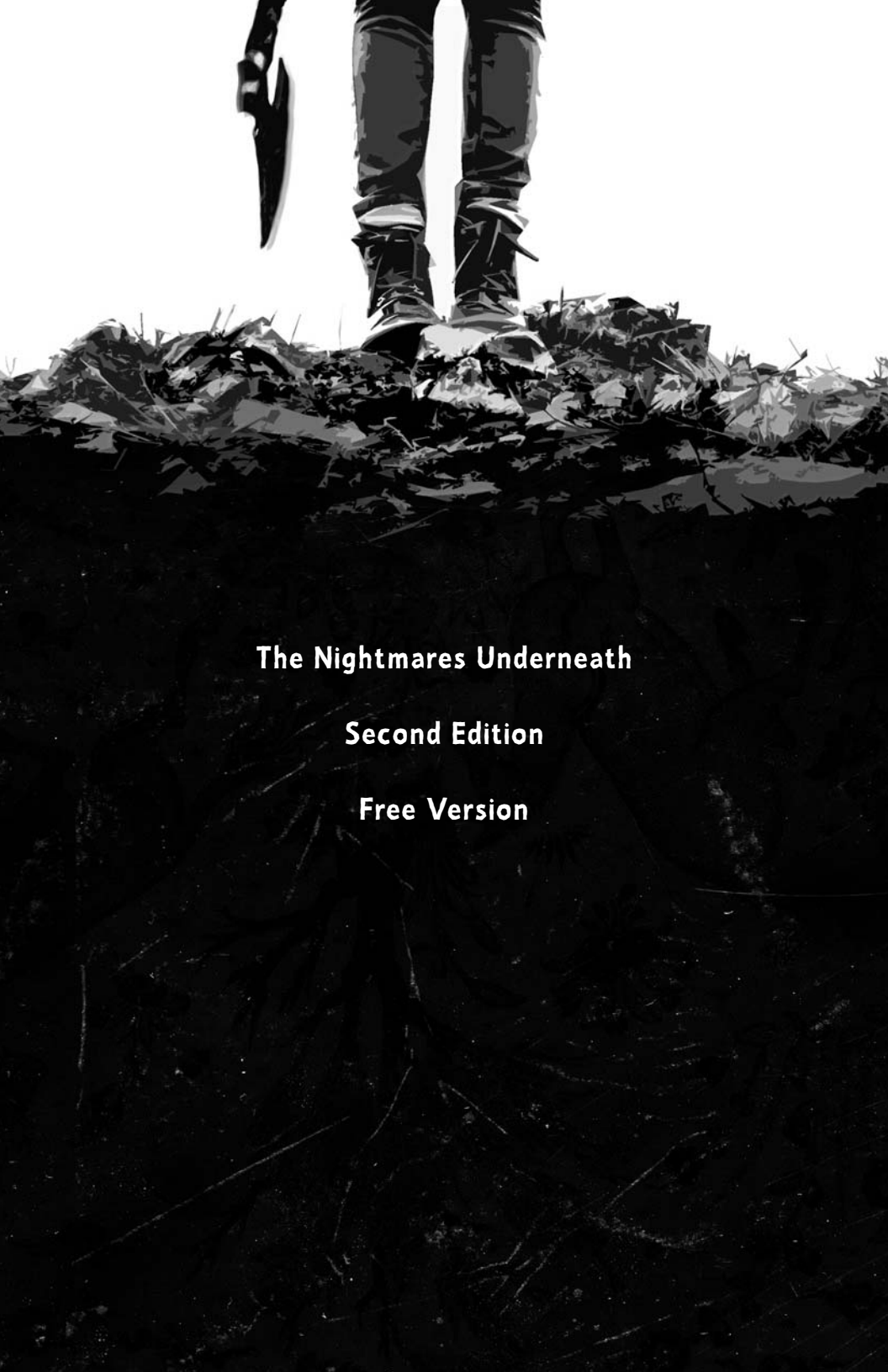




The Nightmares Underneath

Second Edition

Free Version

From beyond the veil of sleep, inhuman forces invade.

The Nightmares Underneath

An old-school fantasy role-playing game.

Second Edition

2019
Vancouver
Canada

The Nightmares Underneath

Written, illustrated, and published by Johnstone Metzger.
Vancouver, Canada.
November, 2019.

Second edition.
Originally published 2016.

Direct Inspirations

Apocalypse World, by D. Vincent Baker.
Basic D&D, by Tom Moldvay.
Blacksand! by Marc Gascoigne and Pete Tamlyn.
Blades in the Dark, by John Harper.
Call of Cthulhu, by Sandy Petersen and friends.
Carcosa, by Geoffrey McKinney.
Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG, by Joseph Goodman.
Dungeons & Dragons, by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.
Expert D&D, by Dave Cook.
Freebooting Venus, by D. Vincent Baker.
Into the Odd, by Chris McDowell.
Kult, by Gunilla Jonsson and Michael Petersén.
Metamorphosis Alpha, by Jim Ward.
Miseries and Misfortunes, by Luke Crane.
The Rise of Early Modern Science: Islam, China, and the West, by Toby E. Huff.
Shahnameh: The Epic of the Persian Kings, by Ferdowsi (trans. Ahmad Sadri),
illustrated by Hamid Rahmanian.
The Swords of Shahrazar, by Robert E. Howard.
The Venture of Islam, by Marshall Hodgson.
Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, by Richard Halliwell, Rick Priestley, Graeme Davis,
Jim Bambra, and Phil Gallagher.
Whitehack, by Christian Mehrstam.
Wonder & Wickedness, by Brendan Strejcek.

Players

Ariel Cayce, Elwood Pudding, Ian Forbes, Jackson Tegu,
Jonathan Walton, Legion McRae, Lester B. Portly, and
Stephen Wood played this game while it was being written.
Thank you all.



Joy is not my profession either.

Table of Contents

Part One	13	Part Two	59
Some Words of Introduction		The Rules of Play	
Role-Playing Games	14	Basic Resolution Rules	60
<i>Contents</i>	15	<i>Advantage and Disadvantage</i>	61
<i>Using Characters from Other Games</i>	17	<i>Attribute Loss</i>	62
Chapter 1: Alabaster and Frankincense	21	<i>Overcoming the Enemy's Defences</i>	62
The Rule of Law	22	<i>Rolling on a Random Table</i>	64
<i>The Sources of Law</i>	24	<i>Saving Yourself from Danger</i>	66
<i>The Letter of the Law</i>	26	<i>Testing Your Skills</i>	67
The Highland Coast	28	<i>Working as a Team</i>	68
<i>The People of the Coast</i>	28	Chapter 3: Brothers and Sisters in Arms	73
<i>Ethnicities of the Coast</i>	30	The Players' Characters	74
<i>Playing with Language</i>	31	<i>Attribute Scores</i>	75
<i>Geth by the Salt Sea</i>	32	<i>Modifiers</i>	76
<i>Neth-Hadrazzar</i>	34	<i>Professions</i>	77
<i>Shahrazar</i>	38	Assassin	78
<i>Town and Country</i>	40	Bard	81
Chapter 2: Beneath the Sunlit Lands	45	Champion	82
The Threat of Chaos	46	<i>Alignment</i>	83
<i>The Realms of Creation</i>	46	Cultist	86
<i>A Darkness, From Beyond</i>	48	<i>Abjuration of a Spiritual Enemy</i>	87
<i>The Vale of Serpents</i>	50	Fighter	88
This Age's Heroes	52	Scholar	91
<i>Crew Types</i>	52	Thief	92
		Wizard	95
		<i>Professional Details</i>	96
		<i>Spells</i>	97
		<i>Alignment</i>	100
		<i>Money and Equipment</i>	101
		<i>Social Class</i>	101
		<i>Describing Your Character</i>	102
		<i>Motives</i>	103
		<i>Finishing Details</i>	104
		Equipment	107
		<i>Hauling Stuff Around</i>	108
		<i>Random Starting Gear</i>	116
		Advancement	134



Chapter 4: Carousing in the Kingdoms of Dreams	139	Resisting Arcane Influence	198
Between Adventures	140	<i>Overcoming Enchantments</i>	199
<i>Down and Out in Pernicious Abandon</i>	141	The Magic of the Gods	200
<i>Living in Style</i>	142	Spell Descriptions	202
Buying and Selling	144	Magic Items	230
<i>Special Goods</i>	145	<i>Arcane Accoutrements</i>	232
<i>Inflation</i>	146	<i>Arcane Tools</i>	233
<i>Investing Your Money</i>	148	<i>Charged Items</i>	234
Creating Institutions	149	<i>Unique Magic Items</i>	238
<i>Investing in Social Structures</i>	149	Chapter 6: Raiding the Nightmare Realms	251
<i>Communist Party</i>	152	Braving the Underworld	252
<i>Hotel</i>	153	<i>Dungeoneering</i>	252
<i>Necromancers' Guild</i>	154	<i>Encumbrance</i>	256
<i>Printer</i>	155	<i>Navigating Obstacles</i>	257
<i>Tea House</i>	156	<i>Searching</i>	258
<i>Thieves' Guild</i>	157	Dungeon Encounters	260
<i>University</i>	158	<i>Starting the Encounter</i>	260
<i>Vice Den</i>	159	<i>Evasion</i>	262
Dealing with People	161	<i>Interaction</i>	263
<i>Contacts</i>	162	Harm and Violence	264
<i>Hiring Retainers</i>	164	<i>Before a Fight Happens</i>	264
<i>Persuasion</i>	170	<i>Combat Rounds</i>	264
<i>Tarnishing Your Reputation</i>	171	<i>Attacking</i>	268
Dealing with Settlements	173	<i>NPC Attacks</i>	272
<i>Conducting Research</i>	173	<i>Combat Situations</i>	274
<i>Resentment</i>	174	<i>Injury and Death</i>	279
Justifying the Spoils	178	<i>Recovery</i>	286
Chapter 5: Casting Spells and Other Enchantments	185	The Taint of Corruption	291
The Nature of Spells	186	<i>Dealing with the Madness</i>	291
<i>Magical Formulas</i>	187	<i>The Nightmare's Curses</i>	292
<i>Spellbooks</i>	188	<i>Lifting the Curse</i>	303
<i>Potions and Spell Containers</i>	190	Chapter 7: A World Full of Nightmares	307
<i>Learning New Spells</i>	191	The GM's Job	308
Performing Magic	193	Creating a Nightmare Incursion	311
<i>Casting a Spell</i>	193	<i>Step 1: The Crown</i>	312
<i>Controlling a Spell</i>	194	<i>Step 2: The Anchor</i>	313
<i>Spell Corruption</i>	196	<i>Step 3: Additional Threats</i>	314
<i>Spells Quick Reference</i>	197	<i>Step 4: The Map</i>	318

Creating Nightmares	324
<i>Concept</i>	324
<i>Nightmare Fuel</i>	328
<i>Monster Stats</i>	330
<i>Nightmare Abilities</i>	334
<i>Beyond the Lair</i>	341
<i>Other Types of Monsters</i>	342
Creating Ruins	345
<i>Additional Threats</i>	346
<i>Random Ruins</i>	350
<i>The Surrounding Area</i>	353
Running a Nightmare Incursion	355
<i>Fixed Encounters</i>	356
<i>Random Encounters</i>	357
<i>The Countdown to Nightmares</i>	360
<i>The Growing Danger</i>	362
<i>Lairs Without Anchors</i>	364



Part Three 369

A Slight Appendix of Additional Material

Why Optional?	370
<i>Contest Resolution</i>	370
<i>Equipment Breakage Rules</i>	371
<i>Troupe Style Play</i>	371
<i>Zero to Hero Disposition</i>	371
Random Tables	372
<i>For Monsters</i>	372
<i>For People</i>	374
<i>For Treasures and Things</i>	375



Part Four 385

The Indices

General Index	386
Index of Spells by Level	394
Index of Tables	396

Part One

Some
Words
of introduction.

Role-Playing Games

The Nightmares Underneath is a tabletop role-playing game, for two or more players. One player must be the Game Master (GM) who is responsible for the rules of the game and the fictional setting. The other players portray Player Characters (PCs)—the protagonists of the game—who explore the fictional setting. Other characters in the setting are Non-Player Characters (NPCs) who are normally portrayed by the GM. See pages 74 and 308 for more details on player objectives and the GM's job.

To determine the outcomes of certain situations you roll dice and consult the rules. In many respects, *The Nightmares Underneath* plays much the same as most other old-school fantasy role-playing games, even though it has its own particular setting and some unique rules. The core principles are in the setup and the procedures, not the resolution or the die mechanics. The GM is responsible for preparing a location (usually a dungeon) ahead of time, along with random tables to embellish it in play. The details of this prep remain unknown and unfamiliar to the other players until they uncover and experience it through play. During the game, each of these players uses their character as a lens through which to explore and discover this prepared material, and ultimately decide how they will deal with it.

Prepared locations feel more real when they are created without deliberate reference to the players' characters. This allows a setting to be explored just as easily by anyone, and keeps the game focused on the exploration of the unknown rather than simply following the protagonists around. Even so, in a long game, you may find that more and more of your prepared material draws from their past actions.

What You Need

Aside from these rules, you need to be able to draw maps and keep track of numerical ratings that change—pencils and paper work pretty good, but then again, computers and whiteboards are also fairly common these days—and you need some dice. At the very least, you need 3 six-sided dice (3d6), 2 twenty-sided dice (2d20), 2 ten-sided dice (2d10)—and if one is marked so it can be used as the tens when you roll both together as a percentile die (1d100), that's great—and 1 each of a four-sided die (1d4), an eight-sided die (1d8), and a twelve-sided die (1d12). If you have multiples of all the dice, so much the better—you'll be rolling them a lot during the game.

You might want to be familiar with the basics of role-playing games before you play this one—at least before you act as GM, anyway—as there is no tutorial section. The author assumes that, since we also live in a golden age of internet forums and video recordings, you have easy access to an infinite variety of far better introductions than these rules can hope to provide.

A Toolbox

Although this is a complete game, you can also use it as a toolbox. Loot it for interesting rules and monsters to use in other games, use these rules with a different setting, or play this game with your own house rules.

Contents

The Nightmares Underneath is divided into five sections. This section, **Part One**, introduces the game and its setting in two chapters. **Part Two** contains the rules of play and is the longest section by far, consisting of six distinct chapters. **Part Three** is a collection of optional rules and material, and **Part Four** contains the index. These last two sections are not divided into separate chapters. Each part except the index can be used on its own, without reference to the rest of the book, as can individual chapters and even rules.

You can read these sections, and the chapters within them, in whatever order you fancy. There is no pressing reason why this book must be consumed from start to finish, like a novel or a scholarly thesis. In fact, the rules chapters have been arranged alphabetically for ease of reference, not because you need to understand one before reading the next. If you are going to play this game but not take on the role of the GM, the chapter most important to you is probably Chapter 3.

The first half of **Chapter 1: Alabaster and Frankincense** explains the implied setting supported by the rules of the game: the “Kingdoms of Dreams.” Though it is not necessary to play in a setting with these assumptions, you may have to change some of the rules or use different professions if you go a different route. The idiosyncrasies of character creation and how characters interact with civilization especially are tailored to reflect a world of science and law that rejects the worship of pagan deities that typifies so many other fantasy settings.

The second half of this chapter details an example region, the Highland Coast, wherein lie the feuding cities of Geth and Neth. You can use these details to colour the campaigns you run, or as inspiration to create your own setting. These places are inspired by the Persian and Persianate cultures of the Middle East—from the Iranian intermezzo through the various Turkic dynasties (including the late Ottoman Empire)—and may seem unfamiliar to those expecting something inspired by the Golden Age of Islam as depicted in the *Arabian Nights*. Although the implied setting includes the respect for science and technology found in the Abbasid Caliphate, it also assumes there is a lack of centralized authority amongst the Kingdoms of Dreams, just as there was in the Islamic world after the Siege of Baghdad by the Mongols (much like in Europe after the fall of Rome).

Chapter 2: Beneath the Sunlit Lands contains an explanation of the nightmares that threaten to destroy the Kingdoms of Dreams, along with some details about the adventurers who fight against them. The incursions of this nightmare realm serve as the foremost justification for the dungeoncrawling undertaken by the players’ characters, and is reflected throughout the rules found in subsequent chapters. Like the setting, it is not necessary to use this excuse, or the rules that come with it, if you have your own ideas for how dungeons come into existence and why they must be raided. However, the rules this book provides for creating and managing dungeons assume either that they have been created by, and continue to be maintained by, these anti-human nightmare creatures, or that they are ancient ruins from the Age of Chaos that have almost certainly attracted the attention of those same nightmares.

Chapter 3: Brothers and Sisters in Arms explains how to create and manage player characters in this game. This is the most important chapter for players, as their characters are the lenses through which they experience both the game's rules and its setting.

Rules for social interactions are described in **Chapter 4: Carousing in the Kingdoms of Dreams**. Lifestyle choices, managing your money, employing hirelings and other retainers, and influencing both individual NPCs as well as settlements and social institutions as a whole are all covered in this chapter. These rules are primarily for use between expeditions into the nightmare incursions, both for preparation beforehand and resource management afterward.

Chapter 5: Casting Spells and Other Enchantments explains the use of magic and magical items in the game and provides a list of one hundred spells, complete with descriptions. All characters can use magic items, but only some demonstrate a mastery of spells.

Chapter 6: Raiding the Nightmare Realms contains the rules for navigating dungeons, encountering monsters, engaging in violent combat, and suffering wounds. Nightmare incursions are violent and deadly places, and fighting is an obvious way to get rid of the monsters found inside them. Because this chapter covers the most basic elements of exploring them, this is one of the more important sections in the book.

This chapter also includes rules for nightmare curses, which afflict the players' characters after they have suffered significant trauma inside the nightmare realm. These curses continue to haunt them even after they have defeated an incursion and returned to the civilized world.

The final part of the rules section, **Chapter 7: A World Full of Nightmares**, explains the role of the GM in the game, and provides procedures for creating ancient ruins and nightmare incursions, populating them with monsters, and then managing them during play. Because these rules are entirely the domain of the GM to interact with before any of the elements they help produce are presented to the players, this part of the book is addressed entirely to the prospective GM. It is not intended for the players to read, though it also does not need to be kept a secret from them.

Finally, the **Slight Appendix of Additional Material** presents some optional rules that might interest you but are not essential to the game, including different ways to roll for task resolution and different ways to handle experience points, damage, and Disposition. These materials can help you customize your game, increase replay value, or give your game more of the heroic feeling that is usually expected of a fantasy setting.

An index has also been provided to help you find specific passages quickly, should you need them during play.

Using Characters from Other Games

It is possible to play *The Nightmares Underneath* using characters from various other old-school fantasy games. Although the Kingdoms of Dreams are probably part of the material plane, they can be accessed by others far away while they slumber. Sleepers may send their Dream Selves through the aether, finding themselves beyond the Land of Dreams itself, and in the so-called Kingdoms of Dreams.

Some adjustments may be required, attributes renamed (Constitution = Health, Strength = Ferocity, Wisdom = Willpower), and other characteristics recalculated. Use your original attribute scores, but all other stats and modifiers should conform to these rules. As well, *The Nightmares Underneath* has only eight core professions (usually called “character classes”), each of which interacts with the rules in particular—and particularly useful—ways. Instead of using the normal powers of your class in the game it originates from, you might rather consider your character to be one of these eight professions.

Assassins, bards, fighters, thieves, and wizards from other games are considered the same profession. Other classes dedicated to exploration count as thieves. Other classes dedicated to martial ability count as fighters. Other dedicated magic-user classes count as wizards.

Classes that combine martial ability with either exploration or thievery can be considered assassins. Classes that combine martial ability and spellcasting should be considered cultists, but you may ignore the weapon restrictions if you also ignore the abjuration ability. Classes that combine spellcasting ability with exploration or thievery can be considered scholars. Priestly classes can be considered bards if they are dedicated healers, cultists if they have any martial ability, or scholars if they are lawful. Other dedicated healing or leader classes also count as bards.

You may, of course, ignore the alignment restrictions. These characters come from lands where such things do not apply, obviously.

Do not adjust your level, but ignore hit points if you have them. You must roll for your Disposition using your new Hit Die (which may be different), and you should roll up new spells each time you enter the Kingdoms of Dreams in the form of your Dream Self. If certain spells are crucial to your character’s identity, however, and you absolutely must retain your access to them, go ahead and select the spells in this book that make the closest match.

Once you have finished your adventures in the Kingdoms of Dreams, you may return to your home plane, retaining all the experience you gained, as well as any treasures that might translate well to your other campaign setting. If you die in the Kingdoms of Dreams, it is only your Dream Self that dies. You awaken back on your home plane, with none of the experience or possessions you gained while adventuring, but you may never again enter the Lands of Dreams or find yourself back in those kingdoms where you died.



Chapter 1.

Alabaster
and

Frankincense
and

Frankincense





The Rule of Law

The Kingdoms of Dreams are many and varied, but all have one thing in common: the triumph of Law over Chaos. In every kingdom, the Law reigns supreme. Civilization has pushed out the uncertainties of lawlessness and the violence of disorder. Are these kingdoms really dreams? Are they mere fancies, fairy kingdoms of shadow and gossamer? Each one might seem strange to outsiders, but their people are content to live under the protection of the Law.

The Law grants two main advantages to the kingdoms who follow it that make them so blessed (although of course these two go hand-in-hand): the celebration of reason and the condemnation of idolatry. Just as it is every individual's duty and honour to lend aid to that which is good and cast out that which is evil, so too must a society let flourish what makes it stronger, and root out the corruption that would debase it.

Rejoice, comrades! For the Age of Chaos is ended! We walk in the light of Creation, which now may fall across the entire face of this Earth. Truly, this is the greatest of times in which to live.

The Triumph of Reason

In the cosmic balance of things, it is the will of the Divine that humanity be the steward for this material world. These lands in which we dwell are no mere toys for us to mangle, to use and throw away. We have been charged with their protection, and our duty is to nourish and conserve them, giving life unto them just as they give life unto us.

But to fulfill this task, to preserve the essence of this world, one must know it thoroughly. This is why lawful scholars in every land study nature so intently. Alchemy, cartography, mathematics, and medicine are all ways of understanding the material world and our place in it, and new sciences are being discovered all the time. They are the keys to completing the Divine plan of which we are all a part.

Of course, not all new inventions are good ones. Some are sources of pollution and sickness, while others can be used by tyrants and butchers to stain the earth. But these errors can be corrected by the same enlightened reason that originated them, for every problem conceived of by the human mind has a solution, just waiting to be teased out by well-ordered thoughts and a clear vision.

The Fall of Idolatry

The Law is a formula for living in harmony with the world. To be lawful is to be part of a family, a community, and a kingdom. Beyond that, there is the Kingdom of Law itself, encompassing all those who follow its wisdom: a society devoted to peace, order, and equity.

Once, the world was ruled by the gods of the idolaters, and chaos reigned supreme. Wars would never end. The innocent were slaughtered. Men and women turned away from their people and went into hiding, only to die off in isolation. Great plagues of legend walked, proudly and openly, throughout the land, spreading misery, death, and abomination.

These false gods make harsh demands of their followers, ranking their own whims and their vanities as more valuable than human souls. To enslave yourself to an inhuman creature is to deny your own humanity. To place an inhuman creature above yourself—between your soul and the Divine—is to deny your own connection to the Divine, which is the source of all creation, and to your society, which is the prime force for harmony and order in the world.

Those who turn away from their own people, who give over their lives to graven idols and demonic creatures from beyond the stars, who live outside the world—those are the real traitors to the Law. To follow only your own urges and deny your responsibilities to others is to support chaos and the rule of the sword over the accord between hearts and minds set to the same purpose.



The Sources of Law

Those who are lawful acknowledge three sources of Law. The first source is Divine prophecy, for the Law must come from heaven if it is to be just in the first place. But it must be studied, and so the work of scholars is also recognized as a part of the Law, though not an immutable one, for only in the realm of the Divine is the Law infallible. In the hearts and minds—and more importantly, the hands—of mere humans, error is almost inevitable. Thus, individual reasoning must be exercised, and the execution of the Law must be argued logically, for a society to determine what is correct. Vigilance must be exercised to ensure the Law is applied as accurately and reasonably as possible, for one who corrupts the Law is a corrupter of all.

Prophecy

The Law, being a divine force of order in the universe, was revealed to humanity through prophetic visions, granted only to a select few holy enough to receive them. These prophets recorded the Law in order to present it to the terrestrial kingdoms of their time, and also to preserve it for future generations. Only five prophets are universally acknowledged throughout the lands that have accepted the Law. Some kingdoms revere more prophets, and many of the scholars who spent their lives converting a single kingdom each are praised in those kingdoms as prophets, despite being all but unknown elsewhere.

The main difference between prophecy and commentary (which is a form of scholarship), is that prophecy is regarded as unchanging and unsurpassable. The commentaries of scholars may become outdated, irrelevant, or unpopular, but the Law, as revealed by prophecy, is the Law, for now and forever. Unfortunately, this world is so changeable that not even prophecy can be perfectly exempt from error, as it must pass through the minds, lips, and quills of fallible humans before it can touch the world.

Even worse, disputes over whether a later prophet's contributions to the Law are legitimate or not have, on occasion, brought kingdoms of differing opinions into open warfare. Alas, only heaven is perfect, and we must spend the allotments of our lives here upon this base, physical earth, where no angel's foot does stoop to tread.

Scholarship

Because the Law can only be applied to the world through the actions of those who live within it, humans do not always find it easy to do so correctly. Even the tongues of the five prophets are rarely spoken these days, and common folk rely on scholars to translate the Law into their own languages.

Fortunately, the Kingdoms of Dreams have the benefit of many generations of such scholars, who have studied the Law, implemented it, and recorded their experiences in order to advise their descendants. Lawful scholarship covers a wide array of subjects. Jurists leave behind examples of the Law being implemented. Historians record the lives of the prophets and the chronicles of lawful kingdoms. Scholars leave commentaries on, and interpretations of, both the Law itself and also the work of other scholars, historians, and jurists.

These bodies of scholarship are not the same in every land. Some kingdoms have their own schools and libraries that few foreigners have access to, and a person that one kingdom enshrines as a prophet may only be considered an important commentator everywhere else. As always, local custom colours everything—even the Law.

Reason

It may seem, to some, that life governed by the Law would be static and unchanging, requiring no thought at all. The Law itself is eternal, and surely centuries of study have yielded the answer to every conundrum that human misunderstanding might have created? But no. The past is gone and every moment of the present is unique. Nothing physical is permanent, and thus the Law in this world becomes a living practice that must be forged in the fires of human reasoning at every turn.

How else could such scholarship even accumulate? The implementation of the Law in every situation must be carefully considered, guided and weighed by human minds aware of its uniqueness. Only through argument and deduction, situated within the context of the past and its traditions, can the Law reach its full glory as a means to elevate the people of this world.

And thus we have the modern practice of the Law in the Kingdoms of Dreams. Where once there were priests and hierophants leading their cults to mindless abandon, now there stand great court houses, where the Divine can be worshipped, the Law enshrined, and the business of arguing legal situations may continue with the gravitas they deserve. It is here in these courts that those who know the Law may present their cases, overturning the tyranny and oppression of criminal elements, and ensuring that those contributing to the greatness of society are not overlooked.

The Letter of the Law

The Law presents a structure for ordering civil departments, families, and the lives of individuals. It outlines the duties and responsibilities of people at all levels of society, but especially those of rulers and other authority figures. According to the Law, the right to rule is not merely a birthright or the spoils of war, but something that must be earned by service to the community.

The Law also formulates a system of scientific reasoning, and this has allowed the Kingdoms of Dreams to develop many ingenious devices and increase production of both food and other goods. Where those held in thrall to the gods were once content with the endless cycle of life repeating, these days the lawful strive to increase humanity's knowledge and ability so that no one must live in darkness.

Authority figures are exhorted to:

- Follow the Law and its scholars in all decisions. To create policy based solely on one person's heart is unlawful.
- Make peace with those who obey the Law. There are proper customs for diplomacy and resolving political disputes. To ignore them is unlawful.
- Put the community's best interests before the individual's desires. To prey upon those who have less in order to accrue personal wealth is unlawful.
- Tend the land. To exhaust the earth of its resources is unlawful.
- Wage war against the unlawful. Just like unlawful behaviour itself, tolerating barbarism and chaos puts a ruler's mandate in jeopardy.

Individuals are exhorted to:

- Give charity, if possible. To abandon others in your community simply because they are less fortunate is unlawful.
- Have children, educate them lawfully, and grow the community. To abandon society is unlawful.
- Learn the Law. If one is ignorant of wisdom how can one abide by it?
- Obey and support rulers who are just. To revolt against a benevolent authority is unlawful.
- Put no masters between humanity and the Divine. Idolatry is unlawful, and will lead you astray.
- Respect the earth. To ruin the land for those who come next is unlawful.
- Speak out against crime, injustice, and tyranny. Profiting from the misery of others is unlawful.

Not every kingdom applies the Law to itself and its subjects the same way, nor does every ruler, or every council of lawful scholars. This is as it should be, for every community—every group of people, even—is a different and unique expression of the material world. Only those with first-hand experience of a situation and the people in it can judge correctly.

Interpreting the Law

Although the Law affects all aspects of society, not everyone has to deal with it directly on a regular basis. Fewer still are those able to make a ruling based upon the Law, or tend to its scholarship, or use their reasoning to argue a case. Some professions directly involved in legal matters include:

- **Judges:** The vast majority of legal questions in the Kingdoms of Dreams are answered by a judge's ruling in court. Contentious cases may be reversed or upheld by judges of a higher court, but according to the Law, no other individual can make a binding decision that will count as precedent. Judges can feel pressured to make certain rulings from a variety of sources—their sultans and emirs, wealthy criminal elements, and of course the community of legal scholars. They don't all remain impartial arbiters of the Law.
- **Juries:** In cases where the Law cannot be provided with a full accounting of the events it must rule on, a group of a dozen locals may be assembled to review witness testimony and other evidence. After they present their independent assessment of the facts, the case returns to the hands of a judge who rules based on their findings. Because they are not making any decisions regarding the Law itself, they need not be scholars of it.
- **Lawyers:** The daily life of a humble lawyer is full of bureaucratic duties: being a court scribe, maintaining a library, dispensing legal advice, or acting as an advocate. More than any other profession, lawyers must be skilled at using reason, in order to argue their cases before a judge, jury, or government official.
- **Officials:** While making (and executing) policy decisions, government officials are called upon to interpret the Law and the precedent-setting decisions of judges past. Often, they do whatever is most expedient for them. Sometimes, it takes a new ruling by a judge to untangle years of such ingrained behaviour and common practice. Officials, however, are no strangers to paperwork.
- **Police:** Sadly, the daily enforcement of the Law does not often require an adequate understanding of it. From city guards and tax assessors to bounty hunters and borderland militias, law enforcement serves the interests of the nobles first, and the scholars of the Law second—if at all.
- **Rulers:** In spite of their vast armies and golden treasuries, even the sultans of the Kingdoms of Dreams do not have the final word in matters of the Law. In fact, a ruler who loses their legal mandate can find their subjects and allies turning against them. Woe betide the one who wears a crown and does not obey the Law!
- **Scholars:** This community includes not only those currently in a legal office, but everyone who has trained under the previous generation's scholars and earned their degrees of accomplishment. The Law itself says the highest legal authority is a majority opinion from a kingdom's community of legal scholars (there is rarely an actual consensus, regardless of the language used). This is the only thing that can overturn a ruling made by the highest rank of judge.



The Highland Coast

A land full of olives and dates, of strong wine and sharp lemons, the Highland Coast has few wonders to boast of. There are rivers, but none that are the stuff of legend. There are mountains, but none so tall as the Qarqumiyyan Massif that separates the highlands from the boundless and burning sands of the great desert called the Voss.

Along the coast lies the famous land of Geth, which everyone knows. Inland there are the twin provinces of Hadrazzar and Shahrazar, originally named after the ancient warlord Rahezar, called Khan Rezzar in the west and Shah Razar in the east. These days, Shahrazar is empty and desolate, the haunt of only ghosts, fiends, and lost cities full of hidden gold. Meanwhile, Hadrazzar is home to the city of Neth, founded by rebellious nobles exiled from Geth, and is more often called Neth-Hadrazzar.

The People of the Coast

The highlands below the Massif have always been a sanctuary for cultures extinguished elsewhere, but since the adoption of the Law, the area has adopted the city dialect. More remote places have adopted it to a lesser degree than others, certainly, but still enough that urbanites can make themselves understood in even the smallest village.

The sultans of Geth and Neth have also imported many people from the east to work in mines and other industries, and the Gethian navy is none too shy of replenishing its ranks in foreign ports. Native opinions of these migrants range from xenophobic hatred to enthusiastic welcome, and everything in between.

Highland Names

Names in these lands come from legendary people of various cultures, not just local history. Gods and monsters, saints and prophets, ancient kings and foreign poets are all represented. Names that have meaning in other languages, especially dialects that have received the Law in prophecy, are considered more desirable.

Most people have two names, but surnames are not common. It is typical, though not universal, for children to have one gendered name and one gender-neutral name, for them to switch between as they like. Gender-neutral names may be drawn from the same pool of historical and legendary beings as gendered names are, but are also just as likely to be everyday words (which are also never gendered).

Second names, as well as rare surnames, may take the form of a patronymic (or even a matronymic) by the addition of *-an*, *-far*, *-i*, *-ian*, or *-nezhad* to the end of the name. They can also indicate a person's land of origin, if they have migrated elsewhere, usually with the suffix *-i* or *-ian*. Foreigners may also gain a surname if they are known for their profession, and this name becomes hereditary.

Nobles, of course, have proper surnames indicating their house, as well as optional patronymics, created by the addition of the suffix *-zadi* for daughters and the suffix *-zada* for sons, which may also function as a kind of surname.



Roll	Feminine Names		Gender-Neutral		Masculine Names	
	Common	Rare	Names	Words	Common	Rare
1	Anoushka	Ashtar	Arian	Almond	Arshan	Ardeshir
2	Avishan	Behzul	Banu	Birdsong	Baruz	Ballam
3	Damina	Ensi	Delshad	Clover	Darud	Dariush
4	Farin	Fatima	Dena	Crystal	Eskandir	Elmas
5	Fehruza	Ghazanit	Etrin	Cypress	Farhad	Ezra
6	Golshan	Kassida	Farhevar	Daylight	Ghazil	Firat
7	Khadija	Laal	Havare	Emerald	Hazim	Gebron
8	Leyla	Masouma	Ihsan	Foresight	Ismail	Hwaja
9	Maryam	Minu	Illkey	Harmony	Jalil	Jamshid
10	Mozhgen	Nargis	Kava	Jade	Kasra	Jeved
11	Nazhmir	Nazanin	Kian	Justice	Marduk	Kamran
12	Nisbet	Nusha	Martikhora	Lightning	Mirza	Khashayr
13	Parvana	Oreshti	Mitra	Marble	Navid	Mamoud
14	Reyhan	Roghaya	Nahid	Ocean	Rastu	Milad
15	Roshni	Rukni	Nima	Orchid	Reza	Raghib
16	Sumaya	Shiva	Omid	Rain	Samir	Rustam
17	Tamina	Statira	Roshan	Sapphire	Soheil	Sarian
18	Yasmin	Tarsa	Sarsayok	Sumac	Tanoush	Shahin
19	Zarina	Vashti	Shadhavar	Sundown	Vahid	Vayu
20	Zeynab	Zinat	Zurvan	Wisdom	Zartosh	Yousef

Feminine names are sometimes created by adding *-a* to the end of names that normally end in a consonant. Masculine names are sometimes created by removing the vowels from the end of a feminine or gender-neutral name. This is by no means universal, however, as there are numerous masculine names that end in *-a*, and numerous feminine names that do not end in vowels.

Examples:

- Almond Soheil the tanner named his children Navida Mitra and Vayu Sumac. They are poor craftspeople, but are sometimes called Soheili after their father.
- Samir Ocean and his sister Nargis Ocean share the same second name because they are twins. Nargis is also known as Firatfar, after her father, because they have a cousin named Nargis Vashti Rezafar, daughter of Firat's brother Reza.
- Zeynab Justice Shahinzadi Chaganian is the noble daughter of Shahin Martikhora Mirzada, patriarch of House Chaganian (known as the Manticore to his friends). His father, Mirza Chaganian, was never head of the house and never used his first name (Ezra) or any form of patronymic.



Ethnicities of the Coast

The native peoples of the Highland Coast are beige and olive, typically dark of hair and eye. But these lands lie near the centre of the world, and so many peoples have passed through them, leaving a wide variety of features in their wake. The Kingdoms of Dreams often see themselves as the perfect mix between their neighbours—a little of each, but not too much—and this view is not entirely without merit. You can roll 1d12 to determine what features are most prominent in a given person.

Roll	Features
1-3	Beige.
4	Eastern.
5	Northern.
6-8	Olive.
9-11	Southern.
12	Western.

Easterners are dark brown, with wavy hair and aquiline features. Many of them closely resemble the people of the Highland Coast, only with darker skin. Because the city of Geth is more westerly than many other Kingdoms of Dreams, it is perhaps rarer to see easterners than one might expect.

Northerners tend to be light of skin and dark of hair, with folded eyelids. Few travellers have scaled the mountains to survey their lands, but these northerners have galloped down in waves numerous times, always with the intent to conquer all they can survey from atop their hardy steppeland ponies. Once they settle in the kingdoms to the east of the Highland Coast, they adopt the customs of the locals, and so the features of their descendants resemble those of all the peoples around them.

Southerners, who dwell in jungles and savannas south of the desolate Voss, are dark brown, with tightly coiled hair. Their features can vary greatly, with eyes, lips, and noses all ranging from broad and wide to thin and narrow.

Westerners, who live on the northern side of the Middle Sea and in the frozen lands beyond, have pale skin and light-coloured hair, their eyes like coloured glass. They have often tried to control the sea that separates them from Geth, but Geth is not as willing to share these waves as foreigners would like.

Random Features

Alternately, you might roll 1d6 for each of a person’s features separately, and blend the results to create a more unique description of them:

Roll	Complexion	Eye Colour	Eye Shape	Face	Hair (if any)
1	Beige.	Amber.	Hooded.	Aquiline.	Coiled.
2	Bronze.	Black.	Monolid.	Broad.	Curly.
3	Brown.	Blue.	Narrow.	Flat.	Straight.
4	Copper.	Brown.	Round.	Long.	Tangled.
5	Olive.	Green.	Upturned.	Pointy.	Tousled.
6	Pale.	Hazel.	Wide.	Round.	Wavy.

Playing with Language

Most of the time, when we play fantasy role-playing games in English, we can assume with little difficulty that our characters are also speaking English, the same as we are. You might even put on an accent that complements the (for example) faux-Scottish culture a character comes from, to further reinforce the imagery.

In a setting like the Highland Coast, which is not very English at all, that can seem a little forced, perhaps even ridiculous. You might instead prefer to assume your *characters* are speaking fantasy versions of various Persian and Turkic dialects (though you, the *players*, are not), to better reflect the aesthetics of Islamic societies in Western and Central Asia. You can even use your funny British and American accents, too! They still communicate something about a character, and you might very well hear those accents if you were watching a foreign film dubbed into English.

Persianate Pronouns

There are no grammatical genders in either Persian or Turkish. Loan words from other languages, like Arabic, do not retain their gender. Instead of *he* or *she* for people, Persian has *u*. Instead of *it* for things that aren't people, Persian has *ân*. The plural *ânâ* can be used for both. Turkish is even simpler: the third-person singular pronoun is *o*, whether it refers to a woman, a table, or a scorpion. The plural *they* is *onlar*.

You can, of course, choose whatever English-language pronouns you wish to use when referring to your characters during play. But take note that Turks and Persians, when translated properly, refer to everyone by using the singular *they*. Combined with the fact that most people on the Highland Coast have an intentionally ungendered name they can use, this suggests that your characters may not always know what gender a person is until they meet them, or are told what their gender is explicitly.

This does not mean the Highland Coast is an egalitarian utopia, by any means. It can be just as rigid and oppressive as any real-world society. But how everything shakes out in practice is up to you to decide at the table, in play. There is no such thing as canon outside of the campaign you are playing in, only resources to use or discard as you wish.

Formal and Ironic Language

As in French, the Persian plural form of *you* is a respectful way to refer to a single person. It is not old-fashioned, like *thee* and *thou* in English, and has the opposite connotations of the informal vernacular plural *y'all*. There are also formal versions of third person pronouns for people, both singular and plural.

It is easy enough to indicate when your character is speaking in a respectful, familiar, or derisive manner, simply by doing the same in English. But you could also introduce some irony, if you say that the specific words your character is using, in their fantasy language, mean something other than what your own performance as a player indicates. One of the great pleasures of Ottoman Turkish poetry is the way it incorporates double (or even triple) meanings throughout the length of a poem, a feat that cannot be accurately translated into English.



Geth by the Salt Sea

While all the people of the only province of the Highland Coast that is actually on the coast consider themselves inhabitants of Geth, foreigners only think of the city when they hear that name. The great metropolis of Geth—which either borrows its name from this land or lends it, no one knows—stretches its fingers across vast oceans, overshadowing the dull but bountiful lands that surround it.

Though the Highland Coast has never been a centre of legal scholarship, Geth has become preeminent amongst the Kingdoms of Dreams. This great mercantile empire serves as a model for others who seek to retain their unique cultural history even as they abandon their gods, for who has more history than Geth? If anyone knows anything, they know that this city is older than time itself.

Once, in ages now long passed, a verdant river did flow to the east of Geth, through a magnificent valley all the way to the sea. It was home to a powerful empire—a veritable font of conquest—and poor, little Geth was merely one of many sea ports ferrying tribute toward its greedy mouth. But Geth was older by far than its overlords, and Geth waited, ever so patiently, until one day the earth did shake and heave, and the city was freed from bondage. Now that mighty river runs to the west of Geth, and to the east there is only the Vale of Serpents, a land that boasts of demon-haunted tombs instead of water, buried gold instead of crops, and death instead of life.

But there is life enough in Geth. It is now one of the preeminent mercantile empires of the modern era. Its ships dominate the Middle Sea, trading with lawful kingdoms far to the east and west. Gethian ships even frequent those barbarian ports to the north, where the tenets of the Law are known, but idolatry has not yet been abandoned. A so-called “Church of Law” struggles to bring light and warmth to a land where ignorance lies as heavy as the frost, but the merchants of Geth are loath to scoff at profit even when their charity is refused.

The People of Geth

Gethians fancy themselves a cosmopolitan people, and consume a great deal of literature, both foreign and domestic. They enjoy music and poetry performed in tea houses, cafes, and private homes. The city boasts numerous theatres, even though it actively discourages schools of the arts, preferring institutions teach science, law, and medicine only. Gambling is endemic, though few will admit this.

A huge section of the underclasses, many of them migrants from the south and east, are engaged in the city’s numerous industries, manufacturing goods of all kinds, but especially those made of metal. Many poor neighbourhoods are built around the factories they serve.

Gethians associate lighter skin tones with indolence and privilege, partly owing to the nobility’s long-standing practice of buying golden-haired women from the north to serve as concubines, and the resulting horde of light-skinned bastards who clamour for their just inheritance. Whether they receive it or not, they are often the face of the wealthy classes that the public sees most.

Roll Noble Families of Geth

1	Alazzurin	11	Karakhan
2	Armananshah	12	Mualidi
3	Bardiyana	13	Ortinathri
4	Chaganian	14	Qarmaktigin
5	Farduzan	15	Sarkhan
6	Ghaznamin	16	Simurid
7	Hanafir	17	Voshnavid
8	Hormizdanid	18	Yazdegarr
9	Jalashmid	19	Zarifsheen
10	Jamaspi	20	Zulimanisi

Places in Geth

The black smoke of Geth's many factories mixes with seasonal fog to create dirty, oven-like layers of smog that smother the city. The dirty rain does not always come as a relief. Nobles prefer to reside in tall towers on high hills that rise above this choking blanket. Of the following unique locations, which are known to everyone, the last two occupy the highest part of the city:

- **The Grand Bazaar:** A series of interconnected indoor markets selling almost everything one can think of, from songbirds and frankincense to North Sea ambergris and poisonous orchids that grow without light.
- **The Harbour:** Several artificial islands serve as defences but also have private docks attached to them, each run by a different noble family.
- **The Hospital:** Due to the sultan's generosity, it is one of the world's largest.
- **The Jewellers' Quarter:** Uncut gems and unrefined metals are fashioned into works of art in this crowded neighbourhood.
- **The Necropolis:** The Gethian dead have outnumbered the living for so long, the city employs lightning-powered guard towers to drive away their ghosts.
- **The Racetrack:** Violence between fans of the various chariot-racing teams is a common occurrence, both at the track and elsewhere.
- **The Sprawl:** When the city is plagued by nightmare incursion, they are most likely to appear where life is already undervalued: the dirtiest of urban factories and tenement buildings in the slums.
- **The Stock Exchange:** This is where most of the banking and investing is done.
- **The Sultan's Palace:** As the city has grown over the last few centuries, so too has the palace. It is now a sprawling hive full of the sultan's slaves.
- **The Temple to Justice:** Once a pagan temple, this structure now holds the courts, libraries, and schools for legal scholars in its gargantuan depths.



Neth-Hadrazzar

To the south of Geth, deep inland, there lies the province of Hadrazzar, now dominated by the city of Neth. Before the losers of the last Gethian civil war took refuge here and built themselves a city, this area was relatively isolated. A small but steady stream of migrants from elsewhere trickled in, but the conflicts of the larger world were otherwise ignored.

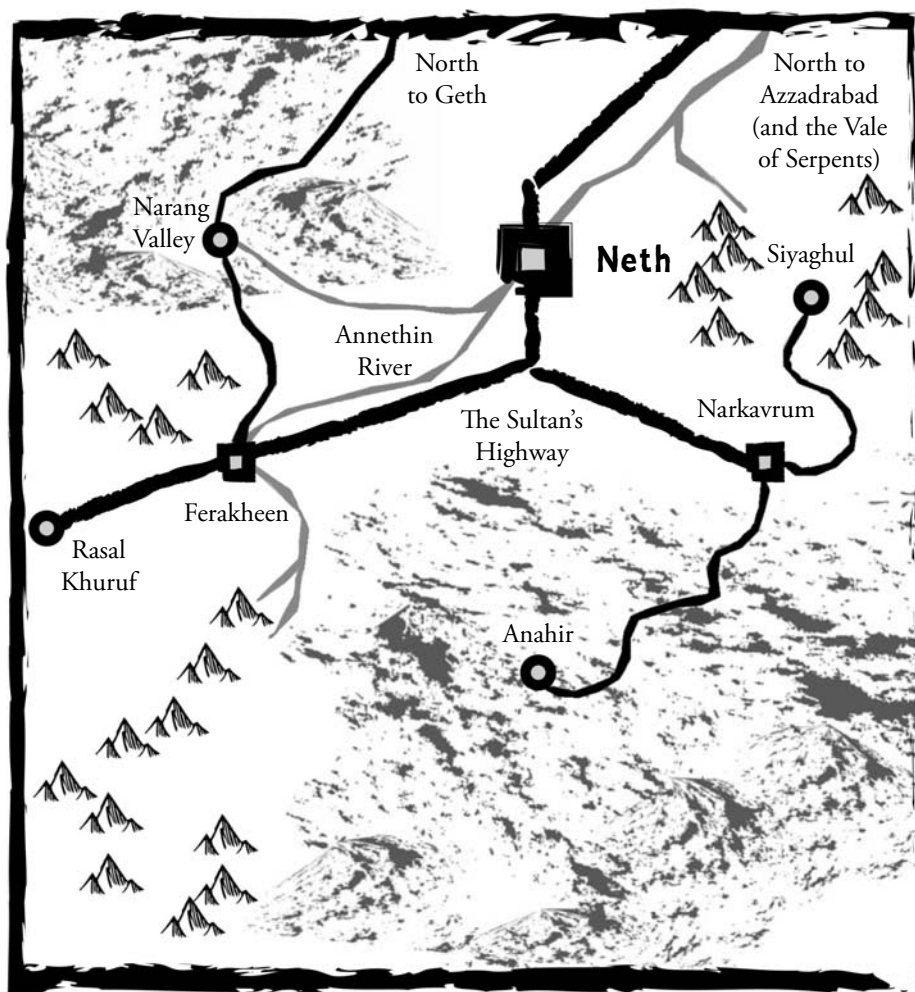
Or rather, this is what the highlanders tell themselves. There have always been intrigues and conflicts between the villages of Hadrazzar, but now they occur under the yoke of Neth. Now there is a decent road running through these lands, and plenty of merchants who use it. The outside world brings new opportunities, new vices, and new ideas every day. For those used to the predictable cycle of crops and seasons, such a swift rate of change can feel bewildering.

Because they originate in Geth, the founders of Neth have brought Gethian culture with them, and imposed it upon their neighbours. It is easy to move from one culture to the other. Hillfolk dialects disappear in favour of the urban tongue, and the business that can be done while speaking it. These are only words, after all. The villagers of the highlands still live as they always have.

The Culture of the City

The city of Neth is surprisingly cosmopolitan, for such an isolated position. In their search for allies, the Gethian exiles forged marriage alliances with numerous other cities and kingdoms, importing businesses and employees along with wives, servants, and other retainers. In order to fully reap the land's resources, they have also imported people to work in mines or in the fields around the city. The native highlanders alone are too few to support a nobility this grandiose, and so new settlements must be created. Within the city itself, there are several signature institutions:

- **The Arsenal:** Though Neth does not have a powerful army, it is nevertheless constantly paranoid about being conquered by Geth. This imperial edifice is meant to instill confidence in its citizenry.
- **The Dome of the Muses:** The largest theatre in Neth by far is also a stage for the status games of the nobility. It is a place to see and be seen, for both the audience and the performers alike.
- **The Halls of Charity:** These law courts are where numerous clerks and civil administrators process immigrants and send them off to villages that need populating and mines that must be worked. Though sometimes they are merely updating the accounting for shipments of people through the south, who never actually see the city.
- **The Stallion's Inn:** The owner of this establishment, which is essentially a tenement building on top of a pub, regularly bribes the city guards to direct new arrivals to the city toward the Stallion. He has numerous rooms and they must be filled if he is to fill his pockets with coin. The guards charge what is a small price for such good advertising.



To the west of Neth:

Ferahkeen

- Corrupt emir.
- Drug dens.
- **Market town.**
- Venerable university.

Narang Valley

- Feuding nobles.
- Marble quarries.
- Orange groves.
- Picturesque valley.

Rasal Khuruf

- Giant snakes.
- Hardscrabble hills.
- Rug weavers.
- Shepherds.

To the east of Neth:

Anahir

- Gold rush.
- Near-lawless.
- Prospectors.
- Trading post.

Narkavrum

- Eastern immigrants.
- Huge foundry.
- Many festivals.
- **Mining town.**

Siyaghul

- Mountainside.
- Secret cult.
- Well-defended.
- Xenophobic.

The Nobles of Neth

Every noble exiled to Neth who still has family members in Geth has, by this time, changed their house name (if only slightly) in order to avoid being confused for Gethian. Exile has also stripped many Nethian nobles of their fortunes. As a result, there are more poor people with surnames in Neth than most other cities.

The nobles of Neth also reject many customs practiced in Geth. They did not build canals in Neth, even though proposals were made. They reject the maritime professions, exalting horsemanship and shepherding instead. In place of the masks so common in smoggy Geth, a bare head is a sign of honesty in Neth. The nobles are suspicious of those who cover their faces, though no amount of paint upon one's lips and cheeks will raise even a single eyebrow. Instead of blonde women from the north, they buy dark-skinned women from south of the desert to be their concubines, and thus the resentful bastards of this city are as dark-skinned as their Gethian counterparts are light.

One particular tradition has not been completely subverted by the nobles of Neth, however. Their sultan still holds court seated upon a throne of alabaster. But where its likeness in the royal palace of Geth is naked, austere, the Nethians cover theirs in rugs and furs and peacock feathers. Their pride is such that they cannot allow themselves to acknowledge that the phrase "the Alabaster Throne" belongs to Geth, and not to them. Foreigners would do well to remember this.

Roll Noble Families of Neth

1	Abdurakheed	11	Layth-Harad
2	Balzurif	12	Mulkashi
3	Barzgavid	13	Mutawithaq
4	Charaknaz	14	Nejjuk
5	Demetrisid	15	Parsach
6	Fathvazid	16	Rafhezadi
7	Hedaueen	17	Saffnahavid
8	Ibnishaqvarid	18	Shahwaleed
9	Khan	19	Tharasvenian
10	Khuttalisid	20	Zaan

Royal Patronage

The sultan of Neth has set up a special department inside his justice system for dealing with nightmare incursions. Foreign adventurers are encouraged to hunt down monsters, and given more leeway in their activities than many city guards would like. Magistrates make a regular habit of commuting the death penalty for criminals who agree to fight the nightmares on behalf of the city instead, and will often assign them to assist those adventurers whose reputation is (still) good. If this practice has increased the number of death sentence handed out in Nethian courts, who can say? Surely, such a thing is beneath the judges of Neth.



Shahrazar

To the east of Hadrassar lies a land that once held people, but no longer. The fruits of civilization flourished here. There were grand cities of architectural genius, lush gardens full of music and poetry, and all throughout the year, the wealth flowed in. Those days are gone now, and today, Shahrazar is a dead province. The ground is dry and cracked, the green is sparse, and the jagged mountains loom, full of menace.

Of course, there are monasteries here. Those who seek distance from the material world seek out places such as this. Are they are simply too weak to support the Law, side by side with their fellows? Or do they consort with evil, away from the eyes of decent folk? Who can say, for the heart does not beat the same in every breast.

But they would all do well to watch for monsters, for this land is haunted, too. No one with the misfortune to travel through Shahrazar has avoided the monsters. A thousand different kinds, to hear them tell it. No two encounters are the same. If there were but a few reports, perhaps they could be explained away as mere fancy, but no. Shahrazar is a place of monsters, and those who enter will find this to be true.

Environs

To the east and south of Shahrazar, across the Qarqumiyyan peaks, is the endless sand of the Voss. There are nomadic tribes who know the safest routes out of this dead land and through the desert, of course, but they do not oft have cause to walk them. In the opposite directions, the land is deceptive. If one goes north, where the land dips, one finds only the Vale of Serpents, an even deadlier land than this. But to the west are mountains, and you must find the right pass if you wish to return to Neth-Hadrassar. Should you fail, you might be stuck at the foot of the highlands forever.

There were trade routes here long ago, and so some roads still remain. But there is no need to, anymore. There are roads and trails that lead to the southlands directly from Hadrassar, and Geth has ships to ply the coasts to the east and west, and the inland areas that feed them. Gethian ships stay to the coast even more often than they sail across the Middle Sea. This is why lawful folks will tell you the only reason someone would go to Shahrazar is to die or to worship demons. But those who live for adventure know there is a third reason: to find the lost city and loot it of its hidden treasures.

The Lost City

The lost city of Shahrazar is a legend that has persisted for centuries, but who has seen it with their own eyes? Nonsense! It is a legend that cultists tell to lure the gullible into their clutches, for they need human sacrifices to appease their evil masters. This land is graveyard for the brave, with their hearts full of fire and their heads full of golden dreams.

And yet, there are those who have returned and told tales. Those who could not be pawns of any cult: honest foes of the nightmare realm. The land breaks them all, for certain, but perhaps there is more truth to these tales than has yet been seen?

Town and Country

Every situation in the game has to happen at a location, and not every location will be a dungeon you have prepared. Use these tables to help you make locations and settlements on the Highland Coast or further inland stand out, or to detail sections of a wilderness the PCs are exploring.

Location Features

How does this location differ from the area around it? Roll 1d20 to determine what is significant about it:

Roll	This area is (more)...	Roll	This area contains (a / an)...
1	Arid / Lush.	11	Abandoned shrine.
2	Barren / Populated.	12	Body of water.
3	Broken / Flatter.	13	Bridge.
4	Cleared / Wooded.	14	Caves or a mine.
5	Colder / Warmer.	15	Crossroads.
6	Drier / Wetter.	16	Defensible location.
7	Higher / Lower.	17	Fort, settlement, or tower.
8	Impassable / Traversed by a road.	18	Monster lair.
9	Pacific / Stormy.	19	Nightmare incursion.
10	Polluted / Pristine.	20	Ruins.

Elements of a Settlement

When the PCs go to a settlement, you need to determine how large it is and the corresponding settlement die size. This is used when the PCs hire retainers and make trouble (see pages 164 and 176).

Because of their bustling populations, large settlements like cities and even towns should not be placed on the map randomly during play. Their existence and location would be common knowledge—information that all PCs should have easy access to. Smaller settlements, especially villages and military forts, are the kinds of settlements it is easy for travellers to stumble across.

Once you have decided on the existence of a settlement, you can use the tables on the next page to determine prominent aspects of its culture, problems, and resources. However, keep in mind that just because a settlement has problems or a lack of resources doesn't mean your players will want to get involved in its social life. Always be prepared to let a settlement fall to the incursions of the nightmare realm.

Settlement Culture

Roll 1d20 to determine what aspect most defines the culture of this settlement:

Roll	Cultural Aspect				
1	Banking centre.	7	Factory culture.	13	Intellectual centre.
2	Belligerent.	8	Festive culture.	14	Military power.
3	Centre of learning.	9	Food exporter.	15	Rapacious nobles.
4	Cultural producer.	10	Foreign quarter.	16-17	Subaltern state.
5	Decadent.	11	Important market.	18-19	Trade route.
6	Exclusionary.	12	Industrious.	20	Very competitive.

Settlement Problems

What is the main problem people of this settlement have to deal with on a regular basis? Roll 1d20 to determine their shame:

Roll	Problem		
1	At war with neighbours.	11	Feuding guilds.
2	Contested leadership.	12	Inconsiderate tourists.
3	Corrupt militia.	13	Lack of clean water.
4	Criminal gangs.	14	Legal disputes.
5	Crumbling infrastructure.	15	Monster attacks.
6	Disease epidemic.	16	Nearby incursion.
7	Dissident movement.	17	Oppressive government.
8	Drug addiction is rife.	18	Overzealous tax collectors.
9	Evil wizards are loose.	19	Secret cults.
10	Facing foreign invasion.	20	Smuggling route.

Settlement Resources

Roll 1d20 to determine what basic resource a settlement has in abundance, and again to determine what they are lacking:

Roll	Resource		
1	Artisans.	8	Industry.
2	Defences.	9	Leadership.
3	Festivals.	10	Markets.
4-5	Food.	11	Medicine.
6	Guilds.	12	Metal.
7	History.	13	Music.
		14	Order.
		15	Plumbing.
		16	Schools.
		17	Stone.
		18-19	Wealth.
		20	Wood.



Chapter 2.

Beneath the Sunlit Lands





The Threat of Chaos

No longer do the Kingdoms of Dreams labour under the weight of superstition and tyranny. Now they live in an age of science and reason, free from barbarous idolatry and the petty, capricious whims of priests and gods. The Age of Law is one where civilization is free to grow and better itself and the lives of those who put their trust in it, turning away from savagery, plunder, and war.

And yet, there is a shadow across the land—or rather, *beneath it*. Invading nightmares worm their way into the light. Gaping maws of darkness spit terrors into the world, to disrupt the rule of Law and drag the unwilling down to hells unspeakable. These dungeons beneath the ground are extensions of the nightmare realm that now invades the dreaming kingdoms. Nightmare incursions can take many different forms, but almost invariably, at heart they are the opposite of the sunlit world above: they are dark, they are cramped and claustrophobic, they are underground lairs, and they are inhabited by inhuman monstrosities made only of fear and destruction.

The Realms of Creation

Other worlds exist beside and beyond our own. This much is known and obvious. The Law itself descends to us from the pillars of heaven in the form of prophecy, delivered by beings we call angels, who are the semiotic will of the Divine, rendered into physical form so we can understand their presence. But there is another world next to ours, with its own inhabitants, whom we call faeries, or genies, or other fanciful names. Their world has its own rules and properties, and they have their own relationship to the Law and the Divine. Unlike angels, who are manifestations of the Divine, these fey creatures are possessed of free will, just as we are.

But faeries are not human. Where fickle emotions spark and die like fires in our hearts, the inner natures of the fey are as immutable as human flesh. In stark contrast, they wear their dreams and feelings—perchance their thoughts, at times—upon their skin for all to see. There is no hiding the court a faerie belongs to, even as their chimerical forms shimmer and shift, dancing before our mundane eyes.

Because of this, they are far less vulnerable to nightmares than humans are. As they slip into our minds and corrupt our dreams, we crumble and fall. But the fey can only be outwardly infected, and such infections are easily cast off when one's nature remains pure. As such, when they pay us any mind at all, the fey are rarely sympathetic to the human struggle against the nightmare realm. We are the weak ones, undeserving of pity.

These two worlds, Earth and Faerie, are only those most familiar to us. They lie at the centre of creation, the point where the Divine light shines most brightly. There are still other worlds, so very foreign to us, that the nightmares touch along their journey to the Kingdoms of Dreams from wherever it is they began.



The Pillars
of Heaven

Earth

Faerie

The Astral
Deep

The Realm of
Nightmares



A Darkness, From Beyond

But where do these nightmares come from? There is no easy or certain answer to this, and much of what follows is the hearsay of wizards, who (by definition) have more dealings with otherworldly forces than prudent people do. And yet, like most knowledge, such revelations raise more questions than they settle, and it is much easier to catalogue the effects of nightmare incursions than to discern the truths of their origins or the fundaments of their natures.

Just as the pillars of heaven shine like a beacon above the Earth, so too does the infernal realm smolder below us, populated by dark mirrors of Divine angels. Similarly lacking in free will, these devils and demons instead bring lies and deceit to the material world, not the true revelations of prophecy. Their nature is the ruin of creation and their goal is to lead us into darkness. But they have been with us forever, walking at our left just as the angels walk to our right. Are these nightmare incursions merely the new face of an ancient foe, or something far more dangerous?

For they do not come alone from the depths of the sea of stars. Their journey to us through the void touches other creatures, equally alien. These dwellers in the deep find their way to Earth through the holes the nightmares punch in reality. The barriers that would have kept them out now ravaged and in tatters, the panoply of life in the universe is shown to more than just the mad summoner whose eyes are full of arcane visions.

Are the nightmares but one more type of creature from the darkness beyond time and space? Are all these things—devils, nightmares, dwellers in the deep—merely a spectrum of anti-human chaos, given a taxonomy based on our familiarity with their appearances? Or are they as alien to each other as they are to us? To repeat what has already been stated: the effects of this invasion are much simpler to describe than its nature in the black beyond, for the nightmares bring more than just creatures from the astral depths to this Earth of ours.



Strange Visitors

Regardless of their origins, the nightmares bring other worlds closer to us. Where once, each part of the universe remained in its proper place, now the barriers break and chaos unfolds. It becomes easier for us to cross those thresholds once so often denied to us. And just the same, creatures from other worlds may enter ours.

The veils that hide the lands of the fey from us are parted. There are doors and pathways, passages and opening, where there were none before. To pass into these weird places is to leave all that is familiar behind. The rules are different, and what natives may think is ordinary can become, to us, heinous deathlands stalked by ravenous man-eating monstrosities. The glittering masquerades of the faerie courts turn ugly when we break their customs out of ignorance, and likewise, when the fey walk through our streets and meadows, we stare in horror at their alien culture, by turns callous yet graceful, chivalrous yet bloody-minded.

The veil between life and death disintegrates much the same. Those confined to their graves arise and walk this Earth, seeking to drag the living back beyond those dread black gates. Unlike the fey, however, there are few misunderstandings between the living and the dead. Those who have returned are the enemies of life. Whether they are mindless zombies or angry ghosts, the animated emotions of souls passed on, they have no culture of their own. To be undead is to be a parasite, nothing more.

And the dead are not the only spirits unfairly trapped upon this plane. While human sorcerers and miracle-workers have long known the secrets to animating base matter—creating golems with the semblance of life and intelligent thought—the nightmare realm is no stranger to this act either. Indeed, the nightmares show even greater skill, offering their help to those corrupted wizards who would trade their minds for power. But an army of stone warriors who crush your enemies soon becomes a life of tormenting shadows and lurking fears, which even stone cannot defend against.

Material Corruption

As if these visitors were not enough, the nightmares bring yet more evil to this world. For just as they corrupt the dreams of mortal men and women, so too can they corrupt the flesh of beasts. The nightmare incursions—and those insane magicians they have corrupted, to be fair—make monsters out of mundane beasts, transforming them into deplorable chimeras and freakish grotesques that cannot even sustain their own lives, but do not die fast enough to keep from threatening human settlements. Nightmare-inspired experiments unleash humanoid beasts upon the world, and other monsters not seen before upon this plane, or any other.



The Vale of Serpents

To the east of Geth there lies a wide valley in the midst of a barren desert. It is shunned by all reasonable people, as there are only two reasons to go there: to loot the ancient, demon-haunted tombs of the sorcerer-kings who ruled these lands in the Age of Chaos, or to die trying. This is the Vale of Serpents, a land once known for its rich, black soil and its decadent, golden cities. But where the river used to run in days gone by, only sand remains there now, and the soil has grown so dry that none can even hope to live there.

But there are riches, still. They pull at the greed inside the souls of men. They serve as anchors for the nightmare realm's incursions. And then those nightmares grow unchecked in this graveyard of empires, feeding on the fates of tomb robbers too foolish not to fight amongst themselves and so let death divide the spoils. Never turn your back on this land, or the thieves you go there with, before you know you are safe.

And yet, the Vale of Serpents is so much more than just this place. It is also a metaphor. The Age of Chaos is long over, but fragments of it yet survive. The ruins of the past lie all around us, and the work of those ancient peoples can become unburied. For they wrought wonders that can never be destroyed. They bound demons that still long for release. And they left great spells upon their dead so they might, one day, reawaken. But they left also their wealth among those warded tombs, just waiting to be taken.

And so when people speak of this Vale of Serpents, they might mean the place itself, or any similar ruin where riches gather nightmares, or simply any place full of mortal danger, like all those places are. Or they could mean the entire ancient world as a whole—a lawless place, forever held in the grips of chaos. It is the name that people give to the source of all the unknown dangers, arcane mysteries, and questionable miracles this world has the misfortune to sometimes see firsthand. It is the place where adventures happen.



The Spoils of Chaos

When a city is plagued by nightmares, they spring up where violence has occurred: tenement buildings in the slums, the dirtiest of urban factories, and the private homes of the most corrupt among the wealthy. They might also take control of tanneries or grain houses along the roads, or even ships in the harbour, though one would think it an easy matter to burn and sink an incursion that floats upon the sea.

But when ancient ruins play host to an incursion, who is there to notice? The nightmares have time spread their roots, through the darkness of future's past, and grasp the magic of the ancients. Only the greatest of treasures can hold them here, and this is what calls the dungeon robbers to them, much more so than heroism. As much as these dark reservoirs out in the middle of the desert must be stopped from spawning new incursions in more settled lands, both greed and need are more motivating than mere altruism.

The treasure from these ruins is a double-edged sword, however. People distrust the fruits of chaos. They look upon the works of old and they see blasphemy. They see weapons that could undo the word of Law, and they turn away from all who would wield them. So not only must you brave the dangers of traps and monsters and slumbering curses in order to loot those tombs of their riches, if you want the freedom to enjoy those riches, you must also win the people over.

But you can do this. The Law is not an inflexible thing. If you can show the people that these items, though magic they be, are safe within your hands, they will let you wield them against the nightmares. All you must do is prove your worth—both in the chaos of the dungeon and the courtrooms of the Law. Of course, this is a task much easier said than done.



This Age's Heroes

Most people who enter the nightmare realm go insane. The terror is too much for their minds to handle. The fear grows inside them, twisting and warping them until they are less than shadows of their former selves. They turn to deviant criminality, revelling in obscene perversion, and fight against the Law.

But some people are different. For whatever reason, they are not affected this way. They can enter the nightmare realms and fight against the terrors that dwell there without being driven mad. Those people are the players' characters.

There are likely numerous people with the power to withstand the nightmare madness who never discover this fact. Why would anyone want to do so? Even for many who do, the trauma of a single incursion is enough for them to swear off "adventure" forever. But there are those few people who either have talents that are useful in the fight against the nightmare realm, or who simply have no other way to earn a living. The risk is high, when one ventures into the abyss, but so too is the reward.

Crew Types

Before you start making your characters, you might want to decide what type of crew, gang, or party those characters are going to comprise. Are they wandering murderhobos, or do they work for the authorities? Desperate citizens just trying to protect the world they live in? Or is this a gang of criminal revolutionaries, looting ancient tombs in search of magical artifacts to use against an evil monarch?

Adventuring Party

The default crew in any dungeoncrawling game is the adventuring party—a typical band of freebooters and ne'er-do-wells in search of treasure. They're light on morals and fuelled by greed. They swear no allegiance to anyone or anything but their own gains. In a world where life can be nasty, brutal, and short, sometimes it's the deathwish that pushes you up to the heights of greatness.

Adventurers might find investing in a hotel, necromancers' guild, or tea house beneficial (see pages 153, 154, and 156, respectively), but may end up spending their ill-gotten gains on more and better adventuring gear so they can spit in the face of death again. Some adventurers might even prefer to spend their coin on sex and drugs at a vice den (see page 159).

Advantages:

- People are attracted to adventurers because they always have incredible stories to tell, and sometimes they also have a lot of money. When they spend large sums of money or they have successful quests to brag about, adventurers should get advantage on rolls to look for retainers (but not hire them) and to conduct research by questioning their admirers.



Criminal Gang

Some of the most skilled destroyers of nightmares are thieves—but thieves have their own interests not always compatible with law-abiding society. Demon-haunted tombs full of unlooted artifacts from the Age of Chaos provide a fast-track to power in this world, regardless of birth or station. It is enough to make any underworld scoundrel's heart beat faster!

The downside to operating on the wrong side of the law, of course, is that the authorities will never thank you for the work you do, even if it means they can sleep better at night. No matter how many incursions you destroy, you will still be thieves and bandits and outlaws unless you cross the line and join them. And everyone knows what that means: throwing away all the work you've done to make sure that your boss isn't the same boss as everyone else's boss. What kind of life is that?

Criminal gangs are often affiliated with a larger illegal organization, such as the thieves' guild or a vice den (see pages 157 and 159). They might prefer to find a chemistry professor at a university (see page 158) who can supply them with "product," or they might simply want to spend their money in the same places adventurers do.

Advantages:

- The criminal underworld doesn't care about the legality of chaotic artifacts, or crimes committed against the rest of the world. Each major gang or criminal community counts as its own settlement, and your Resentment scores with them only increase if you commit offences against them directly or collaborate with the authorities.

Official Investigation

Perhaps the easiest way to gain support for you fight against the nightmare realm is to work for the authorities. Join an official investigation into the incursion problem and suddenly all your difficulties with the police and the city guard go away! Or they should, anyway. Alas, interdepartmental friction is a problem never truly solved.

The downside to being part of an official investigation is that you always have a boss, and if you think it's a bad idea to poke around in whatever mess they send you to solve, you don't exactly have much room to refuse them, do you?

Investigators might invest in law-abiding social institutions that prove useful to them, like a hotel or university (see pages 153 and 158, respectively). But if they have been conscripted into this investigation, or released from prison on the condition that they combat incursions, they might prefer to secretly funnel money to a cult or criminal gang instead.

Advantages:

- Official investigators have advantage on their attempts to gain support from their superiors for their use of magical artifacts, as long as they can show that their use is a benefit to their mission. If those superiors are important enough, they can also grant advantage when you state your case in court.



Political Party

The winds of change have come again to the Kingdoms of Dreams. What if they don't have to be kingdoms? That is not the only system of government in existence. There are other ways that society can be organized—ways that provide opportunities for everyone, not just the nobility. As the nightmare incursions throw a shadow of doubt across thrones from sea to sea to sea, people look for other options. But politics costs money too, not just blood, sweat, and tears. Push back the darkness, and at the same time, fund the revolution!

The party itself can be a social institution, for example the Communist Party on page 152, and so can other organizations connected to it. Perhaps the party has a paramilitary wing, full of streetfighters and former mercenaries, or they run a press to distribute propaganda (see Printer, page 155).

Advantages:

- A political party has a base of supporters, which may literally be a settlement or community of its own, or it could have widespread popular or class support. These supporters count as their own settlement for the purposes of Resentment scores and hiring retainers.
- Members of the political party have advantage on attempts to convince their supporters that their use of magic items is necessary.

Part Two

The
Rules
of play.

Basic Resolution Rules

There are several different ways of rolling dice to resolve risky actions in this game, depending on what situation the players' characters are in. All of them are based on the following systems. Use this section as a reference.

Most rolls to determine whether a character succeeds at a risky endeavour are either **overcome attempts** or **saves**, described below, and will rest on the roll of a d20. Violence and harm require **damage** and **disposition** rolls. The GM is usually the one using **chance** rolls and **random tables**, but sometimes players will roll for these as well.

Chance

Sometimes the rules will dictate that a certain event has a chance of happening. This is fairly straightforward: the GM rolls a die to see whether that event happens or not. This style of resolution is normally used by the GM only, not by the other players.

- **1 in 3** means the GM rolls 1d6 and the event occurs if the result is 1 or 2.
- **1 in 6** means the GM rolls 1d6 and the event only occurs if the result is a 1.
- **50 / 50** or **even odds** means the GM can roll any die. On an even result, the event does not occur, while on an odd result, it does.
- **Percentage chance** means the GM should roll 1d100 and if the result falls within the chance of the event happening, it does so.

Damage and Disposition

When you make a successful attack against another character (person or monster), you roll for damage and reduce their Disposition score by that amount. The reverse is true when you are attacked and suffer damage. Some types of damage reduce your attribute scores instead of your Disposition.

Damage may be rolled with various types of dice: d3, d4, d6, d8, d10, or d12. Sometimes more than one die is rolled, and the results are added together to reduce Disposition or attributes.

Disposition scores are derived by rolling a character's Hit Die twice and adding the results together; or only rolling their Hit Die once if they are sick, poisoned, fatigued, or just not well rested; or using their level if the number rolled is lower.

Overcome Attempts

For actions resisted by other characters you are in conflict with, you must roll equal to or higher than an opponent character's relevant attribute score on a d20 in order to succeed. You may be able to add one of your attribute modifiers or your level, if they are applicable, but a roll of 1 (before modifiers) always fails and a roll of 20 (before modifiers) always succeeds.

A more detailed explanation of overcome rolls can be found on pages 62-63.

Random Tables

Some rules call for non-binary results, such as when actions could result in numerous possible outcomes, and so they come with random tables. You can use any type and combination of dice when creating a random table, but a common method in this game is to roll 2d6 and add any relevant attribute modifiers before consulting the table, which typically has between 3 and 5 different possible results.

There are also numerous random tables in this book for generating elements of play, or the results of situations, that are not used for resolving actions. These can tell you what gear you have, what spells you know, or what items you found. The GM can use random tables to create all manner of people, places, and things—especially nightmare incursions.

Saves

For unopposed task resolution that depends entirely on your character's ability, roll equal to or lower than one of your attribute scores on a d20 in order to succeed. Modifiers do not apply to these rolls. A roll of 1 always succeeds. A roll of 20 always fails. **If you are attempting something beyond your capabilities**, you must roll equal to or lower than half your attribute score, rounded down, to succeed.

Saves are used both for avoiding danger and testing skills (see pages 66-67).

Advantage and Disadvantage

Outside influences can affect your chance of success when rolling:

- **If you have an obvious or significant advantage**, roll one additional die and discard the single die with the least favourable result. Count the remaining die or dice only.
- **If you're hindered by an obvious or significant disadvantage**, roll one extra die and discard the single die with the most favourable result. Count the remaining die or dice only.

Advantage and disadvantage cancel each other out, if both apply. Multiple advantages or disadvantages have no effect, unless only one remains after others have been cancelled out.

Applying 'Vantages

Almost any roll can be affected by advantage or disadvantage. That includes rolls for chance, damage, and Disposition. If a spell indicates that someone has “disadvantage to any rolls made to harm the target,” for example, that includes damage rolls.

Rolls on random tables made by the GM are only affected by advantage or disadvantage when they are made on behalf of a character, to resolve their actions. Most random table rolls the GM makes are to create situations, not resolve them.

The GM has final say as to whether the circumstances of any particular situation call for advantage or disadvantage to any rolls.

Attribute Loss

All six of your attribute scores can be temporarily reduced if you are attacked or suffer other types of harm. Whenever you suffer an attribute loss, it is temporary, but your new score is the one you use for all resolutions rolls. Your half score and your attribute modifier are both derived from your temporarily-reduced attribute score, not from your original score.

It is possible to restore your reduced attributes to their full score by resting and receiving medical treatment, whether magical or otherwise. If a consequence or power reduces one of your attributes permanently, instead of temporarily, it will be noted in the rules.

Overcoming the Enemy's Defences

When you are undertaking an action that directly targets another character, in an attempt to affect or influence them (coerce, deceive, harm, or impress, for example), you must overcome their defences. Initiative and most attacks are examples of overcome attempts.

In order to overcome someone's defences, roll 1d20 + attribute modifier + level (if applicable). If your total equals or exceeds your target's relevant attribute score, you overcome their defences and influence them accordingly. If your total is lower than their attribute score, they resist and you have no effect on them.

The GM determines which of their attributes must be overcome, and which attribute modifier you add to your roll. Deceptions usually use Charisma or Dexterity to target Intelligence, while socializing otherwise tends to be Charisma vs. either Charisma or Willpower. Violence primarily uses Dexterity or Ferocity to target Armour rating, but could also target Dexterity, Ferocity, or Health. The evasion rules (on page 262) use Ferocity or Health to overcome Dexterity, but also make use of Speed ratings as an interesting twist. Some examples include:

- Attacking someone in close combat or with a missile weapon (but not a firearm) requires that you overcome their **Armour rating** (and their Dexterity score if they are dodging) with your **Ferocity** modifier (for hand weapons) or **Dexterity** modifier (for missile weapons).
- To catch on when someone is lying to you, or otherwise prevaricating, you must overcome their **Dexterity** score with your **Intelligence** modifier.
- To discredit someone in front of other people and turn those people against them, you must overcome their **Charisma** score with your own **Charisma** modifier. The same is true of fomenting rebellion against a group's leader.
- To drug someone into a specific mental state, you must overcome their **Health** score with your **Intelligence** modifier (or perhaps your Dexterity, if you are trying to be surreptitious about it, instead of being medically precise).

- To intimidate someone, and perhaps give them disadvantage on a subsequent action, you must overcome their **Willpower** score with your **Ferocity** modifier.
- To persuade someone to give in and do what you want, or perhaps negotiate their price down to something more affordable, you must overcome their **Willpower** score with your **Charisma** modifier.
- To snatch an item right out of someone's hand, quick as a wink, you must overcome their **Dexterity** score with your own **Dexterity** modifier.
- To sneak up on someone, or sneak past them, you must overcome their **Intelligence** score with your **Dexterity** modifier.
- To wrestle an attacker off your friend, you must overcome their **Ferocity** score with your own **Ferocity** modifier.

Most of the time, you're overcoming a person's defences in order to harm, exploit, or deceive them. But there might also be times when you are trying to help them:

- To calm someone down, or talk sense into them when they are in a rage, you must overcome their **Ferocity** score with your **Charisma** modifier.
- To figure out how you might best befriend someone, or give them aid when they are too proud to ask for it themselves, you must overcome their **Willpower** score with your **Intelligence** modifier.
- To improve someone's poor opinion of you through kindness or by doing favours for them, you must overcome their **Willpower** score with your **Charisma** modifier.

You can **add your level** to your roll when your professional skills would be specifically useful: an assassin sneaking up on a target, a bard trying to get work as a performer, a fighter trying to inspire a fellow soldier, a scholar making a legal or academic argument, or a thief conducting a confidence scam. If you have a background that supports being skilled at this action, that too means you can add your level to your roll.

These Are Not "Victimless Crimes"

Overcome attempts are for actions that directly target someone. If you create circumstances that affect someone simply because they exist, like detonating a bomb, casting a spell, or publishing incriminating evidence without any accompanying commentary, that's not an attempt to overcome their defences. Instead, they must save themselves from the danger posed by those circumstances.

'Vantages

Outside influences, such as inebriation or magical assistance, can affect your roll in the form of advantage or disadvantage. Unlike saves, where your roll is compared to a number without being modified, you are already applying numerical bonuses or penalties to your overcome roll in the form of attribute modifiers and possibly your level, so more of those is an option as well, but rolling an extra d20 is quite frankly quicker and easier.

Rolling on a Random Table

A random table is any numbered list that includes three or more results. This game uses two types of random tables: those that determine level of effect or success, and those that provide a list of unranked possible results or elements. Examples of random tables that determine level of effect include abjuring a spiritual enemy, conducting research, healing rolls, reaction rolls, surprise rolls, testing morale, and using the settlement die to find potential hirelings. Examples of random tables as unranked lists include the tables for determining hit locations, nightmare curses, spell miscasting results, and starting gear, as well as all of the tables provided in the appendix.

Random tables are often used to set up the initial nature of a situation. Random encounter tables determine what type of monster is present, and then the surprise table determines who has the upper hand right away. The reaction table is an easy way to set the initial tone of most any social encounter, while the table of resentment events specifically sets up a problem for the players, as a result of their actions.

'Vantages

It is possible to have advantage or disadvantage on random table rolls that resolve actions. If you are rolling on a table that is used to determine level of success, roll one extra die and ignore the single worst die result if you have advantage, or the best if you have disadvantage. If a table is merely a list of possible results, roll twice and choose between the two results. Choose the better result if you have advantage and the worse result if you have disadvantage. It should be fairly rare to have either advantage or disadvantage when rolling on a random table of unranked entries.

If an effect would give you advantage to certain types of overcome rolls and you are rolling on a random table for level of success instead, the GM may rule that you should still have advantage. The same is true of disadvantage.

In cases where the GM (or another player) is rolling on a random table to determine details of the fiction, or for environmental effects (such as the Encounter Die), and not to resolve a specific character's actions, you should not be applying advantage and disadvantage. Take the roll as it is.

Saving Yourself from Danger

When you attempt to avoid the ill effects of a spell, trap, or other disaster, you must roll against one of your attribute scores. The GM determines which attributes are relevant, and the level of the danger, dungeon, spell, or the character putting you in danger determines whether you roll against your full score, or half your score, rounded down.

If the danger is your level or lower, you must roll equal to or lower than your attribute score to successfully avoid it. **If the danger is of higher level than you are**, you must roll equal to or lower than half your attribute score, rounded down, to successfully avoid it. Modifiers do not apply to this roll, although your attributes can be reduced temporarily by damage. Depending on the circumstances, a successful save may mean you avoid the danger entirely, or only suffer partial consequences.

Attributes

Some examples of saves and which attributes to roll against:

- Attacks upon your character, good name, honesty, leadership, reputation, and other types of social prestige are resisted by **Charisma**.
- Saves to avoid breath weapons, collapsing buildings, earthquakes, explosions, and falling anvils depend on **Dexterity**, as do saves made in other situations where being quick and agile can save you.
- Your **Ferocity** is for saves against capture and confinement.
- Resisting disease, paralysis, poison, and other toxic substances that destroy your body depends on **Health**, as do saves against death rays and physically corrupting magical energies.
- Saves against ambush, fraud, misleading intellectual charlatanism, and theft depend on your **Intelligence**.
- Overcoming amnesia, confusion, fatigue, mind control, and other mental attacks depends on your **Willpower**, as do saves to resist mutation.

Saved or Not

You do not get a save against effects caused by a roll that overcomes one of your attribute scores, such as attacks. You do get a chance to save against accidents, spells, and traps. Usually, a successful save indicates you suffer only half the normal effect. If an effect is all-or-nothing, and cannot be reduced to half effect, a successful save means you avoid the effect altogether.

'Vantages

Powerful outside influences can grant advantage or impose a disadvantage on your save. Magical defences are the most likely culprit for this, as mundane influences must be extremely powerful—drugs or large amounts of money, for example.

Testing Your Skills

When you undertake some kind of task that requires skill, or is dangerous and risky, the GM may ask you to make a save to accomplish it (thus saving yourself from the jaws of failure). The GM tells you which of your attributes is appropriate, based on the actions you are taking. **Charisma** is used for persuading others to do what you want. **Dexterity** is used for tasks requiring care, coordination, flexibility, reflexes, and overall body control. **Ferocity** is used for tasks involving intimidation and feats of strength. **Health** is used for tasks that require labouring and stamina. **Intelligence** is for tasks that use your knowledge, learning, and intellect. **Willpower** is used for the most unpleasant kinds of tasks and those where self-control is paramount.

- **If you are skilled and you have the proper tools at hand**, you must save against the relevant attribute's full score in order to get the job done.
- **If you are skilled but have only the minimum necessary in terms of equipment or tools to get the job done**, you must save against half the relevant attributes score, rounded down, to be successful.
- **Likewise, if you are unskilled, but have a good set of tools to use**, you must save against half the relevant attributes score, rounded down, to succeed.
- **If you have neither the skills to complete the task nor the proper equipment**, you cannot succeed at your task.

Some tasks, including standard dungeoneering tasks like searching for hidden traps, depend instead on comparing your level to the level of the dungeon you are on. **If the dungeon level is equal to or lower than your own level**, you count as skilled. **If the dungeon level exceeds your own**, you count as unskilled. Places outside of the nightmare realm always count as lower in level than the PCs.

These skill rules are not for conflicts or contests between characters, but for things characters do independent of each other—like crafting, giving someone medical attention, picking locks, recalling knowledge, searching dungeons, or translating ancient tomes. They are not for foot races, knife fights, or wrestling matches.

What skills your character knows is determined by your choice of profession and your description of your character's background and history. Obviously, no character can know all things, and you have only so much life history you can fill up with relevant work experience. The GM is the final arbiter of what tasks require a skill roll, which attribute score you need to roll under, and whether or not you have the necessary skills and tools.

'Vantages

- **If you are employing tools of the most excellent quality, of vastly superior workmanship and ingenuity, or you have excellent assistance**, you get advantage on your roll.
- **If you are using shoddy, inferior tools in the attempt, or someone is sabotaging your attempts**, you have disadvantage on your roll.

Working as a Team

In many situations, players will want their characters to work together on a task. Indeed, in some instances, they would be foolish not to! Not only can teamwork make the work go faster, it can also guard against the ugly consequences of failing to stay wary in a dangerous environment.

There are four main ways you can be of help to your fellow adventurers:

- Create a situation that provides an advantage for an ally. It requires an action on your part, and possibly a roll, to set this up. The benefits are covered by the normal rules for advantage (see page 61), and keeps you out of danger.
- Provide **assistance** to another character who is making a roll, and in doing so, give them advantage on that roll.
- Represent a group as part of a **collective action** (or simply be part of the group represented, and support the representative).
- Work together as a **group**, with everyone performing the same task, and everyone making the same roll.

Assisting Others

Instead of undertaking your own action, you can provide assistance to someone else who is performing a task, provided you know how to do that. Some tasks require nothing more than a few extra hands to become easier, while others require specific experience or special technical knowledge (possibly including some kind of spellcasting ability). In some cases, one other person is enough assistance to provide a benefit, while other tasks require several people or even a whole team. The GM decides how much help is necessary to make the difference.

If you are undertaking a task for which you must make a roll, receiving enough help from others to significantly improve your performance grants you either advantage on that roll, or at least prevents you from rolling with disadvantage. When in doubt, ask these questions:

- *Are enough people providing assistance to make this task significantly easier?*
- *What are they doing to help? Is it enough to make the task significantly easier?*

If you want to assist someone making an overcome roll in a combat situation, you must both participate in a single attack. Firstly, whoever has the higher initiative rating must hold their action so both of you can act at the same time on the lower of your two initiative numbers. Then, you must both be acting together to perform the same task—spotting for a sniper or upending a pot of boiling oil together, for example—for it to count as assistance and give the roll advantage. Performing your own maneuver in order to set up someone else's attack (or give them some other advantage) is its own action that you must roll for.

Collective Actions

Sometimes, you will want to make a roll on behalf of a larger group, with the results of that roll applying to everyone in it. Collective actions like this are usually social in nature—intimidating a rival gang, negotiating with employers for a safer worksite—but you can also use them to represent fighting units in a battlefield skirmish. If the group you represent gives you an edge in this situation (overwhelming numbers or a position of strength, for example), you have advantage on your roll, but if they merely make it possible for you to act collectively, you do not.

Group Actions

When a group of people work together to achieve a goal, they can both get the work done quicker, and better protect themselves from any dangers they experience while doing so. Group actions like this consist of individual team members performing tasks that all contribute to the overall goal, once the necessary work has been divided up and assigned. If several characters are assigned to the same task and it requires a roll, they can assist each other to gain advantage on that roll.

If you are called on to make saves while working together on a group action, as long as your teamwork helps protect you from danger, each successful save a team member makes can also negate the consequences of one other person's failed save.

If the save is binary, where you suffer the full effects of danger if you fail and either no effect or half effect if you succeed, negating the consequences of failure means the same thing as success. These kinds of rolls can include saving against the danger of an avalanche, the damage from an explosion, or the effects of a Paralysis spell, as long as the group is doing something effective to protect each other.

If the save is a skill test, or something similar, negating the consequences of failure does not mean the task is successful, it only means that failure does not result in additional problems. Searching a dungeon for traps and secret doors is dangerous, for example, as a failed save can mean the traps go off and you suffer harm. Having your failed search roll negated just means you avoid the effects of the trap. It does not mean you find anything else that is hidden.

Not Group Actions

The party leader rolling to avoid a dungeon obstacle (page 257) and for surprise (page 260) are examples of one person making vital decisions that will affect the entire party. Teamwork in situations like these should be treated either as a form of collective action, or one person being assisted by others. They are not group actions and do not require individual contributions from other party members, even though everyone is subject to success or failure. Similar situations should follow similar rules.

If every member of a group needs to succeed at a roll for the whole group to avoid failure (such as when sneaking past guards), this is not a group action. It just means you are all making individual skill tests and the consequences of your failure will also bring attention to your comrades.



Chapter 3.



Brothers

and

Sisters in Arms





The Players' Characters

In order to play the game, you must either be the GM or have a character (a PC).

To make a character, follow the steps below:

1. Roll your attribute scores.
2. Choose a profession.
3. Roll for your spells, if you know any.
4. Choose your restrictions and spiritual enemy, if you're a cultist.
5. Choose an alignment, if you have not done so already.
6. Roll for your social class, or choose one.
7. Buy or roll for your equipment (and determine your Armour rating).
8. Choose or roll for your motivation.
9. Roll your starting Disposition (and Psychic Armour if you have any).
10. Describe your character to the other players.

If you complete some of these steps out of order, that is fine too.

Player Objectives

Once you have created a character, your goals in playing this game are three-fold, as follows:

One

To portray your character's personality as much or as little as you want, and to make decisions for them as they move through the locations and situations presented by the GM.

Two

To explore dangerous dungeons and nightmare incursions, and to survive these forays as long as possible, until your character dies, or until you decide they should retire. Once your character is dead or has no reason to continue adventuring, you have finished the game, though you may continue to play if you make a new character.

Three

To work together with the other players to portray a cohesive group of characters who go adventuring together. You are not playing individual games involving only yourself and the GM—you are all playing one game together, in which your characters, all of them, are the protagonists. Stabbing each other in the back once you get into the dungeon is fine, if that's what your group wants to do, but it's not fair to ask the GM to run two dungeons at once. The characters that start the adventure aren't enemies or complete strangers. They all know and work with each other.

Attribute Scores

Roll 3d6 for each attribute, in order: Charisma, Dexterity, Ferocity, Health, Intelligence, and Willpower. These are your character's starting attribute scores.

Charisma is the certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which they are set apart from ordinary people and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. A highly charismatic character is considered to have powers of persuasion not accessible to the ordinary person. These are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them, that individual is treated as a leader. However, this attribute does not necessarily reflect how influential a character's writings will be, for good or ill, after they are dead.

Dexterity is a measure of physical and mental agility, balance, co-ordination, nimbleness, reflexes, situational awareness, and speed, as well as cleverness and base cunning. A dexterous character is better at getting out of danger fast, sneaking past guards, and attacking enemies from a distance—the worst kind of foe to face.

Ferocity refers to a combination of aggression levels, athletic power, muscle strength, and how much force a character is able to apply to others. Ferocious characters are more adept at violence, regardless of how physically imposing they are.

Health is needed not only to stave off death, but also to enjoy life while it lasts. You might be stupid and crippled and broke, but “at least you have your health,” after all. Unless, of course, you don't.

Intelligence (a word derived from the Latin verb *intellego*, “I understand, I perceive”) refers to a character's ability to collect and retain knowledge through observation and perception, whether in the field or in an academic setting. The higher your Intelligence, the more you know, but that does not necessarily help you figure things out *quickly*. It also does not measure a character's ability to use good judgment when evaluating or employing the intelligence they have gathered—otherwise a high score in this attribute would necessarily preclude one from venturing into dungeons made of nightmares.

Willpower allows you to resist the influence of base urges, fear and terror, mind control, sorcery, and the corrupting influence of the nightmare realms. Those who lack willpower become slaves all too quickly.

Half Scores

You might also use half the score of an attribute, rounded down, at various points during the game. Your full score can be temporarily reduced, because of wounds, magic, or other pernicious vagaries, which also affects both your half score and your attribute modifier.



Modifiers

Each attribute has a second number attached to it. This number will modify some of your rolls, if the attribute in question has an influence. Your attribute scores are never added to, or subtracted from, your rolls—instead, they act as target numbers. Your attribute modifiers are the scores that actually modify your rolls.

Modifiers are based on permanent full scores and temporarily reduced (or increased) scores, not half scores. If your permanent full attribute scores change, adjust your modifiers appropriately.

Each modifier affects different rolls:

- Your **Charisma modifier** affects how others react to you, the loyalty of hirelings, the results of living like the rich, and the number of spells you know if you are a bard of the mystic path. It helps you commit character assassination, conduct research by questioning people, and reduce your Resentment.
- Your **Dexterity modifier** affects your Speed rating, your initiative and surprise rolls, your rolls to escape pursuit, and your attack rolls when you use a missile weapon.
- Your **Ferocity modifier** affects your attack rolls in close combat and all your damage rolls. It helps you chase people down, live on the streets, and use threats effectively.
- Your **Health modifier** affects your encumbrance limit, your ability to chase people down and perform hard labour, and your healing rolls.
- Your **Intelligence modifier** affects your surprise rolls; your ability to conduct research, live poorly between adventures, navigate mazes, and survey dungeon obstacles; and the number of spells you know if you are an assassin of the Holy Mountain, a champion of chaos, a scholar, or a wizard.
- Your **Willpower modifier** is most often used in overcome rolls, but if you are a cultist, it also affects the number of spells you know and your ability to abjure your spiritual enemy.

Full Score	Modifier
1	-5
2	-4
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	None.
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3
19	+4
20+	+5

An ability score of zero usually means you are unable to continue taking meaningful action (see page 284), and so you have no use for the modifier either. If your Health becomes zero, you die. If your Dexterity or Ferocity become zero, you cannot move. If your Willpower is zero, you cannot resist outside influences at all, or make your own decisions. When your Intelligence is zero, your mind is completely insane and cannot tell the truth from fantasy. When your Charisma is zero, you have no desire to interact with others, or influence them through the force of your personality (which has effectively been destroyed). At zero, the attribute cannot be used at all.



Professions

There are eight different professions in *The Nightmares Underneath*: assassin, bard, champion, cultist, fighter, scholar, thief, and wizard.

Assassins are trained killers and covert operatives. Once upon a time they set their knives against the world's many thrones and the crowns that rule them. Now they march into the darkness, against the invaders. There are three different types of assassins, each with their own specialty: acting first, avoiding blows, or casting spells.

Bards are performers—demagogues, songsmiths, entertainers of all stripes. When we must face the darkness, out in the wilds where only beasts and monsters dwell, bards remind us that we are civilized people, that we belong to a glorious culture of light, laughter, and joy. In the midst of our despair at facing, yet again, the corrupting taint of the nightmare world, they lift our hearts and give us the will to keep fighting. There are three types of bards, each with their own specialty: roguish trickery, casting spells, or fighting alongside those you inspire.

Champions have a cause that they fight for, an ideology that is more important than petty concerns like love and money, or even life and death. Burning with the fires of a higher purpose, champions dive headlong into the fight against nightmare incursions. If you play a champion, you must choose one of four different alignments, and this decision determines some of your special powers.

Cultists are members of small faith groups, mystery cults, and heretical sects. In a world where the light of reason is considered the holiest law, they continue their wars of religion. If you play a cultist, you need to choose your preferred weapons and who your spiritual enemy is, as well as roll to determine which spells you know. The cultist is a complicated profession, with a greater number of powers, options, and restrictions than the other professions.

Fighters are soldiers and mercenaries and anyone else who makes their living from violence. For those that care to brave the darkness, one foe is much like the next. The fighter is the easiest profession to play. There are four types of fighters, each with their own fighting style and the special advantage it confers.

Scholars are doctors, lawyers, and philosophers, members of the most vaunted professions in the Kingdoms of Dreams. They carry the torch of reason into the darkness to light the way. If you play a scholar, you'll likely know a spell (or two).

Thieves are scoundrels and criminals, already so used to skulking in the dark that robbing nightmares instead of the rich means little to them. After all, coins all spend the same... don't they? There are four types of thieves, each with their own criminal specialty.

Wizards practice the arcane arts of sorcery. They walk a thin line between conforming to the world as it is and being corrupted by darkness. If you play a wizard, you need to roll to determine which spells you know.

Assassin

Before the Kingdoms of Dreams were shown the light of the Law and became the paradises they are today, they were torn asunder by war and the political machinations of evil kings. Every ruler maintained a secret force of trained killers who committed murder in the name of power while the sun hid her face behind the world.

These days, those traditions have been abandoned. Where once there were many, the orders of assassins have dwindled in number, and those that still exist have either become mere bands of mercenary thugs, working in far-off lands, or enthusiastic recruits in the war against the nightmare incursions.

Hit Die: 1d8.

Primary Attributes: Dexterity and Ferocity.

Restrictions:

- You can't be of good alignment.
- You can't use your special abilities while wearing a suit of plate.

Skills: Assassins are skilled at climbing, disarming traps, handling poisons, hiding, hunting, moving silently and stealthily, picking locks, tinkering with mechanisms, and keeping their gear in good working order. You may also be moderately skilled in some other profession that gives you cover and hides your true calling, such as carriage driving, gambling, prostitution, playing music, or selling rugs.

Special Abilities

- **When you attack from behind or by surprise**, you ignore non-magical armour and deal additional damage, even if you roll to attack and you miss. At levels 1-3, you inflict +1d8 damage; at levels 4-6, you inflict +1d10 damage; at levels 7-9, you inflict +1d12 damage.
- **When you charge a foe with a longer weapon**, they cannot attack you first.
- **When you employ stealth**, you can always add your level to overcome attempts to ambush someone, hide from them, sneak past them, or break and enter.
- You can always **add your level to any physical attacks** and **escape attempts** you make that are overcome attempts.

Choose 1 of the following orders of assassins to determine your fifth special ability:

- **The Flickering Shadows:** You have an Armour rating of 10 + your level, which sneak attacks must overcome, as long as you wear no actual armour.
- **The Holy Mountain:** You know 1 spell per level, plus spells equal to your Intelligence modifier.
- **The Unclosing Eye:** You are never surprised, even if your party is, and you can always add your level to your initiative rolls.

Bard

A bard is the soul of any company. What fighting force could maintain its morale, if it lacked such inspiration? A world without music and laughter, or the fire of oratory, is a dull, greyish hell that few could stand for long. But with a bard behind him, a man feels like he could take on the world, if he wanted to!

Hit Die: 1d6.

Primary Attributes: Charisma and Health.

Restrictions:

- You can't be of evil alignment.
- You can't use your special abilities while wearing a suit of plate.

Skills: Bards are chiefly skilled at performance. You may also be skilled at adapting to local customs, constructing the tools you need to perform (costumes, musical instruments, etc), knowing stories, negotiating prices, reading and writing, recording your experiences and observations, and most of all, travelling. Discuss your character's identity with the GM, either before or during the game. You may need to elaborate on how and where you learned a skill when you perform an appropriate action during play.

Special Abilities

- As a simple action, **you may transfer your Disposition to your allies.** For each point of Disposition you lose, one other character who can see, hear, or touch you gains 2 points of Disposition. You may distribute lost points amongst other characters as you see fit.
- **When you re-roll your Disposition,** any allies who also re-roll their Disposition get advantage. You may decide who is an ally and who is not at any time.
- You may always **add your level to overcome rolls you make to perform for an audience or socialize as a bard** (e.g. busking, getting gigs, impressing a patron, etc).

Choose 1 of the following lifestyles to determine your fourth special ability:

- **The Mystic Path:** You know 1 spell per level, plus spells equal to your Charisma modifier. When you cast a spell you know, you may save against your Charisma to control it, instead of your Intelligence.
- **Roguish Ne'er-do-Well:** You can always add your level to your initiative rolls, and to overcome rolls you make in order to deceive someone, make your escape, run a confidence scam, or steal something.
- **Warrior-Poet:** You can always add your level to any physical attacks you make that are overcome rolls.

Champion

Are you a zealous inquisitor, hunting down witches and other illegal heretics? Or a wandering paladin, sworn to defend the weak from the wicked? Perhaps you are the spirit of vengeance, a revenant returned to finish one last task, or a follower of Chaos, infused with magic, rebelling against everything the Kingdoms of Dreams hold dear. Whatever the case, you have a cause that you champion, above everything else, and that is what gives you the strength to carry on.

Hit Die: 1d8.

Primary Attributes: Health and one other, determined by your alignment.

Restrictions:

- You can't be of neutral alignment.
- You can't use your special abilities while hiding your alignment.

Skills: You adhere to some kind of code, philosophy, or religion that reflects and promotes your alignment. It may be practical or mostly theoretical—either way, you are well-versed in its tenets, skilled both at arguing its ideology and performing its rituals. You may also be skilled in other areas, depending on your past and how you came to become a champion. Discuss your character's identity with the GM, either before or during the game.

Special Abilities

- **During a rest**, you can give anyone else who shares your alignment advantage when they re-roll their Disposition or Psychic Armour.
- You always know when **magic in your presence requires or targets your alignment**, and when **someone in your presence shares your alignment**.
- You can always **add your level to any physical attacks** you make that are overcome rolls, and to all **social overcome attempts in which you defend your alignment**.
- You have **advantage on all saves** against magic that targets your alignment.

Choose your alignment to determine your fifth special ability, your second primary attribute, and your additional starting gear.

Additional Starting Gear

Based on your alignment, you also start with the following items, in addition to any other gear you purchase or randomly generate:

- **Chaotic:** You also have 1d6 doses of hallucinogenic cactus.
- **Evil:** You also have an additional close combat weapon, your choice what type.
- **Good:** You also have 1d6 doses of antitoxin and 1d6 uses of bandages.
- **Lawful:** You also have a written copy of the Law, and the ability to read it.

Alignment

Every champion has a cause, and every cause is either chaotic, evil, good, or lawful. You may have a different name for it—justice, life, revolution, or vengeance—but you must champion something other than yourself, so you cannot be neutral.

Chaotic

Thrones are built of promises that only the gods could ever keep. Until we cast down our kings, our dreams will never leave their cages.

- **You know 2 spells per level**, plus spells equal to your Intelligence modifier. Roll 1d100 to determine what each spell is, but re-roll any result of 61-70. You are unable to cast or learn spells from the school of Law. If you wish to generate a random spellbook, use the tables on pages 198-199.
- Your second primary attribute is Intelligence.

Evil

Never forgive, never forget. You hurt your foes before you help your friends.

- Choose one type of weapon from the following list for each level you have: axes, bows and arrows, clubs and maces, daggers and knives, firearms, fists other and unarmed strikes, flails and whips, garrotes, picks and hammers, pole arms and spears, swords, and thrown weapons. **When you attack with a weapon of one of your chosen types**, you can inflict additional damage, whether you hit or miss. At levels 1-3, you inflict +1d8 damage; at levels 4-6, you inflict +1d10 damage; at levels 7-9, you inflict +1d12 damage.
- Your second primary attribute is Ferocity.

Good

Compassion before anger. Humility before pride. Love before hate. Peace before war.

- **When you lay hands on someone who has been injured no more than a day earlier**, you may restore lost attribute points or remove Wounds equal to your level. You may not heal them again in this way until they suffer another injury.
- Your second primary attribute is Charisma.

Lawful

Alone, we are weak. Together, we thrive. The greatest gift our people have is the Law, and the Law is your calling.

- As a simple action, **you may transfer your Disposition to your allies**. For each point of Disposition you lose, one other character who can see, hear, or touch you gains 2 points of Disposition. You may distribute lost points amongst other characters as you see fit.
- Your second primary attribute is Willpower.

Cultist

Not everyone has embraced the doctrine of the Law. Some still worship forgotten gods and practice strange creeds. They see society as theologically weak, while they have forged their philosophies through hardship and toil. It is no wonder they can stand against the invading darkness so well. Some even worship the darkness of nightmare—they seek to master it and gain its power. But only the bravest and strongest will triumph.

Hit Die: 1d6.

Primary Attributes: Health and Willpower.

Restrictions:

- Half of the experience points you earn are automatically tithed to your cult. In order for them to count toward advancement, you must buy them back by spending the same amount in cyphers on advancing your cult. You may send this money as a tithe to your superiors, or spend it on establishing a shrine or temple of your own.
- You can't be of lawful alignment.
- You may fight with your bare hands, throw things at people, use shields, and wear light armour, plus choose two: blades, blunt weapons, firearms, garrotes, heavy armour, missile weapons, or whips. The ones you do not choose are restricted by your cult precepts or you are not skilled at using them. You cannot use your special abilities while using restricted weapons or armour.

Skills: Cultists are skilled at practicing their religion and learned in the ways of cult doctrines. You might be skilled in some particular specialty, if it serves your cult or allows you to operate in society without revealing your religious affiliation, but it must be some kind of mundane occupation. Discuss your character's identity with the GM, either before or during the game. You may need to elaborate on how and where you learned a skill when you perform an appropriate action during play.

Special Abilities

- You can always **add your level to any physical attacks** you make that are overcome attempts (unless, of course, you are using a restricted weapon).
- **You have a spiritual enemy**, that you may banish from your presence as a simple action. Choose one of the following: beasts (and beastlings), dwellers in the deep, faeries, golems, humans, or the undead.
- **You know 2 spells per level**, plus additional spells equal to your Willpower modifier. Choose a privileged school. You may roll either 1d10 on that school's table or 1d100 on the full table to determine each of your spells. When you cast a spell you know, you may save against your Willpower to control it, instead of your Intelligence.

Abjuration of a Spiritual Enemy

When you attempt to banish a spiritual enemy, roll 2d6 and add your Willpower modifier. You may attempt this once in each situation, and once for each new foe that enters a situation where you are already abjuring your foes. The roll counts for all spiritual enemies in your presence.

Roll Result

0-6	Abjuration has no effect. Either your foe is too strong, or your convictions are too weak.
7-9	If your foe is your level or lower, you can hold them at bay. Otherwise, the abjuration has no effect.
10-11	If your foe is your level or lower, they are held at bay and take 1d6 damage each round they do not move away from you, until they have left your presence. If your foe is of higher level than you are, you can hold them at bay, but no more.
12+	Your foe is held at bay and takes 1d6 damage each round they do not move away from you, until they leave your presence. If they are your level or lower, they take 1d6 damage each round even if they are moving away from you (until they leave your presence).

Spiritual Enemies

Your choice of spiritual enemy determines which creatures you can banish from your presence through sheer force of will:

- **Beasts (and beastlings)** are mundane animals, lycanthropes, and abominable cross-breeds of animals and humans.
- **Dwellers in the deep** are creatures that live far below the earth, within the depths of the oceans, or in those realms beyond even nightmares.
- **Faeries** are creatures who live in dreams, either in the seelie court or the unseelie. They sometimes cross over into the realms of nightmare.
- **Golems** are sorcerous creatures, constructed out of unliving material, usually clay, stone, and metal.
- If **humans** are your spiritual enemy, you can abjure any normal person, including people who can use magic, but not people that are innately magical (like those who are werewolves, possessed, or undead).
- **The undead** include ghosts, vampires, and any creature made of animated remains.

Fighter

Fighters flock to the nightmare incursions like swarms of flies. Who better to defend the sunlit kingdoms than those who make of war their daily bread? And the nightmare world asks its own question in return: who better to die than those who come of their own accord? For there is always a fight, ready and waiting, in the darkness below.

Hit Die: 1d8.

Primary Attributes: Ferocity and Health.

Restrictions:

As a member of the most insolent of professions, the fighter has no restrictions. Anyone can fight—even cowards, when the brave have all been slaughtered.

Skills: Fighters are skilled at fighting, foraging, hunting, labouring, scavenging, soldiering, and keeping their equipment in good working order. You may also be skilled in other areas, depending on your background and history—haggling, music, or smithing, for example. Discuss your character's identity with the GM, either before or during the game. You may need to elaborate on how and where you learned a skill when you perform an appropriate action during play.

Special Abilities

- **When you make a physical attack**, you can inflict additional damage, whether you hit or miss. At levels 1-3, you inflict +1d8 damage; at levels 4-6, you inflict +1d10 damage; at levels 7-9, you inflict +1d12 damage.
- **When your Disposition is lower than your level**, if you join the fight or press the attack, you may increase your Disposition so it equals your level.
- You can always **add your level to any physical attacks and intimidation attempts** you make that are overcome rolls.

Choose 1 of the following martial styles to determine your fourth special ability:

- **Emir:** You have advantage on rolls you make to find and hire militant retainers.
- **Ghazi:** You may always add your level to your initiative rolls.
- **Janissary:** After you make an attack, the next ally of yours who attacks the same target, or that target's squad, in the same fight has advantage on their attack roll.
- **Knight:** Armour does not count as encumbering items for you, as long as you are wearing it (but shields do).
- **Wrestler:** When you fight unarmed, you suffer no damage penalty and your foe cannot attack you first if you charge them, unless they use a ranged weapon.

Scholar

This new world—the one under threat from the realm of nightmares—is a very different sort than the one ruled by superstitious barbarism that came before it. Built by the work of scholars—alchemists and lawyers, doctors and judges, architects and great philosophers—it calls out to those same scholars to save it, to purge it, and make things right once more.

Hit Die: 1d4.

Primary Attributes: Charisma and Intelligence.

Restrictions:

- You can't be of chaotic alignment.
- You can't use your special abilities while wearing a non-magical suit of plate.
- You get no damage bonus for wielding a non-magical two-handed weapon.

Skills: Scholars are highly literate and learned in the ways of law, medicine, and philosophy. You may have a particular academic specialty in which you are an expert, or perhaps some ability in a non-academic hobby or childhood job.

Special Abilities

- **When you spend a turn searching**, you always find hidden things in a dungeon of your level or lower, and you always save against your full Dexterity score when you search a higher-level dungeon (instead of half your Dexterity).
- **When you tend to someone who is injured**, they recover twice as many attribute points or remove twice as many Wounds as normal. Each day, you may tend to a number of patients equal to your level (you may tend yourself).
- **When you treat someone who has been injured no more than a day earlier**, you may restore lost attribute points or remove Wounds equal to your level. You may not heal them again in this way until they suffer another injury. If you have no medical supplies whatsoever, you must save against your Intelligence in order to heal them, or against half your Intelligence if they are mortally wounded.
- **You can use any magic item and gain its full benefits**, regardless of alignment, profession, or other restrictions.
- **You have Psychic Armour.** Roll your Hit Die (1d4) twice and add the results together to determine your Psychic Armour score (or use your level if your roll is lower), just as you do for Disposition. You are not required to re-roll this score when you take a rest, but you may, if you like.
- **You know 1 spell per level**, plus additional spells equal to your Intelligence modifier. Roll 1d100 to determine each of your spells. You may instead roll 1d10 on the Battle table, if you are evil; or 1d10 on the Healing table, if you are good; or 1d10 on the Law table, if you are lawful.

Thief

Just because the Kingdoms of Dreams have accepted the Law, doesn't mean they are utopias. You still need money to eat, and few have given up their possessions. Well, there is more than one way to get rich in this world, and only a few of them are worse than working yourself to death trying.

Hit Die: 1d6.

Primary Attribute: Your sole primary attribute is Dexterity. You suffer a -10 percent penalty to your experience points if your Dexterity is 8 or lower, but gain a +5 percent bonus if it is 13-15, and a +10 percent bonus if it is 16 or higher. Each level, you must roll to increase your Dexterity, as well as one other attribute of your choice.

Restrictions:

- You can't use your special abilities when you wear a suit of plate.

Skills: Thieves are skilled at climbing, disarming traps, hiding, moving silently and stealthily, palming objects, picking locks, picking pockets, and tinkering with mechanisms. You may also be skilled in other areas, depending on your background and history—appraisal, counterfeiting, disguise, or smuggling, perhaps. You might even be a legal expert, specializing in the forcible repossession of stolen goods! Discuss your character's identity with the GM, either before or during the game.

Special Abilities

- **When you employ stealth,** you can always add your level to overcome attempts to ambush someone, hide from them, sneak past them, or break and enter.
- **When you quickly search an area you have not searched before,** without spending a whole turn, you can roll to search as normal, the same as other characters who do spend a turn.
- **When you spend a turn searching,** you always find what is hidden in a dungeon of your level or lower, and you always roll against your full Dexterity score when you search a higher-level dungeon (instead of half your Dexterity).
- You can always **add your level to your initiative rolls,** and to overcome rolls you make in order to **deceive someone, make your escape, run a confidence scam, or steal something.**

Choose 1 of the following criminal specialties to determine your fifth special ability:

- **Burglar:** You have advantage on perception, research, and search rolls for casing a joint with the intention of breaking in.
- **Con Artist:** You have advantage on persuasion and reaction rolls when you approach someone under false pretences.
- **Mastermind:** You have advantage on rolls you make to find and hire criminals.
- **Guild Thief:** You have advantage on rolls to access criminal contacts.

Wizard

Magic is a wondrous and powerful thing, yet dangerous, also—and feared! What better way for a wizard to win society's acceptance than to become a hero?

Hit Die: 1d4.

Primary Attributes: Intelligence and Willpower.

Restrictions:

- You can't use your special abilities while encumbered, wearing a suit of plate, or using a shield.
- You get no damage bonus for wielding a two-handed weapon.

Skills: Wizards are learned in the ways of science and letters, and such arcane arts as alchemy and thaumaturgy. You might also be skilled at other, miscellaneous professions that you once practiced poorly in order to survive. Discuss your character's background and history with the GM, either before or during the game. You may need to elaborate on how and where you learned a skill when you perform an appropriate action during play.

Special Abilities

- **When you fail to control a spell**, you may lose 1d4 points of Willpower instead of rolling on the miscasting table (you must choose before you roll). If this does not reduce your Willpower score to zero, the spell takes effect as normal.
- **When your knowledge of a spell would become corrupted**, you may prevent the corruption if you save against your Willpower (or half your Willpower if the spell is higher level than you are). **When you fail to control a spell**, you must choose whether or not to avoid a miscasting roll before you may attempt to avoid the spell becoming corrupted. If you are casting from a formula, avoiding corruption prevents the formula from being destroyed.
- **You have Psychic Armour.** Roll your Hit Die (1d4) twice and add the results together to determine your Psychic Armour score (or use your level if your roll is lower), just as you do for Disposition. You are not required to re-roll this score when you take a rest, but you may, if you like.
- **You know 2 spells per level**, plus spells equal to your Intelligence modifier. For each spell, you may roll either on the full table or the spell school sub-table of your choice. If you wish to generate a random spellbook, use the tables on pages 188-189.



Professional Details

Your profession gives you certain abilities and specializations. You have primary attributes (usually two, sometimes only one), some special abilities, and a context for skills. It might also give you a Hit Die larger than 1d4, or not.

Hit Dice

This is the die type you roll for damage, and to determine your Disposition. **If you wield a two-handed weapon**, you may roll a die one size higher than this for damage. **If you wield an improvised weapon or fight unarmed**, you must roll a die one size smaller than this for damage. **When you roll to determine your Disposition**, roll two Hit Dice and use the total; or, if you are not well-rested, roll one Hit Die and use the result. That is your Disposition score. If your roll is lower than your level, you may use your level instead.

Primary Attributes

You will have more opportunities to increase these two attributes, as you gain levels, than other attributes. **If both your primary attributes are 13 or higher**, you gain a +10 per cent bonus to experience points you gain. **If only one is 13 or higher**, you still gain a +5 per cent bonus. **If both primary attributes are 8 or lower**, however, you suffer a -10 per cent penalty to the experience points you gain.

When you calculate your experience at the end of an adventure, use your full attribute scores. If either of your primary attributes have been temporarily reduced, that does not affect the amount of experience points you gain.

Restrictions

Make a note of any restrictions on your character because of your profession, and make sure you don't buy any gear that you can't use or that stops you from using your profession's special abilities, because you will probably want to use them.

Skills

Your character has picked up various skills as part of their profession and their life experiences. You fill in the details when you describe their past, and you can have whatever skills are reasonable, based on that history. When you use your skills, refer to the rules on page 67.

You don't need to think about your character's background, history, and skills right away, but you can if you want. It is fine to leave it until later, during the game.

Special Abilities

Make a note of any special abilities your character has because of their profession. If your last ability is one of several choices, select the one you prefer. If you know any spells, roll for them. If you're a cultist, you must also choose your spiritual enemy.

Spells

There are ten different schools of magic, each consisting of ten different spells: Battle, Divination, Enchantment, Evocation, Healing, Illusion, Law, Quintessence, Summoning, and Transformation.

To determine which spells you know, roll randomly for each one, in the manner indicated below. **If you roll a spell that you already know**, roll again or choose another spell from the same school. **If all of your starting spells belong to the quintessence school**, ignore those results and roll for all your spells again.

Assassin of the Holy Mountain

If you are an assassin of the Holy Mountain, for each spell you know, roll a d100 on the full table to determine what it is.

Bard of the Mystic Path

If you are a bard of the mystic path, for each spell you know, you may either roll a d100 on the full table, or roll a d10 on one of the following schools' sub-tables: Divination, Enchantment, Healing, or Illusion. When you gain a new spell upon advancing a level, you have the same choice to make.

Champion of Chaos

If you are a champion of chaos, for each spell you know, roll a d100 on the full table to determine which spell it is. Re-roll any result indicating a spell from the school of Law. You cannot cast or learn Law spells.

Cultist

If you are a cultist, you may choose one school (other than Law) for your faith to privilege. For each spell you know, you may either roll a d100 on the full table or a d10 on your chosen school's table. When you gain new spells upon advancing a level, you have the same choice to make.

Scholar

If you are a scholar, for each spell you know, roll a d100 on the full table to determine which spell it is. **If you are evil**, you may roll a d10 on the Battle school sub-table, instead, if you like. **If you are good**, you may instead roll a d10 on the Healing school sub-table. **If you are lawful**, you may instead roll a d10 on the Law school sub-table.

Wizard

If you are a wizard, for each spell you start with, you may either roll a d100 on the full table or a d10 on the table of your choice. But when you gain new spells upon advancing a level, you must roll a d100 on the full table to determine each of them.



Schools of Magic

Spells are divided by type and effect into different schools. Often, a wizard will specialize in one particular school, as will their students. But schools are not rigid boundaries, and most spellcasters will learn spells from multiple different schools, as befits their own personal interests and studies.

Because you determine which spells you know randomly, your character might turn out differently than what you hoped for. But no one’s journey into magic is the same. Some wizards demand students learn their signature specialties first, while others discover spells by accident and must then develop creative ways to use them. Not every spell is one you can get paid for casting, after all. Note, however, that if all your starting spells are from the Quintessence school, you can’t do much magic on your own, so you are allowed to re-roll them all, if you like.

Some professions give you the option of rolling on a specific sub-table instead of the full list. This allows you more control over what type of spellcaster you play, if you want it. Consult the previous page for details.

Roll	Battle Spells
1	Accurate Weapon
2	Blessing and Bane
3	Brutal Weapon
4	Eldritch Darts
5	Magic Weapon
6	Martial Inspiration
7	Protection from Missiles
8	Protection from Weapons
9	Vorpal Blessing
10	Wizard Sword

Roll	Divination Spells
11	Clairaudience
12	Clairvoyance
13	Detect Evil
14	Detect Magic
15	Find Poison
16	Find Traps
17	Identify
18	Know Alignment
19	Locate Object
20	Sense Nightmares

Roll	Enchantment Spells
21	Cause Fear
22	Charm Animals
23	Charm Monster
24	Charm Person
25	Confusion
26	Fearlessness
27	Inspiration
28	Paralysis
29	Sleep
30	Truth Telling

Roll	Evocation Spells
31	Acid Spray
32	Bridge
33	Chromatic Spray
34	Create Object
35	Floating Platform
36	Ghostly Hands
37	Light
38	Magic Missile
39	Magic Rope
40	Web Trap

Roll Healing Spells

41	Cure Disease
42	Cure Wound
43	Endure Pain
44	Indivisible
45	Negate Poison
46	Purify Food and Drink
47	Raise the Dead
48	Regenerate
49	Remove Curse
50	Second Wind

Roll Illusion Spells

51	Detect Illusion
52	Duplicate Images
53	Faerie Dust
54	Fools' Gold
55	Illusory Appearance
56	Illusory Being
57	Illusory Terrain
58	Invisibility
59	Message
60	Ventriloquism

Roll Law Spells

61	Binding
62	Forlorn Encystment
63	Holy Water
64	Immobilize Animal
65	Immobilize Monster
66	Immobilize Person
67	The Power of Law
68	Protection from Chaos
69	Protection from Evil
70	Voice of Command

Roll Quintessence Spells

71	Arcane Connection
72	Contingency
73	Counterspell
74	Dispel Magic
75	Magic Resistance
76	Move Spell
77	Permanency
78	Spell Burn
79	Spell Extension
80	Transfer Spells

Roll Summoning Spells

81	Conjuration
82	Create Food and Drink
83	Invisible Servant
84	Magic Steed
85	Minion
86	Summon Air Elemental
87	Summon Earth Elemental
88	Summon Fire Elemental
89	Summon Monster
90	Summon Water Elemental

Roll Transformation Spells

91	Alter Items
92	Climbing
93	Colour Change
94	Enlarge
95	False Magnetism
96	Featherlight
97	Shapechange
98	Shrink
99	Transmute
100	Vulnerability



Alignment

Your alignment describes your character's primary motivation. You must choose one, and only one, of the following alignments for your character: chaotic, evil, good, lawful, or neutral.

Chaotic characters believe in the power of self-expression, imagination, and every person's inner life. They reject complicated and coercive social structures, advocate for personal liberty even when such liberty proves to be dangerous, and believe that individuals should be free to make their own choices and either reap the rewards or suffer the consequences.

- Chaotic characters may not become scholars.

Evil means your primary motivation is to cause harm. You might be seeking revenge on a specific foe or you might be a violent psychopath. You might be righteous, you might have friends—you might even be generous and charitable—but you have enemies to fight and this is what consumes you, more than anything else.

- Evil characters may not become bards.

Good characters want to help people more than anything, whether through charity, healing, effective organization and management, counselling and therapy, or even building space for them to live in comfortably.

- Good characters may not become assassins.

Lawful characters believe in a well-ordered society. If you're lawful, preserving law and order in your community is your primary goal, and you work toward this goal more than anything else.

- Lawful characters may not become cultists.

Neutral characters are perhaps the most self-serving of all. If you're neutral, you're all about personal gain (which can, of course, include your friends and family). You don't pick sides, other people do. They're either on *your* side, or they're *not*—or it's not your business and you stay the hell out of it. Neutral is often considered to not be a “real” alignment by more ideologically fervent adventurers.

- Neutral characters may not become champions.

Changing Your Alignment

You can change your alignment between sessions or after a particularly significant event has caused you to re-evaluate your character's personality. People are complicated and their attitudes and motivations can change over time. It is perfectly fine if this happens to your character as well.

If you are playing a champion and you change your alignment, you should also change your profession, becoming a different type of character. If you are playing a different profession with an alignment restriction, you can keep your profession or change, whichever makes the most sense for your situation.

Money and Equipment

Each player's character begins with $3d6 \times 10$ cyphers to spend on starting equipment. A character also begins the game with clothes relative to their social standing, no home or job in this kingdom, and only what other gear they can buy with however much money they start with.

Your character can only carry, without penalty, a number of regular encumbering items equal to their Health modifier plus 4, and a number of small items equal to their current Health score. If you buy more items than that, you should find a place to leave them or get someone else to carry them.

Social Class

Optionally, your roll for starting money can also be used to indicate your character's social class, if you and the other players want to explore this part of the setting. The choice must be made before everyone rolls for their starting money, however.

Roll	Modifier	Social Class
3	-3	Penniless, nomadic vagrants. Slave labourers. Untouchables.
4-5	-2	Average servants and slaves. Poor peasants and criminals.
6-8	-1	Many peasants. Most successful criminals. Poor proletariats. Well-off servants and slaves.
9-12	None.	The middle classes: city-folk, freemen, merchants, and proletariats. Wealthy criminals might retire middle class.
13-15	+1	Knights, lesser nobles, successful bankers and merchants, and wealthy city-folk. At this rank, you might be called bey, faris, or sheikh, if you have a legitimate leadership position.
16-17	+2	Barons, counts, dukes, and other nobles. At this rank you may style yourself a pasha or even khan.
18	+3	Royalty and greater nobility. The possibility of becoming a shah or sultan exists. At this rank, you may be addressed as emir, even if you are not a leader or commander.

Use your social class modifier in place of your Charisma modifier for initial reaction rolls when meeting law-abiding citizens in the Kingdoms of Dreams. For subsequent reaction rolls, or reaction rolls by people who already know who you are, use your Charisma as normal. You may also use your social class modifier instead of your Charisma modifier when communicating by letter with law-abiding citizens and government bodies.

Anyone who rolls a social class of 13 or higher may choose to take any one item or piece of equipment, excluding armour, as a family heirloom they have inherited. They do not have to pay for this heirloom.



Describing Your Character

Finally, you must paint a mental picture of your character for the other players.

Appearance

Your character may be beautiful, ugly, striking, or plain; of any race, gender, sexual orientation, and biological construction you desire; wearing any type of clothing (or not). You might be brown or white, elf or dwarf, angel or snake-tailed minotaur—as long as you are not a nightmare, you may choose as you will. Use your imagination. The numbers on your sheet remain the same, and you do not get any superhuman abilities (like flying or breathing fire) because of your appearance.

You should also decide whether you are an anomaly or if there are many like you, and whether you are celebrated, persecuted, tolerated, or unremarkable in the kingdoms that you frequent.

All that said, the default setting for this game assumes that everyone is some variety of normal human—the kind we might meet all over the real world—and not a fictional type of monster. It is also worth noting that certain types of creatures you might want to play are actual categories of monsters that have game effects (beastlings, faeries, and golems, for example), and you should check with your group first if you want to play a character from that category.

Languages

There is no set list of languages for this game. It is up to the GM to decide whether or not the guttural wheezings of strange, foreign sorcerers and the words inside mouldering old tomes can be understood by the players' characters. Language need not even be an issue in your game—perhaps everyone understands each other and can read anything that is written down.

In any case, whatever languages are spoken by people in your game's particular kingdom, the players' characters can communicate and be understood by at least most of the people around them. Otherwise, why would they go there?

Motives

You should come up with a reason why your character is an adventurer. Most people have no interest whatsoever in braving the terrors of the nightmare world, even if they aren't afflicted by madness as fast as other people. Most people think having a shitty job is better, simply because it is safer. You can decide on a reason yourself, or you can roll for it.

Name

Choose a name for your character. Do not use your own name. Do not re-use the name of a previous character created for this game, even if they are no longer being played. Your character may take another character's name as an alias, but they must have their own name as well.

Motives

When a person dies inside an incursion, the nightmares strip their mind and soul of all their fear, pain, and terror in order to make new dungeons from them. This is, in part, why the GM needs to know what drives your character into these incursions, and perhaps something about their past. Detailing your character's history and life outside of adventuring can also make your interactions in civilized areas richer and more interesting.

Choose one, or roll 1d20, then decide on the specific details:

Roll **You can't work a normal job because...**

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | You are driven by costly vices (addiction, gambling, whoring, etc). |
| 2 | You are hated by other members of your profession. |
| 3 | You are a known criminal. |
| 4 | You are an outsider here, exiled from your homeland. |
| 5 | You are part of an ostracized minority, so work is not offered to you. |
| 6 | You have been too traumatized by violence. |
| 7 | You have no profitable skills other than adventuring. |
| 8 | You have religious objections to work. |
| 9 | You lack the discipline employers desire. |
| 10 | Your compulsive behaviours prevent you from staying employed. |

Roll **You must fight the nightmare incursions...**

- | | |
|----|---|
| 11 | Because you believe the fate of the entire world is at stake. |
| 12 | Because you can't handle any other life. |
| 13 | Because you have debts to pay off. |
| 14 | Because you made an oath or promise to do so. |
| 15 | In order to bury or uncover a family secret. |
| 16 | In order to find someone who, or something that, has disappeared. |
| 17 | In order to free yourself from a curse or something that haunts you. |
| 18 | In order to gain absolution or forgiveness for crimes you have committed. |
| 19 | In order to get revenge on someone or something that assaulted you. |
| 20 | In order to learn more about a supernatural experience in your past. |

Finishing Details

In order to have a finished character, you must have the following details recorded on your character sheet:

- Scores for all six attributes, an Encumbrance Limit, and a Speed rating.
- Your profession and a Hit Die type.
- Your alignment.
- Your money (and maybe a social class), minus what you have spent.
- Some equipment and an Armour rating.
- Your level and experience points.

plus...

- Spells known, if any.
- Allowed weapons and a spiritual enemy, if you are a cultist.

and, finally...

- A name.
- And a reason to go adventuring.

Armour Rating

Your Armour rating depends on the type of armour you wear, if any. Unarmoured characters have an Armour rating of 10 (11 if equipped with a shield and 12 with a tower shield). Light armour gives you Armour 13, heavy armour gives you Armour 15, and a suit of plate gives you Armour 17. If you wear armour and also wield a shield, add +1 to your Armour rating (or +2 with a tower shield).

Disposition and Psychic Armour

Roll for your starting Disposition (and Psychic Armour if you're a scholar or wizard) before you enter the dungeon. If you are beginning with background and planning before the dungeon, you don't need to roll it right away, but you might as well.

Level

Your character begins the game at Level 1, with no experience points. In order to gain experience points and increase your level, you must recover valuable objects, treasures, and riches from the dungeons made of nightmares.

Speed

Your Speed rating is 7 plus your Dexterity modifier. If you are encumbered, your Speed rating is half what it normally is, rounded up (which is usually 4).

Wounds

You begin the game uninjured, so your Wounds score is zero.



Equipment

Starting characters begin with $3d6 \times 10$ cyphers, however much equipment that buys them, clothes relative to their social standing, and no home or job in this kingdom. Alternately, you may roll for a random set of starting gear, on the tables presented after the equipment lists.

Buying Gear

You can buy as much gear as you can afford, using the prices listed here (inflation and market forces may change those prices later on in the game). If you are using the optional social class rules, you might also have a special heirloom—one item from the lists that you don't have to pay for, which can be as fancy as you like. There will be hell to pay if you sell it, however.

Cyphers

The standard units of money in the Kingdoms of Dreams are called “cyphers,” because most coins are stamped with royal cyphers, tughras, or similar geometric designs. Typically, a kingdom mints metal coins worth 1 cypher each, although bills and promissory notes exist as well. The prices of goods in the lists that follow ignore values less than a single cypher, though common silver coins can be broken into up to eight pieces, and copper pennies are also used in some places instead.

Coins recovered from dungeons come in all different shapes and sizes, especially those that have been hidden away for many years. They vary greatly in value, depending on their age, size, and composition. When you find money, the GM describes the exact specifics of it.

Of particular note is the weight of metal used in coinage. One pound of silver is worth about 50 cyphers. Gold is approximately ten times as valuable as silver, by weight, and being about twice as heavy, is thus twenty times as valuable by volume. Likewise, silver is ten times as valuable as copper, by weight. Practically, this means that, in its most compact forms, 50 cyphers worth of copper, 500 cyphers worth of silver, and 5,000 cyphers worth of gold each count as a single encumbering item—as long as it is all wrapped up in sacks or chests. Loose coins are actually much harder to carry than that.

Running Out of Money

Characters with no money and no home must go adventuring immediately or take out a loan. The alternative is to go without food, which means you cannot re-roll your Disposition, and you will eventually die of starvation or thirst. Meanwhile, loans accrue interest every month—or every week—and moneylenders don't last long if they don't send goons after those who don't pay their debts. You don't have to stay broke, though. There is always another dungeon full of nightmares to fight.



Hauling Stuff Around

Items that must be strapped to your body or carried in hand are **regular encumbering items**. You may carry a number of encumbering items equal to 4 plus your Health modifier without penalty. Carrying additional items means you are encumbered.

Items that take two hands, or are awkward in one hand, are **large encumbering items**. The first large item you carry counts as 1 item, but the second counts as 2 on its own (for 3 total), and any more count for 3 on their own. If an item is given a number instead, each one counts as at least that many encumbering items.

Anything you can fit into a pocket is a **small item**. If your group wants to track small items, you can carry a number of small items equal to your Health score, in addition to any encumbering items you are carrying, provided you have some means to do so (like enough pockets or a backpack). Carrying more than that means you are encumbered.

You can carry any reasonable number of **tiny items**, as long as you have the bags or pockets to do so. Backpacks and shoulderbags are only encumbering when empty.

In the equipment lists, an **L** denotes a large encumbering item, an **s** is a small item, and **t** means tiny. A number means the item takes up several encumbrance slots. Any item with a dash instead of a letter is always an oversize item, too large to be carried around easily.

Armour

It is usually a good idea to protect yourself from being murdered. Armour is one way to do that, although it should be noted that you can't dodge while wearing heavy armour. A suit of plate always counts as heavy armour, but is more encumbering (and offers better protection). Armour, when worn, does not count as a large item, even when it counts as multiple items toward your encumbrance limit.

Armour Type	Armour Rating	Cost	Encumbrance
Heavy armour	15	100c	2
Helmet	—	10c	s
Light armour	13	25c	1
Shield	+1	15c	1
Suit of plate	17	1,500c	3
Tower shield	+2	50c	2
Unarmoured	10	Nothing	0

If you are a knight, your armour does not encumber you, though a shield does.

Barding

You can also buy armour for your horse, too, it's called barding. If you can afford it, that is. And you probably can't afford it. Or the horse, even.

Barding Type	Armour Rating	Cost	Encumbrance
Heavy barding	15 (or +1)	500c	4
Light barding	13 (or +2)	250c	2
Plate barding	17	2,000c	6

Camels and dogs have Armour 12 normally.

Horses, mules, and ponies have Armour 11 normally.

Only an animal trained for war will wear heavy (or plate) barding.

Close Combat Weapons

Wielding a close combat weapon allows you to roll your Hit Die for damage when you successfully attack an enemy, and to cause them terrible injuries when you reduce their Disposition to zero. A two-handed weapon allows you to roll a die that is one size higher, unless it is a really poor quality weapon. Poor quality weapons may force you to roll a die that is one size lower than your Hit Die, instead.

Weapon	Cost		Weapon	Cost	
Axe (1-handed)	10c		Pick	12c	
Axe (2-handed)	20c	L	Pike	12c	L
Bastard sword	50c		Pole arm	30c	L
Brass knuckles	3c	s	Scythe	10c	2
Club	1c		Short sword	15c	
Dagger	5c	s	Sickle	1c	s
Flail	20c		Spear	10c	L
Garrote	5c	s	Staff	5c	
Hook	2c	s	Sword (1-handed)	25c	
Lance	20c	L	Sword (2-handed)	50c	L
Mace (1-handed)	5c		Warhammer (1-handed)	7c	
Mace (2-handed)	10c	L	Warhammer (2-handed)	12c	L
Net	4c		Whip	10c	s

Unless otherwise noted, close combat weapons are regular encumbering items.

Ranged Weapons

In order to attack an enemy from a safe distance, you need a ranged weapon. Crossbows and firearms must be reloaded after they are used. This takes one round.

Weapon	Cost	Range (approximate)	
Arrows, per dozen	3c	—	t
Bullets & shot, per dozen	2c	—	t
Composite bow	100c	300 yards	
Crossbow (heavy, two-handed)	50c	200 yards	2
Crossbow (light, one-handed)	35c	60 yards	
Crossbow bolts, per dozen	1c	—	t
Javelin	2c	100 yards	s
Long bow	75c	300 yards	L
Musket	150c	100 yards	
Pistol	100c	30 yards	*
Powder horn	5c	—	s
Quiver	10c	—	
Rifle	500c	300 yards	L
Short bow	30c	150 yards	
Sling	2c	100 yards	s
Throwing axe	5c	30 yards	s
Throwing knife	5c	10 yards	s

Unless otherwise noted, ranged weapons (and quivers) are regular encumbering items. Heavy crossbows are large and count as 2 encumbering items. A bandolier of 2 or 3 holstered pistols counts as a single Large encumbering item, instead of several individual items, if it is strapped to your body.

Two-Handed Weapons

The following weapons are explicitly two-handed, allowing you to increase your damage die by one size:

- Axes, flails, maces, swords, and warhammers that are specifically constructed to be wielded with both hands.
- Bastard swords and spears, but only when wielded with two hands.
- Bows, crossbows, muskets, pikes, pole arms, rifles, and scythes designed for killing are always two-handed weapons.

The exceptions are clubs, staves, and all types of improvised weapons. Even if you need two hands to wield them, they do not increase your damage. Get a real weapon if you want to kill somebody.

Other Equipment

These are the prices starting characters use. Once in play, they are subject to the vagaries of the market, inflation, fraud, and their own bad reputations. Unless otherwise noted, something that can be carried is a regular encumbering item.

Item	Cost		Item	Cost	
Abacus	2c	s	Cart or wagon (4 wheels)	200c	—
Air bladder	1c	s	Case	3c	s
Animal (pet)	15c		Chain, per foot	4c	s
Animal (work)	50c		Chalk, per dozen pieces	1c	t
Animal trap	15c	2	Chariot	250c	—
Antitoxin, per dose	25c	t	Chemicals, per flask	10c	s
Backpack	5c		Chess set	10c	
Bandages, per roll	1c	s	Chest	10c	
Barrel	5c	3+	Clock	1,000c	2+
Basket	1c		Clothes (fine), per item	5c	
Bedroll	2c	s	Clothes (poor), per outfit	5c	
Bell	1c	t	Coach	500c	—
Belt pouch	1c	s	Compass	50c	s
Bird of prey	1,000c		Cooking pot	1c	s
Blanket	1c	s	Crampons, per pair	5c	s
Block and tackle	5c	s	Crowbar	10c	
Boat (river)	4,000c	—	Dice, per pair	1c	t
Boat (sailing)	2,000c	—	Drill	5c	s
Book	40c	s	Drugs, per dose	10c	t
Bottle (empty)	1c		Eyeglasses	30c	t
Brazier	10c	L	Fishing gear	1c	s
Bucket	1c		Fishing net, per 5 sq. ft.	1c	s
Caltrops, per handful	1c	t	Fishing pole	1c	
Camera	50c	2	Food, per day	1c	s
Candles, per dozen	1c	t	Glowbugs, per jar	5c	s
Cane	2c		Glue, per pot	1c	s
Canoe	50c	—	Grappling hook	25c	s
Canvas, per 10 sq. yard	1c		Hammer (sledge)	10c	
Cards, per set	1c	t	Hammer (small)	2c	s
Carrier pigeon	500c	s	Holy symbol (metal)	10c	s
Cart (2 wheels)	80c	—	Holy symbol (wood)	2c	s

Item	Cost		Item	Cost
Holy water, per vial	25c	s	Rope, per 50 feet	2c
Hourglass	100c	s	Rowboat	50c
Incense, per dozen sticks	2c	t	Sack (large), per dozen	2c t
Ink, per vial	1c	t	Sack (small), per dozen	1c t
Iron spikes, per dozen	1c	t	Saddle	50c 2
Jar	1c	s	Saddlebags	10c 2+
Kettle	1c	s	Saw	7c
Ladder, per foot	1c		Scales, per set	12c s
Lantern	10c		Scroll (blank)	5c s
Lard, per pound	1c	s	Shoulderbag	3c
Livestock, each	10c		Shovel	5c
Lock	40c	s	Silver dagger	30c s
Magnifying glass	100c	s	Signet ring	5c t
Make up kit	20c	s	Skiing gear	15c
Mallet	1c	s	Sled	20c —
Manacles	15c	s	Soap, per pound	2c s
Mirror (hand)	10c	s	Spyglass	250c s
Musical instrument	25c		Steed (riding)	100c —
Nails, per dozen	1c	t	Steed (war)	500c —
Oar	2c		Ten foot pole	1c
Oil, per flask	2c	s	Tent, pavilion	100c —
Paint, per pot	1c	s	Tent, per person up to 8	10c 1
Paper, per dozen sheets	2c	t	Tinderbox	10c s
Parchment, per sheet	1c	t	Tobacco, per pouch	1c t
Pencils, per dozen	2c	t	Tools, per set	20c s
Perfume, per vial	5c	s	Torch, per half-dozen	1c s
Photographic plate	1c	t	Wagon (4 wheels)	250c —
Pipe (smoking)	1c	t	Wax, per pound	1c s
Poison, per vial	25c	t	Whistle	1c t
Prayer mat	7c		Wine, per bottle	2c
Quills, per dozen	1c	t	Wineskin	3c s
Raft	10c	—	Wolfsbane, per bundle	10c t
Rations, per day	3c	t	Wooden stakes, set of 4	1c s
Riding gear	25c		Yoke	5c 2+

Tools

A set of tools contains up to a half-dozen distinct, portable, and useful items for practicing a profession. Each tool can be a small, hand-sized implement (like a chisel or a trowel), or a collection of tiny ones (a bunch of needles or pencils, for example). You may describe the actual tools whenever you produce them. Until then, they can stay wrapped up in a box or cloth.

Some examples:

- **Barber-Surgeon:** Bandages, combs, files, flint and tinder, glass cups, oil, ointment, pliers, scalpels, scissors, towels.
- **Carpenter:** Chisels, drill, file, hammer, knives, level, mallet, nails, pencils, planer, ruler, sandpaper, saw, stain.
- **Cook:** Flint and tinder, knives, ladle, mallet, pots and pans, seasoning, utensils, whetstone.
- **Leatherworker:** Awls, beveller, chisels, creasers, folders, hammer, knives, mallet, needles, pliers, shears, thimble, whetstone.
- **Mason:** Brushes, bucket, callipers, chalk, chisels, file, gloves, hammer, jointer, level, mallet, trowels.
- **Scribe:** Inks, paint, paper, pencils, quills, seals, wax.
- **Smith:** Anvil, bellows, gloves, hammers, pieces of metal, tongs.
- **Tailor:** Chalk, cloth, flat iron, knives, needles, pins, ruler, scissors, seam ripper, shears, thimble, thread, wax.
- **Tattooist:** Alcohol, charcoal, hammer, ink, needles, salve.
- **Thief:** Caltrops, candles, dog treats, flint and tinder, gloves, lockpicks, mask, slippers, tiny mirror.

Expensive Items

It is possible to buy more expensive versions of all the items listed here in this section.

If you want good quality items, they cost at least 2d6 times as much as the listed price.

If you want the craftsmanship of a master artisan, you must pay at least 3d10 times as much as the listed price. **If you want to flaunt your wealth for the purpose of increasing your social prestige,** you may spend however much you like on items.

Reselling Used Equipment

You can sell items you bought for half as many cyphers as they normally cost, as long as you do so in a town or city, and your items are in good condition. If an item has been damaged, you can only sell it for $1d4 \times 10$ percent of its original cost. If you find a well-disposed contact or an easy mark, you might be able to get a better price.

Random Starting Gear

In order to speed up character creation, you may prefer to generate your equipment randomly, instead of taking the time to buy it all. There is a different table for each of the social classes to roll on. If you are not using those rules, you may simply choose your social class, or roll on the table of your choice.

When you have a set of tools for the profession of your choice, you can choose an adventuring profession's tools but your set cannot include any weapons or spells. You should negotiate with the GM to determine a tool set's exact contents.

If you end up with an item that does not quite make sense, or doesn't fit with the character you want to play, feel free to either interpret the results as you like, or replace an unwanted item with a roll on the random single item table that follows these random starting gear tables.

The Wretched and the Lost

If you are penniless, a prisoner, an unwanted vagrant, untouchable, or the lowest kind of slave, with a Social Class modifier of -3, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll	Result
3	You have a pistol that spits forth the concentrated fury of a dead age, long buried and forgotten. It never needs to be reloaded.
4	You have a magical cloak that allows you to sneak around like a thief and also protects you as if it were heavy armour, though it weighs nothing.
5	You have a roll of bandages, a shoulderbag, the one-handed close combat weapon of your choice, either 50 feet of silk rope or a shield, and the memory of an angel's whispered blessing that will save you from certain death, or any other terrible circumstance, when your hour of need has come (your choice when).
6	You have a 2-person tent and 4 wooden stakes, a dozen iron spikes, a set of tools (for the profession of your choice), a small hammer, two days worth of food and a plump wineskin, a dagger or a shield (but not both), and either a club or 3 feet of iron chain with broken manacles on one end.
7	You have an axe, a dagger, a spear, a military flag (yours or someone else's), a bar of soap (but no water), a lantern (but no oil), a pouch of tobacco (but no pipe), and either a stolen purse with 3d6 silver coins in it (each worth one cypher) or 2 bottles of your choice of alcoholic beverage.
8	You have a wooden club, one shoe, a piece of glass you think is a gemstone, and either tattered robes or scavenged servant's livery. You have seen others die from disease recently, but seem to have found yourself immune.
9	You have a backpack, half a dozen torches, three days worth of food, and either a club and a leather jerkin (light armour), or a shield and a dagger.

-
- 10-11 You have a backpack, a club, and one or two of the following:
- a bomb;
 - a dozen torches;
 - a flask of oil;
 - a friend in the local criminal underworld who owes you a favour;
 - a jar of excruciatingly harsh moonshine liquor;
 - a sling and a dozen stones;
 - a stolen mule that follows your lead;
 - a written decree allowing you to stay out of prison temporarily.
- 12 You have a bottle of wine, a large sack tied to your belt, 10 feet of chain, a loaf of bread, and the one-handed melee weapon of your choice.
- 13 You have 1d6 candles, a tinderbox, a wineskin, a piece of good advice, and a set of tools (for the profession of your choice that you do not practice).
- 14 You have 1d6 large sacks, two weeks of rations, a bulging waterskin, a stolen whip, a wooden club or staff, and the cult icon of a deity that has recently become popular among slaves and untouchables.
- 15 You have 20 feet of silk rope, a bedroll, a crowbar, a dagger, a quarterstaff, a wineskin, and the terrifying inability to discuss the horrors that have been visited upon you in the past.
- 16 You have an axe, a dozen torches, a large sack you carry tied to a spear, a tinderbox, and a mysterious but wealthy benefactor who has arranged for you to begin your current adventures.
- 17 You have a lantern, 2 flasks of oil, and a flying carpet.
- 18 You have 1d6 doses of drugs (your choice what type), a club, and a mask that lets you see ghosts, spirits, and invisible things.
-

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are an assassin**, you also have a dagger or a vial of poison.
- **If you are a bard**, you also have a good reputation among the lower classes in the local area. Whether you deserve it or not is up to you.
- **If you are a champion**, you also have a slave collar, not yet removed.
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have a symbol of your faith, on cloth or wood.
- **If you are a fighter**, you also have some kind of armband, sash, or uniform that identifies what militia you once belonged to, and either a club or spear.
- **If you are a scholar**, you also have a warrant out for your arrest and the enmity of an official who wants to send you back to jail.
- **If you are a thief**, you also have either a bounty hunter hot on your trail, or members of the watch questioning people as to your whereabouts, your choice.
- **If you are a wizard**, you also have either 1d6 vials of chemicals (your choice what type) or 1d6 monster parts (GM's choice what type).
- **If you know any spells**, you also have a cheap, dog-eared old spellbook.



Peasants and Slaves

If you are a **poor peasant, a servant, or a typical slave**, with a Social Class modifier of -2, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll Result

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 3 | You have 50 feet of silk rope and a grappling hook, the preserved hand of a murderer recently hanged, and choose one of the following pairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an axe and a shield; • any kind of pole arm and one vial of holy water; • heavy armour in the style of our choice and a disease of some kind. |
| 4 | You have a file, a mallet, a saw, a steak knife, and a large keg of beer that is awkward to carry around. If you made an enemy in the nearest town or city, you also have either a compass and a dozen iron spikes or a pair of throwing knives and a length of colourful batik cloth. |
| 5 | You have a club, a leather jerkin (light armour), half a dozen torches in a sack, a small bouquet of flowers, and your master's dog. |
| 6 | You have 1d6 empty jars or bottles, 1d6 flasks full of chemicals, and a set of scales in your sturdy shoulderbag, plus a photograph of some experimental chemical process or whatever it produced, protective leather clothing (light armour), and some unnatural stains on your skin that refuse to wash off, no matter how much you soap and scrub them. |
| 7 | You have a bedroll, a club, a short bow, a quiver containing a dozen arrows, an empty wineskin, 2 weeks worth of rations, and either a human skull or a couple of nice, fat ducks. |
| 8 | You have 1d6 bones (human or not), 50 feet of silk rope and a grappling hook, brass knuckles, a short sword, a length of piano wire, an hourglass, a flute or an oud, and a whistle that dogs hate more than anything. |
| 9 | You have 1d6 candles, 1d6 iron spikes, a bag of sand, a ball of twine, a crowbar, a drill, a loaf of stale bread, a tinderbox, and a live tortoise. |
| 10-11 | You have two of the following, neither of which are stolen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1d6 doses of either antitoxin or your choice of drug (but not poison); • a backpack full of food (four weeks of rations); • a dozen torches and a tinderbox; • a flanged metal mace; • a hooded cloak with concealed pockets in the lining; • a letter of introduction that you cannot read, written for you by someone important who asked you to do them a favour; • several sticks of incense (the smoke keeps bugs away); • a walking stick, crudely or expertly carved (your choice). |
| 12 | You have a backpack, a bedroll, 2 weeks worth of rations, a small hammer, a dozen iron spikes, a handful of caltrops, half a dozen torches, a tinderbox, and the close combat weapon of your choice. |

-
- 13 You have a pair of metal gauntlets, a sling and a dozen good rocks, a dozen candles, a box of matches, and either an axe and shield or a musket with a dozen bullets and a powder horn.
- 14 You have up to four of the following, all of which are stolen (by yourself or someone else, your choice):
- a bag of fresh fruit;
 - a finely-crafted sword;
 - a halberd (or other polearm);
 - a light crossbow, a dozen bolts, and a burlap sack to carry them in;
 - an official uniform (or part of it);
 - a pair of iron manacles;
 - a purse with 4d6 cyphers worth of mixed coins in it;
 - a rolled-up oil painting you think might be worth something;
 - a shield with hastily-obscured heraldry painted on it.
- 15 You have 1d6 torches, 50 feet of silk rope, a backpack, a bottle of cheap wine, a quarterstaff, a tinderbox, a week of rations, and a jar full of hallucinogenic vapours that you have only opened once before. Based on that experience, you are not sure you should open it again.
- 16 You have 1d6 bunches of wolfsbane, 2d6 strips of cloth for marking trees, a hatchet, a sling and a dozen hastily-gathered riverstones, a small and cowardly dog, and the good will of a local innkeeper, who will give you free room and board any day of the week.
- 17 You have a backpack, a bedroll, a dagger, and 4 healing potions that, when drunk, will restore 1d6+1 points of lost Health, remove 1d6+1 Wounds, or allow you to re-roll your Disposition.
- 18 You have two or three of the following, at least one of which is stolen:
- a 2-handed sword;
 - a backpack with 50 feet of silk rope, climbing gear, and 2 weeks worth of rations in it;
 - a chainmail hauberk (heavy armour) with an embroidered tabard;
 - a lantern and 2 flasks of oil;
 - a long bow, quiver, and 2 dozen arrows;
 - a mule and empty saddlebags.
-

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are a bard**, you also have a brass cymbal, carved flute, or pair of drums.
- **If you are a champion**, you also have the symbol of your cause, your lands, or your master on your clothes.
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have an inexpensive symbol of your faith, made of cloth or wood. It can be crude and rough or lovingly crafted, your choice.
- **If you are a thief**, you also have 1d6 doses of drugs (your choice what type).
- **If you know any spells**, you also have a spellbook and up to 2 other books concerning non-magical subjects.

Poor But Free or Caged in Comfort

If you are a **poor freeman**, a **member of the proletariat**, or a **well-off servant**, with a Social Class modifier of -1, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll Result

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 3 | You have an axe, 3 daggers, a mace, a pole arm, a sword, half a dozen torches, a tinderbox, wicker armour (light armour) and a brand somewhere on your body (hidden or obvious, your choice). |
| 4 | You have a box of lures, a fishing pole, a net, a shield, a spear, and a small river canoe with a couple of oars. |
| 5 | You have a backpack, a bedroll, a lucky charm amulet, a wineskin, a week of rations, a spyglass, and either a light crossbow and a quiver with 2 dozen crossbow bolts or a short bow and a quiver with 2 dozen arrows. |
| 6 | You have a crowbar, a piece of chalk, a plumb line, several rulers, a shovel, a tarp, and a small decorative statuette that looks vaguely religious and disturbing. It makes people feel uneasy, but they can't say why. |
| 7 | You have a club or dagger, and one or two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a brass trumpet; • a deck of cards; • a handful of movable type; • a jar full of pieces of broken glass; • a pet snake (not poisonous); • smelling salts; • a vial of piquant spices. |
| 8 | You have a backpack, a bedroll, a written license allowing you to practice the profession of bounty hunter, and one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a club, a net, and a chainmail shirt (light armour); • a sword, a shield, and a plain-looking metal helmet; • or roll 3d4 on the Peasants and Slaves table and take that gear too. |
| 9 | You have 1d6 cyphers worth of mixed coins, numerous leather cords you wear as jewellery, a week of rations, a set of tools (for the profession of your choice), a sleeveless brigandine (light armour), a wooden comb, and either a make up kit or two pairs of dice (one weighted, one not). |
| 10-11 | You have a backpack, a club or dagger, 2 weeks worth of rations, and one or two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an animal trap; • a compass; • a leather jerkin (light armour); • a pack of marked cards; • a pole arm; • a shield. |

-
- 12 You have a 20-foot rope ladder, a crowbar, a sledge hammer, a dozen candles, a tinderbox, a long dagger, a short dagger, a pouch full of sand and a pouch full of mummy dust, a thick black cloak, a pair of pliers and 1d6 loose gold teeth in your pockets, and some strange piece of “treasure” from your last tomb-robbing expedition. Ask the GM what it is after you name one person who died on that expedition and why you miss them.
 - 13 You have a dagger, a random hireling, a shoulder bag, a set of tools (for the profession of your choice), a walking stick, a wineskin, and either a wheel of cheese or 2 days worth of dried meat jerky.
 - 14 You have 1d6 brushes (of different sizes), 1d6 different kinds of knives, 1d6 pots of paint (of different colours), a dozen pieces of chalk, an extra pair of boots, a pot of honey, a waterproof overcoat, and a very large waterskin currently full of beer, ale, wine, or fresh spring water, your choice which (but the alcohol is not particularly expensive, even if you think it tastes like perfection).
 - 15 You have 1d6 bundles of wolfsbane, 1d6 doses of antitoxin, 1d6 doses of drugs or poison (your choice what type), a magnifying glass, a sickle, and an ancient bronze helmet of a design unknown to even the wisest of scholars that you dug out of the earth, miraculously intact.
 - 16 You have a large sack, the close combat weapon of your choice, a book you can't read, a stolen bag of coins worth 20 cyphers, and a fire in your heart that the nobility can never quench.
 - 17 You have 2d4 flasks of oil, a bomb, a club, half a dozen torches, a pound of wax, a sack full of rags, a tinderbox, and either 1d6 small stones that glow softly or a pair of magical gloves that can adhere to any surface.
 - 18 You have a bastard sword, a chainmail hauberk (heavy armour), a lantern, 2 flasks of oil, a mule with saddlebags, and a treasure map—all stolen.
-

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are an assassin**, you also have an extra close combat weapon, your choice what kind.
- **If you are a champion**, you also have a banner or flag on a pole.
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have an inexpensive symbol of your cult and a piece of clothing that signifies your faith.
- **If you are a fighter, thief, or wizard**, you also have a bank note worth cyphers equal to your roll.
- **If you are a scholar**, you always have at least 2 scholarly books, on subjects you have studied before, or at least are interested in now.
- **If you know any spells**, you also have an innocuous spellbook and either a travel memoir describing the local area or a short prison term in your past.

The Middle Classes

If you are middle class, from a family of burghers, merchants, or the well-off proletariat, with a Social Class modifier of zero, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll Result

- | | |
|----|--|
| 3 | You have a dagger, a sack, spectacles, and a ring that makes you immune to acid, cold, or fire and heat (choose one only) when you wear it. |
| 4 | You have a magnificent riding horse and gear, saddlebags, a sword, a week of rations, and a silver locket with a miniature painting of a dead girl inside it. |
| 5 | You have an abacus, an accounts ledger, a dozen quills, a vial of ink, a letter opener, a talisman that (you have been told) keeps ghosts away, and either membership in a secret society or a shrunken head that was made on an island in the South Seas. |
| 6 | You have an accurate map of one city's sewers (your choice which one), a bomb, a handful of pomegranate seeds, a noose, a set of scales, a sword, and one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1d6 doses of powerful psychedelic drugs; • a clay jug full of dead flowers and a leather strap to help you carry it; • numerous tattoos that you are not supposed to have; • a skull coated many times with brightly-coloured lacquer; • a small tin of numbing salve. |
| 7 | You have 1d6 flasks of oil, 1d6 vials of acid, a crowbar, a hand mirror, a leather jerkin (light armour), half a dozen torches and a tinderbox, a set of tools (for the profession of your choice), a shoulderbag, a small collection of hand-drawn pornography. |
| 8 | You have 50 feet of twine cord, a strong magnet, a battleaxe or a flail, a bouncy rubber ball, a cigar cutter, a drinking vessel made from a horn, a jar of pickled vegetables, a lantern that has run out of oil, and either an amulet that is a piece of amber with an insect preserved inside it or a handful of magnesium. |
| 9 | You have a brand-new sword, a lantern and a flask of oil, a set of tools (for the profession of your choice), and a recent personal tragedy that you are trying not to dwell upon. |
| 10 | You have 2 bottles of wine, a dagger, a hammer, a dozen iron spikes, a 2-person tent, 4 wooden stakes, a set of tools (for the profession of your choice), half a dozen torches in a sack, a lamellar cuirass (light armour), a tinderbox, and 1d6 cyphers worth of small coins in your pockets. |
| 11 | You have a bedroll, a dagger, a dozen torches, a shovel, a set of tools (for the lawful profession of your choice), and a complete lack of preparation for the life of adventure you are now pursuing. |

-
- 12 You have 1d6 doses of antitoxin, a 10-foot pole, the one-handed close combat weapon of your choice, a tinderbox, and a backpack with a small hammer, a dozen iron spikes, a dozen torches, and 2 weeks' worth of rations in it.
 - 13 You have 1d6 doses of drugs (your choice what kind), 1d6 pouches attached to belts, 50 feet of silk rope and mountain climbing gear (including a pickaxe and a dozen iron spikes), a dagger, a flag of some kind, a set of tools (for the lawful profession of your choice), a waterproof woolen cloak, and a horn that lets out a melancholy bellow when you blow into it.
 - 14 You have an abacus, bank notes worth 20 cyphers, a small box of cigars, a box of matches, a map of the region, a matching sword and dagger duo, a random hireling, a set of scales, a vial of holy water, and a letter addressed to your father.
 - 15 You have 1d6 bars of soap, a roll of bandages, an ice pick, a set of silverware utensils, a straight razor, a tin of boot polish and a brush to apply it with, a wooden club, and either 1d6 photographs of yourself or a book full of sheet music for songs popular in other kingdoms.
 - 16 You have 1d6 throwing axes, a flail or morning star, a pair of wineskins, strange wooden armour (heavy armour), and a pronounced foreign accent.
 - 17 You have a bedroll, bottle of hair tonic, a dozen candles, a tinderbox, reading glasses (but nothing to read), a spike fiddle and a bow to play it with, a week of rations in a sack, and a foreign chess set that is slightly damaged and missing 1 piece.
 - 18 You have half a dozen books in a shoulderbag, a dagger, a lantern, a flask of oil, a magnifying glass, a rapier, a set of tools (for the academic profession of your choice), a letter from home, and 3 glass vials containing unknown chemicals.
-

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are a bard**, you also have one or two musical instruments of your choice, and a mask.
- **If you are a champion**, you also have a book explicating your ideology.
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have an inexpensive symbol of your cult and a piece of clothing that signifies your faith.
- **If you are a fighter**, you also have an extra close combat weapon of your choice, and 2 weeks worth of rations.
- **If you are a scholar**, you always have at least 2 scholarly books, on subjects you have studied before, or at least are interested in now.
- **If you know any spells**, you also have either a small, innocuous spellbook or your magical writings are collected on scrolls you keep in a wooden case.

Lesser Nobility

If you are from the lesser nobility or a wealthy urban family, with a Social Class modifier of +1, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll Result

- | | |
|----|--|
| 3 | You have 3 books about animals, a dagger, a man trap, a shoulderbag, a short bow, a quiver with 2 dozen arrows in it, and a magnificent cloak (made of feathers, perhaps) that soothes your wounded pride. |
| 4 | You have 1d6 doses of antitoxin, 4 bombs, a tinderbox, a dozen candles, a handful of caltrops, a dozen pieces of chalk, a dagger, a pot of glue, a dozen heretical posters, a shoulderbag, and a heart made of stone, which anyone can see, if they look in your eyes. |
| 5 | You have a fancy set of clothes, a rapier made for you by an infamous weaponsmith, a snuff box (with only a few pinches of snuff left), and either a pet monkey you keep on a chain or a lock of someone else's hair, tied with a ribbon. |
| 6 | You have 1d6 books on different subjects, 1d6 letters, food for 2 days, a notebook, a pencil, a pair of spectacles, a recent newspaper, and a deep, insistent curiosity that will probably get you killed sooner than later. |
| 7 | You have 1d6 throwing knives, 50 feet of rope, a grappling hook, a set of tools (for the lawful profession of your choice), a purse of mixed coins worth 25 cyphers, and either a well-crafted sword or a heavy leather jerkin that feels very stiff (light armour). |
| 8 | You have a bottle of olive oil, a comb made of bone, a crown of flowers on your head, a long coat with numerous pockets, a cruel dagger, a trident, and a rivalry with a noble house greater than yours that prevents you from rising in status through any of the usual means. |
| 9 | You have a bedroll, an excellent pair of scissors, a jar of henna for dying your hair, a kuffiyah made specifically for you, an oud or sitar, a sack of glass marbles, several empty sacks, a wineskin, the close combat weapon of your choice, and either membership in a martial order of nobles or a nearby lawyer who owes you a favour. |
| 10 | You have a stylish leather coat (light armour), a set of tools (for the lawful profession of your choice), a dagger, and one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 feet of silk rope, a grappling hook, and a sword; • a pistol, a dozen bullets, and a powder horn; • a shoulderbag and 2 week's worth of rations; • or roll 1d6+6 on the Middle Classes table and take every second item from that entry as well (but no backpack items if you roll a 12). |
| 11 | You have 50 feet of silk rope, a backpack, a bastard sword, a book (on the topic of your choice), a hand mirror, a jar of beard oil, manacles, a shield, a silver dagger, and a week of rations. |

-
- 12 You have a backpack, a 2-person tent, a mallet, 4 wooden stakes, a lantern and a flask of oil, a set of tools (for the lawful profession of your choice), a hatchet, a short sword, a week of rations, and a festering contempt for those who prefer a safe and settled life, far away from adventure, that you simply cannot hide.
 - 13 You have 1d6 doses of poison, a bottle of expensive wine, a dagger, a long bow, a quiver with 2 dozen arrows in it, a make up kit, a vial of perfume, and a bad reputation.
 - 14 You have a backpack, fingerless woollen gloves, a piece of chalk, a rifle, 2 dozen bullets and a powder horn, a spyglass, a waterproof cloak, and the scars of an old injury, now healed, that still hurts before it rains.
 - 15 You have 1d6 gold coins worth 10c each, a book about noble etiquette, a deck of cards, a dead man's journal, a fancy-looking sword, a pocket watch, a small lamp and a flask of oil, a debt you owe to a distant relative, and either a single feather from a giant bird or a snakeskin valise.
 - 16 You have 1d6 doses of drugs, a dozen sticks of incense, a lantern, 2 flasks of oil, a tinderbox, a small hammer, a dozen iron spikes, a sword cane, half a dozen pencils, and a notebook containing an earnest young man's surprisingly eloquent poetry.
 - 17 You have blood, chalk, and ink stains on your clothes, and on the close combat weapon of your choice, as well as a shoulderbag, a handful of heretical or illegal pamphlets, bad memories of a demon-summoning ritual gone wrong, and either an enemy among the local nobility or a large gambling debt to a criminal gang.
 - 18 You have a compass, a hand mirror, a lantern, 2 flasks of oil, a tinderbox, a magnificent-looking sword, a notebook, half a dozen pencils, a pair of dice, dark, tousled hair, and the love of a foolish young maiden, smitten by that crown of thorns you wear, O bastard child.
-

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are a bard**, you also have 1 or 2 musical instruments and a book (on the topic of your choice).
- **If you are a champion**, you also have either a fancy helmet or an obvious physical mark that symbolizes your cause (amputation, scars, tattoos, etc).
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have an expensive symbol of your faith.
- **If you are a fighter**, you also have heavy armour (in the style of your choice, but it's not a full suit of plate).
- **If you are a scholar**, you also have a shoulderbag and 1d6 tomes devoted to obscure philosophical subjects.
- **If you are a thief**, you also have thieves' tools.
- **If you know any spells**, you also have a well-made spellbook.

Scions of the Great Houses

If you are from the greater nobility, the child of a baron, count, or duke, with a Social Class modifier of +2, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll Result

- | | |
|----|---|
| 3 | You have compromising letters intended for blackmail, a short sword, a staff with a glowing globe on the top of it, a signet ring, a bottle of brandy, gin, or rum (your choice), and a terrible, pervasive ennui crushing your soul. |
| 4 | You have 20 feet of chain, a near-empty backpack, a compass, a jar of glowbugs, a scimitar, a tiger-skin cloak (real or fake, your choice), and either a barbed whip or a stiletto dagger that has a compartment in the hilt for holding a small vial of poison. You have no poison. |
| 5 | You have a mule and a cart, a flail or a warhammer, a shield, a pipe, a box of matches, a bag of tobacco (or some other weed, your choice), and more regrets than you can count. You might also have a dead man in your cart, up to you. |
| 6 | You have a backpack, 2 weeks worth of rations, a set of writing tools in a nice-looking case, a shield, a spear, a vial of perfume you somewhat dislike, a pet cheetah or crocodile, and a random hireling who also knows how to handle it. |
| 7 | You have a composite bow, a quiver with 2 dozen arrows in it, a riding horse and gear, light barding, a signet ring, a sword, a week of rations, and a prominent scar. |
| 8 | You have an axe of some kind, a jar of glow-worms and a bundle of leaves to feed them, a music box, a sturdy shoulderbag, the tell-tale physical appearance that your noble house is known for, and either 1d6 books about monsters or as much camping equipment as you are able to carry. |
| 9 | You have a compass, a duelling rapier, a long brigandine “coat of ten thousand nails” (heavy armour), a pistol you inherited, a dozen bullets and a powder horn, a signet ring, and either a sketchy map of the local area or a license to hunt game anywhere within the sultan’s lands. |
| 10 | You have a backpack, half a dozen torches, a week of rations, a mace or pole arm, and either a steel breastplate and helmet (heavy armour) or a riding horse and gear. |
| 11 | You have the close combat weapon of your choice, a padded silk warcoat (light armour), and one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 feet of silk rope, a grappling hook, and 1d6 large daggers; • a pair of pistols, 2 dozen bullets, and a powder horn; • a random hireling, who is loyal but scared; • a short bow and a quiver with a dozen arrows in it. |

- 12 You have a backpack, 2 bottles of wine, an ancient bronze sword, a steel dagger, a full set of spare clothes, a dozen torches, a tinderbox, and the official deed to an empty piece of land in the middle of nowhere that your older brother gifted you after he inherited the family title.
- 13 You have 1d6 books, 1d6 pistols, 2 dozen bullets and a powder horn, a “magical” amulet bought from a fortune teller, a make up kit, a shoulderbag, a wineskin, and a wooden case that holds within it a dozen pieces of paper, a dozen quills, and two vials of ink (of different colours).
- 14 You have 1d6 gold teeth (that were put in your mouth by a barber surgeon, not teeth taken from someone else), a compass, a notebook, a dozen pencils, a pair of fine calfskin boots, a spyglass, a rifle, 2 dozen bullets and a powder horn, and either a small pet bird and a bag of birdseed or a foreign book full of weird philosophical ideas.
- 15 You have a couple of suitcases full of clothes and toiletries, a heavy cane you can use as a club, a bullseye lantern, 1d4 flasks of oil, a pocket watch, and a carriage, but either no coachmen or no horses (your choice).
- 16 You have a backpack, a bedroll, a fishing pole, a pound of lard, a random hireling, a rifle, 2 dozen bullets and a powder horn, and a letter reminding you how disappointed in you your family is.
- 17 You have a dozen iron spikes, a dozen torches, a roll of bandages, a sturdy shoulderbag, a small hammer, a tinderbox, the close combat weapon of your choice, a good reputation around these parts, and a map of either a lost city or a haunted castle (your choice).
- 18 You have the close combat weapon of your choice, half a dozen bandages, a dozen candles, a tinderbox, a pony, a saddle, and a ring that was a handsome young man’s gift (to you or someone else, your choice).

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are an assassin**, you also have a light crossbow and a quiver with 2 dozen crossbow bolts in it.
- **If you are a bard**, you also have up to 3 books (on the topics of your choice).
- **If you are a champion**, you also have a signet ring.
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have an expensive symbol of your faith and a few pieces of clothing that reveal your cult allegiance.
- **If you are a fighter**, you also have an ornate mace and either a dagger or a throwing knife.
- **If you are a scholar**, you also have several certifications and diplomas from highly prestigious institutions and teachers (and maybe even the abilities to merit them).
- **If you are a thief**, you are also missing an ear, a finger, or one of the teeth in your smile (your choice which one).
- **If you know any spells**, you also have a large and ostentatious spellbook.



The Blood, Royal

If you are of the royal blood, no matter how diluted, with a Social Class modifier of +3, roll 3d6 on this table to determine your starting equipment:

Roll	Result
3	You have 3 pistols, 2 dozen bullets and a powder horn, a signet ring, a flouncy shirt that shows off your chest, and a poisoned dagger you took from the man who tried to kill you yesterday.
4	You have a flask of oil, a lantern, padded leather armour (light armour), a shoulderbag, a tinderbox, the close combat weapon of your choice, and the certain knowledge that one of your closest relatives is plotting to have you murdered... or otherwise disposed of.
5	You have 1d6 doses of antitoxin, 3 vials of holy water, a light crossbow, a quiver with a dozen crossbow bolts in it, a lantern, 2 flasks of oil, a shovel, a small hammer, a dozen iron spikes, and a very fancy chess set.
6	You have a chest full of clothes, a horse and wagon, a signet ring, a sword, and 2 random hirelings that your parents are paying to attend you.
7	You have an axe, a dagger, a pole arm, 1d6 doses of drugs (your choice of type), 2 books (on the topics of your choice), a chainmail shirt (light armour), a signet ring, and a small, untrained dog or monkey.
8	You have a dagger, a hunting horn, a mace, a riding horse and gear, some nearly empty saddlebags, an old book about a random topic, and a set of tools for the mundane-but-labour-free occupation of your choice.
9	You have some bandages, a book, a bottle of wine, a dagger, a pouch of coins worth 15 cyphers, a riding horse and gear, saddlebags, a signet ring, a sword, a vial of perfume, and the musical instrument of your choice.
10-11	You have 50 feet of silk rope, a backpack, the close combat weapon of your choice, and up to 3 of the following: • 1d6 doses of antitoxin; • a disguise of some kind (to hide your high status); • a dozen quills and a vial of ink; • a grappling hook; • a hammer and a dozen iron spikes; • a lantern and a flask of oil; • light armour (your choice what type); • a pick and shovel; • a shield; • two weeks of rations.
12	You have a backpack, climbing gear (but no rope), a dozen torches, a handful of caltrops, a metal helmet, a small bag of sand, a tinderbox, the close combat weapon of your choice, and a random hireling with ulterior motives.

-
- 13 You have a dagger, a shoulderbag, a sword, a week's worth of rations, a request that you attend an upcoming noble event (that would be dishonourable to miss), and either an uncomfortable suit of heavy armour or a spyglass you did not have permission to take, your choice.
 - 14 You have a belt pouch with a bundle of wolfsbane in it, a mace, a shield with heraldry on it (yours or someone else's), a warhorse and gear (but no barding), and a beautiful lock of hair tied in a ribbon.
 - 15 You have an axe, a banker's note worth 100c, a dozen pieces of chalk, an hourglass, a shield, and either a donkey that refuses to carry a rider or a suit of heraldry that disguises you as a member of the lower nobility.
 - 16 You have a compound bow, a dagger, a flask of oil, a lantern, a quiver with a dozen arrows in it, a sack full of scraps of cloth, a sign of your high birth, and a lover in every port (or *so it seems* to your companions).
 - 17 You have 1d6 doses of antitoxin, 1d6 doses of drugs (your choice of type), the close combat weapon of your choice, a short bow, a quiver with a dozen arrows in it, a shoulderbag, half a dozen torches, a week's worth of nasty-tasting rations, and eyes that are different colours.
 - 18 You have a signet ring, a jewelled dagger, 2 other weapons of your choice, the armour of your choice, an armoured warhorse, 2 weeks worth of rations, 50 feet of silk rope, a bedroll, a grappling hook, and a letter from the nightmare realm offering you a crown of your own should you agree to betray your royal kin.
-

And possibly more, depending on your profession:

- **If you are an assassin**, you can have a trained dog if you like, but you must also have the blood of one of your relatives on your conscience, if you do.
- **If you are a bard**, you also have a book of songs or speeches.
- **If you are a champion**, you also have a prophetic birth mark.
- **If you are a cultist**, you also have a very expensive symbol of your faith, a holy book (which may also contains your spells, if you wish), and a fancy ceremonial costume.
- **If you are a fighter**, you must trade one of your items for the close combat weapon of your choice. You may trade other items for close combat weapons as well, if you want to.
- **If you are a scholar**, you also have the journal of a famous architect, heretic, or philosopher (your choice which), and, if you wish, an inconspicuous spellbook that appears to be some other literary work.
- **If you are a thief**, you also have a cursed item. You say what the item is and the GM decides what the horrible curse is. You cannot get rid of it.
- **If you know any spells**, you also have a spellbook, either bound in human skin or made of weird metal (this is optional for cultists and scholars).

Random Single Items

This table lists individual pieces of equipment an adventurer might carry. The first hundred are simple items, the last hundred are more unique or just have longer names. You can generate a full kit of equipment by rolling on this table 1d4+2 times.

If you use the random equipment tables from the previous pages, you can replace an unwanted item with a roll on this table, or (if your group agrees), you can add one or two items from this table to those results to give them even more personality.

You have a... (roll 1d200):

Roll	Item	Roll	Item	Roll	Item
1	Abacus.	29	Fake gemstone.	56	Pliers.
2	Animal trap.	30	Flail.	57	Polearm.
3-4	Axe.	31	Flask of oil.	58	Pot of glue.
5	Backpack.	32	Flute.	59	Pot of paint.
6	Bag full of sand.	33	Fork and spoon.	60	Pot of tar.
7	Ball of twine.	34	Hair brush.	61	Pound of lard.
8	Bedroll.	35	Hammer.	62	Powderhorn.
9	Bell.	36	Hand mirror.	63	Quarterstaff.
10	Bomb.	37	Hookah.	64	Rapier.
11	Book of songs.	38	Icepick.	65	Roll of bandages.
12	Box of matches.	39	Jar of pickles.	66	Ruler.
13	Brass knuckles.	40	Keg of beer.	67	Saw.
14	Burlap sack.	41	Lantern.	68	Scimitar.
15	Calligraphy set.	42	Metal mace.	69	Scissors.
16	Candle.	43	"Magic" wand.	70	Sewing kit.
17	Carpentry tools.	44	Magnifying glass.	71	Shield.
18	Chisel.	45	Make up kit.	72	Short bow.
19	Coin worth 1c.	46	Mallet.	73	Shoulderbag.
20	Comb.	47	Manacles.	74	Shovel.
21	Conch shell.	48	Masonry tools.	75	Sickle.
22	Crossbow.	49	Metal helmet.	76	Sling.
23	Crowbar.	50	Mortar and pestle.	77	Snake.
24	Cynical streak.	51	Musket.	78	Spear.
25	Dagger.	52	Net.	79	Spyglass.
26	Drill.	53	Pair of dice.	80	Straight razor.
27	Embroidery tools.	54	Parasol.	81	Straw broom.
28	Eyeglasses.	55	Pistol.	82	Surgical tools.

Roll	Item		
83	Sword.	117	Decapitated lion's head.
84	Tent.	118	Deck of marked cards.
85	Terrible hangover.	119	Decorated silk hand fan.
86	Thieves' tools.	120	Donkey and saddlebags.
87	Throwing knife.	121	Dozen cigars in a humidor.
88	Tinderbox.	122	Dubious reputation.
89	Toothbrush.	123	Faith in a higher power.
90	Torch.	124	Fancy silver dagger.
91	Umbrella.	125	Flask of fine liquor.
92	Vial of acid.	126	Fossilized stone leaf.
93	Vial of ink.	127	Full kit of mountaineering gear.
94	Vial of poison.	128	Hallucinogenic mushroom.
95	Wheelbarrow.	129	Handful of caltrops.
96	Whetstone.	130	Handful of incense.
97	Whistle.	131	Handful of round river stones.
98	Wineskin.	132	Heavy woollen cloak.
99	Wooden club.	133	Jar of animal urine.
100	Wooden stake.	134	Jar of glowing bugs.
101	Amusing theatrical costume.	135	Lengthy letter from home.
102	Ancient stone knife.	136	Magical skeleton key.
103	Bag of glass marbles.	137	Map of the constellations.
104	Banner of a noble house.	138	Missing person's journal.
105	Bar of gold worth 100c.	139	Notebook and a pencil.
106	Begging bowl (but no coins).	140	Numerous masterwork tattoos.
107	Boar's-tooth helmet.	141	Packet of mummy dust.
108	Bottle of excellent local wine.	142	Pagan religious text.
109	Bottle of poor-quality wine.	143	Pair of chainmail gloves.
110	Brightly-patterned cape.	144	Pair of excellent quality boots.
111	Carved wooden mask.	145	Pair of leather gloves.
112	Censer and a brick of incense.	146	Pair of silken slippers.
113	Chainmail shirt (light armour).	147	Photograph of a monster.
114	Complete set of cult regalia.	148	Piece of sandpaper.
115	Container of smelling salts.	149	Polished riverstone.
116	Cooking pot and frying pan.	150	Pouch full of smokable weeds.

Roll Item

151	Pound of imported tea.	176	Tin of magical tea leaves.
152	Pressed dried flowers.	177	Tiny religious icon.
153	Printed theatrical playbill.	178	Tooled leather mask.
154	Rabbit's foot charm.	179	Unused trepanation drill.
155	Recent local newspaper.	180	Very conspicuous hat.
156	Riding horse and saddle.	181	Very fancy kuffiyah.
157	Scroll with a random spell on it.	182	Vial of cocaine powder.
158	Set of a dozen brushes.	183	Vial of lawful holy water.
159	Set of knucklebones.	184	Vial of a pleasant perfume.
160	Shark's tooth amulet.	185	Warhorse and saddle.
161	Single piece of chalk.	186	Week's worth of rations.
162	Small brass pocketwatch.	187	Wheel of tasty cheese.
163	Small but vicious dog.	188	Whole roast chicken.
164	String of garlic bulbs.	189	Wind-up clockwork bird.
165	Amulet made from a piece of meteoric rock.	190	Magic potion with a random spell suspended in it.
166	Camera with 1d6 photographic plates.	191	Metal cuirass (counts as light armour).
167	Canopic jar from an ancient, unearthed tomb.	192	Partial suit of plate (counts as heavy armour).
168	Coffin (with or without a body inside, your choice).	193	Poorly printed translation of a popular novel.
169	Collection of numerous brightly-coloured feathers.	194	Pouch of mixed foreign coins worth 3d10 cyphers in total.
170	Guidebook for travellers of the local area.	195	Random hireling, paid in advance for one adventure.
171	Handwritten scientific monograph.	196	Scrap of shadow, seething with life.
172	Healing potion that removes 1d6 Wounds when drunk.	197	Suit of chainmail (counts as heavy armour).
173	Holy symbol of a religion that is banned in the local area.	198	Suit of mail and plate (counts as heavy armour).
174	Lamellar coat and helmet (counts as heavy armour).	199	Tattooing needles and 1d6 vials of ink.
175	Leather jacket (counts as light armour).	200	Treasure map of dubious authenticity.



Advancement

Characters start the game at first level with no experience points. **In order to increase your level**, you must gain experience points by recovering treasure and valuables from the Vale of Serpents and the dungeons made of nightmare that are invading the sunlit world. **For each cypher worth of non-magical treasure you recover**, you gain 1 point of experience. Magic items, including spell formulas, are their own reward and do not count toward experience, even if sold for money. Experience points must be split evenly between all the surviving members of an adventuring party that return to civilization together, regardless how the actual money and treasures are divided. Only PCs receive experience points—hirelings, retainers, and other NPCs do not.

Once you reach a certain amount of experience points, you move up to the next level. You can only increase by one level after each foray into a dungeon. You may not increase by two levels at once. Any excess experience points are lost, leaving you 1 experience point short of levelling up twice.

Level 10

Once you reach Level 10, you have essentially triumphed and won the game. At this point, you have a choice to make: you may continue playing this character as if you were still Level 9, and no longer gain experience; or you may retire this character to safety. You may also decide to retire later, if you have one last quest you want to finish.

Level	Experience
1	0
2	2,000
3	4,000
4	8,000
5	15,000
6	30,000
7	60,000
8	100,000
9	150,000
10	250,000

When you retire, choose a location that is important to your character—a place they have made their home, fought to defend, or tried to take control of. It can be as large as a city or even a kingdom, or as small as a farm or a single neighbourhood, as long as your character has a connection to it as a whole and not just a smaller part of it.

From this point on, that location is no longer plagued by nightmare incursions. You have beaten the nightmare realm and your home is safe from the danger it presents. Other areas of the world might still be afflicted, but some other adventurers will have to save them—one hero can only do so much.

Getting a Job

If, at any time before reaching Level 10, you decide that your character is going to get a real job and quit the adventuring life, you may do so, but you are admitting failure and voluntarily losing the game. Make a new character and try again!

Your old character may return to adventuring later on, but they do so without any of their old possessions, having lost them all in some terrible turn of circumstances. Remember to pass your weapons on to new adventurers when you give up the life.

Primary Attributes

Two of your six attribute scores are considered your primary attributes (or one, if you are a thief). Which two is determined by your profession. **If both your primary attributes are 13 or higher**, you gain a +10 per cent bonus to experience points you gain. **If only one is 13 or higher**, you still gain a +5 per cent bonus. **If both primary attributes are 8 or lower**, however, you suffer a -10 per cent penalty to the experience points you gain. Use the permanent scores you have at the end of an adventure, not your temporarily reduced scores, to calculate this modifier.

As you increase your level, you also get more opportunities to increase the scores of your primary attributes than you do your other attributes.

Attribute Gains

Each time you gain a level, you may choose two attributes to test for advancement. The first attribute you test must be one of your primary attributes. The second may be any one of your five other attributes, including your other primary attribute. You may not test the same attribute twice when you gain a level, you must test two different attributes. Once you increase in level again, you may test attributes that you have tested or increased before.

Unlike the other professions, thieves have only one primary attribute, and must always attempt to raise it, along with one other attribute of their choice, when they gain a level.

To test an attribute for advancement, roll a d20 and compare it to the attribute's current, permanent score. If your attribute score has been temporarily reduced, for whatever reason, restore it to its normal maximum and ignore the reduction. You are healed! This is an additional reward for gaining a level.

If you roll higher than your attribute score, you may increase it by 1 point if it is already 13 or higher, by 2 points if it is already 9-12, and by 3 points if it is only 1-8.

If you roll equal to or lower than your attribute score, the score does not change unless it is both one of your primary attributes and 12 or lower.

- If it is a primary attribute and the score is 1-8, increase it by 2 points.
- If it is a primary attribute and the score is 9-12, increase it by 1 point.
- If the score is 13 or higher or it is not a primary attribute, you must roll higher than the score to increase it.

Attribute Score Before Rolling	Roll is Higher than Attribute Score	Roll is Equal or Lower, and Primary Attribute	Roll is Equal or Lower, but not Primary Attribute
1-8	+3	+2	+0
9-12	+2	+1	+0
13+	+1	+0	+0



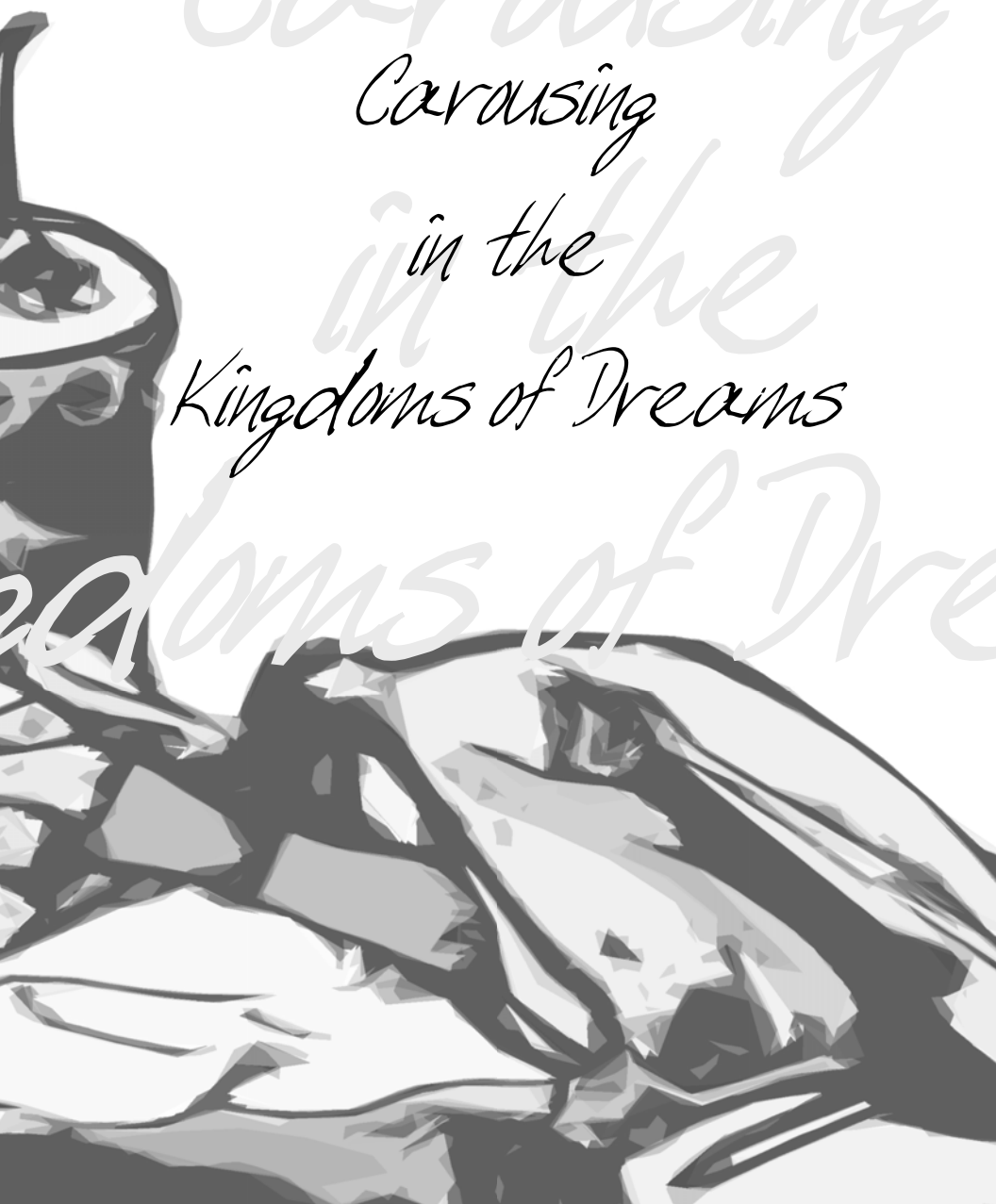
Chapter 4.

Carousing

Carousing

in the

Kingdoms of Dreams





Between Adventures

If a sortie into the nightmare realm goes surprisingly well, the PCs may only need a good night's sleep, or two, before they are ready and willing to charge back in. If things go rather less well, they might need to rest and heal or resupply. They might also want to conduct research into the circumstances surrounding a nightmare incursion, make some valuable contacts in town, study magical writings they have recovered, or improve their standings in the local community.

Buying and Selling Things

The GM determines what goods are available in each settlement. Poor villages have less to offer than a bustling metropolis does. Adventurers who recover obscene amounts of wealth from an incursion may also drive inflation, just by spending it—and spending it might even be impossible if the settlement is too poor to exchange your gems and jewellery for actual money. See pages 144-146.

Conducting Research

The amount of information there is to be found in a settlement is determined by the GM, but how much of it you can extract is up to you. See page 173.

Justifying Your Loot

In order to use magic items looted from ancient tombs without causing panic in the general populace, you may have to go to court and argue a case justifying yourself. If you can do so successfully, your magic item can be used in public without the community turning against you. See pages 178-181.

Magic

For learning new spells and creating magical formulas, see Chapter 5.

People, Places, and Things

Finding people who will be your friend or who will help you obtain goods and services not normally available is best done by living in a settlement and socializing with its people. At the GM's discretion, spending money might grant you an audience with, or an introduction to, an important person, although a reaction roll should still be used to determine their feelings.

Hiring retainers is a risky proposition, because they are almost certainly vulnerable to the nightmare incursions in ways that the PCs are not. Even so, they can be useful. See pages 164-168.

Spending money on community institutions makes them more important. You know the players want to see more of something when they spend their hard-earned treasures on it. As an institution becomes more important, it begins offering unique opportunities, goods, and services. See pages 149-151.

Room and Board

Before the PCs can take advantage of most things a community has to offer, however, they have to spend some time (and money) living in it. Between undertaking adventures, your characters live relatively normal lives, just like everyone else—except they don't really have jobs—and this costs money.

If the PCs only need a night or two before they head back out, just charge them 1d6 cyphers at most, or get them to entertain the innkeeper with a dashing story.

If less than a couple of weeks go by between expeditions into the nightmare realm, simply deduct 2d6 cyphers from each of the PCs. If they spend more time than that in the “real world,” they are subject to all the economic and social vagaries of living like a responsible adult (or not, as the case may be).

Down and Out in Pernicious Abandon

Living on the streets costs nothing, but there is no satisfying rest, so you cannot heal Wounds, recover lost attribute points, and you can't roll two dice for your Disposition.

When it comes time to undertake a new adventure, you must save against your Charisma, Ferocity, or Health (your choice which) or lose an additional 1d4 points of Health. You must also roll 2d6 plus your Ferocity modifier and consult the table below, applying an additional -1 penalty if you've been on the streets for more than a season, -2 if it's been more than a year, and -3 if it's been several years:

Roll Results of Living on the Street

0-6	All your money is gone, and so are all your possessions, except for one, your choice which.
7-9	All your money is gone, and so are half of your possessions (your choice which). The GM may also decide that someone you met while on the streets has an opportunity for you.
10+	All your money is gone, but all your other possessions are still with you. You may also choose one contact to have made while living on the streets.



Living in Style

If you have enough money to afford room and board, you are able to spend your days resting, recovering, and training. Or you can go sight-seeing, make contacts, and do research. You must pay for one week minimum between adventures if you spend longer than a single night at an inn.

There are three levels of quality when you are paying for room and board between adventures: you can live poorly, you can live well, or you can live like the rich. Unless otherwise noted, each of these lifestyles will afford you a good rest.

Poorly

Living poorly means staying at a run-down inn or renting a hovel in the slums, and eating street food every day. This costs at least 10 cyphers per week (or 40c per month). **When you return to adventuring after living poorly**, roll 2d6 and add your Intelligence modifier, applying an additional -1 penalty if you've been down and out for more than a season, -2 if it's been more than a year, and -3 if it's been several years:

Roll	Results of Living Poorly
0-6	Life has not been kind to you. You have lost all your money, and made no useful contacts, although you may know several people who took advantage of you. You may only roll one die for your Disposition.
7-9	You may choose a contact to have made between adventures, as long as they are not a well-off person.
10+	You may choose two contacts to have made between adventures. At least one of them must be appropriate to your lifestyle.

Well

Living well means comfortable clothes, comfortable furniture, tasty food, one or more servants, and a relatively safe neighbourhood. Lots of people live well, but not the majority. It costs at least 25 cyphers per week (or 100c per month). You can reliably make a single contact between adventures if you live well, but if you want an unusual contact, you must save against your Charisma (or half your Charisma if you could only meet them under exceptionally singular or remarkable circumstances).

If you decide to take a job as a servant, you get the benefits of living well at no cost to yourself, but you may not leave your master's service without permission. If you do so, you cannot go back to being a servant in the future, and may be wanted by the authorities.

Like the Rich

Living like the rich is a very nice way to live, but it costs at least 100 cyphers per week (400c per month) if you already have a home, or 250c per week (1,000c per month) if you are renting one. The up-side is that when you return to adventuring, you have 1d4 servants that might accompany you, if you can talk them into it.

When you return to adventuring after living well or like the rich, roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier (or your Social Status modifier, if you wish):

Roll Results of Living Well or Like the Rich

0-6	You have run into a spot of trouble. Choose one: - An ally, contact, or friend of yours (GM chooses who) is in danger and you have become involved, to one degree or another. - You have offended the community (+1 Resentment). - You have gained an enemy. - You have lost all your money. - You have lost an important possession or two (GM chooses what).
7-9	You may choose one contact to have made between adventures.
10+	You may choose two contacts to have made between adventures.

If you spend a season or more living well or like the rich, you may choose an additional contact to have made between adventures.

Medical Stay

Staying in a hospital or a sanatorium means living well if it's a common institution, and living like the rich if you want first-class care. You may need to stay at either a hospital or sanatorium in order to heal your injuries or recover points lost from certain attributes, depending on what reduced them. **If you stay in a first-class sanatorium**, you may ignore the effects of one nightmare curse for the duration of the next adventure, after you are released.

Selling Your Services

This is not a game about wizards who set up thaumaturgy shops and sell healing cures to make their rent. This is a game about adventurers fighting off the nightmare incursions that threaten to destroy the world. If your character has run out of reasons to fight the nightmare incursions, simply describe how they retire to a life of peace and (hopefully) luxury, and make a new character who hasn't.

That isn't to say you can't make one-off deals to perform magic in exchange for money to fund your expeditions, or to buy equipment that you can use on them. But this comes down to how well you can deal with individual NPCs, it is not part of the normal equipping procedures.



Buying and Selling

Once the PCs have returned from an expedition into the nightmares with some valuable loot, they will naturally want to turn it into currency so they can buy things and live well until they are ready to go back into danger. In general, it is not necessary to describe the process of replacing old and lost equipment—spend the money and get back to the dungeoneering. Some expensive pieces of gear may not be available, however, and so PCs may need to travel to get them.

Villages

The availability of equipment is not very reliable in a village. You can buy anything that costs less than 10 cyphers no problem, but the existence of more-expensive items is not guaranteed. The GM describes the state of the village and its resources—if there is no blacksmith, for example, you can't get metal objects made. Also, if necessities like foodstuffs and livestock are in short supply, villagers will demand to be paid more for them.

Unless a village has a well-connected trader or banking house satellite, it cannot handle a large influx of wealth. Treasures worth more than a few hundred cyphers cannot be exchanged for money with villagers, though they might advance you some credit, expecting their hospitality to be repaid once you have returned to the city and dealt with the necessary bankers and merchants.

Villagers are almost never able to buy things you want to sell. If they are in need of weapons and armour, they usually look to their lords to provide guards and soldiers, or they scavenge battlefields. They do not often have the funds to supply their own militias with sophisticated gear.

Towns

Almost by definition, a town has all the basic attributes of a civil society—banking, printing, smithing, tanning, trading, and a sophisticated bureaucracy. You can buy anything that costs less than 500 cyphers in your average town, but more expensive items can only be purchased if a town is well-known for producing goods of that type. A suit of plate can be purchased at a town famous only for its armourers, but a good warhorse must be sought elsewhere.

Towns are part of trade networks, so you can always get paid for your treasure there. If you want to sell your equipment, you can exchange it for half as many cyphers as it normally costs, as long as it is in good condition. If it has been damaged, you can sell it for $1d4 \times 10$ percent of its original cost, at most.

Cities

A city is a cosmopolitan place—anything can be purchased there. You can also exchange your treasure and sell your equipment, the same as you can in towns.

Special Goods

If you want to acquire special items that are not listed, it is up to the GM to decide if, and where, they are available, and how much they cost. Healing potions, magical items, spells, and wild animals are not normally available for purchase. It may be possible to obtain these items by investing in laboratories, by joining a cult or other organization, or by developing special contacts, at the GM's discretion.

Investing in social institutions is another way to obtain rare or specialized goods. If you want the kinds of goods a business, organization, or other institution can provide, talk to the GM about where you can invest your money and what kinds of special opportunities they can provide you with because of it.

Magic Items

Magic items should rarely, if ever, be available for sale in the marketplaces of civilized cities and towns. They should be found in ancient ruins full of monsters, taken as loot from defeated enemies, or crafted specifically by the PCs or by magicians they employ. They should function more as a reward for exploration done, and not high-end toys that become affordable once you hit a fat payday.

Magic items that are valuable aside from just being magical—gilded, jewelled, or carved of precious jade—can be sold for money, but do not contribute toward your experience points. The magic itself is priceless, and is a tool you can use in the fight against nightmares. If the PCs want to sell a magic item, it is up to them to find a buyer and negotiate a price, which can be a risky proposition all on its own.

If the item can be identified as originating in the Vale of Serpents, however, the PCs will need to justify the fact that they are using it or they will be shunned and stigmatized (see pages 178-181). Once the PCs do this work, they will be extremely invested in this item, and that work should be rewarded by the usefulness of the item. The more unique and detailed a magic item is, the more interesting the players will find it. The more severely it breaks the rules, the more useful it often becomes.

Avoid drowning your campaign setting in similar items or items that have only one, simple effect, unless you want those items to be treated as regular equipment. If you want alchemical flamethrowers (for example) to be everyday gear in your game, just price them out and add them to the equipment lists. They can be “magical,” yes, but they aren't in the same realm as things we generally consider to be “magical items.”



Inflation

When you bring a large amount of treasure out of a nightmare incursion and inject it into a community, that treasure can become devalued. People think you are made of money when you're throwing gold around like water, and then they think there should be more of it for them, since you obviously don't care about it. The smaller the community, the more likely it is that prices will go up when you flaunt your loot—city-folk have seen it all, they're pretty jaded.

Villages

If the influx of money into a village-sized settlement is...

- dozens of cyphers, prices double for 2d6 days and then go back to normal.
- hundreds of cyphers, prices double.
- thousands of cyphers, prices triple.
- ten thousand cyphers or more, the settlement cannot handle that amount of money.

Towns

If the influx of money into a town-sized settlement is...

- hundreds of cyphers, prices double.
- thousands of cyphers, prices triple.
- a hundred thousand cyphers or more, the settlement cannot handle that amount of money.

Cities

If the influx of money into a city is...

- thousands of cyphers, prices increase by half.
- tens of thousands of cyphers, prices double.
- hundreds of thousands of cyphers, prices triple for a full season before there is a chance of them returning to normal.

Multiple influxes of money do not repeatedly cause inflation. If prices have already doubled, they do not double again. If they triple after being doubled, they are triple their normal rates, not six times as much.

If money is injected into a settlement's economy repeatedly over the course of several days, it counts as a single influx if it all adds up to a higher category.

Markets Returning to Normal

If the PCs return to a settlement that was subject to inflation after at least a few weeks away, the GM rolls 2d6 and adds +1 for each month after the last influx of money:

Roll Economic Situation

0-3	Prices are being kept artificially inflated.
4-6	Prices are the same, still inflated.
7-9	Prices are cheaper, but still high. Inflation is cut in half.
10+	Prices have returned to normal.

Also apply a -1 penalty to the roll for each of the following that are true:

- The authorities are attempting to keep prices high.
- The local area has been devastated by natural disaster or war.
- The local area is dangerous, due to bandits, creatures, or war.
- Many adventurer types are frequenting this settlement.
- Merchants in this settlement have agreed to a price-fixing scheme.
- This settlement is currently at war.
- There are known nightmare incursions in the area that have not been dealt with.

After a full season passes, prices return to normal, unless someone is keeping them artificially inflated by manipulating the markets.



Investing Your Money

Structure	Cost	Structure	Cost
Apartment	500c	Keep	75,000c
Castle	120,000c	Laboratory	+5,000c
Forge	+5,000c	Mansion	50,000c
Fort	10,000c	Sanctum or vault	+10,000c
Hall or tavern	1,000c	Temple	100,000c
House	2,000c	Tower	20,000c
Inn	10,000c	Walls	20,000c

Small versions are half price. Large versions cost double. Huge versions cost triple. These prices are approximate only, and may be further affected by the affluence of the neighbourhood, or the quality of the construction.

Apartments, forges, laboratories, and sanctums are special areas usually built into other structures. The price for an apartment is to buy, if you don't care to rent. An apartment building costs the same as a house, inn, or mansion. Castles, keeps, temples, and towers are made of stone. Forts, halls, and houses are made of wood. Mansions are usually of mixed construction. The price for walls is enough to surround a town with wood. Small walls will surround a village, large walls a small city, huge walls a large city. Stone walls cost triple.

Temples dedicated to the Law are allowed in the Kingdoms of Dreams, and usually function as community centres, courts, libraries, museums, or schools, but new temples dedicated to personified deities, or abstract ideologies antithetical to lawful society, are generally proscribed.

These prices do not include the cost of real-estate.

Real Estate

Aside from farmland, the cost of real estate is per house-sized lot. A castle requires at least ten lots, a mansion requires at least four.

Real Estate	Cost
City lot	1,000c
Farmland, per acre	400c
Town lot	500c
Village lot	200c
Wilderness land	Free!



Creating Institutions

As much as those adventurer types want to act like cool loners who never have to ask anyone for anything, it's just not true. Sure, they go into the dungeon on their own, but once they come out? All you ever hear from them is "Who wants to buy this gold," or "craft me these seventeen weird pieces of equipment right away," or "I need a doctor, I'm dying over here."

The institutions of a civilized settlement can provide much-needed rest and relaxation opportunities, bustling markets and weapon dealerships, as well as social networks that can help adventurers gain information and plan their next foray into darkness.

Investing in Social Structures

You can also increase the prominence of different social institutions—whether they are businesses, secret societies, or state-run infrastructures—by spending money on them. The GM decides what institutions are present in any specific settlement, but you can decide which ones you want your character to frequent.

Notable Institutions

Once you have spent at least 100 cyphers on an institution, it becomes **notable**, and remains available to perform one special service for you or any other adventurer. This service may be as simple as healing for a fee, or being the only supplier of warhorses in the region.

Significant Institutions

Once you have spent at least 1,000 cyphers on an institution, it becomes **significant**, an important aspect of the settlement. It is now a group or place that provides at least two types of special services to adventurers, which may include being a source of information or goods.

Exceptional Institutions

Once you have spent at least 10,000 cyphers on an institution, it becomes **exceptional**. Not only important, it is also an influential and pervasive aspect of the campaign setting, an integral part of the settlement where it is located. It cannot be destroyed unless the entire settlement is destroyed or it is attacked by another exceptional institution. It is always possible to gain contacts from, or in, this institution.

These sums are based on how much all PCs, as a group, spend on a particular institution, not just individuals, although how much each individual contributes may have an effect on the institution's alignment.



Institutions and Alignment

If the PCs who are spending money on an institution are overwhelmingly of one alignment, that institution will share their alignment. If the PCs spending money are of mixed alignments, the institution will be neutral. Some institutions lean towards a specific alignment instead of being neutral—the courts are lawful, for example—but they can still be corrupted and turned to a different purpose by wealthy PCs of different alignments.

Alternately, if PCs invest in an institution but quickly find themselves at odds with it, because of a poor reaction roll result, or because of their own careless actions, you may decide that the institution should be the opposite alignment as they are—good where they are evil, lawful where they are chaotic, or neutral where they are not. In this case, the institution is defined by being antagonistic to the PCs, instead of functioning as an outgrowth of their particular interests.

Interacting with an institution may require a successful reaction roll on the part of PCs wishing to partake of its benefits. Alignment influences this roll. Chaotic, evil, good, and lawful characters gain advantage when they deal with an institution that shares their alignment. They are also at a disadvantage when they deal with a non-neutral institution of a different alignment. Neutral institutions treat all PCs the same, and neutral PCs get the same treatment from all institutions.

The alignment of an institution can change, if different PCs invest enough money to advance it to the next level. Once an institution becomes exceptional, however, its alignment is fixed and will not change unless it is destroyed and recreated.

Chaotic institutions are primarily concerned with preserving the liberty of their members and other ordinary folk. They are not necessarily revolutionary, violent, or unlawful (though some are). Hobo organizations, for example, exhort their members to be respectful of the lands and people they visit, but also promote the freedom of choice that comes with being a vagrant.

Evil institutions define themselves by their enemies. The people who support them are united by who they oppose and work to defeat. While not all illegal organizations are evil, many evil organizations end up engaged in criminal activity.

Good institutions are almost always involved in charity of one kind or another. They work towards making life cleaner, healthier, and more enjoyable. Hospitals, hostels, libraries, music halls, schools, soup kitchens, and theatres are some of the most likely institutions to be good-aligned.

Lawful institutions universally support the law of the land, in both the written word and in the local interpretation of it. Thus, they reflect the character of the societies they exist within. They can be charitable beacons of science and reason, or they can be corrupt havens for villains who use the law as a shield. Government institutions are the most likely to be lawful.

Neutral institutions are the most common kind. They would bow to the personal influence of their leaders and their societies rather than become the shapers of social mores.

Using Social Institutions

Institutions that become important usually have one or more of the following special characteristics:

- The institution **buys goods** recovered from incursions, acts as a moneychanger, or otherwise allows PCs to exchange their goods for more useful things.
- The institution can **provide information** not readily available elsewhere, either in the form of written records, or from the people who make up the institution's ranks.
- The institution **offers goods** that are cheaper than normal, specialized or unique in nature, or are made to order, individually customized for each and every patron.
- The institution **offers specialized services** that cannot be obtained anywhere else, for love or money.
- The institution **protects the reputations** of those who invest in it, and promotes their economic, social, and even political aims.
- The institution **provides access to hirelings** that might accompany you on your adventures, perhaps even into a dungeon!

The exact special qualities of an institution are determined by the GM, although the interests of the investing PCs should be considered. Institutions can allow PCs to automatically do things that would otherwise require a roll, or to get things for free that would otherwise cost money. They can also make certain types of NPCs commonplace, or keep the Resentment scores of their PC members from increasing.

Some example institutions:

- **Apothecary:** Provides herbs and medicines, ointments and tinctures. Alchemists and physicians can be hired here.
- **Bank:** Keeps your money safe. Could make anonymous purchases for you.
- **Brothel:** You can unwind here after a stressful adventure, and pick up gossip.
- **Criminal Gang:** A steady supplier of criminal contacts.
- **Law Courts:** You can sue people here, or give testimony about their crimes.
- **Library:** Books contain knowledge. More books means more knowledge.
- **Sanatorium:** Good medicine is worth paying for. And if they can also help you overcome a nightmare curse, you have found a veritable savant of a physiker!
- **Smithy:** A proper smith or foundry can create customized works of metal for you, to your exact specifications.

You might also be interested in spending money on an academy, arena, bazaar, brewery, cemetery, cult, garrison, guild, jail, monastery, museum, park, theatre, or zoo, depending on your character's wants and needs.

Communist Party

Standing in stark opposition to the nobility and monarchism, the Communist Party believes the government should consist of politically educated, lawful scholars, and work for the betterment of all citizens, instead of assisting business interests in the exploitation of the proletariat and the peasantry. The party fights for the principles of equality and justice, and a future in which collective ownership is the norm. Once profit disappears, there will be no need for money!

A Notable Communist Party

While notable, a small or newly-formed party is not developed enough to have much sway locally. They can provide contacts abroad, however, since members are connected to the international movement.

A Significant Communist Party

If you spend 1d6 months studying communist theory with a significant communist party, or actively training in collectivist behaviour or political operations alongside your comrades, you can permanently add either a +1 to your Charisma score or a +1 to your Willpower score. You can only gain this bonus once, and you lose it again if you ever repudiate communism.

An Exceptional Communist Party

At this level, the party has the means to challenge the sultan. Operatives commit acts of sabotage and raise funds for the revolution by any means necessary, while fighting legions seize territory by force and drive out their enemies. Unless the PCs act against the party, it will take control of $1d4 \times 10$ percent of the region every season until it is the sole authority.

Each season, there is also a 1 in 6 chance that any particular neighbouring kingdom sends troops or gives material assistance to the sultan's forces. Such interference has a 50/50 chance of cutting the party's control of territory (as represented by a percentage number) in half. Roll separately for each important kingdom nearby.

Additionally, an exceptional party has enough operational personnel to provide a group of up to 1d10 revolutionaries to assist in any quest that communist PCs undertake that benefits the people or challenges the nobility.

Alignment

The party's ideology can follow the Law or repudiate it, and thus be either lawful or chaotic, but a **chaotic** political party will not be in a very good position to rule if it actually removes the existing government. A **good** party may care more about redistributing wealth and charity to the people, while an **evil** party is the most likely to revert to a dictatorship once it controls the government.

Hotel

Let's be honest, here: adventurers don't usually have homes to go back to every night after a hard day out in the desert, looting tombs and battling nightmares. Just because they're trying to save civilization from a malicious otherworldly invasion doesn't mean they're not also desperate murderhobos. And every one of these vagrants wants a nice place to stay when they're flush with looted treasure and tired of roughing it.

A Notable Hotel

When you stay at this hotel, you can live well for only 20c a week (or only 75c a month), or you can live like the rich for only 100c a week—as if you had your own home and didn't have to rent one. **When you return to adventuring after staying at this hotel**, roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier and consult this table instead of the normal one:

Roll	Result
0-6	You poked your nose into the wrong person's business. Choose 1: - An ally, contact, or friend of yours (GM chooses who) is in danger and you have become involved, to one degree or another. - You have gained an enemy. - You have offended a foreign dignitary.
7-9	You may choose two contact to have made between adventures.
10+	You may choose three contacts to have made between adventures.

If you are lawful, you get advantage on this roll—but if you are chaotic, evil, or good, you get disadvantage. All sorts of people stay here, and most of them like to keep their business private.

A Significant Hotel

This hotel has one or more chaplains on staff. If you spend 100c on therapy, you can overcome a nightmare curse that afflicts you, for the span of a month or another venture into a dungeon, whichever is shorter.

An Exceptional Hotel

For 100c and a week's stay, you can receive medical attention, regain up to 20 lost attribute points, get advantage on your Disposition rolls every morning, and if you can successfully save against your Charisma, you meet someone interesting from far away. If you manage to save against half your Charisma, rounded down, they are also important.

Necromancers' Guild

There are flesh markets, and then there are those wizards who deal in the ultimate skin trade. From self-exiled rejects of the living world to emotionless entrepreneurs, necromancers are universally weird people.

Even before becoming important, a guild of necromancers might be able to sell information about historic tombs and graveyards, books on ancient funerary rites, and magical or spiritual ingredients. Necromancers may hire out as guides, physicians, or overseers of construction projects utilizing animated corpses.

A Notable Necromancers' Guild

If you need information regarding death magic, the barrier between life and death, or anything to do with the undead, you know who to talk to. If you need body parts identified, or the magician behind an undead creature unmasked, you can pay in coin, in favours, or maybe, just maybe, in friendship.

A Significant Necromancers' Guild

A guild of this importance can have someone examine a corpse for you, and tell you what killed them, and what the last thing they saw, heard, or felt was. This takes about an hour and costs 25c. House calls cost double, or even more, depending on how far the necromancer has to travel.

An Exceptional Necromancers' Guild

A powerful guild of necromancers must either come to some kind of accord with local power structures, or hide within the shadows of the criminal underworld. If you have access to these necromancers, they will cast any of the following spells for you, provided you can pay:

- Cure Wounds, 180c.
- Negate Poison, 50c.
- Raise the Dead, 800c.
- Regenerate, 400c.

Alignment

Lawful necromancers never force their arts on the unwilling and always work to promote local authorities. They might even refuse to deal with evil or chaotic characters. Guilds of other alignments will give PCs reduced rates if they undertake work to promote the guild's alignment. **Chaotic** necromancers want to reduce the power of the state; **evil** necromancers wish to bring ruin and destruction on others while they glory in their own power; and **good** necromancers use their powers to enrich the libraries of the Kingdoms of Dreams, not to make slaves of ghosts.

Printer

The mass-production of literature can only be considered a net benefit for humanity, because it brings the Law closer to every person's heart. It is only the lowly copyist who suffers, for the master calligrapher is still revered as an artist. A printer, on the other hand, is rarely considered an artist. Their profession is, as yet, still only a trade.

A Notable Printer

Any money spent on broadsheets at this printer counts double when used for character assassination, recovering Charisma, or reducing Resentment scores. They do great work when it comes to publicity!

A Significant Printer

A significant printer has connections all throughout the world of letters. If you have contributed to this printer before, any contacts you make during downtime may be drawn from the pool of book collectors, illuminators, libraries, other printers, scribes, store owners, and writers they have dealings with. A successful reaction roll with this printer will get them to hook you up with specific luminaries in the world of literature, if such business might benefit them at all.

An Exceptional Printer

The exceptional printer has discovered a way to print spell formulas. Setting up the plates to print a spell formula costs $10 \times$ the spell's level in cyphers (or half that if the formulas are intended to be single-use only). Paper and print costs are equal to the spell's level for each formula printed. This has the very real potential to destroy lawful society.

Alignment

A **chaotic** printer cannot create books that don't come with their own individual errors and inconsistencies, no matter how careful they are. An **evil** printer relishes character assassination, while a **good** printer refuses such vulgar business. A **lawful** printer cannot be compelled to print banned or criminal works.

Tea House

What could be better than the sophisticated atmosphere of the tea-dispensing establishment? Some light conversation, some pleasant music, and a most excellent beverage! Come for the relaxation, stay for the back-room scheming.

The more important the tea house, the more important its clients. The average tea house has average clients, while notable houses are patronized by notable people. A significant tea house has patrons drawn from the upper ranks of various institutions and professions, while exceptional tea houses are where society's most important leaders hang out. If applicable, anything Level 7 or higher requires an exceptional institution, while anything Levels 4 to 6 requires a significant institution.

Alignment

If you regularly patronize a tea house that matches your alignment, you can meet important people on an equal footing, and perhaps even get the opportunity to persuade them into lending you their aid. At a tea house aligned to **chaos**, chaotic characters can meet abolitionists, anarchists, crazy wizards, cultists, revolutionaries, and utopian philosophers. At an **evil** tea house, evil characters can meet criminals and corrupt officials. At a **good**-aligned tea house, good characters can meet doctors, healers, physicians, professors, and teachers. At a **lawful** tea house, lawful characters can meet judges, lawyers, nobles, officials, politicians, scholars, and anyone involved in enforcement.

Thieves' Guild

When the entire weight of lawful society is stacked against you, why would you work alone? Not only is there strength in numbers, there is also money to be made by charging other thieves taxes in exchange for protection—just like the taxes you charge anyone else “for protection.”

A Notable Thieves' Guild

Guild thieves are taught the art of public speaking by their masters, so that if they are to be hanged, they might delay the proceedings somewhat, giving their comrades more time to pick pockets among the crowd of onlookers before the end comes. If you are (or were) a member of this guild, you may add public speaking to your skills.

A Significant Thieves' Guild

When a criminal organization becomes this important, it controls one or more neighbourhoods that the police and city guards cannot safely enter. If you need to hide out in guild territory, it costs the same as living well, and you don't return to adventuring having made any contacts, but you also avoid any difficulties the authorities are trying to create for you.

An Exceptional Thieves' Guild

A guild of thieves this powerful can steal just about anything you want, if you're willing to pay half the normal value for it. They can't recover things from incursions or monster lairs, and if they steal something really valuable, the authorities will be cracking down on the usual suspects—which might include the PCs.

Hiring Thieves

For members in good standing, a thieves' guild counts as its own settlement for the purposes of hiring criminal retainers. It has its own Resentment scores, which can only increase by committing crimes against the guild and its members (and criminals do not care about artifacts of chaos). The guild's settlement die is 1d6 until money is spent on it, then 1d8 for a notable guild, 1d10 for a significant guild, and 1d12 for an exceptional guild.

Alignment

A thieves' guild can't be good or lawful, since those motivations conflict with how it operates, but only a **neutral** guild has no ulterior motives aside from personal gain. **Chaotic** guilds are havens for ideologues and revolutionaries, eager for reforms that might see them return to civil society. An **evil** guild follows in the footsteps of the callous nobles who mistreat the peasantry. They take what they want, when they want it, and have no aversion to killing people in the process.

University

As collections of both scholars and scholarship, universities can be an invaluable resource in the fight against the nightmare realm and its associates. Schools concentrating on the humanities always have books, medical universities are full of doctors (which most adventurers need at some point or another), and colleges devoted to the sciences can be tapped for ingenious devices and explosive materials. Law schools, on the other hand, require dealing with lawyers

A Notable University

Every notable university has at least a small department or student association interested in solving the problem that the nightmare realm presents. For the purposes of hiring retainers, the university counts as its own settlement (with a settlement die of 1d6 or 1d8, most likely), with Resentment scores separate from the surrounding town or city. You can hire scholars or any kind of accomplice or citizen from the student body or through the administration. Depending on the type of university, you might be able to hire bards, fighters, thieves, or wizards as well.

A Significant University

Every university comes with a library, but a significant university library allows its patrons to make research rolls with advantage if they are studying subjects that the university concerns itself with. If there are numerous departments and colleges represented under the university's banner, there may be numerous topical libraries that can be accessed by alumni and those on good terms with the staff (libraries are not normally open to the public, of course).

An Exceptional University

This university employs only the best instructors, who know exactly how to bring out the best in their students. Even a single semester is enough to provoke an improvement. Any character who spends 1,000c and attends class for 3 months may raise either their Charisma or Intelligence score by 1, permanently. Neither attribute can be raised more than once by becoming a university student.

Alignment

Chaotic and **evil** universities are always in danger of collapsing under the weight of their own anti-social impulses, either becoming embroiled in some kind of exploitation scandal or being shut down by the authorities for revolutionary activities. Each month there is a 1 in 6 chance that a chaotic or evil university experiences a controversial incident. **Good** universities are eager to provide instruction, even if they do not profit from it monetarily, while **lawful** universities are only interested in waiving their fees for those actively upholding the Law.

Vice Den

More so than most, the delvers into incursions of nightmare need a way to unwind. If they are criminals who run a vice den, they need not even leave home, but everyone else has to pay to play—and who has more money than successful tomb robbers?

A Notable Vice Den

Every vice den has, at a minimum, an ample supply of either sex, drugs, or money. If you want to indulge, or knock over a high-stakes card game for a fast infusion of cash and animosity, this is the place. In addition to its specialty, a notable vice den will also be able to supply basic entertainments for those in search of other vices.

A Significant Vice Den

If you spend a week living like the rich at a significant vice den, you can recover an additional 1d6 lost attribute points or remove an additional 1d6 Wounds, no matter how injured you are (or were, before giving yourself the gift of luxury). Additionally, you can lay low during this time, and no one can find you without a significant bribe to the vice den (which must, at a minimum, exceed the amount they believe they can get out of you in the future).

An Exceptional Vice Den

An exceptional vice den can provide other criminals with blackmail material on anyone who has ever indulged there, for a price. Even if a powerful person has no criminal vices, the den has gathered intelligence on them anyway, comprised mostly of rumours and the kind of indiscreet comments that pass through loose lips.

Dealing with People

When you meet someone in a normal circumstance (such as buying goods from their store), they behave in a normal, expected manner. However, there may be times when you meet someone in an unexpected circumstance (in the wilderness, perhaps), or when you attempt to involve yourself in someone's life in an uncommon manner (hiring them for an adventure, for example).

In such cases, the GM can ask you to make a **reaction roll** for NPCs. Roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier (or your Social Status modifier in cases where that is more important):

Roll Reaction

0-3	They are immediately hostile, and may even become violent.
4-6	They react negatively, being either uninterested in you and your business, or eager to be rid of you, but are not hostile (yet).
7-9	Their reaction is neutral, which could be anywhere from cautious to indifferent, based on their temperament. They give you time to catch their interest based on how busy they are.
10-11	Their reaction is friendly, generous, or interested. They are open to hearing what you have to say.
12+	They are immediately interested, in a positive manner.

Threats and Intimidation

On the other hand, you might have to shake someone down for information that will lead you to a nightmare incursion. **If you are visibly threatening someone with egregious harm and imminent violence**, roll 2d6 and add your Ferocity modifier:

Roll Reaction to Being Threatened

0-3	Instead of being intimidated, they fight back immediately, as hard as they can.
4-6	They are not intimidated. Instead, they try to escape, fight back, hold out on you, or even mislead you, depending on their nature.
7-9	They become unsure of themselves, and try to stall you long enough that they can escape. They surrender if they are overwhelmed, but their courage comes back if you leave them an opening.
10-11	They surrender, in the hopes of being treated leniently.
12+	They agree to switch sides just to avoid your terrible wrath.



Contacts

Creating or joining social networks in towns and cities can open up new opportunities for your characters. Sometimes you make the acquaintance of someone who is willing to do business with you on a regular or repetitive basis. Or perhaps you have actual friends, in spite of your suicidal, vagabond lifestyle. People like that—people you can ask for things you can't get through other avenues—are called contacts. You can use them not only to obtain information about nightmare incursions, but also to obtain goods and services not normally available to outsiders. Contacts can be part of social structure investments, or not.

Seeing a Man About a Dog

If the public markets of a settlement don't have what you're looking for, perhaps one of your contacts can hook you up. If you need information, but don't know who to ask, maybe one of your contacts can tell you what you need to know. They are probably more well-informed than you are, anyway.

When you make use of a contact, say what you want from them and roll 2d6. Add +1 if they come from a significant social institution, +2 if they come from an exceptional social institution, and +1 if you are the same social class as they are. Apply a penalty of -1 or -2 if your contact, or their people, are currently being persecuted.

Roll Contact's Situation

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 0-3 | Your contact is in serious trouble, and might even be dead already. |
| 4-6 | Your contact is either of no help whatsoever, or they might be able to help you if you can help them with a problem they have (GM's choice which). |
| 7-9 | Your contact has some useful information or they can get the goods that you need, but at a steep price. Perhaps they can also pass you on to someone else who can help you more effectively |
| 10-11 | Your contact can get you what you need, or pretty close, for a fair price. |
| 12+ | Your contact has exactly what you need, for cheap. Or maybe they have something even better than you were expecting. |

You can gain contacts by the actions you take during adventures, by accessing social institutions, and through the results of downtime rolls. Contacts can only get you information, goods, or introductions to other people if those things fall within the purview of their occupation, expertise, or social networks. A blacksmith probably can't find exotic poisons for you, and your average undertaker knows nothing about the diamond trade.

The GM may also decide that what you are looking for is definitely within the scope of a certain contact's abilities, and that they always have what you need, and always at a fair price. They could still wind up in a spot of trouble, but whether the PCs decide to do anything about that is up to them.

Example Contacts

The GM has the final word when it comes to defining the NPCs of the setting, but here are some ideas for contacts and what they can provide:

- **Alchemists** can create potions, and perhaps other things. They should at least be able to supply you with customized poisons and drugs.
- **Arcane professionals** might be cultists, scholars, or wizards. They can inscribe scrolls, which should cost you at least twice as much as the raw materials (see page 187). They might also be able to provide you with information about the nightmare realm, specific nightmare incursions, or other arcanists who could be corrupted.
- **Criminals** and criminal organizations can fence goods that you don't want to return to their rightful owners. They can also supply you with illegal goods and services.
- **Cults** can provide services based on their nature, but always demand some display of faith. At the very least, you should probably get an advantage when hiring retainers from inside a cult you belong to.
- **Healers** might be independent practitioners or part of a hospital or sanatorium. They can provide general healing for injured adventurers, or specific long-term care.
- **Lawyers** can represent you in court, argue cases for you, and perhaps even get you released from jail if you haven't done anything too far beyond the pale.
- **Merchants** can supply you with rare and exotic goods, or large quantities of goods. They might also be able to hook you up with contacts in other cities, far away.
- **Nobles and officials** can shield you from other authorities, give you access to restricted places and records, or introduce you to other important people.
- **Servants** can help you break into their masters' homes, or supply you with gossip about the class of people they serve.
- **Smiths** can fashion metal implements under your direction, if you need something custom-made.
- **Street urchins** can run messages for you, keep watch on people or places, and supply you with gossip they heard on the streets. They might even help you rob someone.
- **Undertakers** and other types of tomb-watchers can help you dispose of a body without alerting attention.



Hiring Retainers

You don't need to rely solely on other PCs to aid you in fighting the nightmare incursions. You can hire NPCs to accompany you, to carry your belongings, or even to fight by your side underground. They will probably die or go crazy and ruin your reputation, but if they can keep you alive, it's worth it, right?

When you spend a day or so looking for people to hire, the GM rolls to see if there is anyone who might be interested. What type of die depends on the size of the settlement. The larger the settlement, the greater chance of finding someone you can hire.

Community Size	Population	Settlement Die
Small village.	Less than a hundred people.	1d4
Large village.	Hundreds of people.	1d6
Town.	Thousands of people.	1d8
Small city.	Tens of thousands of people.	1d10
Large city.	A hundred thousand people.	1d12
Sprawling metropolis.	So many people!	1d20

Roll	Findings
1-3	No one is interested in employment.
4-6	1d4 people are interested.
7-9	1d6 people are interested.
10-11	2d4 people are interested, including at least 1 professional adventurer.
12+	2d6 people are interested, including at least 2 professional adventurers.

For each person who is interested, the GM rolls 1d6 to determine what type of person they are. **If you are looking for desperate people**, poor people, and those with little to lose, there is a +1 modifier to this roll. **If you have a reputation as a bad employer**, that is another +1 modifier. **If you have never taken someone from this settlement into a nightmare incursion**, there is a -1 modifier to this roll:

Accomplices are always ready to be employed outside of fighting or entering a nightmare incursion. They refuse to fight or go into dungeons. **All other types** will consider the terms of employment being offered, and may very well accompany you into a nightmare incursion, ready to fight.

Roll	Potential Retainer Type
0-1	Accomplice.
2	Citizen
3	Foreigner.
4	Professional.
5+	Underclass.

Once the type of potential employee has been determined, the GM rolls 1d6 again to determine what their circumstances, job, or motivation is:

Roll	Accomplices
1	Agent.
2	Cook.
3	Driver.
4	Guide or Scout.
5	Manager.
6	Porter.

Roll	Professionals
1	Assassin.
2	Bard or Scholar.
3	Champion or Cultist.
4	Fighter.
5	Thief.
6	Wizard.

Roll	Citizens
1	Closeted.
2	Corrupted.
3	Debtor.
4	Junkie.
5	Suicide.
6	Youth.

Roll	Underclasses
1	Criminal.
2	Junkie.
3	Marginalized.
4	Runaway servant.
5	Slum-dweller.
6	Vagrant.

Roll	Foreigners
1	Criminal.
2	Exile.
3	Itinerant.
4	Mercenary.
5	Refugee.
6	Vagrant.

Roll	Alignment
0-1	Chaotic
2	Evil.
3	Good.
4-5	Neutral.
6+	Lawful.

Alignment

To determine a potential employee's alignment, roll 1d6 for accomplices, 1d6+1 for citizens, and 1d6-1 for foreigners, professionals, and the underclasses. Ignore any restricted alignments for professionals; instead, assassins are evil, bards are good, cultists are chaotic, and scholars are lawful. For champions, re-roll (with no modifier) until they have an alignment other than neutral.

Retainers will not normally do things that run counter to their alignment, but if you are of the same alignment as a (potential) employee, and you want them to perform duties promoted by that alignment, you have advantage when hiring them or testing their morale. This does not apply to neutral characters (who reject ideological and emotional motivations), only to those who are chaotic, evil, good, or lawful.

Descriptions of Potential Employees

Your roll determines the most salient feature of the retainer's background, motives, personality, and skills. It is not the whole of their nature, of course, and you can fill in other details as much or as little as necessary.

- **Agent:** A person who conducts financial transactions for you—buying, selling, investing, or representing your interests in corporate ventures.
- **Assassin:** Not every order of assassins has transitioned to a peaceful society that supports the rule of law. They are loathe to admit such in public, however, and usually represent themselves as something else.
- **Bard:** What could be better than wandering around singing songs and getting paid for it? This is the life!
- **Champion:** A paladin for some cause or other. If you give them the opportunity to pursue their goals, they come cheap, but are demanding. If you oppose their goals, no amount of money can change their mind about you.
- **Closeted:** This citizen practices some kind of behaviour that their society rejects. They need money to either cover this up (including paying blackmail), or so they can reveal it.
- **Cook:** Everybody needs to eat. Might as well feast like a king if you're going to be dead soon.
- **Corrupted:** This citizen has been corrupted by nightmares, and is interested in exploring nightmare incursions further. They do not reveal their corruption, instead passing for something else. The longer they have been corrupted, the harder it is to hide, though.
- **Criminal:** Either a foreigner or a local from the wrong side of the tracks, this person lives off illegal activity (usually protection or theft).
- **Cultist:** Someone who belongs to a (possibly illegal) cult. Unless they are a member of a PC's cult, they pass themselves off as something else who is interested in fighting the nightmare realm.
- **Debtor:** This valued member of the community would normally never consider going on adventures, but they have debts to pay off.
- **Driver:** This person has a cart or a coach, and some horses to pull it. Now they need someone to drive around. Someone who can pay.
- **Exile:** This person was exiled from their home community, and may be having a hard time getting by in a foreign land.
- **Fighter:** Someone who makes—or previous made—their living as a soldier, guard, or some kind of muscle, and knows how to fight.

- **Guide:** Someone who will lead you to locations that are hard to find, and communicate to locals on your behalf.
- **Itinerant:** A labourer who is constantly moving around, migrating wherever the work is.
- **Junkie:** This person may or may not have any useful skills, but they certainly need money to get their fix. They will probably do anything. Citizen junkies are considered valued members of the community who have lost their way, but nobody cares about underclass junkies.
- **Manager:** This person wants to manage your affairs for a fee. They might be able to handle the baggage train, if you are travelling, or they might simply want to organize your accounts.
- **Marginalized:** This person belongs to a minority cultural group, and may even live in a ghetto. There are a limited number of options for them, in terms of upward mobility.
- **Mercenary:** Someone who is willing to fight for money.
- **Porter:** This person will carry your possessions around.
- **Refugee:** Someone who was forced to flee their homeland because of violent persecution or an outbreak of war.
- **Runaway:** They were a serf, slave, or servant, but left that position.
- **Scholar:** This person probably has a particular interest in the nightmare incursions of the local area.
- **Scout:** Someone who will investigate the terrain around you and report back with their findings.
- **Slum-dweller:** This person lives in the shittiest part of the settlement. Who wouldn't want to get the fuck out of there?
- **Suicide:** Though a valued member of their community, this person longs for death, and is willing to fight the nightmare incursions to make that happen. This may or may not be obvious—creeping despair hides itself better than reckless burnout does.
- **Thief:** A professional bandit, burglar, or robber. Unless the PCs are criminals themselves, thieves pass themselves off as something else.
- **Vagrant:** This person is homeless.
- **Wizard:** Fuckin' wizards, man. Nothin' but trouble.
- **Youth:** An idealistic young person, looking for adventure. They are a valued member of their community, though, so it would be a bad idea to take them with you.



Hiring

When you offer someone employment with you, as long as you are offering them the minimum required salary for the job, roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier. Add an additional +1 if they are part of the underclasses, and another +1 if you have undertaken successful expeditions before.

Roll	Reaction to Offer of Employment
0-6	They refuse employment.
7-9	They agree to become your employee if the terms are significantly more generous than normal. If not, they might agree to employment anyway, if they are desperate, but with a -2 penalty to their morale.
10-11	They agree to become your employee, even if the terms are not generous.
12+	They agree to become your employee, and their morale is increased by +1.

The maximum number of retainers you may have in your employment at one time is equal to 4 plus your Charisma modifier (but not less than zero). If your Charisma score is reduced such that you have too many retainers, they do not leave unless your Charisma score stays reduced for more than a week or two, or if you try to take them on another adventure before you have recovered.

Loyalty and Morale

When you order one of your retainers to undertake something that is obviously more dangerous than they believe is reasonable, roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier. Add an additional +1 if you offer them extra compensation.

Roll	Reaction to Dangerous Orders
0-6	They refuse to do what you tell them.
7-9	They do what you tell them to do, but with -2 to their morale.
10-11	They do what you tell them to do.
12+	They do what you tell them to do and gain +1 to their morale.

The GM tests the morale of all NPCs when necessary, as described on page 265. For the purposes of morale, retainers may consider the whole party, including the other PCs and their hirelings, as “their side,” or just their employer and their employer’s other retainers, depending on how the group dynamics have been explained to them. If someone who is part of the group, but not part of “their side,” is reduced to zero Disposition, the GM does not need to test their morale to see if they rout.

Wages

Payment for services should be based on the lifestyle the employee wishes to maintain. For full-time employment, 40-90c per month means living poorly, like most people do, while 100c or more per month means living well, and being comfortable.



Persuasion

In order to convince or persuade someone to do or believe something you want them to, you must establish common ground between the two of you. Are you friends, lovers, or comrades in arms? Are you part of the same family, guild, or subculture? Have you both decided to engage in a commercial transaction with each other?

The strength of your connection with someone dictates the amount of influence you have over them. It's one thing if you have hired them and they have agreed to follow your orders. A relationship that allows you to change their ideas, opinions, and behaviours requires more interaction and constant negotiation.

Once you have established common ground with someone and you want to convince them of something or persuade them to do something, the GM chooses one or more conditions or requirements you must meet in order to effect this change in them:

- They have their own ideas of what you want and how to get it.
- They must be assured of your authority.
- They must be badgered and cajoled into it so they can disclaim responsibility.
- They must be threatened with harm or other consequences first and/or during.
- They want concrete assurances of your sincerity.
- They want a favour from you after.
- They want someone else to take the blame or responsibility.
- They want to be paid in advance.
- They want you to make an oath or promise them something first.
- You must deceive them with regards to the situation and/or your intentions.
- You must do something that makes them happy first.
- You must prove your commitment to them or your relationship first.
- You must spend time with them, working slowly to persuade them.
- You must strengthen your relationship with them first.

A condition may require a save against Charisma, either full or half score, depending on whether you are skilled or if it requires a great deal of effort or not. Or you can use an alternate version of the reaction table (roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier):

Roll Reaction to Persuasion

0-6	They refuse to be convinced or persuaded until you strengthen your relationship with them, and they feel rejected if you don't.
7-9	Multiple conditions or requirements apply, and the GM need not inform you of all of them right away.
10-11	The GM tells you one condition or requirement you must meet.
12+	They are convinced or persuaded and their respect for you grows.

Tarnishing Your Reputation

It is possible to turn a person's friends and neighbours against them by attacking them socially. If you succeed, you increase their Resentment score (see pages 174-177), with all the attendant problems, and if you actively harass them as well, you can even reduce their Charisma score.

If you organize a campaign to smear someone's public image, though, you need to do more than make a single speech in public. You need to reach many, many people. You can do this by actively spreading rumours, distributing pamphlets, hiring musicians to sing rude songs about them, parodying them in the theatre, or writing nasty letters about them to all of your high-society friends. This can take days or even weeks, and you must wait at least a fortnight between attacks that you roll for.

In a village, roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier (or your Social Status modifier). **In a town**, roll 2d6 and add +1 for each 100 cyphers you spend on the attack. **In a city**, roll 2d6 and add +1 for each 1,000 cyphers you spend:

Roll Results of Character Assassination

0-6	Your attack on the target's character and reputation has no noticeable effect, except perhaps lowering one or two people's opinion of them.
7-9	Your attack either increases the target's Resentment score by 1, or (if the campaign inconveniences them directly) reduces their Charisma score by 1d6 points, your choice.
10-11	Your attack both increases the target's Resentment score by 1 and (if the campaign affects them directly) reduces their Charisma by 1d6 points.
12+	Your attack both increases the target's Resentment score by 1 and reduces their Charisma by 1d8 points if they are directly affected, or by 1d4 points if they are only somewhat inconvenienced.

If you are a bard, add another +1 to your roll, and your target loses an additional point of Charisma, if they end up losing any at all.

Power and Wealth

You can also be the target of character assassination perpetrated by rich and influential NPCs. If they have enough rank, they can even inflict more than 1d8 damage to your Charisma. Remember: your characters are merely adventurers, not arch-dukes or the heads of guilds.

Recovery

Lost points of Charisma are regained much like other attribute points, although unless you can save against your Willpower, there is an additional monetary price to pay in order to help repair the strained relationships that might be helping to sow the seeds of doubt in your heart—5 cyphers per day in a village, 25c per day in a town, 100c per day in a city, all spent on socializing.

Dealing with Settlements

There are also ways to interact with a settlement as a whole. Conducting research can provide you with useful information you would not find just from talking to a single person, or if you had ignored written records. At the same time, it is possible to turn an entire settlement against you by constantly behaving in an anti-social manner.

Conducting Research

You may conduct research in a settlement, as long as it has the facilities that are necessary. **If you are looking for information from an organization, institution, or establishment that has had no money invested in it**, you find no useful information at all. **If more than 100 cyphers have been invested**, you might find out something. Roll 2d6 and add your Intelligence modifier:

Roll	Research Results
0-3	You put your trust in bad information.
4-6	You discover no useful information, and may encounter someone you would rather avoid, at the GM's discretion.
7-9	You discover one piece of useful information.
10-11	You discover two pieces of useful information, one of which may be an opportunity, at the GM's discretion.
12+	You discover three pieces of useful information, one or more of which may be an opportunity, at the GM's discretion.

The information, though useful, should be vague, unless you have invested money into this aspect of the settlement. **If the site of your research is a significant institution**, the information you find contains specifics. **If it is an exceptional institution**, you find information not available anywhere else. All the information you find, and any opportunities you uncover, will be related to the site of your research.

If your research consists of questioning people, instead of examining records, you may instead roll 2d6 and add your Charisma modifier. The information you uncover comes in the form of gossip and rumours, instead of more tangible evidence. Socializing with people in an institution gives you more detailed information.

Opportunities

An opportunity can be a lead that directs you to further information, or to valuable items and materials, or a person you meet while conducting your investigations. They do not need to pertain directly to your research, but must be somehow related to the location where you are doing that research.



Resentment

Adventurers who deal with the nightmare realm on a regular basis usually mean bad news for the settlements they spend their downtime in. The GM keeps track of a Resentment score for each of the PCs who have ever gotten into trouble in one of them. Every settlement has a different set of Resentment scores for each of the PCs. This can be shown to player, or keep mostly secret, whichever your group prefers.

Artifacts of Chaos

If you brandish a magical artifact from the Age of Chaos in public, or employ its magical (or chaotic) properties in an obvious manner, your Resentment score increases by 1. You can prevent an artifact from increasing your Resentment score by convincing society to accept it as normal (see pages 178-181).

Character Assassination

If you are publicly accused of a crime that you did not commit, your Resentment score increases by 1. But if your innocence is proven, it is once again reduced by 1.

If your reputation and character are attacked publicly, or ugly rumours about you are spread through the settlement, your Resentment score increases by 1.

Crimes Against the Community

If you commit a crime against the community or any of its valued members, or against property in the settlement, your Resentment score increases by 1 if (and when) your guilt becomes public.

Crimes include (but are not limited to):

- Arson or vandalism of property belonging to the community's institutions or its valued members.
- Assault or kidnapping of an important or valued person.
- Being involved in political corruption.
- Blackmail, extortion, or racketeering within the settlement.
- Blasphemy or obscenity.
- Burglary, embezzlement, robbery, or theft committed against a community institution or a valued community member.
- Fraud or malpractice.
- Revealing secrets pertaining to the settlement's defences, internal security, or mercantile interests.
- Selling or smuggling banned goods or people.

If you take a valued member of the community into a nightmare incursion, and they are killed or go mad, your Resentment score increases by 1.

Valued Community Members

Just because people live inside a settlement does not mean they are valued members of the community. Foreigners and immigrants who are not considered necessary are not valued, nor are members of the lowest classes—untouchables, vagrants, and many of those who live in ghettos and slums. Servants and slaves are considered valuable only if their masters are angered or inconvenienced by their abuse. Crimes committed against marginalized or oppressed people do not increase your Resentment in the settlement if they do not also affect the larger community.

On the other hand, those who lead, work, study, or teach in the community, and are not considered outsiders, are valued members, as are their families. Important people tend to notice when others like them fall prey to the nightmare incursions.

The Wages of Sin

Even if a community doesn't cast you out right way, your bad behaviour can still provoke people into antagonizing you. Both groups and individuals can take umbrage at your actions and come after you because of it.

When your Resentment score increases, unless you get run out of town (see the following page), the GM rolls 1d6 or chooses an occurrence from the table below to see what happens as a direct reaction to your bad behaviour:

Roll	Event
1	The authorities come to have “a talk” with you.
2	A gang or guild tries to persuade you to change your behaviour.
3	A member of the community tries to persuade you to change your behaviour, on their own initiative.
4	An organization or profession shuns you and refuses to deal with you.
5	Someone becomes your enemy and begins to slander and libel you, trying to ruin your reputation.
6	Someone becomes your enemy and tries to assault you.

Resentment scores begin at zero. Unless your reputation precedes you, somehow, a new settlement has no reason to look at you sideways.

Honour Among Thieves

The criminal underworld takes a different view of the Law and those who defy it, seeing themselves as a kind of brotherhood. Even corrupt authorities will only ever be tolerated, never accepted, and things that will get you kicked out of a lawful city could see you celebrated among thieves. Any PCs who are criminals can also track Resentment scores with major criminal factions. These only increase if you commit an offence against that faction or its members specifically, or you collaborate with the authorities to the detriment of that faction or its members. Getting “kicked out of town” means losing all access to members of that faction—and the turf they control.



Wearing Out Your Welcome

When a settlement resents you, it is only a matter of time before you wear out your welcome. **When you make a public appearance or throw a public event, and whenever your Resentment score increases**, the GM rolls the community's settlement die to see if you have worn out your welcome. The larger the community, the larger the size of its settlement die. If the result of the roll is equal to, or lower than, your Resentment score, the community has had it up to here with your shit, and turns against you.

Community Size	Population	Settlement Die
Small village.	Less than a hundred people.	1d4
Large village.	Hundreds of people.	1d6
Town.	Thousands of people.	1d8
Small city.	Tens of thousands of people	1d10
Large city.	A hundred thousand people.	1d12
Sprawling metropolis.	So many people.	1d20

Alternately, you might consider different neighbourhoods of a large city or a sprawling metropolis to be individual settlements of their own, each with different Resentment scores for the PCs.

When you have worn out your welcome...:

- People in this community refuse to help you out or do you favours.
- Prices for goods and services in this settlement are doubled (or even tripled).
- You cannot attract hirelings or retainers of any kind in this settlement.
- The next time your Resentment would increase, the community uses force to expel you.

Reducing Resentment

As long as a community hasn't turned on you yet, you can try to reduce the amount of resentment they have for you. You need to actually do something that contributes to the community, and you need to be public about it. You can either **attach yourself or your name to this contribution from the start**—in which case, you risk wearing out your welcome even before people acknowledge the contribution—or you can **stage an event and then reveal yourself to be the benefactor after**. When an event is staged on your behalf, you don't risk wearing out your welcome before it is finished (because the GM does not roll against your Resentment score when the event begins). If you are trying to return to a community that has already thrown you out, the latter strategy is also viable.

Showing up with obvious artifacts from the Age of Chaos that the public have not accepted as normal—or even worse, using them publicly!—makes it impossible for you to reduce your Resentment. Instead, it increases by 1. Similarly, committing other offences that increase your Resentment will invalidate the attempt to reduce it.

These restrictions do not entirely apply if you are trying to get back into the good graces of a criminal faction, of course, but such overtures must usually be made via private meetings and cash payments.

When you stage an event around a contribution to a community or its settlement, roll 2d6. Add +1 if you are donating hundreds of cyphers to a village, thousands of cyphers to a town, or tens of thousands of cyphers to a city. Add your Charisma modifier if you are appearing publicly as part of this event.

Roll Result

0-3 The community turns on you.

4-6 The community's attitude toward you doesn't change at all.

7-9 Your Resentment score in this settlement is lowered by 1, and you are tolerated once again, unless you are wanted by the authorities for crimes you have committed.

10-11 Your Resentment score in this settlement is lowered by 2, and you are tolerated once again.

12+ Your Resentment score in this settlement is reduced to zero, and you are celebrated, your past deeds forgotten.

Being tolerated again reverses the effects of wearing out your welcome, though specific groups might still maintain their enmity towards you, especially if you are a criminal.

A New Start

If you can effectively assume a new identity, such that no one recognizes you, your Resentment scores are all reduced to zero. If you assume the identity of another person, you inherit their Resentment scores (which are up to the GM, if that person is an NPC), and any actions you take will modify the Resentment scores you now share with them.



Justifying the Spoils

When you loot the ruins of the ancient world, you can find magic items that will help you fight back against the nightmare incursions that threaten the Kingdoms of Dreams. The problem with those items, however, is that they come from the Age of Chaos, when pagan sorcerer-kings ruled, before the Law was known. If people see you employing those tools of chaos, their distrust of you grows quickly.

As noted in the previous section, when you make use of a magic item in public, your Resentment score increases by 1. There are three ways to avoid this:

- The magic item is known to have been created by a law-abiding person.
- The magic item is subtle enough in its influence that its use goes unnoticed.
- Your use of the magic item has been justified in the eyes of the people.

This last reason is the only way to use a magic item that was obviously forged by chaotic wizards long ago. However, getting people to accept your magic item is not an easy process. There are four main steps: first, you must gain enough support to take your case to court, then you must argue your case, overcome the opposition, and finally come to an agreement with the court itself about your use of this item.

Step One: Gather Support

The ultimate authority in the Kingdoms of Dreams is the Law. If the majority of a kingdom's leading legal scholars support someone or something, the populace will inevitably follow suit. The same is true of their disapproval—if they declare that something is forbidden, the people turn their backs upon it. Their support is not a popularity contest—it is gained by arguing your case in court, in the language of the Law, as custom and tradition dictates. Not even sultans can ignore the Law—only the criminal underworld lives in defiance of it.

But the courts are not open to just anyone who wants to wander in. You need to have popular or institutional support already, before a judge will take you seriously. The support of any of the following will allow you to make your case:

- **An important official in a position of authority.** This could be a government minister, a judge, or a high-ranking noble (like the sultan), as long as they have some sway in the local courts.
- **A small group of legal scholars.** The more influential they are, the fewer you need, but unless they are officials, you still need the support of a group. They could be independent scholars, minor bureaucrats, practicing lawyers, respected sheikhs, university staff, or even your own students (if you have any).
- **A large group of citizens**, who will lobby on your behalf. This could be the city watch, an important guild, a neighbourhood you saved from a nightmare incursion, or your political party's supporters—or possibly even the proletariat, if there are enough of them to exert noticeable pressure on the local government and spur them to action.

Alternately, if you have already gone through this process in another kingdom and received the approval of their courts for your use of this magic item, you can request a meeting with judges here, who may either accept that ruling or require a new hearing in their own courts. Unless these two kingdoms are at war, a prior positive ruling is at least enough support for you to begin the justification process again.

How you gain this support is up to you. Blackmail, coercion, nepotism, persuasion, or even genuine respect can all work. Making enemies who can block your access to the courts in the future often proves to be a short-sighted tactic, but it is much easier for people to forgive dirty tricks at this stage. Once you actually step into a courtroom, the stakes get higher.

Step Two: State Your Case

Once you are granted a hearing in court, before one or more judges, you can justify the use of this particular magic item. In doing so, you must present a plausible reason why it is not a threat to lawful society. Possible justifications may differ from kingdom to kingdom, but could include variations on any of the following:

- “This item is merely a tool. It can be used to destroy chaos as easily as support it, just like swords, money, or medicine.” This argument may require you to demonstrate your scientific knowledge of how the item works.
- “This item is necessary to defeat a greater threat to lawful society. If we do not use it, a worse evil may befall the land.” This argument may require you to detail how this item specifically prevents such a threat.
- “This item is a part of our culture. It was made by our people, albeit before they adopted the Law. Because it will not prevent us from being law-abiding, it is acceptable for us to use it—just like the rest of our culture, language, and traditions.” This argument may require you to explain the item’s origins.

Only one person can make this argument, but it does not have to be the same person who owns or normally uses the magic item in question. The case can be prepared by a group, but only one of them will be presenting it and making the roll to see if it is successful or not. Lawyers are the most competent people to do this.

Once you have presented your justification, you must save against your Intelligence score if you have legal training, or half your Intelligence score, rounded down, if you do not. Assistance from either the government or expert lawyers can give you advantage. If your case is being competently sabotaged, you may have disadvantage.

If you succeed on this save, you may proceed to hearing the opposition’s case against you. **If you fail,** the court rejects your case. If you can gain a new hearing, you will need to state a different reason why you should be able to employ this magic item.

Your argument may rely on deception, or your understanding of the facts may be faulty. This does not affect your roll. However, if it is later discovered that your case for this item was not truthful, the Resentment scores of everyone involved immediately increase (unless they denounce your lies), and the magic item in question is no longer seen as justified. Using it in public will once again increase your Resentment score.

Step Three: The Opposition

People always have concerns when it comes to relics from before the Law. After you successfully make your case, an opposition lawyer speaks before the court, urging caution. This is an NPC, played by the GM. Their concerns will vary, depending on the nature of the magic item in question, but might include the following:

- This item encourages **supernatural interference** by ghosts, gods, or spirits from beyond. How will you defend against this? How can we know we are safe?
- This item extends **foreign influence** into this kingdom. What if a nearby culture believes it belongs to them, or another ruler invades in order to seize it?
- This item **glorifies chaos**. How will it be used in such a way that it does not encourage others to turn away from the Law and devote their lives to chaotic sorcery, crime, or pagan gods?
- This item is **dangerous**. What steps have you taken to ensure that no innocents will be harmed? How will you keep it from raining down destruction upon us?

The opposition must then save against their Intelligence. They are always a lawyer, and use their full attribute score (roll 3d6 to determine it, if this character has been newly introduced). If they have the assistance of a powerful faction at odds with the PCs, they might have advantage. If they are being deliberately sabotaged, they might have disadvantage. If the PCs have somehow managed to inveigle one of their own into this position, they can voluntarily botch this step and fail without rolling.

If the opposition fails, you may proceed directly to negotiating the final agreement. **If they succeed**, the courts reject your case, in which case you have two options:

- Address the concerns made by the opposition, and either propose reasonable solutions or accept restrictions on the item's use. If you do this adequately, you may proceed to final agreements.
- Return to Step Two and state your case anew, with a different justification.

Step Four: The Agreement

Having successfully presented your case and overcome the opposition's concerns, you may proceed to negotiating a final agreement between yourself and the court. This process consists of swearing publicly that the item and its users will abide by the Law and agreeing to any additional terms and conditions of the item's use.

This step also requires you to save against one of your attribute scores (or half, rounded down, if you have no legal training). You may always use Intelligence, or you can use Charisma if you are addressing public safety concerns, or Willpower if you must respond to a voluminous catalogue of legal intricacies to make your case.

If you succeed, the court finds your justification adequate and rules in your favour. This ruling is accepted by the general populace and you may now use this magic item in public without increasing your Resentment score. **If you fail**, the court still rules in your favour, but imposes additional restrictions on the lawful use of this magic item, in addition to any you accepted when addressing the opposition's concerns.



Chapter 5.

*Casting Spells
and
Other Enchantments*



The Nature of Spells

Spells, according to the wisest of sages, are living creatures from the realm of pure magic that lies beyond even dreams and nightmares. Casting a spell causes its nature to manifest on the material plane, in the form of magic. While inhuman supernatural beings are able to harness the magic of the astral light or the outer darkness, mere mortals must employ the magical forces that permeate the Earth and Faerie, and so they must be content with the power of spells.

Any character may cast spells, as long as they have the proper tools, though it is by no means always a safe procedure. There are three methods:

- The **easiest** way to cast a spell is to simply **read it out loud from a written formula**. A formula encodes the spell's essence in the form of a magical text, to be released when those words are read aloud. It is imperative that you do so correctly, however—if you fail to control it, the spell is miscast and the formula is destroyed. Some wizards keep formulas of spells they already know, in case they need them, but in doing so, they run the risk of being robbed. Other wizards may supply wealthy clients with spell formulas they can use, a service for which only a fool would not get paid in advance.
- The most **versatile** way to cast a spell is to **learn it**. Of course, it takes years of study and training to achieve this ability, and only the spellcasting professions can do it. When you know a spell, you may cast it whenever you like, even if you do not have a formula. It is still dangerous, however! The spell may be miscast—producing an effect other than what is intended—and your knowledge of it may become corrupted, making it more difficult to cast again until you purify yourself.
- The **safest** way to cast a spell is to **perform a ritual**. You must either know the spell or have a formula for it, and it takes a number of hours of ritual performance equal to the spell's level. At the end of this time, you can either roll to control the spell as normal, ignoring the malign effects of spell corruption, or you can destroy the formula and cast the spell perfectly. A spell cast as a ritual is also easier to control when you have assistants helping you.

Divine Magic

Alternately, idolators may be gifted with spells by the gods they worship, able to cast them as long as they remain faithful. In accepting such magic, they become channels for their patron's will, instead of solely exerting their own upon the world. This practice runs contrary to the Law, however, and no self-respecting scholar would debase themselves in such a way.

Rules for playing a character who receives their spells from a deity instead of magical formulas can be found on page 200.

Magical Formulas

Written spell formulas are the foundations of magic in The Kingdoms of Dreams. They are gateways through which spells pass into reality, so that they might work miracles here, and are designed to facilitate this process even when used by someone ignorant of the arcane arts. Spell formulas are more than just text and diagrams. They are constructed using rare and expensive inks and dyes, usually written on the finest of papers or parchments, and infused with smoke and incense, all varying depending on the dictates of the particular spell. Collections of these written formulas are called spellbooks, although individual, unbound formulas typically take the form of scrolls.

Those who study magic also have the ability, through study and discipline, to imprint these formulas onto their minds like the blackest of inks upon the whitest of papers, thus coming to know a spell so well they can cast it without a written formula. Once you have learned a spell, a written formula can still be useful, but is not a strict necessity.

Reading a Spell Formula

Spells want to be cast. They strain against the confines of their written formulas, willing the reader to make them real. Unlike most pieces of text, a spell formula can be read by anyone unless it is deliberately encrypted or obscured. If a language and its alphabet are completely foreign to the reader, this may count as being encrypted, but even the strangest form of writing cannot change the fact that spells want to be cast.

Creating a Spell Formula

You can only create written formulas for spells you already know. **To create a written spell formula**, you must spend days equal to the spell's level and money equal to its level $\times$ 100 cyphers. Alternately, if you cannot find the best materials, you may spend weeks equal to the spell's level and money equal to its level $\times$ 25 cyphers. Spells of variable level always count as Level 5 for the purposes of creating formulas.

The GM may also allow for alternate types of written spell formulas:

- **Precise formulas** are constructed to be easy to conceptualize and conform one's mental formula to. They take twice as long to produce, but when you study the precise formula of a spell in order to purify your corrupted knowledge of it, you need only spend 1 turn per caster level.
- **Ritual formulas** can only be used to perform rituals. They take 1 week per spell level to produce and require components worth at least 1,000c per level of the spell. It is not possible to quickly cast a spell by reading a ritual formula.
- **Single-use scrolls** are always destroyed when used, even if the spell is controlled successfully. It takes 1 hour per spell level to produce a single-use scroll, and requires components worth at least 50c per level of the spell if you can obtain expensive materials; or 1 day per spell level and 25c per level of the spell if you cannot. You cannot learn a spell from a single-use scroll.



Spellbooks

Wizards often rely quite heavily on written formulas, which means they need somewhere to keep them. Since these spellbooks require time and money to create, obtaining one can represent a significant payday for thieves and scavengers, and the loss to the spellcaster is not insignificant.

How useful and valuable a spellbook is depends largely on the author. Assassins of the Holy Mountain, bards on the mystic path, and all types of scholars have a number of spells in their spellbooks equal to their level. Champions of chaos, cultists, and wizards have twice as many. High-level casters are usually better able to protect their spellbooks, and most wizards tend to leave their spellbooks at home, under lock and key, when they go into field, specifically to prevent their ritual formulas from being stolen.

To randomly generate a spellbook or other arcane text, roll the full set of 1d4, 1d6, 1d8, 1d10, 1d12, and 1d20 and consult the following tables, rolling again on selected tables if you need any additional details:

Roll	Author	1d8
1	Adventuring wizard.	
2	Amateur arcanist.	
3	Cultist.	
4	Inhuman entity.	
5	Powerful archmage.	
6	Scholar.	
7	Shaman.	
8	Specialist wizard.	

Roll	Condition	1d6
1	Beat to shit.	
2	Damaged somehow.	
3	Encrusted with grime.	
4	Perfectly pristine.	
5	Slightly dirty.	
6	Well-worn but clean.	

Roll	Form	1d10
1	Cheap paper book.	
2	Cloth or knotted ropes.	
3	Leather sheets (loose or bound).	
4	Loose sheets of paper.	
5	Metal sheets (loose or bound).	
6	Papyrus scroll(s).	
7	Parchment book.	
8	Parchment scroll(s).	
9	Quality paper book.	
10	Stone slabs or rocks.	

Roll	Length	1d4
1	Expansive.	
2	Long.	
3	Short.	
4	Very short.	

The author's level can be generated by rolling 1d4, 1d6, or 1d8, depending on the possible range. Add a bonus for more-experienced or powerful authors, or a penalty for amateurs. For example, a powerful archmage is most likely level 6 or higher, so roll 1d4+5. For a self-taught wizard with no available mentors, you might roll 1d4 and subtract 1 if you roll 2 or higher.

Roll	Special Qualities	Chaos	vs.	Law	1d20
1	Actually a living creature.	...or...			Alchemical treatise.
2	Always too hot or cold.	...or...			Architectural plans.
3	Bound in human skin.	...or...			Comes in a custom case.
4	Constantly reorders its contents.	...or...			Consists of multiple volumes.
5	Contains a mechanical trap.	...or...			Contains legal information.
6	Dedicated to a specific entity.	...or...			Copied from a longer book.
7	Foul and reeking.	...or...			Crafted by a master bookbinder.
8	Has an infamous reputation.	...or...			Engraved and decorated.
9	Heavily annotated.	...or...			Fragile and/or falling apart.
10	Includes cult rituals.	...or...			Historical information.
11	Iridescent and/or scintillating.	...or...			Large and cumbersome.
12	Made from a fantastic beast.	...or...			Lavishly illustrated.
13	Stolen from a powerful wizard.	...or...			Magically locked or protected.
14	Strangely heavy.	...or...			Maps and other charts.
15	Throbs when touched.	...or...			Oddly compact and portable.
16	Toxic to touch or handle.	...or...			Perfumed and scented.
17	Unclean.	...or...			Poorly but copiously illustrated.
18	Vandalized by a mad scribbler.	...or...			Scientific diagrams.
19	Written by demons.	...or...			Silk ribbon bookmarks.
20	Written in human blood.	...or...			Uncanny graphic design.

Roll	Writing	1d12
1	No language; arcane geometries only. Trace them with your eyes or fingers.	
2	No language; pictures and diagrams only. Imagine them in sequence.	
3	Obtuse or metaphorical language obscures the content.	
4	Plainly written in a popular dialect.	
5	Printed on a press, with additional handwritten content.	
6	Terrible handwriting obscures the content.	
7	Verbosely written in a popular dialect, with opinionated editorials.	
8	Written in an alien or inhuman language.	
9	Written in an ancient dialect or dead language.	
10	Written in code or an invented script.	
11	Written in a foreign language that is rare but not unknown.	
12	Written in an obscure dialect using a popular script (i.e. weird spelling).	



Potions and Spell Containers

Yet another way to get the effect of a spell is to consume or otherwise utilize a substance that has an intangible spell formula suspended inside it. Just as spellcasters may inscribe a formula on paper that holds the power of a spell, so too can a formula be suspended in matter, waiting to unleash its spell when consumed by a living being. The most common examples of this method are potions—drink the potion and you experience the effects of the spell. The potion itself is merely a receptacle and a delivery system for the spell. It functions more like a magical item than a spell formula. Once the potion is drunk, the spell takes effect, and if anything remains of the actual liquid, it is no longer magical.

It does not have to be a potion, *per se*, that delivers the spell. It can be a powder that is snorted or wafers that are eaten, a salve that is rubbed on the skin, or a liquid dropped into the eyes. The point is that it delivers a spell effect to the recipient— whoever is affected by the substance is affected by the spell.

The important difference between spell containers and spell formulas is that the creator of the container is the caster of the spell and the end user is the target. The person who drinks the potion may be able to resist if the effects are harmful, but they do not need to control the spell. That is a task for the one who makes the container.

Creating a Spell Container

You can only create spell containers for spells you already know. **To brew a potion or other consumable spell container**, you must spend weeks equal to the spell's level and money equal to its level × 100 cyphers. Spells of variable level count as Level 1d6+3, and you must roll again each time you create spell containers for them.

Once you have spent the time and money, you must still roll to control the spell you are placing in the container. If you fail to control the spell, roll 1d8 on the following miscasting table instead of the ones on pages 194 and 195:

Roll	Miscasting Result
1-4	The container becomes infused with a different, random spell.
5	The container begins to attract unwanted supernatural attention, but is infused with the proper spell.
6	The infused spell's effect is the opposite of what is intended (GM's discretion).
7	The infused spell's effect is roughly half as strong as expected (GM's discretion).
8	You lose 1d6 points from a random attribute score. If it is not reduced to zero, the container is infused with the proper spell.

The exact results of a miscasting (other than the attribute loss), are discovered only when the container is used and the infused spell is released.

Learning New Spells

The spellcasting professions all have the ability to learn spells: assassins of the Holy Mountain, bards of the mystic path, champions of chaos, cultists, scholars, and wizards. **If you are an assassin of the Holy Mountain or a scholar**, you know a number of spells equal to your level plus your Intelligence modifier. **If you are a bard of the mystic path**, you know a number of spells equal to your level plus your Charisma modifier. **If you are a cultist**, you know a number of spells equal to twice your level, plus your Willpower modifier. **If you are a wizard or a champion of chaos**, you know a number of spells equal to twice your level, plus your Intelligence modifier. You may not learn more spells than this number.

When you advance in level, you must determine your new spells randomly, just as you do for your starting spells, unless you meet either of the following criteria:

- If you have a **mentor** who is willing to teach you one of their spells, you may spend weeks equal to the spell's level and money equal to its level $\times$ 100 cyphers to both learn the spell and write out a spell formula for it.
- If you have a **written spell formula** for a spell you do not know, you may learn that spell when you gain a level instead of rolling for a new spell. It still counts toward your normal limit of spells known.

If you are a fighter, a thief, or a different type of assassin, bard, or champion, you may not learn spells. You might, perhaps, gain this ability after being exposed to the corrupting influence of chaotic magic, but you will not get it from your profession.

Changing Spells

When you advance in level, you can also change the spells you already know, by gradually restructuring your knowledge of them through study and will. You may personalize any of the spells you know, changing their parameters slightly. You may also remove up to one spell from your knowledge completely, and replace it with a different spell. The new spell may be a randomly-determined spell, a spell you learn from a formula, or a spell taught to you, the same as any other new spell you learn upon gaining a level.

Personalizing Spells

You may choose to make any of your spells unique by giving them a new name and adding some kind of quirk or tell, like a specific colour or an accompanying smell. At the GM's discretion, you may reduce the power of one aspect of the spell—damage, duration, range, etc—in order to increase the power of some other aspect. The GM may also decide to change the spell's level based on the changes you want.

A personalized variant becomes a separate spell, and you can know multiple versions at the same time. They still count as different spells toward your total limit, but if one becomes corrupted, it does not affect your casting of the others.



Performing Magic

Spells are the most common form of practical magic, though there are other ways to access supernatural power. By default, other types of magical powers belong only to gods and monsters, so this section covers just the casting of spells.

Casting a Spell

Casting a spell is rarely a subtle process. You must repeat strange words and phrases—or at the very least, utter strange sounds—and trace intricate patterns in the air with your hands. Or perhaps some other part of your body. You might go unnoticed if you cast a spell quietly, from hiding, but never out in the open. Spellcasting requires that you have the use of your voice and body.

If you cannot move or speak, you cannot cast a spell. Being paralysed, tightly bound and gagged, or unconscious all prevent you from using your magic.

If you are merely impeded, you have disadvantage on your roll to control the spell. It is difficult to cast a spell while manacled or in a headlock, but not impossible. Or perhaps you would prefer to keep your voice down and your gestures restrained, in order to remain inconspicuous or hidden.

In order to cast a spell, you must either know it, or be reading from a spell formula. You may cast a spell quickly or as a much-longer ritual.

Fast Casting

When you quickly cast a spell, it takes one combat round and you must roll to control it. **If you fail to control it**, the spell is miscast and either your knowledge of the spell becomes corrupted, or the formula you were casting the spell from is destroyed.

Ritual Casting

When you cast a spell as a ritual, it takes a number of hours equal to the spell's level. Once you are finished, if you choose to destroy the spell's formula, it takes effect as normal, and there is no need to roll to control it. If you choose to keep the formula intact, or you are ritually casting a spell you know without using a formula, you must roll to control it. **If you fail to control it**, the spell is miscast, but not corrupted. If you have help from a number of assistants equal to the spell's level, you get advantage on your roll to control it.

Rituals take time, but they also ignore the other negative aspects of corruption, described on page 196.



Controlling a Spell

When you cast a spell, you must roll to control it. **If the spell is your level or lower**, you must save against your full Intelligence score to control it. **If the spell is of a higher level than your character**, you must save against half your Intelligence score, rounded down, to control it. If you are a bard of the mystic path, you may save against your Charisma instead. If you are a cultist, you may save against your Willpower instead.

If you fail to control a spell you cast, you suffer both consequences:

- You must roll on the miscasting table, below.
- Your knowledge of the spell, or the spell's formula, becomes corrupted.

Miscasting

If you cannot control the spell you cast, roll 1d8 and consult the miscasting table:

Roll	Miscasting Result
1	You cast a different spell on a different target, in addition to your original spell (which works as normal).
2	You cast a different spell on a different target, instead of your intended spell and target.
3	You cast a different spell on your original target, in addition to your intended spell (which works as normal).
4	You cast a different spell on your original target, instead of your intended spell.
5	You lose 1d4 points from a random attribute score. If it is not reduced to zero, your spell works as normal.
6	Your spell affects a different target (but otherwise works as normal).
7	Your spell has the opposite effect (GM's discretion).
8	Your spell is roughly half as effective as expected (GM's discretion).

Different spells are determined randomly, from the full spell list.

Different targets are determined randomly, from all those that might conceivably be affected. Spells that normally affect the caster only may affect other targets.

If one of your attributes is reduced to zero because of a miscasting or corruption, you suffer the consequences before you finish casting your spell. If you die or become incapacitated, the spell is not cast.

Miscasting a Spell Involving Spirits

At the GM's option, if you fail to control a spell that involves contacting, manipulating, or summoning superhuman spirits (even by a telepathic connection with another mind), use the following miscasting table instead:

Roll	Miscasting Result
1	You cast a different spell on a different target, in addition to your original spell (which works as normal).
2	You cast a different spell on a different target, instead of your intended spell and target.
3	You cast a different spell on your original target, in addition to your intended spell (which works as normal).
4	You cast a different spell on your original target, instead of your intended spell.
5	You contact a different spirit, in addition to the intended spirit.
6	You contact a different spirit, instead of the intended spirit.
7	You lose 1d4 points from a random attribute score. If it is not reduced to zero, your spell works as normal.
8	Your spell is roughly half as effective as expected (GM's discretion).

Contacting a spirit means subjecting it to the normal effects of the spell.

If you contact a different spirit, either the GM rolls 1d6 to determine what type of spirit it is, or chooses one that already has the opportunity to become involved:

Roll	Spirit
1	An angel of the astral light.
2	A creature of the outer darkness.
3	A ghost or shade.
4	A native of Faerie.
5	A pagan divinity.
6	A spirit of the natural world.

The Memory of Wizards

Wizards are very adept at casting spells. **If you are a wizard**, you may choose to lose 1d4 points of Willpower instead of rolling on the miscasting table (you must choose before rolling). The spell is cast as normal, instead.

After you choose whether to ignore a miscasting roll or not, you can also prevent a spell you cast from becoming corrupted, if you save against your Willpower score (or half your Willpower score, rounded down, if the spell is higher level than you are). If your knowledge of the spell is already corrupted, this ability has no effect.



Spell Corruption

Because the knowledge of a spell is itself a conduit to another plane of existence, through which that spell enters this world, it is not ink and parchment, but thoughts and flesh, that must bear the brunt of this phenomenon's dangers. Arcane forces rushing through the human body can warp and alter the mind's conception of a spell, causing it to become harmful to the caster until the damage is repaired. But all spellcasters have experienced their knowledge of a spell becoming corrupted at some time or another. It is merely a temporary obstacle.

Once a spell you know is corrupted, if you cast it quickly, you lose a number of points equal to the spell's level from a random attribute score. If this attribute is not reduced to zero, you may roll to control the spell as normal, but if you fail, the spell stays corrupted (it cannot become more corrupted). **Rituals** ignore corruption, however—you may cast any spell you know as a ritual, whether it is corrupted or not, and it has no effect on the process.

If you are casting a spell from a written formula, your knowledge cannot become corrupted. Instead, the formula—too weak to sustain a corrupted spell—is destroyed, and can never be used to cast the spell or aid in its teaching again.

Purifying a Corrupted Spell

Once a spell you know becomes corrupted, it stays corrupted until purified. In order to remove the corruption from a spell you know, you must spend time meditating on the nature of your auras, studying the occult sciences, or performing arcane cleansing rituals.

If you have a written formula for your corrupted spell, studying it for hours equal to the spell's level is enough to purify your knowledge of it. You may purify several corrupted spells in a single day, by studying their formulas, provided you have enough spare time.

If you do not have a written formula, you must spend the equivalent of an entire day or night—from sunup to sundown or from dusk till dawn—purifying a spell that is your level or lower, and twice as much time purifying a spell that is higher level than you are. Once you spend the required amount of time purifying your knowledge of a spell, it ceases to be corrupted.

Whether you use a formula or not, you can break up the required amount of time into separate segments, allowing yourself to rest or perform other tasks, as long as you work on purifying only one spell at a time. If you wish to spend only a few hours a day purifying your corrupted spells, that is fine. However, if you cast a spell while it is still corrupted, before you have spent the required amount of time purifying it, your progress is lost and you must start the purification process over again from the start.

Spells Quick Reference

To cast a spell quickly:

- Takes one full combat round (a complicated combat action).
- You must know the spell or read it from a formula.
- You must save against your Intelligence to control it. If you fail, roll 1d8 on the miscasting table and the spell becomes corrupted. Some professions allow you to save against a different attribute.
- Corruption destroys a spell formula.
- If you quickly cast a corrupted spell, you must lose a number of points equal to its level from a random attribute first.

To purify a corrupted spell:

- Spend hours equal to the spell's level with a written formula.
- Spend 1 day or night purifying a spell of your level or lower, or twice that time purifying a spell that is higher level than you are.

To cast a spell as a ritual:

- Takes 1 hour per spell level.
- You must know the spell or use a formula.
- If you destroy the spell's formula, it is cast automatically.
- If you don't destroy the spell's formula, you must roll to control it. If you have a number of helpers equal to the spell's level, you have advantage on this roll. If you fail, roll 1d8 on the miscasting table.
- Rituals ignore spell corruption.

Spell Formulas:

- May only be created by those who know spells.
- Takes the spell's level in days to make.
- Costs the spell's level $\times$ 100c to make.
- Anyone may cast a spell by reading it from a formula.
- Can be used to cast a spell quickly or as a ritual (see above).

Spell Containers:

- May only be created by those who know spells.
- Takes the spell's level in weeks to make.
- Costs the spell's level $\times$ 100c to make.
- Roll to control the spell at the end of the production process.
- The spell effect is automatic when the container is consumed.



Resisting Arcane Influence

If you have become the subject of a spell, cast by an evil wizard, all is not yet lost. It is possible to fight back against magic, run away from it, or counter its effects, without having to become a spellcaster yourself.

Spell Effects and Initiative

Spells normally occur as they are cast, but some create ongoing effects, such as periodic damage. Unless otherwise noted, this always occurs at the end of a combat round.

Save vs. Spells

The unwilling targets of a spell are allowed to roll a save against its full effects. The attribute they roll against should be appropriate to the type of effect. If multiple attributes would apply to the same spell, the player may choose which one to roll against, based on how their character is trying to avoid being enchanted:

- **Charisma** is for resisting bad luck and having the minds of the people around you turned against you.
- **Dexterity** is for dodging magic missiles and physical explosions.
- **Ferocity** is for struggling out of being incapacitated by magical bindings.
- **Health** is for resisting arcane diseases, magically-induced fatigue, as well as the life-draining effects of necromancy.
- **Intelligence** is used to discern the truth of an illusion.
- **Willpower** is for resisting any enchantment that clouds your mind, changes your thoughts and feelings, or alters your personality, as well as having your body be forcibly changed into another form.

You must save against your full attribute score if the caster is your level or lower, or half your attribute score, rounded down, if their level is higher than your own. **Success means you experience half the normal effect of the spell**—half the damage, half the attribute loss, etc. If the effect is completely binary (either it occurs or it doesn't), you avoid it entirely with a successful save. Because magic is dangerous and unpredictable, spells can still have other, “minor” effects on the environment, even after a successful save, at the GM's discretion.

All characters, NPCs and PCs, whether humans or monsters, are allowed a save against magical effects that target them without requiring an overcome roll. You can save against spells, magic items that produce an effect which targets you, and monster powers that function similarly.

If a magical power requires the user to make an overcome roll against the target's Armour rating or one of their attributes, the target is not allowed to attempt a save on a successful hit—a roll has already been made, in this case by the attacker. If the effect is ongoing however, the target may be allowed to overcome the magic later, under certain circumstances.

Overcoming Enchantments

Once you are under the influence of an ongoing enchantment (after the initial casting and save against it), you can still be afforded opportunities to overcome the spell and free yourself later. This requires making an overcome attempt against the caster's Willpower score, or against their Charisma score if the ongoing effect was placed by, or is maintained by, a third party deity or spirit.

If you know you are being affected by an ongoing enchantment, you can undertake specific actions to combat the spell. Once you complete the action, you are allowed an overcome attempt, adding an appropriate attribute modifier to your roll (usually Willpower), and your level if the action falls within your professional expertise or your other skills are relevant. Such actions can include, but are not limited to:

- Applying an alchemical anti-magic substance to yourself (pure anti-magic dust would neutralize the spell as surely as casting Dispel Magic, but is very expensive and hard to find in the Kingdoms of Dreams).
- Being possessed by a spirit whose nature is antithetical to the effects or influence of the ongoing enchantment.
- Completing a lawful pilgrimage.
- Making a sacrifice to a pagan deity.
- Undertaking a drug-induced vision quest with the help of a local wise woman.

If you are unaware of an enchantment manipulating your thoughts or feelings, being shown evidence that directly contradicts what the enchantment has made you believe allows you to make an overcome attempt to shake it off, adding your Willpower modifier and your level to your roll. For example, if a spell has caused you to love someone and accept them as your sultan, you would get a chance to overcome it if they struck at you with a sword, if they commanded you to ride out and commit atrocities on your own people, or if you found your old notes in which you described your true feelings of hatred for them (which the spell has made you forget). Seeing a spellcaster affect someone else with the exact same spell you saw them use on you is another situation that can allow you to make an overcome attempt against their Willpower score in order to throw off the enchantment.

How soon you can make this overcome attempt after you have been presented with such evidence depends on how fast-paced the situation is:

- **During combat** or a similarly dangerous situation, you can make an overcome attempt at the end of the round.
- **During a conversation** or while exploring, you can make an overcome attempt at the end of the turn (or scene).
- If you are **conducting research** or piecing together the clues and evidence slowly, you can make an overcome attempt at the end of the day.



The Magic of the Gods

Not all adepts of supernatural arts must rely upon arcane scholarship to bend the rules of reality. Amongst those who have not accepted the Law into their hearts, there are some who maintain a relationship with otherworldly spirits, gods, and demons. Bards pray to the pagan muses for divine inspiration. Cultists worship graven idols and heathen gods. Wizards make pacts of power with infernal entities and alien intelligences. Even scholars may fall from the noble path and devote themselves to the worship of ghosts.

If your profession grants you spells—assassin of the Holy Mountain, bard of the mystic path, champion of chaos, cultist, scholar, or wizard—you may choose to receive them from a patron deity instead of having spells mastered. Decide what kind of patron deity you follow, what sort of arrangement it is you have with them—bargain, symbiosis, or worship—and describe it to the GM. Whether the other PCs know about your patron or not is up to you. Roll for your spells as normal.

This is an optional rule, and relies on there being supernatural entities in the setting of your game that can grant people such powers. If none exist, or they can only be found through adventuring, this spellcasting option is not available.

If your magic comes from a patron deity, the following things are true:

- **Your magic has no use for spell formulas.** You cannot make them or learn new spells from them, and they do not benefit you in ritual casting. The spells you know are granted to you by your patron deity, in whatever way they deem most fitting. You know the same number of spells as your profession normally grants you.
- **You may only create potions or other spell containers in service to your patron.** You may only give them to those who will further your patron's goals, either wittingly or not. Defying this edict will anger your patron.
- **When you cast a spell you know as a ritual**, you gain advantage on your roll to control it. If you have a number of faithful equal to the spell's level helping you perform the ritual, you control the spell automatically, without needing to roll for it. Allies who are willing to further your patron's goals may count as faithful, if your patron's need is great enough.
- **When you quickly cast a corrupted spell**, you may ignore the attribute loss if you are undertaking your patron's orders or directly pursuing a quest they have charged you with. The spell remains corrupted unless you purify yourself, and casting it quickly will still reduce your attributes once you deviate from your duty or complete your divinely-assigned task.
- **When you purify a spell you know of corruption**, the process is the same, but you must spend the time communing with your deity.

You can still cast spells from written formulas, just like anyone can, but you carry no spellbooks of your own. If random equipment tables indicate you have a spellbook, change it to a religious or spiritual text instead.



Spell Descriptions

The name, level, duration, effect, range, and school of a spell are all listed before a description of the spell's effects. "Caster level" normally refers to the level of the character casting the spell, but if they are using a magical item that creates a spell effect, the item may determine what level the spell is cast at, if it has its own caster level to influence the strength of the spell.

Level

Spells without a specific level can be cast at various levels. Consult a spell's description to see if it must be cast at a specific level, based on the target or effect. If you must cast a spell at the target's level and you do not know the level of the target, you must commit to casting the spell before you discover what that level is. There is no backing out if you discover it is significantly higher than you were expecting.

Duration

Unless a spell's results are instantaneous, its magical effect lasts for a specific amount of time. This is not an exact or by-the-clock figure, however. A spell's duration is partially tied to a person's perception of time, and not always measured by the impassive judgment of the stars that look down upon us. Spells can also be dispelled by more powerful magic, like the malign influence of the realm of nightmares.

Spells with a time duration listed can be stopped by the caster before the duration ends, unless otherwise noted. Spells with multiple durations listed end when either limit has been met, unless otherwise noted in the spell's description.

Some typical duration amounts include:

- **Caster's Choice:** The caster may choose any length of time, including the durations listed below. If they choose days, rounds, turns, or even longer increments of time, they can specify exactly how many or choose what dice to roll to determine that number.
- **Concentration:** This spell lasts as long as the caster is conscious and continues to exert some portion of their will toward keeping it going. If you are concentrating on maintaining a spell effect and you are interrupted—by an attack or the effects of an offensive spell for example—you must save against your Willpower to maintain your concentration, or the spell ends.
- **Days:** When a spell lasts for one or more days, each of those days could be a strict 24 hours in length, as measured from the time of casting, if you like. Alternately, a spell could fade away upon the next sunrise or sunset, whichever comes second—thus lasting the rest of the day and through the following night (or through the following day, if cast at night).
- **Hours:** You can either assume that each hour consists of approximately 6 turns, or decide when a spell ends based on your estimate of how long things take in the game's setting. Feel free to make that a dramatic moment!

- **Instantaneous:** This spell takes effect immediately, and the results caused by it are permanent, even after the magic has faded.
- **Rounds:** When a spell's duration lasts for a number of rounds, it is dispelled at the end of the final round (or as soon as it produces its effect on the final round). The round in which a spell is cast only counts toward its duration if its effect is produced during that round. For example, you cannot begin throwing Eldritch Darts in the same round you cast it, so it lasts until a *subsequent* $1d6 + \text{caster level rounds}$ have elapsed (or immediately after you throw a dart in the final round). However, casting Faerie Dust when you are not last in the initiative order means others are affected by it during the same round you cast it, meaning that round *would* count toward its total duration.
- **Tasks:** Spells can also last for as long as it takes the target of the spell, or a being summoned by it, to complete 1 or more commands, missions, or tasks issued by the caster. See the spell's description for details.
- **Turns:** Each turn a spell lasts may be roughly 10 minutes, or 1 turn of exploration actions, or 1 scene, or 1 task. If the person benefiting from the spell's influence is focused enough, 1 task may be considerably longer than 10 minutes, but the spell ends as soon as they cease this activity in the slightest.
- **Until Dispelled:** Spells that last until they are dispelled can be cancelled by the caster at any time, or by other means (a Dispel Magic spell, for example), but are effectively permanent until such time.

A spell cast on a target already affected by the same spell does not increase the ongoing effects of the spell. It may extend the duration, however. Use the new duration, if it would last longer than the original spell.

Effect

This category usually refers to the target—who or what is affected by the spell. If the spell has an additional area of effect, this is listed in the spell's description.

Some typical effect targets include:

- **Area of Effect:** If a specific distance, mass, or volume of space is listed here, the spell either affects that amount of space, anywhere within range, or it produces that amount of material, anywhere within range.
- **Caster Only:** This means either the spell affects only the caster, or that its origin point is always the person casting it.
- **Creatures:** Each distinct being, whether living, undead, or unliving matter animated by sorcery, counts as a separate creature. The corpses of newly-dead creatures may be affected, perhaps, but old bones are merely objects.
- **Items:** Each inanimate object counts as a separate item.
- **Locations:** Each site that is conceptually a single area (e.g. a clearing, field, or plaza), but not a region, may count as a location, depending on the caster's perspective. A house is a single location to those outside of it; anyone inside the house must count each room or floor as separate locations.



Range

This is either the maximum distance from the caster that the affected target can be, or the maximum range that effects emanating from the caster can travel. The caster can limit the range of effects to less than the maximum. Spells with multiple ranges are limited by all that are listed, unless otherwise noted in the spell's description.

Some typical range distances include:

- **Infinite:** This means the effects of the spell are not limited by distance.
- **None:** This range means the spell does not extend beyond the caster, and its effect is always caster only.
- **Presence:** A target counts as “in your presence” when they are roughly within conversational distance, or in the same room as you, or (if you need to be precise) no farther away than 10 feet per caster level out in the open—whichever makes the most sense in the specific situation where the spell is used. Some spells may list an alternate specific distance (e.g. 30 feet per caster level). You must still be aware of the target to affect them (i.e. also in senses range).
- **Senses:** You must be able to see, hear, or touch the target for the spell to affect them. Spells with this range may usually be cast as normal on physical targets that you are only aware of due to your senses being magically enhanced.
- **Touch:** You must physically touch the target for the spell to affect them. Clothes and carried equipment count as part of the target. This range may also include things being touched by creatures that the caster is touching, which the caster is not themselves touching (e.g. a circle of people holding hands, one of which is the caster).

School

Each spell belongs to a group of similarly-themed spells. Some characters and monsters may be resistant or vulnerable to certain schools of magic, or they might be able to learn spells from only specific schools.

The schools available in this book include:

- Battle.
- Divination.
- Enchantment.
- Evocation.
- Healing.
- Illusion.
- Law.
- Quintessence.
- Summoning.
- Transformation.

Accurate Weapon

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Presence.**Effect:** 1 weapon per caster level.**School:** Battle.

For the duration of the spell, anyone wielding a target weapon has advantage to their attack rolls. This will not allow it to harm creatures not affected by mundane weapons. This spell can be applied to arrows and bullets as well as bows and guns, although ammunition so enchanted will only be re-usable if it is somehow retrieved.

Acid Spray

Level 3

Duration: Instantaneous.**Effect:** Caster only.**Range:** 5 feet per caster level.**School:** Evocation.

This spell causes you to project a spray of acidic liquid. Whatever it touches is coated and suffers 1d4 damage each round, for rounds equal to caster level. The acid also ruins one piece of a target's equipment each time it deals damage, based on the amount.

Roll	Equipment
1	Armour.
2	Clothing.
3	Random piece of other gear.
4	Weapon.

Alter Items

Level 2

Duration: Instantaneous.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 item per caster level.**School:** Transformation.

This spell transforms mundane, non-magical items you can see, hear, or touch into other mundane items of your choice, as long as they are not substantially larger.

Arcane Connection

Level varies.

Duration: 1 day.**Range:** None.**Effect:** Caster only.**School:** Quintessence.

For the duration of this spell, you may cast other spells upon a target if a piece of that target is within range, but the whole is not. Pieces of a creature can include blood, hair, nail clippings, severed parts, or even prized possessions. Pieces of a location can include dirt or water collected at that location, or pieces of buildings that exist there.

You may choose what level to cast this spell at. It only allows you to cast spells of the same level or lower on the target you have the arcane connection with.

Binding

Level varies.

Duration: Instantaneous.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 creature or item.**School:** Law.

One target you can see, hear, or touch is immediately tied up, bound, and immobilized by whatever material is nearby, or their bindings fall away, freeing them—your choice. This spell must be cast at the same level as the target (to bind the target), or the same level as the one who did the binding (to free the target).

Blessing and Bane

Level 3

Duration: Concentration.

Range: Presence.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Battle.

While you concentrate, anyone within range who is allied or friendly with you receives advantage to their attack rolls, and anyone who is your enemy suffers disadvantage to their attack rolls.

Bridge

Level 1

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 1 location.

School: Evocation.

This spell creates a solid bridge made of magic, up to 5 feet per caster level wide and 100 feet per caster level long, across some distance that begins in front of you.

Brutal Weapon

Level 2

Duration: 1d6 + caster level rounds.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 weapon.

School: Battle.

For the duration of the spell, successful attacks with the target weapon inflict an additional Hit Die of damage. This spell can be applied to arrows and bullets, but not to bows and guns, unless you want to club someone with them.

Cause Fear

Level 3

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Presence (20 feet per caster level).

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Enchantment.

For the duration of the spell, a target you can see, hear, or touch is desperately afraid of you and must flee from you. To defy this fear, they must save against their Willpower for each action they take that keeps them in your presence.

Charm Animals

Level 2

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Senses.

Effect: Special.

School: Enchantment.

This spell causes a number of mundane animals equal to caster level that you can see, hear, or touch to become friendly to you and obey your commands, if they can understand them. If the target animals are magical, you may only charm levels worth equal to caster level.

Charm Monster

Level 5

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 monster.

School: Enchantment.

The target believes you to be an ally, and falls under your influence. It will obey commands and follow suggestions that do no conflict with its nature. The target may attempt to save against their Willpower (or half Willpower if their level is lower than caster level) once each week after being charmed in order to dispel the effect.

Charm Person

Level 1

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 1 person.

School: Enchantment.

This spell causes the target to believe that you are a good and trusted friend of theirs. They will obey commands and follow your suggestions if they do not conflict with their nature or involve too much danger. If you betray them, the spell ends. The target may attempt to save against their Willpower (or half Willpower if their level is lower than caster level) once each week after being charmed in order to dispel the effect.

Chromatic Spray

Level 2

Duration: Instantaneous.

Effect: 1 creature, item, or location.

Range: Senses.

School: Evocation.

This spell causes a rainbow to sprout from your hands and deal excruciating harm to one target you can see, hear, or touch. The spell causes 1d6 + caster level damage, but the type of damage is random. Each time you cast the spell, roll a d10 to see what colour your target is struck by (or a d8 multiple times, if the target is struck by two or three colours):

Roll	Colour
1	Black: necromantic life drain.
2	Blue: psychic damage.
3	Green: poison damage.
4	Orange: fire damage.
5	Purple: corrosive damage.
6	Red: bloody hemorrhaging.
7	White: frost damage.
8	Yellow: lightning damage.
9	Three colours, all causing damage.
10	Two colours, both causing damage.

Clairaudience

Level 3

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Infinite.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Divination.

Name a location and for the duration of the spell, you can hear it as if you were there. You can only name locations you know exist, although you can use this spell to hear what is beyond a door you know of.

Clairvoyance

Level 4

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Infinite.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Divination.

Name a location and for the duration of the spell, you can see it as if you were there. You can only name locations you know exist, although you can use this spell to see what is beyond a door you know of.

Climbing

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Transformation.

For the duration of the spell, one target you can see, hear, or touch can climb or even walk on walls and ceilings with no fear of falling.

Colour Change

Level 1

Duration: Caster's choice.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature, item, or location.

School: Transformation.

This spell changes the colour (or colours) of one target you can see, hear, or touch to anything you want, for as long as you want. If you cast this spell upon a creature, only their body is affected, not their clothes or equipment.

Confusion

Level 4

Duration: 1 round per caster level.

Effect: 1 creature per caster level.

Range: Presence.

School: Enchantment.

This spell causes targets you can see, hear, or touch to become confused and unable to think clearly. Roll 1d6 for each target to determine what action they take while confused:

Roll	Result
1	Attack their allies.
2	Attack their enemies.
3	Do nothing.
4	Investigate their surroundings.
5	Run away.
6	Speak incoherently.



Conjuration

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: None.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Summoning.

This spell summons to your hand the mundane object of your choice. It appears from out of nowhere. It cannot be unique or especially valuable.

Contingency

Level varies.

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature, item, or location.

School: Quintessence.

You must cast this on another spell which you know. Contingency places this other spell upon the creature, item, or location that you touch. The other spell then becomes corrupted and lays dormant upon the target until specific conditions of your choosing are met, at which point it is cast in the manner of your choosing, and this spell ends. Until the Contingency spell ends, you cannot purify your knowledge of either spell (if your knowledge of Contingency becomes corrupted).

Alternately, you may cast Contingency on a spell that a willing ally knows, as long as you are touching them as well as the target. Contingency must be cast at the same level as the spell it affects.

Counterspell

Level varies.

Duration: 1 turn per caster level, or instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

School: Quintessence.

Effect: Caster only.

You may cast Counterspell upon any spell you can see, hear, or touch, or that is being cast upon you (if it is not your turn to act, you lose your actions this round and the next). You must cast it at the same level as the spell you are attempting to counter. If you manage to cast Counterspell properly, the other spell has no effect.

Alternately, you may cast it on yourself, at the level of your choice. The first spell of an equal or lower level cast upon you before the duration ends is countered automatically, and your Counterspell is ended.

Create Food and Drink

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 6 days of food.

School: Summoning.

This spell creates enough food to feed half a dozen people for a day. It can be any kind of food you are culturally familiar with.

Create Object

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Touch.

Effect: Special.

School: Evocation.

This spell creates an inanimate object out of magical energy. The object cannot be larger than 1 cubic foot per caster level, and must be all the same colour. It can be any mundane object you wish, including a mechanical device, but it must be an object you have seen or felt before. This spell can only replicate unique objects if you know what they look and feel like.

Cure Disease

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Healing.

This spell cures the target of any one disease that afflicts them, and prevents them from developing that same disease again for at least 1 year per caster level.

Cure Wound

Level 3

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Healing.

This spell heals the target of one wound—restoring sight to an eye, for example, or stopping a cut from bleeding—and removes up to 1d6 + caster level Wounds. It does not raise the target's Disposition.

Detect Evil

Level 2

Duration: 1 intention per caster level,
1 hour per caster level.

Range: Senses.

School: Divination.

Effect: Caster only.

By concentrating on someone you can see, hear, or touch, you may detect evil intentions in them, such as the intent to harm, steal, threaten someone, or otherwise deliberately inconvenience them. Once you have detected a number of intentions equal to caster level, the spell ends.

Detect Illusion

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: 30 feet per caster level.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Illusion.

For its duration, this spell informs you of any illusions, invisible things, and other magical falsehoods within range. Even if you cannot perceive an illusion with your mundane senses, you will feel its presence, knowing in what direction it lies and approximately how far away from you it is. This spell does not automatically allow you to penetrate the illusions it detects.

Detect Magic

Level 1

Duration: 1 thing per caster level,
1 turn per caster level.

Range: Senses.
School: Divination.

Effect: Caster only.

By concentrating on someone, something, or somewhere that you can see, hear, or touch, you may detect whether it has any magical properties or not. By concentrating on a location, you may also detect someone or something that is both hidden and magical. This spell does not identify the precise nature of the magic. Once you have detected a number of magical things equal to caster level, the spell ends.

Dispel Magic

Level 3

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses, 50 feet per caster level.

Effect: Square space 20 feet to each side
or a single creature or item. **School:** Quintessence.

This spell removes the effects of any spells operating in the area of effect, or affecting the target. Magic items and magical formulas are not affected, only ongoing spells or spell-like effects.

Duplicate Images

Level 3

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Self.

Effect: Caster only. **School:** Illusion.

This spell creates 1d4 illusions that look exactly like yourself and mimic your actions. Any attack against you hits one of your duplicates instead, causing it to disappear, leaving you unharmed.

Eldritch Darts

Level 1

Duration: 1d6 + caster level rounds.

Range: Senses.

Effect: Caster only. **School:** Battle.

For the duration of the spell, you can fling bolts of arcane energy at targets you can see, hear, or touch, instead of making a normal attack. If you can overcome their Dexterity score with your Intelligence modifier, plus your level, you inflict damage equal to your Hit Die plus caster level (non-spellcasters using a formula to cast a spell do not add their level to either roll).

Endure Pain

Level 1

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature. **School:** Healing.

For the duration of the spell, a target creature you can see, hear, or touch is immune to physical, emotional, and spiritual pain (but not harm). They take half damage from attacks where pain is a large part of the effect (GM's discretion).

Enlarge

Level 2

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 creature or item.**School:** Transformation.

For the duration of the spell, one target you can see, hear, or touch grows by up to one full size category (from large to huge, from human-sized to large, from small to human-sized, or from tiny to small), along with their clothes and whatever they are carrying. Possessions they drop or remove return to normal immediately. While enlarged, the target has advantage on their damage rolls.

Faerie Dust

Level 3

Duration: 1d6 + caster level rounds.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 location.**School:** Illusion.

This spell fills the target location full of faerie dust, swirling through the air. You may decide to make it one or more of the following: adhesive, glittering, and irritating. **If it is adhesive**, it reveals invisible creatures or objects and cannot be blown away by wind. **If it is glittering**, anyone within the effect is blinded for the duration of the spell. **If it is irritating**, anyone within the effect suffers disadvantage on rolls requiring physical activity and/or concentration until the spell is over.

False Magnetism

Level 3

Duration: Instantaneous.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 2 items.**School:** Transformation.

This spell causes two objects to become stuck together, at wherever point you choose them to be joined. If they are not touching when you cast the spell, they will move toward each other, as if affected by a force similar to, but stronger than, magnetism.

Fearlessness

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 creature.**School:** Enchantment.

For the duration of the spell, one target you can see, hear, or touch is immune to fear, either mundane or magical. Fear cannot cause them to make morale rolls, lose Disposition, or suffer any other penalties, because they are not afraid.

Featherlight

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 creature or item.**School:** Transformation.

For the duration of the spell, the target becomes light as a feather. If they are falling, they descend languidly and suffer no harm upon landing. They can also traverse ground that would normally not hold their weight, like thin branches, kite strings, or fluttering leaves.

Find Poison

Level 1

Duration: 1 day per caster level.

Range: Senses.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Divination.

For the duration of the spell, you can tell if anything that you can see, hear, or touch is poisonous and how strong that poison is. You can find poisonous plants in the woods, or determine if food is poisoned.

Find Traps

Level 2

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: 10 feet per caster level.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Divination.

For its duration, this spell informs you of the presence of any non-magical trap within range, and any traps farther away that would affect people within range. This spell will inform you of magical traps if combined with a Detect Magic spell.

This spell reveals only traps that have been deliberately set. Unstable ground that is the result of natural processes (like erosion) are only revealed if they are deliberately being used against you (or anyone else). Being knowingly directed toward a natural hazard means that hazard counts as a trap.

Floating Platform

Level 1

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Presence.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Evocation.

This spell creates a magical platform, roughly the size of your arm span, that hovers invisibly next to you, or anywhere within your presence. It can carry 1 tonne per caster level and follows your movements.

Fools' Gold

Level 2

Duration: 1 day per caster level.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 item or collection of coins.

School: Illusion.

For the duration of the spell, the target item appears vastly more valuable than it actually is. Stones or wood chips may appear to be golden coins, a beat-up iron circlet may appear to be a royal crown, bits of glass may look like gems, etc.

Forlorn Encystment

Level 9

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature or item.

School: Law.

This spell imprisons the target in a magical prison deep beneath the surface of the Earth, where even time cannot touch them. If you cast this spell on a creature, you must at least know their name. If your intended target successfully saves against this effect, the spell rebounds back on you, in which case you must also save, or be yourself imprisoned. If a Dispel Magic or Remove Curse spell is cast upon the same location where this spell was cast, the encystment is cancelled and the prisoner is freed.

Ghostly Hands

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: 20 feet per caster level.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Evocation.

For the duration of the spell, you project ghostly hands from your body that are intangible except when you cause them to interact with the physical world. They can do anything your own hands can do: play a piano, strangle someone, or trigger traps. If you cast a spell that requires you to touch your target, your ghostly hands count as your hands, but others touching them cannot cast spells on you that require touch.

Holy Water

Level 1

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 1 flask per caster level of water.

School: Law.

This spell blesses and consecrates water so it can be used for holy purposes. Holy water causes damage to nightmares, the undead, and any extra-planar creature that is neither good nor lawful. **When used to help you cast a spell**, a flask of holy water gives you advantage on any rolls you make to control that spell, so long as the spell does not inflict damage on a living creature. Holy water loses its magical properties once it is used.

Identify

Level 3

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature, item, or location.

School: Divination.

This spell identifies a single creature, item, or location. It gives you a person's name and what they are best known for. It gives you a location's name, and who owns or occupies it, if anyone. Cast upon items and built environments, the spell identifies the maker and owner. Cast upon magical items, this spell reveals what the item does and how to use it.

Illusory Appearance

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: None.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Illusion.

This spell changes your appearance into that of another creature or person. You gain none of the specific abilities the creature you look like possesses, but you can appear to be any specific person or creature you are familiar with.

Illusory Being

Level 5

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: 50 feet per caster level.

Effect: 1 illusory being.

School: Illusion.

This spell creates an illusory being that looks and acts how you want it to. If you do not concentrate on controlling its actions, it repeats whatever it was doing before you stopped concentrating. This being can be touched and felt, but is not actually solid. It cannot cause any harm, nor can it apply any force to the real world.

Illusory Terrain

Level 4

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 terrain feature.

School: Illusion.

This spell causes one feature of the terrain to become hidden or appear as something else, whatever you desire. This illusion is dispelled when touched by someone.

Immobilize Animal

Level 2

Duration: Concentration.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 animal.

School: Law.

This spell immobilizes one animal you can see, hear, or touch. As long as you concentrate, it cannot move around at all. The spell ends if the target is about to suffer harm while immobilized (attacker must roll for initiative).

Immobilize Monster

Level 4

Duration: Concentration.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 monster.

School: Law.

This spell immobilizes one monster you can see, hear, or touch. As long as you concentrate, it can still speak if you let it, but it cannot move its limbs or head, or use its physical abilities (mental abilities are unaffected). The spell ends if the target is about to suffer harm while immobilized (attacker must roll for initiative).

Immobilize Person

Level 3

Duration: Concentration.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 person.

School: Law.

This spell immobilizes one person you can see, hear, or touch. They can still speak if you let them, but they cannot move their limbs or head at all. The spell ends if the target is about to suffer harm while immobilized (attacker must roll for initiative).

Indivisible

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: None.

Effect: Caster only.

Schools: Healing, Law.

For the duration of this spell, no part of your body can be removed or severed and you cannot be made to lose your grip on whatever you are holding.

Inspiration

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Enchantment.

This spell allows one target you can see, hear, or touch to re-roll their Disposition score. If the new roll is lower than their current Disposition, instead of using the new roll, they add caster level to their current Disposition. They can choose to re-roll Psychic Armour instead of Disposition, with the same stipulations.

Invisibility

Level 2

Duration: Until dispelled.

Range: Presence (30 feet per caster level).

Effect: 1 creature or item.

School: Illusion.

For the duration of the spell, the target becomes invisible, along with everything they carry. Items that leave an invisible person's possession become visible again, and light shed by an invisible character is only visible to them, no one else. Invisible characters still make noise and smells. Attack rolls against an invisible person are made at a disadvantage, if there is anything to give them away (otherwise they cannot be attacked). The effect lasts until the caster dispels it, or the target attacks someone or casts a spell that affects an unwilling target.

Invisible Servant

Level 3

Duration: 1 mission or task.

Range: Presence.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Summoning.

This spell summons an invisible being to your presence and sets it one specific task. It may communicate information back to you telepathically (in short thoughts or as dialogue; you cannot share its senses). It may attack your enemies, fighting as a monster of the same level as you are, with a Hit Die of 1d4, wearing light armour (Armour 13). Roll 3d6 for each of its attributes, if necessary.

Know Alignment

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Divination.

This spell reveals to you the alignment of one creature you can see, hear, or touch.

Light

Level 1

Duration: 1 hour per caster level,
or permanent.

Range: Presence (20 feet per caster level).

School: Evocation.

Effect: 1 creature or item.

The item or person you target produces light about as bright as a lantern (20 foot visibility) until the spell ends. If you target a person, you can choose to have their clothes and possessions glow as well, but anything that stops touching them stops being affected by the spell. If you choose to make the effect permanent, you cannot dispel it by choice, you must cast Dispel Magic upon it.

Locate Object

Level 3

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: 50 feet per caster level.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Divination.

Name a specific object or a type of object and this spell informs you how far away it is and in what direction, if it is within the range of the spell. If you choose a type of object, you become aware of the closest item of that type in whatever direction you face (within range).

Magic Missile

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 target per level.**School:** Evocation.

This spell causes a number of magical projectiles equal to your level to shoot forth from your person toward enemies that you can see, hear, or touch. You may target different enemies with each projectile, if you wish, or use them all on the same target. Each target suffers damage equal to 1d4 + the number of missiles they are struck by.

Magic Resistance

Level 6

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 creature.**School:** Quintessence.

For the duration of the spell, one target you can see, hear, or touch is immune to all spells from one school. Choose which school when you cast the spell. The target is also immune to any monster abilities that resemble spells from this school.

Magic Rope

Level 4

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Infinite.**Effect:** Caster only.**School:** Evocation.

This spell conjures an infinite length of rope to your person, which then extends itself up, or down, on its own. For the duration of the spell, anyone can climb the rope as if it were actually hanging from something, even though it is not. If the rope extends up into the sky, its final destination can be somewhere else you want to arrive at, if you successfully save against your Intelligence (otherwise, you arrive at some other, less-desirable location).

Magic Steed

Level 2

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.**Range:** Presence.**Effect:** 1 steed.**School:** Summoning.

This spell conjures a magical steed, whose level is half that of your own (round up). The type of steed is random, based on its level (it may also resemble the spell's magical tradition or the caster's personality). It obeys your commands and disappears once the duration is over.

Magic Weapon

Level 2

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 weapon per caster level.**School:** Battle.

For the duration of the spell, target weapons you can see, hear, or touch are considered magical in nature, and are able to harm creatures that are immune to normal weapons but not immune to magical weapons (including silver weapons).

Martial Inspiration

Level 3

Duration: 1d6 + caster level rounds.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 fighting force.

School: Battle.

For the duration of the spell, everyone in a single fighting force gains advantage to their attack, damage, and morale rolls. Members of this force who turn against you lose this benefit.

Message

Level 1

Duration: 1 emotion, image, or sentence per caster level.

Range: Infinite.

School: Illusion.

Effect: 1 creature you know or 1 location.

This spell allows you to send a message to another creature you know or to a location you have been to before. If you choose a creature, they alone receive the message. If you choose a location, everyone in that location receives the message. You may send feelings or images as well as words, but receivers cannot confuse these for their own thoughts (unless they are already insane).

Minion

Level 2

Duration: 1 turn per caster level, or 1 mission.

Range: Senses.

School: Summoning.

Effect: 1 small or human-sized monster.

This spell summons one random creature, no larger than a human, that will obey you for a few minutes or undertake a single, simple mission for you before disappearing. Roll 1d4 to determine this monster's level.

Move Spell

Level varies.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 spell effect.

School: Quintessence.

This spell allows you to move the effect of another spell that you can see, hear, or touch (even if it is normally caster only). Simply choose a different target creature, item, or location for it. This spell must be cast at the same level as the target spell.

Negate Poison

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature or item.

School: Healing.

This spell neutralizes poison inside a creature, whether poisoned or poisonous; or a container holding poison; or an item that has poison on it. A creature killed by poison can be revived if this spell is cast within 1 turn per caster level. If cast on a visible supply of poison itself, whether in liquid or solid form, that supply becomes harmless.

Paralysis

Level 4

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature per caster level.

School: Enchantment.

This spell reduces the Dexterity scores of multiple targets you can see, hear, or touch by 1d6 each, or a single target by 1d6 + caster level. Any creature that loses half their current Dexterity or more must save against their Health to avoid either dropping what they are holding or falling prone.

Permanency

Level 9

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 spell.

School: Quintessence.

When you cast this on another spell, its effect becomes permanent. Damage cannot be healed, a fireball never stops burning, a spell that destroys something destroys all copies of it in existence, a summoned creature remains on this plane forever, etc. Whatever the actual effect is, it is now permanent and cannot be reversed. This spell must be cast at the same time as the spell it is supposed to affect, or with the spell's effects where you can see, hear, or touch them.

The Power of Law

Level 3

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Presence (20 feet per caster level).

Effect: Caster only.

School: Law.

This spell causes all magical effects in your presence to cease, if they were created by chaotic spellcasters. Specific effects may be exempt, if you choose.

Protection from Chaos

Level 2

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Law.

For the duration of the spell, chaotic creatures suffer disadvantage to any rolls made to harm the target, and the target gets advantage to resist any spells cast by chaotic individuals.

Protection from Evil

Level 1

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Law.

For the duration of the spell, anyone using insults, threats, violence or harmful magic against the target, or in their presence, suffers disadvantages on all related rolls.

Protection from Missiles

Level 4

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Battle.

For the duration of this spell, the target becomes immune to all non-magical missiles, ranged attacks, and projectiles. Anything that flies through the air and is mundane in nature simply bounces off them, to no effect.

Protection from Weapons

Level 3

Duration: 1d4 rounds per caster level.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Battle.

For the duration of this spell, the target becomes immune to all non-magical weapons wielded by the hands of others, including the natural weapons of animals (but not their venoms). Unarmed attacks can still cause damage and projectiles are unaffected.

Purify Food and Drink

Level 2

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: Food and drink for a dozen people.

School: Healing.

This spell purifies food and drink that you can see, touch, or taste, enough for up to a dozen people. Food that was spoiled or rotten becomes fresh, and non-magical poisons are neutralized. Things you don't consider food (even because of dietary restrictions) are unaffected.

Raise the Dead

Level 8

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Healing.

This spell reverses the death of the target, as long as they have been dead for less than 1 day per caster level. The raised character has no Disposition and a temporary Health score of 1. They recover as normal.

Regenerate

Level 5

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Touch.

Effect: 1 creature.

School: Healing.

When you cast this spell, one missing body part—whether gland, organ, or limb—of a living target you touch is regenerated. If there is something preventing the part from regenerating, such as a permanent prosthesis, the spell has no effect.

Remove Curse

Level 6

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature, item, or location.

School: Healing.

This spell removes one curse from the target. This curse can be a permanent or temporary effect caused by a monster or magical item, or the effect of a magical spell that causes curse-like effects. It cannot make magical items non-magical, but it can remove their malign effects from a person. You do not need to be aware of a curse in order to remove it, but if the target is suffering from multiple curses and you do not specify one of them, determine randomly which one is removed.

Second Wind

Level 4

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Presence.

Effect: 1 creature per caster level.

School: Healing.

This spell heals those you touch of all their fatigue, misery, and minor wounds. Their Dispositions increase to their maximum possible score. You lose 1 Disposition for each person you grant a Second Wind to, and you cannot cast this spell on yourself.

Sense Nightmares

Level 1

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 creature, item, or location.

School: Divination.

This spell reveals to you whether a target has been corrupted, influenced, or traumatized by nightmares. You discover what nightmare curses afflict them and if they serve the nightmare realm. You also get a general sense of how long either taint has existed, but no other details. This spell can also reveal if the target is immune to the pervasive madness of the nightmare realm, the way the players' characters are, if that is something you wish to know. If cast on a location, the spell reveals any nightmare incursions present, or any links to them nearby.

Shapechange

Level 5

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.**Range:** None.**Effect:** Caster only.**School:** Transformation.

This spell transforms your shape into that of an animal or creature that is larger than a hare and smaller than a hippopotamus. You gain whatever physical, mundane abilities your new form has, but cannot deal additional damage or use venom. You may not appear to be a specific, individual creature.

Shrink

Level 2

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Presence.**Effect:** 1 creature or item.**School:** Alteration, Transmutation.

For the duration of this spell, a target you can see, hear, or touch is reduced in size by up to one full size category (see page 332), along with whatever they are wearing and carrying. The target has disadvantage on their damage rolls while shrunk.

Sleep

Level 1

Duration: 1d4 hours.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1d6 + caster level creatures.**School:** Enchantment.

This spell causes a number of targets you can see, hear, or touch to fall asleep. Only creatures able to sleep can be affected, and they can be awoken normally.

Spell Burn

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: None.

Effect: Caster only.

School: Quintessence.

For the duration of this spell, if you cast another spell, you may increase its power, at the cost of physical and mental burnout. These are your options, and you cannot choose the same option twice for the same spell:

- Double the area affected by the spell.
- Double the damage inflicted by the spell.
- Double the duration of the spell.
- Double the number of targets affected by the spell.

For each option you choose, you lose 1d4 points from a random attribute score. Roll separately for each option.

Spell Extension

Level 4

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Senses.

Effect: 1 spell.

School: Quintessence.

When you cast this on another spell, you may increase either its duration or effect. If you increase its duration, rounds become turns, turns become hours, hours becomes days, and days become weeks. This has no effect on spells that are permanent. If you increase its effect, you may select an additional number of targets equal to caster level.

Summon Air Elemental

Level 4

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Presence (20 feet per caster level).

Effect: 1 elemental.

School: Air, Summoning.

This spell summons an elemental being made of air, in the form of clouds, smoke, or a tornado, that obeys your commands. Choose the exact form the elemental takes when you cast the spell. It is Level 1d6 or caster level, whichever is lower.

Summon Earth Elemental

Level 2

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Presence (20 feet per caster level).

Effect: 1 elemental.

School: Earth, Summoning.

This spell summons an elemental being made of soft earth such as gravel, mud, sand, or soil, that obeys your commands. Choose the exact form the elemental takes when you cast the spell. It is Level 1d6 or caster level, whichever is lower.

Summon Fire Elemental

Level 9

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.

Range: Presence (30 feet per caster level).

Effect: 1 elemental.

School: Fire, Summoning.

This spell summons an elemental being made of fire that obeys your commands. It is Level 1d6 or caster level, whichever is lower. Fire takes the form it chooses.

Summon Monster

Level 1d8

Duration: 1d8 rounds, or 1 task.**Range:** Presence.**Effect:** 1 monster.**School:** Summoning.

This spell summons one random monster that will obey you for mere moments or undertake a single task for you before disappearing. This spell must be cast at the same level as the monster and you must roll 1d8 to determine the monster's level.

Summon Water Elemental

Level 5

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** Presence (20 feet per caster level).**Effect:** 1 elemental.**School:** Summoning, Water.

This spell summons an elemental being made of water, or a similar liquid, that obeys your commands. Choose the exact form the elemental takes when you cast the spell. It is Level 1d6 or caster level, whichever is lower.

Transfer Spells

Level 2

Duration: Instantaneous.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 person.**School:** Quintessence.

This spell allows you to transfer other spells into the mind of someone you can see, hear, or touch. Of the spells you know (not including Transfer Spells), choose 1 or more: your knowledge of those spells becomes corrupted, and the target may cast each of them once, as if they knew them. Once the target has cast one of these spells, it is gone from their mind. You cannot purify your knowledge of a transferred spell until the target has cast it.

Transmute

Level 7

Duration: Instantaneous.**Range:** Touch.**Effect:** 1 item per caster level, or
1 cubic foot per caster level.**School:** Transformation.

This spell transforms the physical substance of a solid item into some other physical substance. It must remain a solid—you cannot transmute it into a gas or liquid.

Truth Telling

Level 2

Duration: 1 hour per caster level.**Range:** Senses.**Effect:** 1 person.**School:** Enchantment.

For the duration of the spell, one person you can see, hear, or touch is unable to tell a lie. If they attempt to do so, they tell the truth instead. Furthermore, they cannot voluntarily remain silent if engaged in conversation. They must respond or leave.

Ventriloquism

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level.**Range:** 50 feet per caster level.**Effect:** Caster only.**School:** Illusion.

For the duration of this spell, you may cause your voice to emanate from anywhere within range. You may also mimic other sounds. **In order to mimic another human voice**, save against your Charisma. **In order to mimic inhuman sounds**, save against half your Intelligence, rounded down.

Voice of Command

Level 6

Duration: 1 command per caster level, 1 turn per caster level. **Range:** Senses, and they must be able to hear you.

Effect: 1 creature. **School:** Law.

For the duration of the spell, you may give a target you can see, hear, or touch a number of commands equal to caster level, and they must obey. Commands must be specific, discrete actions, not missions or complex undertakings, and the target cannot be commanded to harm themselves outright. At the end of the duration or once you have issued the maximum number of commands, the effect ends. Creatures that cannot understand your language are not affected by this spell.

Vorpal Blessing

Level 1

Duration: 1d6 rounds per caster level. **Range:** Senses.

Effect: 1 edged weapon. **School:** Battle.

For the duration of the spell, the target blade attacks all creatures as if they were unarmoured (with an Armour rating of 10).

Vulnerability

Level varies.

Duration: 1 turn per caster level. **Range:** Senses.

Effect: 1 creature. **School:** Transformation.

When you cast this spell, choose a source of harm, such as acid, cold, fire, lightning, a weapon type (like blades or firearms), or a specific being whose name you know. For the duration of the spell, the target suffers double damage from that source of harm.

Alternately, you may choose to cast this spell upon a number of targets equal to caster level, with a duration of 1 round per caster level.

You must cast this spell at the same level as your target, or the highest level amongst multiple targets.

Web Trap

Level 2

Duration: 1 hour per caster level. **Range:** Presence.

Effect: Square space 10 feet to each side. **School:** Evocation.

This spell fills a cubic area with sticky webs that immobilize any creature inside it. Creatures with human strength take 2d4 turns to break free. If the webs are set alight, they burn for two rounds, dealing 2d6 damage to anyone they immobilize.

Wizard Sword

Level 1

Duration: 1 turn per caster level. **Range:** None.

Effect: Caster only. **School:** Battle.

This spell summons a sword made of magic into your hand. It counts as magical and injures creatures immune to blades and normal weapons. When you attack with it, add your level to your rolls (if you don't already) and deal 2d4 damage. You may add your Intelligence modifier to attack and damage rolls instead of Ferocity, if you like.



Magic Items

Magic items are able to break the rules and grant special, even wondrous, powers to their wielders—or curse them with horrible penalties. Most people assume they are instruments of chaos, even if that is not really the case. **A magic item may...**

- **...break a rule**, explicitly and directly.
- **...create a supernatural effect**, either at all times, or only when activated.
- **...grant advantage or a bonus to your rolls**, when you use the item.
- **...grant a bonus to one of your stats**, so it functions as if it were higher.
- **...store spells** that can be cast by its wielder.

Many magical items also interact with a person’s alignment. **A magic item may...**

- **...grant a bonus** (or a greater bonus) to creatures of a specific alignment.
- **...impose a penalty** on creatures of a specific alignment.
- **...inflict harm** upon creatures of a specific alignment.

The exact effects of a magic item are up to the GM to determine, but most that have survived to the present day have done so because they are impervious to non-magical harm. Magic items that can only be used by a single alignment should be either extremely rare or omitted entirely. Neutral characters should always be able to use a magic item, even if they cannot gain its full benefits.

Recovering Magic Items

Even though some gifted individuals are still able to infuse objects with arcane power these days, the main source of magic items in the present is the Vale of Serpents. This is true both metaphorical and actually, as the demon-haunted tombs of the ancient sorcerer-kings who ruled the Age of Chaos from that particular valley are full of them.

When you recover a magic item from the ruins of the past, roll 1d6 to determine what type of magic item it is:

Roll	Recovered Magic Item Type												
1	Arcane Accoutrement: See page 232.												
2	Arcane Tool: See page 233.												
3	Charged Item: See pages 234-235.												
4	Spell Container: Roll 1d10 to see what form it takes, and 1d100 on the random spell table (pages 98-99) to see which spell it contains. <table><tr><td>1-2</td><td>Balm or salve.</td><td>4</td><td>Dust or powder.</td><td>6</td><td>Liquid drops.</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Bottled air.</td><td>5</td><td>Eatable or pill.</td><td>7-10</td><td>Potion.</td></tr></table>	1-2	Balm or salve.	4	Dust or powder.	6	Liquid drops.	3	Bottled air.	5	Eatable or pill.	7-10	Potion.
1-2	Balm or salve.	4	Dust or powder.	6	Liquid drops.								
3	Bottled air.	5	Eatable or pill.	7-10	Potion.								
5	Spell Formula: Roll 1d100 on the random spell table (pages 98-99).												
6	Unique Magic Item: See pages 238-247.												



Arcane Accoutrements

Arcane accoutrements are items that improve your capabilities in either a stat's effective rating or a type of roll, and often in a subtle way. Roll 1d200 on the specific items table (pages 376-377) to determine what the accoutrement looks like. If that item cannot be worn, the accoutrement is instead an amulet, broach, or piece of clothing shaped like, or decorated with images of, that item.

Roll 1d20 to determine what rolls or stat the bonus is applied to:

Roll	Bonus	Roll	Bonus
1-3	+1 Armour rating.	12	+1 to initiative rolls.
4	+1 to attack overcome rolls.	13	+1 to Intelligence score.
5	+1 to Charisma score.	14	+1 to persuasion overcome rolls.
6	+1 to damage rolls.	15	+1 to reaction rolls (page 161).
7	+1 to Dexterity score.	16	+1 to research rolls (page 173).
8	+1 to Ferocity score.	17	+1 to Speed rating.
9	+1 to followers' morale tests.	18	+1 to stealth overcome rolls.
10	+1 to healing rolls (page 288).	19	+1 to surprise rolls (page 260).
11	+1 to Health score.	20	+1 to Willpower score.

Alignment

Users of a specific alignment gain a +2 bonus instead of only a +1 bonus. Roll 1d10 to determine which alignment. If all alignments receive this bonus, the item has a flat +2 bonus for everyone and does not interact with alignments. Alternately, this bonus could be advantage on rolls, instead of a larger numerical bonus.

The accoutrement's alignment is subtly or obviously indicated in its appearance. Roll on the details and/or jewellery tables on pages 378-381, and modify it accordingly:

Roll	Alignment
1	All alignments.
2-4	Chaotic.
5-6	Evil.
7-8	Good.
9	Lawful.
10	Roll again with 1d8. That alignment gets a +3 bonus, not +2.

- **Chaotic:** Images of ancient gods, transforming figures, asymmetrical patterns, and avant-garde aesthetics are popular.
- **Evil:** The item might be black or red, look like a weapon, have rough edges, or even be gaudily decorated with images of death or vengeance.
- **Good:** The item is always pleasant to the touch and probably decorated with sun, moon, or stars motifs, or images of healing herbs, or interlinking hands.
- **Lawful:** The item is decorated with geometric patterns and symbols. Symmetry is preferred, and there are never images of people or animals.

Arcane Tools

Arcane tools are items that grant advantage to their user when employed in the purpose they were intended for. Weapons grant advantage to attack and damage rolls, a cauldron can be used for brewing alchemies, a sextant can be used for orientation rolls, etc.

Roll 1d20 to determine what type of tool the item is:

Roll		Tool Type	
1	Axe or halberd.	11	Grappling hook.
2	Bow.	12	Hammer or warhammer.
3	Brazier, cauldron, or pot.	13	Lamp or lantern.
4	Brush.	14	Lockpicks.
5	Chain, cord, or rope.	15	Sextant.
6	Crafting tool(s).	16	Spear or staff.
7-8	Dagger or knife.	17	Spyglass.
9-10	Flail, mace, rod, or sceptre.	18-20	Sword.



Charged Items

Roll 1d200 on the specific items table (pages 376-377) to determine what a charged item is shaped to look like, then roll 1d6 to determine how large it is. Most charged items are merely statuettes or pieces of jewellery, but some are also functional objects.

Roll	Charged Item Size
1	Functions as the item it is. 3-4 Small, palm-sized item.
2	Normal encumbering item. 5-6 Tiny broach, necklace, or ring.

Charges

Charged items are normally found with 1d6 charges left. Expending a charge allows the user to produce a specific spell effect if they save against their full Intelligence score. Roll on the charged item miscasting table if this save is failed. Caster level for these spell effects is always that of the user. Once the charges have been expended, they can be recharged. Roll on the recharge table to determine how (page 237).

To determine what spell effect a charged item produces, roll 1d100:

Roll	Spell Effect
1-2	Acid Spray.
3-4	Alter Items.
5-6	Binding.
7	Bridge.
8	Cause Fear.
9-10	Charm Animals.
11-12	Charm Monster.
13-14	Chromatic Spray.
15	Clairaudience & Clairvoyance.
16	Clairvoyance.
17	Climbing.
18	Colour Change.
19	Confusion.
20-21	Conjuration.
22	Counterspell (on spells only).
23-24	Create Food and Drink.
25	Create Object.
26	Cure Disease.
27-28	Cure Wound.
29	Detect Evil.
30	Detect Illusion.
31	Detect Magic.
32-33	Dispel Magic.
34	Duplicate Images.
35	Endure Pain.
36	Enlarge.
37	Faerie Dust (adhesive only).
38	Faerie Dust (glittering only).
39	Faerie Dust (irritating only).
40	False Magnetism.
41	Fearlessness.
42	Featherlight.
43	Find Poison.
44	Find Traps.
45	Floating Platform.
46	Fools' Gold.
47	Ghostly Hands.
48-49	Identify.

Roll Spell Effect

50	Illusory Appearance.	76	Protection from Evil.
51	Illusory Being.	77	Protection from Missiles.
52	Illusory Terrain.	78	Protection from Weapons.
53	Immobilize Animal.	79	Purify Food and Drink.
54	Immobilize Monster.	80-81	Regenerate.
55-56	Immobilize Person.	82	Remove Curse.
57	Indivisible.	83	Shapechange.
58-59	Inspiration.	84	Shrink.
60	Invisibility.	85-86	Sleep.
61-62	Invisible Servant.	87	Summon Air Elemental.
63	Know Alignment.	88	Summon Earth Elemental.
64	Light.	89	Summon Fire Elemental.
65	Locate Object.	90	Summon Monster.
66-67	Magic Missile.	91	Summon Water Elemental
68	Magic Rope.	92-93	Transmute.
69	Magic Steed.	94	Truth Telling.
70	Martial Inspiration.	95	Ventriloquism.
71-72	Message.	96	Voice of Command.
73	Minion.	97	Vulnerability.
74	Negate Poison.	98-99	Web Trap.
75	Paralysis.	100	Wizard Sword.

Miscasting a Charged Item's Spell Effect

If you cannot control the item's spell effect, roll 1d6:

Roll Charged Item Miscasting Result

1	The item affects a different target (GM's discretion or determined randomly) instead of the intended target.
2	The item loses an additional 1d4 charges. If it has no charges left to lose, it is permanently destroyed.
3	The item produces a different spell that targets the user, in addition to its normal effect. Roll on the full spell table to determine the extra effect.
4	The item produces a different spell that targets the user, instead of its normal effect. Roll on the full spell table to determine the new effect.
5	The item produces the opposite of its normal effect (GM's discretion).
6	The item's effect is roughly half as strong as normal (GM's discretion).

Recharging

Items are found with 1d6 charges. If an item has 4 to 6 charges, it cannot hold more. If it has 1 to 3 charges, the maximum number it can hold is 1d6+3 charges.

Roll 1d12 to determine how the item gains new charges:

Roll Recharging Procedure

- 1 The item can only gain charges at a specific location created in ancient times for that purpose. It is almost certainly lost beneath the sands of time, but might perhaps be found by intrepid and persistent adventurers.
- 2 The item consumes fresh blood. Feeding it either the still-warm blood of a newly-deceased, human-sized body or 1d4 Wounds worth of blood from a living donor causes it to gain 1 charge.
- 3 The item gains 1 charge each time it is subjected to lightning.
- 4 The item is charged by attribute points. For it to gain 1 charge, a willing donor must lose 1d4 points from one attribute. Roll 1d6 for which:

1	Charisma.	3	Ferocity.	5	Intelligence.
2	Dexterity.	4	Health.	6	Willpower.
- 5 The item is charged by casting spells into it, requiring at least 1d6+2 levels worth of spells per charge (one spell cannot add multiple charges). Spell effects are absorbed by the item, but miscasting results still occur.
- 6 The item must be buried in a grave or interred in a tomb (with a body) for a full day and night to gain 1 charge.
- 7 The item must be covered in ice for a full day and night to gain 1 charge.
- 8 The item must be left inside a fire or beneath burning coals for a full day and night to gain 1 charge.
- 9 The item must be left submerged in 1d6 × 100 cyphers worth of specially prepared alchemical fluids for a full day and night to gain 1 charge.
- 10 The item must be left submerged under the surface of a body of water (such as a lake, ocean, or large river) for three days to gain 1 charge.
- 11 The item must be smoked for most of a day to gain 1 charge. Roll 1d12 twice to determine what mix of substances the smoke must be made from:

1	Books.	5	Hardwood.	9	Oil.
2	Charcoal.	6	Incense.	10	Softwood.
3	Flowers.	7	Intoxicants.	11	Tea.
4	Grass.	8	Mushrooms.	12	Weed.
- 12 The item must consume 1d6 × 25 cyphers worth of metal per charge. Roll 1d8 for the type of metal:

1	Copper.	4	Iron.	6-7	Silver.
2-3	Gold.	5	Lead.	8	Tin.



Unique Magic Items

Roll 1d100 to determine what unique magical item is found (then remove that item from the table and replace it with a new item of your own invention):

Roll Unique Magic Item

- 1

Agile Gloves: While wearing these long grey gloves, your Dexterity either counts as 13, or 2 higher than it is, whichever is better. If you lose a glove, having only one still increases your effective Dexterity score by 1, but comes with no other benefits.
- 2

Amulet of Resistance: Wearing this heart-shaped gold amulet allows you to resist being injured. When you suffer Wounds, there is a 50/50 chance that the amulet lets you to reduce your Willpower by the same amount instead. If you are of good alignment, it also doubles your normal healing rate, for both recovering lost attribute points and reducing Wounds.
- 3

Amulet of a Thousand Faces: When you wear this amulet openly, you appear to be someone else, of roughly (but not exactly) the appearance you desire, and two of your attribute scores are swapped (your choice which).
- 4

Animal Mask: When you don this golden mask, you may transform into the animal it portrays until you choose to change back (transforming is a complicated action and takes 1 round). Roll 1d6 for the type of animal:

1	Buzzard.	3	Jackal.	5	Narwhal.
2	Cheetah.	4	Monkey.	6	Urial.
- 5

Anti-Magic Shield: This black metal shield, in the shape of a stylized bull's head, blocks magical influence. You get advantage on all your saves against magic while wielding it, and suffer no effects on a successful save.
- 6

Anvil Suit: This bronze suit of plate armour is covered in magical runes. It booms like a gong when struck, but the wearer barely hears it. All successful close combat attacks with blunt weapons against this armour cause 1d4 damage to the attacker due to the magical reverberations, and half of all other successful close combat attacks still suffer 1 damage.
- 7

Armour of Chaos: Anyone who is lawful wearing this suit of plate, which is elaborately decorated with images of malicious gods, has Armour 8 but is encumbered as if wearing a normal suit of plate. Anyone else gets Armour 16 and is encumbered as if wearing only light armour.
- 8

Bag of Holding: This cloth shoulderbag will carry up to 4 encumbering items that can fit in its opening without increasing in weight or size. Any additional items still count as encumbering.
- 9

Belt Buckle of Supreme Confidence: When you re-roll your Disposition while wearing this gaudy red and gold buckle, if your roll is lower than your current Disposition, do not change it.

Roll Unique Magic Item

- 10 **Binding Net:** This long gauzy film has a net pattern embroidered on it and a rope tassel at one end. When you hold the tassel and throw the other end across a creature no larger than a human, they must save against their Dexterity or become immobilized within its now-sticky strands. Anyone else can release them by stroking the rope tassel.
- 11 **Blade of Apotopos:** In addition to being a grimly-decorated sword, the gorgon-shaped hilt allows the wielder to repel humans as a cultist abjuring their spiritual enemy. Chaotic wielders get +1 to their abjuration roll.
- 12 **Blazing Wand:** This thin black cylinder spits a gout of fire when flourished properly. You must still make an attack roll, but unless the target is wearing flame-proof armour, they count as having Armour 10, and the wand inflicts 1d12 damage, regardless of your Hit Die.
- 13 **Boots of Levitating:** When you wear these comfortable black boots, they float just above the ground, leaving no tracks or other disturbances, unless you choose to do so purposefully. When you wish, they can float you up or down at a leisurely pace (or 10 feet per round).
- 14 **Boots of Water Walking:** When you wear these glossy leather boots, you can walk upon the surface of water or any other liquid whenever you wish.
- 15 **Bracelet of Wisdom:** When you wear this bracelet, seemingly carved of wood but indestructible, it tingles when a statement told to you is more lies than truth. When you tell someone about an item you possess, the bracelet lets you know how much they want it.
- 16 **Brazier of Sleep:** Anyone smelling smoke that comes from this brazier is put to sleep unless they successfully save against their Willpower every turn. They awaken as they normally would, and do not necessarily sleep soundly or deeply.
- 17 **Burrowing Psychic Strand:** When you touch someone with this slim red cord only a few feet long, it appears to burrow into their flesh, but causes no physical damage. Instead, it establishes a psychic link. If you hold the other end, ask a question, and lose a point of Health, this cord pulls the answer from the target's mind, placing it into yours. The cord then exits their flesh, leaving no marks or wounds behind.
- 18 **Chime of Hunger:** When struck, this delicate silver bell induces pangs of hunger in all who can hear it. Animals forget their training and humans cannot help but consume twice as much food as normal.
- 19 **Cloak of Invisibility:** You cannot be seen when you wear it inside out.
- 20 **Clockwork Limb:** When pressed into your body, this mechanical rod transforms into a limb. It can replace one that has been lost, or act as a third arm or prehensile tail. If you wear no armour, this new limb gives you +1 Armour rating.



Roll Unique Magic Item

- 21 **Codex of Deep Thought:** The writing in this ancient, leather-bound book is pure gibberish, written in a messy, scribbled hand, but anyone who tries to read it must save against their Willpower or be entranced for 1d6 hours (or until any physical force is applied to them by others).
- 22 **Communal Incense:** Anyone who inhales the smoke of this dark purple incense at the same time can share their thoughts and memories freely with each other through a telepathic bond. It comes wrapped in silvery metal foil and contains 2d6 uses.
- 23 **Dark Eyes:** This visor of smoky glass, framed in gold, protects your eyes from bright lights, reveals anything that magic has made invisible, and allows you to see in all but total darkness as if it were day.
- 24 **Dragon-Leather Jacket:** When you wear this stylish jacket, it counts as light armour but is not encumbering. You also have advantage on your reaction rolls, as people are subtly influenced to pay attention to you. Chaotic wearers appear neutral to non-chaotic characters, no matter the means of inquiry.
- 25 **Dragontooth Wand:** When you quickly cast a spell while waving this wand, that is carved in the image of twinned pagan gods, you may always act first in the initiative order, but if you roll an unmodified 20 to control it, the wand produces 2 miscasting results (instead of just one) and you cannot use your special abilities to avoid either of them.
- 26 **The Ever-Empty Quiver:** This small golden quiver, decorated in ancient runes and women's faces, produces magical arrows made of hard light, which can be used like normal arrows (except their damage rolls have advantage). The arrows dissolve into nothing after they strike something. This quiver never runs out of arrows, but produces no more than 3 at a time. A bow can be stored inside the quiver, making them a single encumbering item together.
- 27 **Faerie Shawl:** When you throw this brightly-patterned kuffiyah over top yourself, it falls to the ground and turns to water, while you disappear beneath it, transported (along with the shawl) to the land of Faerie. Repeating the process there returns you to Earth.
- 28 **Far Shield Broach:** This silver cloak pin, made in the shape of a flying cat, gives you a +3 Armour rating bonus against missile attacks when worn.
- 29 **Firestarter:** Blood shed by this ornate knife becomes flammable, as if it were oil. The blade is engraved with stylized flames and the hilt is almost entirely made of red carnelian.
- 30 **Flametongue:** The blade of this sword becomes blazing hot when the wielder wills it. Attacks cause +1d6 fire damage, whether they hit or miss, but at the end of each round, the wielder must save against their Health or suffer 1 damage as well.

Roll Unique Magic Item

- 31 **Floating Venomous Chime:** When you activate this silvery chime, it floats in the air and spits tiny darts of light into any creature who enters the location but was not there when it was activated. These darts are accompanied by a loud, ringing sound and inject poison into intruders, lowering their Health by 1d6 points per round (save against Dexterity for half) until they leave or die.
- 32 **Flying Carpet:** When you stand upon this carpet, you can will it to fly, transporting you and anything else on it (up to a thousand pounds) wherever you wish to go. It can travel up to a hundred miles in a single hour. If you are pushed off, it glides slowly to the ground.
- 33 **Fog Horn:** When you blow this horn, which appears to be an ivory nautilus shell, it creates a weird visual disturbance around you in a 50 foot radius, that obscures vision (imposing disadvantage to all affected rolls). The distortion, an unnerving cross between fog, smoke, and heat mirages, lasts for about 1 turn and does not move.
- 34 **Frosthammer:** The head of this two-handed mace becomes freezing cold to the touch when the wielder wills it. While cold, successful attacks inflict +1d8 cold damage, but the wielder must also save against their Health at the end of each round or suffer 1 point of damage.
- 35 **Glass Double Amulet:** When you activate this violet amulet, crafted to look like two lovers embracing, it creates an illusory duplicate of yourself that you can direct until you deactivate it or it takes any damage at all and shatters into shards of glass. Only one duplicate may exist at a time. It cannot speak.
- 36 **Glass Orb Medallion:** The glass orb set inside this silver medallion appears to contain roiling stormclouds. If you break the orb, you can change the weather in your location. The orb restores itself at sunrise.
- 37 **Glass of Revelations:** When you look through this monocle-like lens of rose-coloured glass framed in gold, magic and arcane influence appears as a glow and the truth behind illusions is revealed.
- 38 **Hauntbringer:** The ghost of anyone slain by this bone-white blade is cursed to haunt the world forever. Evil wielders also get advantage on their attack and damage rolls when they use this weapon.
- 39 **Helm of War:** You cannot be ambushed by an enemy when you wear this dark green helmet, nor does it impede your senses. A surprise roll of 6 or less counts as a 7 for you. If you sacrifice it to avoid damage to your head (see page 371), it does not break, it merely falls off.
- 40 **Horn of Arihan:** If you blow this horn with the intention of destroying a wall or other built structure, you lose 1d6 points of Health and the structure collapses, falling to pieces. Anyone else who can hear (or even feel) the horn's bone-rattling bass sound also suffers 1 point of damage.



Roll Unique Magic Item

- 41 **Howling Blade:** This glittering sword emits a piercing, bone-shaking howl when unsheathed. Everyone who can hear, except the wielder, has disadvantage to their rolls when performing actions that don't take them farther away from this horrible sound.
- 42 **Illusory Dust:** When you shake this small black box, it dispenses a scintillating, many-hued dust that creates illusions around creatures and items it covers, causing them to appear to be someone or something else for around an hour. Their new appearance is drawn randomly from the minds of nearby creatures, and may represent a composite image. The shaker never runs out of dust, which evaporates after a few moments.
- 43 **Jet Earrings:** These black metal earrings improve your senses. While you wear them, your Intelligence counts as either 13, or 2 higher than it actually is, whichever is better. If you lose an earring, having only one still increases your effective Intelligence score by 1, with no other benefit.
- 44 **Lawbringer:** When you wield this sword against chaotic creatures, you attack as a fighter of 1 level higher than you are (including inflicting bonus damage), but the sword inflicts 1d8 damage upon you if you flee from chaotic enemies without throwing it away first.
- 45 **Lightning Whip:** When you wield this metallic whip in battle, it crackles with lightning, inflicting an additional +1d6 damage, even if your attack is unsuccessful. It is dangerous, however, and an overcome roll of an unmodified 1 when attacking with this whip results in you being shocked for 1d6 damage instead of your target.
- 46 **Magic Rope:** This 50 foot length of golden rope extends upward on its own and can be climbed as if it were affixed to something. It also coils itself when commanded.
- 47 **Mask of Betrayal:** When you focus your attention on someone while wearing this golden face mask, unless they successfully save against their Willpower (or half their Willpower score, rounded down, if they are lower level than you are), they believe you to be someone else of your choosing, who has just arrived. If there are secrets between these two people, the target begins speaking of them, as if they were alone together, and then the effect wears off. No one else is affected by the mask, whose only purpose is to draw out these secrets.
- 48 **Meal Compressor:** When you expand this foldable box and put food inside, it compresses an entire meal into a tiny pellet. When collapsed, the box is still heavy, counting as a single encumbering item. Dishes, containers, and cutlery are emptied of food but otherwise untouched.
- 49 **Message Stones:** These small gemstones allow anyone holding one to communicate with anyone holding the others as if they were next to each other. There are 1d4+1 stones.

Roll Unique Magic Item

- 50 **Metal Steed:** A metal horse head statuette (an encumbering item) that, when activated, expands to become a life-sized metal horse automaton. It has Armour 17, Disposition 24, and other stats like a horse, except that it can fly through the air, covering up to 100 miles in a single hour.
- 51 **Mirror of Weakness:** When you show a creature its own reflection in this hand-held mirror, you can pull a piece of their soul into it. If you can overcome their Willpower score with your Dexterity modifier and your level, they lose 1d6 points of Ferocity.
- 52 **Music Box of Peace:** When this ornate black and gold box is opened, it produces beautiful music from the ancient world that even the deaf can hear. Any creature of Earth or Faerie who attempts to use force or violence while this music plays loses 1d6 points of Ferocity each time (save against Willpower for half). Creatures from beyond are unaffected.
- 53 **Noxious Flare Gun:** This black metal gun fires flares that glow azure, crimson, or yellow for 1d6 rounds. Anyone within 20 feet of the flare suffers disadvantage due to the noxious smoke it produces. The gun never runs out of flares, which are not solid, cannot be removed, and cannot inflict damage.
- 54 **The Philosopher's Stone:** Holding or wearing this darkly glittering, perfectly spherical, palm-sized stone gives you advantage to control any Transformation spell, and any other spell that alters, changes, destroys, or produces matter (whether living or not).
- 55 **Pipes of Madness:** When you play these weirdly fluting bagpipes, everyone who hears the sound must save against their Willpower or lose 1d6 points of Intelligence. Creatures not of the Earth lose 1d8 Intelligence instead, and may not advance upon you. Creatures can only be affected once per day, no matter how much the pipes are played.
- 56 **Portable Bridge:** This copper rod the size of a child's forearm normally counts as a single encumbering item. But it becomes larger when the wielder commands it, up to 10 feet wide and 100 feet in length, but still as thin as a small arm. It can be solid or a ladder, and will support up to a thousand pounds at once.
- 57 **Prophetic Runestones:** This set of seven small runestones cannot be separated. They are linked together by invisible strands of force, and will reconvene as if by magnetism. If you cast them at dawn, they divine some part of the coming day, allowing you to re-roll one failed roll before sundown, and alerting you to one danger that may threaten you soon.
- 58 **Protective Automaton:** This empty suit of plate armour walks behind whoever wears the controlling circlet upon their brow. It can carry up to 2 encumbering items. At a word, it drops everything and surrounds its controller's body, acting as weightless plate armour.



Roll Unique Magic Item

- 59 **Remote Eye:** A silvery orb with two small circular depressions carved into it. When you press either of these circles, the orb activates and obeys your mental commands. It can hover and move at a fast pace (Speed 12), but will always return after it gets more than 100 feet away. The other circle becomes an eye that you can see out of, remotely, as long as there is enough light in the orb's location.
- 60 **Ring of Battle:** This piece of ruby in the shape of a ring grants advantage to any attack and damage rolls involving a close combat weapon held in the hand that wears it.
- 61 **Ring of Invisibility:** Wearing this silver ring makes you invisible to all but faerie creatures. It also attracts faerie creatures—you have (at the least) a 1 in 6 chance of a random encounter with one or more of them every turn you wear it (except in areas utterly devoid of fey).
- 62 **Ring of Regeneration:** When you wear this silver ouroboros ring, you may remove 1 Wound per round, and regain 1 point of Dexterity, Ferocity, or Health per turn. But if you remove it on the same day it has regenerated you, all healing of Wounds and attribute losses for that day are undone, and the ring will not heal you again until a full day has passed.
- 63 **Ring of Shocking Grasp:** When you touch a creature with the hand that wears this black metal ring, you can electrocute them for 2d6 damage, or 2d8 if you are chaotic (they save against Health for half damage), but you must also save against your Willpower or lose 1d4 points of Intelligence. But even if your Intelligence is reduced to zero, you still inflict damage.
- 64 **Robe of Eyes:** When you wear this robe, you can see in all directions, as if through all the eyes embroidered upon it. If you are chaotic, you can also see heat emissions and thus are not blinded by total darkness. If you are a spellcaster, wearing this robe also allows you to double one parameter of your choice when you cast a Divination spell, or any other spell that reveals information to you.
- 65 **Rod of Confounding Touch:** When you strike someone with this rod, they must save against their Willpower or be stunned and reeling for the next 1d6 rounds. They can still defend themselves, by dodging or wrestling free of holds, but cannot initiate any attacks of their own, or speak coherently enough to cast any spells.
- 66 **Salt from Another World:** Large chunks of greenish salt are contained in a golden snuff box (that is worth 1d6 × 100 cyphers and not itself magical). One pinch of this salt will banish an extraplanar creature back from whence it came; or close (and destroy) a portal to another world (including the land of Faerie); or grant advantage on the roll to control a spell affecting other planes in any way, if it is expended during the casting. There is enough salt for 1d6+1 uses.

Roll Unique Magic Item

- 67 **Scarab Crown:** When you wear this golden scarab diadem on your forehead, external effects that drain your Willpower have no effect on you. Your own magic can still reduce your Willpower, but drugs or the actions of others cannot. If this crown prevents a loss of 8 or more points at once, however, it breaks and offers no further protection.
- 68 **Scented Amber:** This small piece of solidified amber smells peaceful and comforting. So will you, if you rub it on your skin or clothes. This gives you advantage on your Charisma rolls for 1 turn.
- 69 **Sceptre of Godly Might:** This golden, lion-headed mace gives you advantage on your attack and damage rolls when you wield it, and every successful attack reduces your enemy's non-magical armour by 1 point until it is destroyed (i.e. reduced to Armour 10).
- 70 **Self-Driving Chariot:** This golden, two-wheeled carriage is elaborately decorated with fanciful beasts. It has a handle in the front that allows a rider to control it and cause it to move under its own power, without the need for horses. It can pull carts or carriages attached to it, up to a maximum of four heavily-laden wagons.
- 71 **Shadowskin:** When you wrap this lightless black piece of cloth around your body, it becomes a form-fitting second skin that gives you Armour 15 but is not encumbering.
- 72 **Silverskin:** When you have this silver pebble in your mouth, your skin is protected by a silver coating that does not restrict you in any way. While covered, you take half damage from acid and other corrosive substances, blades and cutting weapons, fire and heat, and any poisons that work on contact with skin. At your option, spells that require touch have half their normal effect on you (or no effect if you successfully save against them).
- 73 **Skull Mask:** When you wear this black metal mask shaped like a skull, you have power over all undead creatures. They must save against their Willpower to resist your commands and every round they touch you without your permission, they suffer 1d6 damage.
- 74 **Snail Cap:** When you wear this sturdy Phrygian cap, you are able to slowly but surely climb even the sheerest of surfaces, as if your hands adhere to the sides of buildings, cliffs, and walls. You also have advantage when shooting a bow, and you cannot be forced to drop what you are holding.
- 75 **Snake Torc:** At first, this golden torc appears designed to look like an ouroboros. If you are physically threatened while wearing it, the torc transforms into an articulated serpentine automaton and attacks your enemy once per round as a Level 5 monster. It bites for 1d8 damage if they are touching you, or spits corrosive fluid up to 10 feet away that inflicts 1d4 damage.



Roll Unique Magic Item

76-80 **Spell Orb:** This orb has the power to cast a single spell, once per day. The wielder must still roll to control it, as if they were the caster. Determine which spell randomly. If it is from the Battle, Evocation, or Transformation schools, the orb is ruby red; if from the Divination, Enchantment, or Quintessence schools, it is a clear crystal ball; if from the Healing, Illusion, Law, or Summoning schools, it is gold.

81-83 **Spellbook:** This book contains the spell formulas of a Level 1d8 arcanist. Roll 1d12 to determine their profession, then roll their spells randomly. Use the random spellbook tables (pages 188-189) to determine the book's appearance, construction, and other qualities.

1	Assassin.	3	Champion of Chaos.	7-8	Scholar.
2	Bard.	4-6	Cultist.	9-12	Wizard.

84 **Staff of Elemental Command:** This long staff is decorated to look like a specific element. If you choose to lose 1d4 points of Ferocity while holding it, an elemental is summoned and obeys you for 1d4 tasks. Its level is 1d6. Roll 1d6 for the type of elemental the staff summons:

1	Air.	3	Fire.	5	Storm.
2	Earth.	4	Frost.	6	Water.

85 **The Stone Head:** When you wear this hollow stone head over your own head, you can see the world in blacks and greys, like a nocturnal animal, even though the head has no visor. Any blow that would inflict Wounds to your head is nullified, and you have advantage on saves against magic that is at all connected to the earth below. It counts as 1 encumbering item.

86 **Suit of Protection:** When you wear this silver jumpsuit, you become immune to heat and cold, fire and frost, and you will not drown or suffocate if you go without air for up to an hour.

87 **Sword of Defending:** This wide-bladed sword parries blows on its own, giving you +2 Armour when you wield it, but if you are evil, the hilt burns you for 1d6 damage and you drop the sword.

88 **Sword of the Idiot Gods:** This cursed blade appears quite plain and unassuming, but when you wield it, you have disadvantage on all Intelligence and Willpower rolls.

89 **Sword of Life Stealing:** On a successful hit against a living creature, this black blade also drains 1d4 points of both Ferocity and Health (roll separately for each attribute), as well as inflicting damage.

90 **Swordbreaker:** When you wield this notched, black metal mace, you can use it to parry blows and break bladed weapons. Parrying is just like dodging, but attacks must overcome your Ferocity instead of your Dexterity. Any time an attack against you misses, you can save against your Ferocity to break your opponent's weapon, if it is bladed.

Roll Unique Magic Item

- 91 **Terran Anchor:** If you leave one of these two fist-sized black stones inside an incursion (or on any other plane of existence), as long as you hold the other, you can find your way back to it in less than a hundred steps. These stones can be moved by Earthly creatures and some faeries, but not by extraplanar beings.
- 92 **Thirstquencher:** A blue waterskin that is always full of clean, delicious water. If you turn it upside down and try to pour it all out, the elemental inside is offended at not being drunk, and emerges to destroy you.
- 93 **Thunderfist:** This brass warhammer is shaped like a closed fist. You can lose 1 point of Willpower when you bring it down to create a thunderclap, inflicting 1d6 damage to everyone within 20 feet except yourself.
- 94 **Transformable Tool:** This object is composed of multiple pieces of crystal and metal. It can reform and reassemble itself to become any kind of mundane, hand-held mechanical tool or weapon the user desires. It cannot project arrows or bullets and is always a normal encumbering item, between the size of a knife and a sword.
- 95 **Translucent Door:** When you unroll this paper-thin length of translucent plastic shaped like a door and stand it up, you can walk through it and appear, along with the door, in another location about 100 feet further in the same direction—or nearer if blocked by something solid. Only people touching each other can walk through the translucent door together, as it is also transported. Each time you use it, there is a 1 in 6 chance that the doorway leads to another world instead.
- 96 **The Tree of Vengeance:** When you wield this huge, two-handed club, your Ferocity score counts as either 13, or 2 higher than it actually is, whichever is better. If you are evil, you also get advantage on damage rolls when you attack with this club.
- 97 **Venomous Dagger:** The blade of this knife constantly drips with poison. Anyone hit by it must save against their Dexterity or lose 1d6 points of Health, in addition to the normal consequences of being knifed.
- 98 **Whisper Torch:** This small black rod projects light from one end when the wielder wills, but that light is invisible until it touches a solid surface, which then becomes illuminated.
- 99 **Water Stone:** This pale blue stone can be worn as a brooch or amulet. When you wish, it transforms your body and all that you carry into an arcane liquid. In this form you can squeeze through tight spaces and don't need to breathe, but you lose 1 point of Health each round.
- 100 **Worry Beads:** When you handle this bracelet of komboloi beads, you get advantage on saves against anger, fear, sorrow, and similar emotions, whether caused by magic or not. Possessing it allows you to recover lost points of Charisma, Intelligence, or Willpower at twice the normal rate.



Chapter 6.

Raiding the Nightmare Realms





Braving the Underworld

The main activity of PCs in this game is exploring the underworld. Dungeons made of nightmares are invading the Kingdoms of Dreams, and your job is to destroy them, while reaping the benefits of success.

Just like the other sections of this book, this chapter assumes you already have at least some knowledge of old school gaming, and should be seen as a toolbox. Use whichever rules suit your game and your table best, and ignore the ones that become a hassle to deal with. In some cases, multiple suggested practices are given. It is up to you to decide which works best for you and the situation you have in your game.

Dungeoneering

The nightmare realm is much like the demon-haunted tombs it finds so attractive—a collection of limited, constrained spaces. If there are wide-open areas, like those of the sunlit lands on the surface of the earth, they are further inside the nightmare realm than any human has ever been. Every incursion is composed of built architecture, caves, or other similar small spaces. Some might even resemble the internal organs of a giant, but the only skies you can see inside the nightmares are illusions.

Time in the Dungeon

Exploring a dungeon is dangerous, not only because the dungeon environment itself is hazardous, but also because the inhabitants are hostile and will fight. In both instances—exploring the dungeon and fighting foes—time is measured in specific increments.

When the PCs are moving quickly (walking or running) through a dungeon or similar environment, time passes as one would expect it to pass in real life. There is not much need to measure time, except in order to determine when torches die out and must be replaced (of course, adventurers who possess lanterns do not tend to have this problem). The use of the encounter die (see page 357) allows you to roughly judge when light sources run out, instead of having to keep track of every hour or minute.

When the PCs are searching an area, or moving through it very carefully, time can be divided into “turns,” or scenes that are roughly 5 to 15 minutes. If there are multiple parties on the same map, they each get a turn during this time (hence the name). During a turn, characters may move and carefully search a set amount of distance, depending on their Speed rating (see page 254). Turns are less important when characters are recklessly charging through an area.

In deadly situation like combat, time is measured in rounds, which are usually less than a minute each. Rounds are always important when characters are trading blows with each other and life is on the line.

Turns and Rounds

Time during a party's exploration of the dungeon, or other dangerous areas, can be divided up into units of variable length called turns. These units are derived from the tradition that when there are multiple parties on the map, each one gets a turn to take an action that lasts approximately 10 minutes. While this back-and-forth can be a rare occurrence, due to play typically involving a single party of PCs, turns can also be useful for measuring the duration of light sources, spells, and other time limits that are longer than a few minutes but shorter than many hours. Because time is not an absolute—it can seem to crawl by or fly past, depending on an individual's perception, or the supernatural influence of the nightmare realm—you need not be strict about tracking it if that is your preference. Turns are a tool for you to use or ignore as you see fit.

A turn in the exploration phase should not be confused with taking your turn during a combat round. While exploring, the entire party gets “a turn” to act every 10 minutes or so, but each member of the party may do something different, or assist each other, or stick to the same task, whatever they decide. Combat rounds are quick and chaotic (as described on pages 265-267), lasting less than a minute each. Every character who participates gets a turn to act, in the order of their initiative, but these actions are assumed to be occurring almost simultaneously, and are not considered discrete measurements of time in and of themselves.

Measuring Turns and Rounds

The exact amount of time each increment lasts is not particularly important, only its relative value. These increments are designed to allow the characters a restricted number of actions, and to indicate to the GM when to check for threats to the party. **If you need an exact number**, we can say that a single turn lasts 2d10 minutes and there are 1d6 rounds in a minute. If a turn is being interrupted, roll 2d6 to see how many minutes elapse before the intrusion happens.

But a turn can also last as long as a single scene of dialogue—a discussion, argument, or a plan coming together quickly—or as long as you concentrate on a single task. Measurements are given later for how much space you can search in a single room because maps are often detailed in such a way that this matters. Do not feel bound to the strict measurement of time and space if conceptual areas—alcove, bedroom, crawlspace, open field, tunnel—are more important to you and your players.

Time:

- 1 round = less than a minute (1d6 rounds per minute).
- 1 turn = roughly 5 to 15 minutes (2d10 minutes per turn).
- 1 turn can also consist of 1 scene or 1 task.

Mapping

If the PCs are moving slowly, they are assumed to also be keeping a record of their progress, both in their minds and on paper. Players should be allowed to consult an accurate map of areas they have explored carefully and slowly.

If the PCs are moving quickly through the dungeon, the players should be allowed to keep a sketchy and inexact record of their progress. Since they can only imagine the environment that their characters would actually be seeing, experiencing, and interacting with (were they, or any of it, real), players naturally have a much harder time remembering the dungeon's layout, and should have at least some help in that regard.

Places that the PCs run through as fast as they can, or move through in darkness, should be described verbally by the GM, but not sketched or drawn by anyone. Players should not have any kind of map for these areas.

Movement

When you are moving carefully and searching as you go, you can cover ground approximately equal to your Speed $\times$ 100 square feet in a single turn. The average person can cover 700 square feet—on a map, this equates to seven 10-foot squares. Encumbered characters can only cover a little more than half as much ground in a single turn—usually 400 square feet, or four 10-foot squares.

- One turn (5-15 minutes) = Current Speed rating $\times$ 100 square feet of searching, or a number of 10-foot squares equal to Speed.
- **In barren areas**, you may carefully search twice as much space every turn.
- **In cluttered areas**, you can only carefully search half as much space as normal.

If you have no interest in tracking square footage, assume that characters may search the entirety of one large room or one small cluttered room in a single turn.

Moving Carefully

- All characters may search for traps, secret doors, and hidden treasure.
- Characters tend to move quietly when moving carefully.
- GM checks for random encounters every turn, when the party enters a new area, and if the party makes a ruckus.
- Movement rate per turn is restricted by Speed rating.

Moving Quickly

- Characters make more noise when moving quickly.
- GM checks for random encounters only when the party enters a new area or makes a ruckus.
- If movement rate is necessary, use rounds or minutes instead of turns.
- Only thieves may search for traps, secret doors, and hidden treasure.

Light Sources

The industries of lawful kingdoms are able to supply adventurers with certain tools to light their way in the darkness of the nightmare world. Lights meant for purposes other than use in dungeons are all inferior to those presented here:

- A **candle**, either inside a simple lantern or not, casts light in all directions for 10 feet and burns for an hour.
- A **jar or simple lantern filled with fireflies, glow worms, or lightning bugs** casts light in all directions for 20 feet or in one direction for 30 feet. It glows for 2 hours per day, unless the insects are given special drugs, in which case they glow for 6 hours and then die.
- A **mirrored lantern** of any type casts light in some directions for 30 feet or in one direction for 40 feet. An oil lantern burns for 4 hours, and then it must be refilled with another flask of oil.
- A **torch** casts light in all directions for 30 feet and burns for an hour before it becomes useless.

Exploring a hostile environment may cause light sources to become extinguished quicker than normal, due to constant jostling and ever-present dirt. The GM will tell you when a light is close to going out. **Taking a short or long rest in the dungeon** uses up any currently-lit candles and torches, and a lantern that remains lit during the rest is taxed a minimum 1 hour of use.

In complete darkness, PCs may only attack someone they are touching, and moving carefully takes six times as long.

Encumbrance

Characters have an encumbrance limit of 4 sizable items plus their Health modifier. This indicates how many encumbering items they can carry without being hindered. Encumbering items are things that can't simply be strapped to your belt and ignored. They are at least somewhat large or awkward. Particularly awkward, heavy, or large items may count multiple times against this limit.

Encumbrance Limit: 4 + Health modifier in sizable items.

If you are carrying your encumbrance rating or less in items, you may move at normal speed. If you are carrying more than that, you are encumbered.

Encumbrance amounts:

- Armour counts as one or more encumbering items, unless you are a fighter.
- Backpacks, bows, coils of rope, firearms, lanterns, light armour, light crossbows, quivers, satchels, shields, and swords are all things that count as encumbering items.
- Each large item after the first counts as one encumbrance item larger (the first counts as 1, the second as 2, the third as 3, etc) unless you find a way to actually wear it (like armour). Animal traps, chests, heavy crossbows, and small kegs of ale are all large items that count as at least two encumbering items each.
- A suit of plate armour counts as three encumbering items.
- **If you want to keep track of smaller items,** each character can carry a number of small items equal to their Health score without penalty. Small items include things like potions, powderhorns, and wineskins. A half-dozen compact items, like iron spikes, torches, or wooden stakes, might count as a single small item, as might a dozen or more tiny items, like caltrops, pencils, or pieces of chalk. Carrying more small items than your Health score means you are encumbered.

Whether or not you have reached your encumbrance limit, you must still have the means to actually carry the items you want to lug around. If your hands are full, you cannot fight with them or carry more items in them, and there are only so many small items you can fit into your pockets.

When you are encumbered, the following things are true:

- You always lose initiative, acting last during each combat round.
- You may not choose to dodge as a combat action.
- You may not make any attacks of opportunity, even if your weapon is longer.
- You may not swim. If you try, you drown.
- You move and search at half your normal Speed, rounded up.

If keeping track of each character's equipment turns out to be more trouble than it's worth for your group, don't do it.

Navigating Obstacles

Adventurers may encounter all sorts of hazardous or difficult-to-traverse environments. The easiest way to handle the PCs overcoming single obstacles is to ask for attribute saves, either as skill tests or not, with a stated penalty for failure. Sometimes, you may decide that role-playing or a creative use of equipment makes rolling unnecessary. However, there are times you may want to montage a dungeoneering journey of several hours into a single roll—digging out of the mine after a cave-in, moving through a vast and partially-flooded cave complex, or scaling a mountain to break into some fortress eyrie, for example.

When you make your way across, through, or under an environmental obstacle, roll 2d6 and add one of your attribute modifiers, as follows:

- **Dexterity** for climbing, crawling, jumping, and all kinds of rope work.
- **Ferocity** for demolition work or excavation.
- **Health** for digging, hauling, swimming, and other hard labour.
- **Intelligence** for avoiding noxious gases, navigating mazes, and surveying hazardous areas.
- **Willpower** for defying claustrophobia and holding your nerve through unpleasant tasks like crawling in muck or wading cold water.

If you want to montage an entire group travelling, have one person take the lead and roll once for the whole party. If others provide enough help to make the journey easier, they can roll with advantage. The results apply to all involved.

Roll Dungeoneering Results

0-3	Absolute disaster for everyone involved. Roll one setback for the whole party and then another separately for each party member.
4-6	Things go badly, mistakes are made instead of progress. Roll one setback for the whole party or just the party members most affected.
7-9	Mixed results: some progress is made, along with some sacrifices. Roll one setback for the most affected party members or just one, chosen randomly.
10-11	The party makes progress and suffers no immediate setbacks.
12+	The party makes exceptional progress or experiences a stroke of luck.

Progress means the party overcomes the obstacle, or enough of it to reach a safe spot where they can take stock and make plans for the next endeavour.

Setbacks may include small problems like wear and tear, or they can be disasters that cause you to lose vital equipment or even party members. Or roll 1d6 to see what happens.

Roll Dungeoneering Setbacks

1	Equipment is damaged.
2	Equipment is lost.
3	Exhaustion sets in.
4	You become separated.
5	You get hurt.
6	You get lost or trapped.

Searching

The main reason to move slowly and carefully through the dungeon is to search as you go, and find whatever is hidden, whether it be bodies, secret doors, traps, or treasure. Searching carefully takes a full turn and covers the same amount of space as moving carefully (see page 254).

When you spend a turn searching an area, you can find whatever is hidden if you successfully save against your Dexterity score, or half your Dexterity score, rounded down, if the dungeon is higher level than you are.

If you are a scholar or a thief searching carefully, you always find what is hidden in a dungeon that is your level or lower, and you can save against your full Dexterity score to uncover hidden things if the dungeon is higher level than you are.

Searching Quickly

A quick search by any PC who is not a thief reveals only what is obvious, not what is carefully hidden. A thief may find carefully hidden things by searching in haste, however, just as if they were some other profession and searching carefully.

If you are a thief and quickly searching an area you have not searched before, you can find whatever is hidden if you save against your Dexterity score, or half your Dexterity score, rounded down, if the dungeon is higher level than you are.

Secret Passageways

Finding a secret door or tunnel also means finding the means to open it, if it is available. If a door cannot be opened from where the PCs are, or if it is accessible only by magic, searching does not reveal how it opens, merely its presence.

Traps

A trap found by careful searching is not triggered, but neither does finding it disarm it. Failing your roll to find a trap may trigger it.

Disarming Traps

Having found a trap, you may attempt to disarm it safely, at least to the degree that it can be safely disarmed. A disarmed pit trap does not mean the floor is safe to walk on, necessarily—it might mean the pit is permanently open.

If you are an assassin or a thief, in order to safely disarm a trap, you must save against your Dexterity score, or half your Dexterity score if the dungeon is higher level than you are.

If you are not an assassin or a thief, you cannot safely disarm a trap on a dungeon level that exceeds your own, but on a dungeon level equal to or lower than your own, you can safely disarm a trap if you save against half your Dexterity score, rounded down.



Dungeon Encounters

Though it is possible to find other humans in the nightmare realm, monsters are much more common. Any people you might find are likely to be corrupted by otherworldly evil, and count as monsters in any case, but if they really are normal people, encounters with them are identical to social encounters, already detailed in Chapter 4. Monster encounters are described here.

Starting the Encounter

The GM has a map of the dungeon, with specific monsters, traps, and other encounters placed on it. The PCs must interact with these encounters when they reach those areas. They must also contend with additional encounters, as the inhabitants of the nightmare incursions take exception to their intrusion. The GM has rules for when PCs encounter monsters that can vary between dungeons, see pages 356-360.

Encounter Distance

When a wandering monster is encountered, the distance between the PCs and the monsters when the encounter begins depends on the party's speed of movement:

- **Moving carefully:** Monster is $2d6 \times 10$ feet away from the party.
- **Moving quickly:** Monster is $1d6 \times 10$ feet away from the party.

If the rolled distance is too close (or too far) to actually happen, the encounter occurs at the closest (or furthest) reasonable distance instead. **Once the monster has been placed on the map**, an encounter occurs unless the party avoids it. The monster may stay on the map and move each turn.

Surprise

It is possible for the PCs to be surprised by monsters they encounter, or to catch those monsters unawares. The party's leader or lookout rolls 2d6 and adds their Dexterity or Intelligence modifier (player's choice) and the monster's Surprise rating. Alternately, whoever has the highest Dexterity or Intelligence out of all the characters who are actively scouting, standing watch, or acting as lookouts may roll instead.

Roll	Result
0-6	The PCs are surprised by the monsters.
7-9	Both the PCs and the monsters become aware of each other at roughly the same time. Neither has the edge.
10+	The PCs become aware of the monsters before being detected themselves.

A party with the advantage of surprise may choose to go undetected, and either avoid the other party, launch a surprise attack, or make another approach of their choice.

Surprise and Combat

If the monsters are surprised, the PCs have at least one round to act unopposed, during which they can each take a turn, even if they are encumbered. They can act in any order they choose. If two or more players disagree over who should act first, have them roll initiative as normal (see page 265).

If the PCs are surprised, the monsters have at least one round to act unopposed, during which they each get a turn. Surprised PCs may not dodge or otherwise defend themselves, and do not get to make attacks of opportunity even if they have a longer weapon.

Surprised characters, whether monsters or PCs, may only take an action if they are specifically poised and ready to do so. If they realize what is happening during the surprise round, they stop being surprised. If they are not alerted, they remain surprised and may not act.

Once the surprised party has recovered from being surprised, initiative in each round proceeds as if neither party is surprised.

Reaction

Once a monster is aware of the PCs, unless violence has already begun, the GM rolls 2d6 to determine how it reacts to these human intruders. If the PCs end up conversing with a monster, the GM rolls again on this table, but adds the Charisma modifier of the PC leading the conversation.

Roll	Reaction
0-3	Monster attacks immediately, with advantage to its morale rolls.
4-6	Powerful monsters attack immediately. Unsure monsters threaten the PCs to see if they are worth attacking. Cowardly monsters flee.
7-9	Monster is cautious, and attacks or flees if approached, but may be persuaded to parley if the PCs can assure it they have no larcenous or violent intent.
10-11	Monster is neutral, ignoring the PCs if they do not cause trouble, but willing to interact with them if they are inoffensive.
12+	Monster is friendly.

Some monsters have their own rules instead. If the monster is a nightmare, it is always hostile. Nightmares defend their incursions from intruders. Other types of monsters who inhabit or otherwise make use of nightmare incursions may or may not be hostile to humans, depending on their personalities and interests.

A cowardly monster flees immediately on a result of 6 or less, instead of behaving aggressively. Monsters that believe the PCs present no threat whatsoever are much more likely to attack (they *are* monsters, after all), though this is up to the GM.

Just because a monster is friendly does not mean it isn't dangerous. Sometimes being friends with a monster is even worse for your health than fighting it is.

Evasion

When you try to get away from someone or something, or give chase yourself, a pursuit that is simple or just not that interesting to drag out can be resolved by a single overcome attempt against your opponent's Dexterity (or a different attribute, if appropriate). For a potentially longer more dramatic chase sequence, use these the detailed evasion rules below.

Pursuit: 1d20 + Ferocity or Health modifier + Speed vs. Dexterity + Speed.

During a pursuit, each party takes turns making overcome attempts against the other, with the pursuer (or pursuers) going first, then the player trying to escape. Successful rolls keep the chase going; failures bring it to an end. The number of failures needed to end the pursuit is based on how far apart you are when it begins:

- **Close:** You are within touching distance when the chase begins.
Pursuer, you lose your quarry if you fail a total of 3 rolls.
Quarry, you are caught if you fail a total of 2 rolls.
- **Near:** You start the chase within speaking distance, possibly shouting distance.
Pursuer, you lose your quarry if you fail a total of 2 rolls.
Quarry, you are caught if you fail a total of 2 rolls.
- **Far:** You start the chase within sight, but not close enough to converse at all.
Pursuer, you lose your quarry if you fail only a single roll.
Quarry, you are caught if you fail a total of 3 rolls.

The attribute score you need to overcome is your opponent's Dexterity plus their Speed rating. If a chase covers a lot of ground or requires particularly stressful exertion, use their Health score (or Ferocity if they are not alive) instead of Dexterity.

Modifiers: Add your Speed rating and either your Ferocity or Health modifier to your overcome rolls, plus your level, if your profession or skillset is particularly relevant. Humans typically have Speed 7, or if they are encumbered, Speed 4.

You can only chase one target at a time, but you can be chased by multiple pursuers. Roll once against all of them—only those you can't overcome get closer to catching you. **If you lose your quarry,** you cannot re-enter the chase, but you can join back up with an ally later, if they catch the one you're after.

Obstacles

Successful rolls lead the chase further away from where its started. The GM describes the terrain, or has the escaping player do so, if their character is familiar with the area.

If there are any obstacles in your way, such as walls or fences (or gaping pits), you must save against an appropriate attribute score (or half of it, rounded down, if the dungeon is higher level than you are) to bypass it before making your overcome roll against your opponent. In addition to any consequences (such as falling down a pit), a failed save counts as a failed overcome roll, and brings the chase closer to its end.

Interaction

Not every person or monster encountered in dangerous places wants to fight. If an encountered creature is friendly or willing to talk, you can use the normal rules, in Chapter 4, for dealing with people.

But not every monster is impressed by human charms, either:

- **If a monster ignores personality and values only knowledge**, you must use your Intelligence score and modifiers instead of Charisma when dealing with it.
- Likewise, **if a monster is so alien that you must constantly puzzle out its mannerisms in order to discern its intentions**, you must use your Intelligence score and modifiers instead of Charisma when dealing with it.
- On the other hand, **if a monster's presence is so disgusting and odious that tolerating it requires a monumental effort**, you must use your Willpower score and modifiers instead of Charisma when dealing with it.
- **If a monster is warlike and respects only strength**, you must intimidate it in order to parley or negotiate. Otherwise, it takes what it wants.

Creating Interactive Monsters

The types of monsters the GM includes in a dungeon have a direct bearing on how often the PCs will choose to converse instead of fighting or fleeing.

If a creature is not in direct service to the nightmares, give it a reason for being in the dungeon or area. Invent your own, choose one from the list below, or roll 1d10:

Roll Motivation

1	Foraging for elements, supplies, or naturally-occurring substances.
2	Interested in selling or trading goods.
3	Interested in selling or trading services.
4	Looking for a fight.
5	Lost and looking for directions.
6	Searching for a specific artifact or item.
7	Searching for a specific creature or person.
8	Searching for a specific type of creature.
9	Searching for strange items that are worthless to humans.
10	Searching for treasure and valuables.



Harm and Violence

The eventual and inevitable result of contact between humans and monsters of nightmare is deadly combat. Even without monsters, humans may find themselves at odds over pride or resources, seemingly with no other recourse than violence to turn to. Some characters are good at violence, and may prefer it over talking, but for most people, fighting is both risky and costly. Unfortunately, not every monster cares whether you want to fight it or not.

Before a Fight Happens

It is important to know the Disposition scores of the PCs and their position in the tactical layout of the situation, so the players can make informed decisions about whether to fight or not, and how.

Determine Disposition

All PCs must have Disposition scores before a fight begins. Roll your Disposition at some point between getting up for the day (or having an hour's rest and a full meal) and getting into a fight. **If you are healthy and well-rested**, roll your Hit Die twice and add the results together to determine your Disposition. **If you are unwell or your rest was interrupted**, only roll your Hit Die once to determine your Disposition. **If your roll is lower than your level**, you can use your level for your Disposition instead of your roll, if you prefer. Successful attacks against you may lower this number during combat.

If you have advantage to your Disposition, roll an extra Hit Die, and remove the die that rolls lowest. **If you have disadvantage to your Disposition**, roll an extra Hit Die and remove the die that rolls highest.

The GM may determine NPC Disposition at any point, including as the character is being attacked and damaged. The GM may also choose whether to reveal NPC Disposition scores to the players or keep them secret. Monsters usually roll 2 Hit Dice for Disposition (but see pages 331 and 343). Civilians and hirelings with no combat experience at all roll 1 Hit Die to determine their Disposition.

Sketch the Battlefield

It is usually a good idea to have a map of the area where combat occurs, to avoid confusion about where each character is, what they are doing, what they can see, and how they are vulnerable. You may use miniatures arranged on a grid to represent a battle but it is not required. You can simply sketch out the field of battle on paper with approximate distances noted and keep track of character movement by drawing it into the map. You can also use the same map you are using to map the environment, if you are exploring the nightmare world or some other dangerous place.

Combat Rounds

Time during combat is divided into rounds, during which each character involved can take one or more actions. A single round is an abstract, variable amount of time that can be as short as a few second or almost as long as a minute.

A single combat round consists of:

1. Initiative.
2. Morale.
3. Combatants take turns in order.
4. The round ends. If the battle is not over, return to step 1 and repeat.

Determining Initiative Order

Monsters and other NPCs act in order from highest Dexterity score to lowest. Players roll 1d20 + Dexterity modifier to see where in this order they act. **If you roll equal to or higher than a monster's Dexterity score**, you act first (on ties, PCs act first). Two PCs working as a team may switch their order if they have both beaten the monsters.

Initiative: 1d20 + Dexterity modifier vs. a monster's Dexterity score.

Encumbered characters who have not been surprised may only act after monsters and unencumbered characters, in order from highest Dexterity score to lowest

If you have surprised your enemy, you do not need to roll for initiative until they realize what is happening and are able to react.

Morale

The GM must check to see if the NPCs are still willing to fight or if their nerve is broken and they are routed in the following three situations:

- After a round during which one or more creatures have been reduced to zero Disposition, roll to test the morale of their side.
- After a round during which a creature lost half its Disposition or more, roll to test that creature's morale.
- After reinforcements arrive, test the opposing side's morale.

To test Morale, the GM rolls 2d6 and adds the character's Morale rating:

Roll	Result
0-6	Their will is broken and they rout, preferring escape over fighting.
7-9	They break if outnumbered or at a disadvantage, but continue to fight if they are obviously winning. If the odds are even, they fight defensively.
10-11	They continue to fight unless it means certain death.
12+	They rally and gain a new will to fight, no matter the odds.



Taking Your Turn

On your turn to act, as determined by your initiative order, you may do one of the following:

- Abjure your spiritual enemy.
- Declare that you are dodging.
- Hold your action.
- Move.
- Move and abjure your spiritual enemy.
- Move and declare that you are dodging.
- Move and then attack someone.
- Perform a complicated action.
- Perform a simple action while moving, at any point during your movement.
- Perform a simple action without moving.

Before your turn, you may:

- Attack someone moving past you and take no additional actions during your turn or for the rest of the round.
- Attack someone who is charging you if they have a shorter weapon, and take no additional actions during your turn or for the rest of the round.
- Declare that you are dodging this round and take no additional actions during your turn or for the rest of the round.

If you are attacked before your turn and hit, you may not cast a spell on your turn. You must wait until the following round.

Essentially, you may either move and/or perform a simple action, or perform a complicated action where you stand. However, **you may not attack before you move** unless you are mounted. You must move first, then attack. If you are mounted, you may attack at any point during your movement.

Moving

Your move may consist of getting up or lying down, and running up to 5 times your Speed rating in feet (usually 35 feet, or 20 feet if you are encumbered). If you are using a grid, human characters can move a number of 5-foot squares equal to their current Speed rating (half their normal Speed rating if they are encumbered).

Move = Up to Speed × 5 in feet per round, or Speed in 5-foot squares.

You can always run faster, of course. **If you take no other action**, you may sprint up to Speed × 10 feet, as if you had moved twice. If you want to sprint through the middle of a fight or cover dangerous ground, you need to save against your Dexterity score, the same as you would with any other positioning maneuver. Success gives you an advantage or a good position, but failure means you trip, fall, or otherwise succumb to danger.

Actions

As a **simple action** you may draw a weapon and attack, pick up or drop an item, lock a door, or pull a lever or two. Dropping something you hold in your hand doesn't count as an action, but getting rid of your backpack or shield does, since they are (supposed to be) strapped on. Dodging counts as a simple action—you may still move, but you may not attack. You may also grab something but it requires a successful athletic maneuver to do so properly.

Complicated actions include things like aiming a firearm, casting a spell, lighting a torch, reloading a crossbow, retrieving something from your backpack, or anything else that is similarly involved. If you stop, drop, and roll, for example, it takes your entire action.

You may also speak a few words or sentences during the round. This may sound somewhat unrealistic, considering how little time a single round can take in the game world, but players will end up running their mouths anyway, so there is no point trying to disallow it.

Examples of Simple Actions:

- Abjure a spiritual enemy.
- Attack.
- Dodge.
- Draw a weapon and attack.
- Drop your shield.
- Kick over a lamp.
- Lock a door.
- Pick up an item.
- Pull a lever or two.
- Shrug off your backpack.
- Throw something.

Examples of Complicated Actions:

- Aim a firearm or missile weapon.
- Cast a spell.
- Light a torch or lantern.
- String and ready a bow.
- Reset a bear trap.
- Reload a crossbow or firearm.
- Retrieve something from a backpack.
- Sprint (and move twice as far).
- Stop, drop, and roll.
- Tie someone up (if they don't resist).

Holding Your Action

If you want to wait for someone else to act before you take your turn, you may hold your action. Instead of acting on your initiative number, you act later on in the round. You can step in after anyone else has finished their actions and take your turn, but if you are not expecting anything specific to happen, you can't interrupt anyone who is already taking their turn.

If you say you are waiting for a specific action, event, or situation to occur so you can react to it—dousing your lamp when you hear voices, running away if the dragon appears, or slapping the vizier's face as soon as he speaks, for example—you may interrupt that action immediately if it happens and take your turn. If it does not occur, you may act at the end of the round, after everyone else has taken their actions.

Attacking

The main way to win a fight is by attacking your enemies until they flee, submit, or are killed. **When you make successful attacks in battle**, you inflict damage which reduces your foe's Disposition score. An NPC who runs out of Disposition is defeated. A PC who runs out of Disposition takes any further damage as Wounds, and may die because of it.

When you attack someone who cannot defend themselves, either because they are immobilized or unaware of the attack, don't roll to hit. You automatically deal damage to them, including your additional damage if you are an assassin, a champion of evil, or a fighter.

When you attack a foe who can defend themselves, you must roll to attack before you may inflict damage (although fighters still inflict some damage even on a miss).

Defining "An Attack"

An attack, for the purposes of this game, is a single, concerted attempt to defeat your opponent. It consists of as many blows as are necessary before you have a moment or two to re-assess your situation and re-evaluate your tactics. In the case of missile weapons, this usually means a single arrow or bullet, and it is acceptable to track ammo in this fashion, even if an attack at very close range might more reasonably consist of two or even three arrows launched in quick succession. In close combat, however, one attack may consist of a single mighty blow from a hammer, a dozen quick dagger thrusts, thirty seconds of wrestling on the ground, a slash or two at your enemy's wrist to make them drop their weapon, or even a charge and tackle to knock them prone. It is enough to execute a single intent, no more and no less.

Because Disposition represents a character's ability to avoid suffering serious injury in a dangerous environment (and defeat in combat), attacks that hit and deal damage do not necessarily also inflict wounds, and should not be described as doing so. Flashing blades and gunfire can leave you rattled and careless without ever breaking your skin. Anything that wears your opponent down and brings them closer to making that last mistake which leaves them dead by your hand makes for a successful attack. This is why non-lethal attacks reduce Disposition the same as other attacks—it's much easier to stab someone to death once they've been worn down than it is if they're ready for you.

Attack Bonuses

Assassins, warrior-poet bards, champions, cultists using appropriate weapons, and fighters can all add their level to any attack rolls they make that are overcome attempts. They do not get a bonus when using firearms, heavy crossbows, incendiaries, or other imprecise thrown objects in a fight.

By default, monsters also add their level to their attack rolls that are overcome attempts, unless they have their own special rules. They might attack as fighters or have no attack bonus whatsoever. They might even use magical powers instead.

Multiple Attackers

In order to gain the upper hand in a fight, combatants may try to gang up on their enemies. Whether you are using a battlemat or not, there are limits as to how many people can reasonably attack the same opponent at once. Reach weapons, like spears, can allow attackers to join a fight that is already quite crowded.

In an open space:

- Up to 3 enemies can attack you head-on, plus up to 2 more if they have reach weapons.
- Up to 2 enemies can attack you from behind, plus 1 more if they have a reach weapon.

In a confined space:

- Up to 2 enemies can attack you head-on, plus 1 more if they have a reach weapon.
- Only 1 enemy can attack you from behind, or 2 if at least one of them has a reach weapon.

In a confined space like this, reach weapons (e.g. greatswords, halberds, and spears, etc) have disadvantage on their attack rolls.

In a crawlspace:

- Only 1 enemy can attack you head-on.
- Only 1 enemy can attack you from behind.

In a crawlspace, reach weapons have disadvantage on their attack rolls.

When you're backed into a corner:

- Up to 2 enemies can attack you head-on, plus 1 more if they have a reach weapon.
- No one can attack you from behind.

Attacking from Behind

When you attack someone from behind, if they are not wearing armour, you automatically hit them and inflict your damage. If you are an assassin, you may ignore their non-magical armour, and skip the attack roll as if they were unarmoured.

You can only attack someone from behind if you sneak up on them, maneuver around while they are distracted with other foes, or if you are already in close combat with them and they have already been attacked head-on the maximum number of times by other foes in close combat with them. It is much harder to maneuver yourself to face every foe head-on when they are surrounding you.

Attacks by Assassins

If you are an assassin, and you attack from behind or by surprise, you not only ignore non-magical armour, but you also deal additional damage, even if you must roll to attack and you miss. At levels 1-3, you inflict +1d8 damage; at levels 4-6 you inflict +1d10 damage; at levels 7-9, you inflict +1d12 damage.

Attacks by Fighters

If you are a fighter, you deal additional damage whenever you make any kind of physical attack on someone, even if you fail your attack roll. At levels 1-3, you inflict +1d8 damage; at levels 4-6, you inflict +1d10 damage; at levels 7-9, you inflict +1d12 damage.

Close Combat Attacks

When you attack a foe in close combat, you must overcome their Armour rating (and their Dexterity, with a second roll, if they are dodging) with your Ferocity modifier. **If you succeed**, you inflict damage equal to your Hit Die + Ferocity modifier.

Close Combat Attack: 1d20 + Ferocity modifier vs. Armour (or Dexterity).

Dodging Attacks

When you attack a target who is dodging, if your attack is an overcome attempt, you must make a second overcome attempt against their Dexterity score. If both rolls succeed, your attack hits, but if either one fails, the attack is a miss. If your attack is a save, you cannot save against your full Dexterity score, only half (rounded down).

Firearms Attacks

When you attack someone with a musket, pistol, rifle, or a heavy crossbow, instead of making an overcome attempt against them, you must save against your Dexterity to operate the device properly, and thus inflict damage to your enemy. **If your target is stationary and has no cover**, save against your full Dexterity score to hit. **If your target is dodging or has cover**, you must save against half your Dexterity score, rounded down. An opponent moving quickly behind cover cannot be attacked. Being more than **50 feet** away counts as cover. **If you successfully hit your foe**, you inflict damage equal to your Hit Die + Ferocity modifier.

Firearm Attack: Save against Dexterity (or half Dexterity, rounded down).

If you roll a 20 to attack, your firearm is fouled or jammed and must be cleaned to be useful again. Or, the GM may rule instead that you have run out of ammunition.

After discharging a firearm or a crossbow, you must spend a full combat round reloading it before you can fire again. If you are carrying multiple pistols, you can instead holster the spent one, draw a fresh one, and fire in the same round.

Missile Weapon Attacks

When you attack with a regular missile weapon, you must overcome your target's Armour rating (and their Dexterity, if they are dodging), with your Dexterity modifier. A successful roll inflicts damage equal to your Hit Die + Ferocity modifier. Targets under cover may use an appropriate Armour rating instead of their own (light cover counts as light armour, heavy cover counts as heavy armour, etc).

Missile Attack: 1d20 + Dexterity modifier vs. Armour (or Dexterity).

Regular missile weapons include bows, javelins, light crossbows, slings, throwing axes, and throwing knives. Axes and knives meant for throwing use these rules because they require accuracy to inflict damage. Heavy crossbows use the firearms rules because they are strong enough to punch through armour. Light crossbows use these rules because they are not and thus also require accuracy.

Multiple Attacks

Some monsters get to attack multiple times. Unless their special rules specify otherwise, if they make an attack of opportunity against an enemy moving past them, or if they attack an enemy charging them with a shorter weapon, they still only get to attack once, but they can then make the rest of their attacks as normal on their turn.

Throwing Things

When you throw something that does not require accuracy, like a bomb or a flask of oil, you must save against your Dexterity to hit your opponent. **If they are mostly stationary**, save against your full Dexterity score. **If they are dodging or have cover**, you must save against half your Dexterity score, rounded down. **If they are dodging behind cover**, you can't hit them. **If you are right next to them**, where you can easily splash them or dash something upon the ground beneath their feet, you hit them without a roll but may need to roll a save to avoid the effects yourself.

Thrown Attack: Save against Dexterity (or half Dexterity, rounded down).

Unarmed Attacks

In order to attack and deal damage to a foe, you must do so in a way that can defeat them. If your foe is an insubstantial ghost, weapons have no effect, or if your foe is too large to be wrestled into submission, attempting to do so can only fail. Weapons are still better implements of murder than your bare hands, however.

If you make an unarmed attack, or use an improvised weapon, your damage is one die size smaller than your Hit Die (a d4 is reduced to a d3).

If you are grappling a foe who can be grappled, and you want to choke them out instead of trying to pummel them with fists or feet, you may roll your damage as normal, instead of reducing the die size.

NPC Attacks

The GM is responsible for NPCs that attack the players' characters. Animals, humans, and monsters can have a wide variety of fighting styles and special powers. As the GM, it is your job to keep track of all the NPCs in a combat situation, choosing their targets, and making their attack and damage rolls. You may also have to check their morale and decide if, when, and how they want to end the fight.

Most people are civilians—crafters, peasants, labourers, merchants, etc—and so they attack the same way scholars, thieves, and wizards do—without any bonus other than their Ferocity or Dexterity modifiers. If you have not determined a character's attributes, don't apply a modifier. **If human NPCs are assassins, warrior-poet bards, champions, cultists, or fighters** (or something equivalent), they attack the same—add their level to attack rolls, in addition to attribute modifiers, and allow them additional damage if they have that special ability.

Animals and monsters usually add their level to physical attack rolls that are overcome attempts, but do not cause additional damage the way assassins, champions of evil, and fighters do. **Unless otherwise noted in a monster's description**, you must roll for their attacks. Some monsters may get multiple attack rolls, or attack as if they were fighters, while others have special powers that automatically deal damage. Monsters that are poor combatants may attack like civilians, and not receive a level bonus to their rolls. Consult each monster's description to find their special rules and abilities.

Attribute Modifiers for Monsters

All monsters have attribute scores, but these are provided so you can make skill rolls and saves for them, and for overcome rolls the players make against them. Their attribute modifiers do not need to be factored into their attack and damage rolls, since their dangerousness is already a part of their stats. Having to keep track of attribute modifiers in addition to everything else is an unnecessary burden for the GM.

If there are important NPCs accompanying the party and they get involved in combat, you can have the players roll for them and keep track of their modifiers and bonuses, as well as their Disposition and equipment.

Monster Maneuvers

Monsters and other NPCs can use all of the combat situation rules, including positioning and special maneuvers. Some monsters will have special rules, but they can also attempt to use any tactics you think make sense for them, based on their description. If they are making an overcome attempt to do so, you might ask the player how they are resisting, in order to determine which attribute score must be overcome by the monster, or use whatever attribute score makes the most sense.



Combat Situations

Fights are not always mere slaughter, and a great many tactics may be shown on the battlefield. We all want things, and there are many ways to get them.

Aiming

If you spend one or more combat rounds aiming before you take a shot (or make any ranged attack), and you are not disturbed while doing so, you have advantage on your attack roll. You cannot get this advantage by aiming and shooting in the same round.

Athletic Maneuvers

If you must cross a difficult barrier while moving, such as climbing over a wall or jumping over a pit, it may take time or require a roll, as determined by the GM.

If it takes extra time, it counts as either a complicated action or two simple actions, in which case you can end your movement at the obstacle and then begin your next turn moving away from it on the other side, but take no other actions. Some obstacles may take even more time. If such movement turns into a chase that leads off the field of battle, use the evasion rules on page 262 to resolve it.

If it is difficult enough to require a roll, you must save against your Dexterity score to successfully move past the obstacle, provided that you are unencumbered and unhindered. **If you are encumbered or hindered enough to make the maneuver difficult**, you must save against half your Dexterity score, rounded down, in order to move past the obstacle without trouble.

Attacks of Opportunity

If another character moves past you before your turn in the initiative, you may attack them instead of taking your turn later on. You may not take other actions this round if you do attack them. An attack can mean anything from stabbing them to grabbing the bag of gold they are clutching.

Battlefield Details

It is usually a good idea to sketch out the field of battle, so you know where everyone is in relation to each other and the things around them. If there are terrain features, walls and furniture, or other obstacles, knowing where they are can allow the players to plan around them and use them to their advantage. This also makes a fight more interesting than one concerned only with attack and damage rolls.

Especially when durable monsters have high Armour ratings and Disposition scores, simply attacking back and forth may lead to a fight to dragging on in an unexciting manner for too much real time. A battle moves along much quicker when players are jockeying for advantage to their rolls, sussing out a foe's weaknesses, or using clever tactics to avoid fighting altogether.

Casting Spells

Casting a spell is a complicated action and you may not move at the same time. **If you are attacked and suffer damage before it is your turn to act**, you may not cast a spell later in the same round. You must wait until the next round and hope your initiative roll is better. You may still take action on your turn, just not cast a spell.

Charging

If you want to attack someone who is out of weapon range, you must close with them in order to do so. This is called charging. It confers no bonus, and also allows them to attack you first, if they have a weapon with a longer reach than you do (see Weapon Length, on page 277).

Dodging

You may declare you are dodging, to make it harder for enemies to hit you. **On your turn**, it counts as your action, but you may also move. **If you are attacked before your turn in the initiative order**, you may declare that you are dodging instead of taking your turn this round. You continue dodging until your turn next round or you are immobilized, whichever comes first. **While you are dodging**, attacks that are saves become more difficult, and any enemies making overcome attempts must also succeed at a second overcome attempt against your Dexterity, or their attack misses.

You cannot dodge if you are encumbered, grappled, held down, immobilized, paralysed, pinned, tied up, in the grips of a choke hold, or wearing heavy armour.

Dropping Your Light Sources

You may have to throw your light sources onto the ground when a fight begins. **Candles** always go out when you drop them. **Jars** of glowing creatures have between a 1 in 6 and a 5 in 6 chance of breaking and releasing their contents when dropped (depending on the type of ground). **Lanterns** don't go out when dropped, but have a 1 in 6 chance of breaking. **Torches** have a 50/50 chance of going out when dropped, unless they have just been lit.

Grappling

Any attempt to defeat a foe in combat counts as an attack and deals damage, which reduces their Disposition. **If it is possible to grapple and pin your enemy**, a successful attack deals damage, though probably a die size smaller than normal.

When you attack someone you have pinned or in a choke hold, you inflict damage if you overcome their Health score, even if you don't manage to overcome their Armour rating. **If it is not possible for you to grapple your enemy**, your attempts to do so can have no effect.

If you reduce your foe to zero Disposition, they are defeated, based on how you attacked them. You can skewer them on the point of your sword or pin them with an arm lock, the choice is yours. But grappling does not allow you to bypass Disposition.

Mounted Combat

If you are mounted, you may attack at any point during your steed's movement, not only at the end. If you and an opponent on foot have weapons of equal length, yours counts as the longer weapon. Your mount may also have special abilities of its own that help you in a fight.

Positioning Yourself

Attacking necessarily involves moving around quite a bit—bobbing and weaving, dancing into position, trading places with your enemy after every lunge—and this can be used to your advantage. If there is already an opening and stepping into it proves no difficulty, you can do it without even rolling. But usually, it's risky.

In order to maneuver yourself into a favourable position, as part of your move action (which doesn't have to take you very far) you must save against your Dexterity score. Success might get you advantage on a future action (such as your next attack) or allow you to avoid a hazard in the environment. But failing this save means consequences, as determine by the GM. Some examples:

- You are stunned and cannot take any actions for 1 round.
- You fall prone and cannot attack this round.
- You move into a bad position, instead of a good one.

This dance of positioning is all about struggling to get the most out of the combat environment through your own fancy footwork. It can allow you to get to higher ground, jump over traps if you know where they are, or even to get in close with your opponent so you can grapple with them. This only applies to your own position—you can't push, trip, or disarm your opponent with a save.

Special Attack Maneuvers

If you want to disarm your opponent, push them over, trip them, or otherwise drive them back into a specific area, you can do this instead of making a normal attack.

In order to maneuver another character into a spot of trouble, to disarm them, give them disadvantage on a future action, or cause them to blunder into danger, you must overcome one of their attribute scores. Usually this is their Dexterity score, but it could be Ferocity for a push, Intelligence for a tactical maneuver, or Willpower if you are goading them into rushing you foolishly. Which attribute modifier you add to your roll also depends on what actions you undertake to manipulate your foe: Dexterity for finesse, Ferocity for power, or maybe Charisma for taunts and insults.

Two-Handed Weapons

When you use a two-handed weapon in combat, or if you fight with two weapons instead of one, you may increase your damage by one die size (unless you are a scholar using a non-magical weapon, or a wizard). Bows and muskets are two-handed weapons. Obviously, you can't protect yourself with a shield while you've got both hands on your weapon(s).

'Vantages in Combat

If your tactical position is extremely strong, you should get advantage to your attack rolls because of it. If your attacks are hindered by some outside force or circumstance, you should get disadvantage to your attack rolls. The GM has the final decision on what constitutes an advantage or disadvantage.

Manipulating the combat situation is a good way to gain advantage or to put your enemy at a disadvantage. The positioning rules and the allowances for special maneuvers are there to let the players get their characters into exactly those situations, in exchange for adding descriptive flavour to the game.

Weapon Length

If you are charged by someone with a shorter weapon than you (i.e. they approach with the intent of attacking you), and you have not taken your turn this round, you may attack them instead of taking your turn later on. You attack first, interrupting their charge. If they survive, they are allowed to attack you immediately after, thus finishing their turn.

Below is a table of general comparisons between weapon lengths. Use your common sense or knowledge of your game's setting to determine what the exact relationship between individual or special weapons that characters might use.

Length	Weapons
Shortest	- No weapons at all. - Blackjacks, brass knuckles, and palm-sized rocks.
Shorter	- Small improvised weapons. - Daggers and knives.
Short	- Small clubs and most hand-held tools. - Shortswords. 1-handed axes, clubs, hammers, maces, and picks.
Long	1-handed longswords and rapiers. 2-handed clubs, picks, and quarterstaves. 2-handed axes, hammers, and maces.
Longer	2-handed swords. - Spears and pole-arms.
Longest	- Lances. - Pikes.

If you have a bow, crossbow, or firearm at the ready, it counts as longer than a pike, but you cannot throw something or draw and fire when an enemy charges you.

When you have been surprised, you cannot attack first, no matter your weapon.

Injury and Death

The primary means of defeating monsters made of nightmare is to injure them until they are dead. Unfortunately, monsters tend to deal with humans in the same manner.

Damage

When you attack someone and score a hit, you deal damage. Roll your Hit Die and add your Ferocity modifier to determine how much. If you are making an unarmed attack or using an improvised weapon, roll a die that is one size lower than your Hit Die. If you are fighting with two weapons or using a two-handed weapon (and are neither a scholar using a mundane weapon nor a wizard), roll a die that is one size larger than your Hit Die.

Larger

Die Sizes: d3 <> d4 <> d6 <> d8 <> d10 <> d12

Smaller

Do not roll a d20 for damage.

If you have a negative Ferocity modifier, it cannot reduce the damage you inflict below 1 point.

When you take damage, it reduces your Disposition by the same amount. Once your Disposition is reduced to zero, any further damage you suffer is added to your Wounds score, and represents real injury.

Disposition

A character's Disposition score represents their ability to fight off enemies who wish to cause them harm and injury. It can be thought of as a combination of grit, luck, stamina, awareness of danger, energy and reflexes, and a generalized (and possibly desperate) determination to not be murdered.

If you are healthy and well-rested, roll your Hit Die twice and add the results together to determine your Disposition. **If you are unwell or poorly rested**, roll your Hit Die once to determine your Disposition. Resting, magic, and drugs may all cause you to re-roll your Disposition. **When you roll for your Disposition**, the new score replaces your old score, even if it had been reduced by damage. Your Disposition may be reduced by rolling it again—but such is life! Everyone has bad days, and you cannot be sharp as a razor every second you're awake.

Resting

Your Disposition changes when you rest and sleep. **After a short rest**, which requires an hour or so, plus food and drink, you may (at your option) re-roll your Disposition score. If you are happy with it, you need not re-roll it during a short rest. **After a long rest**, which requires a full night's sleep, you must always re-roll your Disposition.

Disposition Zero and Wounds

When most NPCs are reduced to zero Disposition, they are defeated. The GM is free to decide the fate of any NPC that has been reduced to zero Disposition, or turn that decision over to the player who landed the final blow. Because this game is mostly concerned with the lives of the PCs and the nightmares they fight, the specific injuries of NPCs are rarely of any particular importance. The injuries of the PCs, however, we do care about. They are the protagonists of the game, so we will follow them into injury and watch them bleed out where otherwise we wouldn't.

When PCs are reduced to zero Disposition, they are still conscious and may continue taking actions. Any further damage taken after being reduced to zero Disposition is added to their Wounds score (which begins at zero). They might be injured, incapacitated, disabled, mutilated, or killed as a result.

When your Wounds score increases, you must save against your Health score to prevent the injury from temporarily incapacitating the affected location. Roll on the hit location table (see page 281) if the exact injury isn't obvious already. You might have blood in your eyes, or have lost all feeling in your arm, for example. **If you fail this save**, you must either flee blindly right now, spend a full round (as a complicated action) pulling yourself together and recovering your senses, or make do without the use of the incapacitated location.

When your Wounds score increases to a number that equals or exceeds half your current Health score, rounded down, you suffer a mortal wound. The affected location is permanently mutilated (which may cripple or at least scar you), and you must save against your Willpower to stay conscious. **If you fail this save**, you pass out for 1d6 rounds. In order to regain consciousness once those rounds have passed, you must save against your current Health score, or you remain unconscious for an additional 1d6 hours, unless revived. Even if you remain conscious, you cannot use a mutilated limb or sense organ until it is properly healed.

Bleeding

If you gain Wounds from a cutting weapon, there is a 50/50 chance you are now bleeding out. When bleeding out, you gain 1 Wound every turn until the bleeding can be stopped by a healer (a skill test using Intelligence) or you die. Once a turn is spent successfully tending the injury, the bleeding stops altogether.

Dying

If your Wounds score increases to a number that equals or exceeds your current Health score, or if you must have some vital organ amputated because it was mutilated, your character is dead. You must make a new character if you wish to continue playing.

If your character survives, but you do not feel like playing them anymore (perhaps because of their permanent injuries), you may retire them and make a new character to play instead.

Hit Locations

When your Wounds score increases, if the exact type of injury isn't clear, roll for hit location. Poisoned gas clearly affects your internal organs, for example, and doesn't require a hit location roll. Nor does being immersed in acid or having your hand caught in a trap, which obviously affect your exterior and the caught hand, respectively. Close combat attacks and missile attacks usually happen in a pretty chaotic environment, however, and probably require rolling.

Close Combat Attacks (roll 1d6):

Roll	Result	Second Roll	If you need to be more specific when it comes to head attacks:
1	Head.	1	Ear.
2	Left leg.	2	Eye or eyes.
3	Lower body.	3	Jaw.
4	Most exposed arm.	4	Mouth or nose.
5	Right leg.	5	Neck.
6	Upper body.	6	Skull.

Ranged Attacks (roll 1d20):

Roll	Result	Roll	Result
1-2	Abdomen or lower back.	12	Left shoulder.
3	Buttocks or groin.	13	Left thigh.
4-5	Chest or upper back.	14	Neck.
6	Face.	15	Right calf, knee, or shin.
7	Head.	16	Right foot.
8	Left calf, knee, or shin.	17	Right forearm.
9	Left foot.	18	Right hand.
10	Left forearm.	19	Right shoulder.
11	Left hand.	20	Right thigh.

You may also wish to use the optional rules for equipment breakage (see page 371), and specifically:

- **If you are hit in the arm while you are wearing a shield**, you may choose to have the shield break instead of increasing your Wounds.
- **If you are hit in the head while you are wearing a helmet**, you may choose to have the helmet break instead of increasing your Wounds.

Injuries Outside of Combat

When you suffer injuries outside of combat, you add damage directly to your Wounds score, because your Disposition does not help you survive. Damage from being immersed in acid, drowning, falling from a great height, or being injured by a trap are examples of damage that could be applied directly to Wounds.

Note that in each of these cases, it is assumed the character is already injured, and that some amount of damage should be applied to them because of it, not that someone is attempting to injure them through violence. The amount of damage should be determined by a die roll, but the exact amount and type of dice are up to the GM.

Some example severity ratings for injury and damage:

- **d4:** Minor injury. Sprains and bruising. An unskilled attacker.
- **d6, d8, or 2d4:** Quite serious injury, potentially fatal. Bleeding cuts and broken bones. Small explosions. A skilled attacker.
- **d10, d12, or 2d6:** Serious risk of death due to this injury. Close contact with bodily destructive phenomena (such as fire, explosions, or acid).
- **2d8, 2d10, or 3d6:** Often fatal, sometimes immediately. Large explosions. Immersive contact with fire and acid. An experienced killer.
- **2d12, 3d8, 3d10, or 4d6:** Usually fatal, often immediately.

Non-Lethal Damage

You may also suffer a loss of Disposition from things such as fatigue, fear, or pain, which sap your will to fight but do not typically cause physical injuries. In such cases, damage reduces your Disposition as normal, but does not affect your attribute scores or inflict Wounds after your Disposition is reduced to zero.

Non-Lethal Damage: Causes Disposition loss, but no Wounds.

If non-lethal damage reduces you to zero Disposition, you are automatically stunned for 1d6 rounds, or you fall victim to whatever danger the non-lethal damage posed. It could be that you are pinned or too panicked to think coherently. You are most definitely unable to fight, but you might still be able to run away.

Special attacks of this nature might also reduce your attribute scores directly, if they do worse than simply wear you down. If a monster is terrifying because it is a terrifying monster, for example, the terror it causes should count as non-lethal damage. However, if the fear it inspires is a magical effect by which it rends the minds of mortals, it should attack the attribute scores of its foes directly (probably Intelligence or Willpower, in this case). In general, if it is truly “non-lethal,” it reduces Disposition; but if it destroys the body, mind, or soul in an ingenious or magical manner, it reduces attribute scores.

Whether or not a special attack counts as non-lethal damage, and whether it reduces your attributes directly, is up to the GM.

Other Types of Harm

There are more ways to die than just by blade or by bullet. You can also be turned to stone or have your life drained away by a monster. There are also magical effects that target your attributes, and they can reduce you to passive inaction.

Confusion attacks and **insanity** both reduce your Intelligence. This is usually more effective against spellcasters, although Intelligence loss can also open someone up to nightmare curses or even cause them to go completely insane. If you have Psychic Armour, this must be reduced to zero before your Intelligence can be affected.

Disease and **poison** reduce your Health. This can turn existing injuries into mortal wounds, if your Wounds score is now equal to or greater than half your current Health score, rounded down.

Life drain reduces your Ferocity. Once you have no Ferocity left, you die from being life drained (and probably return as one of the undead). If you have Psychic Armour, this must be reduced to zero before your Ferocity can be affected by life drain.

Magical bindings, paralysis, and petrification all reduce your Dexterity. Once your Dexterity has been reduced to zero, you are completely immobilized—bound fast, completely paralysed, or turned to stone.

Mind control can be used to reduce your Willpower, making you even easier to command. Once you have been reduced to zero Willpower, you may not resist outside influence—you are the puppet of malevolent forces! If you have Psychic Armour, this must be reduced to zero before your Willpower can be affected.

Torture can also reduce your Willpower, and your Psychic Armour is no defence, if it is performed correctly. Done poorly, it reduces your Health more than your will.

There is also **character assassination**, which can reduce your Charisma when it is accompanied by a campaign of harassment, but this is a social attack and so it is covered in Chapter 4 (see page 171).

Psychic Armour

Where Disposition acts as a buffer that soaks up physical harm to prevent you from being seriously injured, Psychic Armour does the same against mental and magical attacks. Any time you are exposed to a mental or supernatural source of harm, that damage must reduce your Psychic Armour to zero before it can cause Wounds or begin to reduce your Disposition or your attribute scores.

You may not use your Psychic Armour to soak up physical damage caused by spells and other magical effects, nor the blows of magical weapons. If you have a power that reduces your own attribute scores (such as a wizard's ability to ignore a miscasting by losing Willpower), you cannot use your Psychic Armour to prevent this loss.

When you rest, you may re-roll your Psychic Armour. Unlike Disposition, however, you are not required to, and you may retain your existing score instead.



Attributes at Zero

If your attribute has been reduced to zero because of a special power, such as life drain or petrification, you fall victim to that effect or power and suffer the full consequences. If the cause of attribute loss does not specify an effect that occurs when the score reaches zero, the following is true:

If your Charisma is redacted to zero, you no longer have the will to relate to others. You refuse to communicate with them and you can neither empathise with them or understand their language. You can still move around listlessly, but you cannot fight and you desire only solitude. If you have food and are left alone, you can rest and recover enough to raise your Charisma above zero.

If your Dexterity is reduced to zero, you are incapacitated. You might still be aware or you might be unconscious, but you cannot speak or move.

If your Ferocity is reduced to zero, you are either unconscious or so drained of energy that it makes no difference

If your Health is reduced to zero, you die.

If your Intelligence is reduced to zero, you are unable to think clearly and you cannot understand your surroundings. You are permanently insane and unable to rest in a way that allows you to recover lost attribute points, unless that rest is forced upon you by outsiders.

If your Willpower is reduced to zero, you can no longer make decisions on your own. If you are awake, you will do whatever you are told to do. Otherwise, you sleep or lie motionless.

Some monster that reduce your attribute scores have their own special rules for what happens when you lose half your current attribute score and when one of your attributes is reduced to zero.

Surviving on Your Own

In order to recover from an attribute other than Health being reduced to zero, you need rest at a minimum, as well as food and water. You may also require medical attention, depending on the source. **If you are left alone with a score of zero in Dexterity, Ferocity, or Willpower**, roll 2d6 and add your Health modifier:

Roll	Recovery Results
0-6	You die of dehydration or exposure.
7-9	You can rest enough to raise your lowest current attribute score by 1 point, but your Health is permanently lowered by 1 point as well.
10+	You are strong enough to rest for a day without food or water. Increase your lowest current attribute score by 1 point.

Attribute Reduction and NPCs

Some attacks bypass a PC's Disposition and reduce their attributes directly. Some players may want to use these types of attacks themselves, against NPCs that use only Disposition, and not the same rules for injury as the PCs do. There are two ways to handle this:

- If the NPC is not particularly important, or poses no physical threat, give them a save against the effect. If they fail, the effect occurs. They die, are paralysed, fall unconscious, etc.
- They suffer damage from such attacks instead, and it is subtracted from their Disposition. If their Disposition is reduced to zero, they are defeated and the effect occurs.

The same can be done for NPCs who fall victim to monster attacks that reduce attribute scores directly instead of inflicting damage: either give them a save against the effect and move on, or have them suffer the same amount of damage to their Disposition.

If your group cares about a particular NPC, either an ally or an important nemesis, you can have them use the same rules as the PCs do, instead of simply assuming they are dead or defeated when their Disposition reaches zero. This should only apply to living characters who are humans or monsters, however. Nightmare creatures do not suffer real wounds like living creatures do. Instead, they lose their ability to affect the material world when their Disposition reaches zero, and so they simply disappear.

Recovery

Taking a rest for long enough to have a meal, or even get a night's sleep, allows you to re-roll your Disposition, hopefully replacing your current score with a higher one. Longer-term rest allows you to heal injuries, reduce your Wounds score, and recover lost attribute points. If your injuries are grave enough, they might require medical attention in order to save your life or keep your body intact and free from amputation.

Re-Rolling Your Disposition

Characters that are well rested roll two Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition. If you are unwell or poorly rested, you only roll one Hit Die for your Disposition. Being diseased, mortally wounded, poisoned, sick, or sleep deprived are all reasons why you would be unwell. If you are sleeping in the gutter, out in the rain, or on hard, uncomfortable ground, you will not be well rested. If your Wounds score is higher than zero but still lower than half your Health score, rounded down, it does not impede you from resting well and re-rolling your Disposition the same as someone who remains uninjured.

If you have advantage on your Disposition roll, you still roll an extra die and remove the single lowest. Being well rested allows you to count the total of two dice, it is not the same as advantage.

If the Disposition score you roll is lower than your level, you can use your level for your Disposition score instead. Experienced adventurers are used to sleeping rough and still having to fight monsters the next day!

Some Variations to the Formula:

- **Tiny** creatures only roll one Hit Die for Disposition if they are well-rested. If they are unwell, their Disposition is zero. Monsters made of fragile materials (like glass or paper) also roll a single Hit Die for their Disposition.
- **Huge** creatures roll three dice and use the total for their Disposition. If they are unwell, they still roll two dice and use the total. Monsters made of supernaturally tough material also roll three dice for their Disposition.
- **Civilians** with no combat experience are unprepared for danger and violence, and only roll one Hit Die to determine their Disposition if they are well-rested. Like tiny creatures, if they are unwell, their Disposition is zero.

Additional rules for the Disposition scores of inhuman monsters, including the undead and the unliving, can be found on pages 342-343.

Short Rest

When you spend an hour or so resting, eating, and re-hydrating, you may re-roll your Disposition, if you want to, unless you have already done a full day's work. If your food is terrible and/or your water polluted, you cannot be well rested, even if nothing else is wrong, and you only roll one die for your new Disposition score.

Long Rest

When you sleep for 6 or more hours (depending on how exhausted you are), you must re-roll your Disposition. **If it has been a full day and night, or more, since you last had a 6-hour rest,** you must rest an additional 6 hours for each day you have gone without rest in order to be well-rested again. Less sleep than that requires that you roll one die for your new Disposition score, instead of two. You also lose half your Disposition, rounded down, each night you go without sleep.

Day's Rest

When you spend a day resting after a full night's sleep, you may either reduce your Wounds score by 1, or recover 1 point from one of your attributes that have been reduced (or both if you are treated by a healer). If there is something preventing you from recovering—a festering wound, magical enchantment, or secret poisoner, for example—you cannot benefit from a day's rest.



Healing Mortal Wounds

When your Wound score is less than half your current Health score, you are only slightly injured, and you may remove 1 Wound per day of rest, as normal. Being only slightly injured does not automatically mean you are unwell. You can still roll two dice for your Disposition, as long as your Wounds score is lower than half your Health score, rounded down.

When your Wounds score is equal to or greater than half your current Health score, rounded down, you are in danger of dying if you do not receive medical attention. If you are tended by a healer, you may remove 1 Wound per week of rest until you are only slightly injured. If not, you must roll 2d6 and add your Health modifier:

Roll	Results of Healing a Mortal Wound on Your Own
0-6	You succumb to your injuries and die.
7-9	You lose 1 point from an appropriate attribute score, permanently, but you may remove 1 Wound per month of rest, until you receive proper healing.
10+	You may begin removing 1 Wound per week of rest right away, no matter how badly injured. You will make a full recovery, perhaps miraculously (apart from any mutilated limbs, of course, which you must roll to recover use of separately).

If any part of your body was mutilated, you are left with obvious scars and you must save against your Health to recover proper use of it. **If you fail this save**, a mutilated limb or sense organ is useless and must be amputated, and a mutilated head or torso causes you to permanently lose 1 point from an appropriate attribute score at the very least. If the mutilation is obviously life-threatening, failing this save should probably result in either death or mandatory retirement. A surgeon can make a skill test on your behalf, to save the affected part.

If a magic spell or effect cures a wound specifically, you recover fully without the need for a roll. You may not even require medical attention!

Disabled Characters

Characters that end up being mutilated by monsters and other harmful circumstances do not suffer numerical penalties once they have recovered, though a player's ability to describe their character's actions may be more limited than it was before. A person with one hand will have trouble doing things that require two hands (like wielding two-handed weapons), and someone who is blind will have a great deal of trouble using violence to their advantage, unless they gain some new sensory function to make up for their lack of sight.

In this game, you should be describing and modelling your fictional world with words, not with numbers. The numbers are there to add the elements of chance, risk, and uncertainty—the *game* part of a role-playing game. They are not meant to model physics or to create some kind of realistic world. They exist to create an interactive experience and to add weight to the choices you make within the framework of what this game concerns itself with.

As such, you don't suffer penalties to your die rolls for being disabled. You do not suffer disadvantage to your attack rolls if you must attack with your off hand, for example, nor do you suffer disadvantage to your evasion rolls if you have a peg leg. As long as you are able to take the action, you can roll for it as normal. The same is true of disabilities you start the game with.

You can still suffer penalties if conditions, monsters, spells, and traps say you do, of course. The adventuring life is nothing if not dangerous.

The Taint of Corruption

The nightmare realm is a dangerous place to go, even if you never encounter any monsters while you are there. The nightmare itself corrupts your mind, pollutes your senses, clutches at your heart. Alien thoughts creep into your mind and friends turn against each other as the very fabric of their identities are rent asunder.

When an NPC leaves a nightmare incursion, if they have spent more than one hour inside, they must save against their Willpower to avoid being cursed by the nightmare realm, or half their Willpower score, rounded down, if the level of the incursion is higher than their own. Success means the nightmares allow them to return to the Kingdoms of Dreams with no additional baggage. **But if they fail this save**, they automatically gain a nightmare curse that stays with them.

If an NPC spends more than one day inside a nightmare incursion, they must save against their Willpower once for each day they are inside, before they even leave. Each time they fail, they gain a different nightmare curse.

Those Set Apart

The PCs are immune to this property. They are special in this regard—set apart from other mortals. If anyone could venture easily into the nightmare realm, it would be easy to fight its incursions into the Kingdoms of Dreams. If no one was immune, it would be impossible. Those few whose minds can survive the nightmares are all that stand between the nightmares and the end of civilization—indeed, of life itself.

This does not mean that no PCs ever go mad while raiding the nightmare realm. Anyone who suffers attribute loss while inside an incursion risks gaining a nightmare curse if they lose half or more of their normal, maximum score. This is true of both PCs and NPCs. The nightmares can imprint their nature even on those set apart, altering their way of being and thinking, and leaving a taint upon their souls.

Dealing with the Madness

It is up to the GM when a nightmare curse begins to take effect. It might happen immediately, or it might only manifest after a person leaves a nightmare incursion. This is true of both curses that afflict NPCs and curses gained through attribute loss. Curses are not temporary and do not go away when attribute scores are regained.

The GM may also decide that a particular nightmare curse takes on some of the characteristics of the nightmare incursion that caused it, or the traits of that incursion's crown. The nightmare realm is insidiously clever in its attempts to infiltrate and destroy the material world.

The GM keeps track of what curses afflict each of the PCs, and portrays the nightmare realm's influence through them. You are not required to inform the PCs of a curse's rules beyond its name, if you prefer they learn those details through play.

The Nightmare's Curses

When one of your current attributes is reduced to half of what its normal maximum score is, or lower, while you are inside a nightmare incursion, you must save against your Willpower score to avoid gaining a nightmare curse. If the dungeon level is higher than your own, you must save against half your Willpower score, rounded down.

If you fail your Willpower save, you must roll 1d100 to determine what nightmare curse now afflicts you:

Roll	Curse	Roll	Curse
1-2	Abnormality	61-65	Irrational Hatred
3-7	Anomalous Sensation	66-67	The Living Hand of Glory
8-9	Anti-Social Lust Parasite	68	Masked
10-11	Anything to Kill the Pain	69	Mouth Full of Ashes
12-14	Apostasy	70	Nausea
15-16	Bed of Leaves	71	Nocturnalism
17	Betrayal of the Written Word	72-73	A River of Fear
18	Black Cloud	74	The Sandman of Nightmare
19	Blood Rage	75	Shadows All Around
20	Burning Inside	76	Silence Equals Death
21-25	Compulsive Ritual	77	A Slave to Chaos
26-30	Constant Reminder	78	The Stain of Remorse
31-33	Deformation	79-83	Taboo
34-35	Different Now	84-85	They Find You Sleeping
36-37	Endless Pursuit	86-87	Tides of Emotion
38	Enemies Everywhere	88-89	The Tongue of a Dragon
39-43	Forbidden Ground	90	Truth Hurts
44	Hallways Never End	91-92	Ward Against Nightmares
45	The Heresy of Stigmatism	93-94	Whispers of Doom
46	The Hunger	95-96	The World In All Its Brightness
47	I Need This	97	Xenos
48-50	Infected Attribute	98	Your Memories Devoured
51-60	Irrational Fear	99-100	Your Secrets Bought and Sold

NPCs who fail to save against their Willpower after spending an hour or more inside an incursion roll on this table as well, as described on page 291.

You cannot be cursed more than once each by anything to kill the pain, bed of leaves, betrayal of the written word, black cloud, blood rage, burning inside, different now, endless pursuit, enemies everywhere, hallways never end, the heresy of stigmatism, the hunger, I need this, masked, mouth full of ashes, nausea, nocturnalism, the sandman of nightmare, shadows all around, silence equals death, slave to chaos, the stain of remorse, they find you sleeping, tides of emotion, the tongue of a dragon, truth hurts, ward against nightmares, whispers of doom, the world in all its brightness, xenos, or your memories devoured. Re-roll if the result is something you have already been cursed with.

You can develop multiple abnormalities, anomalous sensations, anti-social lust parasites, apostasies, compulsive rituals, constant reminders, deformations, forbidden grounds, infected attributes, irrational fears, irrational hatreds, rivers of fear, taboos, and your secrets bought and sold, and you can be cursed with the living hand of glory twice. But if the exact focus of this curse is the same as one you already have, roll an entirely new curse, not just a new focus.

Abnormality

One common practice or ritual of civilization disgusts you, petrifies you, or ravages your soul when you think about it. You can no longer participate in this custom without this reaction being evident to all.

Anomalous Sensation

The nightmares have confused your senses in some small way. Perhaps you experience vibrant synesthesia, feel the phantom pains of limbs you never had, or suffer from chronic aching in your joints.

Anti-Social Lust Parasite

The nightmares develop inside you and become a fixation with sexual behaviour that is not socially acceptable (if you haven't already established what your culture, or the local culture, finds unacceptable, decide on something now). **When an NPC finds out**, the GM rolls 2d6 and adds your Charisma modifier to find their reaction:

Roll Reaction to your Anti-Social Lust

0-6	They react in a hostile manner, attacking you physically or verbally.
7-9	They react with disgust and seek to distance themselves from you.
10-11	They judge you on everything, not just this one thing.
12+	They are cool with it.

Anything to Kill the Pain

Once only.

The trauma of the nightmare realm compels you to seek out altered states. **Each day you are sober**, you lose 1 point from all your attribute scores. When you get high again, this penalty goes away (but other penalties to your attributes remain).

Apostasy

Whenever you interact with one of the social institutions you have already contributed to, memories of the nightmare world overwhelm you until you leave and reject that institution. The GM chooses which institution you must turn away from.

Bed of Leaves

Once only.

The nightmares keep you from falling asleep in a bed, or any other civilized place. You can only sleep outside, on the ground (which usually provides poor rest). Even if you have enough money to afford room and board, you still live on the streets.

Betrayal of the Written Word

Once only.

Letters and words seem to dance and move whenever you look at them, sometimes forming phrases you know are impossible. Because of this, you have great trouble reading and writing; it takes you at least twice as long as is usual for people. It also takes you twice as long to learn spells or write a spell formula.

Black Cloud

Once only.

Each time you take a long rest, there is a 1 in 6 chance that a black cloud which only you can see casts its shadow over your heart (if it has not already done so). Do not roll for your Disposition; it is zero. This state of affairs persists until you save against half your Willpower, at which point you are allowed to re-roll your Disposition again, as normal. You may attempt a save each time you get a night's rest. **If you take drugs to ignore the black cloud or drive it away**, it is still there when they wear off.

Blood Rage

Once only.

When you roll a 1 or 20 for an attack roll, before modifiers, you enter a berserk rage and must continue to attack each and every round for the next 2d6 rounds. If there is no one for you to attack, you must charge the nearest person or go looking for people to attack, wherever you think you might find them.

Burning Inside

Once only.

The fires beneath your skin prevent you from wearing heavy armour (including a suit of plate) or carrying enough to be encumbered, lest you overheat and pass out.

Compulsive Ritual

You find yourself repeating a specific action or behaviour, or a sequence of actions, without even realizing it. It could be directly related to a specific event inside a nightmare incursion, or seemingly random. **When you resist this compulsion**, for whatever reason, you may stop yourself from performing it if you save against your full Willpower score when you are not under stress, or half your Willpower score when you are stressed or under pressure.

Constant Reminder

The nightmares are always reminding you of something—a person, a subject, an issue, *something*. You probably don't even care about it, but it's always there, whenever you think about the nightmare world, whenever you think about anything! Maybe if you talk to the other characters about it, the GM won't keep telling you about it so much.

Deformation

Your fears manifest in physical deformities. The GM tells you how your physique warps and changes, and any disadvantage it causes you.

Different Now

Once only.

People say you're different, now. They say you're a mess and you act like a crazy person, that your clothes are always dishevelled and you're constantly fidgeting. Maybe they're right, but you get so distracted by your thoughts. They tell you not to talk about things, that you upset them, but they haven't seen what you've seen! They don't know! You lose 1d6 points of Charisma permanently, or until this curse is lifted.

Endless Pursuit

Once only.

Unless you keep moving, the nightmares catch up with you. **Once you have slept twice in the same place**, you can no longer fall asleep there again. Any attempt you make to rest in that location fails. Changing rooms allows you to stay in the same house, until you have run out of rooms, but larger conceptual locations, like forests and fields, may cause you more problems.

Enemies Everywhere

Once only.

After what you've seen, you can't just relax and stop looking for enemies. They could be anywhere, and they usually are, corrupted by nightmares. **Each day you stay in a civilized settlement**, there is a 1 in 6 chance that someone begins to persecute you, secretly. They continue to persecute you until you leave the area. If you kill a persecutor, the persecution stops until you arrive at a new settlement.

Forbidden Ground

The nightmares refuse to allow you to set foot on ground claimed by one type of building, location, residence, or a social institution that PCs have invested in. It is always a civilized place, never a dungeon or anywhere in the wilderness. **If you enter a location of this type**, you suffer 1d6 damage per round (at the beginning of your turn to act in the initiative order, if timing is important) until you leave.

Hallways Never End

Once only.

Whenever you run, your legs feel heavy as lead, and hallways stretch on and on in front of you. You can no longer outrun anyone.

The Heresy of Stigmatism

Once only.

Whenever you lose points from one of your attributes, or when damage reduces your Disposition or increases your Wounds, you bleed profusely. This doesn't cause any extra damage, but it is very messy.

The Hunger

Once only.

The nightmares awaken unnatural hungers inside your belly. You develop a need to eat what other people consider disgusting, rotten, smelly, or taboo. You repel any who witness you dine, and suffer disadvantage when you try to influence them socially at any time afterward, until you redeem yourself in their eyes somehow.

I Need This

Once only.

Now that you have been adrift in a world without order or any sense of law, you must have the trappings of civilization around you in order to feel competent. Unless you carry enough possessions to be encumbered, you may not use any of your profession's special abilities (this is true even if being encumbered prevents you from using your special abilities). If you are surrounded by enough possessions to be encumbered, but are not carrying them, you can still use your abilities, but if you are walking around, you must either be carrying everything yourself, or have someone you trust carry it for you, and stay close enough for you to touch it.

Infected Attribute

One of your attributes has been infected by nightmares and this influence manifests itself as a form of self-sabotage. You suffer disadvantage whenever you are rolling against this attribute for a save or skill test, or when you make a roll involving this attribute's modifier. Once you enter a nightmare incursion or the nightmare realm, however, this disadvantage vanishes and does not affect you again until you leave. Roll 1d6 to see which attribute is infected this time:

Roll	Infected Attribute	Tell-Tale
1	Charisma	Odd expressions cross your face like shadows.
2	Dexterity	Sometimes you get the shakes.
3	Ferocity	You look ashen and sickly.
4	Health	A wracking cough in your chest, you spit blood.
5	Intelligence	Ghostly light streaks across your vision in the dark.
6	Willpower	All night you dream of your homeland—your <i>real</i> homeland—only to awaken at dawn with fleeting memories of having glimpsed strange vistas upon alien worlds that you have never visited.

Irrational Fear

The nightmares impose a new source of fear upon you, that will trigger a flight response. Roll 1d6 to see what type of thing you become afraid of:

Roll Your Fear

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | The cause of your curse, or something directly related. |
| 3 | Something related to that entire foray into the nightmare realm. |
| 4-5 | Something you witnessed at any point in nightmares. |
| 6 | Something random and unconnected. |

When you encounter something you have an irrational fear of, you must save against your Willpower score to retain control of yourself if the object is within your sight or presence. **If it touches you or otherwise makes contact with you**, you must save against half your Willpower score to retain control of yourself. If you fail this save, you must flee from the object of your fear for a full turn after it is no longer in your sight or presence.

You are able to discuss the object of your irrational fear normally. It is only the presence of it that incites the terror imposed upon you by the nightmare realm, not the thought of it.

Irrational Hatred

The nightmares cause you to hate something, beyond all reason. Roll 1d6 to see what type of thing angers you so much:

Roll Your Hatred

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | The cause of your curse, or something directly related. |
| 2-3 | Something related to that entire foray into the nightmare realm. |
| 4-5 | Something you witnessed at any point in nightmares. |
| 6 | Something random and unconnected. |

When you encounter something you have an irrational hatred of, you must save against your Willpower score to retain control of yourself if the object is within your sight or presence. **If it touches you or otherwise makes contact with you**, you must save against half your Willpower score to retain control of yourself. If you fail this save, you must attack the object of your hatred until it is removed from your presence.

You are able to discuss the object of your irrational hatred normally. It is only the presence of it that incites the rage imposed upon you by the nightmare realm, not the thought of it.

The Living Hand of Glory

Twice only.

One of your hands has been trained by the nightmares to steal things, even without your knowledge. **When you are left alone with something other people consider valuable**, there is a 1 in 6 chance that your hand takes it, whether you notice or not. Half the time your hand tries to leave it somewhere else, and not even keep it. You may not notice this, either. **If your hand is bound or severed**, it cannot steal things.

Masked

Once only.

The nightmares know how to get to you through the most important part of your identity: your face. The eyes are windows to the soul, after all. So you must hide your face behind some kind of mask. **If someone else can see your face**, you cannot use any of your special abilities or re-roll your Disposition, until you hide your face again.

Mouth Full of Ashes

Once only.

Most foods now taste bitter and burnt on your tongue. It is a chore just to feed yourself, and hunger does not make it go down any easier.

Nausea

Once only.

You can leave the roiling chaos of the nightmare realm, but it won't leave you. **When you eat**, you must save against your Willpower in order to keep from throwing up, and you cannot do anything else (conversation, guard duty, etc) while eating or for several minutes after. Your living expenses are doubled.

Nocturnalism

Once only.

It gathers in your skin. You suffer disadvantage to all your rolls in direct sunlight.

A River of Fear

Dark waves of fear wash over you whenever you meet a specific type of enemy. The cold creeps up your spine and seeps into your muscles, giving you disadvantage on all your offensive rolls, including both attack and damage, as well as saves to resist fear caused by this type of creature. **When you gain this curse**, roll 1d6 to determine what type of enemy you cower before:

Roll	Enemy
1	Beastlings.
2	Dwellers in the deep.
3	Faeries.
4	Golems.
5	Humans.
6	The undead.

The Sandman of Nightmare

Once only.

Each time you roll a die, also roll an additional d12. If this extra d12 matches any other die that you roll, you fall asleep and dream horrible dreams, losing half your Disposition (round up) before you awaken. Nightmare creatures ignore you until you wake up, but other monsters do not.

Shadows All Around

Once only.

You see flickers of nightmares in your peripheral vision all the time. You can never be sure if what you see is real or not—you have to look. Because you are always distracted, you suffer disadvantage whenever you undertake a task that requires patience or stillness.

Silence Equals Death

Once only.

The sounds of the nightmare realm follow you wherever you go. You can no longer be stealthy, or even quiet, doing anything.

A Slave to Chaos

Once only.

What if you had never set foot in that nightmare incursion? What if things had worked out differently? You are not always able to control your fascination with luck and chance. **Each week you spend in a civilized settlement where gambling is available**, there is a 1 in 6 chance that you will go to an establishment and gamble until you have no money left or are prevented from continuing. **If you are invited directly to gamble**, there is a 1 in 3 chance that you will accept and gamble until you have no money left or you are prevented from continuing.

The Stain of Remorse

Once only.

Your past experiences haunt you like a ghost. Half the experience points you earn are stolen by the nightmare realm and you must donate or invest the same amount of money into causes you think might help assuage your guilt (even though they never do). If you cannot afford it—because of immediate and necessary expenses, for example—these experience points are lost to you until you make up the shortfall and pay what you owe.

Taboo

The nightmares have damaged your mind and body such that some normal (or at least easy) behaviour is no longer trivial for you to perform. There is some restriction placed on you now. **If you break this restriction**, you suffer 1d6 damage immediately. Roll 1d20 to see what it is:

Roll Taboo

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | You can only communicate in writing. |
| 2 | You can only sleep outside, under the sky. |
| 3 | You can only sleep when sung to. |
| 4 | You can only speak in rhymes, riddles, and questions. |
| 5 | You cannot approach or speak to someone you consider beautiful. |
| 6 | You cannot approach the sound of bells. |
| 7 | You cannot eat food uncooked by fire. |
| 8 | You cannot enjoy music. |
| 9 | You cannot enter an inhabited house unless invited. |
| 10 | You cannot enter courts or temples of law. |
| 11 | You cannot give something that has not been asked for. |
| 12 | You cannot repeat a secret told in confidence. |
| 13 | You cannot speak in a normal voice. |
| 14 | You cannot steal from the living. |
| 15 | You cannot take money unless you find it or steal it. |
| 16 | You cannot tell a lie. |
| 17 | You cannot touch a bleeding person with your bare skin. |
| 18 | You must be polite to anyone who is polite to you. |
| 19 | You must count small objects scattered in front of you. |
| 20 | You must give money to anyone who asks you for charity. |

They Find You Sleeping

Once only.

How can you sleep? That's where the nightmares live. What if they come back? **Each time you try to sleep**, there is a 1 in 6 chance that you cannot rest. Instead, you lose half your current Disposition (round up) and may not re-roll it after a short rest until you manage to sleep. You are also unable to purify spells or get any work done until after you sleep.

Tides of Emotion

Once only.

The nightmare realm has destroyed your composure. Your own feelings wash over you like tidal waves, and other peoples' emotions are contagious. You find yourself weeping openly with joy or sadness, or laughing hysterically, at the drop of a hat.

The Tongue of a Dragon

Once only.

You lie to people. Sometimes you realize what you are doing, and you can stop yourself, but sometimes you don't even know what you are saying. **When you fail a roll in a social interaction**, the GM decides what you really said.

Truth Hurts

Once only.

After you leave a nightmare incursion, it still owns everything you experienced within it. **Whenever you speak the truth about things you did inside a nightmare incursion**, if you're not in an incursion, you suffer 1d6 damage.

Ward Against Nightmares

Once only.

The nightmares can see how you are vulnerable, and that's why you have a lucky charm or item that acts as a ward against them. **If you don't have your magic ward with you**, you cannot use any of your profession's special abilities until you regain it or fashion a new one as a replacement. Replacing your lucky charm requires elaborate, compulsive rituals that take at least a week to perform.

Whispers of Doom

Once only.

The nightmares whisper words into your ears. They tell you what other people think of you, what dangers lurk in the shadows, what poor decisions you always make. None of it does you any good, of course, and the nightmares tell you this, too. You're going to die in the dark somewhere, alone, and then they'll have all of you, not just your ears.

The World In All Its Brightness

Once only.

Life becomes too intense and vivid for you. The light is too bright, sounds are too loud, and you can feel every little thing that touches you. You have disadvantage on any roll you make to do something that requires concentration, unless you use alcohol or drugs to dull your senses.

Xenos

Once only.

Other people can sense the taint of nightmares upon you. They see the damage done in the way your shadow curls, the way the light dims in your presence, the way their hair stands on end when you talk. Your Resentment score begins at 1 in any new settlement you visit, and cannot be reduced to zero.

Your Memories Devoured

Once only.

Even in your mind, the memories of nightmare creatures you have witnessed will not leave you alone. They are constantly displacing, invading, and even consuming your other memories, disrupting your sense of spatial relations and chronology. You are not allowed to make or use maps of the dungeons you explore.

Your Secrets Bought and Sold

The nightmare realm is in cahoots with another type of creature. It gives them information about you, tells them your secrets. They know *things* about you, things they shouldn't. You suffer disadvantage on rolls you make to interact with that type of creature, whether you are fighting, parleying, or tracking them. Roll 1d6 to determine what type of enemy buys your secrets:

Roll	Enemy
1	Animals and beasts.
2	Beastlings (but not beasts).
3	Dwellers in the deep.
4	Faeries.
5	Golems.
6	The undead.

Lifting the Curse

It is always possible that you could find a way to cure someone of their nightmare curse. You might find a healing spell powerful enough, or an exorcist holy enough, or a magical item that can do the job.

In all such endeavours, however, it is important to remember that every curse is actually a living creature of nightmare that dwells inside the mind or body of the afflicted. It lives as they live and dies when they die, yes—but if removed from its host, this nightmare enters the material world, free and self-aware. It cannot build an incursion or summon other nightmares unless it finds an anchor, true, but it can certainly try to murder the people who drew it from its host.

Chapter 7.

A World Full
of
Nightmares

Nightmares



The GM's Job

As the GM, you have a much larger job than the other players. They get to concentrate on portraying one character each, while you have to do everything else. Your responsibilities are essentially three-fold:

One

You portray the setting, including all characters other than the players' characters. You can, of course, ask the players questions about the societies they come from, in order to portray them better. If something in the game is part of a PC's background, culture, or past, you can let them decide its features. But anything the PCs find unfamiliar is entirely up to you to create.

How much of this setting the characters explore is also up to you. Are days spent in town hand-waved so you can get back to the dungeon? Or are the intrigues of the sultan's court dominating your game? You can use the setting material presented here in this book, or use a different setting altogether, but remember that the rules presented here are focused on dungeon exploration, and if you are going to play this game, you should probably focus on that, too.

Two

You create the nightmare incursions that the PCs venture into. You can use the procedures presented here in this chapter, create dungeons using your own procedures and judgment, or you can use dungeons created by other people—whichever method you prefer.

Three

And finally, it's your job to adjudicate the rules. You may want to run the rules straight out of this book, in which case you will still have to make spot decisions when you encounter a situation not sufficiently covered here. You might also want to remove rules that slow down your game, or add new rules, either from other games or of your own invention. This is fine, as long as your players agree and the rules don't get in your way while you run the game.

It's up to you to figure out how you will make decisions when the rules don't cover a situation, or when you have to make a judgment call about the fiction as it is affected by the rules. You can use your sense of realism, or your understanding of genre tropes and narrative structures; you can roll on a random table; or you can even hash it out with the other players. Doing so in a consistent manner is key, though, as this is what makes the activity an actual game that every player can engage with fairly.

Your responsibilities:

- Portray the setting.
- Create the nightmares.
- Adjudicate the rules.



What You Do

The main things you do as the GM are: put the players' characters in situations that you think are interesting and present them with challenges that you find engaging. It's definitely not your job to beat them, to win the game, or to make them lose. But it's also not your job to make sure they win, to entertain them, or to tell them a story. Pay attention to what they find interesting and engaging about the game you are playing, and try to incorporate, or reincorporate, those elements you find inspiring yourself. Playing an entertaining game and creating an enjoyable piece of fiction is every player's responsibility. As the GM, you're something of a facilitator—and probably the one who will end up doing the most work—but that doesn't mean you're the one in charge. You don't have to be the boss.

You may be called the “Game Master,” but it's really just a legacy term, used here because it is so common. If you're a master of anything it's a master of ceremonies—you're a presenter and a facilitator first, not the star of the show. The real stars are the other players and their characters. They won't have much to do if there's no dungeons for them to raid, that's true, but without those characters, that dungeon is just going to sit there, collecting dust.

What you do:

- Put the PCs in situations you think are interesting.
- Present the PCs with challenges you find exciting.
- Don't try to “win.”
- Engage with the interests of the other players.

Dungeons and Monsters

This game is focused on adventurers who raid nightmare dungeons, looting them of treasures and causing them to crumble away, all while trying to avoid being killed by monsters. The more your game strays from this activity, the more you will need to stray from these rules. The previous sections covered the activities of the PCs while in a dungeon as well as their activities in society between forays into nightmare. This section gives you the tools to create those nightmare dungeons, including the nightmare creatures that populate these incursions.

When you create dungeons and monsters, always keep in mind that this game assumes your players can show up to any given game session with new characters if they want to, and that you might not even have the exact same group of players each session. Tying the setting materials you create too closely to any one or two characters may mean it has less of an impact when they don't show up, or if other characters are the ones who interact with it the most. If you design monsters, obstacles, and challenges without reference to the players' characters, it is easier to create a feeling of verisimilitude, and make it seem like this is a real place, independent of those characters.



Creating a Nightmare Incursion

Beyond the veil of sleep, beyond the stars, beyond time and space itself, lies a world full of nightmares, conscious and solid. This nightmare realm has seen the waking world, and tasted its fears. It hungers for more. In order to invade the Kingdoms of Dreams, the nightmare realm creates self-contained spaces that act as bridges, allowing nightmare creatures to influence the human world and letting humans enter this world of nightmares. Because these incursions are constrained spaces, they usually take the form of caves and tunnels and built environments like dungeons.

Nightmare incursions are composed of multiple individual lairs. Each lair is controlled by one specific type of nightmare, called the crown, which also determines the appearance and character of the lair. Lairs are ranked by level, just like characters are. The higher level a lair is, the closer it is to the nightmare realm and the more dangerous its crown is.

Lairs are not stable creations, however. In order to exist, they require an anchor. Any material object infused with strong emotion by humans can function as an anchor—the more the item was, or is, valued, the stronger the lair attached to it can be. This does not mean the anchor must always be monetarily valuable, though that is often the case.

It is also easier for lower-level lairs to maintain a portal that accesses the waking world directly. It requires some kind of will or action by human beings in order for the connection to be made, and lairs closer to the nightmare realm itself are harder for the human mind to comprehend. Because of this, most incursions are composed of numerous lairs, with the lowest-level lairs being points of entry for humans. But even if an incursion's connections to the waking world are destroyed, any lair that still has an anchor may reach out to the sleeping minds of humanity and influence someone to create a new portal.

Cults on the Borderlands

When a nightmare incursion is discovered, adventurers inevitably arrive to attack it. Although a wave of descending humanity can be good for the nightmares in the short term, it often means destruction in the long term. Nightmares prefer to find corrupted humans to hide the entrances to their incursions, so they can spread their evil covertly.

These corrupted outposts are run by servants of nightmare, or even by inhuman monsters, but are not part of the incursions themselves. They can exist in the midst of a bustling civilization without being obvious. Normal people may come and go, pass by and through, without being subjected to curses and madness. Only those the outpost's minions capture specifically have the taint inflicted upon them.

However, since these outposts are still part of the civilized world, and not part of either the incursions they hide or the ruins of the ancient world we call the Vale of Serpents, any treasures recovered from them can provide no experience points at all.



Step 1: The Crown

Every lair in a nightmare incursion is controlled and inhabited by a particular type of creature—a thing composed of nightmares to terrify the human soul. There might be a single nightmare creature of great power, but usually the lair is able to spawn an unlimited number of nightmares whose level is the same as that of the lair.

You can use the nightmare creation procedures presented later in this chapter or use your own methods for creating monsters (including using monsters created by someone else for your nightmare creatures). The crown represents the main risk and the main threat to the PCs who venture into the lair, even though there might be other monsters inside it, and other dangers. Until the anchor is removed or destroyed, the crown will always be there.

Lair Type

There are four types of dungeon lairs, each indicating what type of threat is foremost in the lair. You can wait and choose the lair type when you roll for the additional threats, or you can choose a lair type as part of determining the crown. Choosing now can help you imagine the lair's flavour and the history behind the thoughts and emotions fuelling it.

- **Deathtrap Dungeons** are full of traps instead of monsters. The environment itself is treacherous and lethal, designed to lure people in and destroy them in gruesome manners. In a deathtrap dungeon, PCs have more time to work carefully, but if they don't take that time, death and dismemberments quickly follow.
- **Heretic Temples** are inhabited by crazed people who worship the nightmare realm and work to spread its corruption when they eventually return to the world above. The danger of this type of dungeon lies in the fact that there are people here—and not all of them voluntarily, perhaps. But because of the corrupting nature of the nightmare realm, they are all unstable.
- **Monster Hordes** are lairs that inhuman monsters have flocked to. They work for, or with, the nightmare creatures that control the lair in some kind of symbiotic or parasitic relationship. Monsters are a more immediate threat than human minions, but have a harder time becoming a threat to human society proper.
- **Spawning Pits** have more nightmare creatures than any other threat. Their main purpose is to absorb the fears and night terrors of humans in order to spawn new nightmare incursions. These lairs are more concerned with creating nightmare creatures, rather than trapping people inside or attracting allies.

Dungeons Without Nightmares

If you want to create a dungeon that consists only of monsters and traps, and does not include any nightmare incursions, use only the rules for generating ruins on pages 345-353, instead of the rules for creating incursions.

Step 2: The Anchor

The anchor is the object or objects that tie the nightmare realm to the material plane. These objects must have been suffused with human emotions before being stolen by nightmares to be used as anchors, and the nightmares also feed off these emotions, using them to help create the features of their lairs.

Value

Because expensive objects are often valued quite highly by their owners and those that covet them, the anchor may be of great monetary value on its own—a gemstone or a chest full of gold coins, for example—or it might be an otherwise worthless item, in which case the monetary value determines how much a collector will pay to possess it. Some collectors may have nefarious uses for such items, however.

To determine the monetary value of the anchor in a nightmare incursion lair, roll 2d6 and add the lair level:

You are not required to tell the players the exact value of the anchor until they remove it from the dungeon.

Roll	Monetary Value
3	1d10 cyphers.
4	1d10 × 2 cyphers.
5	1d10 × 5 cyphers.
6	1d10 × 10 cyphers.
7	1d10 × 20 cyphers.
8	1d10 × 50 cyphers.
9	1d10 × 100 cyphers.
10-11	1d10 × 200 cyphers.
12-13	1d10 × 500 cyphers.
14-15	1d10 × 1,000 cyphers.
16-17	1d10 × 2,000 cyphers.
18-19	1d10 × 5,000 cyphers.
20+	1d10 × 10,000 cyphers.

Or make the anchor a magic item.

Size and Weight

Roll 1d6 to determine the **size and weight** of the anchor, as expressed by its encumbrance value. It may consist of multiple items—half a dozen diamonds, a pair of swords, a stack of loose paper—as long as it adds up to the specific encumbrance rating determined by the roll:

An encumbrance result of 7-9 may also indicate an oversized item (such as a piece of furniture), and a 10+ may indicate multiple oversized items. A PC can only carry one oversized item at a time, and some may require more than one person to carry. Or the anchor can be a hoard of seven or more encumbering items.

Roll	Anchor Weight
1-2	Small or tiny item.
3-4	1 encumbrance.
5	1d6 encumbrance worth of item(s).
6	2d6 encumbrance worth of item(s).

There are random tables in the appendix (pages 375-383) to help you decide what kinds of items make up a lair's anchor.



Step 3: Additional Threats

The crown and anchor are not the only important elements of a nightmare incursion. Lairs attract other monsters and corrupted humans, and the nightmares cannot help but fill their lairs with traps and special features that reveal their true natures.

If you have not already chosen a lair type, choose one now: deathtrap dungeon, heretic temple, monster horde, or spawning pit.

Corrupted Outpost

If this lair can be accessed directly from the Kingdoms of Dreams—as opposed to being accessible only from other nightmare incursion lairs—roll to see if there is a corrupted outpost attached to it:

- **If the lair is a deathtrap dungeon**, there is a 1 in 6 chance of a corrupted outpost, maintained by any type of corrupted human or monster.
- **If the lair is a heretic temple**, there is a 2 in 6 chance of a corrupted outpost maintained by corrupted humans.
- **If the lair is a monster horde**, there is a 2 in 6 chance of a corrupted outpost maintained by inhuman monsters.
- **If the lair is a spawning pit**, there is a 3 in 6 chance of a corrupted outpost maintained by either corrupted humans or inhuman monsters.

If a corrupted outpost is present, the passage to the nightmare incursion is located inside of it, either as a hidden doorway or displayed prominently where civilization cannot see it. A corrupted outpost counts as a lair of one level lower than the lair whose entrance it guards, has no anchor, and is maintained by a group of people or monsters instead of nightmares.

Other Elements

Roll 1d6 and add the lair’s dungeon level to determine how many additional elements the lair contains. For each additional element, roll a d6 to determine what type of element it is:

Roll	Corrupted Outpost	Deathtrap Dungeon	Heretic Temple	Monster Horde	Spawning Pit
1	Corrupted	Monster	Corrupted	Monster	Monster
2	Monster	Special	Corrupted	Monster	Nightmare
3	Special	Special	Monster	Special	Special
4	Special	Trap	Special	Special	Special
5	Special	Trap	Special	Trap	Trap
6	Trap	Trap	Trap	Trap	Trap

Then add more elements of your choice, up to the lair’s level in number, if you like.

Corrupted

Any type of human can be a corrupted by the nightmares. They are not required to be cultists, though professional nightmare cultists do exist. Roll 1d20:

Roll Type of Corrupted Humans					
1	Assassin.	7	Fighter.	15	Scholar.
2-3	Bandit.	8	Mercenary.	16	Servant.
4	Bard.	9-10	Noble.	17-18	Slave.
5	Champion.	11-12	Peasant.	19	Thief.
6	Cultist.	13-14	Proletariat.	20	Wizard.

Monsters

Any kind of monster, nightmare creature, or human antagonist. Roll on any table, or 1d20 on either of these ones, for inspiration:

Roll	Monster
1	Acid-mouthed horrors.
2	Bejewelled golem.
3	Chthonic goddess.
4	Corpse-eaters.
5	Corrosive amoeba.
6	Coven of witches.
7	Degenerate wyrm.
8	Drowning pool selkie.
9	Fangs and claws.
10	Filth mound.
11	Insane counterfeiter.
12	Insectoids.
13	Name collector.
14	Pack hunters.
15	Relic trader.
16	Shapechangers.
17	Shards of light.
18	Strands of ooze.
19	Thought poisoner.
20	Treasure gullet serpent.

Roll	Nightmare Creature
1	Blankets of darkness.
2	Blood, meat, and fire.
3	Burrowing parasites.
4	Clouds of confusion.
5	Consuming earth.
6	Corrupted beauty.
7	Death on wings.
8	The drain.
9	Faceless men.
10	Funereal majesty.
11	The ghosts of your failure.
12	Hidden tentacles.
13	Inhuman stillness.
14	The iron maiden.
15	Knife hands.
16	Needles by the hundreds.
17	Poison treasure.
18	A singing flame.
19	Thief of memories.
20	The untouchable feast.



Special Features

Not everything inside a dungeon is an immediate threat to the PCs. Some aspects of the environment present special opportunities that can be used by the monsters against the PCs, but also by the PCs themselves, if they can seize the initiative. For each special feature, roll 1d6 to determine its nature:

Roll	Special Feature
1	Danger.
2	Enhancement.
3	Resource.
4	Reveal.
5	Subterfuge.
6	Transformer.

Danger

It’s not an active threat, but an existing hazard that is part of the environment. It can be dangerous to both PCs as well as monsters. A bottomless chasm, a fast-flowing river, fungal growths that release poisonous spore clouds when disturbed, metal rods that attract lightning strikes, poisonous fruit, a raging bonfire, or stinging thorns and nettles.

Enhancement

A feature that increases the power of a threat in the dungeon, be it monster, trap, or danger. The enhancement can be removed, if the PCs discover how. An alarm that reveals the PCs and their location, a balcony that only the monsters know how to access, a psychic monolith that increases the range of nightmare creatures’ powers, a supply of drugs that induce in the cultists a berserk rage, or any danger that the monsters are immune to.

Resource

An obvious feature of the dungeon that can be used for advantage by monsters and PCs alike. An alchemical pool with magical waters, an area of high ground that is hard to get to, an elevator, a garden of weapons, a magic gate that leads to some other part of the dungeon, or a scrying pool shows other areas.

Reveal

Anything that shows the story behind the nightmare incursion’s creation. Diaries and journals, paintings and photographs, visions of the past, remnants of a person’s life.

Subterfuge

Anything that hides a monster, trap, or danger from being easily uncovered. This can be a deliberate subterfuge, or unwitting. Illusory flooring or stairs, a maze, overgrown plants and vines, persistent fog, secret doors, monsters disguised as statues, or a wizard with the invisibility spell.

Transformer

A feature that changes the tactical situation in the dungeon drastically whenever it is used. Giant plants that secrete gallons of sticky resin when cut, illusory creatures, lockable metal doors that all take different keys, a room that moves from place to place, rooms that fill up with water, a source of illumination that turns on and off, or windows that let the winter cold inside.

Traps

A feature of the environment that is dangerous or deadly. Traps can be built by the nightmare realm or by others who inhabit it, whether humans or other monsters. Interacting with traps created by nightmares attracts the attention of nightmares, and creating a commotion by falling victim to a trap tends to attract other monsters. And then there is the problem of the trap itself.

For each trap, choose or roll 1d12 to determine what type it is:

Roll	Incursion Trap Type
1	Alarm or summoning trap.
2	Ceiling trap (blade, falling objects, gas, nets, etc).
3	Crushing trap.
4	Dart or projectile trap.
5	Drowning or liquid trap.
6	Explosion, fire, flash, or lightning trap.
7	Falling or transportation trap (pit or chute, moving hallway, etc).
8	Fog, gas, or smoke (may be toxic).
9	Illusion.
10	Infection or poison.
11	Insanity or mind control trap (reduces Intelligence or Willpower).
12	Locking door, maze, or prison.

Example effects:

- An **alarm** demands the encounter die be rolled every 1d6 rounds.
- A **blinding flash** causes blindness for 1d6 rounds. Save against Dexterity to close your eyes in time.
- **Falling** inflicts 1d4 Wounds per 15 feet, bypassing Disposition.
- **Fog or smoke** obscures the environment. Save against your Intelligence or miss noticing hidden dangers.
- **Insanity** reduces Intelligence by 1d6 points. Save against your Willpower to suffer only half that loss.
- A **locked door** can be battered down, save against your Ferocity after 1 turn.
- **Mind control** reduces Willpower by 1d6 points and implants a command. Save against your Willpower to resist the command.
- **Poison** reduces Health by 1d6 points (or Dexterity, if paralytic).
- **Projectiles** make attack rolls. Add the dungeon's level, deal 1d6 damage.
- **Slippery liquid** causes you to fall unless you save against your Dexterity.
- A **summoning trap** causes a nightmare or other monster to appear.



Step 4: The Map

Once you have a crown, an anchor, and a collection of other elements, you need to place them on a map of the lair. You can draw a new map or use one you already have. You can place elements in different places or double them up. You can leave sections of your map empty, or add new lairs for those sections. The number of elements you have in a lair does not have to reflect the size or number of areas on the map. Some dungeons are crammed full, with death around every corner. Others feel almost like wastelands, with their nearly endless collections of empty, unused rooms.

Areas

A cavern, a room, or a collection of adjacent spaces that have a connecting feature in them may all count as a single area. If there are multiple features in the same place, it is still a single area. A large group of empty rooms may also count as a single area.

You should have a rough idea of where an area that is inhabited by an important feature begins and ends. It should be hard or impossible to interact with two areas at once without standing directly on the threshold between them. When the PCs cross these borders for the first time, the nightmare realm can sense them, and it reacts to them.

Connections

Dungeons can be single lairs only, if you want, or you can create massive subterranean structures full of nightmares, connected by whatever types of passageways make sense (or even ones that don't, at least not to outsiders). Larger dungeons should be arranged roughly by level, with the lowest level having the most number of portals to the material plane. As adventurers delve deeper into the dungeon, they move from one level to another, with each subsequent level having a higher rating than the last. Each lair that makes up a particular level has the same level rating.

This is not a strict rule, though. A Level 1 lair could have a passageway leading to a Level 4 lair, for example, and a dungeon designed specifically for high-level characters might only have high-level lairs in it.

The map layouts for nightmare incursions come in three main categories, mostly based on how many entrances they have:

- **Tunnel incursions** have only one entrance from the waking world. Inside, they are usually linear, but may have interconnecting lairs or other areas.
- **Hive incursions** have multiple entrances, but those entrances are still restricted to claustrophobic portals like doors and cave mouths.
- **Zone incursions** happen when the nightmares blanket the Earth like a layer. They can be entered from any direction.



Entrances: Tunnel Incursions

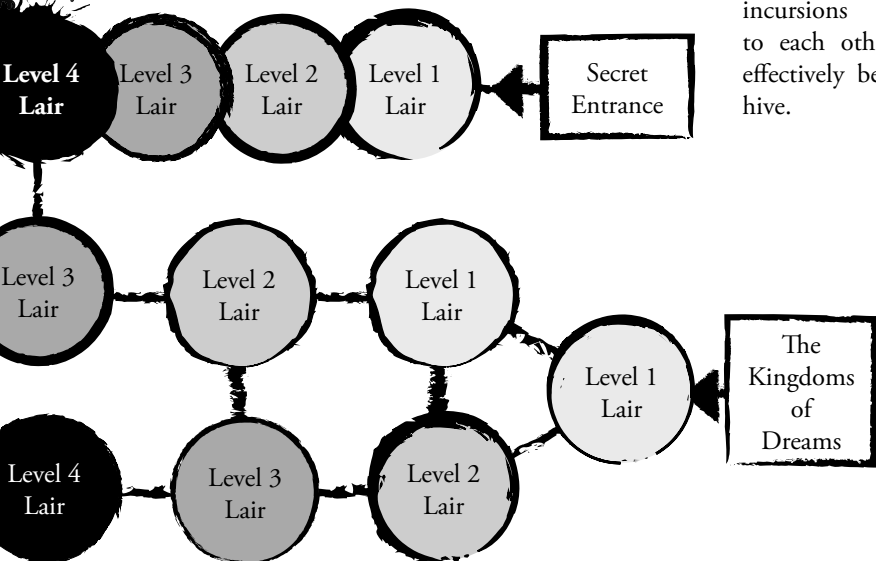
How a nightmare incursion actually manifests on the material plane depends on its structure. The simplest structure is a **tunnel incursion**, which has only one main entrance. Adventurers must get through low-level lairs in order to access those of higher level. The basement of a house, for example, could lead to deeper basement levels, all made of nightmares. But a remote valley, with only one safe point of access, could also serve to hold a tunnel incursion.

Because of its mostly-linear structure, the tunnel incursion lends itself to enclosed spaces, including both subterranean and built environments. But it can also work in a more open environment, such as in an isolated mountain valley, where intruders must travel through one lair to get to the next, repeatedly. There can be other ways in, and even ways of bypassing lairs of the lower levels, but they require clever thinking or planning ahead.

The advantage, and disadvantage, of a tunnel is that it follows a straight line—easier to prepare for, but with less room for the players' choices to really matter. Since the most important feature of a tunnel incursion is that it has only a single entrance, you can vary things up considerably once the PCs get inside, by creating areas that loop around or are connected to numerous other areas instead of just one.

If you prepare multiple low-level lairs, you don't have to use them all at once. New lairs can replace old ones if the PCs don't get all the way to the end on their first try. However, once multiple tunnel

incursions connect to each other, they effectively become a hive.



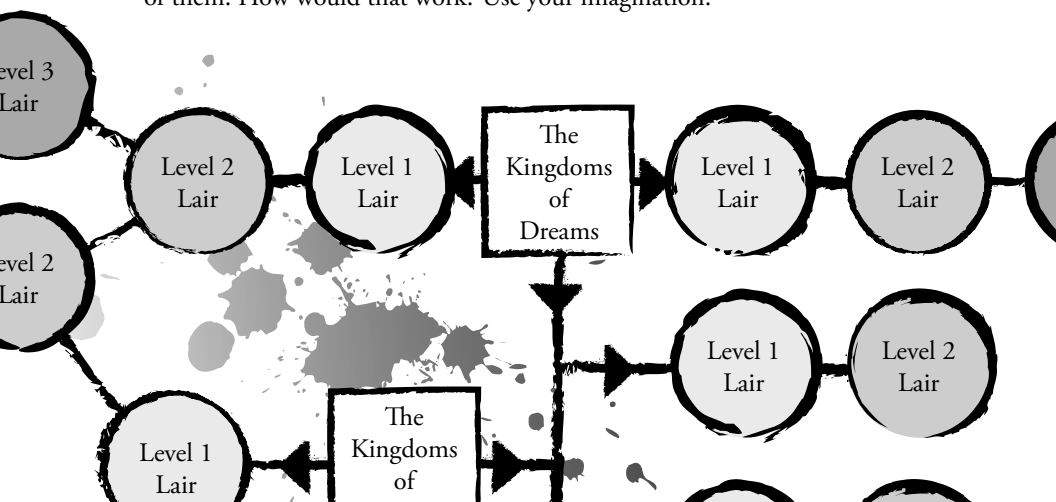
Entrances: Hive Incursions

Somewhat more complex is the **hive incursion**, where numerous lairs have entrances connected to the waking world. They might be connected to each other by passageways within the incursion, or only by the material structure that contains their entrances. In this kind of incursion, the straight line past the entrance might be the only part of the dungeon that exists in the material world, while each of the many passageways leading off from it are either individual lairs, or entire tunnel incursions unto themselves.

Hive incursions are similar to most traditional dungeon complexes, providing depth and variety without being completely open. They constrain the players enough to reasonably prevent choice paralysis, without limiting them to a single path or a fixed series of encounters. It is perfectly fine to start play with a tunnel incursion, then expand it into a larger, more complex hive incursion once the players have begun exploring it—and started destroying parts of it! You can also use their characters' experiences in the dungeon to inspire new areas, monsters, and traps.

Examples of hive incursions include:

- An abandoned prison, where each cell leads into a maze of incursion lairs, many of which connect to each other. Perhaps some areas of the prison are cut off or sealed up so tightly that they can only be accessed by passing through the nightmare realm?
- A cave complex whose tunnels may lead explorers to vast, natural caverns, or deeper into the nightmare realm, past the solid stone where caverns end.
- A corrupted wizard's tower, that now has additional levels, both above its physical roof, and below its deepest basement. Not only do these levels make a loop, with the lowest leading down to the highest, but they have doors and windows that connect in surprising, impossible ways.
- A haunted mansion, whose doors often lead to rooms that do not, and never have, existed anywhere on Earth. There could even be multiple layers of incursions piled on top of each other, with the same physical room beneath all of them. How would that work? Use your imagination.

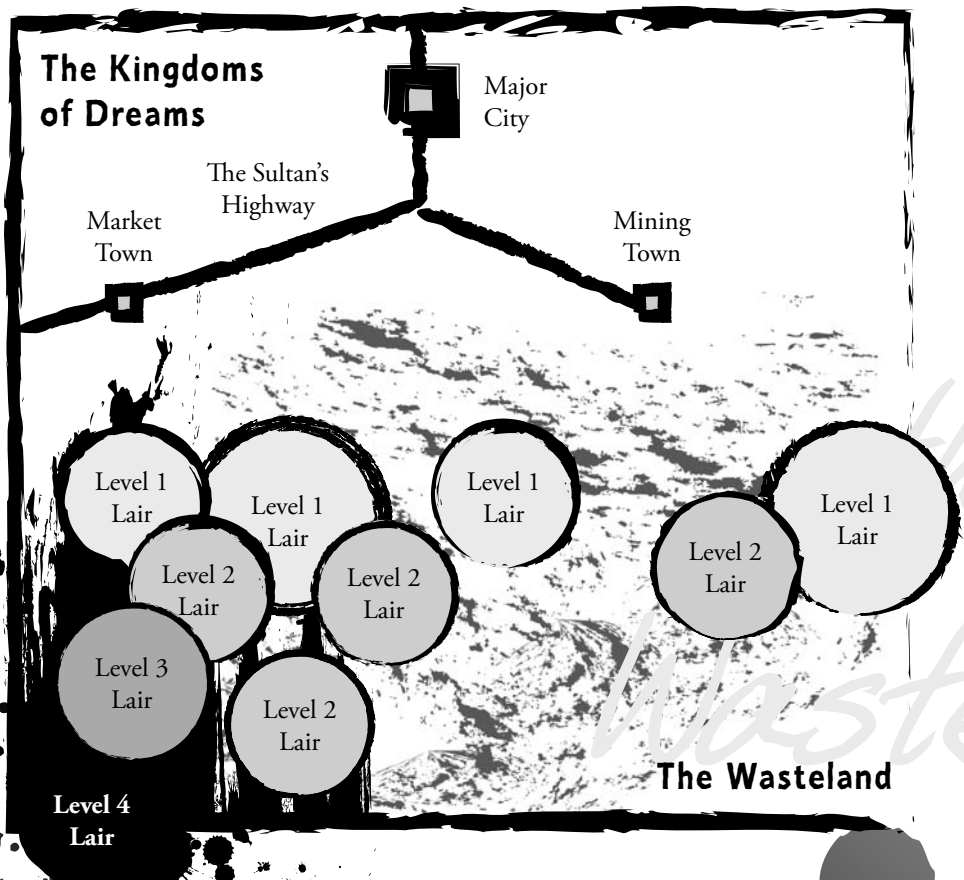


Entrances: Zone Incursions

The format of the **zone incursion** is the loosest. In these dungeons, lairs occupy a specific area of the world, overlapping it and allowing nightmares to wander it freely. Lairs do not have to touch each other, though each can also lead to both hive and tunnel incursions, if you wish. This type of incursion works best in wilderness areas, with lairs scattered across remote plains, swamps, or forests. But it can also serve for a house, inside whose rooms dwell nightmare creatures, but whose doors do not lead one into places that exist only in the realm of nightmares.

A zone incursion is more or less open to the waking world on all side, more so than a tunnel incursion that has the sky above but blocks travel on either side (as in the mountain valley example). The weakness these dungeons share is that they can both be spoiled quite easily by daylight. Nightmares grow mighty under the cover of darkness, but lose their impact once exposed and seen clearly.

The tight confines of interior spaces likewise work to strengthen nightmares, trapping you inside their domains. Outside, the night can serve a similar function, pressing down from all directions, whereas brightly-lit open areas tend to dilute the sensation of horror that incursions employ as a weapon against the Kingdoms of Dreams. Keep this in mind when designing your own nightmare dungeons.



Themes

Dungeons created by the nightmare realm are not limited to what could, realistically, be built underground (or even above ground, for that matter). Corrupted outposts should probably follow such logic, but nightmare incursions inhabit other dimensions, part of some other plane of existence. They are made of the same things nightmare creatures are made of: peoples' nightmares.

Roll 1d20 or choose the materials that the interior structures of your dungeon is made of. The entire dungeon might be mostly the same material, or it could be different for each lair, or each area of each lair.

Alternately, if you want your dungeon to be made from memories of structures entirely built by human hands, and themes around one or more specific structures, you can roll 1d20 on the following table to generate a random result:

Roll Materials

1-2	Bricks and mortar.
3	Carved rock.
4	Cloth, fabric, rope.
5	Crystal or glass.
6-8	Earthen construction.
9	Flesh and meat.
10-11	Human houses.
12-13	Natural caves.
14	Plants, roots, thatch, trees.
15-19	Stonework.
20	Wood construction.

Roll Structure

1	Baths or pools.	11	Mining tunnels.
2	Castle.	12	Offices.
3	Country manor.	13	Palace.
4	Crypt or tomb.	14	Sailing ship.
5	Display rooms.	15	School.
6	Forges.	16	Shops.
7	Gardens.	17	Tannery.
8	Halls.	18	Tenement housing.
9	Hospital.	19	Torture chambers.
10	Jail cells.	20	Workshop.



Creating Nightmares

Every lair that is part of a nightmare incursion, of whatever level, is run by one type of nightmare creature. Ideally, every incursion has a different collection of nightmare creatures, but this is not always feasible, and different lairs in the same incursion lose little if they are run by the same type of nightmare. But the nightmare realm builds itself out of the actual nightmares and inner lives of human beings, so nightmare creatures should have some connection to the environment in the lairs they inhabit.

Concept

First you need an idea. What type of thoughts, dreams, and emotions is this nightmare formed out of? What experiences led to those feelings, and how does the dungeon reflect them? Every nightmare incursion is created from the negative experiences of humans, as they perceive them inside their hearts and minds. Devise a situation of your own, or roll 1d10 one or more times to determine the primary emotions that created the nightmare, and answer some of the related questions.

Second, imagine how this creature turns those emotions and experiences into weapons that it can use against people? Does it attack the body, the mind, or the soul? Does it take a humanoid form? Or is it an animal, a cloud, a weapon that moves on its own? A psychic monolith? Is it a ghost that cannot be touched?

Nightmares of Levels 1-3 should be entirely physical in nature. They are too close to the material world to be anything else. Nightmares of Levels 4-6 might be intangible spectres, or immune to physical harm that isn't magical, but should at the very least still resemble tangible creatures. Nightmares of Levels 7 or higher might have any kind of form you can imagine.

Next, picture in your mind the kind of person whose inner life gave birth to this creature. Even the good things they remember can be used as traps and weapons by the nightmare realm, even though it is the negative experiences—the pains, fears, and doubts they had—that nightmare incursions are truly made of. Use those elements as you construct this creature.

The person or people who instilled their emotions into the anchor can all contribute aspects of their inner lives to the nightmare creatures, but so can others who have died at this spot, or in the presence of nightmares. First contact with the nightmare realm was made by sorcerers in ancient times, but now that the

Roll	Emotions
1	Alienation.
2	Anger, hatred, rage.
3	Anxiety, fear, paranoia, terror.
4	Apathy, failure, ruin.
5	Desire, envy, greed, pride.
6	Disgust.
7	Gluttony, indulgence, lust.
8	Grief, loss, regret, sadness.
9	Hunger and thirst, need.
10	Pain.

barrier between it and the mortal world has been penetrated so many times, even normal people's thoughts and feelings can be stolen and used. PCs that die inside a nightmare incursion can also contribute, as well as those that spend too much time in the wilderness near areas that have been corrupted. Make sure to ask the players questions about what their PCs are afraid of, what they have doubts about, and what they think of their job. You can use those details later on, to build your dungeons.

And finally, think about what the people involved cherished and loved, and how this nightmare incursion can oppose those feelings. Does it use those things as bait, luring the unwary to their doom? Does it show those things, over and over again, but debased and ruined? What does it do to prevent good feelings from occurring?

Alienation

What do other people desire that you do not? What would it be like to have the dungeon show you these things, again and again? How would it do that? How do people shut you out and exclude you? How are these monsters similar?

- Alien monsters are hard to understand or deal with. They attack Intelligence, destroying your ability to comprehend the world properly.
- Feelings of alienation attract dwellers in the deep.
- A lack of emotional connection makes creating golems an attractive option.
- Things that look familiar but behave in unexpected, even alien, manners create feelings of alienation.

Anger, Hatred, Rage

What infuriates you? How could the monsters make you angry? What mistakes could you make, or have you made, in anger? How does the dungeon preserve and repeat them? How have you been wronged? What if you could have revenge?

- Angry monsters inflict terrible injuries, but have few defences.
- Monsters of hatred are specialized to deal with certain foes.
- A need for revenge attracts undead creatures.
- Rage strikes quickly and overwhelmingly.

Anxiety, Fear, Paranoia, Terror

What makes you want to run away? What makes your skin crawl? How are the monsters here like that? How is the dungeon shaped to amplify those feelings?

- Anxiety destroys confidence, creates uncertainty.
- Fear causes you to turn back and run away.
- Illusions cause friends to be suspicious, and turn against each other.
- Paranoid monsters have numerous weapons.
- Terror causes either panic or immobility.
- Wanderlust built on a fear of being tied down attracts other monsters, especially faeries and dwellers in the deep.



Apathy, Failure, Ruin

What is the worst kind of destruction and ruin? What causes it? How does the dungeon preserve or perpetuate it? How have you failed? How do the monsters remind you of that?

- Apathy causes immobility and inaction.
- Callous monsters are easily defeated, but even as they are destroyed, their nihilistic influence causes disaster and misery.
- False hope is a powerful reminder of your failings and the inevitable ruination that awaits you. False friends, false floors, false exits.
- Nightmares can wear the faces of the people you failed.
- Ruin can affect the mind or body, or even gear that the PCs have.

Desire, Envy, Greed, Pride

What do you want that you can't have? How would the nightmares taunt you if they knew? What would they do to humiliate you? Imagine what someone would do if they wanted something so badly that nothing else mattered. How is the anchor connected to similar events? What if a person was so obsessed with their own deeds, rank, or possessions, they could think of nothing else? How could the dungeon use this against you? How could the monsters wear it for all to see? How could you go too far in displaying your achievements? How would you feel about being celebrated for something that wasn't your doing? Could you give up everything that fills you with pride in order to survive?

- All treasure is trapped, and most of it is fake.
- Monsters use the lure of treasure, sex, eternal youth, and other rewards to entrap humans.
- Monuments and statues come alive, show themselves to be better than you.
- Windows can show you what you quest after, even as they keep you away from it. Only monsters may pass through them.

Disgust

What makes your skin crawl? What makes you stare in revulsion and horror? How does the dungeon show you these things and make you watch them?

- Defeating an enemy does not guarantee you are rid of them. Grotesque and broken, the dead and wounded harry you still.
- Disgusting things infect your gear, inspiring revulsion in you whenever you make use of them, carry them, or even look at them.
- The sight of someone's insides, exposed to view.
- A powerful need to escape this putrid cage of flesh that is your body.
- The unwelcome juxtaposition of unrelated elements leads to the innocent of the pair becoming poisoned in the mind of the audience.

Gluttony, Indulgence, Lust

What happens when you overindulge? How do the nightmares reflect that? Who pays for the pleasures you enjoy, and how do they feel about it? How do your pleasures own you? How does the dungeon offer you indulgence?

- Gluttony and lust blur the lines between emotional and physical distress. The hunger makes you compulsive and nervous, but overindulgence leads to heartbreak and nausea, roiling delirium, and aching flesh.
- Indulgence attracts faeries, as well as ghosts, eager to possess your body and partake of your senses.
- Moderation is anathema to gluttony. Extremes are the norm: it must be always either feast or famine. So too with the glutton's dungeons.

Grief, Loss, Sadness

What are you afraid to give up? What would you hate to lose? How does the dungeon take those things away? What have you lost or left behind? What causes regret—anger, failure, negligence, weakness? How could the dungeon remind you of that, in the worst possible way?

- Amputation, whether real or illusory.
- Blankets of melancholy, a weight pressing down on everything.
- A death obsession or suicidal ideation attracts undead creatures.
- The faces of those who died come back to haunt you.

Hunger and Thirst, Need

What can't you live without? What would you do if you had to? How could the dungeon prevent you from getting what you need, and what would happen?

- Constant reminders of going without the things you need.
- Needy monsters sap your resources, take away your abilities, possessions, hope.
- The slow drain, like sheets of ice.
- Your stomach, knotted with hunger. A wild animal writhes inside your guts.

Pain

What causes damage, hurt, injury, and pain? How do the monsters employ that? How do you react to pain? How does the dungeon thrive on it?

- The invasiveness of pain that creeps into your guts, your joints, into your brain where it forces out all other thoughts.
- Pain lets you know you're alive. Thrill-seekers and adrenaline junkies are attracted to the promise of pain.
- Pain limits your ability to concentrate, to plan, and to react with kindness.
- The shame of being seen while in pain.



Nightmare Fuel

Nightmare creatures and incursions both are made from the unpleasant dreams, thoughts, and memories of people. Without these, the nightmare realm is nothing—or at least it has no way to physically manifest itself on the material plane.

The careless rituals of foolish and headstrong wizards provided the nightmare realm with its original material and footholds in this world. But these days, the most common source of nightmares is the minds of people near incursions.

However, the nightmares have a hard time discerning an individual's thoughts and imaginations in the dense chaos of a settlement's population. Extremely strong feelings may push a person into the nightmares, especially if they can provide an anchor, but this is rare. It is usually only when a person uses magical rituals to open themselves, or when they die inside a nightmare incursion, that they show themselves and their minds clearly to the nightmare realm, shining brightly through the fog of civilization.

When you die inside a nightmare incursion, the nightmare realm can plunder your dreams and memories and use whatever negative emotions it finds there to make new nightmares out of.

Dungeon Deaths

When a PC dies inside a nightmare incursion, if you do not know enough about their fears and past experiences, ask one or more of the following questions.

- *What are your final thoughts as you die, and what parts of your life flash before your eyes?*
- *What did no one ever understand about you and the pains in your soul?*
- *What do you regret most about dying in this dungeon?*
- *What do you wish had never happened to you?*
- *What great hopes and dreams die with you?*
- *What is your most cherished possession, and why?*
- *What was the greatest mistake of your life?*
- *Who are you leaving behind?*
- *Who do you blame for this untimely end?*
- *Who do you think will miss you when you don't come back?*
- *Who do you wish you had taken vengeance upon? What did they do to you?*

Take the answers they give you and create new nightmare creatures and incursions from them. If they leave valuable items behind, the nightmare realm can turn these into anchors, though it does not need to create an anchor in order to use these other thoughts and experiences as nightmare fuel.



Away from Civilization

Out in the wilderness, where a person is all alone, things are different. With so few people around, the nightmares can hear your fears and your regrets more clearly. They do not need to wait until you die before they steal the darkness inside you.

The inside of an incursion is much the same—your impressions and emotional reactions to the dungeon can be turned into more nightmares. These are not usually as useful to the nightmare realm, however, because they are rarely new. Inside an incursion, the PCs tend to be fighting nightmares, after all, and thus experiencing the same emotions that created them.

Even so, you can ask the PCs some of these questions while they are inside an incursion, or out in the wilderness at night:

- *What are you afraid of?*
- *What do you hope isn't waiting for you in the dungeon?*
- *What, or who, does this dungeon remind you of?*
- *What sort of creature do you think was responsible for what you see here?*
- *What terrible monster do these noises make you think of?*
- *What would make you leave this dungeon, even after all you have seen already?*

Anything that is part of their answers is something that you, the GM, can use as nightmare fuel. Unlike when a PC dies inside an incursion, however, you have to pay them back for it. You can only use these experience, thoughts, and memories to build your nightmare incursions with if you let the PCs arrive at the dungeon unscathed by the vagaries of the journey there. You both get something, and everybody wins!

Monster Stats

Once you have an idea for your creature, you can write rules for how it functions in play. The average nightmare creature has these stats as a base:

Level equal to the level of its lair (chaotic or evil) nightmare.

Armour 10+level, Hit Die 1d6, Morale +1, Numbers *, (Size), Speed 7, Surprise 0. Cha 0, Dex 10, Fer 10, Hth 0, Int 10, Wil 10.

Skills: Choose one or more things the monster is particularly good at.

1 attack per round.

- Choose a source of harm that deals double damage.
- Choose a source of harm that deals no damage.
- A special ability, attack, defence, or trait that makes this creature unique.

*See page 336 for possible numbers that nightmare creatures may appear in.

All monsters, including nightmare creatures, have the following elements in addition to their descriptions and any special rules they follow:

Alignment

Like humans, monsters can be chaotic, evil, good, lawful, or neutral. Nightmare creatures are only ever evil or chaotic, depending on whether their main target for destruction is an individual's body and soul, or the bonds of social order.

Armour

When the PCs attack this monster, in close combat or with missile weapons, they need to roll this number or higher in order to score a hit and inflict damage. Armour can be just as representative of agility or the ability to phase in and out of reality as it is of how tough the monster's skin is, if you want it to be.

Armour Level of Protection

10	Unprotected. The same as a human wearing no armour whatsoever.
11	Slightly better protection than a human wearing no armour at all. A small shield normally grants this level of protection.
13	Light armour. A leather jerkin or chainmail shirt provides this level of protection. Monsters may have thick fur, tough hide, or layers of blubber.
15	Heavy armour. The same as a human wearing chainmail, a mix of metal plating and leather, or other hardened layers. Shells, exoskeletons, and bone plating could all provide monsters with this level of armour.
17	A human wearing a full suit of plate gets this level of protection. Monsters might be protected by any equivalently solid material.
20+	This means a monster is inhumanly resistant to physical harm in general, something usually provided by obviously supernatural means.

Attacks

By default, monsters add their level to attack rolls that are overcome attempts. If this is not the case, it will be noted. Some monsters have multiple attacks that they roll for, and some inflict bonus damage, whether their attack roll hits or misses, just like fighters do. This will also be noted.

Humans, on the other hand, only add their level to overcome rolls that their profession or background gives them expertise in, so they do not get an attack bonus unless it makes obvious sense that they should.

Attributes

It is not always necessary for monsters to have attribute scores, though you will at least require a Dexterity score to determine initiative. Individual monsters of the same type can all use the same attribute scores, or you can even use the same score for all six of a monster's attributes. Creatures that are not alive have Health scores of zero. Creatures that are unable to interact with, or influence, others socially have Charisma scores of zero.

Damage

Monsters normally deal damage equal to their Hit Die. If an attack causes a different amount of damage, this should be listed in the attack's description.

Disposition

A monster's Disposition score is determined by rolling its Hit Die one or more times, based on its size and what condition it is currently in:

- **Tiny, weak, or unwell** creatures roll one Hit Die to determine their Disposition score.
- **Sturdy and well-rested** creatures roll two Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition score.
- **Huge creatures**, and those that are **supernaturally durable**, roll three Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition score.

Hit Die

This is the die you roll to determine a monster's Disposition, and (normally) the die you roll when it deals damage. Some monsters, and some monsters' attacks, can deal a different amount of damage. This should be noted. Lacking any other instructions, a monster deals damage equal to its Hit Die when it attacks.

Level

The higher a monster's level, the tougher and more dangerous it is (or should be). A monster's level also indicates what level of the dungeon it should normally appear on. If a monster appears on a dungeon of a lower level than its own, it presents a threat more dangerous than what can reasonably be expected at that level, and vice versa.

Morale

This number modifies the roll when you test the monster's morale (see page 265). Any situational factors that change this modifier are listed in the monster's description. Test morale in these situations:

- After a round during which one or more creatures have been reduced to zero Disposition, roll to test the morale of their side.
- After a round during which a creature lost half its Disposition or more, roll to test that creature's morale.
- After reinforcements arrive, test the opposing side's morale.

Numbers

The first number listed is the number of monsters a random encounter consists of. The second number, in parentheses, indicates the number of monsters in a lair. When a dungeon contains a monster as an additional feature, it contains a lair of monsters, either inside the dungeon, or encamped nearby. Use the first number for random encounters with wandering monsters.

Nightmares only appear in lair numbers when they are the crown or in a spawning pit. While there are (theoretically) an infinite number of them in the incursions they inhabit, they are not social and do not gather together like other creatures do.

Size

Size affects how you can fight a monster, and whether you can wrestle with it or not. Monsters that are roughly human-sized, such as common dolphins, hyenas, and leopards are, do not need their size rating listed; only smaller and larger creatures do. Most little birds, pets, and vermin are **Tiny**. Children, dogs, and pythons are **Small**. Crocodiles, horses, and tigers are **Large**. Elephants, rhinos, and whales are **Huge**. Size also affects Disposition, see pages 286 and 331.

Under normal conditions, your attacks cannot inflict damage upon another creature more than one size category larger than you are:

- Tiny creatures may hurt Small creatures, but nothing larger.
- Small creatures may hurt the human-sized, but not Large or Huge creatures.
- Human-sized creatures may not hurt Huge creatures.

Special weapons—such as explosives, flaming oil, large-bore firearms, or poison—may give you the ability to take on much-larger foes.

Skills

The physical activities a monster is good at are usually fairly obvious, but creatures can also be skilled at non-obvious tasks, and these should be listed. Monsters make skill saves using their full attribute scores when they do things that match up with their skills, even if they are difficult or require specialized knowledge. Obvious natural abilities of a monster are also tested against the monster's full attribute score. Otherwise, they must roll against half their attribute scores, rounded down.

Special Abilities

A monster's most pertinent special abilities go below its attack type. Most monsters have, at the very least, vulnerabilities or types of harm they are resistant to. Abilities that require explanation should be elaborated upon in the monster's description.

Nightmare creatures are immune to disease, mind control, and poison, unless they have a specific weakness. They are also destroyed by contact with sunlight, even magical sunlight, unless they are possessing a mortal body or have some other divine or magical protection.

Speed

Speed rating determines how many 5-foot squares a creature can move in a single combat round, and how much ground they can cover while carefully searching a dungeon. If a creature has multiple methods (both walking and flying, for example, or swimming), both should be listed.

Speed can also be used for determining initiative: use $[\text{Speed} \text{ minus } 2] \times 2$ instead of Dexterity.

Speed Description

1-2	Barely mobile.
3-4	Moves at a crawl.
5-6	A bit slow, for a human.
7	Most people.
8-9	Quicker than most.
10-11	Surprisingly fast.
12+	Superhuman speed.

Speed	Careful Movement	Combat Speed
1	100 sq. feet / turn	5 ft. / round
2	200 sq. feet / turn	10 ft. / round
3	300 sq. feet / turn	15 ft. / round
4	400 sq. feet / turn	20 ft. / round
5	500 sq. feet / turn	25 ft. / round
6	600 sq. feet / turn	30 ft. / round
7	700 sq. feet / turn	35 ft. / round
8	800 sq. feet / turn	40 ft. / round
9	900 sq. feet / turn	45 ft. / round
10	1,000 sq. feet / turn	50 ft. / round
11	1,100 sq. feet / turn	55 ft. / round
12	1,200 sq. feet / turn	60 ft. / round

Surprise

Some monsters apply a modifier to the surprise roll the players must make before an encounter. Sneakier monsters are harder to surprise, and thus impose a penalty to this roll. Others are oblivious to their surroundings and grant a bonus.



Nightmare Abilities

To help your nightmare creatures stand out, give each of them a vulnerability, an immunity, and at least one special ability. Then choose a number of benefits equal to their level, or more, and a few flaws, as well. If you scatter hints about a creature's strengths and weaknesses throughout its lair, you can reward the players for paying close attention.

A vulnerability can be a source of harm that inflicts double damage, or it can be a substance that is not normally harmful to humans but inflicts damage to this creature (sunlight destroys nightmares, for example). An immunity means they suffer either half damage or no damage from a source of harm, or they can ignore certain rules that would be detrimental to them.

- A monster with fewer benefits than its level plus its flaws is considered weak.
- A monster with more benefits than its level plus flaws is considered strong.
- If you give your monster a powerful version of a benefit—six attacks per round, or a d12 for its Hit Die, for example—consider counting that as more than one benefit when determining how strong or weak it is.
- Monsters of Level 4 or higher should either have bonus damage (as fighters), multiple attacks per round, or attacks that can affect several people at once.

Benefits and Special Powers

- All or most attribute scores are between 13 and 17.
- Area effect attack.
- Armour is better than 10 + level.
- Attacks inflict bonus damage (as a fighter).
- Better mobility (collapsible, flying, wall-crawling, etc).
- Better Morale (+2 or higher).
- Better Speed rating (8 or higher, regardless of Dexterity score).
- Damage is higher than Hit Die (bonus, larger die size, or multiple dice).
- Disposition is determined by rolling three Hit Dice and using the total.
- Half damage from a source of harm.
- Hit Die is 1d8, or a larger die size.
- Immune to a source of harm.
- Large groups in chance encounters (2d6 or more).
- Large groups in lairs (4d10 or more).
- Magical power (as a spell with unlimited use).
- Multiple attacks per round.
- One attribute score is always 18 or higher.
- Presence effect (happens automatically).
- Size is Large or Huge (do not list size for human-sized creatures).
- Special attack that reduces attributes (life drain, madness, paralysis, etc).
- Spells (1 or more per level).
- Stealthy (penalty to the players' surprise roll).



Flaws and Weaknesses

- Armour is worse than 10 + level.
- Conspicuous (gives the PCs a bonus to surprise rolls).
- Damage is lower than Hit Die (due to a numerical penalty or smaller die size).
- Disposition is determined by rolling one Hit Die only.
- Double damage from a source of harm.
- Hit Die is 1d4.
- Low numbers in chance encounters (1d6 or fewer).
- Low numbers in their lair (fewer than 2d10).
- Negative morale (-1 or lower).
- Restricted movement (can't walk, no limbs, etc) or no ability to attack.
- Size is Small or Tiny.
- Two or more attributes are always very low.
- Vulnerability to a common situation or substance (sunlight, water, etc).

Creating good monsters is an art, not an exact science. The difficulty that the PCs have in overcoming a specific type of monster should affect the amount of treasure they stand to gain should they do so, but real people all have different talents, strengths, and ideas, so a challenge that one group has trouble wrapping their heads around might seem like a walk in the park to another.

If your players are clearing incursions too easily, reduce the amount of treasure they find, or start making tougher monsters. **If the PCs are dying too easily**, tone your monsters down by reducing their numbers or their special abilities.

Numbers

The average nightmare should appear in numbers like 1d6 (2d8) or 1d8 (3d6). For weaker nightmares, bump those numbers up. For stronger, more solitary creatures, reduce them. Weak creatures tend to band together in gangs and swarms, while the mighty travel alone—just make sure your solitary creatures can handle fighting multiple opponents.

Nightmares might mimic other creatures. Those that attack in swarms might have up to 3d4 (4d10) for numbers. Those that prowl the night in gang-like units could be 2d6 (2d12). Overpowered monsters could have as little as 1 (2d4) for numbers. You might also decide a nightmare mimics a more sedentary creature, and lairs of them are very large, but chance encounters are limited, like so: 1d4 (4d10). A creature's lair numbers should never result in fewer than two monsters, or be less than 2d6 unless these monsters are incredibly overpowered for their level.

A slightly different idea you might have is to create a solitary creature that spawns other, smaller creatures—one giant “boss monster” surrounded by numerous, weaker mooks. This is fine, but remember that as long as the anchor stays intact, the nightmare realm can recreate any nightmare creature that are killed or destroyed. Only by removing or destroying the anchor does a nightmare incursion truly come to an end.

Example Immunities and Vulnerabilities

A monster may be resistant or vulnerable to specific sources of harm. Resistant means it is either **immune** or only takes **half damage** from it. Vulnerable means it takes **double damage**, or, if the substance isn't normally harmful, this monster suffers damage if it comes into contact with it. Alternately, it might be resistant or vulnerable to a specific variety of something on this list, and not every instance of it:

- Acid and/or other corrosive substances.
- Alcohol.
- Animals.
- Attacks or spells cast by creatures of a specific alignment.
- Bad weather.
- Bladed or slashing weapons.
- Blood and/or bleeding.
- Blunt weapons and crushing effects.
- Chaotic magic or influence.
- Cold and frost-based attacks.
- Confusion and/or stupidity.
- Crystals and glass.
- Curses and enchantments.
- Darkness and darkness-themed magical effects.
- Desiccation.
- Disease.
- Divine intervention.
- Drowning.
- Drugs.
- Earth, rock, and stone.
- Emotions (anger, fear, joy, etc).
- Falling.
- Fire and heat.
- Gases and vapours.
- Gemstones.
- Gold.
- Healing magic (is more effective or deals damage instead).
- Hunger and thirst.
- Illusions (always believes them or can see through them).
- Insanity or madness.
- Iron.
- The Law.
- Life drain and necromantic magic.
- Light, radiance, and sunlight (or sunlight-themed magic).
- Lightning.
- Living plants, herbs, or spices.
- Magical detection and divination.
- Magical spells.
- Magical weapons.
- Mind control powers.
- Mirrors.
- Moonlight, or phases of the moon.
- Mundane weapons.
- Mushrooms.
- Natural weapons and/or unarmed attacks.
- Paralytic effects (magical or poison).
- Petrification.
- Piercing weapons.
- Plants or wood (living or dead).
- Poisons, toxins, and venom.
- Psychic influence or intrusion.
- Rivers and streams.
- Salt.
- Silver.
- Solitude.
- Sound and vibrations.
- Suffocation.
- The stars.
- Water.
- The weather and its conditions.
- Wood or other dead plant material.



Example Presence Effects

Presence effects are pervasive aspects of a creature's nature. They happen whether it attacks or not, although they always have a fairly definite range, and can be countered if the proper measures are taken. PCs should be able to make a save against the effects, especially if the monster maintains this effect without conscious attention to it. If the monster is maintaining the effect consciously, PCs may instead need to make an overcome attempt against one of the monster's attributes in order to avoid the effect.

Anti-Magnetism

Metal objects that come within 10 feet of this monster are pushed back with an invisible force. You must save against your Ferocity each round to defy this force.

Cause Fear

When you see this monster, you must save against your Willpower or flee uncontrollably. Characters unable to feel afraid are immune to this effect.

Immobility Trap

When you touch this creature, you must save against your Intelligence or stay still for a round as it leeches part of your chronology for itself.

Painwaves

Within 20 feet of this monster, other creatures feel sharp needles of pain at regular or random intervals. When you are affected by this pain, you must save against your Willpower to maintain your concentration for any task that needs it.

Poison Cloud

When you breathe in the air around this creature, you must save against your Health or Willpower or lose 1d6 Health. Not breathing around it at all is probably not feasible, but wearing a wet cloth over your face gives you advantage on your save.

Shocking

When you are touched by this monster, you suffer its Hit Die in lightning damage. In close combat, you must overcome the monster's Dexterity score with your own Dexterity modifier (and level if your profession is martial) to strike quick enough to avoid being touched, once you have seen its lightning touch in action.

Spell Suction

When a spellcaster moves within 10 feet of this creature, one of their uncorrupted spells (chosen randomly) becomes corrupted. If all of their spells are corrupted, they must save against their Willpower or the monster's presence forces them to cast a randomly-determined spell, whether they want to or not.

Veil of Darkness

This monster destroys light produced within 50 feet of itself. Light sources further away are not affected and it probably stays underground during the day.

Example Special Attacks

When a monster has a special attack, it takes a combat action to use. Some attacks it may not be able to use very many times, or even more than once per fight. For most attacks, you roll for the monster to hit the PCs, although some automatically cause damage just like fighters do. When a special attack that does more than cause damage always hits, PCs should get a save to suffer a lesser effect.

Bear Hug

This creature has two claw attacks. If both are successful in the same round, the monster grabs its target and crushes them, automatically dealing damage once in addition to attacking twice. It cannot attack other enemies once it has someone in a bear hug.

Chain Lightning

When this monster shoots a bolt of lightning, it makes an attack roll against the target's Dexterity score. With a successful hit, the monster may attack a second target that is within 10 feet of the first. This may continue as long as the monster keeps scoring successful hits or runs out of targets. Chain lightning may not attack the same target twice during a single attack.

Hallucinatory Foe

This creature may cause an enemy to attack an illusion they perceive as a threat. The target must save against their Intelligence to realize the truth. Maintaining a number of illusions up to its level occupies the creature for the entire round.

Mind Blast

This monster telepathically bludgeons a number of intelligent foes up to its level. Foes targeted must save against their Willpower or suffer its Hit Die in damage.

Poison Blade

This monster wields a sword coated in poison. When you are hit, if you fail to save against the poison (choose your attribute based on your defences and the poison's nature), the damage bypasses your Disposition and reduces your Health instead.

Slime Catapult

This creature produces a globule of slime and hurls it up to a hundred feet (as long as there are high ceilings). If it saves against its Dexterity, the globule hits the intended target, and anyone else within 5 feet, all of whom suffer its Hit Die in damage from the corrosive slime. If this save is failed, the sack lands 3d10 feet away in a random direction.

Spine Blossom

This creature shakes violently, sending spines shooting out in all directions. It makes a separate attack roll against everyone within 30 feet, though it deals only 1d4 damage on a successful hit.



Beyond the Lair

Most nightmare creatures never leave their incursions to stalk the nights of the mortal realm. It is hard for such alien beings to exist in waking reality. But there are three ways this very thing may happen.

Firstly, they can be **summoned by wizards**, the same way other extraplanar creatures are brought to this world. Depending on the magic used, a nightmare might be given physical form, allowed to possess a mortal host, or allowed only mental contact with the wizard. Certainly, physical access is not guaranteed, just because a magic spell has been cast, but even mental contact may allow the nightmare realm to seize an anchor and build an incursion around it.

Secondly, the **nightmare curses** that linger upon even those who have escaped an incursion are actual creatures of nightmare, living inside their human hosts. They can do nothing but enact their curse, unless they are exorcised—in which case they assume physical form in the material world. They might try to kill or possess someone nearby, if they are not destroyed by sunlight, but who would perform such a ritual in the open, where normal people could observe?

Stalking the Night

Third and lastly, it is possible for some nightmare creatures to **leave their incursions** for short periods of time, but only at night, in the dark. They might do so in order to terrorize people, collect worshippers, or to obtain a new anchor from the possession of some miserable person, dying in torment, and thus create a new incursion.

Nightmare creatures of Levels 1-3 can exist outside a nightmare incursion for as long as a few weeks, provided they can manage to stay out of the daylight. If they are caught by the sun's rays, they are destroyed. They might be able to create the illusion that you are seeing them during daylight, but this is always a trick.

Nightmare creatures of Levels 4-6 can exit an incursion at night and roam the earth until sunrise. But as soon as the night is over, so are they. Nightmares this powerful cannot hide from the sun once it rises.

Nightmare creatures of Levels 7-9 can only exist inside an incursion. They are unable to exist in the physical world because their nightmare essence is not diluted enough. This crown does not leave its throne. Only the lower level nightmare creatures are close enough to the material world to live within it for any amount of time at all. A wizard might provide a host body to a nightmare of a higher level, perhaps, but it would have to carry its own incursion around with it, either inside itself, or like a halo surrounding it, neither of which is a normal mode of operating.



Other Types of Monsters

Nightmares are not the only creatures you must be wary of. There are also beasts (and beastmen), alien abominations that dwell in the deepest depths of the Astral Sea, the fey folk from the lands of Faerie, golems and other such sorcerous animations, and, of course, the undead. There might even be innumerable other types of monstrosities should you choose to invent them.

The basic categories of monsters that can be a cultist's spiritual enemy are as follows:

- **Beastlings** include normal animals, corrupted or magical animals, bizarre chimeras, and people with beast-like features. Centaurs, giant worms, griffins, lycanthropes, manticores, mermaids, minotaurs, monstrous oozes, owlbeats, and serpent people are all examples of beastlings.
- **Dwellers in the deep** are beings from hostile, far-away environments—alien gods, demons, undersea leviathans, and creatures from beyond time and space. Some are skilled at wearing masks to appear human, in order to manipulate people, while others do not understand this world and break every part of it they touch.
- **Faeries** also come from another dimension or plane of existence, but one that overlaps the terrestrial world. The seelie court consists of dryads, elves, gnomes, nixies, sprites, treants, and other such majestic creatures. The unseelie court includes goblins, mushroom people, ogres, orcs, and trolls. Both courts worship dragons, just as humans worship pagan gods.
- **Golems** are monsters created from inert materials and given a magical life, so that they behave like people or animals in many ways, but not all. Examples include animated shadows, clockwork automatons, living statues, and even terrible abominations made out of dead organic matter. Golems are always immune to disease and poisons, and those without emotions are also immune to mind control and psychic powers.
- **The undead** are once-living beings who have died and been returned to some semblance of life. They might be animated corpses (much like golems), intangible ghosts, or beings that seems *almost* human, but for whom a few key rules regarding death have been changed. The undead are always immune to disease and poisons, and mindless undead are always immune to mind control.

Disposition

For most humans and monsters, you roll their Hit Die twice and use the total for their Disposition score. But if they are weak, unwell, sick, poisoned, fatigued, or diseased, just roll one die. If you think a monster would be inhumanly tough or supernaturally resistant to violence, you can roll their Hit Die three times and use the total. But some creatures have a slightly different relationship with life and death—specifically, the unliving and the undead.

The Undead

Unlike living creatures, monsters that were once alive and have been brought back from the grave do not have a Health score. They can take short rests and re-roll their Disposition, but they cannot take long rests and their injuries (including Wounds and attribute losses) are permanent. In order to reduce their Wounds score and restore their attributes, the undead must drain that life from the living (if they are even able to do that).

Being dead already, there is no need to compare an undead creature's Wounds score to its Health. Physical damage can still result in bodily destruction, however. **If an undead creature's Wounds score equals or exceeds half its Ferocity score**, rounded down, it is disabled in some way and likely no longer fully intact. **When its Wounds score equals or exceeds its full Ferocity score**, it has been destroyed.

The undead roll a number of Hit Dice for their Disposition based on the integrity of their bodies, not on the quality of their rest:

- **Partially intact undead**, including wraiths, spectres, ghosts, and other ethereal apparitions, as well as skeletons and disembodied severed heads, roll one Hit Die to determine their Disposition score.
- **Full-bodied undead**, whether they are clever vampires or mindless zombies, roll two Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition score.
- Undead creatures that are **amalgamations of multiple bodies** roll three Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition score.

The Unliving

Creatures that were never alive and are just animated bodies of matter, like golems and automatons, also do not have a Health score, as they are beyond life and death. Unlike the undead, however, they do not have a Wounds score either. Instead, when their Disposition runs out, any damage they suffer is permanent. **When that permanent damage equals or exceeds half their Ferocity score**, rounded down, they lose the use of a random limb or one of their important senses. **When permanent damage equals or exceeds their full Ferocity score**, they have been completely destroyed. Once the unliving become damaged, it is usually only sorcery that can repair them.

Unliving monsters can re-roll their Disposition anytime they have a few moments to rest, away from any danger. The rules for short and long rests do not apply to them and they do not recover lost attribute points.

How many dice the unliving roll for Disposition depends entirely on how solid their construction is:

- **Fragile or delicate** unliving creatures roll one Hit Die to determine their Disposition score.
- **Sturdy** unliving creatures roll two Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition score.
- **Supernaturally durable** and inhumanly tough unliving creatures roll three Hit Dice and use the total for their Disposition score.

Creating Ruins

Ruins built by the ancients can be home to nightmare incursions, but they can just as easily hold their own secrets and dangers as well—and their own treasures. For each area of a ruin you feel like detailing on its own, assign it a dungeon level and then generate some features for it. Pick the type of ruin and the initial threat, then roll for additional threats, including rival adventurers. Finally, at your option, roll to determine the character of the ruins and the surrounding area.

Ruin Type

There are five types of ruins, differentiated by who and what uses them, and how they are used:

- **Empty Ruins** have been plundered already, or never had anything of value to begin with, though they might still be dangerous, or even home to monsters.
- **Gates of Darkness** are places where beings from another world can gain purchase upon this one. They are, by definition, places of arcane influence.
- **Monster Fortresses** are ruins that have either been commandeered by inhuman creatures who know how to maintain them, or have dormant monster threats inside them, awaiting resurrection.
- **Nests of Evil** have new and active populations that may consist of both human cultists and/or monsters. The ruins themselves pose less of a threat, usually.
- **Sealed Tombs** have interior spaces that have remained untouched by humankind since they were built.

Initial Threat

Every ruin worth looting is dangerous. Something is keeping people away from it, so what is it? Give each ruin or significant area of a ruin some characteristic or feature that guards its treasures. For example:

- A **band of outlaws** with better knowledge of the site than others have.
- A **deadly trap** that kills all intruders (or worse).
- A **difficult location** that is either a closely-guarded secret, remote and thus time-consuming to reach, or just very hard for would-be visitors to get to.
- A **gateway** that introduces dangers when disturbed.
- A lair of **monsters**.
- A **nightmare incursion** (or more than one).

Magic Items

Roll 1d6 + dungeon level to determine if there are any **magic items** to be found here. If there are, use the recovered magic item table on page 230 to determine what they do.

Roll	Magic Items
2-6	No magic items.
7-9	1 magic item.
10-11	2 magic items.
12+	1d4 magic items.



Additional Threats

Once you have decided on the type of ruin you want to create, generated its initial threat, and determined what magical rewards might be in store, you can move on to making your ruin both more dangerous and more interesting.

Rival Adventurers

There is a 2 in 6 chance that an empty ruin attracts a group of rival adventurers, while other types of ruins have only a 1 in 6 chance of such a fate. The actions of the PCs may also alert rivals to the possibility of treasure and the threat of cult activities being discovered, but this chance indicates a group completely independent.

Roll	Adventurers
0-1	Academics.
2	Cultists.
3	Dissidents.
4	Magicians.
5	Thieves.
6+	Warriors.

Roll 1d6 one or more times to determine what type of adventurers this rival group consists of and what they motives might be. Apply a +1 modifier if the ruin is a monster fortress or a nest of evil, and a -1 modifier for an empty ruin.

- **Academics:** Scholars and students studying the ancient world.
- **Cultists:** Heretical worshippers looking to venerate their deity.
- **Dissidents:** Political activists trying to fund their movement.
- **Magicians:** Alchemists and wizards in search of secret power.
- **Thieves:** Criminals intent on looting this ruin of its riches.
- **Warriors:** Bandits, mercenaries, or soldiers, here to break or enforce the sultan’s laws, whichever proves more profitable.

Other Elements

Roll 1d6 and add the ruin’s dungeon level to determine how many **other elements** this part of the ruin contains. For each additional element, roll a d6 to determine what type of element it is:

Roll	Empty Ruin	Gate of Darkness	Monster Fortress	Nest of Evil	Sealed Tomb
1	Monster	Corrupted	Guardian	Corrupted	Guardian
2	Remnant	Guardian	Monster	Monster	Guardian
3	Remnant	Monster	Monster	Monster	Remnant
4	Remnant	Nightmare	Remnant	Remnant	Remnant
5	Remnant	Remnant	Trap	Remnant	Trap
6	Trap	Trap	Trap	Trap	Trap

Then add more elements of your choice, up to the lair’s level in number, if you like.

Corrupted

Humans corrupted by the nightmare realm are here, trying (and possibly succeeding) to summon an incursion. They are the same kind of people as gather around incursions (see page 315).

Guardians

This result indicates the ruin boasts some kind of golem or undead servitor of the ancients that still stands watch against intrusion. Roll 1d20 below for inspiration:

Roll	Golem
1	Animated statues.
2	Automaton soldiers.
3	Clay behemoth.
4	Clockwork scorpions.
5	The creeping hand of frost.
6	Empty suits of armour.
7	Explosive scarab drones.
8	Flying swords.
9	Gargoyles.
10	Hostile architecture.
11	Living flames.
12	Lumbering ooze.
13	Mechanical monster.
14	Mirror clones.
15	Mosaics come to life.
16	Ravenous magic mouth.
17	Self-powered siege engines.
18	Sentient whirlpool.
19	Tide of stones.
20	A vast and burning darkness.

Roll	Undead
1	Angel of death.
2	Ashen cloud.
3	Blood money.
4	Bone giant.
5	Bursting from their graves.
6	Dead king's ghost.
7	Ghost dogs.
8	Graveyard elemental.
9	Infectious zombie curse.
10	Life-draining halo.
11	Resurrected warlord.
12	Revenant paladins.
13	Roiling pit of flesh.
14	Shades from the past.
15	Skeleton guardians.
16	Skull with burning eyes.
17	Sleeping vampire.
18	Spectral servants on duty.
19	Unwilling lichs.
20	Wolves of the shadowlands.

Monsters

A random monster has taken up residence in lair numbers. This is the same result as the one for nightmare incursions (see page 315).

Nightmares

This ruin contains nightmares. You can either add a single creature—here as if granted access by some portal, instead of an anchor—or create a complete incursion.



Remnants

While an ancient ruin may seem empty and dead to the casual observer, for those who look more closely, there yet remains, at the very least, evidence of the lives that people once led here. For each remnant, roll a d6 to determine its nature:

Roll	Remnant
1	Artifacts.
2	Danger
3	Monument.
4	Records.
5	Secret.
6	Valuables.

Artifacts

These are historical items that can be carried off. They are not necessarily valuable but might still be useful: canopic jars, clothing, discarded tools and instruments, grave goods, preserved foodstuffs, old weapons, statuary, tapestries, or the contents of ancient storerooms. *Why have these artifacts not been looted?*

Danger

An existing hazard, just like one that might be found in a nightmare incursion. It may pose problems for both PCs and monsters, or it could have been set up deliberately, as a trap to harm intruders. *Why does this remnant continue to be dangerous?*

Monument

A symbolic, aesthetic structure that commemorates an event, place, person, or the power of a dynasty. It was intended to demonstrate, in no uncertain terms, the ideas and imaginations of the people who erected it. *What does the monument depict?*

Records

Writings or texts of some kind have been left behind here, recording the details of contracts, events, inventories, relationships, thoughts and feelings, or even lies and propaganda deployed against contemporary historians and their future audiences. *Who kept these records, and why?*

Secret

Something in this ruin reveals a secret that has, so far, remained unknown. It could be the location of a secret room or passage, a hidden tomb or vault, or just the information needed to access such a place. It might instead be evidence that contradicts an established historical narrative: the true history of a famous hero, the corruption of a royal lineage, or a war the scribes erased. Or, it could simply be depictions of events or practices now forgotten: the worship of an unknown deity, a crime that was never punished, or a lost technology, completely alien to the modern world. *Why has it remained a secret?*

Valuables

There is treasure in this ruin! Of course, it might also be hidden, trapped, or otherwise protected from greedy hands. Determine its value the same as you would for an anchor, by rolling 2d6 + dungeon level on the monetary value table on page 313. *Why has this treasure not been found and removed?*

Traps

Ruins can have the same kinds of traps that one would find in a nightmare incursion (see page 317), though some are obviously more suitable than others. Unlike traps found inside incursions, however, those inside a ruin may be (as the name suggests) ruined. They might be rusted and broken by time, or sprung and never reset, since there is no one to maintain them. But the dilapidated state of construction may also result in a ruin having accidental traps where none were originally intended.

Some examples of traps specifically appropriate for ancient ruins include:

Roll Ruin Traps

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Ancient illusions are resistant to modern arcane perceptions. |
| 2 | Arcane or mundane ordnance that is still active. |
| 3 | Collapsing structures (walls topple over, the floor gives way, etc). |
| 4 | Hazardous debris (crumbling ceilings, falling blocks, etc). |
| 5 | Machines that no longer work properly still cause injuries. |
| 6 | Moving debris reveals a nest of angry vermin. |
| 7 | Piled-up items behind doors come crashing to the ground. |
| 8 | Poisonous fungus or weeds (invasive flora). |
| 9 | Scrying chamber induces unwanted visions. |
| 10 | Summoning circle, now defective, periodically works. |
| 11 | Toxins leech out of ruins into the groundwater. |
| 12 | Warding sigils activate once-normal functions, now dangerous. |

Optionally, you may also roll 1d8 to determine a trap's condition, and if it still works properly or not (re-roll results that do not make sense):

Roll Trap Condition

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Broken: This trap no longer works properly but its mechanisms can still be dangerous in other ways. |
| 2 | Harmless: If it was a hazard once, this trap is no longer a danger now. |
| 3 | Illusory: This trap is a trick or a magical mirage. It could function as a distraction from another, more dangerous trap. |
| 4 | Modified: Additions or alterations have been made to the workings of this trap. It is not quite what it was originally intended to be. |
| 5 | Obvious: Someone's remains show what this trap is capable of. |
| 6 | Pristine: This trap is as good as new. Perhaps it is sorcerously reset each time it is sprung. |
| 7 | Unintentional: An accidental hazard has become a trap for the unwary. |
| 8 | Worn: While it has seen some wear and tear, this trap still functions. |



Random Ruins

To randomly generate the character of a particular ruin, roll the full set of 1d4, 1d6, 1d8, 1d10, 1d12, and 1d20, and consult the following tables (the d10 and d12 both generate important events in a ruin’s history, and the same event can occur twice), rolling again on selected tables if you need any additional details:

Roll	Architecture: <i>What is the overall shape of these ruins?</i>	1d4
1	Ceremonial. Built for performances large or small. Aesthetics over convenience, always. The psychological impression induced by the structure is its most important function.	
2	Oppressive. Uncomfortable proportions. Tight spaces, cramped and claustrophobic quarters. Confusing layout, all jumbled and maze-like. Even large spaces loom over the occupant.	
3	Sprawling. Wide and open, built for a sense of freedom. Impressive in its breadth, whether it is capacious and stately or overbuilt and repetitive. Not quick to move through.	
4	Towering. Built to impress with great heights. Balconies and overlooks, deep stairwells, domed ceilings. Perhaps even shafts of light overhead, cutting through clouds of smoke.	

Roll	Condition: <i>What state are these ruins in now?</i>	1d8
1	Apparently nothing but weathered and broken rubble remains.	
2	Buried by time, debris, or accident (such as an earthquake or avalanche).	
3	Deliberately defaced by one hostile culture or waves of passing vandals.	
4	Flooded and/or overgrown by vegetation, either invasive or local.	
5	Obviously arcane (ghostly, glowing, or impossibly shifting, perhaps).	
6	Partially demolished and precariously close to collapsing further.	
7	Remarkably well-preserved or even restored, either recently or long ago.	
8	Used hard by later inhabitants, who may or may not be gone.	

Roll	Later Events: <i>What happened here that was important?</i>	1d10 & 1d12
1	Arcane corruption.	7 Outlaw occupation.
2	Built over.	8 Raided by looters.
3	Burial site.	9 Site of battle.
4	Cult ceremonies.	10 Used as a quarry.
5	Interplanar gateway.	11 Divine visitation.
6	Monster infestation.	12 Magically transported.



Roll **Origin:** *What era do these ruins date from?* 1d6

- 1 **The Age of Heroes**, when mighty kings and warriors founded most of the nations that currently make up the Kingdoms of Dreams.
- 2 **Antiquity**, when the great pagan empires of old held sway over the known world and built many wonders.
- 3 **The Cyclopean Era**, an age of giants, when people of prodigious size and intellect lived in the garden paradise that later became the Voss. It was ended by a great and terrible flood.
- 4 **The Golden Age of Law**, when the last of the chaotic sorcerer-kings were defeated and peace was restored by the Law. It ended in civil war.
- 5 **The Primordial Chaos**, when the Earth was given over to antediluvian monsters. It ended with the rise of the first human civilizations.
- 6 **The Warring Kingdoms Period**, when bloodthirsty sorcerers ruled the land and their forces clashed without respite. It came to an end with the introduction of the Law via prophecy.

Roll **Special Features:** *What is unique or strange about these ruins?* 1d20

- 1 Ancient machines, built on strange (and possibly alien) principles of science.
- 2 Artistic depictions suggest inhuman origins of local people or customs.
- 3 Built on layers of older ruins, stretching back through every era of history.
- 4 Contains the incursion of some deep astral realm, imitating nightmares.
- 5 Erratic tunnels carved as if by living creatures, with walls like melted rock.
- 6 Every available surface is elaborately carved and ornamented.
- 7 Flowing strands of glass, either harder than diamonds or softer than ice.
- 8 Ghosts haunt this ruin in prodigious numbers.
- 9 The gravesite of a powerful arcane being (deity, monster, wizard, etc).
- 10 Hidden ways allow quick transport from place to place inside these ruins.
- 11 Intense magnetism permeates these ruins.
- 12 Leftover illusions create a dangerously deceptive appearance.
- 13 Light refracts off the air, dances, glints off non-reflective surfaces.
- 14 These ruins are full of irritating, inhuman noises.
- 15 Sound echoes weird and long through all the underground chambers.
- 16 The temperature inside these ruins is radically different from the outside.
- 17 Time is elastic here, even running backwards on occasion.
- 18 Unnatural materials from other planes of existence are leaking in.
- 19 Vision-obscuring fog, mist, or smoke is a persistent feature.
- 20 Walls built of stones made from pieces of petrified people.



Rooms

Roll 1d100 one or more times to determine a ruined area's main original purpose:

Roll	Room Function	
1-2	Courtyard.	37 Conservatory.
3-4	Garden.	38 Courtroom.
5-6	Laboratory.	39 Crematorium.
7-8	Temple.	40 Crypt.
9	Academy.	41 Dining hall.
10	Apartments.	42 Dormitory.
11	Apothecary.	43 Exhibition hall.
12	Aquarium.	44 Factory.
13	Arcade.	45 Forge.
14	Archive.	46 Fort.
15	Arena.	47 Fountain.
16	Armoury.	48 Gallery.
17	Arsenal.	49 Garage.
18	Atrium.	50 Gatehouse.
19	Audience hall.	51 Granary.
20	Auditorium.	52 Gymnasium.
21	Aviary.	53 Harem.
22	Ballroom.	54 Hearth.
23	Barracks.	55 Hospital.
24	Baths.	56 Hot springs.
25	Brewery.	57 Hypostyle hall.
26	Brokerage.	58 Kennels.
27	Brothel.	59 Kiln.
28	Caravanserai.	60 Kitchens.
29	Casino.	61 Larder.
30	Catacombs.	62 Library.
31	Cavern.	63 Lodge.
32	Chantry.	64 Loomshop.
33	Chapel.	65 Market.
34	Charnel pit.	66 Mausoleum.
35	Cistern.	67 Maze.
36	Classroom.	68 Menagerie.
		69 Mine.
		70 Museum.
		71 Nursery.
		72 Observatory.
		73 Office.
		74 Operating theatre.
		75 Oubliette.
		76 Pantry.
		77 Parade ground.
		78 Pools.
		79 Prison.
		80 Race track.
		81 Salon.
		82 Sauna.
		83 Scriptorium.
		84 Secluseum.
		85 Sensorium.
		86 Shrine.
		87 Solar.
		88 Stables.
		89 Studio.
		90 Study.
		91 Terrace.
		92 Terrarium.
		93 Theatre.
		94 Throne room.
		95 Tomb.
		96 Tower.
		97 Treasury.
		98 Vault.
		99 War room.
		100 Workshop.

The Surrounding Area

While incursions can spring up almost anywhere, provided there is an anchor wrapped up in strong emotions, unlooted ruins are usually found in dangerous and hard-to-reach places. They lie deep within deserts and wastelands, on the peaks of forbidding mountains, locked inside glaciers, or buried under thick jungle canopies. Some ancient ruins have even been swallowed up by the sea.

Roll 1d6 one or more times to determine what environmental features keep this particular ruin isolated from those who would loot its treasures.

Roll	Surroundings
1	Barren
2	Cursed
3	Fortified
4	Inclement
5	Rugged
6	Toxic

Barren

There is little in the way of vegetation or other life here, probably because of a lack of water. The area could be hot and dry, suffering drought, elevated, or simply blasted.

Cursed

Either a magical enchantment lays upon the land, bending all who venture there to its rules, or it is saturated by some arcane pollution. Such threats may be invisible to mortals with no magical expertise.

Fortified

Built structures make the area hard (or harder) to explore and traverse safely. Walls, gates, dams, and other built fortifications may be manned by monsters or xenophobic humans, or they might just function as barriers blockading passes.

Inclement

The weather is harsh. Possibilities include constant storms and lightning strikes, freezing temperatures or extreme temperature fluctuations, hail and freezing rain, hurricanes, monsoons and flooding, sandstorms, and even volcanoes. Wildlife in the area has been forced to adapt, and so will adventurers.

Rugged

The terrain is rough and broken, with few easy pathways. Cliffs, gorges, quicksand, tar pits, unstable ground, and volcanism can all make for impassable areas.

Toxic

The area around the ruin is rife with disease or poison. It could be a plague reservoir, full of biting insects carrying tropical fever, or full of water polluted by sickening miasmas. Or perhaps the plants are all deadly when eaten and the fauna is overwhelmingly hostile and venomous.



Running a Nightmare Incursion

As the PCs explore the dungeons of the nightmare world and its corrupted outposts—and, frankly, anywhere else they go that is extremely dangerous—they encounter numerous threats and difficulties. When they move through civilization, you play the game in short scenes where the PCs interact with other characters, even fighting them if they so desire, or in montage sequences where they buy new gear, lounge about in hospitals, and discover they are broke and must, once again, face the challenge of robbing the nightmare realm.

But inside the dungeons of their foes, in the fortresses of the corrupted, and out in the chaos of the blighted wilderlands, things are different. In these dangerous and unfamiliar areas, you track the movements of the PCs constantly, staying with them every minute. Because every minute inside a nightmare incursion is a chance to lose your life—or your mind trying not to.

Movement

The PCs have two or three choices for how they will move through unfamiliar areas:

Firstly, they can **walk around like they own the place**, without bothering to carefully check their environment for hidden dangers, traps, or passageways. Thieves can often get away with this, because they still get to save against their Dexterity to find hidden dangers at a glance. Everyone else moving around like this does not. Instead, they trigger any traps they encounter and have no chance of finding hidden doors or secret treasures. The upside is that this is a faster way to move around, and speed is often of the essence in such dangerous places.

Their second option is to **move carefully**, searching as they go. When they do this, they move at a strictly measured pace: they can search, at most, a number of 10-foot squares equal to twice their Speed rating every turn (roughly every 10 or so minutes), or square feet equal to their Speed rating times 100. Characters, including NPCs, with different Speed rating move at different rates. This is important because anyone who moves faster than their Speed rating allows them to is just walking around. They do not get the benefits of searching carefully, which often outweigh the cost of moving slowly, and this can lead them into trouble. Characters moving faster than their Speed ratings allow get no rolls to search for traps or hidden passages, unless they are thieves, and traps can be lethal if you walk right into them.

A third option is to **stay still**. This is not usually a wise choice in such a dangerous environment, but might be necessary in some circumstances. By staying still, the PCs stand a greater chance of being discovered by roaming monsters on the hunt for warm blood, but if they make less of a commotion by doing so, may actually end up attracting less attention, especially since finding a safe place means avoiding fixed encounters altogether.



Fixed Encounters

The most important feature of dungeon exploration is the map. You must have a fully-detailed map that remains a mystery to the players (until they discover its secrets in play), with your monsters, traps, and other things placed on it. Whenever the PCs move to a location where one of those dangers lies, they must deal with it or flee, lest they fall under its power.

The fixed encounters for a specific dungeon, lair, or other location are all known to you before you begin the adventure. The seven main types include: the anchor, the crown, dangers, other monsters, other treasures, special features, and traps. Any other features you have included on the map are also fixed encounters.

The Anchor

Any PC who sees or touches an anchor knows what it is, immediately. Just like they can withstand the madness that incursions cause in normal people, just like they can tell where an incursion begins and where it ends, they know an anchor when they find it. This doesn't necessarily mean that an incursion will flaunt its anchor, just that it can't be hidden.

The Crown and Other Monsters

There should be a predetermined number of the crown, equal to its lair numbers, placed on the map as fixed encounters. Because the crown is a nightmare creature, these encounters are always hostile.

Other monsters also appear in lair numbers, placed on the map in one large group or several smaller groups. These monsters have some sort of arrangement with the nightmares, which may or may not be obvious to intruders.

Other Treasures

If there are valuable items in an incursion aside from the anchor, they have probably not attracted much attention from the nightmares. As such, they are probably in the possession of other monsters, but if the nature of the dungeon calls for treasure in specific locations—around the necks of sacrificed humans, buried under refuse, or placed before idols, for example—place them where it seems most sensible. If the incursion is located in an ancient ruin, see those procedures on pages 345-353.

Special Features and Traps

Other aspects of an incursion's environment exist either because they have been placed intentionally by the nightmare realm or other monsters, or are incidental features of the negative experiences that were used to create the dungeon. Traps should be effective defences against intruders, placed intentionally to do so, but dangers pose a threat to everyone, even the nightmares. Other special features might be advantageous only to nightmares, but it is usually more interesting to make features that can be turned against the monsters by clever, lucky, or resourceful PCs.

Random Encounters

The second danger that the PCs face from both nightmare incursions and corrupted outposts are the nihilistic forces of chaos and entropy. Random accidents occur all too frequently in such deadly, stressful environments. Equipment breaks. Spells fail. Torches go out prematurely. Wandering monsters wander just a little too close. And always, at every moment, the nightmares are coming to get you.

The Encounter Die

Every lair has an encounter die: a single die of a size between a d4 and a d12. When the PCs enter a nightmare incursion, you roll this die to determine how long until the next attack by that incursions' crown. In any dangerous place, you roll this die at regular intervals to see if the PCs encounter any other troubles.

If a dungeon is...	If a wilderness area is...	Encounter Die
Busy or small	Adjacent to an incursion	d6
Large and not crowded	Near an incursion	d8
Mostly empty or quite huge	Not near an incursion	d10

The base size of the encounter die should be modified by circumstances, especially if an incursion's anchor is either worth very little or is especially valuable.

Increase the die size by 1 if...

- The anchor of the lair is worth less than the expected value, based on its level.
- There are many empty rooms or spaces in this lair that require exploring.
- This lair is already heavily stocked with dangerous fixed encounters.
- You want to make this lair slightly less dangerous to explore.

Level	Expected Value
1	500c to 1,000c
2	1,000c to 2,000c
3	2,500c to 5,000c
4	4,000c to 8,000c
5	5,000c to 10,000c
6	6,000c to 12,000c
7	15,000c to 30,000c
8	20,000c to 40,000c
9+	25,000c to 50,000c

Reduce the die size by 1 if...

- The anchor of the lair is more valuable than the expected range, based on its level.
- This lair has relatively few fixed encounters.
- This lair has only nightmares in it and no other monsters.
- You want to make this lair somewhat more dangerous.

Larger

Die Sizes: d4 <> d6 <> d8 <> d10 <> d12

Smaller

Do not use a d3 for the encounter die.



When to Roll the Encounter Die

Periodically, you must check to see if the PCs encounter a wandering monster. These monsters might be attracted by light or noise, they might be able to smell the intruders, or they might simply be travelling through the same space at the same time. Random encounters are possible anywhere there are monsters, corrupted humans, or people antagonistic to the PCs, not just inside nightmare incursions.

When the PCs are actively exploring a dangerous area, roll the encounter die whenever...:

- The PCs cause a commotion or make a ruckus.
- The PCs enter a new area (that has no fixed encounter) for the first time.
- The PCs undertake a task that lasts about a turn, an hour, or a day (see below).

Time Intervals

When the PCs are exploring a nightmare incursion, a typical dungeon, or a teeming wilderness location, roll the encounter die when they undertake a task that takes about a turn. This includes carefully searching, but also might include donning a suit of plate, picking a lock, setting or disarming a complicated trap, or tending to various wounds and injuries.

When the PCs are actively exploring a nearly empty dungeon area, or they are staying put and being inconspicuous, roll the encounter die once per hour. Ignore the light tax result and instead reduce light sources normally, by the hour. Magical enchantments only end if the PCs are in a nightmare incursion; otherwise ignore this result also.

When the PCs are hiding in a secure area or exploring empty wilderness, roll the encounter die once each day and each night, ignoring results other than an encounter. Light sources should be depleted normally, by the hour.

Defining “An Area”

An area is a deliberately nebulous concept. Any section of the dungeon devoted to a similar purpose, or containing an additional threat, can be considered a single area. Additional threats in different rooms should be considered different areas. A series of similar rooms (connecting bedrooms, jail cells, or a few connecting hallways) should be considered a single area. You shouldn't be able to interact with two separate areas at once unless you stand directly on the threshold between them.

Entering the Dungeon

You must also roll the encounter die when the PCs first enter an incursion, but not to generate random encounters. You roll it to create a countdown (see page 360). Do not roll the encounter die for a random encounter when the PCs first set foot in the dungeon. Give them a few precious moments before the hell begins.

Encounters and Other Events

When you are called upon to check for an encounter, as determined by the criteria on the previous page, roll the encounter die and consult this table:

Roll	Event
1	An encounter occurs, Roll on the random encounter table.
2-3	Choose the most appropriate event from the following: • Light sources are taxed by 1 hour. • One ongoing spell or enchantment ends. • Some other resource is depleted by the environment, • A special event occurs, if any have been defined for this area.
4+	No particular encounter or event occurs.

When an encounter occurs, it means a wandering monster is present. Roll on a random table for its type and follow the encounter rules on pages 260-263.

The other events on this table allow you to ignore strict time-keeping in dangerous areas, where time can understandably crawl, stretch, and speed by like an arrow. Instead, the encounter die will tell you when light sources are depleted.

When light sources are taxed, reduce available resources by 1 hour. This allows you to avoid tracking it while the PCs are actively exploring a dangerous area, and adds some uncertainty to such endeavours. Ignore this result when the PCs are in an area where you are not rolling for encounters more than once an hour.

When an ongoing spell or magical enchantment ends, the nightmare realm snuffs it out. This does not ruin magical items, though they might “turn off” for a moment before reactivating. This does not mean you should ignore the normal durations of spells, as some are very short.

When other resources are depleted, they can include anything that makes sense. Environmental hazards like extreme dampness or swarms of stinging insects might cause equipment to fail, supplies to spoil, or they could even reduce attribute scores.

Special events are those unique to a particular dungeon, such as arcane phenomena, bleeding walls, disembodied screams, earthquakes, infectious diseases, or toxic gases in the air. Not every dungeon needs to have its own special events.

Writing Random Encounter Tables

In order to create a random encounter table, make a list of the monsters, corrupted humans, or other creatures it might be possible to encounter in the dungeon (including nightmares, if you wish). Number them and then you have a random encounter table that suits your dungeon better than a list of every single monster of that level (though it is also fine to use such a list, should you prefer to do so).

And then, **when a random encounter occurs**, roll on your table to see what it is that the PCs have run into.



The Countdown to Nightmares

The final danger, and perhaps the most important one, is the attention of the nightmare realm itself. You cannot travel through it without facing the creatures it spawns. While it may be possible, through good luck and perhaps a bit of caution, to avoid any and all wandering monsters while you explore an incursion, the same cannot be said about the nightmares controlling it. They will always pursue you, no matter what.

When the PCs enter a nightmare incursion, roll the encounter die and record the result. This is the current countdown number. The lower the roll, the sooner the PCs will meet another nightmare creature.

Over the course of play, things will happen that cause the countdown number to be reduced. The actions and events that lower the countdown are not quite the same as those that attract the attention of wandering monsters.

Reduce the countdown number by 1 whenever one of these events happen inside the incursion...:

- A living creature dies in the presence of the PCs.
- The PCs move to a different area while carrying the anchor (or any part of it).
- You roll the encounter die to check for a random encounter.

If two of these occur at the same time, reduce the countdown number by 2. For example, carrying the anchor into a new location reduces the countdown by 1, and the encounter die that must be rolled because it's a new area also reduces it by 1. Likewise, if killing a person requires making a ruckus, that means rolling the encounter die, and so in that case you would also reduce the countdown by 2.

When the countdown is reduced to zero, nightmare creatures appear. They are always the crown of the present lair, and they always appear in the same location as the PCs. Use chance encounter numbers, not lair numbers. These monsters are spawned out of the nightmare realm itself, so they do not have to arrive like people do. They can appear by coming right out of the walls, even.

When the encounter with these nightmares is over, with the PCs having escaped or destroyed their foes, roll the encounter die again and start a new countdown.

When the PCs move from one lair to another, do not re-roll the countdown until the current one is reduced to zero. Always roll the encounter die of whatever lair the PCs are currently in. **If the PCs split the party**, track the countdown for each group separately, including when you roll it again after the crown arrives. When they meet up again, discard all but the lowest countdown number.

Do not show the countdown number to the players. Keep it secret.



The Growing Danger

The nightmare realm is no passive enemy. If its incursions are left unchecked, they quickly grow in size and danger. **Every 2 weeks that a nightmare incursion persists after it has been discovered by the players**, roll a d6 for each of its lairs to see how they grow in power. Depending on the event triggered, it might become larger, or attract new monsters, or begin attacking humans who come too close, but inevitably it will become more and more dangerous—and the reward for defeating it will not become more valuable.

Do not roll to increase the lairs of incursions the PCs have not yet discovered, even if you have their locations marked on your map. You should design your dungeons to be the way you want the players to first encounter them, and build on them only after that has happened.

Roll	Incursion Event
1	Antagonize humans.
2	Attract monsters
3	Create new lair.
4	Growth in size.
5	Increase in level.
6	Lure humans.

If an incursion is a deathtrap dungeon, a monster horde, or a spawning pit, you may elect to roll on the custom table of the proper type, instead of the normal table. Heretic temples, being the most chaotic and unpredictable, always use the normal incursion event table.

Roll	Deathtrap Dungeon	Monster Horde	Spawning Pit
1	Create new lair.	Antagonize humans.	Antagonize humans.
2	Create new lair.	Attract monsters.	Antagonize humans.
3	Growth in size.	Attract monsters.	Create new lair.
4	Increase in level.	Create new lair.	Create new lair.
5	Lure humans.	Growth in size.	Increase in level.
6	Roll on normal table.	Increase in level.	Roll on normal table.

If any lair in an incursion reaches Level 9, that whole incursion stops growing in power. Do not roll for any of its lairs again. Instead, it focuses its enmity on nearby humans. There is a 1 in 6 chance each week that this incursion destroys the nearest human settlement.

Once an incursion has destroyed the nearest human settlement, whether any of its lairs have reached Level 9 or not, it becomes “inactive” and stops getting more powerful. Perhaps it will fade away over time, leaving an empty wasteland behind it. Or maybe the world sinks into the nightmare realm permanently, one small piece at a time. What becomes of an incursion after it becomes inactive is up to the GM, but unless an area has been cleansed by a character reaching Level 10 and retiring, there are always more incursions.

Antagonize Humans

The monsters or nightmares of this lair have been venturing out into the world to attack and murder humans. The nearby area becomes dangerous and, at the very least, checking for wandering monsters at night is appropriate. People may be dragged back into the nightmare incursion after being attacked, or left where they lie. The nightmares may also steal valuable objects with the intention of turning them into anchors for new lairs.

Because high-level nightmares cannot leave their incursions, if this is rolled for a lair of Level 7 or higher, it might mean that monsters other than the crown are doing the antagonizing, or that this lair creates a new low-level lair next to it, which is then able to antagonize nearby humans, should its crown decide to do so.

Attract Monsters

A new type of monster arrives, or an existing type has its numbers increased. Choose or roll a monster and refer to its lair numbers to determine how many additional monsters now inhabit this lair.

Create New Lair

A new lair of a lower level manifests next to this one, or at least nearby. This new lair has its own crown and anchor, the same as any other, and is not dependent on the one that spawned it for survival. If possible, the crown should be drawn from the thoughts and memories of those who have died in the first lair.

Lairs of Level 1 are already the lowest level possible, so they cannot create new lairs. If this result is rolled for a Level 1 lair, it antagonizes nearby humans instead.

Growth in Size

This lair grows in size to encompass surrounding areas, or radically changes its interior layout. Or both! New rooms and sections appear, which may be trapped, but do not come with new monsters. This lair may now have more entrances, and it will probably take longer to reach the anchor than it would have before.

Increase in Level

The level of this lair increases by 1. It gains a new element, which you can choose or roll for, but none of the existing monsters increase in level except the crown, which is always the same level as its lair. The crown should also gain an additional power, or lose a weakness if it has several, and a few more should be added to the map as fixed encounters. The anchor does not get any more valuable than it already is.

Lure Humans

This can mean either of two things. It could be that a large number of people have ventured into this nightmare incursion of late, meeting grisly fates or disappearing entirely. Or this lair has attracted a number of human cultists, intent on worshipping it or seeking a twisted form of enlightenment in the madness it causes.



Lairs Without Anchors

Once a lair's anchor is destroyed or leaves the nightmare incursion, that lair fades away. Its crown is no longer able to manifest and assault people, its traps no longer work, and its rooms are no longer accessible by humans.

This can happen quickly or slowly, depending on who is still in the dungeon. Once people have left an area in an anchor-less lair, they cannot go back—unless it is their only way back out again. No one is ever trapped in a lair that loses its anchor. When the nightmare realm recedes, it cannot take material things with it. Anything material still inside a lair when it disappears is either claimed by another nightmare incursion or is left behind in the waking world.

Other monsters that are not nightmares also lose access to lairs that have had their anchors removed. They do not leave along with the receding nightmare realm, however, and may still stalk and kill humans they encounter. Creatures that rely on nightmares to magically animate them—some golems and undead—become inert once the nightmare lair vanishes.

Losing Contact with the World

If a dungeon loses all of its lairs that have entrances on the material plane, it can no longer be reached by normal people. Any lairs left inside it are cast adrift, pieces of the nightmare realm that have no purchase in the waking world. They must find new entrances in order to continue terrorizing the Kingdoms of Dreams.

This can easily befall **tunnel incursions**, if they have no solid passageway between their various lairs. By contrast, even when a **hive incursion** is a collection of tunnel incursions, lairs disconnected from the waking world may re-attach themselves via nearby lairs that still have functional entrances. Because the lairs of a **zone incursion** each have their own access to the material plane, with less need for compact entrances, they are also the hardest to get rid of (but also the easiest to notice).

If PCs wish to return to an incursion whose connection to the waking world has been severed, they have several options other than waiting patiently for its return:

- Employ a magic item that grants access to the nightmare realm (assuming such an item can be found). The terran anchor on page 247 is one such example.
- Perform a magical ritual that opens a portal to the desired incursion, or transports them directly. Such a ritual would be exceedingly hard to find, and would almost certainly involve great risk or sacrifice if actually used.
- Strike a bargain with someone else who can do either of the above. Magicians might have their own means of contacting other planes not described in this book, and faerie nobles have entire magical traditions of their own, wholly alien to human beings. There are even dwellers in the deep whose minds are similar enough to those of human beings that communication can occur between them. If they have already experienced a journey from their reality all the way to the Kingdoms of Dreams, might they not also know a way through the myriad worlds and into nightmares?

Evil's Return

Just because an incursion has lost its entrance to the material world, or its connection to an entrance, does not mean that it no longer poses a threat. So long as it contains an anchor, an incursion can, and will, return.

Incursions can show up again through several means. The oldest and surest way is through **the summonings of wizards**. Usually, summoners are fishing for other entities—ghosts, demons, spirits—but sometimes they bring the nightmare realm closer, allowing it to snatch a connection to an anchor from out of the minds of those resentfully dying nearby. And sometimes, magic can even create new entrances to lairs that already have anchors.

Less common is for lairs to be **called by emotions** strong enough to rend the veils between the planes. This is more or less the same as being summoned, though it happens unconsciously or unintentionally, during a highly charged death. People who die in terrible ways can give themselves over to the nightmare realm and live on—in a sense—through the incursion that is built around their pain and suffering and the anchor that was once in their possession. It is much easier for nightmares to steal memories and experiences like this when they have already established a foothold in the area, however. Like calls to like, after all.

There are also certain **cursed objects** that can work to manifest new nightmare incursions around themselves. Anchors and most mundane objects cannot be used by the nightmare realm in such a way—an anchor removed is a lair destroyed. Only magical items can call the nightmare realm into the world. Even mundane anchors are powered by a person's experience of them, not by their inherent qualities.

The usual way of reconnecting to the material world, however, is for lairs to simply **attach themselves to other incursions** that have not lost their entrances. This is one way for dungeons to grow and alter themselves. As they lose lairs to persistent intruders, smaller dungeons blink out of existence, their contents added to other, more successful incursions.

A single tunnel dungeon, cut off from the world, may attach itself to another tunnel dungeon, creating a new hive incursion. Or it might attach itself to a hive incursion already in operation, making it more complex. Because tunnel incursions and hive incursions are more contained and interior than zone incursions, they do not often mix with them. Instead, if they attach to a zone incursion's lair, that lair becomes a *de facto* part of the tunnel or hive incursion—usually the new entrance. But then again, as they say: all kinds of miseries are possible, in hell.

Part Three

A slight Appendix of additional material.



Why Optional?

Creating your own material is a major part of this game—adding new social institutions, drawing and populating your own dungeon maps, inventing new monsters and nightmare creatures, and so many details about the kingdoms the PCs are trying to defend. Because you must make the game’s setting your own, it is natural that it might drift away from the world implied by the rules presented so far. This section introduces material that may be of interest to players in some games of *The Nightmares Underneath*, but won’t fit well into every group’s setting.

Contest Resolution

This is an optional system for simple resolution of conflicts and tasks where attribute modifiers should have a considerable impact. **To decide the contest**, both players roll 2d6 and add any relevant attribute modifiers or other bonuses. The higher score wins, and a tie is a tie.

Contest Resolution: 2d6 + attribute modifier vs. 2d6 + attribute modifier.

If your profession is particularly relevant, the GM may tell you to add your level to your roll. Your opponent may add their level as well, if their profession, or their existence as a monster, is of use to them.

In lieu of an opponent’s roll, the GM may dictate a target number instead. For multiple characters, a mixture of the two can be used—for example, Speed may be used for NPC’s initiative rolls if the PC’s use this contest resolution system instead of an overcome roll. In this case, initiative is 2d6 + Dexterity modifier vs. the monsters’ Speed ratings.

Non-Binary Resolution

By riffing off of this 2d6+attribute modifier non-binary result, along with many of the random tables in the game, you can create a whole new system for skill rolls:

Roll	Non-Binary Result
0-3	Miserable failure and everything gets worse.
4-6	Results are not successful.
7-9	Limited results. Marginal, partial, or mediocre success. A mixed bag.
10-11	Satisfactory results overall, for a minimal cost.
12+	Exceptional results.

If you must choose between fast, cheap, and good, you get one with a 7-9, two with a 10-11, and a 12+ will get you all three, perhaps miraculously.

Equipment Breakage Rules

When you're putting your weapons and tools to hard use, or generally straining your gear (in a dangerous environment, for example), things can break. Here are two optional rules for equipment breakage:

Lucky Saves

If you are struck in the head while wearing a helmet, you may choose to have your helmet break instead of suffering Wounds. **If you are struck in the arm or torso while carrying a shield**, you may choose to have your shield break instead of suffering Wounds. Broken equipment cannot be repaired and no longer offers protection.

Things Fall Apart

If you roll a 1 on an overcome roll, or a 20 on a save, a random piece of equipment that you are using breaks. An attack roll of 20 (before modifiers) damages the target's armour, reducing its Armour rating by 1.

Troupe Style Play

Nightmare incursions don't wait around passively while PCs are resting up, licking their wounds, and recovering their lost attribute points. They get worse, and time is of the essence. If players don't want all their characters to wait while a few of them regain their strength, you can create a pool of characters, who can either belong to one specific player each, or are available for anyone to play. When you prepare for a sortie into the dungeon, each player chooses one character each (or two each, if your group is small) from the pool, and that's your adventuring party.

Meanwhile, unchosen characters remain at home. They continue to recover if they are wounded; or not, if they don't need to. When a character is chosen to return to adventuring after more than a week, use the downtime rules on pages 141-143 and decide how much they have spent on living in civilization, as normal.

Zero to Hero Disposition

If you want a more exponential scale of character toughness (like other old school games), you can determine Disposition by always rolling a number of Hit Dice equal to a character's level, instead of one or two based on how well they rested. This makes high level characters and monsters much harder to defeat than those at low levels.



Random Tables

Use these tables when you need additional ideas for monsters, people, and treasures. Names can be found on page 29, tables for location details are on pages 40-41, and the main magic items table is on page 230. Coinage, precious metals, and money in the Kingdoms of Dreams are all discussed on page 382.

For Monsters

A monster is a creature that, by its very nature, is incompatible with civilization—a thing that cannot help but be contrary to the natural order. How does a monster’s behaviour disrupt human activity?

This particular monster... (choose or roll 1d20):

Roll	Behaviour
1	Attacks and kills other people to prove its superiority.
2	Breeds and domesticates other people.
3	Captures and enslaves other people.
4	Collects people as if they were trophies.
5	Dominates others by being the only source of a specific resource.
6	Feeds off others parasitically.
7	Finds amusement in the suffering of others.
8	Hinders the cognitive abilities of other people.
9	Hunts and attacks specific (types of) victims.
10	Kills and eats other people, violating all codes of conduct to do so.
11	Lives only for conflict and war.
12	Manipulates others to their ruin from the shadows.
13	Persuades others to do its bidding, to their own detriment.
14	Persuades others to turn against their communities.
15	Reproduces parasitically, using other peoples’ bodies, minds, or lives.
16	Ruins the environment that other people must live in.
17	Seizes the fruits of others’ labour by force.
18	Steals the possessions of other people.
19	Wants to share the experience of its own suffering.
20	Works to destroy social organizations larger than a few people.

Then give it some monstrous traits that help it go about its anti-social business.

Monstrous Traits

Roll 1d100 one or more times to determine a monster's traits:

Roll	Trait				
1	Amorphous.	35	Hallucinogenic.	69	Rotting flesh.
2	Angry.	36	Hissing.	70	Rubbery.
3	Atrophied.	37	Hoarder.	71	Sadistic.
4	Beaked.	38	Hooks.	72	Salt-encrusted.
5	Bestial face.	39-40	Horns.	73	Scabrous.
6	Bloated.	41	Hypnotic.	74	Scars.
7	Bloody.	42	Ink.	75	Scent.
8	Burning.	43	Insectile.	76	Screeching.
9	Burrowing.	44	Intoxicating.	77	Scuttling.
10	Cannibal.	45	Invasive.	78	Shell.
11-12	Claws.	46	Jaundiced.	79	Skinless.
13	Crest.	47	Liar.	80	Slimy.
14	Croaking.	48	Limbless.	81	Slithering.
15	Crumbling.	49	Mandibles.	82	Snout.
16	Crystalline.	50	Many eyes.	83	Sonar.
17	Deceptive.	51	Melting.	84	Spines.
18	Diseased.	52	Membranous.	85	Sticky.
19	Emaciated.	53	Metallic.	86	Suckers.
20	Emotionless.	54	Mindless.	87	Suggestive.
21	Exoskeleton.	55	Mottled.	88	Tail.
22	Eyeless.	56-57	Nocturnal.	89	Tentacles.
23	Eye stalks.	58	No reflection.	90	Thorns.
24	Faceless.	59	No shadow.	91	Translucent.
25-26	Fangs.	60	Open sores.	92	Trunk.
27	Filthy.	61	Parasitic.	93	Tumours.
28	Fish-like.	62	Poisonous.	94	Tusks.
29	Freezing.	63	Pollen.	95	Veiny.
30	Frost-rimed.	64	Possessed.	96	Waxy.
32	Gaseous.	65	Radula.	97	Webbed digits.
32	Glittering.	66	Ravenous.	98	Wings.
33	Glowing.	67	Reeking.	99	Withered.
34	Hairy.	68	Reptilian.	100	Writhing.



For People

When you introduce an NPC, roll 1d100 if you need some mannerisms for them:

Roll	Mannerisms				
1-3	Exaggerates.	39	Hands clenched.	70	Raised eyebrow.
4-7	Hand gestures.	40	Haughty.	71	Rambles.
8-10	Proverbs.	41	High voice.	72	Removes glasses.
11	Arms akimbo.	42	Hoarse.	73	Rubs eyes.
12	Arms crossed.	43	Hunched.	74	Rubs temples.
13	Avoids eye contact.	44	Ink-stained.	75	Serene.
14	Bites fingernails.	45	Jewellery.	76	Shuffling.
15	Bobbing head.	46	Journal keeper.	77	Sloucher.
16	Bow-legged.	47	Jovial.	78	Sniffing.
17	Braggart.	48	Jumpy.	79	Stands too close.
18	Chin stroker.	49	Languid.	80	Stares.
19	Choppy gestures.	50	Limping.	81	Steepled hands.
20	Clears throat.	51	Lip-smacking.	82	Straight-backed.
21	Coughing.	52	Lisping.	83	Stutters.
22	Cracks knuckles.	53	Literary allusions.	84	Suave.
23	Deep breathes.	54	Loud.	85	Sultry.
24	Deep voice.	55	Monotone.	86	Swaying.
25	Exuberant.	56	Mothering.	87	Swings arms.
26	Eye rolling.	57	Mouthbreather.	88	Talks over others.
27	Flexes muscles.	58	Mumbler.	89	Teethgrinder.
28	Flutters eyelids.	59	Nasal voice.	90	Tells jokes.
29	Foot tapper.	60	Nervous.	91	Thumb twiddler.
30	Funny hat.	61	Paint-flecked.	92	Trails off...
31	Giggling.	62	Panicky.	93	Traumatized.
32	Gossips.	63	Paranoid.	94	Tugs at ear.
33	Graceful.	64	Perfumed.	95	Twitchy.
34	Gruff.	65	Plays with rings.	96	Unmoving.
35	Grumbler.	66	Poetic.	97	Uses slang.
36	Hair tosser.	67	Purring.	98	Whispering.
37	Hand waving.	68	Questioning.	99	Wide-eyed.
38	Hand wringing.	69	Quiet.	100	Wrinkles nose.

For Treasures and Things

Item Types

A lair's anchor may be any item or collection of items that you think is reasonable, given its size and value. Choose something yourself, or use some of the following tables to help determine what the object actually is.

For a general category of type, roll 1d10 if the anchor is not an oversized item, or 1d6 if it is:

Roll	Encumbering Item Type
1	Armour or shield.
2	Book.
3	Bottle.
4	Clothing or costume.
5	Money.
6	Music.
7	Ornament.
8	Painting.
9	Tool or toy.
10	Weapon.

Roll	Larger Item Type
1	Armour or costume.
2	Book.
3	Container.
4	Device or toy.
5	Furniture.
6	Music.
7	Ornament.
8	Painting.
9	Statue.
10	Tool or weapon.

Larger items are those that count as 2 or more encumbering items each.

Roll	Oversized Item Type
1	Altar.
2	Chest.
3	Device.
4	Furniture.
5	Statue.
6	Vehicle.

An oversized item may require more than one person to carry it.

Roll	Small or Tiny Item Type
1	Book or writings.
2	Clothing.
3	Cosmetics, or scent.
4	Flask, jar, or vial.
5	Gemstone.
6-7	Jewellery.
8	Music.
9	Tool or toy.
10	Weapon.



Specific Items

Roll 1d200 to determine a specific item for the anchor or another object to be:

Roll	Item				
1	Accordion.	33	Bust sculpture.	65	Dagger.
2	Alcohol.	34	Calligraphy set.	66	Dart board.
3	Altar.	35	Candlestick.	67	Desk.
4	Amulet.	36	Cane.	68	Diary.
5	Anklet.	37	Canoe.	69	Dice.
6	Armlet.	38	Cape.	70	Divan.
7	Arrow.	39	Carving.	71	Doll.
8	Automaton.	40	Cask.	72	Door.
9	Axe.	41	Cauldron.	73	Dress.
10	Ball.	42	Cello.	74	Drinking horn.
11	Barrel.	43	Chair.	75	Dye.
12	Bastard sword.	44	Chamber pot.	76	Earrings.
13	Bed.	45	Chariot.	77	False teeth.
14	Bell.	46	Chess set.	78	Fan.
15	Belt.	47	Chest.	79	Feather.
16	Bird cage.	48	Cloak.	80	Flail.
17	Blanket.	49	Clock.	81	Flask.
18	Board game.	50	Club.	82	Flute.
19	Boat.	51	Coach.	83	Framed painting.
20	Bolt of cloth.	52	Codex.	84	Gemstone.
21	Bonnet.	53	Coffin.	85	Girdle.
22	Book.	54	Coins.	86	Glass eye.
23	Bookcase.	55	Comb.	87	Globe.
24	Boots.	56	Compass.	88	Gloves.
25	Bottle.	57	Coronet.	89	Goblet.
26	Bow.	58	Cosmetics kit.	90	Guitar.
27	Bowl.	59	Couch.	91	Hair stick.
28	Box.	60	Crib.	92	Halberd.
29	Bracelet.	61	Crossbow.	93	Hand drum.
30	Brazier.	62	Crown.	94	Harmonica.
31	Brush.	63	Crystal ball.	95	Harp.
32	Bureau.	64	Cup.	96	Hat.

97	Hearth.	132	Pendant.	167	Snuff box.
98	Heavy armour.	133	Perfume.	168	Spear.
99	Helmet.	134	Piano.	169	Spectacles.
100	Horn.	135	Pillow book.	170	Spindle.
101	Hurdy gurdy.	136	Pipe.	171	Spyglass.
102	Idol.	137	Pistol.	172	Staff.
103	Incense.	138	Plate.	173	Stand-up bass.
104	Jar.	139	Polished stone.	174	Statue.
105	Jewellery.	140	Pot.	175	Suit of plate.
106	Journal.	141	Precious metal.	176	Sword.
107	Keg.	142	Press.	177	Table.
108	Key.	143	Quiver.	178	Tablecloth.
109	Kick drum.	144	Rapier.	179	Tambourine.
110	Knife.	145	Rifle.	180	Tapestry.
111	Lantern.	146	Ring.	181	Throne.
112	Leash.	147	Rug.	182	Tiara.
113	Letters.	148	Ruler.	183	Torc.
114	Light armour.	149	Sarcophagus.	184	Toy.
115	Locket.	150	Saxophone.	185	Tray.
116	Loom.	151	Sceptre.	186	Trumpet.
117	Lute.	152	Scimitar.	187	Tuba.
118	Mace.	153	Scissors.	188	Unframed painting.
119	Mandolin.	154	Scroll.	189	Vase.
120	Mask.	155	Set of tools.	190	Veil.
121	Medal.	156	Sextant.	191	Violin.
122	Mirror.	157	Shaker.	192	Wagon.
123	Musket.	158	Shawl.	193	Warhammer.
124	Necklace.	159	Shield.	194	Water pipe.
125	Nose ring.	160	Shirt.	195	Waterskin.
126	Notebook.	161	Shoes.	196	Wind chimes.
127	Organ.	162	Silverware.	197	Wine.
128	Oud.	163	Sitar.	198	Wineskin.
129	Pan.	164	Sketchbook.	199	Worry beads.
130	Pants.	165	Slippers.	200	Writings of some kind.
131	Parasol.	166	Snare drum.		



Details

Use the following tables to help you customize anchors and other treasures:

Roll	Aesthetic	1d10
1	Alien or uncanny.	
2	Austere.	
3	Beatific or idealized.	
4	Clean and pure.	
5	Chaotic or decadent.	
6	Imperial or stately.	
7	Orderly.	
8	Playful.	
9	Revolutionary.	
10	Savage or sinister.	

Roll	Artistic Style	1d20
1	Abstract.	
2	Baroque.	
3	Classical.	
4	Comedic.	
5	Existential.	
6	Expressionist.	
7	Formal.	
8	Futuristic.	
9	Geometric.	
10	Heroic.	
11	Minimalist.	
12	Monstrous.	
13	Pastoral.	
14	Pornographic.	
15	Psychedelic.	
16	Realist.	
17	Romantic.	
18	Surreal.	
19	Symbolic.	
20	Tragic.	

Roll	Colour	1d20
1	Amber.	
2	Black.	
3	Blue.	
4	Bronze or copper.	
5	Brown or beige.	
6	Crimson or scarlet.	
7	Gold.	
8	Green.	
9	Grey.	
10	Mauve or violet.	
11	Ochre.	
12	Olive or verdigris.	
13	Orange.	
14	Pink or magenta.	
15	Purple or lavender.	
16	Red or russet.	
17	Silver.	
18	Turquoise.	
19	White or off-white.	
20	Yellow.	

Roll	Complexity	1d6
1	Complicated.	
2	Elaborate.	
3	Elegant.	
4	Ingenious.	
5	Ornate.	
6	Simple.	

Roll	Condition	1d20
1	Aged.	
2	Battered.	
3	Broken.	
4	Covered.	
5	Dirty.	
6	Dusty.	
7	Elegant.	
8	Exquisite.	
9	Fine.	
10	Intact.	
11	Polished.	
12	Pristine.	
13	Refined.	
14	Scarred.	
15	Scuffed.	
16	Skillfully made.	
17	Stained.	
18	Striking.	
19	Weathered.	
20	Worn.	

Roll	Effects	1d20
1	Cleaning agent.	
2	Colouring agent (dye, paint).	
3	Combustible or flammable.	
4	Corrosive.	
5-6	Flavouring.	
7	Hallucinogenic.	
8-9	Intoxicant.	
10	Irritant.	
11	Lubricant.	
12	Magical.	
13-14	Medicine.	
15	Nourishment.	
16-17	Poisonous.	
18	Scented.	
19-20	Stimulant.	

Use this table for consumables, potions, and powders of a suspicious or unknown nature only.



Roll	Emotion
1	Anger.
2	Desire.
3	Envy.
4	Fear.
5	Gluttony.
6	Greed.
7	Hate.
8	Jealousy.
9	Loss.
10	Love.
11	Lust.
12	Need.
13	Nostalgia.
14	Obsession.
15	Pride.
16	Resentment.
17	Revenge.
18	Reverence.
19	Security.
20	Worship.

Roll	Enchantment
1	Attracts attention.
2	Bad luck curse.
3	Enhancement.
4	Induces transformation.
5	Magical effect.
6	Reveals information.
7	Stirs emotions.
8	Stores energy.

Roll	Gemstone Type
1	Agate or onyx.
2	Amethyst or quartz.
3	Aquamarine.
4	Azurite.
5	Beryl.
6	Carnelian.
7	Diamond.
8	Emerald.
9	Garnet.
10	Jade.
11	Jasper.
12	Lapis lazuli.
13	Malachite.
14	Opal.
15	Peridot olivine.
16	Ruby.
17	Sapphire.
18	Serpentine.
19	Topaz.
20	Zircon.

Roll	Owner
1	Artist or performer.
2	Crafter or proletariat.
3	Criminal.
4	Farmer or peasant.
5	Merchant or trader.
6	Noble.
7	Nomad.
8	Priest.
9	Professional or scholar.
10	Soldier or warrior.

Jewellery

Roll 1d10 for decoration, 1d20 for form, 1d12 for material, 1d8 for provenance, and 1d6 for the intended recipient:

Roll	Decoration
1	Animals.
2	Coral.
3	Crystal or glass.
4	Deity.
5-6	Gemstones.
7	Pearls.
8	Script.
9-10	Symbols.

Roll	Form
1	Anklet.
2	Armlet.
3	Bonnet.
4	Bracelet.
5	Coronet.
6	Crown.
7	Earrings.
8	Hair stick.
9	Locket.
10	Necklace.
11	Nose ring.
12	Pendant.
13-17	Ring.
18	Tiara.
19	Torc.
20	Veil.

Roll	Material
1	Alum.
2	Brass or copper.
3	Bronze.
4-6	Gold.
7	Platinum.
8-9	Silver.
10	Stone.
11	Unknown substance.
12	White gold.

Roll	Provenance
1	Ancient culture.
2	Distant culture.
3	Foreign culture.
4-5	Local culture.
6	Local sub-culture.
7	Nearby culture.
8	Unknown culture.

Roll	Recipient
1	Feminine.
2	Inhuman.
3	Masculine.
4	Oddly feminine.
5	Oddly masculine.
6	Ungendered.

The recipient result may refer either to the intentions and cultural values of the crafter of this piece of jewellery, or to the cultural assumptions of the PCs that find it.



Money

Coins come in all shapes and sizes and in various types of metals. With every new kingdom, and every new ruler, comes new coinage. Maybe you can trust a coin's purity based on the designs stamped upon, and maybe you can't.

Most currency in the Kingdoms of Dreams comes in the form of silver coins, though there are also gold coins and gold bars, which facilitate commerce between the elites. There is also a whole world of trade that occurs without money at all, where credit and debt is recorded in writing—but of course the adventurers who come to plunder the nightmare realm of its stolen riches care little for paperwork.

Finding a hoard of gold coins and gilded ornaments may be a dream come true, but you still need to carry it off before you can spend it. There are no hard and fast rules on how many coins make up a single encumbering item, because it depends not only on their weight, but also on how awkward they are to carry. After all, it is much easier to carry ten one-pound gold bars than it is to carry ten pounds of loose gold coins. The numbers below are rough guidelines.

Gold

- 1,000 cyphers worth of loose gold coins, kept in pockets and other small containers on your person, counts as 1 encumbering item.
- 2,000 cyphers worth of loose gold coins, kept in a sack or other bag, counts as 1 encumbering item.
- 5,000 cyphers worth of gold bars or carefully packed gold coins counts as 1 encumbering item, and weighs about 10 pounds.

Silver

- 100 cyphers worth of loose silver coins, kept in pockets and other small containers on your person, counts as 1 encumbering item.
- 200 cyphers worth of loose silver coins, kept in a sack or other bag, counts as 1 encumbering item.
- 500 cyphers worth of silver bars or carefully packed silver coins counts as 1 encumbering item and weighs about 10 pounds.

Impurities, like copper and iron, generally decrease the value of coins (and are used by counterfeiters for this purpose), but may actually increase the value of coins and jewellery if they give the gold or silver a pleasing appearance. White gold is a combination of gold and silver, and is worth some value higher than pure silver but lower than pure gold, depending on how much of each metal it contains.

Ancient metals whose manufacture is no longer known in the Kingdoms of Dreams, like hepatizon and orichalcum, can be much more valuable than gold.

If coins are rather large, or they have a hole in the middle and you string them together, you can count up to twice as many loose coins as a single encumbering item. Coins that were made deliberately to be awkward to carry, or coin hordes with a wide array of different sizes can count as more encumbering items than the numbers here indicate.

Writings

An anchor that consists of writing may be a valuable book, a collection of personal journals or records never meant to be seen by others, or anything in between. They might also be magical formulas. Choose a type or roll 1d10:

Roll	Type of Writing
1	Almanac.
2	Catalogue of... ↓
3	History of... →
4	Liturgical text.
5	Observations on... →
6-7	Personal journal of... ↓
8	Practical manual of... →
9	Theoretical treatise on... →
10	Travelogue describing... ↘

Once you have determined the type of writing, roll 1d8 or 1d20 to determine the subject or topic:

Roll	Catalogue of...
1-2	Animals and beasts.
3	Human cultures.
4	Legal rulings.
5	Maps.
6	Religious cults.
7	Spell formulas.
8	Tasty recipes.

Roll	Personal journal of...
1	Arcane experiments.
2	Artistic sketches.
3	Mechanical devices.
4-5	A personal philosophy.
6	Scientific inquiry.
7-8	Tragic events.

Roll	History / Observations / Practice / Theory
1	Agriculture.
2	Alchemy or magic.
3	Architecture or engineering.
4	Astronomy or navigation.
5	Brewing.
6	Cosmetics or costumes.
7	Economies and trade.
8	Herbalism.
9	Law.
10	Literature or poetry.
11	Mathematics.
12	Militaries and war.
13	Mosaics or sculpture.
14	Music or theatre.
15	Painting.
16	Philosophy.
17	Political organization.
18	Religious cults of old.
19	Smithing.
20	Surgery.

Roll	Travelogue describing...
1	Alien culture.
2-3	Ancient culture.
4	Distant culture.
5	Foreign culture.
6	Local culture.
7	Nearby culture.
8	Unknown culture.

Part Four

The Indices

General Index

- abjuration of a spiritual enemy, 87.
- Abnormality (curse), 293.
- Accurate Weapon (spell), 205.
- Acid Spray (spell), 205.
- actions (in combat), 266-267; while
 - encumbered, 256; held, 267; while surprised, 261.
- advantage and disadvantage, 61; in
 - combat, 265; to Disposition, 264.
- adventuring party (crew type), 52.
- aiming, 274.
- Alabaster Throne, The, 37.
- alignment, 100; and arcane
 - accoutrements, 232; and institutions, 150; and magic items, 230; of retainers, 165.
- Alter Items (spell), 205.
- Anahir (village), 35.
- anchors, 311, 313; and the countdown, 360; and the encounter die, 357; as a fixed encounter, 356; lairs without, 364; and new lairs, 363, 365; random tables for, 375-383.
- angels, 46, 48; contacting, 195.
- Anomalous Sensation (curse), 293.
- Anti-Social Lust Parasite (curse), 293.
- Anything to Kill the Pain (curse), 293.
- Apostasy (curse), 294.
- arcane accoutrements, 232.
- Arcane Connection (spell), 205.
- arcane tools, 233.
- areas (of an incursion), 318, 358.
- armour (equipment), 109.
- Armour (rating), 104; of assassins, 78; of monsters, 330; of nightmares, 334, 336; while mounted, 109, 276.
- assassins, 78; attacks by, 270; disarming traps, 258; as potential employees, 165, 166.
- assisting others, 68.
- astral, the, 47, 48, 186, 342, 351.
- athletic maneuvers, 274.
- attacks, 62-63, 268-271; while
 - encumbered, 256; by monsters, 272, 331; multiple, 271; by multiple attackers, 269; by NPCs, 272; of opportunity, 274; special, 276; unarmed, 96, 271, 275, 279.
- attributes, 75; half scores of, 75; increasing, 135; loss of, 62, 282-285; modifiers, 76; and overcome attempts, 60, 62-63; primary, 96, 135; of monsters, 272, 330, 331; recovering, 171, 287; reducing, 282, 283, 285; saves against, 61, 66, 198; at zero, 76, 284.
- barbing, 109.
- bards, 81; and character assassination, 171; as potential employees, 165, 166; and spells, 97, 191.
- Battle spells: school of, 98.
- beastlings, 49, 342; as spiritual enemy, 87.
- Bed of Leaves (curse), 294.
- Betrayal of the Written Word (curse), 294.
- Binding (spell), 205.
- Black Cloud (curse), 294.
- bleeding, 280.
- Blessing and Bane (spell), 206.
- Blood Rage (curse), 294.
- Bridge (spell), 206.
- Brutal Weapon (spell), 206.
- Burning Inside (curse), 294.
- Cause Fear (spell), 206.
- champions, 82-83; as potential
 - employees, 165, 166; and spells, 97, 191.
- chance (resolution), 60.
- character assassination, 171.
- character creation procedures, 74.
- charging, 275.

-
- Charisma, 75; and character assassination, 171. *See also* attributes.
- coins, 107, 382; fake, 214. *See also* money.
- charged magic items, 234-237.
- Charm Animals (spell), 207.
- Charm Monster (spell), 207.
- Charm Person (spell), 207.
- Chromatic Spray (spell), 207.
- Clairaudience (spell), 208.
- Clairvoyance (spell), 208.
- Climbing (spell), 208.
- collective actions, 69.
- Colour Change (spell), 208.
- combat, 265-277; while encumbered, 256; mounted, 109, 266, 276; surprise and, 261; time in, 252-253.
- Communist Parties, 152.
- complicated actions, 266-267.
- Compulsive Ritual (curse), 294.
- Confusion (spell), 208.
- Conjuration (spell), 210.
- Constant Reminder (curse), 296.
- contacts, 162-163; gaining contacts between adventures, 141-143.
- contest resolution, 370.
- Contingency (spell), 210.
- corrupted humans, 49, 314-315; as potential employees, 165, 166.
- corrupted outposts, 311, 314.
- corruption (of spells), 194, 196; and divine magic, 200; and wizards, 95, 195.
- countdowns, 360.
- Counterspell (spell), 210.
- cover; and firearms, 270; and missile attacks, 271.
- Create Food and Drink (spell), 210.
- Create Object (spell), 211.
- criminal gang (crew type), 54.
- crowns (of nightmare incursions), 312, 356; and countdowns, 360.
- cultists (corrupted). *See* corrupted humans.
- cultists (profession), 86-87; as contacts, 163; as potential employees, 165, 166; and spells, 97, 191.
- Cure Disease (spell), 211.
- Cure Wound (spell), 211.
- currency. *See* money.
- cyphers, 107. *See also* money.
- damage, 60, 268, 279; Ferocity modifier and, 76, 279; non-lethal, 282; of monsters, 331; of two-handed weapons, 111. *See also* Hit Dice. *See also* injuries.
- death, 280, 284, 288; inside an incursion, 328; of NPCs, 280, 285.
- deathtrap dungeons (incursion type), 312, 314, 362.
- Deformation (curse), 296.
- Detect Evil (spell), 211.
- Detect Illusion (spell), 211.
- Detect Magic (spell), 212.
- Dexterity, 75; and dodging, 275; and initiative, 265; and overcome attempts, 62-63; and ranged attacks, 270-271; and searching, 258; and surprise, 260. *See also* attributes.
- Different Now (curse), 296.
- disabled characters, 289.
- disadvantage. *See* advantage and disadvantage.
- Dispel Magic (spell), 212.
- Disposition, 60, 96, 104, 264; of monsters, 331, 342-343; reducing, 268, 279-280, 282; recovering, 286-288. *See also* Wounds.
- Divination spells: school of, 98.
- dodging, 275.

-
- drugs, 118.
 dungeoneering obstacles, 257.
 Duplicate Images (spell), 212.
 dwellers in the deep, 48-49, 342;
 contacting, 195; as spiritual
 enemies, 87.
 dying. *See* death.
 Eldritch Darts (spell), 212.
 empty ruins (ruin type), 345-346.
 Enchantment spells: school of, 98.
 encounter die, 357-359; and the
 countdown, 360.
 encounters, 260-261; and the
 countdown, 360; fixed, 356;
 random, 357-359.
 encumbrance, 101, 108, 256; of
 anchors, 261; and initiative,
 203; of money, 107, 382; and
 movement rate, 266; and surprise,
 261.
 Endless Pursuit (curse), 296.
 Endure Pain (spell), 212.
 Enemies Everywhere (curse), 296.
 Enlarge (spell), 213.
 equipment, 101, 107-114; buying,
 107, 114, 144-145; and
 encumbrance, 256; selling, 114,
 144-145; and skills, 67.
 evasion, 262.
 experience points, 134-135.
 Evocation spells: school of, 98.
 Faerie (land of), 46-47.
 Faerie Dust (spell), 213.
 faeries, 46, 49, 244, 342; contacting,
 195; as spiritual enemy, 87.
 False Magnetism (spell), 213.
 Fearlessness (spell), 213.
 Featherlight (spell), 213.
 Ferakheen (town), 35.
 Ferocity, 75; and damage, 76, 279. *See*
 also attributes.
 fey. *See* faeries.
 fighters, 88; attacks by, 270; as
 potential employees, 165.
 fighting. *See* combat.
 Find Poison (spell), 214.
 Find Traps (spell), 214.
 firearms, 111; attacking with, 270.
 fixed encounters, 356.
 Floating Platform (spell), 214.
 Fools' Gold (spell), 214.
 foraging. *See* hunting and foraging.
 Forbidden Ground (curse), 296.
 Forlorn Encystment (spell), 214.
 Garden of Heaven, The, 351.
 gates of darkness (ruin type), 345-346.
 Geth, 28, 32-33, 38; and Neth, 34, 37.
 Ghostly Hands (spell), 215.
 GM's job, 308-309.
 gods (pagan), 23, 181, 342; contacting,
 195; and cultists, 86; and magic,
 200; and names, 28. *See also*
 idolatry.
 golems, 342; and ruins, 347; as
 spiritual enemies, 87.
 grappling, 271, 275.
 group actions, 69.
 guardians (of ruins), 347.
 guns. *See* firearms.
 Hadrazzar (province), 28, 33-37.
 Hallways Never End (curse), 296.
 harm. *See* damage *or* injuries.
 healing. *See* recovery.
 Healing spells: school of, 99.
 Health, 75; and Wounds, 280. *See also*
 attributes.
 heaven, pillars of, 46-48.
 held actions (in combat), 267.
 help (on a roll), 68.
 Heresy of Stigmatism, The (curse),
 297.
 heretic temples (incursion type), 312,
 314, 362.
 Highland Coast, The, 28-41.

-
- hirelings. *See* retainers.
- hiring retainers, 164-168.
- Hit Dice, 60, 96; and damage, 110, 270-271, 279; and Disposition, 264, 279; of monsters, 331; of nightmares, 330.
- hit locations, 281.
- hive incursions, 321.
- Holy Water (spell), 215.
- hospitals, 33, 142.
- hotels, 153.
- Hunger, The (curse), 297.
- I Need This (curse), 297.
- Identify (spell), 215.
- idolatry, 22-23, 26, 32, 46, 200. *See also* gods (pagan).
- Illusion spells: school of, 99.
- Illusory Appearance (spell), 215.
- Illusory Being (spell), 215.
- Illusory Terrain (spell), 216.
- Immobilize Animal (spell), 216.
- Immobilize Monster (spell), 216.
- Immobilize Person (spell), 216.
- incursion events, 362-363.
- incursions. *See* nightmare incursions.
- Indivisible (spell), 216.
- Infected Attribute (curse), 297.
- inflation, 146-147.
- initiative, 265; and encumbrance, 256; and spells, 198; and surprise, 261.
- injuries, 279-289. *See also* Wounds.
- institutions. *See* social institutions.
- Inspiration (spell), 216.
- Intelligence, 75; and surprise, 260. *See also* attributes.
- investing, 148.
- Invisibility (spell), 217.
- Invisible Servant (spell), 217.
- Irrational Fear (curse), 298.
- Irrational Hatred (curse), 298.
- Know Alignment (spell), 217.
- lairs. *See* nightmare incursions.
- Law, The, 22-27.
- Law spells: school of, 99.
- Level, 104, 134-135; of monsters, 331; of nightmare incursions, 311; of spells, 202.
- lifestyle, 141-143.
- Light (spell), 217.
- light sources, 255, 359; dropping 275; magical, 217.
- Living Hand of Glory, The (curse), 299.
- Locate Object (spell), 217.
- loyalty (of retainers), 168.
- madness. *See* nightmare curses.
- magic items, 145, 230-247; and alignment, 232; justifying the use of, 178-181; Resentment because of, 174; in ruins, 345.
- Magic Missile (spell), 218.
- Magic Resistance (spell), 218.
- Magic Rope (spell), 218.
- Magic Steed (spell), 218.
- Magic Weapon (spell), 218.
- magical formulas, 186-187, 191, 197; casting from, 193; and divine magic, 200. *See also* spellbooks.
- mannerisms, 374.
- mapping, 254, 264, 318-322.
- Martial Inspiration (spell), 219.
- Masked (curse), 299.
- Message (spell), 219.
- Middle Sea, The, 32, 38.
- Minion (spell), 219.
- money, 107, 313, 382; starting, 101.
- monster fortresses (ruin type), 345-346.
- monster hordes (incursion type), 312, 314, 362.
- morale, 265; of monsters, 332; of retainers, 168.
- motives: of monsters, 263; of PCs, 102-103.

-
- mounted combat, 109, 266, 276.
 Mouth Full of Ashes (curse), 299.
 Move Spell (spell), 219.
 movement, 254, 266, 355, 358-360; of
 monsters, 333.
 multiple attackers, 269.
 multiple attacks per round, 271.
 names, 28-29; of nobles, 33, 37.
 Narang Valley, 35.
 Narkavrum (town), 35.
 Nausea (curse), 299.
 necromancers' guilds, 154.
 Negate Poison (spell), 219.
 nests of evil (ruin type), 345-346.
 Neth (city), 34-37.
 Neth-Hadrazzar. *See* Hadrazzar.
 nightmare creatures, 312, 314-315,
 324-341, 360; stat block, 330.
 nightmare curses, 291-303, 341.
 nightmare incursions, 52, 291-292,
 324-329, 355-365; additional
 threats of, 314-317; lairs of, 311,
 312; mapping, 318-322; in Neth,
 37; outside incursions, 341.
 nightmare realm, 48-51, 291-292, 311.
 nobles, 101; as contacts, 163; of Geth,
 33; names of, 28-29, 33, 37; of
 Neth, 37; starting gear for,
 124-129.
 Nocturnalism (curse), 299.
 numbers (of monsters), 332; of
 nightmare creatures, 336.
 obstacles (in dungeons), 257.
 official investigation (crew type), 54; in
 Neth, 37.
 overcome attempts, 60, 62-63.
 Paralysis (spell), 220.
 party: adventuring, 52; Communist,
 152; political, 55.
 patron deities, 200.
 Permanency (spell), 220.
 persuasion, 170.
 player objectives, 74.
 poisons, 113, 214; skill with, 78.
 political party (crew type), 55.
 positioning (in combat), 276.
 potions, 190.
 Power of Law, The (spell), 221.
 presence effects, 338.
 primary attributes. *See* attributes.
 printers, 155.
 professions, 77-95.
 pronouns, 31.
 Protection from Chaos (spell), 221.
 Protection from Evil (spell), 221.
 Protection from Missiles (spell), 221.
 Protection from Weapons (spell), 221.
 Psychic Armour, 104, 283.
 Purify Food and Drink (spell), 221.
 Qarqumiyyan Massif, 28, 38.
 Quintessence Spells: school of, 99.
 Raise the Dead (spell), 222.
 random encounters, 357-359.
 random starting gear, 116-133; single
 items, 130-133.
 random tables (resolution), 61, 64.
 Rasal Khuruf (village), 35.
 reactions, 161; to Anti-Social Lust
 Parasite, 293; when hiring, 168;
 for lowering Resentment, 177; of
 monsters, 263; to persuasion, 170;
 and social class, 101.
 real estate, 148.
 recovery, 279, 286-288; of Charisma,
 171; on your own, 284, 288; and
 scholars, 91; and vice dens, 159.
 Regenerate (spell), 222.
 Remove Curse (spell), 222.
 reputation, 164, 171, 174.
 research, conducting, 173.
 Resentment scores, 174-177.
 resolution (rules), 60-61.
 resting, 279, 283, 286-287.
 retainers, 164-168; of NPCs.

-
- retiring, 134.
rival adventurers (in ruins), 346.
River of Fear, A (curse), 299.
rooms (in a ruin), 352.
rounds, combat, 265-267; and spells, 203. *See also* time.
ruins, 38, 50-51; creating, 345-353.
Sandman of Nightmare, The (curse), 299.
saves (resolution), 61, 66, 67.
scholars, 91; and the Law, 24-27; as potential employees, 165, 167; and searching, 258; and spells, 97, 191.
scrolls, 187. *See also* magical formulas.
sealed tombs (ruin type), 345-346.
searching, 67, 258, 355; and the encounter die, 358; while moving carefully, 252, 254; by scholars, 91; by thieves, 92.
Second Wind (spell), 234.
Sense Nightmares (spell), 222.
settlement die, 164, 176.
Shadows All Around (curse), 300.
Shahrazar (province), 38.
Shapechange (spell), 224.
Shrink (spell), 224.
Silence Equals Death (curse), 300.
simple actions, 266-267.
Siyaghul (village), 35.
size (of monsters), 332; and Disposition, 286, 331.
skills, 67; of monsters, 332; of PCs, 78, 81, 82, 86, 88, 91, 92, 95, 96.
Slave to Chaos, A (curse), 300.
Sleep (spell), 224.
social class, 101.
social institutions, 149-151.
spawning pits (incursion type), 312, 314, 362.
special abilities: of monsters, 333; of nightmares, 334-339; of PCs, 96.
special attack maneuvers, 276.
special goods, 145.
special powers. *See* special abilities.
Speed (rating), 104; and encumbrance, 256; and initiative, 265; of monsters, 333; and movement, 254, 266, 333.
Spell Burn (spell), 225.
spell containers, 190.
Spell Extension (spell), 225.
spell formulas. *See* magical formulas.
spellbooks, 187, 188-189.
spells, 97-99, 186-228; casting, 193; in combat, 275; containers, 190; controlling, 194-195; corruption of, 194, 196; descriptions of, 202-228; learning, 191; personalizing, 191; quick reference, 197; random tables of, 98-99; resisting, 198-199. *See also* magical formulas. *See also* miscasting.
spiritual enemies, 87.
Stain of Remorse, The (curse), 301.
Summon Air Elemental (spell), 225.
Summon Earth Elemental (spell), 225.
Summon Fire Elemental (spell), 225.
Summon Monster (spell), 226.
Summon Water Elemental (spell), 226.
Summoning spells: school of, 99.
surprise, 260-261; while encumbered, 256; and initiative, 265; modifier (monster stat), 333.
surrounding areas (around a ruin), 353.
Taboo (curse), 301.
tea houses, 156.
teamwork, 68-69.
They Find You Sleeping (curse), 302.
thieves, 92; as contacts, 163; as potential employees, 165, 167; honour among, 175; and searching, 258.
thieves' guilds, 157.

-
- throwing things, 271.
- Tides of Emotion (curse), 302.
- time (tracking), 252-254, 358-359, 362; and healing, 288; and spells, 202-203.
- Tongue of a Dragon, The (curse), 302.
- tools, 114.
- traits (of monsters), 373.
- Transfer Spells (spell), 226.
- Transformation spells: school of, 99.
- Transmute (spell), 227.
- traps, 112, 314, 317, 356; disarming, 258; Find Traps spell, 214; in ruins, 349; searching for, 258; skill with, 78, 92.
- Truth Hurts (curse), 302.
- Truth Telling (spell), 227.
- tunnel incursions, 320.
- turns (in combat), 265-266.
- turns (unit of time), 252-254; and spells, 203. *See also* time.
- unarmed attacks. *See* attacks.
- undead, 49, 342-343; contacting, 195; and holy water, 215; and necromancers, 154; and ruins, 347; as spiritual enemy, 87; and Wounds, 343.
- unique magic items, random table of, 238-247.
- universities, 158.
- unliving creatures, 343.
- Vale of Serpents, The, 38, 50-51; and Geth, 32; and magic items, 145, 230.
- 'vantages. *See* advantage and disadvantage.
- Ventriloquism (spell), 227.
- vice dens, 159.
- Voice of Command (spell), 228.
- Vorpai Blessing (spell), 228.
- Voss, The, 28; in history, 351; and Shahrazar, 38.
- Vulnerability (spell), 228.
- wages. *See* retainers.
- Ward Against Nightmares (curse), 302.
- weapons, 110-111, 270-271; length of, 277.
- Web Trap (spell), 228.
- Whispers of Doom (curse), 302.
- wilderness; around ruins, 353; and encounters, 357-359; and nightmare fuel, 325, 329; and zone incursions, 322.
- Willpower, 75; and enchantments, 198-199; and wizards, 95, 195. *See also* attributes.
- Wizard Sword (spell), 228.
- wizards, 95; memory of, 195; as potential employees, 165, 167; and spells, 97, 191; summoning nightmares, 49, 328, 341, 365.
- working as a team, 68-69.
- World In All Its Brightness, The (curse), 302.
- Wounds (score), 279-280; and dying, 280; reducing, 286-288; starting, 104; and the undead, 343; and the unliving, 343. *See also* damage. *See also* recovery.
- Xenos (curse), 303.
- Your Memories Devoured (curse), 303.
- Your Secrets Bought and Sold (curse), 303.
- zone incursions, 322.

Index of Spells by Level

Level 1

Accurate Weapon, 205.
 Bridge, 206.
 Charm Person, 207.
 Climbing, 208.
 Colour Change, 208.
 Conjunction, 210.
 Create Food and Drink, 210.
 Create Object, 211.
 Cure Disease, 211.
 Detect Illusion, 211.
 Detect Magic, 212.
 Eldritch Darts, 212.
 Endure Pain, 212.
 Fearlessness, 213.
 Featherlight, 213.
 Find Poison, 214.
 Floating Platform, 214.
 Ghostly Hands, 215.
 Holy Water, 215.
 Illusory Appearance, 215.
 Indivisible, 216.
 Inspiration, 216.
 Know Alignment, 217.
 Light, 217.
 Magic Missile, 218.
 Message, 219.
 Negate Poison, 219.
 Protection from Evil, 221.
 Sense Nightmares, 222.
 Sleep, 224.
 Spell Burn, 225.
 Ventriloquism, 227.
 Vorpall Blessing, 228.
 Wizard Sword, 228.

Level 2

Alter Items, 205.
 Brutal Weapon, 206.
 Charm Animals, 207.
 Chromatic Spray, 207.
 Detect Evil, 211.
 Enlarge, 213.
 Find Traps, 214.
 Fools' Gold, 214.
 Immobilize Animal, 216.
 Invisibility, 217.
 Magic Steed, 218.
 Magic Weapon, 218.
 Minion, 219.
 Protection from Chaos, 221.
 Purify Food and Drink, 221.
 Shrink, 224.
 Summon Earth Elemental, 225.
 Transfer Spells, 226.
 Truth Telling, 227.
 Web Trap, 228.

Level 3

Acid Spray, 205.
 Blessing and Bane, 206.
 Cause Fear, 206.
 Clairaudience, 208.
 Cure Wound, 211.
 Dispel Magic, 212.
 Duplicate Images, 212.
 Faerie Dust, 213.
 False Magnetism, 213.
 Identify, 215.
 Immobilize Person, 216.
 Invisible Servant, 217.
 Locate Object, 217.
 Martial Inspiration, 219.
 Power of Law, The, 221.
 Protection from Weapons, 221.

Level 4

Clairvoyance, 208.
Confusion, 208.
Illusory Terrain, 216.
Immobilize Monster, 216.
Magic Rope, 218.
Paralysis, 220.
Protection from Missiles, 221.
Second Wind, 222.
Spell Extension, 225.
Summon Air Elemental, 225.

Level 5

Charm Monster, 207.
Illusory Being, 215.
Regenerate, 222.
Shapechange, 224.
Summon Water Elemental, 226.

Level 6

Magic Resistance, 218.
Remove Curse, 222.
Voice of Command, 228.

Level 7

Transmute, 227.

Level 8

Raise the Dead, 222.

Level 9

Forlorn Encystment, 214.
Permanency, 220.
Summon Fire Elemental, 225.

Level varies

Arcane Connection, 205.
Binding, 205.
Contingency, 210.
Counterspell, 210.
Move Spell, 219.
Summon Monster, 226.
Vulnerability, 228.

Index of Tables

- abjuration of a spiritual enemy, 87.
- accomplices (as retainers), 165.
- Acid Spray results, 205.
- advancement, 134.
- aesthetics (of items), 378.
- alignments: of arcane accoutrements, 232; of retainers, 165.
- anchors: expected values of, 357; monetary values of, 313; weights of, 313.
- Anti-Social Lust Parasite reactions, 293.
- arcane accoutrements alignment, 232.
- arcane accoutrements bonus, 232.
- arcane tool type, 233.
- armour, 109.
- Armour level of protection descriptions, 358.
- artistic styles (of items), 378.
- attribute gains, 135.
- attribute modifiers, 76.
- attributes reduced to zero, recovering from, 284.
- barding, 109.
- character assassination, results of, 171.
- charged item miscasting results, 235.
- charged item size, 234.
- charged item spell effects, 234-235.
- Chromatic Spray colours, 207.
- citizens (as retainers), 165.
- close combat weapons, 110.
- colours (of items), 378.
- complexity (of items), 378.
- conditions (of items), 379.
- Confusion results, 208.
- contacts, 162.
- corrupted human types, 315.
- creating a spell container miscasting results, 190.
- culture, settlement, 41.
- decorations (on jewellery), 381.
- dungeoneering results, 257.
- dungeoneering setbacks, 257.
- effects (of items), 379.
- emotions (stirred by items), 380.
- enchantments (on items), 380.
- encounter checks, 359.
- encounter die size, 357.
- equipment, other, 112-113.
- experience points needed to advance, 134.
- features (of people), 30.
- foreigners (as retainers), 165.
- forms (of jewellery), 381.
- gemstone types, 380.
- healing a mortal wound on your own, 288.
- Highland Coast names, 29.
- hirelings. *See* retainers.
- hiring a retainer, 168.
- hit locations, 281.
- hotel, staying at a notable, 153.
- incursions. *See* nightmare incursions.
- Infected Attributes, 297.
- inflation, markets returning to normal after, 147.
- Irrational Fears, 298.
- Irrational Hatreds, 298.
- items: details of, 378-380; types, 376.
- jewellery, 381.
- lengths, weapon, 277.
- living: on the street, 141; poorly, 142; well or like the rich, 143.
- location features, 40.
- loyalty, or retainers, 168.
- magic item types, recovered, 230.
- magic items, unique, 238-247.
- magic items in a ruin, 345.
- mannerisms, 374.
- materials: of an incursion, 323; of jewellery, 381.
- miscasting: of spells, 194; of spells involving spirits, 195; when creating a spell container, 190; when using a charged item, 235.

-
- monsters: behaviours of, 372;
 motivations of, 263; random table of, 315; reactions of, 261; traits of, 373.
- monstrous traits, 373.
- morale, 265.
- mortal wound, results of healing from a, 288.
- motives (of PCs), 103.
- names, Highland Coast, 29.
- nightmare creatures: emotions inspiring, 324; random table of, 315.
- nightmare curses, 292.
- nightmare incursions: creatures in, 315; events, 362; materials of, 323; other elements of, 314; special features of, 316; structures of, 323; traps in, 317.
- noble families of Geth, 33.
- noble families of Neth, 37.
- non-binary resolution results, 370.
- offer of employment, reaction to, 168.
- other elements of an incursion, 314.
- other elements of a ruin, 346.
- other equipment, 112-113.
- owners (of items), 380.
- problems, settlement, 41.
- professionals (as retainers), 165.
- provenance (of jewellery), 381.
- random features, 30.
- random single items, 130-133.
- random starting gear, 116-129.
- ranged weapons, 111.
- reactions (of NPCs), 161; to an Anti-Social Lust Parasite, 295; of monsters, 261; to offer of employment, 168; to persuasion, 170; to threats, 161.
- real estate prices, 148.
- recharging procedures (of charged items), 237.
- recipients (of jewellery), 381.
- recovering from attributes reduced to zero, 284.
- remnants in ruins, 348.
- research, conducting, 173.
- Resentment, organizing a public event to reduce, 177.
- Resentment events (upon increase), 175.
- resources, settlement, 41.
- retainers, 165; finding potential, 164; types of, 164.
- rival adventurers in a ruin, 346.
- A River of Fear enemies, 299.
- rooms in a ruin, 352.
- ruins: guardians of, 347; other elements of, 346; random features of, 350-351; remnants in, 348; rival adventurers in, 346; rooms in, 352; surroundings of, 353; trap types in, 349.
- settlement die size, 164, 176.
- settlements: culture, 41; problems, 41; resources, 41.
- social class, 101.
- special features of an incursion, 316.
- specific items, 376-377.
- Speed rating: descriptions of, 333; movement rates, 333.
- spell effects of charged items, 234-235.
- spell miscasting results, 194; for spells involving spirits, 195.
- spellbooks, 188-189.
- spells, 98-99.
- spirit type, 195.
- structure prices, 148.
- structures of an incursion, 323.
- surprise, 260.
- surrounding area (of ruins), 353.
- Taboos, 301.
- threats and intimidations, reactions to, 161.

-
- traits, monstrous, 373.
 - trap conditions (in ruins), 349.
 - trap types: in incursions, 317; in ruins, 349.
 - underclasses (as retainers), 165.
 - unique magic items, 238-247.
 - weapon lengths, 277.
 - writings, 383.
 - Your Secrets Bought and Sold enemies, 303.

The End.