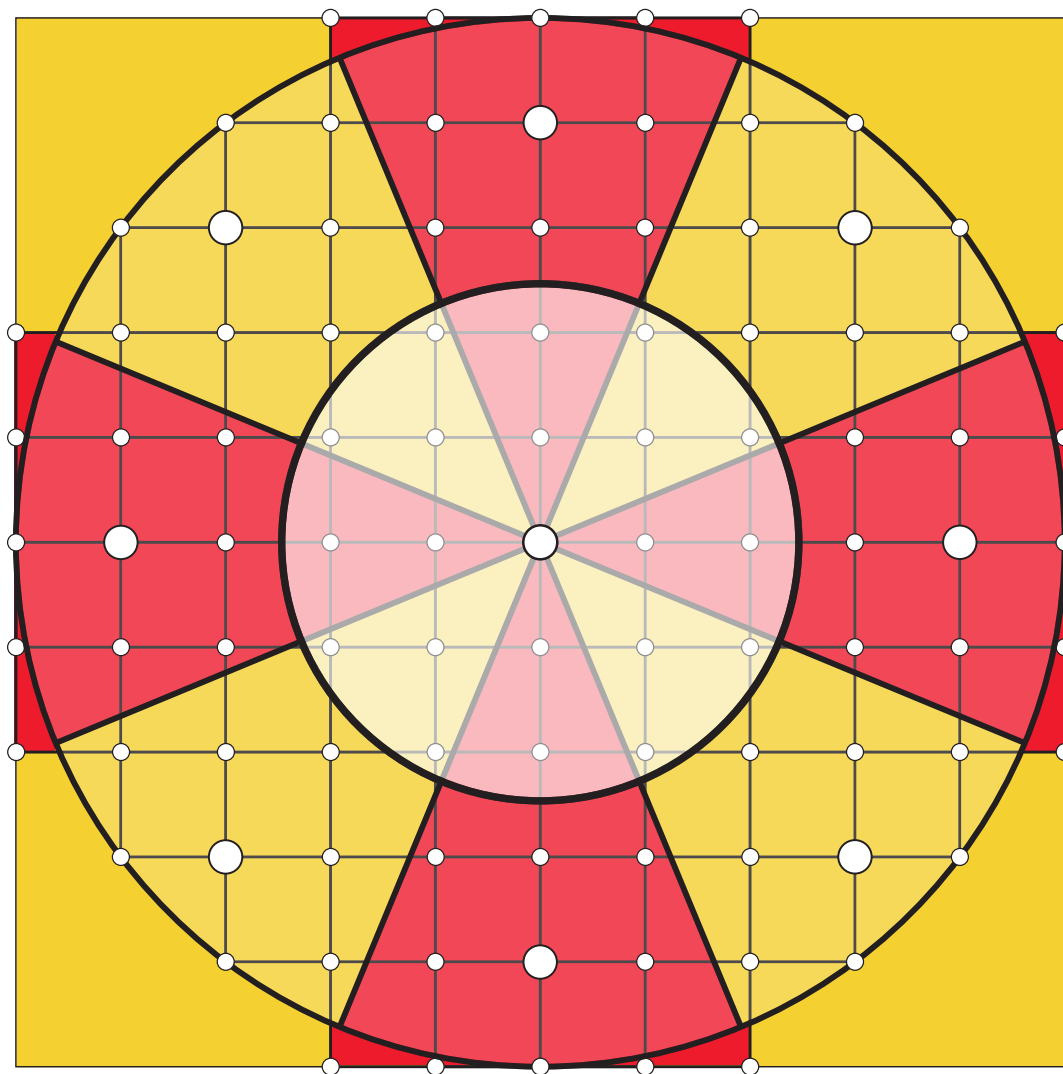


# WICKED "K" GAMES

PRESENTS



VISUAL ALIGNMENT TRACKER

A TOOL FOR TRACKING GRADUAL CHANGE



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## VISUAL ALIGNMENT TRACKER - THE INSTRUCTIONS

Character alignments have been around since the very early editions of tabletop fantasy gaming. Initially three choices (lawful, neutral, and chaotic) helped the player decide which actions their characters would take. Although it was a good place to start, the roles of good and evil were ill-defined. Law generally equaled heroics and goodness while chaos implied just the opposite. It was not until a major revision that the good/evil axis was introduced, expanding both gaming options and character definitions. With new editions of tabletop gaming, the understanding of alignments grew and evolved, creating innovative and sophisticated adaptations with each step forward.

The Visual Alignment Tracker continues in those footsteps, bringing a new perspective to the classic form. The system functions on a point rating structure, which allows for the measuring and mapping of player choices. While the concept of alignment points and graphing them is nothing new, this system takes a different approach in the design of the grid.

A traditional alignment grid is composed of nine spaces: three wide by three tall. The Example A shown on the right breaks the alignments down into steps. The horizontal and vertically adjacent squares on the grid are “one step away” while the diagonally adjacent squares are “two steps away”. This layout is especially important to the d20 cleric class. Clerics with a deity or philosophical alignment concept are required to remain within “one step” of their patron for continual access to spells and class features. Various spells and abilities also affect creatures by their alignment. At higher levels, this can be the difference between life and death as some of the more powerful spells target or affect specific alignments.

**EXAMPLE A**

LAWFUL GOOD	NEUTRAL GOOD	CHAOTIC GOOD
LAWFUL NEUTRAL	TRUE NEUTRAL	CHAOTIC NEUTRAL
LAWFUL EVIL	NEUTRAL EVIL	CHAOTIC EVIL

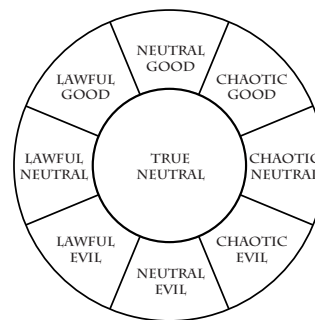
**EXAMPLE B**

0 / 0	0-50	51-69	70-100	0 / 100
0-50	LAWFUL GOOD	NEUTRAL GOOD	CHAOTIC GOOD	
31-69	LAWFUL NEUTRAL	TRUE NEUTRAL	CHAOTIC NEUTRAL	
70-100	LAWFUL EVIL	NEUTRAL EVIL	CHAOTIC EVIL	
100 / 0				100 / 100

The first step in changing the nine-step alignment chart is in the layout. Example A adds these scales to create Example B. The coordinates are in an X/Y format with a horizontal X-Axis and a vertical Y-Axis. The traditional point scale ranges from 1-100, divided by three borderlines per axis. A static location plugged into this grid visually represents the players distance from the center.

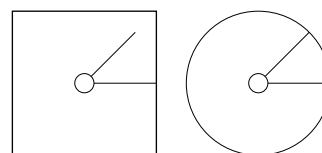
The second conversion made to the traditional chart is to make it circular. Example C is the result of a transformation from the square blocks into circular pieces. It resembles an equally balanced pie chart with a central inner circle. The most obvious difference in the two diagrams is the increased size of the center step. The explanation expands upon this concept further in.

EXAMPLE C



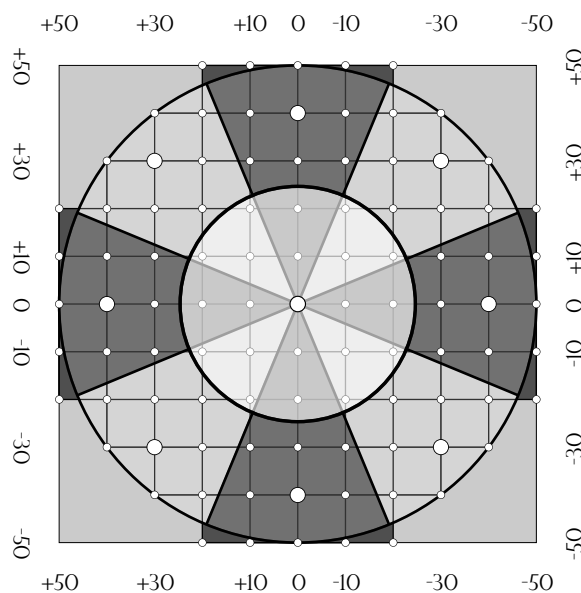
With the exception of a true neutral character, the farther from the center the character's mark is, the more established in their alignment that character would be. This is what makes having a circular grid so significant. The corners of a square are farther away from its own center than its sides are. Example D illustrates this point with their identically measured lines originating from each center.

EXAMPLE D



Each dot has its own score corresponding to an exact location on the grid. The final circular grid in Example E is shaded to emphasize this. All points within the inner circle are true neutral. The points that are within the outer circle belong to each of the other eight alignment categories. The larger dots in the middle of each of the areas represent the starting location of a new character with that particular alignment.

EXAMPLE E



The characters only move their marks on the grid when a point value reaches zero or a multiple of ten. A character's mark cannot move beyond the adjacent dots. The inner circle's larger dimension emphasizes the increased likelihood of making a neutral decision. Just as many courses of action fall within a particular category, to abstain from an action is the act of selecting neutrality.

To simulate the flexibility of real life, the characters may make decisions that move their scores back and forth, as most intelligent beings do. They may do this without consequences as long as their scores remain within nine points of their current dot's score. Behavioral patterns that emerge in the system allow actions to speak for themselves and create the changes to the alignment location in response.



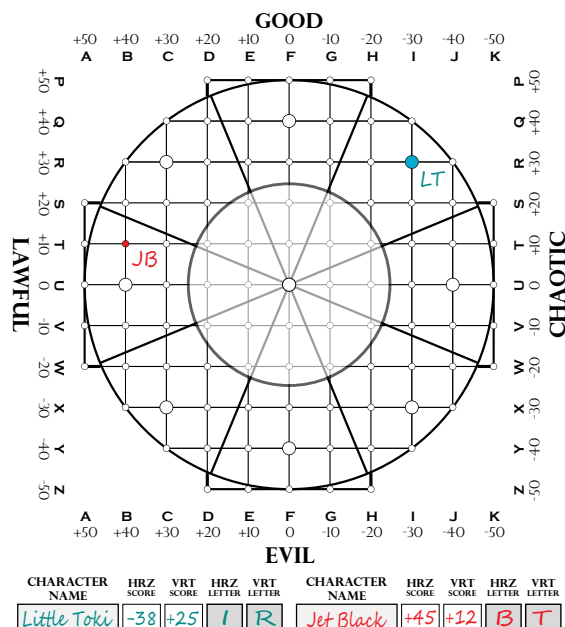
When a character chooses an alignment, they make a philosophical choice. Characters of a single source alignment may dedicate themselves to a particular philosophy they hold highest above the rest. The dots available at the centered edges of the four cardinal directions accent this. Characters that choose a dual source alignment may dedicate themselves to a moral philosophy. They may completely balance a blend of these two ideals to an extreme, but not as greatly as if they had only one paramount alignment source. Since there are two ideals, each may present a conflicting choice against the other and the character may have to choose which one is more important. This is not an issue for the player with a single source.

Each ten-point line along the final chart bears a corresponding letter. Using two different sets of letters per axis reduces confusion. Example F shows the printer friendly version of this. The alignment score is purely numeric and fluctuates regularly, while the alignment position is usually static and changes less often.

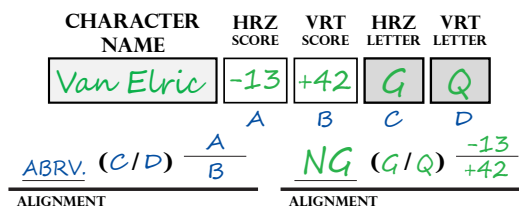
A step on the final chart is still the distance between the horizontally and vertically adjacent dots. These steps are similar to steps in a traditional chart, except that they do not move diagonally. Character information occupies the boxes at the bottom of Example F. These two sample characters are color coded for easier use. Little Toki is only two points short of making the chaotic step from Line I to Line J. Jet Black is still a full eight points from making the step towards good from Line T to Line S.

Writing out the new alignment information on a standard character sheet is much easier with alignment notation. Example G shows a sample character filled out as this way. On the top half of the illustration is alignment information, just as it would appear on the printed alignment sheet. Under each top box is a blue letter corresponding to the sample notation setup on the left. On the right side of the example, the completed information fills the notation.

### EXAMPLE F



### EXAMPLE G



Whenever a decision with an ethical implication is made, points are issued based on the impact of that decision. The amount of points to be distributed is open to interpretation, but setting up a guideline beforehand avoids unnecessary complications. Depending on the severity, an extreme model may give 2, 5, or 10 points. A light model may only give out 1, 2, or 4 points at a time. Finally, a moderate model might give out 1, 3, or 7 points.

Consider the frequency and time requirements involved when deciding how often to give or withhold points. For the sake of keeping things flowing, the more frequently alignment roleplaying is used, the less frequently points should be given. This does not mean bypassing the system when an extreme act is committed, it entails broadening the allowance of acts that do not incur point changes at repetitive intervals.

It is essentially easiest to create three increments of points. For instance, these three may include a lesser, moderate, and greater set of consequences or rewards. The lesser acts may consist of the player investing one minute of real time and perhaps a single die roll toward their character's role. The moderate acts might require one to ten minutes real time and may involve multiple dice rolls. The greater acts may entail spending more than ten minutes roleplaying a single related chain of events or choices.

A series of methods determine the allocation of points. The three ways for issuing points are by the Oversight, Nomination, or Responsibility Methods. There is no wrong use or combination of these methods so long as they serve your group's needs.

In the Oversight Method, the game master issues points based on their own perspective and judgment about how the actions influence the game. The range of points used is solely at the discretion of the game master, as is whether the players see the grid or not. If players are abusing this system or other methods, the group may need switch to this method.

The Nomination Method involves players announcing when an action just taken should deserve alignment points. As long as one player elects the act, if any other players confirm it, then the nomination passes and points are given. The game master generally decides the quantity of points gained. This reduces arguments and prevents slowing game play. A nomination and confirmation can happen as swiftly as one player voicing the election and any other player gesturing in response. The player's awareness of point totals or lack thereof should be determined before implementing this system. It is still necessary for the game master to inform a character of an alignment change or being near to it.

The Responsibility Method leaves all of the tracking and point allocation to the individual players. The only time the game master needs to intervene is when a character whose class is alignment restricted makes a gross violation of conduct. Each player has their own chart for mapping and they are responsible for announcing changes to their alignment and such.

Each player's personal perspective varies as to what comprises each alignment. A gaming group should agree on what type of behavior should fall into each category. If using the Oversight Method, the game master dictates which behaviors will incur points and what will not. If using the Nomination Method, a group discussion should create a general compromise of boundaries. If using the Responsibility Method, players decide how their characters will observe each field.

A player may have their alignment reset by having atonement cast on them by an appropriately aligned character. The game master may limit this to prevent abuse or excessive use. This should usually result in changing the recipient's alignment to match the alignment of the divine caster's patron deity or philosophy.

In addition to the definitions already given in the rules, an easy way to recognize the actions of the four alignments:

- Lawful: Acts of honor, discipline, or loyalty.
- Good: Acts of benevolence, mercy, or compassion.
- Evil: Acts of selfishness, maliciousness, or cruelty.
- Chaotic: Acts of liberty, flexibility, or autonomy.

Alignments influence some magic items and spells, making them either helpful or harmful based on the potential target. Using the new chart's steps can expand upon this. Items that require a specific alignment optionally have a specific coordinate instead. The distance in steps establishes the benefits based on proximity to the source coordinate. In addition, limitations on item usage are determined in the same manner.

Classic myths present some great examples of this. In one variant of Arthurian legend, King Arthur pulled Excalibur from the embedded stone. In Norse mythology, Sigmund drew the sword Odin had thrust into the trunk of a tree. In both examples, only a specific type of person could draw the sword. Perhaps the only person that can pull forth the magical sword of legend is one of an FP coordinate (the farthest location of good on the good-evil axis). On the other hand, the Spear of Ages might have the following added effects:

- Four Steps Away: Wielding grants the same penalty as if by an opposed alignment.
- Two Steps Away: The item acts normally as if wielded by the correct alignment.
- One Step Away: As two steps, except additionally granting a minor boon.
- Main Coordinate: As two steps, except additionally granting a major boon.



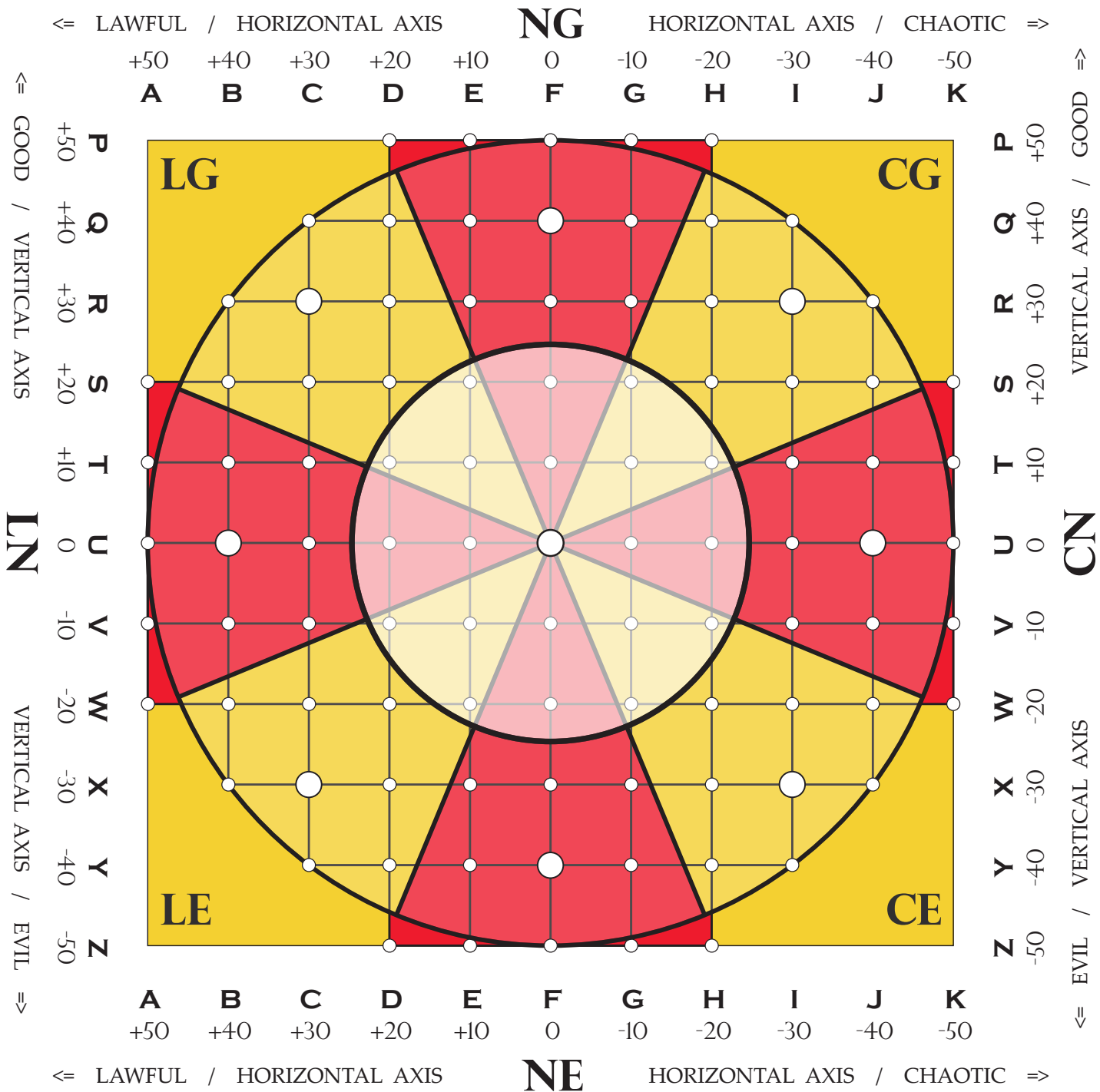
Use Magic Device would act normally when attempting to emulate an alignment, using the larger starting dot as the location. For every step deviated away from the starting dot the difficulty class would cumulatively increase. An additional step would add +1 DC, two steps would add +2, and three steps would add +4 DC. All dots are within three steps of a starting dot. The only exception to this would be an artifact, which may have a location outside of the outer circle. The DCs for this would continue to grow as the location became further away.

The Visual Alignment Tracker should be easy to add to most tabletop systems and have a minimal impact on other supplements. However, a specific document stands out as highly compatible with the alignment points. *Rewarding Roleplaying* by Spes Magna Games encourages and rewards better roleplaying with its three criteria. The players set their own roleplaying goals. With each goal the player meets, they receive the rewards in the form of an Action Point, which help achieve greater levels of success in the game. This is a great addition to any game, and the promotion code given in the ad page makes it extremely affordable too!

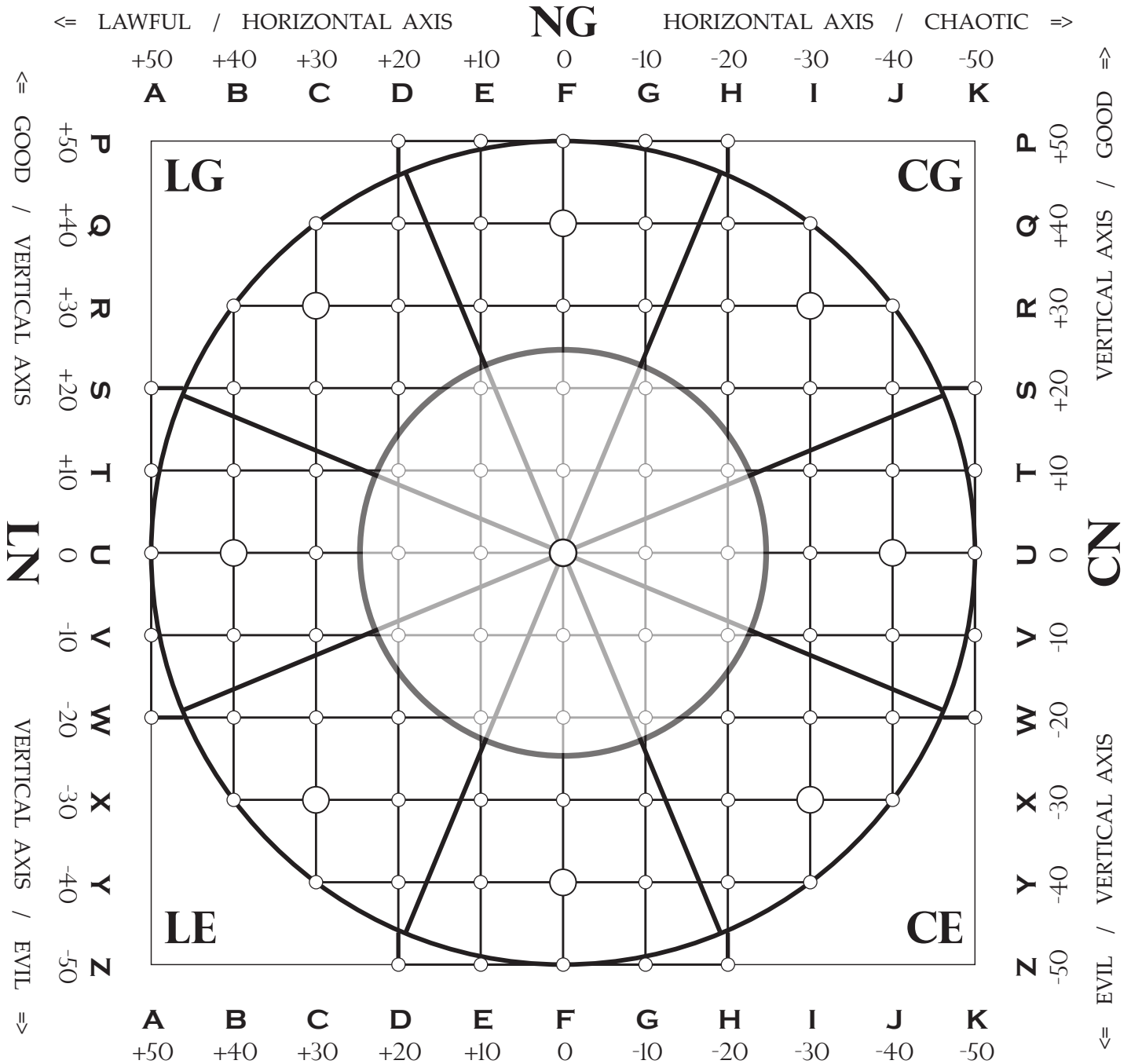
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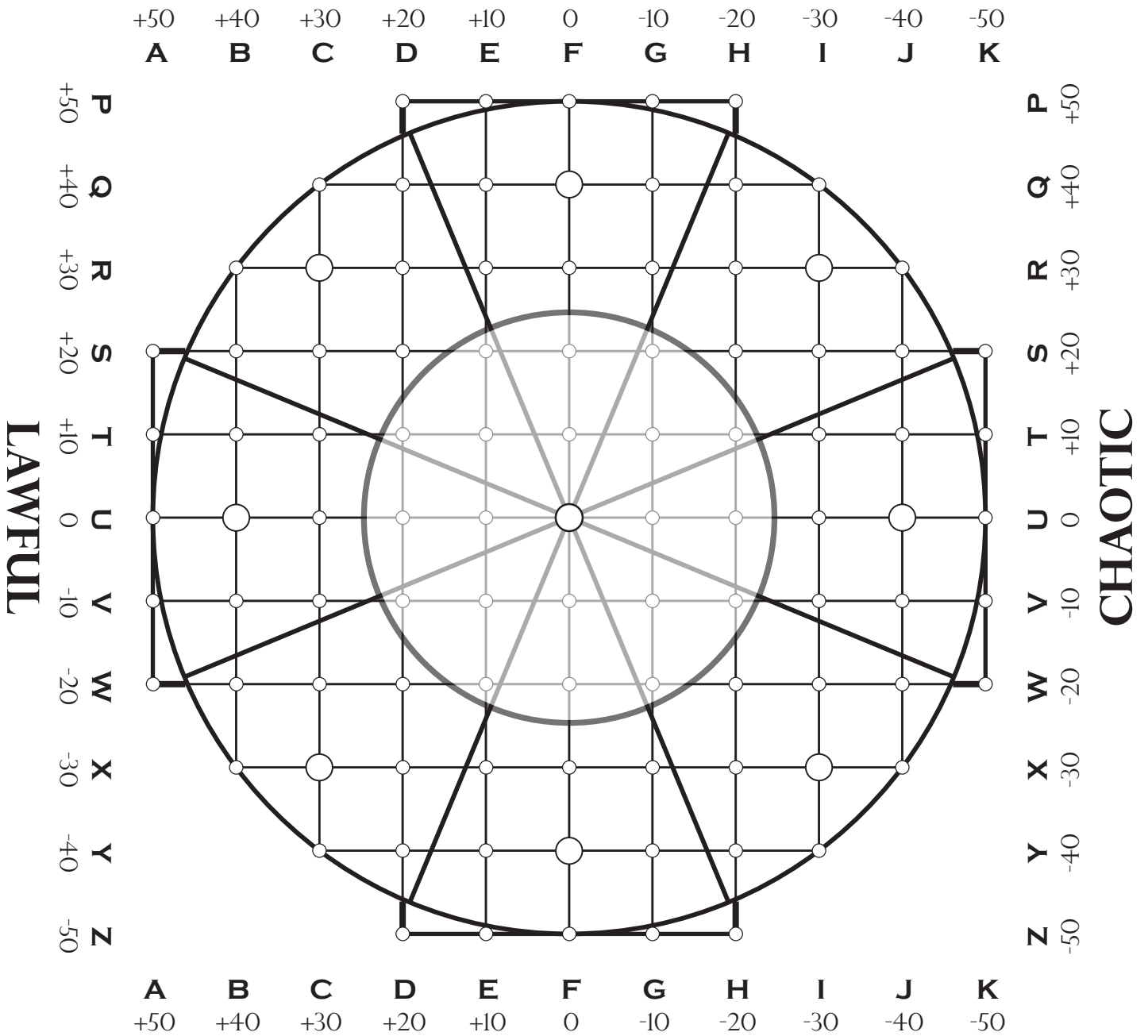
TRUE NEUTRAL	
DT DU DV ES ET EU EV EW FS FT FU FV FW GS GT GU GV GW HT HU HV	
<b>LAWFUL GOOD</b> CQ DQ BR CR DR SB SC DS  <b>CHAOTIC GOOD</b> HQ HR HS IQ IR IS JR JS  <b>LAWFUL EVIL</b> BW CW DW BX CX DX CY DY  <b>CHAOTIC EVIL</b> HW IW JW HX IX JX HY IY	<b>LAWFUL NEUTRAL</b> AS AT BT CT AU BU CU AV BV CV AW  <b>NEUTRAL GOOD</b> DP EP EQ ER FP FQ FR GP GQ GR HP  <b>NEUTRAL EVIL</b> DZ EX EY EZ FX FY FZ GX GY GZ HZ  <b>CHAOTIC NEUTRAL</b> IT IU IV JT JU JV KS KT KU KV WK



CHARACTER NAME	HRZ SCORE	VRT SCORE	HRZ LETTER	VRT LETTER

CHARACTER NAME	HRZ SCORE	VRT SCORE	HRZ LETTER	VRT LETTER

# GOOD



# EVIL

CHARACTER NAME	HRZ SCORE	VRT SCORE	HRZ LETTER	VRT LETTER	CHARACTER NAME	HRZ SCORE	VRT SCORE	HRZ LETTER	VRT LETTER

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