



<COOL NAME GOES HERE>
A COMMUNITY OWNED RPG SYSTEM

CNGH PLAYTEST v1.00

Release Date: July 30, 2024



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Special Thanks to

The Kickstarter Backers • The Backerkit Backers

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Playtest Introduction

Welcome to the playtest rules for the *Cool Name Goes Here Roleplaying Game*.

Release Version

This is Version 1.0 of the Cool Name RPG Core Rules Playtest Edition. This version was released on July 30th, 2024.

About Cool Name RPG

[Cool Name RPG](#) (also known as Cool Name Goes Here RPG or CNGH) is a project to create a new fantasy roleplaying game system and then release it to the world for free. Once it is complete, anyone can use the system for free to run, play, or build their own games. These permissions include the freedom to create and sell commercial products using the Cool Name RPG ruleset at no cost and without any special attributions. Everyone can use the system in any way they want for free, forever, and with no strings attached.

This project is funded by the generous backers of a [Kickstarter that ended in March of 2023](#) and all the amazing people who joined the movement since by making late pledges on Backerkit. [You can still back today](#) and become part of this unique project, plus you will get early access to playtest materials, receive invites for Q & As, and have a chance to play in Cool Name RPG adventures at Gen Con.

Why in the world is It Called Cool Name RPG?

Cool Name RPG is a placeholder name that comes from the project's full name: Cool Name Goes Here. When the game is complete, backers like you will help us come up with the final name for the game.

The Consulting Designers

Building a game system from the ground up is no small feat. To ensure we create the best game possible, we have put together a dream team of consulting designers who are guiding the development with reviews, shared expertise, and critiques.

The consulting designers (in random order) are:

- Crystal Mazur
- Robin D. Laws
- Toiya Kristen Finley
- Matt Forbeck
- Andrew Marlowe
- Steven S. Long
- DBJ
- Monica Marlowe
- Owen K.C. Stephens
- Eloy Lasanta
- Kenneth Hite

What are the Core Rules?

The rules you hold in your hands are the Cool Name RPG **Core Rules**. The **Core Rules** are the base set of rules used to play the game. As per our design goals, the Core Rules have a short learning curve, are self-contained, have a low handling cost, and play fast at the table.

Following the completion of the Core Rules, we are releasing an additional Expanded Rules book. This second book, also being released for free, will be filled with Rules Modules you can plug-in to your game that allow you to customize the system to your group's gaming preferences.

What is a Playtest?

The goal of a playtest is to make sure we release the best game possible. By putting the game in front of a bunch of different gamers like you, having you try the game out, and then collecting your thoughts, we can discover problems, gaps, and broken bits before the game goes live. We also hope you will share any cool ideas you have to make the game even better. Finally, you can let us know what parts of the game you like best, so we can make sure we leave those bits in.

How to Playtest

There are lots of ways you can playtest. In the end, it is up to you and your friends to decide what works best for you. Here are a few ideas.

- **Read the Rules:** That's it! Just read the rules. Even if you never throw dice, there is a lot we can learn by hearing your thoughts after you read the rules.
- **Solo Play:** Play out a few encounters on your own. If the encounter features NPCs, you can easily roll for both sides and still get a good feel for how well the rules work.
- **Limited Group Play:** Grab some friends, gather around the table, and play through some encounters. Put the rules through their paces and see how it flows.
- **Standard Group Play:** The Core Rules contain everything you need to start a campaign.

How to Share Feedback

Your feedback is extremely important to us. Hearing your thoughts is how we will know what to keep, what to change, and what is missing. Here are a few ways you can share your thoughts.

Surveys

Every now and then, we will post a survey asking for your feedback. These surveys include both specific questions, as well as opportunities to share your thoughts and ideas. If you are gaming as a group, one person can fill out the survey for your group, or each person can fill out their own copy of the survey.

We will share survey links in the [Kickstarter](#) updates, on [Discord](#), and on [Facebook](#).

Email

We are always happy to get email feedback. You can reach us at contact@cnghrpg.com. The only caveat

regarding email is that while we try to get back to everyone at some point, depending on how much email we are getting and the depth of the feedback, it might take us a little while to respond.

Discord Discussions

Our [Discord](#) server has playtest channels where you can talk about your experiences. Although the surveys are the best way to share your thoughts, the playtest channel is a good place to share ideas with us and your fellow Cool Name RPG playtesters.

You can [join the Discord server here](#).

Writing Feedback

Any feedback you give us helps. There are, however, some things you can do that will make sure you are giving the best feedback possible.

When sharing your experiences, be sure to let us know the context and the details. Things you might want to share include:

- How many people were playing.
- Details of the game encounter where the situation came up.
- Which version of the playtest rules you were using.
- Details about why you liked or disliked something.
- Things you DID like. Hearing the good things is not just to make us feel good—it ensures we do not accidentally remove something from the game you really enjoyed!

I want to repeat the most important point: **any feedback is valuable**. The points above are just suggestions. Even something as simple as saying, “We had a blast.” or “Combat took forever.” is helpful.

Chapter 1: Cool Name RPG Basics

What is Cool Name RPG?

Cool Name RPG is a roleplaying game system that lets you and your friends tell fantastic stories where down-to-earth heroes with a handful of exceptional abilities travel to wondrous places for action-packed adventures. Your heroes will risk life and limb negotiating difficult obstacles, overcoming daunting challenges, and vanquishing deadly foes to accomplish extraordinary goals.

Down-to-earth heroes: In a Cool Name RPG adventure, players take on the roles of characters in a fantasy setting who are on the power scale of your favorite artifact hunting archaeologists, wandering barbarian swordsmen, English super spies, or renegade starship crew members seeking serenity.

A handful of exceptional abilities: Each character will have a few exceptional abilities. These could include things like fantastic luck, amazing martial arts skills, incredible endurance, the ability to kit-bash gear out of a pile of junk, or even talent with magic.

Travel to wondrous places: Over the course of their adventures, your characters will travel to wondrous places like ancient temples, secret strongholds, floating castles, or even other worlds or dimensions. As your adventure begins, your characters will leave the normal world behind to explore these strange and exciting locations.

Action-packed adventures: The pace of a Cool Name RPG game is along the lines of your favorite action-adventure films or super-hero comic books. Even the “downtime” scenes are designed to set up and drive the story on to the next exciting encounter.

Risking life and limb: But don’t get too comfortable! Although your characters will occasionally perform amazing feats and have unique special abilities, they are unquestionably mortal, suffering injuries and with clear limits to their power. Their mortal fragility may even become one of the challenges they must overcome to succeed in their quests.

Obstacles, challenges, and foes: Your characters will do more than just fight bad guys. They will need to solve puzzles, navigate mazes, and face a host of problems they must overcome to succeed in their goals.

To accomplish extraordinary goals: The primary goal of a Cool Name RPG adventure is almost always something extraordinary, such as locating a lost city, recovering a legendary artifact, or breaking someone out of a prison no one has ever escaped from. Individual encounters in pursuit of this goal might be down-to-earth, but the primary goal is nearly always extraordinary.

NEW TO ROLEPLAYING GAMES?

If you are a new or novice gamer, we recommend you start by reading the Cool Name RPG Starter Book. A free digital download of the Starter Book will be available at www.coolnamerpg.com. <AVAILABLE LATE 2024>

The book you are reading today assumes you are already familiar with roleplaying games and how they work. We will not spend much time discussing things like “What is a d6?” or explaining what a gamemaster does.

Basic Game Concepts

You will learn the Cool Name RPG rules in the following chapters, but first, it is helpful to familiarize yourself with some of the game’s core concepts.

Adventures

Adventures are like the stories from your favorite fantasy books, movies, and shows. As you play the game, you and your friends tell your own story, and the characters you create are the heroes. Every decision your character makes is up to you, and the only limit to where the story takes you is your imagination.

Encounters

Every adventure is made up of a series of interconnected **Encounters**. Encounters are like the scenes in a movie or the chapters in a book. Each Encounter is a discrete moment in the story with clear

objectives, obstacles, and rewards. The outcome of the Encounters determines how your story unfolds.

A very short Adventure might only consist of a single Encounter while a long Adventure might include a dozen or more. It all depends on the nature of the Adventure and the length of the game the Gamemaster has planned for you. Most Adventures Cool Name RPG consist of 5-10 Encounters of varying types.

Challenges

Each Encounter will present one or more **Challenge** your characters must overcome. The way your characters deal with these Challenges and the outcome of the characters' Actions determines where the story goes next. Attempting to pick a lock, trying to fast talk the guards, or battling an ancient dragon are examples of Challenges you might face during an Encounter.

Challenge Points

Every Challenge your characters face is assigned a number of **Challenge Points**. Challenge Points represent the magnitude of the Challenge. The bigger the Challenge, the more Challenge Points assigned to it. When you reduce the Challenge Points to zero, you have overcome the Challenge.

Rounds and Turns

Cool Name RPG tracks time during Encounters using Rounds. In one **Round**, each **character** (a hero controlled by a player) and **NPC** (a person or creature controlled by the **Gamemaster**) gets one **Turn** to act. The characters and NPCs take their Turns in the order of their **Initiative**, with the highest Initiative going first, the next highest second, and so forth.

Length of a Round

The length of a Round depends on the nature of the Encounter. A protracted search of the city for a fleeing criminal might use Rounds that last an hour each, while a quick and dirty fight with that same criminal in a dingy back alley might use Rounds that are just a few seconds long.

Scores

The adventure worlds you explore in a Cool Name RPG adventure, and many of the things found in those

worlds, are defined by **Scores**. A Score is a numeric value that defines the quality, power, or impact of a thing in the game. The higher the Score, the more it impacts your character—sometimes positively and sometimes negatively.

Points

Points are like Scores, in that they are a numeric value that help define aspects of your characters, the world, and the things that inhabit that world. Unlike Scores, Points are reduced and restored over the course of the game. For instance, Vitality Points represent how much damage your character can withstand before they must stop to recover. When their Vitality Points reach zero, they are out of the fight until they restore at least one Vitality Point. Challenge Points, introduced earlier, are another example of Points. You overcome a Challenge when you reduce its Challenge Points to zero.

Actions

On your character's Turn, you decide what your character says and does. Whatever you describe is your character's **Action**. Many Actions in a Cool Name RPG game are handled with simple storytelling: you describe what your character does and the Gamemaster describes the outcome of the Action.

Sometimes, however, it may not be clear if your character can achieve the outcome you desire. For instance, you might *want* your character to leap across the river of lava, but are they strong enough to make it to the other side? When a situation like this arises, you make an **Action Check**.

Action Checks

An **Action Check** is a game mechanic used to check if your character succeeds at their Action. The most common way to resolve an Action Check is to roll a predetermined number of dice, add the results together, and compare the total to a **Difficulty Score**. If the dice total matches or exceeds the Difficulty Score, your Action is a success! If the total is less than the Difficulty Score, the Action failed and it is up to the Gamemaster to describe the consequences.

Difficulty Score

To determine an Action's **Difficulty Score**, the Gamemaster adds up the Scores for everything working against your character. The complexity of the task, the Actions of your opponents, and the conditions under which your character is attempting the Action may all factor into the Difficulty Score. The total of these Scores is the Action's Difficulty Score. The higher the Difficulty Score, the more difficult the Action.

Action Score

Where the Difficulty Score is the total of everything working against your character, your character's **Action Score** is the total of everything working in their favor. Your character's natural abilities, their training, their equipment, and the Actions of their allies all have the potential to improve the character's Action Score. The higher your character's Action Score, the more dice you get to roll, and the better your odds of success.

Action Dice

The dice you roll to see if your character succeeds at their Action are called the **Action Dice**. To find your Action Dice, locate your Action Score on the Action Chart and grab the dice indicated. Roll the dice, add the results together.

Open Ended Rolls

Cool Name RPG uses **open ended** dice rolls. Sometimes this mechanic is referred to as **exploding dice**. When you roll the highest number on a die, add the result of the first roll to your total, then roll another die of the same type and add the result of the new roll to your total as well. If the new die rolls the highest number, repeat the process. This continues until you roll lower than the highest number on the die.

ACTION CHART

Action Score	Action Dice
2	d6
3	d8
4	d10
5	d12
6	2d6
7	d6 + d8
8	d6 + d10
9	d6 + d12
10	3d6
11	2d6 + d8
12	2d6 + d10
13	2d6 + d12
14	4d6
15	3d6 + d8

Open Ended Roll Example

Wargar is attempting to leap across a crevasse. Jumping this crevasse is Difficulty Score 10, and Wargar has Action Score 7. Wargar's player, Steve, checks the Action Chart and sees the Action Dice for Action Score 7 are d6 + d8. Steve rolls the dice and gets a 6 on the d6 and a 1 on the d8. This adds up to 7 (6 + 1). Not bad, but Steve needs Wargar to do better if he's going to make it to the other side.

*Fortunately, Steve rolled a 6 on the d6, the highest number possible on that die, so the roll **open ends**. He grabs another d6 and rolls it as well, getting a 3. Adding this to his total he gets a final result of 10 (6 + 1 + 3). Wargar lands safely on the far side of the crevasse. That was a close one!*

Determine the Result

Compare the total you rolled to the Difficulty Score. If the total rolled matches or exceeds the Difficulty Score, your Action succeeds. If the total rolled is less than the Difficulty Score, your Action fails. The Gamemaster will describe how your character's success or failure to perform the Action impacts the story.

Effect

Sometimes you only need to know whether you succeeded at your Action or not. Other times, it is important to know not only if you succeeded, but how great of a success you achieved. We call this measurement of success the **Effect**.

The Effect of an Action Check is the amount by which your roll exceeded the Difficulty Score. For example, if the Difficulty Score was 6 and you rolled 10, the Effect is 4. The Effect of a successful Action Check is never less than 1. If the Effect of a successful Action Check ever comes out to zero, treat it as Effect 1.

The most important reason to know your Action's Effect is that when you are attempting to overcome a Challenge, you subtract the Effect from the Challenge's Challenge Points. If you reduce the Challenge Points to zero, you have overcome the Challenge.

Let's Review!

A Cool Name RPG Adventure is made up of a series of Encounters. Each Encounter features one or more Challenges you must overcome. Each Challenge is assigned Challenge Points to represent the size of the Challenge. If you reduce the Challenge's Challenge points to zero, you are victorious.

During an Encounter, you choose Actions for your character to overcome the Challenges. If it is uncertain whether your character will succeed at an Action, you make an Action Check. Find your character's Action Score and roll the associated Action Dice. If the total of your roll is equal to or greater than your Action's Difficulty Score, you succeed. The Effect of a successful Action is subtracted from the Challenge's Challenge Points. Reduce all the Challenge Points for all the Challenges in an Encounter to zero, and you complete the Encounter! At that point you move on to the next exciting Encounter, continuing until you reach the epic conclusion of your heroic adventure!

The Rule of Common Sense

The rules found in this book are written with the expectation that the **Rule of Common Sense** is in effect. This means that when you or the Gamemaster are interpreting the rules, if something isn't explicitly spelled out in the rules or if the rules don't fit with the situation you are facing, you will use common sense to decide how to proceed.

For instance, in the combat rules, we will not write, "You must be able to reach the target to hit it with a sword." Common Sense dictates that of course you need to be able to reach someone to hit them with a sword. We trust you and the people you play with to make these calls on your own. In the case of an intractable disagreement, the Gamemaster makes the final call.



Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges

The most important rules in Cool Name RPG are Action Checks and Challenges. When the Gamemaster presents you with a Challenge, such as eliminating the threat of a powerful monster or navigating a dangerous mountain pass, it is up to you to describe the Actions your character takes to overcome it. With each successful Action, you reduce the Challenge's Challenge Points and move closer to victory.

Many Actions are resolved with simple storytelling: you describe what your character does and the Gamemaster describes the outcome. Sometimes, however, it is not clear if the thing you want to do is possible. For instance, you might *want* your character to leap across the river of lava, but are they strong enough to make it to the other side? When a situation like this arises, you make an Action Check.

Action Checks

An **Action Check** helps you figure out if an Action you described succeeds or fails. Here are the steps for resolving an Action Check:

- Determine the Action Score (AS):** The player adds up the Scores for everything working in their character's favor.
The total is their Action Score (AS).
- Set the Difficulty Score (DS):** The Gamemaster adds up the Scores for everything working against the character.
The total is the Difficulty Score (DS).
- Roll the Action Dice:** The player locates their Action Score on the Action Chart, grabs the indicated dice, and rolls. If the total amount rolled on the

Action Score	Action Dice
2	d6
3	d8
4	d10
5	d12
6	2d6
7	d6 + d8
8	d6 + d10
9	d6 + d12
10	3d6
11	2d6 + d8
12	2d6 + d10
13	2d6 + d12
14	3d6 + d6
15	3d6 + d8

dice matches or exceeds the Difficulty Score, the Action succeeds.

Action Check Example

Steve's character, Wargar the Bold, is fleeing from a pack of ravenous wolves, but Wargar's escape is blocked by a sheer cliff. Steve declares Wargar will climb the cliff as his Action. Marc, the Gamemaster, isn't certain Wargar will succeed, so he calls for an Action Check.

Wargar has a Strength Score of 3 and an Athlete MO Score of 2. Steve also reminds Marc that Wargar grew up in the mountains and suggests this should benefit Wargar on this Action. Marc agrees, so Steve adds up everything working in Wargar's favor and determines his Action Score is 6 (3 Strength + 2 Athlete + 1 modifier for familiarity with mountainous cliff climbing).

Marc decides climbing this particular cliff is something a novice climber might reasonably expect to succeed at, so he sets the Difficulty Score to 3. In addition, it is dark and raining, so Marc increases the Difficulty Score by 1 for each of the conditions working against Wargar. The total Difficulty Score for this Challenge is 5 (3 + 1 for darkness + 1 for rain).

Steve checks the Action Chart, grabs his Action Dice (2d6), and rolls. If the total rolled is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Score of 5, Wargar successfully climbs the cliff. If not...well, Wargar will be remembered fondly.

Skipping the Roll

You do not need to make an Action Check for every Action. If the Action is especially simple, if nothing is preventing the character from succeeding given enough time, or if the Action is something the character can easily accomplish based on their skills, experience, and training, the Gamemaster can declare an automatic success—no rolls necessary.

Comparing Scores

If there is still doubt about whether the character would succeed at an Action, but rolling dice will not add any

fun or excitement to the game, an alternative to rolling is to simply compare the Action Score to the Difficulty Score. If the Action Score matches or exceeds the Difficulty Score, the Gamemaster may declare the Action Check is a success—no roll needed. You can even use this method to determine an Action’s Effect.

Comparing Scores is a good approach for resolving low-pressure Actions or Actions taken under highly controlled conditions, where there is still *some* doubt about whether the character will succeed or how long it will take to complete a task, but the randomness of the dice do not add to the fun.

Determining Action Scores

To find your Action Score, add up the Scores for everything that improves your chance of success. The total is your Action Score.

Typically, you find your Action Score using the following formula:

One Primary Attribute Score + One MO Score = Action Score

Primary Attribute Score

Most Action Checks are based on one of your character’s nine **Primary Attributes**. Primary Attribute Scores represent your character’s natural abilities, such as their toughness, intellect, and creativity. The higher the Primary Attribute Score, the stronger the character is in that area. The nine Primary Attributes are described in detail in **Chapter 3: Character Attributes**.

Some of the rules found in this book list which Primary Attribute Score you should use for different types of Actions. For example, the rules for firing a bow instruct you to use your character’s Coordination Score. If the rules do not specify which Primary Attribute Score to use, you and the Gamemaster should decide which is appropriate.

Even if the rules *do* list a specific Primary Attribute Score for an Action, you and the Gamemaster can always choose to use a different Primary Attribute if it makes sense. Whichever Primary Attribute Score you choose, add its Score to your Action Score. You may

only add one Primary Attribute Score to an Action Score.

MO Score

Your character’s skills, talents, and abilities are defined by their **Modi Operandi (MOs)**. Example of MOs are Wizard, Warrior, or Cleric, and it is possible to have more than one MO. Each of your MOs has a Score. If the Action you selected involves something your character would have studied or practiced while learning their MO, add the Score for that MO to their Action Score. You may only add one MO Score to an Action Score.

MOs and Action Scores Example

Wargar and Eldar are attempting to walk along a narrow ledge next to an open pit trap. Wargar has the Athlete MO and the Warrior MO. Balance seems like the sort of thing an Athlete would learn, so the Gamemaster agrees Wargar may add his Athlete MO Score to his Action Score.

Eldar only has the Wizard MO. It seems extremely unlikely Eldar studied balance in the Wizarding College. The Gamemaster rules that Eldar may not add his Wizard MO Score to this Action Score.

Focuses and Specializations

Some characters have extra training that improves their chances when attempting certain Actions. This is represented by **Focuses** and **Specializations**. A Focus is a refinement of a character’s MO training, while a Specialization is a refinement of a Focus.

Here is an example:

MO	➡	Focus	➡	Specialization
Warrior	➡	Melee	➡	Long Blades

If the Gamemaster allows you to add your MO Score to the Action Score, and you have a Focus for that MO applicable to the Action, you may also add the Focus’s Score. If you also have a Specialization of the Focus and it applies to the Action, you can add the Specialization’s Score as well. You may only add one Focus Score and one Specialization Score to your character’s Action Score.

Focus, Specialization, and Action Scores Example

In the previous example, where Wargar is attempting to walk along a narrow ledge, the Gamemaster has agreed to allow Steve to add Wargar's Athlete MO Score of 1 to the Action Score. In addition, under his Athlete MO Wargar has a Focus in Agility with a Score of 1, and under his Agility Focus, he has a specialization in Balance with a Score of 2.

MO ➡ Focus ➡ Specialization

Athlete 1 ➡ Agility 1 ➡ Balance 2

The Gamemaster agrees that all three are applicable to this Action. Wargar's new Action Score for this Action is 6 (Coordination 2 + Athlete MO 1 + Agility Focus 1 + Balance Specialization 2.)

MOs, Focuses, and Specializations are discussed in detail in **Chapter 4: Modus Operandi**.

Other Scores

Any other Scores that improve the character's chance of success may be added to the Action Score with the Gamemaster's permission. Examples include the Score for a beneficial spell that boosts a character's ability to resist poison or disease, the Attack Score for a weapon, or the Score for a special talent that applies to the Action.

Modifiers

Every advantage, positive condition, or helpful circumstance that improves the character's chance of success increases their Action Score by +1. We call these +1 bonuses **modifiers**. Examples include a character background that applies perfectly to the situation at hand, having the high ground in a fight, or taking extra time. None of these have their own Scores, but any of these might benefit the character for certain types of Actions. The Gamemaster always has the final say on whether the player may add modifiers to their Action Score.

Action Score Example

Jeff's character, Spyder, has discovered a strange pyramid in the center of the ruins he is exploring. Jeff is convinced there is an entrance to the pyramid at the summit, so he decides to climb it.

The Gamemaster decides the Difficulty Score for the Action of climbing the crumbling pyramid is 7.

ACTION: Climb the Crumbling Pyramid DS 7

Jeff thinks his Coordination is the most appropriate Primary Attribute for climbing a pyramid, and Spyder's Coordination score is 4. Spyder also has the Thief MO with a Score of 3, and Jeff is confident his Thief MO training included practice at climbing. In addition, Jeff points out that Spyder has a pair of magic gripping gloves designed to help with climbing. The gloves have a Score of 2.

Finally, Jeff reminds the Gamemaster that Spyder's backstory is he started his career looting ruined temples, so Jeff imagines climbing this crumbling pyramid is exactly the sort of thing Spyder is good at.

The Gamemaster agrees that all of these improve Spyder's chance of success, so Jeff adds them up and determines Spyder's Action Score for climbing the pyramid is 10 (Coordination 4 + Thief MO 3 + Gloves 2 + Backstory Modifier 1). Checking the Action Dice Table, Jeff sees that Action Score 10 means he gets to roll 3d6. If the total rolled is 7 or more, Spyder makes it to the top. Jeff likes those odds! Spyder heads for the pyramid and begins his climb. What could go wrong?

Taking Extra Time

One way to increase a low Action Score is to take extra time. Each move up the Time Increment chart adds a +1 modifier to the character's Action Score. For instance, taking 15 minutes to perform a 6 second Action adds +2 to the Action Score.

Time Increments

6 seconds

1 minute

15 minutes

1 hour

12 hours

1 day

1 week

1 month

The base time increment for an Action depends on what the Gamemaster has declared for that Encounter. See **Chapter 6: Encounters** for more information.

Setting Difficulty Scores

When the Gamemaster is ready to set the Difficulty Score, they should ask themselves...

“What level of skill is required to have a reasonable chance of success at this Action under normal conditions?”

Find that level of skill on the Difficulty Chart and follow the line across to find the Difficulty Score.

DIFFICULTY CHART

Skill Level Needed	DS
Unskilled	2
Novice	3
Skilled	6
Professional	9
Expert	12
Master	15
Legendary	20

Normal Conditions

The Difficulty Scores listed in the table assume the character is working under **normal conditions**. Normal conditions mean the character is in a place conducive to the work and they have the proper tools. If the place where the character is performing the Action is not well-suited to the task, or if the character does not have the right tools, the Gamemaster should add one or more **modifiers** to the Difficulty Score.

Difficulty Score Modifiers

Each condition, situation, problem, or obstacle working against the character during an Action Check adds +1 to the Difficulty Score. These are called **modifiers**.

Slippery ground, sub-standard tools, poor lighting, high winds, a serious injury, or extreme cold are all things that might apply a modifier to the Difficulty Score.

When dealing with a complex condition, like a thunderstorm, it is a good idea to add separate modifiers for each aspect of the problem, such as +1 for wind and +1 for rain.

Difficulty Score Modifier Example

*The adventuring party is trying to repair their wagon during a horrific thunderstorm. The Gamemaster decides that the repair itself is relatively easy and is something a **novice** wainwright could handle under normal conditions. Checking the novice line on the Difficulty Chart she sees the suggested Difficulty Score is 3.*

The base Difficulty Score assumes the characters have the right tools and are working under conditions appropriate for the work. As you might imagine, the side of the road during a raging storm is far from normal conditions for wagon repair. On the bright side, the characters packed a good set of tools, so that isn't a problem.

The Gamemaster decides that the lack of a proper workshop adds a +1 modifier to the task. In addition, the storm clouds block out the sun, so she applies +1 for dim lighting. It is also pouring rain, making everything slippery; that is another +1. Finally, the wind is roaring, adding yet another +1. The total modified Difficulty Score is 7 (Difficulty Score 3 + 1 for environment + 1 for dim light + 1 for rain + 1 for wind). Before the players roll to resolve the Action Check, one of the players suggests their characters push the wagon behind a rock outcropping, away from the wind. The Gamemaster agrees that such a move makes things easier and decides no roll is required to move the wagon. With the wagon safely behind the outcropping, the Gamemaster drops the wind Modifier, reducing the final Difficulty Score to 6.

Resisted Action Difficulty Scores

A **Resisted Action** is an Action where an opposing force is actively trying to stop the Action from succeeding. Examples include racing to reach a goal, a tug-of-war competition, or trying to hit someone who does not want to be hit. There are two ways of setting Difficulty Scores for Resisted Actions: **Opposed Rolls** and **Defense Scores**.

Opposed Rolls

When an NPC is actively attempting to stop a character from succeeding at their Action, the Gamemaster may call for an **Opposed Roll** to resolve the Action Check. The Gamemaster determines the Action Score for the Action the NPC is using to oppose the character and rolls the Action Dice. The number the Gamemaster rolls becomes the Difficulty Score for the character's Action Check. A classic example of an Opposed Roll is when one party is attempting to hold a door shut, but another party is attempting to push their way in.

Defense Scores

The other common way of setting Difficulty Scores for Resisted Actions is to use one of the target's **Defense Scores**. Defense Scores are primarily used during Combat Encounters. You can learn more about Defense Scores in **Chapter 7: Combat Encounters**.

Effect

The **Effect** of an Action Check is the amount by which your roll exceeded the Difficulty Score. For example, if you rolled 9 against a Difficulty Score 5, that Action Check has an Effect of 4. The minimum Effect for a successful Action Check is 1.

In some situations, you do not need to know the Effect of an Action Check. All you need to know is whether the Action succeeded or failed. Effect is typically important if you are using your Action to reduce a Challenge's Challenge Points.

The Reasonably Possible Rule

One of the only restrictions on the Actions you may choose in Cool Name RPG is the **Reasonably Possible Rule**. This rule restricts you to Actions that are

reasonably possible under the current circumstances. This doesn't mean the Action is easy. It just means the Action and your desired outcome are reasonably possible.

Here are some extreme examples of Actions that are *not* Reasonably Possible:

- * You can't shoot someone with a bow if you don't have any arrows.
- * You can't start a normal campfire underwater.
- * You can't fly if your character doesn't have any means, natural or mechanical, to fly.

It is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine if the Action you want to take is Reasonably Possible, and the Gamemaster always has the final say in the event of a disagreement.

There are, however, two exceptions to the Reasonably Possible Rule: **Magic** and **Cinematically Possible Actions**.

Magic

Magic, by its nature, breaks the laws of reality, allowing you to attempt Actions that are both *unreasonable* and *impossible*. With Magic you could shoot energy arrows, create fire underwater, or even fly. See **Chapter 11: Magic and Spellcasting** for details on how magic works in Cool Name RPG.

Cinematically Possible

A second exception are Actions that are Cinematically Possible. Cool Name RPG is a game where you get to tell action-adventure stories of the sort you see in books, shows, video games, and movies. Characters in those stories regularly do things where they achieve wildly unlikely outcomes. Their Actions are still bound loosely by the limits of the world, environment, and conditions, but they manage to get results that, if not impossible, are highly improbable. Examples include:

- * A thrown lantern breaks on the floor and explodes into a ball of fire, burning everyone in the room.
- * The character falls from a four-story building, but a merchant's tent breaks their fall and they emerge unharmed.

* A thief picks a complex lock using nothing but a rat bone, a sewing needle, and a rusty nail.

In Cool Name RPG, when you want to perform a Cinematically Possible Action, you perform a Stunt. You will learn more about Stunts in **Chapter 5: Action Types**.

Challenges

Challenges are any obstacle, problem, or enemy your characters must overcome to complete an Encounter. Challenges take many forms, from pit traps to monsters to NPCs with goals contrary to your own.

Challenge Points

Every Challenge has **Challenge Points (CP)**. Challenge Points represent the magnitude of the task. The bigger the task, more powerful the enemy, or longer the distance, the more Challenge Points the Gamemaster assigns to the Challenge.

Each time you or your companions perform a successful Action to overcome the Challenge, you reduce the Challenge's Challenge Points by the Effect. When you reduce the Challenge Points to zero, you have overcome the Challenge.

Challenge Points Example

Beth's halfling, a burglar named Altiss, wants to steal a wizard's crystal ball. Unfortunately, the crystal ball is located on the top floor of the wizard's tower, and the only way to access the top floor is through a small window in the side of the tower. The tower is quite tall, so the Gamemaster assigns 6 Challenge Points to the Challenge to represent the magnitude of the task.

CHALLENGE: Enter the Tower CP 6

Beth declares that Altiss will try to climb the tower. After all, Altiss spent years training for just this sort of situation. She decides to have Altiss use her exceptional Coordination 3 to make the climb, so she adds 3 to her Action Score. Since climbing buildings is something all burglars learn, she also adds her MO Score of Burglar 2 to her Action Score. In addition, Altiss has a Focus of Infiltration 1 for her Burglar MO, and the Gamemaster agrees the Focus applies in this case. Finally, Altiss puts on her shoes with the special climbing spikes, providing

a +1 modifier to her Action Score. This gives her Action Score 7 (Coordination 3 + Burglar MO 2 + Infiltration Focus 1 + Climbing Spikes 1 = AS 7).

The tower is made from smooth stone blocks with shallow joints between them, so the Gamemaster decides that you need to be a Skilled climber to have a reasonable chance of success. He declares climbing the tower is Difficulty Score 6.

ACTION: Climb the Tower DS 6

Beth checks the Action Chart and sees that the Action Dice for AS 7 are d6 + d8. Beth grabs the dice and rolls, getting a 4 on the d6 and a 4 on the d8 for a total of 8. Not bad! She beats DS 6 by 2 points so her Effect is 2. The Gamemaster reduces the Challenge's Challenge Points from 6 to 4.

CHALLENGE: Enter the Tower CP 4

With 4 CP remaining, Altiss is only a third of the way up. Beth will need to make another Action Check for Altiss to keep climbing. The DS doesn't change (the tower is just as difficult to climb here as where she started) and Altiss' AS stays the same as well. Beth rolls the dice again and this time she rolls a 2 on the d6 and a 4 on the d8 for a total of 6.

A 6 matches the DS 6, so the Action Check is a success. Unfortunately, it matched exactly so Altiss gets the minimum Effect of 1. The Gamemaster declares that Altiss struggled to find good handholds on that portion of the climb, and she barely made progress. The Gamemaster reduces the Challenge Points by Effect 1, from 4 to 3.

CHALLENGE: Enter the Tower CP 3

Beth gets ready to make another Action Check, but the Gamemaster stops her. He explains that it is starting to rain! The sides of the tower are now slick with water, making the climb more difficult. The Gamemaster adds a +1 Modifier to the DS, raising it to DS 7.

ACTION: Climb the Tower DS 7

Altiss is more than half-way up the tower. There's no turning back now. Beth rolls again. This time she gets 4

on the d6 and a 6 on the d8 for a total of 10. Against a DS 7 that's an Effect 3—exactly what Beth needed to reduce the CP to zero. Success!

Reaching the window, Altiss grasps the sill and pulls herself up over the edge. Now to find that crystal ball!

Setting Challenge Points

The **Challenge Point Table** offers provides the Gamemaster with guidance for assigning Challenge Points. The **Size** column lists the size of the Challenge, the **Rounds** column shows the number of rounds it will typically take a group of four characters to overcome a Challenge of this size, and the **Points** column shows the number of Challenge Points appropriate for a Challenge of this size.

CHALLENGE POINT TABLE

Size	Rounds	Points
Tiny	1	0
Small	1 to 2	5
Medium	3 to 5	10
Large	6 to 10	25
Enormous	11+	50+

The Rounds column assumes the characters have the necessary skills and abilities to overcome this sort of Challenge. In game terms, this means their Action Scores roughly match the Difficulty Scores of the Action they are performing.

If their Action Scores are generally lower than the Difficulty Scores, the Challenge may take additional Rounds to overcome. On the other hand, if the Action Scores are generally higher than the Difficulty Scores, they will probably overcome the Challenge in fewer Rounds.

Challenge Points Example

To escape the Sphynx's lair, Wargar and Eldar must each complete a Challenge. Wargar's Challenge is to clean the orc soldiers' barracks. The orcs are exceptionally messy, making this a very big job. To reflect this, the Gamemaster has assigned the task 25 Challenge Points. That is a lot of work.

CHALLENGE: Clean the Barracks CP 25

Wargar grabs a mop and bucket and prepares to start cleaning. The Gamemaster decides cleaning with a mop and bucket isn't a particularly complicated Action. Any unskilled person could figure out how to do it, so the Gamemaster sets the Difficulty Score at 2.

ACTION: Mop the Floor DS 2

Eldar, on the other hand, has a very small job. He must put a little clockwork sparrow back together. All this involves is placing three small gears into the mechanism properly. There are three gears to insert, but it's far less work than cleaning the barracks, so the Gamemaster assigns it 8 Challenge Points.

CHALLENGE: Fix the Clockwork Sparrow CP 8

Eldar chooses the obvious Action: he is going to reinsert the three gears. The problem is that the gears are tiny and the mechanism highly complex. It would normally require a Professional clockmaker to get the job done. To reflect this, the Gamemaster sets the Difficulty Score for this Challenge to 9

ACTION: Insert the Gears DS 9

Each Round is 1 hour, but the catch is that if they don't both finish their tasks in 3 Rounds, the Sphynx will come and devour them. They'd better get to work!

Reducing Challenge Points

The Challenge Points indicate how big the job is, but it is up to the players to decide how they overcome the Challenge. In a Cool Name RPG Adventure, you can use any reasonable Action you can imagine to reduce a Challenge's Challenge Points. Get creative and leverage your character's strengths. As long as your plan is approved by the Gamemaster, there is no "right way" to reduce a Challenge's Challenge Points.

Creative Actions Example

Let's pretend for a moment that in our previous example it wasn't Wargar and Eldar trying to escape the Sphynx, but Wargar and Dysart. Wargar must still clean the orc barracks, but Dysart is given the task of fixing the clockwork sparrow. Dysart is a Mountebank, a con artist, and he doesn't know the first thing about

clockwork. The odds of him overcoming his Challenge in time are slim to none.

Fortunately, Dysart's player comes up with a better idea. Dysart may not know how to repair clockwork, but he definitely knows how to bluff and misdirect. Instead of fixing the sparrow to reduce the Challenge Points, Dysart declares he will use his Action to set up a bluff that tricks the Sphynx into thinking the work is complete! The Effect of Dysart's Action Checks still reduce the Challenge Points, but Dysart does it in his own unique way.

Combat Challenge Points

In game terms, the enemies you face in combat are just Challenges, and as such, each enemy combatant is assigned Challenge Points. Just like other Challenges, you use any Actions you like to overcome these opponents. You might choose an obvious Action like drawing a weapon and smacking the enemy with it repeatedly, or you could come up with other clever solutions, such as intimidating your foe, tricking them, or sneaking past. Whatever approach you take, when you reduce the enemy's Challenge Points to zero, they are Defeated.

The reason these varied approaches work in combat is because an enemy's Challenge Points represent more than their health. They also represent:

- Morale
- Mental stability
- Endurance
- Strategy
- Determination
- Spirit
- Experience

This means there are all sorts of ways you can defeat an opponent. Get creative, leverage your character's strengths, and most importantly, make it fun!

More information about Combat Encounter Challenge Points is found in **Chapter 7: Combat Encounters**.

Creative Combat Actions Example

The ground shuddered and trees crashed to the ground as the monstrous lizard charged out of the jungle. Twice the size of a draft horse and angrier than a halfling called late to dinner, the creature turned on the party and attacked!

The Gamemaster informs the party that this foe has 25 Challenge Points. The players gasp, realizing this will be a true test of their heroism.

CHALLENGE: Terror Lizard CP 25

Wargar goes first and for his Action he charges straight at the beast, swinging his massive double-bladed battleaxe. He gets Effect 6 so the Terror Lizard's CP are reduced to 19. (25 – 6 = 19)

CHALLENGE: Terror Lizard CP 19

Altiss is a halfling and not well-suited for battling giant lizards in direct combat. Altiss remembers, however, that almost all the animals on the farm where she grew up feared fire. Maybe this is true for giant lizards as well? Grabbing a torch, she runs toward the creature, swinging the flaming brand back and forth, trying to drive the beast back into the forest. For this Action, Altiss makes a Presence Action Check and gets Effect 4. The monster reels back from the flame and its Challenge Points are reduced to 15 (19 – 4 = 15).

CHALLENGE: Terror Lizard CP 15

The heroes are off to a surprisingly good start. They might just make it through this one alive!

Timed Challenges

Some Challenges must be overcome before a set number of Rounds pass. This means the characters have a limited number of chances to reduce the Challenge Points to zero. Failure to reduce the Challenge Points to zero before the time is up means the characters fail to overcome the Challenge and suffer whatever horrible consequences the Gamemaster dreamed up.

One Chance Challenges

For some Challenges, your characters only get one chance to succeed. These are "Yes/No" Challenges

where you get one Action and you either succeed or you fail. Examples include leaping onto the back of a horse as it runs by, diving for cover to avoid the billowing flames of a fireball, or catching a thrown object. In each case, you either succeed or you fail, and if you fail, you often do not get another chance to overcome the Challenge.

Group Challenges

A Group Challenge is one where all the players work together to reduce the Challenge Points. By default, every Challenge in Cool Name RPG is a Group Challenge unless the Gamemaster tells you otherwise. Cool Name RPG assumes the characters are always working together to achieve success. They assist one another along the way, collaborate to solve problems, make up for their friends' area of weakness with their strengths, and cover for their ally's mistakes.

Even Challenges like climbing a cliff or sneaking up on the castle guards are Group Challenges. The Challenge Points assigned to these Challenges represent the amount of work needed for the entire group to succeed, not one individual. As a result, the Actions all work to reduce the same set of Challenge Points.

Solo Challenge

A Solo Challenge is a Challenge where each character must overcome the same Challenge independently. This type of Challenge is rare in Cool Name RPG except in situations where characters must react blindly to some unexpected event.

Timed and Group Challenge Example

Eldar, Wargar, and Spyder are creeping through the forest when they spot their enemies gathered in a clearing just ahead. The players decide to sneak up on the enemy and take them by surprise.

The clearing is at least a stone throw away, and all three characters must arrive together if they want to maintain the element of surprise. To represent the magnitude of the task the Gamemaster decides this Challenge has 10 Challenge Points.

CHALLENGE: Surprise the Enemy CP 10

Additionally, there is a guard patrolling the edge of the forest. The Gamemaster declares this is a Timed Challenge. The party only has 1 Round to get from their current position to the enemy camp.

CHALLENGE: Surprise the Enemy CP 10, Time 1 Round

The party talks it over and comes up with a plan. Wargar will make an Intellect Action Check using his Warrior MO to leverage his experience performing similar ambushes during his time as a mercenary. Eldar will cast a spell of silence to reduce the noise the party makes as they approach. Finally, Spyder will lead the way, using his exceptional stealth to guide the party and make sure they all stay as quiet and hidden as possible. The Gamemaster sets their difficulties as follows.

ACTION: Devise a Strategic Approach DS 4

ACTION: Cast a Spell of Silence DS 6

ACTION: Move Silently and Unseen DS 4

Wargar rolls his Action Dice and fails his Action Check. His failure does not immediately alert the enemy, but it also does not reduce the Challenge Points and thus does not get the party any closer to success.

CHALLENGE: Surprise the Enemy CP 10, Time 1 Round

Next, Eldar casts his spell and gets an Effect of 3, reducing the Challenge Points to 7. The magic helps to muffle the sound of their approach, but if things don't improve soon, it's starting to look like the plan might fail!

CHALLENGE: Surprise the Enemy CP 7, Time 1 Round

Since the party only has one Round and everyone else has already taken their Turns, it's all up to Spyder! Spyder waves the group forward and rolls his Action Check. Thanks to an open-ended roll he gets an Effect of 10! This reduces the Challenge Points to zero meaning the party overcame the Challenge of surprising the enemy.

The Gamemaster describes the outcome like this:

"Before you begin, Wargar offers some advice based on similar ambushes, but unfortunately once you start moving you find his advice doesn't really help. Eldar,

meanwhile, successfully casts a spell that wraps you all in a cloak of silence, muffling your footfalls. It helps, but it doesn't completely cover the sound of your movement. Finally, Spyder leads the way, pointing out branches to avoid stepping on and holding back brush that might make noise. Spyder is, after all, an expert sneak, and thanks to his skill the party creeps up on the enemy, completely unseen."

Escalating Challenges

An Escalating Challenge is one where the Challenge Points increase at the end of each round. This represents situations such as water seeping into a sinking ship, the slow approach of a powerful army, or any situation where the longer the players take, the more dangerous the situation becomes. At the end of the Round, if the Challenge Points have not been reduced to zero, increase the Challenge Points by the amount described for the Challenge.

Challenge Points vs. Action Difficulty

Challenge Points represent the size of a task, but not the difficulty. Difficulty is based on the Action you take to overcome the Challenge. Depending on which Action you choose, the Difficulty might vary greatly, even when all the Actions are aimed at the same Challenge.

For example:

A locked iron door blocks the passage. Somehow the heroes must get past this door if they want to complete the Encounter. The Gamemaster decides this is a Medium sized task meaning it should only take 3 to 5 Turns to overcome if handled in the most efficient way, so he assigns it 8 Challenge Points.

CHALLENGE: Locked Iron Door CP 8

The party should probably work together, but instead, they decide to each make a run at the door individually. Wargar wants to try to knock it down using brute strength, Altiss wants to pick the lock, and Eldar wants to turn temporarily make the door intangible.

The Gamemaster assigns each Action a Difficulty Score. Eldar wants to change the physical nature of the door. The Gamemaster decides this is exceptionally difficult

and assigns DS 12 to Eldar's Action. Wargar's approach is possible but very hard (it is an iron door after all) so the Gamemaster assigns Wargar's Action DS 9. Finally, Altiss is trying to pick the lock, which as it turns out is not especially high quality or complex. He assigns Altiss's Action DS 6.

ACTION: Make the Iron Door Intangible DS 12

ACTION: Knock Down the Iron Door DS 9

ACTION: Pick the Lock on the Iron Door DS 6

Everyone grabs their dice and gets ready to roll.

You're Ready to Play!

You now know everything necessary to play in a Cool Name RPG adventure. The following chapters contain lots of helpful tools, clarifications, and fun ways to expand your game, but if you stopped right here, you'd know enough to play a character in the game.

Of course, we know you will want to continue reading, but you'll soon discover everything that follows are just specialized ways to use the rules you already learned in this chapter.

Before we move on, here is an example of a group of friends playing Cool Name RPG.

Example of Play

Gamemaster: With the baron's henchmen hot on your tail, you all jump into the wagon and with a strong push send it careening down the hillside. As it picks up speed you realize the hill is much steeper than you'd thought and the wagon is already going dangerously fast.

Beth: I wish we'd had time to hook up the horses. Altiss has a bad feeling about this plan.

Gamemaster: Up ahead you spot a fork in the road. Unfortunately, your wagon is currently pointed at the space between the two roads where an ancient oak tree is growing.

Steve: We need some way to turn this thing. Wargar is going to try to sit on the front edge of the wagon and kick at the wheels to get it to go, uh, left I guess.

Gamemaster: Okay, steering an out-of-control wagon with no horses by kicking at the wheels is going to be tough. I'll say this is DS 9.

Steve: Good grief. That's going to be hard. I'm going to use Strength of course, which is a 3. I'm also going to wrap my arms in the loose reins to give me additional leverage. Can I get a +1 modifier for that?

Gamemaster: Sure. That makes sense.

Abby: There is no way he'll pull this off with Action Score 4. Aria leans forward, places her hand on his shoulders and calls upon her gods to give him strength.

Gamemaster: That's an Assist Action, so your Difficulty Score is 2 for casting a spell at Reach distance plus his current Strength Score which is 3, for a total of DS 5. Oh, and the bouncing wagon makes it hard to concentrate. That adds a +1 modifier for a total of DS 6.

Abby: Aria's Spellcasting is Action Score 6, so I roll 2d6 and get...a 5 and a 3! That's 2 over the DS so I get Effect 2!

Gamemaster: Nice rolling. The spell increases Wargar's Strength by 2 as long as you maintain it, and his new Action Score for kicking the wheels is 6. And just in time too – you're almost to the fork in the road!

Steve: That's more like it! I kick at wheels and try to get this thing to turn left. I roll 2d6 and get a 4 and a 6! Yes! Open ended my roll. I roll another d6 and get a 3. So, a total of 13. I easily beat the DS of 9.

Gamemaster: You give the wheels a good strong kick and at the last minute the wagon veers to the left, narrowly missing the huge oak tree. At this point you notice two riders charging down the hill behind you. One of them is standing in his stirrups and taking aim with a bow.

Jeff: Just what we need. With no good way to shoot back I look around the wagon to see if the farmer left anything in it I can throw out the back and cause some problems for our pursuers.

Gamemaster: All you see is a crate full of cabbages.

Jeff: That'll do! I grab the crate and tip it out the back. Hopefully this will cause their horses to hesitate and mess up the archer's aim.

Gamemaster: So basically, you want to increase the archer's Difficulty Scores for attacks against your party. That's an Obstruct Action. I'll say using the cabbages to distract the horses is relatively easy, DS 3.

Jeff: Excellent. I'll use my Coordination, which has a Score of 3, to dump them strategically. Action Score 3 is d8 so I roll and get a 6.

Gamemaster: The cabbages roll out the back of the wagon forcing the horses to jump and prance to avoid stepping on them. It throws off the archer's aim adding a +1 modifier to his Difficulty Score. I roll d10 for the archer's shot—he's aiming at Spyder since he's in the back— and...he gets a 2. Misses. The arrow whizzes harmlessly overhead.

Everyone: Hooray!

Gamemaster: Don't get too excited. You look up ahead and realize the road turns sharply to the right at the edge of a cliff overlooking the river valley below.

Your Challenge is to turn the wagon before it flies off the cliff. Making that sharp of a turn with no controls is a pretty big task, so I'm giving it a Challenge Score of 8 and you have 1 Round before the wagon goes over the edge.

Everyone: *groan*

Steve: Okay, well Wargar is going to try the same trick of kicking at the wheels.

Abby: I'm still maintaining my Strength spell on him.

Gamemaster: That's fine. Wargar's DS for the Action of steering the out-of-control wagon by kicking the wheels is still 9.

Steve: I get that this is pretty tough if it were real life, but this is an adventure! What if I perform this as a Stunt? It seems pretty cinematic to me.

Gamemaster: I can see that. Just realize that if you do it this way and roll less than the Difficulty Score, you'll lose Body Vitality Points equal to the amount you

missed by. But if you want to try it, I'm willing to reduce to the DS 6.

Steve: Let's do it! I climb further out onto the cross bar and give the wheels a huge kick! I roll 2d6 again and get...oh, crap. A 5 and a 1. That's exactly the DS. Glad I did the Stunt.

Gamemaster: The minimum Effect for a successful Action Check is always 1, so you reduce the Challenge Score from 8 to 7.

Steve: Well, that's a start.

Chris: I figure it's time Eldar did his part. I want to cast a spell on the earth under the left wheels of the wagon, shaping the ground to gently guide the wagon to the right.

Gamemaster: Unless you want to lean over the side of the wagon...

Chris: I absolutely do not.

Gamemaster: ...then the range for this spell is just a bit farther than Reach, so we'll say Across the Room. That's DS 3. In addition, you're on an out-of-control wagon careening down a hill. That's pretty distracting, so I'm adding a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score. Your total is DS 4.

Chris: Sounds good! I begin chanting the arcane words of the spell and point my wand at the ground under the wheels. I roll 2d6 and get a 2 and 5! That's 7, so 3 over the DS for Effect 3.

Gamemaster: Not bad. You reduce the Challenge Score from 7 to 4. You're almost there.

Beth: I've got a plan. It's crazy but it just might work.

Abby: Oh, no.

Beth: Trust me! Altiss will grab her rope and tie one end around the wagon, then ready the other end to swing it around and lasso a tree on the right just as we hit the turn. The rope will pull tight and slingshot us around the corner!

Gamemaster: Okay, this is highly improbable but definitely cinematic, so this is going to be a Stunt.

Abby: Wait, I haven't gone yet this Round. I want to cast a spell to enhance Altiss' Coordination the way I did for Wargar's Strength.

Gamemaster: That's fine. That's another Assist, but you are maintaining the Strength spell so that will add +1 to your Spellcasting DS. You're also casting at Reach, so that's +2, and with the bouncing wagon that's another +1 to the DS. Finally, Altiss' current Coordination is 3, so your total is DS 7.

Abby: Ug, ok. I roll 2d6 and get a 4 and a 4. Well, that's Effect 1. Better than nothing.

Beth: Okay, so I have Coordination 3 and I get +1 to my Action Score for Aria's spell. And as a burglar, I regularly need to throw ropes around things when I'm climbing into buildings, so I think I should add my Thief MO Score of 2. Also, you remember from my backstory I grew up on a farm? Well, this probably isn't my first rodeo. I think Altiss should get +1 for past experience.

Gamemaster: That all makes sense to me. I'm fine with that. So, your Action Score is 7. As for the Difficulty Score, even as a Stunt this is going to be hard. I'll say DS 8. And with Action Score 7 you're rolling d6 + d8.

Beth: And I need an Effect of 4 to get the Challenge Points to zero, which means I need to roll a 12 or higher. It'll be tough, but not impossible.

Jeff: Hold on! I haven't gone this Round either. I leap over and help Altiss tie off the rope so she can focus on her lassoing!

Gamemaster: Spyder is just tying a knot, so I'll say you don't need to roll for that. That adds an additional +1 modifier to Altiss' Action Score. Now you have Action Score 8, Beth.

Beth: Yes! Action Score 8 is d6 + d10. Don't worry, guys! I've got this.

Steve: We're all going to die.

Gamemaster: Go ahead and roll the dice, Beth. It's all up to Altiss.

Chapter 3: Character Attributes

If you want to know how fast, strong, healthy, or intelligent a character is, you can find out by looking at the Scores assigned to their Attributes. The higher the Score, the smarter, stronger, or tougher the character.

Attributes fall into two categories: Primary Attributes and Secondary Attributes.

Primary Attributes define your character at the most basic level. They include traits like Toughness, Willpower, and Resilience. These are foundational to who your character is and what they can do, and they will not change much, if at all, over the course of your adventures.

Secondary Attributes are attributes based on your character's Primary Attributes. Rather than having a Score assigned to them, Secondary Attribute Scores are typically calculated from your Primary Attributes. For instance, your Maximum Body Vitality Score is equal to your Strength Score + your Coordination Score + your Toughness Score. Secondary Attributes might also include non-attribute Scores, like adding a shield's Defense Score to a character's Block Score.

Primary Attributes

Cool Name RPG characters have nine **Primary Attributes**. Primary Attributes are grouped according to their types: Body, Mind, or Spirit. During Character Creation, you will assign a Score to each of your Primary Attributes.

Body Attributes

Strength

Strength represents your character's overall muscle mass and physical power. It is the Primary Attribute used when performing Action Checks to lift, carry, pull, and push. Strength is also the Primary Attribute used in many types of melee attacks.

Coordination

Your character's natural sense of balance, agility, and precision with fine motor skills are represented by their

Coordination. Coordination is the Primary Attribute used for many full-body activities, such as acrobatics, dancing, and balance. Coordination is also used for Action Checks requiring strong hand-eye-coordination, such as picking pockets or performing surgery.

Toughness

Toughness represents your character's ability to function and recover when faced with illness, accidents, or other physical demands. It is used in Action Checks to resist the effects of poison and disease, recover from injuries, and endure wounds. Toughness is also used when making Action Checks to recover Body Vitality Points.

Mind Attributes

Intellect

A character's logical processing, ability to identify patterns, and general memory are all aspects of their Intellect. Intellect is the Primary Attribute used for Action Checks involving logical deduction, analysis, learning complex tasks, and remembering facts. It is also the Primary Attribute used by Wizards to cast spells.

Creativity

Creativity represents the character's ability to assemble information in new and novel ways. It is the Primary Attribute used in artistic creation, thinking "outside of the box," and solving problems where the answer lies outside the realm of accepted truths. Creativity is the Primary Attribute used to create and appreciate works of art, craft new items, and cast spells as a Sorcerer. A Creativity Action Check may also be used to gain a flash of insight when you are out of ideas (that is to say, get a hint from the Gamemaster.)

Willpower

Willpower is the character's ability to resist the influence of others and persevere in the face of extreme physical or emotional hardship. It is used for Action Checks to resist psychic assault, push forward even when exhausted, and disbelieve illusions that are

impossible to discern from reality. Willpower is also used making Action Checks to recover Mind Vitality Points.

Spirit Attributes

Presence

Presence represents a character’s ability to command a room and grab people’s attention. Performance, intimidation, seduction, and leadership are all types of Action Checks where the character’s Presence comes into play. Note that Presence does not necessarily mean “charismatic” or “likeable.” A hideous monster is as likely to have a high presence as a dashing rogue. Presence is also the Primary Attribute used by Clerics for spellcasting.

Awareness

A character’s Awareness is their innate ability to sense changes in the world around them and read the emotions of other living beings. It is used in Action Checks to sense illusions, pick up on duplicitous intent, and find things that are hidden or difficult to notice. Awareness is also used in Action Checks to see if the character unconsciously notices changes in their environment or potential danger. Awareness is also the Primary Attribute used by Druids for spellcasting.

Resilience

Resilience represents a character’s innate ability to persevere in the face of emotional trauma and spiritual strain. Resilience is used in Action Checks to resist fear, face death in all its forms without faltering, and adapt to changes that undermine the character’s understanding of the world. It is also used in Action Checks to recover Spirit Vitality Points.

Human Primary Attribute Scores

What is a “good” Primary Attribute Score? To give you a baseline for understanding Primary Attribute Scores, let’s look at the normal range of Scores for humans. Typically, human Scores range from 0 to 5. A Score of 2 is “human normal,” but a truly average human will not have twos for

HUMAN ATTRIBUTE SCORES	
Score	Description
0	Insignificant
1	Weak
2	Average
3	Superior
4	Exceptional
5	World-class
6	Legendary

all their Primary Attributes. Rather, they will have twos for most of their Primary Attributes, a handful of ones to represent areas of weakness, and *maybe* a single three if they are especially gifted in one area. You are unlikely to meet many humans with a Score of 4, and it is extremely unusual to meet a human with a Score of 5.

Of course, your characters are anything but “normal.” Every one of your characters are extraordinary in some way, and the thing that makes them extraordinary might be a few higher-than-normal Attribute Scores. Most heroes have at least a couple Attributes with a Score of 3, and a few will have an Attribute with a Score of 4.

Secondary Attributes

The Scores for Secondary Attributes are calculated Scores based largely on your character’s Primary Attributes.

Defense

A character’s **Defense** Attributes help them to avoid damage during Combat Encounters. They serve as the starting Difficulty Scores for Attack Action Checks made against your character by NPCs. Detailed rules for making and defending against attacks are found in **Chapter 7: Combat Encounters**.

Body Defense

Body Defenses help your character avoid attacks designed to reduce their Body Vitality Points. Each character has three Body Defense Attributes: **Dodge**, **Parry**, and **Block**.

Each Body Defense Score is based on a different Primary Attribute:

Dodge = Coordination

Parry = Strength

Block = Toughness

In addition, the following modifiers may be added to the character’s Defense scores:

- You may add your MO Score to any Defenses listed under Defenses in the MO description. If you have more than one MO with the same

Defense, may only add one MO Score to each Body Defense.

- Characters may add the Scores for appropriate defense Focuses and Specializations.
- Some weapons modify Parry.
- Some shields modify Block.

Mind Defense

Mind Defense helps your character avoid mental and psionic attacks designed to lower their Mind Vitality Points.

Mind Defense = Creativity

You may add your MO Score to Mind Defense if it is listed under Defenses in the MO description. If you have more than one MO with Mind Defense, you may only add one of the MO Scores.

Spirit Defense

Spirit Defense helps your character avoid emotional and spiritual attacks designed to reduce their Spirit Vitality Points.

Spirit Defense = Awareness

You may add your MO Score to Spirit Defense if it is listed under Defenses in the MO description. If you have more than one MO with Spirit Defense, you may only add one of the MO Scores.

Initiative

A character's **Initiative Attribute** is used to determine when a character takes their Turn during a Round. It represents a combination of their reflexes, alertness, and instinct. To calculate your characters Initiative Score, use the following formula:

$$\text{Coordination} + \text{Intellect} + \text{Awareness} = \text{Initiative}$$

Vitality

Your character's **Vitality Attributes** represent how much physical, mental, and emotional hardship your

character can survive. The higher your character's Scores for these Attributes, the more pain, damage, and suffering they can endure before they must stop to recover.

Characters have three Vitality Attributes: Body Vitality, Mind Vitality, and Spirit Vitality:

- **Body Vitality:** Body Vitality represents your character's overall physical health, their ability to resist stunning blows, and how well they withstand fatigue.
- **Mind Vitality:** Mind Vitality represents your character's force of will, their ability to stay centered in the face of chaos, and their power of concentration.
- **Spirit Vitality:** Spirit Vitality represents your character's morale, their inner strength, and their spiritual life force.

Vitality Scores are calculated as follows:

$$\text{Body Vitality} = \text{Strength} + \text{Coordination} + \text{Toughness}$$

$$\text{Mind Vitality} = \text{Intellect} + \text{Creativity} + \text{Willpower}$$

$$\text{Spirit Vitality} = \text{Presence} + \text{Awareness} + \text{Resilience}$$

Each Vitality Attribute has a corresponding pool of **Vitality Points**. Your character begins with Vitality Points of each type equal to the corresponding Vitality Score. The corresponding Vitality Score also represents your character's maximum Vitality Points of that type.

If an enemy, Challenge, or the outcome of an Encounter ever reduces one of your character's Vitality Points to zero, your character is **Incapacitated** and must take time to recover. (See Incapacitated in **Chapter 8: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing**)

Chapter 4: Modus Operandi

noun: modus operandi; **plural noun:** modi operandi

a particular way or method of doing something, especially one that is characteristic or well-established.

- Oxford Languages

In Cool Name RPG, you can play any sort of character you like. You could choose to play a noble knight skilled in the arts of combat, a wily wizard steeped in arcane power, or a clever thief sneaking through the shadows and helping yourself to whichever unguarded baubles catch your eye. Whatever you choose, the skills, talents, and abilities your character can call upon while adventuring are defined by their **Modi Operandi (MOs)**. Characters can have more than one MO, allowing you to play characters like a warrior thief or a merchant knight.

If none of the MOs offered here describe the character you want to play, you can always create a new MO. Instructions for creating your own MOs are found in **Chapter 12: Character Creation**.

MO Scores

Like your Primary Attributes, each of your MOs have a Score. The more experienced and skilled a character is, the higher their Score. The following table helps illustrate the level of expertise represented by each Score. Most characters begin the game as Skilled practitioners of their chosen MO.

MO Score	Expertise
0	Unskilled
1	Novice
2	Skilled
3	Professional
5	Expert
7	Master
10	Legendary

Detailed rules for selecting MOs and assigning Scores to MOs, Focuses, and Specializations are found in the Character Creation section.

MOs and Action Checks

Whenever your character performs an Action Check you and the Gamemaster determine if one of your character's MOs helps you in that situation. If it does, you may add that MO's Score to the Action Score. You may only add one MO score to an Action Score.

Familiarity vs. Expertise

Sometimes an action is only tangentially related to your MO. In these cases, the Gamemaster may decide your character only has **Familiarity** with the task rather than actual expertise. In that case, you still add your character's MO score to the Action Score, but the Gamemaster adds a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score. This represents that, while your character generally understands what to do, there are some aspects of this Action Check where your character lacks the necessary training. Focus and Specialization scores (see below) may not be added to the Action Score if a character only has Familiarity for an Action Check.

Familiarity Example

Steve's character, Wargar the Bold, is trying to figure out the proper way to greet a noble lord. Wargar has the Warrior MO with a Score of 3, and it's unlikely Wargar learned noble etiquette during his training. Steve suggests many of Wargar's field commanders were probably nobles. He may have picked up some of the proper etiquette by observing their behaviors. The Gamemaster decides to allow it, so Steve adds Wargar's Warrior MO of 3 to the Action Score. The Gamemaster, however, decides this is not something Wargar was specifically trained in, so they declare it is only a Familiarity, which adds a +1 Modifier to the Difficulty Score.

Focuses and Specializations

Your character's MO represents a broad collection of skills, talents, and abilities they have mastered. It is possible, however, to spend extra time perfecting skills in a particular area of study. In Cool Name RPG, we represent this extra training with **Focuses** and **Specializations**.

Focuses

A **Focus** represents extra time spent improving a single area of study related to an MO. For instance, a character with the Warrior MO might have a Focus in Melee Combat, or a character with the Thief MO might have a Focus in Deception. Focuses let you differentiate your character from other characters with the same MO.

Focuses and Action Checks

Whenever one of your character's MOs is added to the Action Score, you may check to see if one of that MO's Focuses applies as well. If it does, you may also add the Focus's Score. You may only add one Focus Score to your Action Score.

Specializations

What if your character already has the Warrior MO with a focus in Melee, but you want the character to be an expert sword master? In other words, the character has training as a Warrior (Warrior MO) and extra training in melee weapons (Melee Focus), but they are at their very best when wielding a long blade. To represent this in the game, you would add the Long Blades **Specialization** to your character's Melee Focus. Where a Focus is a refinement of an MO, a Specialization is a refinement of a Focus.

Specializations and Action Checks

Whenever one of your character's Focuses is added to the Action Score, you may check to see if one of that Focus's Specializations applies as well. If it does, you may also add the Specialization's Score. You may only add one Specialization Score to your Action Score.

Steve's character, Wargar, is making a melee Attack Action against a goblin using his longsword. Wargar's melee attacks using longswords are based on Wargar's Strength Attribute. Wargar has Strength 3, so Steve adds 3 to Wargar's Action Score.

In addition, Wargar has Warrior MO 3, and combat is absolutely an area in which Warriors are trained. Steve adds his Warrior MO 3 to the Action Score.

For his Warrior MO, Wargar has Melee Focus 1. Attacking with a sword is melee combat, so Steve adds his Melee Focus 1 to the Action Score.

Finally, for Wargar's Melee Focus he has Specialization Long Blades 1. Since the sword he is using is considered a long blade, Steve adds 1 more to his Action Score.

Wargar's Action Score for this attack is:

Strength 3 + Warrior MO 3 + Melee Focus 1 + Long Blades Specialization 1
= Action Score 8

List of MOs

The following are classic fantasy MOs you can choose from when creating your character. Each entry includes descriptions of skills and areas of expertise common to characters with this MO. It also describes the types of activities and occupational duties in which a character with this MO has experience. Each entry also includes a list of suggested Focuses, as well as a list of related Specializations for each Focus.

Reading the Entries

Each of the MO entries consist of the following parts:

- **Name:** The name of the MO.
- **Description:** A short description of the skills, talents, experiences, and abilities characters with this MO have or in which they are trained.
- **Suggested Focuses and Specializations:** A list of ideas for Focuses you might wish to select for a character with this MO, and a list of suggested Specializations for each Focus. These are just suggestions. With the Gamemaster's

Focus and Specialization Example

permission, your character could choose Focuses and Specializations not listed here. See **Chapter 12: Character Creation** for more information.

- **Weapons:** These are weapons (in addition to foot, fist, dagger, club, and simple blunt thrown weapons like stones) to which you may add the character's MO Score for Attack Action Scores.
- **Armor:** A list of armor types a character with this MO is trained to use. If the character wears other types of armor they suffer a modifier to Difficulty Scores for Action Checks involving movement.
- **Defenses:** These are the Defenses to which you can add the character's MO Score.
- **Vitality:** This is your character's Dominant Vitality. A character with this MO may add their MO Score to their Action Score when taking Recovery Actions to regain Vitality Points.
- **Spellcaster:** This indicates whether this is a Spellcaster MO. Characters with a Spellcaster MO may add their Spellcaster MO Score to their Spellcasting Action Scores. To have the ability to cast spells, however, the character must also have the Spellcasting Exceptional Ability. Note that See **Chapter 11: Magic and Spellcasting** for more information.
- **Starting Equipment:** A character with this MO begins the game with the equipment listed here. Details about the equipment are found in **Chapter 14: Equipment**.

For additional information about how Weapons, Armor, and Defenses are used in combat, see **Chapter 7: Combat Encounters**.

A Place to Start, Not Limits

The descriptions of the MOs and the suggestions for Focuses and Specializations are starting points for understanding your character and using the character in the game. **They are not limits** to what your character may try or what they know.

For instance, it would be impossible to describe everything the typical Wizard learns during their training; we'd need multiple rulebooks just for the Wizard. Instead, when a situation comes up in the game not covered by the descriptions here, it is up to you and the Gamemaster to decide, "Do most Wizards learn about this during their training?" If you answer "Yes," then you may add your MO to the Action Score.

Anyone Can Try Anything

Remember as well that your character can *try* anything you can imagine, even if it isn't something a character with your MO would have studied. For example, in most fantasy worlds, painting isn't something included in the Warrior MO training. Fine arts tend to get overlooked when training someone to survive on the battlefield. This doesn't mean a Warrior can't try their hand at painting if the need arises. They might even roll exceptionally well, especially if they have a high Creativity Score. The areas covered by your MO only limit what Actions you may add your MO, Focus, and Specialization Scores to. They do not limit what Actions you can try.



Athlete

Athletes are individuals who spend countless hours honing their body to the point of perfection. Whether running, jumping, lifting, climbing, or swimming, they are true masters of the athletic arts. Athletes are not combatants, and they are not trained to kill. The only forms of combat they are skilled at are wrestling and boxing.

Athlete: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Agility	Acrobatics, Balance, Contort, Escape
Coaching	Inspire, Intimidate, Lead, Organize
Endurance	Overcome, Persevere
Power	Lift, Punch, Push, Wrestle
Speed	Climb, Run, Swim, Toss

Athlete: Other Traits

Weapons	Javelin
Armor	None
Defenses	Dodge, Spirit
Vitality	Body
Spellcaster	No

Athlete: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- 5 javelins
- javelin quiver
- dagger
- club
- 20 sp

Bard

Bards are masters of art, music, and the written word. They are talented orators, natural leaders, and fierce opponents in a debate. They regularly find themselves serving as the voice and face of the adventuring party, taking point in the more civilized fields of battle, such as the royal court or the market square.

Bard: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Art	Compose, Paint, Sculpt, Write
Leadership	Command, Discipline, Educate, Inspire
Persuasion	Debate, Haggle, Intimidate, Seduce
Performance	Acting, Instrument, Oration, Singing

Bard: Other Traits

Weapons	Rapier
Armor	Light Armor, Buckler
Defenses	Dodge, Mind
Vitality	Mind
Spellcaster	No

Bard: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- rapier
- lute
- 2 sp, 5 cp

Cleric

Clerics are warrior priests. It is their duty to see that the will of the gods is carried out and obeyed by mortals. They are religious specialists with extensive knowledge of their god and how that god is worshiped. They are trained in the arts of combat, since their duties often take them into hostile territory or place them in situations where they are expected to defend the followers of their god. Clerics can wield magic, giving them access to spells related to the powers and domains of their deity. Finally, they receive training in the healing arts, often serving as battlefield medics.

Cleric: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Defense	Block, Intercept, Protect
Guidance	Advise, Educate, Inspire, Preach
Healing	First Aid, Herbology, Treat Wounds
Religion	Arcana, History, Ritual
Spellcasting	Healing, Protection, Turning

Cleric: Other Traits

Weapons	Mace
Armor	Light Armor, Medium Armor, Shields
Defenses	Dodge, Block, Spirit
Vitality	Spirit
Spellcaster	Yes (Presence)

Cleric: Starting Equipment

- Spellcaster's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- mace
- holy symbol (arcane talisman)
- healer's kit
- 11 sp

Druid

Druids believe there is life in all things, and that a powerful sentient force connects all things together. They are experts on plants, the weather, and the myriad wild creatures which roam the land. They are often called upon to bless crops and livestock, although they are more comfortable in the wilds. Some say they speak to the living planet, and it whispers secrets to them of ancient times long forgotten.

Druid: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Ancient Lore	Foretelling, History, Languages
Communion	Connect, Empathy, Observe, Sense
Nature	Animals, Fertility, Plants, Weather
Spellcasting	Animals, Plants, Stone, Water, Wood
Survival	Forage, Hunt, Track

Druid: Other Traits

Weapons	Staff
Armor	Light Armor
Defenses	Dodge, Spirit
Vitality	Spirit
Spellcaster	Yes (Awareness)

Druid: Starting Equipment

- Spellcaster's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- sickle
- yew rod (arcane talisman)
- 41 sp

Merchant

Merchants travel the countryside, buying and selling goods. They are shrewd negotiators and have an eye for items of value. They are the life blood of towns and cities, and they are experts on how to thrive in these urban trade hubs. Every now and again their hunt for new wares and the next big sale takes them to distant lands, where they easily adapt to strange new people and cultures.

Merchant: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Business	Accounting, Appraisal, Negotiation
Geography	History, Kingdoms, Navigation, Rulers
Socialization	Charm, Deception, Etiquette
Travel	Camping, Packing, Riding, Teamster

Merchant: Other Traits

Weapons	Shortsword
Armor	Light Armor
Defenses	Dodge, Mind
Vitality	Mind
Spellcaster	No

Merchant: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- leather armor
- shortsword
- portable scale and weights
- small leathern chest with a simple lock
- 24 sp

Mountebank

The mountebank's most dangerous weapon is their wit, and their strongest armor is a well-crafted lie. They can talk their way past the gates of a heavily-guarded fortress, out of a deadly trap, or into the good graces of their deadliest enemy. That is not to say that they let their rapiers grow rusty. After all, things tend to get a tad uncomfortable if the mark ever sees through the mountebank's verbal glamour.

Mountebank: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Con	Disguise, Deceive, Misdirect
Retreat	Escape, Hide, Withdraw
Schmoozing	Charm, Flatter, Small Talk
Showmanship	Distract, Orate, Surprise

Mountebank: Other Traits

Weapons	Rapier, Weighted Cape
Armor	Light Armor, Cape
Defenses	Dodge, Spirit
Vitality	Spirit
Spellcaster	No

Mountebank: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- rapier
- disguise kit
- 5 sp

Outlander

An Outlander is at home in all the wild places of the world. Mountain or marsh, forest or fen, the Outlander knows where to find food, water, and shelter in any wild place. They are decent hunters and trappers, skilled in the preparation of herbal remedies, and are fair combatants if forced to fight.

Outlander: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Camping	Build Shelter, Find Water, Start Fires
Hunting	Fish, Forage, Track, Trap
Instincts	Connect, Notice, Observe, Sense Motive
Journey	Improvise, Navigation, Weather
Nature	Animals, Monsters, Plants, Terrain

Outlander: Other Traits

Weapons	Shortbow
Armor	Light Armor, Medium Armor
Defenses	Dodge, Spirit
Vitality	Body
Spellcaster	No

Outlander: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- shortbow
- 25 arrows
- quiver
- dagger
- hunting trap
- fishing pole
- 20 sp

Scholar

Scholars are professional academics. They are the learned keepers of knowledge, versed in everything from history to chemistry. The library is their home, although they pick up a few survival skills in their occasional forays out into the world to obtain first-hand knowledge of their areas of interest. They are poor warriors, and while they know *how* to do many things and can even design new inventions, they often lack the practical skills to execute on their knowledge.

Scholar: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Educator	Convince, Motivate, Orate, Pedagogy
Engineering	Civil, Clockwork, Mechanical, Military
History	Ancient, Local, Social, World
Professional	Cartography, Law, Mercantile, Navigation
Science	Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Research

Scholar: Other Traits

Weapons	—
Armor	—
Defenses	Dodge, Mind, Spirit
Vitality	Mind
Spellcaster	No

Scholar: Starting Equipment

- Spellcaster's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- small blank book
- 2 cp

Sorcerer

Sorcerers harness magic to increase their personal power and to unlock the forbidden secrets of the universe. They believe magical power is their birthright and their destiny, and they are willing to take foolhardy risks to achieve their goals. They are keepers of forbidden knowledge, and experts on the lore of monsters.

Sorcerer: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Arcana	Forbidden Magic, Forgotten Lore, Spells
Dispelling	Counterspell, Dispel, Identify, Ward
Monsters	Demons, Devils, Magical Creatures, Undead
Spellcasting	Curse, Control, Scry, Summon

Sorcerer: Other Traits

Weapons	Staff
Armor	—
Defenses	Dodge, Mind
Vitality	Mind
Spellcaster	Yes (Creativity)

Sorcerer: Starting Equipment

- Spellcaster's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- wand (arcane talisman)
- dagger
- gold ring (8 sp)
- 32 sp

Thief

The thief's goal in life is to get rich by taking wealth from others. Although it is a simple goal, it is one rife with complications—specifically, the original owners of said wealth wanting to keep it. To get around this, thieves are experts at stealth, subterfuge, and infiltration. They have learned to spot, disarm, and set traps as needed. Climbing, squeezing, and balancing play a key role in their work. They can engage in direct combat if needed, but are more suited to hit and run actions.

Thief: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Deception	Bluff, Disguise, Forgery
Larceny	Pick Lock, Pick Pocket, Sleight of Hand
Security	Case Target, Guards, Traps
Stealth	Hide, Shadow, Sneak

Thief: Other Traits

Weapons	Hand Crossbow, Shortsword
Armor	Light Armor
Defenses	Dodge, Mind
Vitality	Body
Spellcaster	No

Thief: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- leather armor
- hand crossbow
- 20 quarrels
- quiver
- dagger
- 2 cp

Tradesperson

A tradesperson is someone who works with their hands. From carpentry to farming, they are the folks who roll up their sleeves, and through their hard work, keep the civilized world turning. They are not as knowledgeable as a scholar, but they learn a decent amount about the subjects of their chosen trade through first-hand experience.

Tradesperson: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Agriculture	Brewing, Husbandry, Farming, Preserving
Crafting	Carpentry, Pottery, Masonry, Tailoring, Weaving
Industry	Lumbering, Mining
Smithing	Armorsmith, Blacksmith, Weaponsmith

Tradesperson: Other Traits

Weapon	Shortsword
Armor	—
Defenses	Dodge, Spirit
Vitality	Spirit
Equipment	<>

Tradesperson: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- shortsword
- leather armor
- tools of their trade
- 2 sp

Warrior

Warriors are trained for one mission—to defeat the enemy in battle! They engage enemies head on, steel against steel. They are skilled in the use of all manner of melee and ranged weapons, from simple clubs to the finest blades to bows and crossbows. Warriors are trained to survive in the field. They can make camp, forage for food, and set up simple defenses. Field medicine is another of their talents, and to ensure their fitness for battle, they train in all manner of athletic activities.

Warrior: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Brawling	Grab, Restrain, Shove, Throw
Command	Inspire, Intimidate, Lead, Organize
Defense	Block, Dodge, Parry
Melee	Clubs, Hafted, Long Blades, Polearms, Short Blades
Ranged	Bows, Crossbows, Thrown Weapons

Warrior: Other Traits

Weapons	All
Armor	All
Defenses	Dodge, Block, Parry
Vitality	Body
Equipment	<>

Warrior: Starting Equipment

- Adventurer's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- leather armor
- shortsword
- medium shield
- dagger
- 8 sp

Wizard

Masters of the arcane arts, wizards are powerful spellcasters and keepers of mystic lore. They are magical scientists, constantly studying the arcane world, hoping to gain an understanding of how the universe works. They have knowledge of magical and magically altered beasts, basic skills in alchemy, and can sense the presence of magic and possibly identify its nature.

Wizard: Suggested Focuses and Specializations

Focuses	Specializations
Alchemy	Potions, Transmutation, Identification, Reagents
Arcana	Astrology, History, Monsters, Spells
Enchanting	Rings, Scrolls, Wands, Weapons
Reasoning	Analysis, Debate, Decipher, Logic
Spellcasting	Air, Earth, Fire, Water

Wizard: Other Traits

Weapons	Staff
Armor	—
Defenses	Dodge, Mind
Vitality	Mind
Spellcaster	Yes (Intelligence)

Wizard: Starting Equipment

- Spellcaster's Package
- Common Clothing Package
- staff (weapon and arcane talisman)
- dagger
- 40 sp

Creating New MOs

If none of the MOs or combination of MOs are right for the character you want to create, you and your Gamemaster can create your own. A good rule of thumb is that an MO should describe an occupation. It represents a package of active, academic, and social skills the character learned during their training and early adventuring career.

Other Traits

Each MO entry includes a list of Other Traits. If you are creating your own MO, here are some things to consider as you select these traits.

MO Weapons

Select one or (at most) two specific weapons a character with your new

MO commonly employs. The weapon you select should be something people in your world automatically think of when they imagine a person with this MO. For instance, if you were creating a classic Swashbuckler MO, you might list Rapier for their weapon. You should only select a class of weapons (like “melee weapons”) or All Weapons if the MO’s primary focus is armed combat.

MO Armor

When people think about a person with this MO, what sort of armor (if any) do they immediately imagine them wearing? A simple leather vest? A full suit of plate armor? Or do people generally imagine this character unarmored? Select a type of Armor appropriate for the MO (None, Light, Medium, or Heavy). You should only select All Armor if the MO’s primary focus is armed combat and people with this MO wear a wide variety of armors.

MO Defenses

Each MO lists two Defenses they are allowed to add to their MO Score to. This represents the Defenses in which a person with this MO would have received intense training. Every MO may add their MO Score to

their Dodge Defense. Select one other Defense (Block, Parry, Mind, or Spirit) to which a character with this MO may add to their MO Score.

MO Vitality

The Vitality field lists the type of Recovery Action a character may add their MO Score to when determining the Action Score for a Recovery Action. Select a type of

Vitality (Body, Mind, or Spirit) that aligns most closely with the MOs training and background.

Spellcaster

This indicates whether a character with this MO is considered a Spellcaster when using the rules provided in **Chapter 11: Magic and Spellcasting**.

This should only be set to Yes if the MO performs

most of their Actions in the game using magic. Wizards and Sorcerers are classic examples of MOs that are considered Spellcasters. Classic MOs like Paladin or Bard, both of which use spells in many fantasy RPGs, are not Spellcasters since magic is simply a tool and not their primary mode of operation. In addition, only Spellcaster MOs should be allowed to select Spellcasting as a Focus.

MO Equipment

This is a set of equipment with which characters with this MO start the game. To build out your equipment pack, just purchase the appropriate gear using the character creation rules for Purchasing Equipment provided in **Chapter 12: Character Creation**.

Creating New Focuses and Specializations

The Focuses and Specializations listed for each MO in this chapter are labeled as “suggested.” These are common examples you might want to consider for a character with that MO, but they are not an exhaustive list. We expect many players and Gamemasters will

FOCUS ON THE FUN

When creating your own MO, focus on the fun. What we mean by this is creating MOs, Focuses, and Specializations is more of an art than a science. In the end it comes down to what type of game *you* want to play. If you want a world where every character is a Spellcaster, make every MO a Spellcaster! If you want a world where wizards wear armor, create that world. As long as you are creating the world and game you want to play, there are no wrong answers when creating your own MOs, Focuses, and Specializations.

want to add their own Focuses and Specializations, both for the MOs provided here and for MOs they create.

A good rule of thumb for adding Focuses and Specializations is to say the following and see if it rings true:

“All <MO name> can <insert the Focus or Specialization you came up with>.”

If the statement makes sense within the context of your game world, then it is probably a great new Focus or Specialization. If it does not make sense, it should probably be part of a different or new MO.

Also, remember that just because you decide a character should not take a particular Focus or Specialization, it does not mean they cannot try those sorts of Actions. They might even have a bit of experience in whatever it is they want to try. All it

means is they cannot add a Focus or Specialization Score to Action Checks of that type.

New Focus Example

Jeff tells the Gamemaster he wants to add a Healing Focus to his character’s Thief MO. The Gamemaster tests this idea by saying, “All thieves can heal you.” The Gamemaster decides this does not make sense for the campaign world in which they’re playing. The Gamemaster tells Jeff adding Healing to the Thief MO doesn’t fit the world, and he’ll have to choose a different Focus. Jeff can still attempt to perform healing Actions in the game, but he won’t get the advantage of a Focus Score he can add to healing Action Scores.



Chapter 5: Action Types

In Cool Name RPG, you may attempt any Action you can dream up. Want to swing across the room by the chandelier? You can do it! Want to throw sand in your enemy's eyes so it is harder for them to hit you? You can do that too!

Some Actions just add to the story, such as describing how your character sweeps dramatically into the tavern. Other times, you will want to create a specific game effect with your Action. For instance, maybe sweeping dramatically into the tavern is not only cool, but is also intended to impress the locals and make it easier for you to succeed at future Action Checks when you ask them to aid you in your quest.

In this chapter, we provide a list of Actions you can use to achieve the most commonly desired game effects. Whether you want to increase an Action Score, slow an escalating Challenge, reduce Challenge Points, or create a positive modifier for a friend, the Actions described here will help you achieve your goal and help the Gamemaster to adjudicate your actions.

Although the descriptions of the Actions assume you are making an Action Check, it is still up to the Gamemaster to determine if an Action Check is necessary and whether you need to roll or just compare Scores.

A final note: we do not expect you to pick from this list each time you take an action. The list is just to help you understand how to use the rules to get different game effects. You should always start by describing the cool thing your character is doing and what you want to accomplish, and *then* reference the Actions described here to help you use the rules to make it happen.

Action List

Listed below are the most common types of Actions and their associated game effects, followed by detailed descriptions of each Action.

- **Advance the Story:** Reduce a non-combat Challenge's Challenge Points.

- **Aid:** Add a +1 modifier to the Action Score for you or an ally.
- **Assist:** Increase the Action Score for you or an ally.
- **Attack:** Reduce an enemy's Challenge Points in combat.
- **Clear:** Counteract a modifier to the Difficulty Score.
- **Deescalate:** Reduce the amount by which an Escalating Challenge increases.
- **Delay:** Delay your Turn until a point in the Round of your choosing.
- **Initiative:** Reroll your character's Initiative.
- **Interact:** Perform an Action not covered by the other Action Types.
- **Obstruct:** Add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score for an opponent's Action Check.
- **Ready:** Take a specific Action when a specific event occurs, even if it is not your Turn.
- **Recovery:** Recover Vitality Points.
- **Slow:** Make character and NPC movement require a Major Action.
- **Withdraw:** Withdraw from the Encounter.

Describing Your Actions

When you declare your Action, it is important to offer as much detail as possible. Simply stating, "I'm performing an Advance Action to reduce the Challenge Score," does not give the Gamemaster much to work with in terms of determining a Difficulty Score or understanding how the Action changes the story. It's also pretty dull compared to boldly stating, "I grab the rope, swing across the room, and kick the trap's trigger as I pass, causing the goblins to fall into the pit!"

Describe the Action you want to take in detail. Explain what you are doing, how you are doing it, what outcome you want to achieve, and anything you are using to get the job done. Get creative! Use the Gamemaster's description of the environment or even add details of your own. A great description is a surefire way to convince the Gamemaster to approve your

Action. You might even earn a few positive modifiers to your Action Score.

Action Descriptions

The following are detailed descriptions of each Action Type. Each description includes the following details:

- Action Type Name
- **Difficulty Score:** What Score to use as the Difficulty Score. “Gamemaster sets” means the Gamemaster uses the normal rules for setting Difficulty Scores as described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges**.
- **Target:** The person or thing that is impacted by the Action’s effects.
- **Result:** A summary of the game effect in the event of a successful Action Check.
- **Description:** A detailed description of how to use the rules to execute this type of Action.
- **Example:** An example of this Action being used in the game.

Advance the Story

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets

Target: A non-combat Challenge

Result: Reduce the target’s Challenge Points by the Effect

A successful Advance the Story reduces a Challenge’s Challenge Points by the Effect. If the Challenge does not have Challenge Points, a successful Advance the Story overcomes the Challenge. The description of your character’s Advance the Story must involve activities that work to directly overcome the Challenge.

Advance the Story Example

With the storm swiftly approaching their tiny vessel, the heroes need to take quick action if they hope to survive the storm. The Gamemaster decides this is an 8 Challenge Point Challenge.

CHALLENGE: Survive the Storm CP 8

*Jess declares that their character, Halvik of Greensol, will climb up and use their knot tying skills to close haul the sails, ensuring they will not come loose in the wind. The Gamemaster decides a **novice** Sailor would have a reasonably good chance of success at this task under normal conditions, so he begins with Difficulty Score 3. In addition, he adds modifiers for the lashing rain, roaring wind, and rolling seas.*

ACTION: Close Haul the Sails DS 6

With Action Score 6, Jess rolls 2d6 and gets Effect 4. The Gamemaster reduces the CP to 4.

CHALLENGE: Survive the Storm CP 4

Aid

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets

Target: One Challenge

Result: Create a situation that adds a +1 modifier to Action Scores related to the Challenge

A successful Aid creates a beneficial condition that adds a +1 modifier to Actions made to overcome a specific Challenge. The Action you use to Aid must be related to the Challenge. The Aid remains in place until the start of your next Turn.

With the Gamemaster's permission, you may maintain the Aid each Round using a Major Action without a need to make additional Action Checks. The Gamemaster may also rule an Aid remains in effect for multiple Rounds or even permanently, depending on the nature of the Aid.

The advantage of Aid over Assist is that the Difficulty Score to perform an Aid is typically much lower than for an Assist. In addition, an Aid benefits everyone who performs the aided Action, where Assist only benefits a single target.

Aid Example

Altiss is struggling to repair the complicated gearworked device that controlled the portcullis. Chris announces that Eldar is grabbing the ancient dwarven manual of mechanical designs and will use it to help Altiss by offering guidance from the book. It's a fairly large book, making it somewhat difficult to find useful information (DS 4), but Chris rolls and succeeds! The Gamemaster tells Beth she may now add a +1 modifier to her Action Score for the repairs to represent Eldar's Aid.

Assist

Difficulty Score: The current value of the Action Score you want to improve

Target: One Score

Result: Increase the target's Action Score by the Effect

On a successful Assist, add your Effect to the target Action Score. You must declare the target of the Assist before you make your Action Check.

The Assist you describe must be directly related to the Action Score you are improving. The Assist remains in place until an Action Check is made using the improved Action Score or until the start of your next Turn. You can repeat the Assist each Round, but you must make a new Action Check. An Assist cannot be maintained.

With the Gamemaster's permission, multiple characters can Assist the same Action Score on the same Round, but characters after the first must use the new, improved Action Score as their Difficulty Score for their Action Check.

In some cases, the Gamemaster may allow you to perform multiple Assists over multiple Rounds to repeatedly improve the same Action Score before the Action Check is made, but the Difficulty Score for each additional Assist increases to the new, improved Action Score on each subsequent attempt. Any failed Action Check causes a loss of all benefits gained prior to that roll.

Assist Example

The Dread Knight of Arcus, wearing a full suit of black mail, charges the heroes. Jeff's character, Spyder, doubts his daggers will help overly much, so instead Jeff says Spyder will leap up onto the Knight's back and try to pull on his gorget, exposing the Knight's neck and assisting Wargar's attack.

Wargar's Attack Action Score is 7, so the Difficulty Score for Spyder to Assist is 7. Spyder rolls a 9, which is Effect 2. Wargar adds the Effect to his Attack Action Score, giving him a new Attack Action Score of 9.

Attack

Difficulty Score: Target Defense Score

Target: An enemy combatant

Result: Reduce the Challenge Points or Vitality of an enemy in combat by the Effect

A successful Attack reduces the Challenge Points or Vitality of an opponent by the Effect of the Attack. The Difficulty Score for an Attack is one of the target's Defense Scores. Use the Defense Score that matches the type of Attack you are making. For example, if you are trying to frighten an enemy with a Presence Action Check, the Target's Spirit Defense would serve as the Difficulty Score.

Detailed rules for using the Attack Action are found in **Chapter 7: Combat Encounters**.

Attack Example

*Wargar swings his mighty battleaxe at the Dread Knight! Wargar's Action Score is 9 so Wargar's player, Steve, rolls $d6 + d12$. The Dread Knight has Body Defense 6, so the Difficulty Score for the Attack is 6. Steve rolls a 16 giving him Effect 10! Subtracting the Dread Knight's **Armor (Body)** 2, the final Effect is 8. The Dread Knight's Challenge Points are reduced by 8.*

Clear

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets

Target: One Difficulty Score modifier

Result: Remove a modifier to the Difficulty Score

A successful Clear, counters a negative condition and removes the associated +1 modifier from the Difficulty Score for anyone attempting to overcome that Challenge. The Action you describe to Clear the modifier must be related to the negative condition it is countering. The Clear remains in place until the start of your next Turn.

With the Gamemaster's permission, you may maintain the Clear each Round using a Major Action. The Gamemaster may also rule the Clear remains in effect for multiple Rounds or even permanently, depending on the nature of the Action.

Clear Example

"I can't see a thing in this dark. I'll be lucky if I don't spring the trap on myself," Altiss complained as she attempted to disarm the complicated mechanism.

ACTION: Disarm the Trap DS 7 (6 + 1 for dim light)

Wargar grabbed a torch from a wall sconce and ran over to Altiss' side. "Here little one," he said. "This should help." The Gamemaster decides no Action Check is necessary for this Action and bringing the torch closer counters the dim light modifier.

ACTION: Disarm the Trap DS 6

Deescalate

Difficulty Score: The amount of the escalation

Target: One Escalating Challenge

Result: Reduce the amount of escalation by the Effect

A successful Deescalate reduces the number of Challenge Points by which an Escalating Challenge increases at the end of the Round by an amount equal to the Effect

The Action you describe must be directly related to whatever is causing the Escalation. The Deescalate lasts until the start of your next Turn. You may repeat the same Action each Round but must make a new Action Check. If the Gamemaster agrees, more than one character may perform a Deescalate Action against the same Escalation.

Wargar, Steve's character, isn't much of a locksmith, but maybe he can slow the water down. Steve declares that Wargar grabs one of the nearby tables and slams it against the hull to block the hole as a Deescalate Action. Wargar rolls his Action Dice and gets Effect 4, reducing the +4 escalation to zero—as long as he can hold the table that is.

"Work fast!" Wargar shouts.

Deescalate Example

The party, who are shackled together in the hold of a pirate ship, thought things couldn't get any worse—until the Gamemaster tells them the storm has driven their ship onto the reef and torn a gash in the side of the vessel. The hole is right where they are all chained, and the ship is rapidly taking on water. The Gamemaster considers their situation and assigns 4 Challenge Points to the Challenge of Don't Drown. In addition, this is an Escalating Challenge, and the rising water adds +4 Challenge Points at the end of each Turn.

CHALLENGE: Don't Drown CP 4 (+4)

*Altiss was already working to pick the lock on their shackles, but with seawater gushing in, suddenly her work takes on new urgency. The locks would require the skills of a **skilled** locksmith to pick, so the Difficulty Score is 6. The Gamemaster also declares that the water rushing in and Altiss' makeshift lockpicks both modify the Difficulty Score.*

ACTION: Pick the Lock DS 8 (6 + 1 Rushing Water + 1 Makeshift Lockpicks)

CP 4 isn't that big of a Challenge, but the DS is high enough Beth worries Altiss won't manage to reduce the CP by more than a point or two each Round. "I'll never get us out fast enough," she shouts.

Delay

Difficulty Score: NA

Target: NA

Result: Take your Turn at a time of your choosing later in the Round

On your character's Turn, you may declare a Delay. With a Delay, your character may take their Turn later in the Round at a time of your choosing.

When ready to act, announce that your character is taking their delayed Turn. Your character may take their Turn immediately *after* any other characters or NPCs acting on that Initiative Turn.

Performing a Delay does not change your character's Initiative. If the Delay is held over until the next Round, your character may take their delayed Turn at any time in the new Round, but the delayed Turn counts as your character's Turn for that Round.

Delay Example

Thanks to the thick fog blanketing the battlefield, Wargar doesn't know where the enemy is, what sort of enemy he is fighting, or whether the enemy is there at all. When Wargar's Turn comes up on Initiative 6, Wargar's player, Steve, decides Wargar is going to Delay his Turn until he figures out what he is up against.

On Initiative 3, eight goblins come charging out of the fog. Steve announces that Wargar is taking his Delayed Turn to attack the goblins. Wargar can't take his Turn until after the three goblins take their Turn, but it's a better outcome than wasting his Turn on something less useful earlier in the Round.

Interact

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets

Target: Varies

Result: The character achieves the outcome they desire

Interact includes any outcomes not covered by other Action Types. Repositioning, pulling gear from a pack, or drinking a potion are all examples of Interacts.

Describe the Action you want your character to take and detail the outcome you want to achieve. The Gamemaster will determine if an Action Check is required and provide an appropriate Difficulty Score.

Interact Example

As her companions fought valiantly against the massive troll, Aria pulled a pair of healing potions from her pack. The party was holding their own, but she had a feeling they would need these potions before the battle's end.

Initiative

Difficulty Score: No Difficulty Score

Target: You

Result: Reroll your character's Initiative

When a character takes the Initiative Action, they reposition themselves in the hopes of getting a better Initiative in future Rounds. The character may take no other actions (Major or Minor) on their Turn. Whatever you roll, even if it is lower than the character's original Initiative, becomes the character's new Initiative for the rest of the combat, starting on the next round. You may perform this Action as many times as you like during the Encounter.

Initiative Example

On his Turn Steve declares that Wargar is going to try to reposition, size up the enemy strategy, and improve his rather miserable Initiative of 2. Wargar rolls again and this time he gets a 14. For the rest of the Encounter, starting next Round, Wargar will take his Turn on Initiative 14.

Obstruct

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets

Target: One Difficulty Score

Result: Create a situation that adds +1 modifier to a Difficulty Score

A successful Obstruct creates a complicating condition that adds a +1 modifier to a Difficulty Score. The Action you describe must be related to the Difficulty Score you are targeting. Unless the Gamemaster rules otherwise, the obstruction only lasts until the start of your next Turn, but it applies to all Action Checks made against the Difficulty Score you obstructed.

With the Gamemaster's permission, you may use a Major Action to maintain the Obstruct each Round without a need to make additional Action Checks. The Gamemaster may also rule an Obstruct remains in effect for multiple Rounds or even permanently, depending on the Action you described.

Obstruct Example

The party slams the door and drops the door bar into place. Looking around the room, Wargar spots a dresser against one of the walls. Throwing his muscle behind it he shoves it across the room and up against the door.

"That should slow them down," he says.

The Gamemaster agrees and rules that no Action Check is necessary to perform this Obstruct. The Gamemaster adds a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score for anyone that tries to knock down the door.

Ready

Difficulty Score: As per the declared Action

Target: As per the declared Action

Result: Interrupt the Turn of another character or NPC to perform the declared Action

On your Turn, as a Minor Action, you may Ready a Major Action. When you Ready an Action, you declare a **specific Major Action** you will take if a **specific event** occurs. If the event occurs, you may immediately take the Action, interrupting other characters and NPCs.

Using the Action does not change your Initiative. If the event does not occur that Round, you may hold the readied Action over to the following Round. When you do take the readied Action, it counts as your Turn for *that* Round. Once you take (or drop) the readied Action, you may act normally on your previously rolled Initiative during the *next* round.

If the declared event never occurs, or if you choose not to use the specified Action, you lose your Action for that Round.

Ready Example

On Spyder's Turn on Initiative 8, Jeff uses a Minor Action to declare Spyder is taking a Ready Action. The event and Action he describes are, "If an enemy enters the cavern, I shoot them with my crossbow."

On Initiative 7, Wargar comes running into the cavern. Wargar is not an enemy and Spyder does not want to shoot his teammate, so he continues to hold his readied Action.

On Initiative 4, a Bandit comes creeping into the cavern. As soon as the Bandit shows his face, Spyder takes his readied Action, interrupts the Bandit's Turn, and shoots!

Recovery

Difficulty Score: The target's total number of Wounds

Target: You or an ally

Result: Increase target's Vitality by the Effect up to their maximum

A successful Recovery restores lost Vitality Points. When you perform a Recovery, you must choose which Vitality Score you wish to restore: Body, Mind, or Spirit.

The Difficulty Score is equal to the target's *total* number of Wounds.

**Body Wounds + Mind Wounds + Spirit Wounds =
Difficulty Score**

You may attempt to recover your own Vitality Points by simply "catching your breath." This represents mentally pushing away the pain, steeling your resolve, shoving that dislocated joint back into place, or just taking a quick rest.

The Primary Attribute used to determine your Action Score is based on the type of Vitality you are recovering.

Body Vitality Points = Toughness

Mind Vitality Points = Willpower

Spirit Vitality Points = Resilience

If the Vitality type you are recovering is the Dominant Vitality for one of your MOs, you may add that MO's Score to your Action Score.

You may also use a Recovery Action to help an ally recover Vitality Points. This type of Recovery is also referred to as First Aid. You and the Gamemaster choose the Primary Attribute for the Action Score based on how you describe your Action and the type of Vitality you want them to recover.

For instance, if you are bandaging your ally's injuries to help them recover Body Vitality Points, the Gamemaster may decide this is an Intellect Action Check. If, on the other hand, you are giving your ally a pep-talk to help them recover Spirit Vitality Points, the Gamemaster may decide it is a Persuasion Action Check. It is up to you and the Gamemaster to decide if any of your MOs, Focuses, or Specializations should be added to the

Action Score. If the Gamemaster allows, you may perform First Aid on yourself.

On a success, the target regains Vitality Points of the chosen type equal to the Effect. A character's Vitality Points may not exceed their maximum.

Additional rules for first aid and recovery are found in **Chapter 8: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing**

Recovery Example

Steve's character, Wargar, finishes off the giant rat he is fighting, but there are still four giant rats remaining. Wargar's Body Vitality Points are down to 2, so Steve decides Wargar better take a Recovery if he wants to stay in the fight. While his teammates continue the battle, Wargar ducks behind a pile of barrels and tries to catch his breath.

Wargar has 1 Body Wound and no Mind or Spirit Wounds, so his Difficulty Score for the Recovery is DS 1. Wargar is recovering Body Vitality, so he uses his Toughness 3 to determine the Action Score. As a Warrior he may also add his Warrior MO Score of 3 to the Recovery Action Score for a total of AS 6.

ACTION: Body Recovery DS 1

He rolls 2d6 and gets 5 which is Effect 4. Steve increases Wargar's Body Vitality Points back up to 6. Time to hunt some more rats!

Slow

Difficulty Score: Target Body Defense or GM sets

Target: A character, NPC, or area

Result: Require a Major Action to cross the space

A successful Slow Action Check changes movement Actions for the Target or within the Target area from a Minor Action to a Major Action. Examples of Slow Actions include knocking a shelf full of boxes into the enemy's path, dumping a barrel of sand on an enemy, or flooding an area with knee deep water.

When the Target is an individual, the Difficulty Score is the opponent's Body Defense. In these cases, the Action involves tangling up, blocking, or performing some other Action that only affects the Target. The only way for the Target to overcome the Slow is to take a Major Action to clear or move out of the cause of the Slow.

When the Target is an area, the Difficulty Score is set by the Gamemaster as described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges**. The Difficulty Score will depend on your description of the Slow condition you want to create. Depending on the cause of the Slow, the Gamemaster may allow an Action Check to eliminate it.

The Gamemaster decides if the Slow effect lasts one Round, remains until cleared, or is permanent, as well as the Difficulty Score to clear it if allowed depending on how the character accomplished their Slow Action. Some Slow Actions may also apply to allies (like flooding a room.)

Slow Example

*The orcs are advancing down the hall toward the party, firing arrows at the heroes every Round. Spotting a vat of cooking oil, Altiss grabs it and throws it across the hall, hoping the now slippery floor will slow their opponents. The Gamemaster decides any **Unskilled** person would have a good chance of properly covering the floor with cooking oil. The orcs will need to use a Major Action to cross the oil, which will keep them from firing arrows for a Round at least.*

ACTION: Slow with Slippery Floor DS 2

Withdraw

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets or Enemy Attack Score

Target: Special

Result: Your character is removed from the Encounter

There are times where discretion is the better part of valor. To put it another way, sometimes you need to run. Most of the time you will not need to make an Action Check to Withdraw from an Encounter, but if your opponents want to prevent you from leaving or if they plan to pursue, the Gamemaster may decide an Action Check is appropriate.

Depending on the nature of the Encounter, the Difficulty Score could be a number set by the Gamemaster to reflect the complexity of extracting oneself from the situation, or it might be a Resisted Action, where the Difficulty Score might be the Attack Score of an enemy, an opponent's Mind Score, or even an Opposed Roll.

On a success, your character is removed from the Encounter to a place of relative safety. Your character will remain "offscreen" until the other characters overcome the Encounter's Challenges or they all Withdraw.

If all the characters Withdraw before the Challenges are overcome, you have failed to accomplish the goals of the Encounter. Typically, there are consequences for failure, and your Gamemaster will inform you of the cost.

Withdraw Example

Eldar felt the blade cut deep into his leg. Another hit, and he knew he'd be meeting the ancestors.

"Get out of here, wizard! There is nothing more you can do," shouted Wargar.

Eldar is frustrated but nods in agreement. Eldar's player, Chris, announces that Eldar is going to distract the enemy with a flash of magical light to cover his escape. The Bandit King has sworn to kill all the heroes, and he is going to try to stop Eldar from getting away. The Gamemaster declares the Difficulty Score is the Bandit

King's Attack Score of 7. Eldar prepares to cast his spell and hopes to the Gods he gets a 7 or higher!

Stunts

One of the only restrictions on what Actions you may choose is the **Reasonably Possible Rule**. This rule states that your Action and the desired outcome must be Reasonably Possible under the current circumstances. It is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine whether an Action meets this requirement, and if the Action could be performed in the real world with a reasonable chance of success, it is Reasonably Possible. This does not mean the task is easy for your character or that you will succeed—it just means it is reasonable and possible.

Cinematically Possible

But wait! Cool Name RPG is a game where you tell action-adventure stories like you see in books, shows, video games, and movies. Characters in those stories regularly do things where they achieve wildly unlikely outcomes. Their actions are still bound loosely by the limits of the world and their environment, but they achieve things that, if not impossible, are highly improbable. A few examples include:

- A thrown lantern breaks on the floor and explodes into a ball of fire.
- The character falls from a four-story building, but a merchant's tent breaks their fall and they emerge unharmed.
- A thief picks a complex lock using nothing but a rat bone, a sewing needle, and a rusty nail.

We call these **Cinematically Possible Actions**. In Cool Name RPG, whenever you want to try a Cinematically Possible Action, you must perform a **Stunt**.

Performing Stunts

Stunts are just highly cinematic Actions. They follow all the rules described in this chapter and in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges**. The only exception is that if the Action Check for a Stunt fails, your character loses Vitality Points equal to the amount you rolled under the Difficulty Score. This loss of Vitality Points represents your character pushing the bounds of what is normally possible, and if they fail, they pay a cost for the additional effort put into the Action.

Vaguely Plausible Conditions

Unlike a normal Action, which requires reasonable tools and conditions (even if these tools and conditions are substandard), when you want to try a Stunt all you need is a situation that makes your desired Action and outcome vaguely plausible, if highly improbable.

Be creative and proactive! Don't wait for the Gamemaster to describe something that supports your Stunt; offer creative ideas. Instead of asking, "What do I see in the room?" try a question like, "Since this is a kitchen, I look around for a nice, big, heavy serving platter I can use to fashion into an axe head. Do I see anything like that?" This adds to the story and makes the Gamemaster more likely to agree to your Stunt.

One final word of advice: when asking your questions, always say *why* you are looking for a thing. If you say "Any serving platters here?" the Gamemaster might say, "Nope. No serving platters," and accidentally shut down your idea. If you make clear the reason you are looking for a thing, however, the Gamemaster is more likely to say "Yes" or at the very least, they might be able to offer a suitable alternative. "No serving platters, but there *is* that giant cast iron pot lid."

Vaguely Plausible Conditions Example

Wargar lost his battle axe and is trapped in the castle's kitchen. He looks around to see if he can assemble a new weapon from what he has available. Steve declares that Wargar wants to use the bread oven as a forge and the kitchen utensils as tools. His plan is to hammer together a new axe from a large serving platter and the leg torn from one of the big oak chairs.

Cornered on the rooftop by the King's Guard, Spyder seems to be out of places to run. From the tower where he is standing, he can see the moat a short distance away, but it's not directly below him. There is no reasonable way he could reach it. Jeff asks if the roof has a lightning rod, and the Gamemaster confirms it does. Spyder grabs the rod, pulls it back with all his strength, and ties it to the crenellations with a bit of rope. Climbing on top of the rod, he slices the rope with

his knife and the rod springs back up, sending Spyder flying off toward the moat!

The advancing gang of orcs stand between Altiss and her exit. There is no obvious way past them, but she's small and they're big so there must be something she can do. Suddenly, she remembers the tub of bacon grease she keeps in her bag. Rubbing it all over her shield, she runs forward and leaps on it like a sled. With a woosh, she slides between the legs of the orcs and is now on the other side! She's not out of this yet, but at least she has a chance!

Difficulty Score

When setting Difficulty Scores, the Gamemaster should set them as if the Stunt were a normal Reasonably Possible Action. The additional cost of a stunt is already accounted for in the potential for Vitality loss. The Gamemaster may still modify the Difficulty Score for the usual reasons. Modifiers for inappropriate tools, adverse conditions, and similar problems still apply.

Vitality Loss Type

The type of Vitality Points you lose on a failed roll is the same Type as the group of the Primary Attribute used for the Action Check. For instance, if the Stunt's Action Check used Strength, a failed roll would reduce Body Vitality Points. If the Action Check used Intellect, you lose Mind Vitality Points.

Wounds

If your Vitality Points are reduced to zero by a failed Stunt Action Check, you suffer a Wound normally. See

Chapter 8: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing for more information.

Stunt Examples

Wargar is battling three bandits. He doesn't like the idea of being surrounded, so he wants to make a sweeping attack with the flat of his axe that hits all three bandits, one after the other, and sends them flying backwards. To put it another way, he wants to use a Shove Action on all three at once. The Gamemaster decides this is going to require a Stunt. He sets the Difficulty Score to the Defense Score of the bandit with the highest Score, and he decides to add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score for each additional bandit. The final Difficulty Score is 8. Wargar makes his normal Attack Action Check. If he rolls an 8 or higher, he pulls off the Stunt and sends all three bandits flying. Unfortunately, Wargar gets a 5. The Gamemaster explains that Wargar over-extended his shoulder trying to make the wide strike. He missed by 3 so he loses 3 Body Vitality Points. Ah, well. It was worth a try!

Dysart is hiding from a bounty hunter in the changing room at the theater. He is horrified to discover there is no back door, and the bounty hunter will be there any moment. Dysart wants to put together a disguise to fool the bounty hunter. There are plenty of items in the dressing room to make a disguise with, but not nearly enough time to do it properly. The Gamemaster declares that Dysart may still try to throw together a passable disguise by snatching up whatever items are nearby, but it will require a Stunt. After all, assembling a decent disguise in six seconds by grabbing random items is pretty improbable.

Chapter 6: Encounters

Cool Name RPG Adventures consist of a series of interconnected **Encounters**. Encounters are like the scenes in a movie or the chapters in a book. Each Encounter is a discrete moment in the story with clear objectives, obstacles, and rewards.

Encounter Types

An Encounter can tell any sort of story you like, but there are three main types of Encounters in the Cool Name RPG Core Rules: Action, Combat, and Social.

Action Encounters

In an Action Encounter, your character runs, jumps, and swings their way through the world to overcome the Challenges presented by the Gamemaster. Examples of Action Encounters include making your way through a tomb riddled with traps to reach the treasure chamber, sneaking into a well-defended stronghold, or sailing a ship through a terrible storm.

An Action Encounter might have one large Challenge or a series of smaller Challenges. You may face the Challenges all at once, or one at a time. When you overcome all the Challenges in the Encounter, you are victorious.

Combat Encounters

In a Combat Encounter, the primary activity is combat. These are the scenes where your characters battle the goblins who are attacking the village, defeat the horrific troll that has been eating local shepherds, or go blade to blade with the bandits that will not let anyone use an important bridge without paying an exorbitant toll. Usually, each enemy in a Combat Encounter has their own Challenge Points, and you achieve victory when you reduce the last combatant's Challenge Points to zero.

Social Encounters

Social Encounters are scenes that focus on your character's interactions with the people who inhabit the game world. Examples of Social encounters include negotiating a peace treaty between the armies of the

King and his rebellious son, conning your way into the posh neighborhoods of the noble quarter, or even participating in a heated bargaining match with a local merchant. Like Action Encounters, a Social Encounter might have a single large Challenge or a series of smaller Challenges.

Additional rules for each of the three Encounter Types are provided in **Chapter 9: Action Encounters**, **Chapter 7: Combat Encounters**, and **Chapter 10: Social Encounters**.

Rounds and Turns

For most Encounters, time is tracked using Rounds. In one **Round**, each character (a hero controlled by a player) and NPC (a person or creature controlled by the Gamemaster) gets one **Turn** to act. The characters and NPCs take their Turns in the order of their **Initiative**, with the highest Initiative going first, the next highest second, and so forth. Turns and Initiative are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Length of a Round

The length of a Round in game time (that is to say, the length as perceived by your characters) is up to the Gamemaster and depends greatly on what is happening in the Encounter. Combat Encounter Rounds are usually very short, lasting around six seconds per Round. This is because combat is fast and furious, and it is important to track and play out every little change on the battlefield.

For other Encounter Types, each Round might last a minute, an hour, or even a few hours per Round. The Gamemaster will let you know how long a Round is at the beginning of the Encounter.

One thing to keep in mind is that the Cool Name RPG rules are not meant to serve as a mechanism for action simulations, but rather to help you and your friends tell an incredible action-adventure story. The length of the Round is just there to give you a rough sense of what your character can accomplish each Round, not to precisely track the passage of time.

Encounters without Rounds

You don't need to use Rounds for every Encounter, and some Encounters work better when you don't. When you're playing an Encounter without Rounds, players describe what their characters do and the Gamemaster describes the outcomes. Challenges are addressed as they arise, Action Checks are made when and if they are needed, and the players decide when and how their characters act. The story unfolds in a freeform back-and-forth conversation between the Gamemaster and the players. You might also choose to use Rounds for one part of an Encounter but not for another.

Like Action Checks, only use Rounds when they add to the game.

When to Use Rounds

Here are a few reasons you might want to use Rounds:

- To make sure none of the players are getting left out.
- The characters have a limited amount of time to overcome the Challenges.
- The order of the player and NPC Actions has a significant impact on the game
- The Encounter consists primarily of Combat.

Encounter Structure

Every Encounter, regardless of type, has the same structure. What follows is a high-level overview showing the structure of Encounters followed by detailed descriptions of each part.

Encounter Overview

1. **Set the Stage:** The Gamemaster describes where the Encounter takes place, tells the players what NPCs are present, identifies the Challenges (at least those the characters are aware of,) and explains the overall goal of the Encounter.
2. **Declare Starting Positions:** The players describe where their characters are when the Encounter begins, what they are doing, and what gear they are carrying. The Gamemaster lets the players know the location of important NPCs.

3. **Determine Initiative:** The players make Initiative Action Checks for their characters and the Gamemaster determines Initiative for the NPCs.
4. **Round Begins:** At the beginning of the Round, the Gamemaster tells the players the Round length or informs them if the Round length is changing.
5. **Taking Turns:** Each character and NPC participating in the Encounter get a Turn to perform one Minor Action and one Major Action. The participants act in the order of their Initiative with the highest Initiative going first.
6. **Round Ends:** The Round ends once every character and NPC have taken a Turn.
7. **Check for Victory:** If the characters have overcome (or been defeated by) all the Challenges, the Encounter ends. Otherwise, continue to Step 8.
8. **Escalating Challenge Points Increase:** If the Encounter has any Escalating Challenges, the Gamemaster increases their Challenge Points
9. **Trigger Events:** The Gamemaster checks the Encounter's description to see if any events are triggered.
10. **End of Round Trigger Events:** Any End of Round events take place.
11. **Repeat:** Go to Step 4 and repeat until the characters have overcome all the Challenges, all withdrawn from the Encounter, or are all defeated.

Step 1: Set the Stage

At the beginning of the Encounter, the Gamemaster sets the stage. To set the stage, the Gamemaster provides a detailed description of the location, describes any NPCs that are present and what they are doing, and identifies possible threats. The Gamemaster's description both identifies key game elements and brings the world to life for the players.

The Gamemaster does not need to describe everything, but they do need to provide enough information that the players can easily choose relevant Actions for their characters. Examples of details the Gamemaster might want to provide include the time of day, the weather (especially if the Encounter takes place outdoors), what objects are nearby, notable sounds or smells, and the appearance of key NPCs.

The players may ask the Gamemaster to provide more information about a certain element of the scene, such as an NPC's demeanor or details about a particular object. If this goes on for too long, or if discovering the details is the purpose of the Encounter, the Gamemaster may choose to start the Encounter, at which point the characters will take Actions to gather additional information.

The Gamemaster should also describe any obvious Challenges and explain the Encounter's objectives.

Step 2: Declare Starting Positions

The players decide where their characters are at the start of the Encounter, what they are doing, and make decisions about what equipment they have at the ready. For many Encounters, the players make this choice, but in some cases, the Encounter dictates where the characters are when the Encounter begins or even what equipment they have available. The Gamemaster also describes where NPCs are located as well as any important equipment the NPCs have.

Step 3: Determine Initiative

Each player makes an Initiative Action Check for their character. The Action Score for this Action Check is the character's Initiative Score. Find the appropriate Action Dice and roll. The Initiative Action Check is Difficulty Score 0, although modifiers may apply. The Effect is the character's Initiative for the Encounter.

The Initiative for NPCs and monsters is already listed in their statblocks. No dice are rolled. It is helpful to write down a list of the participants and their Initiatives, from highest Initiative to lowest, for reference during the Encounter.

Step 4: Round Begins

The Round begins! If you want to sound a war horn or blow your carnyx or bang a gong to mark the beginning of the Round, we absolutely encourage you to do so, but it is not required. At this step, the Gamemaster declares the Round length. If the Encounter is already underway, at this step the Gamemaster lets the players know if the Round length is changing.

Step 5: Taking Turns

Each participant in the Encounter takes one Turn in the order of their Initiative, with the highest Initiative acting first. On their Turn, a character or NPC may take one **Major Action** and one **Minor Action** in whatever order you like.

Minor Actions include Actions such as changing position, drawing a blade, moving a short distance, removing an easily accessible item from your pack, or opening a door.

Major Actions include Actions such as casting a spell, attacking an enemy, or searching for a secret door. As a rule of thumb, if the Action requires an Action Check, it is a Major Action.

Round Length and Actions

The Major and Minor Action examples provided above are appropriate for an Encounter with short Rounds, like the six second Rounds commonly used during Combat. What constitutes an appropriate Action for an Encounter, however, depends entirely on the length of the Round. For instance, if the Rounds are 1 hour long, traveling to the other side of the city might be a Minor Action, but if the Round is six seconds long, it might take a Minor Action to cross the room.

Choosing Actions

Your character may take any Action you like. The only limits are your imagination and the Gamemaster's adjudication. Get creative, have fun, and bring the story to life by having your character act in a way that mirrors what you see in your favorite books, shows, and films.

If you are uncertain about what your character can do, read through the descriptions of your MOs for inspiration, or look at the Action Types described in **Chapter 5: Action Types** and in the chapters for each of the Encounter Types. Whatever you choose, keep the

following in mind: heroes in stories do not “*perform an Obstruct Action.*” Rather, they “*Throw a torch into the pile of broken barrels to set the oil spilling out of them ablaze, distracting the enemies so my friends can escape!*”

One other important point to remember is that you can (and should) use Actions that play to your character’s strengths. This is true for any type of Challenge, from climbing a wall to fast-talking a barkeep to defeating an enemy in combat. For instance, a Thief might use their high Coordination Score to creep up on the enemy, but a Wizard is more likely to use their Intellect to cast a spell of silence. When choosing your Action, you are more likely to be successful if you play to your strengths and strive to tell an exciting story.

Step 6: Round Ends

Once every participant in the Encounter has taken their Turn, the Round ends. As noted earlier for the start of the Round, horns, bells, and gongs are encouraged but not required.

Step 7: Check for Victory

You will probably know when your characters achieve victory, but just in case, the Gamemaster checks to see if the characters have overcome all the Encounter’s Challenges.

Alternatively, if all the characters are defeated, or if they have all used the Withdraw Action to leave the Encounter, and they have not overcome the Challenges, the Encounter ends and the heroes have failed. The Gamemaster will explain what this means and describe the consequences.

One unique trait of RPGs is that failing to achieve an objective does not mean the characters lose the game. As long as the characters are still alive, the story continues. Withdrawing or being defeated just means the story goes in a different direction than if the characters were the victors. Welcome to the low point in your story where the heroes must pull themselves up by their bootstraps and devise a new plan to overcome the forces of evil!

Step 8: Escalating Challenge Points Increase

If there are any Escalating Challenges in this Encounter, the Gamemaster increases the Challenge Points for those Challenges.

Step 9: Trigger Events

Trigger Events are special events that occur at certain points in the Encounter. The Trigger for an event might be when the Challenge Points for a Challenge reach a particular number, the passage of a certain number of Rounds, or the completion of one or more of the Encounter’s Challenges. In this step, the Gamemaster checks to see if any Events are triggered.

Step 10: End of Round Trigger Events

After all other Trigger Events are resolved, End of Round Trigger Events occur.

Step 11: Repeat

Assuming there are still Challenges to overcome, go back to **Step 4: Round Begins** and repeat the steps. Repeat this process until either the characters have all Withdrawn from the Encounter, have overcome all the Challenges, or have been defeated.

Mixing Encounter Types

Every Encounter Type uses the same set of rules, so you can easily mix and match Encounter Types. Want to play a Combat Encounter that takes place in a ruined temple where the characters must climb and jump as in an Action Encounter? That works. Both Encounter Types use the same rules, so you can easily have both types of Challenges. Or maybe your peaceful Social Encounter at the palace has gotten a bit heated for one of the characters, and for that character, the conversation has devolved into a Combat Encounter. You can play out the combat scene for one group of characters at the same time that another group is trying to talk the Duke into loaning them his prize warhorse.

Rounds, Turns, Initiative, Challenge Points, Action Checks, Effects, and all the other elements of the Cool Name RPG rules are handled the same way for every Encounter Type. You can, and should, mix and match as much as you like.

Ending the Encounter

Once all the Challenges are overcome, the Gamemaster wraps up the Encounter. Typically, this includes a short description of the outcome of your victory (or defeat) and what has changed in the story thanks to your heroic Actions. The wrap-up might also include one or more

rewards for the Challenges you have overcome. Finally, the wrap-up will usually include a link to a new Encounter, propelling your heroes along the path of the story and on to the next scene in their epic Adventure.



Chapter 7: Combat Encounters

A staple of fantasy adventures are action-packed battles against the forces of evil. Whether attempting to slay a terrible dragon or defending the village against a gang of bandits, most Cool Name RPG Adventures include at least a few **Combat Encounters**.

A Combat Encounter is any Encounter where the primary Challenge is defeating one or more enemies in battle. In this chapter, we show you ways to use the rules introduced in the preceding chapters to create fantastic fantasy battle scenes. Be sure to familiarize yourself with those rules before you proceed.

Story or Simulation?

The goal of the Cool Name RPG rules is to help you tell exciting adventure stories. They are not designed to realistically simulate combat. This is not to say the rules are unimportant, but the focus of the rules is helping you to take meaningful actions that have a dramatic impact on the Encounter’s narrative. They also provide a framework for understanding your character’s place in the Encounter. For instance, when playing a Combat Encounter, are your characters hopelessly outclassed? Is the enemy about to break? Will teamwork lead to a faster and cleaner victory? These are the types of questions the Cool Name RPG Core Rules are designed to answer.

Initiative

In Combat Encounters the order in which combatants act is often a matter of life or death. Combat Encounters almost always use Initiative.

Rounds

For most Combat Encounters, each Round is roughly six seconds long, but it is up to the Gamemaster to decide on the exact Round length. The main value of knowing the length of the Round is to give you a rough idea of how much you can do on your Turn.

One notable exception to the six-second combat Round is mass combat. If your Combat Encounter involves a massive battle with large numbers of combatants, you

might want to use longer Rounds to represent the protracted fighting typical of set piece combat. With longer Rounds, you can use the character’s Actions to represent the highlights of the battle or use a single roll to represent the outcome of a drawn-out clash between two large forces.

Distance, Movement, and Range

Combat in the Core Rules of Cool Name RPG is played out in the theater of the mind. This means the Gamemaster sets the stage for the battle through storytelling, and you describe your character’s heroic Actions without worrying overly much about things like the precise distance between combatants or exactly which way your character is facing.

The Gamemaster might still provide you with a map of the battlefield and you might even use miniatures to roughly position your characters, but these exist as storytelling aids rather than tools for measuring the precise distance between combatants or the exact number of spaces your character moved.

Distance

Distance in the Cool Name RPG Core Rules is measured using an abstract system of measurements that support telling an exciting adventure story without getting bogged down in the details. The Distance Increments Table lists the five distance

increments used in Cool Name RPG Combat Encounters. At the beginning of a Combat Encounter, the Gamemaster will tell you how far away the enemy combatants are from your position using these range increments.

Distance Increments

Self
Reach
Across the Room
Stone's Throw
Bow Shot

Movement

Moving around the battlefield during a Combat Encounter requires a Minor Action. Typically, this involves increasing or decreasing the distance between you and another combatant. For instance, moving from

within **Reach** of an opponent to a position **Across the Room** is a Minor Action. Movement that requires an Action Check, like climbing a wall or leaping over a pit, are Major Actions.

Moving with Purpose

Almost all fantasy RPG battles take place in locations the size of a great hall or smaller. Typically, this places all the participants in a Combat Encounter a **Stone's Throw** away from one another or less. In a space of this size, every person on the battlefield is within easy reach of one another in a six-second Round and can move easily between combatants. This means that when your character moves, the fact that you are moving is less important than the *reason* your character is moving.

By identifying the reason for the move, you not only make it easier to determine the effect of your Action on the game, but it tells a much more exciting story. For instance, saying you run to the other side of the room might be factual, but it is uninteresting and probably unimportant. On the other hand, saying you dash across the room, zig zagging to avoid the enemy arrows (Assist Action to increase your Dodge,) because you want to be in position to Withdraw from the combat next round, matters in the game and tells a far more interesting story.

Position

Changing your position, such as crouching, sitting on a chair, or standing up do not require an Action. More dramatic changes of position, such as diving for cover or getting up from prone, may require a Minor Action if the Gamemaster feels it is appropriate, or a Major Action if it involves an Action Check for game effect.

Range

The distance between you and your target in most fantasy RPG combats typically is not far enough that the range impacts the outcome of the Encounter. The Gamemaster may, however, wish to impose a +1 modifier on Difficulty Scores for ranged attacks from **Bow Shot** distance.

Actions

On your character's Turn you may take one Minor Action and one Major Action. As with all Cool Name RPG Encounters, there are no limits on what Actions your character may attempt. If you are uncertain about what your character can do, at the end of this chapter are rules for common RPG combat Actions.

Talking During Combat

Speaking a few words or even a sentence or two during a battle does not require an Action. Combat chatter, witty repartee, and throwing around insults mid-battle are a common element of adventure story battles. Also, it is usually fine if players want to talk to coordinate their Actions. Since the action all occurs in your imaginations, you may need to talk things out that would not require discussion if you were truly in combat together.

If at any point the Gamemaster feels the talk is going on too long, they may declare the discussion has used up your character's Minor Action, so try to keep it brief!

Any talking that includes an Action Check, such as attempting to have your character intimidate or bluff the enemy, requires the use of a Major Action.

Weapons

Weapons have several Attributes that come into play during combat. These Attributes apply primarily when performing Attack Actions, although with the Gamemaster's permission, they may be applied in other situations.

Weapon Attributes

Each weapon has the following attributes:

Primary Attribute

This is the Primary Attribute you use when performing an Attack Action with this weapon. Some weapons list more than one Attribute. With these weapons you may choose which Attribute to use when determining your Attack Action Score.

Attack

The Attack modifier is applied when using this weapon for an Attack Action. Typically, this is a modifier to the Action Score for the Attack, but in case of especially

heavy weapons or weapons that are difficult to wield properly, the weapon might list a modifier to the Difficulty Score. In this case, the Difficulty Score for Attack Actions made with this weapon are increased by the amount listed for the weapon.

Parry

This Score is added to the character's Parry Defense when they are actively wielding this weapon.

Effect

Some weapons modify the Effect of successful Attack Action Checks. After the making a successful Attack Action Check, add this number to the Effect before subtracting Armor (see **Armor** below).

Some weapons have additional traits and abilities, such as Scores that modify attempts to disarm an opponent or the ability to ignore an opponent's Armor.

A complete listing of weapons and their Attributes are found in **Chapter 14: Equipment**.

Off-Hand Weapons

An off-hand weapon is a light weapon wielded in the hand opposite your primary weapon. The most common off-hand weapon is a dagger, although any weapon with the **light** weapon property may be wielded as an off-hand weapon.

A character wielding an off-hand weapon adds a +1 modifier to their Parry Defense, in addition to any Parry Defense modifiers provided by their primary weapon.

Weapon Training

If you are trained in the use of a particular weapon, you may add your MO Score to your Attack Action Score. All characters are trained with fist, foot, daggers, and clubs as well as simple thrown weapons, like stones. In addition, each MO lists additional weapons in which the character is trained.

Armor

Armor reduces the Effect of an Attack Action. After a successful Attack Action, reduce the Effect by the target's Armor Score before applying it to Challenge Points or Vitality.

Armor Types

Armor is designed to protect against a specific type of injury. The three types are: Body, Mind, and Spirit. Body Armor is the most common type of Armor. Mind and Spirit Armor exist, but they are far less common.

Armor Attributes

Armor has several Attributes that come into play during combat. These Attributes apply primarily when the character is the target of an Attack Action, although with the Gamemaster's permission, they may be applied in other situations.

Armor Type and Score

Each piece of Armor lists the type of protection it provides and its Armor Score. Reduce the Effect of a successful Attack against the character by the Score.

Block

This Score is added to the character's Block Defense when they are actively wielding a shield with this Score.

Some armor has additional traits and abilities, such as extra protection against wounds or increased Difficulty Scores when performing certain types of Actions.

A complete listing of armors and their Attributes are found in **Chapter 14: Equipment**.

Armor Training

Each MO lists the Armor varieties the character is trained to use (Light, Medium, Heavy, or Shield). If you are unaccustomed to wearing a particular variety of armor, it is more difficult to perform Actions where ease of movement is important.

When wearing a variety of Armor you are not trained to use, add +1 to the Difficulty Scores for any Action Checks based on Strength, Coordination, or where precise or controlled body movement is important (such as spellcasting.)

Cover

When you are behind Cover, such as ducked down behind a large rock or peeking around a corner, it is easier to Dodge incoming attacks. The amount you are hidden determines the Cover Score.

Cover	Score
1/4	1
1/2	2
3/4	3

Increase your Dodge by the Cover Score when you are attacked by an enemy.

Attacking from Cover

When you make a melee attack from behind cover, your opponent receives the same Cover benefit to their Dodge or Defense. Both sides of a melee combat benefit equally from the cover between them. There are no modifiers to Difficulty Scores for ranged Attack Actions made from behind cover.

Defenses

When an NPC makes an Attack Action against your character, their Difficulty Score is one of your Defense Scores. For attacks against your Mind or Spirit, the Difficulty Score is your Mind or Spirit Defense. Body Defenses, however, are handled differently.

Body Defenses

When an NPC makes a melee or ranged Attack against your character, you choose the Body Defense you want to use. The Defense you choose becomes the Difficulty Score for the NPC's Attack Action.

Body Defense Requirements

Each of the Body Defenses have requirements for use. If these requirements are met, you may use that Defense against an attack.

- **Dodge:** There are no special requirements for Dodge.
- **Block:** You must have a readied shield.
- **Parry:** You must have a readied, rigid melee weapon. In addition, the weapon must be one the character is trained to use.

In addition, the nature and circumstances of an attack may limit your options for Defense. For instance, if you are trying to defend against a charging elephant, the

Gamemaster might only allow you to Dodge. Parrying an elephant's Attack with a dagger or trying to Block it with a small shield are unlikely to help. The Gamemaster makes the final call on what Defenses you may use against Attacks.

Combat Actions

The following examples show how to use the basic Action Types to perform the most common RPG Combat Actions. Unlike the standard Action Types, some combat Actions have a prerequisite you must meet before you may attempt the Action.

Attack: Melee or Ranged

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: By weapon

Difficulty Score: Target's Body Defense Score

Result: Reduce the target's Challenge Points or Body Vitality by the Effect

On a successful melee or ranged Attack, reduce the enemy's Challenge Points or Body Vitality by the Effect. If the target is an NPC and their Challenge Points are reduced to zero, they are Defeated.

Attack: Special

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Varies

Difficulty Score: Target's appropriate Defense Score

Result: Reduce the target's Challenge Points or appropriate Vitality by the Effect

There are more ways to defeat an opponent than simply beating them into submission. You could try to drive the enemy away using intimidation, fool them into thinking you are more dangerous than you are, or tip a shelf full of pottery over onto their head. These are all ways you could reduce an enemy's Challenge Points without making a standard weapon attack.

Describe the Attack

When you make a Special Attack Action, you must describe the cool, heroic, or clever thing you are doing. Try to describe in detail what your character is doing and the desired outcome. For instance, you might say

something like, “At the perfect moment, Altiss slices the rope that holds up the chandelier so it falls on the goblin’s head.”

Primary Attribute

The Primary Attribute Score added to your Action Score depends entirely on the Action you described. In the example above where Altiss cuts the rope, the Gamemaster might allow Altiss to use Coordination, Awareness, or Intellect, depending on how she described the Action. It is always preferable to choose Actions that add to the story and play to your character’s strengths.

Difficulty Score

The Difficulty Score for a special Attack is the target’s Body, Mind, or Spirit Defense. It is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine which Defense is appropriate.

Here is a simple rule of thumb:

- If the attack will cause **physical injury**, use the target’s **Body Defense**.
- If the attack will **trick or confuse** the target, use their **Mind Defense**.
- If the attack will **demoralize** the target or have an **emotional** impact, use their **Spirit Defense**.

Effect

If the special Attack is successful, subtract the Effect from the target’s Challenge Points or the targeted Vitality Score. If the target is an NPC and their Challenge Points are reduced to zero, they are Defeated.

Coup de Grâce

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: Target is Defeated

Primary Attribute: Strength or Coordination

Difficulty Score: Automatic

Result: Enemy is killed

As a Major Action, you may execute a Coup de Grâce to finish off a defeated enemy. Typically, a character will need to have a readied weapon to take this Action.

Defend

Action Type: Assist

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Special

Difficulty Score: Defense Score you want to improve

Result: Increase the selected Defense Score by Effect

On a successful Defend, you improve one ally’s Defense Score (Block, Dodge, Parry, Mind, or Spirit) by the Effect for one Round. The benefit ends at the start of your next Turn.

The Action Score for Defend is one of your Defense Scores. The Defense Score you use must be of the same type (Body, Mind, or Spirit) as the one you wish to improve. For example, if you want to improve an ally’s Parry, you could use your Block, Dodge, or Parry as your Action Score. You could not, however, use your Block Score as the Action Score to improve an ally’s Mind Defense.

Note that Defense Scores already take Primary Attributes, MOs, Focuses, Specializations, and equipment into account, so no additional Scores should be added to the Defense Score when determining the Action Score.

You may also choose to Defend yourself, improving one of your own Defense Scores.

Disarm

Action Type: Opposed Attack

Prerequisite: Appropriate weapon

Primary Attribute: By weapon

Difficulty Score: Opposed Attack Action

Result: Loser drops their weapon

Disarming an opponent is an Opposed Roll pitting your Attack against the target’s Attack. Both sides calculate their Attack Action Score normally and roll. The combatant with the highest result forces the other to drop their weapon.

Drag

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: Grab or Grabbed

Primary Attribute: Strength

Difficulty Score: Opposed Strength

Result: You move the target

Drag is resolved with an opposed Action Check between your Strength and the target's Strength or Body. On a successful Drag, your character drags a Grabbed opponent to a place on the battlefield of your choosing. The Grab may be maintained after successfully performing the Drag Action. On a failed attempt, the target remains where they are, but your character retains their Grab.

Alternatively, your character may use the Drag Action to move while Grabbed without first performing an Escape Action. On a successful Drag Action Check, you move to the desired location, dragging along the enemy that Grabbed you. The NPC or character that has you Grabbed may choose to release their Grab in this case, rather than being dragged along with you.

Escape

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: Grabbed or Restrained

Primary Attribute: Strength or Coordination

Difficulty Score: Target Attack Score

Result: You break free of a Grab *or* reduce the Restrained condition to Grabbed

If another character or NPC has Grabbed your character, on a successful Escape your character breaks free of the Grab. If your character is Restrained, a successful Escape reduces the Restrained state to Grabbed.

Grab

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Coordination

Difficulty Score: Target Defense

Result: You grab the target or an object the target is holding

On a successful Grab, you grab the target or an item the target is holding (declare which before rolling.) Grabbed NPCs and characters may still perform any Action they like on their Turn, including attempting to Grab the attacker back. Grabbing an opponent back does not break their Grab. On a success you are both Grabbed.

Once you have a person or thing Grabbed, you may maintain the Grab as a Major Action without making additional Action Checks. If the Grabbed character wishes to move, they must Escape first or use the Drag Action.

Harm

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: Grab

Primary Attribute: Coordination or Strength

Difficulty Score: Target Toughness

Result: Reduce the target's Challenge Points or Body Vitality by the Effect

On a successful Harm, you inflict non-lethal damage on the target. Reduce the target's Challenge Points or Vitality by the Effect by twisting, choking, or yanking. Normally, Armor (Body) does not protect against the damage from a successful Harm.

Harry

Action Type: Obstruct or Aid

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Varies by Action

Difficulty Score: Gamemaster sets

Result: +1 modifier to the target's Attack Difficulty Scores or +1 modifier to ally's Attack Actions against the target

When you Harry an enemy, you disrupt their ability to fight effectively. Harrying includes distracting, flanking, and similar strategic maneuvers.

A successful Harry adds a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score for all the target's Attack Actions, or a +1 modifier to all allies' Attack Action Scores when attacking the target.

The Primary Attribute for Harry and the Difficulty Score depend on your description of how you are harrying the target.

Intercept

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: Readied Intercept Action

Primary Attribute: NA

Difficulty Score: Automatic

Result: You throw yourself in front of the enemy's attack and take the blow in place of the enemy's target

If you have readied an Intercept Action, before the Gamemaster rolls you may leap in front of an attack aimed at an ally. In doing, you force the enemy to attack you instead of your ally. Resolve the Attack normally.

Restrain

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: Grab

Primary Attribute: Coordination or Strength

Difficulty Score: Target Strength

Result: You prevent the target from taking any Action other than Escape

The Restrain Action is used to control the body of the person you have Grabbed so you can prevent them from performing any Major or Minor Actions other than Escape. Once you have the target Restrained, you may maintain the Restrain as a Major Action without making any additional Action Checks. If the target is prone, add a +1 modifier to your Action Score.

Sacrifice

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: NA

Difficulty Score: NA

Result: All attacks directed against an ally are directed at you instead

When you perform a Sacrifice Action, you prevent the enemy from attacking one ally until the start of your

next Turn. Any attack aimed at the ally must target you instead.

Shove

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Strength

Difficulty Score: Target Toughness or Defense

Result: You push the target in a direction of your choosing

On a successful Shove, you push the target from Reach to Across the Room.

If the target cannot move in the direction you shoved them because there is something in the way, they collide with that object. Reduce the target's Challenge Points or Body Vitality by the Effect of your Shove. Armor (Body) reduces the Effect. A deadly surface, such as a wall of spikes, may increase the Effect with the Gamemaster's approval.

Take

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: Grabbed Item

Primary Attribute: Strength

Difficulty Score: Target Strength

Result: You take the item from the target

On a successful Take, you forcibly take a Grabbed item away from the target. Unless the target willingly releases the item at this point, the item takes damage equal to the Effect. The item's Armor (Body) reduces the Effect.

Takedown

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: Grab

Primary Attribute: Coordination or Strength

Difficulty Score: Target Strength or Dodge

Result: Reduce the target's Challenge Points or Body Vitality by the Effect and the target is now prone

On a successful Takedown, you slam a Grabbed target into the ground. This reduces the target's Challenge Points by the Effect, although Armor (Body) will reduce the Effect. In addition, the target is now prone. You may

retain your Grab on the target if you kneel or drop prone as well, otherwise, you must release your Grab.

Team-Up

Action Type: Assist

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Varies

Difficulty Score: Ally's Attack Action Score

Result: Increase the ally's Attack Action Score by the Effect for attacks against a specific target

When you Team Up, you work together with an ally to improve their chance of hitting the enemy. A successful Team Up improves a single ally's Attack Action Score by the Effect when they next attack the target.

You and the Gamemaster should select an appropriate Primary Attribute for the Action Check. For instance, if you are feinting with your sword to throw the enemy off balance, you might use Strength or Coordination. On the other hand, if you are signaling to your companion so they know the perfect time to strike, you might use Intellect or Awareness.

Throw

Action Type: Attack

Prerequisite: Grab

Primary Attribute: Coordination or Strength

Difficulty Score: Target Strength or Dodge

Result: Reduce the target's Challenge Points or Body Vitality by the Effect, the target is now prone, and the target is moved from Reach to Across the Room

On a successful Throw, you release your Grab on the target, move the target from Reach to Across the Room in a direction of your choosing, place the target in a prone position, and reduce the target's Body Vitality or Challenge Points by the Effect. Armor (Body) will reduce the Effect.

Trip

Action Type: Interact

Prerequisite: Readied Trip Action

Primary Attribute: Coordination

Difficulty Score: Target Dodge

Result: The enemy is prone, their movement stops

On a successful Trip, you drop the enemy to the Prone position. Trip does not cause damage, but if used as the reaction for a Ready Action, it will end the movement of a target that is moving past your character.

Withdraw

Action Type: Withdraw

Prerequisite: None

Primary Attribute: Varies

Difficulty Score: Enemy Attack Score

Result: You withdraw from the Combat Encounter

On a successful Withdraw, you withdraw from the Combat Encounter to a place of relative safety. You remain "offscreen" until the other characters overcome the Encounter's Challenges, are defeated, or all Withdraw.

If the enemy does not care if you Withdraw, no Action Check is required. Otherwise, the Difficulty Score is equal to the Attack Score for the enemy you are currently engaged with or the highest Attack Score among the enemy combatants.

The Primary Attribute depends on how you extract yourself from the battle. A fighting retreat might use the Primary Attribute for your weapon, where a clever ruse to distract the enemy might be based on Presence or Intellect.

NPCs in Combat

NPCs include bandits, evil wizards, goblins, dastardly mercenaries, and any other creature or thing controlled by the Gamemaster.

In a Combat Encounter, NPCs use most of the same rules as characters with the following exceptions:

- **Initiative:** The Gamemaster does not roll Initiative for NPCs. NPCs use the Initiative listed in the NPC statblock.
- **Actions:** NPCs may attempt any of the Actions available to characters except for those described as prohibited here. In addition, some NPCs have unique Actions described in the Actions section of their statblock.

- **Primary Attributes:** NPCs only have three Attributes: Body, Mind, and Spirit. If an Action calls for a particular Primary Attribute, use the NPC Attribute with the same name as the listed Primary Attribute's group. For instance, if an Action calls for Strength, a Primary Attribute of the Body group, use the NPC's Body Attribute.
- **Attack:** An NPC's most common Attack Actions are listed in their statblock and include a precalculated Attack Score. NPCs also have a general Attack Score the Gamemaster may use if the NPC makes other types of physical Attack Actions. In both cases, the Attack Score listed in the statblock already includes the NPC's attributes, equipment, and training Scores. Normal modifiers may still be applied to both the NPC's Attack Score and Difficulty Score.
- **Defense:** NPCs have a single Body Defense Score rather than Dodge, Block, and Parry Scores. Their Body Defense serves as the Difficulty Score for physical attacks directed against them.
- **Vitality:** NPCs have Challenge Points instead of Vitality Points. When a character's attack strikes an NPC, reduce the NPC's Challenge Points by the Effect.
- **Recovery:** NPCs may not use the Recovery Action to restore their Challenge Points. They may recover Challenge Points through magic or other means described in their statblock.
- **Wounds and Death:** When an NPC's Challenge Points are reduced to zero, they are **Defeated**. They do not make Death Checks or suffer Wounds. See **Defeated NPCs** below for more information.

Additional rules for NPCs and information about reading NPC statblocks are included in **Chapter 16: NPCs**.

NPC Challenge Points

To defeat an NPC, the characters must reduce the NPC's Challenge Points to zero, at which point they are **Defeated**.

What Are NPC Challenge Points?

NPC Challenge Points represent more than the NPC's health. They also represent:

- Morale
- Mental stability
- Endurance
- Strategy
- Determination
- Spirit
- Experience

In Cool Name RPG, as in real life, beating an opponent in battle is more than just a physical challenge—it is a mental and spiritual conflict as well. You might win the battle by just hitting the opponent over the head repeatedly, but odds are you will win a quicker and more complete victory by leveraging all your party's skills, talents, and abilities to reduce the enemy's Challenge Points.

Defeated NPCs

When an NPC's Challenge Points are reduced to zero, the NPC is **Defeated**. Since Cool Name RPG lets you choose from many different types of Attack Actions to reduce an enemy's Challenge Points, the Gamemaster decides what this means. Depending on how you defeated the foe, the Gamemaster might decide a Defeated enemy is dead, unconscious, routed, or incapacitated in some other fashion entirely. Whatever the Gamemaster chooses, from a game perspective the Challenge is overcome and the enemy no longer poses a threat to the characters.

NPC Attack Effects

If the NPC hits with a melee or ranged Attack Action Check, reduce the character's Body Vitality by the Effect.

- If the NPC attack has an **Effect Score**, add the Score to the Effect.

- If the target is wearing **Armor** of the same type as the attack (Body, Mind, or Spirit), reduce the Effect by the character's Armor Score.

For more information about the Effect of Vitality loss, see **Chapter 8: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing**.

Area of Effect Attacks

An Area of Effect Attack is an Attack Action with the potential to reduce the Challenge Points and Vitality Points of everyone within a set area. The shape of the area varies by the attack. Some of the most common are a line, such as a magical lightning bolt that strikes everyone in its path, an arc, such as a spray of acid from a trap that hits everything in front of a nozzle, or a sphere, like an exploding fireball.

Regardless of shape, the space impacted by the Area of Effect Attack is measured using the abstract distance measurements introduced earlier in this chapter. For instance, a dragon's fire breath might strike every target in a line between the dragon and a Target space a **Stone's Throw Away**, or a fireball might fill a sphere with a diameter of **Across the Room**.

Defending Against Area of Effect Attacks

Area of Effect Attacks are Resisted Actions using an Opposed Roll. Every Target within the Area of Effect must make a Defense Action Check using the Attacker's Attack Action Check result as the Difficulty Score.

If a Target rolls higher than the Difficulty Score, the Target manages to duck behind cover, leap out of the way, or otherwise avoid the attack. In addition, they may declare that their character has moved out of the Area of Effect and will not be impacted by the Effect if it continues on future Turns.

If the Target rolls below the Difficulty Score, they suffer damage equal to the amount they missed by.

Note that Area Effect Attacks are not selective. Everyone and everything, friend or foe, within the Area of Effect, is impacted by an Area of Effect Attack.

Defense Action Score

You and the Gamemaster should determine the appropriate Defense Action Score to use when facing an Area of Effect Attack. For instance, your character's Parry Defense is not likely to be of much use when facing a fireball that fills the room with flame.

Defense Action Score Modifiers

You and the Gamemaster should add modifiers as appropriate to the circumstances. For instance, if your character is rolling to avoid a fireball and their clothing are wet thanks to their recent swim across the castle moat, the Gamemaster might allow you to add a +1 modifier to your Defense Action Score.

Effect Scores

Like weapons, some Area of Effect Attacks have an Effect Score. The Effect Score is added to the spell's Effect for Targets that fail their Defense Action Check.

Effect Score Example

When the fireball exploded, Spyder used his Dodge Defense to leap out of the way. Unfortunately, the wizard who made the Action Check to Attack with their fireball wand rolled a 10 and Spyder rolled an 8 on his Defense Action Check. Spyder missed by 2 so he is going to lose 2 points of Body Vitality from the billowing flames. In addition, the fireball wand has an Effect Score of 5. This means Spyder's total loss of Body Vitality is 7 (5 + 2).

Wargar was luckier. He rolled a 10, exactly what he needed to avoid the attack. Since he succeeded at his Action Check, the Effect Score is not applied and Wargar walks away unscathed.

Armor

Armor of the appropriate Type protects normally against Area of Effect Attacks. Subtract Armor Scores after Effect Scores are added to determine the final Effect.

Chapter 8: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing

Fantasy adventure worlds are dangerous places, and sooner or later your character is going to get hurt. The following rules explain how to handle injuries in a Cool Name RPG Adventure.

Vitality

When any of your Vitality Scores (Body, Mind, or Spirit) reach zero, you are **Incapacitated** and suffer a Wound. Vitality loss stops at zero. It is not possible to have a negative Vitality Score.

Incapacitated

When you are **Incapacitated**, you are awake and aware, but you are prone, disoriented, and communication is difficult. At best, you can say a few words each Turn, but complex sentences and thoughts are impossible. Incapacitated characters may not make Action Checks except to perform a “catch your breath” Recovery Action. With the Gamemaster’s permission, they may perform Minor Actions like digging a potion out of their pack or fumbling a door open.

Movement is limited to a slow crawl. Depending on the situation, you may be able to lurch to your feet and, again with the Gamemaster’s permission, stumble along a few feet at a time.

The exact nature of the Incapacitation depends on which of your Vitality Scores were reduced to zero.

Body Vitality 0

At zero Body Vitality you might be seeing stars, have the wind knocked out of you, or be punch drunk. You are physically exhausted and everything hurts. You might be suffering from numerous minor cuts and bruises, and you are likely feeling more than a little light-headed.

Mind Vitality 0

At zero Mind Vitality you might be catatonic, deeply disassociated, or hopelessly confused. Making decisions is nearly impossible, and activities requiring higher thought are out of the question. You might also suffer

from temporary memory loss and debilitating confusion. Often, you lack the will to act at all.

Spirit Vitality 0

At zero Spirit Vitality you might be emotionally broken, overcome with terror, or suffering from a soul-searing existential crisis. You are probably only vaguely aware of your surroundings, and you might even suffer from hallucinations. You struggle to make emotional connections, and you likely appear pitiful to friends and enemies alike.

Attacking Incapacitated Characters

Incapacitated characters cannot defend themselves. The base Difficulty Score for Attack Actions against an Incapacitated character is zero. If your character is hit with an attack that would reduce a Vitality Score already at zero, instead of losing Vitality, the character automatically suffers another Wound of that Vitality type.

Recovering Vitality Points

You may make a Recovery Action to restore lost Vitality Points of a particular type. If you are Incapacitated, you may only use the “catch your breath” form of Recovery. See Recovery in **Chapter 5: Action Types** for more information.

An hour of uninterrupted rest restores all your character’s Vitality Scores to their maximums.

Wounds

Whenever one of your Vitality Scores reach zero, you suffer a Wound. Wounds are serious, lingering injuries that may lead to death. Each time you suffer a Wound you must make a Death Check (see **Death and Dying** below).

Healing Wounds

Healing a Wound requires an Intellect Action Check and has a base time of 1 hour. Each move up the time chart (for example, 1 hour to 12 hours) adds a +1 modifier to the Action Check.

Wounds are healed by Type (Body, Mind, or Spirit), and you may only heal one Type of Wound with each Action Check. A successful Action Check, regardless of Effect, heals 1 Wound of the chosen Type.

Difficulty Score

Healing Wounds is a task for a Skilled healer, so the base Difficulty Score is 6. You must also add the number of Wounds the character has of the Type you are attempting to heal to the Difficulty Score.

Healing Difficulty Score Example

Aria is attempting to heal one of Wargar's Body Wounds. Wargar has 2 Body Wounds and 1 Mind Wound. The starting Difficulty Score for the Action Check to heal his Body Wounds is 8 (6 + 2 Body Wounds).

The following may add modifiers to the Difficulty Score:

- **Environment:** Is the environment appropriate for healing? For example, Body Wound healing requires a clean, dry, safe place. Access to clean water is a must, and the patient must be kept warm.
- **Tools:** Wound healing requires a proper set of tools. For Body Wounds this means Healer's Tools or a Surgeon's Kit. A simple first aid kit is not enough.
- **Self-Care:** If you are healing your own Wounds add +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.
- **Time:** Each move down the time chart from 1 hour (for example, 1 hour down to 15 minutes) adds a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.

Natural Healing

A character that spends a week resting may automatically check to see if any of their Wounds heal. At the end of the week, the character makes one Action Check for each of the types of Wounds they are suffering from.

The Primary Attribute for the Action Check depends on the type of Wound the character is healing:

Body Wounds = Toughness

Mind Wounds = Willpower

Spirit Wounds = Resilience

The Difficulty Score is equal to the number of Wounds the character has of that type. On a success, the character reduces the number of Wounds of that type by 1.

Negative conditions, such as filth or cold, may add one or more modifiers to the Difficulty Scores. Participating in more than light activity at any point during the week restarts the clock, requiring the character to wait another week before they may make natural healing Action Checks.

Death Checks and Dying

A character cannot die from Vitality loss, but each time the character takes a Wound they must immediately make a Death Action Check. The Death Action Check does not require the use of an Action. The Primary Attribute used to make the Action Check depends on the type of Wound the character just received.

Body Wound = Toughness Action Check

Mind Wound = Willpower Action Check

Spirit Wound = Resilience Action Check

The Action Check has a Difficulty Score equal to the total number Wounds (Body Wounds + Mind Wounds + Spirit Wounds) from which the character is suffering. There are no other modifiers to the Difficulty Score or Action Score for this check.

On a successful Action Check, the character survives and may continue on with the Encounter. On a failure, the character collapses to the ground and is **Dying**.

Dying

A **Dying** character is unconscious with their life slowly ebbing away. The character will continue Dying for a number of Rounds equal to the Primary Attribute Score

used to heal Wounds of the type they just received. After their Turn on the last Round, the character dies.

Stabilization

You can stabilize a dying character by making an Intellect Action Check against a Difficulty Score equal to the character's total number of Wounds (Body Wounds + Mind Wounds + Spirit Wounds).

On a success, the treated character stops dying, but remains unconscious for the remainder of the current Encounter. At the end of the Encounter, they regain consciousness and may continue their adventure.

A failed stabilization Action Check does not make things any worse, but the character is still dying. Assuming the character is still alive, you may try to stabilize them again on your next Turn.

Dying Example

Wargar is in trouble. He already had two Body Wounds, and on Round 5 he takes a third Body Wound. Wargar must immediately make a Death Action Check based on his Toughness with a Difficulty Score of 3 (+1 for each Wound). His Toughness is 3 so his Action Score is 3, which means he is rolling a d8. Wargar rolls the d8 and gets a 2. He failed!

Wargar collapses to the ground and is dying. Since his Toughness is 3, Wargar has 3 rounds starting with the next round before he dies. This means that if no one stabilizes Wargar, at the end of his Turn on Round 8, he dies!

Non-Lethal Attacks and Wounds

Certain types of Attacks are considered Non-Lethal. Attacks made with a blunt part of the body (fist, feet, head, tail, knee, etc.) are Non-Lethal Attacks. The Harm Action is also a Non-Lethal Attack. Finally, a few weapons have the Non-Lethal property. Attacks with these weapons are Non-Lethal Attacks.

If a character's Body Vitality is reduced to 0 by a Non-Lethal Attack or the character is hit with a successful Non-Lethal Attack when their Body Vitality is already zero, the character takes a Wound as per the rules *but* does not make a Death Action Check.

Claws, fangs, tail spikes, and other natural edged and piercing weapons inflict lethal damage. A Wound taken from an attack with a weapon like this follows all the normal rules for Wounds and Death Action Checks.

It is possible to perform a Coup de Grâce Action with a Non-Lethal weapon.

Chapter 9: Action Encounters

A good action story is more than just a series of battles. Maybe your character must escape an ancient temple before it collapses, search the castle ruins for a magical weapon, or steer their ship through the eye of a hurricane. Our favorite adventure stories are filled with exciting action sequences, and in a Cool Name RPG adventure we play these scenes out with Action Encounters.

Action Encounter Example

The party just saved their ship by fighting off a crew of bloodthirsty pirates. The Combat Encounter ended in victory, but the Gamemaster tells the party they aren't out of the woods yet. When the pirate ship rammed their vessel, it damaged the hull and their vessel is taking on water! How will the heroes survive this predicament? This sounds like an Action Encounter!

Action Encounters use the rules described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges**, **Chapter 4: Action Types**, and **Chapter 6: Encounters**. Be sure to familiarize yourself with those rules before reading this. In this chapter we will focus on aspects of those rules that are especially important to Action Encounters, and ways to use the rules to create exciting action scenes.

What is an Action Encounter?

In an Action Encounter, the source of the Encounter's Challenges is the setting itself. The world and the things in it are the obstacles the characters must overcome to reach their goal. Some of these are active threats, such as a terrible storm or a collapsing building. Others are passive, like a cleverly hidden trap in the hallway ahead or an enormous library that holds the one book the characters need.

The pace of an Action Encounter varies as well. Some are frenetic, fast-paced scenes, such as a race against time to pick the lock on the prison door before the jailers return. Others are unhurried and atmospheric, like the tense search of a burial cairn for a long-lost magical artifact.

Rounds

The decision to track time with Rounds or not depends on the pace of your Action Encounter. If the characters are cautiously creeping through the halls of a dungeon, a freeform back and forth between the players and the Gamemaster might be the best way to run the Encounter. On the other hand, if the heroes are in an out-of-control wagon racing down a steep slope, switching to Rounds and rolling for Initiative will make the Encounter easier to adjudicate and help to reinforce the urgency of the situation.

Round Length

In an Action Encounter, a Round might represent a few seconds, a few minutes, or even a few hours. The Gamemaster will let you know how long a Round is at the beginning of the Encounter. As always, Round length in Cool Name RPG is a rough approximation of time, not an exact measurement.

Like Combat Encounters, the rules presented here are not meant to create a simulation, but rather an impression of action. They exist to help you tell an exciting story and have a meaningful impact on the game and the adventure. The length of the Round exists primarily to give you a rough sense of what your character can accomplish on their Turn.

Round Length Example

The Gamemaster tells the party the ship is slowly taking on water. He declares that each Round of this Action Encounter lasts about an hour. Although each character still only gets a single Major Action each round, their Action might be to spend an hour working feverishly to repair the ship, scrambling to plot a course to a nearby island, hurriedly readying the lifeboat, or performing some other large task that helps the party to survive the Challenge of a sinking ship. The length of the Round is quite long, but the Action is still intense.

Initiative

When time is of the essence, the Gamemaster should call for Initiative rolls. Initiative is helpful when the characters only have so many chances to overcome the Challenges, and any delay or a bad choice at the wrong time can result in terrible consequences.

Challenges

An Action Encounter might consist of a single epic Challenge, or it might consist of many smaller Challenges. Challenges may occur all at once, like trying to keep your ship afloat as you pilot it through a storm, or in succession, like the traps and puzzles you might encounter while exploring a ruined temple.

Reducing Challenge Points

Like Combat, you can (and should) come up with novel ways to reduce a Challenge's Challenge Points, and not every character has to help in the same way. Each member of the party should consider their skills, talents, and experience, and think of the way their character can best help the party to achieve victory.

In our damaged ship example above, the characters might choose to sail the ship back to the island, and each successful Action Check reduces the Challenge Points bringing the party closer to safety. Alternatively, the characters might make Action Checks to repair the damage, and again, each success reduces the Challenge Points representing the slow restoration of the ship's integrity. Or maybe they do both, with one group performing repairs and another navigating the ship to the island. Both activities reduce the same pool of Challenge Points, representing the effort of the party working together to overcome the Challenge.

Action Encounter Challenge Points

Example

The party is a fair distance out to sea and the damage to the ship is significant. The Gamemaster decides that the Challenge of "Survive the Sinking Ship" has 14 Challenge Points. That's a good-sized Challenge, so the team swings into action.

CHALLENGE: Survive the Sinking Ship CP 14

*Jeff has his character, Spyder, head below deck with tools and extra boards to repair the damaged hull. The Gamemaster decides this is not a difficult task, requiring only **novice** skill to perform, so the Difficulty Score starts at 3. Unfortunately for Spyder, these are far from ideal conditions. Normally this type of repair requires a dry dock and a team of skilled laborers, and Spyder doesn't have either of these. The Gamemaster adds +1 for each of these complications. In addition, the water in the hold is knee deep, creating a further complication and increasing the Difficulty Score by an additional +1.*

ACTION: Repair the Hull DS 6 (3 + 1 Bad Location + 1 No Team + 1 Water)

*Beth, on the other hand, doesn't think her halfling Altiss will be much use down in the flooded hold, so she decides to have Altiss begin piloting the ship back to an island they saw a few leagues back. This is a pretty basic task for any sailor, and the Gamemaster decides a sailor of **novice** skill would have a reasonable chance of success. The biggest problem is that with everyone else doing other things, she's working with a skeleton crew and steering the damaged ship is like dragging a whale down Market Street by the tail.*

ACTION: Pilot the Ship to Safety DS 5 (3 + 1 Lack of Crew + 1 Damage to the Ship)

Both Altiss and Spyder make Action Checks, and if they succeed, the Challenge Points for the Survive the Sinking Ship Challenge is reduced by the Effects of their Action Checks.

Escalating Challenges

Action Encounters are the perfect type of Encounter for an Escalating Challenge. The Challenge Points for an Escalating Challenge go up after the end of the Round. This may represent water seeping into a sinking ship, the slow approach of a powerful army, or any other situation where the longer the players take, the more dangerous the situation becomes.

Escalating Challenge Example

Altiss and Spyder do fairly well on the first Round of trying to Survive the Sinking Ship. Altiss manages to get the ship headed back toward the islands, and Spyder is

making progress on the repairs. Their efforts have reduced the Challenge Points from 14 to 9.

CHALLENGE: Survive the Sinking Ship CP 9

Unfortunately for the party, the Gamemaster declares that the constant flow of water into the ship makes this an Escalating Challenge. At the end of each Round the Challenge Points increases by 2, as more and more water fills the hull. At the start of the next Round, the Challenge Points are back up to 11.

CHALLENGE: Survive the Sinking Ship CP 11 (EC +2)

Better work faster, heroes!

Trigger Events

Trigger Events are events that occur at specific points in an Encounter, and they are a common Element of Action Encounters. A typical trigger is when a Challenge reaches a specified number of Challenge Points. Trigger Events might also occur after a certain number of Rounds pass, when a particular Challenge is overcome (or failed), or when the characters perform a specified Action. The Gamemaster decides what, if any, Trigger Events apply for an Encounter.

Trigger Event Examples

The following are some examples of Trigger Events.

Example 1: *At the end of the fourth Round, an aftershock from the earthquake shakes rocks loose from the cliff and sends them tumbling down onto the characters. The heroes must make Dodge Action Checks to avoid being hit by rocks or suffer Body Vitality loss.*

Example 2: *When the characters reduce the Challenge Points for the Open the Door Challenge to 10 or less, a swarm of poisonous spiders are released into the room. The Action Encounter transitions (at least temporarily) to a Combat Encounter.*

Example 3: *Once the Replace the Bridge Challenge Points are reduced to zero, the support team immediately races across with much needed aid for the characters.*

Example 4: *If the Escalating Challenge's Challenge Points reach 15, the walls start to close in.*

Example 5: *The heroes are trying to follow a faint trail in the dust, but at the end of the second Round the sun sets, and the deepening gloom makes the task more difficult, adding a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Scores for Actions requiring sight.*

Depending on the adventure and the setting, the Gamemaster might also have a table of random Trigger Events. For instance, at the end of each Round the Gamemaster rolls on a Random Event table to see if an event occurs, and if so, what sort of event takes place.

Trigger Event Example

Just when our heroes trying to Survive the Sinking Ship thought things couldn't get any worse, things get worse! At the end of the third Round, Altiss spots sails coming over the horizon. It's the sister ship of the pirates they just defeated!

The Gamemaster declares that this adds a new Challenge to the Action Encounter, "Escape the Pirates," with 6 Challenge Points.

CHALLENGE: Survive the Sinking Ship CP 11 (EC +2)

CHALLENGE: Escape the Pirates CP 6

Beth and Jeff discuss what they will do, and they agree that Spyder will continue to try to repair the ship, reducing the Challenge Points for Survive the Sinking Ship, and Beth will try to lose the pursuing pirates by piloting the ship through the deadly coral reef, with her successes reducing the Escape the Pirate Challenge Points. I'm not going to sugar coat it. It looks pretty bad for our heroes.

Action Encounter Actions

The following are some of the most common Actions you might want your character to take during an Action Encounter and advice for how to use the rules described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges** and **Chapter 5: Action Types** to perform the Action. As always, these are suggestions. In the end, it is always up

to you and the Gamemaster to determine the best way to resolve an Action in your game.

Actions vs. Challenges

When following the guidance presented here, keep in mind the difference between Actions and Challenges.

The Challenge is **the problem** you must overcome.

When described properly, Challenges do not dictate the way you overcome it. The Action is **the thing you do** to overcome the Challenge.

For example, let's say the characters are attempting to sneak into the Queen's walled garden. As they stand at the base of the wall, the Challenge they are facing should be "Get Into the Garden" and *not* "Climb the Wall." In other words, the characters shouldn't be limited to a Climb Action Check. There are many ways one might get into the garden. A character with incredible leaping skills might make a Jump Action

Check to leap over the wall while an exceptionally strong character might toss their ally over the wall.

Action Examples

Listed in the table below are examples of Actions regularly performed during Action Encounters. The table contains the following information:

- **Action:** The name of the Action the character wants to take.
- **Examples:** Examples of this sort of Action.
- **Attribute:** The Primary Attribute typically used when performing this sort of Action.
- **Difficulty:** Things that are used to determine the base Difficulty Score for this sort of Action.
- **Modifiers:** Things that commonly modify the Difficulty Score or Action Score for this sort of Action.

Action Encounter Action Examples

Action	Examples	Attribute	Difficulty	Modifiers
Balance	Walk a tightrope, shimmy along a ledge, stand atop a pole	Coordination	Width of the surface	Slippery surface, strong wind, balance pole, angled surface
Break Down	Knock down a door, smash through a barricade	Strength	Thickness of barrier, barrier's material, quality of barrier	Physical reinforcement, age of barrier
Climb	Clamber over a wall, climb to the top of a cliff	Strength or Coordination	Handholds and footholds, angle of surface	Slippery surface, strong wind, climbing equipment
Disarm Trap	Disable a mechanism, jam the gears, remove the trigger	Coordination or Intellect	Complexity of the mechanism	Low light, tool quality, mechanism quality
Drag or Push	Move an object that is too heavy to lift	Strength	Size and weight of the object	Handholds, footing, surface under the object, wheels or rollers
Hide	Conceal a person or object	Intellect or Awareness	DS 0 + modifiers	Lighting, clutter, color of hidden item, noise, movement
Jump	Leap over a pit, hop up onto a table, jump up and ledge	Strength or Coordination	DS 2 for horizontal, DS 3 for vertical, distance is reflected by Challenge Points	Slipper surface, strong wind, running start, vertical jump
Lift	Lift an object too heavy to carry, lift a portcullis	Strength	Size and weight of the object	Handholds, footing, bulk
Pick Lock	Use lockpicks to unlock a lock	Coordination or Intellect	Complexity of the lock	Lighting, tools, size of lock
Ride	Ride a horse, mule, or other animal	Coordination or Presence	Animal's type and training	Tack (saddle, bridle, etc.), specialized training, animal condition
Search	Find a secret door, locate a hidden object, find a concealed person	Intellect or Awareness	Effect of the Action Check made to hide the object or person	Familiarity with the place, special means of detection, enhanced senses
Swing	Swing on a vine, rope, chandelier, chain, etc.	Coordination or Strength	Suitability of the thing for swinging, distance reflected by Challenge Points	Grip, running start

Chapter 10: Social Encounters

Social Encounters are about your characters' social interactions with the people (and creatures) who inhabit the game world. The primary differences between Social Encounters and other types of Encounters are that there is much less running around, swinging from ropes, and firing arrows (usually). Instead, expect pointed arguments, deft deceptions, and grand romantic gestures.

Examples of Social Encounters include negotiating a peace treaty between the armies of the King and his rebellious son, conning your way into the posh neighborhoods of the noble quarter to attend a secret rendezvous with the Duchess, or participating in a heated bargaining session with a local merchant to acquire an ancient artifact needed to bring down the Dark Lord.

Social Encounters use the rules described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges**, **Chapter 5: Action Types**, and **Chapter 6: Encounters**. Be sure to familiarize yourself with those rules before reading this. In this chapter we will focus on aspects of those rules that are especially important to Social Encounters, and ways to use the rules to create dramatic scenes.

Social Encounters vs. Social Interactions

You won't need these rules for most of your character's social interactions in the game. Whether you're asking a local farmer for directions or paying the innkeeper for your room, simple roleplay is all that is required. Even if your character is called upon to make an Action Check during one of these minor social interactions, you don't need to build an entire Encounter around it.

Social Encounters are used for key scenes in the game where the outcome of the Encounter will change the direction of the story. It's the moment where everything is on the line, the party is working together to accomplish something heroic, and it isn't clear which direction things will go.

Rounds

When the outcome of a Social Encounter could change the course of the adventure, we encourage the use of Rounds. Using Rounds brings the element of time into the story. Time pressures are a key aspect of what makes Social Encounters in our favorite movies, books, and series exciting. In addition, using Rounds and Turns ensures that everyone at the table gets an opportunity to participate in the scene—not just those players with a natural flare for the dramatic or characters whose MO is most suited to social interactions.

Rounds In Social Encounters Example

The players have decided they want to attend the royal ball so they can convince the Duke to back their play for the kingdom's throne. If they had infinite time, Rounds and Turns wouldn't be necessary. As it is, the ball only lasts a few hours, and it turns out their rival, Graethon Blackheart, is at the party as well, trying to win the Duke's support for his own plan. With just a few hours to make their case, the speed with which the party nails down the Duke's support matters a great deal.

As with Action Encounters, the length of a Round in a Social Encounter is up to the Gamemaster. A Round might last an hour, a few minutes, or even a few seconds if the Action gets really heated. The Gamemaster might also change the length of the Round during the Encounter as tensions rise and fall.

Round Length Example

When the heroes arrive at the Duke's palace, the Gamemaster decides a Round will last roughly an hour. This makes sense, since at the start of the evening the characters are getting to know the surroundings, mingling with the other guests, and scoping out the best opportunity to approach the Duke.

When the players are ready for their characters to approach the Duke, however, the Gamemaster declares a Round is now only 15 minutes long. The negotiations are heating up, and time is running out.

Finally, when Blackheart appears and begins offering counter arguments to why the Duke should support him instead of the characters, the Gamemaster declares Turns are now just 1 minute long, representing the rapid back and forth of the escalating debate.

Initiative

As with Action Encounters, it will be up to you and the Gamemaster to determine if Initiative is important for a Social Encounter. If it is, determine Initiative as described in **Chapter 6: Encounters**.

Challenges and Challenge Points

In Social Encounters, a Challenge's Challenge Points are determined and handled in the same fashion as described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges** and **Chapter 6: Encounters**. The Gamemaster might also decide to use **Escalating Challenges** and **Trigger Events** to add to the excitement of a Social Encounter.

Actions

Social Encounters use the same rules for Actions and the same Action Types described in **Chapter 2: Action and Action Checks** and **Chapter 5: Action Types**.

Social Encounter Action Example

The Gamemaster decides that convincing the Duke to back their play for the throne is a Challenge with 10 Challenge Points.

CHALLENGE: Gain the Duke's Support CP 10

*The players agree that Beth's character, Altiss, should be the first to approach the Duke. Beth wants to add a +1 modifier to the rest of the party's Action Scores by getting the Duke to like them. Her plan is to put the Duke in a good mood by complementing him on his party. The Gamemaster decides the Duke gets a lot of compliments, so one must be a **skilled** orator to have a reasonable chance of success. The Gamemaster sets the Difficulty Score for Altiss's Action to DS 6.*

ACTION: Butter Up the Duke (Aid) DS 6

Beth notes that Altiss makes a special point of gushing about the delicious roast peacock, of which they learned

in an earlier Round the Duke is especially proud. The Gamemaster decides to give Altiss a +1 modifier to her Action Score for this detail. Beth also roleplays her speech, and all the players agree it was some top-notch roleplaying! The Gamemaster gives Altiss an additional +1 modifier to her Action Score for the great roleplaying. Altiss grabs her Action Dice and rolls!

Physical Actions in Social Encounters

A creative character might find a way to use physical Actions in a Social Encounter (combat or otherwise). You never know when a feat of Strength, a show of Toughness, or an impressive display of Coordination will help to sway a Social Encounter in your character's favor. If your character is not a mental giant or spiritual guru, do not let that stop you from joining in the fun.

Physical Actions Example

Wargar is watching his friend's efforts to win over the Duke. Pretty talking isn't something Wargar excels at, so he figured he might sit this one out. He notices, however, that Blackheart's noble allies approaching the debate. Their presence might be enough to sway the argument in Blackheart's favor.

Thinking fast, Steve decides to have Wargar create a diversion. He wants Wargar to stumble drunkenly into the nobles and 'accidentally' spill his wine all over their clothes to stop them from approaching the debate. The Gamemaster decides that throwing the wine at the nobles is a Coordination Action Check. Wargar can handle that, no problem. Whether they believe it was an accident is another issue altogether.

Social Combat

Occasionally during Social Encounters, what started as an effort to reduce the Challenge's Challenge Points through a graceful dance of wit and wile, devolves into a literal war of words! In these situations, the jabs and jibes become vicious and hurtful, and the only way forward is to completely remove an opponent from the Encounter. This might take the form of undermining the intellectual authority of the enemy's finest scholar in an academic debate, getting a lying barrister thrown out of

court, or demoralizing another suitor to the point they give up and slink away. We call this **Social Combat**.

Social Combat Example

Blackheart realizes that he is losing the battle for the Duke's support. Desperate, he begins a concerted and vicious effort to undermine the characters' reputation and convince the Duke he is making a mistake if he chooses their side. The Gamemaster decides it's time for Social Combat. He determines an appropriate Round Length and has everyone involved roll for Initiative. Let the battle of the wills begin!

Social Combat might occur simultaneously with the other elements of a Social Encounter, or it might be the primary focus of the Encounter. It is up to the Gamemaster to properly set the stage and expectations for the players.

Rounds and Initiative

In Social Combat, Round Length is typically 15 minutes or less. This keeps the scene moving and helps to represent the quick, impassioned back and forth of Social Combat. Since, like regular combat, Social Combat can remove an NPC or character from the scene, it is best to use Initiative for the sake of fairness.

Social Combat Attacks

For characters, the Primary Attribute for Social Combat Attacks is typically Intellect or Presence. For NPCs, it is Mind or Spirit. As always, it is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine the right Primary Attribute based on the Action you describe. It is also the player's responsibility to describe the form of their attack in as much detail as possible. Simply stating "I make a Mind Attack Action" is not enough. Instead, the player should strive for something like, "I attack their argument, demonstrating that their idea was only true during the reign of the previous monarch and that by the modern legal standards, the law must be applied in the fashion I've described!"

NPC Attacks

If the NPC is well-suited to Social Combat, such as a Major Domo or a King, they may already have Social Attack Actions listed in their statblock. If they do not,

the Gamemaster should determine the Attack Action Score by starting with the NPC's Mind or Spirit Attribute and then modifying as they deem appropriate for the type of Attack Action they have described for the NPC.

Defense Scores

Social Combat Attacks are made against either Mind Defense or Spirit Defense. For both characters and NPCs, any bonuses from MO, Focus, or Specialization are already included in the Mind and Spirit Defense scores, although it is up to you and the Gamemaster to make the final determination.

Social Combat Modifiers

Modifiers to the Action Scores or Difficulty Scores in Social Combat could include:

- Irrefutable evidence
- An expert witness
- An impeccable reputation in the eyes of the audience
- Appropriate clothing or props
- The vocal support of an important NPC
- Fantastic roleplaying by the player

Story elements like these may add +1 modifiers with the Gamemaster's approval.

Vitality and Challenge Points

The Effect of a successful Social Combat Action against a character is applied to Mind Vitality or Spirit Vitality depending on the nature of the Attack. The Effect of successful Social Combat Actions against an NPC reduces the NPC's Challenge Points. If an NPC's Challenge Points or the character's Vitality Points are reduced to zero in Social Combat, they are **Discredited**.

Discredited

An NPC or character **Discredited** in Social Combat temporarily lose their relevance in the Encounter. The exact nature of this is up to the Gamemaster: perhaps the defeated party has lost their will to fight, been emotionally broken, or are no longer taken seriously by those present. Once Discredited, the individual is unable to further influence the Social Encounter and is relegated to the role of spectator.

Social Wounds, Death, and Recovery

Discredited individuals are not knocked prone, are still able to communicate and act in ways that do not directly impact the Social Encounter, do not take Wounds, and do not die or make Death Checks. Once the Social Encounter ends, characters regain all lost Vitality Points and NPCs are returned to their former lives (and may still cause problems for the players in the future!)

At the Gamemaster's discretion, however, there may be long term consequences for being Discredited. People in the area may hear about the character's loss, making social interactions with those individuals more difficult in the future. A loss might also change your character's general reputation or create lasting self-doubt that impacts your character in future Social Combats.

Transition to a Combat Encounter

Sometimes Social Combat turns into plain old physical combat. If this happens, restore all the combatants' Challenge Points, Mind Vitality Points, and Spirit Vitality Points to their maximums and proceed according to the rules given in the **Chapter 6: Combat Encounters**.

Social Encounter Actions

The following are some of the most common Actions you might want your character to take during a Social Encounter and advice for how to use the rules described

in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges** and **Chapter 5: Action Types** to perform the Action. As always, these are suggestions. In the end, it is always up to you and the Gamemaster to determine the best way to resolve an Action in your game.

Limits of Social Actions

A successful Social Interaction Action Check is not mind control. No matter how well the character rolls, they cannot force a person to do something that is in opposition to their beliefs, values, and morals. They might make the person second guess their choices, but in the end, you can't force the target to do something they really don't want to.

Action Examples

Listed in the table below are examples of Actions regularly performed during Social Encounters. The table contains the following information:

- **Action:** The name of the Action the character wants to take.
- **Description:** A short description of the Action.
- **Attribute:** The Primary Attribute typically used when performing this sort of Action.
- **Difficulty:** Things that are used to determine the base Difficulty Score for this sort of Action.

Modifiers: Things that commonly modify the Difficulty Score or Action Score for this sort of Action.

Social Encounter Action Examples

Action	Description	Attribute	Difficulty	Modifiers
Aggravate	Insult, offend, or frustrate a target to make them angry.	Intellect, Creativity, or Presence	Target's self-control, experience with frustrating situations	Physical reinforcement, familiarity with the target
Compliment	Make the target like you more using compliments.	Intellect, Creativity, or Presence	Target's level of narcissism, target's self-confidence,	Truth of the compliment, familiarity with the target
Convince	Get the target to agree to your request or with your point of view.	Intellect, Creativity, or Presence	Size of the ask, how aligned it is with what the target already wants	Bribes, trust, past experience
Deceive	Get the target to believe something that is patently untrue.	Intellect, Creativity, or Presence	The size of the difference between reality and the deception	Evidence, authority, attractiveness of the deception
Demoralize	Undermine the target's will to continue a particular course of action.	Intellect, Creativity, or Presence	The target's self-confidence	Conditions, evidence
Disguise	Change one's appearance to look like someone or something else.	Creativity or Awareness	The amount of difference between the target's natural appearance and the disguised appearance	Makeup, props, costumes, familiarity with the subject
Entertain	Please an audience with an artistic performance	Creativity or Presence	Audience mood	Appropriateness of performance, props and sets, music
Impersonate	Pretend to be someone you are not through voice and behavior.	Creativity or Presence	How familiar they are with the person or type of person being impersonated	Disguise, lighting, gullibility
Impress	Win favor by impressing another person.	By Action	How easily the target is impressed by an Action of that sort, target's level of skill in the activity	Showmanship
Inspire	Encourage others to persevere in the face of opposition.	Presence	The danger, difficulty, or hardship posed by the problem the targets must overcome.	Conditions, presence of enemies/allies, past success/failure
Intimidate	Convince through fear.	Strength or Presence	Size of the ask, how aligned it is with what the target already wants	Appearance, weapons, past actions, morale, past experience
Seduce	Increase your attractiveness to a potential romantic partner.	Presence	Target's current level of attraction to your character	Appearance, past experience, target's obligations
Sense	Assess a target's truthfulness, emotional state, or intentions	Intellect or Awareness	Opposed roll if the target is trying to deceive, otherwise Gamemaster judgement	Physical indicators, evidence, familiarity

Chapter 11: Magic and Spellcasting

Magic is an exceptionally powerful force. When wielded properly, spellcasters can achieve the impossible. When wielded improperly, magic can tear apart the very essence of the spellcaster's mind and spirit.

In Cool Name RPG, casting a spell is an Action Check, and it follows all the same rules presented in **Chapter 2: Actions and Action Checks** and **Chapter 5: Action Types**. In addition, spellcasting Action Checks are treated as Stunts, since the effects are about as far from Reasonably Possible as you can get. If the spellcasting Action Check fails, the spellcaster loses Vitality Points.

Performing Actions using magic, however, does not even require Vaguely Plausible conditions. With magic, you *can* build a fire underwater, move instantly from one point to another, or perform similarly amazing feats, with nothing but your will and a bit of magical energy. For this reason, the Difficulty Scores for spellcasting Action Checks have additional modifiers for range, area of effect, and other factors.

Finally, due to the power of magic within the context of the game mechanics, if you want your character to cast spells you must select Spellcaster as one of your character's Exceptional Abilities. See **Chapter 12: Character Creation** for more information.

Designer Note: Spells Without Story

You'll notice we include very little "color text" in these rules. Does magic come from patrons, such as gods or demons? Does magical power come from another realm? Or does it come from the character's own store of internal mana?

These questions, while vital to building a cool fantasy setting, are less important when it comes to understanding the spellcasting rules. Once you understand the rules, you can apply whatever arcane

explanations you wish to create the fantastic fantasy story you desire.

Spellcasting Action Check

When you want to cast a spell, you make a **Spellcasting Action Check**. Spellcasting uses the standard rules for making Action Checks described in **Chapter 2: Actions and Action Checks** and **Chapter 5: Action Types**. Exceptions to those rules are described in this chapter.

What is a Spellcaster MO?

A Spellcaster MO is an MO where the character accomplishes most tasks using spells. Examples include Wizard and Cleric.

Primary Attribute

The Primary Attribute used to determine the Action Score for a Spellcasting Action Check depends on your Spellcaster MO. Here are the four most common Spellcaster MOs and their Spellcasting Primary Attributes.

Wizard: Intellect

Sorcerer: Creativity

Cleric: Presence

Druid: Awareness

The listed Primary Attribute is representative of the way a character with the that MO casts spells, thinks about magical power, and understands the role of magic in the universe.

It is possible for a character to have the ability to cast spells (by choosing the Spellcaster Exceptional Ability) without taking a Spellcaster MO. In this case, it is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine the appropriate Primary Attribute for your character when they make Spellcasting Action Checks.

MO

You may only add an MO Score to your Spellcasting Action Score if it is from a Spellcaster MO. Any character with the Spellcaster Exceptional Ability may cast spells, but only characters with a Spellcaster MO

may add their MO Score to their Spellcasting Action Score.

Focuses and Specializations

If your character has Spellcasting as a Focus for a Spellcaster MO, you may add your Spellcasting Focus Score when casting spells. If you also have a specific spell type as a Specialization of the Spellcasting Focus (such as Healing or Fire) and the spell you are casting is of that type, you may also add the appropriate Specialization Score.

Here is an example of a Spellcaster MO with a Spellcasting Focus and a spell type Specialization.

MO	➡ Focus	➡ Specialization
Wizard	➡ Spellcasting	➡ Fire

Action Score Modifiers

As with any Action Check, it is up to the player and the Gamemaster to determine if there is anything that improves the character’s chance of success. For each benefit, add a +1 modifier to the Action Score.

Taking Extra Time

Casting a spell normally takes about six seconds. You may increase your Action Score by taking longer to cast the spell. For each move up the time scale, add a +1 modifier to your Spellcasting Action Score.

Time Increments
6 seconds
1 minute
15 minutes
1 hour

Taking 12 hours or more to cast a spell is handled using the Ritual Magic rules, available in the **Cool Name RPG Expanded Rules**.

Spell Target

Every spell requires a **Target**. The Target can be a person, a space of roughly 5’ x 5’ x 5’, or an object. The one requirement for selecting a Target is you must be able to clearly sense it. Typically, this means you must be able to see the Target, but if you are playing a character that uses some other sense to perceive the world, the Gamemaster may allow you to select a Target using that sense.

Multiple Targets

You may select more than one Target for a single spell. Learn more about multi-Target spells in the **Building Spells** section below.

Spell Description and Effect

Before you make your Spellcasting Action Check, you must describe the spell you want your character to cast. Are you sending a bolt of searing flame racing toward the Target to burn their flesh? Causing a sheet of ice to cover the ground to slow the enemy’s progress? Or creating a ball of light to illuminate a darkened cavern? The better you detail the spell, the easier it will be to build the spell and determine an appropriate Difficulty Score for your Spellcasting Action Check. Of particular importance is describing not only the spell you are casting, but the outcome you want to achieve.

Spell Game Effect

Where the Spell Description is what the world sees, the spell game effect is how the rules are used to execute your spell using the game mechanics.

Spell Description and Game Effect Example

Chris declares that his character, Eldar, is going to cast a spell. Chris’s Description of the spell is that Eldar is going to call upon the ancient powers of the underworld to create a bank of eerie fog that fills the hallway. The desired game effect of the spell is to make it harder for the enemy to target his friends with ranged attacks. The desired outcome sounds like an Obstruct Action, the effect of which is to add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score for anyone taking Attack Actions against Eldar’s allies.

Mundane Actions Using Magic

Although magic is flashy and the ability to create something from nothing is amazing, in truth, spellcasting is just a different way to perform the Action Types described in **Chapter 5: Action Types**. To put it another way, any time another character would use their training or a mundane tool perform an Action, spellcasters can choose to use a spell and their spellcasting training instead.

For example:

- A Fireball spell is just a Ranged Attack with an Area of Effect.
- Invisibility is just an Assist to the Target's Sneak Action Score.
- Teleport is physically moving something from one place to another but at exceptional speeds.
- An Unlock spell is just using magic to make a Pick Lock Action instead of using lock picks and lock picking training.

The key differences between Spellcasting Action Checks and other types of Action Checks are:

- The spellcaster does not require tools or training specific to the desired outcome to add their Spellcaster MO Score.
- The Difficulty Score is slightly higher than a normal Action Check.
- The spellcaster can attempt an Action at range that normally requires close proximity to the Target.
- The spellcaster risks serious injury if they fail their Spellcasting Action Check.

Spells as Weapons

Spells are often used to perform Attack Actions. Attack Actions made using spells work exactly like the Attack Actions described in **Chapter 6: Combat Encounters** except for the difference mentioned above. See **Building Spells** below for more information.

Spells as Equipment

Magic is sometimes used in place of equipment. A classic example is casting a Light spell instead of lighting a torch or lantern. For even simple replacements, however, remember the importance of stating the desired outcome and game effect. In the case of a Light spell, for example, you are effectively performing a Clear Action against the modifier of Darkness. See **Building Spells** below for more information.

Spells and Challenge Points

Spells used to perform an Advance Action or Attack Action work just like mundane Actions with the differences noted earlier. On a successful spellcasting

Advance or Attack Action Check, reduce the Target's Challenge Points by the Effect of the spell with a minimum of 1.

Spell Difficulty Scores

The Difficulty Score for casting a spell is dependent on numerous factors, many of which are unique to spellcasting. See the **Building Spells** section below for details on creating spells and determining their Difficulty Scores.

Spell Failure

If you roll less than the Difficulty Score on a Spellcasting Action Check, the amount you missed by is subtracted from your character's Vitality Points. The Vitality Points are taken from the Type that matches the group their Spellcasting Primary Attribute is from. This means that if you are using Intelligence or Creativity to make Spellcasting Action Checks, on a failure you lose Mind Vitality Points, but if you are using Presence or Awareness for your Spellcasting Action Checks, you lose Spirit Vitality Points.

The effect of Vitality loss from a failed Spellcasting Action Check is handled as per the rules in **Chapter 7: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing**. If the character's Vitality Points are reduced to zero, they suffer a Wound and must make a Death Check as per those rules.

Spell Failure Example

Chris rolls the dice for Eldar's Bolt of Fire spell and gets 6. This is 3 less than the Difficulty Score 9. Eldar has the Wizard MO, so he uses his Intelligence as his Primary Attribute for Spellcasting Action Checks. Since Intelligence is a Mind Attribute, he loses 3 Mind Vitality Points as the magical energy he tried to harness breaks free of his control and tears at the essence of his Mind. This also reduces Eldar to 0 Mind Vitality Points which means he is Incapacitated and suffers a Wound. As per the rules, he will need to make a Death Action Check, but this is his first Wound he'll probably be fine.

Spell Duration

Spell duration is Instantaneous or One Round.

Instantaneous Spells

Instantaneous spells typically include spells that reduce Challenge Points or Vitality Points (such as a Firebolt spell), and spells that change the state of the Target (such as a spell to unlock a door). These spells are usually permanent. In other words, the damage from the firebolt spell does not wear off when the spell ends and the door remains unlocked.

Spells that transform something (water to ice) might be Instantaneous if the Gamemaster rules the effect is permanent, otherwise they last until the start of the character's next Turn, at which point the Target reverts to its previous form (See **One Round Spells** below.)

One Round Spells

One Round Spells include (but are not limited to) spells used to perform Assist, Obstruct, Clear, and Aid Actions. Examples include spells that improve a character's Action Score (such as a spell that makes the Target stronger), add or remove a modifier (such as a spell that makes the ground slippery with grease), or temporarily alter the form of something (such as a spell that makes the Target invisible).

These spells last from the moment the spellcasting is completed to the beginning of the spellcaster's next Turn. At that point, the magical effect fades, returning the world to its previous state.

Maintaining Spells

With the Gamemaster's permission, spellcasters may maintain One Round Spells for multiple Rounds. Rather than allowing the spell's game effect to fade at the start of their next Turn, the Spellcaster can declare they are maintaining the spell.

Maintaining a spell does not require an Action or an Action Check. A spellcaster may maintain as many spells as they like. For each spell a spellcaster is maintaining, they add a +1 modifier to all their Difficulty Scores. This includes Recovery and Death Checks.

Ending a Maintained Spell

The Spellcaster can end a maintained spell at any time without using an Action, even if it is not the spellcaster's Turn. Maintained spells also end if the spellcaster suffers a Wound or is Incapacitated. Finally, Maintained spells end if the Target of the spell ever leaves the spellcaster's ability to sense it or the spellcaster moves to a place where they can no longer sense the Target. Once a spell ends, the +1 modifier to the spellcaster's Difficulty Scores is removed.

Building Spells

A Spellcasting Action Check works like any other Action Check: add up everything working against you to find the Difficulty Score, add up everything working in your favor to find the Action Score, and roll the dice to see if you succeed. That said, there are some elements unique to spellcasting that must be taken into consideration, especially when it comes to determining the Spellcasting Difficulty Score.

In this section, we show you how to create the game effect you desire and teach you about the rules unique to Spellcasting. The process of using the rules to create your spell is called **building spells**. You may build your spells on the fly, or you may build spells in advance. Building your most commonly cast spells in advance helps to keep the game moving. The Gamemaster may even allow a +1 modifier to your Spellcasting Action Score when you cast a spell you built in advance.

If you want some spells to get you started, or if you want to see examples of how spells are built, at the end of this chapter you will find pre-built versions of many classic fantasy RPG spells.

Spellcasting Difficulty Score

Most spells are just the use of magic to accomplish things typically achieved with mundane Actions. For this reason, the starting Difficulty Score for most spells is determined the same way you determine the starting Difficulty Score for the exact same Action performed without magic. For instance, if you want to use magic to unlock a door, the Gamemaster should set the starting Difficulty Score based on the complexity of the lock, just as they would if a character with the Thief MO were attempting the same Action with their lock picks.

Normal Conditions

Difficulty Scores represent the complexity of a task under “normal conditions.” The following are the normal conditions for a Spellcasting Action Check, regardless of the desired outcome. These are used in place of the normal conditions required to get the same outcome by mundane means.

- **Uninterrupted:** Spellcasting requires focus and concentration. Interruptions, like dodging enemy attacks, rattling along in the back of a wagon, standing on the prow of a tempest tossed ship at sea, or any other major distraction may add one or more +1 modifiers to the Difficulty Score. It is up to the Gamemaster to determine what modifiers apply.
- **Verbalization:** Spellcasting requires the spellcaster to intone magical words, phrases, or mantras at full voice. If the spellcaster is unable to meet this requirement, add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.
- **Magical Talisman:** The spellcaster must have a magical talisman appropriate to their MO out and readied. Typically, this is a staff for the Wizard MO, a wand for Sorcerers, a holy symbol for Clerics, or a yew rod for Druids. If the spellcaster does not have their talisman or choose not to use it, add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.
- **Gestures:** Spellcasters must be able to gesture using both hands to properly cast a spell. One of their hands may be used to hold their magical talisman. If the spellcaster cannot meet this requirement, add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.
- **Spell Components:** The spellcaster must have appropriate spell components in hand. The components are consumed whether the spellcasting Action Check is successful or not. If the spellcaster has no components, substandard components, or inappropriate components, the Gamemaster may add one or more +1 modifiers to the Difficulty Score. What constitutes “appropriate components” is up to you and the Gamemaster to decide. Your

game’s setting may also dictate which components are appropriate for different types of spells.

Spell Components and Setting

The standard spellcasting rules for Cool Name RPG require all spellcasters to use spell components when casting spells. This is part of the cost spellcasters must pay for the incredible flexibility and power of spellcasting.

In some settings, certain types of spellcasters, especially Clerics or other divine spellcasters, may not need spell components. In these settings, removing the need for spell components is typically offset with some other restriction, such as a limited list of spells they can cast.

Casting in Combat

Normal Conditions for spellcasting say the spellcaster should be uninterrupted. One of the examples given is “dodging attacks.” This is not meant to imply that any spell cast in combat has a +1 Difficulty Score modifier. Combat casting is a standard skill for adventuring spellcasters. What the example refers to are intense combat conditions or casting highly complex spells in combat.

For instance, if a spellcaster is facing off with a single goblin and wants to cast a relatively simple spell (low Difficulty Score), the Gamemaster may declare there is no modifier. That type of situation is pretty “normal” for adventuring spellcasters.

If, on the other hand, the character is casting a highly complex spell (high Difficulty Score) in combat or if the spellcaster is facing multiple enemies, the Gamemaster may decide that the situation is very distracting and add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.

Mundane Modifiers

Modifiers to the Difficulty Score that apply when attempting an Action using mundane methods might still apply when using magic. For example, a +1 modifier to picking a lock because the mechanism is old and rusted might also apply to attempts to unlock the lock

using spellcasting. The Gamemaster makes the final determination about what modifiers apply.

Tools

No matter the desired outcome, spellcasters never need to worry about having the appropriate mundane tools. The normal conditions described earlier are the only “tools” they need.

Resisted Action Checks

Spellcasting is sometimes used to perform Resisted Actions. Use the normal rules for determining the starting Difficulty Score for a Resisted Action as described in **Chapter 2: Action Checks and Challenges**. The most common examples are spells used for Attack Actions. When using spellcasting to perform an Attack Action, use the Target’s appropriate Defense Score as the Difficulty Score, just as you would for a mundane Attack.

Spell Target Modifiers

Every spell requires a **Target**. The Target can be a space of roughly 5’ x 5’ x 5’, a person, or an object. The one requirement for selecting a Target is you must be able to clearly sense it. Typically, this means you must be able to see the Target, but if you are playing a character that uses some other sense to perceive the world, the Gamemaster may allow you to select a Target using that sense.

Range Modifier

One thing that makes Spellcasting Actions more difficult than mundane Actions is spellcasting includes a modifier to the Difficulty Score based on the distance between the spellcaster and the Target. The modifiers for spellcasting ranges are based on the same abstract distance measurements described in **Chapter 6: Combat Encounters**.

Spellcasting Range Modifiers	
Target Distance	DS Modifier
Self	+0
Reach	+2
Across the Room	+3
Stone's Throw	+6
Bow Shot	+9
Within View	+12

The distance of **Self** only applies when the spellcaster is casting the spell on themselves, on the space where they are standing, or on an object they are carrying.

Note that any spell cast on the space where the spellcaster is standing affects the spellcaster. Spellcasters are not immune to their own spell’s game effects.

Spellcasting adds one additional increment, **Within View**. This is any Target beyond bow shot the spellcaster can still sense.

Limits of Spellcasting

Spellcasting in the Cool Name RPG Core Rules restricts the spellcaster to Targets they can see or sense. This puts limits on some classic fantasy RPG spell types. For example, detection spells (like Detect Magic) or spells that move you instantaneously (like Teleport) are limited to Targets you can see or sense.

Multiple Targets

It is possible to select multiple Targets for a single spell. This is different from an Area of Effect spell (described below) which applies the spell’s game effect to everyone and everything within the area of effect. Selecting multiple distinct Targets applies the spell’s game effect only to the selected Targets.

Use the following rules when determining the Difficulty Score for a spell with multiple Targets.

- Add a **+1 modifier** to the Difficulty Score for each Target beyond the first.
- For the **Range Modifier**, use the distance to the Target that is farthest away from the Spellcaster.
- If the spell is being used to perform a Resisted Action or if the Difficulty Score is based on one of the Target’s Scores, **use the highest Score among the Targets** to set the starting Difficulty Score.

On a successful Spellcasting Action Check with multiple Targets, all the Targets are affected by the spell’s game effect.

Multiple Targets Example

Aria’s companions have all lost some Body Vitality Points during the battle. It won’t be long before one of her friends reaches zero Body Vitality Points and is

Incapacitated. Aria decides to use her Spellcasting to attempt to heal her allies with divine power and restore their Body Vitality Points (a Recovery Action).

The Difficulty Score for a Recovery Action is the Target's total number of Wounds. Since Aria is casting the spell on multiple Targets, she must use the highest Difficulty Score from among her chosen Targets as her starting Difficulty Score. Wargar has three Wounds, the most of anyone in the party, so her starting Difficulty Score for this spell is 3.

ACTION: Cast a Recovery Spell DS 3

Aria is casting the spell on Wargar, Eldar, and Spyder, so she adds a +1 modifier for each Target beyond the first.

ACTION: Cast a Recovery Spell DS 5 (3 + 1 + 1)

*Wargar and Spyder are both within **Reach** of Aria, but Eldar is **Across the Room**. This is her farthest Target, so she adds a +3 modifier for range.*

ACTION: Cast a Recovery Spell DS 8 (5 + 3)

The Action Dice are rolled and she gets a total of 10. That's two over the Difficulty Score giving her an Effect of 2. All three of Aria's companions regain up to 2 Body Vitality Points.

Area of Effect Spells

Area of Effect spells apply the spell's game effect to everything within the Area of Effect.

Area of Effect Shape

The spellcaster must choose one of four shapes for an Area of Effect Spell.

Line: Affects everything in a straight line. The spell's game effect begins in a space **Reach** distance from the spellcaster and extends out to a length of the spellcaster's choosing. The line is roughly 1 yard (1 meter) wide and tall.

Cone: Affects everything in a cone or fan shaped area. The spell's game effect begins in a space **Reach** distance from the spellcaster and extends out to a length of the spellcaster's choosing. The cone's diameter at the end may not exceed a size one increment smaller than the selected length.

Sphere: Affects everything in a sphere. The center of the sphere is a 5' x 5' x 5' space of the spellcaster's choosing, and that space serves as the Target when determining the Range modifier. The spellcaster chooses the sphere's diameter.

Plane: A circle of game effect spread over a flat plane, typically a floor, wall, or ceiling. The center of the circle is a roughly 5' x 5' space of the spellcaster's choosing, and that space serves as the Target when determining the Range modifier. The Plane shape is typically only used for spells that coat a surface, such as a coating of ice, grease, or water.

Area of Effect Spellcasting DS

The starting Difficulty Score for an Area of Effect spell is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Modifier for Distance to Target} \\ &+ \text{Modifier for Length or Diameter} \\ &= \text{Area of Effect Spellcasting DS} \end{aligned}$$

Range: For Line and Cone shapes, the Target is always a space **Reach** distance from the spellcaster. For Sphere and Plane shapes, the spellcaster chooses the Target space.

Length/Diameter: For all shapes, the spellcaster chooses the size of the spell, selecting a length or diameter from the range increments listed on the Spellcasting Range Modifiers table. Keep in mind that everything in the Area of Effect, including the spellcaster, are affected by the spell's game effect.

Lightning Bolt Example

*Early in the combat, Eldar decides to fire a bolt of lightning down the hall at his enemies. He wants to hit all the enemies in the hall, so he casts it as a Line shaped Area of Effect spell. The Target space for a Line spell is always a space **Reach** away from the spellcaster, so this adds +2 to the Difficulty Score. Eldar wants the lightning to extend out to a **Stone's Throw Away**, so that adds +6.*

ACTION: Cast Lightning Spell (AOE Line) DS 8 (2 Reach Range + 6 Stone's Throw Length)

Fireball Example

Later, the party is battling bandits in the badlands. A group of archers are behind a wagon a Stone's Throw Away, firing arrows at the characters. Eldar wants to drop a fireball on the bandit archers. Since the archers are a Stone's Throw Away, this adds +6 to his Difficulty Score. Fortunately, the bandits are clustered in a space no bigger than Across the Room, so Eldar chooses Across the Room for the fireball's diameter. This adds +3 to the Difficulty Score

ACTION: Cast Fireball (AOE Sphere) DS 9 (6 Stone's Throw Range + 3 Across the Room Diameter)

Divine Inspiration Example

Aria and her companions have hired a troupe of dancers to perform with them at the King's coronation. It's exceptionally important to the characters that this performance go well, so Aria decides to call upon her god to provide the dancers with divine inspiration. Aria's player wants Aria to use Spellcasting to perform an Aid Action that benefits everyone within the Area of Effect. Since Aria is performing at center stage, she casts the spell on herself. Range of **Self** doesn't add anything to the Difficulty Score. The other performers are scattered around the stage, a space roughly the size of **Across the Room** in diameter, so she selects Across the Room as the spell's diameter. This adds +3 to the Difficulty Score.

ACTION: Cast Divine Inspiration (AOE Sphere) DS 3

The Gamemaster declares that casting this spell while dancing adds a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score.

ACTION: Cast Divine Inspiration (AOE Sphere) DS 4 (3 + 1 distraction modifier)

Aria rolls to cast the spell. If she succeeds, Performance Action Checks made by anyone within the Area of Effect will have a +1 modifier applied to their Action Score as the holy energies of Aria's god inspire them to greatness. Aria may choose to maintain her spell for the entire performance, but then her own Action Checks will have a +1 modifier applies to the Difficulty Scores.

Barriers

Depending on the spell's description and the spell's game effect, barriers like walls or furniture may block

the spell's game effect. It is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine if a barrier blocks the spell's game effect enough that a character, object, or NPC within the Area of Effect is unaffected by the spell.

Resisting Area of Effect Game Effects

Area of Effect spells, regardless of the chosen game effect, are Resisted Actions. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, affected Targets must make an Action Check to resist the spell's game effect, with a Difficulty Score equal to the Spellcasting Roll. If the roll to resist succeeds, the Target does not suffer the spell's game effects. In addition, on a success the Target may immediately move out of the spell's Area of Effect without using an Action. If the Target rolls lower than the Difficulty Score, they suffer the spell's game effect.

The Primary Attribute used to resist an Area of Effect Spell is determined by the Gamemaster and depends on the spell. To avoid falling on a slippery sheet of ice, the Gamemaster might require a Coordination Action Check. To avoid taking damage from an exploding fireball, however, the Gamemaster might call for a Dodge Defense Action Check. See **Chapter 6: Combat Encounters** for more information on Area of Effect in combat.

If an NPC or character within a spell's Area of Effect is willing to accept the spell's game effect, they do not need to roll to resist. This typically arises for spells that heal, protect, or enhance the characters.

When to Resist Area of Effect Spells

Those affected by an Area of Effect spell (and thus needing to resist any harmful game effects) include:

- Targets within the Area of Effect when the spell is successfully cast.
- Targets that Move into or through the Area of Effect of a Maintained Area of Effect Spell on their Turn.
- Targets that begin their Turn on the following Round inside the Area of Effect of a Maintained Area of Effect spell.

You never suffer from, benefit from, or need to resist an Area of Effect game effect more than once each Round,

and you are only impacted by the spell's game effect once each Round.

Remember that Area of Effect spells impact everyone and everything within the area of effect, living or non-living, friend or foe. If you want to cast a spell that only affects specific combatants, use the rules for casting a spell with Multiple Targets.

Targets Affected Example

On Initiative 8, Eldar casts an Area of Effect spell that fills a room with a cloud of acidic gas. As soon as the spell is cast, every NPC, character, or object within the Area of Effect rolls to resist the spell's game effect, including the goblins' orc commander. The orc commander fails to resist the spell's game effect and loses 3 Challenge Points as the acid burns his flesh.

The orc commander takes his Turn on Initiative 3 of the same Round. The orc commander does not need to resist the spell's game effect again, since he already resisted the spell's game effect once this Round. If Eldar maintains the spell and the orc commander remains inside the Area of Effect, he will need to resist the spell's game effect again on his Turn next Round.

On Initiative 1, the bumbling goblin messenger rushes into the room to deliver a message to the orc commander. The goblin has moved into the Area of Effect and has not rolled to resist yet this Round. He must roll to resist the spell's game effect immediately. If the spell is maintained and the goblin messenger is still within the Area of Effect on his next Turn, he will have to resist again next Round on Initiative 1.

Maintaining Area of Effect Spells

Area of Effect spells may be cast as Instantaneous spells or as One Round spells, but you must declare your intention before you cast the spell and the Gamemaster must approve.

If cast as an Instantaneous spell, all the NPCs, characters, and objects within the Area of Effect must resist the spell's game effect the moment the spell is successfully cast. Once all resistance Action Checks are completed, the spell's game effect ends.

If cast as a One Round spell, the spell's game effect remains until the beginning of the spellcaster's next Turn. **Casting an Area of Effect spell as a One Round spell adds a +1 modifier** to spellcasting Difficulty Score.

With the Gamemaster's permissions, Area of Effect spells cast as a One Round spell may be maintained. See **Maintaining Spells** earlier in this chapter for more information on maintained spells.

The shape, position, and size of a One Round or Maintained spell may not be changed after casting. In addition, for Line and Cone spells, the spellcaster may not move from their current position. To make any of these changes, the spellcaster must recast the spell on a future Turn.

Multiple Game Effects

A spell may only have a single game effect. If you want additional game effects, you must maintain the first spell and then cast additional spells to achieve the other game effects. All the normal rules for maintaining spells and determining spellcasting Difficulty Scores apply.

Multiple Game Effects Example

Eldar wants to perform a Grab Action on the orc commander by animating the vines around the commander's feet and then have the vines squeeze the commander to reduce his Challenge Points.

To accomplish this, Eldar must cast Animate Vines to perform the Grab Action on his first Turn. If this succeeds, on his next Turn Eldar may maintain the spell that executed the Grab and then cast Animate Vines again to squeeze the orc, using his spellcasting to perform a Harm Action.

Although this is handled using two consecutive spells, from a story perspective, the vines animate and wrap tightly around the orc on the first round and start squeezing on the second round.

Spell List

The following are pre-built spells using the rules described above. Each entry includes the following spell traits:

- **Name:** The name of the spell.
- **Range:** The spell's maximum range.
- **Area of Effect:** If the spell is an Area of Effect spell, this shows the size and shape of the spell.
- **Target:** The Target of the spell.
- **DS:** The starting Difficulty Score for the spell.
- **Duration:** Whether the spell has an instantaneous effect or one round (1R), and if it may be maintained (+M).
- **Casting Time:** The amount of time needed to cast the spell.
- **Description** A description of the spell and the spell's game effect.
- **Components** The spell components typically used to cast this spell.

Note that you can modify any of these spells using the spellcasting rules. The purpose of creating spells in advance is to speed up play by having your most commonly cast spells ready to go. We also include a short design note for each spell, describing how we used the rules to create it.

Animate Vines

Range: Across the Room
Target: One NPC, character, or object
DS: 3 + Target Body Defense
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: One Round Maintained
Components: A palm-sized wreath of woven vines

The spellcaster causes vines to spring from the ground and wrap around the Target. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, the Target is Grabbed by the vines as per the Grab Attack Action described in **Chapter 6: Combat Encounters**.

Once the Target is Grabbed all the standard rules for a Grab apply. The spellcaster may make Animate Vines Spellcasting Action Checks on later Turns to attempt to

Drag, Harm, Restrain, or perform any other allowed Action with a Grabbed opponent.

Animate Vines Design Note

With this spell, the spellcaster is performing a standard Attack Action (Grab) using magic instead of their physical abilities.

Arcane Bolt

Range: Across the Room
Target: One living creature
DS: Target Defense + 3
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Instantaneous
Components: A small chip of lapis lazuli

A bolt of blue energy streaks from the spellcaster's fingertips toward the target. The spell reduces the target's Challenge Rating or Body Vitality by the Effect. Armor (Body) protects.

Arcane Bolt Design Note

This is a standard Ranged Attack (Body), just like when a character fires a bow, but accomplished with magic.

Arcane Shield

Range: Self
Target: Self
DS: Your Block Score
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: One Round Maintained
Components: A miniature shield carved from a chip of oak

A glowing medium shield of a design chosen by the caster appears on the spellcaster's arm. This shield allows the spellcaster to use the Block Defense with a modifier to their Block Defense Score equal to the Effect.

Arcane Shield Design Note

Based on Assist, this is a variation on the Defend action described in the **Chapter 6: Combat Encounters**. It was decided that giving a character a Block Defense was a reasonable advantage to offset the risk inherent in spellcasting.

Bull's Strength

Range: Reach
Target: One living creature
DS: Target's Str + 2
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Maintained
Components: A pinch of bull's hair or a chip of bull's horn

The spellcaster increases the Target's Actions Scores for Strength Action Checks by the Effect. A red nimbus which vaguely resembles a bull or minotaur surrounds the recipient.

Bull's Strength Design Note

This spell is based on the Assist Action. Normally, an Assist is limited to a particular Action, rather than a class of Actions. We felt that the risk involved in spellcasting and the cost of maintaining the spell offset the advantage of benefiting all Strength based Action Checks.

Fear

Range: Across the Room
Area of Effect: Across the Room (Sphere)
Target: Target Space
DS: 6
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: One Round Maintained
Components: A pinch of crushed bone and dried blood

The spellcaster rubs the mixed bone and blood between their palms. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, all living creatures in the Area of Effect must make a Spirit Defense Action Check with a Difficulty Score equal to the spellcaster's roll. If they fail, the amount they missed by is subtracted from their Spirit Vitality or Challenge Points. Armor (Spirit) reduces the Vitality or Challenge Point Loss.

If their Spirit Vitality or Challenge Points are reduced to zero, they are overcome with fear. The only Action they may attempt on their Turn is the Withdraw Action. The condition persists for Rounds equal to the Effect of the Spellcasting Action Check. The damage from this spell does not cause Wounds.

Characters may perform a Recovery Action on allies stricken with fear. If the Target's Spirit Vitality is restored to 1 or more, they overcome their fear.

Fear Design Note

Since scaring someone is just a way to remove them from combat without killing them, we treated this spell as a standard Attack against the victim's Spirit.

To properly reflect the spell's desired outcome of defeating without killing, we bent the rules slightly to remove the possibility of taking Wounds. This makes sure no one ever dies from a Fear spell. This softening of the outcome is offset by the fact that characters reduced to zero Spirit Vitality by a Fear spell are attempting to Withdraw rather than Incapacitated, a slightly worse outcome than normal for reaching zero Spirit Vitality.

Fireball

Range: Across the Room
Area of Effect: Across the Room (Sphere)
Target: Target Space
DS: 6
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Instantaneous
Components: A coal from a blacksmith's forge

The spellcaster blows on the coal which causes it to flow red, then throws the coal at the Target Space. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check the coal explodes into a ball of fire with an area of effect of Across the Room. All living creatures within the area of effect must make a Dodge Action Check with a Difficulty Score equal to the spellcaster's roll. If they fail, the amount they missed by is subtracted from their Body Vitality or Challenge Points. Armor (Body) reduces the Vitality or Challenge Point Loss.

Flammable objects within the area of effect may ignite at the Gamemaster's discretion.

Fireball Design Note

This is a standard Ranged Attack Action with an area of effect using magic instead of a mundane weapon.

Grease

Range: Across the Room
Area of Effect: Across the Room (Plane)
Target: Target Space
DS: 6
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: One Round Maintained
Components: An egg-sized pottery jar of cooking grease

The spellcaster throws the jar at the space where they want to center the spell's effect. The area of effect is covered with a coating of slippery grease. While the spell is maintained, moving through the greased area requires a Major Action.

Grease Design Note

This spell uses the rules for the Slow Action to make it difficult for opponents to cross the area of effect. Although the grease is created magically, just like the normal Slow Action Type, mundane solutions for crossing the grease still work, such as throwing sand on it or a board across it.

Players might want to try variations on the spell, such as a greased area that acts as an Obstruct Action, adding +1 all Difficulty Scores for Actions performed within the area of effect that require solid footing.

Heal Wounds

Range: Reach
Target: One character
DS: 8 + Target's Number of Wounds
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Instantaneous
Components: A bit of willow bark soaked in alcohol

The places the willow bark on one the Target's forehead and uses magic to heal a single wound of a pre-selected type. The Difficulty Score is 8 + the number of wounds the character has of the type (Body, Mind, or Spirit) you wish to heal. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, one of the character's wounds of that type is healed.

Heal Wounds Design Note

With this spell, the spellcaster is performing the standard Heal Wounds Action described in **Chapter 7: Vitality, Wounds, and Healing** using magic.

Light

Range: Self
Area of Effect: Across the Room (Sphere)
Target: Carried Item
DS: 6
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: One Round Maintained
Components: A pinch of sulfur

The spellcaster touches a small object, causing it to glow with a brightness equal to a lit torch.

Light Design Note

The measurable game effect of this spell is a Clear Action to remove modifiers for darkness or dim light. It also provides the usual benefits of allowing the characters to see in dark places. We felt the spell is one where a Novice Caster would have a good chance of success (DS 3) and the Across the Room Area of Effect adds an additional 3 to the Difficulty Score (DS 6).

Mage Hand

Range: Reach
Target: One Object
DS: 3
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: One Round Maintained
Components: A two-inch long, quarter-inch diameter maple rod tied with five red silken strings

The spellcaster summons an ethereal hand to perform a simple physical task such as opening a door, pulling a lever, or moving a non-living object of 20 pounds or less. The ethereal hand cannot be used against NPCs, characters, or other living Targets, although with the Gamemaster's permission it could be employed to button up a person's coat or untie their shoelaces. It may not be used for anything that requires an Action Check.

Mage Hand Design Note

Mage Hand is a classic wizard's tool, used for everything from opening doors to summoning spellbooks from across the room. Since it's just an Interact Action used to perform simple tasks at range and may not be used for Action Checks, the only thing included in the Difficulty Score is the Range modifier.

Recovery (Body)

Range: Reach
Target: One character
DS: 2 + Target's Total Number of Wounds
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Instantaneous
Components: Two tea leaves

The spellcaster crushes the leaves and sprinkles them over the Target's body. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, the Target recovers a number of Body Vitality Points equal to the Effect of the spell up to their maximum.

Recovery Design Note

This is the standard Recovery Action Type performed using magic instead of mundane skills.

Sleep

Range: Across the Room
AOE: Across the Room (Sphere)
Target: Space
DS: 6
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Instantaneous
Components: A pinch of fine purified sand

The spellcaster throws the sand out in an arc in the direction of their Target. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, all living creatures in the Area of Effect must make a Mind Defense Action Check with a Difficulty Score equal to the spellcaster's roll. If they fail, the amount they missed by is subtracted from their Mind Vitality or Challenge Points. Armor (Mind) reduces the Vitality or Challenge Point Loss. If their Mind Vitality or Challenge Points are reduced to zero, they fall into a deep slumber for a number of hours equal to the

Spellcasting Action Check's Effect. The damage from this spell does not cause Wounds.

Characters may perform a Recovery Action on sleeping allies. If the Target's Mind Vitality is restored to 1 or more, they awaken.

Sleep Design Note

Since putting someone to Sleep is just a way to remove them from combat without killing them, we treated this spell as a standard Attack against the victim's Mind. It is a spherical Area of Effect spell with a diameter of Across the Room, so the starting Difficulty Score is 3. The maximum range for the Target Space of the spell is also Across the Room, so that adds an additional 3 to the Difficulty Score for a total of DS 6.

To properly reflect the spell's desired outcome of defeating without killing, we bent the rules slightly to remove the possibility of taking Wounds. This makes sure no one ever dies from a Sleep spell. This softening of the outcome is offset by the fact that characters reduced to zero Mind Vitality by a Sleep spell are Asleep rather than Incapacitated, a slightly worse outcome than normal for reaching zero Mind Vitality.

Turn Undead

Range: Across the Room
Area of Effect: Across the Room (Sphere)
Target: Target Space
DS: 6
Casting Time: Major Action (6 seconds)
Duration: Instantaneous
Components: A prominently brandished holy symbol

The spellcaster brandishes their holy symbol and calls on their chosen god. On a successful Spellcasting Action Check, all undead creatures in the Area of Effect must make a Spirit Defense Action Check with a Difficulty Score equal to the spellcaster's roll. If they fail, the amount they missed by is subtracted from their Spirit Vitality or Challenge Points. Armor (Spirit) reduces the Vitality or Challenge Point Loss. The holy symbol is not consumed.

Turn Undead Design Note

Turn Undead is just an area of effect Attack. The fact that the spell only affects undead is as helpful (won't hurt allies) as it is a detriment (won't hurt non-undead enemies), so we decided the pros and cons balance each other out and no additional modifiers were required



Chapter 12: Character Creation

These step-by-step instructions walk you through the process of creating your Cool Name RPG character. The order of the steps here is what works best for most players, but you are not required to follow the steps in order. You can just as easily start by assigning points to your Primary Attributes or end with choosing an MO. Whatever you choose, it will not break the game.

Step 1: Choose Your MO, Focuses, and Specializations

Your MO represents the package of skills, tricks, and talents your character uses to survive their adventures. Your Focuses and Specializations, meanwhile, represent aspects of your MO where you have spent extra time training and perfecting your abilities.

Your MO and any Focuses or Specializations you choose each have a Score. To set these Scores, each player gets **10 Training Points**. The costs to add a new MO, Focus, or Specialization with a Score of 1, or to improve the Score of one of your existing MOs, Focuses, or Specializations are as follows:

MO/Focus/Specialization Cost

To increase your...	It costs...
MO Score	4 Training Points
Focus Score	2 Training Points
Specialization Score	1 Training Point

In addition:

- Your character may have more than one MO.
- You may only add or improve a Focus if you have a Score of at least 1 in the parent MO.
- You may only add or improve a Specialization if you have a Score of at least 1 in the parent Focus.

For more information about MOs, Focuses, and Specializations, and for a list of MOs, see **Chapter 4: Modus Operandi**.

MO, Focus, and Specialization

Examples

Matt is creating a wandering knight named Hawk. He wants Hawk to have the skills of a warrior, but he also wants Hawk to be an expert at surviving in the wilderness. He decides to spend 4 Training Points to add the Warrior MO with a Score of 1. He also spends 4 Training Points to add the Outlander MO with a Score of 1. He also imagines Hawk as known far and wide for his skill with a bow. He spends 2 Training Points to add the Ranged Focus to his Warrior MO with a Score of 1 and 2 additional Training Points to raise his Ranged Focus Score to 2.

When Matt is finished, Hawk has:

Warrior MO 1
Ranged Focus 2
Outlander MO 1

Melanie, meanwhile, is creating a Sorcerer. She considers spending 8 Training Points to give her character Sorcerer MO 2, but instead she decides to spend 4 Training Points for Sorcerer MO 1 and 4 Training Points for Spellcasting Focus 2.

She also imagines that her Sorcerer is a bit of an anti-hero and is known for their skills with spells that curse and control their victims. To represent this, she spends 1 Training Point to add Curse Specialization 1 and 1 Training Point to add Control Specialization 1.

When she is finished, she has:

Sorcerer 1
Spellcasting 2
Control 1
Curse 1

Melanie likes this because it means she'll be able to add 4 to her Spellcasting Action Scores when casting Curse spells (1 Sorcerer + 2 Spellcasting + 1 Curse). This should help her avoid costly (and painful) Spellcasting failures.

Step 2: Select Exceptional Abilities

Characters in a Cool Name RPG game are down-to-earth heroes with a handful of exceptional abilities. This is the point in character creation when you get to choose your character’s Exceptional Abilities.

At the end of this chapter is a list of Exceptional Abilities and the game benefits your character gets when you choose that Ability. Choose two Exceptional Abilities for your character: one Primary Exceptional Ability and one Secondary Exceptional Ability.

For your character’s Primary Exceptional Ability they get the game benefit listed in the Primary column. For their Secondary Exceptional Ability, they get the game benefit listed in the Secondary column.

You may not choose the same Exceptional Ability for both your Primary and Secondary Exceptional Abilities.

Step 3: Set Primary Attribute Scores

You have **18 Attribute Points** to distribute between your character’s nine Primary Attributes. Each Attribute Point increases one of your Primary Attributes Scores by 1. For instance, if you wanted a Strength Score of 3 and a Coordination Score of 2, that would use up 5 of your 20 Attribute Points.

No Primary Attribute may start with a Score higher than 3 unless you have the Exceptional Ability called **Exceptional Attributes**. In addition, no Primary Attribute may start with a Score lower than 1.

To give you a sense of what a “good” different Primary Attribute Scores are, we’ve included a list of Primary Attribute Scores and what that Score represents for humans.

HUMAN ATTRIBUTE SCORES	
Score	Description
0	Insignificant
1	Below Average
2	Average
3	Superior
4	Exceptional
5	World-class
6	Legendary

Step 4: Select a Lineage

Choose a Lineage for your character from the list of lineages available in your Adventure’s setting, and add the lineage’s special traits and abilities to your character sheet. In **Chapter 13: Lineages** you will find a selection

of classic fantasy lineages, including Human, Dwarf, Elf, and Halfling.

Primary Attribute Minimums and Maximums

Some Lineages require minimum Scores for certain Primary Attributes. This means you must apply at least that many Attribute Points on the listed Primary Attribute to select that Lineage.

Other Lineages may list a maximum Score for certain Attributes. For these Lineages, you may not apply more Attribute Points to the listed Primary Attribute if you want to select this Lineage.

The reason for minimums and maximums is to help tell a certain type of story for the setting. For instance, things get a bit silly if a Fairy has the Strength of an Ogre or an Ogre has the Toughness of a squirrel. As with all things, however, your Gamemaster may allow you to ignore these rules if they feel it is appropriate.

Primary Attribute Adjustments

Some lineages include adjustments to your Primary Attribute Scores. These adjustments are a trait of the Lineage you selected common to all members of that Lineage, and typically any benefit these adjustments provide comes with some sort of negative trade-off.

Apply any Primary Attribute adjustments listed for your Lineage to the appropriate Primary Attributes. These adjustments are “free,” meaning they do not require you to use Attribute Points.

Step 5: Equipment

There are two options for selecting your character’s equipment: MO Equipment Packages and Shopping for Equipment.

MO Equipment Packages

Each MO lists a package of equipment characters who start with that MO receive. This includes basic armor, weapons, adventuring gear, and some pocket money should they want to buy an ale at the tavern. If your character has more than one MO, you only get the equipment from one of your two MOs (your choice.)

Shopping for Equipment

If you prefer to pick out your own gear, you can always shop for your equipment by purchasing from the

equipment lists in **Chapter 14: Equipment**. If you choose to shop for your equipment, you begin the game with 250 SP to buy gear and do not receive the starting equipment package for your MO.

Step 6: Calculate Secondary Attributes

The last step for your character is to calculate their Secondary Attributes. The calculations are as follows:

Secondary Attribute	Calculation
Body Vitality	Strength + Coordination + Toughness
Mind Vitality	Intellect + Creativity + Willpower
Spirit Vitality	Presence + Awareness + Resilience
Initiative	Coordination + Creativity + Awareness

Defenses

Each Defense Score is based on a different Primary Attribute:

Defense	Primary Attribute
Dodge	Coordination
Parry	Strength
Block	Toughness
Mind	Creativity
Spirit	Awareness

In addition, the following modifiers may be added to the character's Defense scores:

- You may add your MO Score to any Defenses listed under Defenses in the MO description. If you have more than one MO with the same Defense, may only add one MO Score to each Body Defense.
- Characters may add the Scores for appropriate defense Focuses and Specializations.
- Some weapons modify Parry.
- Some shields modify Block.

Exceptional Ability List

Exceptional Ability	Primary	Secondary
Advanced Training	+3 Training Points to spend on Focuses and Specializations.	+1 Training Point to spend on a Specialization.
Exceptional Attributes	Attribute Maximum during character creation raised to 5.	Attribute maximum during character creation raised to 4.
Exceptional Wealth	<Comfortable> lifestyle at no cost. May increase lifestyle for the difference in cost.	<Modest> lifestyle at no cost. May increase lifestyle for the difference in cost
Follower	Follower built with 16 Attribute Points, 6 Training Points, and one Secondary Exceptional Attribute.	Follower built with 16 Attribute Points, 6 Training Points, and no Exceptional Abilities.
Hard to Kill	+1 to Death Check Action Scores and + 2 Rounds to stabilize when Dying.	+2 Rounds to stabilize when Dying.
Increased Vitality	+3 to Body, Mind, or Spirit Maximum Vitality Points and +1 to Recovery Action Checks to restore that type of Vitality Points.	+2 to Body, Mind, or Spirit Maximum Vitality Points.
Natural Armor	+1 Armor Score of a Type (Body, Mind, or Spirit) you choose.	Not available as a Secondary Exceptional Ability.
Reputation	+2 to social interaction Action Scores when dealing with individuals who appreciate your reputation.	+1 to social interaction Action Scores when dealing with individuals who appreciate your reputation.
Spellcasting	Your character can cast spells.	Your character can cast spells, but Vitality Loss from Spellcasting Action Check failures is doubled.

Chapter 13: Lineages

Your character's Lineage is the type being or creature they are. Classic examples from fantasy roleplaying games include humans, dwarves, elves, and halflings.

The list of Lineages you can choose from is different for every game world and campaign setting, so talk to your Gamemaster about which Lineages are appropriate for the game you are playing. To help you get started, however, we have included rules for some of the most common fantasy Lineages.

Lineage Entries

Each Lineage entry includes the following Lineage traits:

- **Name:** The name of the Lineage.
- **Attribute Minimums:** This is the minimum number of Attribute Points you must assign to the listed Primary Attribute/s if you wish to play a character of this lineage.
- **Attribute Maximums:** This is the maximum number of Attribute Points you may assign to the listed Primary Attribute/s if you wish to play a character of this Lineage.
- **Abilities:** An Ability represents a special Action available to characters of this Lineage.
- **Modifiers:** These are Action Score modifiers for certain types of Actions available to characters of this Lineage.
- **Powers:** These are otherworldly powers possessed by all characters of this Lineage.

Dwarf

Attribute Minimums: Toughness 2
Attribute Maximums: None
Attribute Modifiers: +1 Toughness
-1 Coordination

Born in caverns dark and deep, the dwarves are the masters of mines, lords of the deepholds, and the keepers of the ancient fire. They are as strong and sturdy as the mountains beneath which they were born, and they have an uncanny connection to stone from which the first dwarves arose.

Depth Sense (Ability): If a dwarf succeeds at a DS 3 Awareness Action Check, they can identify exactly how deep underground they are. This is a measurement of how far the dwarf would need to travel straight up to reach the surface.

Infravision (Power): As a Minor Action, dwarves can shift their vision from standard vision to Infravision. When using Infravision, dwarves see infrared light. The warmer an object is, the more infrared light it emits, and the brighter it appears to the dwarf. Fine details and color are impossible to see with Infravision, but even invisible objects are visible to the dwarf if the object still gives off heat.

Stone Sense (Modifier): When making Mind or Spirit Action Checks related to stone, dwarves gain a +1 modifier to their Action Scores.

ELF

Attribute Minimums: Coordination 2
Awareness 2
Attribute Maximums: Strength 2
Attribute Modifiers: +1 Coordination
+1 Mind Defense
-1 Strength
-1 Body Vitality

The elven people were old before the other Lineages even appeared in the world. They are ethereal beings, beautiful and fine, and they move with extraordinary grace. They have an inborn affinity for magic, and it is so important to their lives that it borders on the religious.

Low Light Vision (Power): As long as any amount of light is present, even starlight or candlelight, elves can see as if it were bright as day.

Sense Magic (Modifier): When attempt to sense the presence of magical objects, effects, and creatures, elves get a +1 to their Action Scores.

Unearthly Grace (Modifier): Elves receive a +1 modifier to their Action Scores for Action Checks involving balance and grace.

Halfling

Attribute Minimums: Toughness 2
Attribute Maximums: Strength 2
Attribute Modifiers: +1 Body Vitality
+1 Spirit Vitality
+1 Spirit Defense

Halflings are a stout and sturdy little folk who often go unnoticed by the big folk of the world. These diminutive beings have survived in a dangerous world by keeping silent and staying out of sight. Still, a heart as powerful as a blazing hearth fire beats in their chest, and if pushed to anger, their stubborn fury makes them surprisingly dangerous opponents.

Elusive (Modifier): Halflings gain a +1 modifier to their Action Scores when they hide. They also gain a +1 modifier to their Action Score for Withdraw Actions.

Lucky (Power): Once per game the player of a halfling character may reroll any one die roll. They must accept the new result, even if it is worse than the original roll.

Resilient (Power): If a halfling fails their Death Check, they have double the normal number Rounds to stabilize before they die.

Tough Feet (Power): Halfling feet are as tough as a good pair of boots. They can go barefoot in any environment or climate without suffering any negative effects.

Human

Attribute Minimums: None
Attribute Maximums: None
Attribute Modifiers: +1 Creativity
+1 Initiative

Humans are the youngest of the Lineages, having only appeared in the world during the last great age. Despite their recent arrival in the tapestry of time, they have flourished and are now the most common Lineage in the world. They are highly creative, and they react quickly and easily to change.

Adaptable (Power): Humans may take the Initiative Action as a Minor Action during an Encounter.

Extremophile (Modifier): Humans add a +1 modifier to their Action Scores when making Action Checks to resist the negative effects of heat or cold.

Good Instincts (Modifier): Humans have excellent instincts when it comes to identifying the best way to help others. Humans gain a +1 modifier to their Action Score for Assist Action Checks.

Chapter 14: Equipment

An adventurer is only as good as their gear. Strong blades, sturdy armor, thick ropes, nutritious rations, and a host of other items are necessary if you want your character to survive their Adventures.

Medieval Pricing

The equipment prices provided here roughly equate to prices in Europe during the late 13th and early 14th centuries. Under this system the gap between the wealthy people and the common people is much more pronounced. Using a real-world foundation also allows us to more easily measure what is “a lot of money,” what a common person might realistically afford to buy, and how an adventurer’s wealth will be perceived by a community. In addition, the base economy is based on the Silver Piece rather than the Gold Piece.

How Much Money is a Silver Piece?

It is one thing to say that something costs 1 sp, but it is another thing entirely to understand how valuable a silver piece feels to a person living in a medieval fantasy setting. When you tell a person in your game world something costs 1 sp do they laugh it off and toss you the coin without another thought? Or do they cringe and reluctantly pull the precious piece of silver from their purse, wincing as they hand it over.

To help you to get a better sense of this, we studied the income, expenses, and general cost of living for people in late 13th and early 14th century Europe. By comparing similar cost of living expenses in the United States at the time of this book’s publication, especially disposable income, we can get a rough idea of how much a particular coin *feels like* to a person living in the fantasy game world.

Fantasy Coin	Feels Like...
1 Copper Piece	\$8 USD
1 Silver Piece	\$80 USD
1 Gold Piece	\$800 USD

Put this way, suddenly that silver piece you tossed to the barkeep is a heck of a good tip.

Keep in mind that this is not a tool for converting Earth prices to fantasy roleplaying game prices. Factors such as mass production, global trade, and new materials make a direct comparison of prices impossible. Using the comparison above, however, we know that when you give somebody a cp, it feels like the same as handing someone eight American dollars here on Earth.

Weapons

Weapons in Cool Name RPG have the following qualities:

- **Name:** Weapon name.
- **Cost:** Weapon cost.
- **PA:** Primary Attribute used when performing an Attack Action with this weapon. Some weapons list more than one Attribute. With these weapons the attacker may choose which Attribute to use when determining their Attack Action Score.
- **Attack:** A modifier to the character’s Action Score (+# AS) or Difficulty Score (+# DS) when making an Attack Action Check using this weapon.
- **Parry:** A modifier added to the character’s Parry Defense Score (+#) when wielding this weapon and using a Parry Defense. A listing of NA means the weapon may not be used for a Parry Defense.
- **Effect:** A modifier to the Effect of a successful Attack Action Check using this weapon.
- **Weight:** The weight of the weapon.
- **Properties:** A list of the weapon’s special properties.

Note that NPC Attack and Defense scores listed in NPC statblocks already include the benefits and disadvantages of their weapons.

Weapon Properties

Many weapons have special properties.

Ammunition (#): The weapon uses ammunition in the amount of the number on each Attack Action Check.

Dangerous: The weapon is especially difficult to wield. On a roll of 1 on all the dice of an Attack Action Check, the weapon injures the wielder, inflicting d6 Body Vitality damage. Armor (Body) reduces the amount, minimum of 1.

Fragile: On a roll of 1 on all the dice of an Attack Action Check the weapon breaks and is ruined.

Grab: If the attacker wishes, they may perform a Grab Action with this weapon instead of an Attack Action.

Light: The weapon may be used as an off-hand weapon providing a +1 modifier to the character's Parry Defense.

Loading: Loading this weapon is a Minor Action.

Long: The weapon may be used to attack Targets **Across the Room** but it cannot be used to attack foes at **Reach**.

Non-Lethal: This is a non-lethal weapon. Wounds caused by this weapon do not trigger a Death Check.

Piercing: The Effect of a successful Attack Action Check ignores 1 point of Armor (Body).

Range: The weapon may be used to take Ranged Attack Actions. The two ranges listed are the short and long ranges using the standard distance increments: Reach (R), Across the Room (AR), Stone's Throw (ST), or Bow Shot (BS). Add a +1 modifier to the Difficulty Score for Attack Action Checks against targets at long range or closer than short range. You may not use this weapon to make Ranged Attack Action Checks against opponents farther away than long range.

Slow-Loading: Loading this weapon is a Major Action although no Action Check is required.

Two-Handed: The weapon must be wielded with two hands.

Versatile: The weapon may be used with a two-handed grip. Add +1 to the Effect of successful Attack Action Checks when this weapon is used two-handed.

Name	Cost	PA	Attack	Parry	Damage	Weight	Properties
<i>Swords and Daggers</i>							
Dagger	5 sp	Cor	-	-	-	1 lb.	light, range AR/ST
Sickle	5 sp	Cor	+1 DS	-	+1	2 lb.	light
Scimitar	20 sp	Str	+1 AS	-	+1	3 lb.	light
Shortsword	6 sp	Cor	-	-	+1	2 lb.	light
Rapier	100 sp	Cor	+2 AS	+1	-	2 lb.	light, fragile
Longsword	100 sp	Cor/Str	+1 AS	+1	+1	3 lb.	versatile
Greatsword	200 sp	Str	+1 DS	-	+3	6 lb.	two-handed
<i>Axes</i>							
Handaxe	10 sp	Cor/Str	-	-	+1	2 lb.	light, range AR/ST
Battleaxe	100 sp	Str	+1 DS	-	+2	4 lb.	versatile
Greataxe	150 sp	Str	+2 DS	-	+3	7 lb.	two-handed
<i>Clubs, Maces, and Flails</i>							
Club	1 sp	Str	-	-	-	2 lb.	light, non-lethal
Light Hammer	3 sp	Str	+1 AS	-	-	2 lb.	light, range AR/ST
Mace	10 sp	Str	+1 AS	-	+1	4 lb.	—
Quarterstaff	1 cp	Str	+1 AS	+1	-	4 lb.	two-handed, non-lethal
Flail	50 sp	Cor	+2 DS	NA	+2	2 lb.	grab
Greatclub	30 sp	Str	-	-	+2	10 lb.	two-handed, non-lethal
Morningstar	100 sp	Str	+1 AS	-	+2	4 lb.	—

War hammer	50 sp	Str	-	-	+2	2 lb.	versatile
War pick	50 sp	Str	-	-	+2	2 lb.	versatile
War flail	100 sp	Cor	+1 DS	-	+2	6 lb.	two-handed
Whip	10 sp	Cor	+2 DS	NA	-	3 lb.	long, grab, dangerous

Spears and Polearms

Spear	3 sp	Str/Cor	-	-	-	3 lb.	range AR/ST, versatile
Trident	50 sp	Cor	-	-	+1	4 lb.	range AR/ST, versatile
Glaive	20 sp	Str	-	NA	+1	6 lb.	long, two-handed
Halbred	40 sp	Str	-	NA	+2	6 lb.	long, two-handed
Pike	40 sp	Str	-	NA	+3	18 lb.	long, two-handed
Lance (long spear)	6 sp	Str/Cor	-	NA	-	6 lb.	long, special
Maul	150 sp	Str	+2 DS	-	+3	10 lb.	two-handed

Simple Ranged Weapons

Dart	5 cp	Str/Cor	-	NA	+1	1/4 lb.	range AR/ST
Sling	2 cp	Cor	-	NA	-	—	Ammunition (1), loading, range 30/120
Shortbow	10 sp	Cor	-	NA	+1	2 lb.	ammunition (1), range AR/BS, loading, two-handed
Crossbow, Light	50 sp	Cor	+1 AS	NA	+2	5 lb.	ammunition (1), range AR/BS, slow-loading, two-handed, piercing
Javelin	8 sp	Str/Cor	-	NA	+1	2 lb.	range BS/BS

Marital Ranged Weapons

Blowgun	10 sp	Cor	+1 DS	NA	-	1 lb.	ammunition (1), range AR/ST, loading
Crossbow, hand	30 sp	Cor	+1 AS	NA	-	3 lb.	ammunition (1), range AR/ST, light, loading
Longbow	90 sp	Cor	-	NA	+1	3 lb.	ammunition (1), range ST/BS, two-handed
Crossbow, heavy	100 sp	Cor	+1 AS	NA	+2	18 lb.	ammunition (1), range AR/BS, slow-loading, two-handed, piercing
Net	100 sp	Cor	-	NA	NA	3 lb.	grab, range R/AR

Ammunition and Accessories

Arrows (24)	16 sp				—	3 lb.	—
Blowgun needles (50)	1 sp				—	1 lb.	—
Quarrels (20)	6 sp				—	4 lbs.	—
Sling bullets, lead (10)	1 sp				+1	1 lb.	—
Sling bullets, stone (10)	1 cp				—	1 lb.	—
Bowstring	5 cp				—	—	—
Quiver	1 sp				—	1 lb.	—

Scabbard, dagger	5 sp	—	—	—
Scabbard, sword	10 sp	1d4	1 lb.	—
Sheath, dagger	1 sp	—	—	—
Sheath, sword	3 sp	—	—	—
Whetstone	1 cp	—	—	—

Armor and Shields

Armor and Shields reduce the Effect of successful Attack Action Checks made against the wearer, down to a minimum of 1. A readied shield also allows the individual wielding it to use the Block Defense.

Armor Training

As your character learned their MO, they were trained in the use of certain types of Armor. Each MO lists the Armor Types that members of that MO are trained to use.

You can wear Armor Types that are not listed in your MO description, but when you wear armor untrained, you suffer a +1 modifier to all Difficulty Scores for Action Checks based on Strength or Coordination.

Armor Traits

Armor and shields have the following qualities:

- **Name:** The name of the armor.
- **Cost:** The armor's cost.
- **Armor (Body):** The amount by which the armor reduces the Effect of a successful Attack Action

check before reducing Challenge Points or Body Vitality Points. Even with armor, the minimum Effect of any successful Attack Action Check is always 1.

- **Block:** The amount by which the shield increases the character's Block Defense.
- **Weight:** The weight of the armor.
- **Properties:** A list of the armor's special properties

Properties

Armor and shields may have one or more of the following special properties.

- **Hardened:** Ignores the Piercing weapon property.
- **Padded:** If an enemy inflicts a Wound with a non-lethal weapon, the wearer may ignore the Wound.
- **Rigid:** Adds a +1 modifier to Difficulty Scores for Coordination Action Checks. This modifier stacks with the modifier for wearing armor you are not trained to wear.

Armor	Cost	Armor	Block	Weight	Properties
Light Armor					
Leather	60 sp	1 (Body)	NA	8 lb.	—
Linothorax	120 sp	1 (Body)	NA	4 lb.	—
Padded Gambeson	100 sp	1 (Body)	NA	10 lb.	padded
Medium Armor					
Chain shirt (Haubergeon)	150 sp	2 (Body)	NA	25 lb.	—
Breastplate (Cuirass)	200 sp	2 (Body)	NA	10 lb.	hardened
Half plate (Corselet)	500 sp	3 (Body)	NA	25 lb.	hardened, rigid
Heavy Armor					
Padded Gambeson (Leather Fronted)	500 sp	3 (Body)	NA	20 lb.	padded

Chain hauberk	300 sp	3 (Body)	NA	40 lb.	—
Splint	500 sp	3 (Body)	NA	35 lb.	hardened
Plate	2500 sp	4 (Body)	NA	55 lb.	hardened, rigid

Shields

Buckler	10 sp	—	—	2 lb.	—
Medium Shield	40 sp	—	+1	8 lb.	—
Large Shield	60 sp	1 (Body)	+1	20 lb.	—

Containers

Container	Cost	Weight ¹	Capacity
<i>Bottles, Cannisters, and Vials</i>			
Case, leathern (map or scroll)	5 sp	12 oz.	13" x 4"
Case, wooden (map or scroll)	5 sp	1 lb.	13" x 4"
Flask, tin	3 sp	4 oz.	10 oz.
Mug, pewter	1 sp	1.5 lb.	16 oz.
Mug, wood	6 cp	6 oz.	16 oz.
Potion bottle, clay	6 cp	6 oz.	.5-3 oz.
Potion bottle, glass	3 sp	6 oz.	.5-3 oz.
Potion bottle, leather	1 sp	6 oz.	.5-3 oz.
Potion bottle, metal	3 sp	6 oz.	.5-3 oz.
Potion bottle, wood	1 sp	6 oz.	.5-3 oz.
Vial, glass	1 sp	6 oz.	4 oz.
Waterskin	3 sp	1 lb. (9 lb. full)	1 gallon

Chests

Chest, leathern (small)	8 sp	13 lb.	2 cubic feet
Chest, wooden (small)	6 sp	18 lb.	2 cubic feet
Chest, wooden (medium)	14 sp	60 lb.	7 cubic feet

Pouches and Packs

Backpack, Canvas	20 sp	5 lb.	1 cubic foot, 30 pounds of gear
Backpack, Leather	60 sp	8 lb.	1 cubic foot, 35 pounds of gear
Backpack, Wicker	8 sp	3 lb.	1 cubic foot, 25 pounds of gear
Pouch	3 sp	1 lb.	1/5 cubic foot, 6 pounds of gear
Pouch, component	10 sp	1 lb.,	1/5 cubic foot, 6 pounds of gear
Purse	4 sp	10 oz.	500 coins, 2 pounds of gear
Purse, wired	10 sp	12 oz.	500 coins, 2 pounds of gear

Sacks

Sack, canvas (small)	2 sp	1 lb.	1 cubic foot, 30 pounds of gear
Sack, canvas (large)	7 sp	5 lb.	5 cubic feet, 150 pounds of gear
Sack, canvas (medium)	3 sp	2 lb.	2 cubic feet, 60 pounds of gear

1. Empty weight

Clothing

Item	Cost	Weight
<i>Clothing</i>		
Belt	2 sp	7 oz.
Belt, component	10 sp	1 lb.
Boots	15 sp	1.5 lb.
Boots, hide	22 sp	2 lb.
Breeches	15 sp	1 lb.
Breeches, hide	23 sp	1.5 lb.
Breeches, leather	20 sp	1.5 lb.
Cap	3 sp	4 oz.
Cloak	50 sp	2.5 lb.
Cloak, fur-lined	200 sp	8 lb.
Cloak, wool	150 sp	4 lb.
Chemise	8 sp	1 lb.
Dress	30 sp	2 lb.
Gloves	2 sp	2 oz.
Gloves, hide	2 sp	9 oz.
Hat	10 sp	4 oz.
Hood	5 sp	10 oz.
Hood, masked	7 sp	12 oz.
Hose	10 sp	10 oz.
Plague mask	15 sp	1.5 lb.
Robe	30 sp	2.5 lb.
Robe, acolyte's	20 sp	2 lb.
Robe, surgeon's	35 sp	2 lb.
Robe, wool	180 sp	4 lb.
Sandals	2 sp	8 oz.
Shoes	3 sp	10 oz.
Shoes, soft soled	5 sp	8 oz.
Socks	1 sp	4 oz.
Tabard	15 sp	2 lb.
Toga	20 sp	2 lb.
Tunic, linen	6 sp	1.5 lb.
Undergarments	1 sp	5 oz.
Vest	12 sp	1 lb.
Vest, hide	10 sp	1.5 lb.
Vestments	25 sp	2 lb.
Wimple	5 sp	10 oz.
<i>Accessories</i>		
Clasp	1 sp	—
Hair pins (1 set)	1 sp	—
Mask	8 cp	8 oz.
Ring, gold	8 sp	—
Ring, signet	15 sp	—

Adventuring Gear

Item	Cost	Weight
Acid (vial)	30 sp	10 oz.
Altar, portable	10 sp	5 lb.
Antitoxin (vial)	50 sp	10 oz.
Banner	10 sp	1 lb.
Bedroll	24 sp	7 lb.
Bell (small)	8 sp	—
Blanket	22 sp	7 lb.
Block and Tackle	50 sp	5 lb.
Bowl, bronze ritual (small)	2 sp	1 lb.
Calling card	1 sp	—
Caltrops (bag of 20)	3 sp	2 lbs.
Censer	5 sp	2 lb.
Chain (10 feet)	5 sp	10 lb.
Chalk (1 piece)	1 cp	—
<i>Clocks</i>		
Sundial	1 sp	5 lb.
Hourglass	250 sp	1-5lb.
Water Clock (klepsydra)	1 sp	2 lbs.
Mechanical	3200 sp	10+ lb.
Magical	5000 sp	Varies
Collapsible rod	50 sp	2 lb.
Compass	100 sp	—
Dice	3 cp	—
Grappling hook	20 sp	4 lb.
Hammock	25 sp	—
Handkerchief, linen	5 cp	—
Handkerchief, silk	3 sp	—
Holy Symbol	20 sp	1 lb.
Holy water (flask)	25 sp	1 lb.
Hunting Trap	8 sp	25 lb.
Incense (1 block)	1 sp	—
Incense burner, metal	1 sp	8 oz.
Ink (1 ounce bottle)	2 sp	—
Magnifying Glass	100 sp	1/2 lb.
Manacles	1 sp	6 lb.
Mess kit, tin	6 sp	1 lb.
Mess kit, wood	1 cp	2 lb.
Mirror, hand (metal)	1 sp	8 oz.
Needle, sewing	2 cp	—
Paper	2 sp/sheet	—
Parchment	1 sp/sheet	—
Paper, folio	2 sp	—
Paper, quire	8 sp	—

Books

Type	Cost	Weight	Notes
Book, folio	2 sp	—	More of a pamphlet; 8 pages
Book, unique subject	800 sp	2 lb.	300 pages
Book, rare subject	400 sp	2 lb.	300 pages
Book, uncommon subject	200 sp	2 lb.	300 pages
Book, common subject	120 sp	2 lb.	300 pages
Book, blank	100 sp	2 lb.	300 pages
Spellbook, blank	600 sp	3 lb.	300 pages

Size

Miniature	x3	x1/4	2" x 3" x 1/2"
Travel	x1	x1/2	6" x 4" x 1"
Standard	x1	x1	11" x 8.5" x 2"
Oversized	x2	x2	24" x 19" x 4"

Length

Short	x1/2	x1/2	1/2 thickness
Medium	x1	x1	standard thickness
Long	x2	x2	double thickness

Maps

Item	Cost
Base Map Cost	100 sp
Coverage	Cost Modifier
Local	x 1/2
Local Region	x 1
Region	x 1.5
Kingdom or Wide Region	x 2
World	x 3
Precision	
Few details	x 1/2
Average details	x 1
Many details	x 2
Extremely detailed	x 3
Subject	
Known lands	x 1
Wilds	x 1.5
Unknown location	x 2
Legendary location	x 3

Instruments

Item	Cost	Weight
Bagpipes	30 sp	6 lb.
Drum	6 sp	3 lb.
Dulcimer	25 sp	10 lb.
Flute	2 sp	1 lb.
Horn	3 sp	2 lb.
Lute	35 sp	2 lb.
Lyre	30 sp	2 lb.
Pan flute	12 sp	2 lb.
Shawm	2 sp	1 lb.
Viol	30 sp	1 lb.

Animals and Vehicles

Item	Cost	Carrying Capacity
Domestic Animals		
Boar	30 sp	—
Bull	80 sp	—
Cow	60 sp	—
Chicken	1 sp	—
Dog, hunting	480 sp	25 lb.
Dog, fighting	600 sp	30 lb.
Donkey	100 sp	200 lb.
Duck	2 sp	—
Falcon, hunting	200 sp	—
Goat	26 sp	45 lb.
Goat, kid	13 sp	—
Goose	3 sp	—
Lamb	6 sp	—
Mule	120 sp	300 lb.
Oxen (pair)	200 sp	—
Pig	3 sp	—
Pigeon	1 cp	—
Pony	100 sp	150 lb.
Sheep	12 sp	—

Horses

Draft horse, common	120 sp	450 lb.
Draft horse, fine	240 sp	600 lb.
Riding horse, common	150 sp	300 lb.
Riding horse, fine	300 sp	250 lb.
Riding horse, knights	1200 sp	450 lb.
Warhorse, common	5000 sp	630 lb.
Warhorse, knight's	15,000 sp	650 lb.

Saddles and Supplies

	Cost	Weight
Barding, gambeson	500 sp	40 lb.
Barding, leather, and chain	1000 sp	75 lb.
Barding, plate	3000 sp	150 lb.
Bit and bridle, riding	5 sp	1 lb.
Bit and bridle, war	10 sp	1.5 lb.
Fodder (1 day)	1 sp	10 lb.
Horse blanket	2 sp	½ lb.
Horse collar	2 sp	45 lb.
Horseshoe	4 sp	2.5 lb.
Ox Bow	5 cp	66 lb.

Saddle, exotic	250 sp	30 lb.
Saddle, pack	70 sp	30 lb.
Saddle, riding	70 sp	30 lb.
Saddle, war	100 sp	40 lb.
Saddlebags	20 sp	6 lb.
Saddlebags, dog	10 sp	2 lb.
Saddlebags, goat	10 sp	2 lb.
Spurs	5 sp	5 oz.
Yoke, single	24 sp	15 lb.

Vehicles

Cart	50 sp
Cart, hand	20 sp
Chariot	1900 sp
Litter	8 sp
Wagon	100 sp
Wheelbarrow	6 sp

Tools

Item	Cost	Weight
Tools		
Anvil	58 sp	250 lb.
Axe, woodcutting	5 sp	7 lb.
Chisel	6 sp	8 oz.
Crowbar	7 sp	3 lb.
Falx (type of sickle)	10 sp	1 lb.
Grindstone, sharpening	3 sp	75 lb.
Hammer, small	3 sp	2 lb.
Hammer, sledge	5 sp	12 lb.
Hook, Reaping	3 sp	1 lb.
Hook, Weed	2 sp	1 lb.
Knife, small	1 sp	—
Knife, spice cutter's	2 sp	8 oz.
Net, hunting (partridge)	56 sp	3 lb.
Pickaxe	4 sp	10 lb.
Pincers, Iron	4 sp	2 lb.
Pliers, iron	2 sp	1 lb.
Ploughshare	10 sp	10 lb.
Shovel, wood	8 cp	3 lb.
Shovel, metal	3 sp	4 lb.
Sickle, long handled	3 sp	5 lb.
Thieves' tools	25 sp	1 lb.

Adventurer's Package

Item	Cost	Weight
Waterskin	3 sp	9 lb.
Backpack, Canvas	20 sp	5 lb.
Pouch	3 sp	1 lb.
Sack, canvas (medium)	3 sp	2 lb.
Bedroll	24 sp	7 lb.
Chalk (x2)	2 cp	—
Messkit, Tin	6 sp	1 lb.
Needle, Sewing (x2)	4 cp	—
Razor	6 sp	—
Rope, Hempen (50 ft)	1 sp	10 lb.
Soap (x2)	2 sp	—
Spike, Iron (x2)	6 cp	1 lb.
String (250 ft)	5 cp	—
Thread, spool	5 cp	—
Tinderbox	8 sp	1 lb.
Rations (x7)	21 sp	14 lb.
Salt (1/2)	1 cp	—
Spice (Common) (x2)	1 sp	—
Hammer, small	3 sp	2 lb.
Knife, small	1 sp	—
Candle, Tallow (x2)	1 sp	—
Torch (x5)	1 cp	5 lb.
Whetstone	1 cp	—
Totals:	105 sp 5 cp	59 lb. 6 oz.

Spellcaster's Package

Item	Cost	Weight
Waterskin	3 sp	9 lb.
Backpack, Canvas	20 sp	5 lb.
Pouch, component	10 sp	1 lb.
Folio (x2)	4 sp	—
Common Spell Components	16 sp	1 lb.
Pen, quill (x2)	1 sp 4 cp	—
Ink (1oz Bottle) (x2)	4 sp	—
Vial, glass	2 sp	1 lb.
Bedroll	24 sp	7 lb.
Chalk (x4)	4 cp	—
Messkit, Tin	6 sp	1 lb.
Needle, Sewing (x2)	4 cp	—
Razor	6 sp	—
Soap (x2)	2 sp	—
String (250 ft)	5 cp	—
Thread, spool	5 cp	—
Tinderbox	8 sp	1 lb.
Rations (x7)	21 sp	14 lb.
Salt (1/2)	1 cp	—
Spice (Common) (x2)	1 sp	—
Knife, small	1 sp	—
Candle, Tallow (x2)	1 sp	—
Totals:	132 sp 3 cp	40lb. 8 oz.

Common Clothing Package

Item	Cost	Weight
Belt	2 sp	—
Boots	15 sp	1 lb. 8 oz.
Tunic, Linen (x2)	12 sp	3 lb.
Breeches (x2)	30 sp	2 lb.
Cloak	50 sp	2 lb. 8 oz.
Gloves	2 sp	—
Socks (x3)	3 sp	—
Undergarments (x3)	3 sp	—
Totals:	117 sp	11 lb. 5 oz.

Chapter 15: Advancement

As you complete Adventures, your character will inevitably grow and change. Some of this change is in how you play the character. Perhaps a bad run in with some snakes left an impression they will never forget, or maybe an encounter with a prophetic sorceress reveals an unexpected destiny that changes your character's purpose for adventuring. There are no rules governing this sort of advancement. It is completely up to you how you grow your character's personality.

Character Advancement

By successfully completing a series of Adventures, players also get the opportunity to advance their character's MOs, Focuses, and Specializations, learn new tricks, and maybe even improve a Primary Attribute. We call this **Character Advancement**, and the Character Advancement rules found in this chapter explain when and how you can make these changes.

Story Advancement

Finally, the world in which the characters live and their relationship with that world changes over time, and characters also earn in-game story benefits, like a valuable contact or an owed favor. We call this **Story Advancement**, and the Story Advancement rules found in this chapter show you how to use the rules to expand and grow the world in which your adventures take place and your character's relationship with it.

Character Advancement

In the Cool Name RPG Core Rules, you get to add additional points to your character's Attribute Scores, MO Scores, Focus Scores, and Specialization Scores at key milestones we call **Chapters**. For some Chapters, you even get to add or improve Exceptional Abilities.

The five Chapters in your character's story are:

- Chapter 1: Origin Story
- Chapter 2: Novice Adventurers
- Chapter 3: Heroic Adventurers
- Chapter 4: Veteran Adventurers

- Chapter 5: One Last Adventure

Since many players prefer to get straight into the main story, the character creation rules found in **Chapter 12: Character Creation** are for creating Novice Adventurers. If you decide you want to play your character's Origin Story adventure, you will want to create your character using the reduced numbers listed for Origin Story.

Cool Name RPG intends for all the characters to advance to the next Chapter as a group, although there is no reason you could not have a group of Adventurers at different Chapters in their career. You might also choose to have some characters move to the next Chapter at a different time than others. In general, it is better if everyone moves to the next Chapter together so some poor Novice is not thrown into a Veteran Chapter Adventure filled with Veteran Chapter threats!

Training Points

When you reach a new Chapter, you are awarded additional Training Points. You can add new MOs, Focuses, and Specializations or improve existing MOs, Focuses, and Specializations using the same rules for Training Points found in **Chapter 12: Character Creation**. In addition, you may not raise any MO, Focus, or Specialization Score by more than 2 in one Advancement Chapter.

Attribute Points

In Chapters 1 through 4, you are awarded additional Attribute Points. Apply these points to your character's Primary Attributes as you wish using the same rules described for improving your Attributes in **Chapter 12: Character Creation**. This includes the rules for maximum Primary Attribute Scores.

In Chapter 5, you are permitted to reduce on Primary Attribute by 1 point and raise a different Primary Attribute by 1. You get to do this up to two times, but you cannot lower or raise the same Attribute more than once. The rules regarding Primary Attribute maximums and minimums do not apply in Chapter 5.

Exceptional Abilities

In Chapters 2 and 4, you are allowed to select a Secondary Exceptional Ability for your character. In Chapter 5, you are allowed to transform one of your Secondary Exceptional Abilities into a Primary Exceptional Ability. When you add or improve an Exceptional Ability, you gain all the benefits listed for that Ability in **Chapter 12: Character Creation**.

Stunt Points

In Chapters 3, 4, and 5 you are awarded Stunt Points. For each Stunt Point you may select one Signature Stunt. These are Stunts or specific spells your character regularly performs and is known for. When performing a Signature Stunt, you gain a +1 modifier to your Action Score.

Chapter Details

The following are details for each of the Chapters in your character's adventuring career. Each entry includes the following information.

- **Chapter Name:** The name of the chapter.
- **Description:** A short description of what this Chapter represents in terms of the character's life story.
- **Training Points:** The number of Training Points the player may spend to improve their character's MO, Focus, and Specialization Scores when they reach this Chapter.
- **Attribute Points:** The number of Attribute Points the player may spend to improve their character's Primary Attributes.
- **Exceptional Abilities:** The number and type (Primary or Secondary) of Exceptional Abilities you may add to your character when you reach this Chapter.
- **Stunt Points:** The number of Stunt points you may spend to add Signature Stunts when you reach this Chapter.
- **Length:** The recommended number of Adventures in the Chapter. This is a suggestion, and it is up to you and the Gamemaster to decide how many Adventures are in each

Chapter of your game. Some groups will choose to have fewer Adventures in each Chapter, accelerating the pace of their story and their characters' advancement, while others might have more, extending the length of time you spend in a particular Chapter.

Chapter 1: Origin Story

This is the story of how your character became an adventurer. In this Chapter your character receives the call to adventure and chooses to leave the safety of their old life to seek out their destiny. It is their first foray into a larger, more dangerous world, and if they survive, the springboard for their future success.

- **Training Points:** 8
- **Attribute Points:** 18
- **Exceptional Abilities:** 1 Primary
- **Length:** 1 Adventure

Chapter 2: Novice Adventurers

In this Chapter, your characters begin to make a name for themselves. They are starting to develop their skills, and they can take on more larger Challenges. Their adventures grow more complex and toward the end of this Chapter their quests may take them to neighboring lands. The rules in **Chapter 12: Character Creation** are for the creation of a Novice Adventurer.

- **Training Points:** +2
- **Attribute Points:** +2
- **Exceptional Abilities:** +1 Secondary
- **Length:** 2-5 Adventures

Chapter 3: Heroic Adventurers

The characters are successful, established adventurers and have performed many notable deeds. In this Chapter they build upon their legend, taking on more powerful enemies and facing Adventures where the stakes are significantly higher. These Adventures may take them to distant lands or even other planes or dimensions.

- **Training Points:** +6
- **Attribute Points:** +2
- **Stunt Points:** +3
- **Length:** 3-5 Adventures

Chapter 4: Veteran Adventurers

By the time the adventurers reach this Chapter they are well known and respected heroes. They have defeated many enemies and completed important quests. In this Chapter, the great powers of the land turn to the heroes in their times of greatest need. From hunting down legendary dragons to confronting powerful demons, the characters face deadly challenges that no one else in the land could hope to overcome.

- **Training Points:** +6
- **Attribute Points:** +2
- **Exceptional Abilities:** +1 Secondary
- **Stunt Points:** +3
- **Length:** 2-3 Adventures

Chapter 5: One Last Adventure

It is the twilight of the characters' careers. In this Chapter, the characters are called upon for one last adventure. Perhaps they are pulled out of retirement, forced to strap on their blade one last time, or maybe this is the moment all the adventures in their lives have led up to. Whatever the case, there is a very good chance they will not be coming home from this one, but no one else could possibly overcome this threat.

- **Training Points:** +4
- **Attribute Points:** Reduce one Primary Attribute Score by 1 and raise a different Primary Attribute Score by 1. You may do this twice but you may not change the same Primary Attribute Score more than once.
- **Exceptional Abilities:** Improve one Secondary to Primary
- **Stunt Points:** +4
- **Length:** 1 Adventure

Story Advancement

At the end of each Adventure the Gamemaster awards each player Story Points. You can spend these Story Points to make changes to the adventuring world, your characters place in that world, or the tools and resources available to you while you are adventuring.

Story Points per Adventure

The number of Story Points awarded is up to the Gamemaster, but typically it depends on the length of the Adventure. The following is a guide the Gamemaster may use to help determine the right number of points.

Adventure Size	# of Encounters	Story Points
Small	2-5	5 SP
Medium	6-10	10 SP
Large	11+	20+ SP

Mid-Adventure Story Points

At any time during the Adventure, a Gamemaster may choose to award a Story Point to a character. Reasons the Gamemaster might choose to award a Story Point include:

- An especially memorable, entertaining, or heroic bit of roleplaying.
- Making a major heroic sacrifice.
- Spending extra time between games to draw a map of the party's base, using the rules to build out important NPCs, or writing a great game synopsis and sharing it with the group.
- Helping a new player learn the rules.
- Bringing snacks to share on game night!

Spending Story Points

Story points may be spent at any time with the Gamemaster's permission. The Story Point Rewards Table lists ways you can spend your Story Points. It is up to you and the Gamemaster to determine exactly what your selection looks like in terms of the game's story and the exact game effect of your choice. The Gamemaster always has final say over the nature of the change. Unless stated otherwise in the description you may only select a specific reward once per Adventure.

Enhancing Action Scores

In addition to spending Story Points on benefits listed on the Story Points Rewards table, a character may use unspent Story Points at any time during the game to improve an Action Score. For each Story Point spent, the player may improve the character's Action Score for a specific Action by 1.

Story Point Reward Table

Reward	Cost	Description
RECOGNITION		
Dinner	2	A minor government official invites you to dinner as a reward for your good works.
Feast	5	A local noble lord holds a feast in your honor.
Grand Feast	10	A town or village holds a feast in your honor.
Grand Marshal	20	You are invited to serve as the Grand Marshal for an important festival.
Poem	2	A bard writes a short poem about your exploits and reads it during their performances.
Song	5	A bard writes a song about your adventures and sings it during their performances.
Play	10	A troupe of actors write and perform a play reenacting one of your adventures.
Book	20	A scholar writes a book about your adventures.
Statue	50	A sculptor carves a statue of you to display in an important location.
Commendation	5	You receive an official commendation from a local noble.
Medal	10	The local military commander awards you a medal for valor.
Honorary Title	15	An organization of importance to your MO grants you an honorary title.
Legal Title	30	The local noble leader grants you an official legal title.
Membership	40	A prestigious guild or other elite organization invites you to become a member.
Pardon	50	A noble pardons you for a past crime.
REPUTATION		
Enemies	15	You gain a reputation among a particular group of enemies. This could both help you or endanger you when dealing with these enemies, depending on the circumstances.
Friends	15	You gain a positive reputation among a group of your peers. This is especially beneficial during Social Interactions with this group.
Small Area	15	You gain a positive reputation in a small geographic area such as a single village. This is a benefit in all Social Interactions in that area.
Middle-Sized Area	30	You gain a positive reputation in a middle-sized geographic area such as a town or a small district. This is a benefit in all social interactions in that area.
Large Area	50	You gain a positive reputation in a large geographic area such as a city or a duchy. This is a benefit in all social interactions in that area.
SETTING		
New Business	10	A new business of your choice is established in the area where you are adventuring offering new goods and services.
Improved Business	20	An existing business of your choice within the area you are adventuring improves its offerings, facilities, or services.
Turn for the Better	20	Some negative aspect of the world (bandits, bad weather, resource shortages) where your adventures are taking place finally improves.
Opportunity	10	An opportunity for adventure of your choosing appears in the area where your adventures are taking place.
Festival	10	The settlement where you are staying hosts a grand festival with a market, entertainers, and visitors from across the region.
Wedding	5	An important couple gets married and they invite you to the celebration.
WEALTH		
Coins	1	Through investments, good luck, gambling, or similar means, you come into some money. Gain 50 sp. You can take this reward multiple times.

Distinctive Item	15	The appearance of a piece of equipment you commonly use is improved and enhanced, making it distinctively yours and unique.
Trip	10	Between adventures you journey to a nearby land to see an important shrine, natural wonder, or similar location related to your character's interests.

ALLIES

Love interest	10	You and an NPC fall in love.
Engagement	25	You ask your love interest to marry you and they say "Yes." You must have selected the Love Interest reward previously.
Marriage	50	You and your fiancé are married. A local noble throws you a lavish wedding. You must have selected the Engagement reward previously.
Pet	5	You acquire a loyal pet. This is a normal animal with no special abilities and is not intended to go on adventures.
Contact	5	You establish a contact with a specific set of skills. You still need to negotiate for their services, but now you "know a guy."
Improved Contact	15	A pre-existing contact becomes more useful, either because they trust you more or their circumstances have improved.

SPECIAL ACCESS

Library	10	You gain access to a library containing useful non-magical books and scrolls.
Guildhall	20	You gain access to a guildhall and for a fee may make use of their discounted living quarters and storage.
Expert Craftsperson	15	You are allowed to make use of the services of an expert craftsperson. This includes individuals such as the King's alchemist or a General's personal blacksmith. You must still pay this individual for any work they perform on your behalf.
Expert Scholar	15	You gain access to a learned scholar with expertise in a specific area of knowledge. You may ask this person for information, but you may be required to pay them for their services.

ONE USE BENEFITS

Favor, Minor	2	A specific NPC owes you a single small favor. This favor costs the NPC little or nothing and does not create any problems for the NPC.
Favor, Medium	5	A specific NPC owes you a single medium-sized favor. This favor may cost the NPC up to a week's wages and may create problems in the NPC's life if they fulfill it.
Favor, Large	10	A specific NPC owes you a single large favor. This favor might cost the NPC as much as a month's wages and could cause significant problems, even endangering the NPC's safety.
Last Minute Rescue	25	You can purchase this at any time. During an Adventure when you find yourself in a tight spot, you receive last minute assistance to avoid disaster. This assistance does not solve your problem. Rather it gives you another opportunity to extract yourself from the trouble. It might take the form of a wandering ranger, a fortunate discovery such as an additional exit, or other coincidence that gives you another chance to save yourself.

Chapter 16: NPCs

NPC stands for “non-player character.” An NPC is a character controlled by the Gamemaster. NPCs includes villagers, dragons, goblins, bandits, merchants, and any other sentient being the characters encounter on their adventure.

NPC Entries

Listed here are entries for 18 NPCs common to fantasy RPG settings. The collection of information presented in each entry is called a **statblock**. Each statblock includes the following information:

- **NPC Name:** At the top of the statblock is the name of the NPC.
- **Description:** Beneath the name is a short description of the NPC and their typical role in an Adventure.
- **Challenge Points:** This is the NPC’s starting Challenge Points.
- **Initiative:** This is the NPC’s Initiative Score. Use this number as the NPC’s Initiative during Encounters rather than rolling.
- **Attributes:** These are the NPC’s Primary Attributes. For simplicity’s sake, NPC statblocks only list Scores for Attribute Groups rather than listing all nine individual Attributes. If the Gamemaster wants the NPC to perform an Action that calls for a particular character Primary Attribute, use the Score for the matching Attribute group for the NPC.
- **Defenses:** These are the NPC’s Defenses. The Scores listed here already includes Attribute Scores, expertise, and equipment modifiers. If instead of a number a Defense is listed as “—” it means the NPC is immune to that type of attack.
- **Armor:** These are the NPC’s Armor Scores. The number listed already includes modifiers for natural armor and equipment.
- **Expertise:** These are things the NPC is especially good at. If the Gamemaster wants the NPC to

perform an Action not listed under Favored Actions, but related to one of the Actions listed here, they should add the listed modifier to the appropriate Attribute to determine the NPC’s Action Score.

- **Favored Actions:** These are the Actions this NPC most commonly performs. The Action Score listed here already includes Attribute Scores, expertise, and equipment modifiers.
- **Powers & Abilities:** These are special powers, unusual abilities, and unique Actions available to the NPC.
- **Gear:** This is a list of distinctive equipment the NPC typically carries in addition to whatever mundane equipment the Gamemaster feels is appropriate.

Bandit

Bandits are thugs and criminals who prey on travelers, preferring ambush to a straight fight.

Challenge Points: 7 **Initiative:** 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	1	2
Defenses:	5	2	2
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Ambush +1, Attack +3, Intimidate +1, Strength +1

FAVORED ACTIONS

Club (Melee Attack NL): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +0

Sling (Ranged Attack): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +0

POWERS & ABILITIES

Group Courage: If three or more Bandits are in the same battle, they have Armor (Mind) 1 and Armor (Spirit) 1. This Armor represents their unwarranted self-confidence when fighting as a group.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Bandit Captain

Bandit Captains are criminals who were smart enough or lucky enough to survive the life of a common bandit.

Challenge Points: 20 **Initiative:** 8

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	3	2	2
Defenses:	7	3	3
Armor:	2	0	0

EXPERTISE

Ambush +2, Attack +4, Intimidate +3, Leadership +2, Strength +1

FAVORED ACTIONS

Longsword (Melee Attack): AS 8 (d6+d10);
Effect (Body) +1

Longbow (Ranged Attack): AS 7 (d6+d8);
Effect (Body) +1

Intimidate (Social Interact): AS 5 (d12)

Lead by Fear (Social Interact): AS 6 (2d6)

POWERS & ABILITIES

Group Courage: If two or more Bandits are in the same battle as the Captain, the Captain has Armor (Mind) 1 and Armor (Spirit) 1. This Armor represents their unwarranted self-confidence when fighting as a group.

Sacrificial Withdraw: The Bandit Captain can force any number of surviving Bandits under their command to stay and fight to the death (they may not Withdraw). The Captain gains a +1 modifier to their Withdraw Action Score for each Bandit sacrificed in this fashion.

GEAR

Tattered Pennoncelle: The bandit captain carries a tattered pennoncelle marked with the heraldry of the noble they served prior to their fall to banditry. Returning the device to the appropriate noble as proof of the bandit captain's defeat will likely earn the character favor with the noble and perhaps a reward.

Dragon

Dragons are giant fire-breathing reptiles willing to wipe out entire towns just to increase the size of their hoard.

Challenge Points: 125 **Initiative:** 10

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	8	8	7
Defenses:	8	10	9
Armor:	2	1	1

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Deceive +2, Deduction +2, Intimidate +2, Knowledge +4, Spellcasting +2, Strength +4

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 11 (2d6 + d8); Effect (Body) +2

Claw (Melee Attack): AS 10 (2d6 + d8); Effect (Body) +2

Fire Breath (Area of Effect Fire Attack, Line/Stone Throw, Body Stunt): AS 9 (2d6), Effect (Body) +0

Terrify (Spirit Attack): AS 9 (3d6); Effect (Spirit) +0

Negotiate (Mind Interact): AS 9 (3d6)

Sense True Purpose (Spirit Interact): AS 8 (d6 + d12)

Spellcasting (Mind Varies): AS 10 (2d6 + d8)

POWERS & ABILITIES

Flight: Dragons have leathery wings they use to fly. They can move any distance within Bow Shot with a Minor Action.

Spellcaster: Dragons are natural spellcasters, although they rarely use their magic in combat.

Two Attacks: Dragons may make two Attack Actions each Turn that they choose to Attack.

GEAR

Dragon's Hoard: Dragons tend to stay close to their lairs. Dragon's love gold and jewels, and the typical dragon's lair contains a hoard of treasure worth at least 100,000 sp.

Dragon Scales: The body of a dragon yields enough scales to create two suits of Dragonscale armor. This armor behaves as Full Plate and provides an additional Armor (Body) +1 when reducing the Effect of fire attacks.

Ghost

Ghosts are tortured spirits of murdered individuals who seek revenge for their dark fate.

Challenge Points: 10 **Initiative:** 10

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	0	3	5
Defenses:	2	2	5
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Chilling Touch (Melee Cold Attack): AS 4 (d8); Effect (Body) +0

Terrifying Visage (Ranged Spirit Attack): AS 8 (d6+d10); Effect (Spirit) +0

POWERS & ABILITIES

Flight: Ghosts are unbound by physical laws and fly as easily as a living person walks.

Immortal: Defeated ghosts return with full Challenge Points at the next full moon.

Intangible: Ghosts are immune to non-magical physical Attack Actions.

Invisibility: Ghosts can become invisible to all physical senses as a Major Action. While invisible they may not interact with the physical world but they can still move and observe. Becoming visible again takes a Major Action.

GEAR

Personal Talisman: Each ghost has a physical talisman of great personal importance. This might be an object precious to the ghost in life, the place they are haunting, or even their mortal remains. The only way to completely Defeat a ghost is to destroy this talisman.

Supernatural Senses: Ghosts do not need light or any physical input to “see” their surroundings. They perceive the world with some unexplained, otherworldly sense.

Giant

Giants are twenty-foot-tall humanoids with grotesque features (by human standards) and volatile tempers.

Challenge Points: 40 **Initiative:** 3

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	7	1	2
Defenses:	4	2	2
Armor:	2	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Strength +4

FAVORED ACTIONS

Club (Area of Effect, Line/AR): AS 6 (2d6); Effect (Body) +2

Stomp: AS 6 (2d6); Effect (Body) +2

POWERS & ABILITIES

Long Sleep: Giants can sleep for years without the need for any form of sustenance.

Sleeping Camouflage: Within a week of a giant lying down for a long sleep, grass, trees, stones, and other elements of their environment cover the giant making them very difficult to notice (DS 10).

GEAR

Gold Tooth: Every giant is born with one solid gold molar. This tooth is worth 5,000 SP.

Goblin

Goblins are evil, craven creatures that rely on their numbers to overwhelm foes.

Challenge Points: 4 **Initiative:** 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	1	2
Defenses:	5	2	2
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Acrobatics +4, Attack +2, Climb +4, Withdraw +5

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 4 (d10); Effect (Body) +1

Spear (Ranged Attack): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +2

POWERS & ABILITIES

Dark Vision: Goblins can see as well in the dark as in daylight.

Sneak Away: Goblins may perform a Withdraw as a Minor Action, even if they must make an Action Check.

Kobold

Kobolds are small reptilian humanoids who fiercely defend the belief they descended from dragons.

Challenge Points: 4 **Initiative:** 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	1	1	3
Defenses:	3 (4)	2	2
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Aid +1, Assist +2, Attack +2, Cooperate +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 4 (d10), Coordinated AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +1

Spear (Melee Attack): AS 3 (d8), Coordinated AS 4 (d10); Effect (Body) +2

POWERS & ABILITIES

Coordinated Combat: If a kobold is within **Reach** of another kobold during combat, both kobolds gain a +1 modifier to Body Defense (from 3 to 4) and +1 to Melee Attack Action Scores.

GEAR

Dragon Charm: Every kobold carries a small dragon charm, often worn around their neck on a leather cord, representing the Great Dragon from which they believe their clan is descended.

Low Light Vision: If there is some form of light nearby, even a dim light, kobolds see as well in near darkness as they do in full light. Kobolds are not affected by Difficulty Score modifiers due to limited illumination.

Lizardfolk

Reptilian humanoids, lizardfolk hunt for prey in the swamps where they live in primeval tribes.

Challenge Points: 11 **Initiative:** 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	3	2	2
Defenses:	5	2	3
Armor:	1	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Hunting +2, Swimming +2, Tracking +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 4 (d12); Effect (Body) +0

Spear (Ranged Attack): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +1

Spiked Club (Melee Attack): AS 6 (2d6); Effect (Body) +1

POWERS & ABILITIES

Swimming: Lizardfolk swim as easily, naturally, and quickly as other aquatic reptiles.

GEAR

Spiked Club: The spiked club the lizardfolk traditionally wield is constructed as part of their coming-of-age in the tribe. Losing one's club is a great dishonor, and lizardfolk will go to great lengths to get it back.

Merchant

Whether based at a shop or traveling from town to town, merchants always have something you need.

Challenge Points: 4 **Initiative:** 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	1	3	2
Defenses:	1	3	2
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Appraisal +2, Attack +1, Mathematics +2, Haggle +3

FAVORED ACTIONS

Dagger (Melee Attack): AS 2 (d6); Effect (Body) +0

Appraise (Social Interact): AS 5 (d12)

Deceive (Social Interact): AS 4 (d10)

Haggle (Social Interact): AS 6 (2d6)

POWERS & ABILITIES

Contacts: Merchants always “know a guy.” With the right incentive, a merchant can connect a character with any sort of expert or service.

GEAR

Portable Scale: Every merchant carries a portable scale. After all, you don’t want to be fooled by a clipped or counterfeit coin!

Mimic

A mimic hides in plain site by replicating the appearance of a nearby object to lure in unsuspecting prey.

Challenge Points: 20 **Initiative:** 10

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	1	2
Defenses:	6	4	3
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +4

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 6 (2d6); Effect (Body) +2

POWERS & ABILITIES

Ambush: When an unsuspecting victim moves within Reach of a mimic, it splits open to reveal its toothy maw, and attacks! Mimics get to take one Major Action before combat begins.

Dark Vision: Mimics can see as well in the dark as in daylight.

Shapechanging: Over the course of 24 hours, a mimic can perfectly replicate the appearance of any inanimate object of roughly human size. Once the transformation is complete, the mimic is outwardly indistinguishable from the real thing.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Noble

Nobles are good friends and dangerous enemies. They rule feudal societies with authoritarian power.

Challenge Points: 7 **Initiative:** 4

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	2	2
Defenses:	5	4	5
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +3, Governance +3, Influence +2, Leadership +2, Ride +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Longsword (Melee Attack): AS 6 (2d6); Effect (Body) +1

Charm (Social Interact): AS 4 (d10)

Debate (Social Interact): AS 6 (2d6)

POWERS & ABILITIES

Absolute Power: Within the lands they rule, nobles wield absolute power over all except higher ranking nobles.

GEAR

Fine Longsword: Noble blades are crafted by the finest weaponsmiths in the land. They are stronger, lighter, and hold their edge better than any mundane weapon. Many are also lavishly decorated with inlays of precious metal and have jeweled scabbards.

Orc

Orcs have brutal, violent lives, and the blade of their war axe is their solution to every problem.

Challenge Points: 7 **Initiative:** 4

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	3	1	2
Defenses:	3	2	2
Armor:	1	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Break +3, Drag +3, Intimidate +2, Shove +3

FAVORED ACTIONS

War Axe (Melee Attack): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +2

Short Bow (Ranged Attack): AS 4 (d10); Effect (Body) +0

POWERS & ABILITIES

Elf Bane: It is said that orcs are the shadows of elves, captured by an evil sorcerer and brought to life as a new, foul creature. Orcs receive a +1 modifier to their Action Score for all Attack Actions made against elves.

GEAR

Chains and Manacles: An orc's standing with his war band is elevated every time it returns from battle with prisoners to put to work in the deep mines.

Owlbear

The size of a grizzly bear with the head of a giant owl, owlbears are violently territorial highland hunters.

Challenge Points: 30 **Initiative:** 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	5	1	2
Defenses:	6	2	2
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Climb +2, Strength +3

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 7 (d6+d8); Effect (Body) +1

Claws (Melee Attack): AS 7 (d6+d8); Effect (Body) +2

Grab (Melee Attack): AS 6 (2d6); Effect Grabbed

Harm (Melee Attack): AS 6 (2d6); Effect (Body) +4

POWERS & ABILITIES

Claw and Bite: On its Turn, an owlbear may make both a claw and a bite Attack Action.

GEAR

Pinion Feathers: Although owlbears cannot fly (thank the gods) they do have vestigial pinion feathers. Among many outlander cultures, wearing the pinion feathers of an owlbear you defeated is a way to signal to others your prowess in battle.

Skeleton

Skeletons, animated by necromantic magic, are often used as guardians for tombs and vaults.

Challenge Points: 6 **Initiative:** 3

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	0	0
Defenses:	5	—	—
Armor:	0 (3)	—	—

EXPERTISE

Attack +3

FAVORED ACTIONS

Shortsword (Melee Attack): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +0

Short Bow (Ranged Attack): AS 5 (d12); Effect (Body) +0

POWERS & ABILITIES

Pierce Resistance: Piercing attacks slide between a skeleton's bones, so they gain Armor (Body) 3 against piercing attacks.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Troll

Trolls are the bigger, meaner, hungrier cousins of orcs and goblins.

Challenge Points: 45 **Initiative:** 3

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	6	1	2
Defenses:	4	2	4
Armor:	1	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Strength +3

FAVORED ACTIONS

Club (Melee Attack): AS 8 (d6+d10); Effect (Body) +3

Club Quake (Area of Effect, Cone R/AR): AS 8 (d6 +d10)

Regenerate (Special): AS 6 (2d6)

POWERS & ABILITIES

Club Quake: As a Major Action, the troll makes an attack on the ground in front of it that shakes the earth

and knocks opponents to the ground. All living creatures standing in the Area of Effect must make a Coordination Action Check to remain standing with a DS equal to the troll’s Club Quake roll.

Regeneration: At the beginning of its Turn, the troll makes a regeneration roll. The DS for this roll is equal to the Round number of the Encounter. So, on Round 1 the DS is 1, on Round 2 it is 2, and so forth. The troll regains Challenge Points equal to the Effect of the Regeneration roll.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Villager

Villagers are the everyday people whose hard work keeps kingdoms running.

Challenge Points: 5 Initiative: 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	2	2
Defenses:	2	2	2
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Animal Husbandry +2, Attack +1, Farming +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Staff (Melee Attack): AS 3 (d8); Effect (Body) +0

POWERS & ABILITIES

No powers or special abilities.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Wolf

Wolves are fierce predators that hunt in deadly packs.

Challenge Points: 5 Initiative: 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	1	2
Defenses:	6	2	4
Armor:	0	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2, Tracking +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack): AS 4 (d10); Effect (Body) +1

POWERS & ABILITIES

Pack Attack: If more than one wolf is attacking the same target, all wolves attacking that target get a +1 modifier to their Attack Action Scores.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Zombie

Zombies are the reanimated corpses of the recently dead.

Challenge Points: 6 Initiative: 5

	Body	Mind	Spirit
Attributes:	2	0	0
Defenses:	4	6	—
Armor:	1	0	0

EXPERTISE

Attack +2

FAVORED ACTIONS

Bite (Melee Attack vs. Grabbed): AS 4 (d10); Effect (Body) +0

Claw (Melee Attack): AS 5 (d10); Effect (Body) +1

Grab (Melee Attack): AS 4 (d10); Grabbed

POWERS & ABILITIES

Infectious: A character that loses Body Vitality from a zombie bite must make a Toughness Action Check with a DS equal to the number of Vitality Points lost from the attack. On a failure, the victim is infected and will rise as a zombie the Round after they die using the rules for the zombie’s They Keep Coming power.

They Keep Coming: Each time a zombie is Defeated, it returns to battle in one Round with two fewer Challenge Points. When this leaves the zombie with zero Challenge Points, it is fully defeated.

GEAR

No distinctive equipment.

Action Score	Action Dice
--------------	-------------

2	d6
3	d8
4	d10
5	d12
6	2d6
7	d6 + d8
8	d6 + d10
9	d6 + d12
10	3d6
11	2d6 + d8
12	2d6 + d10
13	2d6 + d12
14	4d6
15	3d6 + d8



Character Name _____

Player Name _____

Spellcasting Action Score

Attr. MO Foc. Spec. Equip. AS/Dice Effect Mod.

+ + + + =

Spell Name	Range	Area of Effect	Target	Description
Difficulty Score	Casting Time	Components		

Spell Name	Range	Area of Effect	Target	Description
Difficulty Score	Casting Time	Components		

Spell Name	Range	Area of Effect	Target	Description
Difficulty Score	Casting Time	Components		

Spell Name	Range	Area of Effect	Target	Description
Difficulty Score	Casting Time	Components		

Spell Name	Range	Area of Effect	Target	Description
Difficulty Score	Casting Time	Components		

Action Score

Spellbook: +1 AS if out and able to reference

Extra Time: +1 AS for each move up the time chart

Pre-built Spell: +1 AS if you built the spell in advance

Spell Components: +1 AS if unique or high quality

Difficulty Score

Conditions: +1 DS for violent movement, heavy melee, or other distractions.

Maintaining Spells: +1 DS for each maintained spell

Speak and Gesture: +1 DS if unable to speak in full voice and +1 DS if unable to gesture

Magical Talisman: +1 DS if not brandishing your magical talisman

Components: +1 DS for missing or substandard spell components

Area of Effect: Length/Diameter Range DS + Distance Range DS

Range Modifiers

Self	+0 DS
Reach	+2 DS
Across the Room	+3 DS
Stone's Throw	+6 DS
Bow Shot	+9 DS
Within View	+12 DS

Time

6 seconds
1 minute
15 minutes
1 hour
12 hours
1 day