



3 CAMPAIGN SYSTEMS



You gods-damned tonic merchant!” Alain hauled Daniel up by his wrist and cocked a fist. “Steal from me, will you? Let’s see how many potions it takes to put your face back together again after I’m done with you!”

“Alain!” Alahazra grabbed the warrior’s arm, but he shook her off.

“Stay out of this, No-Eyes. This little poultice-peddler just stole all our treasure. And he didn’t even spend it on anything good!”

“I didn’t steal it,” Daniel snarled. “I invested it, you illiterate brawler!”

“Invested?” Alain snorted and let the alchemist drop back into his seat.

“Maybe I ought to make an investment of my own. How does three feet of steel in your gullet sound?”

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a variety of small tweaks for your campaign, each one focused on giving life to moments and depth to activities in your game. You can use these systems individually or mix and match them together to taste.

Alignment (see this page) dives into what each of the nine alignments means to different people, and provides new rules for incrementally changing your alignment.

If your party loves playing out interactions with merchants and finds selling items at half price a little dull, spice things up with **Bargaining** (page 138).

Classes and feats can grant you an animal companion, familiar, cohort, or other partner. **Companions** (page 140) brings new options to your table for using them.

PCs meet interesting and useful allies all the time. **Contacts** (page 148) lets you turn those chance meetings and dealings into long-term recurring characters in your campaign.

Exploration (page 154) takes the time your party spends exploring the unknown lands between dungeons and settlements and makes it a part of your party's story, giving campaigns more of a sandbox feel.

Many characters follow some code—chivalric, criminal, samurai, and so on. **Honor** (page 160) lets you track your personal code and use it to your advantage.

With **Investment** (page 164), you can add “entrepreneur” to the list of roles you have in the world, staking your hard-fought gold and silver on an enterprise.

Family is important to many adventurers. **Lineage** (page 166) provides many ideas for using your family in the campaign.

Magic Item Creation (page 170) takes the rules from the *Core Rulebook* and adds greater depth and detail for casters who love magical research and development.

When you have recurring NPCs, you have the potential for interesting drama. **Relationships** (page 176) models that drama between both friends and rivals.

Successful adventurers are well known and respected for their grand deeds. **Reputation and Fame** (page 180) marks the tangible progress of fame—good or ill—and shows the rewards of having a high reputation.

If you're fortunate, maybe one day you'll put down the sword and wand and run a tavern for the rest of your peaceful days. That's where **Retirement** (page 186) comes in.

As time goes on, your needs as a hero change. **Retraining** (page 188) has you covered, letting you change your archetypes, class features, feats, skill ranks, spells known, and other abilities.

When adventurers walk into town with satchels of treasure, everyone wants a cut. **Taxation** (page 192) describes the situations where the party needs to part with their silver.

Young Characters (page 194) provides rules for creating and progressing adventurers who got a very early start in the dungeon-exploring and monster-slaying profession.

ALIGNMENT

Alignment is a curious creature; it summarizes the philosophy and morality of a person, and yet no two characters with the same alignment are exactly alike. Still, alignment says much about a character's soul and the way she interacts with others.

Each alignment has a list of philosophies or doctrines that characters may follow, together with a list of core concepts to bear in mind while playing a character of a given alignment. You could decide that one word is particularly crucial to your character—be that justice, greed, or self. You'll find that some of these words appear in more than one alignment. To one person, “freedom” may mean freedom for herself and others, while to another, it may mean freedom to take what she wants.

When thinking of alignments, use a simple test: How would the character treat a stranger in trouble? A chaotic good person who sees a stranger being robbed would rush to his aid—a person in distress needs help. A lawful good character would move to take over the situation and see justice done. A neutral character might stand back and watch developments, acting as she sees fit on this occasion, and perhaps acting differently the next time. A chaotic evil character would join in, and perhaps try to rob both the victim and the robbers. A lawful evil character would hang back, waiting for the fight to end, and then take advantage for his own gain or that of his god or cult.

LAWFUL GOOD

Justice is all. Honor is my armor. He who commits a crime will pay. Without law and truth, there is only chaos. I am the light, I am the sword of righteousness. My enemy shall pay in the end. Right is might. My soul is pure. My word is truth.

Core Concepts: Duty, fairness, honor, property, responsibility, right, truth, virtue, worthiness

A lawful good character believes in honor. A code or faith that she has unshakable belief in likely guides her. She would rather die than betray that faith, and the most extreme followers of this alignment are willing (sometimes even happy) to become martyrs.

A lawful good character at the extreme end of the lawful-chaotic spectrum can seem pitiless. She may become obsessive about delivering justice, thinking nothing of dedicating herself to chasing a wicked dragon across the world or pursuing a devil into Hell. She can come across as a taskmaster, bent upon her aims without swerving, and may see others who are less committed as weak. Though she may seem austere, even harsh, she is always consistent, working from her doctrine or faith. Hers is a world of order, and she obeys superiors and finds it almost impossible to believe there's any bad in them. She may be more easily duped by such imposters, but in the end she will see justice is done—by her own hand if necessary.

NEUTRAL GOOD

Do the best I can. See the good in everyone. Help others. Work toward the greater good. My soul is good, regardless of how I look. Never judge a book by its cover. Devotion to the goodness in life does not require approval. Charity begins at home. Be kind.

Core Concepts: Benevolence, charity, considerateness, goodness, humaneness, kindness, reason, right

A neutral good character is good, but not shackled by order. He sees good where he can, but knows evil can exist even in the most ordered place.

A neutral good character does anything he can, and works with anyone he can, for the greater good. Such a character is devoted to being good, and works in any way he can to achieve it. He may forgive an evil person if he thinks that person has reformed, and he believes that in everyone there is a little bit of good.

CHAOTIC GOOD

My soul is good, but free. Laws have no conscience. Blind order promotes disorder. Goodness cannot be learned just from a book of prayer. Compassion does not wear a uniform. The smallest act of kindness is never wasted. Repay kindness with kindness. Be kind to someone in trouble—it may be you who needs kindness the next day.

Core Concepts: Benevolence, charity, freedom, joy, kindness, mercy, warmth

A chaotic good character cherishes freedom and the right to make her own way. She might have her own ethics and philosophy, but is not rigidly held by them. She may try to do good each day, perhaps being kind to a stranger or giving money to those less fortunate, but does so purely out of joy. Such a character makes up her own mind up about what is good and right based upon truth and facts, but does not fool herself that evil acts are good. Her goodness is benevolent—perhaps occasionally blind, but always well meant.

A chaotic good character can seem unpredictable, giving alms to an unfortunate outside a church but refusing to make a donation within. She trusts her instincts and could put more stock in the words of a beggar with kind eyes than the teachings of a harsh-looking bishop. She might rob from the rich and give to the poor, or spend lavishly for her own joy and that of her friends. In extreme cases, a chaotic good character may seem reckless in her benevolence.

LAWFUL NEUTRAL

Order begets order. My word is my bond. Chaos will destroy the world. Respect rank. I live by my code and I'll die by my code. Tradition must continue. Order is the foundation of all culture. I am my own judge.

Core Concepts: Harmony, loyalty, order, organization, rank, rule, system, tradition, word

A lawful neutral character admires order and tradition, or seeks to live by a code. He might fear chaos and disorder, and perhaps have good reason to do so from past experience. A lawful neutral person is not as concerned

about who rules him so much as how secure he and his compatriots are, and finds great solace in the normality of society. Such a character may admire the strongest of leaders and punishments if they keep order, and he may support wars against other nations even if his own country is a brutal invader—his only concern is the rightness of the military action.

A lawful neutral character who follows his own code never breaks it willingly, and may become a martyr to defend it.

NEUTRAL

Our whims and desires are irrelevant, compared to the turning wheel of the world. I am who I am. Trust no one but your friends and family. The wheel turns in spite of us. Systems come and go. All empires fade. Time is a healer. The seasons never change. The sun does not care what it rises over.

Core Concepts: Balance, cycles, equality, harmony, impartiality, inevitability, nature, seasons





A neutral character is unusual in that she may have one of two distinct philosophies: she may be a person who is neutral because of distrust or apathy toward others, or one who wishes to have a truly neutral stance in the world and rejects extremism.

A neutral character could seem selfish or disinterested. She might be driven primarily by an acceptance of fate, and the most extreme followers of this alignment become hermits, hiding from the zealots of the world. Some neutral characters, however, strive openly for neutrality, and shun any act that veers too extremely toward any alignment. This type of neutral character prides herself on navigating her way between law and chaos, evil and good. She may have a fatalistic view in the face of nature and the fundamental power of night and day.

CHAOTIC NEUTRAL

A rolling stone gathers no moss. There is only today. Be like the wind and be taken wherever fate sees fit. He who fights fate courts folly. You only live once. Power to those who do not wish for power. Avoid anything in a uniform. Challenge the old orders.

Core Concepts: Capriciousness, fate, freedom, individuality, liberty, self-possession, unpredictability

A chaotic neutral character values his own freedom and ability to make choices. He avoids authority and does not fear standing out or appearing different. In extreme cases, he may embrace a lifestyle entirely suited to himself—living in a cave near a city, becoming an artist, or otherwise challenging traditions. He never accepts anything at face value and makes up his own mind rather than blindly accepting what others tell him to do or think.

LAWFUL EVIL

One day, I will rule. A strong leader is admired, a weak leader overthrown. I have principles and I am right. Chaos brings death. In this world there is only order or oblivion. Rank must be respected and feared. The weak will follow sure leaders. Sin is satisfaction. Everyone has vices.

Core Concepts: Calculation, discipline, malevolence, might, punishment, rationality, subjugation, terror

A lawful evil character goes about her business motivated by her own interests, but knows that ultimately order protects her. She seeks to achieve her own ends—but through order, not chaos. Even when boiling with anger, she is more likely to carefully plot vengeance than risk her own death through hasty actions. Sometimes that revenge will take years to happen, and that is acceptable.

A lawful evil character at the extreme end of the spectrum is zealous in her aims and will make any sacrifice to achieve them. Her twisted philosophy can make her paranoid of her closest followers, even family and friends. She stops at nothing to gain control, for only through control can she have peace. Yet even the most powerful and ordered society has its enemies, and to a lawful evil character only the destruction of those enemies can bring fulfillment.

Order is everything, at any cost.

NEUTRAL EVIL

I am the most important thing in creation. Do what you want, but never get caught. Conscience is for angels. Evil for evil's sake. Vice is its own reward. The sinner enjoys his life. Evil is just a word. Others envy my freedom and life without conscience.

Core Concepts: Desire, immorality, need, selfishness, sin, vice, viciousness, vileness, wickedness

Motivated by his own needs and wants, a neutral evil character is without conscience, acting only for self-gratification. He might surround himself with the trappings of cults and evil, but does so purely because it brings him closer to sin and wickedness. While a lawful evil person is inclined to bargain and a chaotic evil one to lash out, a neutral evil person is inclined only to look out for himself. In many ways, he epitomizes evil, since he has no clear loyalty to anything except absolute self-interest.

An extremist neutral evil character tends to be a loner, since he has either betrayed or slain those who came close to knowing him.

CHAOTIC EVIL

If I want something, I take it. Might is right. The strong rule the weak. Respect me or suffer. Fear me. There is only today, and today I take what I need. Anger brings out the best in me. I am the stronger one.

Core Concepts: Anarchy, anger, amorality, brutality, chaos, degeneracy, freedom, profaneness, violence

A chaotic evil character is driven entirely by her own anger and needs. She is thoughtless in her actions and acts on whims, regardless of the suffering it causes others.

In many ways, a chaotic evil character is pinned down by her inherent nature to be unpredictable. She is like a spreading fire, a coming storm, an untested sword blade. An extreme chaotic evil character tends to find similarly minded individuals to be with—not out of any need for company, but because there is a familiarity in this chaos, and she relishes the opportunity to be true to her nature with others who share that delight.

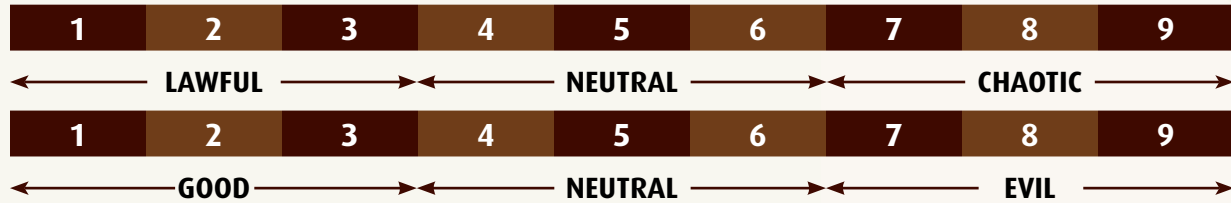
CHANGING ALIGNMENT

Over time, a character might become disillusioned and drift toward a different alignment. This section describes an optional system for tracking incremental changes to a character's alignment.

Every character has a 9-point scale for the lawful-chaotic alignment axis (see Table 3–1), with 1, 2, and 3 representing lawful, 7, 8, and 9 representing chaotic, and the rest representing neutral. Each character has a similar scale for the good-evil alignment axis, with 1, 2, and 3 representing good and 7, 8, and 9 representing evil.

The player decides where the character's alignment is on the alignment track. For example, a mischievous rogue with a good heart may be a 7 on the lawful-chaotic axis and an 2 on the good-evil axis—a chaotic good character who is more good than chaotic. A cruel but honorable knight could be a 1 on the lawful-chaotic axis and a 7 on

TABLE 3-1: CHANGING ALIGNMENT



the good-evil axis, a lawful evil character who is far more lawful than evil.

When a character performs an action that is out of character for his listed alignment, the GM decides whether the action is enough to shift the character's alignment on the appropriate alignment track, and if so by how much. Executing a captured orc combatant so the PCs don't have to haul it to a distant prison may only be 1 step toward evil; torturing a hostage for information may be 2 steps. For minor infractions, the GM can just issue a warning that further actions will cause a shift on the alignment track. Extreme, deliberate acts, such as burning down an orphanage full of children just for the fun of it, should push the character fully into that alignment, regardless of the character's original position on the alignment track.

When a character's position on an alignment track shifts into another alignment (such as from 3 to 4 or 7 to 6), change the character's listed alignment to the new alignment. The character takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and checks because of guilt, regrets, or bad luck associated with abandoning his previous ethics. After 1 week, this penalty goes away. Note that the character is still "on the border" of his previous alignment, and later actions could make him shift back to his previous alignment, with a repeat of the 1-week penalty, so after an alignment change, it is in the character's best interest to act in accordance with that new alignment, embracing his new beliefs and philosophy. This penalty is in addition to any other consequences of changing alignment (such as becoming an ex-cleric or ex-paladin).

The mechanism for strengthening a character's position within a particular section of the alignment track requires greater effort than acting out of character. A person who is a little bit good (3) has to work hard to become very good (1)—even a lifetime of mildly good acts is insufficient. If a character makes a great effort toward promoting or maintaining that alignment, the GM should decide whether that merits a shift toward one of the "safest" points on the alignment track (1, 5, and 9) where most out-of-alignment acts don't risk an immediate alignment change. This helps prevent players from gaming the system by offsetting minor evil acts with an equivalent number of minor good acts to remain within the good section of the evil-good alignment axis.

A forced alignment change, such as from a *helm of opposite alignment*, shifts a character's position on each alignment track to the corresponding opposite position (1 becomes 9, 2 becomes 8, and so on); a true neutral character jumps to an extreme point on both alignment tracks (1/1, 1/9, 9/1, or 9/9).

Unlike a deliberate alignment change, a forced alignment change does not incur the normal 1-week penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and checks.

Using an *atonement* spell moves the character's position on the alignment track the minimum amount to return the character to his previous alignment. For example, a fallen paladin using *atonement* to become good again shifts her position on the good-evil track to 3, even if she originally was at 2 or 1. The spell is a means of reversing the worst of an indiscretion, not for gaining a safe buffer within an alignment zone on the track, and this gives the character an incentive to work toward entrenching herself within the tenets of the restored alignment. Using the "reverse magical alignment change" option of *atonement* does not give the target the normal alignment-change penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and checks, but accepting the "redemption or temptation" option does.

A GM who wants a grittier campaign or more flexibility in changing alignment can alter the size of the alignment zones (where everything but 1 and 9 are neutral), use a scale with more than 9 points to allow more granularity when quantifying alignment acts, or create transition areas between the alignment zones where characters can slowly change alignment without penalty.

FORCED ALIGNMENT CHANGE

When a forced alignment change is purely arbitrary (such as from a curse or magic item), some players look upon this change as a chance explore the character acting in a different way, but most players prefer the character's original concept and want it to return to normal as soon as possible. GMs should avoid overusing forced alignment changes or make them only temporary (such as a scenario where the characters are dominated by an evil entity and are freed once the entity has accomplished a particular goal). Remember that if players wanted to play characters of other alignments, they would have asked to play them, and radical shifts ruin many character concepts.

Some classes lose class abilities when a character changes alignments. Alignment changes may be interesting for a short adventure, such as freeing a monk from the curse of a chaotic monkey god, but these situations should be unusual. For some characters, changing alignment is a character-altering concept akin to destroying a wizard's spellbook or amputating an archer's arm—the scars are long-lasting, hard to reverse, and end up punishing the player.

BARGAINING

An item is worth only what someone will pay for it. To an art collector, a canvas covered in daubs of random paint may be a masterpiece; a priestess might believe a weathered jawbone is a holy relic of a saint. The rules presented here offer you a way of playing through the process of selling off goods brought up from a crypt, liberated from a baron's bedchamber, or plundered from a dragon's vault. They also enable players to establish contacts with local fences, launderers, antiquarians, and obsessive collectors.

VALUATION

The Appraise skill allows a character to accurately value an object. However, the fine arts of the jeweler, antiquarian, and bibliophile are complex. Valuable paintings may be concealed by grime, and books of incredible rarity may be bound in tattered leather covers. Because failure means an inaccurate estimate, the GM should attempt this skill check in secret.

BARGAINING RULES

In general, a character can sell an item for half its listed price (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 140). This keeps players from getting bogged down in bargaining with NPCs over 10 gp on a 10,000 gp item, and maintains game balance by not allowing players to use bargaining to exceed the Wealth by Level guidelines by buying low and selling high. The "sell for half" rule allows a fair price for standard items in normal circumstances.

For rare or unique items, or in certain cases, the GM might allow or encourage bargaining. Keep in mind that bargaining usually involves one PC talking with an NPC while the other players wait, and watching someone else bargain is rarely interesting. Bargaining should be infrequent, and should happen only when it's important to the story.

By using the rules for bargaining, you give up some control over your PC's decisions and accept the risk of the deal falling through to gain the chance of getting a better price.

Step 1: Seller Sets the Asking Price

The seller suggests a price to the buyer. If the Asking Price is more than 150% of the item's actual value, the buyer simply refuses to bargain. The lowest amount the seller will accept is 75% of this Asking Price.

Step 2: Evaluate Item

The buyer chooses to attempt either an Appraise check to estimate the item's value or a Sense Motive check opposed by the seller's Bluff check (with failure meaning the buyer believes the seller is being fair). If the seller's price is the same as the buyer's estimation of the item's value, no Sense Motive check is needed and the buyer believes the seller.

A group of items can be sold as a unit. If the buyer is dealing with a mix of items she can appraise and others she can only guess about, she uses either Appraise or Sense Motive, depending on which she has more skill ranks in.

The GM can allow a PC to substitute an appropriate Knowledge skill for Appraise or Sense Motive, such as Knowledge (arcana) for selling a rare book about magic. He may also assign modifiers to skill checks to reflect expertise or ignorance about a specific type of item, good roleplaying, or insulting behavior toward an NPC buyer or seller.

Step 3: Determine Undercut

The Undercut Percentage is a portion of the item's price or value used to determine the buyer's Initial and Final Offers.

To determine the Undercut Percentage, have the buyer attempt a Bluff check opposed by the seller's Sense Motive check. The Undercut Percentage is 2%, plus 1% for every point by which the Bluff check exceeds the Sense Motive check (minimum 0%).

Step 4: Set Offers

The Initial Offer is the buyer's first counteroffer to the seller's Asking Price.

The Final Offer is the largest amount the buyer is willing to pay. Though the seller and buyer negotiate back and forth, the buyer won't exceed this offer. For example, if the seller's Asking Price is 1,000 gp, the buyer's Initial Offer may be 800 gp and the Final Offer 900 gp. These offers are determined by how much the buyer thinks the item is worth compared to the seller's Asking Price.

Fair (Appraise or Sense Motive): If the seller's Asking Price is less than or equal to the amount that the buyer thinks the item is worth, subtract the Undercut Percentage from the seller's price to get the Final Offer, and subtract $2 \times$ the Undercut Percentage to get the Initial Offer.

Unfair (Appraise): If the result of the buyer's Appraise check leads her to believe the item is worth less than the seller's Asking Price, subtract the Undercut Percentage from the buyer's estimate of the item's value to get the Final Offer, and subtract $2 \times$ the Undercut Percentage to get the Initial Offer.



Unfair (Sense Motive): If the result of the buyer's Appraise check leads her to believe the seller's Asking Price is too high, subtract $2 \times$ the Undercut Percentage from the seller's Asking Price to get the Final Offer, and subtract $4 \times$ the Undercut Percentage to get the Initial Offer.

Step 5: Bargain

The buyer begins bargaining by countering the seller's price with her Initial Offer. This step repeats until the buyer and seller agree on a price or one side ends negotiations.

Counteroffer Is Less Than Final Offer: If the seller counters with a price that is less than the buyer's Final Offer, have the seller attempt a Diplomacy check (DC 15 + the buyer's Charisma modifier). Success means the buyer accepts the seller's counteroffer and buys the item. Failure means the buyer holds at her Initial Offer. The seller can try again, but the Diplomacy check DC increases by 5 unless the seller lowers his price.

Counteroffer Equals Final Offer: If the seller counters with a price that is the same as the buyer's Final Offer, have the seller attempt a Diplomacy check (20 + the buyer's Charisma modifier). Success means the buyer accepts the seller's counteroffer and buys the item. Failure means the buyer counteroffers at a price between the Initial Offer and the Final Offer. The seller can try again, but the Diplomacy DC increases by 5 unless the seller lowers his price.

Counteroffer Exceeds Final Offer: If the seller counters with a price higher than the buyer's Final Offer, have the seller attempt a Diplomacy check (25 + the buyer's Charisma modifier). Success means the buyer counteroffers at a price between the Initial Offer and the Final Offer. Failure means the buyer holds at her Initial Offer. Failure by 5 or more means the buyer is insulted and lowers her offer or refuses to deal with the seller. The seller can try again, but the Diplomacy DC increases by 5 unless the seller lowers his price.

Examples of Bargaining

Orshok has a jeweled idol worth 1,800 gp he mistakenly appraised at 2,000 gp. He tries to sell it to an art collector at an Asking Price of 2,200 gp, knowing the collector will counter with a lower price. The collector succeeds at her Appraise check and realizes the idol's actual value. The collector attempts a Bluff check against Orshok's Sense Motive check and succeeds by 1, so her Undercut Percentage is 3% (base 2% plus 1% for exceeding the check by 1). Because the collector thinks the idol is worth less than Orshok's price, her Initial Offer is 6% less than her estimate of the value (1,692 gp) and her Final Offer is 3% less than her estimate (1,746 gp). When she makes her Initial Offer, Orshok counters with a price of 2,000 gp. This is higher than the collector's Final Offer, so Orshok attempts a Diplomacy check whose DC equals 25 + the buyer's Charisma modifier to keep the buyer's interest. He succeeds at the check, so the buyer counteroffers 1,740 gp (between her Initial and Final Offers). Orshok doesn't

USING MAGIC TO BARGAIN

An unscrupulous character may use magic to charm or dupe buyers into accepting inflated prices. Something as simple as *charm person* can alter the Diplomacy and Sense Motive DCs by 5 in the spellcaster's favor for an entire negotiation, and a specific *suggestion* can alter the result on a single roll by 10 in the caster's favor. If the buyer later realizes that magic influenced the negotiation, she may refuse to deal with the spellcaster and attempt to get her money back, or at least report the spellcaster to the local authorities.

think the collector will go much higher, and decides to find another buyer.

Later, Orshok tries to sell the idol to a spice merchant who finds it interesting but knows nothing about art. Orshok again starts with a price of 2,200 gp. The merchant's Sense Motive check beats Orshok's Bluff check, so she realizes he isn't offering a fair price. The merchant attempts a Bluff check opposed by Orshok's Sense Motive check and succeeds by 4, which makes her Undercut Percentage 6% (base 2% plus 4% for exceeding the check by 4). The merchant's Initial Offer is 12% less than Orshok's price (1,936 gp), and her Final Offer is 6% less than Orshok's price (2,068 gp). Orshok counters with a price of 2,000 gp. This is less than the merchant's Final Offer, so Orshok attempts a Diplomacy check (DC 15 + the buyer's Charisma modifier). He succeeds, so the merchant accepts Orshok's counteroffer and buys the item for 2,000 gp.

COLLECTOR NPCs

The GM can define a few NPCs as collectors, traders, or antiquarians interested in unusual items PCs collect after their adventures. If the PCs establish an amiable relationship with these collectors over time, the GM can reduce the base Undercut Percentage to 1% or even 0%, especially if the PCs' offerings cater to the NPCs' interests. Likewise, PCs may develop bad blood with one or more buyers; such buyers' Undercut Percentage may rise to 5% or higher, or the buyers may refuse to bargain with the PCs at all.

FLOODING THE MARKET

When PCs attempt to sell multiples of a durable good, the GM may lower the offered prices by 10% or more to reflect market saturation in that location. For example, a border town patrolled by guards with crossbows can always use more +1 *bolts*, but has limited use for a wagonload of masterwork spiked chains, so the Initial and Final Offers for the spiked chains would be 10% lower.

TRADE GOODS

Trade goods (*Core Rulebook* 140) are exempt from bargaining, even in extraordinary circumstances.



COMPANIONS

In a typical campaign, each player controls one character. However, there are several ways for you to temporarily or permanently gain the assistance of a companion, such as an animal companion, a cohort, an eidolon, or a familiar. The combat advantages of controlling a second creature are obvious, but having a companion also has drawbacks and requires an understanding of both your role and the GM's in determining the creature's actions. This section addresses common issues for companions and the characters who use them.

CONTROLLING COMPANIONS

How a companion works depends on the campaign as well as the companion's nature, intelligence, and abilities. In some cases, the rules do not specify whether you or the GM controls the companion. If you're entirely in control, the companion acts like a subsidiary PC, doing exactly what you want just like a true PC. If the GM is control, you can make suggestions or attempt to influence the companion, but the GM determines whether the creature is willing or able to attempt what you want.

Aspects of Control

Whether you or the GM controls a particular companion depends largely on the creature's intelligence and level of independence from you.

Nonsentient Companions: A nonsentient companion (one with animal-level intelligence) is loyal to you in the way a well-trained dog is—the creature is conditioned to obey your commands, but its behavior is limited by its intelligence and it can't make altruistic moral decisions—such as nobly sacrificing itself to save another. Animal companions, cavalier mounts, and purchased creatures (such as common horses and guard dogs) fall into this category. In general they're GM-controlled companions. You can direct them using the Handle Animal skill, but their specific behavior is up to the GM.

Sentient Companions: A sentient companion (a creature that can understand language and has an Intelligence score of at least 3) is considered your ally and obeys your suggestions and orders to the best of its ability. It won't necessarily blindly follow a suicidal order, but it has your interests at heart and does what it can to keep you alive. Paladin bonded mounts, familiars, and cohorts fall into this category, and are usually player-controlled companions.

Eidolons: Outside the linear obedience and intelligence scale of sentient and nonsentient companions are eidolons: intelligent entities magically bound to you. Whether you wish to roleplay this relationship as friendly or coerced, the eidolon is inclined to obey you unless you give a command only to spite it. An eidolon would obey a cruel summoner's order to save a child from a burning building, knowing that at worst the fire damage would temporarily banish it, but it

wouldn't stand in a bonfire just because the summoner said to. An eidolon is normally a player-controlled companion, but the GM can have the eidolon refuse extreme orders that would cause it to suffer needlessly.

Magical Control: *Charm person*, *dominate person*, and similar effects turn an NPC into a companion for a limited time. Most charm-like effects make the target friendly to you—the target has to follow your requests only if they're reasonable, and has its own ideas about what is reasonable. For example, few creatures consider “hand over all your valuables” or “let me put these manacles on you” a reasonable request from a friend. You might have to use Diplomacy or Intimidate checks to influence a charmed ally, and the GM has the final say as to what happens. Though the target of a charm effect considers you a friend, it probably feels indifferent at best toward the other PCs and won't listen to requests from them. A creature under a dominate effect is more of a puppet, and you can force it to do anything that isn't suicidal or otherwise against its well-being. Treat it as player-controlled, with the GM making its saving throws to resist inappropriate commands.

Common Exceptions: Some companions are exceptions, such as an intelligent companion who doesn't bear exceptional loyalty toward you (for example, a hired guard), a weaker minion who is loyal to you but lacks the abilities or resources to assist in adventuring tasks, and a called outsider (such as from *planar ally*) who agrees to a specific service but still has a sense of self-preservation. You can use Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate to influence such companions, but the GM is the final arbiter of their actions. For example, a PC might use threats to convince a caravan guard to hold back an ogre for a few rounds or to prevent her zealous followers from attacking a rival adventurer, but the GM makes the decision whether the guard runs away after getting hit once or the followers attack when provoked.

The GM may deviate from the above suggestions, such as allowing a druid to control an animal companion directly, creating a more equivalent or even antagonistic relationship between a summoner and an eidolon, or roleplaying a mentoring relationship between a veteran warhorse and the young paladin who inherited his loyalty. Before you create a character with a companion creature (or decide to add a companion in play), the GM should explain to everyone how much influence you and the GM each have over the creature's actions. That way, everyone is fully informed about all aspects of dealing with the companion.

The specifics of controlling a companion vary for different campaigns. A gritty campaign where animal companions can't do anything that real animals can't do forces the GM to act as a check against you pushing the bounds of creativity. A high-fantasy game where familiars are nearly as important to the storyline as the PCs—or are played as near-PCs by other players—is a very different feel and can create interesting roleplaying opportunities.

An evil campaign where companions are unwilling slaves of the PCs creates a dynamic where the PCs are trying to exploit them as much as possible—perhaps even sacrificing and replacing them as needed—and treat them more like living tools than reluctant allies.

Issues of Control

The GM should keep in mind several factors when it comes to companions, whether handling them as suggested above or altering the balance to give you more or less control.

Ease of Play: Changing who controls a companion can make the game easier or harder for the GM. Controlling a cohort in combat is one more complex thing for the GM to deal with. The GM must keep track of a cohort's tactics and motivations and how those affect it in combat while keeping her own knowledge of the monsters separate from the cohort's knowledge; otherwise, the cohort will outshine the PCs with superior tactics. Giving you control over these decisions (while still allowing the GM to veto certain actions) alleviates some of the burden and allows you to plan interesting tactics between yourself and your cohort, much as you would have mastered during times you trained together.

Conversely, giving a player full control over the actions of two characters can slow down the game. If you're prone to choice paralysis, playing two turns every round can drag the game to a halt. If this is a problem, the GM should suggest that another player help run the companion or ask you to give up the companion and alter yourself to compensate (such as by choosing a different feat in place of Leadership, taking a domain instead of a druid animal companion, or selecting the "companions" option for a ranger's hunter's bond ability instead of an animal).

Game Balance: Even a simple change like allowing players to directly control companions has repercussions in the game mechanics. For example, if a druid has complete control over an animal companion, there's no reason for her to put ranks in Handle Animal, freeing up those ranks for other valuable skills like Perception. If a wizard with a guard dog doesn't have to use a move action to make a Handle Animal check to have the dog attack, he has a full set of actions each round and a minion creature that doesn't require investing any extra time to "summon" it. If companion

animals don't have to know specific tricks, the PC can use any animal like an ally and plan strategies (like flanking) as if the animal were much smarter than it actually is.

With intelligent companions such as cohorts, giving you full control means you're controlling two characters and can take twice as many actions as the other players. The GM can create a middle ground, such as requiring you to put ranks in Handle Animal but not requiring you to make checks, or reducing the action needed to command an animal, but these decisions should be made before the companion joins the group.

Sharing Information: Whenever you control multiple creatures, there are issues of sharing information between you and your companions. Some companions have special abilities that facilitate this sort of communication, such as a familiar's empathic link or an eidolon's bond senses ability, but most companions are limited to what they can observe with their own senses. For example, if a wizard using *see invisibility* knows there is an invisible rogue across the room, he can't just direct his guard dog to attack the rogue; he has to use the seek command to move the dog to the general area of the rogue, and even then he can't use the attack command to attack the rogue because the rogue isn't an "apparent enemy." If the GM allows the wizard to make the dog fight the invisible rogue, that makes the animal much more versatile than normal, and also devalues the special nature of a true empathic or telepathic bond with a companion. If the dog is allowed to work outside the PC's line of sight, it devalues abilities such as a wizard's ability to scry on his familiar. Of course, intelligent companions using speech can bypass some of these limitations (such as telling a cohort there's an invisible rogue in the corner).



ADVANCING COMPANIONS

Another issue is who gets to control the companion's advancement. Animal companions, eidolons, and cohorts all advance much like PCs, making choices about feats, skills, special abilities, and (in the case of cohorts) class levels. Whoever controls the companion's actions also makes decisions about its advancement, but there is more of a shared role between you and the GM for some types of companions.

Animal Companion: Advancement choices for an animal companion include feats, skills, ability score increases, and tricks.

If the companion's Intelligence score is 2 or lower, it is limited to a small selection of feats (see *Animal Feats*, *Core Rulebook* 53). You should decide what feats the animal learns, though the GM should have a say about whether a desired feat is appropriate to the animal's type and training—fortunately, the feats on the list are appropriate for just about any animal. If the animal's Intelligence is 3 or higher (whether from using its ability score increase or a magic item), it can select any feat that it qualifies for. You should decide what feat it learns, subject to GM approval, although the creature's higher intelligence might mean it has its own ideas about what it wants to learn.

As with feats, you should decide what skills your animal companion learns, chosen from the *Animal Skills* list (*Core Rulebook* 53) and subject to GM approval. If the animal's Intelligence score is 3 or higher, it can put its ranks into any skill, with the GM's approval. Of course, the animal might not have the physical ability to perform certain

skills (a dog can't create disguises, an elephant can't use the Ride skill, and so on).

Ability score increases are straightforward when it comes to physical ability scores—training an animal to be stronger, more agile, or tougher are all reasonable tasks. Training an animal to be smarter, more intuitive, or more self-aware is less easy to justify—except in the context where people can cast spells and speak with animals.

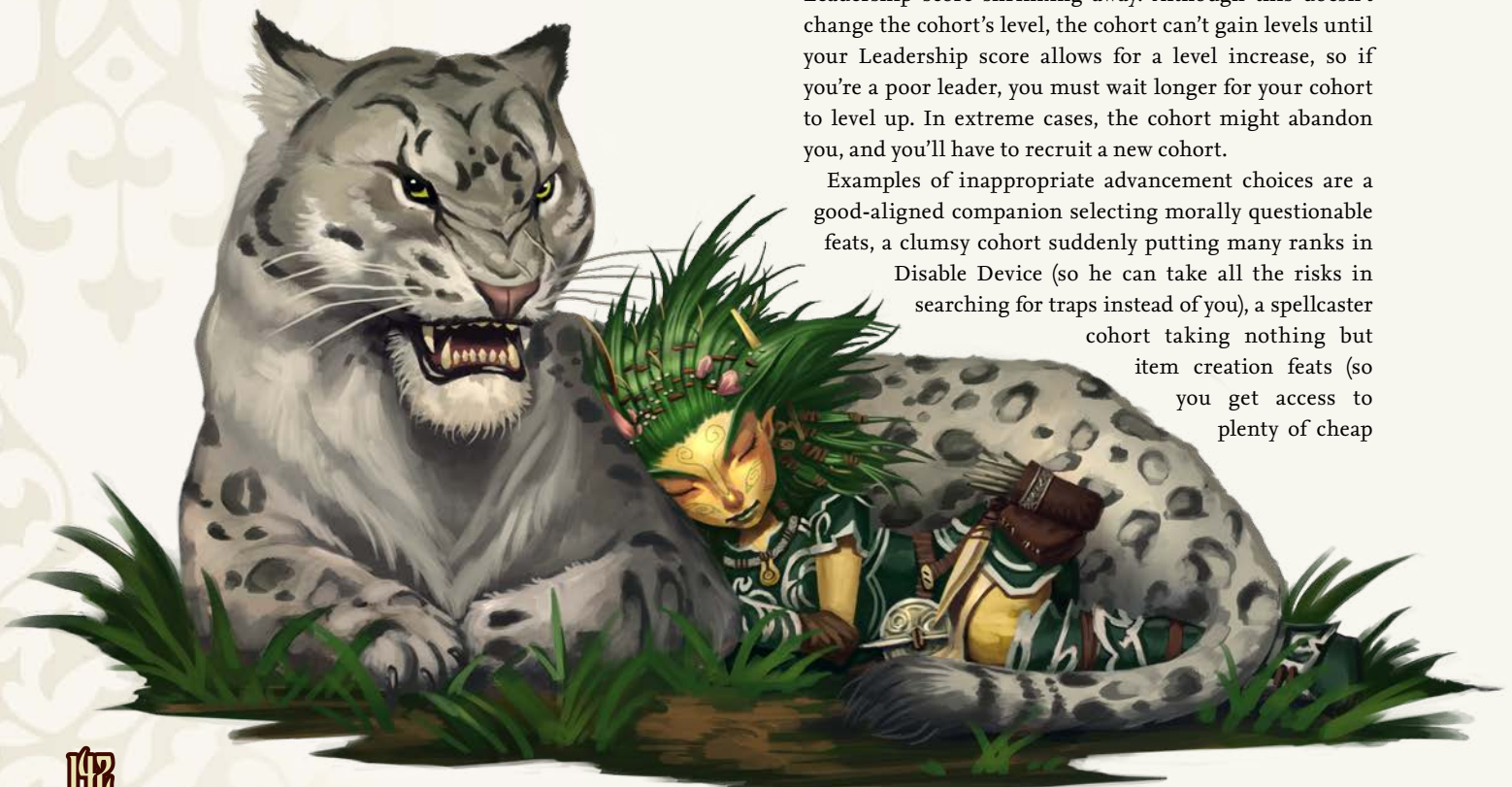
Because you're responsible for using the Handle Animal skill to teach your companion its tricks, you decide what tricks the companion learns. If you're not skilled at training animals or lack the time to do it yourself, you can hire an expert trainer to do it for you or use the downtime system to take care of this training.

Cohort: Advancement choices for a cohort include feats, skills, ability score increases, and class levels.

A cohort is generally considered a player-controlled companion, and therefore you get to decide how the cohort advances. The GM might step in if you make choices that are inappropriate for the cohort, use the cohort as a mechanism for pushing the boundaries of the game rules, or treat the cohort unfairly. A cohort is a loyal companion and ally to you, and expects you to treat him fairly, generously, without aloofness or cruelty, and without devoting too much attention to other minions such as familiars or animal companions. The cohort's attitude toward you is generally helpful (as if using the Diplomacy skill); he complies with most of your requests without any sort of skill check, except for requests that are against his nature or put him in serious peril.

If you exploit your cohort, you'll quickly find your Leadership score shrinking away. Although this doesn't change the cohort's level, the cohort can't gain levels until your Leadership score allows for a level increase, so if you're a poor leader, you must wait longer for your cohort to level up. In extreme cases, the cohort might abandon you, and you'll have to recruit a new cohort.

Examples of inappropriate advancement choices are a good-aligned companion selecting morally questionable feats, a clumsy cohort suddenly putting many ranks in Disable Device (so he can take all the risks in searching for traps instead of you), a spellcaster cohort taking nothing but item creation feats (so you get access to plenty of cheap



magic items at the cost of just one feat, Leadership), a fighter cohort taking a level in wizard when he had no previous interest in magic, or you not interacting with your cleric cohort other than to gain defensive spells from a different class or a flanking bonus.

When you select the Leadership feat, you and the GM should discuss the cohort's background, personality, interests, and role in the campaign and party. Not only does this give the GM the opportunity to reject a cohort concept that goes against the theme of the campaign, but the GM can plan adventure hooks involving the cohort for future quests. The random background generator in Chapter 1 can help greatly when filling in details about the cohort. Once the discussion is done, writing down a biography and personality profile of the cohort helps cement his role in the campaign and provides a strong reference point for later talks about what is or is not appropriate advancement for the cohort.

Eidolon: Compared to an animal companion or cohort, an eidolon is a unique type of companion—it is intelligent and loyal to you, and you have absolute power over whether it is present in the material world or banished to its home plane. You literally have the power to reshape the eidolon's body using the *transmogrify* spell, and though technically the eidolon can resist this—the Saving Throw is “Will negates (harmless)” —it is assumed that the eidolon complies with what you want. After all, the eidolon can't actually be killed while summoned; at worst, it might experience pain before damage sends it back to its home plane. This means the eidolon is usually willing to take great risks to help you. If swimming through acid was the only way to save you, it would do so, knowing that it won't die and will recover. The eidolon is a subservient creature whose very nature depends upon your will, so you decide what feats, skill points, ability score increases, and evolutions the eidolon gains as it advances.

Follower: Because a follower is much lower level than you, it's generally not worth determining a follower's exact feats and skill ranks, as he would be ineffective against opponents appropriate for your level. In most cases, knowing the follower's name, gender, race, class, level, and profession is sufficient, such as “Lars, male human expert 1, sailor.” Since followers lack full stat blocks, the issue of advancing them is irrelevant. If your Leadership score improves, just add new followers rather than advancing existing ones. However, if events require advancing a follower (such as turning a follower into a cohort to replace a dead cohort), use the same guidelines as for cohorts.

Hirelings: Hirelings don't normally gain levels. If the GM is running a kingdom-building campaign where hireling NPCs are heavily involved, you might suggest ways for NPCs to advance, but the final decision is up to the GM. If you want more control over your hireling's feats, skills, and class levels, you should select that hireling as a follower with the Leadership feat.

INTELLIGENT ANIMALS

Increasing an animal's Intelligence to 3 or higher means it is smart enough to understand a language. However, unless an *awaken* spell is used, the animal doesn't automatically and instantly learn a language, any more than a human child does. The animal must be taught a language, usually over the course of months, giving it the understanding of the meaning of words and sentences beyond its trained responses to commands like “attack” and “heel.”

Even if the animal is taught to understand a language, it probably lacks the anatomy to actually speak (unless *awaken* is used). For example, dogs, elephants, and even gorillas lack the proper physiology to speak humanoid languages, though they can use their limited “vocabulary” of sounds to articulate concepts, especially if working with a person who learns what the sounds mean.

An intelligent animal is smart enough to use tools, but might lack the ability to manipulate them. A crow could be able to use simple lockpicks, but a dog can't. Even if the animal is physically capable of using a tool, it might still prefer its own natural body to manufactured items, especially when it comes to weapons. An intelligent gorilla could hold or wield a sword, but its inclination is to make slam attacks. No amount of training (including weapon proficiency feats) is going to make it fully comfortable attacking in any other way.

Even if an animal's Intelligence increases to 3 or higher, you must still use the Handle Animal skill to direct the animal, as it is a smart animal rather than a low-intelligence person (using *awaken* is an exception—an awakened animal takes orders like a person). The GM should take the animal's Intelligence into account when determining its response to commands or its behavior when it doesn't have specific instructions. For example, an intelligent wolf companion can pick the weakest-looking target if directed to do so, and that same wolf trapped in a burning building might push open a door or window without being told.

Mounts: Common mounts (such as horses or riding dogs bought from a merchant, rather than mounts that are class features) don't normally advance. If extraordinary circumstances merit a mount gaining Hit Dice, and you have Handle Animal ranks and take an interest in training the animal, use the same guidelines as those for animal companions.

REMEMBERING COMPANIONS

Often, a companion is forgotten about when it's not needed. A familiar hides in a backpack and only comes out when the sorcerer needs to spy on something or deliver a spell with a range of touch. An animal companion or cohort follows the druid silently and acts only when a skill check or attack roll is needed. An eidolon is used as a mount or an expendable



resource in battle. You and the GM need to remember that a companion is a creature, not an unthinking tool, and can't simply be ignored.

Tips for Remembering Companions

There are several ways to make sure a companion doesn't get lost or forgotten.

Props: Physical props can help you, the other players, and the GM remember companions. If the campaign uses miniatures on the tabletop, the companion should have its own miniature or token. If all the adventurers move forward, it's easy to see that a lonely miniature was left behind. Even without miniatures, having a physical representation of the companion on the tabletop keeps it in mind. Whether this is a stuffed animal, a toy, an action figure, a cardboard stand-up, a GameMastery Face Card, or a simple character sheet with a colorful illustration, this kind of reminder gives the companion a presence on the tabletop.

Another Player: If you regularly forget the presence of your companion and the GM is busy dealing with the rest of the game, another player can take over playing the companion. If the second player has an introverted character or one whose actions in combat are fast and efficient, allowing that player to control the companion gives him another opportunity to have some time in the spotlight. The second player should roll initiative separately for the companion so the companion's actions don't get forgotten on either turn—giving the companion its own turn reinforces its role in the party.

Allowing another character to play the companion also gives the group additional roleplaying opportunities. You might feel silly talking as both your character and your cohort, but more comfortable having a dialogue with your cohort when it's played by someone else (this also keeps the cohort from blindly doing whatever you say). Wearing a hat or mask, or holding up a small flag or banner to represent the companion can help other players keep track of who is acting when you speak.

Casual Observer: Some gaming groups have a casual player, friend, spouse, or child who isn't interested in playing a normal character for the campaign, but likes to watch the game or be nearby when everyone else is playing. That person might be interested in playing a companion for one or more sessions (especially if it's a creature that's funny and cute). This is an opportunity for that person to get involved in the game without the responsibility of being a full contributing member to the group—and just might be the hook that convinces that observer to become active in the game.

If playing a companion goes well, the GM may create a one-shot spin-off adventure in which all the players play companion creatures instead of normal PCs (perhaps because the PCs are captured, incapacitated, or merely sleeping), returning to the normal campaign when that adventure is completed.

Remembering Followers

Followers are a little more complex because there can be so many of them and they don't usually adventure with you. You and the GM should keep notes about each follower (or group of followers, if there are several in a common location such as a temple) and link this information to the followers' base of operations. For example, the GM's notes about the capital city should mention the thieves' guild informant follower of the rogue PC. Artwork representing the follower (even a simple piece of free clip art found online) can be a stronger reminder than a name that's easily lost in a page full of words.

Followers also have a unique companion role in that they spend most of their time away from you, and might use that time positively or negatively. Just because a follower is low level and you're not doesn't mean the follower stops being a person with needs, fears, and a role to play in your heroic story. Even if you dismiss the follower aspect of the Leadership feat as baggage, a follower is going to pay attention to what you do, and if this hero-worship grows tarnished from neglect or abuse, that very same follower provides an opportunity for the GM to demonstrate how bad will among the common folk can negatively affect an adventurer's life (see the Reputation section of this chapter for more information).

COMPANION PLOT HOOKS

Having a companion in the party is an incredible opportunity for the GM to introduce plot elements into a campaign—and more interesting plots than “the companion has been kidnapped!” The players have a general idea about their characters' pre-adventurer histories, but a companion is a bit of a mystery. What did it do before it met you? What is its motivation for joining the adventuring party? What are its goals? What does it do when you aren't around?

Animal Companion

Unless you raised your animal companion from birth, it has its own history and secrets that are likely important and could surprise you. A druid's wolf companion might have been saved by a famous ranger, fought in an orc tribe's arena, or escaped a wizard's experimental lab. What happens when that wolf recognizes that helpful ranger, savage orc, or mad wizard? Is the wolf aggressive when the druid isn't around? Does it have behavior quirks like not letting anyone touch the druid when she's sleeping, even allies trying to wake her? What if the companion was once a humanoid, but was cursed or polymorphed into a different shape and lost its memory about its original identity? What if another druid previously cast *awaken* on it, and it has been pretending to be a common animal so it can watch over or spy on a PC? The answers to these questions are the seeds to side plots or entire adventures.





Animal companions can also incite fear or prejudice among ignorant townsfolk. Most villages don't want rowdy adventurers bringing wolves, bears, lions, giant snakes, and especially dinosaurs into the town square, and innkeepers don't usually want the larger animals staying in rooms with guests. Stables might charge more to board exotic animals or entirely refuse to do so, and might not have appropriate food for them. If a village is experiencing attacks on its livestock, angry people might be quick to blame a carnivorous animal companion. Conversely, innocent children could have a circus-like fascination with exotic animal companions and help break the ice between visiting adventurers and suspicious locals.

Cohort

A cohort could have a former life as a criminal that she abandoned after being inspired by your heroic deeds. Just like a PC, a cohort has family and friends, with hopes and concerns for those people. The cohort might be a target for your enemies who are unwilling or unable to strike directly at you (though be careful to avoid making the cohort become a liability or look incompetent). A cohort who is critically injured by a monster might develop a fear about that kind of monster and avoid attacking it. She may have secret vices or virtues that become more prominent

over time and can directly affect her relationship with you. If the cohort has an animal companion, you might also suffer some indirect repercussions for the animal's behavior or reputation.

Eidolon

An eidolon has the same mystery as a cohort, except its origins are far weirder. It might have been linked to another summoner before its bond with you. It might be a natural creature altered by planar energies and banished to a far realm, or a former adventurer lost in a disastrous mission to an unknown plane. If it resembles a more conventional planar monster (such as an archon, a dretch, or an elemental), it might have been accidentally summoned or called by a sloppy spellcaster and could have some familiarity with other people in the world. Though an eidolon's soul is strongly tied to its summoner, it has an existence in another world when it is away, and in that world it might be a bully, champion, or slave. How it reacts to things during its limited time on the Material Plane is influenced by its unknown past and secret life.

An eidolon always has the appearance of a fantastical creature, and attracts as much attention as any unfamiliar animal would. Fortunately for you, you can send the eidolon away to its extraplanar home, allowing

you to do business in town and move about normally without drawing unwanted attention. However, if you call the eidolon in an emergency without warning the local authorities, townsfolk might assume it is a marauding monster bent on tearing them limb from limb, requiring hasty explanations and diplomacy to prevent panic.

Familiar

Plot hooks for familiars are similar to those for animal companions, as they can have the same unknown

backgrounds and instinctive reactions to people they knew when they were just common animals. Fortunately, familiars are usually small creatures that can easily pass for common pets as long as they don't do anything that reveals their unusual intelligence. Most townsfolk aren't averse to a common cat, a trained hawk, or even a snake, though innkeepers and merchants might ask that such animals be kept in a cage to prevent them from getting loose and causing any damage.

Remember that a familiar has an empathic link to its master, and its animal instincts can lead to plot hooks. For example, a toad familiar might project feelings of hunger whenever a member of a fly-demon cult is nearby, a bat familiar might express curiosity about the words a weird hermit is muttering under his breath, and a rat familiar might feel fear when a dangerous assassin walks into the room. A more powerful familiar can speak with other animals of its kind, and if left to roam, it could pick up interesting news about a town or an army camp.

Follower

A follower should be more than an acquaintance or an employee. A follower is devoted to you in the same way a cohort is, but has fewer resources at his disposal and in most cases isn't an adventurer. The follower sees you as a hero or celebrity—someone to emulate. Though it's easy to treat followers as a single, nameless group, a smart player realizes that they don't have to group together. Followers can be spread out over multiple settlements and have multiple roles. For example, if you have a Leadership score of 10, you can have five 1st-level followers: a city guard in the capital, an acolyte at the high temple, an informant in the thieves' guild, an adept in a frontier village, and a strange child saved from a goblin's hunger. Gaining followers is an opportunity for you to look back over your adventuring career, recall important or noteworthy NPCs, and solidify the bonds between those NPCs and you.

Choosing followers gives you a network of loyal contacts who trust and respect you. Though they might not have the resources or backbone to fight on your behalf, they're always on the lookout for ways to help you in any way they can. In effect, they are trustworthy NPC contacts (Trust score 4; see Contacts on page 148). The city guard might invite you to gamble with the other guards or arrange to have your armor polished. The acolyte might have tips about an upcoming religious festival and the clergy's concerns about a nearby plague. The informant might have news about mysterious disappearances or volunteer to keep an eye on your rival. A thug might bully the truth out of a tight-lipped witness or provide inside information on her employer. The adept might send messages about strange events from the wildlands. The strange child might have precognitive visions, perhaps from budding magical powers.



If you ever lose or dismiss your cohort, selecting a replacement from among your followers not only gives you an excuse to spend some downtime training that follower to become your new cohort, but rewards the loyalty of all the other followers, as they see that you treat them as near equals.

The GM should use these followers as plot hooks. Instead of having rumors from an unknown source reach your ears from no specific source, a named follower could present that information. Instead of having you hunt for information about a cataclysm prophesied to occur in 3 days, a scholarly follower could find a scroll or book about the prophecy and bring it to you. The desperate stable-boy follower can approach you about money to pay off his father's gambling debts to a crooked bookkeeper. The poor merchant can ask you for help dealing with a charismatic man trying to convince his daughter to become a prostitute. By using a follower for a plot hook, the GM lets the player know that the character can trust the follower's intentions, and keeps the PC's past involvement with that NPC relevant.

As you reach higher Leadership scores, you gain dozens of followers. Rather than these followers all being spread thinly across every possible settlement in the campaign, it's more likely that many of these individual followers know each other well, possibly by working together, spending time at the same temple or academy, or being members of the same family, and you should expand these clusters of followers in an organic way. For example, the other guards who gamble with you could become new followers, the acolyte can train other acolytes or spread the good word about you, the informant might persuade others in the thieves' guild that you're a valuable ally, the adept's entire village might begin to see you as a hero and savior, and the strange child could become a wizard's apprentice and convince the entire cabal to befriend you. If you ever decide to build a fort or found a temple or guild, you already have a group of like-minded and skilled followers ready and willing to help.

REVIVING AND REPLACING COMPANIONS

Adventuring is a dangerous career, and sometimes an animal companion, cohort, or familiar dies or is lost. A change in your alignment or religion might drive away your cohort, or the cohort's role in the story might end based on discussion between you and the GM. An extended voyage in a dangerous environment might convince a druid to free a trusted companion that would otherwise suffer and die if forced to travel (such as a polar bear in the desert). A ranger might discover a rare specimen of a favorite type of creature and want to claim it as his own in order to protect it from poachers. Regardless of the cause, when a companion dies or is lost, you need to replace it. This creates an opportunity for roleplaying.

Reviving a Dead Companion

A lost animal companion, cohort, familiar, or follower can be raised or resurrected with spells such as *raise dead*, *resurrection*, or *true resurrection*. For a cohort or follower with character levels, these kinds of spells give the character one or more negative levels—a price worth paying if the alternative is death. Creatures with no character levels (such as animal companions and familiars) count as 1st level for the purpose of these spells, and therefore they take Constitution drain instead of negative levels. A nonsentient companion is assumed to be willing to return to life unless you were cruel to it or directly responsible for its death.

In most cases, the companion probably remembers its last moments alive and understands that you're the reason why it is alive again. For a lower-level cohort or a non-adventuring follower, the gift of a second chance at life is something very treasured and earns you great respect and devotion. You can gain the reputation of "fairness and generosity" for the purposes of the Leadership feat.

Using *reincarnate* is an alternative option, but has a similar effect on a companion's loyalty and affection. Few humans would choose to be reincarnated as a bugbear or kobold, but if the choice is that or death, a new life in a new body is generally preferred. For an animal companion, the GM should create a random table of creatures similar to its original form—for example, a lion might be reincarnated as a leopard, cheetah, or tiger.

Finding a Replacement

In some cases, replacing an animal companion or familiar can be as easy as purchasing an animal of the desired type and declaring it your new companion. Attuning a familiar to its new master requires a ritual (*Core Rulebook* 82). Choosing an animal companion requires 24 hours of prayer (*Core Rulebook* 50). The ceremony can also be used to attract and bond with an animal appropriate to the local environment. However, you might want to wait for the campaign to present an appropriate companion, such as an animal you rescue from a cruel enemy that you tame with the ritual or ceremony. In terms of game mechanics, there is no difference between any of these options, and you should work with the GM to find a replacement method that is appropriate to the campaign.

Replacing a lost or killed cohort or follower involves a similar collaboration between you and the GM to create a character who is appropriate for the campaign and valuable to you (and hopefully to the rest of the party). You might want to elevate a follower to a cohort, select another known NPC to become a cohort, or start from scratch by introducing a new NPC to the party. Keep in mind that your Leadership score might have changed, especially if you were responsible for the previous cohort's death—and that sort of tragedy creates roleplaying opportunities for the new cohort.

CONTACTS

A contact is a unique NPC with useful skills or powerful connections. You can call upon contacts for aid to accomplish specialized tasks without getting directly involved. A low-level contact can dig up a local rumor, tell you where to find a good meal, or impart basic knowledge. However, as you earn more of a contact's trust, he might perform greater tasks with greater personal risk, such as helping you track down an adversary, bailing you out of jail, or loaning you a magic item.

There are many types of contacts—a contact might be a childhood friend, a former adversary with whom you share a mutual respect, a war buddy, a former colleague, or a friend of the family. They aren't limited to a specific social class or profession. A contact with few connections is capable of providing only minimal aid to you, but others might have more significant resources. A contact's ability to aid you might even shift over the course of your adventuring career. Changes to a contact's profession, rising or falling social status, and other personal events can alter his ability to provide aid.

Sometimes a contact needs compensation for his trouble, or at least reimbursement for costs incurred while working on your behalf. Criminal contacts in particular almost always charge for their services or demand favors in return. A contact from a temple or guild might expect you to give a donation to the temple or pay guild fees. Other times, costs arise out of necessity. A contact who needs anonymity to accomplish a task might require additional funds for bribes or to purchase covert access to a secret location. Likewise, you shouldn't expect a spellcaster contact to pay for the expensive material components when casting a spell on your behalf.

Two factors influence the effectiveness of a contact: the amount of trust you share with the contact and the amount of risk involved with what you ask of the contact. A contact who doesn't fully trust you won't risk his neck to help you, though he might still perform some basic risk-free tasks to see if you warrant additional trust.

TRUST

In order for you to secure a reliable contact, you must establish and maintain the contact's trust. A new contact won't typically reveal the full extent of his abilities or covert affiliations. For example, your childhood friend might have close ties with a political organization, thieves' guild, or street gang, but may keep this information secret to protect himself and you. At some point, the friend reveals this connection and becomes a contact for you. As the contact's trust increases, he becomes more willing to perform or secure various services for you, provided those services remain within his means.

Trust is measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the least amount of trust and 5 representing the highest. You build trust through successful interactions between you

and your contact. As these interactions accrue, the level of Trust increases (see Gaining, Cultivating, and Losing Contacts on page 151). A contact can have different Trust scores for different PCs in the same adventuring party—a city guard could have a high Trust score for a paladin PC he's known for a while and a low Trust score for a wizard PC who is new to town. For some contacts, the Trust score declines if they haven't heard from you in a while, but rebuilding Trust to its earlier level is faster than starting from scratch.

The different trust levels are as follows.

1. Wary: A wary contact has no more trust in you than in any stranger. Though he's willing to divulge minimal information, he'd just as readily sell your information to your enemies or turn on you in order to protect himself or his reputation. A wary contact performs only basic tasks that assume little to no personal risk.

2. Skeptical: A skeptical contact has established some small amount of trust with you. Despite earlier positive interactions, the contact remains fairly cautious. He can be called upon to perform tasks of minimal risk, but refuses any task that might jeopardize his safety, public image, or finances. If questioned about you, the skeptical contact attempts to remain neutral when describing his relationship and won't immediately turn on you.

3. Reliable: A reliable contact still doesn't fully trust you, but is willing to make a greater effort to help. He might perform tasks that place him at slightly greater risk, such as hiding a fugitive on his property or loaning small sums of money or nonmagical items. A reliable contact is not willing to assume greater risk solely out of trust in you, and tries to protect his own reputation as a reliable contact.

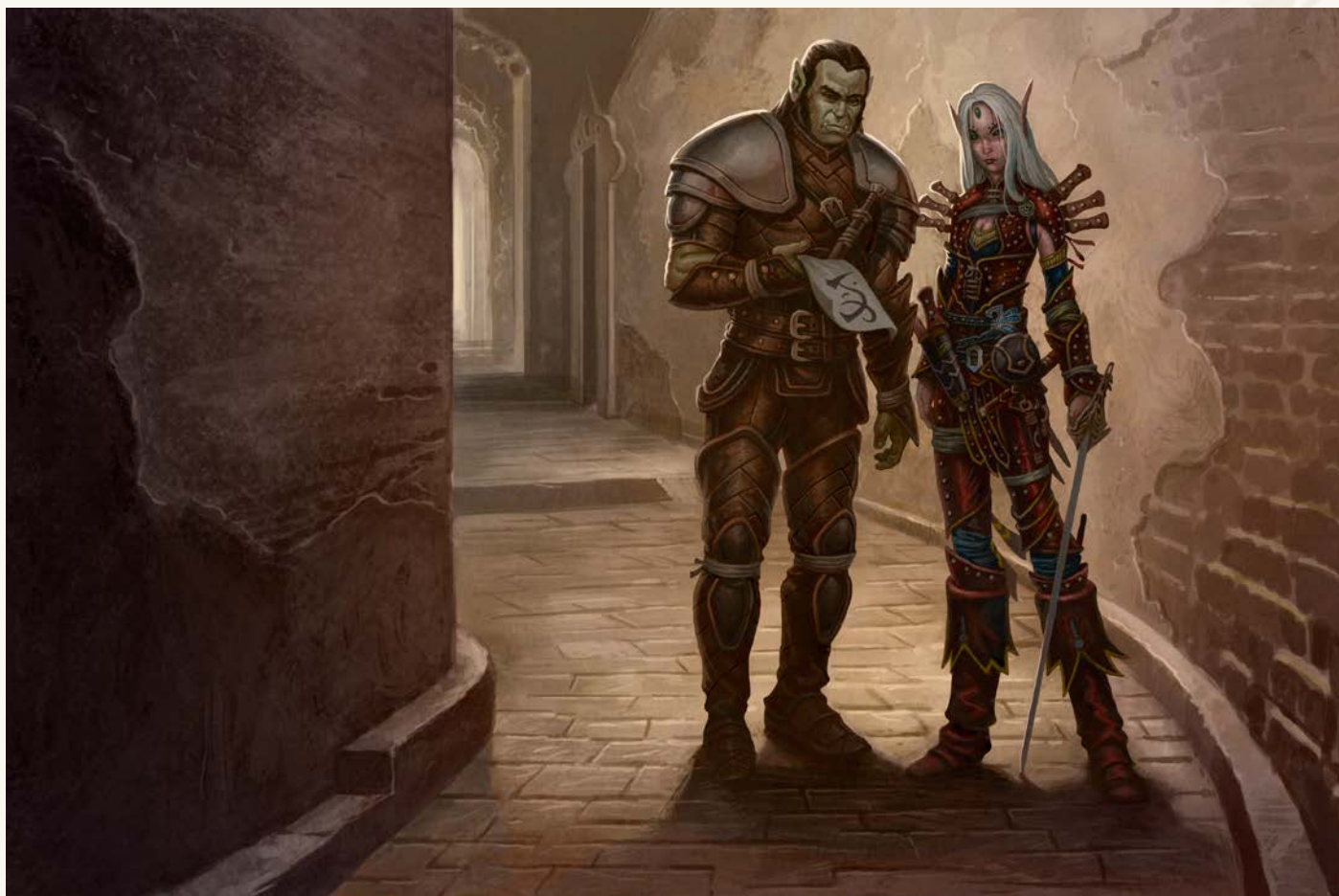
4. Trustworthy: A trustworthy contact holds you in high regard. When you ask for assistance, he sincerely desires to aid you. He puts in extra time and effort to assure success, but still avoids undertaking tasks that would place him or his loved ones in significant danger. He will not lightly accept a task that would destroy his career, reputation, or finances.

5. Confidant: At this level, the contact trusts you with his life. He attempts to help you even if it stretches his personal means or involves great personal risk. A confidant never turns against you unless he's shown absolute proof that you betrayed him.

RISK

Risk represents the potential danger of various tasks. Like a Trust score, Risk is measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing little or no risk and 5 representing serious danger. Each level of risk includes the typical drawback or punishment the contact suffers if he critically fails at a risky task (see Negotiation Checks on page 150).

The different risk examples are as follows. The GM should use these examples as guidelines to determine how risky a task is.



1. None: No-risk tasks include carrying a message to one of your allies in a neighboring town, directing you to a reputable merchant, getting your equipment repaired, providing you with minor rumors, or getting a sage to show you a history book or map. These tasks might be inconvenient, but the contact doesn't risk any sort of penalty for performing them.

Critical Failure: No consequences worth considering.

2. Minor: Minor-risk tasks include deliberately leaving a door to a private area unlocked, acquiring a semi-legal item for you, or finding a place for you to lie low. Negative consequences can include paying a small fine, provoking the ire of the local authorities, suffering a small financial loss, or enduring social embarrassment.

Critical Failure: Fine or imprisonment with bail. You must spend $\frac{1}{3}$ the value of the contact's gear (see Table 14-9: NPC Gear on page 454 of the *Core Rulebook*) to rectify this situation; otherwise, you lose the contact, and all current and future contacts have their Trust scores lowered by 1 with you.

3. Moderate: Moderately risky tasks include lying to authorities on your behalf, making forgeries, helping you evade authorities (such as by providing horses or casting a *teleport* spell), or loaning you money or equipment (worth up to $\frac{1}{3}$ your estimated gear value according to Table 12-4: Character Wealth By Level on page 399 of

the *Core Rulebook*). If the contact is caught while involved with this task, he may have to pay a fine, face short-term imprisonment, or suffer a moderate financial or social loss.

Critical Failure: Fine or imprisonment with bail. You must spend $\frac{1}{2}$ the value of the contact's gear (see Table 14-9: NPC Gear on page 454 of the *Core Rulebook*) to rectify this situation; otherwise, you lose the contact, all current and future contacts have their Trust scores lowered by 2 with you, and the DC of any of your future attempts to raise the Trust scores of contacts increases by 5.

4. Considerable: Considerably risky tasks are explicitly illegal (such as burglary or robbery) or are morally questionable even if legal (such as fraud conducted by taking advantage of obscure loopholes in the law). If the contact is caught performing such a task, he may be imprisoned, have his property seized, or lose personal rights (such as a formal title or high-status employment). He may be punished by flogging, torture, or enslavement.

Critical Failure: The contact is imprisoned without bail or his social status is reduced to that of a peasant. You must restore the contact's status, possibly by legally freeing him and vindicating him, or by rescuing him and helping him establish a new life elsewhere. Failure to do so means you lose the contact, all current contacts have their Trust scores lowered by 3 with you, and the DCs of



any of your future attempts to raise the Trust scores of contacts increase by 5.

5. Great: An act of great risk describes any task for which the failure results in death, exile, or life imprisonment, such as murder, grievous assault, or treason.

Critical Failure: Within 1 week's time of the contact being caught, you must get the contact's sentence negated, overturned, or revoked, or otherwise save him from his fate. Failure to do so means all current contacts have their Trust scores lowered by 4 with you, and the DCs of any of your future attempts to raise the Trust scores of contacts increase by 5. Extraordinary measures, such as raising the contact from the dead, allow you to retain the contact (though his status and usefulness may be questionable if his reputation was also destroyed). Unless it is known that you used these extraordinary measures, the Trust penalty for other contacts remains.

NEGOTIATION CHECKS

To use a contact, you must first determine the contact's willingness to help you. Compare the task's Risk score to the contact's Trust score.

If the task's Risk score is higher than the contact's Trust score, the contact simply refuses to attempt the task. You can try to entice the contact by offering him compensation for his efforts such as gold, gems, a magic item, or a debt of service. As a general rule, you may temporarily increase the contact's Trust score by 1 point by offering an enticement worth half the value of the contact's gear (see Table 14–9: NPC Gear on page 454 of the *Core Rulebook*). You can't offer more value to increase his Trust score more than 1 point at a time.

If the Trust score is equal to or higher than the Risk score, you must attempt to negotiate by making an opposed Diplomacy check against the contact to determine whether he'll perform the task. The contact

adds the task's Risk score to his Diplomacy check. If your check succeeds, the contact is willing and able to attempt to help you (though he may have a price for his services). Failure doesn't necessarily mean the contact doesn't want to help; the contact might be unavailable or unable to help at that time.

Once a contact agrees to help, the GM must determine the extent of his success. The GM attempts a skill check on behalf of the contact using the contact's most appropriate skill for the task (or an ability check if no skill is appropriate). The DC for this check is determined using the following formula:

$$\text{DC} = 10 + \text{the CR of the task} + \text{the task's Risk score} \\ + \text{any other GM modifiers}$$

"Any other GM modifiers" includes any modifiers the GM feels are appropriate for the situation, such as a high level of scrutiny at a noble's party or a temporary shortage of certain black-market goods.

Failing this check by 5 or more results in a critical failure (see the Risk section for consequences of critical failures on tasks).

Most tasks require 1 day of work, with the check to determine the contact's success or failure attempted at the end of the time period. When appropriate, the contact may decrease the DC of a task by increasing the time spent completing it, representing the time spent planning and preparing, gathering resources, and waiting for the right moment to attempt the task. Subtract 1 from the DC for each day spent beyond the first, to a maximum of 4 extra days.

The GM might decide that a particular task is longer term and requires at least 1 week to perform (such as pulling off a large heist or protecting someone for several days). When appropriate, the contact may decrease the DC of a long-term task by proportionately increasing the amount of time spent. Subtract 1 from the DC for each additional week spent, to a maximum of 4 extra weeks. Tasks requiring more than this amount of time should be broken into smaller tasks and handled on a daily or weekly basis.

If the task becomes riskier while the contact is still working on completing it, you and the contact make another opposed Diplomacy check at the new Risk score (even if you aren't present to speak to the contact). This represents the contact weighing his trust in you and the risk of the task. If you succeed at this second check, the contact proceeds with the task. If you fail, the contact abandons the task.

Each time a contact fails at or abandons a task, he adds a cumulative +1 bonus on all subsequent Diplomacy checks made to negotiate tasks with you because of frustration, fear of being associated with you, or various other reasons. You can try to convince the contact to try again, but the contact usually must wait 1d4 days before

another attempt, and trying that same task over again gives the contact a +4 bonus on his opposed Diplomacy check to negotiate.

GAINING, CULTIVATING, AND LOSING CONTACTS

The GM may allow you to begin the campaign with one contact (typically with a Trust score of 2 or 3), but otherwise you gain contacts through roleplaying over the course of an entire campaign. To gain a new contact, you must first establish the NPC's trust through repeated positive interactions or a single profound one.

Positive interactions include things such as regular patronage of the NPC's business, providing the NPC with some form of additional compensation for his efforts, performing a deed on his behalf, or using your personal influence to help the contact gain a position of greater power or prestige. Profound interactions include saving the life of the NPC or someone the NPC loves, protecting his reputation against ruinous slander, or preventing loss of his property or finances. Once you accrue at least five positive interactions or one profound interaction with an NPC, you can treat him as a contact. This means you can ask him to help you, and you can attempt to improve his Trust score with you.

A relationship with a contact develops as you spend time with him. Each time you have a positive or profound interaction with the contact (but no more than once at each of your character levels), attempt a Diplomacy check to improve the contact's Trust score by 1. If the interaction is profound rather than merely positive, you gain a +5 bonus on this Diplomacy check. The DC of the check depends on the contact's Trust score with you.

NPC TRUST (SCORE)	DIPLOMACY DC*
Wary (1)	20
Skeptical (2)	15
Reliable (3)	10
Trustworthy (4)	15
Confidant (5)	20

*If the contact has a bonus on Diplomacy checks made to negotiate with you from failing or abandoning a task, add that bonus to this DC.

At the GM's discretion, if you're away from the contact for a month or longer, that contact's Trust score with you might decrease as he forgets about you. If this happens, attempt a Diplomacy check against the above DC. Success means the contact's Trust level remains the same, and failure means it decreases by 1 (minimum 1). At the GM's discretion, some contacts with special relationships to you, such as childhood friends or old mentors, might not lose Trust in this manner, or you could have to make these checks only once per year instead of once per month.

Ending a relationship with a contact can be easy or difficult, depending on who the contact is and what

kind of relationship he has with you. How you end a relationship with a contact can impact the Trust scores of your other contacts. In some cases, avoiding a contact for long enough (so his Trust score drops to 1) is enough to end the relationship with no hard feelings. It is up to the GM to determine what you must do to lose a contact in a way that does not affect the Trust score for your other contacts, but the GM should err on the side of leniency—if you made the effort to gain many contacts, you shouldn't be punished with reduced Trust scores for all contacts just because you stop interacting with some of them.

TYPES OF CONTACTS

Contacts are as diverse and complicated as society itself. Simple contacts only provide you with basic information, such as which roads have fewer bandits or which wells have the cleanest water. Contacts with greater experience, power, and influence are capable of providing more advanced aid. A politician's scribe might leak information or alter an important document, and a high-ranking church official might lend you a sacred relic. Because of this diversity, associating with certain types of contacts creates greater risk for you than associating with others. A conversation with a local miller or lumberjack attracts far less attention than a conversation with the sister of a powerful guildmaster or multiple visits to the grand vizier's chambers. Likewise, asking a notorious assassin to see whether an ailing wizard friend is recovering may be construed as a threat, asking a crazed wizard contact for local rumors is more likely to reflect poorly on you than asking a popular bard, and keeping company with criminals, outcasts, or other shady characters might implicate some amount of guilt by association in the eyes of local authorities.

Some of the following example contacts have a minimum Risk (MR) listed after them. When making the negotiation check, use the Risk score of the task or the contact's MR, whichever is higher. For example, asking a contact to acquire a black-market item is normally a minor task (Risk score 2), but asking an assassin contact (MR 3) to acquire the same item makes the task moderately risky (Risk score 3), simply because the assassin's nature and reputation make even common tasks more chancy.

The DC of the skill check to complete the task uses the task's Risk, not the MR of the contact. For example, just because a master assassin is an inherently risky contact doesn't mean it's automatically harder for her to find a black-market item for you.

A particular contact may have a higher minimum Risk than what is listed; these are just typical examples within a general category.

Academic: An academic can provide knowledge within her areas of expertise. She typically has access to various libraries or other centers of knowledge. An academic researches a subject by drawing on public records and



texts and then attempts to answer questions by making appropriate Knowledge checks.

Artisan: A PC can count on an artisan to get an honest appraisal of an item, find goods for fair prices, locate or create a hard-to-find mundane item, find hearty livestock, or repair a broken item.

Assassin (MR 3): An assassin will sicken, poison, or even kill someone at your behest. Most assassins charge a fee based on the nature of the target, though there are religious assassins who perform these services for religious leaders at no cost. In most lands, the penalty for hiring an assassin is the same as the penalty for committing a murder.

Crime Boss (MR 3): This contact is the leader of some type of criminal syndicate, such as a thieves' guild, crime family, or necromantic cult. A successful crime boss usually has great wealth and knowledge of the region his organization works within. A crime boss rarely fails to complete a task given his resources, but usually demands some sort of payment for this service—typically requiring you to perform an illegal act that benefits the contact or his criminal organization.

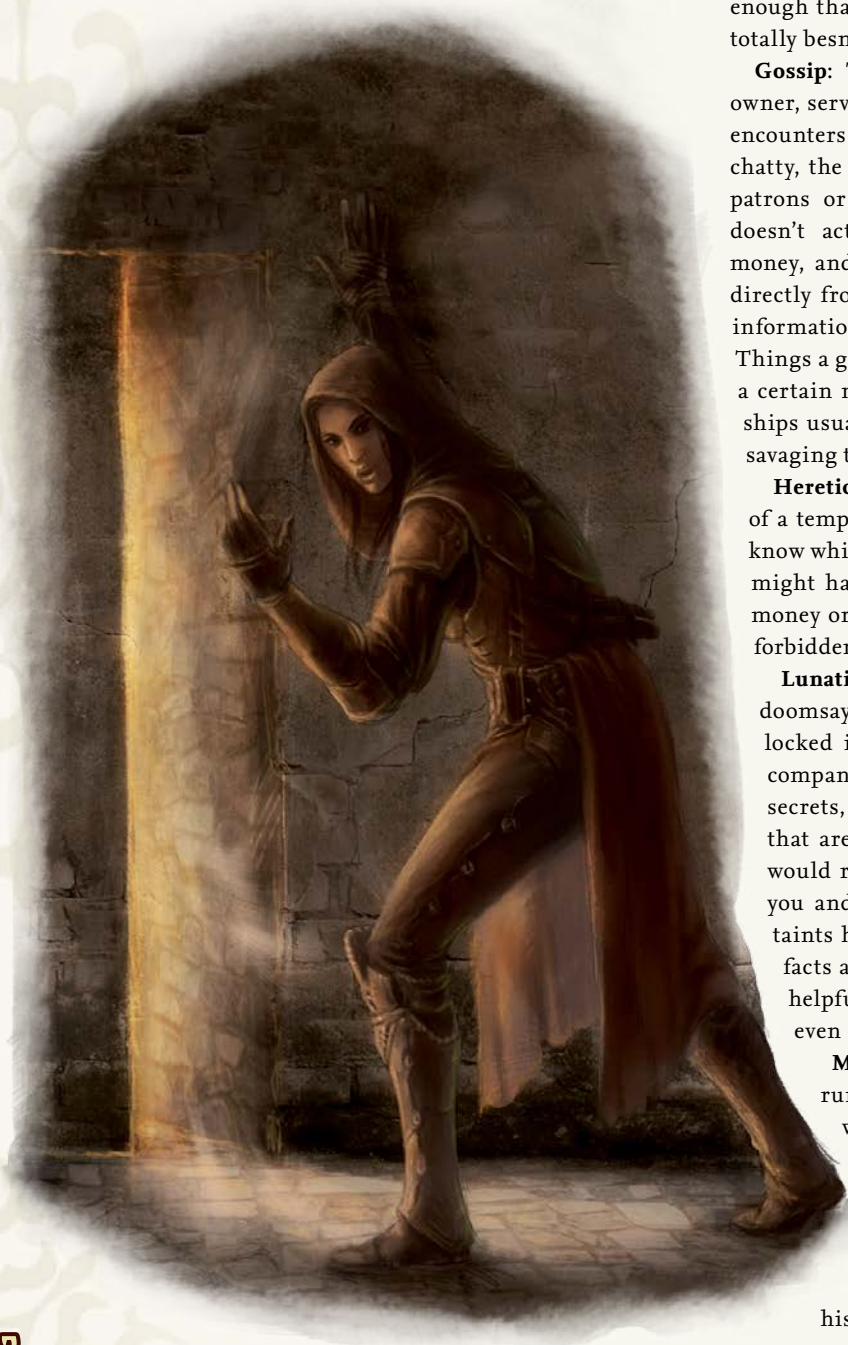
Fence (MR 2): A fence specializes in buying and selling hard-to-find items, magical trinkets, and stolen or illegal black-market goods (such as drugs, poisons, and other types of contraband). Though fences often keep a low profile, many folks find their services useful enough that incidental contact with a local fence won't totally besmirch one's character.

Gossip: This contact could be a bartender, tavern owner, servant, prostitute, or stable hand who regularly encounters all sorts of individuals. Gregarious and chatty, the gossip leaks you information about various patrons or stories. Unlike a rumormonger, a gossip doesn't actively seek to distribute information for money, and his knowledge is based on what he hears directly from others. Though a gossip provides useful information, rarely is it anything unusual or covert. Things a gossip might know include the type of person a certain noble fancies, the day of the week merchant ships usually sail into port, or reports of a wild beast savaging the surrounding lands.

Heretic (MR 2): A heretic might be the laughingstock of a temple or a dangerous cultist. The heretic could know which clergy members are the most corrupt, and might have access to dark secrets, hidden caches of money or magic, evidence of lies and conspiracies, or forbidden texts.

Lunatic (MR 2): This contact might be a wandering doomsayer, a reclusive hermit, or an insane criminal locked into a dingy cell and desperate for human company. Lunatics often know dark and forgotten secrets, can recount seemingly insignificant events that are full of clues, or recall seeing things most would rather forget. Though a lunatic might adore you and make sincere efforts to aid you, madness taints her judgment and interpretation of both the facts and reality. Sometimes her ramblings can be helpful, though other times they can be useless or even detrimental.

Manipulator (MR 2): A manipulator usually runs a clandestine network of agents who whisper in the ears of powerful merchants, nobles, priests, and politicians to effect change on the behalf of the manipulator's clients. Depending on his personal motives, the nature of his network, and whether your plans affect his other clients, his services could be very expensive.



Merchant: A merchant owns or operates some sort of shop. As a contact, the merchant might impart tidbits of information about other customers and minimal town gossip. She might also give you a discount on goods or services, or extend you a line of credit.

Observer: This category includes vagrants, beggars, street-cart vendors, fortune-tellers, drunks, and others who spend their time wandering the city streets or country roads. So commonplace is the observer within his surroundings that most people ignore him as they pass by. The observer bears witness to all that goes on around him. He can tell you the time a specific event occurred and who was around when it happened. He knows the patterns of the city guard and which gates they watch most closely, and can keep a watch out for individuals who are hiding within a crowd or who are abroad at odd hours.

Outsider (MR 2): The outsider's roots lie beyond the immediate community, and as a result she suffers the distrust and prejudices of locals. She might be a foreigner, a member of a primitive tribe, or an indigenous person in a land conquered by imperialists. The outsider provides information about the outside world, especially the lands of her birth and places she's traveled. She knows sources for exotic weapons and other imports, such as spices and wines. Alternatively, the outsider might know and be able to teach you rare fighting techniques, secret formulas, or the esoteric spells of her people.

Pariah (MR 2): A pariah suffers the disdain of a certain group such as a city council, local religious leaders and their congregation, or even an entire community. Though not openly persecuted or hunted, the pariah has few rights and no privileges. What pariahs can offer varies from one to another. Use another contact type for the basis of that aid, but use the pariah's minimum Risk.

Petty Criminal (MR 2): A petty criminal dabbles in minor nonviolent crimes, such as burglary, smuggling, and money laundering. He might also know about covert passages through a city and which officials accept bribes. He could be willing to introduce you to a professional criminal or crime boss.

Politician (MR 2): This person holds an influential position within the community's current political structure. She might be a royal advisor, a tribal council member, or the scion of another politician. The contact maintains direct access to the ears and concerns of those with political power and can attempt to influence their decisions. This type of contact is highly sought after, so her actions are closely watched to prevent outsiders (like you) from bribing or otherwise manipulating her. Though she has great potential to initiate social and political changes, she remains under close scrutiny at all times. A politician who has fallen out of favor could become a gossip, outsider, manipulator, or even a pariah or traitor.

Professional Criminal (MR 3): This contact belongs to a known criminal organization, thieves' guild, or street gang. Unlike a petty criminal, he might resort to more violent crimes such as arson, kidnapping, assault, and extortion. A professional criminal might know or work for a crime boss.

Rumormonger: A rumormonger keeps her ear to the ground for tidbits about the social and political goings-on as well as word of interesting current events or discoveries. She makes a living buying and selling semi-sensitive and personal information, and might also provide little-known details about current events. A rumormonger usually provides more usefulness and amusement to her community than threat, and is careful enough to keep secrets that might get her killed. She occasionally repeats information that's more dangerous than she realizes, however, putting herself or others in jeopardy.

Saboteur (MR 3): A saboteur is an expert at destroying objects and property, whether through arson, scuttling ships, weakening bridges, or setting deadly traps. A career saboteur typically works for a thieves' guild or a resistance movement against local authorities.

Snitch (MR 2): Unlike a rumormonger, a professional snitch deals only in information that he knows to be true. He relies upon an extensive range of sources and checks the accuracy of their reports. A snitch also earns many enemies; thus he makes every effort to keep a low profile. He can be hard to contact, and his services are generally costly. He can produce personal information about nobles, clergy members, politicians, criminals, and other important people.

Thug (MR 2): A thug uses force or threats of violence to influence others. She may be an enforcer who collects on debts for his employers or a vigilante who treats villains to her own sense of justice. Often the only difference between a thug and a city guard is that the thug performs his jobs outside of the constraints of the law. A thug isn't necessarily villainous, but others might consider her actions criminal. In addition to performing unsavory tasks, a thug can tell you details about her employer or those she torments.

Traitor (MR 3): A traitor has been accused or convicted of turning against the government and actively aiding its enemies. This contact isn't necessarily evil; he just actively rejects the ideology or actions of the current rulers—a paladin who rejects the edicts of an unscrupulous monarch and a witch who hexes nobles are both traitors according to their local leaders. A traitor is often knowledgeable about the government and could have even once been a politician in good standing.

Watch Guard: This contact provides information about local criminals and suspects, as well as reasonable insight into the workings of the city guard and current political goings-on and trends. She can keep an eye on things, provide an escort, allow you to speak with a prisoner, or arrange a meeting with a superior officer.



EXPLORATION

Exploration is the epitome of adventuring. An explorer strikes out into the uncharted wild to pursue fortune and glory, facing off against a world of unknown perils that can strike at any time. Beyond the protection of civilization, death can come at the hands of bandit attacks, encounters with feral beasts, and the uncaring whims of the environment. For those brave enough, exploration offers its own kind of reward: the ability to look back on the long road traveled, to recount the many obstacles that were struggled through, and to mark the discoveries made along the way as yours. The summit of every mountain climbed and the length of every trail forged is a victory for the traveler—a chance to look at the world she is conquering.

The following pages present rules for how you as a GM can include exploring large regions of wilderness in your campaign. You can use these rules to run an exploration-themed campaign or to add an exploration component to a campaign, such as searching for resources, scouting territory for the expansion of a kingdom, or establishing trade routes.

SANDBOX EXPLORATION

These exploration rules can work well in a sandbox-style game. Essentially, a sandbox campaign provides many different locations on the map where the PCs are offered tasks to resolve, and locations where the tasks can be executed. (Each task might or might not take place in the same locations it was offered.) A task can be as simple as clearing evil monsters from a patch of forest or as complicated as helping a fledgling kingdom acquire resources in its back country.

When designing tasks for sandbox gaming, have them be things the party can *choose* to do, not that they *must* do. By leaving the choice of which tasks to undertake up to them, you allow the PCs to be wandering heroes—masters of their own fate who travel the land setting things right.

This kind of nonlinear play encourages PCs to move out into the world, search for new tasks, and claim their rewards. You can also use these tasks to introduce new sites in the world by offering the characters jobs delivering goods, escorting travelers, and the like.

MOVEMENT

Each hex on the map is 12 miles across from corner to corner, representing an area just under 95 square miles. The hexes are used to track the party's movement while exploring, and as a means to help define the extent of different types of terrain. The exploration rates presented in these rules differ from the travel rates found in the *Core Rulebook*, since characters are also assumed to be taking time to fully explore each area they enter, which takes a great deal longer than simply walking through it.

To determine how long it takes the PCs to travel through a hex or fully explore it, determine the group's base speed (set by the slowest member of the group) and consult Table 3–2: Travel Time (1 Hex) or Table 3–3: Exploration Time (1 Hex). These times represent the movement and exploration of a normal hex of the specified terrain type; rules presented later in this section modify the amount of time it takes to travel through or fully explore a hex.

A typical wilderness hex is trackless (see Table 7–8 on page 172 of the *Core Rulebook*). Though no humanoid-created roads or trails pass through it, trails by game animals might. If a hex contains more than one terrain type, treat it as the most prevalent terrain for the purpose of travel times.

TABLE 3-2: TRAVEL TIME (1 HEX)

PARTY SPEED	PLAIN	ALL OTHER TERRAIN
15 feet	11 hours	16 hours
20 feet	8 hours	12 hours
30 feet	5 hours	8 hours
40 feet	4 hours	6 hours
50 feet	3 hours	5 hours

TABLE 3-3: EXPLORATION TIME (1 HEX)

PARTY SPEED	PLAIN	DESERT, FOREST,	
	OR HILL	OR MARSH	MOUNTAIN
15 feet	3 days	4 days	5 days
20 feet	2 days	3 days	4 days
30 feet	1 day	2 days	3 days
40 feet	1 day	1 day	2 days
50 feet	1 day	1 day	1 day

Tracking Travel

The simplest method of tracking the PCs' progress as they travel and survey the wilderness is to do so on hex paper. As the PCs explore a hex, the players should note their progress by placing a small "X" in the hex. Tracking which hexes are fully explored is important for determining exploration rewards.

Exploration Rewards

Whenever a hex is explored fully, the party earns 100 XP for the effort. Some modifiers can add to this amount. The party gains an additional 25 XP after fully exploring a hex that contains either difficult terrain or a hazard. You might decide that some hexes are more dangerous, especially in a higher-level campaign, and award the party more XP per hex (perhaps up to 500 XP for especially hostile areas).

Keep Things Interesting

When the players ask what they find while exploring a hex, the answer should never be "nothing." Even in the simplest field of wheat, offer a bit of detail—something compelling to help flesh out the world. The foundation of a long-forgotten village or a set of standing stones built to honor a lost god can be hints about that area's history.



Table 7–56: Things Found on the Roadside (*GameMastery Guide* 224) and Table 7–58: Scenic Spots (*GameMastery Guide* 225) list many examples of interesting features you can use to fill in details.

Other than in the rare village, exploring PCs have very few opportunities to resupply. Acquiring food and finding shelter against the elements is paramount, and losing supplies has a crippling effect on the party, as they have to hunt and forage just to acquire enough food and water to survive another day. An exploration encounter can be driven by complications like these, where every meal foraged is a victory in itself.

Remember that adventuring is more about glory than grim survival, so it's best to keep a balance between realistic exploration issues (such as obtaining fresh food and water) and fun, exciting monster encounters. If you make exploration both dangerous and rewarding, the players will remain eager to keep striking out into the great unknown.

Getting Lost

While moving through the wilderness, there is the possibility of adventurers losing track of where they're going. The lack of a clear path, coupled with low visibility due to terrain or weather, can cause explorers to head in the wrong direction. Anytime the characters move through marshes or forests, or have reduced visibility

from the effects of any modifiers, they have a chance of becoming lost.

The effect of getting lost is the same as in the normal rules (*Core Rulebook* 424), except the GM randomly determines the next hex the lost party moves into, and does not reveal this misdirection to the party. Once the PCs have regained their bearings, the GM reveals their true location on the map.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Natural disasters can occur anywhere. Untamed regions are often home to a wide variety of monsters. You can instill a bit of additional danger into your exploration sessions by including random encounters, whether they take the form of natural hazards or monsters that dwell in the terrain.

Roll on the following table once per day (or once per hex, if the PCs enter multiple hexes in a single day). For hazards, see the Hazards section on page 158. For monster encounters, in most cases the PCs face off against a creature appropriate to the terrain, but a nearby famine, drought, war, or plague may force a monster out of its normal territory and into a strange environment.

d%	RESULT
01–50	No encounter
51–60	Hazard
61–100	Monster

PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

A specific, planned encounter for a hex does not have to be especially complicated. It can be as simple as a quick meeting with an explorer who can sell the PCs some necessary supplies or the discovery of a monster lair that hints at a greater threat. A good rule when determining the number of planned encounters to prepare is to have at least one for each character in the party. That way, you can tailor encounters to allow each character to take the spotlight without having to populate every single hex on the map one by one.

After creating these encounters, choose a hex on the map and note that an encounter occurs there. When the party draws closer to a hex with a planned encounter, foreshadow it with appropriate details. For example, if you plan to have the party discover a battle between two armies, the nearby hexes should contain signs of an army's passage—old cooking fires, piles of refuse, and even the graves of soldiers who fell to illness along the way give your players clues about the impending encounter.

A few encounter sites are landmarks immediately obvious or visible with just a little bit of looking or scouting. A PC who enters the hex automatically discovers the landmark. If a PC in an adjacent hex spends an hour studying the landmark's hex and succeeds at a DC 10 Survival check, he discovers the landmark. When the PCs discover a landmark, note it on the landmark's hex.

Many encounter sites remain undiscovered unless the PCs decide to explore a hex rather than just travel through it. By exploring the hex, the PCs discover the site automatically. Some sites are hidden, requiring the PCs to make an appropriate skill check as they explore. The skill and its DC depend on the nature of the site.

HEX TERRAIN TYPES

For simplicity's sake, a hex is categorized by its primary terrain: desert, forest, hill, marsh, mountain, plain, settlement, or water. The terrain doesn't have to be uniform within that hex—the border between a forest hex and plain hex might be a gradual thinning of the trees or the sudden edge of a heavy forest. A hex might have a river running through it, a large rock outcropping, a barren patch from a fire, and so on. The hexes are abstractions to make travel and encounters easier, not a way to reduce the campaign map to a simple board game.

Each of the following terrain type entries includes a description of the terrain and any rules effects the terrain type might implicate. In addition, each terrain type entry includes example terrain elements that might be found in a particular hex of that terrain type. A terrain element could be some obstacle or hindrance that makes a hex more difficult to pass through, a unique feature within the hex, an encounter with the predators or people who use this hex as their hunting ground, resources that could aid adventurers exploring the hex, or a secret location hidden somewhere in the hex.

Even a “standard” hex (that is, one without a terrain element), should have something to make it memorable. PCs who explore that hex are spending at least a day there, and an exploration campaign grows boring if days pass uneventfully (see *Keep Things Interesting* on page 154).

Desert

A desert is any sort of terrain that receives very little rainfall. It can be warm, temperate, or cold.

This section pertains mostly to warm and temperate deserts. In cold environments, a desert is usually tundra, which acts like another terrain category depending on the current season. During most of the year, a cold desert is covered in a layer of permafrost, creating hard, stable terrain (which is treated as plains). During the warm season, the permafrost thaws and turns the area into mud (which is treated as marsh).

Difficult: A difficult desert is a treacherous place, full of sand dunes, sinkholes, rubble, sandstorms, or numerous ravines. Rare seasonal rains might cause flash floods, sweeping away or drowning any creature in their path. Survival checks to avoid getting lost or to become un-lost in this hex gain a +1 bonus. Survival checks to get along in the wild increase by 5.

Treat a flash flood as an avalanche (*Core Rulebook* 429), except instead of suffocating from being buried under rock, creatures who are buried must hold their breaths or start drowning.

Feature: A desert hex feature might be a city or tomb long buried under the sands, one or more geoglyphs, an unusual mesa, a majestic canyon, a tar pit, or an oasis. A tall structure—such as a mesa or ruined tower—can be used as a landmark for navigation or an observation point to get a better view of the surrounding area. Other features might point to hidden treasures, ley lines, or celestial conjunctions.

Hunting Ground: The hex might be home to one or more kinds of flying predators (typically dragons and sphinxes), poisonous monsters capable of tracking wounded prey over long distances, or subterranean creatures that use burrowing and similar tactics to make ambush attacks. The desert might also be home to nomadic raiders, genies, or elementals of a type fitting the desert's environment. The chance of random encounters within these deserts increases by 10%.

Resource: This hex might contain valuable ore, water (such as an oasis), or a rare but useful plant (such as a cactus used for medicine or exotic beverages).

Secret: A secret desert hex might have shifting sand dunes, acrid winds, poisonous terrain, elemental portals, or some other strange feature that hides its secrets.

Ruins half-buried in the desert could still contain lost treasures or might already be looted. In either case, the ruins can be used as a place to take shelter from storms or as a lair for monsters. PCs who take shelter in these ruins suffer no effect from storms and similar hazards, but the chance of random encounters increases by 25%.

Forest

A normal forest hex can be any sort of common forest: sparse patches of trees in the lowlands, thickly needled pines of the taiga, a lush tropical jungle, or even an ancient fruit tree grove turned overgrown and wild.

Difficult: A difficult forest is a treacherous place, full of rotting trees that can fall without warning, twisted scythe trees that lunge at their victims, or witch-lights that lead expeditions off the path. For each hour spent traveling through a difficult forest, there is a 5% chance of a falling tree hazard. Survival check DCs to avoid getting lost increase by 5.

Feature: A forest hex feature could be either a cluster of massive old-growth trees or some type of tree that is unique to that region. In an old-growth forest, the canopy limits how much light reaches the ground, so undergrowth tends to be low-lying, tough plants like mosses and ferns.

Hunting Ground: This kind of forest hex is often treated with awe by local people, as hunting grounds are full of a terrifying array of arboreal creatures. The chance of random encounters within these forests increases by 10%.

Resource: This hex contains valuable lumber, medicinal herbs, or plentiful sources of game meat. Survival checks to get along in the wild gain a +5 bonus.

Secret: A secret forest hex has thick mists or deep shadows that make fully exploring it a time-consuming prospect. Exploration time increases by 50%.

Hill

A hill is lower and less steep than a mountain. Hills are often transitional terrain between mountains and plains.

Difficult: Full of short cliffs and jagged stones, a difficult hill hex requires extra caution to avoid dangerous falls. For the purposes of travel and exploration times, treat the party's speed as one category slower on Tables 3-2 and 3-3.

Feature: The hex might be the site of a famous historical battle or the burial mound of long-dead chieftains. It provides a commanding view of the surrounding region and is useful as a waypoint. Survival checks to avoid getting lost or to become un-lost in this hex gain a +1 bonus.

Hunting Ground: The hex is cut with valleys and trenches that obscure predators from view. The chance of random encounters increases by 25%.

Resource: The hex contains resources such as quality stone, coal, precious metals, or gems.

Secret: Hidden caverns provide shelter and lairs for monsters. Locating these caverns requires a successful DC 10 Perception or Survival check. PCs who take shelter here suffer no effect from storms and similar hazards, but the chance of random encounters increases by 10%.

Marsh

Marshes, swamps, and bogs are challenging ground to traverse. Survival check DCs to avoid getting lost increase by 1 in a marsh hex.

Difficult: A difficult marsh hex is a deadly place, replete with quicksand, poisonous plants, and treacherous water.

The DCs for Survival checks to get along in the wild increase by 5. For the purposes of travel and exploration times, treat the party's speed as one category slower on Tables 3-2 and 3-3.

Feature: The hex might be the location of a marsh creature's den (such as a hag), a sunken ruin, a large water causeway, or a shallow lake.

Hunting Ground:

Attacks in this hex are equally likely to come from underwater

as from the surface. The chance of random encounters increases by 25%.

Resource: Marsh resources primarily come in the form of medicinal plants and herbs.

Secret: Unfortunate explorers died in the marsh and left behind all their gear. With a successful DC 25 Survival check, the PCs can each salvage equipment worth 10 gp per character level.

Mountain

Mountains form long barriers across the landscape that greatly impede the movement of travelers.

Difficult: All Climb DCs in a difficult mountain hex increase by 2. For the purposes of travel and exploration times, treat the party's speed as one category slower on Tables 3-2 and 3-3.

Feature: The mountain is the highest in the vicinity or has an unusual shape, perhaps resembling a face or creature. Alternatively, use a feature from the Feature section of the hill hex terrain type.

Hunting Ground: Bandits and monsters frequent these hexes, falling upon weary travelers. The chance of random encounters increases by 10%.

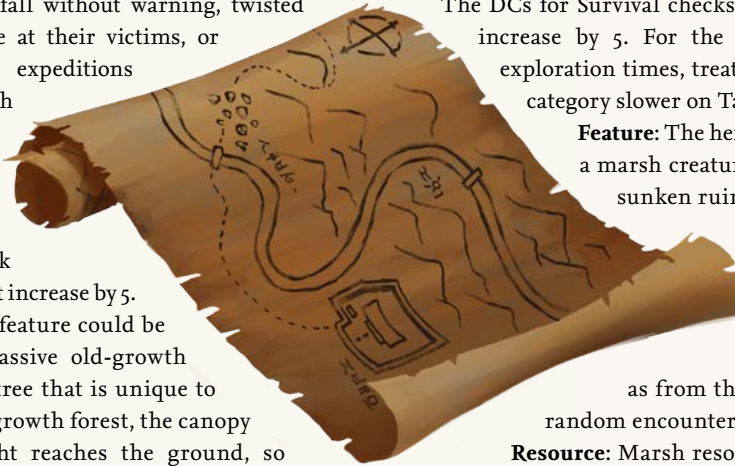
Resource: The hex contains resources such as quality stone, coal, precious metals, or gems.

Secret: Hidden pathways carved through the mountains offer speedier paths. If the PCs succeed at a DC 20 Perception check to find the pathways, they can ignore the default travel time increase for the mountain hex.

Plain

Plains can be fields of high grasses, permanently frozen tundra, or flat badlands.

Difficult: Dangerous plains tend to be filled with small sinkholes and pits that can twist or break the legs of the unwary. For the purposes of travel and exploration times, treat the party's speed as one category slower on Tables 3-2 and 3-3.



Feature: The plain might be the site of an old battlefield, with the remnants of earthwork defenses and trenches.

Hunting Ground: Ambush predators abound in these plains hexes, using the cover of tall grass to outflank and strike surprised prey. In tundra and badlands terrain, predators lie in wait underground using abilities such as burrow, or by digging shallow pits to hide in. The chance of random encounters increases by 25%.

Resource: The hex has edible plants (such as wheat or cacti) or useful vegetable matter (such as flax or cotton).

Secret: Stolen goods are buried in the hex and marked with an innocuous sign, such as an out-of-place river rock. With a successful DC 25 Perception check, the PCs recognize the marker and can each salvage treasure or nonmagical gear worth 10 gp per character level.

Settlement

Normal settlement hexes are small villages or military encampments. Settlements usually appear with another terrain type they're built upon. Frequently used trails or even simple roads reduce travel time through the hex by 25–50% depending on the terrain type for that hex.

Difficult: A difficult settlement hex holds the ruins of an abandoned town or one full of the victims of famine, plague, or another devastating event. Decrepit buildings might collapse at any moment (treat as a cave-in or collapse; *Core Rulebook* 415).

Feature: The settlement hex has a community with a well-known reputation or historical significance.

Hunting Ground: This settlement is lawless, frequently attacked by brigands or pirates, or plagued by civil unrest. The chance of random encounters increases by 25%.

Resource: The settlement is a trading post, merchant camp, or small fort on a crucial crossroad or river crossing, and goods of many types (particularly trade goods and natural resources from nearby hexes) pass through the area.

Secret: A secret settlement is a bandit fort, pirate town, village inhabited by monsters, or secret home of someone trying to avoid normal civilization. The hex primarily resembles an adjacent hex type, and access to the settlement is usually hidden.

Water

Whether a river, lake, or ocean, this type of hex is predominantly water. If the PCs lack swim speeds or boats, it is best to treat lakes and oceans as obstacles for the PCs to travel around rather than through. Treat the shores of the water hex as the adjacent terrain type.

Difficult: Whitewater rapids, strong tides, or underwater vortexes mean this water is more challenging to cross. The Swim DCs to cross these waters increase by 5.

Feature: The hex is part of a large or well-known river's course, or has a sturdy bridge that facilitates easy crossing.

Hunting Ground: The hex might be home to predatory aquatic creatures or opportunistic hunters waiting to strike prey that comes to drink. The chance of random

encounters increases by 10%, or 25% if the PCs spend most of their time in the water.

Resource: Fish, shellfish, and pearls are plentiful in the hex. In some situations, the benefit of this resource is the availability of fresh water rather than the contaminated water or salt water available in nearby hexes.

Secret: The hex might contain an oasis, a connection to the Plane of Water, or a spring with magical powers.

RANDOM MAP GENERATION

Not everyone has the time to create a detailed map to use in-game. An example map has been provided on page 159 to photocopy and easily drop into play, but you and your players can also use the following rules to create a whole new map randomly during play. This can empower your players to discover the unexplored world around them. The options presented below are intentionally designed to be generic types of temperate terrain; adjust them for your own game. In a frozen wasteland, plain hexes could represent great expanses of icy ground, while in an arid climate they could represent massive alkali flats. Use these examples as a springboard to create a unique campaign of exploration.

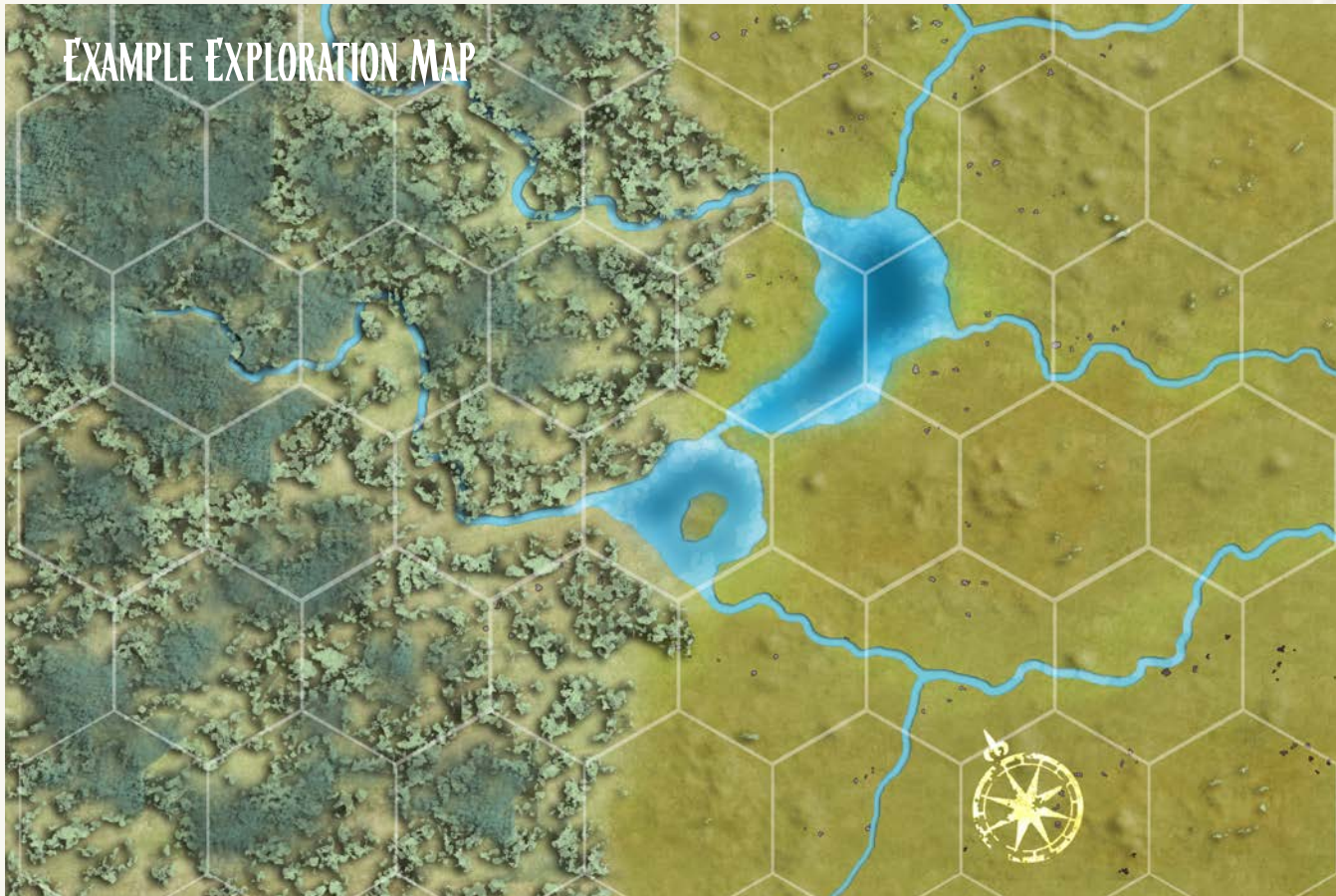
To generate a new map, begin by selecting a hex on your blank map as the starting point. Then decide the type of terrain for that starting point (such as a settlement in a forest hex). From that point onward, the reins of exploration are in your players' hands. Let them decide which direction they travel, and let each player take a turn generating the next hex by rolling 1d20 twice to determine the terrain type and terrain element for that hex using the tables below.

d20	TERRAIN TYPE
1-3	Forest
4-6	Hill
7-8	Marsh
9-10	Mountain
11-13	Plain
14	Settlement
15-16	Water
17-20	As previous terrain type

d20	TERRAIN ELEMENT
1-3	Difficult
4-6	Feature
7-10	Hunting Ground
11-12	Resource
13-14	Secret
15-20	Standard

HAZARDS

Hazards are dangerous obstacles or events relevant to a hex's terrain type. They represent the natural disasters, harsh weather, and bad luck that can befall an expedition, and are included to liven up the PCs' journey as they explore the world. In addition to these hazards, you might use an environmental danger that's suitable to the



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current terrain (*Core Rulebook* 424–433). After the effects of a hazard have been resolved, treat the hex as a standard example of that terrain.

Bad Weather (Any)

Bad weather can range from minor precipitation to a serious storm (*Core Rulebook* 438). The weather can include lightning strikes and cause floods, landslides, and other natural hazards.

Blight (Any)

Whether from a lack of water, a plague, or hostile magic, the plants and wildlife in the hex are suffering. A blight affects the hex and all adjacent unexplored hexes, and lasts for 1d4+2 weeks. During a blight, Survival DCs to get along in the wild increase by 5.

Deadly Gas (Desert, Marsh)

In a marsh, pockets of flammable gas can build up under the surface before violently erupting, throwing rocks, mud, and debris in all directions with startling force. In a desert, toxic fumes from a natural vent, old mine, or magical disaster might leak into the air, poisoning or mutating nearby creatures.

In a marsh, PCs can attempt a DC 15 Perception check to notice the smell and swelling before it erupts. The eruption deals 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage in a

20-foot radius, or 4d6 points of fire damage if the area contains open flame.

In a desert, PCs can attempt a DC 15 Perception check to notice the fumes and get out of their path before coming to harm. Otherwise, they must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Constitution damage and be nauseated for 10 minutes.

Dust Devil (Desert, Hill, Plain)

A dust devil is a whirlwind not associated with a storm, particularly in a region with little or no topsoil. Treat a dust devil as a duststorm (*Core Rulebook* 438), sandstorm (*Core Rulebook* 431), or tornado (*Core Rulebook* 439).

Grass Fire (Hill, Plain)

Grass fires are often caused by lightning or careless camp fires. A grass fire is similar to a forest fire (*Core Rulebook* 426), except it can be spotted at twice the normal distance, and a PC caught in its area saves against heat damage only every 10 rounds.

Volcanic Tremor (Hill, Mountain)

Though active volcanoes are rare, even dormant volcanoes can produce tremors. Tremors last anywhere from 1d4 rounds to 2d6 minutes and increase Climb DCs by 2. The tremors might start an avalanche or collapse a cave or cliff (similar to an *earthquake* spell).

HONOR

Beyond life and death, beyond good and evil, there is honor. It is the abode of the eternal, which none can take but which can be destroyed through a single rash act. It is a measure of one's place within a society, a status known to all and sought by many. Whether in a samurai culture, the frozen viking wastes of the northlands, or the dizzying court intrigues of a byzantine kingdom, honor provides an anchor and stable foundations for your life's work. If you lack honor, others view you as faithless, untrustworthy, disloyal, and unfair. Honor influences reputation, status, and legend, but transcends them all.

Who has honor varies from culture to culture. In some, anyone from the lowliest peasant to the emperor can pursue

honor, and a life lived in accordance with honor is the highest achievement. In another land, honor is a game only for nobility, a scoring method in their battles over status. Honor may be purely a warrior's code or a more primitive, largely unspoken understanding between combatants.

In some lands, the use of poison is an instant blight on one's honor. In others, its subtle and effective use might be a mark of the truly civilized person who wants to avert war and avoid innocent bloodshed. The general who fights until his last soldier falls is counted as honorable in some realms; in others, it is the general who surrenders, recognizing that sacrificing her soldiers' lives would be a waste. A criminal's code of honor is different from a priest's, and a school of wizards may have different rules for honor than a cabal of sorcerers.

No matter what form it takes, honor is recognition of a code larger than the individual, a willingness to subsume one's desires in the service of that code. Honor requires self-sacrifice. It is often neither the most reasonable course of action nor the most practical. It comes with a cost, but is its own reward. Your honor must be protected and upheld at all times; allowing another to besmirch it is almost as great an affront as you performing a dishonorable act. A dishonorable person may try to use your honorable code against you, but honor does not equate to stupidity.

This section presents a system for representing honor, as well as examples of various honor codes, including the chivalric code, the criminal code, and the samurai code.

HONOR POINTS

Honor is represented by points on a scale from 0 to 100. A score of 0 represents a person who is seen as completely untrustworthy, willing to sacrifice anything and anyone for even a momentary gain. A score of 100 represents a person of legendary stature whose reputation is without blemish. Honor is not a measurement of alignment, fame, or goodwill so much as a gauge of loyalty, trustworthiness, and fairness—one could be a kindhearted-but-flighty shogun with 0 honor points, or a cruel-but-stalwart monk with 100 honor points.

NPC Base Honor Points: An NPC's base number of honor points is equal to its CR \times 5. The GM modifies this value according to the Gaining and Losing Honor section. An NPC who deviates from the strictures of his society may have an honor score very different from this base value. Most NPCs' honor scores rarely change, though the GM might choose to bestow fortune or disgrace on a particular NPC as a story or adventure hook for the PCs.

PC Base Honor Points: You start with a number of honor points equal to your Charisma score plus your character level. For example, a 1st-level PC with a Charisma score of 13 starts with an honor score of 14. Whenever your experience level or Charisma permanently changes, adjust your honor score accordingly. You can also gain or lose honor points during play.





GAINING AND LOSING HONOR

You gain and lose honor points through events. Some events affect all PCs in the party (such as destroying a demon that's attacking a village), and others only affect you (such as losing a duel against a less honorable rival). Most of these events require witnesses who spread the word of what happened; if nobody outside sees the event, and nobody in the party speaks of it, it has no effect on your honor. The GM may decide that a delay of 1d6 days or more is appropriate for a change in honor, reflecting the time needed for news to travel.

A single event can earn you honor points for multiple reasons. For example, if you're a paladin using the chivalric code and your party's APL is 8, defeating a CR 11 hezrou demon earns everyone in the party 1 honor point for the "party overcomes a challenging encounter" general event and you earn 2 honor points for the "defeat a challenging monster of the opposite alignment" chivalric event.

The tables of honor point adjustments for the various types of codes provide examples of events that would cause you to gain or lose honor points. The honor point values are guidelines; the GM should adjust them as appropriate to the situation and campaign.

SPENDING HONOR

You can spend honor points once per game session to gain a temporary advantage for yourself, such as a gift, loan, or introduction to an important person. Each expenditure reduces your honor score by an amount determined by the GM. If you try to spend honor points for an advantage that costs more points than you currently have, your honor score is reduced to 0 and you don't gain the advantage—by reaching too high, you lose honor and gain nothing. Examples of honor point expenditures include the following.

Favor: You call upon an allied NPC for a favor. Examples include access to private resources (such as a wizard's library), unhindered passage through enemy territory (such as getting an official to write you a letter of passage), or an audience with an important person (such as a high priest or city governor). *Cost:* 1d6 to 5d6 honor points, depending on the difficulty of the favor and the NPC's attitude toward you. If the GM is using the Contacts rules (page 148), the typical cost is 1d6 honor points per risk level of the task.

Gift or Loan: You ask an NPC ally to give or loan you something of value. The gift or loan must be in the form of wealth or a single item. The GM may rule that an NPC refuses to give away a particularly rare or expensive item. The item must be something the NPC can actually grant—you can't ask a peasant for a suit of armor or a ronin for the emperor's personal sword. A gift is permanent, but a loan lasts only for the game session in which it is granted. *Cost:* 1d6 honor points per 2,000 gp value of the gift. If the request is a loan instead of a gift, the honor point cost is halved, but if you do not return the item at the end of the session, you must pay this honor point cost at the start of each session until the item is returned. This counts as your one

opportunity to spend honor points that session; you can't spend honor on anything else until you return the item.

Skill Bonus: Choose Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate. You gain a +5 circumstance bonus on checks for that skill for the rest of the game session. *Cost:* 1d6 honor points.

CONSEQUENCES OF LOSING HONOR

If your honor score reaches 0, you take a –2 penalty on Will saving throws and Charisma-based checks, representing your sense of shame. If you are part of an honor-bound institution, your lack of honor may bring shame upon the institution, and cause its leaders to punish you.

You may renounce your code of honor at any time. You lose all honor points and benefits from honor, but do not take the penalty for having 0 honor points (not having a code is not the same as flaunting your code). Any characters who believe in that code refuse to speak or deal with you any more than they must. Your NPC allies avoid you. Your honorable institution declares you an enemy. Even those who have no association with your former code may steer clear of you, fearing retribution from your honorable institution.

General Honor Events

These events are appropriate for most honor codes, including the individual codes listed below.

EVENT	HONOR POINTS
Complete a CR-appropriate Adventure Path	+10
Complete a noble task for an honorable NPC (50+ honor points) and tell no one	+2
Roll 30 or higher on a Craft check to create a work of art or masterwork item ¹	+2
Roll 30 or higher on a Diplomacy or Intimidate check ¹	+2
Roll 30 or higher on a Perform check ¹	+2
Complete a CR-appropriate adventure ²	+1
Craft a powerful magic item	+1 ³
Destroy an evil or dangerous magic item	+1 ⁴
Party overcomes a challenging encounter (CR 3 or more higher than APL)	+1
Willingly break one of the tenets of your code of honor	–2
Party flees an easy combat challenge (CR lower than APL)	–3
Slander a person with a higher honor score	–4
Party loses an easy combat challenge (CR lower than APL)	–5
Commit an act of treason or betray an honorable lord	–10
Be directly responsible for the death of an honorable ally or loved one under your protection	–20

¹ You can gain honor points this way once per month.

² About the length of a 32- or 48-page published adventure.

³ Per 40,000 gp of the item's price.

⁴ Per 40,000 gp of the item's price. Artifacts with no price grant 5 honor points for this purpose.

Chivalric Code

These events apply to a chivalric or Arthurian knight's code.

EVENT	HONOR POINTS
Become a lord or similar rank	+50
Defeat a noble lord in combat	+20
Agree to protect and be responsible for the protection of an honorable ally	+10
Redeem a dishonorable foe	+6
Acquire vassals	+4
Offer sanctuary and defend that offer	+3
Swear fealty to a lord	+3
Defeat a challenging monster of the opposite alignment (CR 2 or more higher than APL)	+2
Protect a site holy to your religion against attackers	+2
Protect an innocent against significant odds (CR 2 or more higher than APL)	+2
Swear a major oath and uphold it	+2
Win a tournament	+2
Accept an enemy's parole	+1
Participate in a tournament	+1
Accept an enemy's parole and refuse to honor the ransom	-2
Be betrayed by a "redeemed" foe	-2
Be convicted of a petty crime	-2
Offer sanctuary and betray it	-4
Swear a major oath and break it	-4
Win a tournament by cheating	-5

Criminal Code

These events apply to a criminal code such as that used by a thieves' guild or ninja clan.

EVENT	HONOR POINTS
Become a guildmaster (city population 25,000+) ¹	+50
Become a guildmaster (city population 10,000+) ¹	+25
Adopt a specific criminal code ²	+4
End a long-running feud (1+ years) with a criminal more honorable than you ³	+3
Party humiliates an honorable noble ⁴	+3
Corrupt a high-ranking public official ⁵	+2
Willingly take the fall for a higher-ranking criminal	+2
Minstrels willingly sing about your exploits ⁵	+1
Defeat a legal challenge, be acquitted, or avoid sentencing	+1
Party agrees to and then commits a significant crime	+1
Steal a powerful magic item or valuable treasure	+1 ⁶
Be convicted of a significant crime	+1
Pay minstrels to sing about your exploits	-2
Willingly work with the authorities to prevent or solve a crime	-2
Party agrees to commit a crime and then reneges	-3

Engage in a long-running feud (1+ years) with a criminal less honorable than you ³	-4
Refuse to punish an associate for becoming a turncoat	-4
Party cooperates with authorities in helping dismantle a criminal enterprise	-5
Violate your specific criminal code	-6
Be toppled as guildmaster	-30

¹ These events don't stack for the same city. If the city's population increases after you become guildmaster, you gain the difference in honor points between the two events.

² Such as "I commit only property crimes" or "I never steal, I only commit murder."

³ Your honor score and the other criminal's must differ by at least 20 points.

⁴ Non-criminal honor point score of 50 or more.

⁵ You can gain honor points this way once per month.

⁶ Per 40,000 gp of the item's price.

Political Code

These events apply to cultures favoring political intrigue, espionage, and diplomacy.

EVENT	HONOR POINTS
Become leader of a country	+50
Become a duke (or equivalent rank)	+20
Ascend the ranks of nobility	+15
Receive an important appointment	+10
Successfully negotiate a peace for a national dispute	+5
Prevent a war	+5
Successfully negotiate a peace for a familial dispute	+3
Act as an ambassador	+2
Gain the favor of an honorable NPC ¹	+2
Remove an enemy without bloodshed or death	+2
Start a popular war	+2
Write and deliver a treaty	+2
Aid a political ally of lower status ²	+1
Embarrass a rival	+1
Make allies in the bureaucracy	+1
Successfully negotiate a peace for a personal dispute	+1
Make well-placed enemies in the bureaucracy	-1
Refuse to use violence when negotiation fails	-2
Fail as an ambassador to a neutral country	-3
Refuse to aid someone who did you a favor	-3
Receive an embarrassing appointment	-4
Use violence to solve a problem when negotiation was an option	-5
Start an unpopular war	-8
Fail to keep a popular war popular	-10

¹ You can gain this reward once per NPC. The NPC must have at least 10 more honor points than you.

² You can gain this reward once per month. The NPC must have at least 10 fewer honor points than you.



Samurai Code

These events apply to a samurai code.

EVENT	HONOR POINTS
Become a daimyo or temple master	+80
Defeat an honorable daimyo or temple master in combat	+20
Commit seppuku	+10
Adopt a strict code of honor	+8
Help a disgraced ally perform seppuku	+4
Challenge and defeat in single combat someone who has publicly dishonored you	+3
Party defeats a challenging oni (CR higher than APL)	+3
Destroy a shrine that's dedicated to an opposing power	+2
Protect a shrine from marauders	+2
Roll 30 or higher on a Craft check to create a work of art or masterwork item ¹	+2
Roll 30 or higher on a Perform check ¹	+2
Perform an action against your alignment because of a sworn oath ²	+1
Trick a kami in a battle of wits	+1
Excessively brag of your accomplishments ³	-1
Be convicted of a petty crime	-2
Be drunk in public	-2
Slay an honorable opponent who has surrendered	-5

¹ You can gain honor points this way once per month. If this event recounts accomplishments of another PC or NPC, you and the subject gain 2 honor points each. If the event mocks the subject and the subject has fewer honor points than you, you gain 2 honor points and the subject loses 2. If the event mocks a target with more honor points than you, you risk the -4 slander penalty if the event can be associated with you. Each additional subject the event would praise or mock gives the skill check a -5 penalty.

² The oath must be to someone with more honor points than you.

³ Unless this is part of a class ability that requires you to brag about your accomplishments.

Tribal Code

These events apply to nomadic or tribal societies.

EVENT	HONOR POINTS
Become the leader of the clan	+50
Defeat the leader of your tribe in single combat and become leader	+20
Gain justice for a large slight to your family, tribe, or clan	+3
Defend your village or camp from a raid	+2
Develop a recognizable and feared persona	+2
Go far beyond the basics of hospitality	+2
Represent your tribe at a clan gathering	+2
Stand against 10 opponents (whether the conflict is physical, social, or artistic)	+2
Challenge the leader of your tribe to single combat for leadership	+1

Develop a new tribal tradition	+1
Enact tribal justice for a serious transgression	+1
Gain justice for a small insult to your family, tribe, or clan	+1
Party enforces the code of hospitality	+1
Break tribal behavioral code	-1
Speak ill of your clan outside your clan	-1
Speak ill of your tribe outside your tribe	-2
Back down from a one-on-one fight	-3
Ignore tribal command structure	-3
Party refuses hospitality to other travelers	-3
Speak out against a member of your family	-3
Party takes advantage of hospitality, then betrays the hosts	-5



INVESTMENT

From the lowly copper piece to treasure chests bulging with precious gemstones, the anchor of most parties is treasure. But what is the purpose of a PC collecting this money if not to better her life? Once she's acquired it, shouldn't she put it to work for her? After all, adventuring is not a certain prospect—investments are a much safer bet, and the return they offer on the money invested comes without all the dangers involved in adventuring.

But an investment is still a wager, and sometimes these wagers go bad. This section provides a sample of monetary investments a PC might make, and offers the GM suggestions for potential adventure hooks that utilize those investments in the broader campaign. If the PC makes an investment, it should be more interesting than calculating compound interest—give the PC the opportunity to interact with monetary decisions.

The rate of return shouldn't be more than 5% per year for low-risk investments, though particularly risky investments might see as much as 15–20%. This upper end should be incredibly rare, and situations where the investors' profit exceeds 25% are almost unheard of. A GM should ration out those high-yield investments carefully. Keep in mind that unscrupulous people are always

happy to get between the players and their investment income. Whether these people are legitimate (such as the tax collectors) or not (such as bandits, swindlers, or thugs wanting protection money), the net profit on an investment is frequently less than anticipated.

INVESTMENT MECHANICS

When a PC decides to invest, ask the player how much money the PC provides for the investment. This is the seed money, and has a direct effect on how much money the investment earns each year (see below).

A GM can use Table 3–4: Investment Rewards as a general guideline for how much an investment is likely to return. The GM can modify these percentages to reflect particulars of the campaign. Players and GMs should use this guide only for investments in a fantasy world, not reality.

To use this table, roll d% to check the investment's success or failure.

Failed Year: The investment does not provide a return this year. Three failed years in a row indicate that the investment is ruined, and the operation ends unless the character continues to invest at 2 to 3 times the amount of the original investment.

Normal Year: The investment is successful and earns its Normal Return \times the seed money. For example, if the seed money is 1,000 gp and the Normal Return is 3%, the investment earns the PC 30 gp as profit that year. She can choose to reinvest this profit (automatically increasing the seed money by this amount for the next year), pocket the Normal Return, or cash out the entire investment (seed money plus the Normal Return) as money or goods appropriate to the investment. For example, the PC could add the 30 gp to her 1,000 gp of seed money for next year's roll; pocket the 30 gp, and remain invested with 1,000 gp of seed money; or take the 1,030 gp (1,000 gp of seed money + 30 gp profit) and walk away from the investment.

Breakout Year: The investment has a good year and earns far more than expected. Make the die roll indicated in the Breakout Return column and multiply the result by the percentage listed in the Normal Return column. For example, if the PC invests in banking and has a breakout year, she multiplies the Breakout Return for banking (1d4+1) \times the Normal Return for banking (2%) to determine that year's return. If the roll results in a 5, that year's return is 10% of her investment. As with a normal year, the PC can reinvest this profit, pocket the Breakout Return, or cash out her seed money plus the Breakout Return.



Quentin



If a PC needs money quickly or wants to end her association with a particular investment, she can withdraw her seed money from the investment at any time, which normally takes 1d6 days and requires direct contact with the person running the investment (such as the manager of an inn, master of a guild, or head of an exploratory group). The PC receives only half of the invested seed money; the rest is lost as the involved parties quickly sell off assets (generally at half their actual value) to refund the PC her seed money. This sort of behavior tends to sour relationships between the PC and the others, making future investments with that group unlikely.

EXAMPLE INVESTMENTS AND PROBLEMS

This list of investments is not meant to be exhaustive; NPC ingenuity could open up all sorts of investments. Some research on medieval and Renaissance technology reveals many ideas the people of those times used to make their lives easier, and some of those ideas can easily become an investment opportunity for the PCs. This section details how particular investments might serve as plot hooks for the PCs involved.

Arts: The entertainers are more volatile or political than the investor had imagined.

Banking: The investor's theoretically impenetrable vault is cracked and the valuables stolen.

Crafting: A labor strike, bandit activity, or an unscrupulous rival blocks access to needed materials.

Exploration: An explorer ends up being unreliable, greedy, or incautious, accidentally releasing ancient evils on an unsuspecting populace.

Granary/Mill: The building catches on fire, either from a simple accident or deliberate arson, and the aerosolized grain causes a massive explosion.

Guild: A rival guild targets the investor's employees, friends, family, or buildings.

Imports: Enemies of the client see a shipment as an opportunity to humiliate or kill the PC and acquire valuable goods.

Invention: The invention fails spectacularly and dangerously, putting the surrounding populace at risk.

Protection: A client you're protecting betrays an assassin's guild, is branded as a heretic by an influential church, or insults a prominent member of the ruling elite.

Quarry: Miners discover a strange hazard such as mutation-inducing crystals or a cave complex full of dangerous monsters.

Research: The research goes awry, or falls into the hands of blackmailers, criminals intent on using it for evil, or rival researchers.

Stable: Sabotage or a deadly accident occurs, or a rustler steals the most valuable mounts.

Tavern: Overheard plans for an ambush spark rumors and property damage.

TABLE 3-4: INVESTMENT REWARDS

INVESTMENT	NORMAL RETURN	FAILED YEAR	NORMAL YEAR	BREAKOUT YEAR	BREAKOUT RETURN
Arts					
Creative	4%	01-30	31-95	96-00	2d4+1
Performing	2%	01-35	36-95	96-00	2d6+1
Banking					
	2%	01-10	11-98	99-00	1d4+1
Crafting					
Common	1%	01-05	06-95	96-00	1d3+1
Magical	5%	01-30	31-95	96-00	1d8+1
Military	5%	01-15	16-90	91-00	1d6+1
Exploration					
	2%	01-40	41-85	86-00	2d8+1
Granary/Mill					
	3%	01-10	11-98	99-00	1d3+1
Guild					
Assassins'	5%	01-30	31-95	96-00	2d4+1
Crafting	2%	01-05	06-98	99-00	1d3+1
Merchant	3%	01-10	11-98	99-00	1d4+1
Thieves'	4%	01-15	16-90	91-00	1d8+1
Imports					
Exotic	5%	01-30	31-90	91-00	1d10+1
Ordinary	2%	01-15	16-95	96-00	1d4+1
Invention					
	3%	01-40	41-90	91-00	2d6+1
Protection					
	3%	01-30	31-95	96-00	1d8+1
Quarry					
	3%	01-20	21-90	91-00	1d6+1
Research					
Magical	5%	01-50	51-75	76-00	2d6+1
Mundane	3%	01-20	21-85	86-00	1d8+1
Stable					
	1%	01-05	06-98	99-00	1d3+1
Tavern					
	2%	01-10	11-98	99-00	1d4+1



LINEAGE

A hero doesn't just blink into existence the moment you fill out a character sheet; he came from somewhere. For most characters, that means he has or had a family: a mother and father, who in turn had mothers and fathers of their own, and so on, stretching back into the past in a chain of ancestry. This is the character's lineage, and it shapes and defines the character, whether he's consciously aware of it or not. Some lineages are more complex than others—adoption, sorcerer bloodlines, and reincarnation are a few examples—but the idea of family is still important beyond immediate blood ties. Whatever form this lineage takes, it has a profound effect on the character's life, story, and role in the campaign.

DEVELOPING YOUR FAMILY

The most obvious manifestation of your character's lineage is his still-living relatives. Many of these NPCs have been with the character since birth, and helped shape him into the person he is today. A character's family is an extension of that character's backstory, and so you should ultimately have the final say over its size and nature. The GM should only intervene when your desired family would disrupt the campaign in some way or give you an unfair advantage. For the same reason, the GM should avoid introducing new members to your character's family after the campaign begins, unless the circumstances of the story (such as marriage or pregnancy) demand it.

The first thing you need to do is to determine the size and composition of your character's family. This can be chosen arbitrarily, within reason, or can be generated randomly using the rules in Chapter 1 of this book. One character's family might consist solely of the single parent who raised him, while another character might be a part of a large clan or noble house. Once you determine the size of the family, you can use the guidelines in this book and Chapter 4 of the *GameMastery Guide* to further develop the personalities of these relatives. Every family is different, so it's hard to generalize a PC's relationship with his relatives. The following guidelines are a good place to start. This assumes a happy, functional family. For other family types of dynamics, see *Complicated and Dysfunctional Families*.

Immediate Family: This group includes anyone who played a direct role in raising the character, or anyone whom the character is raising (such as a child or younger sibling). Generally this includes the character's mother, father, surrogate parents, brothers, sisters, and any other live-in relatives. The character's spouse (if any) also belongs in this category, as do any children. The size of an immediate family varies by culture, but for most campaigns they shouldn't be too numerous. These family members are usually very loyal, and start the campaign with a helpful attitude toward the PC

(though in most campaigns they are low-level NPC-class characters and can't provide much support in terms of finances or gear). It should be difficult to permanently worsen their attitudes, barring exceptionally heinous actions. A character's greatest obligations are often to immediate family members, and when times get rough for the family, he may be expected to spend time or money helping them.

Extended Family: These family members had a less important role in the character's life growing up, but nonetheless played a part. This group often includes aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Married characters might also count their in-laws. A character's extended family is almost always larger and more diverse than her immediate family, but also less willing or able to help her in times of difficulty. Usually these relatives have a friendly attitude, though a few might be helpful, indifferent, or even hostile, depending on the family's circumstances. A character generally has fewer obligations to her extended family, though these relatives may still expect the occasional favor from the PC.

Distant Relatives: Any person who is only loosely related to your character and has no strong emotional bond to the PC is considered a distant relative. These characters have little connection to you beyond (possibly) a shared surname, or are extended family of someone in your character's extended family. They are the character's most numerous and diverse group of relatives, and so can come in handy in a wide variety of situations, though she can't rely on them for help too directly or too often. These NPCs generally start with an indifferent attitude, though a particularly family-oriented relative might be friendly instead. They also generally don't expect many favors from the PC in return. They can usually be counted on to take the PC's side when dealing with people outside the family.

COMPLICATED AND DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES

Of course, not all families get along. Past trauma, such as abuse or neglect, can shatter bonds, poisoning what should be healthy relationships. Politics and religion also drive wedges between relatives, turning brother against brother and mother against daughter. Sometimes a simple clash of personalities is enough to turn one family member away. Because of reasons like these, some family members begin with a worse attitude toward your PC than the above guidelines suggest. Most such relatives will be unfriendly to the PC at worst, though hostile relatives are possible in extreme cases.

Whether or not your character initially gets along with his family is up to you. However, once the campaign begins, it's the GM's responsibility to control these relatives and determine how their attitudes change over the course of play. A character that acts against his family's interests, fails too often in familial obligations,



or behaves in a manner contrary to the family's beliefs or ethics should expect relationships to sour. This should be handled delicately, as turning a character's family against him seriously alters the character's place in the campaign. The GM should remember that most families are forgiving, and only the most egregious of acts should have a permanent effect on the character's relationships with his family.

In the event that a family member's attitude does shift, reconciliation should always be possible (likewise, relatives who started out as unfriendly or hostile can be brought around with enough hard work). If the character convinces his family that he is truly repentant or trying to make amends with the offended relative, and he works to redress any wrongs he may have done, things should return to normal over time. How the character must do this is up to the GM. It might be as simple as making a Diplomacy check, or complex enough to merit its own side quest or short adventure.

FAMILY VALUES

You can create and describe the individual members of your character's family using Chapter 4 of the *GameMastery Guide* and the guidelines earlier in this chapter, but a true family is more than a collection of NPCs with the same surname. Families have traditions, values, and a shared folklore that sets them apart, even from other groups in the same culture. When developing your character's family, you should consider what makes that family unique.

Does the family have any famous ancestors that they're proud or embarrassed of? What stories do the family elders tell about them? What stories do other family members tell? Does the family follow any special naming traditions, or worship a deity unusual for the region? What songs do they sing? Do any members have notorious reputations? Does the family have a motto? What values do they hold and what behaviors do they condemn? These are just a few examples of questions you can use to breathe life into the family and give its members a sense of cohesion.

INCLUDING FAMILIES IN THE GAME

While creating and developing a character's family is largely your responsibility, it's up to the GM to determine how large a role that family plays in the campaign. The family's role might be limited to that of a background element, serving only to flesh out your character concept, or it could play a pivotal role in the campaign's story, tying the character directly to the plot and motivating her from adventure to adventure.

Creating a family for your character helps establish an emotional connection with the campaign setting, and the GM should encourage this by giving your family some measure of in-game relevance. Yet placing too much emphasis on one character's family gives that player undue influence over the campaign, and unless the rest of the party is composed of playing members of the same family, the other players could feel underrepresented.

The GM also needs to make sure that your character doesn't receive too much help from her family. If you play a character with a large or influential family, or a character with ties to a notable or powerful NPC, the GM should be wary of placing too much power in the hands of NPCs related to your character, as this could mean your character steals the spotlight from the rest of the party or makes trivial an important encounter by calling in some favors. The GM is free to disallow any familial relationships that could disrupt the campaign, but it may be worthwhile for you to work with the GM to create the relationships you want in a way that fits the campaign. For example, perhaps your character is disliked by his powerful relative, and therefore you can't call on the



relative for assistance except in the most dire situation. Another option is for your character to have ties to a prominent family, but for the rest of the family to be far removed from where the adventure takes place, placing any help weeks or months away.

SUPPORT AND OBLIGATION

Unless your character's family is astonishingly poor, they should be able to provide the PC and her allies with simple, mundane aid. This might mean a decent meal, a clean set of clothes, a roof for the night, or a few extra hands for some manual labor. Beyond this, what sort of aid the family provides depends on the family's interests and skills. A family of artisans might offer to craft a nonmagical piece of equipment, or lend tools and equipment related to their trade. A family of musicians might help you make contact with an influential noble patron, or throw a party for your friends and allies after a great victory.

Family members should never fight your PC's battles for you, and probably shouldn't fight at all except in extreme circumstances—after all, your PC is likely the adventurous member of the family. However, if you take the Leadership feat and select a family member as a cohort, the normal cohort rules apply and you may turn a family member into a combat-ready NPC (though the rest of your family may never forgive you if you get your relative killed by a monster).

One easy way to handle the family's aid to your PC is to use the rules for NPC Boons (*GameMastery Guide* 88), mainly in the form of favor and skill boons. These boons usually come only from immediate family members, and even then only as often as the GM feels is appropriate. Unique boons (as defined in the *GameMastery Guide*) might make an excellent reward for a PC who does her family a great service.

These offers of help don't come for free. Your character is expected to help the family when problems arise. The family should primarily ask for small favors, things your character can take care of with a simple skill check or a little gold. For example, your niece might ask you to help her enroll in a prestigious academy, necessitating a Diplomacy check with the school's dean, or your character's brother might ask for a small loan to start a new business. These favors should play to your character's strengths, and come with tangible benefits for your adventuring career in order to prevent the family member from becoming a GM-controlled nuisance. For example, your niece can arrange to get you access to her school's magical library, and your brother can give you a discount on the goods or services his business sells. These activities should take place during downtime so as to not detract from adventuring. Family obligations are also a way to introduce short side quests into the game, although GMs should be sure to include plot hooks that interest the rest of the party.

INHERITANCE

The GM may decide that your character inherits something of value from a deceased relative. This may be as innocuous as a village farm or a house in the city, an adventurer's heirloom such as a masterwork rapier or *ring of protection +1*, or something cryptic and unnerving like a glowing frog idol or a skull that whispers secrets.

These items are often the source of adventure hooks: Perhaps squatters are living in your house, the rapier has an inscription in a lost language, or cultists are trying to steal the idol. Sometimes the inheritance creates family drama, such as a brother who is upset that you got the house instead of him, an impoverished uncle who'd like to sell the ring, or a religious cousin who shuns you because you own the blasphemous skull. Just like in real life, an inheritance can divide close family members or create alliances out of distant relatives.

These guidelines for inheritance don't apply if you are just using the idea as a way to provide roleplaying flavor for your character's starting equipment. For example, if your starting equipment at 1st level includes a normal longbow, you don't need GM approval to say that the bow once belonged to your grandmother, who was a ranger in her youth. However, if you wanted an heirloom masterwork longbow or *+1 longbow* for your character, you would need GM approval because the price of either of those items is beyond what a 1st-level character could afford.

FAMILY MEMBERS AS FOES

Villainous relatives are everywhere in popular fiction, and for good reason—confronting the “black sheep” of the family, whether over bad politics, stealing from the family business, or dangerous criminal acts carries a lot of dramatic tension, and the fallout from this sort of storyline can impact the entire family for generations. Having a friendly family member turn out to be the villain is just as effective as having a retired PC become a villain (see Retirement on page 186). The GM should use this as a plot device sparingly—turning relatives into villains is predictable, can negatively impact your perception of your character's family, and might focus the campaign too much on one player.

Instead of using a family member as a turncoat, you can plant the seeds for shady members of the family that the GM can use or ignore for the campaign. If your character's family owns a horse ranch, you may have a cousin who's fallen in with horse thieves. If the family owns a farm, a lazy uncle may have run off to join a cult or a gang of bandits. If the family matriarch is heavily involved with the local good temple, an eerie cousin may have sorcerer powers or leave to study necromancy. These NPCs may appear in the campaign later as obvious foes or as morally ambiguous characters you can recruit or ally with—after all, as an adventurer, you may be the black sheep in your family, an embarrassment that nobody decent talks about at family gatherings!

Having a relative as an antagonist brings additional complications. The family might deem harming your kin the ultimate sin, or maybe doing so would upset an influential relative, putting your character in a situation where you can't attack that opponent and can't allow allies to kill him. Alternatively, you could feel it is your personal mission to rid the family of the villain who stains its reputation, or bring that person to justice. If the problem family member is a dead ancestor of yours, it could fall to you to make amends for his evil deeds—or bear the burden of being the only one in the family who knows that a celebrated grandparent was secretly a cold-blooded murderer.

Long-lived monstrous races in your background can have interesting consequences for your character—though the ancestor's misdeeds happened decades ago, that relative may still be active in the campaign. For example, the shapechanging red dragon who polluted your bloodline may awaken after a century of rest, or the vampire queen of a nearby land may turn out to be your rebellious great-grandmother. Adversarial relationships like these provide a campaign villain and allow all the PCs to participate in your family's story, and can be the key to unlocking traits or other abilities for your character.

DEATH IN THE FAMILY

When a GM kills your PC's family members, it carries just as much risk as using your PC's family members as villains, and yields far fewer benefits. The death of a loved one at an enemy's hand can certainly provide an emotional kick to the campaign, and help characterize a villain as a truly loathsome individual. However, the unforeseen death of a beloved family member can just as easily prove jarring or traumatic if you are heavily invested in your character's family's well-being. If the GM believes it is necessary to place your character's family in peril, you should have a fair opportunity to defend or save them, or at least to distract the one responsible long enough for your family to get to safety.

FAMOUS LINEAGES

Your character's deceased family members can have just as strong an influence over the campaign as you do. Lineages vary widely; one character might be descended from an ancient line of kings, and another could be the child of an infamous thief. Rather than simply granting your character benefits or drawbacks based on her ancestors, your character's legacy should be used to provide hooks for further adventures and quests.

For example, a powerful evil NPC might owe your character's dead grandmother a favor and plot to discreetly eliminate your character before you learn of this debt and try to collect on it. If your character survives long enough to discover the NPC's motives, the favor may be of great benefit. Similarly, clues might surface implicating a dead

ancestor in a terrible crime, prompting the local governor to place your character on trial in his stead because of a law that allows punishing descendants for an ancestor's offenses. To survive, your character needs to delve into your family history in order to clear the ancestor's name (and save your life), perhaps recovering a forgotten title or long-lost heirloom as a reward.

By drawing both positive and negative consequences from your character's past, the GM can present a nuanced and realistic portrayal of your character's legacy, while simultaneously producing scenarios versatile enough to capture the interest of the other PCs.



MAGIC ITEM CREATION

If you have item creation feats (or access to those feats from cohorts or other NPCs), you might want to use time between adventures to craft magic items, either to create new items from scratch or add abilities to existing items. If the desired item is something out of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* and you have the appropriate feats, the GM's role is mainly to approve or disapprove the creation of the item (for example, if the GM has decided that the desired item is rare, requires exotic ingredients, or is illegal or forbidden where the downtime takes place). If there is a chance for you to accidentally create a cursed item by failing the skill check by 5 or more, the GM should roll the check in secret so you don't know whether or not the item is cursed.

If you want to create an entirely new type of item (such as a ring that allows you to cast *acid arrow* three times per day) or add properties to an existing item (such as adding the *flaming* property to a *holy avenger*), the process is more complex and requires discussion and cooperation between you and the GM. The following sections address common concerns and problems about magic item creation.

Pricing New Items

The correct way to price an item is by comparing its abilities to similar items in the *Core Rulebook* (see Magic Item Gold Piece Values on page 549 of the *Core Rulebook*), and only if there are no similar items should you use the pricing formulas to determine an approximate price for the item. If you discover a loophole that allows an item to have an ability for a much lower price than is given for a comparable item in the *Core Rulebook*, the GM should require using the price of the *Core Rulebook* item, as that is the standard cost for such an effect. Most of these loopholes stem from trying to get unlimited uses per day of a spell effect from the “command word” or “use-activated or continuous” lines of Table 15–29 on page 550 of *Core Rulebook*.

Example: Rob's cleric wants to create a heavy mace with a continuous *true strike* ability, granting its wielder a +20 insight bonus on attack rolls. The formula for a continuous spell effect is spell level \times caster level \times 2,000 gp, for a total of 2,000 gp (spell level 1, caster level 1). Jessica, the GM, points out that a +5 enhancement bonus on a weapon costs 50,000 gp, and the +20 bonus from *true strike* is much better than the +5 bonus from standard weapon enhancement, and suggests a price of 200,000 gp for the mace. Rob agrees that using the formula in this way is unreasonable and decides to craft a +1 *heavy mace* using the standard weapon pricing rules instead.

Example: Patrick's wizard wants to create bracers with a continuous *mage armor* ability, granting the wearer a +4 armor bonus to AC. The formula indicates this would cost 2,000 gp (spell level 1, caster level 1). Jessica reminds

him that *bracers of armor +4* are priced at 16,000 gp and Patrick's bracers should have that price as well. Patrick agrees, and because he only has 2,000 gp to spend, he decides to spend 1,000 gp of that to craft *bracers of armor +1* using the standard bracer prices.

Some new items are really existing magic items with a different weapon or armor type, such as a *dagger of venom* that is a rapier instead of a dagger or a *lion's shield* that's a wooden shield instead of a metal shield. For these items, just replace the price of the nonmagical masterwork item with the cost of the new type of item. For example, a *rapier of venom* has a price of 8,320 gp instead of the *dagger of venom's* price of 8,302 gp.

Cooperative Crafting

If you need another character to supply one of an item's requirements (such as if you're a wizard creating an item with a divine spell), both you and the other character must be present for the entire duration of the crafting process. If the GM is using the downtime system from Chapter 2, both you and the other character must use downtime at the same time for this purpose. Only you make the skill check to complete the item—or, if there is a chance of creating a cursed item, the GM makes the check in secret.

If the second character is providing a spell effect, that character's spell is expended for the day, just as if you were using one of your own spells for a requirement. If the second character is a hired NPC, you must pay for the NPC's spellcasting service (*Core Rulebook* 163) for each day of the item creation.

Upgrading Items

Adding more magic to an existing item can be quite simple or very math-intensive. If the item's current and proposed abilities follow the normal pricing rules (particularly with weapons, armor, and shields), adding the new abilities is a matter of subtracting the old price from the new price and determining how many days of crafting it takes to make up the difference.

Example: Patrick's wizard decides to use his downtime to increase the armor bonus on his *bracers of armor +1* to +3. The price difference between the two types of bracers is 8,000 gp, so Patrick's wizard must spend 8 days and 4,000 gp (half the 8,000 gp price difference) upgrading his bracers' magic. If he has fewer than 8 days before the next adventure, he'll need to finish his crafting while traveling or use accelerated crafting in town to speed up the process.

For most other items, GMs should use the multiple different abilities rule (*Core Rulebook* 549) to determine the item's new price: increase the cost of the new ability by 50%, add that to the total price of the item to get the new price. Then subtract the old price from the new price to determine the difference, and determine how many days of crafting it takes to cover the difference.

Example: Lisa's paladin has *horseshoes of a zephyr* and wants to hire Patrick's wizard to add the powers of *horseshoes of speed* to her current horseshoes. Their GM, Jessica, decides that this is a suitable item and tells Lisa and Patrick they can proceed. The price of *horseshoes of speed* is 3,000 gp, increased by 50% for the multiple different abilities rule to 4,500 gp. Patrick's wizard must spend 5 days and Lisa's paladin must pay 2,250 gp (half the 4,500 gp price difference) to add the new property to the horseshoes, resulting in an item worth 10,500 gp (6,000 gp originally + 4,500 gp for the new property).

For specific magic armor and weapons, the price for the base item may be hard to determine, as some abilities may have been priced as plus-based properties and some as gp-based properties. Without knowing which is which, how to increase the price (using the plus-based table or flat gp addition) can't be determined. If this happens and nobody can agree on a fair price, it's best to not upgrade the item, or ask the GM for permission to pseudo-upgrade the item by swapping it for a different item with a price that can be calculated with the normal rules.

Example: Lisa's paladin has a *holy avenger* that she wants to upgrade with the *flaming* special ability. A *holy avenger* has a price of 120,630 gp, but when not in the hands of a paladin, it functions as a +5 *holy cold iron longsword*, which has a price of 100,630 gp. The 20,000 gp difference in the prices of these two possible base weapons includes the sword's spell resistance, *greater dispel magic* once per round, and the limitation that the extra powers don't work for non-paladins. Jessica and Lisa talk about pricing ideas for a while, but can't figure out a fair way to price the upgrade. Lisa decides to upgrade her character's armor instead.

The multiple similar abilities rule (*Core Rulebook* 549) is specifically for items that don't use a magic item slot (such as staves), and can't be used for items that do use a magic item slot. The existing staves in the *Core Rulebook* all use this rule for pricing the cost of their spells. When adding abilities to these items, remember that they're priced with the highest-level spell at 100% of the normal cost, the next-highest at 75%, and all others at 50%, which means that adding a new spell that's between the lowest and highest spell level can alter the cost of the other abilities in the item. Increasing the number of charges required for an ability also affects the cost of that ability (see *Creating Staves* on page 552 of the *Core Rulebook*). Because staff pricing is so complex, a GM might want to forbid adding new abilities to staves, or limit new abilities to the lowest-level spell already present in the item.

Recharging Charged Items

The *Core Rulebook* doesn't allow item creation feats to recharge charged items such as wands. This is because wands are the most cost-effective form of expendable spellcasting in the game (the minimum price is 15 gp per

charge, as compared to a minimum price of 25 gp per use for a scroll or 50 gp per use for a potion). Allowing wand recharging devalues scrolls and potions in the game, especially as using a wand does not provoke attacks of opportunity. A wand's lower price increment would also mean that partially recharging the wand is easily done with a short downtime period (10 charges per day for a 2nd-level wand, 4 per day for a 3rd-level wand, and 2 per day for a 4th-level wand), making the wand even more useful and cost-effective.

A GM who wants to allow wand recharging can require a minimum of 25 charges added to the item to help offset this advantage, as it forces you to



spend a larger amount of gold at once instead of smaller amounts more frequently.

Altering Existing Items

The *Core Rulebook* doesn't allow item creation feats to alter the physical nature of an item, its default size, its shape, or its magical properties. For example, there is no mechanism for using crafting feats to change a steel *+1 longsword* into an adamantite *+1 longsword*, a Large *+1 chain shirt* into a Medium *+1 chain shirt*, *boots of speed* into an *amulet of speed*, or a *+1 unholy longsword* into a *+1 flaming shock longsword*. Many GMs might decide that these kinds of transformations are impossible, beyond the scope of mortals, or not as cost-efficient as crafting a new item from scratch. Others might allow these sorts of transformations for free or a small surcharge. Keep in mind the following warnings.

Not All Item Slots Have Equal Value: This is true, even though it isn't expressed monetarily in the rules.

Some item slots are very common and are shared by many useful items (boots, belts, rings, and amulets in particular), while some slots are used by only a few items (such as body, chest, and eyes). Allowing a character to alter or craft an item for one of these underused slots is allowing the character to bypass built-in choices between popular items.

Some Abilities Are Assigned to Certain Slots: Some of the magic items in the *Core Rulebook* are deliberately assigned to specific magic item slots for balance purposes, so that you have to make hard choices about what items to wear. In particular, the magic belts and circlets that give enhancement bonuses to ability scores are in this category—characters who want to enhance multiple physical or mental ability scores must pay extra for combination items like a *belt of physical might* or *headband of mental prowess*.

If there is a trend of all *Core Rulebook* items of a particular type using a particular slot (such as items that grant physical ability score bonuses being belts or items that grant movement bonuses being boots), GMs should be hesitant to allow you to move those abilities to other slots; otherwise, they ignore these deliberate restrictions by cheaply spreading out these items over unused slots.

Classes Value Some Slots More Than Others: This is a combination of the two previous warnings. Because most belts enhance physical abilities, wizards rarely have need for standard belt items. This means a wizard can change an item that's useful to wizards into a belt and not have to worry about a future slot conflict by discovering a wizardly magic belt in a treasure hoard. Likewise, fighters have little use for most standard head items, so altering an existing fighter item to use the head slot means it has little risk of competition from found head slot items. GMs should consider carefully before allowing you to bypass these intentional, built-in item slot restrictions.

Respect Each Crafting Feat's Niche: You might be tempted to create rings that have charges like wands, or bracers with multiple charge-based effects like staves. A GM allowing this makes *Craft Wondrous Item* and *Forge Ring* even more versatile and powerful, and devalues *Craft Staff* and *Craft Wand* because those two feats can create only charged items.

Before allowing such an item, consider whether the reverse idea would be appropriate—if someone with *Craft Wand* can't make a *wand of protection +1* that grants a deflection bonus like a *ring of protection +1*, and if someone with *Craft Staff* can't make a *handy haversack* that stores items like a *handy haversack*, then *Craft Wondrous Item* and *Forge Ring* shouldn't be able to poach item types from the other feats.

GMs who wish to allow some of these sorts of alterations should consider using the original item as a talismanic component for the final item (see page 173).





Adjusting Character Wealth by Level

You can take advantage of the item creation rules to hand-craft most or all of your magic items. Because you've spent gp equal to only half the price of these items, you could end up with more gear than what the Character Wealth by Level table (*Core Rulebook* 399) suggests for you. This is especially the case if you're a new character starting above 1st level or one with the versatile Craft Wondrous Item feat. With these advantages, you can carefully craft optimized gear rather than acquiring GM-selected gear over the course of a campaign. For example, a newly created 4th-level character should have about 6,000 gp worth of gear, but you can craft up to 12,000 gp worth of gear with that much gold, all of it taking place before the character enters the campaign, making the time-cost of crafting irrelevant.

Some GMs might be tempted to reduce the amount or value of the treasure you acquire to offset this and keep your overall wealth in line with the Character Wealth by Level table. Unfortunately, that has the net result of negating the main benefit of crafting magic items—in effect negating your choice of a feat. However, game balance for the default campaign experience expects you and all other PCs to be close to the listed wealth values, so the GM shouldn't just let you craft double the normal amount of gear. As a guideline, allowing a crafting PC to exceed the Character Wealth by Level guidelines by about 25% is fair, or even up to 50% if the PC has multiple crafting feats.

If you are creating items for other characters in the party, the increased wealth for the other characters should come out of your increased allotment. Not only does this prevent you from skewing the wealth by level for everyone in the party, but it encourages other characters to learn item creation feats.

Example: The Character Wealth By Level table states that an 8th-level character should have about 33,000 gp worth of items. Using the above 25% rule, Patrick's 8th-level wizard with Craft Wondrous Item is allowed an additional 8,250 gp worth of crafted wondrous items. If he uses his feat to craft items for the rest of the party, any excess value the other PCs have because of those items should count toward Patrick's additional 8,250 gp worth of crafted items.

CREATING ITEMS FOR PROFIT

The expectation in a standard campaign is that the PCs go on quests to fighting monsters and collect treasure. In other words, you aren't supposed to stay at home, work at day jobs, and earn wages instead of adventuring. The game mechanics reinforce this by only allowing you to sell items for half their normal price because it assumes selling them to an NPC shopkeeper, so even if you craft a *bag of holding*, you can't sell it yourself for full price because you don't have your own store to sell it in. This prevents you from profiting by crafting an item (and

paying half the price to do so) and selling it for the full market price.

However, the downtime system (see Chapter 2) allows you to build a business such as a tavern or even a magic shop, and earn money from that business while you're away adventuring. You might want to use an appropriate business to sell crafted items for more than half price, but the downtime system already accounts for using a building to generate money, as well as spending personal time helping run the business (see *Run a Business* on page 87). A typical magic shop (see page 110) earns about 3 gp per day, or perhaps 4–5 gp per day if a skilled owner PC directly participates in running the business. Because magic items are very expensive (with the most common potions costing 50 gp or more, far higher than what most commoners can afford), this income represents many days where the business sells nothing, followed by selling one or two high-priced items, which averages out to a few gp of profit per day. In other words, just because you can craft one *+1 longsword* each day doesn't mean you're likely to sell one each day in your shop. The GM has two options for resolving this mercantile dilemma.

Use the Downtime System: This is the simplest solution, and assumes you are spending downtime running the business rather than crafting specific items.

Example: Patrick owns a magic shop and has 5 days free between adventures. Instead of crafting specific items for his own use, he uses that time on the run a business downtime activity (page 87), with the assumption that he is using his crafting feat to create minor magic items for customers to increase the money generated by his magic shop. Patrick doesn't have to specify what items he is creating, track inventory of completed items, or worry about interrupting his crafting—the details aren't important, just that he is using his skills to increase the profit of his business.

Alter Wealth By Level: Similar to using the item crafting rules to adjust wealth by level, this just applies a flat adjustment to your expected wealth. You don't even have to account for what specific items were crafted using this method.

Example: Rob's cleric has the Brew Potion feat and owns a magic shop. Jessica, the GM, allows him to exceed his wealth by level by 25%, and the extra doesn't all have to be in the form of potions—Rob's shop is selling potions, and he is using his profits to purchase other items for his character.

TALISMANIC COMPONENTS

Fantasy and myth are rife with exotic materials used to create magic items—meteoric iron, unicorn horn, dragon blood, vampire ichor, and so on. The item creation system in the *Core Rulebook* is very abstract, however, and most item creation is just a matter of spending gold in town for the necessary supplies that are never quantified or described. This section provides details on incorporating

talismanic components into a campaign, the effect they have on treasure hoards, examples of many talismanic components, and the sorts of items they are used for.

Enriching the Campaign

Using talismanic components is a fun way to provide more story flavor and local color to a campaign. They make magic items feel more unique and less mass-produced. A +1 *flaming longsword* is no longer an unremarkable magic item if giving a weapon a +1 enhancement bonus requires a sprinkle of dust from a dead star, and if crafting a *flaming* weapon requires a fragment of a fire elemental's spirit. That gives the weapon a sense of history and opens the door to many questions about who originally created the sword, where the creator got the materials for it, and who it was crafted for. Interactions with merchants and traders likewise take on a new flavor if caravans full of goods from distant lands carry a small selection of these obscure crafting components.

Using Components

You spend talismanic components exactly like gp for the purpose of crafting magic items, and they're destroyed as part of the item's creation or incorporated into the item. Once used, they're expended and can't be used again. Talismanic components don't change the crafting time, DC, or any other aspects of creating a magic item; they are just a substitute for the gp cost to craft it.

Example: Dragon heartblood is a talismanic component useful for all magic items. Patrick's wizard wants to create a *wand of burning hands*, which has a price of 750 gp. Crafting the wand requires him to spend 375 gp on magic supplies. The wizard has a vial of dragon heartblood worth 300 gp. He decides to use all 300 gp worth of his heartblood to craft the wand, and uses his actual gold to cover the remaining cost of crafting the wand.

Most components are only usable for crafting certain magic items, but some are usable for any kind of magic item. A component's description lists what kind of items it can be used for. Using an inappropriate component in crafting an item normally has no effect, but the GM might allow a desperate crafter to use an inappropriate component at a higher crafting DC, increasing the risk of failure or creating a cursed item.

Requiring Components

The GM might decide that some or all magic item creation requires talismanic components. These components could be available for purchase in civilized areas, or could be acquired only by hunting specific creatures or searching in remote locations. Some components might be illegal in some cities or countries and found only on the black market there. In this way, the GM can set different controls on item creation and create adventure opportunities for crafting-oriented PCs. For example, if crafting an *anarchic* weapon requires the blood of a

powerful demon, you can try to acquire some demon blood in town, arousing suspicion as to why you need such a foul substance, or you can travel to a location where demons are known to dwell and try to kill one—or maybe even bargain—for its blood.

Components as Commodities

These components are trade goods just like gems, wheat, spices, or cloth. Under normal circumstances, you can acquire these materials at the listed cost or sell what you find in a treasure hoard at the listed cost. For example, 500 gp worth of dragon heartblood costs 500 gp in a city, and if you take a flask of dragon heartblood worth 500 gp as your share of treasure, you can sell it in town for 500 gp. If there is a surplus or shortage of a particular component, the price could go up or down, or merchants might be more inclined to bargain over the price (see page 138) to try to get a better deal.

Components as Treasure

If the GM uses these rules for talismanic components, killing monsters shouldn't suddenly result in more treasure because you can loot suitable parts for components, in the same way that just because wyvern poison costs 3,000 gp doesn't mean that 3,000 gp worth of sellable poison can be obtained from every wyvern. The value of a talismanic component from a monster should be subtracted from the monster's total treasure award for the encounter, or later encounters should award a reduced amount of treasure to make up for the value of the talismanic component.

Acquiring a talismanic component from a monster or natural feature might not be easy or automatic. Plucking a rare herb without damaging its magical properties might require a Profession (herbalist) check. Harvesting an intact glowing crystal from a mithral vein might require a Knowledge (geology) check. Distilling heartblood from a dragon's corpse might require a Craft (alchemy) check. Gaining a tear of happiness from a lillend might require a Diplomacy or Perform check. The GM can use these kinds of skill checks to reward you for putting ranks in noncombat skills, and use similar checks for you to recognize that an object has value as a talismanic component.

Talismanic components might be viable for only a limited time, or spoil under certain circumstances. For example, dragon heartblood loses its power if it's exposed to air for more than a few minutes, necessitating transporting it in sealed vials (and limiting how much can be taken from a slain dragon). Vampire ichor spoils instantly in sunlight or on holy ground. These kinds of limitations also provide additional plot hooks for quests involving the acquisition and retrieval of talismanic components.

Example Components

This section lists conventional and commonly known talismanic components. GMs should invent many other strange and mythical components such as “the first scent

of the day” or “the sound of a cat’s footfall,” especially for very powerful items. Note that the substances don’t necessarily have identical values per unit; dragon heartblood might be worth 10 gp per drop, mithral crystals worth 10 gp per pound, and the hands of murderers worth 10 gp each.

Adamantine Ore: Used for metal armor, metal weapons, and items that manipulate or create earth or metal.

Arcane Residue: Salvaged from destroyed magic items, often in crystalline or powder form; used for any kind of magic item.

Astral Essence: Scraped from creatures that are located deep within the Astral Plane; used for plane-traveling, teleportation, and time-manipulating items.

Demon Blood: Taken from powerful demons (though weak demons might have minute quantities); used for chaotic, evil, demon-summoning, electricity-resistance, and good- or lawful-repelling items.

Devil Blood: Taken from powerful devils (though weak devils may have minute quantities); used for lawful, evil, devil-summoning, and fire-resistance items.

Dire Animal Brain: Used in animal-influencing and physical enhancement items.

Doppelganger Ichor: Used for disguise and polymorph items.

Dragon Bone: Flawless, smooth bones are suitable for rods, staves, wands, and dragon-controlling items. Dragon bones can also be used for items with abilities or energy types appropriate to the dragon’s breath weapon (copper dragons for *slow*, red dragons for fire, and so on).

Dragon Heartblood: The freshest blood from the dragon’s heart; used for any kind of magic item.

Elemental Spirit: Taken from the remains of powerful elementals; used for items appropriate to the source’s element or associated energy type.

Ethereal Essence: Dusted from creatures located deep within the Ethereal Plane; used for plane-traveling and dream items.

Giant Squid Ink: Used in scrolls and water items.

Hand of a Murderer: Must be taken shortly after the murderer’s demise; used for death, evil, and undead-creating items, as well as items that specifically involve a preserved hand (such as a *hand of glory*).

Heart of the Mountain: Mined from places deep underground or the Plane of Earth; used for metal armor, metal weapons, and items that manipulate or create earth or stone.

Holy/Unholy Symbol: Used for items that are appropriate to the religion associated with that symbol, items used to oppose enemies of that religion, or items especially suited for divine spellcasters of that religion (such as a *phylactery of faithfulness* or a *phylactery of positive channeling*).

Mithral Crystal: A rare crystallized form of mithral ore; used for defensive, light, and lycanthrope-repelling items.

Naga Brain: Used in metamagic and poison items.

Rare Herbs: A broad category with individual uses depending on the nature of the particular herb. Nox mushrooms are used for shadow items, bloodvine for bleeding and healing items, wolfsbane for lycanthrope-repelling items, and so on.

Stardust: Collected from long-dead stars, meteorites, and strange beasts native to the dark void; used for cold, darkness, light, and shadow items.

Troll Blood: Used in healing and regenerative items.

Unicorn Horn: Used intact for healing and poison-resisting wands and staves, or powdered for evil-repelling, healing, and teleportation items.

Vampire Dust/Ichor: Dust is taken from a destroyed vampire, ichor from an active one; used for blood, life-draining, mind-controlling, and necromantic items.

Virgin’s Blood: Typically acquired in quantities of a pint or more; used in blood, fiend-summoning, and purity items.

Wyvern Poison: Used in corruption and poison items.



RELATIONSHIPS

No villain ever seems to understand that when he threatens a hero's family, things go south for him. After all, nothing gives the beleaguered champion one last surge of strength like the sight of a loved one in peril. Relationships are the cornerstone of all that heroes are and can be.

This section helps you create dynamic and important relationships for player characters. Building a relationship between a PC and a key NPC can eventually grant that PC unique advantages and boons—whether the relationship is amiable or adversarial.

When your PC first meets a significant NPC (assuming the NPC isn't already part of your character's backstory), the GM may inform you that your PC can build a relationship with that NPC. If you are interested in doing

so, record the NPC's name on your character sheet, the current Relationship Score you have with that NPC, and whether the relationship is friendly or competitive. Normally, your Relationship Score for a new contact is equal to your Charisma modifier, but the GM may decide that a relationship with a character tied to your backstory starts with a higher Relationship Score.

A relationship with an NPC can be either friendly or competitive—you get to choose which kind to pursue. Various in-game events can spontaneously change a relationship from one type to the other.

RELATIONSHIP LEVELS

Your Relationship Level with an NPC is based on your Relationship Score, which can increase in play (see Growing Relationships). You gain new benefits when an NPC's relationship with you progresses to a new level.

RELATIONSHIP SCORE	RELATIONSHIP LEVEL
5 or lower	Association
6–11	Friendship/Competition
12–30	Fellowship/Rivalry
31 or higher	Devotion/Enmity

Association: You and the NPC know each other, but not well enough to have a significant bond.

Friendship/Competition: You are a good friend or known competitor of the NPC. Whenever you gain this Relationship Level with an NPC for the first time, your party gains 200 XP. The first time you gain this benefit in a campaign, your party gains an additional 200 XP. Most existing relationships from a backstory start at this level, and such a relationship does not grant you XP, as it predates the start of play.

Fellowship/Rivalry: You have strong ties to the NPC, either through deep mutual respect and admiration or through a strong sense of competition and conflict. As long as the other NPC is alive and active in the campaign, you gain a +1 morale bonus on all Charisma-based skill checks. Whenever you gain this Relationship Level with an NPC for the first time, your party gains 600 XP. The first time you gain this benefit in a campaign, your party gains an additional 600 XP.

Devotion/Enmity: You and the NPC are devoted to each other or actively opposed to one another. Whenever you gain this Relationship Level with an NPC for the first time, your party gains 1,600 XP. The first time you gain this benefit in a campaign, your party gains an additional 1,600 XP.

When a relationship with an NPC reaches this strength, it grants you a bonus trait (see page 51), whether your relationship is friendly or competitive and whether this is your first relationship to do so or the latest in a series of strong relationships. The nature of this trait is decided by the GM, and is specific to the NPC and the campaign (for example, the bonus trait from a notable NPC fighter is



probably about combat rather than improving spell DCs). You keep this trait for as long as the NPC is alive and active in the campaign; if the NPC dies, retires, or otherwise is no longer an active part of the campaign, you lose the trait.

The bonus XP from a relationship is divided among all PCs, just like other campaign-based XP awards. You can't gain XP bonuses from reaching a particular new Relationship Level with an individual NPC more than once (such as if you decrease your Relationship Level with an NPC or change its nature and bring it back up).

GROWING RELATIONSHIPS

You can change your Relationship Score with an NPC in the following ways.

Campaign Trait: If your GM is using campaign traits for this campaign (*Advanced Player's Guide* 330), and you have a campaign trait associated with a specific NPC, your Relationship Score with that NPC gains a one-time increase of 4 points.

Charisma: Since your base Relationship Score with any NPC is equal to your Charisma modifier, when your Charisma score changes permanently (such as from Charisma drain or a *headband of alluring Charisma*), your Relationship Scores with NPCs change with it. Temporary changes, such as from ability damage or bonuses from spells like *eagle's splendor*, do not alter Relationship Scores.

Companionship: Every time you gain a character level, you may increase your Relationship Score with one NPC still active in the campaign by 1 point.

Gifts and Insults: A special gift can increase a friendly Relationship Score with an NPC, and a perfectly crafted insult can increase a competitive Relationship Score. Gifts and insults can't be just anything—each NPC reacts strongly to different things. When you establish a relationship, the GM should suggest one kind of gift or insult appropriate to the NPC. You can learn other relevant gifts or insults by observing the NPC in play.

Every time you gain a character level, you may give one special gift to or craft one perfect insult for each NPC with whom you have a relationship. The gift can be an item you found, built, or purchased. In most cases, the cost of the item is irrelevant as long as it's an honest gift.

When you think you have the right kind of gift or the right insult, inform the GM of your intent, then make a Diplomacy check (for a gift) or an Intimidate check (for an insult). If you roleplay the gift or insult's delivery particularly well, the GM might award up to a +4 bonus on this check. If you roleplay the interaction poorly, or if you time things badly enough (attempting to give a gift in the middle of combat, for example), the GM might give up to a -4 penalty on the check. The DC for this check is equal to your current Relationship Score with the NPC. If you succeed, your Relationship Score with that NPC increases by 1 point. If you exceed the DC by 10 or more, it increases by 2 points instead. Failure means there's no change.

Special Events: Certain events in a campaign can alter your Relationship Score with an NPC, such as saving a

REVERSING RELATIONSHIPS

If you want to deliberately change a relationship from friendly to competitive, you can do so by insulting or rejecting the NPC. This also automatically reduces your Relationship Score with that NPC by half.

If you want to change a relationship from competitive to friendly, you must offer the NPC a gift and make a Diplomacy check at a DC 10 higher than the normal gift check. If you succeed, the relationship changes to friendly, but your Relationship Score with that NPC is reduced by half. If you fail by less than 10, the relationship remains competitive, but you may reduce your Relationship Score with that NPC by 1 (representing the weakening of your rivalry). If you fail by more than 10, the relationship's nature and Relationship Score don't change.

friend from execution or humiliating a competitor in public. The GM should inform you of these adjustments if and when they occur. These events generally increase your Relationship Score with that NPC by 1 to 5, but a particularly dramatic event can increase it by up to 10.

EXAMPLE RELATIONSHIPS

Listed below are some of the familial relationships likely to be significant to a character, as well as adventure hooks, roleplaying advice, and ways to make the relationship grow over time.

PARENT

Whether a progenitor or a parental figure (like a mentor or teacher), a parent often embodies the sense of debt and responsibility a character has for his origins and past.

Adventure Hooks: For younger characters, parents might represent an authority of some kind, with power to bring them back home or to any other place where the parent needs some kind of service or duty performed. For older characters, parents can represent the need to repay all the debts and kindnesses of being reared. Some adventure hooks include:

- Your father calls you back home from the frivolity of adventuring to mind the family lands or to take over for the family business.
- Your retired adventurer mother asks you to settle one last quest that she failed to complete.
- Your elderly grandfather is facing death (whether from a curse, disease, or natural causes), spurring you to quest for a cure or locate lore on extending life. This may be an altruistic choice or to spare you the burden of inheriting his responsibilities.

Roleplaying Advice: Most parents are driven to guide their children—even well into adulthood sometimes. If you learned magic by studying your father's spellbooks and have now surpassed his ability, he might still offer advice and “lessons” on the proper use of magic. If your

mother is knowledgeable about world events, she might withhold key information to prevent you from taking on a dangerous quest. A competitor parent might walk the line between maintaining the relationship and manipulating you for some ultimate goal.

Growing the Relationship: One of the easiest ways to show growth is for a parent to become less directly involved in your life. As you achieve higher levels and more prestige, your parents may come to accept that you're a competent adult. Her acknowledgment of your skill could lead to a mother shifting from guardian to mentor. Your parents could become well-meaning but exasperating antagonists who constantly test you. A competitor father whose talent is surpassed by yours might oppose you because he believes you're ungrateful, or even become a villain in the campaign.

SIBLING

Sibling relationships have been the basis of folklore and mythology for ages, and for good reason. Unlike a parent, a sibling is your direct peer, a living mirror who forces you to confront your past deeds and future potential.

Adventure Hooks: No matter how disparate a sibling's current social status, financial standing, or chosen profession might be from yours, the ties of blood and family often obligate you to aid him. Some adventure hooks include:

- Your brother is considering arranged marriages from several influential families. He asks you to investigate them to find which bride might be both a worthy match for the family and a good spouse for him.
- Your sister signed on to a dangerous expedition to harness rare material spell components and hasn't returned. It is your duty to find her—and if she is dead, complete her contracted service.
- Your brother has finally decided to impress your parents and asks for your help in tracking down and slaying a powerful monster in order to restore the family fortune. He won't survive if he goes on his own.
- Your foolhardy younger siblings were swindled into buying barren land with a monster-infested mine on it. They are now trapped and you must intervene before they are killed.
- Your long-lost sibling returns at the same time that a rash of mysterious crimes occurs. Your sibling could be responsible for the crimes or have information about their true cause.

Roleplaying Advice: The most important aspect to roleplaying a sibling relationship is to know his age in relation to yours. A younger sibling might be well-intentioned but desperate to prove himself to you. An older sibling might have difficulty letting go of an authority figure role, even if you've proven yourself in battles and quests. If you have lost a parent, an older sibling could take on the caregiver role. Middle siblings are often mediators or quietly overlooked by the rest of the family,

and could enjoy or resent this position, perhaps acting out to draw attention from other members of the family.

Growing the Relationship: This often relies on how the sibling reacted to your last endeavor. If your brother allows you to take the blame for his crimes, but returns to clear your name at the last minute, he may be trying to give up old habits. A sibling adventurer might attempt to gain understanding of your perspective by taking a level in a character class you have.

CHILDHOOD RIVAL

A childhood rival might be someone who used to bully you, an apprentice of the same mentor who competed against you for privileges, or a contemporary in your field who resented your opportunities or scoffed at your inferior birth status. This rival might openly hate you, pretend to like you while plotting your downfall, or respect you but have goals that conflict with yours. Backstabbing, cliques, peer pressure, and rumors are her weapons—the rival is someone who has known you for a long time and knows what buttons to push to annoy or distract you.

Adventure Hooks: Whether the rivalry is a slow boil or ragingly violent, this person is a strong tie to your past, and the core of many memories. Some adventure hooks include:

- An old mentor has fallen ill or passed away, and you and your rival have been called to put the mentor's affairs in order—and perhaps carry out an ambiguous will.
- A threat to your hometown sends you running to deal with it, only to find your old rival is there with different and dangerous ideas on how to remedy the problem.
- The rival unexpectedly reappears in your life and wishes to make amends. This could be a sincere change, a ploy for trust, or another attempt to humiliate you.
- Your rival is the leader of another adventuring group and issues a challenge to your party, such as a race to retrieve a legendary artifact or a public battle for a political prize.
- The rival wants to hire you to perform a quest, but the specifics are mysterious and she won't tell you what happened to the last group hired.

Roleplaying Advice: With this sort of relationship, you have to identify the original conflict with the rival. Perhaps you were an easy target because you were physically weaker. Perhaps you had a different religion, were of a different race or gender, or practiced a different kind of magic. Perhaps you were the instigator (knowingly or unknowingly) of this conflict, the rival is the original victim, and you are dealing with the consequences of your own bad behavior.

With this knowledge, find a way to justify the rival's behavior toward you—encouraging you to overcome your weakness, convert to a morally superior religion, see the benefits of a different magical school, and so on. You might not agree with these reasons, and they could make you angry, ashamed, or vengeful, but they drive the roleplaying for the conflict.

Growing the Relationship: Identifying the rival's main motivation could be the way to turn the tables on him. By beating the rival at his own game, you become the dominant one in the relationship. For bullying rivals, this might even convince his allies or neutral parties to rally to your side and turn against the instigator of the rivalry. If the problem stems from the rival's weakness or insecurity, challenging the source of the conflict or making sincere attempts to become friends might turn the rival into a staunch ally—many relationships start with two parties disliking each other, only to grow into friendship after conflict.

SPOUSE

Romantic entanglements can be the stuff of roleplaying dreams. They add drama, tension, and excitement, and can raise the campaign stakes to unprecedented levels. Perhaps the most important facet of your relationship with your spouse hinges on how the two of you met. Furthermore, your spouse's role in the campaign affects you and the other PCs. When your paladin falls in love with the party cleric, marriage might not adversely affect the group dynamic—but if you marry the innkeeper in your favorite town, it could lead to a sedentary lifestyle and a divided loyalty between your fellow adventurers and your spouse's community.

Adventure Hooks: Despite possibly grounding your PC to a specific area, a spouse can offer several strong adventure hooks. Possible hooks include:

- You and your spouse married in secret, without the approval of his influential family. You must prove yourself worthy to your new in-laws with quests that will improve their financial and social status (and thus their impression of you).
- Your merchant spouse must deliver a message or item to another merchant, but you realize it is a coded missive between members of the thieves' guild planning an assassination. You must stop the attack in such a way that it doesn't invite reprisals against your spouse.
- Your divine spellcaster spouse has accidentally and unknowingly violated an obscure tenet of faith by marrying you, and has lost all class abilities. Rather than abandon you for the church, your spouse insists on traveling to the high temple to beseech special dispensation for your marriage.

Roleplaying Advice: A spouse's main drive as a character is usually the well-being of the other half of the relationship. For adventuring couples, this might mean selecting feats or spells that uniquely complement each other's strengths. For conventional professions, this may mean developing useful connections and contacts. In an unhealthy marriage, the spouse is a competitor, and you might be the victim of tiny sabotages, like your partner secretly taking adventuring gear from you, or greater offenses such as your spouse feeding information to your rivals or enemies.

Growing the Relationship: Married adventurers must balance the need for income and glory against the desire for safety and stability. A well-meaning spouse can influence your adventuring habits by making demands on your time and resources. Even a loving marriage might develop friction in the face of your adventuring. Questions about responsibilities over raising children—particularly if both parents continue adventuring—can cause conflict and resentment. Local customs might place burdens on you or your spouse. You can't simply treat your marriage like a familiar, remembering it only when it's convenient and stuffing it in a metaphorical backpack when not.



REPUTATION AND FAME

Though some heroes content themselves with living off the spoils of their exploits or cloaking themselves in humility, others seek to live forever through the sagas and songs of their epic deeds. History measures a hero's success by tales of triumph and bravery that are retold down the ages. A hero with no one to tell her story quickly fades into obscurity along with her unsung accomplishments. How others tell of a hero's deeds becomes the weight by which she is measured, sculpting both her identity and reputation.

Reputation represents how the general public perceives you, whether positively or negatively. This perception precedes you, speaking on your behalf when you are absent and determining how you can expect to be treated by those who have heard of you. Reputation means different things to different types of characters, reflected in the social and cultural values of different regions. A character who embodies the qualities of a hero in one region may be perceived as villainous or disreputable in another. An icon widely revered and respected in her homeland may slip from fame into obscurity upon traveling to a neighboring kingdom.

TABLE 3-5: FAME EVENTS

EVENT	FAME MODIFIER
<i>Positive Events</i>	
Acquire a noteworthy treasure from a worthy foe ¹	+1
Confirm two successive critical hits in a CR-appropriate encounter	+1
Consecrate a temple to your deity	+1
Craft a powerful magic item	+1 ²
Gain a level in a PC class	+1
Locate and disarm three or more CR-appropriate traps in a row	+1
Make a noteworthy historical, scientific, or magical discovery ³	+1
Own a legendary item or artifact	+1 ⁴
Receive a medal or similar honor from a public figure	+1
Return a significant magic item or relic to its owner	+1
Sack the stronghold of a powerful noble	+1
Single-handedly defeat an opponent with a CR higher than your level	+1 ⁵
Win a combat encounter with a CR of your APL + 3 or more	+1
Defeat in combat a person who publicly defamed you	+2
Succeed at a DC 30 or higher Craft check to create a work of art or masterwork item ⁶	+2
Succeed at a DC 30 or higher public Diplomacy or Intimidate check ⁶	+2
Succeed at a DC 30 or higher public Perform check ⁶	+2
Complete an adventure with a CR appropriate for your APL ⁷	+3
Earn a formal title (lady, lord, knight, and so on)	+3
Defeat a key rival in combat	+5
<i>Negative Events</i>	
Be convicted of a petty crime	-1
Keep company with someone of disreputable character	-1 ⁸
Be convicted of a serious nonviolent crime	-2
Publicly flee an encounter of a CR lower than your APL	-3
Attack innocent people	-5
Be convicted of a serious violent crime	-5
Publicly lose an encounter of a CR equal to or lower than your APL	-5
Be convicted of murder	-8
Be convicted of treason	-10

¹ This includes claiming a treasure from a defeated monster or rival. A villainous character may include stealing such an item instead of obtaining it fairly.

² Per 40,000 gp of the item's price.

³ Such as finding the ruins of a lost city, recovering forgotten lore, or creating a useful new spell.

⁴ Per 40,000 gp of the item's price. Artifacts with no price count as 200,000 gp (5 PP) for this purpose.

⁵ Per CR the opponent is above your level.

⁶ You may increase your Fame in this way no more than once per month.

⁷ Approximately the length of a Pathfinder Module or Pathfinder Adventure Path adventure.

⁸ Per week of close association.

When using these reputation rules, the GM needs to establish what reputation means to the players and NPCs of the campaign. For instance, a viking-themed campaign might base reputation on pillaging. Regardless, the basic concept for how you earn a reputation remains the same: You gain reputation when word of your deeds spreads. The more fantastic or socially significant your deeds, the better tales they make. If you are able to establish a strong or noteworthy reputation, you may be extolled for your actions and afforded resources beyond those obtainable by lesser-known individuals. Similarly, you can use your reputation to influence people socially, politically, and financially.

Three factors determine your reputation: Fame, Sphere of Influence, and Prestige Points. Your Fame increases and decreases depending on your actions. Your current Fame determines your overall reputation and maximum potential for cashing in on your fame (for a heroic character) or infamy (for a villainous character). Sphere of Influence defines the places where you can apply the benefits of your reputation. You can reap the benefits of your reputation by spending Prestige Points on awards, including temporary bonuses and favors.

FAME

You begin play with a Fame equal to your character level + your Charisma modifier. Your Fame ranges from -100 to 100, with 0 representing a lack of any notoriety. Through the course of the campaign, your words and deeds help you build a reputation. Though an adventurer performs many deeds, not all are significant enough to warrant a change in Fame. If possible, the GM should stick to those deeds that directly affect the story or campaign and not reward points for minor victories. The significance of specific deeds should generally be left up to the GM, though Table 3-5 details some specific examples. If your Fame ever drops below 0, see Disrepute and Infamy on page 184.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Your reputation travels only as far as the tales of your deeds. Even if you are a great hero in your homeland, when traveling elsewhere you will soon discover that your reputation diminishes until you eventually reach regions where you are completely unrecognized. The greater your reputation, the farther it travels and the broader your Sphere of Influence.

Your Fame determines the maximum range of your Sphere of Influence. Your Sphere of Influence has a radius of 100 miles, generally increasing by another 100 miles when your Fame reaches 10, 20, 30, 40, and 55. Increasing your Sphere of Influence isn't always automatic, and you are allowed some say as to where your reputation holds weight. For example, you could ask that your sphere extend more southward toward a major city and ignores the barbarian tribes to the east, or that it extend inward toward another country rather than out into the ocean.

Though your reputation may spread by happenstance, it usually spreads deliberately, whether by traveling bards embellishing stories of your accomplishments to make them more entertaining, your allies exaggerating your common achievements, your enemies repeating rumors about you to recruit others against you, or you telling your story to eager listeners. Where these tales get told determines where you become known and shapes your Sphere of Influence—a heroic sorcerer might hire bards to brag about her magic in a nearby kingdom she plans to visit, or a villainous barbarian might drive the maimed survivors of his raids southward to sow fear among his next victims.

Outside your Sphere of Influence, your Fame is 0. You can attempt to expand your Sphere of Influence into a new



settlement by attempting a DC 30 Charisma, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check. If you succeed, you treat the settlement as being within your Sphere of Influence for 1d4 days, though your Fame is effectively halved for that settlement. After this time, the settlement reverts to being outside your sphere.

The following actions and conditions alter your Charisma, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check modifier for the purpose of expanding your Sphere of Influence.

TABLE 3-6: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE MODIFIERS

ACTION	CHECK MODIFIER
Allies or minions spread tales of your deeds before you arrive	+5
A bard spreads tales or songs of your deeds before you arrive	+ 1/2 bard level
You have NPC contacts in the settlement	+1
You have enemies in the settlement	+1
Distance from your Sphere of Influence	-1 per 10 miles
Settlement's primary language is different from yours	-5

PRESTIGE POINTS

Prestige Points represent your ability to leverage your Fame. You earn Prestige Points (PP) by completing objectives during the course of play. The GM decides which deeds, goals, or story elements are most important and awards players for completing them accordingly. Each time your Fame increases, you also gain 1 Prestige Point. In a typical campaign, you should gain approximately 4 to 6 Prestige Points per character level. Your current Prestige Points can never exceed your Fame. You can't share Prestige Points with other characters; only the character who earned them can spend them. Most of the time, you spend points on rewards—titles, temporary abilities, or bonuses on tasks associated with your interests.

AWARDS

Spending Prestige Points earns you awards—temporary bonuses or favors. Each time you want to use an award, you must spend the Prestige Points for that award. Unless otherwise stated, bonuses from spending Prestige Points do not stack (for example, you can't combine the Hero's Luck award with the Lore of Ages award to gain a +9 bonus on a Knowledge check). Spending Prestige Points on a reward is not an action. You may only spend Prestige Points within your Sphere of Influence.

Titles are a special category of award that is permanent instead of temporary. Unless a title's description says otherwise, you can only select a particular title once.

The following are examples of awards and titles for various thresholds of Fame. You must have at least the listed Fame to select a reward from that category. For example, you must have a Fame of at least 10 to select the Wanderer title, even if you have the 5 Prestige Points to spend on it.

Fame 1

This is the starting Fame for a new 1st-level adventurer.

Hero's Luck (1 PP): You gain a +4 luck bonus on a single skill check. You must use this award before you attempt the check in question.

Palm Greaser (Title, 4 PP): In any settlement of at least 5,000 inhabitants, you may locate a corrupt official. If you're imprisoned or fined for crimes committed in the settlement's jurisdiction, you may take advantage of this contact. You pay no fines and escape sentencing if you can make a Diplomacy check (DC 15 for petty crimes, 20 for serious crimes, or 25 for capital crimes). You can use this ability once per game session. You may select this title once for each settlement in your Sphere of Influence; each time you select it, choose one settlement where you may use the award.

Planar Pact (5 PP): You gain the services of an imp, mephit, quasit, or similar extraplanar creature from the Improved Familiar list on page 127 of the *Core Rulebook*. You can choose a creature with an alignment up to 1 step away from yours on each alignment axis. The creature acts as your willing servant for a number of encounters equal to your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma bonus (whichever is highest), but remains for no more than 24 hours. The creature is called outsider and automatically returns to its home plane at the end of this service.

Fame 10

This is the typical Fame of a character who has completed a couple of adventures.

Arcane Study I (1 or 2 PP): With the help of a wizard or magical ritual, you gain the ability to prepare and cast a few weak arcane spells. If you spend 1 PP, you can prepare 4 wizard cantrips or one 1st-level wizard spell. If you spend 2 PP, you can prepare 4 wizard cantrips and one 1st-level wizard spell. You cast these spells as a wizard, and must have the minimum Intelligence to prepare these spells. You can't select this award if you're a wizard. After 24 hours, you take 1d3 points of Intelligence damage and lose any prepared spells you didn't cast.

Character Witness (5 PP): If you happen to find yourself in trouble with authorities as a result of false accusations, an influential benefactor steps forth to vouch for your honor, absolving you of any wrongdoing. You can use this award without penalty up to three times, after which the available benefactors begin to question your reputation; any further uses cost you an additional 1d4 Prestige Points.

Lore of Ages (1 PP): You may secure the assistance of a dedicated sage, librarian, or other knowledgeable individual, granting you a +5 bonus on any single Knowledge check after 1 hour of research. You make this Knowledge check as if you were trained in that skill.

Wanderer (Title, 1 PP): The long time you've spent on the road with fellow travelers has enhanced your knack for picking up local customs. Knowledge (local) becomes a class skill for you as long as you have this title.

Fame 20

This is the typical Fame of an adventurer who has completed several adventures and whom the public is starting to take notice of.

Arcane Study II (3 PP): This award works like arcane study I, except you can prepare one 2nd-level wizard spell, and the Intelligence damage is 1d4 instead of 1d3. You can use this award and arcane study I at the same time. You can't select this award if you're a wizard.

Favored Territory (Title, 5 PP): Choose a 100-square-mile region within your Sphere of Influence. This is now your favored territory, and you gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks within that territory. When your Fame reaches 30, you can select this title a second time, gaining a second favored territory and increasing the bonus in your first favored territory to +4. When your Fame reaches 55, you can select this title a third time, gaining a third favored territory and increasing the bonus in your first favored territory to +6 and in your second to +4.

Fence Friend (Title, 4 PP): Once per game session when selling any item, you may do so through an NPC fence, increasing the sale price of the item by 10%. This has no effect on items normally sold at full value (such as gems and trade goods).

Initiate (Title, 1 PP): A powerful organization accepts you into its ranks. This could be a knighthood, a sagacious cabal of mages, or an order of monks. One skill appropriate to that organization becomes a class skill for you. You may select this title multiple times; each time you select it, you choose an appropriate organization to join and another skill that becomes a class skill. The GM determines whether an organization is available and what skills are appropriate choices for it.

Intense Student (Title, 2 PP): You gain a +2 competence bonus on checks with one skill as long as you have this title. You can take this title again once your Fame reaches 30, 40, and 55, selecting a different skill each time.

Master of Trade (Title, 4 PP): Using influential contacts and mercantile experience, you can find a good deal. Once per game session, you gain a 10% discount when purchasing an item. This award cannot be used for spellcasting services, costly material components, items normally sold at full value (such as trade goods or gems), or magic item crafting.

Sacrifice (0 PP): Make a significant sacrifice to gain 1d3 Prestige Points. If you are a heroic character, you must spend 375 gp × your character level to use this award, representing a great feast in your name, charitable giving, or other expenses that improve your reputation. If you are a villainous character, you must kill or sacrifice allies and minions whose total Hit Dice equal your character level, representing callous evil toward your friends and underlings. You can use this award once per month.

Sage (Title, 5 PP): Select one Knowledge skill. You can make untrained checks with this skill up to a maximum of DC 20 instead of the normal

limit of DC 10. You may select this title multiple times, each time selecting a different Knowledge skill.

Temporary Cohort (1 PP): Gain a cohort as if you had the Leadership feat. This character remains in your service for 24 hours.

Vindicator (Title, 2 PP): Pick one rival organization as your hated enemy. You gain a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls against members of that organization. This is a favored enemy bonus.

Fame 30

This is the Fame of a successful adventurer whose exploits have made her a local hero.

Arcane Study III (3 PP): This award works like arcane study II, except you can prepare one 3rd-level wizard spell, and the Intelligence damage is 1d6 instead of 1d4. You can use this award, arcane study I, and arcane study II at the same time. You can't select this award if you're a wizard.

Blood-Bound (Title, PP 2): Undergo a bloody ritual with an ally whose Fame is at least 30. Once per week when in the company of that ally, you may lend him up to 5 Prestige Points, which he can spend as he pleases. If he does not spend them within 24 hours, they return to you.

Escape Death (5 PP): If you are reduced to 0 hit points or fewer but are not dead, you automatically stabilize; on your next turn, you are healed 2d8+3 hit points. You can select this award only once per character level.

Officer (Title, PP 5): You can select this title only if you have selected the initiate title. Your rank within your chosen organization increases. You gain an appellation appropriate to the organization and a +4 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks made to interact with anyone within the organization. If you belong to multiple organizations, you may select this title multiple times.

Warden (Title, 5 PP): Within your Sphere of Influence, you hold enough respect that you can arrest, detain, and confiscate possessions from any common citizen you suspect has committed or is committing a crime. This right does not apply when dealing with nobles, aristocrats, political figures, or those who have ranks or titles similar to or greater than your own.



Worldly Fame (2 PP): Word of your deeds has spread far and wide, even outside of your Sphere of Influence. For the next 24 hours, you may use your Fame as if you were within your Sphere of Influence without needing to make the appropriate check, though your Fame is effectively halved outside your Sphere of Influence. You may select this award even when outside your Sphere of Influence.

Fame 40

This is the Fame of an adventurer who has achieved celebrity status.

Commander (Title, 4 PP): You can select this title only if you have selected the officer title. Your rank within your chosen organization increases to a position of command. You can call upon low-ranking members of your organization to perform mundane personal tasks at your behest, including running messages, announcing your arrival, and making sure preparations are made to accommodate your needs. In addition, you gain a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks made to influence any members of your organization's greatest rival group (such as a competing guild or citizens of a hostile country). If you belong to multiple organizations, you may select this title multiple times.

Patriot (Title, 4 PP): Your reputation as an agent of your homeland's interests precedes you. When traveling outside your Sphere of Influence, you gain a +2 bonus on all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks against citizens or natives of your homeland.

Privileged Meeting (2 PP): You use your reputation to gain a private audience with a powerful individual such as a queen, general, high priest, or guildmaster. You gain



a +2 circumstance on Diplomacy checks for the duration of that audience.

Fame 55+

At this Fame level and higher, the character is idolized and easily recognized for his or her achievements.

High Commander (Title, 4 PP): You can select this title only if you have selected the commander title. You become a senior member of your chosen organization. While serving the interests of that organization, you can call upon low-ranking soldiers to fight on your behalf. The soldiers are not magically summoned; you must speak to them as a group or send an officer to gather them for you (which may take anywhere from 1d4 rounds to 1d10 minutes). The number of soldiers at your command is equal to your Fame, plus one 3rd-level officer for every 20 soldiers and one 5th-level leader for every four officers. These soldiers are usually 1st-level fighters, but depending on the organization they may have some other appropriate class. These minions serve you for 1 day, but will not betray the interests of the organization or recklessly

throw away their lives for you. If you belong to multiple organizations, you may select this title multiple times.

The Great (Title, 10 PP): You immediately increase your Sphere of Influence by 100 miles.

DISREPUTE AND INFAMY

If your Fame drops below 0, your reputation is based on infamy rather than fame. Treat your Fame as a positive number instead of a negative number for all rules relating to Fame, Sphere of Influence, and Prestige Points (for

TABLE 3-7: NEGATIVE FAME REACTIONS

FAME	REACTION
-5	Merchants, hirelings, and innkeepers overcharge you by 10% to discourage you from doing business in their community.
-8	Merchants, hirelings, and innkeepers refuse to accept your business. If you enter a business, you are immediately asked to leave. If you refuse, the owner calls for the authorities or locals to throw you out.
-10	When you approach, businesses shutter their windows and bar their doors. Most citizens refuse to speak with you. Others request that you leave immediately. If you remain for longer than 24 hours or act out against the citizens, your Fame decreases by 5 and the citizens form a mob to run you out of town.
-15	Incensed that you display the gall to enter their community, an angry mob gathers. If you do not leave within a few minutes, the mob starts pelting you with fruit, sticks, and rocks.
-20	An angry mob forms shortly after you enter town. Not willing to wait for a potentially corrupt trial, they attempt to capture you and execute you for your crimes.
-25	An authority figure has issued a warrant for your arrest, including a reward to anyone who captures you. This is well known and many are eager to collect it.
-30	An authority figure has issued a bounty for your head. This is well known and many are eager to collect it.

example, a villainous Fame of -20 is equivalent to a heroic Fame of 20 for the purpose of determining what awards you can buy).

If an event would increase your Fame, you may choose to increase your Fame (bringing it closer to 0) or decrease your Fame (making it a larger negative number). For example, if your Fame is -20 and you publicly roll a 30 on a Craft check to create a masterwork sword (normally worth $+2$), you may increase your Fame to -18 or decrease it to -22 . Negative events that decrease your Fame always count as negative (a villain attacking innocent people doesn't make the public like him more).

If you have a negative Fame, nonevil NPCs often have unfriendly or hostile reactions to you (see Table 3-7: Negative Fame Reactions). Note that if you have a reputation for being powerful and dangerous, NPCs might avoid you rather than confront you.

SHARED FAME

Sometimes situations should take into account the Fame values of multiple characters. This usually occurs when all the PCs continually operate as a single entity, such as King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, Robin Hood's Merry Men, or Captain Kidd's pirate crew. Instead of the fame of individuals contributing to the fame of a group, the group's fame is independent of its members (a group may start in the first category and evolve into the second as it gains more members and the founders take a less direct role in its activities). A group like this develops its own Fame; if you are a member of that group, you use its Fame instead your own. If you and your allies are part of such a group, the Fame rules work the same, except the GM only tracks one Fame value for the entire group instead of individual values for each PC; each character's actions that would increase or decrease the Fame contribute to that score. You still gain and spend your own Prestige Points, but use the group's Fame for everything else.

ALTER EGOS, ALIASES, AND SECRET IDENTITIES

Throughout the course of your adventuring career, your public persona and your true personality might drift begin to drift apart or become notably disparate. When this occurs, you may change your name and adopt an alter ego or alias in order to rid yourself of your prior reputation. In this case, your Fame and Prestige Points remain with your former name, allowing you to shed your former life and start a new one.

With an alter ego, you create an artificial persona to show the public. You wear a mask or costume to hide your true identity. When performing deeds as your alter ego, you develop its Fame instead of your own. Only when presenting yourself as the alter ego can you use its Fame and Prestige Points to your advantage. In this way, a

seemingly weak or unassuming character can adopt the identity of a famous masked vigilante, relying on her fame to persuade commoners and strike fear into villains while remaining unknown in her secret identity.

If it's revealed that your two identities are actually the same person, your Fame and Prestige Points may change when dealing with those who have found out. For example, a notorious bandit changes her name and becomes a humble village healer. If her former life is made public, the villagers react to her according to her (larger, negative) Fame as a bandit, but she also loses face with bandits, who don't respect her choice to live peacefully and react according to her (lower, positive) Fame as a village healer.



RETIREMENT

Every hero's journey comes to an end. Ideally this happens at the conclusion of the campaign, but not every hero makes it that far. Some are crippled in battle, killed without the possibility of resurrection, or altered beyond recognition by foul magic. Others lose the will to adventure or their motives for adventuring become irrelevant. Characters can also fall by the wayside for out-of-game reasons, such as a player's schedule changing and preventing participation or the player losing interest in playing the character or the game.

When this happens, you have an opportunity beyond the character walking off into the sunset—you can work with the GM to turn her into an NPC. If you choose this, you're left with questions to answer. Where does she go? What does she do when not adventuring? Similarly, the GMs is presented with an intriguing dilemma: should the retired character be involved in the campaign as an NPC, and if so, how?

Using ex-PCs to develop the world and advance the story is an easy way to establish a personal connection between the players and the setting, yet overusing them can steal the focus of the campaign away from the active PCs. The GM must also take the desires of the character's player into account, as few enjoy seeing a favorite PC portrayed poorly.

The decision to include ex-PCs is not one to make lightly, but the benefits typically far outweigh the risks. Continuing to use ex-PCs reinforces the idea that characters' actions have real and vital consequences for the game world, even after the last battle.

THE SIMPLE LIFE

When most people think of retired adventurers, they think of the explorer-turned-tavern owner or the seasoned veteran who now patrols the streets as sheriff. These are characters who turned away from excitement and danger to live simpler, safer lives within the confines of civilization. This is an excellent option for PCs who have strong ties to a particular settlement or who possess skills or abilities that would be of use in the world outside the dungeon. If you're interested in having your PC retire this way, work with the GM to determine what sort of occupation your character can pursue and what location in the campaign world is best for that role.

The GM should consider what impact the ex-PC has on the region. If a 3rd-level wizard moves to a thorp or hamlet he will make waves, but he would have hardly any effect on a large town or city. On the other hand, a newly arrived 15th-level cleric radically alters the social and political structures of just about any region unless the character takes great pains to be unobtrusive. The GM should discuss with you what the character's goals for retirement are and how he plans to accomplish them. For example, does he want to build or buy a home or business? Will he build it himself or hire local workers? Does the PC plan to

marry? Have or adopt children? What relationship does he want to have with the local NPCs? Will he participate in politics? Answering these questions helps ensure the character becomes a part of the setting rather than forgotten or a tacked-on addition.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PCS

You need to consider your retired PC's relationship with the remaining PCs, including your new character if you have one. If your PC left on good terms, the party members now have a friendly contact to call upon for advice or assistance. The retired PC can also serve as a convenient mouthpiece when the GM needs to relay plot-relevant information to the players. However, the GM should take care not to let your retired PC have too much of an active role in the campaign—the point of retiring is to retire, and if your old character is involved almost as much as your current character that means you're getting twice as much time in the spotlight as the other players.

Your retired PC isn't automatically best friends with your new character and shouldn't be the source of free gold, magic items, or spellcasting (but see the Lineage section for information about handling inheritance from earlier PCs). You should think of your retired PC as an allied NPC—to keep things fair, you need to make Diplomacy checks to gain significant favors, and the GM is the final arbiter of how much assistance your old PC is willing to offer based on the needs of the campaign.

TAKING A DIFFERENT PATH

A character that stops being a PC doesn't have to quit adventuring; that PC just isn't part of the main adventuring party anymore. A devout mystic might leave the group to undertake a sacred pilgrimage for her church, or a savage warrior may return to her homeland to defend her tribe from foreign invaders. This type of retirement works best for an individualistic character or one whose adventuring motives are independent of the group's overall goals. The ex-PC may not have a direct role to play in the group's future efforts, but that doesn't mean she can't continue to influence the campaign.

An easy way for the GM to keep the departed character relevant is to make sure the other PCs are informed about her activities. She might send letters or magical messages (such as from *sending*) to the other PCs, or the PCs may hear news and rumors about her from bards and through town gossip (especially when they're in the retired PC's territory). These tales could be realistic or bombastic, depending on the personality of the retired PC. As a general rule, they shouldn't overshadow the accomplishments of the active PCs—the goal should always be to inform or entertain the PCs rather than have the retired PC steal the spotlight.

This approach gives the GM an excellent avenue to foreshadow future developments in the campaign, or to steer the party into further adventures. For example, the PCs might hear that their old ally sold several sets of Large

weapons and armor in a nearby town, and when the PCs reach that area they are attacked by a gang of hill giants. Using retired PCs to flesh out the local history and legends also gives the campaign a stronger sense of continuity.

Whether the news is true or just a fabrication is of course up to the GM and the player who created the ex-PC. The retiree might leave to deal with some issue from her past or to battle some threats she is particularly suited to confront. Alternatively, she might choose to aid the group in a less direct way, such as by tracking down leads about campaign villains on behalf of the active PCs or tying up loose ends they leave behind (such as chasing down the last few cultists fleeing a temple the PCs destroyed). The retired character might even be fighting a second front against a common foe with or without the PCs being aware.

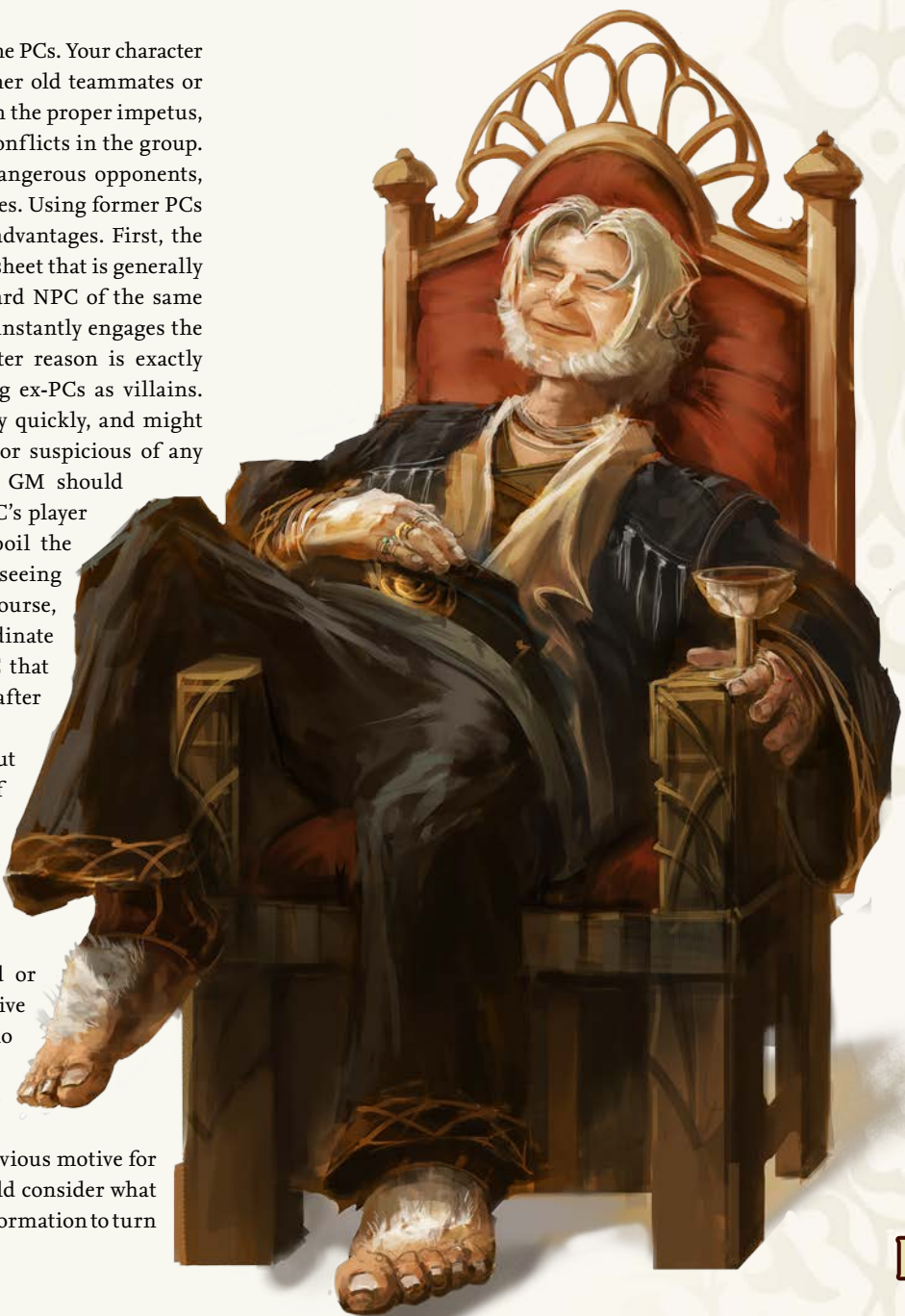
BETRAYAL

Not all retired characters work to aid the PCs. Your character might harbor some grudge against her old teammates or even outright turn against them given the proper impetus, especially if there were personality conflicts in the group. Foes who were once friends make dangerous opponents, since they know the party's weaknesses. Using former PCs as campaign villains has two great advantages. First, the GM saves time by having a character sheet that is generally a little more powerful than a standard NPC of the same level. Second, the PC-turned-villain instantly engages the players' emotions. However, the latter reason is exactly why the GM should be careful using ex-PCs as villains. Repeated betrayals lose their potency quickly, and might leave players feeling jaded, cynical, or suspicious of any new PC who joins the group. The GM should have the permission of the retired PC's player (obtained discreetly, so as to not spoil the surprise), as many players won't like seeing their heroes turned into villains. Of course, it is also possible for the GM to coordinate with a player to introduce a new PC that they both want to turn into a villain after he spends a stint in the party.

A good betrayal is unexpected but believable in hindsight. This form of retirement works well for a character the party would not immediately suspect, so long as the GM and player can construct a rational motive. Sometimes the circumstances make this easy. A character left for dead or believed killed in battle might survive and swear revenge on the friends who abandoned him. He could return as an undead creature to (quite literally) haunt the PCs, or return in a different form, such as a flesh golem. If no obvious motive for betrayal presents itself, the GM should consider what the ex-PC values most, and use that information to turn

the character against the party. Even the most righteous characters may turn against former friends under the right circumstances. Perhaps the villains are holding the character's family hostage to force compliance, or perhaps it's something as simple as a well-placed *suggestion* effect, a *dominate person* spell, or demonic possession.

The key to making the most of a retired character's betrayal is for the GM to tie it in with the campaign story. A former PC that acts alone is good for one fight or a tense roleplaying scene, but not much more than that. One who becomes a recurring villain, however, gives the PCs another hook to get involved with the story and lets the players act on their feelings of betrayal. It also gives them the opportunity to bring the former PC to justice—or offer redemption.



RETRAINING

If you are unsatisfied with a feat, skill, archetype, or class ability you chose, you may spend time in intense training to trade the old ability for a new one. Though it is time-consuming and expensive, this allows you to alter aspects of your character without extreme magic or a traumatic event.

Retraining takes all your attention for 8 hours per day for a number of days based on what you're retraining. You can't perform any other strenuous activities while retraining, such as marching, adventuring, or crafting magic items. You can retrain only one thing at a time; you must complete or abandon a particular training goal before starting another one. Abandoning unfinished training means you lose all progress toward that training's goal and all costs associated with that training.



Unless stated otherwise, retraining costs gp equal to $10 \times$ your level \times the number of days required to retrain. This is normally paid in full at the start of the retraining period, but the GM might allow you to divide these payments over multiple days. At the GM's discretion, this training cost could be up to 50% higher or lower, depending on situational factors within the settlement—availability of trainers, local economy, cost of materials, and so on.

Some retraining options require you to work with a trainer. If no suitable trainer is available, the GM might allow you to retrain yourself by spending twice the normal time. Even if you train yourself, you must still pay the cost for training (though you don't double the cost as you do the time). Any option that requires a trainer also requires some kind of training facility for that activity (such as a Dojo—see Rooms starting on page 94 of Chapter 2).

When you use retraining to replace some aspect of your character, you must meet all prerequisites, requirements, and considerations for whatever you're trying to acquire. For example, a 6th-level rogue can't use retraining to learn the Weapon Specialization feat because only fighters can choose that feat. When retraining multiple character options (class features, feats, classes, etc.) in one continuous period, all of the new selections are made at the end of that period in an order decided by the player. If this period is interrupted for any reason all choices must be made immediately. In this way players can retrain class features and their prerequisites at the same time.

Unless otherwise specified, there is no limit to how many times you can use retraining. Options that specify "one" of something refer to once per retraining session, not a campaign-wide limitation. For example, a barbarian can retrain one rage power per training session, and when she finishes a session she can start another retraining session to retrain that rage power or another one.

Some of the options listed below involve retraining features of your character that are essentially permanent parts of your heritage, such as a sorcerer's bloodline. The cost of retraining these things presumably includes magical or alchemical alterations to your body. The GM might rule that these changes are unavailable in the campaign, are only available under rare circumstances, take longer, are temporary, require some sort of quest, or are more expensive than the listed cost.

The following are the many types of training available.

ABILITY SCORE INCREASE

You may retrain an ability score increase gained at level 4, 8, 12, 16, or 20. This takes 5 days. At the end of the training period, remove the +1 bonus from the original ability score and add it to a different ability score. If this retraining means you no longer qualify for a feat, prestige class, or other ability you have, you can't use that feat, prestige class, or ability until you meet the qualifications again. (You can retrain that feat, prestige class, or other ability separately.)



ARCHETYPE

You can use the retraining rules to acquire an archetype for your class or abandon an archetype you have.

To gain an archetype that replaces standard class abilities you already have, you must spend 5 days for every alternate class feature you would add, subtract, or replace by taking that archetype. At the end of the training period, you lose the standard class features and replace them with the archetype's alternate class features (if any).

To abandon an archetype, you must spend 5 days for every alternate class feature you already have from that archetype. At the end of the retraining, you lose the archetype's class features and gain the standard class features for the class.

Swapping one archetype for another requires two retraining sessions: one to abandon the archetype, and then one to gain the new one.

Note that you don't have to use the retraining rules to take an archetype if your class level is low enough that the archetype doesn't modify any of your current class abilities. For example, if you're a 1st-level fighter who wants the archer archetype (*Advanced Player's Guide* 104), that archetype doesn't replace any class abilities until fighter level 2, so you don't need to use the retraining rules at all—once you reach 2nd level, you can just decide to take the archer archetype.

Example: Logan's 4th-level fighter has the archer archetype (*Advanced Player's Guide* 104). Because he is 4th level, he has two alternative class features from his archetype (hawkeye at 2nd level and trick shot at 3rd level), so he must spend 10 days and 400 gp retraining to abandon this archetype. If he were 5th level, he would also have the expert archer alternative class feature, which would increase his retraining to 15 days and 750 gp.

CLASS FEATURE

Many choices you make about your class features can be retrained. It takes 5 days to retrain one class feature. Training requires spending time with a character of your class whose class level is at least 1 higher than yours and who has the class feature you want. For example, if you are a 5th-level illusionist wizard and want to become a necromancer, you must train with a necromancer of at least 6th level.

Retraining a class feature means you lose the old class feature and gain a new one that you could otherwise qualify for at that point in your level advancement. For example, if you want to retrain your paladin's fatigued mercy (which she gained at 3rd level), you can replace it only with another mercy from the 3rd-level list. If at 6th level you learned the sickened mercy (which is on the 3rd-level list), you may replace it with a mercy from the 3rd- or 6th-level list (because you are replacing a 6th-level mercy slot which you spent on a 3rd-level mercy).

The class feature you wish to retrain can't be one that you used as a prerequisite for a feat, class feature, archetype, prestige class, or other ability. You must retrain those elements separately before you can retrain this class feature.

If an archetype or variant class feature replaces the listed class feature, at the GM's discretion you may retrain that alternative class feature for an equivalent variant class feature. For example, *Ultimate Magic* presents rules for inquisitions, which inquisitors can select in place of a domain, and the inquisitor entry below allows you to retrain your chosen domain, so you are allowed to instead retrain an inquisition, swapping it for a domain or another inquisition.

Class features you can retrain are as follows (some entries also call out other retraining options that are significant for the class in question, such as retraining feats for fighters, skill ranks for rogues, or spells known for sorcerers).

Alchemist: Retrain one discovery.

Antipaladin: Retrain one cruelty, or retrain your fiendish bond, replacing your bonded weapon for a fiendish servant or vice versa.

Barbarian: Retrain one rage power.

Bard: Retrain one type of Perform skill associated with your versatile performance class feature. See also retraining skill ranks and retraining spells known.

Cavalier: You can change your order; the rules for this are found in page 33 of the *Advanced Player's Guide*. See also retraining feats.

Cleric: Retrain one domain; the new domain must be one granted by your deity. Doing so replaces your list of domain spells and your domain granted powers. If you are a neutral cleric of a neutral deity, you can instead retrain whether you channel positive or negative energy, which also changes whether you spontaneously cast *cure* spells or *inflict* spells.

Druid: Retrain your nature's bond, replacing your domain with an animal companion or vice versa. You can instead retrain one domain; the new domain must be available to your class or archetype. Doing so replaces your list of domain spells and your domain granted powers.

Fighter: Retrain one fighter weapon group you chose for your weapon training class feature. See also retraining feats.

Gunslinger: Retrain one firearm type you selected for gun training, or retrain one deed you selected for true grit. See also retraining feats.

Inquisitor: Retrain one domain; the new domain must be one granted by your deity or ethos. Doing so replaces your domain granted powers. See also retraining feats and retraining spells known.

Magus: Retrain one magus arcana.

Monk: See retraining feats.

Ninja: Retrain one ninja trick or master trick.

Oracle: Retrain one revelation. You can instead retrain whether you add all *cure* spells or all *inflict* spells to your spell list. See also retraining spells known.

Paladin: Retrain one mercy, or retrain your divine bond, replacing your bonded weapon with a bonded mount or vice versa.

Ranger: Retrain one favored enemy. This takes 5 days for each +2 bonus you have against the favored enemy you are replacing.

You can instead retrain your combat style. This replaces all your current combat style bonus feats. This training takes 5 days for every combat style feat you are replacing.

You can instead retrain one favored terrain. This training takes 5 days for each +2 bonus you have in the favored terrain you are replacing.

You can instead retrain your hunter's bond, replacing your companions bond with an animal companion or vice versa.

See also retraining feats.

Rogue: Retrain one rogue talent or advanced rogue talent.

Samurai: Retrain the weapon you chose for your weapon expertise class ability. You can change your samurai order; the rules for this are on page 18 of *Ultimate Combat*. See also retraining feats.

Sorcerer: Retrain your bloodline. Doing so replaces your bonus spells, bloodline arcana, bloodline feats, and bloodline powers. This training takes 5 days for every bonus feat, bloodline arcana, and bloodline power you lose from changing bloodlines. See also retraining feats and retraining spells known.

Summoner: Retrain one eidolon evolution. You can instead retrain your eidolon's base form, but if the eidolon has an evolution that requires its original base form, you must first retrain that evolution in exchange for one without that requirement. See also retraining spells known.

Witch: Retrain one hex, major hex, or grand hex.

Wizard: Retrain your arcane bond by replacing one bonded item with another, replacing your bonded item with a familiar, or replacing your familiar with a bonded item. See also retraining feats.

You can instead retrain your arcane school (including changing to or from a universalist). Doing so replaces your school's bonus spell slots and school powers. This training takes 5 days for every school power you lose from changing schools.

CLASS LEVEL

One of the most critical choices you can make about your character is what class to choose when you gain a level.

In general, it takes 7 days to retrain one level in a class into one level in another class. Some classes are more suited for this kind of retraining, as they have a similar focus or purpose—this is called retraining synergy. If your old class has retraining synergy with your new class, retraining that class level takes only 5 days instead of 7 days. Determine class retraining synergies according to Table 3–8: Retraining Synergies.

Most prestige classes have retraining synergy with base classes that share their common class features. For example, the arcane trickster prestige class requires and advances arcane spellcasting, so it has retraining synergy with all arcane spellcasting classes. It also requires and

advances sneak attack, so it has retraining synergy with classes that grant sneak attack. The GM is the final arbiter of whether or not a prestige class has retraining synergy with a base class, but should err on the side of generosity—if you would rather spend time retraining levels over and over again instead of adventuring, that is your choice.

TABLE 3-8: RETRAINING SYNERGIES

OLD CLASS	NEW CLASS
Alchemist	Magus, rogue, witch, wizard
Barbarian	Cavalier, fighter, ranger
Bard	Oracle, rogue, sorcerer
Cavalier	Barbarian, fighter
Cleric	Druid, inquisitor, oracle, paladin
Druid	Cleric, oracle, ranger
Fighter	Barbarian, cavalier, gunslinger, magus, monk, paladin, ranger, rogue
Gunslinger	Fighter, ranger
Inquisitor	Cleric, paladin, ranger
Magus	Alchemist, fighter, wizard
Monk	Fighter, rogue
Oracle	Bard, cleric, druid, paladin, sorcerer
Paladin	Cleric, fighter, inquisitor, oracle
Ranger	Barbarian, druid, fighter, gunslinger, inquisitor
Rogue	Alchemist, bard, fighter, monk
Sorcerer	Bard, oracle, summoner, witch, wizard
Summoner	Sorcerer, witch, wizard
Witch	Alchemist, sorcerer, summoner, wizard
Wizard	Alchemist, magus, sorcerer, summoner, witch

Training requires spending time with a character who has at least 1 more level in the class you're retraining than your current level in that class. If no trainer is available (such as if you are at the highest level for that class), you still have the option to retrain without a trainer by spending double the time.

When you retrain a class level, you lose all the benefits of the highest level you have in that class. You immediately select a different class, add a level in that class, and gain all the benefits of that new class level.

This retraining does not allow you to reselect the feats your character gains at odd levels or the ability score increases your character gains every four levels (though you can retrain those options separately). If retraining a class level means you no longer qualify for a feat, prestige class, or other ability you have, you can't use that feat, prestige class, or ability until you meet the qualifications again. (You can still retrain that feat, prestige class, or other ability.)

Example: Mark is playing a ranger 5/rogue 2, and has decided he'd like to retrain one of his ranger levels into a rogue level (so he has to find a 3rd-level rogue). When he completes the training, he immediately loses all benefits



from taking ranger level 5 (base attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, Hit Dice, hit points, skill ranks, and class features), then gains 1 level in rogue, immediately gaining all the benefits of rogue level 3. Mark's character is now a ranger 4/rogue 3. This retraining did not change Mark's 7th-level feat.

If you are retraining a level in an NPC class (adept, aristocrat, commoner, or expert) to a level in any other class, the training takes only 3 days. This allows an NPC soldier to begin her career as a warrior and eventually become an officer who is a single-classed fighter, and for a younger character to start out with one commoner or expert level and become a 1st-level adventurer with a PC class when he reaches adulthood (see *Young Characters* on page 194).

FEAT

You may change one feat to another through retraining. Retraining a feat takes 5 days with a character who has the feat you want. The old feat can't be one you used as a prerequisite for a feat, class feature, archetype, prestige class, or other ability. If the old feat is a bonus feat granted by a class feature, you must replace it with a feat that you could choose using that class feature.

Note that this retraining is unrelated to the fighter ability to learn a new bonus feat in place of an old one at certain class levels. That class ability is free, happens instantly when the character gains an appropriate fighter level, doesn't require a trainer, and can happen only once for any appropriate fighter level. Retraining a feat requires you to spend gp, takes time, requires a trainer, and can happen as often as you want.

HIT POINTS

Sometimes the dice aren't in your favor when you gain a level and the hit points you roll are especially low. Unlike retraining other character abilities, retraining hit points doesn't involve replacing an existing ability with a new one, it just increases your maximum hit points.

Retraining hit points takes 3 days and requires you to spend time at a martial academy, monk monastery, or with some kind of master of combat who is at least one level higher than you. At the end of the training period, increase your hit points by 1. You can retrain hit points only if your maximum hit point total is less than the maximum possible hit point total for your character.

Example: If you are a fighter 5 with Constitution 14 and you haven't allocated any of your favored class bonus to hit points, your maximum possible hit point total is 60: $(d10 \text{ HD} + 2 \text{ from Constitution}) \times 5 \text{ levels}$. If your maximum hit point total is already 60, you can't retrain hit points because you are already at the limit. If you took the Toughness feat, you would gain 5 hit points and your maximum possible hit point total would also increase by 5, which means your ability to retrain hit points would be the same as without the feat.

NEW LANGUAGE

You can spend time to learn an additional language. It takes 20 days of training to gain a bonus language, and these days need not be consecutive. Each language requires a trainer who shares a language with you and knows the language you want to learn, or a book written in a language you know that explains the basics of the language you want to learn.

The new language does not count toward your maximum number of languages (racial languages + bonus languages from Intelligence + Linguistics ranks). You can train this way only a number of times equal to 1 + your Intelligence bonus.

RACIAL TRAIT

If your campaign uses alternate racial traits (such as from the *Advanced Player's Guide*), you can retrain a racial trait. This takes 20 nonconsecutive days and requires a trainer with the racial trait you want. The replacement trait must be an appropriate one from your racial list. The old and new racial traits must replace the same standard racial trait. For example, the magic resistant and stubborn alternate dwarven traits replace the hardy standard trait, so you can retrain one of those for the other.

SKILL RANKS

You can retrain skill ranks you have assigned to skills. Retraining skill ranks takes 5 days. When the training period ends, reassign a number of skill ranks up to your Intelligence bonus (minimum 1), removing them from your existing skill (or skills) and adding them to a different skill (or skills).

If retraining skill ranks means you no longer qualify for a feat or other ability you have, you can't use that feat or ability until you meet the qualifications again. (Or you can retrain that feat or other ability.)

SPELLS KNOWN

If you are a spontaneous spellcaster (such as a bard, oracle, sorcerer, or summoner), you can retrain a spell known. This retraining takes 2 days per spell level of the new spell (or 1 day in the case of a cantrip or orison) and requires a trainer who can cast the spell you want. The trainer must cast the same kind of spells as you do (arcane or divine).

The spell with which you're replacing the previous spell must be another from your class spell list. The new spell must be one you could place in the old spell's spell slot. Note that this retraining is unrelated to the ability of sorcerers (or other spontaneous spellcasters) to learn a new spell in place of an old one at certain class levels. That class ability is free, happens instantly when the character gains an appropriate level in the spellcasting class, doesn't require a trainer, and can happen only once for any appropriate class level. Retraining a spell known requires you to spend gp, takes time, requires a trainer, and can happen as often as you want.



TAXATION

Even a moderately successful adventurer commands wealth and personal power beyond the means of most normal people in the world. While the common folk adore their heroes and the small-minded envy them, the authorities take a more pragmatic view: How can they and their jurisdictions financially benefit from these adventurers? In the greater campaign, as the PCs advance in stature, they gain the notice of such authorities, who seek a share of the PCs' rewards in the form of taxes. They claim material goods, utilize the PCs' talents in day-to-day life, or even enlist the PCs' services as adventurers. These people see this attention and service as their due for giving adventurers safe haven between quests and, at least in theory, protecting the PCs from the depredations of robbers and swindlers.

Taxes manifest in many ways and from many sources, and go by different names: dues, fees, surcharges, tariffs, tithes, and even requests for charity or donations. The person or organization levying the taxes, known as the collector, varies as well. A collector might be a civil leader (such as a noble or mayor), a professional (such as a dean or guild master), or a religious authority (such as an archbishop or parish priest).

When and how much to tax varies based on the nature of the campaign. Generally, paying taxes should happen between adventures, such as when the PCs enter a new city or return to their regular base of operations. A good rule is for the GM to tax the party once per character level for an amount roughly equal to a single encounter's total treasure value at their APL (*Core Rulebook* 399). The GM could also split this amount into multiple taxes or fees over the course of that character level.

For example, a party of 3rd-level PCs on the Medium track should be taxed about 800 gp. If the party's wealth is higher than the normal wealth by level guidelines and the PCs don't show discretion about this excess, authorities notice this and actively work to separate the PCs from more of their treasure. The GM should shower the PCs with flattery and promises of favors in the future so they don't feel punished for success.

This section also gives advice on using alternatives to taxation as adventure hooks. Instead of forcing the PCs to pay taxes, the local authorities can request that the PCs complete appropriate services or quests.

TYPES OF TAXES

Though many taxes come in the form of financial transactions, some collectors are willing to substitute material goods, favors, or services for coin.

Direct Taxation: Claiming a share of all proceeds is the simplest way collectors benefit from adventurers. This might be a coinage fee for converting foreign or excessive currency, a duty imposed on treasure and enforced by customs inspectors, or even a tithe paid by religious characters. Though such policies are straightforward to

implement, clever PCs can avoid them by concealing their wealth—a typical tax collector lacks the wherewithal to ferret out treasure masked by illusion or cached in an extradimensional space. However, bragging about evading taxes can backfire, and could lead to divination-based inspections or interrogation under magical means.

Monetary Favors: When a collector needs funds, the PCs present a ready and often untapped source of money. Experienced adventures routinely throw around amounts of gold that could equip an army or feed a town for months. Canny collectors avoid drawing from the well too often, saving their requests for dire circumstances. When they do call, they appeal to the PCs' compassion, patriotism, or sense of duty. Technically, it's not tax evasion to decline such a request, but collectors have long memories.

Service: In some countries, particularly ones with the feudal system, subjects swear fealty to their lord in a system of intertwined obligation. In return for the lord's protection, subjects agree to give service. When called upon by a lord, a PC must report to duty, offer up a suitable person to serve instead, or refuse the call and risk imprisonment or worse. Churches similarly expect service from their congregations, and guilds expect service from their members. Willing and eager service on the part of the PCs may be repaid by a favor from their collector in a time of need. If the service is especially suited to adventurers, such as clearing out monsters from the city sewer, the PCs should receive less than the normal treasure award—they shouldn't earn more gold for performing a service than they would have to pay in taxes to avoid that service.

TYPES OF SERVICE

PCs are more useful for the deeds they can accomplish than for any material wealth they might possess. Even low-level adventurers possess talents in excess of the typical populace, and high-level adventures can shake the pillars of the world.

Assassination: Though not always the most discreet of hired killers, adventurers can be effective. Assassination requires catching a normally well-protected enemy in a vulnerable moment, and killing him without leaving any evidence behind. Even in failure, PCs bring one last valuable asset to the table: deniability. If the PCs are caught, the collector can claim ignorance of their activities, leaving the PCs to face justice on their own.

Celebrity: PCs, particularly the more charismatic sort, get invited (often just a euphemism for a demand) to attend social functions in order to impress the collector's other guests. PCs with only minor fame might just be a part of the throng at a grand ball or wedding, but more storied adventurers attend feasts and parades with a collector, elevating her status among peers and subtly deterring rivals. These social events also give other collectors the opportunity to approach the PCs for favors or material support, ideally after wining and dining has left the PCs in a relaxed and unguarded mood.

Espionage: In many cases, espionage missions are given to an appropriate PC, such as a bard, enchanter, or rogue. As with assassination, collectors use PCs as spies so they have the advantage of deniability. Requests for espionage might be tied to a region the PCs already plan on visiting, or might require that they arrange their travel to suit the request.

Magic Item Creation: A PC with an item creation feat could find herself called on to use her talents, either as a personal favor or for the common good. A PC wizard could be asked to enhance the blades of the city guard, or a PC cleric could be asked to provide *cure light wounds* potions for her temple. Depending on who makes the request, the cost of creating the magic item might be borne by the PC, paid for by the collector, or split between them.

Military Service: Usually only low-level PCs get called on for rank-and-file service. More capable adventurers might instead find themselves pressed into service in the role of elite commandos, sent to deal with the opposing force's most dangerous troops and monsters. PCs with appropriate expertise may be called up to train others in their skills—a tedious but valuable service that can be accomplished during downtime between adventures.

Monster Hunting: Few things better suit adventurers than being sent out to kill menacing beasts and monsters. Unfortunately, collectors often lack judgment as to what sort of opponents lie within a party's grasp. Novice adventurers aren't likely to be sent chasing dragons, but great heroes might be sent to dispatch a "demon pig" that turns out to be a mere dire boar, or mid-level ones sent to handle a "wandering giant" that turns out to be a storm giant or titan. Fleeing such conflicts may have long-lasting repercussions.

Spellcasting: Even middling spellcasters still have impressive magic at their disposal. Between adventures, many PCs leave their magical talents almost untapped. Asking a few hours of spellcasting service for the public each month seems like a trivial request to a collector. Besides prosaic tasks like constructing fortifications, lighting the city with permanent lights, tending to the sick, or entertaining guests with elaborate illusions, PC spellcasters might be asked for greater favors like contacting the dead, divining the will of the gods, or weaving defensive wards. The cost of these services might be the responsibility of the PC, subsidized by the collector, or split between the two, though non-spellcaster collectors have a tendency to greatly underestimate the costs of certain powerful spells and base their terms on these false assumptions.

Other Services: Beyond these examples, collectors may ask for almost anything within or even just beyond the PCs' abilities. The PCs might be tasked to find a stolen soul, loot a newly discovered dungeon and share the proceeds, intervene in a dispute between great wizards, or deliver tribute to a dragon. Often, these services serve as hooks for full adventures.

COMPLIANCE

Forcing taxes on adventurers carries a certain amount of risk. Low-level PCs who avoid paying taxes likely face arrest, heavy fines, and possibly imprisonment if caught. Of course, they might be able to perform a suitable service in lieu of punishment. For mid-level PCs, indirect consequences are more effective than attempts to arrest them (unless the authorities have enough resources and ability that they stand a reasonable chance of capturing and holding the PCs)—local businesses may refuse to serve them, the thieves' guild might be given permission to rob them, city guards may ignore their calls for help, and so on. High-level PCs outmatch anyone trying to arrest them, and in many cases the worst consequences of their actions are cheers from other lawbreakers and snubs by nobles who rely on taxation for income. In the cases of dues and tithes, PCs who shirk their responsibilities can expect no help from their churches or guilds while indebted, and have to pay a considerable surcharge even after they make good on their debts. Of course, the proper service or favor might convince a church or guild to forgive the PCs for their transgressions.



YOUNG CHARACTERS

Not all fantasy characters have the luxury of waiting until adulthood to begin their adventuring careers—take Arya Stark, Sabriel the Abhorsen, the Pevensie siblings, and Harry Potter, for example. The dangers of fantasy worlds don't discriminate between the ages of those they threaten. Even the infant Hercules had to strangle the serpents Hera sent to kill him in his crib. But though they're often underestimated, such youths are rarely the ready victims they're often treated as. By default, newly made characters are adults, their ages randomly assigned or at least influenced by Table 7-1: Random Starting Ages, presented on page 169 of the *Core Rulebook*. However, should you wish to play a young prodigy getting an early start on her legend, the rules here detail how to bring such a character to life.

CREATING YOUNG CHARACTERS

Young characters are essentially normal characters with an age category younger than any presented in the *Core Rulebook*. Characters of this age category are able and intelligent, curious and talented, but not yet experienced or worldly. They are on the threshold of great things, but still a step away. This youthfulness is represented in three ways: ability score adjustments, restrictions to available classes, and slower trait acquisition.

Ability Score Adjustments: In the same way an adult character gains adjustments to her ability scores as she reaches middle, old, and venerable age, a young character occupies a new pre-adulthood age category, and therefore has altered physical ability scores, though the vigor of youth does grant some benefit. A young character has a +2 bonus to Dexterity and a -2 penalty to Strength, Constitution, and Wisdom. (A young character's potential inexperience and awkwardness are represented by having only the skill ranks of a 1st-level character rather than taking a penalty to Intelligence or Charisma.)

When a young character reaches adulthood (see Table 3-9: Random Young Starting Ages), she loses these ability score adjustments.

Available Classes: A young character does not have access to the same classes as adult characters. Not yet trained in the advanced techniques of war, arcana, faith, and varied other pursuits, a young character is a squire, apprentice, acolyte, or student on the path to expertise. As such, you can select only NPC classes while in this age category, beginning play and advancing in level as an adept, aristocrat, commoner, expert, or warrior, according to your interests and social background. As soon as you reach adulthood, though, you may retrain those NPC class levels as levels in any base classes of your choosing (see Retraining on page 188).

Traits: Because character traits (see page 51) represent your character's background before becoming an adventurer, the GM might limit you to selecting only one trait at 1st level instead of the normal two traits

allowed. When your character reaches adulthood, you select your second trait. Note that normally you can select a new trait after 1st level only if your character takes the Additional Traits feat, so this option allows you more flexibility in choosing your second trait, as recent events in the campaign might make some of your trait options more valuable than they originally appeared when the campaign started.

TABLE 3-9: RANDOM YOUNG STARTING AGES

RACE	YOUTH ¹	ARISTOCRAT, COMMONER,		ADEPT, WARRIOR	ADULTHOOD ²
		EXPERT			
Human	8 years	+1d6		+2d3	15 years
Dwarf	20 years	+2d6		+4d4	40 years
Elf	55 years	+4d6		+6d6	110 years
Gnome	20 years	+4d4		+3d6	40 years
Half-elf	10 years	+1d4		+1d6	20 years
Half-orc	7 years	+1d6		+2d3	14 years
Halfling	10 years	+1d6		+2d4	20 years

¹ During youth, +2 Dex; -2 to Str, Con, and Wis.

² At adulthood, ability score adjustments for young age are lost.

LEAVING YOUTH BEHIND

Unlike higher age categories, there are two common ways a young character might advance into adulthood.

Age: The simplest way for a young character to reach adulthood is by aging into new age thresholds. Table 3-9 includes the age when members of the core races reach adulthood. Once a character reaches that age, she loses the ability score adjustments related to youth and may retrain NPC classes. If you aren't playing one of the races from the *Core Rulebook*, find a race with the lifespan that most closely approximates that of your character's race and work with your GM to create reasonable age benchmarks for youth, adulthood, middle age, and beyond.

Reward: The pace at which characters gain experience varies widely from campaign to campaign. In one campaign, a character might gain multiple levels in a single month of in-game time, while in another a character might spend years at the same level. If adulthood were purely tied to the passage of time in a campaign, a young character might gain extensive adventuring experience but still be restricted to selecting only NPC classes.

A GM may grant a young character the option of passing into the adult age category early after achieving some noteworthy goal. Potential accomplishments include surpassing your instructor's skill, defeating a powerful adult foe, overcoming a threat to your home, or completing a lengthy journey. The completion of a published module or adventure of similar length might warrant a youth advancing to adulthood, or perhaps attaining a certain level in an NPC class (perhaps at 3rd or 5th level). If your GM grants your young character the



ability to advance into adulthood early, you may choose when to take advantage of that benefit. Your ability scores do not change to reflect your new age category until you retrain an NPC class level.

CONSIDERATIONS OF YOUTH

You might choose to play a young character to gain insight into your PC's life or indulge a character concept you haven't tried. A GM might start your campaign at a young age to mimic adventures common in young adult fiction, video games, superhero teams from comics, and various other media. If you are thinking about playing a young character, consider the following points. The GM planning for this should be aware of and have methods of addressing each topic.

Roleplaying: Unlike modern society, which tends to treat even very competent youths like children, medieval societies usually treated children like adults as soon as they proved they were able to handle adult tasks and responsibilities. This means NPCs might treat a group of young PC adventurers just like they would treat adult adventurers, though any physical shortcomings could be a source of jokes or disdain.

Uneven Parties: NPC classes are not as powerful as PC classes. Therefore, if some players have young characters and others have adult characters, the adults in the

group will be more powerful and have other advantages. Even if you are fine with playing an underpowered character, the other players in the group might not be okay with a weaker character tagging along, especially if your character's relative weakness potentially jeopardizes the group. Before you create a young character, make sure that all players are willing to accept a young character into the party.

Child Endangerment: It's one thing to throw traps, monsters, and deadly magic into the path of willing adults, but another thing to threaten young people with such dangers. Although fantasy fiction is filled with instances of peril giving juvenile characters the opportunity to be heroic and prove their potential, not all players are going to be comfortable with putting young characters in danger. Before including them in a game, the GM should discuss with the group whether or not this might negatively impact any players' enjoyment of the campaign.

Weakness: Young PCs are weaker than standard PCs. Published adventures are designed assuming PCs have the abilities, skills, flexibility, and full potential of base classes, making them too lethal for young characters. As a quick rule, the Average Party Level (APL) of a party of NPC-classed characters is approximately 2 character levels lower than that of a party of PC-classed characters of the same level.