

YAGS

Yet Another Game System

By Samuel Penn.

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Introduction

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Yags is a generic role playing game system. The name is temporary until I can think up a better one, but will probably end up sticking. *Yags* is the successor to my *Myths* system, its aim being something which is simpler – both during play and also for designing.

The rules given here have been optimised for use with my *Euressa* campaign, and hence will have an *anglo-saxon* bias to them.

The Basic System

This chapter gives a brief tour of the *Yags* system, explaining terminology, and giving a description of the basic conventions used.

Dice Conventions

As with most role playing games, *Yags* uses dice as a means of randomly determining the outcome of many events. The only type of die used is the d10.

Normally, dice are used to determine use of a character's abilities. In this case, 2d10 are rolled, and both results are added to the character's ability score.

On a roll of a '10', then an open ended roll occurs, where the die is rolled again, and added to the original 10. Each time a '10' is rolled, roll again and add. The written convention that shall be used in these rules to show use of open ended dice, is the appending of an exclamation mark - '!' - to the normal dice notation.

So, 2d10! means roll two open ended dice.

Fumbles

A fumble normally occurs on an ability roll if the total die roll is 2. Under some situations which warrant extra chances of a fumble (e.g. combat), a roll of 3 (or even higher) may cause a fumble to occur.

Attributes

Attributes are the basic defining characteristics of any character in *Yags*. There are eight attributes – *strength, health, agility, dexterity, perception, intelligence, charisma* and *will* – and all characters will have them at some level. An average value for any attribute for a human adult is considered to be 20. In practise, they will range from 10 to 35.

No creature will ever have an attribute below zero.

Attributes can change over a character's life, and it is possible to improve attributes through training.

Skills

A *skill* is something which can be learnt, and can only be gained with experience. All skills default to a value of 0%, and increase in steps of 25%.

When a skill is used, it is multiplied with a given attribute, to give the character's final ability score. Generally, neither attributes nor skills are used by themselves, they are always multiplied together first.

A skill of 100% is considered to be professional level, and someone with an average attribute and a skill at 100% would be able to accomplish moderate tasks with ease.

Passions

Passions represent a character's stronger emotional traits, and range from +0 (no passion of particular note) to +5 (this passion consumes the character's life).

A character can have many passions, and are listed as being either of a general emotion (such as loyal, curious, cowardly) or as being directed towards a particular ideal or person (love of a friend, loyalty to a lord, hatred of a religion).

Advantages and Disadvantages

These are special bonuses and penalties a character can take to make him somewhat extraordinary compared to normal people.

The cost of all advantages and disadvantages taken must balance, and not all cost the same. The advantage of 'keen hearing' which gives a small bonus to listening rolls, doesn't cost as much as the advantage of 'shapeshifter' for example.

Characters

Creating a character follows three general steps:

- Determine attributes.
- Choose advantages and disadvantages.
- Purchase skills.

The order in which these are performed is not important, though the above order will be followed in the steps below.

Determine Attributes

Each of the eight attributes defaults to a value of 20, and if the player desires, they can remain that way.

Otherwise, for each attribute, the player should roll two d10, one positive one negative, and modify the attribute by the result, giving values in the range from 11 to 29.

After they have been rolled, the attributes can be arranged in any order by the player. The attributes can be improved both by using advantages (see the next section), and during play.

Advantages and Disadvantages

A character can purchase up to 20 points of advantages, but must also purchase an equal number of disadvantages.

Generic Advantages

These cover options which can be either advantages or disadvantages, or which affect the starting state of the character.

Improved Attributes

As a one point advantage, any attribute can be re-rolled until it is higher (an attribute of 29 cannot be increased in this fashion). This advantage may be taken multiple times on the same attribute (or on different attributes) if desired.

A second way of improving an attribute is to increase it by +1 per point of advantage. No attribute can be raised above 35 in this way.

Appearance

Unless this advantage is taken, then it is assumed that the character is of average physical appearance. Such characters will generally not stand out in a crowd.

To have a character that has above average beauty, is an advantage. A character which is ugly on the other hand, is considered to be at a disadvantage.

Cost	Appearance
+20	Godlike in your radiance.
+15	Legendary beauty. People will tell stories about you in years to come.
+10	Stunning beauty. You will be the focus of attention.
+6	Very beautiful.
+3	Noticeably beautiful.
+1	Good looking.
--	Normal appearance.
-1	Rather Plain.
-3	Noticeably ugly, but not overly so.
-6	Very ugly, and difficult to hide.
-10	Deformed. Will be shunned.
-15	Suffers from interesting skin diseases.
-20	Will be hated, reviled, hunted down and killed. It's not worth it.

For each +1 of appearance, it is an advantage worth one point. For each -1 of appearance, it is a one point disadvantage.

The modifier applies to any situation where the GM sees fit. Positive modifiers greater than +1 are

halved when dealing with those who don't find you sexually compatible. There may well be further modifiers for members of a different race (some races may simply get a flat bonus, irrespective of appearance – after all, all trolls look the same, don't they?).

Social Class

A character is assumed to be a freeman unless this advantage is taken. Some social classes are not practical for the typical 'adventuring' character. A character may be a slave, but they're not going to have much freedom of action. They could always run away, in which case they become an outlaw.

Likewise, very high social classes will cause problems, since important land owners are expected to keep their attention on running their domain. Going off to war is always a respectable option for such characters however.

Cost	Social Class	Weregild
-5	Outlaw.	0
-3	Slave.	60s
--	Ceorl.	200s
+1	Geneat, or son of thegn.	600s
+2	Thegn (5 hides).	1200s
+3	Thegn (15 hides).	1500s
+5	Thegn (100 hides), or reeve.	2000s
+10	Thegn (1000 hides).	2500s
+15	Ealdorman (1000 hides) or shire-reeve.	3000s
+20	Ealdorman of a shire.	5000s

Before taking a high social class, players should check with the GM to see whether they are allowed. A character with a high social class will not be applicable to all campaigns.

Reputation

The reputation of a character can greatly affect how other people react to them. Reputations can be good or bad, and are respectively considered to be an advantage or a disadvantage.

There are two factors which affect the cost of a reputation – the size of the area it covers, and its level. A high level reputation means that everyone in a group or area knows about it. It is possible to have a high level reputation in a small area, or a low level reputation over a large area.

Level	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Cost	1	2	3	5	8

The size of the area covered by the reputation multiplies the above costs as follows:

Area	Multiplier
Single village (50 people)	×¼
A hundred (1000 people)	×½
A shire (100,000 people)	×1
A kingdom (1 million people)	×2
The known world	×3

Other modifiers may be used, as decided by the GM (especially if the reputation isn't really important).

A reputation must have been gained for some reason, so the player and GM should decide how the character got his reputation.

Exceptional Childhood

You had an exceptionally active childhood, and learnt far more than your peers. Normally, a character has 80 points of childhood skills when generated. For every point of advantage you take, you have an extra 4 points. You must still obey the normal limits on skill selection and improvement though.

Alternatively, you could have had a deprived childhood, have 4 less points of skills for every point of disadvantage.

Equipment

If you have need of special or expensive equipment (such as good quality arms and armour), then you need to spend some advantage points here.

As far as weapons and armour go, you can normally

start with common weapons and armour (spears, short blades, leather armour or furs etc, as well as a shield). An expensive weapon, or expensive armour, is an advantage of +2.

If you want high quality expensive weapons or armour, then it is a +5 advantage per item, and you must have a social class of +1 or better.

Common Advantages

The following advantages are open to anyone (subject to GM veto). Advantages marked with a ‘†’ symbol are passions, and can be taken as +3, +4 or +5 passions.

Absolute direction (+4): You have an uncanny sense of direction, and generally have a very good idea about which direction you are facing.

Absolute timing (+2): Character has an accurate sense of time, and excepting being knocked unconscious, drugged etc, can always know how much time has elapsed. If character also has light sleeper, he can wake up at a preset time.

Acute hearing (+3): Gives you a +5 bonus to all sense rolls to hear sounds.

Acute taste and smell (+1): Gives you a +5 bonus to all sense rolls to smell or taste things.

Acute vision (+3): Gives you a +5 bonus to all sense rolls to see things.

Ambidextrous (+4): Can use both hands with equal skill. If you ever have to use a single weapon in our off-hand, you don’t suffer any penalty. It does not affect the *two weapons* fighting style.

Animal affinity (+4): You have an affinity with animals, being able to relate to them much better than you can with humans. You gain +10 when using charisma related skills with animals.

Beautiful voice (+3): You have a voice that most people find attractive and trustworthy. You gain +5

on all charisma skills where you can use your voice, and a +10 to skills which rely greatly on the sound of your voice – e.g. singing or reading poetry.

Brave (+1/+2/+4)†: You are brave and heroic, having a passion of *brave* at either +3, +4 or +5. A high passion means that you are fearless, and will not hesitate to go into danger.

Combat reflexes (+5): If you are taken by surprise, you can react with surprising speed. If you make an agility × brawling roll of 30+, you can still act if surprised, but your action is not entirely under your control. This means that you could possibly skewer a friend.

Cultural flexibility (+2): You are unusually tolerant of other cultures, religions and social groups, as well as being quick in picking up on local customs. You suffer no penalties to any social skills when dealing with foreign people.

Cute (+2/+5): There is something about your personality and looks which makes people think you are cute. There are two levels to this advantage, the first merely means that people will assume that you are innocent and friendly, and will find it difficult to blame you for things. The second level of cute represents a sort of sickening gooey sort of cute, rounded off with ample helpings of sugar and treacle. You could get away with murder, almost literally, and even then people would probably see you as the poor innocent victim, who was forced into the act through events beyond her control. To have either level of this advantage, you must have a positive appearance, and must look and act the part.

Double jointed (+2): Get a +5 bonus in applicable situations, such as escaping from restraints, or squeezing through narrow places. Nearly always gives a bonus to the contortion skill.

Empathy (+4): You have an almost unnatural ability to relate to other people, allowing you to see through others attempts to deceive you, but also making you more susceptible. You gain a +5 bonus

to your folk ken ability. When others use charm or seduction attempts against you though, and they mean it (e.g. they really do need your help, or really do like you), then they receive it as a bonus (their enthusiasm infects you).

Hard to kill (+1/level, maximum +5): You gain a +2 bonus to rolls to stay alive (though not conscious) per level of this advantage.

Hardy Convalescence (+3): You get a +10 bonus to all healing rolls.

High pain threshold (+5): You only gain half the normal penalties from being injured (round down).

Inspirational (+5): You can infect others with your enthusiasm and emotions, rallying them to a cause, or into some course of action. If you succeed on a charm or leadership roll (which depends on circumstance) against their will × guile, then they gain half your bonus for a given passion.

Light sleeper (+4): You are easily woken by noise. This can be a disadvantage, but it can also save your life. You cannot combine this advantage with *versatile sleeper*.

Linguist (+3): All language skills are considered to be one level easier to learn, though easy languages (if there are any!) are unaffected. Languages learnt during childhood (which are always considered to be ‘easy’) are unaffected.

Lithe (+2): You are small of frame, but quick and agile. You gain +3 to both agility and dexterity, but you do not have a *hurt* body level, or *winded* fatigue level.

Literate (0/+2): You may take a skill in reading/writing. In a campaign where literacy is uncommon, this advantage must be taken before any skills can be bought (but does not itself give a skill). In a campaign where literacy is the norm, then this advantage is not required.

Luck (+1): You have one point of luck, though you may take this advantage as many times as you can afford to. Each point of luck can be used once, after which it is lost permanently. When used, it can modify any ability or damage roll, to either being a fumble, or to being a roll of double ‘10’. The latter allows a roll up (so effectively gives +20 to the roll). A single character can spend one point of luck on any single roll, but multiple characters may combine to give multiple bonuses.

Need little sleep (+5): Can survive on half as much sleep as normal people.

Night vision (+4): You are very good at seeing in the dark, and only suffer half the normal penalties for performing actions in poor light. In total darkness, you still cannot see a thing though.

You have the knack of being able to notice things just on the edge of your field of vision better than anyone else. If something is happening behind you (though not directly behind), then you get an *alertness* roll to notice.

Piercing gaze (+3): Just by looking at people, you can make them feel ill at ease, giving them the impression that your eyes are boring into their soul. It doesn’t win friends, and you sometimes do it without thinking, but you’ve found that it stops people from bothering you, and gives you the edge.

Resistant to Disease (+1): You have a strong immune system, gaining a +10 bonus to your Health to resist the effects of disease.

Serendipity (+2/+5/+10): You are incredibly lucky, and life tends to be easy for you. How easy depends on the level of this advantage.

Situational Awareness (+5): You have a keen sense of where you are, and probably more importantly, where everyone else is. This is especially useful under combat conditions, where you get no penalties to *alertness* or other perception skills to know what is happening around you.

Unfzable (+2/+4/+8)†: The unexpected, and unusual, do not bother you. Whether it is stumbling across a pile of disfigured corpses, or a bolt of lightning splitting a tree next to you, you don't even flinch.

Versatile sleeper (+2): You can sleep anywhere, under almost any circumstance. This often means you can get the equivalent of a full night's rest during the day. You cannot combine this with the *light sleeper* advantage.

Common Disadvantages

These disadvantages are open to anyone. As for advantages, a '†' denotes a passion.

Absent Minded (-3): You have a tendency to forget the minor things in life, such as locking the front door, packing food for a journey or people's names. Role play it.

Animal enmity (-2): Animals hate you. Cats will try to scratch your eyes out, dogs will bark at you, and try to bite you if you get too close. Don't ever try to hand feed something with big teeth. You have an extra +5 to your fumble chance when trying to work with animals.

Big mouth (-4): You have a habit of saying the wrong thing at the worst possible time. You suffer an extra +5 fumble chance to any charisma skills.

Branded criminal (-2/-5): You have been marked as a criminal. -1 point disadvantage for petty theft or something similar, -3 for something major (maybe dishonour in a society which highly values honour) which will cause major social problems.

Can't sing (-1): You are very bad at the performing arts, being a very bad singer, dancer and poet. Add +8 to your fumble chance for such skills.

Clueless (-2): Any skill for which you have not invested any character points in you are particularly bad at. You suffer a +5 to the fumble chance of such skills.

Code of honour (-2/-4/-8): You have a code of honour which you follow at all times. There are three point costs for a *code of honour*. Examples are:

Gang members code of honour (-2): always avenge an insult, your friend's foe is your own, never attack a fellow gang member except in a fair duel.

Warrior's code of honour (-4): Never break your word, never ignore an insult to yourself or to your lord. Give hospitality where requested, and respect it when given. Avenge those of your family. Never take advantage of a worthy opponent, weapons and circumstances must be equal.

Chivalric code of honour (-8): As for a warrior's, but also you must protect those weaker than yourself. You must accept any challenge to arms from those of equal or greater rank. Even in war, sides must be equal against noble and chivalric foes.

-1 points for a pirates code of honour, -2 for gentleman's, and -3 for a chivalrous code of honour. A celtic code of honour (always be generous, hospitable and honest) would be -2.

Combat paralysis (-4): You are not good at reacting to combat or other dangerous situations. You spend the first round of any combat dithering about what to do.

Coward (-2/-4/-8)†: You are a yellow blooded coward. If something looks dangerous, you'll go the other way. You may well betray your friends and allies rather than suffer pain or humiliation. Your intentions may be good, but when it comes to the crunch, you're the pathetic quivering heap in the corner. Take a passion of coward, at a level of -3, -4 or -5.

Cruel (-1/-3/-5)†: You enjoy seeing pain and suffering inflicted on others, and often go out of your way to torment others yourself. You probably have a bad reputation as well among those that know of you.

Curse of Venus (-2): You seem to attract members of a compatible sex. For anyone else this would be a good thing, except that in your case it is always the people whom you *don't* want to attract which are attracted to you.

Dark secret (-2/-5): You have a secret in your past which is best left hidden. If someone were to find it out, or to make it public, your life could become quite complicated. This is a -2 disadvantage if the secret would be annoying if let out, or -5 if it would be a serious risk to your health (you were a member of some particularly reviled cult for instance).

Death wish (-3/-6/-12)†: At first glance, some might call you brave. Those that know you though realise though that you are merely foolhardy, and seem to have some unconscious desire to end your life. You are fearless, and never shun danger, indeed you embrace it with suicidal passion. You cannot have a brave or coward passion. You must make a will check (with death wish working against you) to choose anything less than the most dangerous option.

Depression (-3/-6/-12)†: You are always feeling down and gloomy. No plan is ever going to work, things will always go wrong, and you can only ever see the bad side of any situation. You're probably addicted to some drugs (probably alcohol) in an attempt to get away from reality. You're generally not a very cheerful chap to be with. Character's with a depression of +5 probably aren't worth playing, since all you want to do is sit in your room and sulk.

Easily fatigued (-2): You suffer double the normal penalties from being fatigued.

Easily Forgotten (-3): You have an uninspiring personality, to the point of being utterly forgettable. People will tend to forget about you even a few minutes after meeting you, and they won't have any desire to get to know you. You cannot have a passion greater than ± 3 , your appearance must be between +1 and -1, and your charisma cannot be higher than 20. To some characters, this can

actually be an big advantage.

Egotist (-1/-3/-5)†: You're a self centred, selfish bastard. You think that you're the centre of the universe. You can't understand why you should stick your neck out for anyone else. Most people will just get fed up with you, aim to cut you down to size, just to teach you a lesson.

Fanaticism (-4/-8/-15)†: You're a fanatic, either to a person or to a cause. You gain a passion of level +3 to +5, though anything above +3 will generally bring you into continual conflict with anyone who doesn't believe in your cause the same way that you do. If you have a passion of +5 in fanaticism, then all others are enemies of the cause. Fanaticism is always directed at something (e.g. a particular religion, a particular person), and you cannot be fanatic in more than one unrelated causes.

Intolerant (-2/-4/-6)†: You are intolerant of anyone who is different to you. Whether it's because of their skin colour, accent, background or clothes, if they don't conform to what you consider to be normal, then you'll go out of your way to ignore, be rude to, or even openly violent towards that person.

Fat (-4): You are greatly overweight. You cannot have an appearance better than 'good looking', and may suffer up to a -10 penalty on rolls in physical tasks (such as climbing/ contortions etc).

Gullible (-5): You are often easily persuaded by others, even when what you're being told is blatantly untrue. You suffer a +8 fumble chance to your *folk ken* and *bargain* skills, plus anything else the GM deems suitable. You are naturally trusting of other people.

Hatred (-2/-4/-8)†: You have a strong dislike towards a particular group. You will not want to cooperate or act reasonably around such people. Generally, you probably just want to see such people dead.

Heavy sleeper (-2): You suffer -10 to all rolls to wake up.

Honesty (-10): You don't like to break the law. You can lie, as long as it doesn't involve breaking the law.

Impulsive (-2/-4/-8)†: You're not the sort of person to sit around talking about things – you just want to get up and do something. Generally you act first, and think later.

Innumerate (-2): You are unable to count above ten, and even then you need to do lots of work on your fingers. Numbers above three are about all you can cope with easily. Anything higher than this is merely 'lots'.

Invalid (-3): You gain a -10 penalty to all healing rolls.

Leprosy (-15): You have leprosy, and as such are a social outcast (you cannot take any social status). You probably smell of rotting flesh, and people will do their best to avoid (or destroy) you. Your appearance is automatically -10.

Love (-2/-4/-8)†: You hold a person, object or event in the highest regard. With the extremes of this disadvantage, you want to spend all your time pursuing the object of your passion. It could be the love of a woman, of hunting, of a particular weapon, of your family, or anything which might generate a great deal of devotion.

Low pain threshold (-4): You suffer double the normal penalties for being wounded. Any difficulties to resist torture and overcome pain are increased by 50%.

Loyalty (-2/-4/-8)†: You are loyal to a cause, group or person. You will never betray them, and will do your best to aid them whenever person. This disadvantage is very similar to *fanaticism* in some ways, though isn't quite so dominating.

Mania (-4): You have no sense of proportion, being unable to distinguish between what is important and what isn't. When doing anything, you'll tend to fixate on a particular problem, and devote your

entire energy into solving that one single problem, regardless of how important it is to the whole. You are full of boundless energy, enthusiasm and cheerfulness, but cannot channel that energy usefully.

Manic-depressive (-6): One day you're bright and cheerful, even manic (see mania, above), but the next you could slip into a deep apathetic depression. Your personality shifts are sudden and severe, though you tend to remain stable for a couple of months at a time. The change though, when it comes, can occur overnight, or immediately because of some turn around of events.

Nightmares (-3): Your sleep is continuously disturbed by terrible dreams, from which you awake screaming, soaked in sweat. The dreams may refer to some dark event in your past, or they may simply be the side effect of some mental illness. You have these nightmares two or three times a week, and the following day you may suffer fatigue from lack of sleep.

Non-combatant (-5): You don't like fighting, and definitely don't like the idea of killing people. You aren't necessarily a pacifist, but are either too squeamish, cowardly, or civilised to take part in a fight yourself. You can learn combat skills (though it is very bad roleplaying to use them regularly), but if you ever use them in a real combat (i.e. With intent to harm or kill, rather than say, an archery contest) you suffer a +5 fumble chance.

No sense of direction (-2): You have this remarkable ability to get lost all the time. You suffer a +8 fumble chance for any skills involved with finding your way around.

Noticeable mark (-1/-3): You have a strange and obvious mark on your body. This is a -1 disadvantage if it isn't normally visible, -3 otherwise.

Overconfidence (+1/+3/+5)†: You are unable to accurately take into account your own weaknesses. You could be proud and boastful (maybe an egotist

as well), or just the sort of person who quietly wanders into danger getting himself (and possibly others) killed.

Paranoid (-2/-4/-6)†: They are out to get you. You're not sure exactly who they are, but they're everywhere, and possibly even everyone. Anything that goes wrong in your life is part of a carefully orchestrated plan to ruin your life. Trust no one, because there is no-one that you can trust. Paranoia is something that can only be role played. Everyone else just thinks you're crazy. Or at least they say they do – they're probably part of the plot...

Personal hatred (-1/-2/-4)†: You have a strong hatred of a particular person. The difference between this and the *hatred* disadvantage is that the latter is directed at a group of people.

Phobia (-1/-2/-3)†: Those with a phobia have an unreasonable fear about something. You must make a will check in order to overcome that fear (you get no bonuses from being brave, or even from a death-wish), modified by the strength of your passion. An uncommon phobia (such as a fear of spiders, enclosed spaces, deep water, heights) is the listed cost. Common phobias are double cost (such as music, loud noises, death, blood), and very common phobias are triple cost (the opposite sex, the open air, strangers, daylight, darkness).

Short attention span (-3): You cannot keep your mind on something for very long, before getting bored and mentally wandering off track. This can make you extremely unreliable for any task involving patiently waiting.

Short sighted (-3): You have difficulty seeing anything beyond a range of a few metres. When using missile weapons, increase your fumble chance by +1 for every 10 metres.

Shy (-2): Around strangers, or in large crowds, you suffer up to a +8 fumble chance, depending on the size of the crowd. You may start to stammer, or simply try to hide.

Terrible liar (-3): You understand the concept of not telling the truth, but when you try to do it, you often end up failing miserably, either because of your body language, or just because you blurt out the wrong thing without thinking. Suffer a +8 fumble chance for the *guile* skill.

Unlucky (-2/-5/-10): The opposite of serendipity. If something can go wrong, it will.

Voracious appetite (-2): You need to eat twice as much as everyone else. This is not the same as being greedy, since you really do need to eat this much to stay alive.

Vow (-1/-2/-5/-8): You have sworn an oath, either to yourself or to a higher power (either mortal or godly). Warriors will often make oaths at the beginning of each year, vowing to complete some task. This type of vow can be taken, in which case a new one of the same value should be taken at the start of each year.

A vow can be *trivial* (1 point), always wear red, never eat the meat of a dog; *minor* (2 points), chastity, vow of silence during the day, never ride a horse; *major* (5 points), never sleep indoors, own no more than you can carry, never strike someone who has not attacked you first, never let an insult go unchallenged; *legendary* (8 points), never refuse a request for aid, challenge every warrior you meet to combat, kill a man every month.

Weakness (-1/-2/-4)†: You have a weakness for something, be it alcohol, money or women. Whenever tempted, you must make a will check to resist. Difficulty is generally in the range of 25 to 40. Cost of disadvantage depends on the level of the passion (the listed cost above), and its acceptability

An *acceptable* weakness (the listed cost) might be for wealth or alcohol.

A frowned upon or dangerous weakness (double the listed cost) might be sex, some drugs, gambling etc.

An *unacceptable* weakness (triple the listed cost) would be one which you probably want to keep hidden, such as highly illegal drugs, sadism, deviant sexual behaviour etc.

Youth (-3/-6/-9/-12): You start the game younger than the normal base of 16. For each year younger than this, it is a -3 disadvantage, and you start with 8 less experience for adolescent skills. The youngest you may start is 12 years old, in which case you may only have childhood skills. As well as lacking skills, people will treat you as a young upstart, and not take you seriously.

Fantastic Advantages

These advantages are generally only found in a fantasy campaign, being supernatural in nature.

Berserker (+5): You occasionally fly into a rage and blood lust so great, that your enemies tremble before you. You have a *hard* childhood skill called *berserker*, which is used with *will*. You must roll 30+ to go berserk (and 5 higher than this roll to calm down again). Each point above the difficulty you roll, you gain a +1 bonus to attack, damage and soak rolls. You gain an equal penalty to defence rolls though.

Danger sense (+6): You have a knack of sensing danger before it rears its ugly head. You have a *hard* childhood skill, *danger sense*, which when used with perception, allows you to sense general danger on a roll of 20+. Specifics (when, where, how bad) only become known on rolls of 30 or higher.

Giants blood (+12): You have the blood of giants somewhere in your ancestry. Increase your base strength attribute by +5 (so effectively, after you've determined your strength, and after any limits have been opposed, add +5. You can therefore start with a strength of 40).

Hex (+5): With this ability, you can curse others. The curse must be appropriate, and misuse of the ability will bring the displeasure of the gods down

on your head. You have a *hard* childhood skill called *hex*, which combines with *will*. The difficulty is the target's own *will*, modified by severity and situation.

Immortal (+15): Whether you are the child of a god, or were blessed by magic at an early age, you cannot die. You never make aging rolls (though may not start older than 30). You will never die from wounds (treat all rolls of death when fatally wounded as being unconscious). If someone harms your body in a way that cannot be sensibly recovered from (decapitates you, rips out your heart, burns you to ash), then you die. Otherwise, you may merely be incapacitated for a long time. You do need to eat and drink, though failing to do so merely leaves you weak, and you will start to waste away.

Old soul (+5/life): When a person dies, their soul is reborn in another body. Normally, the old life is forgotten. Sometimes though, the old lives leak through to the living. You have such a soul. For each life you can remember, determine that life's background and personality, as well as 60 points worth of remembered skills. You also have a *hard* childhood skill called *past memories*, a will based skill which on a roll of 30+ allows you to recall the knowledge side of these skills. The more you rely on these past personalities though, the greater their connection, and hence influence, over you.

Second sight (+2): You are sensitive to that which is 'not quite right'. You have a skill, second sight, which is an easy childhood skill, which you can use to perceive the magical nature of things.

Werewolf (+10): You are a werewolf, able to change your form to that of a wolf more or less at will. You have an item which gives you the power to change into wolf form – normally this will be a cloak made of wolf skin. When you change (which takes two rounds), no clothing or equipment will change with you other than your cloak. When in wolf form, you keep your own attributes, and have a (easy, childhood) skill of *tooth and claw*, with which you can attack. It has the following bonuses:

Init +8, Attk: +7, Defn: +7, Dmg: +10. While in wolf form, the first body level of any damage you take is taken as a short term fatigue level.

Fantastic Disadvantages

These disadvantages are only found in a fantasy campaign, being supernatural in nature.

Geas (-2/-5/-8/-12): You have a geas which, if broken, will bring misfortune down on you. Types of geas are similar to vows (trivial, minor, major and legendary), but are slightly more expensive. Breaking a geas will bring a *lot* of bad luck.

Pawn of Darkness (-4): Either from birth, or because of some event in your youth, your life is plagued by the interventions of dark powers, be they demons, fey or gods. Alternatively, it may have been prophesied that such will come about later in your life.

Skills

Skills are those abilities which a character develops throughout their life. At the start of character generation, all skills begin with a score of 0%, and must be developed in order to rise above this value.

Skill Cost and Advancement

Skills are measured as a percentage – kept to multiples of 25% for simplicity – with 100% representing a professional level of competence. Skills can rise above 100%, and apart from exorbitant costs, there are no limits to how high a skill can be raised. The cost of buying a skill at a given level doubles for each level up to 150%, and then increases at a fixed advancement cost for each level beyond that.

Skills are rated according to how difficult they are to learn - *easy*, *average* or *hard*. Generally, social and knowledge skills are easy or average, and physical skills are average or hard.

Characters get a number of skill points to spend on skills initially. These points are provided in three stages of the characters life – *childhood*, *adolescence* and *adulthood*.

Childhood

Over a period roughly equivalent to their first twelve years, a character has 80 points to spend on childhood skills. These skills represent basic physical and social capabilities.

No skill can be learnt above 75% during childhood, except for language skills which may be learnt up to 100% (and the character's native language should be learnt to this level). Further, all language skills are considered to be *easy* during childhood.

Obviously, there are some skills which *all* characters will come out of childhood knowing, such as their native language, local area lore and general social and physical skills. Next to each of the childhood skills, is the level most people will come out of childhood with. Players can either keep these (the cost for all skills at the listed levels is 64 points), or modify them to suit their character.

A player though has free choice over which skills they choose, and it is perfectly possible to over specialise and come out of childhood lacking these general skills. If this happens, then the player should not complain when their character is unable to perform basic tasks.

Adolescence

During their adolescent years, a character will take up a profession, and learn more specific skills. It is assumed that the experience from childhood skills takes the character up to an age of about 12. The next four years of their life is probably spent in apprenticeship, learning some useful trade. This time grants a character a further 32 points to spend on skills. Any of the childhood skills may be obtained at this stage (though language skills must be learnt at normal cost – if the language is average or hard, then double or quadruple the number of points the character put into it at childhood), plus

Skill	Easy	Average	Hard	Description
0%	—	—	—	No experience.
25%	1	2	4	Very basic experience.
50%	2	4	8	Non-professional 'can muddle by' sort of level
75%	4	8	16	Can cope with anything that's easy.
100%	8	16	32	Competent, professional level.
125%	16	32	64	Highly competent. Skilled professional.
150%	32	64	128	Dedicated.
175%	48	96	192	Very highly skilled.

Childhood Skills

Physical

Alertness (Av)	50%	Stamina (Hd)	50%
Athletics (Av)	50%	Stealth (Av)	50%
Brawling (Av)	50%	Swimming (Av)	
Climbing (Av)	25%	Throwing (Av)	50
Observation (Av)	50%	Travel (Ea)	
Running (Av)	50%		
Riding (Av)			
Sleight (Av)	25%		

Social

Bard (Hd)	
Bargain (Av)	50%
Charm (Av)	75%
Etiquette (Ea)	
Folk ken (Hd)	50%
Guile (Av)	50%
Leadership (Av)	
Seduction (Av)	

Knowledges

Area lore (Ea)	75%
Folk lore (Ea)	50%
Religion (Ea)	50%
Language (Ea)	100%
Survival (Av)	

any skills related to the characters profession.

skills.

No skill may be taken to above 100% at this point.

Characters may begin at any age the player wants above 16, but characters which start above 35 years of age will have to make aging rolls before the game begins (so could possibly die).

Adulthood

At the age of 16, a character is assumed to be an adult, and can enter play. Many players may well feel that their characters aren't quite suited to the big outdoors quite yet, and will want to develop them further. Each year above 16 that a character is when it enters play, has another 4 points to spend on

Complete Skill List

Animal skills

Animal handling (Ea)
Falconry (Av)
Riding (Ea)

Athletic Skills

Athletics (Av)
Climbing (Av)
Contortions (Hd)
Stamina (Hd)
Swimming (Av)
Travel (Ea)

Combat Skills

Brawling (Av)
Missile weapon (Av)
Single weapon (Av)
Two handed weapon (Av)
Two weapons (Hd)
Weapon and shield (Av)

Communication Skills

Artist (Av)
Bard (Hd)
Bargain (Av)
Charm (Av)
Etiquette (Ea)
Folk ken (Hd)

Guile (Av)
Leadership (Av)
Seduction (Av)

Knowledge

Area lore (Ea)
Beast lore (Ea)
Chirurgury (Hd)
First aid (Ea)
Folk lore (Ea)
Herb lore (Av)
History (Ea)
Religion (Ea)
Language (Ea)
Occult lore (Av)
Survival (Av)

Tracking (Av)

Perception Skills

Alertness (Av)
Observation (Av)

Combat

This chapter describes weapon skills, weapons and armour, and how combat is run.

Weapon Skills

There are a number of different weapon skills, each associated with a given fighting style, and choice of weapons. One such skill has already been encountered – *brawling*, which is a childhood skill, and hence the only weapon skill all characters can more or less be assumed to have some skill in. It can actually be used in place of any melee weapon skill, though isn't as effective as using the correct skill.

There are five basic styles of melee fighting:

- Brawling.
- Single weapon.
- Weapon and shield.
- Two weapons.
- Two handed weapon.

Each is considered to be of *average* difficulty, except for the *two weapons* skill, which is *hard*. When a skill is taken with one of the above styles, it should be specified what weapons the style has been learnt with. A style can be learnt multiple times with different weapons if desired.

Fumbling

As for other skills, there is a chance of fumbling whenever a combat skill is used. Generally, a roll of four or less on the dice constitutes a fumble. Poor conditions can raise this to five, or even six.

Since a combat skill is with a particular type of weapon, in a given fighting style, there is often the need to use a melee skill with an unfamiliar weapon. Doing so increases the chance of fumbling, as described for each fighting style.

Brawling

This is a childhood skill which covers fighting with the fists and feet. Damage done with this style is generally fatigue levels rather than body levels. A knife, dagger or small club can be used with this fighting style, and in which case damage is body levels. You only gain the damage bonus of the weapon though, not the initiative, attack and defence bonuses.

If larger weapons are used, then treat as per a knife, dagger or club, but there is also a +3 to the fumble chance.

If a shield is used, then you suffer any initiative penalties, and gain only half the defensive bonus. You also suffer +2 to your fumble chance.

Single Weapon

This style uses a single one handed weapon, with no use of a shield. You gain the initiative, attack, defence and damage bonuses of the weapon, and can use either the weapon skill or brawling as your base defensive skill.

A different weapon of the same category can be used at no penalty. If a shield is used, you do not gain the attack bonus of the shield, and increase fumble chance by +4. Weapons of a different category increase fumble chance by +2.

Using a weapon of a one different size class increases fumble chance by +1, and two size classes increases fumble chance by +3.

Weapon and Shield

This is the most common weapon style, for it combines both effective attack and defence. You gain all the initiative, attack, defence and damage bonuses of both the weapon and the shield.

If a different weapon is used other than the one trained in, then fumble chance is at +1. If the weapon is of a different category, then there is a

Weapons

Weapon	Init	Attk	Defn	Dmg	Str	Size	Type	Notes
Fist/kick	+2	+0	+0	+0	—	—	—	Brawling attack.
Knife	+4	+1	+3	+2	10	S	Blade	
Dagger	+6	+3	+5	+5	12	S	Blade	
Short sword	+12	+6	+7	+8	15	M	Blade	
Long sword	+9	+5	+10	+12	20	M	Blade	
Great sword	+18	+12	+10	+20	40	L	Blade	Two handed weapon.
Short spear	+15	+5	+4	+9	15	M	Pole	
Long spear	+22	+8	+3	+12	20	L	Pole	Two handed weapon.
Quarterstaff	+18	+10	+12	+8	20	M	Pole	Two handed weapon.
Axe	+8	+3	+6	+15	20	M	Blade	
Round shield	-3	+3	+7	+0	20	M	Shield	
Buckler	+0	+0	+3	+0	10	S	Shield	

further +2. Each difference in size category also gives another +2.

Not using a shield with this style causes you to suffer no penalties other than not gaining any shield bonuses.

Two Weapons

An unusual style, not practised a great deal. You must specify one weapon as your primary weapon, and the other as your secondary weapon. You gain all the bonuses of the primary, plus half the bonuses of the second weapon. Using different weapons with this style gives you penalties as per the *weapon and shield* style, and if both weapons are different, add the penalties together.

If a shield is used instead of a second weapon, then you gain half the bonuses of the shield (though suffer the full initiative penalty if there is one). You also have a +3 fumble chance.

Two Handed Weapon

The two handed weapon style allows use of a single weapon requiring both hands to wield. When using a weapon with two hands, your strength is effectively 50% higher for purposes of being able to wield the weapon (i.e. damage is not affected).

Armour

Armour	Hauberk	Half	Full
Quilted/fur	+2	+3	+5
Heavy leather	+4	+6	+9
Metal+leather	+6	+9	+12
Chain mail	+9	+13	+18

If you are using a different weapon to that which you have been trained with, then fumble chance is at +1. If you are using a weapon one handed instead of two handed, then fumble chance is +4.

Using a shield only gains half the bonuses (but full initiative penalty) of the shield, and increase your fumble chance by +3. Using the wrong type of weapon (e.g. spear instead of sword) adds a further +3 to the fumble chance.

The Combat Round

Combat is divided into *rounds* each lasting approximately five seconds. At the beginning of each round, the players declare what their characters are doing (and the GM decides what the NPCs are doing).

Initiative

Characters who are involved in fighting each other then roll for initiative. The initiative of a character is equal to their agility × weapon skill, plus the initiative modifiers of their weapons, plus 2d10!. The highest initiative acts first.

Every character gains an attack and a defence. The attack is based on dexterity × weapon skill plus weapon modifiers, as is the defence.

If the attack roll equals or exceeds the defence, then a successful attack has been made, and the attacker should determine damage.

Damage

Weapon damage is based on strength plus the weapon damage bonus (skill does not affect this). The attacker adds 2d10! to this, and subtracts the *soak* of the target. The target's *soak* is equal to their strength, plus any armour bonuses. The defender does not add a roll to their soak.

If the final result is zero or greater, then compare to the following chart:

Modified Damage	Wounds	Penalty
0	Stunned	*
1-5	1 (Hurt)	0
6-10	2 (Light)	-3
11-15	3 (Medium)	-5
16-20	4 (Serious)	-10
21-25	5 (Critical)	-15
26-30	6 (Fatal)	-25
31+	<i>Special</i>	<i>Special</i>

A stunned character gains one level of short term fatigue. A character who is wounded several times, adds their wounds together, so two *light* wounds become a single *serious* wound.

A character who is *critically* injured or worse is at risk of passing out, or dying. If you are at critical wounds, then you need to make a health × stamina

roll of 30+ to remain conscious, with a fumble chance of 7 (where a fumble denotes simple unconsciousness). You only need to make this roll once, when you first reach critical wounds.

If your wound level reaches *fatal*, then you must make a similar roll or die immediately. If you rolled 30+, but less than 45, then you fall unconscious. In either case, a fumble means death. Each round that you exert yourself, you must make another roll at the end of the round. If you are not exerting yourself (i.e. you decide to become one with the ground), then a failure or fumble merely results in unconsciousness.

After falling unconscious because of a fatal wound, then you must continue to roll 30+ each minute (with a fumble chance at a more normal 4). A failure means that you die. You have to keep on rolling until you either die, or are tended to by someone with the *first aid* skill.

Beyond Fatal

There is no wound category beyond being fatally wounded. If you are ever taken to 'beyond fatal' (including if you take another wound when you are already fatally wounded), then you must make a stamina check as if you had just been fatally wounded, but with a fumble chance of +2 per wound level beyond fatal. You are still considered to be at a wound level of *fatal* though.

If you are ever taken to *fatal* wounds in a single blow (i.e. 6 or more body levels of damage), then the base fumble chance becomes 15, rather than 7, for the initial survival roll.

Special Attacks

Instead of making a normal attack, before initiative is determined, a character can opt to make a special attack. Generally these can be made with any type of weapon and with any fighting style, though the GM may rule against their use in some

circumstances.

Aimed Shot

Only applicable for missile weapons. If you spend the entire round aiming, then you get a +5 bonus to your attack next round, and fumble chance drops by two. You cannot spend more than one round aiming., though can try and perform a *killing blow* when you do fi re.

Aggressive

Make an all out melee attack this turn, taking a -10 penalty to your defence, but gaining a +5 attack bonus.

Ambush

If your foe is unaware of your attack, then you can try an *ambush* manoeuvre. You gain no bonus to either your initiative or attack, but if you hit (against a base diffi culty of 20, since your foe has no active defence), then you can halve the armour of your target. Further, the attack counts as a *killing blow* (see below).

Cleaving Attack

Such an attack causes you to automatically loose initiative. You are also at -10 to your attack skill if using a one handed weapon, or -5 if using a two handed weapon. On a successful hit though, the target's armour is halved. Can only be performed with a melee attack.

Killing Blow

When attempting this manoeuvre, you automatically loose initiative, and suffer a -15 penalty to your attack. On a successful attack though, if you cause at least two body levels of damage, you decapitate (or otherwise) your foe (generally something which normally results in instant death).

Defensive

Spend this turn fi ghting defensively with a melee weapon, gaining a +5 bonus to your defence, but suffering a -10 penalty to your attack.

Feint

Make no attack this turn, but gain +5 to your melee initiative and attack roll next turn.

Weapon Smash

This is a brute force disarm manoeuvre with a melee weapon. You loose initiative, and suffer -5 to your attack roll. On a successful attack, both opponents make opposed damage rolls, and if the attacker wins, the defender looses their weapon.

Recovery from Wounds

A wounded character who does not have their wounds seen to will deteriorate over time. With the exception of fatally wounded characters, every hour that a character goes without having fi rst aid applied, gains them one level of long term fatigue.

It takes one minute to apply fi rst aid to a wound. The diffi culty for the task depends on the severity of the wounds.

Wound level	Difficulty
Hurt	10
Light	20
Medium	25
Serious	30
Critical	35
Fatal	40

Once a character's wounds have been tended to successfully, they can start to heal. An hour of rest will fully heal a *hurt* character, given a straight health roll of 30+. A full nights rest will fully heal a *lightly* wounded character, again given a health roll of 30+.

Failure of either of the above means the character can make another check either after another hour, or after another night, at a cumulative +5 bonus.

For more serious wounds, roll on the following chart to see how long recovery down to the next lower wound level takes.

Wound	0+	10+	20+	30+	40+	50+	60+
<i>Medium</i>	15	10	5	3	2	1	1
<i>Serious</i>	30	20	15	10	7	3	2
<i>Critical</i>	80	60	45	30	20	15	10
<i>Fatal</i>	X	X	120	80	60	45	30

A result of X means that the character slips into a coma (if not in one already) and eventually dies. A fumble on any roll means that the character's state worsens, and that they lose a further body level (or die, if already at *fatal*) at the end of the given period. A fumble for a medium or serious wound occurs on a 4 or less, for a critical wound on 6 or less, and for a fatal wound, on 8 or less.

Missile Combat

Missile weapons are covered by the *throwing* skill in much the same way as melee weapons are covered by the *brawling* skill. Throwing applies to all missile weapons, including bows, so is as much hand-eye coordination as it is chucking stones at people.