

AGE OF IRON

an OSR fantasy heartbreaker by Voidlight

“the real OSR is the game you accidentally make yourself along the way”

An Evolving Setting

A Prequel

I have a setting called *Suns Apart*, which is a surreal magic universe full of high society mages engaged in conspiracies, politics, and picking through the twisted remains of worlds warped by what years of having wizards running the universe does to a setting. The aesthetic is eclectic but moody in the way that surreal art tends to be, and when the fashion norms aren't being thrown out the window, it tends towards a 1920's European aesthetic, because I think a bunch of wizards wearing suits and waistcoats, smoking cigars and talking about how to resolve racketeering in the memory trade is a vibe (It's heavily inspired by two other games: *Invisible Sun* and *Fallen London*).

At some point, I thought it would be fun to explore the medieval past of this setting, and see what things were like back when the arcane arts were still in their "teenage years" so to speak, with some aspects of magic well understood, but many others still undiscovered. This would give me a chance to run classic fantasy adventures intended for systems in the ballpark of D&D, while allowing me the fun of setting continuity and the comfort of my favorite mechanics all in one place.

Hence, Age of Iron.

Another Dark Age

The Martoi were the first wielders of magic, but they are long dead, poisoning the Earth in their hubris and lust for immortality. Much of the strange things now on Earth were once theirs, places of wonder and of horror.

The Seree came after: an empire of sorcerer kings, and the mark of imperial rule still shapes the world today. Eventually they fell though (by the hand of the gods it is said), after attempting to seize power from the heavens.

In the long wake of that collapse, many places once off limits or inaccessible are being picked through by various mercenary companies, knights-errant, and so called "adventurers". With each discovery and ancient secret unearthed, magic and lost knowledge seep back into the world, and new Orders of mages dedicated to pushing the boundaries of the arcane arts are rising. It will be different this time, they say. But the powers of old are still a long way from being surpassed, and uniting the scattered kingdoms is still out of reach of any one power.

This is no longer the age of empire, but the Age of Iron.

(The lore is not that important outside of a given campaign; the point is that it's broadly medieval and there are cursed ruins with magic stuff to find. The Martoi and Seree are from Michael Prescott's [Tristhmus](#) setting, and I'm using that for a campaign at the time of writing. Very broadly, the Martoi are like

the Egyptians and the Serees are like the Romans. Now it's post-empire and the world is a bunch of scattered kingdoms. If I ever release this formally I'll replace it with lore that focuses more on the origins of the Orders of Magic.)

Start and Scope

This system is intended to be my go to for running both one-shot adventures, and long fantasy campaigns with multiple generations of characters, large scale warfare, and epic adventures. Not all mechanics will be needed at all times, but I want everything I need to be here.

Adventurers

You are a company of adventurers, striking out into places no sane person would go in hopes of riches, secrets, or as a favor to some faction that is the key to your grand political scheming. You may be heroes defending a community, or mages seeking to usher in a new age of arcane progress and the rise of the Vislae Orders, but you are just as likely to be mercenaries looking to live interesting lives full of treasure and danger.

Basic Rules

SAVES

To pass a Save, roll a d20 equal or below the relevant Core Stat. Failure means negative consequences, not always a failed action.

CORE STATS

Core Stats represent characters' abilities to act under extreme pressure and withstand stress and harm. They can be reduced and raised in a number of ways, but can never go higher than 19 or lower than 0.

TURNS

A turn in combat is enough time to Move and then perform an Action. A turn during dungeon/adventure site exploration is typically 10 minutes, enough time to search most rooms. A turn during wilderness travel

or overland exploration may be several hours or a whole day, depending on the scale of the map being used and how "zoomed in" the timekeeping and resource tracking needs to be for the purposes of a given play session.

INITIATIVE

Catching your opponents unawares is an excellent strategy. If it is unclear who acts first (both sides were ready for violence), all PCs make a MIND Save. PCs that pass act in a group turn before the opponents, then all opponents act, then PCs that fail act in a group turn after the opponents, concluding the round. PCs that passed may choose to hold their action and act after the opponents. If combat is ongoing, MIND Saves for initiative are rolled again for the new round, which may mix up the turn order.

Ambushes with the right preparations can grant advantage to initiative checks or simply cause auto-success or failure, but the real benefit of an ambush is the potential to catch opponents unprepared. This may mean they are *Exposed* due to encumbrance or grogginess, not wearing their full armor (humans do not wear their outer layers of armor all the time), or even unarmed, leading to them having to spend actions rifling through their packs, dropping their travel bags, or scrambling for crucial wargear.

EXPOSED

Characters who are caught with their guard down or otherwise defenceless are *Exposed* and act as if they have 0 Guard (GD). If they remedy their situation then they are no longer *Exposed*. Traps and ambushes typically catch victims *Exposed* (and thus bypass Guard). Wearing a traveling pack during combat is a common cause of being *Exposed*. Ever tried fighting while wearing a fully loaded pack?

INVENTORY

Inventory is tracked with numbered slots. Characters typically have 4 worn and 4 held slots. Clothing need not be tracked here, but armor/weapons/magic items are. Some items are *Petty*; multiples may be kept in a single slot (typically 3). *Bulky* items take up 2 slots. Carrying more than 2 *Bulky* items makes a character *Exposed*. Each worn pack counts as a single *Bulky* item (even if it contains multiple *Bulky* items), and expands available inventory slots (default +4). So the typical maximum inventory slots is 12: held (4), pack (4), 2nd pack (4).

Worn/held items are always readied. Removing something from a pack under duress (such as in combat) requires rolling a d12, and getting equal or higher than the last slot occupied by that item. Failing means you get the item, but you spend your whole turn doing so and cannot also use it this turn. Pack your bags carefully! Smart adventurers typically keep a combat pack and a non-combat pack, stash the extra one somewhere safe before getting into combat, and remove any useful items so they won't have to dig for them. It pays to catch opponents unawares!

DEATH

Even experienced adventurers can die a sudden or ignoble death. Prepare yourself for this. Being reduced to zero BODY counts as a mortal wound and triggers a Death Save (a secret roll to determine the characters status, revealed when they are checked by another PC), but there are things which may kill a PC outright.

When a PC dies the player creates a new character and they are added to the Company as quickly as possible.

Alternatively they may assume control of a squire, apprentice, or camp follower.

ATTACKS

Take the Attack dice noted on your weapon(s), shield, and granted by bonuses. If you have Skill Dice (SD) that apply to the current context (making a ranged attack, raging), one or more may be added as well.

Go through the following steps in order:

1. All combatants attacking the same target gather their dice.
2. Any abilities that occur before attack rolls (like Parry) may trigger.
3. All attackers roll their dice together.
4. Any abilities that trigger immediately after attack rolls (like Deny) may trigger.
5. Attackers with the proper training may spend some of the rolled dice to perform Gambits.
6. Take the highest die remaining.
7. Add any extra Damage from attackers who used the Bolster Gambit.
8. Subtract the target's total Armor score.
9. The Attack causes that much Damage.

So a Knight with a mace (d8) and shield (d4) is aided by an ally with 2 daggers (d6 each). They roll d8 and d4, and 2d6 respectively.

The dice show 7, 3, 1, and 5. The highest die is 7. The 5 is spent on a Gambit to Bolster the Damage to 8. The target has Armor 2 (helm and shield), reducing the Damage to 6.

Blast attacks target everybody in an area, rolling an attack for each target separately.

DAMAGE

The attack's Damage is deducted from the target's GD. If they have at least 1GD remaining that narratively means they have blocked or evaded the Attack.

If it leaves them with exactly 0GD then they gain a **Scar** (pgXX).

If it exceeds the target's GD, the excess is deducted from a relevant core stat (typically BODY for physical attacks) and they are Wounded.

If they lose half or more of their remaining BODY stat it is a Mortal Wound. Mortally Wounded targets are down and dying. They die if left untended for an hour, but can be patched up in a few moments. This can make fleeing an interesting choice if you have downed allies.

If Damage reduces the target's BODY to 0, they make a Death Save. If Damage reduces MIND or SOUL to 0 it may mean a Death Save, or possession, a psychotic break, or some other horrible consequence.

RECOVERY

GD is fully restored with a few moments of rest to catch one's breath. Typically this means right after combat, but there may be some clever ways to restore GD while a fight is ongoing.

Core Stats are restored with rest and access to treatment, which may or may not have a cost depending on where the PCs are. SOUL comes back the most easily, and PCs regain d6 SOUL each dawn (if they are above ground).

The rate that the BODY and MIND stats recover can be tweaked to the group's preference, playstyle, and level of time tracking. By default, BODY restores a point each day of adequate rest (including eating a ration), but this can be accelerated with healing arts or interrupted if adequate rest conditions are not available. If the character was actively adventuring instead of resting, make a BODY save each day after eating a ration, and restore a point only on a pass. This rate can be accelerated with access to superior care or supplies.

When skipping ahead in time a week or more it is common to just assume all Core Stats are restored.

SCARS

Take the die that caused the Scar and roll it again, consulting the table below for the specific Scar caused.

Stat loss through Scars is not Damage, so cannot Mortally Wound or Slay the victim. Scars are only gained through real, deadly combat, not training or bloodless duels.

(This table is from *Electric Bastionland*. Map the stats as follows: CHA = SOUL, HP = Guard, Critical Damage = Mortal Wound, Deprived = Exposed)

SCARS TABLE DAMAGE CAUSED	
1	Battlescar – A part of you is violently marked. Roll 1d6: 1: Eye 2: Cheek 3: Neck 4: Chest 5: Stomach 6: Hands Reroll your Maximum HP on d6 and keep the result if higher.
2	Shaken Nerves – You stammer and shake. After you take something to calm your nerves, reroll your Maximum HP on d6 and keep the result if higher.
3	Hobbled – Reduced to a limp until fixed.
4	Smashed Mouth – You spit teeth and blood. You look a mess until you see a dentist.
5	Bloody Mess – You need stitches. You are DEPRIVED until it's done by a Specialist. Reroll your Maximum HP on 2d6 and keep the result if higher.
6	Punctured Organ – A vital organ is in a critical state. If you take CRITICAL DAMAGE before seeing a Specialist you die. If you get it seen to, reroll your Maximum HP on 2d6 and keep the result if higher.
7	Maimed – A part of you is torn off. Roll 1d6: 1: Nose 2: Ear 3: Finger 4: Thumb 5: Eye 6: Chunk of Scalp
8	Torn Limb – A random limb is torn off or in need of amputation.
9	Splintered Mind – You are DEPRIVED until you spend a whole evening emotionally unloading.
10	Shattered Ego – You are dealt a humiliating blow. If you achieve revenge, reroll your Maximum HP on 3d6 and keep the result if higher.
11	Fractured Skull – You feel like a slightly different person. Reroll your CHA on 2d6.
12	Doomed to Die – You shouldn't have survived that. You have nightmares of your own death. If you fail your next SAVE against CRITICAL DAMAGE you die horribly. If you pass, remove this effect and reroll your Maximum HP on 3d6 and keep the result if higher.

Specifics of Combat

ATTACK MODIFIERS

Various things can Impair an attack (e.g. the effects of drugs, fighting in confined conditions, being grappled, etc.).

Impaired attacks roll d4 only and cannot gain bonus dice or benefit from Feats. Unarmed attacks are typically impaired against foes with weapons.

Blast attacks affect all targets in an area (the GM determines who will be affected), rolling the attack dice separately for each target.

Bonus attack dice may be gained from useful information, shrewd preparations, or a tactical advantage. +d8 is a typical bonus. Class abilities may also grant dice which can be spent to enhance attacks.

FEATS

Feats are special, almost superhuman techniques some classes can perform in combat, often as the result of special training or blessings. After using a Feat the user must pass a Save or become Fatigued, unable to perform Feats until they rest. Typically the same Feat cannot be triggered more than once per combatant involved in an attack, though one combatant may trigger multiple, distinct Feats in a single attack (if they keep passing their saves against Fatigue).

GAMBITS

Gambits are opportunities that present themselves during combat which trained combatants may be able to capitalize on. After rolling attack dice, if the attacker has the ability to perform Gambits they may discard one or more dice showing 4+. These dice no longer contribute towards damage (even if they were the highest die rolled), but for each one the attacker may pick a special effect, such as pushing the enemy back, grabbing the enemy's arm to Impair their next attack, or some other effect which grants a temporary advantage. The enemy can make a Save to resist the effect if it targets them. If the die used to trigger the Gambit showed 8+ it is instead a Strong Gambit, and a more impactful result may be chosen (e.g. disarming the target, or stripping a piece of their armor), or else a standard effect but the enemy gets no Save.

Gambits are described in more detail under classes that can perform them.

DESPERATE GAMBITS

Untrained combatants can still attempt Gambit style effects (grapple, shove, impair weapon, etc.), but they are riskier. These are attempted instead of making an attack rather than as a side effect to one, and if the opponent makes their Save there is usually a harsh penalty (attacker goes over the edge instead, free attack against them, etc.)

RANGED COMBAT

Purely ranged weapons cannot be used if the attacker began their turn engaged in melee.

Protective cover grants an additional point of Armour against ranged attacks.

MOUNTED COMBAT

Mounted combatants use their steed's trample Damage in addition to their own weapons when charging enemies on foot. This doesn't work against spearwalls. Steeds can be targeted separately by attacks.

Being dismounted causes d6 Damage. If this occurs in combat, add it to the existing dice.

SHIELDWALLS & SPEARWALLS

3 or more allies may form a wall formation. If they all bear shields (not bucklers) then they gain an additional point of Armour. If they all bear spears (or similar) then enemies cannot Attack on the turn that they charge.

WAVERING MORALE

Individuals who are Wounded, or groups who lose half their number, must pass a Save to avoid rout or surrender (typically SOUL).

Organised groups roll once using their leader's Core Stat. Disorganised groups roll for each individual against their own Core Stats. This does not affect player characters.

Warfare

WARBANDS

Two-dozen or so combatants fighting together are treated as a single Warband.

- When they are Mortally Wounded they are routed from the battle.
- At 0 BODY they are wiped out entirely, at 0 SOUL they are broken.
- They are not harmed by individual attacks unless they are Blast attacks or suitably large-scale.
- Warband attacks against individuals receive +d12 and cause Blast Damage.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

One individual within a Warband can add their Attack dice to the Warband's Attack Roll, leading from the front. If they do, they suffer the same Damage that the Warband does until their next turn.

WOOD AND STONE

Ships and structures are destroyed at 0 GD. Recovering GD takes a day of repairs.

Wooden structures and ships ignore Attacks other than from fire, siege weapons, or suitably large creatures.

Stone walls cannot be breached by conventional means, though their gates are usually a viable target.

Gate: 5GD, A2
Rampart: 10GD, A2
Castle Wall: 10GD, A3

Colliding ships take d12 Damage. If one ship is much larger it takes d6 Damage instead.

Rowboat: 4GD, carries 6 passengers
Longship: 7GD, A1, carries a Warband
Warship: 10GD, A2, carries 2 Warbands

ARTILLERY AND SIEGERY

Siege Tower: 7GD, A2
Battering Ram: d12
Stone Thrower: d12 blast
Bolt Launcher: 2d12
Trebuchet: 3d12 blast, immobile

RECRUITMENT

Soldiers are drawn from loyal Vassals, Knights that share a cause, or mercenaries who have agreed a price.

Whatever their origin, soldiers expect their basic needs to be met during their service. Warbands who are ill-rested, poorly fed, or otherwise pushed too far typically lose SOUL. At 0 SOUL a Warband will not follow orders, acting only in their self interest.

EXAMPLE WARBANDS

Militia: BODY 10, MIND 10, SOUL 7, 3GD
Crude polearm (d8 long)

Skirmishers: BODY 10, MIND 13, SOUL 10, 2GD
Shortbow (d6 long)

Mercenaries: BODY 13, MIND 10, SOUL 10, 4GD
A3 (mail, helm, shield)
Spear (d8 hefty), shield (d4)

Riders: BODY 10, MIND 13, SOUL 10, 3GD
Javelins (d6), handaxe (d6), steed

Knights: BODY 13, MIND 10, SOUL 13, 5GD
A3 (mail, helm, shield)
Mace (d8 hefty), shield (d4), charger (d8 trample)

Arms and Goods

WIELDING WEAPONS

If no type is noted, assume the weapon uses one hand and has no other restrictions.

Hefty weapons require one hand. Only one Hefty item can be wielded at once.

Long weapons require both hands and are *Impaired* in confined environments. They are *Bulky* items (2 inventory slots).

Slow weapons count as Long, and cannot be used if the attacker has moved this turn.

COMMON WEAPONS

Hefty Tools: d6 hefty (pitchfork, hatchet)

Long Tools: d8 long (staff, logging axe, pick)

Hand Weapons: d6 (dagger, club, handaxe)

Hefty Weapons: d8 hefty (spear, mace, axe)

Long Weapons: d10 long (poleaxe, billhook)

Sling: d4 hefty

Javelin: d6 hefty

Shortbow: d6 long

UNCOMMON WEAPONS

Shortsword: 2d6

Lance: d10 long, count as hefty if mounted

Brutal Weapons: 2d10 slow (greataxe, maul)

Longbow: d8 slow

RARE WEAPONS

Longsword: 2d8 hefty

Greatsword: 2d10 long

Recurve bow: 2d6 long

Crossbow: 2d8 slow

SPECIALIST WEAPONS

Take an existing common or uncommon weapon with +d8 or +d10 in a specific situation. Make it one category rarer.

WEARING ARMOUR

One of each armour type (coat, plates, helm, shield) can be worn at once, each taking inventory slots and combining their armour scores together. Plates and helm are generally not worn outside of battle. Ill-fitting armor pieces count as *Bulky*.

COMMON ARMOUR

Shield: d4, A1 (round, kite, heater)

UNCOMMON ARMOUR

Coat: A1 (mail, gambeson, flexible armour suitable for general wear or beneath plates)

Helm: A1 (kettle, nasal, bucket, coif)

RARE ARMOUR

Plates: A1, *Bulky* (cuirass, brigandine, splint, scale, rigid armour often worn over a coat, slow to remove or don, even with assistance)

TOOLS

Common Tools: Saw, fishing rod, sewing set, candles, shovel, flute

Uncommon Tools: Animal trap, smithing tools, herbalist kit, scribe set, lute

Rare Tools: Alchemy tools, crystal ball, extravagant harp

COMMON BEASTS

Hound: VIG 5, CLA 10, SPI 5, 4GD, d6 bite

Sheep or Pig: VIG 5, CLA 5, SPI 5, 1GD
Pony: VIG 7, CLA 7, SPI 5, 2GD

Mule: VIG 10, CLA 5, SPI 5, 1GD

UNCOMMON BEASTS

Ox: VIG 15, CLA 5, SPI 5, 3GD

Hawk: VIG 5, CLA 15, SPI 5, 4GD, d4 talons

Riding Steed: VIG 10, CLA 10, SPI 5, 3GD

Heavy Steed: VIG 15, CLA 5, SPI 5, 2GD

RARE BEASTS

Charger: VIG 10, CLA 5, SPI 5, 5GD, d8 trample

POISONS

Common: Sickness and discomfort Uncommon: Suffering, then slow death Rare: Death plus speed, secrecy, or suffering

Making a Character

Class

Technically an optional piece of a character, a class is a set of abilities that helps represent a specific archetype or the benefits gained from magical training or membership of an Order. Many classes are available to play, but there is no intention for them to be balanced, or for them to be necessary for the game. A smart player with a bare bones character that has no special abilities, but an inventory full of rope, torches, and rations should be able to clear dungeons and complete personal objectives through the most powerful ability of all: paying attention and manipulating the environment. The perfect solution to most situations is probably not on your character sheet!

That being said, let's fill that character sheet with cool shit anyway.

Generate Stats

Roll 3d6 each for BODY, MIND, and SOUL. Roll d6 for Guard.

Advancement

When you gain a level, raise your max Guard by d6. Also roll d4, distributing that many points among your core stats as you see fit. Choose a class and gain the next template in that class you do not already possess (starting with A if you have no templates in that class). The Warden will say if there are any requirements in the fiction for gaining levels in specific classes, such as spending months studying at a wizard school.

Characters are considered "max level" once they have 4 templates/levels, though the Warden may allow templates to be continually gained beyond this (though it can result in characters becoming a huge pile of abilities). The default requirement for gaining a level is surviving a certain number of expeditions (or sessions for faster progression), but this should be modified to the taste of a given gaming table.

Level 0: Novice. You don't have a class yet, and are working on gaining one.

Level 1: Professional. You survived a "funnel" session, or started at this level.

Level 2: Veteran. You have survived three expeditions since level 1.

Level 3: Adept. You have survived five expeditions since level 2 and have taken an apprentice.

Level 4: Master. You have a Veteran level apprentice and survived an expedition with them.

Champion Classes

Skill Dice

Skill Dice (SD) are d6s that may be added to armed melee attacks. You have a number of SD equal to your levels in any Champion class. They are expended on rolls of 4-6 and return to your pool at a rate of 1 SD per 10 min of rest.

Fighter

A: Full Arsenal Training, Parry, Gambits, +1 SD

B: Flow State, +1 SD

C: Riposte, +1 SD

D: Weapon Mastery, +1 SD

A: Full Arsenal Training

You may spend your SD on any attack (including ranged and unarmed attacks). Additionally, you become proficient with any weapon type (swords, bows, rifles, shields, etc.) the first time you roll max damage with a weapon of that type (i.e., you rolled the highest possible value on the damage die for that weapon, not necessarily all dice included in the attack). You are proficient in your starting weapon types.

A: Parry

Your SD can be spent to parry or dodge incoming blows where it would make sense. Declare you're doing so **before** the enemy attack roll, invest a number of SD, and roll them. The highest rolled parry die is deducted from the incoming damage before armor is applied.

A: Gambits

You see opportunities in the heat of battle the untrained would miss. In melee combat, you may discard any number of attack dice showing 4+ to perform Gambits from the list below. Targets get a Save to resist the effect.

- **Bolster** the attack for +1 damage
- **Move** after the attack, even if you already moved or are unable to move
- **Repel** the target away from you
- **Stop** the target from moving next turn
- **Impair** a weapon on the target's next turn
- **Dismount** the target
- **Other effect** of similar impact

If a die showing 8+ is discarded, then the Gambit is a Strong Gambit. Choose one:

- **No Save** is granted to the target
- **Greater Effect**, such as disarming the target, cutting off their pack, damaging their armor, knocking them prone, or something else with similar impact

B: Flow State

When you deal a Mortal Wound, you may immediately make a second attack against the same target or a new target in range. This can chain a number of times up to the number of Fighter templates (not other martial classes) you possess.

C: Riposte

When an enemy damages you in melee but you still have Guard remaining afterward, you may immediately roll SD (if you have any) in retaliation. It uses only SD, but is otherwise a normal attack and can deal damage, activate Gambits, etc. This can represent a counterattack, reflexive return fire, or whatever makes sense.

D: Weapon Mastery

Choose a weapon type (e.g. swords, bows, rifles). You gain greater mastery over weapons of that type, and further develop your personal fighting style. When attacking with this weapon type, you may combine two standard Gambits into a Strong Gambit (i.e. you may discard two attack dice showing 4-7 and get a greater effect, or a standard Gambit effect with no save, as if you had discarded a die showing 8+).

Berserker

A: Rage, +1 SD

B: Raging Gambits, +1 SD

C: Feat of Strength, Die Hard, +1 SD

D: Incandescent Rage, +1 SD

A: Rage

You can choose to rage at the start of your turn, or in response to taking damage. You might froth, stare in battle-focus, consume stimulants, or merely let a facade drop and give in to your ancient urges, brutal warrior training, or religious fanaticism.

While raging:

- You have advantage on initiative checks. You act before all other PCs in a group turn, and your actions are resolved before theirs.
- Your SD become d8's and you must use at least one per attack if possible
- You refresh a SD (up to your max) every time you are wounded.
- You are immune to pain and fear
- You cannot do anything defensive, curative, or tactical with your allies. All you can do is attempt to kill things.

You cannot stop fighting until you kill, subdue, or drive off all enemies. If an ally has injured you this fight, they count as an enemy. To stop raging, pass a MIND Save at the start of your turn.

B: Raging Gambits

You see opportunities in the heat of battle the untrained would miss. In melee combat, you may discard any number of attack dice showing 4+ to perform Gambits from the list below. Targets get a Save to resist the effect.

- **Bolster** the attack for +1 damage
- **Move** after the attack, even if you already moved or are unable to move
- **Repel** the target away from you
- **Stop** the target from moving next turn
- **Impair** a weapon on the target's next turn
- **Dismount** the target
- **Other effect** of similar impact

If a die showing 8+ is discarded, then the Gambit is a Strong Gambit. Choose one:

- **No Save** is granted to the target
- **Greater Effect**, such as disarming the target, cutting off their pack, damaging their armor, knocking them prone, or something else with similar impact

As a Berserker, you may take d4 damage while in melee combat to discard any single attack die as if it had rolled 4+ (including spending it to increase the overall attack damage by 1). This represents you headbutting, catching a weapon with your bare hand, or otherwise putting yourself in harm's way to force a Gambit. This damage is treated as normal (armor and Guard apply, it can wound you), and is resolved *after* your attack (so you could conceivably knock yourself out while also downing your target). You may decide to use this ability after you have already rolled your attack, but before it has been resolved.

C: Feat of Strength

The strength of ten men!

Use this Feat to either:

- count as a small group of people working together for the purposes of a strength related task (lifting a heavy gate, prying open a sarcophagus, pulling a ship on a rope, etc.). This will allow you to attempt something typically impossible for one person, grant advantage or possibly obviate the need for a Save, at the Warden's discretion.
- Upgrade a Gambit while raging to a Strong Gambit (i.e. you may discard an attack dice showing 4-7 and get a greater effect, or a standard Gambit effect with no save, as if you had discarded a die showing 8+)

Pass a BODY Save after using or become *Fatigued*.

C: Die Hard

You can make BODY Saves to avoid Critical Damage. If you would be downed automatically from Critical Damage (such as when taking a mortal wound), you instead get a Save to resist and remain conscious.

D: Incandescent Rage

Your Rage has the following changes:

- All your attacks gain Blast (so you can fight warbands or large creatures without penalty)

- You have disadvantage on MIND Saves to end your Rage.

Knight

A: Knightly Training, Gambits, Challenge, +1 SD

B: Feats: Smite, Focus, Deny, +1 SD

C: Aura of Courage, Quest, +1 SD

D: Inspire, Shining Soul, +1 SD

A: Knightly Training

You have advantage on Saves relating to horses (or whatever sort of mounts your knightly order favors), etiquette, and resisting Fear (or similar effects).

A: Gambits

You see opportunities in the heat of battle the untrained would miss. In melee combat, you may discard any number of attack dice showing 4+ to perform Gambits from the list below. Targets get a Save to resist the effect.

- **Bolster** the attack for +1 damage
- **Move** after the attack, even if you already moved or are unable to move
- **Repel** the target away from you
- **Stop** the target from moving next turn
- **Impair** a weapon on the target's next turn
- **Dismount** the target
- **Other effect** of similar impact

If a die showing 8+ is discarded, then the Gambit is a Strong Gambit. Choose one:

- **No Save** is granted to the target
- **Greater Effect**, such as disarming the target, cutting off their pack, damaging their armor, knocking them prone, or something else with similar impact

A: Challenge

This ability only works on creatures that can understand you and are capable of being offended. If you challenge a creature outside combat, they must Save or accept your challenge. In civilized areas, this could mean a duel, a joust, or a brawl. The challenged party can set conditions for the duel. Leaders may send out champions.

In combat, you can challenge one creature each turn as a free action. The creature must Save. If they fail they must attack you.

B: Feats

After using a Feat the knight must pass a Save or become Fatigued, unable to perform Feats until they rest (a whole watch at least).

- **SMITE** - *Release your righteous fury*

- Use before rolling a melee attack
- The attack gains either +d12 or Blast
- Pass a BODY Save or become *Fatigued*
- **FOCUS** - *Create an opening to exploit*
 - Use after rolling an attack
 - Perform a regular Gambit without using a die
 - Pass a MIND Save or become *Fatigued*
- **DENY** - *Rebuff an attack before it lands*
 - Use after an attack roll against you or an ally within arm's reach
 - Discard one attack die from the enemy attack
 - Pass a BODY or MIND Save (player's choice) or become *Fatigued*

Alternatively, treat feats as a magic ability that is enabled by the heirloom rune-blades, rune-plate, and rune-shields passed down through knightly houses. The equipment is required to perform the feat, just like a spellbook is needed for a spell. Saves use SOUL, and the save is made after the effect is resolved to see if they become fatigued. If someone untrained attempts to use runic equipment, they save *before* the effect is resolved, and it's save or pass out.

C: Aura of Courage

Allies who can see and hear you can use your Save vs Fear instead of their own (i.e., they roll against your stat value and get advantage just as you would). This ability has no effect if you are currently afraid or fleeing.

C: Quest

You learn the location of a legendary magic item or something of similar importance. Work with the Warden to decide what, and how (it was revealed to you in a dream, a local ruler trusted only you with the information, etc.). Gain advantage on any Saves related to recruiting hirelings or requesting aid from civilized authorities if you choose to share this knowledge as part of the Save.

D: Feat of Inspiration

Rally to me!

Help your allies dig deeper and find the strength to fight harder and longer.

- Use as your action in combat
- Allies who can see and hear you heal 1d4 Guard. If they were at full Guard, they instead gain +d6 to their next Attack roll.
- Pass a SOUL Save or become *Fatigued*

D: Shining Soul

You get a Save (typically LUCK) against spells and magical effects even when you normally wouldn't (typically only magic users can Save against magic).

Specialist Classes

Rogue

A: Always Prepared, Thief Training

B: Gambits, Light Fingers

C: Backstab

D: Escape Feat, Criminal Contacts

A: Thief Training

You automatically know the worth of mundane items (unique items may require a MIND Save). You can easily find the black market (or equivalent) in any settlement if there is one. You gain advantage on inventory checks (pulling something out of your inventory and using it that same turn).

A: Always Prepared

When you are in a settlement, you may spend any amount of money to buy an Unlabeled Package. Decide how many inventory slots it takes up (if 2+, it is *Bulky*). When the package is unwrapped, you declare what it contains, as long as the contents comprise the appropriate number of Inventory Slots, don't cost more than you originally paid, and are available in the settlement you bought the Unlabeled Package (note the settlement name and amount spent on your packages). You can even put multiple items inside a large Unlabeled Package (including smaller Unlabeled Packages). This is basically retroactive shopping.

B: Gambits

You see opportunities in the heat of battle the untrained would miss. In melee combat, you may discard any number of attack dice showing 4+ (i.e., forgo the +1 each would normally provide to damage) to perform Gambits from the list below. Targets get a Save to resist the effect.

- **Move** after the attack, even if you already moved or are unable to move
- **Repel** the target away from you
- **Stop** the target from moving next turn
- **Impair** a weapon on the target's next turn
- **Dismount** the target
- **Other effect** of similar impact

If a die showing 8+ is discarded, then the Gambit is a Strong Gambit. Choose one:

- **No Save** is granted to the target
- **Greater Effect**, such as disarming the target, cutting off their pack, damaging their armor, knocking them prone, or something else with similar impact

B: Light Fingers

You have access to a special Gambit option (available in melee only), which can be chosen as normal when discarding an attack die showing 4+:

- **Steal** an item from the target.
 - Doesn't work on things that are held or tightly worn (armor, their equipped weapon, etc.) unless upgraded to greater effect as a Strong Gambit, but works on anything else (rings, things in their pockets, in their pack, etc.) If you don't have something in mind, you can steal an item at random (roll on their inventory, a loot the body table, or the Warden will make something up). Whether they pass their save or not, your target is aware of your attempt.

You can also use this ability freely out of combat, whenever you walk past someone. If the target passes a MIND Save, they are aware of the theft. If they also pass a LUCK Save, they notice you in the act.

C: Backstab

Your melee attacks against unaware targets gain +d8 *in addition* to any normal bonuses, and if you inflict critical damage you may declare the attack was non-lethal, silent, or both.

D: Escape Feat

I'll just be leaving now...

Can get you out of a grapple, lynching, awkward social situation, but not Hell or a magic bubble

- Use when restrained by mundane means (physical or social)
- You automatically escape, through borderline supernatural luck or coincidence
- Pass a SOUL Save or become *Fatigued*

D: Criminal Contacts

You have advantage on all SOUL Saves related to situations like:

- Do I know someone here?
- Does this law enforcement officer recognize me? (pass means they don't)

Once per settlement you've spent at least a week in, you may declare that someone there owes you a favor. The Warden will say who, and you can decide what you did for them.

Hunter

A: Ranger Training, Scout

B: Ranged Gambits

C: Ghillie Suit

D: Careful Aim

A: Ranger Training

When ambushing or if you win initiative but choose to hold your action to the end of the round, you may make a ranged attack with +d8.

Additionally, you can become proficient with environments (woodland, urban, desert, etc.) as well as weapons. After every week exploring an unfamiliar environment, make a MIND Save. If you pass, you are now proficient with that environment. While in an environment you are proficient in, gain the following benefits:

- you may view the encounter table
- you always know how to find food and water (if any)
- you treat cover as +1 the protection it would normally offer (just for yourself)

A: Scout

You have a finely tuned danger sense and tracking expertise. You contribute a scout die to the encounter die pool, which represents your ability to pick up on traces of creatures that have passed by, and notice encounters before they notice you. Your scout die is a d6, and upgrades to a d4 (you want it to roll 1's, so smaller is better) when you possess three levels in classes that have the Scout ability.

B: Ranged Gambits

You see opportunities in the heat of battle the untrained would miss. In ranged combat, you may discard any number of attack dice showing 4+ to perform Gambits from the list below. Targets get a Save to resist the effect.

- **Bolster** the attack for +1 damage
- **Move** after the attack, even if you already moved or are unable to move
- **Repel** the target away from you
- **Stop** the target from moving next turn
- **Impair** a weapon on the target's next turn
- **Dismount** the target
- **Other effect** of similar impact

If a die showing 8+ is discarded, then the Gambit is a Strong Gambit. Choose one:

- **No Save** is granted to the target
- **Greater Effect**, such as disarming the target, cutting off their pack, damaging their armor, knocking them prone, or something else with similar impact

C: Ghillie Suit

With at least a day of preparation and access to suitable materials (fabric, foliage, mud, trash, etc.), you may craft a suit to camouflage yourself in a specific environment you're proficient in. The suit counts as a *Bulky* item. If you are unobserved by enemies when you set up (choose a position, lie prone, etc.) you will not be detected by any mundane sight, smell, or hearing based means until you attack or choose to reveal yourself. Remember that attacking from hiding grants a bonus attack die (see Bonus Attack Dice, pg. TODO)!

D: Careful Aim

If you win initiative in a given round, you may pick your target but hold your action until the end of the round (i.e. after all enemies have taken a turn). If your target is still alive, in range of your weapon, and in your sights, you may make a ranged attack against them with a free Gambit (i.e.

you can pick a Gambit effect even if you don't discard a die or roll any 4+'s), or upgrade a single Gambit to a Strong Gambit (i.e. you may discard an attack dice showing 4-7 and get a greater effect, or a standard Gambit effect with no save, as if you had discarded a die showing 8+).

Acrobat

A: Acrobat Training, Dodge!

B: Tricky Gambits

C: Cat Power

D: Roast the Oaf

A: Acrobat Training

You have advantage on initiative checks, climbing checks, and checks relating to artistic physical performance (yes, you can juggle). Gain +4 Guard while not wearing armor.

A: Dodge!

You can take d6 damage to BODY to declare that something doesn't affect you. This works on anything that you could physically dodge. This can trigger critical damage.

B: Tricky Gambits

You see opportunities in the heat of battle the untrained would miss. In melee combat, you may discard any number of attack dice showing 4+ to perform Gambits from the list below. Targets get a Save to resist the effect.

- **Bolster** the attack for +1 damage
- **Move** after the attack, even if you already moved or are unable to move
- **Repel** the target away from you
- **Stop** the target from moving next turn
- **Impair** a weapon on the target's next turn
- **Dismount** the target
- **Other effect** of similar impact

If a die showing 8+ is discarded, then the Gambit is a Strong Gambit. Choose one:

- **No Save** is granted to the target
- **Greater Effect**, such as disarming the target, cutting off their pack, damaging their armor, knocking them prone, or something else with similar impact

As an Acrobat, you can declare before making an attack that you are focusing only on Gambits. If you do, you upgrade all dice you were about to roll by one die size (d4 → d6, d6 → d8, etc.), but you can no longer deal damage with the attack. All dice must be spent on Gambits or else be wasted.

C: Cat Power

You treat falls as if they were 20' shorter, and climbs as if they were one difficulty level easier. Your jump distance is twice the average for your species. Cats tend to like you. Once ever, you can escape death. Your DM will describe the afterlife to you, as well as the opportunity that allows you to escape (if you wish to). This ability has no effect if your body has been destroyed beyond plausibility.

D: Roast the Oaf

If an enemy rolls 1 on any melee damage die against you and you have Guard remaining after the attack, you may force them to immediately make another attack against a target in range, including themselves.

Working Magic

Magic In Brief

In general, working magic involves collecting a pool of dice, hereafter referred to as Magic Dice or "MD" (almost always d6s), rolling it all together, and then interpreting the result. Higher totals mean more powerful, longer lasting, and harder to counter magic, while lower totals often mean the caster gets some of the invested dice back and can use them again that day.

INTERPRETING MD

Flux

Whenever doubles or triples are rolled on MD it is called flux, and indicates that control over the magic has slipped, causing unintended and often chaotic consequences. This can be adjudicated in a variety of ways using any "arcane disaster", "miscast", or similar tables that the group finds amusing, and some have been provided here (TODO). In general though, keep these factors in mind:

-the best (most fun) flux is often specific to the given situation, and introduces elements or difficulties which will be felt in the moment

-**doubles** are **Minor Flux**, and should **not** negate the intended effect of the caster, but rather introduce a side effect or extraneous complication to deal with which does not render the spell pointless

-**triples** are **Major Flux**, and indicate that the casting has **failed**, its energy entirely subverted and spent powering something other than the intended effect

-**quadruples** (and further multiples) are **Grand Flux**, and are adjudicated similarly to Major Flux except the effect should be *permanent, grand in scale* (affecting all present at a minimum), and likely *life altering*. Grand Flux is the stuff of legends (eternal winters, cities untethered from the earth, cursed dynasties, etc.), and the sort of thing whole quests are needed to resolve.

Flux dice are sometimes added to a casting roll to indicate that the conditions for casting are not ideal, the rules of magic are being

bent, or something exceptionally complicated is being attempted. These are additional d6s that do nothing except increase the likelihood of duplicate numbers (and thus flux). They are not counted towards [sum] or [dice] in spell/ability descriptions.

Reabsorption

MD which roll 1-3 are returned to the caster's pool and may be used again. MD which roll 4-6 are expended.

Scaling

Spells and other magical praxes do not have levels like in some other games, but rather scale in power depending on how many MD are invested. The mechanics for spells and other arcane praxes often use the notation [sum] and [dice] to indicate the scaling of numerical effects. [sum] is the summed value of what each MD invested showed when it was rolled, after any alterations or rerolls have been applied. [dice] is a value equal to however many MD were invested, not counting flux dice.

GAINING MORE MAGIC DICE

Taxing

Mages can pull additional MD from their SOUL stat to extend their potency further. The technical term is "taxing". When they are about to cast or perform some magical praxis, they may declare that they are pulling some or all of the MD for the casting from SOUL, and how many. They roll that many additional MD as part of the casting,

and the sum of any MD pulled from SOUL is deducted from their SOUL stat.

Reducing SOUL to zero or less in this way causes automatic Major Flux, and the caster passes out for 30 minutes, or a number of hours equal to how far below zero their SOUL was reduced.

Refreshing

For most mages, the Suns are the ultimate source of their power. Each dawn as the Sun rises, mages reset their pool of available MD to a number based on their level/degree. This daily allotment is called their "natural magic dice". Certain things may cause natural magic dice not to return to a mage's pool, such as a Maker's MD being tied up in enchanted objects. Bonus MD (such as those pulled from SOUL or a place of power) typically expire at dawn, with the mage's pool resetting to only their natural MD.

If a mage finds themselves beyond the reach of the Suns' influence at dawn (perhaps deep in the Veins of the Earth, or at the far reaches of the High Wilderness among the cold and bitter pretender suns), their MD may not return automatically, but rather on an X-in-6 chance each (X representing how weak the Suns' influence is), or not at all if they are somewhere truly forsaken.

It is whispered that a mage may bind their SOUL to a different power source, such as the Fire Beneath, and refresh MD from that rather than dawn's light.

Boosting

Boosting is whenever a mage transfers magic dice to someone else. It typically takes an action (if done during combat),

though any number of MD can be given as part of the same action. It does not take an action to receive MD. The target of boosting may be a non-mage/individual without magical talent (who would not normally be able to get MD), but if this is attempted the MD being sent are rolled, and the untrained recipient takes *Mind* damage equal to the sum. They will also likely have flux dice added when using the MD they received.

Boosting requires line of sight, or physical contact in lieu of that. Attempting to boost a non-mage always requires physical contact.

HANDLING BIG MAGIC

Channeling

Flux becomes a significant risk once mages start attempting legendary workings of 4+ MD. The most common way to mitigate this risk is channeling, which is when an additional mage joins the work/casting to help guide and stabilize it. For each mage channeling for a praxis, the main caster gains a reroll that they may use to roll all the MD invested and take the new result (perhaps because the sum was higher than desired, lower than desired, or contained flux they wish to avoid). If a reroll is used, the casting takes an additional round to complete and all participants must spend their action on the subsequent round keeping it stable. If one of the channeling participants is incapacitated or leaves the casting early, immediately roll a flux die and add it to the pool of MD invested in the casting.

If the casting roll on the second round is still undesirable and the main caster has more rerolls available (likely from having two or more mages channeling), then they may

extend the casting by another round and reroll again (on their turn next round). In this way, large workings with many MD invested may take several rounds to complete, and the main participant is often faced with the trade-off of releasing the magic early and facing the consequences of minor flux, or taking more time in the hopes of a better roll.

Casting with multiple participants in this way is often called “ritual casting” or “long form magic”. To channel, a mage must be experienced in the type of praxis the main participant is performing. For example, if the main participant is summoning, the channelers must also know how to summon to be of use. If a mage is capable of spellcasting they can channel for someone else casting a spell, even if they have no experience with the spell in question.

CASTING RESTRICTIONS

Physical Requirements

The default requirements of performing magic are: at least one hand free to gesture and sign in Invisible, **or** words spoken aloud. This means that a mage who is bound and gagged will typically be unable to use magic. If only one condition is met, add a Flux die. This also applies to channeling, but not boosting. A bound mage could send MD to another mage they can see (or touch), but could not actually perform magic or assist the other mage through channeling.

Mages of particular schools of magic may have different restrictions.

USES OF MD

Spells

This is the most typical and least risky way to use MD. The text of the spell (often hundreds of pages) stabilizes and controls the effects, though this is strained when many MD are involved, and *Channeling* is recommended.

Beneficence (Magic Healing)

Magic dice can be used to restore the stats of other characters, even without a specific spell of restoration or healing. Without a spell or other technique to channel the magic, the magic is unfocused which limits the potency and increases the risk of flux. Pick a stat to heal, and invest any number of MD. Roll the MD +1 Flux die. The target heals points in that stat equal to the highest MD rolled (not Flux die).

Flux when healing BODY typically means mutation. These fade or atrophy after a season, or never in the case of Major Flux.

Flux when healing MIND typically means losing touch with reality. You begin to see the world through the lens of your fears and dreams, and the Warden will alter how they describe things to you. This fades after a season, or never in the case of Major Flux.

Flux when healing SOUL represents minor curses or unwanted spiritual attention. These never go away without intervention of some sort. Major Flux means full blown possession or potentially deadly curses.

Maleficence (Magic Violence)

MD may be used to directly deal damage. This means a mage is always armed, even

without a spellbook or other equipment. The technical name for this is Maleficence (though it has many names), and it is a surge of raw, unfocused power and anger.

Invest any number of MD and pick a visible target. Roll the MD +1 Flux die. The target takes [sum] damage, ignoring mundane armor.

Maleficence can manifest in different ways, but it usually looks like an angry haze and lensing of light around the target as temperature and pressure fluctuate wildly. Blisters form, lacerations spontaneously open beneath the target's clothes. With more MD, veins are burst, eyes are melted. If 10+ damage is dealt with this and the target dies, they explode in a shower of boiling gore, dealing d4 *blast* damage (not ignoring armor) to nearby targets. Dying to Maleficence is very messy.

COUNTERING MAGIC

Defensive Spells

Often forethought and preparation are the best way to protect oneself from unwanted arcane influence. There are many spells which provide various protections if cast in advance, such as armor against magical damage, the prevention of specific affects like scrying, or indirect protection like invisibility, illusory copies, or other effects which interfere with being targeted in the first place.

Counterspell

In an emergency, mages can attempt to counter someone else's working as a reaction (the term counterspell is used here, but these rules also apply to blocking

enemy weaving, summoning, etc.). This does not take an action, and involves the mage investing any number of their MD and trying to beat the attacker/initiator's sum. If the defender/responder's sum is higher, the magic is snuffed a split second after it begins, preventing any harm or intended effects from occurring. If their sum is lower the counterspell fails and the initiator's praxis takes effect as normal.

Flux rules apply to counterspells. If the defender rolls a higher sum, but also triple flux, the counterspell fails as the magic is spent powering the major flux effect instead.

If the sums are equal, then the competing magics have mingled! The two dice pools now count as one for the purposes of flux, which may or may not cause the attacker's working to fail depending on the flux. If the sums are equal but no flux is caused (e.g. attacker rolls 4, 6, and defender rolls 5, 3, 2), then the working is **amplified** and now counts both dice pools together for the purposes of adjudicating potency (i.e. [sum] and [dice]).

Any MD invested in counterspelling are always expended, even if they rolled 1-3 and would normally return to the mage's pool. This is because the mage is dumping their power into the air in a rushed, *please-don't-let-me-turn-into-a-frog* fashion, rather than metering it out carefully as they would during normal casting.

Long form/ritual magic may be counterspelled, but only once all rerolls are evaluated and it is actually cast. Before that, it's easier to just bonk the participants over the head and interrupt the casting.

MAGE DUELS

Participants act simultaneously. Your MIND stat is still important because you save every round, and on a pass you know if the opponent is about to cast a spell and what spell it is.

Cast with the right hand, counter with the left. When focusing on one opponent, the formal style is for mages to enter a dueling stance where they split focus between casting and counterspelling. This is mentally taxing, and basically requires standing still. It is terribly suited to normal combat.

Each round, the participants decide if they are casting a spell, and pick which one. You are now committed to that action. Then they both make MIND saves. If you pass, the other person reveals their action for the round (about to cast sleep, etc). If you're not casting a spell, that is typically obvious and the opponent does not have to roll. Then each participant secretly invests a number of MD from their pool (must be at least one) into casting. Hold these in your right hand. Then they invest a number of MD from their pool into counterspelling (can be zero!). Hold these in your left hand. Roll all together. Flux is not counted between hands. The normal rules for counterspelling apply, with the modification that dice showing 1-3 return to that mage's pool, since this is a more careful form of counterspelling than the emergency dumping of magic in the heat of pitched combat.

Mage Classes

Wielders of the Invisible light. Benders of the world's Law.

Schools and Orders

Mages come from many, many different traditions. Below are some abilities all mages get, but you should also pick a thaumaturgy School (wizards) or theurgist Order (vislae). The various wizard schools may carry certain stereotypes, but in actuality their members rarely represent any kind of unified culture or political entity, and wizards study within a specific tradition for their own reasons. While a few arcane colleges do exist, most of these are just “schools” in a metaphorical sense, and the master and apprentice model reigns. Two pyromancers may have nothing in common other than that they both practice pyromancy.

Mages gain more Magic Dice as they advance, as well as deeper access into the spell list of their school, as follows:

- A: +2 Spells (1-6), +1 MD
- B: +1 Spell (1-8), +1 MD
- C: +1 Spell (1-10), +1 MD
- D: Choose 4 spells, +1 MD

ORTHODOX WIZARD

Starting Gear

dagger (d4), random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, signature red robes (set a MD to 6 once per day)

Perk

May cast with gestures only or words only without incurring a flux die.

Drawback

None. This is the sensible, traditional school of magic.

Cantrips

1. Change the colour or texture of an object smaller than a horse for 10 minutes.
2. Create a tiny light as bright as a match on a fingertip.
3. Move a light object with a wave of your finger. You could cause a coin to roll along the ground or turn the pages of a book.

Spells

1. Lock
2. Knock
3. Grease
4. Force Field
5. Levitate
6. Magic Missile
7. Feather Fall
8. Sleep
9. Light
10. Wizard Vision
11. Invisibility
12. Fireball

NECROMANCER

Starting Gear

bone staff (d8, long), random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, bone carving tools

Perk

Can tax BODY for bonus MD as well as SOUL.

Drawback

Must be in contact with bone while casting.

Cantrips

1. A fresh corpse of a creature answers [sum] questions posed by the caster (min 1). The corpse can lie.
2. Ward a corpse against possession by wandering spirits.
3. Invite wandering spirits to possess a corpse. (May always choose to start with this one.)

Spells

1. Fear
2. Fog
3. Rot
4. Summon Spirit
5. Explode Corpse
6. Control Undead
7. Innocent Revenant
8. Corpse Mask
9. Death Scythe
10. Skull Alarm
11. Finger of Death
12. Fatal Doom

ARACHNOMANCER

Starting Gear

dagger (d4), random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, extra eyes (six is traditional)

Perk

Refresh 1 MD for each ration of meat you eat.

Drawback

Can only eat meat.

Cantrips

1. Perform a startling leap up to 20' horizontally or 10' vertically.
2. Touch a woven object to learn how long ago it was created. You may also receive impressions of its creator.
3. At will, you can remain perfectly motionless. You still need air, but you do not appear to breathe. You can remain in this state for a number of hours equal to BODY.

Spells

1. Speak with Spiders
2. Hold Person
3. Featherfall
4. Entangling Web
5. Silken Tether
6. Envenom
7. Vomit Spiders
8. Spiderclimb
9. Control Spiders
10. Antidote
11. Spiderform
12. Trapdoor Monster

WHITE HAND WIZARD

Starting Gear

random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, grey robes with the mark of a white circle

Perk

Can target anything you have touched in the last [dice] days with your spells.

Drawback

Must always visibly bear a white circle.
Cannot eat meat.

Cantrips

1. Press your hands together to become impossible to push, shove, or move. You still take damage.
2. Run your hands over clothing to remove any stains or dirt.
3. If you would drop to zero BODY or less, you may roll all your remaining MD to drop to 1 instead. Must spend at least 1 MD.

Spells

1. Cure Wounds
2. Awaken (Energy Boost)
3. Protection from [Element]
4. Light
5. Magic Missile
6. Enhance Smell
7. Strengthen
8. Inflict Pain
9. Projectile Ward
10. Wizard's Hut
11. Blinding Curse
12. Hand of White Metal

GARDEN WIZARD

Starting Gear

quarterstaff (d8, long), random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, spade, brown robes, a good pair of leather boots

Perk

You can identify and assess the effects of plants and fungi by sight.

Drawback

Must meditate for 10 minutes each morning within sight of natural beauty. Even some mold growing on a rock counts. You must describe this to other players.

Cantrips

1. Permanently change the colour or form of a small plant.
2. Plants grow just a little bit better in a [level] mile radius around you.
3. You can sleep anywhere, in any position, on command. You can set environmental conditions that will wake you, such as "sunrise" or "rain".

Spells

1. Clarity
2. Woodbend
3. Dendrigraphy (speak to plants)
4. Locate Animal
5. Control Stone
6. Sleep
7. Whirling Staff
8. Light
9. Barkskin
10. Read Animal Mind
11. Rootsense
12. Animate Plant

GEOMETER WIZARD

Starting Gear

random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, mathematical tools (ruler, protractor, plumb line), compass

Perk

When casting in sunlight, MD return on 1-4.

Drawback

Must cast with a compass in hand. Can make a new one with 1GP of materials and 1 watch of labor.

Cantrips

1. Know the exact angle and distance to any point you can see.
2. Know the exact time of day, and the exact date.
3. Know the distance and direction to any settlement you have visited.

Spells

1. Magic Missile
2. Reform
3. Orbital Eye (Bird's Eye View)
4. Moon Lust
5. Package Neatly
6. Control Iron
7. Light
8. Track Ley Lines
9. Magnetic Blast
10. Sturdy Circle in the Air
11. True Teleport
12. Resurrection

PYROMANCER

Starting Gear

random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, singed robes, flask of oil, firebomb (d6, blast)

Perk

You are immune to extreme heat. Mind that your equipment is probably not!

Drawback

You must be close enough to a flame to feel its heat to cast your spells. You cannot cast while soaking wet.

Cantrips

1. You can always start a fire, even if the wood is soaked or a gale is blowing.
2. Snapping your fingers produces sparks as flint and steel.
3. Sense the direction and rough distance to the nearest fire.

Spells

1. Control Fire
2. Fire Sight
3. Unburn
4. Fire Ward
5. Wall of Fire
6. Fireball
7. Ashen Veil
8. Furnace Breath
9. Ember Servant
10. Unquenchable Sigil
11. Heat Metal
12. Phoenix Soul

CRYOMANCER

Starting Gear

random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, fur lined robes, flask of freezing (any liquid placed within freezes after a few moments), snow globe (shatter and it immediately becomes Winter for a week in the current hex)

Perk

MD return on 1-4 in Winter.

Drawback

MD are expended on 3-6 in Summer.

Cantrips

1. Sense tomorrow's weather.
2. Dispel the discomfort of being cold (damage remains).
3. Water briefly freezes beneath your feet as long as you keep moving.

Spells

1. Cold Ward
2. Rime Armor
3. Chill Whirlwind
4. Ice Lance
5. Snow Clone
6. Flash Freeze
7. Ice Prison
8. Shatter
9. Ice Bridge
10. Heat Swap
11. Avalanche
12. Freeze Time

CURSE-EATER WIZARD

Starting Gear

random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, a blade (d6), a sacrifice (missing either one eye or the little finger of each hand)

Perk

You can use the MD of a mage you are touching as your own. Rolls of 1-3 still return to their MD pool.

Drawback

Your soul is claimed. Barring exceptional circumstances, you are going to Hell.

Cantrips

1. Tell by sight whether a creature, object, or place is cursed. Invest MD to learn about the nature of the curse.
2. Spit to crack all non-magical mirrors within 50'. Calm water will ripple. Other reflective surfaces may crack or darken.
3. Touch a recently deceased creature to tell if they had a soul and where it went.

Spells

1. Fingerbreaker
2. Deflect Spell
3. Crush Flames
4. Transfer Disease
5. Forget
6. Eat Curse
7. Abjure
8. Drain Life
9. Cure Wounds
10. Enfeebling Sigil
11. Cloudkill
12. Death Ward

BIOMANCER

Starting Gear

random spellbook from your school x2, ink and quill, random potion x3, flensing knife (d4), syringe

Perk

BODY save to recycle consumed potions within 10 min of drinking (essentially generate another dose).

Drawback

Magic healing always mutates you.

Cantrips

1. Transfer a blemish or cosmetic feature from one creature to another. E.g. swap eye colours, warts from a toad to a princess. Cannot transfer major features (poison, wings, etc.)
2. Taste blood to tell what kind of creature it came from.
3. Your appearance will no longer age. This may fail in times of dire stress.

Spells

1. Acid Arrow
2. Sculpt Flesh
3. Animate Potion
4. Extract Fluid
5. Shriveled
6. Hand of the Hound
7. Graft
8. Monsterize
9. Regenerate Flesh
10. Become Delicious
11. Chrysalis
12. Mutate

Vislae Classes

Seekers of the Invisible light.

The Invisible Orders are similar at base to Wizard Schools, as they study spellcasting, but beyond that they differ greatly. The Orders are not just ways of practicing magic, but also philosophies and religious sects. Members see the world through the lens of their Order. Collectively they revere Visla, who they believe is the silent, hidden goddess of magic, whose grand spell is creation. She is the Warden of an “Invisible Sun” behind and within every Sun, the hidden light of which is magic itself. They call themselves “vislae”, meaning “children of Visla”.

Each Order has a signature praxis, a way of using magic other than traditional spellcasting, and each believes theirs to be the purest, truest expression of what magic is and what it is *for*. The Orders vary in structure and level of dogmatism, but even the loosest are still more unified in thought than the average wizard school, such that Orders have the concepts of apostates (those who have broken Order traditions) and excommunicants (those who have been cast out).

The Orders disagree on the best path for pushing magic forward as a discipline without repeating the mistakes of the Seree, and in particular the Order of the Mind and the Order of the Tongue often find themselves at odds.

Note: The Orders are not “balanced” with the wizard schools; I don’t really care about balance in TTRPGs. Some tradeoffs of being a vislae are that you have obligations to your Order, the rest of the world trusts you even less than wizards because they associate you with the Seree, and the selective recruiting for each Order means vislae are few in number. They may not multiclass with other Orders or Wizard Schools.

ORDER OF THE MIND

Members are called Vances, Mentali, or Minds

Starting Gear

Postulant mind vault (2x2 grid for Mind spells), high collared robes (uniform of the Order), bundle of ciphertext notes on Mind spells and Order ideology

Order Overview

Mentali refer to their Order as “The Mind”. Conformity of thought is strongly encouraged! They cultivate special “mind vaults” which make them nearly impossible to mindread or be mentally affected, and are capable of storing proprietary spells directly in their mind without the need for spellbooks. These special spells basically cast themselves, and are the Order’s signature praxis.

Culture and Outlook

Mentali are a highly organized Order which emphasizes rigorous training and formation of all aspects of each member. They believe unity and order produce flourishing. They are known for:

- Training postulants from a young age (9 years old in Indigo years)
- Heavily emphasizing teamwork. Training consists of many challenges that are intentionally impossible to overcome alone
- Distinctive uniforms (the only Order to have a required uniform)
- A strong focus on rank and hierarchy (forehead tattoos display rank)
- Accepting individuals without magic ability as members. These are called Oblates, and they serve many functions within the Order, including assisting mages in rituals.
- Removing the mind vaults of Apostates, ruining their spellcasting ability, as well as their memories from their time with the Order.

Arcane Analysis

Minds can identify the school of magic (they say the “color” of magic) by sight, and can classify magical effects. For example, they could tell if a fire was started by magic, if the magic was intended to be offensive, and whether the praxis in question was a spell, cantrip, ritual, weave, etc. They can detect spell “residue”, like forensics for spellcasting. They do not automatically know if objects are cursed or people are possessed.

Mental Casting

Minds can cast standard spells, but they see it as beneath them. Mind spells grant a passive effect while held in the mind, as well as an active effect once “released”, however they may only be cast once per day. At dawn, Minds fill their mental vaults with spells from the list of spells they know. These spells come in different levels of power, and occupy different amounts of “space” in the mind. MD are not invested to cast them, because they are preloaded with a fixed

number of MD based on their size. Mental spells may be cast with only a thought, rendering ineffective many common anti-mage tactics which focus on silencing or entangling the mage.

A mind vault is represented by a grid. Mind spells take up squares equal to their level (the number of built in MD they contain) and have a specific shape, like a Tetris piece. Postulants (first degree/level 1 Minds) can fit only the first two spell levels in their vaults:

Alpha spells:  **Beta spells:**  

Thus a Postulant could hold four Alpha spells, two Alpha spells and one Beta spell, or two Beta spells. At higher degrees their spell vaults can handle Gamma spells, and beyond.

Vancian Spells

The full Vancian spell list [can be found here](#). Mentali Postulants know all the cantrips, as well as six other spells of the player's choice which they are able to cast (Alpha or Beta).

ORDER OF THE TONGUE

Members are called Goetics, Summoners, Lingotti, or Tongues.

Starting Gear

oathblade (d6, +d8 vs entities of a chosen Sun), Book of Names (notes on various spirits), ink and quill, ritual chalks and salts

Order Overview

A: Soul Sight, Contract, Chromatic Tongues, Summoning, +1 MD

B: Conjuring, Protective Circle, +1 MD

C: Banish, Bind, +1 MD

D: Familiar, +1 MD

Summoners view all existence as a network of power structures, pacts, and ontological hierarchies. Magic is a tool whose chief use is as leverage. They are hyper-pragmatic; many things are justifiable if they serve the needs of the Order. They view the fall of the Seree not as an issue of their ambition, but of skill in the execution thereof. There are other worlds out there, and other Suns. The Lingotti have glimpsed these truths just as the Seree did. There are beings capable of swimming in the strange spaces between worlds. The Order of the Tongue invites (and sometimes forces) such spiritual entities into our world in exchange for service and knowledge. Their core tenet: ability to wield power is proof of one's right to wield it.

Culture and Outlook

Lingotti are one part linguist, one part lawyer, and one part demonologist. They get excited about precise wording, overlooked loopholes, and alternate meanings of words. They frequently employ binding oaths and contracts, especially on their own members. Loyalty is never assumed; they believe systems without explicit incentives and punishments are stupid. They are said to have their own private afterlife: a special arrangement with the Empress of the Pale and the Duke of Hell.

Apostates typically have their tongues burned out, and sometimes this is automatically done with magic if they violate one of the Order's many binding agreements.

A: Soul Sight

Lingotti can see spirits, and likewise they can see souls, the spiritual spark within mortals. This allows them to immediately tell if a person is possessed, undead, protected by some sort of divinity, or a spellcaster. They can identify the Sun of origin for spiritual entities on sight.

A: Contract

Early in their formation, Lingotti learn a special cantrip called Contract. When used, a spoken or written agreement between two or more parties is sealed such that all parties will be instantly mentally notified if the terms are violated, by who, and generally how.

A: Chromatic Tongues

Linguists and translators extraordinaire, Lingotti can speak, read, and write the languages of any but the most obscure spiritual entities. This includes the chromatic languages of the eight Solar realms as well as some of the major dialects, such as Crimson for Red and Pallid for Pale.

A: Summoning

Summoning is the act of calling a spirit from another Sun into this realm. Spirits are beings of pure light and thought, unlike mortals: light muddled with flesh. All spirits are tied to a specific Sun, and they cannot persist long under foreign light. There are three main ways to mitigate this: possession (within a mortal body), binding (within a specially prepared object), and summoning. Summoners shield spirits temporarily in magic shells, enabling them to cohere and act in this realm. To summon, choose a Sun and roll a number of MD. The resulting [sum] determines the entity's Essence (its sole stat, used for all saves and damage). Each 17 points of [sum] brings one being; excess Essence creates attendants or sub-spirits. They lose 1 Essence per hour until banished.

Once summoned, the Lingott enters a colloquy—a rapid, telepathic negotiation. Lingott and spirit alternate choosing [dice] terms, beginning with the entity if the [sum] is odd, or the Lingott if even. Terms are binding. Each party can add a condition or nullify a previous one. Multiple

beings in the same summoning share the same terms. Breaking your own binding deals d6 direct damage to MIND, and violating timed terms inflicts this damage hourly.

If agreement fails or the Lingott chooses, they may initiate aggressive negotiations—a duel for dominance. If the entity detects outside help from non-Lingotti, it may leave freely. Otherwise, it must fight until one side submits or falls. If the entity loses, it is forced into total servitude for the duration. This earns resentment, except from Suns that respect strength, like the Red Sun. Once begun, combat replaces negotiation and cannot be undone.

Summoning typically takes a round, though the colloquy may *feel* like it takes much longer. The entity may act on the following round, so summoning in combat is possible but preemptive summoning is ideal. If the summoner takes 10 minutes instead of one round to summon, and they provide an offering appropriate to the entity's nature, they get a free term at the outset of the colloquy.

Example Lingott terms:

- Spirit shall not maliciously misinterpret commands
- Spirit shall keep the identity of the summoner secret
- Spirit shall perform tasks outside its forte
- Spirit shall reveal its true name to the summoner

Example entity terms:

- Summoner shall give the entity an item they possess
- Summoner shall allow the entity to possess them for a day to experience mortal pleasures.
- The summoner shall promote spirit's ideology to all they encounter for a week

B: Conjuring

Conjuring is a more advanced form of summoning which compels the presence of a named entity rather than sending out an open call to entities of a given Sun. For a summoner capable of this technique, it is as simple as stating the true name of the entity they are intending to conjure, and then going about the summoning process as normal. The entity that manifests will be the entity they named. Additionally, knowing an entity's true name grants advantage to any saves against that entity or their effects, and disadvantage to all saves the entity makes against the summoner.

B: Protective Circle

At third degree, Lingotii learn how to ward against what they conjure up. Mentali would object to safety being something being added to the mix *after* learning to summon otherworldly beings, but The Order of the Tongue is not The Order of the Mind. Power before caution.

Protective circles are temporary defensive measures that trade time for safety when summoning. The circle takes an hour to draw up (per 10ft of circumference), including invoking the right pacts and wards over it. A protective circle must be keyed to a specific Sun it will shield against. Such circles act as barriers impassable to entities of a given Sun (and their magic), so

long as the intricate runes and sigils comprising the circle remain intact and the circle is unbroken.

C: Banish

A third degree summoner can target a spirit and make a sign of banishment. They then invest any number of MD. If the [sum] is greater than the entity's Essence, they are shunted back to whatever realm they came from.

C: Bind

Experienced summoners can attempt to bind spirits into a host to extend their stay under the current Sun indefinitely, or just strip their ability to operate as an incorporeal spirit. The process is similar to banishment (invest MD and try to get [sum] > Essence), but the entity must be in close range to both the Goetic and the host, and the host may get a Save to resist if the host itself is a conscious and unwilling being. If the entity is willing to be bound, success is automatic.

D: Familiar

By fourth degree most Lingotti have built up relationships with at least a few entities, and they may formally invite one to work closely with on an ongoing basis. This entity is known as their familiar. The chosen entity must have been conjured by the Lingott at least once before, and they must agree to be a familiar, though if the relationship is one of force they may be compelled to agree (this takes the form of aggressive negotiations).

A familiar may be conjured by their Lingott at will (investment of zero MD), and their time is not limited. This is because part of the Lingott's soul is bound to the familiar, so they can remain stable under foreign Suns indefinitely without being limited to a physical host. If zero MD are invested the entity is not compelled by magic to do anything in particular beyond appear, and will leave when it suits them. They will cooperate to the extent that they are willing to (or are forced/cowed into doing). They are basically treated as a special hireling.

Familiars may still be conjured using 1+ MD as normal, in which case they are compelled to follow the Goetic's commands to the extent determined in the colloquy.

A Lingott may only have one familiar at a time, and the process of bonding to a familiar exposes the Lingott's true name to the entity, so establishing a new familiar without the permission of the old one can prove hazardous.

ORDER OF THE HAND

Members are called Hands, Makers, or Shapers

Starting Gear

Maker: forgehammer (2d8, hefty), tableshield (A1, becomes an anvil at will), mail (A1)

Shaper: a sack of stones/bones/iron ingots as appropriate to their praxis, monastic sensibilities

Order Overview

Hands follow one of two paths, becoming either Makers (arcane crafters of magic artifacts), or Shapers (able to command matter itself and manipulate their environment). Their signature praxis is either Making or Shaping respectively, and they seek to surpass the feats of arcane might and engineering achieved during the time of the Seree.

Culture and Outlook

While united in somewhat grounded sensibilities and a distaste for abstraction, metaphors, and middlemen, the Order of the Hand is divided between competing schools of thought: The School of Form (Makers) and the School of Matter (Shapers). The former favor methodical approaches, permanent solutions to problems, and creating gear to empower allies. The latter favor improvisation, decisive action, and self-mastery. Shapers focus on manipulating the physical directly, while Makers often provide hardware for interacting with the immaterial. Their frequent exposure to alternative perspectives and high utility makes them get along with other Orders better than most.

Maker's Eye

Makers can tell by sight if items are cursed, and know the safe methods of experimenting to find out the nature of such curses. They can tell what powers magic artifacts possess with a touch. They have an expert eye for craftsmanship and are adept at identifying forgeries or flaws in construction.

Making

Crafting magic items is the chief joy of Makers, and in their view, the ultimate purpose of magic. The process incorporates traditional crafting skills, combined with coaxing an item into holding on to arcane power as if it had a soul, and indeed some Makers talk to their creations as if they were sapient (Lingotti and Mentali assure us they are not). Magic items typically have a number of MD within them, which can only be spent on powering whatever effects are built into the item. So a Staff of Fireball (2) would contain two MD which could only be spent casting fireball, even if you did not have a spellbook of fireball (it is built into the item). These MD work in most ways exactly like MD a mage would have: they are retained on rolls of 1-3 and expended on 4-6, they are refreshed to the max number at a certain condition (typically dawn), they may be spent in

any number, and they may be combined with MD from other sources (as long as it's to power the item's effect). 4+ MD items often have passive effects which are free or always active.

In order to use the MD within a magic item, a mage must attune to it. This takes about 10 minutes of concentration per item, and one of the mage's unspent MD must be expended to forge the bond with the item. Severing attunement is instant and does not take an action or require touching the item again. In this way, attuning to several magic items can significantly increase a mage's available MD to use at the cost of flexibility.

Example: Otiven is a 3rd level mage (3 MD) and has a Staff of Fireball (2 MD), a Coat of Ooze Form (2 MD), and Gloves of Counterspell (3 MD). In the morning he spends 30 minutes attuning to these three items, spending all his natural MD in the process. Now, instead of 3 MD at his disposal, he has 7, though 2 can only be spent on Fireball, 2 can only be spent on Ooze form, and 3 can only be spent on Counterspell.

Crafting a magic item requires materials, time, and optionally a power source. The materials can be whatever seems thematically appropriate, and are largely unimportant as long as the Maker has something to work with. Wardens may grant a bonus MD in the final item if the materials are particularly rare or suitable. The time taken is typically a week per MD the final item will have at minimum. At the end of each week after the first, the current MD total must be rolled (so 2 MD at the end of week 2, 3 after week 3, etc.). Minor flux means something has gone awry: the Warden adds a permanent side effect to the item (may only be used in darkness, smells delicious to bees, etc.). Major flux means catastrophe! The item and all materials are destroyed, and likely most of the Maker's workshop (the Warden will specify the details). If the Maker is crafting in a proper arcane workshop, they get a reroll they may use at any point during the crafting process. They get another reroll for each additional Maker of their level or higher that is participating in the Making process (involved for the full duration). Makers may only make items with up to one more MD than they naturally possess themselves, so a 4th level Maker (4 MD) could make a 5 MD magic item. Additionally, a "power source" is needed to handle the arcane energy the item will be infused with each dawn. Power sources can be anything the Warden deems appropriate (based on what fits the campaign), and Makers should be on the lookout for them as they adventure. Power sources are rated with a number, representing how many MD they can support. Regarding mundane quality, use item rarity as a guide. Makers can make Common weapon/armor equivalents at level 1, Uncommon at level 2, and Rare at level 3.

Example: Otiven is now a 4th level Maker. He previously found a molten heart (3), and a handful of jellied godsflesh (2). Both of these power sources can be combined into the crafting of one item, allowing him to Make a longsword (a rare weapon) imbued with 5 MD (the maximum for his level). He will make four crafting rolls in total (at the ends of week 2, 3, 4, and 5), with one more MD each time. There is no roll on week 1 because it with a single die flux is impossible, but the Warden could rule there are flux dice applied to the Making if there was some adverse condition, in which case a roll for week 1 would be needed too. Otiven will likely need assistance to avoid disaster!

Shaper's Sense

Shapers can sense the presence of substances they have mastered, within a radius of about 100 yards.

Shaping

Shaping requires speaking and at least one hand free, just like spellcasting, but it does not require a spellbook. Speaking is essential, Shaping cannot be attempted at all if speaking is impossible. The shaper simply looks at a target, invests a number of MD, and speaks a command of [dice] words to [dice] substances they have mastered, controlling:

- 1 MD - a handful
- 2 MD - a person sized amount
- 3 MD - a room sized amount
- 4 MD - a tower sized amount
- 5 MD - a city district sized amount

The Warden adjudicates the exact effects. Substances struggle to respond to commands contrary to their nature. The results are not highly precise, especially with fewer words, but they are permanent which is where the main power of Shaping lies. Matter moved or reformed stays that way, and injuries inflicted or healed remains as well. The four traditional substances are Bone, Flesh, Stone, and Metal. The Order of the Hand works daily to discover the secrets of mastering additional substances. Shapers typically have a number of substances mastered equal to their level.

Example: Xenia is a Shaper who has mastered Bone. She looks at the assassin who has broken into her sanctum, rolls 1 MD, and commands their bones to "break!" The Warden rules that this will do d6! damage (sometimes called exploding damage, meaning that if a 6 is rolled an additional die of damage is rolled and added, and so on as a chain reaction). This represents the chance of breaking a more critical bone, such as the vertebrae in the neck!

Example: Lorcan has mastered Stone and Metal. He invests 4 MD into shaping, targets the ground above an ore vein, and commands both Stone and Metal: "build a fortified tower!" He rolls and manages to avoid flux. The ground heaves and a great mass of stone and metal surges upwards. The Warden asks Lorcan to describe the tower, and rules that it will count as a rampart (10GD, A2).

Example: Afir has mastered Bone and Flesh. He targets his ally's shattered arm, and commands the broken bones and rent flesh to "set, mend!", rolling 2 MD. The warden rules that this will restore functionality to the arm, and heal [sum] points to the ally's BODY stat.

ORDER OF THE HEART

Members are called Weavers, Hearts, or Spiders

Starting Gear

journal, tea set, knitting needles and wool, a pair of gut hook fish knives (2d4)

Order Overview

One of the oldest Orders, tracing their traditions all the way back to the time of the Martoi (said to be the first wielders of magic), the Order of the Heart is an eclectic one. Their signature praxis is called Weaving, and for that reason they are most commonly called “Weavers”. Weaving is the process of mystically reaching out to draw on certain distinct nexuses of power that represent facets of reality. These “threads” are equal parts metaphor and literal humming undercurrent of the world. Each thread is an aggregate of several distinct facets; it is somewhat random which facet will manifest when a Weaver draws on a given thread. The unique interplay between facets and the innumerable possible combinations grant Weavers their signature unprecedented, on the fly flexibility, as well as the somewhat chaotic nature of their magic. Mirroring their chaotic, freeform magic, Weavers are a loosely structured Order composed of self governing “cells” which are bound together only through a broad ethos and passion for Weaving.

Culture and Outlook

Weavers believes Visla will supply what is needed to the Vislae who knows how to listen, and much of their teachings focus on how to make the most of the situation you’re in, and how to best play whatever hand you’re dealt. They believe everything in the world (and beyond) is interconnected by delicate arcane strands, and that seeking to understand and master these connections is the most beautiful and worthwhile application of magic and pursuit in life. They have a special affinity for spiders, and believe them to be “silent teachers”, and many eventually undergo rituals to add spider-like features to their body as they advance in the Order (extra eyes and limbs are most common, but it varies by cell). Uniquely among the Orders, they generally take a fairly lax view towards apostasy, being minimally dogmatic to begin with. Those that “lose heart” are often kept in the memory of the cell, and talked about as if they were still present. Weavers often use “Heart” as a term of endearment amongst themselves, as in “my Heart” or “my dear Hearts”. The general public is more likely to call them “Spiders” or pejoratively, witches.

Heart Sense

Weavers can see the threads between people. It is often possible for a Weaver to tell by sight whether individuals are related, whether one is feeling strong emotion towards the other (such as a crush or holding a grudge), or whether a given individual is entangled in any way (debts, infidelities, etc.). At a minimum they can detect the emotional state of the target (holding back

rage, afraid, calm, about to cry, etc.). These things can be concealed with magic fairly trivially, but most people do not know how. For this reason, Weavers tend to unnerve the general public even more so than other mages, and even other vislae.

Weaving

To weave, a Weaver decides how many MD they are going to invest and assigns a thread they have mastered to each one. The same thread may be assigned to multiple MD (eg. a Weaver who masters *Wind* could roll three MD that were all for *Wind*). Each thread has six facets associated with it. The Weaver rolls all the MD invested, and the facets of each chosen thread that match the number rolled for that thread all come to the fore together. The Weaver must channel the power through those facets by coming up with a bespoke magical effect that thematically fits each facet rolled. Multiples of the same facet can be interpreted as amplifiers which increase the effect's intensity or scope. The Warden will adjudicate any needed mechanical effects, drawing on the [dice] and [sum] syntax for spells as needed.

*Example: A Weaver who masters Fire, The Tower, and Moonlight weaves with 3 MD. They assign the MD as Fire, Tower, Fire. They roll their MD and get 3, 5, and 2. Checking their threads, they see these results correspond with the facets of **heat** from Fire, **strength** from The Tower, and **destruction** from Fire. They declare that they are projecting a heat ray from their palms that can melt through metal. The Warden decides this will be a beam attack that hits all targets in a straight line including penetrating through cover, and it will do 3d6 damage.*

*Example: A Weaver who masters Blood, Wind, and Diamond weaves with 2 MD. They assign both MD to Wind and get a roll of 5 and 5, which corresponds with the facet of **invisibility** from Wind (x2). They declare that they want to become undetectable. The Warden decides that they will be undetectable by [dice] means of detection for [sum] rounds, which in this case means 2 means of detection for 10 rounds. The Weaver chooses sight and magical sensing as the means of detection, and they fade from view.*

Importantly, Weaver characters must channel their power in some form within a few seconds of calling it up, otherwise it will backfire. In game terms, if a Weaver player cannot think of an effect that adequately incorporates their rolled facets with a reasonable time frame (typically a minute or so), the concentrated energy backfires as an explosion that deals [sum] damage to everything nearby the Weaver's location. Yes, this can be triggered intentionally, at great risk to the Weaver in question.

Threads

There is not a fixed number of threads, only a repository of documented, known Threads (maintained by Mentali researchers; Weavers do not have time for that). Weavers are constantly meditating, experimenting, and discovering more. At first level, Weavers start with 3 mastered threads, and gain another with each subsequent level in the Order.

BLOOD

1. Health
2. Vigor
3. Thirst
4. Energy
5. Wounds
6. Family/Ancestry

MOONLIGHT

1. Illumination
2. Subtlety
3. Sky
4. Softness
5. Deception
6. Night

THE TOWER

1. Protection
2. Shelter
3. Height
4. Imprisonment
5. Strength
6. Stone

DIAMOND

1. Strength
2. Stone
3. Hardness
4. Gravity
5. Beauty
6. Wealth

INFINITY

1. Size
2. Capacity
3. Duration
4. Movement
5. Other realms
6. Mental damage

WIND

1. Speed
2. Grace
3. Speech
4. Breath
5. Invisibility
6. Weather

HATE

1. Damage
2. Vengeance
3. Pursuit
4. Ignorance
5. Blindness
6. Time

THE SEA

1. Journeys
2. Distance
3. Water
4. Aquatic creatures
5. Life
6. Secrets

WINTER

1. Ice
2. Damage
3. Silence
4. Stillness
5. Endings
6. Impassivity

FREEDOM

1. Escape
2. Movement
3. Destruction
4. Joy
5. Distance
6. Sight

SLEEP

1. Rest
2. Recuperation
3. Dreams
4. Nightmare
5. Immobility
6. Sloth

THE WOODS

1. Nature
2. Plants
3. Darkness
4. Wood
5. Growth
6. Mystery

FIRE

1. Damage
2. Destruction
3. Heat
4. Illumination
5. Movement
7. Passion

THUNDER

1. Power
2. Sound
3. Damage
4. Shaking/Breaking
5. Movement
6. Fear

ALLEYWAYS

1. Stealth
2. Trickery
3. Poverty
4. Filth
5. Whispers
6. Betrayal

Warlocks

Servants of a great Power. Students of Ambition.

Warlock is a class that is typically not gained at first level, but gained through play by interacting with Sites of Power or agents of a Power. When you pledge yourself to an entity capable of Patronage, gain the below class template, which may be taken multiple times.

Note on Clerics: Being a cleric may mean being granted authority to perform certain religious rites. This is typically handled on a case by case basis and does not grant magic abilities. If becoming a certain type or level of cleric does grant magic abilities, gain a warlock template as the difference is only semantics and the image of themselves a given Power likes to project.

W: The Great Game, Shared Power, +1 PD

Pact Dice

Pact Dice (PD) are essentially special Magic Dice (MD), and may be used in combination with MD a character has from other sources. They are different in the following ways:

- They are d8s
- They do not deplete, instead you accrue points of debt with each 4+

Debt may be spent by a patron to saddle the warlock with tasks. The exact nature of how much debt = what sort of task is not known to the warlock (unless they have extensive contract law experience), but a good baseline is tasks that reasonably require X days to complete cost X debt. Things which can be briefly completed in the middle of a session (e.g. grab that item for me, cut that person's throat) are typically just 1 debt. Warlocks should expect some of their downtime to be spent dealing with tasks for their patron.

W: The Great Game

Warlocks gain insight into the power structures that pull the strings of the universe. This insight scales with the number of levels/templates taken in warlock, but a guideline is:

- 1 level: recognize agents and artifacts of other Powers on sight and understand their association
- 2 levels: learn the nature of the Suns and the Dark
- 3 levels: learn the answer to a secret of your choice

W: Shared Power

Gain a spell or ability from your Patron's list. Some Patrons offer a choice, others have abilities gained in order. Some offer multiple abilities at each level. Results may vary. Negotiate carefully.

Typically if a Patron grants a spell, the knowledge of the spell resides with them and is channeled to you through the connection of your pact, so you do not need to carry a spellbook to have access to it.

Gods and Divinity

Name	Lives	Domains	Notes
Deel	Sky	war, rulership	Wounded in the war with the Seree. Led the retaliation.
Gaal	Sea	sea creatures, stillness, the drowned	associated with octopi
Cicollus	Sky	abundance, wisdom	rumored to be slain in the war with the Seree
Panur	Earth	peace, contentment, non-ambition	formerly Sky, descended to Earth in Claimsun, fast growing cult
Suvuvena	Underworld	flesh, mutation, evolution of forms	Associated with the Carreg people
Zulin	Sky	kingship, knowledge, the wind	God of the Hesayan Church. Seeks to assimilate other religions.
Raal	Earth	hunger, hunting, the dead	Associated with orcs, ghouls, and the Blightlands
Sorg	Underworld	hunger, hunger, hunger	Gnaws at the world. Drank the ancient sea of the underworld.
Satur	Earth	blood, grain, fertility	"Cities are a mistake. Too many people is the world's biggest problem."
Dendra	Earth	gleeful death, chaotic renewal	A consuming ash. "Destroy present forms that new ones may rise."

Name	Lives	Domains	Notes
Azure	Sky	money, commerce, profit, the color blue	A god of merchants. Said to allow the purchase of impossible things.
Incarné	Sky	bureaucracy, debt, the color red	Sister of Azure. Only worshiped by people who have to. Called Marsaat in the North.
Soil Mother(s)	Earth	plants, fungi, primordial forests	Very active in Grinvolt and the Talking wood. Create the "Onddo". Purely physical.
Quen	Earth	fire, darkness, volcanoes	Associated with Firevault in the North.
Visla	"beyond" the Sky	magic, secrets, silence	Worshipped by vislae, members of the Invisible Church, the new Orders of magic

Optional/Untested Rules

Healing

Restore points to each core stat (roll for each) when you take a long rest (at least two watches). How much you restore to each stat is determined by a *rest die*, and the size depends on the environment and other factors.

- Resting on a stone floor or dirt floor with no bedroll: **1 point to each stat**
- Camping with basic supplies/amenities: **d4**
- Resting in the hospitality of a home with a kitchen: **d6**
- Resting in a settlement: **up to d12** (depending on money spent and state of the place)

Modifiers

Bump *up* the rest die size by one step (1 pt → d4 → d6 → d8... etc.), up to d12, for each of the following that are true:

- You have a team of camp followers ministering to you (cooks, maids, etc.)
- You have access to high quality supplies (choice meats, wines, or soothing unguents)
 - These supplies should say how many uses they have. One long rest consumes one use for one person (i.e. 4 uses could boost the rest of one person for 4 rests, two people for 2 rests, etc.)
- You spend money or reputation for better accommodations in a settlement (the Warden will say how much)

Bump *down* the rest die size by one step for each of the following factors. This can reduce the benefit of rest to zero (i.e. ...d6 → d4 → 1 pt → no rest).

- You are in a hostile environment with the risk of nocturnal ambush (Warden will say if this applies)
- Something is waking you frequently (screams of the wounded, an infant or animal that needs care, harassment tactics)
- There are brutal environmental conditions (night during winter, day during summer, depending on climate)
- Your rest is not contiguous (-1 step for each watch of non-rest in the middle, i.e. a watch of rest, then a watch of non-rest, then another watch of rest can count as a long rest with a -1 penalty to the rest die)
 - This is a penalty you may have to take if getting 2 watches of unbroken rest is impractical, but it can be mitigated by reducing guard duty to half watch shifts and rotating out (if you have enough people for that)

Restoring your Spirit

The *Soul* stat typically restores with a long rest as normal, but characters may have a special condition that prevents it from restoring at all (regardless of other rest conditions). The default for this is isolation: *Soul* does not restore during rest for a character that is alone. The default for mages is dawn's light: *Soul* does not restore for a mage that does not wake during the dawn watch, or cannot see the Sun at all (i.e. underground or in prison).

Specialists

Specialists are teams adventuring parties may bring with them which are designed to cover a range of skillsets and solve specific problems the adventuring party may face. The idea is that more parties should have some “skilled but otherwise fairly normal humans”. When pitching classes, the following archetypes have easy appeal:

- You’re a lethal combatant who can hold their own against multiple foes!
- You can do magic!

Not to be too harsh on rogues, and this is a bit reductive, but “you can pick locks!” is not really on the same level IMHO. However “you’re a group of specialists!” is. *Apocalypse World* has rules for having a gang of characters under the control of one player, and several other games have variations on that. I like the idea of one character who basically manages the hirelings and plays a team of scouts and rogues that assist the team. It feels more realistic, and moves away from the superhero/cult of personality vibes I want to avoid.

Design ideas for the Specialists class:

- Should involve a mini game of choosing which loadouts to bring with you (trap setting gear, anti-mage gear, etc.)
- The specialists are not a coordinated fighting force by default. They have 2 GD each and 10 in all stats
- Upgrades:
 - Militia - your specialists do not shy away from combat, and are trained to fight as a unit. If you have at least 6 combat ready guardsmen, they may fight as a special warband, with the following profile:
 - **Militia**: BODY 11, MIND 10, SOUL 7, [members/3] GD, A1, Polearms (d8)
 - Whenever this warband takes BODY damage, make a BODY save. A fail means a number of members equal to the damage taken are down and dying. If this takes your fighting ready guardsmen below 6, they no longer count as a warband, but as individual combatants.
 - Not quite overwhelming numbers: rather than ignoring non-blast attacks from individuals as a typical warband does, such attacks against this warband are merely *Impaired*.
- Each member gets 1 specialty
 - Guardsman - change statline to BODY 11, MIND 10, SOUL 7, 3 GD, A1, Polearm (d8)
 - Guardsmen may form a warband if you have enough, see Militia
 - **Assassin** - can move in complete silence, melee attacks against unaware targets gain +d8 *in addition* to any normal bonuses, and on critical damage you may declare the attack was non-lethal, silent, or both.
 - **Locksmith** - can bypass any non-magical lock in a dungeon turn (about 10 min), though for complicated locks this may involve cutting tools or acids and leaves obvious traces
 - **Cartographer** - automatically maps spaces the party passes though
 - **Trapper** - may spend a dungeon turn to set up a trap (d10 damage, MIND save to avoid). Each trapper can set up to 6 traps. Spent traps cannot be reused, though recovering a spent trap is still beneficial. The materials for a new trap cost

1 GP, and the materials to recycle a spent trap cost 1 SP. Trappers will always point out traps to the party, and may reappropriate existing dungeon traps at the Warden's discretion.

- **Anti-Mage** - can smell mages (automatically tell if someone is a mage if they get close enough to smell). Equipped with anti-mage gear:
 - choking smoke bombs (BODY save if attempting to speak, fire a ranged weapon, or cast spells. Fail means you spend your turn coughing and gagging. Spells cast while under the effects of the smoke gain +2 Flux dice. Lasts d4 rounds.)
 - The bombs are only potent enough to seriously affect the target they are thrown directly near, and are not considered Blast attacks. An anti mage may throw 3 bombs at once to give the attack Blast.
 - Anti-mages come equipped with 6 bombs and may buy additional bombs for 1 GP each. Each bomb occupies a full inventory slot but they are not *Bulky*.