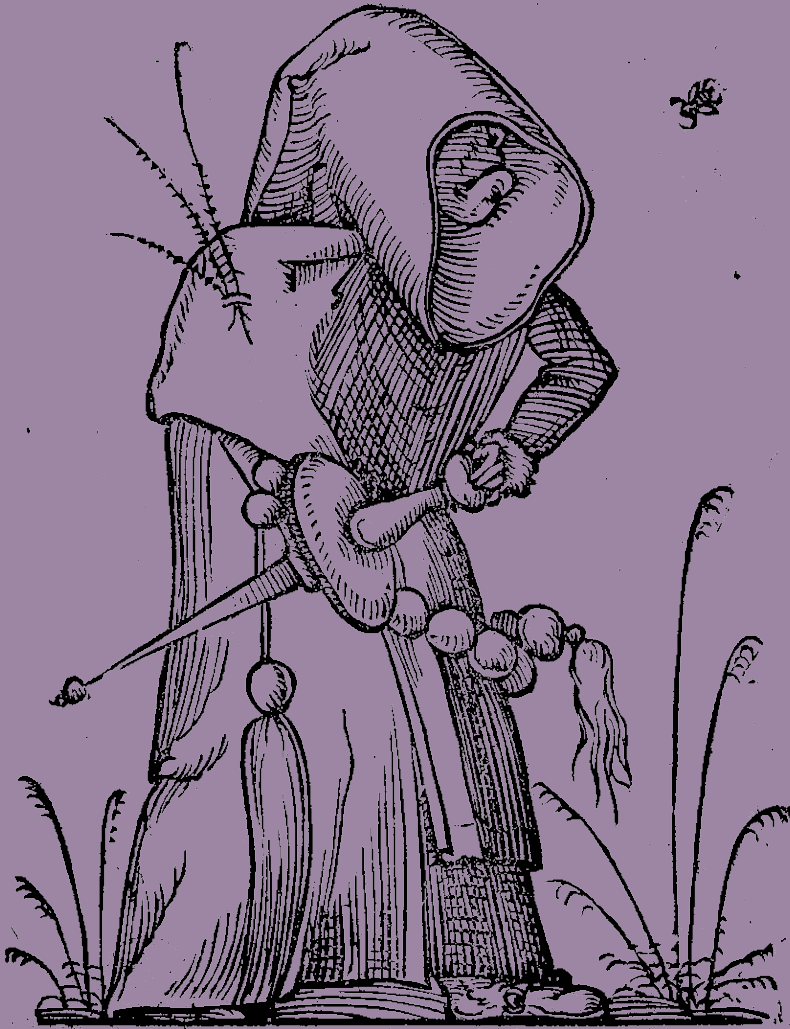


Laevender Hack



Grand Strategy Fantasy RPG

Rules for getting lost, going broke, losing friends, and making questionable assumptions about magic.

LaVender Hack

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Art Francois Rabelais, *The Drolatic Dreams of Pantagruel*, 1565, Internet Archive Public Domain Collection

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*Silly Sally Went to Town,
Cursing Every Thief Around*

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Zounds! Sally Hath Cursed Me Wyth An Interminable Case of the Moonsdays!

Core Rules

Core Rules

They'll certainly kill you if you ever show up back at the manor house. But you have no intention of going back. Who wants to barely survive, serving every sadistic whim of some wealthy asshole? Not you.

They say there are devils out there. Things that will suck the lifeforce right out of you and leave you as a drooling husk. But there are treasures! Treasures of such grandiosity that you can raise an army and come back and lay those bastards low. Won't that be nice.

Or, maybe you'll be ripped apart or poisoned or fall in a pit. Better that than spending one more second here.

Lavender Hack is a fantasy tabletop role-playing game with a focus on **strict time records, exploration, diplomacy, trade, downtime, and getting as much wealth as possible.**

In many places, it works like 80's era old school fantasy role-playing games, but it has some newer tech, such as **success with cost, aspects, usage dice, and tighter procedures** to support strategic modes of play.

Hi! I'm Phil Lewis. I wrote much of the text and designed a few new widgets, but most of *Lavender Hack* is heavily inspired by other games. The big influences are *Whitehack*, *Black Hack*, *Macchiato Monsters*, *Fate Core*, *Dungeon Crawl Classics*, *Czege House Rules*, *Knave*, *Dreams of Adventure*, *The One Ring*, *Into the Odd*, *Sharp Swords and Sinister Spells*, *Ironsworn*, *Torchbearer*, *Dungeon World*, *Adventurer Conquerer King*, *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, and *Old School Essentials*. I'm going to use these highlighted commentary sections to rant and ramble and add more context. Skip them if you're just looking for rules.

"Strict Time Records" is a Gygaxian reference to the first edition *Advanced Dungeons*

and Dragons Dungeon Master's Guide which claimed that without meaningful time records, you couldn't play the game effectively. There is much truth to this, but I've never been very satisfied with the particular way time is handled in the various *D&D* editions. One of the core goals of this system is to make time pressure and resource management central to the game while keeping the fiddly bits manageable. That's kind of my jam. I wrote another game called *Wrath of the Autarch* which is fun if you want a really deep dive on domain management. Word of warning: *WotA* is very fiddly, and feels more like a boardgame.

There is also a primary design goal to hew close to the 1981 *Basic/Expert D&D* core popular in Old School Renaissance (OSR) circles. In particular, I'm interested in using hexcrawl content like *Barrowmaze* or *Hot Springs Island* or *Night's Dark Terror* or *Dwimmermount* without too much pain. *Torchbearer* and *The One Ring* both manage time in very interesting ways, but aren't close enough to *B/X* to make that content very easy to use. That said, those two are among my favorite RPGs, so if you haven't played them, you should!

What makes something compatible or easy to convert is somewhat a matter of opinion. In the case of *Lavender Hack*, most of the conversion involves converting monster armor class and using abstract values for treasure rather than a gold piece standard. Both of which aren't too difficult to manage.

Not sure if *Lavender Hack* fits into the OSR or not, but it's close enough that you can use *B/X* to cover up any holes in the rules, and you'll be in pretty good shape. It also might go without saying, but it helps if you've played *B/X D&D* and even newer games like *Dungeon World* and *Fate Core* to make sense of this. There's a lot left unspoken. If you're completely new, I'd recommend starting with *5th Edition Dungeons and Dragons* and come back after you've played a few games.

Core Rules

Getting Started

The best way to learn how to play fantasy tabletop role-playing games is to find a group or watch videos online. In *Lavender Hack*, one player, the **gamemaster**, facilitates the game for the rest of the **players**, who each control a **character** they create. Characters in *Lavender Hack* explore a dangerous and fantastical world, inhabited by different **factions** to interact and trade with. The characters form a **company**, the purpose of which is to make enough money to escape their miserable existences.

To play *Lavender Hack*, you will need 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 20 sided dice. The shorthand d20 refers to the twenty-sided die. The shorthand 3d6 refers to rolling three six-sided dice and adding the results together. The shorthand d100 refers to rolling two ten sided dice and using one die for the tens digit to generate a number from 1 to 100.

Each player will need a copy of a **character sheet**, and the group will need a copy of the **company sheet**. There are also **exploration sheets** which can be useful during exploration. All of these sheets are located at the back of the book, as well as at ziapeltagames.com.



*Astride His Plasmic Emu,
Clever Noel Smells Trouble*

Ability Scores

Ability scores are central to the game. They are the first thing you calculate when making a character. There are six, and they should come as no surprise: **Strength (Str)**, **Dexterity (Dex)**, **Wisdom (Wis)**,



*Tinky-Winky the Strong
Str 18, Cha 3*

Intelligence (Int), **Constitution (Con)**, and **Charisma (Cha)**.

Ability scores are on a scale from **3-18**, and they have modifiers ranging from **-3** to **+3**. The modifiers are based on the ability score as follows.

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

Ability score modifiers are more important to the game than the actual score. If the game text says something like **add Con** or **+Str**, that means adding the ability score **modifier**, never the original ability score. The modifier added may be negative, thus lowering the result! Ability scores can change over the course of the game (particularly as your character grows in experience), which may also change the associated modifier.

Tests

One of the core mechanics in *Lavender Hack* is the **test**, a d20 roll added to an ability score modifier.

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If the total is an **8 or higher**, the test **succeeds**. If it's below that number, the test **fails**. Frequently, finer granularity is needed beyond just determining whether a test succeeds or fails. In that case, the following degrees of success and failure are used.

Total	Result
<i>Natural</i> 20	<i>Critical</i> Success
18+	<i>Strong</i> Success
8+	<i>Weak</i> Success
7-	<i>Miss</i>
<i>Natural</i> 1	<i>Fumble</i>

The *natural* above refers to a d20 roll that shows the **exact** number in question, regardless of ability score modifiers. For example, if a player has a +2 modifier to a roll, and rolls an 18, the result is **not** a critical even though the total is a 20. Only an unmodified roll of 20 is a critical.

I really wanted to keep the widely known d20 interpretations of 1 as a fumble or massive failure and 20 as a critical success. The roll under ability score OSR variants like *Black Hack* or *Whitehack* are cleanly designed, but there's a ton of cultural inertia around what rolling a 20 means. I also really like the historical precedent of rolling 3d6 straight down for ability scores during character creation. Using roll under with that approach makes for wildly ineffective or overpowered characters without tweaking how ability scores are generated. Keeping modifiers between -3 and +3 and success on 8+ means that even very high or low ability scores aren't going to wildly skew success or failure. At the worst, there's still about a 50% chance of success.

Advantage and Disadvantage

Some situations can result in a test roll having **advantage** or **disadvantage**. If a player has advantage on a test, they roll two dice and take the highest result. If they have

disadvantage, they roll two dice and take the lowest result. This frequently applies to tests (d20 rolls), but could apply to any dice rolls, of any dice type, as specified. If a player has both advantage and disadvantage on a roll, they cancel each other out and the die is rolled straight.

Keep Criticals and Fumbles!

Some situations may allow a player to modify a test result in various ways, or re-roll the result. This may allow them to change a miss into a weak success or a weak success into a strong success. However, **fumbles and criticals can't be altered after the roll**. That's the result!

General Tests

Sometimes a test is called for that does not use any ability score modifier. This is referred to as a **general test**. Frequently this is rolled by the gamemaster, with the results being interpreted based on the degree of success or failure. Random events in the dungeon and wilderness are an example of this sort of test.

Saves

Saves or saving throws

are tests which are reactive. They work the same way as other tests but they tend to be driven by the gamemaster or

as a consequence of some action taken by the player. For instance, if a poisonous beast bites a character, they may have to make a save using their Constitution. As usual, an 8+ is successful. Degrees of success and failure may be used to further distinguish results as normal.



Save vs. Notice

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Procedures

The game consists of an ongoing dialog between the players. The gamemaster gets the ball rolling by setting scenes and situations that the characters find themselves in.

As this narrative unfolds, some fictional situations have explicit steps to follow when they occur. These steps are called **procedures**. Most procedures use tests, and include results for each degree of success and failure. If there isn't an entry for a particular result, assume nothing happens. Some procedures specify which ability score to use, with phrases like **test Str** or **make a Cha test**.

The choice of which procedure to use is not just up to the fictional situation, however! There may be multiple procedures that apply to a situation: some are simple and some are involved. Choosing which to use depends on what sounds fun and interesting to everyone at the table.

Overcome and Create Advantage

Two core procedures are **overcome** and **create advantage**. These workhorse procedures will drive the narrative forward when no other procedures quite work. They will become second nature.



Alfina the Kazoo Bard Holds Court

Overcome

*When you wish to accomplish a task that is both **uncertain** and **interesting**, make a test using a relevant ability. Briefly outline what the character is attempting to do, waiting until after the roll to fill in details. On a*

Critical, *the character has amazing success! Either the effect is much greater or it takes less time than anticipated.*

Strong success, *the character succeeds at the task.*

Weak success, *the character succeeds at the task, but there is a complication of some sort! Perhaps resources are used or a different problem has emerged.*

Miss, *the character fails at the task.*

Fumble, *whatever can go wrong, does. This is the worst possible result.*

Create Advantage

Choose an ally to help with a test. Helping takes the same amount of time as the target ally's action. Narrate how your character is helping and test the most relevant ability. On a

Critical, *the ally's test is made with advantage, and they receive an additional +2 on the result.*

Strong success, *the ally's test is made with advantage, and they receive an additional +1 on the result.*

Weak success, *your help is appreciated! The ally's test is made with advantage.*

Miss, *there are too many cooks in the kitchen! The ally does not get advantage and no one else can create an advantage for this test.*

Fumble, *you're doing more harm than good! The ally's test is made with disadvantage and no one else can create advantage for this test.*

Inevitably in role-playing games, one player wishes to help another one. Create Advantage was crafted for this reason. The name of this procedure, along with the name for Overcome, were stolen from *Fate Core*. The goal here is to provide an avenue for

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characters to help each other in a careful, deliberate manner.

It's important to note that creating an advantage takes as much time as the action the advantage is for. So, in combat, creating an advantage takes a short amount of time, since actions are measured in ten second rounds. During wilderness exploration, creating an advantage takes longer, since actions in wilderness exploration are measured in four hour watches.

Minigames

Some procedures are involved, and inject strategy into *Lavender Hack*. These procedures are called **minigames**. Minigames have players take turns and choose from a variety of options during their turn. The minigames in *Lavender Hack* are **wilderness exploration, ocean exploration, dungeon exploration, court, combat, and downtime**.

It's possible to resolve fictional situations using just overcome and create advantage, but *Lavender Hack* is more fun with the time pressure and difficult choices that minigames provide. Also, you paid for 80 pages of rules, not two!



Wistandantilus, Sorcerer from the College of Wheat Wrangling

Many of the procedures in *Lavender Hack* look like moves from *Apocalypse World*. *Apocalypse World* burst forth on the RPG scene in 2010 and had a major impact on game design. There are quite a few *PbtA* (Powered by the Apocalypse) games, which leverage, to varying degrees of success, the tech from *Apocalypse World*. Moves are also mechanical widgets triggered by fictional situations, although they usually aren't nested within more involved turn based procedures. They also tend to be less prescriptive than what I'm doing here, so I didn't want to use that word.

I like the free flowing behavior of moves to push the fiction in all sorts of interesting directions. However, I also really like structured minigames, such as Duel of Wits in *Burning Wheel* or Combat in *The One Ring*. Those minigames need turns to work well. Turns have an advantage over moves in that the spotlight tends to get deliberately shared more, and minigames add tactical diversity and strategy. Relying too much on minigames may result in an overly regimented game that may become a little dry. However, only relying on moves makes the game less strategic, which I don't personally enjoy as much.

Lavender Hack mixes free flowing procedures with minigames. *Apocalypse World* purists might blanch at this approach, but I see no incompatibility from switching between the freeform "talk in the funny voices" parts of rpgs and the "win at a game" parts of rpgs. It's easy enough to tell which is which and when to use either.

Spotlight Player

Lavender Hack occasionally has choices and die rolls that aren't directly related to any particular character. A **spotlight player** makes these choices and die rolls. The spotlight player should be chosen at the beginning of the session. Rotate the

Core Rules

spotlight around, so that players alternate the responsibility. Occasionally the spotlight player endures further complications or hardships for their character! Being in the spotlight isn't always a purely beneficial experience.

Usage Dice

Usage dice are a general purpose tracking mechanism heavily featured in *Lavender Hack*. Usage dice change die type based on situations in the game. This forms a ladder of sorts, going from d2 at the lowest to d12 at the highest.

d2(0) - d4 - d6 - d8 - d10 - d12

A d20 is used for the lowest step. A usage die can never be above a d12 or below a d20.

Usage dice may reflect an **amount** of something, in which case the d12 represents having a lot of it and the d20 represents just scraping by. For example, a d12 food die means the characters have plenty of food of all different kinds, and a d20 means they have a few very questionable berries found while foraging.

Usage dice may reflect the **quality** of something, in which case the d12 represents something of the highest quality, while a d20 represents something very shoddy and makeshift. For example, if used for light, a d12 is a number of lanterns with plenty of oil, while a d2 is a torch scrapped together from a torn bit of clothing.

If the rules instruct you to **step up** a usage die, you increase the die by one step. For example, a d8 would get swapped out with a d10. If the rules instruct you to **step down** a usage die, you lower the die by one step. For example, a d8 would get swapped with a d6. There are a variety of ways and reasons usage dice are stepped up and down. A d12 can't be stepped up and a d20 can't be stepped down. A d20 usage die is referred to as **broken**.

Usage Test

Usage dice might be rolled for a variety of reasons. If the result of rolling a usage die is a 1-3, the die is **stepped down** in addition to any other potential effects. The more usage dice are rolled, the more they're used up! A 1, 2, or 3 result means the thing was **used**, and can occasionally trigger an additional effect besides stepping the die type down.

This process of rolling a usage die, checking the result, and then determining if it should be stepped down is called a **usage test**. Frequently the only thing that matters in a usage test is if the die is stepped down or not.

Usage Save

If players are forced to roll a d20 usage die, the result is almost never good! Each type of usage die has a set of general test results that are used for this purpose. Rolling a d20 usage die is referred to as **making a usage save**. A usage save is also made if the d20 die is stepped down for some reason.

The spotlight player rolls the usage die and looks up the related save results to determine the value and what happens!

Usage dice come from the game *Black Hack*, although they are also used very effectively and extensively in *Macchiato Monsters*. In *Black Hack* they lower on a 1-2. I used the *MM* version, which is where the 1-3 comes from. Stepping down on a 1-3 ensures a little more movement, even for larger die types.

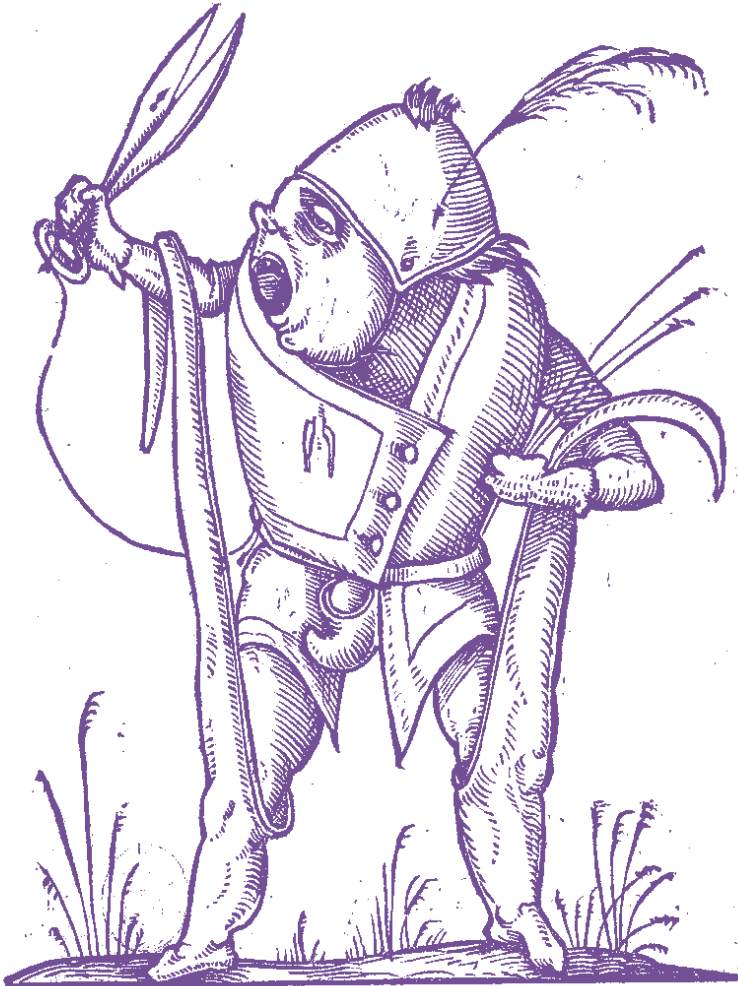
I love the concept of usage dice, although getting them to function well as an economy is one of the most active parts of development. Who knows, maybe they won't be as good of a fit as simple counters. In order for them to be viable, they need to be rolled frequently!

Core Rules

Resources

There are important party level *resources*, each tracked with a usage die. The core resources are *gear*, *food*, *light*, and *fellowship*. Party resources are discussed in detail in *Party Resources* (page 26).

Some games modify how resources used. For example, in ocean exploration, a *hull* resource is used to track the stability of the boat, and light isn't used at all.



Kevin the Oily Fumbles His Attempt to Craft Boots of Escaping

Characters

Characters

There are three *character classes* in *Lavender Hack*, each of which represents a broad archetype: **Strong**, **Wise**, and **Deft**. The classes map roughly to the idea of warriors, spellcasters, and rogues.

Those three class names are from *Whitehack*. I'm undecided on going with a generalized class structure rather than the more standard fantasy class archetypes.

Having broader classes can offer up more customization. But having a stronger archetype, like a paladin or a cleric, makes it easier for people familiar with fantasy games to engage quicker.

Class Level

Character classes have **levels** between 1 and 10. When making a new character, they start at level 1. As the character grows and explores and hopefully survives the trials of being an adventurer, they gain levels. With new levels come more hit points and new and more interesting class options to explore. The process of leveling up is described in *Train* (page 64).

Primary Abilities

Classes have **primary abilities** which take a prominent role in tests for that class. The Strong use Strength and Constitution, the Wise use Intelligence and Wisdom, and the Deft use Dexterity and Charisma. Primary abilities may be increased when a character gains a level. Although ability scores can't be increased beyond 18.

Class Features

Features are special abilities or procedures that each class has available to them. They help the class fit into a niche within the game. Higher level characters have more and better class features available to them.

In the class descriptions, **starting features** are available immediately. One **advanced feature** is chosen each time the character gains a level in that class. Many of the class features are used in games that are fleshed out later in the book.

Hit Dice

Classes have **hit dice**, which are rolled at character creation to determine starting **hit points**. Hit dice are rolled at other times as well. The higher the hit die type, the more hit points a character has, which reflects their endurance and toughness. Hit points are used heavily in combat.

Conditions

When a character would drop down below zero hit points, they take a **condition** instead of losing hit points. Conditions are longer term complications that can only be recovered during downtime. A condition has a **severity**, which reflects how difficult it is to recover from. See *Recover* (page 65) for more details.

When a condition is needed, roll on the table below or use an appropriate condition based on the situation. **Roll a d6** to determine the severity. Lower numbers mean a less serious version or type of the condition. Fill in progress boxes on the character sheet for the condition equal to the condition's severity. As the condition is recovered from, these progress boxes will be erased.

Conditions give relevant ability tests disadvantage, as listed in the disadvantages column of the conditions table. This list is not comprehensive.

A character can have at most **two** conditions. If a character already has two conditions and would take a third, they are **retired** from play. It is up to the group to decide what this means. It could mean they are dead or insane or unable or unwilling to adventure for some

Characters

other reason.

Characters may gain conditions in other ways beyond going below zero hit points. For example, a disease or some types of longer lasting poisons may be modeled as conditions.

I really wanted the random table of conditions to include mental issues. Going below zero hit points is almost certainly part of a traumatic event that could have long lasting mental repercussions.

The depiction and representation of mental issues in role-playing games has a fraught history. There is a danger in not treating them seriously enough, but ignoring that element of violence has always struck me as an unfortunate omission.

Compelling Conditions

Narrative complications that unfold from conditions can give them further depth. For example, a concussed character may become temporarily confused, walking away from battle. Or a character with anxiety may avoid a social situation.

Conditions

d12	Name	Suggested Disadvantages
1	Cracked Rib	Str, Con
2	Dislocated Shoulder	Str, Dex, Gear
3	Sprained Ankle	Dex, 1/2 movement
4	Paranoia	Wis, Cha
5	Sprained Wrist	Dex, Gear, One-handed weapons only
6	Agoraphobia	Cha
7	Concussion	Int, Wis, Dex
8	Anxiety	Cha, Fellowship
9	Broken Arm	Str, One-handed weapons only
10	Stab Wound	Con
11	Ruptured Spleen	Str, Con
12	Depression	Wis, Cha

Using conditions in this way is called a **compel**. Any player may suggest a compel. If the table agrees that the compel is narratively interesting, and creates a suitable complication, the player may erase one progress from the condition. The more the condition becomes a hardship, the less time it will linger.

The word compel comes from *Fate Core*. The concept here is somewhat similar, although more restrictive than in *Fate*.

Aspects

Each character has three **aspects** which further define them. These are their **background**, **belief**, and the sign they were **burn under**.

Background

Backgrounds are the sets of skills and occupations the character learned prior to adventuring. Generally this background was filled with drudgery, but even a life of drudgery can sometimes provide useful experiences.

Each character class has sample backgrounds

Characters

that may be rolled on or chosen during character creation. See the character class sections for more details.

Born Under

Every character is born under a sign that impacts the course of their life. **Roll a d12** and write down the sign from the table below. Alternatively, players may create their own signs, using the table as inspiration.

The important thing is that signs need to have both **domains** of influence as well as negative qualities, which come into play if a character becomes **cursed** under the sign, as explained below.

Signs may require some tweaking depending on the culture and setting for the game. The example signs reference common fantasy tropes that also tie into important elements from the game.

Ambition

Why choose a life of danger and adventure over the character's previous life of toil? The character's ambition answers this question. Ambitions may be noble, such as "*Feed and house all of the orphans in the realm,*" or something more untoward, like "*Raise an army to destroy Duke Aerent.*" Ambitions can be focused or open ended, but they must be ambitious! Buying a nice scarf doesn't

Born Under the Sign of The...

d12	Name	Domains	Curse
1	Cold Forge	Weapons, Armor, Technology, Winter	Pyromania, avoid darkness, seek daylight, stay warm
2	Lavender Cloak	Books, Jewels, Finery, Pain	Jealousy, spread rumors, treat the poor with disgust
3	Happy Hares	Birth, Forests, Animals, Spring	Lust, hedonism, avoid violence and hardships
4	Ineffable Wyrms	Riddles, Dragons, Spells, Air	Greed, steal treasures, ignore friends, read tombs
5	Three-Fingered Merchant	Trade, Gold, Bargaining	Wanderlust, avoid cities and people, stay out on the road
6	Tipsy Gnome	Illusion, Ale, Summer, Earth	Obnoxious, play mean tricks on those around you
7	Silent Siren	Love, Storms, Boats, Water	Sorrow, seek the sea, wail and cry, sing shanties
8	Widowed Orc	War, Battle, Justice	Rage, look for fights, no matter what odds
9	Velvet Harp	Song, Festivals, Wine, Autumn	Carefree, party with abandon, sing loudly, get drunk
10	Esoteric Fungus	Poison, Mold, Caverns, Disease	Photophobia, voyage too deep underground, dig in the earth
11	Honeyed Hearth	Cooking, Plants, Foraging, Fire	Gluttony, eat anything that comes your way
12	Crown of Bone	Death, Frost, Potions, Pacts	Treachery, seek out and use the darkest magicks

Characters



*Horatio Feathercap,
Born Under the Lavender Cloak*

push someone to adventure, but lusting for revenge might.

Invoking Aspects

Players may add a relevant resource die for any test that relates to a character aspect. This is referred to as **invoking** that aspect. This may be done after the test roll results are known, as long as the test roll is not a fumble or a critical. Remember, **fumbles and criticals may never be modified!**

The player invoking the aspect should narrate how the resource and aspect relate to the test. The group should decide whether that use of the resource dice is appropriate or not. But this isn't something players should be overly strict about.

Invoking Backgrounds

The way invoking works depends on the aspect. For backgrounds, the resource die is rolled, and the result is added to the test. Handy! As usual, if the resource die is used (1-3 result), it is stepped down.

The word aspect and the concept of invoking aspects come from *Fate Core*, although, as in the case with conditions, the concept used here is narrower.

Many of the newer OSR games have something like this, though. The most popular approach is to let a player roll with advantage when some form of trait or narrative element applies to the roll. *Lavender Hack* uses resources both because the game is primarily a resource management game, and because resources form a limited party level pool that makes for more difficult choices.

Although limited, using resources in this way is numerically better than rolling with advantage - because a player is able to see what the result is before deciding to add resource dice.

Star-crossed

When invoking the born under aspect, resource dice are **rolled with advantage!** However, **if doubles are rolled**, the character takes a condition based on the sign's curse. This condition should be named after the sign, such as *Curse of the Widowed Orc*.

As usual, roll a d6 to determine the condition's severity. These conditions push the character into complications as described in the curse column on the Born Under table. These complications are particularly well suited for use with compels.

Invoking Ambition

When invoking ambition, the resource die is not rolled at all! Instead, the max value of the die is used. So, a d8 would add 8 to a test. A d20 would add 2, and this would also trigger a save, so be careful invoking d20 resource dice.

When ambition is used, it must be marked. This comes into play during downtime, when

Characters

the character sets their ambitious plans in motion. There is only room to mark ambition five times. This fluctuates as a result of events during downtime.

- Roll 3d6 and record totals in order for Strength, Dexterity, Wisdom, Intelligence, Constitution, and Charisma
- Record ability score modifiers
- Roll for birth sign
- Choose a class
- Roll on class background table
- Create starting belief
- Roll class hit die with advantage and add Con to get starting hit points
- Roll on class starting gear tables
- Set starting encumbrance slots to Str modifier plus five (2-8 starting slots)
- Record starting class features

Unlike background and born under, it's usually easier to invoke ambition, as many things a character does are in service to their ambition. Invoking ambition can come as a form of oath, as in Inigo saying "Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya, you killed my father, prepare to die," or Kaylee in Firefly saying "You mean to say... as in sex? To Hell with this, I'm gonna live!"

Character Creation

Use the following steps when creating a new character.



Spurs of Socialization +3

The Strong

The Strong

- Hit Die: d8
- Primary: Strength, Constitution
- Armor: Any
- Weapons: Any

Starting Backgrounds

Roll a d8 or create an appropriate background.

1. Copper Miner
2. Apprentice Smith
3. Radish Farmer
4. Trout Fisherman
5. Henchman for a Tax Collector
6. Horse Trainer
7. Failed Barkeep
8. Brute Squad Captain

Starting Equipment

Roll a d4.

1. Leather Armor, Shield, Bearded Axe, Bear Trap
2. Leather Armor, Pack Horse, Falchion, Heavy Crossbow
3. Chainmail, Claymore, Caltrops
4. Chainmail, Longbow, Longsword, Riding Horse

Starting Features

Dealer of Death: After *regrouping* or after a night's rest, gain a number of d6 dice equal to level. Those dice may be used during any successful *melee attack* to add additional damage. After the dice are rolled, they are used up until the character *regroups* or rests overnight.

Mighty Thews: Gain bonus encumbrance slots equal to Con modifier. Only apply this ability when Con modifier is positive.

Weapon and Armor Repair: During *regrouping*, the Strong may **repair weapons or armor**. If the gear die type is higher than

or equal to the current armor or weapon die type to be repaired, roll the gear die and increase the armor or weapon die one step, up to max effectiveness.

Advanced Features

Cleave: When one of your *melee attacks* reduces an opponent to zero or negative hit points, you may immediately make another attack with that weapon on a nearby opponent.

Combat Maneuver: On a strong success from a *melee attack*, may disarm an opponent's weapon, push them back ten feet, or sunder their shield in addition to normal damage.

Tank: Roll the armor die with advantage.

Shield Bash: To use Shield Bash, the Strong character must be equipped with a shield. When rolling to defend against a *melee attack damage*, on a success, the attacker takes d6 damage, bypassing their armor.

Dual Wielder: If equipped with two one-handed weapons, may forgo any movement in the round to attack once with each weapon.

Animal Companion: By spending a full week in the wilds, the Strong character may find and train an animal companion. The animal has a number of hit dice equal to or less than the Strong character. The Strong character may command the animal to guard, fetch, or attack. If the animal companion is killed, a new one may be trained when the Strong character levels up.

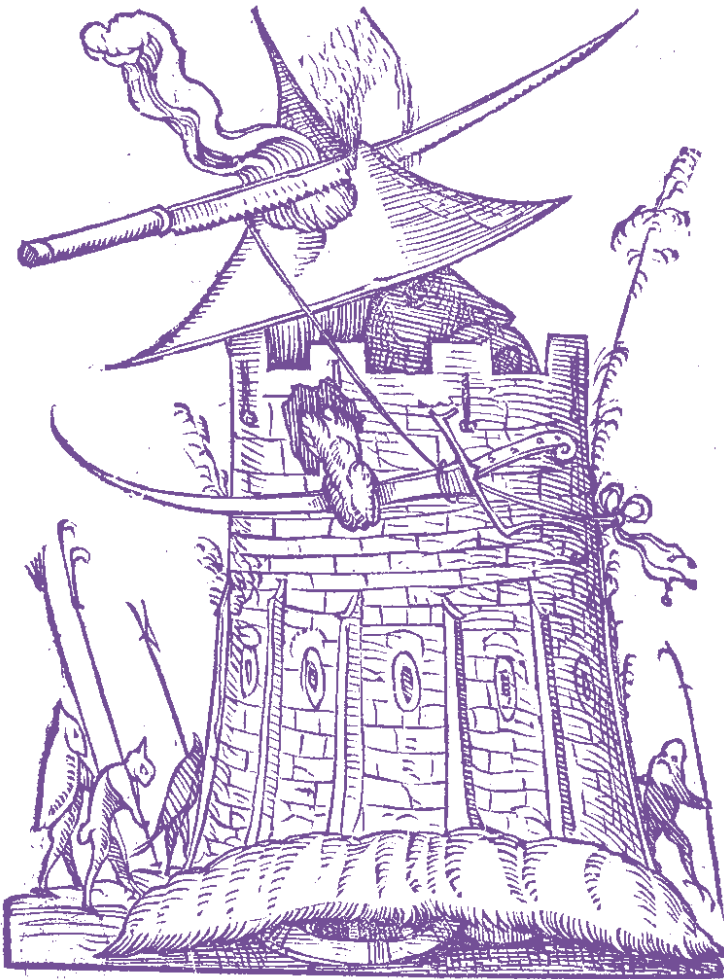
Power Attack: May add a gear die roll to *melee damage*.

Frenzy: Gain advantage on *melee attack* rolls and disadvantage on *defense* rolls.

Toughness*: This feature may be taken more than once. Each time it is taken, the

The Strong

Strong character effectively gains an extra hit die. For the purposes of leveling up, add this extra hit die to the total rolled. The Con bonus is added to the hit die as well.



Upon Retiring, Jogrick the Strong Tours His Demesne in a Mobile Keep

The Wise

The Wise

- Hit Die: d4
- Primary: Intelligence, Wisdom
- Armor: None
- Weapons: Staff or Dagger

Starting Backgrounds

Roll a d8 or create an appropriate background.

1. Faerie Translator
2. Watchmaker
3. Herbalist
4. Prince Gilroy's Accountant
5. Astronomer
6. Potion Crafter
7. Scribe
8. Book Binder

Starting Equipment

Roll a d4.

1. Staff, Sand Timer, Fine Inks
2. Ritual Dagger, Amnita Mushrooms, Liquid Mercury
3. Staff, Raiment of Starsilk
4. Broad Hat with Eclipse Runes, Hemlock, d4 Chickens

Starting Features

Magical Spells: The Wise have the ability to cast magical Spells. See the Spells section for more detail. A Wise character starts with one random spell.

Under certain circumstances, a spell may be forgotten after it is cast. Spells may be memorized again after a full night's rest or as an option while **regrouping**.

Find Familiar: The Wise character begins play with a magical familiar. This is a small animal or creature that can become a focus for the Wise character's spells.

Favored Element: Each Wise character

understands how to harness one destructive element. Roll a d8 to determine the character's element.

1. Fire
2. Acid
3. Ice
4. Entropy
5. Earth
6. Air
7. Warp
8. Steam

Calamity

Choose any memorized spell and **test Int** to make a **ranged attack** on something close or nearby using your favored element. On a **Critical**, do d8 damage per level.

Strong Success, do d6 damage per level.

Weak Success, do d4 damage per level and memorized spell is forgotten.

Miss, memorized spell is forgotten.

Fumble, memorized spell is forgotten and favored element unleashes on everything close or nearby, doing d4 damage per level.



Frida the Friendly Finds a Few Familiars who are Unfortunately Flatulent

The Wise

Cure

Choose any memorized spell and **test Wis** to cure hit points on a close-by ally. On a

Critical, cure d8 damage per level.

Strong Success, cure d6 damage per level.

Weak Success, cure d4 damage per level and memorized spell is forgotten.

Miss, memorized spell is forgotten.

Fumble, memorized spell is forgotten and you lose half your remaining hit points from damage caused by favored element.

Advanced Features

Magical Study*: At each new level, the Wise character gains a new spell. See the Magic section for more details.

The Deft

The Deft

- Hit Die: d6
- Primary: Dexterity, Charisma
- Armor: Leather
- Weapon: One-Handed or Ranged

Starting Backgrounds

Roll a d8 or create an appropriate background.

1. Riverboat Gambler
2. High Class Escort
3. Circus Performer
4. Political Activist
5. Low Ranking Politician
6. Diplomat
7. Bunko Artist
8. Rat Catcher

Starting Equipment

Roll a d4.

1. Leather Armor, Longsword, Shortbow, Deck of Cards
2. Longsword, Dagger, Longbow, Fine Clothes
3. Leather Armor, Longsword, Shortbow, Loaded Dice
4. Leather Armor, Shortsword, Crossbow, Riding Horse, Treasure Map

Starting Features

Sneak Attack: When making a *melee attack*, if the enemy is unaware of the character or is otherwise surprised, roll for the attack with advantage. If the attack succeeds, roll damage twice and add the results together.

Resourceful: Deft players roll the gear die with advantage.

Polyglot: The Deft know a number of additional languages equal to Cha modifier.

Advanced Features

Precise Shot: May add a gear die roll to *ranged damage*.

Charming Impression: Add +1 progress after successfully *pursuing goals* during court.

Scout: If this character is the party scout (see the Encounter section), they may roll with advantage when checking for surprise.

Critical Strike*: This feature may be taken more than once. Add d4 damage on a successful *ranged attack*.

Set Trap

When the gear die is a d6 or higher and there are no distractions, spend one turn to set a trap on a door, hallway floor, or chest. Step down the gear die and test Dex. On a

Critical, the trap does d12 damage per level.

Strong Success, the trap does d10 damage per level.

Weak Success, the trap does d8 damage per level.

Fumble, take d4 damage per level and step down the gear die again.

Song of Inspiration

When danger threatens, you may sing a song of inspiration. Describe such a song and test Cha to give inspiration to any close-by allies. On a

Critical, all close-by allies gain advantage on all die rolls for d6 rounds.

Strong Success, all close-by allies gain +1 to all attacks and saves for d6 rounds.

Weak Success, all close-by allies gain +1 to all attacks and saves for one round.

Fumble, your songs are ill received! Step down the fellowship die.

The Deft



My Faithful Jay, I Sing For You With Mask Off!

Song of Fellowship

While **regrouping**, you may sing a song of fellowship. Describe such a song, step down the food die, and **test Cha**. On a

Critical, set fellowship die to a d8.

Strong Success, set fellowship die to a d6.

Weak Success, set fellowship die to a d4.

Fumble, your songs are ill received! Step down the fellowship die.

Valuables

Valuables

Lavender Hack uses an abstract concept of **value**. Valuables are sorted into ten broad levels, each of exponential worth. *Lavender Hack* uses a copper penny standard for currency, when there is currency, which isn't often. Value is relative to each culture the players encounter. A big part of *Lavender Hack* is discovering and trading with different groups!

Rough values in terms of copper pennies are provided below. Occasionally it is necessary to compare a usage die to this scale, which is also given on the table below.

Valuables are described by a **type**, a **value**, and the number of **encumbrance slots** required to carry it. Valuables are things like treasure, jewels, maps, scrolls, and clothing. But also unique types of equipment like weapons or armor which aren't covered by the gear die.

The type of a valuable is a general class, such as clothing, art, armor, jewelry, potion, animal, or plant. It is used when trading with factions, as they may favor certain types of valuables over others.

It usually takes 5 things of the same value to get something of the next higher value. Trading down is less efficient, as you only get 4 things of the next lower value. Trading comes into play during court, and exchanging wealth occurs during downtime.

Lavender Hack reflects a world where currency exchange is a questionable proposition at best. All the moldy potatoes in the world aren't going to get you a suit of armor. It's also more narratively interesting when a culture values something like shells or red crystals rather than generic coins.

If you're coming from an OSR game with a gold piece standard, 1gp is roughly 50 copper pennies.

Encumbrance Slots

Characters start the game with a number of encumbrance slots equal to **5 + Str** modifier. Most items take one slot each. This isn't many slots, but each character is carrying many other things represented by the gear die, the light die, and the food die.

Example Valuables

Value	Usage Die	Copper Pennies	Gold Pieces	Example
1	d2(0)	1	0	Moldy Potato
2	d4	5	0	Bushel of Grain
3	d6	25	1	Small Bell
4	d8	125	2	Dagger
5	d10	625	12	Longsword
6	d12	3,000	60	Half Plate
7	-	15,000	300	Full Plate
8	-	80,000	1,600	Stone Tower
9	-	400,000	8,000	Warship
10	-	2,000,000	40,000	Stronghold

Valuables

Coins and Weight

It takes roughly 100 coins or 10 pounds to occupy one slot. This also holds true for other lighter things like a piece of paper. This rule mainly comes into play when extracting treasure from underground. In this case, it's fine to merge treasure into one slot of a particular value, such as noting *sack of six gems, value 4* on one slot.

Where possible, though, error towards giving items one slot each. This is a useful and necessary abstraction, partly justified by all the other gear characters are burdened with. Yes, of course, a deck of cards doesn't weigh the same as a shield, but slots are not just raw encumbrance, but reflect *personal value* and importance for a character. If the things on a character sheet are lighter, it means that character is most likely carrying more of the other sorts of gear for the party.

The other interesting thing about using copper pennies is that weight becomes a factor much quicker! In a game about exploration and movement, this can make for difficult choices! It also makes lighter, compact valuables much more sought after.

Appraisal

The value of something may not always be known when it is found. To find the true value of such a thing, **research** must be conducted during downtime. However, a character may be able to estimate the value in the moment if they have the correct sort of **appraisal expertise**.

The appraisal expertise table gives a guideline of which class can estimate different the worth of different valuables.

Appraisal Expertise

Class	Expertise
Strong	Weapons, Armor, Animals, Monsters, Food
Wise	Scrolls, Wands, Plants, Mysteries, Maps
Deft	Jewelry, Art, Finery, Gems, Ore

Appraise

*When something of unknown value is discovered in the dungeon or wilds, a character may **test Wis** to appraise it if they have appropriate appraisal expertise. On a*

Critical, the exact value is known and the character knows a buyer that specifically is looking for this thing. The character may be in a faction or may be someone met during downtime. If the valuable is given to this character, its value is **one more** than the actual value.

Strong Success, the exact value is known.

Weak Success, only a ballpark value is known. The gamemaster secretly rolls a d6 and d4. If the d6 is odd, the d4 result is subtracted from the actual value and that number is told to the player. If the d6 is even, the d4 result is added to the actual value and that number is told to the player.

Miss, the value is not known. As usual, let the result ride. No other players may test.

Fumble, the value is not known. However, the character thinks the valuable is **priceless**, and must carry the item back to town, freeing up enough item slots to make room. In addition, the value is **one less** than the actual worth, as the valuable is not what the character thought it was. Note this value on the character sheet. When arriving back in town, the item must be banked for this value.

Valuables

Valuable Types

d20	Type	Expertise
1	Jewelry	Deft
2	Fine Clothes	Deft
3	Art	Deft
4	Gems	Deft
5	Wine	Deft
6	Gold	Deft
7	Silver	Deft
8	Copper	Deft
9	Melee Weapons	Strong
10	Ranged Weapons	Strong
11	Armor	Strong
12	Ale	Strong
13	Monster Parts	Strong
14	Pack Animals	Strong
15	Books	Wise
16	Healing Herbs	Wise
17	Maps	Wise
18	Fungi	Wise
19	Spices	Wise
20	Reagents	Wise

Party Resources

An important part *Lavender Hack* is managing the four core resources represented by usage dice: gear, food, light, and fellowship. Some minigames, such as ocean exploration, may modify which resources get used.

These resource dice step up and down based on the activities of players. Usage saves are also listed here, as described in *Usage Save* (page 11).

Gear

Most common adventuring gear is abstracted into the gear die. It is assumed characters have standard sorts of gear, such as

appropriate clothing, tents, bedrolls, flint and steel, sacks, backpacks, rope, parchment, iron spikes, and class related items like repair kits, lock-picks, spellbooks, and spell reagents.

If the players want gear that is more odd, like a shrimp net or an hourglass, they may produce it, but must roll the gear die. Very specific things which may pertain to mission goals, like a unicorn horn, or magic items, like a balm of healing, can't be produced with the gear die. Also, gear produced this way can't be transferred to a character sheet. You can't use the gear die as an item generator for trade!

There tends to be lots of assorted gear that players track on their character sheets. Most of it is very similar and creates administrative overhead without much interesting choice. The gear die abstracts all of that out. In essence, the only items tracked by players will be iconic weapons, armor, treasure, and more unique items. This fits in well with the abstract slots based weight system that *Lavender Hack* uses. There aren't many slots available, the assumption being you're already weighed down by stuff not specifically listed on your character sheet.

This abstraction can also allow for more creativity in the moment. A deft character may have the tools to make a trap, a mage may have interesting spell components, and so on.

Valuables

Gear Save

When a d20 gear die is used or stepped down, make a save. On a

Critical, successfully improvised new gear! The value is 4 and step up the gear die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is 2.

Weak Success, the value is 1.

Miss, the value is 0 and the party's gear is broken. Any tests that use gear are rolled with disadvantage until the gear die is stepped up.

Fumble, the value is 0 and a catastrophe has occurred! Any characters in the party using the gear take their hit die in damage.

Food and Light

Food and light are tracked separately from other adventuring gear. They are heavily used during **exploration**.

Food Save

When a d20 food die is used or stepped down, make a save. On a

Critical, the group has foraged successfully! The value is 4 and step up the food die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is 2.

Weak Success, the value is 1.

Miss, the value is 0 and the characters are starving. Any tests using Str, Dex, or Con are rolled with disadvantage until the food die is stepped up.

Fumble, the value is 0 and the spotlight character is overtaken with a random disease.

Light Save

When a d20 light die is used or stepped down, make a save. On a

Critical, successfully improvised torches! The value is 4 and step up the light die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is 2.

Weak Success, the value is 1.

Miss, the value is 0 and the characters are in total darkness. Any tests needing light are rolled with disadvantage until the light die is stepped up.

Fumble, the value is 0 and a random encounter occurs at this inopportune time. Maybe the encountered party uses light? Or maybe...

Fellowship

Fellowship is considered a resource, although it is a very different sort of resource than gear, food, and light. Fellowship represents how well the group is getting along together. As hardships increase, fellowship tends to step down. It is very important when courting factions.

Fellowship Save

When a d20 fellowship die is used or stepped down, make a save. On a

Critical, the party has grown through adversity! The value is 4 and step up the fellowship die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is 2.

Weak Success, the value is 1.

Miss, the value is 0 and hatred has boiled over. Any tests using Int, Wis, or Cha are rolled with disadvantage until the fellowship die is stepped up.

Fumble, the value is 0 and there is death and mayhem in the wilds! The spotlight character has reached their breaking point and murdered another character in their sleep. The spotlight player decides which character dies.

Valuables

Equipment

The only things written into slots on character sheets are valuables. **Equipment** is a special type of valuable that has some use beyond value. These are things like weapons, armor, healing herbs, and magic items.

Equipment has a value, type, as well as encumbrance slots. Some equipment, like weapons and armor, have a die associated with how effective they are.

Gaining Advantage

If appropriate, equipment may be expended to gain advantage on a test. Erase the equipment prior to making the test.

Armor

Armor has a **protection** die, which is used during combat to absorb damage. It is possible for armor to degrade in effectiveness, which causes this protection die to step down as if it was a usage die (d8 to d6, d6 to d4, etc). Keep track of the original protection die and the current state of the armor if it's different.

A **shield** steps up the protection die once, in a similar fashion to a usage die. For example, leather armor and a shield is a d6 armor die. Armor, like weapons, can also become damaged.

Armor

Name	Protection	Value	Slots
Leather	d4	4	1
Chain	d6	5	2
Half Plate	d8	6	3
Full Plate	d10	7	3
Shield	+1 Step	4	1

Weapons

Weapons have a **damage** die, which is used during combat. For various reasons, the damage die can degrade, making the weapon less effective. If this happens, lower the damage die as if it was a usage die (d8 to d6, d6 to d4, etc). Record the new damage dice amount on the character sheet next to the original damage.

Ranged Weapons

If a weapon has a **range**, it can be used as a missile weapon. A ranged attack subtracts 2 from the ranged attack test for each range increment past the first, up to a maximum range of 4 range increments.

Ranged weapons use **ammunition** such as arrows or sling stones. Ammunition may be used up during a ranged attack, see *Combat Actions* (page 52). Like many elements of *Lavender Hack*, the precise amount representing one ammunition is abstract, but ammunition is tracked in amounts from 0-3. Purchasing ammunition resets the amount back up to 3.

Ammunition

Name	Value	Slots
Arrows (3)	3	1
Bolts (3)	3	1
Stones (3)	1	1

Features

Weapons have features which modify how they're used during combat.

2H. Requires two hands to use, making shield use impossible. Weapons with two damage dice separated by a slash may be used one-handed or two-handed. The second number is for two-handed use. If the damage die degrades, both one-handed and two-handed damage is affected.

Valuables

Deft. This weapon uses Dex instead of Str for melee attacks. attack against every opponent within range.

Gunpowder. These weapons are risky to use! On a fumble, in addition to any other effects, the firer takes the weapon die in damage, ignoring armor. However, on a critical, the target takes triple damage!

Horseback. This weapon may only be used when mounted. Additionally, a successful hit made during a charge does double damage.

Multi. The attacker may make a separate

Oil. Burning oil uses the light usage die for damage. As usual, rolling a 1-3 for damage steps down the light usage die. Additionally, if the oil hits the target, it will burn for two rounds, so the light usage die will be rolled again on the second round for more damage.

Reach. Reach weapons can attack targets one additional square away. Additionally, they may be *braced* against the ground when a charging character attacks. A successful hit does double damage.

Weapons

Name	Damage	Value	Slots	Features	Range
Battle Axe	1d6/1d8	4	2	2H	
Blunderbuss	1d10	6	2	2H, Gunpowder, Reload	40'
Crossbow	1d10	4	2	2H, Reload	80'
Dagger	1d4	3	1	Thrown	10'
Greatsword	1d10	5	3	2H, Slow	
Hand Axe	1d6	4	1	Thrown	10'
Javelin	1d4	2	1	Thrown	30'
Kama	1d6	4	1	2H, Multi	
Lance	1d8	5	3	2H, Horseback	
Longbow	1d8	4	1	2H	70'
Mace	1d6	3	1		
Oil Flask	Light Die	N/A	N/A	Oil	10'
Polearm	1d10	5	3	2H, Reach, Slow	
Pistol	1d8	6	1	Gunpowder, Reload	20'
Rapier	1d6	5	1	Deft	
Sai	1d4	5	1	2H, Multi, Thrown	10'
Shortbow	1d6	3	1	2H	50'
Shortsword	1d6	3	1		
Sling	1d4	3	1		40'
Spear	1d6/1d8	3	2	2H, Reach, Thrown	20'
Staff	1d4	2	1		
Sword	1d8	5	2		
Torch	Light Die	N/A	N/A	Torch	
Warhammer	1d8	3	2	2H	

Valuables

Reload. This weapon can't be fired on consecutive rounds in combat. It takes one action to reload.

Slow. Characters using slow weapons will always take slow actions during the combat procedure. Don't roll for initiative.

Thrown. Applies to melee weapons that may be used as ranged weapons. These weapons have no ammunition, so if ammunition is expended as part of a procedure, the weapon is broken and the damage die is stepped down.

Torch. Torches use the light usage die for damage. As usual, rolling a 1-3 for damage steps down the light usage die.

Qualities

Some features, called *qualities*, are only available for high quality weapons and armor, forged by master craftsmen. These weapons and armor are not usually available for purchase, but may be created using the rules for *Craft* (page 66). Sometimes they may be found in the wilds.

Along with a description of what the special feature does, the increase in value for the weapon or armor is listed as well.

Light (+1 Value). This weapon or armor is created from special materials that make it lighter than normal. It takes -1 slot, to a minimum of 1.

Masterwork (+2 Value). This weapon or armor is particularly effective. The damage or protection die is stepped up by one, to a maximum of 1d12.

Land Transport

Movement per watch is a modifier to the number of hexes characters are able to move in a four hour period, as described in *The Wild* (page 36). The company uses the slowest movement in the party. Animals will

only carry one average sized adult human.

The **movement per round** is used during combat, as described in the *Bestiary* (page 77).

Carts and wagons don't have their own inherit movement, but must be pulled by draft horses. It takes one draft horse to pull a cart, and two to pull a wagon.

Slots is the number of encumbrance slots that can be carried. Multiply by 10 to find the number of pounds, and 100 to find the number of coins.

Upkeep must be paid at the end of each downtime phase in order to maintain ownership.

Ocean Transport

The base **move** for seaworthy vessels is the number of 8 mile hexes that may be traveled each day, as described in *The High Sea* (page 40). The first value is the speed using sails, which is contingent on wind speed.

The **upkeep** cost for ocean transport must be paid at the end of each downtime phase to fund a crew for the voyage. The **hull** die tracks how structurally sound the ship is. Each boat has a number of **weapon slots** for naval weaponry.

The **crew** column shows the full crew after upkeep, the minimum crew for maneuvering and ocean travel, and finally the minimum crew for evading obstacles. This is covered in more detail in *The High Sea* (page 40).

Naval Weaponry

Naval weapons may be purchased and fitted separately. Each weapon takes the number of slots listed. **Upkeep** costs for weapons must be paid at the end of each downtime phase to supply ammunition for the weapon.

The **range** for each weapon, listed as

Valuables

Land Transport

Type	Value / Upkeep	Move (Watch)	Move (Round)	Enumbrance Slots
Camel	5 / 3	+1	Standard	60
Cart	4 / 2	N/A	N/A	80
Horse (Draft)	5 / 3	+0	Standard	90
Horse (Riding)	5 / 3	+2	Fast	60
Horse (War)	6 / 4	+1	Standard	80
Mule	4 / 2	+0	Standard	40
Wagon	5 / 3	N/A	N/A	250

Ocean Transport

Type	Value / Upkeep	Move (Day) Sail / Oar	Hull	Crew	Cargo (lbs)	Weapon Slots
Barge	6 / 3	1 / 0	d6	5 / 1 / 1	20,000	3
Canoe	4 / 0	0 / 1	d2	1	500	0
Caravel	8 / 5	4 / 0	d8	30 / 5 / 4	400,000	4
Cog	7 / 4	3 / 0	d8	15 / 3 / 1	300,000	3
Galley	9 / 7	5 / 3	d10	150 / 40 / 10	300,000	12
Longship	8 / 6	4 / 3	d8	60 / 35 / 10	20,000	2
Outrigger	5 / 2	2 / 1	d4	3 / 1 / 1	500	0
Skiff	5 / 0	0 / 1	d2	2 / 1 / 1	500	0

Naval Weaponry

Type	Value / Upkeep	Damage	Range	Crew	Slots
Ballista	6 / 5	3d8	4	2	1
Catapult	7 / 4	4d8	6 (Min 3)	3	2

hundreds of yards, works as it does for missile weapons. Catapults have a minimum range as well, under which nothing can be targeted.

The *crew* number is the minimum number of crew members needed to operate the weapon.

Loans

It could be some time before the characters will be able to afford their own boat. So what's an enterprising adventurer to do? Go

into debt of course!

Debt is taken at the level of the company. The desired item is written on the company sheet. Immediately, and at the start of each downtime phase, 1/2 the value of the item, rounded down, must be paid. Failure to pay means the item is taken back, and the characters are thrown in jail for 3d6 years. Loans do not include any upkeep costs.

Retainers

Retainers

Retainers are hirelings under the employment of a player character to help during the adventure. They are located and hired during downtime by carousing. See *Carouse* (page 68).

Retainers are controlled by the player who hired them, with oversight by the gamemaster to determine if the tasks for which they have been hired are being honored. Retainers shouldn't be treated as unthinking meat shields to absorb damage!

Retainer Descriptions

There are different *types* of retainers, each performing a different function within the party. Retainers don't have ability scores, classes, or class features. If retainers make tests, all of their modifiers are at +0.

Any number of retainers may be hired by a player, but they must be paid before they will help. Add the *level* of the hiring character to the *upkeep cost* modifier to determine the value that must be paid at the end of each downtime phase to keep the retainer employed.

Retainers do have gear, but the only items worth tracking are their weapons and armor. Retainers are subject to *morale tests* during combat, and not all types of retainers are

suited to fighting. See *Morale* (page 53).

Retainers have *hit points*, which are determined by rolling the listed dice when the retainer is first located. If hit points are ever reduced to zero or less, the retainer is killed. They can recover hit points as a character. Their *hit die* is the die type rolled to determine hit points.

Retainers may not be outfitted with different gear. They are particular about the weapons, armor, and equipment they have been trained to use! A shieldbearer doesn't know how to use a bow, and a laborer isn't going to trust a magic ring!

Archer

Archers are equipped with longbows, best suited as ranged support during battle.

Herbalist

Herbalists have many concoctions to smoke and drink that keep the party in good condition. When players roll to recover hit points as part of a *regroup* or *camp* action, they may roll their hit die with advantage. See *The Wild* (page 36) and *The Dungeon* (page 45) for more information on regrouping and camping.

Retainers

d8	Type	Upkeep	Hit Points	Weapons and Armor
1	Archer	-1	3d8	Longbow, Shortsword
2	Herbalist	-1	2d4	Dagger
3	Hunter	-2	3d6	Shortbow, Shortsword
4	Laborer	-3	2d6	Staff
5	Shieldbearer	+0	5d8	Chain Armor, Shield, Shortsword
6	Soldier, Light	-1	4d8	Leather Armor, Sword
7	Soldier, Heavy	+0	4d8	Chain Armor, Greatsword
8	Torchbearer	-2	2d6	Dagger

Retainers

Hunter

Hunters are good at finding food while exploring the wilds. When the food die is rolled as part of the *Wilderness Exploration Minigame* (page 36), roll the food die with advantage.

Laborer

Laborers have four encumbrance slots that can be used to haul valuables into or out of the wilds.

Shieldbearer

Shieldbearers can handle the front lines of combat. They do not make a morale test until they lose one-half of their current hit points.

Soldier

Soldiers are sturdy fighters. They do not make morale tests until they lose one-half of their current hit points.

Torchbearer

Torchbearers are helpful when delving underground. When the light die is rolled as part of the *Dungeon Exploration Minigame* (page 45), roll the light die with advantage.

I debated including hirelings at all, since they have the potential to take the spotlight off of the player characters. But they can add texture to the game and give depth to the party.

Historically, hirelings were separated out into retainers, specialists, and mercenaries. I combined the concepts for mercenaries and retainers. Rolling for different types of hirelings to see who is available is fun. I also think giving retainers a specialty gives them more color and strategy for use, rather than being a generic all around adventurer.

I decided to make hit points fixed by type as a way to change which retainers are useful over the course of a campaign. Early on, a heavy soldier would be an amazing asset. But later, they probably wouldn't be worth the high cost, since it depends on character level!

I like scaling payment to character level rather than using a fixed limit of retainers based on Charisma. The rationale being that higher level characters are exposed to more danger and more reward during adventure, which retainers will seek to capitalize on!



Ser Cashmere Lets Fly the Daisybow

Exploration & Travel

Exploration & Travel

Exploration is the first of four minigames that fuel *Lavender Hack*, the others being encounters, factions, and downtime. One of the primary goals of *Lavender Hack* is to work well for wilderness **hexcrawls**, the sorts of adventures where characters go out into the hinterlands and figure out what's where and who's what.

The term hexcrawl comes from the wealth of fantasy gaming content which feature hex maps of varying scales, where each hex contains terrain of a particular type.

There are three types of exploration in *Lavender Hack*: wilderness, ocean, and dungeon. The goal of the exploration system is to make distances feel distant, such that resources like food are a concern, and the chance for surprise encounters with beasts and factions is always a possibility. Wilderness and ocean exploration use hex maps.

Dungeon exploration is the trickiest to manage, because grid based dungeon maps do not provide as clean a unit of abstraction as hexes. This creates more difficulty when trying to come up with usable measures for time and distance. It also makes for more challenges when players try to make sense of where they are.

I tried to make the procedures for each type of exploration (wilderness, dungeon, ocean) mirror each other somewhat. Exploration is built around the options of **exploring** a new place, **traveling** through somewhere you've been, **searching** where you are, and **resting**. In terms of time and distance, dungeon exploration is the most zoomed in, while ocean exploration is the most zoomed out. Dungeon exploration relies mostly on light, wilderness exploration mostly on food, and ocean exploration mostly on the weather.

Time and Distance

Common units of time and distance are needed to handle exploration at the right level of abstraction. The units of time are **watches** of roughly four hours and **exploration turns** of roughly ten minutes. The units of distance are **overland hexes** of roughly 3 miles across, **ocean hexes** of roughly 8 miles across, and **dungeon rooms** of roughly 1,000 square feet.

Watches and used for wilderness exploration, days are used for ocean exploration, and turns are used for dungeon exploration. The **company sheet** has a calender to track the passage of days.

The term watch comes from *Hot Springs Island* (not sure if it came from somewhere else first), and I really like that level of abstraction for wilderness exploration. It keeps the pace moving, which is important for a game featuring resource management. The *AD&D 1E* encounter system was broken up into six different time periods as well, although that was only used for encounter checks, not as a unifying way to track time.

Turns are a *B/X* legacy term, going all the way back to the wargaming roots of *D&D*. I'm not fond of the word turn to describe ten minutes, but it has lots of cultural inertia behind it. *Black Hack* uses hours, minutes, and seconds to describe these zoomed in time structures, which is consistent and matches casual language. However, the fact that the terms are plural makes speech a little clunky in a more procedural game like *Lavender Hack*.

Exploration Sheets

There are exploration sheets at the back of the book for each type of exploration. These sheets are for tracking resources and general flow.

The light die is used to track turns, the

Exploration & Travel

fellowship die to track hours, and the food die to track watches. Not all of these dice are used for each type of exploration. The gear die has its own spot on exploration sheets as well.

Travel

The minigames in the following chapters are mainly about exploration, that is, moving around in unknown lands. For travel along known routes, the fast travel procedure can be used as an alternative.

Along roads, characters can travel 4 overland hexes each day, not factoring in extra speed from land transport. In the ocean, the number of hexes traveled each day depends on the type of boat.

The value of resource dice depends on cost of living expenses incurred at the end of downtime. See *Ending Downtime* (page 69).

Fast Travel

When traveling a well known route, determine the total number of days needed to reach the destination, then the spotlight player makes a general test. On a

Critical, the journey is full of good fortune! It takes half as long as expected, and food is foraged along the way. Do not roll the food die.

Strong Success, the company makes good time. It takes half as long as expected. Roll the food die for every 2 days of travel.

Weak Success, travel takes as long as expected. Roll the food die for every 2 days of travel.

Miss, the journey is mired in bad weather and misfortune! It takes twice as long as expected. Roll the food die for every 2 days of travel.

Fumble, the journey couldn't have been worse! It takes twice as long as expected, and resources are very stretched. Roll the food die for each day of travel.

game starts looking like a fantasy version of *Traveler*. Use the *Valuable Types* (page 26) table to come up with some supply and demand results for a set of cities and ports, and you're on your way to arbitrage heaven. Or hell, depending on your view of such things.

Actually, if you really wanted to drift a game in that direction, you would probably want some form of encounter options, because much of the fun of *Traveler* is getting waylaid. Travel never goes smoothly.

Scout

During exploration, one character can take the role of **scout**. The scout character moves ahead of the rest of the company, looking for trouble. This is very useful for encounters, although can be nerve wracking for the scout! See *Encounters* (page 49) for more details.



The Quartermaster Checks Gear Thoroughly

Too far down this rabbit hole and the

The Wild

The Wild

Wilderness exploration begins when the characters arrive at a remote area they wish to explore that has a corresponding hex map of terrain and important sites. At least one encounter table is necessary to determine what beasts and factions may be found in each sort of terrain.

The gamemaster determines where the players are located on the hex map. If this is after **downtime**, reset all resources based on cost of living expenses. If this is at the start of a new campaign, set all resource dice to d8.

Watches and Hexes

Time during wilderness exploration is divided into four hour **watches**, for a total of six watches each day (dawn, day, day, dusk, night, night). Use the food die on the party sheet to track this.

Each **overland hex** is assumed to be 3 miles across and populated with terrain that is difficult to negotiate (mountains, jungle, woods). Hexes of different sizes will require slight modifications to this procedure.

Guide

One player takes on the role of guide for the journey. The guide navigates the terrain during exploration, finding the best route through the wilds.

Wilderness Exploration Minigame

1. At the start of a new day, determine **wilderness events**.
2. Spotlight player chooses one of the following actions with input from the group.
 - a. **Explore** a new hex.
 - b. **Travel** through an already explored hex.
 - c. **Search** the current hex.
 - d. **Create advantage**.
 - e. **Regroup** and **re-balance gear**.
 - f. **Camp**.
3. Track watches on party sheet using the food die.
 - a. On the second and fourth watch, **roll the food die**.

Wilderness Events

To determine **wilderness events**, the gamemaster makes a general test, and rolls on the subtable indicated, if necessary.

Wilderness Events

At the start of each day of wilderness exploration or when called for, make a general test for wilderness events. On a

Critical, the group has found a lair! Check on the standard encounter tables, but treat as a lair result.

Strong Success, there is bad weather!

Weak Success, there is an encounter!

Miss, there is potential discord! Roll the fellowship die.

Fumble, there is a discovery!

Bad Weather

The bad weather result indicates bad weather appropriate for the type of terrain and season, such as a torrential downpour, a blizzard, or a dust storm. Bad weather lasts for **d4 days** and makes outdoor activities much more difficult. Any rolls related to guiding, scouting, hunting, camping, and

The Wild

foraging are **made with disadvantage** on a day with bad weather. Furthermore, movement rates are halved.

Encounter

The encounter result indicates an encounter with creatures or factions native to the area. **Roll a d6** to determine the watch when the encounter will occur (dawn, day, day, dusk, night, night).

If an encounter is indicated, use the **encounter procedure** to determine how the beasts or factions react to the characters. Every encounter shouldn't default to combat.

Most published products have encounter tables for each region the players may find themselves in. If they don't, it will be necessary to create one.

It's useful if encounter tables aren't just a list of vicious monsters, but also include factions as well as less dangerous fauna that may be hunted or tracked. Additionally, things like diseases can be listed on the encounter table.

Interactions with factions provide important opportunities for trade and role-playing.

Lair

In the case of a lair result, use the standard encounter tables, but instead of a roaming group, the beasts or faction are encountered in their lair. There are typically many more creatures in their lair than are found roaming. There also may be an opportunity for more treasure. If a hex already has a lair indicated, use that rather than creating a new one. The lair will be found in the next hex the party enters.

Discord

The grind of being away from home slowly wears down a person. Roll the fellowship die.

Discovery

If the party has a discovery, they have found a resource they can use in the hex! The discovery will be found in the next hex the party enters. Alternatively, if the hex already has something of value that could be discovered, that is now found, without needing to search for it.

Wilderness Discovery

When the party is lucky enough to have a discovery, make a general test. On a

Critical, *step up the fellowship die. What was found? Maybe an extreme area of beauty, rare spices, or pipe weed.*

Strong Success, *step up the light die. What was found? Maybe lantern oil or plants useful for making torches.*

Weak Success, *step up the gear die. What was found? Maybe a cache of equipment or medicinal plants.*

Miss, *step up the food die. What was found? Maybe berries, squash, or an abundance of fish.*

Fumble, *the party has made a discovery of valuables! Roll a d10 to determine the total value of what has been found, then describe it.*

The standard OSR way to handle encounters is to roll a die once for every unit of time (such as every watch), with the odds based on the sort of terrain the characters find themselves in. I prefer rolling less frequently, but having the odds for something happening be higher. That prevents the chance for a series of encounters back to back, which can start to feel a little tedious. Particularly if it's always monsters. However, it increases the chance that *something* is happening each day, which can make the world feel alive. I also like the inclusion of elements like weather and discoveries into the roll, hence using the word events rather than encounters.

The Wild

Exploration & Travel

Exploration is moving to a new hex the characters haven't been to before, while **travel** is moving through hexes the characters have already visited.

It takes **one watch** to **explore** a hex. Since it is a new hex, there is a chance the characters get lost.

Guide the Company

*When exploring a new hex, the guide decides which hex to move into and **tests Wis**. Bad weather and other hardships can affect this roll. On a*

Success, the route has been found! The group ends up in the desired hex.

Failure Success, the group has become temporarily lost! **Roll a d6**. On a **1-4**, the characters end up back where they started. On a **5**, they veer left, ending up in the hex left of where they desired. On a **6**, they veer right, ending up in the hex to the right of where they desired.

When **traveling**, the characters may move through **two hexes** in **one watch**. No guide is necessary for travel.

In the old *AD&D 1E* game, there was an involved procedure for becoming lost, whereby the GM secretly tracked where characters were, and players kind of fumbled about in the dark. I usually find this more fun in principle than in practice. Here, becoming lost primarily sacrifices time. Although, characters may find themselves in a more dangerous locale as well.

Encumbrance

If one or more characters in the party are encumbered, it takes **two watches** to **explore** and only **one hex** may be **traveled** through in a watch.

Roads

Movement along roads is much easier than hacking through the wilds. Characters move twice as fast, being able to cover **four hexes** each watch. Movement along roads is assumed to be travel, never exploration.

Search

It takes **one watch** to search a hex. If there is something of interest in the hex, it is found. This is commonly used to find lairs or entrances to dungeons. If there are multiple things of interest, only one is found for each watch spent searching.

I really like the *Hot Springs Island* approach, where each hex has three things of interest that may be searched for. Giving players some knowledge of where and when to search makes it a more useful action to take.

Regroup

Regrouping takes **one watch** and allows characters to individually choose from a variety of actions. Each player may choose one of the following actions: create advantage, **heal**, **repair**, **memorize**, or **forage**.

Additionally, as part of regrouping, players may **re-balance gear**. This is done by stepping down the fellowship die, and setting the gear die to a d6. Set the new dice on the party sheet.

Heal

The player rolls their character's hit die and recovers that many hit points.

Repair

A Strong character may repair a damaged weapon or armor. If the gear die is of a **higher** type than the damaged weapon or armor die, the player rolls the gear die and steps up the damaged weapon or armor die,

The Wild

not exceeding the initial weapon or armor effectiveness.

Memorize Spell

A Wise character may memorize one forgotten spell for their character if they have slots available.

Forage

*If a character forages for food while regrouping, **test Str.** On a*

Critical, a large food source has been found! Step up the food die and do not roll the food die for the remainder of the day.

Strong Success, hunting has been successful! Step up the food die!

Weak Success, a small source of food has been found. Do not roll the food die for the remainder of the day.

Fumble, the hunter has become the hunted! Roll for a random encounter.

Camp

Camping lasts **two watches**. After camping, Wise characters may recover all Spells. Additionally, each character may roll their hit die and regain that many hit points. If there is bad weather, the recovery roll is made with disadvantage (roll hit die twice and choose lower result).

Actions at Night

If the players spend a watch doing something at night besides camping, they must roll the light die with disadvantage.

The High Sea

The High Sea

Ocean exploration is used when the characters have access to a seaworthy vessel and wish to travel the open seas. Weather features prominently in ocean travel, as it can greatly dictate progress.

Days and Hexes

Time on the ocean is measured in *days*. Distance is measured in hexes, as in wilderness travel. However, the hexes represent more area. A *standard ocean hex* is *eight miles* across.

The Crew

Managing a larger ship is not an easy task. There are lots of jobs and rankings, most mundane and backbreaking.

Players can take any of the following prominent roles, or defer that responsibility to NPCs. Roles they don't take can be handled using general tests, although it's much more fun for players to take these roles.

Minimum Crew

In addition, ships have a number of *crew* members to handle a variety of tasks. This number is tracked on the High Seas exploration sheet.

The starting crew is listed in *Ocean Transport* (page 30). Keeping track of the number of crew available is important, because if it falls below a certain number, it will be impossible to perform all of the necessary tasks.

The second crew number in the equipment section lists the minimum crew needed to travel. Without this, the boat is drifting, at the mercy of winds and currents.

The third number in the equipment section lists crew needed to handle attacks and obstacles, mainly coming into play in *Naval*

Combat (page 55).

Captain

The captain makes the big decisions and orders the crew around. This can be accomplished using the *overcome* procedure with *Charisma*, as necessary. The captain has the final say on what happens on the ship.

Quartermaster

The quartermaster follows the navigation procedure each day to determine how well the route is followed. Quartermasters are also important for maneuvering in combat. *Wisdom* is important for these tasks.

Bosun

The bosun keeps the equipment and crew in order. This is particularly important during combat, but it can come into play anytime quick action and readiness is important. *Charisma* is important for ordering crew around, while *Constitution* may be used when the bosun needs to get their hands dirty and pitch in.

Gunners

Gunner is a broad term referring to any crew manning naval weaponry. Players may be in charge of individual pieces of naval weaponry.

There are not many OSR products that feature ocean travel. The impetus for this chapter was my love for *Hot Springs Island*. However, in *HSI*, the larger island chain is not mapped out, so actual ocean travel doesn't feature prominently. Due to binging on sea shanties while writing, *Lavender Hack* is certainly very focused on the ocean. My main inspiration for the eight mile hex size are the old *D&D Gazetteers*, such as *GAZA: Kingdom of Ierendi* and *GAZ9: The Minrothad Guilds*.

The High Sea

Ocean Exploration Minigame

1. Determine starting wind.
2. Each new day, check for **ocean events**.
 - a. If there is an event, roll a d6 to determine the watch when it occurs.
3. Captain charts a course, and the **quartermaster** makes a navigation test.
 - a. Update current location and wind.
4. At the end of the day, roll **food die**.

Resources at Sea

A **hull usage die** is used at sea to track the structural integrity of the ship. Along with the hull die, the food, fellowship, and gear dice are used as well. The light die is not used at sea.

The resource saves in *Party Resources* (page 26) are written for travel in the dungeons or wilds. For ship travel, use the following procedures instead.

Food Save at Sea

When a d20 food die is used or stepped down during ocean exploration, make a save. On a

Critical, secret stores of food have been found! The value is four and step up the food die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is two.

Weak Success, the value is one.

Miss, the value is zero and half the crew is very weak, unable to contribute.

Fumble, the value is zero and the entire crew is starving to death, unable to contribute.

Fellowship Save at Sea

When a d20 fellowship die is used or stepped down during ocean exploration, make a save. On a

Critical, the crew has grown through adversity! The value is four and step up the fellowship die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is two.

Weak Success, the value is one.

Miss, the value is zero and half the crew mutinies! A fierce battle ensues!

Fumble, the value is zero and the entire crew mutinies! Make the captain walk the plank!

Damaged Hull

Some events can cause the ship's hull to become damaged. A ship with a damaged hull moves at half speed, and any navigation or maneuvering tests are made with disadvantage. Repairing the hull can be done as an action during downtime and requires spending the ship's upkeep.

Hull Save

When a d20 hull die is used or stepped down during ocean exploration, make a save. On a

Critical, she has some fight left in her yet! The value is four and step up the hull die to a d4.

Strong Success, the value is treated as a two.

Weak Success, she can't take much more of this! The captain player rolls a d6, killing that many crew. The value is treated as a one.

Miss, we're food for sharks! The value is zero and the boat will sink in d10 turns.

Fumble, the boat is shattered! Everyone on board is drowning. Time to drink potions of water breathing.

Anchored

When the boat anchors so that the company can be sent out to explore, the company uses the same die type for food, fellowship, and

The High Sea

gear that the boat has. Set the light die to the same die type as the gear die.

Record the current food die on the ocean exploration sheet. When the company returns, reset the food die to this type prior to setting off.

The idea here is that the quality of food for overland exploration is based on the level found on the ship. During exploration, food will be used at a faster rate, so upon return, the ship's food die is used, rather than the company's food die.

Wind

Wind speed and direction has a great effect on ocean travel. The wind speed table lists movement modifiers that are applied to the number of hexes a ship can travel, based on the strength of the wind. Entries for +1 hex and -1 hex add or subtract one to the total hexes traveled, respectively.

During *calm*, the only movement possible is with oars. However, each day that oar movement is used, the fellowship die must be rolled.



*Oh, What Shall We Do
With a Tripping Sailor?*

The movement modifier for *strong* winds only applies if the boat is roughly going in the same direction as the wind. Otherwise, movement is reduced by half.

In a *gale*, any maneuvering and navigation is made at a disadvantage. The boat will be pushed along in the general direction of the wind. If there is land in the boat's path, it will crash against the shore, becoming shipwrecked.

Wind Speed

d8	Strength	Movement
1	Calm	None
2	Faint	Half
3	Gentle	-1 Hex
4	Moderate	Standard
5	Robust	Standard
6	Strong	+1 Hex
7	High	Double
8	Gale	Triple

Wind Direction

d4	Strength
1	North
2	East
3	South
4	West

Starting Wind

At the start of a new outing, roll a d8 to determine the starting wind speed and a d4 to determine the starting wind direction.

For each week players delay their voyage, they may roll again to see how the wind changes, although they will need to perform actions as usual for *Downtime* (page 63).

The High Sea

Ocean Events

To determine **ocean events**, the gamemaster makes a general test, and rolls on the subtable indicated, if necessary.

Ocean Events

At the start of each day on the ocean, make a general test for ocean events. On a

Critical, the ship has taken damage! Step down the hull die.

Strong Success, intense storms rain down on the ship. All navigation and maneuvering tests for the ship are made with disadvantage for the remainder of the day. Additionally, roll for a mission event.

Weak Success, roll for a mission event.

Miss, there is potential discord among the crew! Roll the fellowship die.

Fumble, there is an ocean discovery!

Mission Event

The mission event result indicates another roll on a mission specific event table. **Roll a d6** to determine the watch when the encounter will occur (dawn, day, day, dusk, night, night).

Using an ocean based monster encounter table is fine, however ocean exploration tends to have fewer encounters with creatures, and more events on the ship itself. Such events can make the voyage more memorable.

Sample Mission Events

d20	Event
1	A small uncharted island
2	Dense fog and roll again
3	Outbreak of scurvy
4	Rat infestation
5	Merchant vessel riding past
6	School of fish
7	Pirate ship draws near
8	Outbreak of dysentery
9	Pod of dolphins
10	Sirens sing a deadly song
11	Crime amongst the crew
12	Massive blue whale
13	The kraken strikes!
14	Mermaids lure the sailors
15	Drunk crew and roll again
16	Marriage on the high seas
17	Stranded merchant vessel
18	A stowaway is found
19	Dragon turtle
20	The dreaded ghost pirate

Discord

The grind of being away from home slowly wears down the crew. Roll the fellowship die.

Discovery

A resource or valuable has been found! The specifics will depend on where the party is located and the type of valuable found. It could be a floating shipwreck or a small uncharted island. Alternatively, if the hex already has something of value that could be discovered, that is now found, without needing to search for it.

The High Sea

Ocean Discovery

The ship has made a discovery on the high seas. Make a general test to determine what has been found. On a

Critical, step up the fellowship die. What happened? An inspiring shanty? A beautiful natural phenomena?

Strong Success, step up the light die. What was found? Oil or plants useful for making torches.

Weak Success, step up the gear die. What was found? Maybe a cache of equipment or medicinal kelp.

Miss, step up the food die. What was found? Fish? Rain for the water supplies?

Fumble, the party has made a discovery of valuables! Roll a d10 to determine the total value of what has been found, then describe it.

Navigation

At the start of each day on the ocean, the navigator should **test Wis**. On a

Critical, the navigator has successfully used the currents to great advantage. Move two extra hexes for the day.

Strong Success, the navigator reads the wind well. The navigator may change either the wind direction or degree one step.

Weak Success, steady progress is made. Roll for shifting winds.

Miss, unsteady progress is made. The gamemaster may change the wind direction or degree one step.

Fumble, the ship smashes against an unseen rock and the hull is damaged! Step down the hull die.

Shifting Winds

When the winds shift, make a general test. On a

Critical, the winds shift direction as shown below.

N -> E -> S -> W -> N

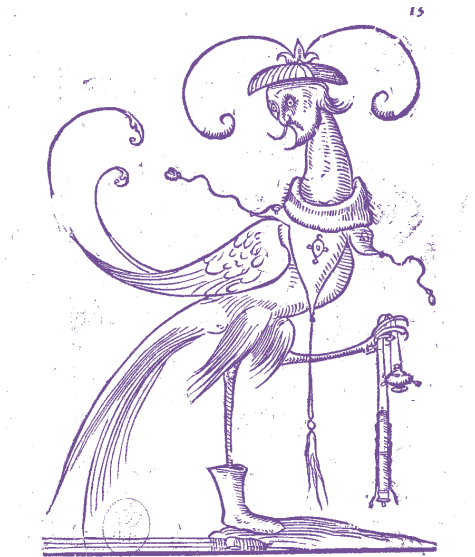
Strong Success, if the test roll was even, the wind speeds increase twice. If the test roll was odd, the wind speeds decrease twice.

Weak Success, if the test roll was even, the wind speeds increase. If the test roll was odd, the wind speeds decrease.

Fumble, the winds shift direction as shown below.

N -> W -> S -> E -> N

Unlike in wilderness travel, the hexes in ocean travel are usually fairly sparse. While events can greatly liven up the voyage, much of ocean travel is about the time and resources needed.



Here's a Health to the Company!

The Dungeon

The Dungeon

Dungeon exploration begins when the characters arrive in a dungeon they wish to explore that has a corresponding numbered **grid map** of rooms, passages, doorways, and important features. At least one **encounter** table is also necessary to determine what sorts of beasts and factions may be found in the dungeon.

Turns and Rooms

During dungeon exploration, time is measured in **exploration turns**, or just **turns**, of roughly ten minutes. This is intentionally similar to the six watches a day for wilderness exploration, except the second and fourth turns use light instead of food.

Each time six turns pass, one hour goes by. Use the fellowship die on the party sheet to track hours. Each time four hours pass, one watch goes by.

Distance in the dungeon is tracked via **rooms of roughly 1,000 square feet**. This requires some hand waving to use effectively. A long hallway may need to be broken up into multiple rooms, while a set of very small rooms would be considered one room for purposes of exploration time. In most published adventures, any keyed area with a number or a name is probably one room. The important thing is to be aggressive with keeping time moving.

Danger

Dungeons have a **danger** rating from 1 to 8. This reflects both how dangerous it is and how obscure and potentially lucrative the knowledge and valuables located within the dungeon are. Different areas or sections of a larger dungeon may have different levels of danger.

Dungeon Exploration Minigame

1. At the start of a new hour, determine **dungeon events**.
2. Spotlight player chooses one of the following actions with input from the group.
 - a. **Explore** a new room.
 - b. **Travel** through already explored rooms.
 - c. **Search** the current room.
 - d. **Craft torches**.
 - e. **Re-balance gear**.
 - f. **Create advantage**.
 - g. **Regroup**.
 - h. **Camp**.
3. Track time for the chosen action on the party sheet, rolling resource dice if indicated.

Dungeon Events

To determine **dungeon events**, the gamemaster makes a general test, and rolls on the subtable indicated, if necessary.

Dungeon Events

At the start of each hour of dungeon exploration or when called for, make a general test for dungeon events. On a

Critical, surprise!

Strong Success, close encounter.

Weak Success, distant encounter.

Miss, the hour is uneventful.

*Fumble, the party has made a discovery! Test for a **Discovery**.*

Encounter

Most events in the dungeon are encounters. Each dungeon or section of dungeon will need an encounter table stocked with creatures and factions that may be in the area. Another fun addition to dungeon encounter tables are rival adventuring parties. **Roll a d6** to determine the turn when the encounter will occur.

For **distant** encounters, the characters have

The Dungeon

plenty of warning before the encounter occurs. The target of the encounter is a few rooms away, and the characters hear them approaching. This is the most common result on the table. It's a way to let the players choose how to handle a coming threat: run away, try to create a barrier, ambush them. It makes for difficult choices if the threat is coming from the direction the players were intending to go.

If there's a **close** encounter, there's no time to react. The creatures have stumbled into the room. The **encounter procedure** should be used to determine how to handle this. In the **surprise** encounter, the creatures or factions were lying in wait for the characters. It's time to fight on.

At first blush, this is a fairly high encounter rate. It works better with dungeons that are not packed wall to wall with monsters in every room. The *Dwimmermount* megadungeon is an excellent example of this philosophy. Having blank space lets the dungeon breathe more, allowing factions to patrol and move around. It also makes it less of a goal to go room by room, trying to clear every chamber of danger, because one of the higher sources for encounters are the random tables for the dungeon. This helps incentivize pushing deeper when the opportunity arises, because returning to the dungeon doesn't mean it's all that much easier to traverse.

Holding Portals

There are occasions where characters may attempt to seal themselves off in a relatively "safe" portion of the dungeon. Dungeons being what they are, though, this is fraught with peril. If there is an encounter with curious creatures capable of opening or destroying such barriers, **roll the gear die**. If the gear die fails, the barrier does not hold, and the creatures make their way in.

Discovery

If the party has a discovery, they will stumble upon a valuable in the next room they enter. It should be fairly obvious what it is, since they aren't searching for it. If it's an area of the dungeon already explored, perhaps it is being carried by an explorer who has met an unfortunate end.

The value of the discovery is based on the **danger** of the dungeon where the discovery is made. Make a general test, calculating the value as follows.

Dungeon Discovery

When the party is lucky enough to make a discovery in the dungeon, make a general test. The test determines the value of the discovery, relative to the danger of the dungeon. On a

Critical, two higher than danger.

Strong Success, one higher than danger.

Weak Success, equal to danger.

Miss, one lower than danger.

Fumble, two lower than danger.

Exploration & Travel

The movement in dungeons is similar to that of wilderness, just substituting rooms for hexes and ignoring guide tests for getting lost.

Exploration is moving to a new room the characters haven't been to before, which takes **one turn**. When characters **travel** through rooms they have already visited, they may move through **two rooms in one turn**.

Encumbrance

If one or more characters in the party are **encumbered**, it takes **two turns** to **explore** and only **one room** may be **traveled** through each turn.

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Caution

The default movement rate assumes a high level of caution on the part of the characters. When players explore a new room, describe the area with a solid amount of detail. This includes any sounds that may be coming from beyond doors or down halls. The standard level of caution assumes that characters are listening carefully, moving somewhat slowly, and generally trying to stay aware of their surroundings. However, they will not automatically find traps or hidden doors things in the room they are in. For that, they must search.

Running

There are times, particularly when chased by horrible things, that characters care far more about speed than caution. When running, characters move at **double rate**. For example, if they are unencumbered, they can **travel through four rooms** in a turn. Exploration is still slower than travel, even when running, due to dealing with unexpected terrain. Much better to run toward a known entrance than deeper into the dungeon! The *chase* rules are in the encounters section.

Search

Searching a room takes **one turn**. If there is something of interest in the room, it is found. This is commonly used to find secret doors, traps, and treasure. If there are multiple things of interest, only one is found for each turn spent searching. Remember again that room is a general term that includes corridors and hallways!

Traps

Traps are a common feature of dungeons. If characters search a room for traps, they will find one, provided it is there. Otherwise, most traps allow some sort of success test to avoid them or take less damage. When running, these tests are made with

disadvantage.

I've never found rolling a die to find things all that interesting. If the players are searching for something, they find it. Time pressure makes constant searching costly.

Craft Torches

As an action that takes **one turn**, the spotlight player may step down the gear die to set the light die at a d6. This can be done for free while regrouping or camping.

Re-balance Gear

As an action that takes **one turn**, the spotlight player may step down the fellowship die to set the gear die at a d6. This can be done for free while regrouping or camping.

Regrouping

Regrouping in the dungeon is more restrictive than it is in the wilds. To initiate regrouping, the spotlight player **rolls the light die and the fellowship die**. Regrouping takes **one watch**, but the light die is only rolled once, as staying in place helps to conserve resources. If this is the first or fourth watch of the day, the food die must be rolled as normal.

During regrouping, characters may either **heal** or **memorize a spell**.

Heal

The player rolls their character's hit die and recovers that many hit points.

Memorize Spell

A Wise character may memorize one forgotten spell for their character if they have slots available.

The Dungeon

Events During Regrouping

Only one dungeon event occurs during regrouping, since there are fewer events when characters aren't moving.

Camp

Camping is also more restrictive in the dungeon than it is in the wilds. To initiate camping, the spotlight player **rolls the light die once and the fellowship die twice**. It is very taxing to camp in the dungeon!

Camping takes **two watches**, but the light die is only rolled once, as it is easier to conserve that resource while not moving. The food die is rolled as normal if either of the watches spent camping are the first or the fourth of the day.

During camping, each character gains hit points equal to a roll of the character's hit die. Additionally, all spellcasters may refresh their Spells.

Events During Camping

Two dungeon events occur during camping. Check once during each watch.

Encounters

Encounters

When the characters first encounter a **creature**, apply the following procedure. This could be from a planned encounter, or a random encounter during wilderness, ocean, or dungeon exploration. The word creature is employed very liberally here: humans are considered creatures.

Encounter Minigame

1. Check for **surprise** using a general test.
 - a. If there is an active scout, that player makes a **Dex test** instead.
2. Determine starting distance.
3. Spotlight player chooses approach.
 - a. **Communicate**.
 - b. **Combat**.
 - c. **Flee**.

Surprise

Both sides check for surprise, if applicable. The spotlight player tests for the characters, and the GM tests for the creatures.

Frequently, creatures aren't able to be surprised by the characters. This is particularly true if the characters don't have a scout or are moving through a dark dungeon with light sources. Ultimately, the GM decides if the creatures may be surprised.

If only one side is surprised, they automatically fail *initiative* tests on the first round of combat. Additionally, if the creatures are surprised the characters gain advantage if they roll to *flee*. Combat and fleeing are covered below.

Scouts

If the party has a *scout*, the scout player may **test Dex** instead of the spotlight player making a general test. See *Scout* (page 35) for more on scouts. It will take **one full round** for the rest of the characters to catch up to where the scout is. This might be

rough if the scout finds themselves surprised against a challenging foe! But maybe the lower chance of surprise is worth it?

Starting Distance

The starting distance is usually dictated by the circumstances of the encounter. If it's in the dungeon, then the encounter is most likely at close range, perhaps in a particular room. If unsure about encounter distance, use the following:

- In the **dungeon**, the creature is 2d6x10 feet away.
- In the **wilderness**, the creature is 4d6x10 yards away. If either side is surprised, the distance is 1d4x10 yards.
- On the **high seas**, the create is 2d6x100 yards away.

If there is a scout, they will encounter the creature first. If combat breaks out, it will take one full round for the rest of the party to catch up.

Communicate

Communication is an option if the creature is intelligent. The word intelligent encompasses creatures capable of using spoken languages, but also less intelligent animals and beasts whose behavior can be understood and manipulated. A character attempting to communicate may use the *Creature Reactions* move.

If there isn't a mutually understandable language, **roll with disadvantage**. If the characters trade something of value to the other group or have leverage for some reason, **roll with advantage**. The result determines the creature's feelings toward the party.

If the characters, for whatever reason, don't wish to attempt communication, the GM may determine the creature's reaction by making a general test with disadvantage

Encounters

using **Creature Reactions**. For example, if the scout has an encounter and immediately runs back to the main group.

Creature Reactions

*When the party encounters an intelligent creature that isn't already hostile or friendly, one character may attempt to communicate with it. If the creature uses spoken language, **test Cha**. If the creature is an animal or beast of some kind, **test Wis**. If no attempt at communication is made, the GM tests with disadvantage. On a*

Critical, the creatures are **friendly!** This may open the door to a new faction the characters may trade with, or perhaps a new animal companion.

Strong success, the creatures are **helpful**. The creatures bear the characters no ill will and will be reasonably talkative or non-threatening.

Weak success, the creatures are **uncertain**. They keep their distance and look upon the characters with suspicion. Depending on the characters' behavior, the creatures may become unfriendly.

Miss, the creatures are **unfriendly**. Depending on the sort of creature, this will likely result in violence.

Fumble, the creatures are **hostile!** They will attack ferociously and suddenly. The characters are all slow the first round of combat.

Flee

Sometimes the best option is to run for it! Use the Flee procedure if the opposing creatures have **standard** movement rates. See the *Bestiary* (page 77) for more on creature movement rates. If the creatures are **slow**, the characters will successfully be able to escape and don't need to roll, and if the creatures are **quick**, running away isn't possible without a character staying behind to hold them up.

Having a quality **guide** is the most important factor in getting away cleanly! Things get chaotic when running for it. Guides are discussed in *Guide* (page 36). If no guide is currently selected, choose one before fleeing.

Fleeing from a combat situation frequently means the opponents get free attacks as the character disengage. See the *Combat* (page 52) chapter for more detail.

Flee

*When the characters wish to flee from creatures that have standard movement, the player controlling the guide decides on a path to run and **tests Wis**. Move time forward d4 turns. If the path is toward the unknown, roll with disadvantage. On a*

Critical, the guide has sent the pursuers into a trap! This could be rough terrain, a dangerous area in the dungeon, or a clever use of gear. If the pursuer is a single creature, they lose half of their hit points. If the pursuer is a group, half the creatures are killed. The characters may now escape, or perhaps they will stand and fight?

Strong success, the characters have successfully escaped!

Weak success, the characters escape, but the guide has taken a wrong turn somewhere. The characters are lost.

Miss, the character with the highest encumbrance is caught! They may fight off the pursuers to buy time for the other characters to escape. Or all of the characters can break off fleeing to aid them.

Fumble, they are out of the frying pan and into the fire! Roll for a new encounter. The characters are caught at the same instant they run into this new encounter.

Becoming Lost

In the wilderness, becoming lost results in losing one watch of time. The characters are in the same hex where they started from.

Encounters

In the dungeon, the GM can determine a suitable place the characters end up depending on how much time has elapsed and what seems reasonable.

Encounters at Sea

Encounters at sea follow a slightly different format. There is no scout on the boat, but one character can be in the crow's nest if appropriate.

Naval Encounter Minigame

1. Check for **surprise** using a general test.
 - a. If a character is in the crow's nest, that player makes a **Dex test** instead.
2. Determine starting distance.
3. Captain chooses approach.
 - a. **Communicate.**
 - b. **Combat.**
 - c. **Escape.**

Surprise isn't as common on the high seas, although could be factor while sailing around coastal terrain, during bad weather, or when encountering sea monsters.

Use the Escape on the Sea procedure if the movement rate of the character's ship is within one of the opposing ship, or if the opposing sea creature has a **standard** movement rate.

If opposing sea creature is slow or the character's ship is more than one movement rate faster than opposing ships, they automatically escape danger. If the opposing sea creature is fast, or the character's ship is less than one movement rate slower than opposing ships, escape isn't possible and they must engage in *Naval Combat* (page 55).

Escape on the Sea

When the characters wish to sail away from an opposing ship with a movement rate within one of the character's ship, or a sea creature with standard movement, the player controlling the quartermaster decides on a direction to travel and tests Wis. Move time forward d4 watches. If the route is toward the unknown, roll with disadvantage. On a

Critical, as a strong success, or the spotlight player may choose to make the hunter become the hunted! If so choosing, naval combat begins at a range determined by the players, and they gain advantage on all rolls for the first two rounds of combat.

Strong success, the characters have successfully escaped!

Weak success, the characters escape, but the navigator didn't plan the route correctly. The characters spend d4 days lost before they recover their position.

Miss, the ship is caught! Roll 2d6 for starting encounter range and begin naval combat.

Fumble, the ship is caught! Additionally, the maneuvering failed so spectacularly that the GM may set the initial naval combat range to any desired distance.

Combat

Combat

Sometimes characters can't run fast enough to escape a conflict. This is when combat comes into play!

Time during combat is divided up into **rounds** of several seconds each, during which characters and foes take actions. As with **turns** and **watches**, **rounds** are fairly elastic time concepts. Distance in combat is represented by 5'x5' **squares**, commonly tracked on a 1"x1" scale if you use miniatures.

Combat Minigame

1. Any characters casting a spell or fleeing combat declare so now.
2. Each character makes a **Dex test**. On a success, they have initiative for this round.
3. Characters with initiative act.
4. Enemy actions.
5. Characters without initiative act.
6. **Morale** checks.
 - a. For a **single** enemy, check on first hit, 1/2 hit points lost, and 3/4 hit points lost.
 - b. For a **group** of enemies, check on first casualty, 1/2 group taken out, and 3/4 of the group taken out.
7. Combat ends when one side flees or is taken out.
 - a. Make usage tests for armor dice showing a 1.
 - b. If combat is not over, return to step 1.

Combat Actions

On their turn, each combatant may take one **action**. Additionally, each combatant may **move** before or after their action. Initiative is tested each round. Characters who succeed at initiative go first, followed by enemies, and finally any characters who failed at the initiative test.

The following actions are available: **melee attack**, **ranged attack**, **cast spell**, **create advantage**, **charge**, and **disengage**.

Additionally, a combatant may **move twice** instead of taking an action. This list isn't considered exhaustive, as there are any number of things a character or creature may attempt to do, but this should give an idea of what's possible in a round.

Movement

Movement is divided into three bands: **fast**, **standard**, and **slow**. Fast movement is 8 squares (40'), standard is 6 squares (30'), and slow is 4 squares (20'). Characters that are not encumbered have standard movement. Encumbered characters are slow.

Charge

A **charge** is a special action that can be taken when the acting combatant is **at least 4 squares away** from a target. They may move in a straight line to a square adjacent to this target and make a melee attack. This melee attack gains advantage, but any defense rolls made this round are at a disadvantage.

Engaged

The squares adjacent to a combatant with a readied melee weapon are considered **threatened** by that combatant. Natural weapons like fangs and claws count as melee weapons. Two adjacent combatants are said to be **engaged** in combat.

When a combatant moves out of one of these threatened squares, they provoke a special melee attack called an **opportunity attack**.

Resolve opportunity attacks using the melee attack move, but the attack **does not take an action**.

Disengage

A combatant using the **disengage** action does not take an opportunity attack when moving this round.

Combat

Melee Attack

When you're adjacent to an enemy with a melee weapon in hand, **test Str** to make a **melee attack**. On a

Critical, subtract double damage from enemy hit points, bypassing armor.

Strong success, subtract damage from enemy hit points, bypassing armor.

Weak success, subtract damage from enemy hit points, taking armor into account. May ignore enemy armor if you **exert yourself** (lower your armor die value, to a minimum of one), or take an **exposed position** (next defense roll is at disadvantage).

Fumble, miss and weapon effectiveness degrades one die.

Ranged Attack

When an enemy is within range of a ranged weapon in hand, **test Dex** to make a **ranged attack**. On a

Critical, subtract double damage from enemy hit points, bypassing armor.

Strong success, subtract damage from enemy hit points, bypassing armor.

Weak success, subtract enemy armor from damage. Then subtract result from enemy hit points. May ignore enemy armor if you **expend ammo** (lower your ammo value by one), or take an **exposed position** (next defense roll is at disadvantage).

Fumble, miss and weapon effectiveness degrades one die.

Defend

When an enemy makes a physically damaging attack against a character, **test Con**. On a

Critical success, the character takes no damage and the next attack against this enemy gains advantage.

Strong success, the character takes no damage.

Weak success, the character subtracts their current armor value from damage. Then lower armor value by one. Armor value may never fall below a 1.

Miss, the character takes full damage.

Fumble, the character takes double damage.

Armor

Armor dice are **rolled the first time a character is hit**. Don't roll armor dice at the start of combat. Once rolled, the armor die functions as a counter, dropping down in value during the course of the combat. This reflects the fatigue of the wearer. Armor may never drop below a value of one. Foes do not roll for armor, they have fixed value listed in the stat block.

Morale

The gamemaster tests morale at the end of a round when a creature is first hit, when it loses one-half or more of its hit points, and when it loses three-quarters or more of its hit points. The first hit doesn't need to cause damage to trigger a morale test. For groups of creatures, test morale on the first casualty, when one-half or more of the creatures are taken out, and when three-quarters or more creatures are taken out.

To test morale, the gamemaster makes a test and adds the creature's morale modifier to the roll. See the *Bestiary* (page 77) for specific morale modifiers. If uncertain, use +0. If successful, the creatures stay in the fight. Otherwise, they run.

Combat

With groups of creatures that have different morale modifiers, only roll for morale once, but apply the morale modifiers independently. This could result in some creatures fleeing while other creatures remain.

Morale is a very important part of the combat procedure! It adds color and strategy to combat, making it likely that combat is cut short by a loss of nerve rather than a loss of life. Creatures that don't need to test morale, such as undead or golems, are all the more dangerous because of their willingness to absorb massive damage.

I like procedures that go against what "should" happen. Surprises keep the game interesting. I've had situations where the characters looked dead in the water, but a lucky hit and failed morale roll saved them. Would an opponent sense that they were on the ropes and press the attack? Maybe. Maybe not. But the fact that the opponent didn't raise interesting narrative questions.

Retainer Morale

Retainers test morale using the same basic principle: on first hit, one-half hit points lost, and three-quarters hit points lost. However, the test is made immediately when the situation arises, rather than at the end of the round. Use the retainer mettle procedure.

Retainer Mettle

When a retainer takes a hit in combat, or loses one-half or three-quarters of their hit points, the hiring players tests Cha. On a

Critical, they have gone berserk! For the remainder of this combat, they roll for attack and damage with advantage. No morale tests for the rest of combat.

Strong success, their nerve is strong. No morale tests for the rest of combat.

Weak success, they are in the fight... for now.

Miss, they make a controlled withdrawal! While they won't run off into the wilds, they do everything they can to remove themselves from danger until combat is over. They will no longer help fight.

Fumble, no amount of money is worth this shit! Time to run! The retainer moves as quickly as possible to get to safety, never looking back. They most likely won't be seen again. This could be particularly painful for laborers carrying treasure.

Conditions

If the damage a character takes would lower their hit points below 0, they take a condition instead. Roll for a random condition on the condition table, as described in *Conditions* (page 13).

After Combat

Any player with an armor die value of one must make a usage test with the die. A failure degrades the armor one step. Note the damaged value of the armor.

Naval Combat

Naval Combat

Naval combat is for battles between the character's ship and other ships or possibly a large aquatic creature. It follows a different procedure than melee combat, and thus has an entire chapter devoted to it.

Time during the naval combat minigame is broken into **turns**. The captain, the quartermaster, and the bosun all play important roles during combat, as do gunners for any naval weaponry. See *The High Sea* (page 40) for more information on those roles. The **range** for each opponent, along with the **hull** die and **crew** total for each ship are important to track during combat.

Range

Each opponent during naval combat has a **range** attached to it from 0 to 12, measured in 100s of yards. Using a 12 sided die is a good way to track range.

Ships at range 0 from each other may board or ram. Ships at range 12 may attempt to escape from combat. Starting range is based on what happens during *Encounters at Sea* (page 51), usually starting at 2d6.

Spatial positioning in naval combat is kept purposefully abstract. This isn't a tactical combat game. The purpose of naval combat is to generate complications and showcase the talents of characters.

Maneuvering during combat is intentionally chaotic, so that it's fairly difficult for the characters to keep a specific range. This is partly to keep naval combat from dragging on too long, and partly to keep options for boarding and escape open.

Crew

Keeping track of the number of surviving crew members for each boat is important.

Maneuvering, evading, and using each weapon all have minimum crew numbers.

Weapons without enough crew can't fire, and if maneuvering or evading procedures don't have enough crew, they are treated as a miss. The captain ultimately decides where to allocate crew. The crew numbers for these functions are listed in *Ocean Transport* (page 30).

Hull Damage

For every 10 points of damage a ship takes from one attack, roll the hull die. For example, if a catapult hits a ship for 24 damage, roll the hull die twice. Ignore any damage results less than 10.

Naval Combat Minigame

1. The captain **inspires** the crew.
2. The quartermaster **maneuvers** the boat.
3. Ships with initiative take actions.
4. Ships without initiative take actions.
5. **Morale** checks.
 - a. Check each round the hull die is stepped down.
6. Naval combat ends when one side escapes, boards, or is taken out.
 - a. If combat is not over, one turn passes and return to step 1.

Inspire Crew

*Each turn of naval combat, the **captain** inspires the crew to continue fighting by making a **Cha test**. On a*

***Critical**, as a strong success and all attacks this turn are made with advantage.*

***Strong success**, as a weak success and the ship may attack immediately or wait until after the quartermaster's maneuver.*

***Weak success**, the captain's ship has initiative.*

***Miss**, the enemies have initiative.*

***Fumble**, the crew is disorganized! All of the bosun's defensive rolls are with disadvantage this turn.*

Naval Combat

Naval Maneuver

Each turn of naval combat, the **quartermaster** makes a naval maneuver around a single enemy by making a **Wis test**. On a

Critical, the quartermaster may choose to either escape from combat, ram the enemy, or board an enemy ship.

Strong success, the quartermaster may add or subtract up to four from the range to the targeted enemy.

Weak success, the quartermaster declares whether the ship is closing or withdrawing. If closing, d6 is subtracted from the range. If withdrawing, d6 is added to the range.

Miss, the gamemaster chooses an enemy and either adds or subtracts d6 from their range to the character's ship.

Fumble, the gamemaster chooses an enemy, which may either escape, ram, or board the character's ship.

If the a result would take the range below 0, it will stay at 0. Similarly, if a result takes the range above 12, it stays at 12. If there are multiple ships, naval maneuvering must be done separately for each one.

This minigame works best when the character's ship is opposed by one or two enemy ships. It doesn't scale very well beyond that.

Naval Combat Actions

Gunners use the **Fire When Ready!** procedure to attack with naval weapons. Naval weapons not controlled by characters resolve the procedure using a general test.

Characters who aren't taking a role on the crew may perform other actions. The following actions are available: **ranged attack**, **cast spell**, and **create advantage**. As with other minigames, this list of actions isn't exhaustive. For example, a player may use the overcome procedure to put out a fire on

the deck.

Additionally, if a ship is at range 0, the captain may **ram** or **board** the nearby ship as an action. If the character's ship is at range 12 for every opposing ship, the captain may try to escape. Use the *Escape on the Sea* (page 51) procedure to determine success.

Fire When Ready!

A **gunner** may **test Str** to fire an operable naval weapon. On a

Critical, the weapon scores a direct hit! If the target is ship, the ship takes damage, and 2d6 crew are killed. If the target is a beast, it takes double damage.

Strong success, if the target is a ship, the ship takes damage, and d6 crew are killed. If the target is a beast, it takes double damage.

Weak success, the target takes damage.

Fumble, disaster strikes! The firing weapon is broken, and must be repaired to be effective again.

Ram

An opposing ship at range 0 may be rammed. The ramming ship rolls the hull die with advantage. The opposing ship rolls the hull die. The ship with the lowest result steps down the hull die.

A ship choosing to ram may not fire naval weapons.

Naval Combat

Board

An opposing ship at range 0 may be board or be boarded. If either ship wishes to board, the **bosun tests Dex**. On a

Critical, the captain decides whether boarding is successful or not. If boarding failed, it may not be attempted again for the remainder of the combat.

Strong success, the captain decides whether boarding is successful or not. If not, it may be attempted again later.

Weak success, the ships are close enough that d10 crew may move from one ship to the other.

Miss, the gamemaster decides whether boarding is successful or not. If not, it may be attempted again later.

Fumble, the gamemaster decides whether boarding is successful or not. If boarding failed, it may not be attempted again for the remainder of the combat.

Successful boarding results in the two ships lashed together, such that crew can move between them.

Defense

Enemy ships may fire weapons, or attempt to ram, board, or escape. When an enemy ship fires a weapon, the bosun uses the Evasive Maneuver procedure to determine the result.

Use the Ram or Board procedures when an enemy ship attempts to ram or board the character's ship.

Evasive Maneuver

When an enemy makes a physically damaging attack against the ship, the **bosun tests Dex**. On a

Critical success, the ship takes no damage and the next attack against this enemy gains advantage.

Strong success, the ship takes no damage.

Weak success, the ship takes damage, subtracting the maximum value of the hull die from damage.

Miss, the ship takes full damage or d6 crew may be killed. Captain's choice.

Fumble, the ship takes full damage, d6 crew are killed, and a fire breaks out on deck.

Morale

The gamemaster tests morale at the end of any round when an opposing ship steps down its hull die. If the opposition is a sea creature, test for morale on the first hit, when it loses one-half or more of its hit points, and when it loses three-quarters or more of its hit points.

To test morale, the gamemaster makes a test and adds the creature's morale modifier to the roll. See the *Bestiary* (page 77) for specific morale modifiers. If uncertain, use +0. If successful, the creatures stay in the fight. Otherwise, they run.

Retainers don't usually have to test for morale during naval combat.

Factions

Factions

Since trade is one of the most important parts of *Lavender Hack*, it makes sense that there must be groups to trade *with*. That's where factions come in. Factions are the groups large and small that characters may encounter while far away from home. The characters' home is special, and is covered under the rules for downtime.

Factions are not necessarily composed entirely of one culture. The diversity of a faction, along with various cultural norms and practices, is independent of the characteristics used to describe them. For each faction in the game, figure out their *disposition*, *approach*, *languages*, types of goods they *supply* and *demand*, and what the faction *wants*.

Disposition

The most important characteristic of a faction is their disposition toward the characters, measured as a value from 0 to 10. Disposition is on the same scale as value, as they are interrelated. Over the course of a campaign, the disposition of a faction may raise or lower based on the activity of the characters and other forces.

A faction with a disposition of 0 has no interest in interacting the characters at all, unless the intention is to imprison or injure them. A faction with a disposition of 10 is perhaps more welcoming of the characters than the people of from their own home.

Faction Dispositions

Disposition	Attitude
1	Hostile
2-3	Unfriendly
4-5	Uncertain
6-7	Indifferent
8-9	Friendly
10	Enthusiastic

Downtime

A faction that has a disposition of 8 or higher (friendly or better) may be used as a downtime location by characters.

Approach

Factions have different ways they prefer to interact with others. This is characterized with an approach, which is either *rapport*, *command*, *intimidation*, or *logic*. Each faction has one favored approach.

Languages

Each faction also has one or more languages they are capable of conversing in. If characters don't know the language of the faction, that can make interactions with them much more difficult.

Supply and Demand

Cultures have very different ideas of value, whether driven by preference or scarcity. If a culture supplies a certain type of valuable (such as potions), its value is **one less** in all interactions with the faction. If a culture demands a certain type of valuable, its value is worth **one more** in interactions with the faction. Naturally, it's worth getting what they supply and giving them what they demand! A faction may supply or demand any number of types of things, or none at all.

Factions

Wants

Factions always have things they want. These might be tasks, such as opening a road, or stopping the attacks by the undead. They can also be valuables, such as a cockatrice feather or a bar made of platinum. The valuables wanted by a faction don't necessarily need to be worth a great amount, but they should be fairly hard to come by. Although it's *okay* to have a faction want something like 10,000 copper pennies, that's a little boring. Helping the faction get what they want improves their disposition.

Court

Court

When the players wish to ***court a faction***, the characters must be at a location the faction controls, with important characters from the faction present, and the faction must have a disposition of 1 or higher. Furthermore, the characters may only court a faction **once** between each downtime procedure.

If a faction has a disposition of 0, the characters must get their foot in the door somehow, perhaps by offering a bribe of some sort or using magical abilities. Shifting a faction from a disposition of 0 to a disposition of 1 shouldn't be easy, as this faction either wants absolutely nothing to do with the characters, or more likely, is intent on causing them harm.

This procedure is not used when characters return home. That is covered under downtime.

I struggled on what to call this procedure, but liked the word court, since it has multiple applicable connotations. Community was another option, but court is also a verb, which fits in better with exploration and combat. Court doesn't necessarily mean a formal medieval audience with royalty. The usage of court to mean "to persuade or win over" is more applicable, as any type of faction may be courted.

Court Minigame

1. Set fellowship die to the max value for the die type.
2. Create goals.
3. One player who hasn't gone this round chooses an action:
 - a. **Pursue goals.**
 - b. **Trade.**
 - c. **Curry favor.**
 - d. **Create advantage.**
4. One day of time passes.
5. Lower fellowship die value by one.
 - a. If the fellowship die value is greater than 1, players *may* return to step 3.
 - b. Actions are taken in rounds where each player acts once. Players may choose the order of actions each round.
6. Court ends if the players choose or the fellowship die value is a 1.

Goals

Goals are written from the perspective of characters. They are things the characters want, such as *Let us pass through the Eastern gate*, *Release Xendar from prison*, *What do you know about the Door of Fire?*, or *Let us view the Rotting Hand Scroll*.

Goals are not for gaining valuables, such as gear or resources. That action is covered under trade. Write goals down on different index cards, also noting the difficulty for the goal.

Goal Difficulties

Goals all have difficulties, which range from **3-12**, representing how likely it is the faction is willing to do the thing. The disposition of the faction should be taken into account when setting difficulties. Goal difficulties of 1-2 aren't used both because the math doesn't work well and goals represent things which require *some* measure of convincing. Goals with a difficulty of 12 are going to be very, very hard to achieve, even if the party has a high fellowship die.

Court

Goal Progress

Progress toward a goal is tracked on the card. When a goal has an amount of progress equal to or greater than the difficulty, it is achieved. Remove the goal from play and narrate any consequences from achieving the goal.

Starting Goals

At the start of court, write down some appropriate goals. This can and should be a collaborative effort, with all of the players contributing ideas. Goals which weren't achieved on previous visits to court may also be recycled if they're still appropriate.

Pursue Goals

When a character is in the presence of an influential member of a faction, they may **pursue a goal** with that faction. The player chooses a goal and chooses which ability score to test based on the approach they take. The choices for approach are **rapport (Cha)**, **command (Wis)**, **intimidation (Con)**, or **logic (Int)**. On a

Critical, immediate success! The goal is completed! This character is held in high regard with the faction.

Strong success, add 2 progress to goal.

Weak success, add 1 progress to goal.

Fumble, there is a diplomatic incident! Lower the faction disposition by one and the group is immediately asked to leave. Could trigger more dire consequences.

If the approach used is the **avored approach** for the faction, **add one** additional progress to a goal on a success.

Incidents

An incident represents a social faux pas of some significant severity. If the faction has a disposition of 1 and an incident occurs, the characters are about to be imprisoned or killed. The combat and chase procedures may

be appropriate now! Things are about to get out of hand.

Trade

When a character is in the presence of someone from a faction who has the types of valuables or resources they want, they may offer up something of value and attempt to **make a trade**. The item on offer is removed from the character sheet. The character receives something equal or less in value, modified by the result of a **Cha Test**. On a

Critical, the value is 2 higher.

Strong success, the value is 1 higher.

Weak success, the value is equal.

Miss, the value is 1 less.

Fumble, the value is 2 less.

Remember to modify valuables received by the supply and demand for the faction.

For resources, the die type gained for a particular value is listed in the Valuables section. For example, a value 5 sets a resource die to a d10. If the fellowship die is improved, swap out the die type, but don't change the top facing number, since that tracks turns during Court. Gaining fellowship resources represents song and revelry.

Maximum Value

The **maximum value** that can be gained from a faction is equal to their **disposition**. Anything above that is wasted. Hostile forces don't set you up with premium gear!

Trading Down

As mentioned in Valuables, when trading for valuables, a character may take five slots worth of something one lower in value.

Example

Wendy is playing *Yargrel the Crafty* and the fellowship die is currently a d6. The party

Court

is visiting the centaurs of North Hollow (disposition 5), and she offers up wyvern poison (value 4) for food, drink, and good conversation (gaining a better fellowship die). The centaurs have a demand for wyvern poison, so the value is increased to 5. The Cha test results in a natural 20! Critical! The final value is now a 7.

However, the max value is a 5 because the centaur disposition is a 5. So, the fellowship die is swapped out for a d10 (twice the result). Even if the disposition with the centaurs had been higher, only a value 6 could have been used, because the d12 is the highest resource die. Still much better than a d6!

The *Centaurs Demand Wyvern Poison* is also the name of my stoner rock filk band.

Curry Favor

*When a character is in the presence of an influential member of a faction, and they have **satisfied one of the faction's wants**, they may increase the faction disposition by one.*

Downtime

Downtime

Downtime begins when the characters arrive at a populated locale that functions as their long term base of operations. Downtime is an opportunity to turn valuables into experience, research mysteries, craft items, and potentially showcase their ambitions. Time during downtime is measured in **days** and **months**. The company sheet has a calendar to track the current month.

Party Wealth

There is a **party wealth table** on the company sheet. This tracks the investments and connections the company has available to them.

There are five circles on each row of the party wealth table. This is to reflect the rough 5:1 ratio of the value scale, see *Valuables* (page 24). When **five boxes** of a row are filled in, they may be erased, and **one box** of the higher value can be filled in.

Liquidity

It is possible to trade down on the wealth table, but the rate is worse than trading up. Flexibility costs money! Erasing **one box** on the wealth table lets a player fill in **four boxes** of the lower value.

Spending Company Wealth

To **spend company wealth**, simply erase the box of the given value. For example, to spend wealth 2, erase a filled in box on the second row of the party wealth table. Players may exchange party wealth up or down as detailed above before doing so.

Towns

Downtime takes place in towns. The term town here is very flexible: it means any populated area that supports buying and selling goods. Each town has a **wealth** score

between 1 and 10.

A town with a higher wealth has a wider variety of goods and services available. However, higher wealth means carousing and researching are more expensive.

Starting Town Wealth

A good town wealth for starting campaigns is **4**. This reflects a town with access to many types of gear, but one that isn't prohibitively expensive to live in.

Cost of Living

Many activities in town require spending the **cost of living** for the town, which is **two less than the town wealth**, to a minimum of one. The wealthier the town is, the more expensive it is! Although, wealthier towns tend to have better gear as well.

The default assumption in *Lavender Hack* is that there is only one town that functions as a home base. This is largely true for most OSR content. Typically this town is on the edge of the wilds, with easy access to suitable adventure locations.

Over the course of a campaign, it's possible for the town base to change, but it shouldn't change often. Tracking multiple towns is a possibility, which would drift *Lavender Hack* into more of a speculative trading game. In that case, travel costs should be strictly enforced.

Supply and Demand

Types of valuables the town **supplies** cost one less to purchase, and types of valuables the town **demands** are worth one more when sold.

When a town is created, and at the end of every month, erase any existing supply and demand for the town and roll twice on *Valuable Types* (page 26).

Downtime

The first roll determines which type of valuable the town supplies cheaply, and the second roll determines what type of valuable is in short supply and will fetch a higher price. These changes last until the end of the next month.

The idea here is to give players slightly different incentives each time they go out into the wilds. This may promote trading with different factions to get types of valuables that are in demand. It may be necessary to customize the random table of valuables to better match the adventure setting.

Downtime Minigame

1. Each player chooses one of the following downtime actions.
 - a. **Buy** equipment.
 - b. **Sell** items.
 - c. **Create advantage**.
 - d. Class **training**.
 - e. **Recover** a condition.
 - f. **Craft** item.
 - g. **Research** item or mystery.
 - h. **Carouse** with the locals.
2. d10 days of time pass.
 - a. At the end of every month, roll for **downtime events** and update supply and demand.
3. Upon leaving town, erase one filled in box for ambition, pay cost of living, and pay equipment and retainer upkeep.

Buy

As an action, any weapons, armor, or equipment may be purchased in town, provided the value of the item is **less than or equal** to town wealth. See *Equipment* (page 28) for more details.

Sell

Erase each valuable sold from the character sheet, and add one box on the appropriate row of the party wealth table. If any row of

the wealth table is completely filled with five marks, the row may be erased and one higher value box marked.

Used gear or equipment has a value **one less** than normal.

A player may sell as many items as they wish from any character sheet as part of the sell action. Items of unknown value must be **researched** first to find their worth before they are sold.

Inflation

If an item with a value equal to or greater than the town's wealth is sold, the **town's wealth increases by one!** Thanks for contributing to inflation!

Create Advantage

As usual, create advantage takes the same amount of time as the action it is helping.

Train

Training is the process of gathering the experience and resources necessary for leveling up. After taking the training action, a player may add **one** training progress on their character sheet by spending an equivalent amount of wealth. For example, to fill in the 3rd progress box, spend 3 party wealth. Progress is not lost between downtime procedures. The progress boxes may be filled in any order.

Leveling up requires an amount of progress equal to the target level. For example, a 3rd level character needs 4 progress to reach level 4. If every box up to the appropriate progress is filled in, **erase all progress**, and follow the level up procedure.

Downtime

Level Up Procedure

1. The player may increase either **primary ability** score by one.
2. Roll a number of hit dice equal to the new level and add them together.
 - a. Add Con modifier to each die rolled.
 - b. If the total is higher than the character's maximum hit points, use new result as maximum.
3. Choose a new advanced class features.

Recover

Recovering from conditions uses progress tracks like training. However, progress is made by using the recovery procedure, **not** by spending party wealth. All conditions have a value, which indicates how much total progress must be achieved to remove the condition.

The ability score to use depends on the condition. Physical ailments may use Con or Str, while mental troubles may use Wis, Int, or Cha. Additionally, a character may use recovery to help another character recover, which could change the ability score to use. A character trying to overcome disease on their own might use Con, while a character trying to help them may use Wis or Int.

If all of the progress up to the value of the condition is filled in, erase all progress and erase the condition.

Some conditions may require additional special ingredients, which must be spent in addition to filling in progress. This is more common with the mysterious blights and curses than can befall an intrepid adventurer.

Recover from Condition

When a character is recovering from a condition, or helping another character recover, spend any necessary special ingredients and test a related ability score. On a

***Critical**, the condition has been cured! Maybe it wasn't as bad as initially thought. Maybe it was, and the character is just amazing at recovery. Erase all progress and remove the condition.*

***Strong success**, add 2 progress to remove the condition.*

***Weak success**, add 1 progress to remove the condition.*

***Fumble**, there's a major setback! Remove all progress for the condition, and it needs one extra progress to recover from.*



No Condition is Permanent, Just Hang In There!

Downtime

Craft

Crafting is used to create new items, magic or otherwise. A character may **only** craft item types for which they have expertise. See *Appraisal* (page 25).

Crafting works similar to training. After taking the crafting action, a player may add **one** crafting progress on their character sheet by spending an equivalent amount of wealth.

The amount of progress needed is equal to the value of the item being created. See the *Valuables* (page 24) and *Magic* (page 70) chapters for sample values. In addition, some types of crafting, usually magical, require **special ingredients** that may be hard to find. These must be spent in addition to completing the progress track.

When the track is completed, and any special ingredients have been spent, the player finishes crafting by following the crafting procedure for either non-magical equipment or magic items.

Equipment

Crafting equipment allows a player to furnish gear that would normally be unavailable based on the wealth of the town. Additionally, higher quality features may be added to gear, although there is also the potential for a flaw. See *Qualities* (page 30).

Craft Equipment

*When crafting progress is completed and any special ingredients have been spent, you may **craft equipment**. Erase all crafting progress and **test Str** for Strong characters, **Int** for Wise, and **Dex** for Deft. On a*

Critical, the work is a masterpiece! Name it after your character. Its value is one higher than normal and the item has one additional equipment feature.

Strong success, the item is very well crafted! Its value is one higher than normal.

Weak success, crafting finishes without complications.

Miss, the item is poorly crafted. Its value is one less than normal.

Fumble, the item is of shoddy make! Its value is one less than normal and the item gains an equipment flaw.

Magic Items

Crafting magic items is an involved undertaking. The players should use the items in the magic section as a baseline, and determine an appropriate value and potential special ingredients. One way to create interesting magical items is to give them both beneficial and harmful traits.

Only Wise characters may make magical items. They first must have the item they wish to enchant. So, it is possible for a Strong character to buy or craft a sword, and then the Wise character may imbue it with magic.

Making magical items is not as formulaic as crafting equipment, because magic is not formulaic. It is entirely appropriate to have weird and bizarre ingredients needed. Additionally, weird and bizarre ingredients that the characters find can be used as inspiration for potential magic item. See *Magic Items* (page 75) for more inspiration about potential effects and curses.

Downtime

Craft Magic Item

When crafting progress is completed and any special ingredients have been spent, a Wise character may **craft a magic item**. Erase all crafting progress and **test Int**. On a

Critical, the magical interactions produce a new effect! The item is one of a kind, so name it after your character. Its value is one higher than normal and the item has one additional magical effect when used. Work with the group to come up with something appropriate and evocative.

Strong success, the item is very well crafted! Its value is one higher than normal.

Weak success, crafting finishes without complications.

Miss, the item is poorly crafted. Its value is one less than normal.

Fumble, the item is cursed! Its value is one less than normal and the item has a magical curse.

I really like books of weird magical herbs and creatures, like *Fungi of the Far Realms* or the strange plants in *Hot Springs Island*. Magic item crafting gives an opening to use strange things characters find for potions and other items. It may take some research to figure out just what the plants and animals can do.

This is intentionally a more narrative process. There aren't long tables of effects with different values, because such things rarely track with how the game is played, and can rob magic of its wonder.

It's okay if one character has a gonzo or powerful magic item - particularly if it's mediated by narratively fun downsides. The most important thing to ensure is that each character feels like they have a role in the party.

Research

Researching is used to find the worth of a valuable or any magical properties an item possesses. Research may also be used to find out more information about something discovered in the wilds or to create high quality maps.

After taking the research action, a player spends cost of living to determine the **value** of an item, to discover a single **magical property** of an item, or to find the answer to a question. The gamemaster tells players when the last magical property of an item is discovered.

Research is limited based on the available resources in the town. For instance, a town with little wealth or population may not have the necessary expertise to identify a rare magical item.

Research is used when a player is trying to answer questions that didn't have obvious answers in the wilds, such as "When does the Moon Door open" or "I'd like to learn more about the Frog people." General rumors are handled by the Carouse action.

Researching the Wilds

While at a populated location during downtime, a player may spend **cost of living** and make a **Int test** to research a particular question. On a

Critical, as a strong success, and additionally, you discover something useful about a related subject as well.

Strong success, you discover a useful fact related to the question.

Weak success, you discover suspect writings on this subject. The information is only partly true.

Fumble, your head is filled with lies! Lies are sticky: take a condition describing the misinformation. The condition has a value of d6.

Downtime

Maps

The value of a map primarily depends on how dangerous the mapped area is. A map must contain at least **10 rooms** or **5 hexes** to be of value. If the map is larger than that, divide it into a number of different maps of roughly that size. See the *Exploration & Travel* (page 34) chapter for more details on making maps.

Creating a map is a type of research. The character assigned to mapping may use the Cartography action to determine how good their maps are.

Cartography

While at a quiet location, the mapping player may **spend cost of living** and **test Int** to create a detailed map. The base value of the map is equal to the danger of the mapped area. On a

Critical, the character has perfectly recreated the area, down to the last detail! The value of the map is 2 more than the danger. Additionally, if the players missed any secret areas on the map, they realize that now.

Strong success, the map is worth 1 more than the danger.

Weak success, the map is worth the same as the danger.

Miss, the map is worth 1 less than the danger.

Fumble, the character has created a garbage map! The map is worth 2 less than the danger. Additionally, the map finds its way into the hands of someone who doesn't take kindly to being misled. After barely surviving their expedition, they make inquiries into whoever created such a travesty in order to take revenge.

Carouse

While at a populated location during downtime, a player may spend **cost of living** and make a **Cha test** to carouse at a popular gathering spot. On a

Critical, you have received a dungeon map showing an area of interest! Or choose the strong or weak results.

Strong success, you have found a potential retainer! Or choose the weak result.

Weak success, you hear a rumor about the wilds you're going to visit next.

Fumble, your carousing has aroused the interest of a rival adventuring party! They head out into the wilds in d6 days, looking to find treasure before you do!

If a retainer is found, roll for the type of retainer and their hit points using *Retainers* (page 32). They are paid at the end of downtime.

Recurring Hirelings

Alternatively, a set of retainers may be created ahead of time for the town and randomly rolled for when retainers are located. This allows for a recurring cast of characters for each town, further giving it a unique texture.

Downtime Events

If the players are in town when a month ends, the gamemaster rolls for random downtime events as a general test.

Downtime

Downtime Events

At the end of each month, make a general test for downtime events. On a

Critical, a horrible calamity befalls the town! Fire? Flood? Magical miasma? Whatever it is, everyone must leave and the town takes d12 days to get back to normal. The characters must leave immediately and may not return until the time has elapsed. Perform end of downtime actions as normal, then head out. Hope you make it out there!

Strong Success, all that coin you're flashing around has attracted the wrong attention! You have been robbed! Erase wealth equal to town wealth, or as much as possible up to town wealth.

Weak Success, it is time to get serious about your ambitions! Spend cost of living for each filled in ambition box.

Miss, economic growth has slowed. Subtract one from town wealth.

Fumble, the spotlight character receives a blessing! The stars have aligned and they may either erase one condition or make all tests with advantage until the next downtime phase.

Pursuing Ambitions

When a character's ambitions catch up to them as part of a downtime event, they must spend cost of living for **each** ambition box that is filled in! The player can narrate how they're working to satisfy their ambition.

If the player can't or won't pay, they gain a condition related to their ambition! Roll a d6 to determine the value of the condition. Give the condition an evocative name based on the character's ambition. This is an opportunity to showcase how a character's ambitions affect their life.

Ending Downtime

When the players choose to end downtime, or run out of funds with which to conduct actions, they must pay a final amount based on the cost of living in town. The amount spent determines what the resource dice should be set to.

Additionally, each player may **erase one** filled in box for their ambition aspect. This reflects the slow, steady progress made to satisfy their ambitions.

Reset Resource Dice

Compare the amount spent to the cost of living, and set the four resource dice (food, fellowship, gear, and light) to the listed dice type. For example, if an amount equal to the cost of living is spent, all of the resource dice are set to d8s. Then the characters are ready to continue exploration!

Cost of Living	Resource Dice
Nothing	d20
Two Less	d4
One Less	d6
Equal	d8
Two More	d10

Upkeep

Each character that employs retainers must pay them now. The cost is based on the employing character's level. See *Retainers* (page 32). If the player either can't or won't pay this cost, the retainer leaves and looks for work elsewhere.

Additionally, any upkeep costs for equipment like ships or horses is paid at this time. If the upkeep cost can't be paid, the equipment may not be used until next downtime phase.

Magic

Magic

Before the firmament, in the voids of chaos, the raw stuff of magic swirled. The creatures of Faerie and the Elemental Gods are closer to magic than anything, but even they harness it with care. For magic is not predictable and will inevitably turn on those who harness it.

Spells

Spells are mostly used by the Wise class, although some creatures also have access to them. If a creature casts a spell, treat their hit dice as the caster level.

All spells all take one round to cast, unless mentioned otherwise. If a character or creature is interrupted while casting a spell, make any tests with disadvantage.

The **duration** of a spell indicates how long it will last, and usually depends on the level of the caster. The **range** determines the limit of its effect. Sometimes spell effects have an area, like a line, cone, or a sphere. It's not important to be too picky about these dimensions: they are rough guidelines for how the spell is used.

Some spells allow for a **saving throw** to ignore the effect, although that's somewhat rare. After all, there's already a roll to see what happens. If a saving throw is allowed, subtract the level or hit dice of the caster.

Animate Object

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: 30'

*The caster turns an inanimate object into a horrifying flesh golem, with the general shape and form of the original object. Capabilities are based on the targeted item, which can be no larger than 2 cubic feet per level. For every 2 cubic feet, the golem has roughly 1 HD and can do 1d4 damage in a melee attack. Unless something like a wagon was transformed, assume the golem is slow. **Test Int.** On a*

Critical, the golem understands very complex commands. It can fetch, guard, attack, carry, and explore. In addition, it has a disturbing form of speech it can use to communicate.

Strong success, the golem responds to basic commands, such as guard and attack.

Weak success, as a strong success and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, you have animated your clothes, which become flesh, and move of their own accord until the spell ends! Animated clothes frequently want to be worn by someone attractive. Regardless, this is a traumatic experience, roll the fellowship die.

Magic

Charm Person

Duration: 1 Watch Per Level

Range: 120'

The caster turns an intelligent creature that shares the same language into an ally. **Test Int.** On a

Critical, the target is fanatically loyal to the caster. They will gladly lay down their life in service if necessary.

Strong success, the target considers the caster to be a trusted friend. The target won't go against their core beliefs, but must requests within reason will be followed.

Weak success, as a strong success and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the target considers the caster to be a terrible foe! They will do anything in their power to destroy the caster. However, they are not fanatical in their efforts. They are content to lay in wait for an opportune moment to strike.

Control Weather

Duration: 1 Watch Per 2 Levels

Range: 300 yards around caster

When the caster is outdoors, they may control the weather around the party, **test Wis.** On a

Critical, the caster has complete control of the weather. They may bring about clear skies, torrential storms, tornadoes, snow, blizzards, or up to hurricane force winds. This can be focused into a ranged attack that does d6 damage per level.

Strong success, the caster can remove any bad weather replace it with clear skies, pleasant temperatures, and a calm breeze coming from a direction chosen by the caster. During this time, all fellowship tests are made with advantage.

Weak success, as a strong success and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the Gods have forsaken us! An elemental storm based on the favored element of the caster descends upon the characters. This is particularly bad weather - in addition to the usual effects of bad weather, each hour spent without shelter the characters take their hit die in damage.

Magic

Daemonic Porter

Duration: 1 Hour Per Level

Range: 240'

You summon a daemonic porter from the abyss to help carry your gear and valuables. The first time this daemon is summoned, give it a name and determine which lower realm of hell it guards over.

*When the duration ends, the daemon returns to hell and the **spell is forgotten**. When you call upon the daemon, **test Int**. On a*

***Critical**, the daemon is in a good mood! It will carry 20 encumbrance slots and its humorous anecdotes step up the fellowship die.*

***Strong success**, the daemon will carry 15 encumbrance slots.*

***Weak success**, the daemon will carry 10 encumbrance slots.*

***Miss**, the daemon will carry 10 encumbrance slots. It is also particularly mean spirited, roll the fellowship die.*

***Fumble**, the daemon will carry 10 encumbrance slots. However, it also leaves with some item the party values!*

Invisibility

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: Self

*The caster may make themselves invisible for the duration of the spell. Unless a creature doesn't rely on sight much, invisibility makes it much more difficult to be hit in combat, giving advantage to defense. When the spell is cast, **test Int**. On a*

***Critical**, the caster's entire party becomes invisible. The caster does not need to maintain concentration to keep the spell effect going, and may perform any activities while invisible.*

***Strong success**, the caster becomes invisible. They do not need to maintain concentration, and may perform any activities while remaining invisible.*

***Weak success**, the caster becomes invisible. They must maintain some level of concentration to remain invisible. Strenuous activities, such as climbing a wall or fighting in combat will cause the spell to end. The spell is forgotten.*

***Miss**, the spell is forgotten.*

***Fumble**, the caster can't hide! Mostly because of the loud sounds emanating from their person. Any encounter tests are made with disadvantage for the duration of the spell.*

Magic

Mirror Image

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: 30'

The caster creates a number of illusionary copies of themselves. If the caster is attacked, the attack will hit one of the illusionary copies instead, causing it to vanish. To create the copies, **test Int**. On a

Critical, the caster creates a flesh and blood copy of themselves. During the duration of the spell, the player controls two identical copies of themselves, with the same set of spells and abilities. After the divergence, the clones may act independently from each other, and may cast and forget different spells. At the end of the spell, no matter how far apart, one clone merges into the other one. This merging process includes duplicate gear.

Strong success, d6 duplicate images.

Weak success, d4 duplicate images and spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the caster summons an image of their worst self, their fears and hatreds and insecurities becoming manifest. The worst self will avoid being hit in combat, hiding behind the caster. Roll the fellowship die each turn the spell lasts.

Sleep

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: 240'

The caster induces a sorcerous slumber on a number of creatures capable of sleeping by **testing Int**. Creatures with the lowest number of hit dice are affected first. On a

Critical, the caster sleeps d4 hit dice of creatures per level.

Strong success, the caster sleeps 1 hit dice of creatures per level.

Weak success, the caster sleeps 1 hit dice of creatures per level and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, there is no sleep! Every character in the party is unable to sleep until a spellcaster successfully casts sleep on them. Characters who can't sleep temporarily lose 1d4 points from any ability score each day until they are released into blissful slumber.

Magic

Speak with Animals

Duration: 1 Round Per Level

Range: 30'

The caster may converse with non-fantastic animals of a common variety. The sorts of communication possible depend on the habits of the animal and its disposition toward the caster. When the caster finds an animal to communicate with, **test Wis.** On a

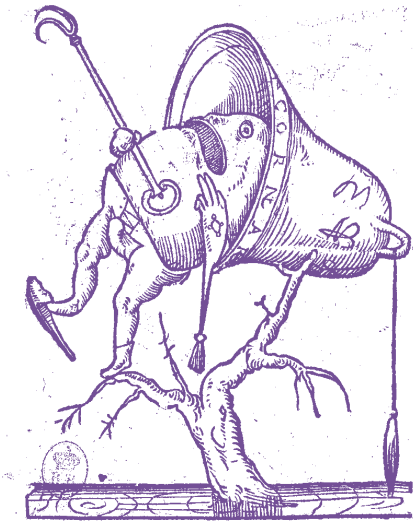
Critical, the caster may ask the animal one question per level as well as make a request. If the request is reasonable, the animal will carry out the request to the best of their ability.

Strong success, the caster may ask the animal one question per level. The animal will be on its way after attempting to answer these questions, but the spell is remembered.

Weak success, the caster may ask the animal one question per level and spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the message is lost in translation, and the animal is deeply offended! So much so that it will attempt to summon its friends and harass the party until they somehow make amends.



Sophia the Squamous
Suffers Magical Backlash

Spider Climb

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: Self

The caster gains the ability to climb walls as a spider, moving at normal speed up and down sheer surfaces. **Test Int.** On a

Critical, the party gains the ability to spider climb! They can move at normal speed up and down sheer surfaces.

Strong success, the caster gains the ability to spider climb.

Weak success, as a strong success and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the caster becomes a large spider! They seek to build webs, and will defend themselves if necessary, but all of their instincts are spider like.

Spirit Swap

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: 30'

The caster may exchange spirits with their familiar, seeing through their eyes, feeling their sensations, and controlling their actions. When attempting spirit swap, **test Wis.** On a

Critical, the caster maintains control of their body while inhabiting the familiar, able to act as both familiar and caster at the same time.

Strong success, the caster inhabits the familiar and the spirit of the familiar inhabits the caster - who becomes mostly docile, but does have tendencies of the familiar during the spell.

Weak success, as a strong success and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the caster inhabits the spirit of a random animal within a few hundred yards. Meanwhile, the caster's body slumps over in a heap, devoid of consciousness until the spell ends.

Magic

Turn Undead

Duration: 1 Turn Per Level

Range: 40'

The caster may channel positive energy through an icon of their choosing, which is anathema to undead. The listed hit dice of undead are affected for the duration of the spell, starting with the lowest hit dice undead first. To begin turning undead, **test Wis**. On a

Critical, 1d4 hit dice of undead per caster level are destroyed!

Strong success, 1d4 hit dice of undead per level are turned.

Weak success, as a strong success and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the caster summons the deathless horde! For the duration of the spell, any undead within 100 yards know where the caster is and make every effort to find and destroy them.

Custom Spell

It is easy enough to port spells from other systems into *Lavender Hack*. Use the following template as a guide.

Spell Template

The spell should either **test Wis** or **test Int**, depending on theme. On a

Critical, the effect should be powerful, typically double effectiveness, either in duration or magnitude, whichever is more important.

Strong success, the effect should trigger and the spell is retained.

Weak success, the effect should trigger, and the spell is forgotten.

Miss, nothing happens and the spell is forgotten.

Fumble, the spell is forgotten and some sort of magical mishap occurs, related to the nature of the spell.

The biggest thing to watch for when porting over spells from OSR content is accidentally undermining the resource economies (gear, light, food, and fellowship) of *Lavender Hack*. As you can tell, there are intentionally no spells such as Light, Continual Light, or Create Food and Drink! The other area to be a little cautious of is niche protection. That is, letting a Wise character completely take over the role a Strong or Deft character would better occupy.

Because the Wise characters can use any spell to harm or heal, it's not necessary to have long lists of healing or harming spells. Use the weird ones with lots of potential for dramatic fallout! My favorite magic book is *Wonder & Wickedness*, along with the spells in *Knave*.

Magic Items

Magical items are a special class of valuables possessing abilities far beyond general equipment. It is impossible to buy magical items: they must be painstakingly crafted or found while exploring.

The number in parentheses is the **value** of

Magic

the magic item.

Crafting

As mentioned in the Downtime section, each class may craft a type of magic item, based on the sorts of valuables they're knowledgeable about. See the Appraise section and Downtime sections for more details.

Potion of Cure Light Wounds (2): As an action, a character may drink the potion of cure light wounds to immediately heal d8 damage.

Ring of Protection +1 (5): The ring of protection allows the wearer to add +1 to any armor die rolls, although the result can't be higher than the max value of the armor die. If the wearer doesn't have armor, they gain a temporary d4 die of armor that won't need to make usage tests.

Bestiary

Bestiary

This section contains a sampling of creatures listed in alphabetical order. Creatures are listed with a short section of descriptive text, followed by a stat block, and finally a bulleted list of special features and notes.

AR: The *armor* value of a creature, subtracted from damaging attacks as described in the Combat section.

HD: The *hit dice* of the creature are a rough gauge of how much damage they can absorb. Hit points are determined by rolling a number of d8s equal to hit dice and adding them together. Alternatively, use a flat 5 hit points per hit die.

A: The number, type, and damage of *attacks* the creature has available during combat. Using the listed attacks takes one action during combat. Attacks separated by an *or* indicate alternative attack options, either of which takes an action. Ranged attacks have a range listed as well. Creatures that use weapons will use the weapon damage and stats where applicable.

MV: The *movement* of creatures is either *fast*, *standard* or *slow*. Movement is described in the Exploration and Combat sections. Other forms of movement, such as flying or swimming, are listed here as well.

ML: The *morale* of a creature is added to morale tests during Combat.

Special Features

The list of special features for a creature lists a variety of effects and special abilities. This includes listing creature types that may interact with other character abilities or spells, such as undead or giant.

Features that are in *bold italics* are actions that may be taken during combat, instead of using attack actions. *Spell-like* actions

work like spells: the GM must declare at the beginning of a round that the creature is using the spell ability, and if it is disrupted it is lost. *Spells* are from the Spell section, and the effects work as described there. Assume creatures gain spells each day as a caster, and cast them as a caster of level equal to their hit dice unless mentioned otherwise.

Converting creatures to *Lavender Hack* from OSR style games should be fairly straightforward. The hit dice and attacks can most likely be used as-is.

For armor, most creatures should have a value between 1 and 3. Very high armor values, such as 5 or 6 will force players to take costs during combat to bypass armor. This should be done sparingly. When using *B/X* monsters, the following formula will probably get you in the right ballpark: $(9-AC)/2$.

Morale should usually range from -5 to +5, with most creatures centered on +0. *B/X* monsters have morale stats from 2 to 12, and they convert as follows: **2** (-11), **3** (-10), **4** (-9), **5** (-7), **6** (-5), **7** (-1), **8** (+2), **9** (+4), **10** (+5), **11** (+6), **12** (No Check).

Efreet

Efreet are cunning and cruel beings infused with powerful magics. They are massive, standing 15' tall, with smoky red skin and jet black horns. Their primary goals are to recover great wealth, increase their influence, and murder djinn. They welcome aid in these tasks.
AR 4, HD 10, A 1 x fist (2d8), MV Standard / Standard (flying), ML +6

- **Elemental:** Efreet hail from the elemental plane of fire. They are immune to attacks using fire and take double damage from attacks using water.
- **Giant:** Efreet stand up to 15' tall.
- **Spells:** *Wall of Fire*, *Invisibility*, and *Illusion*.

Bestiary

Lizardfolk

Lizardfolk are powerfully built humanoids standing up to 8' tall. They form tribal societies with widely different belief systems. They prefer warmer and wetter climes.

AR 2, HD 4, A 1 x weapon (d8), MV Standard / Standard (water), ML +3

Nereid

Beautiful beings born from the sea, with long flowing hair and lithe frames. They enjoy singing songs and manipulating oceanfarers into helping achieve their goals.

AR 0, HD 5, A 1 x weapon (d6), MV Standard / Quick (water), ML +2

- **Elemental:** Nereids are from the elemental plane of water. They are immune to attacks using water and take double damage from attacks using fire.
- **Song:** As a spell-like ability, the nereid may sing a stunning song which charms another intelligent creature. A successful Wis save ignores the attempt.
- **Spell:** *Control Element (Water).*

Ogre

Large hulking brutes, making up for their lack of intelligence with raw destructive power.

AR 1, HD 5, A 1 x large weapon (d10), MV Standard, ML +4

- **Giant:** Ogres stand up to 10' tall.

Salamander, Fire

Fire salamanders are serpentine humanoids standing almost 6' tall, with 6' long tails and bright red or orange scales. They enjoy bullying the weak.

AR 2, HD 4, A 2 x claw (d4), 1 x bite (d8), MV Standard, ML +2

- **Elemental:** Fire salamanders hail from the elemental plane of fire. They are immune to attacks using fire and take double damage from attacks using water.
- **Scorch:** Fire salamanders radiate an intense heat that does d8 damage to any creature within 20'.

Skeleton

The animated skeletons of dead warriors, brought back to unlife by necromancers for their inscrutable purposes.

AR 2, HD 1, A 1 x crude weapon (d6), MV Standard, ML +4

- **Undead:** Undead are not susceptible to spells or effects which target the mind, such as sleep and charm.
- **Bludgeoning:** Players ignore the armor value when using bludgeoning weapons such as maces or clubs.

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Lavender Hack

NAME

CLASS

LEVEL



ARMOR



current

max

HIT POINTS

VALUABLES (5+Str Mod)

USAGE

VALUE

SLOTS

STR ●	
INT ●	
WIS ●	
DEX ●	
CON ●	
CHA ●	

Background	Invoke Resource
------------	-----------------

Born Under	Invoke Resource With Advantage On Doubles, Starcrossed
------------	---

Ambition	Invoke Max Resource Value ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Mark Ambition
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DOWNTIME	Training ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Crafting _____	Condition _____
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Crafting _____	Condition _____
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Class Features

Sigil or Portrait

RETAINER NAME TYPE HP (DIE) WEAPONS AND ARMOR

MOUNT / FAMILIAR / HP (DIE) FEATURES
ANIMAL COMPANION

Lavender Hack

COMPANY _____

LEADER _____

YEAR _____

MONTH _____

SESSION END



Calendar

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Court

Faction _____
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Faction _____
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Faction _____
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Faction _____
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Downtime

Town _____
 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Supply _____

Demand _____

Town Events

Critical: Calamity!

Strong: Robbed!

Weak: Lower Town Wealth

Miss: Upkeep or Ambition

Fumble: Fortune!

Company Wealth

Trade Valuables ↑ ↓	5:1	10	○	○	○	○	○
		9	○	○	○	○	○
		8	○	○	○	○	○
		7	○	○	○	○	○
		6	○	○	○	○	○
		5	○	○	○	○	○
		4	○	○	○	○	○
		3	○	○	○	○	○
		1:4	2	○	○	○	○
			1	○	○	○	○

The High Sea

SHIP

CARGO

TYPE

HULL

SPEED

CREW

Daily Log



FEATURES / WEAPONS MINIMUM CREW

Travel or Maneuver

Evade Attack

Calm

Faint

Gentle

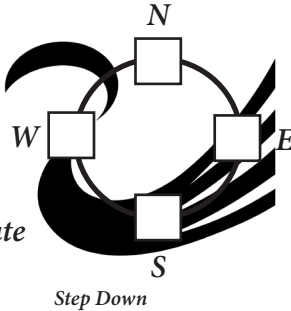
Moderate

Robust

Strong

High

Gale



Morale



Rebalance Gear



Gear



Hull



Food

Captain

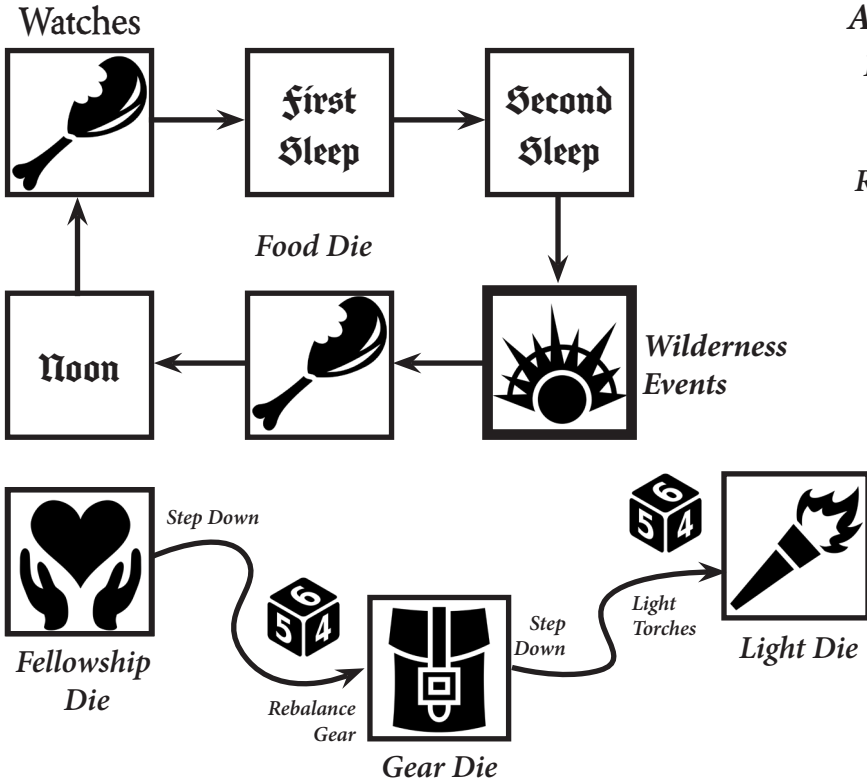
Quartermaster

Bosun

The Wild

Actions

- Explore
- Travel
- Search
- Regroup
- Camp

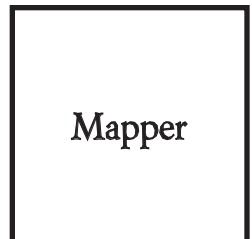
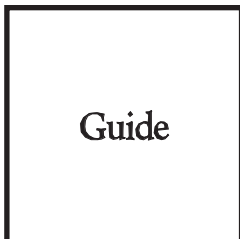
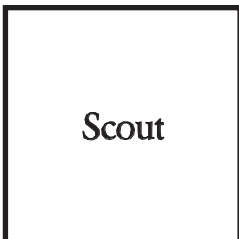


Wilderness Events

- Critical: Lair!
- Strong: Weather
- Weak: Encounter
- Miss: Discord
- Fumble: Discovery!

Discovery!

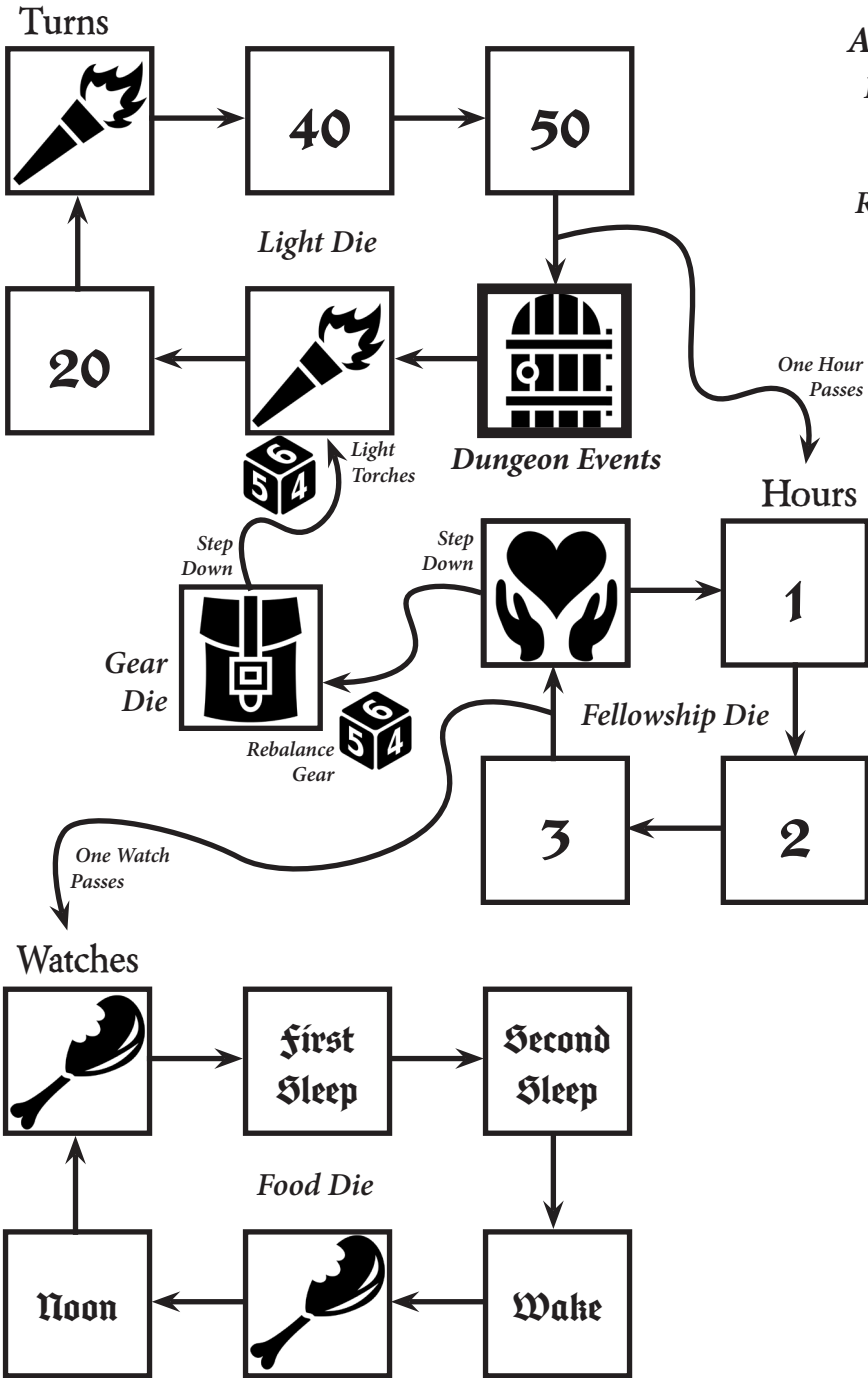
- Critical: Fellowship
- Strong: Light
- Weak: Gear
- Miss: Food
- Fumble: Valuable

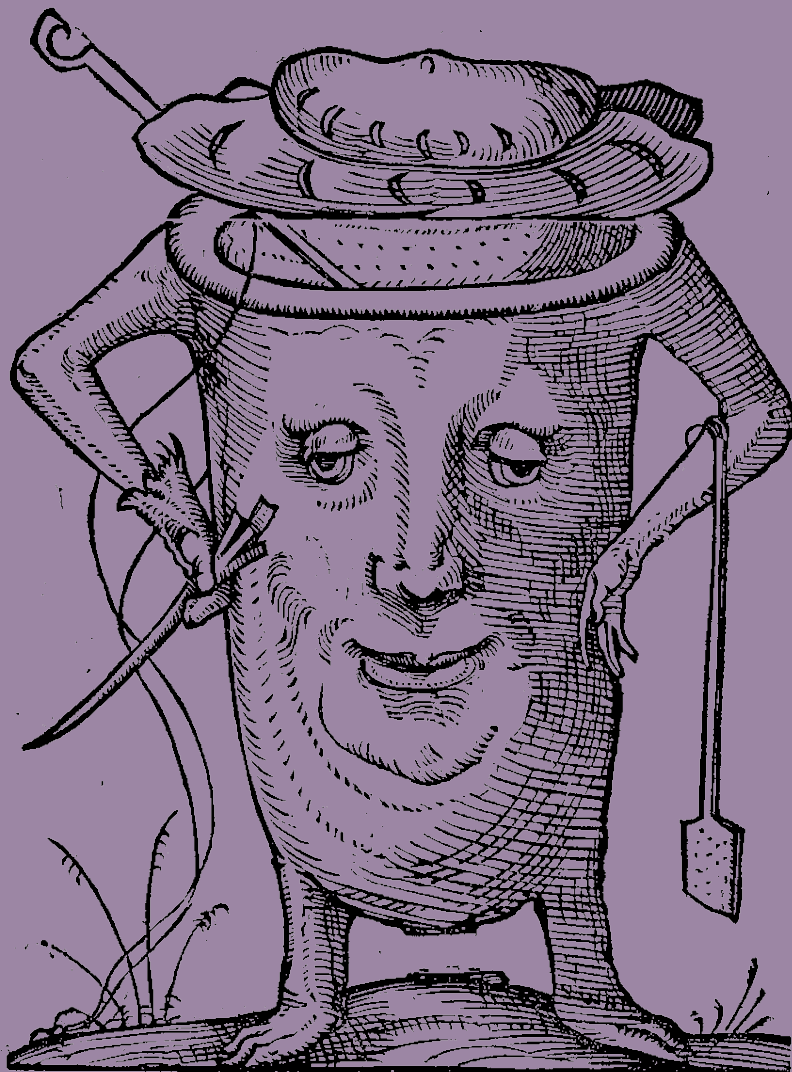


The Dungeon

Actions

- Explore
- Travel
- Search
- Regroup
- Camp





Be Prepared!