAL DAMAGE

Inflict HP damage when someone suffers a physical blow, or ability damage from the wear and tear of adventuring: a character might suffer 1 point of Constitution damage from an arduous journey, 1d4 points of Strength damage from sustained physical strain, or 1d6 Wisdom damage when confronted by a *terrifying* monster.

HIT POINTS, INJURY & ABILITY DAMAGE

Hit points (HP), **injuries**, and **ability damage** together measure kinds of harm that may be suffered by characters in the game. NPCs and other creatures may possess hit points and receive injuries, but only PCs suffer ability damage. Weapons always inflict HP damage, according to their listed stats; all other harm is inflicted at the discretion of the Judge.

Hit points represent a character's capacity to withstand physical duress. Think of HP less as flesh and blood and more a measure of grit, morale, and defensive skill. When describing a loss of HP in battle, imagine the character getting worn down as they fend off or evade blows, suffering only minor injuries until their HP drops to zero or below. When that happens to a PC, they make the **Bite the Dust** move; anyone else dies outright.

An **injury** occurs when it makes sense in the fiction, and impacts the fiction accordingly. It might be accompanied by HP damage, but only if it's life-threatening.

EXAMPLE

To escape the Red Tooth gang, Veronika the fighter jumps out a third-floor window into the street below. I rule that she'll suffer 1d6 damage and needs to Make a Saving Throw with CON or DEX (whichever is better) to avoid breaking a leg; she rolls a 4 for damage and a 5 for the saving throw, so I tell her her leg gives out when she hits the cobblestones. The fictional impact of the broken leg is that it puts her in great pain and limits her mobility—if the Red Teeth manage to give pursuit, they'll be able to catch up with her easily.

Ability damage is a mechanical means of registering other physical and non-physical costs exacted by a life of hardscrabble adventure. Most commonly, PCs will suffer damage to their Constitution or Strength scores when undertaking particularly strenuous or exhausting tasks, but every ability score can be damaged (see table below). 1 point of ability damage is minor; 1d4 is noticeable; 1d6 is serious; 1d8 is potentially debilitating.

ABILITY DAMAGE

Abilities can suffer damage from a variety of sources, as suggested by the **DAMAGE SOURCE** column. Things like poison, drugs, disease, magic, and divine power might damage any ability. 1 point of ability damage is minor; 1d4 is noticeable; 1d6 is serious; 1d8 is potentially debilitating.

SUGGESTED TAG BY ABILITY SCORE

ABILITY	DAMAGE SOURCE	6-8 (-1)	4-5 (-2)	1-3 (-3)	0 or less
Strength	fatigue, muscle strain	<i>weak</i>	<i>sapped</i>	<i>incapacitated</i>	<i>dead</i>
Constitution	fatigue, lack of rest, illness	<i>tired</i>	<i>exhausted</i>	<i>bed-ridden</i>	<i>dead</i>
Dexterity	stress, nerve damage	<i>clumsy</i>	<i>shaky</i>	<i>palsied</i>	<i>paralyzed</i>
Intelligence	head injury	<i>confused</i>	<i>stupid</i>	<i>mindless</i>	<i>braindead</i>
Wisdom	fear, trauma	<i>anxious</i>	<i>fearful</i>	<i>terrified</i>	<i>catatonic</i>
Charisma	reputation, disfigurement	<i>off-putting</i>	<i>repellant</i>	<i>repulsive</i>	<i>shunned</i>
Luck	magic, divine power	<i>unlucky</i>	<i>ill-fated</i>	<i>cursed</i>	<i>doomed</i>

INCIDENT

Something happens during the journey, at a point of the Judge's choosing. After it's resolved, the current leg of the journey is considered complete.

1d12	WILDERNESS	ROAD	SETTLEMENT
1	CREATURE	CREATURE	hazard
2	CREATURE	CREATURE	obstacle
3	CREATURE	CREATURE	obstacle
4	CREATURE	CREATURE	mishap
5	hazard	CREATURE	mishap
6	hazard	CREATURE	EVENT
7	obstacle	CREATURE	EVENT
8	obstacle	hazard	EVENT
9	mishap	obstacle	EVENT
10	mishap	mishap	EVENT
11	DISCOVERY	mishap	EVENT
12	DISCOVERY	DISCOVERY	EVENT

As always, consider the context when an incident occurs, and integrate it sensibly.

A mishap is an inconvenience or complication within the party that might deplete resources, such as an accident (sprained ankle, injured mount), poor navigation (a wrong turn that costs time, getting lost entirely), compromised supplies (equipment breakage, spoiled rations, vermin infestation), or interpersonal issues (misunderstanding or argument).

An obstacle is any impediment to travel that must be overcome or circumnavigated. It might be something that simply bars the way (river, crevasse, roadblock, crowded street), difficult terrain (scree, swampland, sand dunes), or a seasonal occurrence (impassable underbrush, animal herd migration).

A hazard is any potentially harmful problem that must be dealt with directly. It may be the result of the environment (quicksand, avalanche, sandstorm), a risky traversal (precipitous ledge, rickety bridge, boiling mudflats), or a bad turn in the weather (thunderstorm, hurricane, blizzard).

A CREATURE is a living thing, wild or civilized; threatening, friendly, or ambivalent. In the wilderness it might be a terrible beast, while on a road it might be a group of pilgrims. Choose one from a prepared list, or roll it up on the CREATURE table.

A DISCOVERY is something unanticipated, which may simply add color to the journey or demand further examination. Choose one from a prepared list, or roll it up on the DISCOVERY table.

An EVENT is something notable that occurs within the bounds of a settlement. Choose one from a prepared list, or roll it up on the SETTLEMENT EVENT table (see *Settlements & Citizens*).

DISCOVERY

Roll 1d12 for general category, 1d12 for subcategory, 1d12 for specific discovery.

1 · UNNATURAL FEATURE

1	DIVINE	2-3	PLANAR	4-12	ARCANE
1	presence	1	outpost	1-4	blight/mutation
2-3	protected place	2-4	portal/gate	5-6	enchantment/portal
4-8	cursed/defiled place	5-8	rift/tear	7-11	taint/residue
9-12	blessed/sacred place	9-12	distortion/warp	12	source/resource

2-6 · NATURAL FEATURE

1-2	LAIR	3-5	TERRAIN CHANGE	6-8	WATER FEATURE
1-4	RUIN	1-3	hollow/cleft/defile	1	sea/ocean
5-7	cave/tunnel	4-6	canyon/valley/vale/dale	2-3	river
8-9	nest/hive/aerie	7	multilevel/tiered	4-6	lake/pond/mere/tarn
10-12	den/burrow/warren	8-9	pocket of TERRAIN	7-11	brook/stream/rill
		10-12	slope up/down	12	spring/hot spring
7-8	LANDMARK	9-10	FLORA/FAUNA	11-12	RESOURCE
1	ODDITY	1-2	notable plant/flower	1-4	game/fruit/vegetable
2-3	striking landscape	3-5	notable tree/brush	5-7	timber/stone
4-7	earth-based	6-8	notable BEAST	8-9	herbs/spice/dye source
8-10	plant-based	9-10	useful plant/herb/root	10-11	copper/tin/iron
11-12	water-based	11-12	useful BEAST	12	gold/silver/gems

7-9 · EVIDENCE

1-6	TRACKS/SPOOR	7-10	REMAINS/DEBRIS	11-12	STASH/CACHE
1-2	trail of blood/fluid	1-4	bones of CREATURE	1-4	roll 1d4 STASH booty
3-4	signs of violence	5-6	CREATURE corpse/carcass	5-7	roll 1d6 STASH booty
5-6	multiple/many signs	7-9	junk/refuse	8-10	roll 1d8 STASH booty
7-9	definite/recent/clear	10-11	1d6 PERSONAL ITEMS	11	roll 1d10 STASH booty
10-12	faint/old/unclear	12	lost TRADE GOOD	12	roll 1d12 STASH booty

10-12 · STRUCTURE

1	ENIGMATIC	2-3	INFRASTRUCTURE	4-5	DWELLING
1-4	ODDITY	1-3	signpost/marker	1-4	campsite/hovel/hut
5-7	mound/earthworks	4-5	bridge/aqueduct	5-8	homestead/farmstead
8-10	monument/megalith	6-11	track/path/trail/road	9-10	inn/toll house/mill
11-12	statue/idol/totem	12	mine/quarry	11-12	tower/keep/castle
6-7	RELIGIOUS	8-11	RUIN	12	SETTLEMENT
1-3	grave marker	1-4	DUNGEON	1-4	hamlet
4-6	graveyard/burial ground	5-6	SETTLEMENT	5-7	village
7-9	tomb/crypt/barrow	7-8	RELIGIOUS (1d8+4)	8-9	keep
10-11	temple/monastery	9-10	DWELLING (1d8+4)	10-11	town
12	great temple/sanctuary	11-12	INFRASTRUCTURE (1d8+4)	12	city

CREATURE

Choose one that suits, or roll 1d12 +safety of area (+3 for *safe*, +2 for *unsafe*, +1 for *dangerous*, +0 for *perilous*) for general category, 1d12 for subcategory, and 1d12 for specific type of creature. Wing it from there, or use the creature creation guidelines (*Beasts & Booty*, pages **XX-XX**).

1-4 • MONSTER

1	LEGENDARY	2-3	SUPERNATURAL	4-12	FEARSOME
1-2	ODDITY + <i>huge</i>	1	divine/demonic lord	1-3	BEAST + ABILITY
3-4	dragon/titan + COLOR	2-3	elemental (ELEMENT)	4-5	BEAST + ODDITY
5-6	dragon/titan + BEAST	4-6	imp/demon	6-7	BEAST + BEAST
7-9	dragon/titan	7-8	wight/wraith	8-10	slime/ooze
10-12	BEAST + <i>huge</i>	9-12	wisp/ghost/specter	11-12	plant/fungus

5-9 • BEAST

1-2	WATER-GOING	3-5	AIRBORNE	6-12	EARTHBOUND
1	whale/narwhal	1	pteranadon	1	dinosaur/megafauna
2	squid/octopus	2	condor	2	elephant/mammoth
3	dolphin/shark	3	eagle/owl	3	ox/rhinoceros
4	alligator/crocodile	4	hawk/falcon	4	bear/ape/gorilla
5	turtle	5	crow/raven	5	deer/horse/camel
6	clam/crab/lobster	6	heron/crane/stork	6	cat/lion/panther
7	fish	7	gull/waterbird	7	dog/wolf/boar/pig
8	frog/toad	8	songbird/parrot	8	snake/lizard/armadillo
9	eel/snake	9	chicken/duck/goose	9	mouse/rat/weasel
10	clam/oyster/snail	10	bee/wasp/hornet	10	ant/centipede/scorpion
11	jelly/anemone	11	locust/dragonfly/moth	11	snail/slug/worm
12	insect/barnacle	12	gnat/mosquito/firefly	12	termite/tick/louse

10-11 • HUMANOID

If the dominant culture of the region is not human, substitute "human" for one of the asterisked (*) entries. Roll NPC OCCUPATION, ALIGNMENT, and TRAITS if desired (*Settlements & Citizens*, pages **XX-XX**).

1-2	RARE	3-5	UNCOMMON	6-12	COMMON
1-2	human + MONSTER	1	cyclops/giant (<i>large</i>)	1-2	orc/hobgoblin/gnoll
3-4	major <i>undead</i>	2-3	ogre/troll (<i>large</i>)	3-5	goblin/kobold (<i>small</i>)
5-6	wereBEAST	4-7	minor <i>undead</i>	6-7	half-elf/half-orc etc.
7-8	human + BEAST	8	lizardfolk/merfolk	8-9	halfling* (<i>small</i>)
9-10	fey/fairy (<i>tiny</i>)	9	catfolk/birdfolk	10-12	mixed party (<i>group</i>)
11-12	elf*	10-12	dwarf/gnome* (<i>small</i>)		

12+ • HUMAN

If humans do not comprise the dominant culture of the region, substitute the species that is dominant. Roll NPC OCCUPATION, ALIGNMENT, and TRAITS if desired (*Settlements & Citizens*, pages **XX-XX**).

DETAILS

These tables are arranged in alphabetical order. Use whichever you choose, whenever prompts for ideas or descriptions are needed.

ABERRANCE		ABILITY		ACTIVITY	
1	multicephalous	1	bless/curse	1	laying trap/ambush
2	profuse sensory organs	2	entrap/paralyze	2	fighting/at war
3-4	anatomical oddity	3	levitate/fly/teleport	3	prowling/on patrol
5	many limbs/digits	4	telepathy/mind control	4	hunting/foraging
6	acephalous/decentralized	5	mimic/camouflage	5	eating/resting
7	tentacles/feelers	6	seduce/hypnotize	6	arguing/infighting
8	gibbering/babbling	7	dissolve/disintegrate	7	traveling/exploring
9	exudes chaos/blight	8	based on ASPECT	8	trading/negotiating
10	shapechanging	9	based on ELEMENT	9	fleeing/running away
11-12	roll 1d10 twice	10	drain life/drain magic	10	building/excavating
		11	MAGIC TYPE	11	sleeping/unconscious
		12	roll 1d10+1 twice	12	nursing injury/dying

ADJECTIVE		AGE		ALIGNMENT	
1	slick/slimy	1	unborn/nascent	PREVAILING ALIGNMENT	
2	rough/hard/sharp	2	being born/budding	G	L N C E
3	smooth/soft/dull	3	newborn/blossoming	1	e e e e e
4	corroded/rusty	4-6	young/green	2	c e c e e
5	rotten/decaying	7-9	mature/ripe	3	c l c c e
6	broken/brittle	10	old/going soft	4	n l n c e
7	stinking/smelly	11	dead/withered/ancient	5	n l n c e
8	weak/thin/drained	12	dust/pre-historic	6-7	l l n c c
9	strong/fat/full			8	g n n n n
10	pale/poor/shallow			9	g n n n n
11	dark/rich/deep			10	g c l l l
12	colorful			11	g g l g l
				12	g g g g g

ASPECT		COLOR		CONDITION	
1	war/discord	1	white/bright/pale	1	being built/born
2	hate/envy	2	red/pink/maroon	2-4	intact/healthy
3	power/strength	3	orange/peach	5-7	active/alert
4	trickery/dexterity	4	yellow/mustard/ochre	8-9	weathered/tired/weak
5	time/constitution	5	green/chartreuse/sage	10	vacant/lost
6	lore/intelligence	6	blue/aquamarine/indigo	11	damaged/hurt/dying
7	nature/wisdom	7	violet/purple	12	broken/missing/dead
8	culture/charisma	8	gray/slate		
9	luck/fortune	9	brown/beige/tan		
10	love/admiration	10	black/dark		
11	peace/balance	11	metallic/prismatic		
12	glory/divinity	12	transparent/clear		

DAMAGE TYPE		DESIGN		ELEMENT	
1-2	blunt/bludgeoning	1	blank/plain	1	void
3-4	edged/slashing	2	floral/organic	2	death/darkness
5-6	pointed/piercing	3	circular/curvilinear	3-4	fire/metal/smoke
7	constricting/crushing	4	geometric/triangular	5-6	earth/stone/vegetation
8	poison/toxic	5	asymmetrical	7-8	water/ice/mist
9	acid/dissolving	6	square/rectilinear	9-10	air/wind/storm
10	choking/asphyxiating	7	meandering/labyrinthine	11	life/light
11	ELEMENTAL	8	oceanic/wavelike	12	stars/cosmos
12	roll 1d10+1 twice	9	astrological/cosmic		
		10	balanced/harmonious		
		11	erratic/chaotic/random		
		12	roll 1d10+1 twice		

FACTION		MAGIC TYPE		ODDITY	
1	commoner/peasant	1	necromancy	1	bright/garish/harsh
2	criminal/corrupt	2-3	evocation/destruction	2	geometric/concentric
3	revolutionary/subversive	4	conjunction/summoning	3	web/network
4	military/merc/security	5	illusion/glamour	4	crystalline/glassy
5	religious/theological	6	enchantment/artifice	5	fungus/slimy/moldy
6	craft/guild	7	transformation	6	gaseous/misty/illusory
7	trade/mercantile	8	warding/binding	7	volcanic/explosive
8	labor/industrial	9-10	ELEMENTAL	8	magnetic/repellant
9	nationalist/loyalist	11	restoration/healing	9	multilevel/tiered
10	outsider/foreign	12	divination/scrying	10	absurd/impossible
11	academic/arcane			11-12	roll 1d10 twice
12	roll 1d10+1 twice				

ORIENTATION		TERRAIN		VISIBILITY	
1-2	down/earthward	1	sea/ocean	1-2	buried/hidden/invisible
3	north	2	wasteland/desert	3-6	obscured/overgrown
4	northeast	4-6	lowland/plains	7-9	obvious/in plain sight
5	east	6	wetland/swamp	10-11	visible at near distance
6	southeast	7-8	woodland/jungle	12	visible at far distance
7	south	9-10	highland/hills		
8	southwest	11	mountains		
9	west	12	roll 1d10+1, +ODDITY		
10	northwest				
11-12	up/skyward				

THREADS

Make the world feel real is an important principle. The players should feel like their characters are in a living, breathing place that they can change with their actions, but that would continue on without them if they weren't around. This feeling underlines the struggle to survive and succeed which is at the heart of the game, and heightens the sense of accomplishment that accompanies each goal completed or level gained.

Maintaining a living fictional world might seem like a lot of work for the Judge, but that work can be organized and simplified to the point where it takes up very little prep time. In *Freebooters*, the tool used to that end is called a "thread."

A thread is a kind of countdown or timer that the Judge uses to keep track of things transpiring "offstage" or in the background of the fiction being played out by the PCs. A thread can be used to track everything from a budding romance between a PC and NPC to a kingdom mobilizing for war.

STARTING A THREAD

The Judge can make the Judge move "Start or mark a thread" like any other Judge move; all she needs is the right opportunity. An opportunity in this sense is any time the fiction suggests a sequence of background events that might eventually impact the PCs.

When you start a thread, write down a word or phrase that summarizes the content of the thread. While the fact that a thread is being started need not be withheld from the players, the nature and contents of a thread are often only known to the Judge until the PCs become aware of its effects by witnessing them in-game.

EXAMPLES

① *The party raids a swamp tomb and escapes with some booty. When they look to the Judge to see what happens next, the Judge sees an opportunity to start a thread, and decides that breaking the seal on the tomb awakened the dead within. Over time, the dead will slowly emerge and move toward the nearest settlement. She tells the players that she's starting a thread and decides to name it "The Tomb Curse," but chooses not to tell them the name or anything else about it, since the characters don't yet realize their actions have awakened the dead.*

② *During a jungle expedition, Jan the Fighter is bitten by a poisonous snake. He needs to Make Saving Throw to resist the effects of the poison, and Jan's player rolls a 5. The Judge makes a move by starting a thread that he calls "Jan Poisoned," and tells everyone as much, but does not reveal the contents of the thread. Jan knows he's been bitten, but the longterm effects of the bite will not be clear until enough time has passed.*

③ *In town, Matild the Thief saves Lazlo the NPC beggar from public humiliation and Lazlo is deeply grateful, asking Matild if there's anything he can do for her. Matild mumbles, "Sure—find enough silver to pay off my debt to Bogнар," and looks to the Judge to see what happens next. The Judge decides that Lazlo takes Matild's throwaway comment to heart and starts a thread named "Marla's Debt," which will track Lazlo's progress in saving enough silver to eventually pay off Bogнар. The Judge reveals nothing beyond saying, "Lazlo looks you hard in the eye before he squeezes your hand and disappears into the crowd."*

KNOTTING A THREAD

At some point after starting a thread by writing it down, you'll need to define it further, by giving it a length and choosing specific effects or events that will occur at different points along its length.

The length of a thread is an abstracted representation of how much time will pass before the thread ends, and is quantified by the number of steps, or "knots" in the thread. You can think of each knot as one tick of a countdown. A thread can be any length, but limiting your choice to 3 (short), 5 (medium), or 7 (long) knots makes things easier.

When you choose a length for a thread, draw the knots along a vertical line under the thread name.

EXAMPLE

① *The Judge decides that "The Tomb Curse" is a slow-burning Thread, but not super long, so she assigns it 5 knots:*

THE TOMB CURSE



Write an event or effect next to the last knot—this is the thing that happens when the thread reaches its natural conclusion. The last knot should always be something that has a noticeable impact on the world and/or characters. It doesn't always need to be earth-shattering, but it should be meaningful. Write that last event with dramatic impact mind.

Then, if it seems appropriate, add events to some or all of the other knots. Each event you add should mark progress toward the thread's conclusion.

EXAMPLE

① *The Judge decides that the Tomb Curse will reach its conclusion when the arisen dead reach the settlement of Graybridge (the party's home base). Thinking about what might lead up to that event, she chooses a couple of other markers of their progress and writes each next to its own knot.*

THE TOMB CURSE

- The dead leave the tomb
- The dead cross the swamp
- The dead attack Graybridge!

Once you've written in as many events as you feel necessary, your thread is ready to play out in the background until the PCs become aware of it and take action to change it, or until it runs its course.

MARKING A THREAD

The other part of the Judge move "Start or mark a thread" is the marking. When you mark a thread, you check off the next knot in the sequence. This means that the event attached to that knot occurs, and that the thread is one step closer to its end.

When you mark a thread, and there's an event written next to the marked knot, that event takes place. If the PCs have any way of knowing about the event, tell them what they would know and play to find out what happens next; otherwise, just mark it and carry on with play. Keep in mind that although they may not witness a particular event first-hand, the PCs might encounter evidence or repercussions of its occurrence later on.

If the players are not privy to the contents of the thread, and don't have any way of knowing that a particular event just occurred, feel free to tell them you're marking a thread, but don't tell them what it means.