

Chapter Six: Character Generation and Development

As roleplaying games (RPGs) are essentially a form of interactive storytelling, they revolve around the players' characters and what happens to them within the game. They use sets of rules called "systems" to help prevent arguments over the results of character actions (the "I shot you!" — "Did not!" dialogue familiar to children's make-believe games.) These systems codify the details about what characters can do within the game.

This codification starts with the "character creation system," which presents a set of rules that describe characters in game terms, and an "action resolution system" that details what characters can do within the game and how the results of their actions are resolved (see *Chapter 7: Playing the Game*).

The *Deryni Adventure Game* uses a game system called ***Fudge***, which actually offers two methods for character creation customized specifically for the Deryni universe. It will be up to the Gamemaster (GM) to decide which character creation system to use in the game, "Five Point Fudge" or the "Subjective System."

General Roleplaying Game Terms

Roleplaying Game (RPG): Interactive storytelling games in which players take on the roles of characters and interact with one another and the game world that the "Gamemaster" presents through narration and dialog. A roleplaying game usually has a system of game rules that help players determine the outcome of any character's actions within the story. Alternate terms for RPGs include "tabletop games" or "pen & paper games" (to distinguish them from computer RPGs).

Adventure: In the *Deryni Adventure Game*, this term describes a complete storyline, usually beginning with the player characters' initial encounter and challenge (rescue a princess, deliver a message to the king through a war-torn province, or whatever) and ending with the characters' success (or defeat). Some adventures can be run in a single session, while others will take multiple sessions, similar to chapters in a book.

Campaign: A series of adventures that complete an all-encompassing story arc, usually involving the same characters throughout the campaign. (The death of a character can alter that, of course!)

Game Terms: Specific terminology used by a roleplaying game system to define a character's abilities or determine the outcome of characters' actions. In ***Fudge***, for example, abilities are defined verbally rather than numerically, so that "Good" is a bit better than average, "Great" is better than Good, and "Superb" is the best one can be. In the *Deryni Adventure Game*, an accomplished Deryni mage might have Good Power and Great Arcane Lore.



Gamemaster (GM): The person who runs the game for one or more players. The GM organizes play sessions; presents the game world usually through narration, although game aids like maps are often used; roleplays or acts the part of secondary characters and villains (called "non-player characters" or NPCs); and determines the outcomes of any character's actions within the world, usually through the use of dice as a randomizing factor. The GM serves as narrator, director, sound effects, and "extras" such as NPCs.

Non-player Character (NPC): A character run by the GM. Many NPCs are the equivalent of "bit parts" — stable hands, innkeepers, passersby, and the like (including animals) — as well as villains the PCs encounter.

Player: A person who takes on the role of a character within the game setting and "roleplays" that character's actions and reactions within the game. In the game, players describe what their characters are doing — or attempting to do. The GM and the players speak "in character" in a sort of impromptu live action theatre. There is no set rule regarding whether the player speaks in 1st or 3rd person, although the former is considered more conducive to achieving a closer connection with the character.

Player Character (PC): A character "run" (controlled) by a player. PCs are usually described in "game terms" using whatever game system the specific RPG provides (or the GM designates.) They are the main characters in the story that unfolds as the game is played.

Session: One of many terms used to describe the time spent playing an RPG. Typical RPG sessions may last two hours or more, during which the story advances based on the PCs actions and reactions to the situations the GM presents to them.



Character Creation Terms

Attributes are traits that every character in the game world possesses to some degree. On a scale of Terrible/Fair/Superb, the average person's attributes are Fair. In the *Deryni Adventure Game*, character attributes include Agility, Stamina, Strength, Perception, Willpower, and Wits — and, for Deryni, Power.

Faults are innate traits that limit your character's actions or elicit a negative reaction from others like an Addiction to alcohol or being Illegitimate. Some faults could be considered positive traits, such as a Code of Honor. These items are classified as "faults" because they restrict a character's behavior in some way.

Gifts are innate traits that benefit a character but cannot be quantified by the Terrible/Fair/ Superb scale. Gifts supplement or enhance a character's attributes and skills. Examples include Exceptional Memory and Knighthood.

Levels define how well a character can do specific things or how difficult a particular task will be, and are measured in levels from Terrible to Superb. These are then compared to the Difficulty level of a task or action (also rated from Terrible to Superb). A character's social status is also rated in levels from Terrible to Superb, with the Rank trait. Unlike attributes or skills, a character's Rank level does not directly affect the ability to perform specific tasks. Rank dictates a number of things during character creation, including required Gifts, Faults, and Skills (see ***Rank***, p. XX).

Points are used ("spent") to select ("buy") skills. The basic *Deryni Adventure Game* uses 5-point characters; however, the GM may allow the players more or fewer points as suits the group or the adventure.

Skills are traits acquired through experience and improved through use. They are ranked on a scale of Terrible to Superb. The default level for an unlisted skill is usually Poor, although this varies according to the skill's difficulty.

Skill Groups are collections of skills grouped according to a general heading. Each point spent in a skill group affords a character a specific number of skills at certain levels.

Traits are adjectives that describe a character's physical, mental, educational, and professional aspects. Traits (including Skills, Attributes, Gifts, and Faults) serve an important function in the game play mechanics and can also be used as guides for roleplaying. Remember that the player's imagination is a character's most important trait, and that cannot be quantified by any game system.

Fudge Levels

The *Deryni Adventure Game* uses the ***Fudge*** Trait scale of adjectives to describe a character's attributes and skills, as well as the difficulty of the challenges the characters face and the outcomes of the characters' actions in the game (see *Chapter 7: Playing the Game*).

The Basic Fudge Trait Scale:

- Superb
- Great
- Good
- Fair
- Mediocre
- Poor
- Terrible

"Legendary" is an additional level beyond Superb. (Camber of Culdi had some Legendary magical skills, for example.) Some GMs may restrict Legendary character traits to NPCs while other GMs may allow PCs to attain Legendary status in one or more traits, usually after successful completion of many adventures or after an exceptionally heroic action.

Character Creation Systems

Five Point Fudge

In the "***Five Point Fudge***" character creation system detailed in this chapter, players receive "points" to purchase skills for their characters. Skills are grouped in like categories (Athletic, Scholar, etc.) and a character's level of competence in these skills is based on points spent. The Five Point system provides guidance for choosing skills and skill levels for a character. Once familiar with the range of character possibilities in the *Deryni Adventure Game,* players may want to switch to the Subjective System.

Subjective Character Creation

Players who don't wish to worry about spending points may want to try "subjective" character creation (see sidebar), which provides looser guidelines for creating characters. In the subjective system, a player simply describes the character in ***Fudge*** terms. Subjective character creation is more collaborative as GMs and players work together on character definition.

Other Character Creation Systems

Experienced gamers may want to explore additional means of creating Fudge characters. The full ***Fudge*** game system, with all its extra options and alternative methods for character creation and action resolution, is available on the Grey Ghost Press website at http://www.fudgerpg.com. Players may also purchase ***Fudge*** RPG books from their FLGS (favorite local game store).

Subjective Character Creation

"Subjective character creation" is one of the easiest and most flexible ways to create a character. Players simply describe their characters in Fudge terms and add detailed descriptions or clarifications as needed. The GM may limit characters to a certain number of traits rated at Superb, another number at Great, and so on, which helps prevent "character escalation" with everyone designing superheroes who have nothing but Legendary traits.

When creating a character "subjectively," describe the character in as much detail as you like, using Fudge terms to rate the character's attributes and skills. You can use the Attributes, Gifts, Faults, and Skills presented in this chapter or you and your GM may come up with different character traits. The GM may also place limits on the number of Superb or Great attributes and skills, or the number of gifts your character can have.

Suggested limits include:

- Attributes: Two "free levels" (raise two attributes by one level or one attribute by two levels) (default: Fair)
- Skills: Two Great, four Good, six Fair, and at least one Mediocre (default: Poor)
- Gifts and Faults: Two required (each)

Consider trading some character trait levels to give you some additional flexibility within these restrictions:

- Take a fault to get another gift or to raise an attribute one level
- Trade "two lower for one higher" — for example, trade two Good skills for one Great skill
- Trade "one higher for two lower" — for example, trade one Good skill for two Fair skills

If the GM feels that your character is too powerful for the campaign, you may need to reduce some Trait levels, give up a gift, or otherwise modify the balance.

Likewise, your GM may think that your character is too weak in a certain area and suggest that you give your character more social skills, for example. (Of course, if there are multiple players, the other player characters may compensate for an individual PC's weaknesses. You never want to hear the GM ask, "Doesn't *anyone* have any social skills?")

If you are having trouble balancing your character, the GM may ask you to write a detailed prose description of your character that includes everything you decided during character concept (see Chapter Five), which can then be "translated" into appropriate Traits and levels.

Character Creation Summary

1. After reading Chapter Five: Character Concept, discuss your character concept with the GM.

Your Gamemaster may or may not want players to discuss their characters with each other. (Your characters may meet for the first time at the start of the adventure, in which case revealing information about each character should happen within the game.)

2. Choose a Race (Human or Deryni, see below), a Rank (see p. 69), and a name for your character.

If you need help choosing a name, there are many lists of medieval names available online, or you can take a "normal" name and change it slightly: "Elizabeth" may become "Lizbith," for example, or "Paul" may become "Pol." You may certainly take names from the Deryni novels — the Duke of Corwyn in King Kelson's time is unlikely to be the only person in Gwynedd named Alaric.

3. Assign traits (Skills, Attributes, Gifts, and Faults) by doing the following in any order:

a. *Spend points to purchase skills.* The more points you spend in a group, the more skills you may choose and at higher levels. You may also use one of your points as a "General Skills Point" which allows you to select three skills at Fair (taken from any two or three skill groups). When choosing skills and levels, keep Step 4 (below) in mind — you can trade skill levels up or down to get the right mix for your character.

b. *Assign attributes, all of which begin at Fair.* You may use two free levels to increase one attribute by two levels (from Fair to Great) or two attributes by one level each (from Fair to Good).

c. *Choose two gifts, including whatever is required for the overall Rank and Race you select.* (Note that most Noble and Clerical ranks count as at least one gift, and being Deryni counts as one gift.)

d. *Choose two faults, including those required for the overall Rank you select.* (Note that a Rank of Poor or Terrible counts as one or two faults, respectively.)

4. Refine your character by trading Traits.

You may do any or all of the following, as many times as you would like, provided your GM approves:

a. *Trade one skill for two at a lower level (trade a Good skill for two Fair, a Great for two Good, etc.).* All skills involved must be from the same Skill Group, unless you are trading a skill purchased with a General Skills Point, in which case you may trade a Fair for two Mediocre skills from different skill groups.

b. *Trade two skills for a skill from the same skill group at one level greater (trade two Mediocre for a Fair, or two Fair for one Good skill, etc.).* All skills involved must be from the same Skill Group. Note that this trade requires the GM's approval!

c. *Decrease an attribute one level to raise another by one level, or trade it for one gift.*

d. *Take another fault to raise an attribute by one level or gain another gift.*

5. Select a suitable complement of equipment for your character. The GM should define the equipment and monetary resources your character has when the game begins.

Race and Rank Packages

While most character traits are offered "a la carte," there are two important character concept decisions best handled with "packages" of character traits: Race and Rank. A Race or Rank package is a collection of Gifts, Faults, and Skill requirements or restrictions with an overall cost of one or more gifts. Some packages actually count as one or more faults (e.g., some of the "Commoner" Rank packages). Choose the packages appropriate to your character's Race and Rank, and follow that package's requirements and restrictions when assigning the rest of your traits.

Note that these "packages" are optional. If you prefer well-defined characters with all pertinent character traits specifically spelled out, the Race and Rank packages are a good way to ensure that characters have the proper attributes for someone of their social status and role in society.

If you are using *Subjective Character Creation* (see sidebar, p. 67) or wish to simplify the character creation process, you can bypass Rank package specifics. With the GM's concurrence, choose a Rank (Terrible to Legendary), a profession such as "Knight" or "Priest" or "Free Commoner" or whatever is appropriate for the character, and a few notes regarding the privileges and duties go with that rank and role. As you play, you will want to keep notes about your character's development; in this way, you are sort of "build as you go."

Racial Package

- If you are creating a human character, skip ahead to Rank, below.
- If your character is a Deryni character, you will need to purchase the Deryni Racial package.

The Deryni Racial Package (Cost: 1 Gift)

The Deryni Racial Package, a requirement for all Deryni (non-Human) characters, provides the following:

- Power attribute at Fair
  (most human characters have no Power attribute at all)
- The following Magic skills at the default level of Poor:
  - Body-Control
  - Casting
  - Mind-Reading
  - Mind-Speech
  - Shields
  - Truth-Reading
- Dark Secret (Deryni)

A Deryni's skill level with innate magical abilities can be raised by spending points in the Magic skill group (see p. XX) or through character development during game play (see p. XX).

The player may choose to be unskilled in most Deryni Magic, keeping the six Deryni Magic skills listed above at the default level of Poor. This is especially appropriate for a character with the Hidden Lineage gift who may learn of his Deryni heritage and abilities in the course of the game.

Most Deryni characters should probably spend at least one point in the Magic skill group to improve their magical abilities. Note that spending more than one skill point in this group requires the Formal Magical Training gift as well as the Deryni racial package.

Characters with the Deryni racial package also have the Dark Secret (Deryni) fault, which becomes the Social Stigma (Deryni) fault when dealing with anyone who knows or discovers that you are a Deryni. If you have the Known Deryni fault, the Social Stigma (Deryni) applies with everyone you meet, as your racial heritage is no longer a Dark Secret.

Rank

The *Deryni Adventure Game* has three categories of Rank: Noble, Commoner, and Clergy. Male characters base their Rank on their current status, with heirs equal to their eventual titles or rank. Unmarried female characters gain Rank equal to that of their father, while married women's rank is determined by their husband's rank unless they have received a title directly from the monarch. This may seem unfair to female characters, but is appropriate to the Deryni world and historically accurate for the medieval period in Western Europe. A character's Rank greatly influences other Traits, including Gifts, Faults, and Skills. Each Rank comes with a Rank "package" as detailed below.

Sendai the Magnificent: Character Concept

You present the following character concept to the GM:

"Sendai the Magnificent" is a Deryni named Doral Sendai. The leader of a troupe of performers, he is a stage magician as well as a trained Deryni mage. Sendai uses sleight of hand and other tricks of the trade to cover up any use of "real" magic. A man in his 40's, his travels allow him to pursue his real goal — to collect as much information, knowledge, and ancient wisdom connected with his race and with Deryni magic as possible.

The GM likes the idea of a traveling troupe because it allows a wide range of skills among the characters and makes the group highly mobile — the better to explore the Eleven Kingdoms!

The others players have all agreed that Sendai can be the group's leader (and employer). They trust the player not to be too "bossy" or hog the spotlight during the game. (*Note:* Sendai makes a good leader for a group of player characters with varying levels of experience.)

Race

Since Sendai is a Deryni, you note the following default traits:

- Power Attribute: Fair
- Magic skills:
  - Body-Control
  - Casting
  - Mind-Reading
  - Mind-Speech
  - Shields
  - Truth-Reading.

Because you'll be spending some points in the Magic skill group, you do not select levels yet — you want Sendai to be competent with these skills, so you will probably be buying them at higher levels than the default of Poor.

- Fault: Dark Secret (Deryni)

Character Generation

Characters who select Clergy may receive both a birth Rank (whether Noble or Commoner) and a Clergy Rank. A character leading a "double life" may also have two Ranks. However, if the cost of the two Ranks exceeds the two "free" gifts each character starts with, you must take one or more additional faults to balance that cost.



In the case of a character who has stepped outside social convention, choose the Rank level appropriate to the character's current station and balance that against how society views the character. While it is customary in other types of medieval and high fantasy games for women to be knights and warriors, the world of the Eleven Kingdoms is closer to real world convention, in that such a career is tantamount to social disaster. That said, if the players and the GM agree, adjustments can be made as long as everyone understands that this is not a true reflection of either the Deryni world or the real world of that time.

The requirements and restrictions of Rank packages apply only at character creation. If a character's Rank changes during the game, the GM will determine which, if any, of the gifts, faults, privileges, and restrictions that come with the new Rank package actually apply. If a wealthy merchant's daughter marries a minor noble, for example, she won't suddenly gain skills in the Noble skill group. However, she may be presented opportunities to learn such skills in her new life (see *Character Development*, p. XX).

Precedence

Nobility always outranks commoners, regardless of Rank. For example, a landless Knight (Mediocre Rank) would take precedence (in social circles and in legal matters) over even the wealthiest commoner (Fair Rank).

The Clergy always outrank Commoners or Nobility of the same Rank level. Thus, a Bishop takes precedence over a Duke, even though both are of Superb Rank. Lay brothers take precedence over commoners of Mediocre Rank, although wealthy freemen of Fair Rank outrank them. Within ranks, there are stratifications not immediately apparent from the rather broad Rank categories. These are best roleplayed rather than delineated as separate ranks with differing gifts and faults.

Here are some guidelines for determining social status within a given Rank (especially for Nobility):

- Royal Blood always outranks non-royal blood. (For instance, the Duke of Carthmoor, traditionally a member of the Royal Family, outranks the other Dukes of Gwynedd.)
- The actual holder of a title or position outranks the heir, who outranks all other family members.
- Males outrank females of the same rank.
- One who has achieved Knighthood enjoys a slightly higher social status than one of the same rank who has not.

Noble Rank Packages

Legendary (King or Queen or any ruling sovereign, regardless of title)
Cost: 3 Gifts

- *Gifts:* Authority (Governmental), Educated, Land, Royal Blood, Title, Wealth (x2).
- *Faults:* Duties (x 2), Easily Recognized, Enemy or Rival (x4).
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Must spend at least 3 points in the Noble skill group. May not spend any points in the Rogue or Trade skill groups (may use a General Point to select skills from these skill groups if the character's background justifies this).



Superb: Duke or Duchess
Cost: 2 Gifts

- *Gifts:* Authority (Governmental), Educated, Land, Title, Wealth (x2).
- *Faults:* Duties, Enemy or Rival (x4), Oath of Fealty to King.
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Must spend at least 2 points in the Noble skill group. May not spend any points in the Rogue or Trade skill groups (may use a General Point to select skills from these skill groups if the character's background justifies this).

Great: Earl (Gwynedd), Count (Torenth), or Countess (wife of Earl or Count)
Cost: 2 Gifts

- *Gifts:* Authority (Governmental), Educated, Land, Title, Wealth.
- *Faults:* Duties, Enemy or Rival (x2), Oath of Fealty to Overlord (and to the King).
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Must spend at least 2 points in the Noble skill group.

Good: Baron or Baroness, Clan Chief
Cost: 2 Gifts

- *Gifts:* Authority (Governmental), Educated, Income, Land, Title.
- *Faults:* Duties, Enemy or Rival, Oath of Fealty to Overlord (and to the King).
- *Restrictions:* Must spend at least 2 in the Noble skill group.

Fair: Landed gentry (untitled)
Cost: 1 Gift

A member of the landed gentry may be referred to as "Lord (Lady) of the Manor" or "Laird" in the Borderlands, but this is by courtesy rather than by actual title granted by the Crown.

- *Gifts:* Authority (Governmental – Local), Educated, Income, Land.
- *Faults:* Duties, Enemy or Rival, Oath of Fealty to Overlord.
- *Restrictions:* None.

Mediocre: Nobility without land or title, Knight/Lady
No Cost



Note that while this person may outrank a member of the untitled landed class in terms of precedence, the lack of income will hamper their activities and may require them to seek a patron.

- *Gifts:* Educated. They may have Authority (Governmental) but it would be by appointment to a position and not gained through land holdings.
- *Faults:* Duties (may be determined by the patron). The nobility are in fealty to the Crown but without the ability to raise a levee.
- *Restrictions:* Knights must take the Knighthood gift, and should take the Warhorse gift and the Code of Honor (Chivalric) fault. Many noblemen in the Eleven Kingdoms achieve knighthood, in which case they retain their own Rank. Commoners who are Knighted enter the Noble Rank at Mediocre, or may be confirmed as a Knight in a clerical Order, but this requires GM permission. Unlanded knights will need to find a way to support themselves financially by serving an overlord or the Crown.

Commoner Rank Packages

Fair: Wealthy craftspersons and merchants, personal servants of noblemen of rank Great or better (Cost: 1 Gift)

- *Gifts:* Educated, Income.
- *Fault:* Enemy or Rival.
- *Restrictions:* Must spend at least two points in the Trade skill group. Cannot spend points in the Noble skill group.

Note: Many of the wealthier commoners own houses, ships, and even land, and can afford to hire servants and workers of their own. Some are wealthy enough to fund building projects, grant loans, and otherwise influence and drive commerce in their city or region.

Mediocre: Free commoners (No cost)

This rank includes craftspeople, shopkeepers, freehold farmers who cultivate their own land, yeomen (attendants to knights and nobles of Rank Good or lower).

- *Gifts:* Income.
- *Faults:* None.
- *Restrictions:* Must spend at least one point in the Trade skill group. Cannot spend points in the Noble skill group.

Note: Some free commoners own property — their home and shop, their farm, etc.

Poor: Journeymen, servants, subsistence farmers, peasant laborers, criminals who have not been caught (Cost: 1 Fault)

- *Gifts:* None.
- *Faults:* Duties.
- *Restrictions:* Cannot spend points in the Noble skill group. Cannot be Wealthy, cannot have the Educated gift without GM permission.

Terrible: All who are considered actual property or whose lives are controlled by a contract holder (Cost: 2 Faults)



This Rank includes villeins (peasants bound to the land but who hold legal status of freemen with anyone but their lord), apprentices, convicted criminals, and indentured servants.

- *Gifts:* None.
- *Faults:* Social Stigma, plus one of the following: Captivity or Duties (if indentured or otherwise contractually obligated to perform duties).
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Cannot spend points in the Noble skill group. If the character escapes from bondage or captivity, replace "Captivity" or "Duties" with "Dark Secret" (if caught the character will likely be punished and returned to bondage or captivity).

Note: Slavery is outlawed in Gwynedd and much of the Eleven Kingdoms. During Imre's reign, some commoners who refused to pay Imre's Tariff, or who could not, were bound over to serfdom to pay the debt in labor. This practice was abolished after the Haldane Restoration. However, there are still some instances of indentured servitude for a finite period of time in payment of a debt or fine.

Sendai the Magnificent: Rank

Sendai the Magnificent is a commoner. There may be noble blood in his past, but any lands and titles were stripped in the anti-Deryni purges. So what is his rank? He is not tied to the land as a peasant or serf would be but he is not wealthy either. A Mediocre rank (Free Commoner) is probably best.

Keep in mind the requirements and restrictions for this rank level. Sendai receives the "Income" gift and no faults. He must use one or more points in the Trade skill group for skills appropriate to his rank and occupation. (See the *Mediocre: Free Commoners* Rank package, left).



Clergy Rank Packages

Legendary: Archbishop
(Cost: 3 Gifts)

- *Gifts:* Authority (Religious), Educated, Land, Patron (the Church), Title of Primate of all Gwynedd (or equivalent), Wealth x2.
- *Faults:* Duties, Enemy or Rival (x2), Vows (Ecclesiastical), Vows (Religious Order).
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Must spend at least 3 points in the Religious skill group. May not spend any points in the Rogue or Trade skill groups (may use a General Point to select skills from these skill groups if the character's background justifies this).

Superb: Bishop
(Cost: 2 Gifts)

- *Gifts:* Authority (Religious), Educated, Land, Patron (the Church), Wealth
- *Faults:* Duties, Vows (Ecclesiastical), Vows (Religious Order).
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Must spend at least 2 point in the Religious skill group. May not spend any points in the Rogue or Trade skill groups (may use a General Point to select skills from these skill groups if the character's background justifies this).

Great: Itinerant Bishop, Abbot, Abbess
(Cost: 1 Gift)

- *Gifts:* Authority (Religious, Educated, Patron (the Church), Wealth.
- *Faults:* Duties, Vows (Ecclesiastical), Vows (Religious Order).
- *Restrictions:* Requires GM permission. Must spend at least 2 points in the Religious skill group. May not spend any points in the Rogue or Trade skill groups (may use a General Point to select skills from these skill groups if the character's background justifies this).

Good: Priest with a parish or position on a bishop's staff
(Cost: 1 Gift)

- *Gifts:* Authority (Religious), Educated, Patron (the Church).
- *Faults:* Vows (Ecclesiastical), Duties.
- *Restrictions:* Must spend at least 2 points in the Religious skill group. May not spend any points in the Rogue skill group (may use a General Point to select skills from this skill group if the character's background justifies this). If the priest is also a member of a particular religious order, he should take the Vow (Religious Order) fault (not included in the Rank package).

Fair: Itinerant priests, monks, nuns, deacons
(Cost: 1 Gift)

- *Gifts:* Authority (Religious), Educated, Patron (the Church).
- *Faults:* Vows (Ecclesiastical if priests, Religious Order if monks or nuns), Duties.
- *Restrictions:* Must spend at least 1 point in the Religious skill group.



Mediocre: Lay staff and lay brothers
(Cost: none)

- *Gifts:* Patron (the Church).
- *Faults:* Duties.
- *Restrictions:* None.

Gifts and Faults

Gifts and Faults are Traits that are not measurable in the Terrible to Superb scale. They allow for more detail to be added to the character that cannot be adequately described by other Traits. Generally, gifts are positive effects and faults are negative, although a gift might be a burden to bear and a fault might turn out to be a blessing in disguise.

Read through the following lists of gifts and faults, looking for traits that make sense for your character based on the character concept you developed. Pay special attention to gifts and faults that may affect skill choice (e.g., Educated, which allows you to purchase skills in the Scholar skill group).

- Choose two gifts (including any gifts you use for Race or Rank).
- Choose two faults.
- You may choose an additional fault to gain an additional gift, or to raise an attribute by one level (see p. XX).
- You may also lower an attribute to gain a gift (see p. XX).
- *Note:* While many Rank and Race packages count as gifts or faults, any gifts or faults included in the package are in addition to the gifts or faults used to purchase that package, at no extra cost.

Gift List

Alertness	You are unusually alert and aware of your surroundings. You receive a +1 bonus to all Perception trait checks.
Ambidextrous	You may use either hand with equal ease (the normal penalty for using the off-hand is –1)
Animal Empathy	You have an affinity for animals. You can sense their moods and can rapidly forge a bond with them. You are at a +1 to Animal Handling, Animal Training, and Riding, provided you have some time to establish a bond with the individual animals involved. Requires GM approval. (Your GM may decide that "Animal Empathy" is actually an untrained Deryni ability, requiring the Deryni gift and possibly the Lost Heritage fault. In the Highlands, people with Animal Empathy and similar gifts may be said to have "the Sight.")
Assumed Powers (Human only)	You are a human who has been given Deryni powers through a power assumption ritual. This gift requires that you also buy the gift: Human With Power.
Attractive	You are generally more attractive than the average person. The GM will take this into account when determining reactions of the non-player characters encountered.
Authority	You have Authority over other people, whether as an overlord (Noble), Religious (if a ranking member of the Clergy), or Military (as a military leader). You can issue orders and expect them to be obeyed, and also mete out justice and punishments. This gift is part of several Noble and Clerical rank packages, but may also be purchased separately with the GM's permission.

Sendai the Magnificent Gifts and Faults

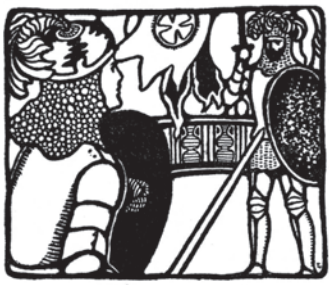
Due to Race and Rank, you've already spent one gift for Sendai to be a Deryni. The Rank of Mediocre costs nothing and provides the Income gift, which as a package-derived gift, does not count toward the two that Sendai gets.

The Deryni racial package comes with the fault: Dark Secret (Deryni). As a package-derived fault, it does not count toward the two faults you need to choose which means you can select one more gift, and must choose at least two additional faults.

To make Sendai an accomplished Deryni mage, choose the Formal Magic Training gift. You probably want him to be Educated, which means you will need to take another fault to balance an extra gift, or you might want to lower an attribute by one level to gain an extra gift.

Now look for faults that make sense for Sendai and will also make him fun to play. Code of Honor (Help the Helpless) and Overconfident should get him into enough trouble to make things interesting but you still need another fault to balance Educated, so you decide on Loyalty to his troupe. Doral Sendai is the type of leader who will do his best to keep his troupe well fed, well clothed, and out of trouble, and would never abandon any one of them.

Beautiful Voice	You have a beautiful voice, giving you a +1 to the Singing and Storytelling skills.
Blocker (Deryni Healer only)	You have the very rare ability to block the powers of other Deryni. This requires first purchasing the Healer gift. Blocking is also a skill (see p. XX).
Charisma	You exhibit personal magnetism that commands respect and admiration. The GM will take this into account when roleplaying NPCs your character interacts with in social situations.
Combat Reflexes	Your reflexes are highly tuned, allowing you to react instantly to dangerous situations. The GM will take this into account when determining the effects of ambushes, being surprised in your sleep, and other situations where quick, instinctive reactions will benefit you.
Common Sense	Your character has the ability to make sensible decisions based on sound, practical judgment untainted by romantic notions or prejudicial beliefs. When faced with a problem, your character applies reasoning to come up with a good solution, particularly in difficult situations. When roleplaying a character with Common Sense, you may take time to consult with your GM and other players "out of character" to collectively come up with a good, practical plan — one that hopefully minimizes danger! Once back "in character," you can roleplay your character crafting and explaining and/or executing the plan. Note that within the game, it generally takes your character less time to formulate the plan than it did for you to consult with others on the best solution.
Contacts	You have contacts who provide you with information or special services. A contact is someone who is not bound to you by an Oath of Fealty (nor you to them.) Calling on a contact too frequently may strain the relationship. The GM may make a Situational Roll (see p. XX) to determine if your contacts are able to provide you with the help or information you need.
Danger Sense	You are unusually sensitive to signs of danger. This "sixth sense" may warn you when an ambush or other danger is about to occur. The GM will make a Situational Roll whenever you are about to be threatened (a Good or better result indicates you sense the danger), or she may give you bonuses to Perception rolls to detect the danger. (Your GM may decide that "Danger Sense" is actually an untrained Deryni ability, requiring the Deryni gift and possibly the Lost Heritage fault. In the Highlands, people with Danger Sense and similar gifts may be said to have "the Sight.")
Double-Jointed	You are inordinately flexible, and can contort your body. This allows you to more easily get into and out of tight places, and grants a +1 bonus to skills like Acrobatics, Escape, and others your GM deems appropriate.
Educated	You may buy skills in the Scholar skill group, and you receive Literacy at Mediocre as a default. (If you use points to purchase Literacy, add +1 to your skill level). Within the Eleven Kingdoms, nobles are more likely to be Educated than commoners, and men are more likely than women to get a formal education. This in no way restricts you from purchasing the Educated gift at character creation (player characters represent exceptional people), but if you're creating a peasant woman with a formal education, you should think of a back-story to explain how that came to be.





Empathy	You have an affinity for other people, and can sense their emotions and motivations. You are at a +1 for Perception checks when trying to detect lies (without the use of magic, by observing body language) or get a sense for a person's current emotional state and how that may affect their behavior. (Your GM may decide that "Empathy" is actually an untrained Deryni ability, requiring the Deryni gift and possibly the Lost Heritage fault. In the Highlands, people with Empathy and similar gifts may be said to have "the Sight.")
Exceptional Memory	You have an exceptional memory, and are able to recall even the smallest details of information. This gift is best simulated by copious notes; write down everything that happens to your character and any information your character may wish to recall! Your GM will help by telling you something your character remembers (but that you, the player, don't necessarily know). The GM may require a Wits check for you to remember something obscure.
Experienced	You've been around for a while, and have led a busy life. You get your choice of three additional skills at Mediocre, or raising three existing skills by one level (maximum of Superb), or a combination of the two options. This may be bought more than once with GM's permission and proper character background. This gift is easily abused, so make sure your character's concept warrants the label. Your character must also have a detailed background.
Favors Due	People owe you favors that you can call on as needed. Your GM will help you determine the sources of these favors. This gift is not a permanent one, unless you earn other favors during the course of the game. Your GM will inform you when "all debts are paid."
Focused	You can focus your attention to do better at tasks that require time (+1 to skill checks when your GM deems it appropriate). Such focus helps you ignore interruptions and distractions. This is particularly helpful when exercising magical skills.
Formal Magical Training (Deryni or Humans with Power only	You have been formally trained in the Magical Arts. You may spend two or more points in the Magic skill group. You also get the Spellcasting skill at a default of Poor. If you spend points on the Spellcasting skill, add +1 to your final skill level.
Good Reputation	You are well regarded by those around you. The GM will apply a +1 to any reaction checks she makes for NPCs. Your reputation may also warrant a +1 to social skills in certain circumstances, as deemed appropriate by the GM.
Healer (Deryni only)	You have the Deryni ability to Heal and gain the Magic skill of Healing at Poor. (You may purchase it at a higher level with points spent in the Magic skill group.)
Hidden Lineage (Deryni only)	Your family has managed to bury the knowledge that they are Deryni so deeply that no one outside the family knows. With the GM's permission and some good roleplaying on your part, your lineage may even be hidden from yourself! The GM will also restrict whether anyone can discern your lineage through research.
High Pain Tolerance	You have a higher than normal ability to withstand pain. When wounded, you suffer wound penalties as though the wound is one level less severe (see p. XX).
Human With Power (Human only)	Although human, you have acquired Deryni powers (you have the Power attribute at Fair.) You may spend one skill point in the Magic skill group (more if you also have Formal Magic Training). Requires GM permission.
Income	You have a source of money, whether a stipend from a Patron or a family member or a position or investments that provide income. However, your income does not exceed (and may not even meet) your needs; for that you need Wealth.
Keen Hearing	Your hearing is truly exceptional, granting a +2 bonus to Perception checks involving hearing sounds.
Keen Sense of Smell	Your sense of smell is truly exceptional, granting a +2 bonus to Perception checks involving smell or taste.



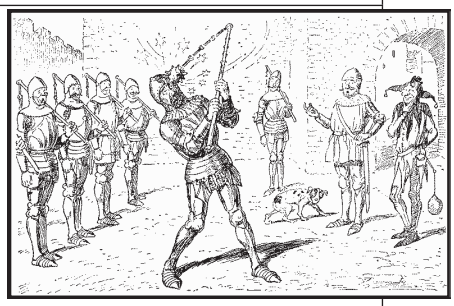
Keen Sense of Touch	Your sense of touch is truly exceptional, granting a +2 bonus to Perception checks involving tactile experiences.
Keen Vision	Your vision is truly exceptional, granting a +2 bonus to Perception checks involving sight.
Knighthood	You have been dubbed a knight. You should be skilled in riding and fighting, and should also take the Warhorse gift and the Code of Honor (Chivalric) fault. Your starting equipment includes armor, shield, helm, sword, hauberk, lance, saddle, and bridle. If you don't have Income, Wealth, or Wealth Beyond Your Station, that may be all you own (ask your GM). Knights in religious orders are usually Nobles as well as Clergy. 
Land	You own land. Your GM will determine how much and where, based on your Rank and character concept.
Light Sleeper	You are totally alert upon wakening, even if your sleep is interrupted. Also, you are more likely to be awakened by strange noises.
Luck	You have unusually good fortune. Your GM chooses the exact effects of this gift: e.g. a re-roll of the dice a pre-determined number of times during a game session; allowing re-roll of any die roll that would have serious harmful consequences for the character; or gaining a pre-determined number of extra Fudge points (see p. XX).
Magic Sensitivity (Humans only)	You are more sensitive to magical workings than normal humans. Most humans are oblivious to Deryni magic that has no visible or audible effect (although they may suspect magic is afoot!). With Magic Sensitivity, the GM may allow a Perception check for you to recognize magic that wouldn't otherwise be noticeable.
Patron	You have a Patron of higher rank who is willing to help you. If you are a member of the Clergy, you enjoy the patronage of the Church, which provides you with room, board and basic necessities.
Resistance/ Immunity	You have a natural or built-up resistance to a particular kind of harmful effect, giving you a +1 to resist such effects. Choose a specific disease or poison when designing your character. Depending on the nature of the harmful substance, this gift may provide full immunity, or only limited resistance. For example, some Deryni have consciously built up a resistance to merasha and can mitigate its effects. But if they eat it or drink it, or are jabbed with a "Deryni pricker," they still experience some of the symptoms. Normally, a Deryni dosed with merasha will be nearly incapacitated, with a –3 penalty to any actions. One who's built up some resistance suffers only a –1 penalty (–2 if heavily dosed). See *Merasha,* p. XX.
Royal Blood	You have royal blood in your veins, from one or both parents. (It may be many times removed from the current ruler.) Requires GM permission.
Sense of Direction	You have a good sense of direction, and are less likely to get lost. You receive +1 to Navigation and similar skills.
Time Sense	You have a perfect sense of time and can estimate the time to within a GM-set precision (minutes, seconds, etc.). Use this gift to coordinate actions when timing is crucial.
Title	You have a title, although it does not necessarily come with any property or income. This gift is most often purchased as part of a Rank package. The precise title is subject to GM approval. Some nobles have more than one Title. On rare occasion, a king may bestow a Title upon a commoner.
Tough	You are resistant to injury. Add +1 to your Defensive Damage Factor (see p. XX). You are also resistant to the effects of fatigue. If using the optional *Fatigue* rules (see p. XX), your character can perform an additional Tiring or Exhausting action, or gains a +1 on Trait checks, depending on the method being used to track the effects of Fatigue. Otherwise, roleplay it — when everyone else is glad to bed down after a hard day of hiking or riding, you still have energy to spare.

Unknown Benefit	Somewhere in your past is something beneficial that you are unaware of. It could be a lost heritage, a magical endowment, or something else entirely. While you may suggest the nature of the unknown benefit, the actual "unknown benefit" is up to the GM, to be discovered during the course of the game.
Warhorse	You have a Warhorse of good breeding with appropriate gear and bardings. For the benefits of owning a trained warhorse, see *Animals in the Game,* p. XX.
Wealth	You are wealthy. You have more than enough funds and treasures to meet your needs. This gift may be purchased multiple times to increase the amount of wealth you enjoy. This gift is most often purchased as part of a Rank package, but may be purchased separately with the GM's permission.
Wealth Exceeds Station	You have access to more money than is normal for one of your Rank. This can come in the form of a stipend from a benefactor, or some business interests, or accumulated wealth from your politically or mercantile-savvy family.
Well-Traveled	You have traveled quite a bit around the Eleven Kingdoms. (Consult with your GM to decide which countries you have visited.) You gain the primary languages spoken in those countries (except Latin), with skill levels in those languages starting at Poor, which is enough for basic conversation. You get +1 level to any languages in which you spend skill points.



Fault List

Absent Minded	You forget things easily, especially if distracted by another task. The GM may require a Wits check for your character to recall whatever it is that was forgotten.
Aged	You are elderly. Subtract one level from one of your attributes (your choice).
Addiction	You have a bad addiction to something — alcohol, gambling, women, etc. — that you find very hard to resist. The GM may require Willpower checks to resist temptation.
Ambitious	You have social or economic ambitions, like reaching a certain rank, or becoming wealthy or powerful. You will set all other activities aside when opportunities for furthering your goal occur.
Bad Reputation	You are known by many people, in a negative way. The reputation does not necessarily have to be true, just that many believe it and react to you accordingly.
Black Sheep	For some reason you are not on good terms with your family. This may be your fault or the fault of one or both of your parents or siblings, and you may or may not know why.

Blunt and Tactless	You do not mince words, to the point of rudeness, often offending people unintentionally. You have a –1 to social skills where diplomacy, discretion, or delicacy may be required. Feel free to roleplay this, but don't overdo it — you don't want to offend the GM or other players!
Callous	You have a decided lack of empathy for your fellow beings. You are unlikely to give aid to others, or respond to stories of hardship and thus, others are likely to respond callously to you.
Captivity	You are a captive. You may be an imprisoned criminal, a nobleman being held for ransom, a hostage, a political prisoner, or a slave or villein (not legal in all Kingdoms). Requires GM permission. If you escape, replace this fault with Dark Secret or Enemy (your captors hunting you) as your GM requires.
Clumsy	You are fumble-fingered and fumble-footed. Add a –1 to any trait or skill checks the GM feels could be hampered by your clumsiness. Note that you don't need to actually lower your Agility attribute level, as your general athletic ability remains unchanged. Being Clumsy simply means you're more likely to trip, drop things, knock things over, etc. than the average person. You may roleplay this for the humorous element, but probably shouldn't take it as far as slapstick. 
Code of Honor	You have a strict Code of Honor that dictates much of your behavior. This may be fueled by your personal beliefs or merely because it is required (by law or other external force), but in the end, it affects your decisions. Discuss the specifics of this Code with your GM. Examples may be to Help the Helpless, Do Good Works, Your Word is Your Bond, etc. Some Codes of Honor are quite complex, encompassing almost every aspect of life. The Chivalric Code emphasizes loyalty, courage, respect, mercy and compassion, truthfulness, and keeping one's word of honor at any cost. Knights following the Chivalric Code strive to protect those weaker than themselves, including the poor, women, and children; and to protect the Church. Clansmen in the borderlands follow a Code of Honor that encourages loyalty, justice, honesty, courage, hospitality, and upholding one's honor. Tribesmen in the Anvil of the Lord follow a Code of Honor entailing loyalty to the tribe, independence, endurance, bravery, retribution, and above all hospitality, even to strangers. The consequences of violating one's Code of Honor include loss of self-respect and the loss of "face" that may result in others shunning the dishonored. A character who breaks a Code of Honor multiple times or in a visibly undeniable way may gain the Bad Reputation fault.
Combat Paralysis	You freeze in combat situations, and must make a Willpower check to be able to act.
Dark Secret	You have a secret you need to hide from the rest of the world. If others find out, it will damage your reputation or cause serious harm to you or your family. If you are a Deryni — but not known as one — you have the Dark Secret (Deryni) fault. (You may have other Dark Secrets as well, counting as additional faults). To anyone who discovers you are Deryni, this fault becomes the Social Stigma (Deryni) fault. If you have or acquire the Known Deryni fault, your Dark Secret (Deryni) becomes the Social Stigma (Deryni) fault in all circumstances.
Dependent	You have someone who is dependent on you for survival. This goes beyond the normal duties and ties of family, and is not something you can pass off to another.

Disfigured	You have been scarred in a way that is easily recognizable, and may make a negative impression on people.
Distractible	You are easily distracted. You are at a –1 to trait checks when performing a long-term or uninteresting task, such as keeping watch or reading difficult texts.
Duties	You have the duties required of your station, title(s), or lands. This includes required court appearances, fealty to your overlord or family head, and the problems of managing your lands. Servants and other commoners have Duties assigned by their employer or lord who may be another player or an NPC.
Easily Recognized	Your face is distinctive or widely known. People will recognize you easily for who you are. (Describe what makes you easy to remember.) This may prove beneficial, if you ever need to prove who you are for any reason. It can also cause problems — enemies can more easily track you down simply by asking people if they've seen you….
Enemy or Rival	You have enemies. You may have one enemy at a higher Rank level, two at your level, or three enemies that Rank below you (determined by the GM). These enemies may simply be petty rivals or might be out to kill you.
Fanaticism	You hold extremely strong views on a particular subject, to the point of irrationality. Choose the object of your fanaticism. GM permission required.
Fear	You are afraid of something so much that facing your fear is almost impossible. You may not be able to overcome the impulse to flee, nor can you willingly face it. The object of your fear requires GM approval. The GM may allow a Willpower check for you to attempt to overcome it.
Fragile Constitution	Your body does not deal well with injury. You are at a –1 to your Defensive Damage Factor (see p. XX). If using the optional *Fatigue* rules (see p. XX), your character can perform one fewer Tiring or Exhausting action than normal, or is penalized –1 on Trait checks, depending on the method being used to track the effects of Fatigue.
Glory Hound	You are always at the forefront of heroic action, unable to resist any action that may bring you personal renown. You also attempt to pull off feats in the most flamboyant and ostentatious manner possible. This may lead to resentment towards you on the part of the other PCs or NPCs.
Hearing Problem	You are hearing-impaired (extent to be determined by GM.) You are at a disadvantage on Perception checks, cannot overhear conversations at a distance, and have problems hearing in a noisy crowd. Purchase this fault twice if you are totally Deaf. (One Hearing Problem fault gives a –2 to all Hearing Perception checks. Deaf characters do not get to make Hearing Perception checks).
Heavy Sleeper	You are hard to awaken. You do not get a Perception check to notice things while you are sleeping, and you are groggy upon waking, especially if you haven't had a full night's sleep.



Illegitimate	Your parents were not legally married to each other when you were born, which means you do not qualify for inheritance (either of real property or of titles or honors), and you may find a hard time interacting with society. Your Rank is equal to that of the lower-ranked parent, or one less than the higher-ranking parent if that parent acknowledges you (but no greater than Fair). Example: the illegitimate (and unacknowledged) child of a peasant woman and an Earl would have Rank Poor (peasant). That same child, if acknowledged by the Earl, would have rank Fair (free commoner, illegitimate child of Earl).
Impulsive	You do not think before you act, and often underestimate risks. The GM will determine Difficulty levels of impulsive actions based on your "enthusiasm."
Intolerant	You have a negative reaction to a specific race, country, religion, behavior, or other trait you find deplorable. In Gwynedd, many are Intolerant of the Deryni. We don't recommend taking the Intolerant (Deryni) fault unless your GM wishes to make it part of the campaign. For example, Intolerant PCs may have their opinions changed over the course of the game, as they learn that Deryni aren't the evil creatures they believed they were. (Requires GM approval.)
Known Deryni (Deryni only)	It is common knowledge that you and your family are Deryni, which causes major difficulties for you in public, especially at Court. Suspicion follows you wherever you go. You have a –1 to your apparent Rank when dealing with those who do not like Deryni. You may become a Known Deryni during game play. Once you are a Known Deryni, your Dark Secret (Deryni) fault becomes the Social Stigma (Deryni) fault.
Lame	You have a pronounced limp. Running is virtually impossible, and you probably walk with a cane or staff. While overall your Agility may be high, it is at a –2 penalty whenever you need to make an Agility check that requires the use of the lame leg.
Law-Abiding	You follow the law to the letter, and are unwilling to compromise, even when it may be advisable to do so.
Lazy	You avoid effort whenever possible by shifting responsibility to someone else, procrastinating, or simply not performing an allotted task.
Lost Heritage (Deryni only)	Your family has hidden their Deryni secret for so long that they've forgotten what they are. Thus, you have no defaults in the Magic skill Group. (If you discover your Deryni powers during gameplay, you gain the basic four Deryni magic skills of Body-Control, Mind-Speech, Scanning, and Truth-Reading at Terrible.) You may be a priest with GM permission only — as there will have to be a reason why you were able to pass the merasha test prior to ordination.
Low Pain Threshold	You do not deal well with pain, and so are easily overcome when injured. You suffer wound penalties immediately, rather than after battle (see p. XX).
Loyalty	You have a strong sense of duty to your companions, to a specific organization, or to a specific person. You are reluctant to betray the subject of your loyalty, regardless of evidence of wrongdoing. (The GM may require a "Loyalty to Companions" fault for all PCs.)
Magical Aura (Deryni or Human With Power only)	There is something about you, whether a physical feature or merely something in your attitude that makes people think of magic, consciously or otherwise. This can make keeping your power secret difficult.
Oath of Fealty	You have sworn an oath to someone who may now call upon your aid whenever needed.



Obsession	You are obsessed with a goal, like gaining revenge or winning the love of a particular person, to the point where you will set all other activities aside when opportunities for furthering this goal occur.
Overconfidence	You have an overabundance of faith in yourself, to the point of foolhardiness. You often believe you are up to a task, regardless of your actual capabilities, and will forego any assistance.
Pacifist	You hold a philosophy of non-violence, and may not even engage in violence to defend yourself. You will never initiate aggression, regardless of the situation. And if you ever must commit an act of violence, you will seek to gain absolution and do whatever you can to make restitution.
Social Stigma	There is some reason that causes the average person to react negatively to you. You could be a foreigner (especially a Torenthi), be of a different religion, or something else. This must be a fairly recognizable item (i.e., you don't have the fault if your Torenthi character has no accent and looks and dresses like a Gwyneddan). If you are a Deryni, you have the Social Stigma (Deryni) fault, assuming you are known to be a Deryni. See the Dark Secret fault if your heritage is a secret.
Stubborn	You hold to any beliefs or preconceived notions regardless of the evidence against them. Once you make a decision, it's unalterable.
Truthful	You never tell a lie, even if it would be in your best interest to do so.
Unattractive	While most of the main characters of the Deryni world are good looking, you are not. This may make life difficult in social situations. The GM will take this into account when determining reactions of the non-player characters encountered.
Unknown Background	There is something in your background that you don't know that could have unpleasant consequences when it comes out. While the player may have suggestions as to what this is, the final choice is up to the GM, and the player (and character!) won't know until it comes out in game.
Unlucky	You are plagued by bad luck. Your GM will make you the target of almost every random coincidence that inconveniences or troubles you and your companions.
Vision Problem	Your vision is impaired in some way. Reading is difficult, as is noticing visual details, or perhaps you have no night vision. Purchase this fault twice for a character who is Blind. (Once gives a –2 to all vision-based Perception checks. Blind characters do not get to make vision Perception checks).
Vow	You have made vows to do (or not do) certain things. If you break your vow, you will face consequences, at least to your reputation. Ecclesiastical vows are taken by all priests, and usually include "obedience," and "chastity." If a priest is also a member of a religious Order, he may take a vow of poverty as well. Religious Order vows are dictated by the Order's rules (as defined in Chapter 2 or by your GM).
Wealth Below Station	For some reason, you don't have the money you should according to your Rank level. Maybe your father is keeping a tight lid on it, or your family has fallen on hard times financially.)
Youth	You have not yet come of age. You may spend only 4 points on skills. If you are a titled noble, others may rule in your name until your 14th birthday.



Skills

While Gifts, Faults, and Attributes define general information about your character (how strong and perceptive he is, what's special about him, and so on), Skills refine details about what your character can do and how. ***Five Point Fudge*** arranges skills in groups to help you choose.

The basic skill groups are:

- Athletic/Outdoor
- Daily Life
- Magic (restricted to Deryni or Human With Power)
- Noble
- Religious (restricted to Clergy or Educated)
- Rogue
- Scholar (restricted to Noble, Clergy, or Educated)
- Trade
- Weapons/Combat

See pp. XX-XX for the specific skills each group encompasses.

Spending Points

You get five character points with which to purchase skills for your character. (Your GM will tell you if you get fewer or more.) Some gifts (such as Experienced) and faults (such as Youth) affect the levels at which you can purchase skills or the number of character points you can spend. Your Rank may also require that you spend at least one or two points in a particular group or restrict your spending.

For each point you spend in a given group, you get a set number of skills from that group at specific levels according to this chart:

Points Spent on a Group	Levels of Skills in that Group	General Skills Point:
1	**3 at Fair** **1 at Mediocre**	**3 at Fair –** **Must choose from 2 or 3 groups**
2	**2 at Good** **4 at Fair**	
3	**1 at Great** **3 at Good** **4 at Fair**	
4	**1 at Superb** **2 at Great** **3 at Good** **3 at Fair**	

You may spend up to 4 points in a single group, but you must choose skills from at least two groups.

You may spend 1 point (and no more) as a General Skills Point, which allows you to choose three skills at Fair from any two or three skill groups, provided you are not restricted from spending points in that group.

Exchanging Skills

During character creation you may exchange one skill for two of lesser value. For example, you could trade a Good skill for two Fair, one Great skill for two Good, etc. You may only exchange skills in the same group. The only exception involves the General Skills Point, in which case you can trade a Fair skill for two Mediocre skills from two different groups. If you really want your character to be a "Jack of All Trades," you can use your General Skills Point to take six Mediocre skills from six different groups, but you must qualify for skills in each of those groups, because some groups are restricted. If — and only if — your GM allows, you may also trade two skills for one skill at one level higher. Thus, you could trade two Fair skills for one Good skill.

Choosing What to Spend Where

When deciding how many skill points to spend in which groups, use your character concept to guide you (see Chapter Five). First, decide which skill groups best express what your character can do.

Noble characters will want to spend one or more points in the Noble skills group; likewise, clergymen in the Religious skill group. Commoners will most likely need skills from the Trade group or possibly the Rogue group.

If your character has a scholarly bent, you should spend one or more points in the Scholar group, assuming you have chosen the Educated gift. If your character is a Deryni or a Human With Power, you are likely to spend some points in the Magic group.

Once you've chosen two to four Groups for your character, rank them in order of importance. You may choose to spend one point in each of five skill groups, although this will create a character with no particular focus. The more important a group is to your character concept, the more points you should spend in that group. Don't forget to use a General Skills Point if you need only one or two specific skills from one group!

Generally speaking, you should spend 2 or 3 points in a group that contains the skills you expect that your character will use the most (usually the ones by which he or she will make their way in society.) For example, a court noble or knight would be bought with 2-3 points in the Noble skill group, a priest with 2-3 points in the Religious group, etc.

Supporting skills are important. A highly skilled swordsmith who cannot properly manage his business will not have an easy time making a living. A knight who is always triumphant in combat will not go far in social circles if he lacks social skills (Court Etiquette). Conversely, a priest who is of noble birth (with points spent in the Noble and Religious groups) can move through the Church hierarchy as much by political know-how and connections as by vocation or religious training.

Once you have decided how many points to spend in which groups, look at how many skills your points will purchase. If you are spending 2 points in the Noble skill group, that would be six skills. Choose the six most appropriate for your character from that group, and rank them in order of importance, which will guide your choice of skill level.

Sendai the Magnificent: Skills

Sendai is a commoner of Mediocre Rank. This requires him to spend at least one point in the Trade skill group, and restricts him from the Noble skill group. Because he's a Deryni, you may spend one point in the Magic group. He also has Formal Magic Training, which allows you to spend more than one point in Magic for him. It would be a shame to waste that formal magical training, so you spend 2 points in the Magic group. With his interest in Deryni history and ancient knowledge (and his Education gift), you should spend at least one point in the Scholar skill group.

Don't forget his skills as a stage magician and performer! Spend points on that required Trade group to aid him in his profession. He's not a member of the clergy, so you don't need to spend any points in the Religious skill group. (Use the skills available in the Scholar group instead.)

After looking over the skill groups and the specific skills, here's the point spread:

- Magic: 2 points
- Scholar: 1 point
- Trade: 1 point

Should you put that fifth point into the Trade group or spend it as a General Skills Point (which gives you only three skills but more options to decide which Group to take the skills from)?

The Trade group has a special exception: if you spend two or more points in the Trade group, you can take skills from other groups provided your GM agrees that those skills pertain to the character's chosen Trade.

That's it, then: Doral Sendai has 2 points in the Magic group, 2 points in the Trade group (choosing from other groups as needed for his Stage Magician/Troupe Leader trade), and 1 point in the Scholar group.

Concentrate on the Trade group first — after all that's how Sendai makes his living. Spending two points in a group gains six skills (two at Good and four at Fair).

Obvious skills for Sendai include Performance, Sleight of Hand, and Profession (Traveling Performer). The latter covers all the basic skills involved in making a living as a traveling performer — finding locations to set up in, dealing with administrative details, attracting customers, etc. Purchasing Performance and Sleight of Hand gives him a better chance of entertaining his customers well enough to make a decent living.

While Sleight of Hand, Concealment, and Area Knowledge are not available directly from the Trade skill group, the GM agrees that they would be likely skills for Sendai to have as a traveling stage magician. Sleight of Hand and Concealment complement his Performance skill, and Area Knowledge (Gwynedd's Cities) will help him find work.

continued next page…

Sendai's Skills, continued

Now assign levels. Spending two points allows for 2 Good skills and 4 Fair skills. Thus:

- Sleight of Hand and Performance: Good
- Profession (Traveling Performer), Concealment, and Area Knowledge (Gwynedd's Cities): Fair

That leaves one more skill at Fair.

A further review indicates that perhaps he should have Haggling as a skill; this will help him negotiate better compensation from employers. And as leader of his troupe, Sendai probably handles the money matters, making Reckoning a vital skill (combined with Literacy from the Scholar group to provide bookkeeping skills). But what about Acting? Or Disguise? Both of these could be helpful to a traveling performer.

You can get more skills by exchanging one skill for two skills at one level lower. Dropping Concealment from Fair to Mediocre allows you to add Reckoning, also at Mediocre.

You could drop Performance from Good to Fair in order to gain Acting at Fair (and even drop Acting to Mediocre and add Disguise at the same level). But you decide you want Sendai to be more than competent at his primary skills, so you leave everything as is, with Performance at Good. Perhaps he can learn Acting or Disguise through the course of his adventuring.

When considering the Magic skill group, Sendai as a Deryni has several skills at Poor by default. You must decide whether to spend points to get any of these skills at a higher level or to leave them at Poor. So you go through the same process with the Magic group as you did for his Trade, lowering some skill levels in favor of a broader range of magical skills. For a little while, you try to fit Arcane Lore among Sendai's Magic skills — then you realize that Arcane Lore is also available in the Scholar group.

So on to the Scholar group with that last point. With the Educated gift, Literacy defaults to Mediocre. If you take Literacy as the Mediocre-level skill gained by spending one point in the Scholar group, the Educated gift actually raises that +1 level — to Fair. Altogether, that makes four Fair skills from the Scholar group.

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Skill Levels: What do I need to do my job?

Let's review the ***Fudge*** terminology, this time with some definitions of the levels as they pertain to skills:

• *Terrible:* You are untrained with no exposure to the skill, or truly inept despite exposure or training.

• *Poor:* This is the "default" skill level that assumes some exposure to the skill and its use, but minimal experience.

• *Mediocre:* You have basic competency in a skill. You could make a living using this skill, with support from other related skills.

• *Fair:* You are fully competent with this skill. This is the normal level for someone who uses this as his primary skill for making a living.

• *Good:* You're not just competent, you're good at this! People will travel across town to see you or hire you.

• *Great:* You're a master at this skill. People will travel across the kingdom to buy your services.

• *Superb:* You are one of the best in the kingdom — or perhaps even all of the Eleven Kingdoms!

Skill Defaults

Many skills are usable even by someone who is not formally trained in their use. For example, it takes no training to pick up a sword and swing it; training allows one to do so effectively. Most skills default to Poor, which means that your character can do them… Poorly. You do not need to write these defaults on your character sheet (see p. XX). Simply remember that you can attempt a task involving a skill you have not purchased, provided the skill has a default. Some skills do not have any defaults; you must be trained to be able to use them at all. These are marked in the skill list and in their descriptions.

Skill Requirements

Some skills require you to have take a pre-requisite and restrict you from purchasing the skill at a higher level than the required companion skill. For example, Jousting requires Riding and Lance and additional weapons skills. If you have Riding at Fair and Lance at Mediocre, your Jousting skill cannot be above Mediocre.



Skill Groups

Deryni Adventure Game skills are divided into nine groups: *Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life, Magic, Noble, Religious, Rogue, Scholar, Trade,* and *Weapons/Combat*. Note that some skills appear in two or more groups. This is deliberate, reflecting the relevance of that skill to more than one group. The skill is basically the same regardless of which group you purchase it from, although the emphasis may be a bit different: an archer's bow (Archery) will do as much damage to a human target (*Weapons/Combat*) as to a stag (*Athletic/Outdoor*).

Some skills require you to choose a specific version of a skill. An example of this is Area Knowledge, which needs to be defined more specifically — Area Knowledge (Gwynedd), Area Knowledge (Corwyn), or Area Knowledge (Rhemuth), for example. Some skill groups have requirements or restrictions, which are detailed below.

The following list is not exhaustive. You may create additional skills with your GM's permission. See the skill definitions, pp. XX-XX, for more information on each skill.

Daily Life

- Animal Handling
- Animal Husbandry
- Appraisal
- Area Knowledge (specify)
- Art (specify)
- Axe (one-handed)
- Balancing
- Bluffing
- Boating
- Brawling
- Camaraderie
- Church Etiquette
- Cooking
- Court Etiquette
- Dancing
- Detect Lies
- Farming
- Fishing
- Flatter
- Folklore
- Gambling
- Games (specify)
- Gardening
- Haggling
- Herbal Medicine
- Jumping
- Knot-Tying
- Leadership
- Lying
- Musical Instrument
- Needlecraft
- Persuasion
- Reckoning
- Riding
- Singing
- Spinning & Weaving
- Storytelling
- Swimming
- Teaching
- Throwing
- Weather Sense

Athletic/Outdoor

- Acrobatics (may choose specialty)
- Archery
- Balancing
- Boating
- Camping
- Climbing
- Dancing
- Dodging
- Falconry
- Fishing
- Fletching/Bowyer
- Hunting
- Juggling
- Jumping
- Knot-Tying
- Mountaineering
- Nature Lore
- Navigation
- Quarterstaff
- Riding
- Running
- Sailing
- Sling
- Spear
- Sport (choose specific)
- Stealth
- Swimming
- Throwing
- Tracking
- Trapping
- Weather Sense
- Wilderness Survival
- Wrestling

Sendai's Skills, continued

In the end, Sendai the Magnificent has the following skills:

- Sleight of Hand: Good
- Performance: Good
- Arcane Lore: Fair
- Area Knowledge (Gwynedd's Cities): Fair
- Haggling: Fair
- Latin: Fair
- Literacy: Fair
- Profession (Traveling Performer): Fair
- Reckoning: Fair
- Concealment: Mediocre
- History: Mediocre

And his Magic skills are:

- Body-Control: Fair
- Casting: Fair
- Mind-Reading: Fair
- Mind-Speech: Fair
- Shields: Fair
- Spellcasting: Fair
- Truth-Reading: Fair

Magic

You must have the Deryni or Human With Power gift to purchase skills in the Magic group. The Formal Magical Training gift is required to spend more than one point in this group. The basic Deryni magic skills (shown in italics) that come with the Derynji gift default to Poor, as do the knowledge-based skills available in other skill groups (Arcane Lore, Latin, Meditation). Magic skills requiring further gifts (Healer, Blocking) or study default to Terrible.

- Arcane Lore (default: Poor)
- Blocking (default: Terrible, requires Blocking gift)
- *Body-Control (default: Poor)*
- *Casting (default: Poor)*
- Healing (default: Terrible, requires Healer gift)
- Latin (default: Poor)
- Meditation (default: Poor)
- Mind-Control (default: Terrible)
- *Mind-Reading (default: Poor)*
- *Mind-Speech (default: Poor)*
- Move Objects (default: Terrible)
- *Shields (default: Poor)*
- Spellcasting (default: Terrible, raise to Poor with Formal Magical Training gift)
- *Truth-Reading (default: Poor)*

Noble

You must be of Noble Rank to spend points in this group:

- Administration
- Bribery
- Camaraderie
- Civil Law
- Court Etiquette
- Dancing
- Diplomacy
- Falconry
- Flatter
- Gambling
- Games
- Heraldry
- Hunting
- Intimidate
- Jousting
- Lance
- Leadership
- Literacy
- Needlecraft
- Oratory
- Persuasion
- Poetry
- Politics
- Repartee
- Riding
- Sword (specify one-handed or two-handed)
- Warfare



Religious

You must be of Clergy Rank, or have spent 2 or more points in the Scholar group, to spend points in this group. If you spend 3 or more points in the Religious group, you may choose skills from the Scholar group as though they were in the Religious group, subject to your GM's approval.

- Administration
- Architecture
- Calligraphy (requires Literacy)
- Canon Law
- Chanting
- Church Etiquette
- Diplomacy
- Gardening
- Herbal Medicine
- History
- Illumination
- Interrogation
- Languages (Latin is the default for churchmen in Gwynedd and Greek for Torenthi, with Latin as a possible secondary; consult with your GM)
- Latin
- Leadership
- Literacy (defaults to Mediocre with Educated gift, otherwise defaults to Poor)
- Literature
- Liturgy
- Meditation
- Oratory
- Research
- Teaching
- Theology

Rogue

Some Noble and Clergy Ranks prohibit spending points in this group (except a General Skills Point, with GM approval).

- Acting
- Area Knowledge (specify)
- Bluffing
- Brawling
- Bribery
- Camaraderie
- Climbing
- Concealment
- Dagger
- Detect Lies
- Disguise
- Fast-Talk
- Find Hidden
- Forgery (requires Literacy)
- Gambling
- Infiltrate
- Interrogation
- Intimidate
- Knife Throwing
- Lock Picking
- Lying
- Persuasion
- Pickpocketing
- Poisons
- Sleight of Hand
- Sneak
- Stealth
- Streetwise
- Swindle
- Tailing
- Ventriloquism

Scholar

You must be of Noble Rank, have spent 2 or more points in the Religious skill Group, or be Educated to spend points in this group. If you spend 3 or more points in the Scholar group, you may choose skills from the Religious group as though they were in the Scholar group, subject to your GM's approval.

- Apothecary (requires Herbal Medicine, Physicking)
- Arcane Lore
- Area Knowledge (specify)
- Astrology
- Building
- Calligraphy (requires Literacy)
- Cartography
- Chirurgery (no default, requires Physicking)
- Canon Law
- Civil Law
- Geography
- Heraldry
- Herbal Medicine
- History
- Languages (no default, specify, requires GM permission)
- Latin
- Folklore
- Literacy (defaults to Mediocre with Educated gift, otherwise defaults to Poor)
- Literature
- Physicking
- Nature Lore
- Navigation
- Philosophy
- Poetry
- Reckoning
- Research
- Teaching
- Theology
- Writing

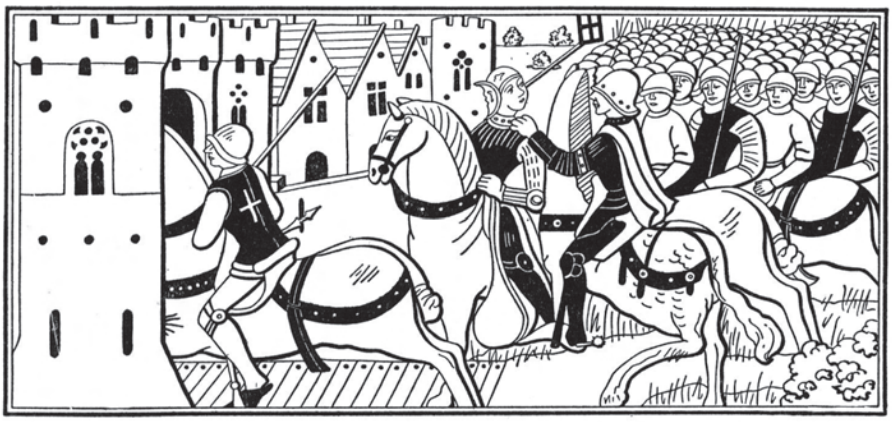
Trade

If you spend 2 or more points in the Trade group, you may choose skills from any other group you are eligible for as though the skills were in the Trade group. However, this applies only to skills that pertain to your chosen trade or profession, and is subject to GM approval. Some Noble and Clergy Ranks prohibit spending points in this group (except General Skills Points, with GM approval).

- Acting
- Administration
- Animal Handling
- Animal Husbandry
- Animal Training (requires Animal Handling)
- Apothecary (requires Herbal Medicine, Physicking)
- Appraisal
- Architecture
- Area Knowledge (specify)
- Art (specify)
- Building
- Calligraphy (requires Literacy)
- Cartography
- Civil Law
- Cooking
- Craft (specify)
- Falconry
- Farming
- Fishing
- Fletching/Bowyer
- Gardening
- Haggling
- Illumination
- Juggling
- Knot-Tying
- Languages (no default, specify, requires GM permission)
- Masonry
- Musical Instrument
- Navigation
- Needlecraft
- Performance
- Physicking
- Profession (specify)
- Reckoning
- Sailing
- Shipbuilding
- Ship Handling
- Shopkeeping
- Singing
- Spinning & Weaving

Weapons & Combat

- Archery
- Axe (specify one-handed or two-handed)
- Bow
- Brawling
- Club/Mace
- Crossbow
- Dagger
- Dodging
- Fighting Blind
- Jousting (requires Riding and Lance and other weapon skills)
- Knife Throwing
- Lance
- Pike
- Quarterstaff
- Read Opponent
- Shield
- Spear
- Spear Throwing
- Sword (specify one-handed or two-handed)
- Tactics
- Warfare
- Wrestling
- (Other weapon skill approved by GM)



Skill Definitions

Magic skills are in part defined here, but for more detailed information please see *Chapter 9: Deryni Magic*.

Skill	Definition
Acrobatics (may choose specialty) **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You can perform tumbling, rolls, leaps, graceful movements, and other similar maneuvers. This skill is also available in two specialties that must be purchased as separate skills: Acrobatics (Equestrian) and Acrobatics (Troupe).
Acting **[Rogue, Trade]**	This skill covers stage and theater performance as well as the ability to take on a role: to simulate emotions, body language, and voices. Used with the Disguise skill, Acting can be used to impersonate another person. You can also use Acting to fool people (faking injury, pretending to be a noble or official, and so on).
Administration **[Noble, Religious, Trade]**	You have experience governing land and managing people and resources. You understand how to work within a bureaucracy, including knowing who to see, the proper procedures to get something done, etc.
Animal Handling **[Daily Life, Trade]**	This skill allows you to manage most common animals (dogs, horses, oxen, etc.). You know how to get an animal to go where you want it to go, and how to keep yourself safe when handling unpredictable animals. You also know how to train animals to perform basic tasks. You can drive wagons and other conveyances pulled by draft animals. If you know Herbal Medicine, Physicking, or Chirurgery, you can use those skills on animals.
Animal Husbandry **[Daily, Trade]**	You know a lot about caring for and keeping animals: what to feed and how much, what sort of restraints (leashes or pens or fences or sheepdogs) the animal requires, how much work an animal can bear without ill health, and the basics of breeding animals.
Animal Training (requires Animal Handling) **[Trade]**	This skill covers advanced training of animals, such as hunting dogs, guard dogs, falcons and hawks (requires the Falconry skill), and animals used in war (warhorses, dogs, etc.). You can also use Animal Training to train wild animals, although such trained animals will never be fully reliable.
Apothecary (requires Herbal Medicine, Physicking) **[Scholar, Trade]**	With your knowledge of plants and their properties as well as disease and injuries, you can mix and dispense remedies and poultices and medicines. If you ply your trade in the smaller towns, you're likely to be the local physicker as well. In larger towns, you mix and sell your remedies for other physickers as well as your own patients.
Appraisal **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You can identify the worth and sale price of items. This skill covers any trade goods you are familiar with (based on skills and character background).
Arcane Lore **[Magic, Scholar]**	You understand (to the best of anyone's ability) how Deryni magic works and how to work rituals. This includes the conventions and rituals for the Duel Arcane, a ritualized style of magical combat practiced by some Deryni to settle disputes. Note that scholars without Power can study such things but not actually work magic (although they can assist in magic rituals). (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Archery **[Athletic/Outdoor, Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to use and care for bows and arrows. Your preference for shortbow versus longbow depends in part on the culture you're from. In Gwynedd, bows are generally used by commoners. Some nobles practice Archery as a sport, and perhaps use a bow in hunting. In Torenth, short bows designed for use on horseback are accepted weapons for the nobility.



Architecture **[Religious, Trade]**	You understand building construction, design, artistry, and building techniques. You can draw up plans for buildings, and have them executed. You may also be able to identify flaws in existing buildings or buildings under construction, and may have some knowledge of how secret passages and the like are constructed and where they're most likely to be.
Area Knowledge (specify) **[Daily Life, Rogue, Scholar]**	You have knowledge of a given area — local geography, people, politics, and history. You may purchase this skill more than once, each for a different area. These areas can be as large (country, province, city) or small (neighborhood, sewer system) as you prefer. Knowledge concerning large areas will be general, while knowledge of small areas can be quite specific.
Art (specify) **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You are an artist, trained or experienced in the creative arts. Specify Painting/Drawing, Carving, Sculpting, Mosaics, etc. With Illumination and Calligraphy, your services would be much in demand creating illuminated manuscripts.
Astrology **[Scholar]**	You study the stars and planets and their influence on worldly affairs. You can use this knowledge as a tool for divination.
Axe (specify) **[Daily Life, Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to use an axe, either as a tool or a weapon. Specify one-handed (most often used as a tool) or two-handed (almost exclusively used as a weapon).
Balancing **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life]**	You're able to walk on narrow ledges or other difficult places. This allows you to perform normal movements with relative safety in precarious situations such as ship's rigging, tree branches, or other hazardous places.
Bluffing **[Daily Life, Rogue]**	You can mislead people into thinking you will perform an action you have no intention of performing. This skill is opposed by Reasoning. (Attempts to bluff are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Bluff skill versus your target's Reasoning attribute. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Blocking (requires Blocking gift) **[Magic]**	You are a rare Deryni healer who can also block Deryni powers — and you know how to do it. This skill allows you to block a Deryni's powers, essentially removing them. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Boating **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life]**	You know how to handle small boats. This can aid in Fishing, or in transporting you and some goods and passengers wherever there's a waterway deep enough to accommodate your boat.
Body-Control (default: Poor with Deryni gift) **[Magic]**	You know how to control your body (or the body of another once Rapport is achieved) with magic. You can use this skill for reducing the effects of heat or cold, hunger or thirst, ensuring restful sleep, etc. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Brawling **[Daily Life, Rogue, Weapons/Combat]**	You've had some experience with brawling — the time-honored art of unarmed combat using anything at hand.
Bribery **[Noble, Rogue]**	You know how to purchase someone's favor, such as a guard or official. This skill includes determining who best to approach with an offer, and what offer is most likely to gain the hoped-for result.
Building **[Scholar, Trade]**	You can design and build structures, devices, and engines. The type of building you do depends on your background and occupation, and can include simple cottages and barns, wells, fortifications, siege engines, complex buildings such as mills or cathedrals, bridges, etc. See also Architecture and Masonry.







Calligraphy (requires Literacy) **[Religious, Scholar, Trade]**	You know how to write beautifully with formal lettering.
Camaraderie **[Daily Life, Noble, Rogue]**	You know how to be entertaining in social settings, such as at a bar, at a party, around a campfire, etc., which can gain someone's confidence and approval. With enough Stamina, you can drink copious amounts of alcohol and otherwise outlast your comrades.
Camping **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You know how to set up camps, including choosing proper spots, erecting tents, building fires, preparing basic meals, etc. This skill requires some tools, such as blankets, pots, an axe, and a tent. For camping without such tools, see Wilderness Survival.
Canon Law **[Religious, Scholar]**	You have studied Church law.
Cartography **[Scholar, Trade]**	You know how to draw useful maps. With Calligraphy and Illumination you can create maps that are beautiful as well. You need to gather reliable information (by surveying the area in person, or through other means) for the maps to be accurate.
Casting (default: Poor with Deryni gift) **[Magic]**	With this skill, you can "cast" your senses out around you to gather information not readily apparent to the normal five senses. Casting can identify a person on the other side of a door, find hidden things, sense poison, or "sweep" an area for signs of danger. Casting can also detect magical workings, signs of life, and similar energy-based signs. On a Fair or better result, Casting allows you to "read" an object, gaining impressions of its history (who last touched it, where it's been, significant events that happened in its presence, etc.). Strong emotions or emotional events are the easiest to read. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Chanting **[Religious]**	You're familiar with religious chants.
Chirurgery (requires Physicking) **[Scholar]**	With your knowledge of anatomy and surgery, you can sometimes save lives when no one else can. You know how to remove arrows and the like from deep within wounds, amputate limbs, and perform other risky procedures. But they are just that — risky! — and generally performed only when the alternative means death or life-long disability.
Church Etiquette **[Daily Life, Religious]**	This skill allows you to interact effectively with clergy, as you know how to behave, what to say, who to say it to, and how to address the people you're speaking with.
Civil Law **[Noble, Scholar, Trade]**	You have studied secular laws.
Climbing **[Athletic/Outdoor, Rogue]**	You can scale surfaces or objects. Some surfaces, such as sheer walls or cliffs, may require extra equipment to successfully climb them.
Club/Mace **[Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to use a heavy stick or mace or similar object as a weapon.

Concealment **[Rogue]**	You've developed techniques for appropriating and hiding objects about your person or elsewhere without being seen.
Cooking **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You can cook quality meals. Anyone can cook the basics; this skill covers creating good-tasting meals from scratch, often with limited resources.
Court Etiquette **[Daily Life, Noble]**	You have good manners in dealing with nobility. If you're a noble, it is extremely important for you to have this skill, since it will come up often in the game. Commoners may also have this skill if they have served at court or attended nobles.
Craft (specify) **[Trade]**	The Craft skill covers handicrafts and artisan skills. With it, you can manufacture items, evaluate them, and find markets for them. Specify the craft. Remember to take supporting skills such as Reckoning and Haggling if you use your Craft to make a living! Sample crafts: Armorer, Basket maker, Bowyer, Carpenter, Carver, Cobbler, Cooper, Glassblower, Jeweler, Leatherworker, Smith (specify tin/bronze/iron or silver/gold), Leatherworker, Potter, Seamstress/Tailor, Tanner, Weaponsmith, Weaver, etc. See also Profession.
Crossbow **[Weapons/Combat]**	You can use a crossbow as a weapon or against a target. Crossbows are relative newcomers to Gwynedd.
Dagger **[Rogue, Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to use a dagger or knife as a weapon. See Knife Throwing for daggers as thrown weapons.
Dancing **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life, Noble]**	You can perform country, popular, or stately court dances with grace and ease. The dances you know depend your background. A noble with both Court Etiquette and Dancing will use the higher skill level of the two when attending court dances.
Detect Lies **[Daily Life, Rogue]**	You can tell when another person is lying, by observing expressions, body language, voice, tics, or perspiration. Lying or Swindle may oppose your attempt to detect lies. For magically detecting lies, see the Truth-Reading skill.
Diplomacy **[Noble, Religious]**	You have some skill at negotiating between parties to reach a satisfactory middle ground, or defusing a potentially violent situation.
Disguise **[Rogue]**	You know various tricks involving clothing and make-up and other materials to change your appearance. This skill may be used in conjunction with the Acting skill.
Dodging **[Athletic/Outdoor, Weapons/Combat]**	The best defense is not being there when the blow comes. You can use the Dodging skill in place of a combat skill or other skill when attempting to avoid an attack. (This will be an Opposed roll versus the attack — see p. XX). This skill can also be used to dodge falling or thrown items. It can be used to dodge missile fire from bows or crossbows, in which case you are attempting to get out of the expected path of the missile, not actually dodging the missile itself as it comes speeding toward you.
Falconry **[Athletic/Outdoor, Noble, Trade]**	You are knowledgeable about hunting with falcons and other birds of prey. (For training falcons, see Animal Training.) There are strict rules concerning which species of birds one can fly, based on Rank. (See *Animals in the Game,* p. XX.)
Farming **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You know how to farm crops — what to plant, when, and where; how to care for the growing plants; when to harvest. With the Animal Husbandry skill, you may farm animals as well as crops.







Fast-Talk **[Rogue]**	You can often convince people of something by overwhelming them with talk, facts, and arguments.
Fighting Blind **[Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to fight while blinded or in darkness, through the use of other senses such as sound, smell, and touch. (See Combat, pp. XX)
Find Hidden **[Rogue]**	You know where and how to look for concealed or disguised items, such as secret doors, false bottoms, etc. You are even able to discern things hidden in among others, such as picking out a needle in a (small) haystack.
Fishing **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life, Trade]**	You know how to find and catch fish, and are familiar with your fishing equipment. (The precise equipment used depends on your circumstances and culture — fishing rods, nets, weirs, traps, spears and harpoons, etc.)
Flatter **[Daily Life, Noble]**	You know how to make people like you by complimenting them to the point they begin to trust your judgment. This skill is opposed by Willpower. (Attempts to flatter are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Flatter skill versus your target's Willpower attribute. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Folklore **[Daily Life, Scholar]**	You know many of the stories and myths of your native lands, including stories of famous historical figures and fairy tales. (Scholars may learn Folklore from other countries as well.)
Forgery (requires Literacy) **[Rogue]**	You can forge false documents, provided you have the needed materials. This includes faking seals and other means of identification. The Calligraphy and Art skills are useful related skills to have.
Gambling **[Daily Life, Noble, Rogue]**	You can win reasonably often in games of skill or chance, and accurately assess odds in betting on the outcome of races or other events.
Games **[Daily Life, Noble]**	You know the rules and strategy for one or more games. Games include dice, card, and board games. (See Sports for other types of games.) Specify the games known. Your GM determines how many games you may choose. Board games include cardounet, Fox and Geese, and others. See Games, p. XX, for more information.
Gardening **[Daily Life, Religious, Trade]**	You know how to grow herbs and vegetables and decorative plants. With the Herbal Medicine skill, you can grow a fairly extensive range of herbs for remedies. The Gardening skill does not cover growing significant amounts of food (see Farming).
Geography **[Scholar]**	You have knowledge of the general geography of the Eleven Kingdoms.
Haggling **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You know how to bargain shrewdly with a merchant or customer over the cost of goods or services. You also know how to barter, where goods are exchanged for other goods. The Appraisal skill is a good complementary skill to have.
Healing (requires Healer gift) **[Magic]**	You know how to use your Healer gift and Deryni magic to heal wounds. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Heraldry **[Noble, Scholar]**	You have studied the various coats of arms of the Eleven Kingdoms, as well as the terms and compositions of heraldic devices. With Art and History skills as well, you may be called upon to create new coats of arms now and then.



Herbal Medicine **[Daily Life, Religious, Scholar]**	With your knowledge of plants and their properties, you can gather and use herbs as medicinal agents. You understand the dangers of using herbs, as well, and safe dosage levels. Your knowledge of Herbal Medicine doesn't extend to specific poisons — see Poisons for that skill. At the default skill level of Poor, you know a few basic herbs — chamomile, a native plant, for digestion, sleep, and watery eyes; mint, imported from the east, for colds.
History **[Religious, Scholar]**	You've studied the events and people of the past. This does not cover Deryni events except from the point of view of the general attitude of the Church and courts.
Hunting **[Athletic/Outdoor, Noble]**	You can find, track, and kill game given the appropriate tools, such as weapons, snares, and traps. (If using a weapon such as a bow or spear in hunting, you will also need the Archery or Spear skill.) The nobility has turned hunting into a sport that often involves riding and sometimes involves entire entourages with picnic baskets.
Illumination **[Religious, Trade]**	You have learned the art of creating books with illustrated texts using colorful inks and pleasing layouts. Usually used in conjunction with Calligraphy.
Infiltrate **[Rogue]**	You have experience slipping into places you don't really belong, like guarded camps or organizations, either by pretending to have a right to be there or simply by avoiding all contact.
Interrogation **[Religious, Rogue]**	You know various techniques of extracting information from an unwilling subject.
Intimidate **[Noble, Rogue]**	You know how to bully or frighten or browbeat someone into obeying you. This skill is opposed by Willpower. (Attempts to intimidate are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Intimidate skill versus your target's Willpower attribute. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Jousting (requires Riding and Lance and other weapon skills) **[Noble, Weapons/Combat]**	You can fight in tournaments. In addition to knowing how to "tilt" with opponents on horseback and other contents of martial skill, you know which tournaments bring the most glory and greatest prizes and how to maximize your chances of winning.
Juggling **[Athletic/Outdoor, Trade]**	You can manipulate objects to keep them in the air. This skill is usually used in conjunction with the Performance skill.
Jumping **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life]**	You have practiced jumping for distance and accuracy.
Knife Throwing **[Rogue, Weapons/Combat]**	You can throw a knife accurately and with force.
Knot-Tying **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life, Trade]**	You know how to tie functional or ornamental knots for various purposes, including shipboard safety and more.
Lance **[Noble, Weapons/Combat]**	You can use a lance or spear as a weapon on horseback in battles or tournaments.





Languages (no default, specify, requires GM permission) **[Noble, Scholar, Trade]**	You can speak (and read and write if you have Literacy) a language of the Eleven Kingdoms. You know your native language automatically and do not need to purchase it. Each additional language must be taken as a separate skill. Examples: Bremagni, Torenthi. Note that Latin, as a religious language rather than a language used in common life, has its own skill and may not be bought as a Language here. Your character background should include how you came to know other languages. Scholars may also learn ancient languages if the GM allows.
Latin **[Magic, Religious, Scholar]**	You're familiar with the language of the Church. Every Christian in Gwynedd knows a little Latin (at the default of Poor) because it's used in all Church services. Taking this language as a skill means you've actually studied the language. If you have the Literacy skill, you can read and write Latin as well as understand spoken Latin.
Leadership **[Daily Life, Noble, Religious]**	You can inspire others to follow a common course of action, and know various ways to rally flagging morale.
Literacy **[Noble, Religious, Scholar]**	You can read and write the languages that you know. If you have the Educated gift, Literacy defaults to Mediocre, and you may add +1 to the Literacy skill level if you purchase this skill at character creation. Otherwise, Literacy defaults to Poor.
Literature **[Religious, Scholar]**	You are familiar with books and writings, ancient or new.
Lock Picking **[Rogue]**	You can open locks without keys.
Liturgy **[Religious]**	You have knowledge of the texts and rituals surrounding the Sacraments of the Church (Baptism, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Eucharist, Matrimony, Orders, and Penance).
Lying **[Daily Life, Rogue]**	You are skilled at convincing others of a falsehood.
Masonry **[Trade]**	You know how to build with brick and stone.
Meditation **[Magic, Religious]**	You can focus your mind and find calm. (See Chapter 9 for more information on using meditation with magic.)
Mind-Control **[Magic]**	You can control your own mind through magic. You may mind control others as well, although this requires first establishing rapport using Mind-Reading and Mind-Speech. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Mind-Reading (default: Poor with Deryni gift) **[Magic]**	You can read minds. At its most basic, Mind-Reading allows you to "read" someone's surface thoughts. More difficult uses of this skill include "death reading" (reading the most recent or intense thoughts of someone newly deceased) and "mind ripping" (something no ethical Deryni would do). (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Mind-Speech (default: Poor with Deryni gift) **[Magic]**	You can speak with another Deryni mind to mind. Used in conjunction with Mind-Reading, Mind-Speech allows you to establish "rapport" with another's mind — including non-Deryni. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)

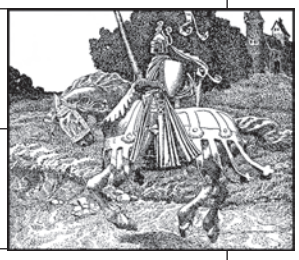


Move Objects **[Magic]**	You can move objects magically. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Mountaineering **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You have experience traversing mountains while avoiding or dealing with dangers such as deep snow, avalanches, rockslides and mudslides, and other dangers of mountainous terrain. This requires the Climbing skill when dealing with truly difficult slopes.
Musical Instrument **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You know how to play music. (Specify the instrument. Examples include bagpipe, bladder pipe, drum, finger cymbals, flute, gemshorn, harp, hurdy-gurdy, lute, organetto, pipe and tabor, psaltery, rebec, recorder, tambourine, shawm, viol, others as the GM allows.)
Nature Lore **[Athletic/Outdoor, Scholar]**	You are familiar with wild animals, plants, seasonal cycles, etc. Combined with the Herbal Medicine skill, this allows you to harvest useful herbs when in season. In combination with the Wilderness Survival skill, Nature Lore can greatly improve your ability to forage in the wilderness.
Navigation **[Athletic/Outdoor, Scholar, Trade]**	You know how to find your way based on the stars, position of the sun, map reading, etc. Depending on your circumstances, this may be land navigation or navigation along coastlines. (Ships capable of ocean travel are not yet available within the Eleven Kingdoms.)
Needlecraft **[Daily Life, Noble, Trade]**	You can do decorative work with a needle, as well as minor repair work. Most noblewomen are at least marginally proficient in this skill, but much of the "commercial" weaving, tailoring, and some forms of needlework is done by craftsmen.
Oratory **[Noble, Religious]**	You have skill in keeping the focus of a group through eloquent public speaking, and attempting to sway them to your point of view. This skill is opposed by Willpower. (Attempts to sway a crowd's beliefs are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Oratory skill versus your target group's average Wit –1. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Performance **[Trade]**	You know how to perform for an audience — how to keep their attention, judge their moods, and entertain or influence them. This skill is usually used in conjunction with another skill: Acrobatics, Acting, Juggling, Singing, and the like.
Persuasion **[Daily Life, Noble, Rogue]**	You know techniques to help you persuade someone of your point of view. This skill is opposed by Wit. (Attempts to persuade someone are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Persuasion skill versus your target's Wit. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Philosophy **[Scholar]**	In your search for wisdom, you have studied the body of knowledge gathered by scholars throughout history. You've pondered the nature of reality, religious beliefs, and similar weighty topics. You apply logical reasoning and faith to your studies in equal measure as you seek to deepen your understanding of your beliefs. Philosophy and Theology are sister skills.
Physicking **[Religious, Scholar, Trade]**	You know how to treat injuries and diseases. At its most basic (the default skill level of Poor), Physicking includes applying bandages, splints, salves and similar techniques to injuries and diagnosing and treating the most common illnesses such as coughs (with honey a common ingredient to remedies) and intestinal worms (with vermifuges — herbal mixtures with de-worming and laxative properties). If you actually have experience or training in Physicking (skill level above Poor), other techniques you use to heal or cure include bleeding, cupping, purgatives, "simples" (herbal remedies) and advice concerning dietary changes. This skill is also available as a specialty that must be purchased as a separate skill: Physicking (Midwifery). See also Apothecary, Chirurgery and Herbal Medicine.



Pickpocketing **[Rogue]**	You have the ability to remove items from someone's pockets, belt, purse, etc. without them noticing. This skill is opposed by Perception. (Attempts at pickpocketing are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Pickpocketing skill versus your target's Perception. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Pike **[Weapons/Combat]**	You have experience using a very long hand-held spear as a weapon. This is most useful in formations, especially against cavalry. The pike is a commoner's weapon.
Poetry **[Noble, Scholar]**	You can compose poetry, and are familiar with popular and classic poets and their works.
Poisons **[Rogue]**	You have knowledge of how poisons are made and how they are administered, their effects, and their antidotes, if any.
Preaching **[Religious]**	You know how to devise and deliver sermons.
Profession (specify) **[Trade]**	This covers broad skills that commoner characters use to earn a living. If you wish to excel, purchase relevant skills separately. Sample professions: Baker, Brewer, Butcher, Cook, Drover, Farmer, Fisherman, Guardsman, Huntsman, Innkeeper, Merchant, Musician/Bard, Performer, Physician, Sailor, Scout, Scribe, Shepherd, Pigkeeper, Goatherd, Spy, Tinker, Trapper, Woodcutter, etc. See also Craft. Requires GM approval.
Quarterstaff **[Athletic/Outdoor, Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to use a quarterstaff — a stout pole, 6-8 feet long, often iron-tipped — as a weapon. The quarterstaff is considered a peasant's weapon; nobles are unlikely to have this skill.
Read Opponent **[Weapons/Combat]**	You can roughly estimate an opponent's skill in combat.
Reckoning **[Daily Life, Scholar, Trade]**	You know how to count things, and perform basic mathematics (adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing). Used with the Literacy skill, the Reckoning skill includes keeping accounts and registers and rolls for administrative or financial purposes.
Repartée **[Noble]**	You are adept at witty sayings and double-entendres, which can carry subtle and hidden insults or stings.
Research **[Religious, Scholar]**	You are adept at unearthing facts or information, given appropriate time and resources (books, scrolls, accounts and rolls, etc.)
Riding **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life, Noble]**	You know how to ride and control a horse (or other animal such as a camel, with GM permission) comfortably, safely, and with precision.
Running **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You've trained to run with increased speed (you run faster than non-runners), or over long distances.
Sailing **[Athletic/Outdoor, Trade]**	You know how to operate a sailing vessel, including the sails, the helm, and making minor repairs when needed.





Shield **[Weapons/Combat]**	You have been trained to use a shield effectively for defense in combat.
Shields (default: Poor with Deryni gift) **[Magic]**	You are trained to raise and lower your shields, flare them for visual effect, and strengthen them against attack. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Shipbuilding **[Trade]**	You are skilled at constructing vessels such as boats, barges, and even sailing ships.
Ship Handling **[Trade]**	You command sailors to handle a large sailing ship. (This skill includes piloting and basic navigation skills.)
Shopkeeping **[Trade]**	You understand the basics of keeping a shop or an inn, including tracking inventory, managing employees, and knowing who to contact to get the various supplies for your particular business. This is a commoners' skill.
Singing **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You can make music with your voice, and are familiar with various songs.
Sling **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You know how to use a sling to propel small rocks or shaped pieces of metal into targets for defense or for hunting.
Sleight of Hand **[Rogue]**	You can manipulate small objects cleverly in your hands so as to conceal what you are actually doing with them. In conjunction with the Performance skill, sleight of hand can be used for legerdemain: performing tricks with balls, coins, and cards for entertainment or personal gain.
Sneak **[Rogue]**	You can move silently and unseen in urban situations, including shadowing someone in a crowd and slipping quietly through buildings. See the Stealth skill for moving quietly in rural and wilderness terrain.
Spear **[Athletic/Outdoor, Weapons/Combat]**	You are skilled in the use of a spear either in combat or for hunting. This is a commoners' skill.
Spellcasting **[Magic]**	You know how to cast spells. Sample spells include attuning objects, producing handfire, banishing fatigue, setting wards, and similar simple ritualized Deryni magic. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Spinning & Weaving **[Daily Life, Trade]**	You can take suitable raw materials (such as wool) and spin it into yarn or thread and weave it into cloth.
Stealth **[Athletic/Outdoor, Rogue;]**	You can move through the outdoors quietly and unseen. See the Sneak skill for moving quietly and unseen in urban settings.
Storytelling **[Daily Life]**	You are adept at recounting stories, either from your past or from other sources. Storytelling without the Performing skill is more likely to be successful with your family and friends than in a professional setting. If you have the Folklore skill, you are unlikely to run out of stories to tell.





Streetwise **[Rogue]**	You're at home in city streets. You know where to find free or cheap drink, which alehouses or taverns to avoid, who not to offend, and how to present yourself to either stay out of trouble — or cause it. You have the ability to blend into the seedier neighborhoods of town, and can find things not always easily found, whether it's information or misappropriated goods.
Swimming **[Athletic/Outdoors, Daily Life]**	You can move through water without drowning
Swindle **[Rogue]**	You have some experience persuading people of exaggerated or untrue facts in order to fraudulently obtain money or goods.
Sword (specify one-handed or two-handed) **[Noble, Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to use a sword as a weapon. Specify one-handed or two-handed. You may further specify the type of the sword for "flavor" if you wish — longsword, Highland claymore, Torenthi scimitar, etc. — subject to your GM's approval.
Tactics **[Weapons/Combat]**	You know the best ways to arrange groups of warriors so as to take best advantage of the situation, terrain, their skills, etc. You can also estimate an opposing group's tactical sophistication level and are often able to come up with tactics to counter your opponents' moves.
Tailing **[Rogue]**	You know how to follow someone without their noticing. This skill is opposed by Perception. (Attempts to tail someone are resolved as Opposed Actions, your Tailing skill versus your target's Perception. See Chapter 7 for more information.)
Teaching **[Daily Life, Religious, Scholar]**	You know effective means to impart knowledge to others.
Theology **[Religious, Scholar]**	You have studied the beliefs, dogma, and rituals of the Church.
Throwing **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life]**	You are (usually) able to hit what you aim at with thrown objects. This may be used as a combat skill, but with a –1 penalty to damage. See also Knife-Throwing.
Tracking **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You can follow traces left behind by a creature or a person's passage. You also know how to cover or erase tracks, campsites, or other evidence of passage by rearranging the local terrain (and can sometimes spot others' efforts to do so). Note that this skill does require time, and may slow your movement.
Trapping **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You know how to set and detect traps to catch game for food or fur.
Truth-Reading (default: Poor with Deryni gift) **[Magic]**	You have the magical ability to tell whether someone is lying. (See Chapter 9 for more information.)
Ventriloquism **[Rogue]**	You can "throw your voice" to make it sound as if it comes from somewhere else, disguise your voice, or speak without moving your lips.





Warfare **[Noble, Weapons/Combat]**	You know how to make war. This includes devising strategies, gathering and organizing soldiers and warriors, organizing supply chains, and so on.
Weather Sense **[Athletic/Outdoor, Daily Life]**	You understand weather patterns and have the ability to make predictions about weather conditions. This is especially useful for sailors and farmers.
Wilderness Survival **[Athletic/Outdoor]**	You are able to survive in the wilderness (skills include basic fire making, food procurement, and shelter construction.). The Nature Lore skill can greatly enhance your survival skills.
Wrestling **[Athletic/Outdoor, Weapons/Combat]**	You're trained in unarmed combat where the object is to grapple and hold one's opponent rather than inflicting damage. (See Chapter 8 for more information.)
Writing (requires Literacy) **[Scholar]**	You know how to write either to effectively impart information or to entertain.



Attributes

Attributes are traits that every character has, regardless of background. These are measured on the normal Terrible – Superb scale but default to "Fair" (average for the population). They should be chosen with an eye to your character's skills. Occasionally there will be character concepts that break the normal expectations, so be sure to discuss it with the GM and reflect that in your character's description.

Attributes help define your character's innate abilities and talents. Your GM may require an attribute check in situations not covered by specific skills, such as a Strength check to break down a door or a Perception check to see if you notice the assassin trailing you. An attribute check is a dice roll that modifies your attribute level, with the result being compared against a Difficulty level (see Chapter Seven for more information).

- All standard attributes start at Fair.
- You get two free levels to apply to your attributes. You may raise two attributes to Good or one attribute to Great.
- You may also raise an attribute by lowering another. Thus you would lower one attribute to Mediocre to raise another to Good. No attribute may be raised higher than Superb or lowered below Terrible.
- You may also take an extra fault to raise one attribute one level or you may lower an attribute by one level to gain an extra gift.

The Standard Attributes

In the *Deryni Adventure Game*, there are six standard attributes. Three represent your character's physical traits (Agility, Stamina, Strength) and three represent mental traits (Perception, Willpower, Wit).

Attribute	Description	Attribute	Description
Agility	This measures your character's physical dexterity, adroitness, and natural talent for physical skills. If you have purchased several Athletic or movement-based Rogue skills you may want a higher Agility trait level.	**Perception**	This measures how well your character perceives the world around him. While physical senses (eyesight, hearing, etc.) are important, Perception is in large part a function of how observant and attentive the character is.
Stamina	Stamina governs how quickly your character will tire and his resistance to disease and injury.	**Willpower**	Willpower is vital in resisting certain kinds of magical attacks, verbal persuasion, or even torture. It can also be used to overcome faults (an alcoholic choosing not to drink, for example).
Strength	Your character's Strength influences how much he can lift or move and how much damage he can do with hand-held weapons. (See Chapters 7 and 8 for more information.)	**Wits**	This reflects your character's intelligence, reasoning, and "quick thinking."

The Power Attribute

The Power attribute, available only to Deryni or a Human With Power, is a measure of the innate energy your character can apply to magical workings. With your GM's permission, you may raise Power one level by lowering one of your standard attributes. (See Chapter 9: Magic for more information.)

Finishing Touches

Once you have assigned all your character's traits, review your character to see if there is anything you may have missed. Read through the character's background to see if you forgot to get any gift or fault or skill he may need. Did you remember your two free gifts and two free attribute levels? Have you balanced any additional gifts with faults, in addition to the two required faults? Are you satisfied with his attribute levels? Do you have your Rank package noted, and have you and your GM worked out the details of any Enemy or Rival your Rank requires?

Make any adjustments to the character's background to reflect new ideas and changes that came about during the rest of character creation. Explain why your knight has the Fear fault or the Good Reputation gift. Or what it means that your lady is now a Black Sheep of her family.

When you are satisfied with your character, give a copy of the background and character traits to your GM for final approval. Discuss any changes she might want for the character. Remember, she knows what her campaign will be like, so work with her to make sure the character will fit.

You are now ready to play the Deryni Adventure Game!

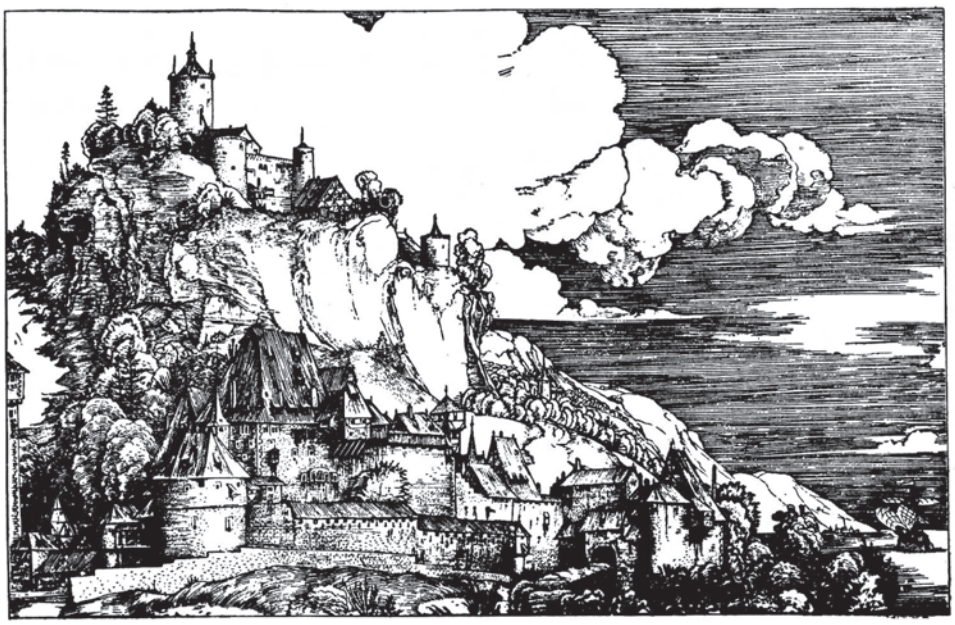
Sendai the Magnificent: Attributes

With a detailed character background and gifts, faults, and skills already chosen, determining the best attribute levels for Sendai is easy! He has all seven attributes, including Power, because he is a Deryni. You can leave most of his attributes at the default level (Fair) but as a magician and scholar, he needs above-average Agility and Wits. You could raise his Power level instead of Wits, but you probably want him to have some opportunities to increase his Power during the game, so he will be better served by having a quick mind.

Here are his attributes:

- Agility: Good
- Stamina: Fair
- Strength: Fair
- Perception: Fair
- Willpower: Fair
- Wits: Good
- Power: Fair

Doral Sendai, traveling magician and Deryni scholar, is ready to begin adventuring in the Eleven Kingdoms!



Chapter Seven: Playing the Game

In the course of playing the Deryni Adventure Game, your character will face a series of challenges. There may be rogue Deryni to bring under control, nefarious plots against the King to foil, and many other adventurous deeds. Your character will use Traits — the Skills, Attributes, Gifts, and occasionally Faults in Chapter 6 — to deal with these challenges.

Now that you have a character, it's time to play the game!

An Example of Play

Roleplaying games are played in "sessions," usually lasting two hours or more. At the beginning of each session, the Gamemaster (GM) sets the scene, usually with a combination of narration and dialog. The players describe what their characters are doing or saying (and sometimes thinking), and the Gamemaster describes the outcome of their efforts and anything that happens within the game. Sometimes the players or the Gamemaster roll dice to help determine outcomes — this element of randomness adds excitement and suspense to the game.

Our sample group has been playing the game for a while. In last week's session, they wrapped up an amusing adventure set at a country fair that involved a noblewoman's missing engagement ring and a prize goat (see pp. XX-XX). The players eagerly anticipate the next adventure but have no idea what the GM may have in store for them.

The players' characters are Sendai the Magnificent, a Deryni mage who uses stage magic to hide his real powers, and his troupe of traveling performers, including Larsten and Ancara, his son and daughter-in-law. (The character sheets for Sendai and his troupe are available on the derynirealms.com website if you'd like to use them as characters — PCs or NPCs — or just as examples.)

The group has gathered to begin the new adventure.

Narration and Dialogue

GM (to the group): *So you've all been enjoying the fruits of your labors in recovering the lost ring. The troupe's cashbox actually has some weight to it, for a change. Your performances at the fair were profitable, and as I recall Sendai gave you all the last day of the fair off to enjoy the festivities — quite a rarity!*

Of course, it hasn't all been fun and games for Sendai.

The GM turns her attention toward Sendai's player. As the troupe's leader, Sendai makes most of the decisions involving travel and employment and the like, so the GM focuses the next part of her narration on Sendai: *Even while you were relaxing and enjoying yourself, you kept your eyes and ears open for opportunities. Rumor has it that a young knight in Rhemuth is looking for performers for a feast he's arranging in honor of his younger brother, who will be knighted at the Summer Court. Interested?*

Sendai (words spoken by the player, "in character")*: Yes, of course.*

GM*: All right then, it's off to Rhemuth! You pack up camp and head west and then south to Rhemuth. The trip's uneventful, with even the weather holding up. A week later, you've arrived in the city.*

Note: Depending on what the Gamemaster has in mind for story and plot development, travel from one location to another can be "gamed" (the travel itself being part of the story) or summed up (much like a transitional paragraph between one chapter and another in a novel) as it is here.

GM: *What do you do?*

The players now each describe what their characters are doing. The GM responds to the players' choices, roleplaying as needed.

Sendai*: Hopefully there is room for us at the Little Peacock.*

Alorna Orsaltis (the player speaks for her character, smiling just as Alorna herself would be smiling within the story): *Ah, yes, the Peacock when we have money, the Crooked Billet when we don't…*

GM*: You're in luck. Mistress McGowan at the Little Peacock has two rooms available.*

Alorna*: Perhaps I can dance for the patrons tonight.*

Wulfin MacKennin*: And I'll fiddle… for wine.*

GM (to Alorna, in an "in-character" voice for Mistress McGowan): *Why, my dear, it's so good to see you again! Of course you may dance tonight! And yes, Master MacKennin, you may fiddle for as much wine as you can hold!*

Wulfin*: I hope you have a full cellar!*

Sendai*: While you're all settling in, I shall investigate this rumor about a knight looking for performers. Jak, why don't you come with me?*

The game proceeds, with the players describing what their characters are doing by roleplaying (with dialogue and descriptions of their actions in 1st person), while the GM does the same for the NPCs (non-player characters) they meet.

Action Resolution Terms

Actions are what your character attempts to do during an adventure. Some actions are merely described by the GM or players, while others have a random component (a chance of success or failure) that can be resolved with a roll of the dice.

Dice introduce the element of uncertainty into the game. When their characters are attempting an action that may fail, players roll four Fudge dice (see p. XX), yielding a result between –4 to +4, with 0 being the most common. The Gamemaster may also roll the dice, either to determine the success or failure of non-player character actions or to determine other elements with varying possible outcomes (reactions NPCs have to the player characters, how good — or bad! — the weather is, etc.).

Rolled Level describes how well a character does at a specific individual task. If someone is Good at Climbing in general, and the dice roll comes up as +1, then the Rolled level is Great (Great is one level above Good on the character trait scale).

Relative Level describes how well a character does compared to another participant in an opposed action. Unlike the Rolled level (see above), you describe the Relative level as a number. For example, if a knight gets a Rolled level of Mediocre in a fight and his opponent gets a Rolled level of Good, the knight loses by two levels. The Relative level is –2 from his perspective, +2 from his opponent's perspectives. The Relative level affects wound severity in combat.

Below Terrible describes Rolled levels from Terrible –1 down to Terrible –4. Such a result indicates that the character's failure is particularly spectacular. These results may also be called "Abysmal."

Beyond Superb describes Rolled levels from Superb +1 to Superb +4. These are spectacular successes, and may also be called "Legendary."

Difficulty Level measures the challenge of an action. A task that even someone with Poor skill can likely accomplish will have a Difficulty Level of Poor; a task that is best tackled by someone who's Great at it will have a Difficulty Level of Great. Typical tasks have a Difficulty Level of Mediocre. Tasks requiring solid competence have a Difficulty Level of Fair. Characters can attempt tasks beyond their skill levels and trust in luck to aid their skill.

Unopposed Actions occur when a character is trying to perform a task that is not influenced by anyone else. Examples include jumping a wide chasm, climbing a cliff, performing a fatigue banishing spell, etc. Simply roll the dice and add the result to the appropriate skill level.

continued next page…

Action Resolution Terms, continued

Opposed Actions occur when other people, animals, or forces have an effect on the outcome of an action. In this case, each contestant rolls a set of dice, comparing the results to determine the outcome. Examples of opposed actions include combat, attempts to influence behavior, negotiating, tug-of-war, etc.

Situational Rolls are rolls of the dice that give the GM a sense of the overall situation — whether it's favorable or unfavorable. Situational Rolls are not based on any character traits, they simply return a result of Terrible to Superb that the GM can use as a guide in determining non-player character reactions, general circumstances, etc.

At times in the adventure, the characters will try to accomplish some task or to perform some action that may actually fail. Most roleplaying games use dice as a randomizer to put some uncertainty into the outcome, or use rules that determine whether or not the actions will be successful. This (usually) avoids the kinds of arguments common to childhood roleplaying.

Any time your character is faced with a choice or has an opportunity to take action, you should describe in detail what your character plans to do. For instance, instead of stating, "I search for clues," say, "I examine the door for signs of forced entry, and then I crouch close to the ground to look for any tracks that might indicate recent foot traffic." The details you give in your description gives the group a better picture of what your character is doing and helps them roleplay their own characters. Roleplaying this way can make the experience richer for yourself and the rest of the group, including the GM.

Resolving Actions

Some tasks your character attempts are simple and thus success is automatic. After you describe your character's actions, the GM might say that you have succeeded —no dice rolls are needed. Conversely, despite your best intentions, some tasks may be too difficult for any chance of success. In such cases, the GM will tell you that it's simply impossible for your character to do what you wish to do. The dice come into play when the outcome of an action is uncertain (or when the GM wants it to appear so.) The GM is the final arbiter of whether a situation requires a die roll.

Not all GMs run their games the same way. In some cases, the player and the GM may consult to determine which is the most appropriate skill to test for each action; in other cases, the GM will inform the player which skill is being tested. Searching for a clue might test the Find Hidden skill, the magical Casting skill, or the character's Perception attribute, depending upon the situation. If you have related skills or other traits that might affect your attempt, you can mention them to the GM. Possessing a high Perception attribute may help your character, while the Distractible fault may cause him to give up early. If there is a relevant Skill, but your character is untrained in it, then you will use the default level — usually Poor. If none of the defined skills seem relevant, the GM may ask you to use the most appropriate Attribute. Many GMs make "cheat sheets" that list characters' statistics to help determine which areas are affected. There is no right or wrong way to do this; as noted above, it's up to the GM.

Your GM will assign a Difficulty Level for the task. Many tasks are Fairly difficult. Some are so easy that a Terrible effort will succeed while others necessitate Superb results for success. Generally, the GM will inform you of the Difficulty Level ("You need a Mediocre result"), although she may have reason on occasion not to share this information.

The final part of resolving an action is the die roll. Your character may be Great with a bow, but he won't get a Great shot every time! The dice will help determine just how well your character does.

The next sections describe how to read Fudge dice, resolve actions in which your character is unchallenged by another character (Unopposed Actions), and resolve actions involving two or more characters (Opposed Actions).

Fudge Dice

The Deryni Adventure Game uses Fudge dice — six-sided dice with two sides marked with a "+" (+1), two sides marked with a "–" (–1), and two sides left blank (+0). These dice are available at your Friendly Local Game Shop or online (see Grey Ghost Press's website, www.fudgerpg.com, for links to retailers that sell Grey Ghost products).

Fudge dice come in many colors. Most are packaged in sets of 20 (five sets of four dice in various colors). Fudge dice are also packaged as *Deryni Dice,* consisting of two sets of four Fudge dice, one set black and one white, to represent ward cubes (see p. XX).

You can also make your own Fudge dice easily. Get four normal white d6s (six-sided dice.) Using permanent markers, color two sides of each die green, two sides red, and leave the other two sides white. When the ink has dried, spray the dice lightly with clear matte finish to prevent the ink from staining your hands. You now have 4dF: the green sides = +1, the red sides = –1, and the white sides = 0.

Rolling the Dice

A world of mystery and adventure will also harbor uncertainty — even accomplished Deryni mages are, regrettably, not always successful in their endeavors. Fortune is represented by rolling dice to determine the outcome of an action.

To use Fudge dice, roll four of them and total the amount. Since a +1 and a –1 cancel each other, remove pairs of +1 and –1 and any 0's from the table. The remaining dice are easy to read. For example, if you roll +1, +1, 0, and –1, remove the 0, the –1, and one of the +1's, as together they equal 0. The remaining die is easily read: +1. If there are no opposing pairs of +1 and –1 dice, remove any 0's and the remaining dice are again easy to read.

The result of a die roll is a number between –4 and +4. Refer to the chart of the attribute levels on *The Deryni Adventure Game* character record. To determine the result of an action, put your finger on your trait level, then move it up (for positive results) or down (for negative results). The result is the rolled level, which may be greater or less than your character's skill level:

Superb
Great
Good
Fair
Mediocre
Poor
Terrible

Example: Sendai's Sleight of Hand skill is Good. The player rolls the dice for Sendai's current display of legerdemain (using sleight of hand to manipulate cups and balls). The results are +1, 0, –1, –1, for a total of –1. Sendai provides a Fair display of legerdemain — certainly enough to entertain his audience but not his best performance.

Other Randomizing Techniques

For those who do not want to make or buy Fudge dice, here are two additional options:

3d6: Roll three six-sided dice. Add the numbers and look up the results on the table below:

Rolled:	3-4	5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14-15	16	17-18
Result:	–4	–3	–2	–1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4

d%: Roll percentile dice (d10s, available at game stores) and consult the table below:

Rolled:	1	2-6	7-18	19-38	39-62	63-82	83-94	95-99	00
Result:	–4	–3	–2	–1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4



Unopposed Actions

Unopposed actions pit a character's skill against a challenging task rather than against a person or creature. After you describe your character's action in detail, the GM will inform you which skill to test and the Difficulty Level you are trying to match or exceed. If your character does not possess the appropriate skill, you may have to use the default level (often Poor or Terrible). Then you roll the dice.

Example: Variable Results

Sendai the Magnificent, with his Area Knowledge of Gwynedd's cities at Fair, tries to find his way through the crowded, winding streets of Rhemuth to the Silver Fountain Inn. He's in a hurry because he is late for his appointment with a young knight interested in hiring the troupe.

The GM decides that Sendai needs a Fair result on his Area Knowledge skill to make his way quickly and by the best route to the Silver Fountain. If Sendai's player rolls a 0 or better, Sendai will have no trouble reaching the Silver Fountain as quickly as possible — that is, unless the GM has other ideas and throws some obstacle or distracting event in Sendai's way.

If Sendai's player rolls a –1 (Mediocre) result, Sendai may have to ask for directions. A roll of –2 (Poor) may result in Sendai taking a wrong turn and having to retrace his steps before heading along the right path again, further delaying his arrival at the Silver Fountain. Rolling –3 or –4 (a Terrible or worse result) may put Sendai in the wrong part of Rhemuth entirely, with his actions being quietly observed by "undesirable elements" sizing up his purse and his walking stick as they judge his suitability as a victim….

If your character's trait is high or low enough, it is possible to roll beyond Superb or below Terrible. Note the exact level (Terrible –3 or Superb +1, for example) and play as usual. The GM will describe the results of extreme rolls.



Example: Clear Success or Failure

With some actions, it's an all-or-nothing thing — your character will either succeed or fail.

Jaksmar ("Jak" to his friends) Telamon, the troupe's "proceeds collector," clings to a trellis running up the side of the Silver Fountain Inn. He's attempting to climb in through a third-story window — never mind why! — and needs to negotiate the three-foot gap between the edge of the trellis and the window sill. The GM says this requires a Fair Climbing check to avoid calamity. Jak is a Fair climber, so his player expects little or no trouble. A result of 0 or higher on the dice would meet the Difficulty Level. But he rolls a –2, which is a failure! He misses the windowsill and is now hanging off the trellis by one hand. The kindly GM gives Jak one chance to avoid falling and asks the player to roll against Jak's Agility. She tells the player that Jak needs a Good result or he'll fall. With a Great Agility, he'll only fail if the dice come up as –2 or worse. The player rolls a +1. Success!

Example: Level of Success

Of course, there are other times when you want to know exactly how well your character did.

Sendai is well aware of Sir Bevyn's scrutiny as he prepares to demonstrate his legerdemain to his prospective employer. Nor is the knight his only audience. The sight of the magician's accoutrements spread on the table— cups and balls, a kerchief, a handful of coins — has attracted the attention of several patrons in the inn. With a flourish, Sendai the Magnificent begins his performance… and his player rolls the dice. A +1: that's a Great result, one level higher than Sendai's Good Sleight of Hand skill. Applause breaks out at the end of Sendai's performance, and Sir Bevyn claps and nods in appreciation.



Example: Modifiers

The GM may also inform you that your character's skill will be modified up or down for some reason.

Mission accomplished, Jak slides himself out through the window and begins a quiet climb back down the trellis. The GM judges that Jak's Good Sneak skill and Great Agility are worth a +1 bonus to his Climbing skill, raising it to Good for the climb down. Unfortunately, the unlucky player rolls a –4, which is a Terrible result despite all of Jak's (roleplayed) care! One of the trellis boards breaks, and Jak comes crashing down. The GM allows Jak to use his Agility to land on his feet. Jak's player rolls +0, a Great result, so Jak isn't injured, although he did make a bit of noise. Fortunately his misadventure outside the inn goes unheard over the applause and laughter at Sendai's tricks within.

Example: Secret Rolls

On occasion, the GM might make a roll in secret for you — especially in those instances where simply asking you to roll gives you more information than your character should know. Perception checks are common examples of rolls the GM will make on your behalf. For example, if the GM asked you to roll a Perception check as when your character lifts a mug of ale to his lips, you might suspect there's something wrong with the drink. But if the GM rolls the dice, hiding the results, you won't necessarily know what she's rolling for — which character(s) may be involved, whether it's Situational Roll to determine whether a particular NPC appears or a Wits check to see if the character recognizes someone else in the tavern, etc.

Jak is not yet aware that his fall has been observed by someone being as stealthy as Jak hoped to be. The GM doesn't want to tip her hand too soon by asking the player to roll on Jak's Perception attribute, thereby letting the player know there's something Jak may want to be aware of. So she rolls the dice herself, hiding the roll behind her notebook and not commenting on the reason for the roll. The result is 0. Jak's Perception is Good, for a Good result overall. The GM decides that Jak will catch a glimpse of the onlooker as he turns around and brushes himself off.

Opposed Actions

Opposed actions directly involve another character. Combat, persuasion, evasion and the like are all activities in which your character is attempting to best another indicate opposed actions.

Describe exactly what you would like your character to do. As with unopposed actions, the GM will inform you which skill to test and any appropriate modifiers, and may also tell you the Difficulty Level (if there's a chance to fail no matter what your opponent does). The difference with opposed actions is that the other character also gets a Trait check. Note that the traits rolled against are not necessarily the same for both characters. For example, a disguise attempt might contest Disguise skill with the Perception attribute of the resisting participant. Combat generally opposes a weapon skill with Dodge, or with another weapon skill.

If you do not achieve the Difficulty Level, your opponent's roll is probably immaterial because you failed anyway. If you equal or exceed the Difficulty Level, the GM compares each character's rolled level to determine the relative level between them. You describe the relative level as the difference between the rolled levels achieved by each opponent. The relative level is positive for the winner, negative for the loser. Or it can be 0, preserving the status quo.



If you make a Good trait check and your opponent ends up with a Mediocre result, the relative level favors you by +2. If you make a Good roll but your opponent rolls a Superb, the relative level favors him by +2, but is –2 to you.

Example: A Chase!

Jak quickly recovers from his surprise at seeing someone hiding in the shadows and steps forward to get a better look at the person, but the lurker turns and runs. Intrigued, Jak begins running after the fleeing figure. The GM determines that Jak's chances of catching up to the person will depend on the results of an Opposed roll: Jak's running ability versus the non-player character's running ability. The NPC has a Running skill at Fair. Looking at Jak's character sheet, the GM decides that in lieu of a running skill (Jak doesn't have that skill), Jak's roll will be based on his attributes. Jak's Agility is Great, but stamina and strength also affect a person's running ability. Jak has those attributes at Fair.

The GM decides that Jak's natural running ability is Good (an average of sorts of the three attributes involved), but that his player will be rolling at –1 due to not having actual skill at Running. The GM also tells Jak's player that Jak will need a Fair result or better to keep up with the person. Jak's player rolls the dice and gets a +1, for a Good result overall (Good running, –1 for no actual running Skill, +1 for the dice result). Jak keeps up with the person! Now the GM will determine if Jak actually catches the mysterious runner. The GM rolls against the NPC's Running skill. The dice come up with a +1 result, also a Good result (Fair running +1). So Jak can keep up with — but not overtake — the runner.

The GM then announces that the runner has turned to throw something at Jak in an effort to discourage his pursuit. This, too, is an Opposed action — the NPC's Throwing skill (Good) versus Jak's Dodge skill (also Good). The GM rolls a –1 (a Fair result, the minimum necessary for the NPC to throw accurately while continuing to run). But Jak's player continues to experience bad luck with the dice. A –3 result on the dice means that even with Jak's Good dodge, he gets a Poor result. He gets beaned on the forehead by an apple, which breaks his stride long enough for the runner to escape.

The GM rolls the dice one more time, in secret this time. A +1! With Jak's Good Perception, that's a Great result. The GM tells Jak's player that Jak realizes the runner is a woman as she ducks around a corner into an alleyway. By the time Jak gets to the alley, the woman is gone.

Summary of Dice Rolling and Results

Taking the PC's baseline traits (Skills, Gifts and Faults, and Attributes), dice rolls are added to give a random element to the play. No matter how good they are at a skill, they may fail at something they've done a hundred times before if they get a –4. Or they may succeed at something they thought they couldn't do, with luck, if they get a +4 dice roll. Even though Sendai knows Rhemuth fairly well, a bad dice roll could send him down the wrong street. He'll be lost, he'll be late, he'll have lost a chance to make a good impression on Sir Bevyn, and perhaps lose out this engagement to some other performer, etc. Or perhaps good dice rolls mean he gets there on time, and puts on a better than usual performance which leads to getting hired for the party. Or his good performance could make up for having kept Sir Bevyn waiting. Jak's luck is more mixed, thanks to the dice rolls he gets. He is saved from disaster, but is also kept from succeeding thanks to the mixture of his agility, perception, running ability and the dice.

Fatigue and Effort (Optional)

Jak stands at the head of the alley, breathing hard. Now that the excitement of the chase is over, he realizes how tired he is. The woman led him along several streets, as she dodged around and among the carts and horses and foot traffic. Jak is not unfit by any means, but he briefly wishes he were a Deryni mage with the ability to banish fatigue. Once he catches his breath, he begins to make his way back to the Silver Fountain Inn. A pint of ale will restore him almost as well as one of Sendai's magic spells….

Actions characters take within the game world may prove tiring. Fatigue can dull your reactions, both mentally and physically.

The simplest way to incorporate fatigue into the *Deryni Adventure Game* is for the GM to keep character actions in mind as an adventure progresses, and to inform the players whenever their characters have become fatigued. The actual effects of fatigue can remain vague, with fatigue acting more as "flavor" in the narrative as the characters' story unfolds than as an effect determined by game rules.

For players and GMs who prefer to have fatigue codified, these optional rules present a way to track a character's fatigue. They can also determine when the ever-popular "fatigue banishing spell" would prove useful.

Categories of Activities

In *The Deryni Adventure Game,* physical activities are classified into three broad categories: Effortless, Tiring, and Exhausting. The GM determines how fatiguing an action may be, based on the general guidelines presented below. Just as in real life, there are penalties associated with being Tired or Exhausted (see "Fatigue Penalties" below).

Effortless

You can perform as many effortless activities as you like without suffering any fatigue effects. Examples include:

- Activities that require no trait checks (dice rolls), including walking, talking, and other common activities.
- Everyday activities that may require dice rolls, like fishing, gambling, and any other skill that does not require true physical or mental exertion.
- Potentially tiring actions performed for brief periods, like running, swimming, riding, etc. The length of time before such activity is no longer effortless is up to the GM. You may repeat such potentially tiring activities without effort only if you pause to rest between activities.

Tiring

You can perform a small number of tiring activities, after which you become "Tired." Examples include:

- Normally effortless activities pursued for a long time (intensive research, for example), especially if the character delays resting or sleeping.
- Any activity that requires physical exertion such as running, swimming, riding, climbing, dancing, and so on.
- Potentially exhausting actions performed for brief periods. Examples include hand-to-hand combat (including wrestling and brawling), running very fast (sprinting), hard labor and the like. The length of time before such activity becomes Exhausting is up to the GM. Characters may repeat such potentially exhausting activities only if they pause to rest between activities.

Exhausting

A character performing an exhausting action will become at least "Tired," and may become "Exhausted." Examples include:

- Any Tiring activity continued for long periods or with extra effort. This includes long-distance running, riding hard all day over rough terrain (the horse may be exhausted, too!), dancing particularly strenuous folk dances, forced marches, and similar actions.
- Any strenuous activity that lasts for more than a short time, such as hand to hand combat or running at top speed.
- Any activity that requires a super-normal effort on the part of the character, generally performed under great duress — heaving a fallen beam off a comrade trapped in collapsing rubble, for example.

Measuring Fatigue

The number of tiring or exhausting activities the character can engage in before suffering the effects of fatigue depends on the character's Stamina attribute. There are two methods of tracking this (the GM chooses the method).

Pre-Determined Number of Actions

The easiest way to determine when a character becomes Tired or Exhausted is to allow the character to perform a given number of activities based on their Stamina attribute.

Once the character has performed the given number of tiring activities within the space of a day (as time passes for the characters inside the game, not for the players), he or she will be Tired and will suffer fatigue penalties (see below). The character may perform the same number of additional Tiring activities, based on his Stamina, but will then be Exhausted.

A character can perform fewer Exhausting activities. Characters with Terrible or Poor Stamina are unable to perform Exhausting activities at all — they simply don't have the physical or mental stamina to accomplish such feats. Also, characters will be Tired after any Exhausting activity, although they can continue to perform Tiring or Exhausting activities until reaching their limits and becoming Exhausted.

Stamina Attribute	Tiring Activities	Exhausting Activities
Superb	7	5
Great	6	4
Good	5	3
Fair	4	2
Mediocre	3	1
Poor	2	—
Terrible	1	—

Fatigue and Magic

Using magic can also cause fatigue. As with physical efforts, your Stamina determines how quickly you'll become Tired or Exhausted from magical activities. Your GM will categorize each use of a Magic skill as Effortless, Tiring, or Exhausting using the same guidelines as for physical activities and her determination of how difficult the magic is. A Deryni's Power attribute and magical skill levels can influence how fatiguing a given use of magic will be. As an example, fighting a Duel Arcane requires extreme mental concentration and a lot of energy and is likely to be Exhausting. A Deryni with less Power and lower skill levels than his opponent will likely become fatigued first — a potentially lethal disadvantage in a Duel Arcane.

Deryni can use magic to stave off the effects of Fatigue through the use of a "fatigue banishing spell" (see p. XX). You can use a fatigue banishing spell on yourself or on someone else, effectively countering any fatigue penalties. There's a price to pay, though. Once the spell wears off, the Fatigue you've held at bay will return, magnified.

For more information concerning the effects of Deryni magic on Fatigue (and vice versa), see *Chapter 9: Deryni Magic*.

Trait Checks

The second method of tracking fatigue involves dice rolls based on the character's Stamina and Willpower. Every time a character performs a Tiring activity, make a Stamina trait check at Difficulty Level Fair. If the check fails (Stamina plus dice roll results in Mediocre or worse), the character will become Tired. The character may continue to perform Tiring actions, rolling against Stamina (again with Difficulty Level Fair), until a Stamina trait check fails again (result is less than Fair), whereupon the character has become Exhausted.

The same is true for any Exhausting task. If the Stamina check fails, the character is Exhausted. However, in the case of Exhausting activities, even if the Stamina check succeeds the character will become Tired! (If he was already Tired, he will now be Exhausted.) Once Exhausted, a character requires a successful Willpower check (Difficulty Level Fair) in order to attempt any Tiring tasks. Roll against Stamina as normal, but failure results in a character who is Incapacitated as well as Exhausted (see Wounds and Healing, p. XX).

Exhausted characters can perform Exhausting actions only in extreme circumstances. This requires a Willpower check with Difficulty Level Great. It also requires a Stamina check with Difficulty Level Fair to allow the character to complete the exhausting task. Whether or not the character successfully completes the Exhausting task, he or she will then be Incapacitated (see Wounds and Healing, p. XX) as well as Exhausted.

Fatigue Penalties

There are penalties associated with being Tired or Exhausted:

- Once Tired, a character suffers –1 to most activities — including any Stamina and Willpower rolls required to perform additional Tiring or Exhausting activities.
- Once Exhausted, a character will suffer a –2 to all activities, and can only make exhausting efforts in exceptional circumstances.

Note: these penalties apply to future actions, not to the activity that results in the character becoming Tired or Exhausted.

Recovering from Fatigue

Six to eight hours of normal sleep will restore a Tired character. Exhausted characters need an entire day of rest, and will remain Tired throughout that day. A second night's sleep will restore them. The GM may allow characters to recover from fatigue faster, especially in conjunction with successful Willpower rolls. On the other hand, the GM may impose continued penalties for as long as she deems necessary if the character's actions were truly heroic and well beyond a person's normal limits.

In essence, the fatigue factor works so that everyone can perform everyday effortless jobs, such as walking talking, getting dressed, cooking meals etc. Most people can do Tiring tasks for at least a limited period of time. The PC's personal level of stamina and the grade of difficulty involved in the task determines how long they can keep at it without collapsing. Favorable dice rolls may mean they can work a little while longer, although at a cost. Even the less difficult tasks will tire characters if they keep doing them all day. Fewer people can do the actually Exhausting tasks for more than a very brief time, and only PCs with the best physical strength and stamina can keep them at it for any length of time. Every PC will eventually become Tired and then Exhausted after a long day of doing Tiring or Exhausting tasks, especially if they delay resting.



After becoming Tired, PCs have to rest for a number of hours before they can repeat or resume their Tiring or Exhausting duties. After becoming Exhausted, the PC is essentially incapacitated for approximately 24 to 36 hours before they can resume their normal activities. In an Exhausted state, it takes an *extremely* favorable dice roll for an Exhausted PC to succeed at a Tiring or Exhausting task.

When Things Come to Blows

With happy thoughts of cool ale on his mind, Jaksmar continues on. He's making his way through a side alley, not far from the Silver Fountain Inn, when he gets a sudden sense that something's not quite right. Now alert, he takes a quick look around, and is dismayed to realize he's walked into an ambush….

The world of the Eleven Kingdoms is a dangerous one. There are many who will not hesitate to use the blade to resolve disputes. In a world where medical care has major limitations, combat is truly a matter of life or death. The best fight is the one you don't get into, but you can't always talk your way out of a confrontation.

Before Combat

Before playing out a combat scene in the Deryni Adventure Game, the GM and players should make sure everyone is aware of any factors that may influence the outcome of the fight.

What weapons are involved? What means of defense do the combatants have? What skills do they bring to bear? What role might magic play in the scene? Does anyone have the advantage of numbers or position (height or cover or otherwise)? What other factors are present?

The GM also decides what game rules will apply to combat in her Deryni adventures. There are several ways to handle combat situations using ***Fudge*** game rules. The *Deryni Adventure Game* offers two systems: "Narrative Combat" and ""Combat Rounds." (See Chapter Eight for the more game-rule-intense "Combat Rounds" system.)

Regardless of the game rules used, players should determine what weapons and armor their character has. These should be written down on the character sheet.

Combat Terms

Narrative Combat is a freeform method of determining the events and outcome in a combat situation. Players describe their characters' intentions and planned actions in detail, and the GM decides (with the help of the dice) how the characters' actions actually play out in the scene.

Story Elements are distinct segments of the combat narrative. The interval between story elements is a practical place for a die roll to help determine the outcome of the characters' actions in the next story element.

Melee Combat is close combat, also called hand to hand fighting. It may involve single combat, or combat in groups.

Ranged Combat occurs when opponents are not close enough for melee combat — most often with bows, crossbows, or thrown weapons that attack from beyond normal weapons reach.

Determining Weapon Effectiveness

For each weapon a character possesses, consider the following to determine the weapon's effectiveness in the hands of a trained fighter:

The potential strength of the attack. For muscle-powered weapons, such as melee weapons, unarmed attacks (wrestling or grappling), bows, slings, etc., this is determined by the attacker's Strength attribute; stronger people hit harder. For machine-like weapons (e.g., crossbows, ballistas, etc.) damage is relative to the nature of the weapon; a siege engine will do far more damage than a hand-held crossbow.

The deadliness of the attacker's weapon. Big weapons tend to do more damage than little weapons and sharp weapons tear flesh better than dull ones, but blunt weapons can cause concussive damage even through armor thick enough to stop a bladed weapon. People trained in unarmed combat tend to do more damage than those untrained in any martial art.

For a free-flowing game stressing narration and story over mechanics, all the player needs is an idea of how deadly his weapons are. For assigned numerical damage factors, see Chapter 8.

Weapons

Weapon choice in the Deryni Adventure Game is more a matter of style and character concept than exactly how much damage you can do. The choice of one weapon over another is heavily influenced by the character, his training, location, resources, and his titles and standing. Normally only a Borderer would be found wielding a claymore and no self-respecting noble would fight with a quarterstaff if he had any choice in the matter. Commoners use whatever they can afford or can find, be that pitchfork or rusty sword.

Almost anything can be used as a weapon. Weapons designed and forged for combat will be more effective than those improvised from materials on hand (e.g., a chair or a stick) For information about Improvised Weapon, see below.

Terms for swords and other bladed weapons apply to general classes of weapon rather than to specific weapon styles. The term "broadsword" applies to any sword with a long and broad blade, while "short swords" are those designed for close-quarters fighting (a real-world example is the Roman *gladius*.) Larger weapons, like a bastard sword or a claymore, are huge weapons with long blades that require two hands when wielded.

See Appendix XX for details about weapons in the Eleven Kingdoms.

Armor

Armor protects its wearer by absorbing some of the impact of a weapon strike, thus lessening the severity of wounds or preventing injury altogether. Like weapons, armor is best when it is designed specifically for the wearer to counteract particular weapons. Padding under a metal or hard leather outer shell adds to the ability to absorb strikes, and also protects against chafing. Clothing worn under the padding provides an additional amount of protection; although small, it could be enough to prevent an arrow from burying itself in the target's body.

Having a shield between you and your opponent may determine your ability to survive in combat. However, your character must be trained to use a shield to gain this benefit, as a solid blow from a strong opponent can either knock the shield out of your hands, or worse cut straight through it. A shield in the hands of someone without the proper training may provide cover from ranged attacks, but is otherwise no more useful than a thin wall when struck by an axe. Even if the strike does not cut through the wood or metal, the force of the blow still travels a quick but unfortunate path straight into the arm, or worse.

If your character lacks training with a shield (represented by the Shield skill,) the default skill level is Poor. If your character is a squire, your Shield skill should be at least Mediocre. A knight should have the Shield skill at Fair or better.

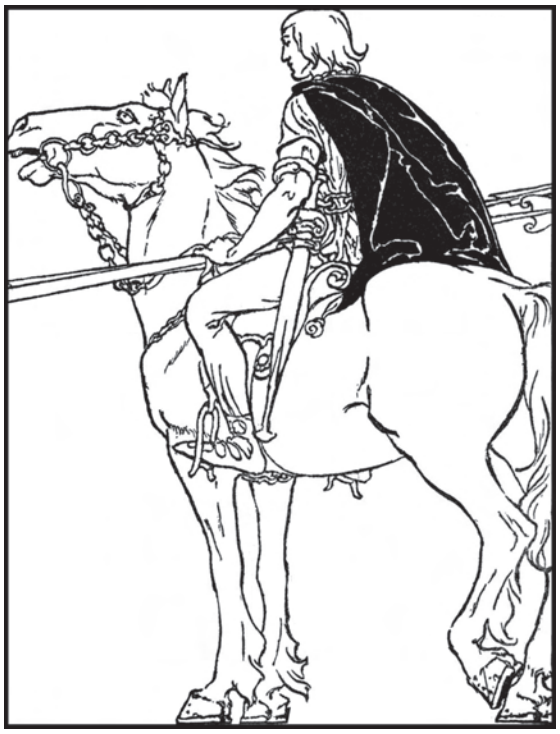
Determining Armor Effectiveness

Once you know what type of armor (if any!) your character has, consider the following in determining how well the armor protects him. Thicker or stronger armor, and more of it, tends to prevent more damage. Armor types, like weapons, are determined by locale, training, and social station, and ranges from quilted cloth, hardened leather, metal rings (large or small), or chainmail, to partial metal plate. Many types of armor combine two or more materials or multiple garments. (As noted in Chapter 4, knights and warriors in the Eleven Kingdoms do not wear full metal plate armor.) A knight may wear a chainmail hauberk over a padded gambeson, while a peasant may wear only a heavy leather jacket.

Armor in the *Deryni Adventure Game* is rated Light, Medium, and Heavy. Any Gifts or Faults (including Tough or Fragile Constitution) affect the amount of damage a character can sustain in addition to the protection offered by the armor itself.

As with weapon damage factors, numerical "defensive damage factors" may be assigned to a character based on his Traits and armor. See Chapter 8 for more information.

Weapons and Armor Examples



Sendai's Strength is Fair, giving him no particular bonuses (or penalties) to the amount of damage he can inflict with a weapon. He has only one weapon — a staff, which is a light wooden weapon requiring two hands. Sendai has no armor, and did not take the Tough Gift, so he could be in trouble rather quickly, should a serious fight break out. Fortunately, he does not have the Fragile Constitution fault, which would make him even more vulnerable.

Jaksmar has a small but very sharp dagger, and no armor or special character Traits (Strength, etc.) that would significantly affect the amount of damage he can do.

Larsten, Sendai's son, would do better in a fight. His Strength is Good, lending more power to any weapon blows. He is also skilled in three weapons: a Bow (light two-handed range weapon), a Sword (large bladed melee weapon), and a Lance. The latter is a special case because a lance is most often used in mounted combat. If Larsten were using it as a spear, it would be considered a sharp (piercing) two-handed weapon. Used as a piercing weapon in a mounted charge, the lance can do far more damage. In this case, the damage done is based on the *horse's* Strength rather than Larsten's Strength. With an average horse and a good hit, a lance is a fierce weapon! Larsten also has hardened leather (*cuir bouilli)* with metal rings sewn onto it, which is referred to as "ring mail."

The GM determines the weapons, armor, skill levels, etc. for any foes (NPCs) the characters face.

Narrative Combat

Narrative combat encourages dramatic roleplaying. Action moves forward dramatically and situations can be resolved with minimal dice rolling. Here's how it works:

When your character faces a combat situation, the GM will describe as much of the particulars as she feels you need to know, usually what you see and hear, the opponents you face (those that you know about), and so on.

After setting the scene, the GM will ask you what your character is doing. Describe in detail what your character plans to do in response to the situation and how he intends to do it. Assuming you are within view (or earshot) of the other characters of the party, you may be able to take their stated actions into account when figuring out your character's action. The more complete your description, the better able the GM will be to assess the situation. This can be important if she has something that won't be revealed until the middle of a battle — such as how many opponents will be popping out in an ambush.

The GM will break the battle down into "story elements," which in essence are narrative equivalents of traditional gameplay "rounds" or "shots" in a movie action scene. Each story element represents a unit of time and action that the GM feels will provide the best balance between detailed descriptions of the scene and keeping the action moving. The length of each story element depends on the GM's style, the importance of the battle, the number of participants, whether or not there are surprises, and so on. Each element should be a "dramatic unit," and something should change at the end of the story element (a character gets injured, an opponent is knocked down, combatants break off to re-assess the situation, etc.). An entire scene may be covered by a single story element, or the GM may break the scene down into several story elements.



The GM will tell you which of your character's Skills will be tested as the story element unfolds and gives a modifier, ranging from –3 to +3, with the most common being 0 or no modifier. The modifier is based partly on how well the PCs' plan would work, the characters' opponents, and various circumstances: fatigue, lighting, footing, surprise, weapon superiority, bravery or cowardice of the non-player characters, wounds, etc.

Finally, you roll the dice. Narrative combat is an unopposed action — the result of your die roll reveals the outcome of your tactics. The GM-set modifier accounts for the opponents' actions and other factors as noted above.

The GM may ask for a single die roll, or require three rolls and take the median roll. (The median is the middle value die roll, which may be the same as either the high or low die roll.) For example, if you roll a Good, a Mediocre, and a Superb result, the median is Good, since it's the result in between Mediocre and Superb. A result of Poor, Great, and Great gives a median die roll of Great. Using a median tends to soften the role of extreme luck. Some GMs use a median when a single die result represents many actions.

Narrative Combat Example

Here's how the ambush in the alley might play out:

GM (to Jak's player): *It's late afternoon, and the alley is deep in shadow. In that first moment of awareness, you see three figures emerging from the gloom. One, in front of you, hefts a blackjack. There's one to either side. There may be more behind you now that you've moved into the alley.*

Jaksmar's player: *Are there any obstacles or debris in the alley?*

GM: *There's a goat cart leaning up against the wall to your left. One of the thugs was hiding behind it.*

Jaksmar's player: *I don't suppose there's a window within reach, above the goat cart? Or anywhere in the alley?*

GM: *Sorry, no. The buildings to either side are two to three stories, and lean in towards one another overhead. There may be a door farther down the alley. You're about 20 feet from the street you just came from, and it's a good 60 feet to the next street.*

Jaksmar's player: *Do I have time to get my dagger out before Mr. Blackjack gets to me? Remember, I have Combat Reflexes.*

GM: *Probably not, although you can roll on Jak's Dagger skill if you like. The Difficulty Level will be Great, as the thug with the blackjack's pretty much leaping at you. Your Combat Reflexes lets you react to the thugs before they're upon you, though.*

Jaksmar's player: *Okay, never mind. I'm going to try to dodge past the guy coming from the goat cart, leap onto the cart, and spring from there past Mr. Blackjack. Then I'll hit the ground running and try to make it to the next street.*

GM: *What's your Acrobatics skill?*

Jaksmar's player: *Er, I don't have any. I'm the troupe's non-tumbler.*

GM: *What traits do you think might be applicable to the situation?*

Jaksmar's player*: I've got Great Agility and Good Dodge. Oh, and Combat Reflexes, of course.*

GM: *Okay, roll the dice. No modifier, because your Good chance of success and your fatigue cancel each other out.*

Jaksmar's player: *(rolling four* ***Fudge*** *dice): Drat. –1, Mediocre.*

GM (chuckling)*: You're not having much luck with the dice today! Okay, you dodge around the thug to your left and reach the goat cart. You have no trouble jumping up onto it, although it feels a little rickety under your feet. The thug with the blackjack was moving faster than you realized, though. So now you're on top of the goat cart but two thugs are closing in on you — Mr. Blackjack and the guy who was hiding by the cart. Do you still want to try to leap past them and run?*

Jaksmar's player: *No. I'll leap <u>on</u> them, hollering bloody murder as I do. I'll do as much damage to them as I can, especially to their faces, but break away and run as soon as possible. My Brawling's Fair.*



GM: *Okay, roll the dice three times.*

Jaksmar's player gets a –1, 0, and –3, for a median of –1, or Mediocre. The other players groan.

The GM rolls some dice, too, shielding the results from the players' sight. She rolls four Fudge dice twice, once to determine the reaction of passers-by in the street and once to determine if Sendai could possibly hear Jak's yelling. The results come up +2 (Great!) and +1 (Good). Fortunately for Jak, the GM's rolling better than Jak's player.

From her notes, the GM sees that Sendai's Perception is only Fair. Even with a Good result, the Silver Fountain is too far away for Sendai to notice anything, although he is now outside the inn, having concluded his performance for Sir Bevyn.



GM: *Your leap upon the thugs goes awry, and you end up taking only Mr. Blackjack down with you. The other thugs quickly set upon you. I assume you're yelling at the top of your lungs all this time?*

Jak's player: *Sure am!*

GM: *Okay, then. Roll a Brawling skill check to see how well you can fend the attacks off.*

Jak's player: *Can I use Dodge instead?*

GM: *Sorry, not while you're grappling on the ground with Mr. Blackjack.*

Jak's player: *OK.* (The player rolls the dice — a +0 modifier on Jak's Fair brawling.) *Fair.*

GM: *You're taking quite a beating, but manage to gain some satisfaction when your elbow meets Mr. Blackjack's stomach and he lets out a swear with an oomph! You have to stop your yelling, though, or you won't have enough breath to keep brawling.*



Jak's player: *Okay, it's determined silence now. And windmill arms, elbows, knees and feet. I'll bite, too, if I get a chance.*

GM: *Several more curses accompany your efforts as you land various blows on the thugs. There are four of them — the one behind you when you entered the alley and three more you noticed. Even though they're getting in each other's way, you're definitely getting the worst of it. Do you try to keep Mr. Blackjack down, or do you try to regain your footing?*

Jak's player: *I'm going to try to regain my feet, but keep doing as much damage as possible while I do. I want to keep them off guard as best I can.*

GM: *Roll the dice, three times. You're using your Great Agility as well as your Fair Brawling, so you're at +1.*



Jak's player rolls the dice again. The other players groan again when the first roll comes up –3, Terrible, modified to Poor by Jak's +1. But the next two rolls are each +1 — Great due to the +1 modifier!

Jak's player: *Whoo hoo! Median roll's Great!*

GM: *Finally! You scramble to your feet, kicking Mr. Blackjack's knee in the process. That keeps him on the ground for a little bit longer. Swinging your arms wildly, you throw your attackers off balance for a moment more. Just then, you hear a "Ho! What's this?" from the nearby street. "Hey, there! Thieves, Thieves!" Several more people take up the cry. The thugs take to their heels, including Mr. Blackjack, who manages — barely — to get to his feet. You're surrounded by concerned citizens, who dust you off and make sure you're not seriously hurt.*

Special Circumstances and Combat Modifiers

Sometimes your character will want to perform a special action during combat, and other times there may be special circumstances that will affect the character's chances. The GM always takes your character's special actions and any special circumstances into account when assigning a modifier to your dice roll for the current story element. Here are some sample actions and circumstances and recommended modifiers:

- *Better Equipment:* A character who is better equipped than his opponent (higher quality weapons or armor, larger or more damaging weapons, etc.) may get a bonus of +1 to +3, depending on the disparity between the fighters' gear.
- *Positional Advantage:* If the character has a positional advantage over his opponent (attacking from a height, on good footing while his opponent is in mud or on ice, etc.) the bonus should be +1 or +2.
- *Shield:* A character with a shield should get a +1 modifier (+2 for a large shield) in melee combat, provided his opponent does not have a shield. (If both have shields, the advantages cancel out.)
- *Targeted Blow:* Aiming for a specific target (body part or chink in armor etc.) should carry a penalty of –1 (e.g., "left leg") to –3 (e.g., "an eye). The combat roll must also meet a Difficulty Level of Good to Superb, depending on how hard the target will be to hit.
- *Improvised Weapon:* The GM may assign a penalty of –1 to –2 if the character is using an improvised weapon (e.g., a branch picked up from the ground, a leg broken off a chair, etc.).
- *Inferior Equipment:* A character who is facing a better-equipped opponent (his foe has higher quality weapons or armor) will be penalized by –1 to –3, depending on the disparity between the fighters' gear.
- *Multiple Opponents:* When a character faces multiple opponents, he'll be at a –1 disadvantage for each additional foe beyond the first. A well-armored fighter facing weak opponents can concentrate on one and let the others try to get through his armor, and may not be at any disadvantage at all. A well-armored knight wading through a peasant levy is an example. The number of opponents that can attack at the same time may be limited by space (a character in a doorway or on narrow stairs will face one or two attackers at a time regardless of how many opponents there are).
- *Automatic Death:* Sometimes you don't have to roll the dice. Holding a knife to a helpless character's throat is a good example. Hopefully, the GM won't be so cruel as to put your character in that situation (unless it's with your prior permission, if your character's death will add real drama to the story). And hopefully your character wouldn't be so cruel as to kill a person in cold blood — unless it was a necessary execution of an enemy of the king!

The GM will assign modifiers for other circumstances as she deems appropriate.

Optional: Damage to Weapons and Armor

When a character sustains a wound in combat, it's likely that his armor has been damaged as well! Your GM may choose to ignore any game effects of armor damage. You can assume that your character will fix any minor damage between battles (hammering out dents in metal, re-weaving chain mail, re-stitching leather armor, etc.) and that he'll replace any armor with major damage (or find a weapon smith to fix it).

If the GM wishes to factor armor damage into the game, there are several ways to do so.

- She can simply include the effects of combat on armor in her description of any wounds.
- Any time a character is Hurt or worse, she can make a Situational Roll. With a Poor or worse roll, the character's armor or shield will lose one level of effectiveness: damaged Heavy armor will protect no better than Medium armor, and Light armor that has been damaged will protect no better than normal clothing. If she wishes, the GM can add any wound penalties as modifiers to the Situational Roll (a –1 if the character was Hurt, –2 for Very Hurt, –3 for Incapacitated or Near Death).
- She can rule that armor sustains significant damage only on a "critical failure" (the player rolls a –4 on the dice in a combat check).

If using the optional wound location rules, damage will be to any armor that was protecting the wounded body part.

Broken Weapons

Sometimes, weapons break during combat. This is especially true of lances (galloping horses lend impressive force to any blow!) or of poorly made weapons.

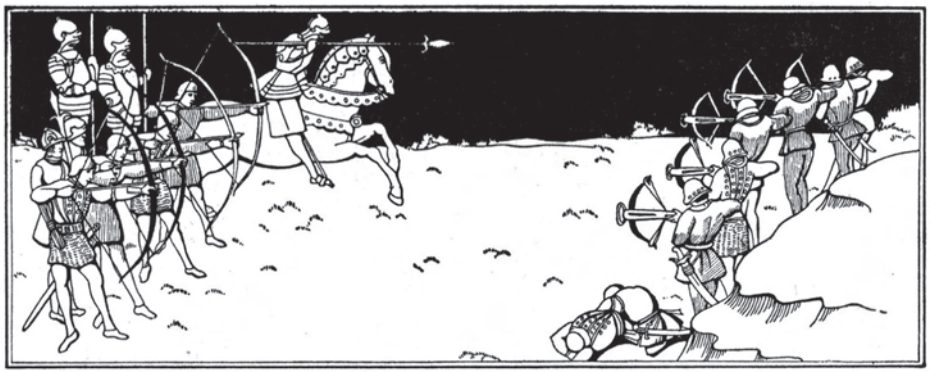
In general, the GM will determine that a weapon has broken only if it adds to the story or if the player rolls a critical failure in combat (–4 on the dice).

Ranged Combat

When a character attacks from a distance — with a bow, a thrown object, or a siege weapon — it's called a "ranged" attack. Ranged combat may or may not be an Opposed action. If the target is unaware of the assault, or chooses not to defend against it, the attacker makes an Unopposed action roll to see if he hits his target. The GM sets the Difficulty Level based on distance, lighting, cover, etc. Do not modify the attacker's skill for range, partial cover, or other circumstances — that's included in the Difficulty Level.

If the defender is aware of the attack and acts to avoid it, treat it as an Opposed action: the attacker's ranged weapon skill against the defender's defensive trait. (A Difficulty Level for range, lighting, etc., is still set by the GM, and is the minimum rolled degree needed to hit.) A defensive roll should be made against a Dodge skill, or Agility attribute, or something similar.

If the attack involves a thrown weapon, there is no modifier to the defense roll. However, arrows and bolts from bows and crossbows are much harder to avoid. In this case, reduce the defensive roll by –2 or –3. Obviously, the defender isn't trying to dodge an arrow, but dodging the presumed path of an arrow when an archer aims his bow.



Mounted Combat

The sight of a knight on his warhorse thundering toward him brings terror to the lowly foot soldier, and with good reason. A well-trained warhorse provides its rider with superior strength, speed, and maneuverability. The horse itself can be a weapon, striking out with its hooves or teeth, or simply overrunning and trampling the knight's unmounted opponent.

There are some disadvantages to mounted combat, though. Warhorses must be trained to remain responsive to their riders in the frightening environment of a battlefield. And the knight is far from invincible. Opponents on foot can overwhelm a horse and rider by sheer numbers, blocking the horse's movement and robbing the knight of the advantage a charging horse gives him.

When roleplaying mounted combat scenes, let movies portraying medieval settings inspire your character's actions.

Unless your GM says otherwise, assume that she will control your horse's actions as though it were a non-player character. You can tell her what your character wants the horse to do, but the horse's reactions are up to her. She will also roll the dice for any Trait checks needed for the horse, including combat skill rolls whenever the horse attacks someone.

Your GM may ask for Riding skill checks whenever there's a chance the horse will disobey — especially if it becomes frightened or injured. The Difficulty Level will depend on the circumstances and how determined the horse is to ignore its rider. Horses can "spook" (suddenly leap forward or to one side) due to loud noises, unexpected movement, or indeed anything that a prey animal might find frightening. A truly frightened horse will bolt in an attempt to flee. It will take a few moments or minutes for the rider to regain control, even with a successful Riding check!

If the Riding check fails with a Poor or worse result, the rider falls from the horse. The GM may make a Situational Roll to determine if the rider's hurt in the fall. Most falls from horseback result in bruises, sprains, and embarrassment rather than serious injury, but a bad fall can incapacitate the rider (or even kill!). The situation is worse on a battlefield. An unhorsed rider is vulnerable to attack, and will require a few moments to get to his feet even if unhurt. The GM may allow a Riding or Acrobatics check, Difficulty Level Good or higher to allow a falling rider to land on his feet.

Mounted Combat Modifiers

When mounted, a character's skills are limited by his Riding skill. If the character's Sword skill is Good, but his riding is Fair, he will fight as a Fair swordsman while on horseback. Of course, he'll still have the advantage of height (if fighting against unmounted opponents) and the horse's strength and speed. Your GM will take this into account when determining combat results.



If the character's mount is not trained for battle, the GM will increase the Difficulty Level of any Riding checks. The untrained horse will also call for more Riding checks than a trained horse will require.

When charging, a knight's weapon will do more damage than normal. This is especially true for a lance, which is a weapon designed specifically for a mounted charge. An unmounted opponent hit squarely with a lance will be Very Hurt at the least (see *Wounds*, below).

A horse can take more damage — especially to body or neck — than a human can, simply because it's bigger. A horse's leg is as vulnerable to damage as a human leg, though. Ground troops often target a horse's legs for this reason.

See *Animals in the Game,* p. XX, for more information on warhorses.

Wounds

Attacks from enemies, falls from horses, raging fires, and other mishaps can all result in injuries to your character. It is impossible to be 100% accurate when simulating damage to such an intricate mechanism as a living being. Consequently, the GM should strive for good storytelling rather than realism or accuracy.

The *Deryni Adventure Game* presents a simple freeform system that lets the story flow. For GMs who like more detail and "realism" in their games, there are options to make wound determination more mechanical (see Chapter 8, Advanced Combat). Each GM is encouraged to add as much detail as she is happy with.

Wound Levels

Injuries to a character can be described as being at one of seven stages of severity. The stages are:

- Undamaged: no wounds at all. The character is not necessarily healthy — he may be sick, for example. But he doesn't have an injury that's recent enough to be bothering him.
- Just A Scratch: no real game effect, except to create dramatic tension. This may eventually lead to being Hurt if the character is damaged again. The actual wound may be a graze, bruise, cut, abrasion, etc., and the GM may choose to use one of these terms instead. These are wounds that are painful and leave a mark, but don't hamper movement or the ability to function.
- Hurt: the character is wounded significantly, enough to slow him down: –1 to all traits that would logically be affected. A Hurt result in combat can also be called a Light Wound. Injuries at this level include simple breaks in minor bones, deep cuts that miss important organs or arteries, and the like.
- Very Hurt: the character is seriously hurt, possibly stumbling: –2 to all traits which would logically be affected. A Very Hurt result can also be called a Severe Wound. Deep punctures, compound fractures, broken ribs, etc. fall into this category.
- Incapacitated: the character is so badly wounded as to be incapable of any actions, except possibly dragging himself a few feet every now and then or gasping out an important message. These injuries may be life-threatening.
- Near Death: the character is not only unconscious, he'll die in less than an hour — maybe a lot less — without medical help. No one recovers from Near Death on their own unless very lucky.
- Dead: you may want to create another character.

Determining the Extent of Injuries

Characters may be injured in accidents, usually as the result of some failed action. Falls are common accidents — although most falls cause only bruises and possibly embarrassment. Falls can occur with failed skill checks when riding a fractious mount, climbing a tree or cliff (or trellis), swinging on a chandelier, or even running up or down stairs. Some tasks that aren't normally associated with risk or danger may also result in accidents — a critically failed Cooking attempt (the player rolls –4 on the dice) may result in the cook slicing into a finger, or getting burned, or worse….

The GM determines the extent of any injuries, taking into account the situation, what the character was doing at the time of the accident, and the nature of the accident. She also looks at the dice roll that caused the character's failure. A character who misses the trait check by one level is less likely to get hurt than one whose player rolls –4 on the dice. The GM may also use a "Situational Roll" (see p. XX) to determine how bad the accident will be.

Let's take Jak's mishap on the trellis as an example. In our previous example, the GM allowed the player to roll on Jak's Great Agility to avoid injury by landing on his feet. She could instead simply take the Terrible result Jak got and decide that he was Hurt.

Or she could use a Situational Roll to determine whether or not the fall resulted in injury, and if so how serious. Since a Situational Roll isn't based on any trait, it usually produces a Fair result. (Jak's Great Agility gave him the same chance of getting a Great result as a Situational Roll has of getting only a Fair result. So you see, the GM was being very nice in letting Jak use his Agility to avoid injury.) So Jak's failed Climbing skill meant he fell, and the GM's Situational Roll determines how badly he falls. A Great result could mean he landed on his feet (as he did in our example), a Fair result could mean he was bruised but not really hurt, a Mediocre result may mean a sprained ankle (Hurt), and a Terrible or worse result could even mean a really bad fall with a broken bone or two (Very Hurt, possibly Incapacitated).

The extent of injuries will depend mostly on the nature of the accident, though, rather than on any Situational Roll or degree of failure. While a Mediocre Situational Roll for Jak's fall from halfway up the trellis to the second story may mean a sprained ankle, if he were falling from halfway up a 100' cliff, the same Mediocre Situational Roll would probably result in Jak being Incapacitated or Near Death.

Combat is especially likely to result in injuries. That is, after all, the purpose of combat — to wound your opponent. There are three major components to determining appropriate wound levels whenever a character is hurt in combat:

- The deadliness of the victor's weapon and strength of the blow,
- The defender's armor and hardiness,
- The relative degree the attack succeeded by — the better the hit, the greater likelihood of damage.

With narrative combat, the GM simply assesses the situation and circumstances and announces how bad the wound is. How does she do this? By thinking about the context and needs of the story unfolding during play, and applying some common sense, her knowledge of the game world, and a flare for the dramatic.

Let's take Jak's difficulties in the alley as an example. In determining how badly Jak was injured, the GM thinks to herself, "*Okay, Jak has Fair Strength but Great Agility. No weapons used, just fists, since Jak kept the thug with the blackjack from using his weapon. Results in the tussle were Mediocre (twice), then a Fair Brawling skill check. He was up against four opponents, though. With no armor, he's got to be Hurt, at least. With the Great result I rolled for NPC reactions, others came to the rescue soon enough to prevent any further damage.*" Of course, this all happens at the speed of thought. Out loud, she says "Jak's Hurt. Mark that on his character sheet…."

If the injured character is one of the GM's non-player characters, the player characters won't necessarily know precisely how badly they have wounded their opponent. In those cases, the GM can simply say, "You got through his armor and drew blood, but he's still on his feet," or, "Your blow had no visible effect."

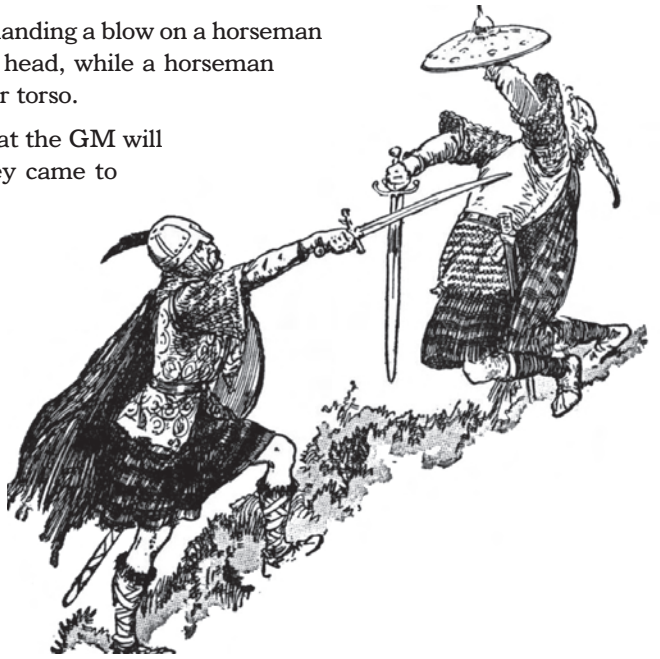
Optional: Determining Wound Location

A light blow to an eye is very different from a light blow to an armored shoulder, or to a shield. Determining a wound's location (arm, leg, torso, head, etc.) adds flavor to combat and the description of a character's equipment, wounds — and scars! Many roleplaying games have a "hit location system," and a GM can easily translate one she is familiar with to Fudge. Or she can treat hit location as another aspect of narrative combat, applying common sense to determine the likely wound location based on the in-game circumstances and any storytelling needs.

In determining wound location, the Gamemaster should consider the following factors:

- The relative degree (the number of levels by which the winner won the combat check). The better the relative degree, the more critical the location of the blow. Winning a battle by +8 will allow the attacker to pierce an eye, if that's what the winning character desired!
- The weapons and armor involved in the combat. Short to medium-length hand-held weapons are most likely to strike torso, arms, or upper leg as those targets are easily within arm's reach. And a combatant is likely to aim for any unarmored part of his opponent. A defender using a shield may find his shield arm damaged, perhaps even broken, from the sheer force of a mighty blow.
- Any other relevant circumstances. For example, a footman landing a blow on a horseman is much more likely to damage a leg or the torso than the head, while a horseman striking someone on foot is likely to strike the head or upper torso.

Hopefully, the players will describe their actions in such detail that the GM will know what their characters intended and can tell how close they came to their objective merely by looking at the relative degree.



The Gamemaster determines the severity of the wound as normal. However, the penalty (–1 for Hurt, –2 for Very Hurt, etc.) applies to the specific body part that was damaged. A Hurt sword arm gives a –1 penalty to combat, for example, while a Very Hurt leg is –2 to any running, acrobatics, etc. An Incapacitated eye loses all vision (although the other eye may still be able to see), and so on.

After battle is the time to decide if an Incapacitated body part can be healed, or is permanently Incapacitated. The Gamemaster can make that decision based on the needs or the story, or can use a Situational Roll to help her decide how permanent the damage may be.

Keeping Track of Injuries

The Deryni Adventure Game uses a "wound track" to record a character's current state (from Uninjured to Near Death):

	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8	9+
Wounds	Scratch	Hurt	Very Hurt	Incapacitated.	Near Death
	OOO	OO	O	O	O

The numbers above the wound levels are for use with the advanced combat rules in Chapter Eight. Ignore them if you're using the simpler, more freeform rules presented here. The boxes below the wound levels represent how many of each wound type a character can take. In the *Deryni Adventure Game*, a character can receive up to three injuries that are described as "just a Scratch" without any significant effect on actions taken. A character can also withstand two injuries that "Hurt" him, but only one injury that leaves him Very Hurt or Incapacitated.

When a wound is received, mark off the appropriate box. Note that the wound result may represent more than one distinct injury, but as they were received at roughly the same time they count as one "wound" for action penalties and healing purposes.

If there is no open box for a given wound, the character suffers the next highest wound for which there is an open box. In such cases you should write the letter(s) of the actual wound received rather than a check mark or "X". For example, if your character's already been Hurt twice, and is Hurt again, write "H" under Very Hurt to signify a third Hurt result. Your character will suffer the effects of the more serious wound (a –2 penalty, see *Wound Penalties,* p. XX) but only have to heal from the actual injury level.

Injury Tracking Example

A character takes a Very Hurt result early in a fight. The player crosses off the Very Hurt box like this:

	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8	9+
Wounds	Scratch	Hurt	Very Hurt	Incapacitated	Near Death
	OOO	OO	X	O	O

If the character was then Scratched, the player would check it off like so:

	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8	9+
Wounds	Scratch	Hurt	Very Hurt	Incapacitated	Near Death
	XOO	OO	X	O	O

The character then receives another wound at the Very Hurt level. But there are no open boxes left for Very Hurt, so the character is now Incapacitated.

	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8	9+
Wounds	Scratch	Hurt	Very Hurt	Incapacitated	Near Death
	XOO	O	X	VH	O

The player writes "VH" in the Incapacitated injury box, to remind him that while the character is Incapacitated and out of the fight, for healing and scarring purposes he has only received two Very Hurt injuries. The Incapacitating wound was not received in one blow, but is rather the culmination of two wounds at the Very Hurt level. Since Incapacitating blows are harder to heal from (see Healing, p. XX), this is important.

Note that three boxes are provided under Scratch. A Scratch wound will not make a fighter Hurt until he receives his fourth Scratch. Likewise, a Hurt wound will not make the character Very Hurt unless he receives a third wound at the Hurt level.

Wound Penalties

Injuries will affect your character's actions and abilities. A wounded knight reacts and moves more slowly or stiffly, which reduces his ability to defend himself or press the attack against his opponent. The extent of the penalties will depend on the seriousness of the injuries involved.

Scratches are not serious enough to slow a character down (unless he receives several of them). However, when a character is Hurt, he is at a –1 penalty to all his actions. (For example, a Good swordsman will now fight at a Fair skill level, etc.)

A Very Hurt character suffers a –2 penalty and an Incapacitated character is just that — Incapacitated. A Good or better Willpower check is required for that character to attempt any action, and even then he will only be capable simple acts like raising a sword in a desperate attempt to block one last blow. Any such actions will be at a –2 penalty to the trait check, and the GM can disallow any action she thinks would be beyond the Incapacitated character's ability to attempt.

These penalties are not cumulative. If a character is already Very Hurt, the penalty remains –2 even if he receives a Hurt wound. Only the penalty for the highest level of injury applies.

The High Pain Tolerance gift reduces the wound penalty by one level. A Very Hurt character with High Pain Threshold will suffer only a –1 penalty to skill checks, and can ignore any penalties due to Hurt wounds without a resistance check (see below).

Resistance Checks

A character may not suffer the penalties of his injuries immediately. In the heat of battle, it's not unknown for a knight to fight on valiantly despite a mortal wound.



When a character suffers an injury, the player can roll a "resistance check" on the character's Stamina or Willpower, whichever is higher. A successful result allows him to ignore the injury for a while. The penalties will not take effect until after the fight is finished or any immediate danger has passed. (Note that characters with the Low Pain Threshold fault do not get a resistance check.)

A character will require a resistance check for each injury sustained. The Difficulty Level is based on the severity of the injury. Hurt wounds require a Fair Stamina or Willpower check for the character to ignore the effects, while Very Hurt wounds require a Good resistance check. Incapacitating injuries can be ignored only with a Great result.

If the character fails a resistance check, the penalty for the highest wound level he has suffered takes effect immediately. This is true even if the resistance check was for a lesser wound. A character who was Very Hurt early in a battle, but made a successful resistance check, will be affected by the –2 penalty he resisted earlier if he fails a resistance check for a subsequent Hurt result. Wound penalties also apply to future resistance checks.

Regardless of resistance check results, once the heat of battle is over, wound penalties are in effect for all future actions until the character recovers from his injuries.

If the character finds himself in another dangerous situation that demands top performance — especially life-or-death situations — the GM may allow a new resistance check. The Difficulty Level is based on the severity of the wound as it is at that point in the story (taking any healing into account), rather than the severity of the wound when first dealt. If successful, the character may ignore any wound-related penalties, at least until he suffers an additional injury or the danger has passed.

Pulling Punches, Stun, and Knockout

You may choose to have your character do reduced damage in any given attack. This is known as "pulling your punch," even if you are using a sword. This commonly occurs in duels of honor, where it is only necessary to draw "first blood" to win, and killing your opponent can get you charged with murder. A Scratch will win a "first blood" duel so it is not necessary to Hurt someone.

To pull your punch, simply announce the maximum wound level your character will inflict if you are successful. A swordsman can say he is going for a Scratch, for example. In this case, even if he wins the Opposed action by a large margin, the worst he will do is nick his foe.

Your character may try to stun or knock his opponent out rather than damage him. Using the flat of a blade instead of the edge, for example, can accomplish this. Damage is figured normally, but any damage inflicted doesn't wound the opponent; instead, it stuns. In this case, a Hurt result is called a "Stun." A stunned character cannot attack — if he wins the Opposed roll, he defends himself successfully but does no damage to his opponent. The character will be stunned for a short time only, perhaps one short story element, or one or two combat rounds if you are using the advanced combat rules (see Chapter 8).

The player should mark the appropriate wound box with an "S" for Stun. The Stun result stays on the character sheet and is tracked similarly to normal wounds. A character can handle being Stunned once or twice (the equivalent of being Hurt), but a third Stun result, even if delivered later in the combat, will cause the character to become Very Stunned.

A Very Hurt result in a stunning attack is called a Very Stunned result instead: no attacks are possible, and the character is at –2 to all actions for a longer period (a longer story element, or two short story elements, or three or four combat rounds if you're using the advanced combat rules).

A result of Incapacitated or worse when going for stun damage results in a knockout. A knocked-out character doesn't need healing to recuperate to full health, just time. A character can be knocked out in a single blow, if the blow is powerful enough, or it may take several stunning blows. If the character has already been Very Stunned, another Very Stunning blow will Incapacitate him. (Naturally all blows during combat are ameliorated if the target is wearing armor. The GM will account for this in determining wound results and Difficulty Levels. For more exact effects of armor on combat, see *Chapter 8, Advanced Rules*.)

The GM may simply decide that a successful Great blow (or better) to the head knocks someone out automatically. In an Opposed action, the Great blow would also have to win the combat, of course. Normally, characters don't get a resistance check to avoid the stunning effects of an opponent's attack. A generous GM may allow a resistance check for stun penalties in life or death situations.

Healing

Time heals most wounds. Medical skills can help speed up the process, or at least keep complications such as infection at bay. Some (very few) Deryni are Healers, with the magical ability to heal a wound right before onlookers' eyes. But Deryni Healing is thought to be a lost art in Gwynedd.

Even with a successful roll on a healing skill (Herbal Medicine, Physicking, Apothecary, or Chirurgery), healing will take time. The success of the roll merely insures the wounds will heal, given enough rest. How long this takes depends on the injury or wound, and is up to the GM.

After combat or an accident, when the characters have time to assess their injuries, have the player of any injured character roll on their best healing skill, with a default level of Poor if they don't have Herbal Medicine or Physicking on their character sheet. If one character (PC or NPC) is tending to another, have the examiner make the skill check rather than the injured character.

The Difficulty Level is based on the severity of the wound:

Injury	**Difficulty Level**
Hurt	Mediocre
Very Hurt	Fair
Incapacitated	Good
Near Death	Great

The GM determines the precise nature of any wounds or injuries received, and also determines the length of time the character must spend

Sample Healing Times

For those players who want more detail, here are some guidelines for determining how long it will take for a given wound or injury to heal. Note that these times assume a successful healing skill roll. Healing will be much slower with no medical attention, or with failed Healing Skill rolls. Of course, Deryni Healing takes only minutes rather than days or weeks — these healing times are for non-magical healing.

Broken Bones: 2-12 weeks with suitable splints and rest.

Burns: 3-6 days for a minor burn, 2-4 weeks if the burn is particularly deep or covers a large area.

Crush Injuries: 1-15 weeks depending on severity. An injury due to the blow of a mace, being trampled by a horse, or other mishap that involves some part of the body being crushed is particularly difficult to heal. There may be damage to the internal organs, broken bones, or broken skin. Such injuries often become infected. Crushed limbs may need to be amputated.

Cuts: A superficial (skin deep) cut is a Scratch and will heal on its own in a few days, unless it gets infected. Bad cuts (Hurt or worse) can take up to a month to heal, provided they're clean cuts.

Internal Injuries: Only time — or Deryni healing — can help with internal injuries. Chirurgeons and battle surgeons do what they can, but deadly complications are common. Internal bleeding, bruising, and other injuries to organs may take days to weeks to heal.

Puncture Wounds: Minor puncture wounds (Scratches) close up in a day or two. More serious wounds can take up to two weeks to heal. The deeper the wound, the greater the risk of infection. (The GM may ask you to roll a Stamina check, difficulty Fair for Hurt wounds, Good for Very Hurt, Great for Incapacitated, and Superb for punctures that leave the character Near Death. Failure indicates infection.)

Soft Tissue Injuries: Sprains and strains may require four to six weeks of rest (or at least favoring that area) before they resolve. The area is likely to be weak and prone to re-injury for months.

resting in order to heal. Note that a health skill check is required for each separate injury or wound the character has. It's possible for one wound to heal while another festers. A Scratch is too insignificant to require a roll on a healing skill. Scratches are usually erased from the character sheet after a battle, provided the characters have five or ten minutes to attend to them. An individual GM may rule otherwise, of course: a scratch may linger on for a day or two.

If the health skill check fails, the character attempting to doctor the victim cannot make another skill check until the following day (although someone else with a healing skill can try to help the patient). Each day an injury goes without successful treatment increases the chance of infection or other complications. The GM may use a Situational Roll to help her decide how bad the complications may be.

A disastrous failure of the health skill check (a Terrible or worse result) will actually harm the patient. Increase the severity of that wound by one level.

Fudge Points

Sometimes the dice don't roll in the player's favor. Rather than leaving everything to fate (and the GM), the Deryni Adventure Game gives players a way to affect (and hopefully improve) the outcome of their character's actions.

The Gamemaster awards "Fudge Points" for good roleplaying, for successful completion of a story arc, or for anything else she feels deserves a reward. For example, the GM may award a Fudge Point when a character does something particularly brave or puts himself in danger to protect another; when a player (and his character) solves a mystery or figures out how various sub-plots from the last few game sessions are actually connected; or anytime a character's actions or dialog creates drama (or makes her laugh.)

The GM sets the starting number of Fudge Points (recommended: 1 Fudge Point at the start of the game). The GM may award one or more Fudge Points at the end of each gaming session, in addition to any awarded for good roleplaying or for other reasons totally at her whim.

Using Fudge Points

You can use your Fudge Points to "fudge" a game result, which is especially important when your characters need luck and the dice are not cooperating. You can also use Fudge Points to improve your character's Traits or acquire new Skills (see Character Development, below.) Fudge points may be accumulated, although the GM may decide to set a limit on how many can be spent in a game; unused Fudge Points are held in a pool as long as that character is alive. The GM determines how many Fudge Points are necessary for the particular thing you want to affect.

The GM determines what you can actually do with Fudge Points within her game. Here are some recommendations:

- You can spend a Fudge Point to alter a die roll one level up or down as desired. The die roll can either be one you make or one the GM makes that directly affects your character.
- You can spend a Fudge Point to declare that a wound or injury is less serious than first thought (in essence, lower one wound by one level so that a Hurt becomes a Scratch, Very Hurt becomes Hurt, etc.). If the GM allows this, it occurs only after the battle is over or the danger has passed, when the characters have time to assess the situation and dress their wounds.
- Spending two Fudge Points gives the character an automatic +4 result for one Trait check.

With your GM's permission, spending five or more Fudge Points can ensure a favorable coincidence. For example, if your characters are imprisoned, perhaps one of the guards turns out to be the cousin of one of them — and lets you escape! Or your character happens to be in the right place at the right time and overhears a conversation that reveals an enemy's nefarious plans. The Gamemaster determines the nature of the coincidence.

Character Development

After your character has experienced a few adventures, you may feel that he should now be a better swordsman, or know more about survival in the wilderness, or otherwise deserves to improve a character Trait or two.

If in-game actions and outcomes warrant, the GM may grant your character a new skill, or tell you to raise a particular skill or attribute by one level, or grant a new gift (or even a fault!).

The Area Knowledge skill is a good example. The very first time your character visits Rhemuth, his "Area Knowledge: Rhemuth" skill will be Poor at best, unless you purchased the Area Knowledge skill for Rhemuth at character creation (in which case your character likely visited the city at least once in his history). But after a week or two of exploring the city, scoping out the best inns and taverns, the GM may decide that your character's "Area Knowledge: Rhemuth" has improved to Mediocre. You now have a new skill to write on your character sheet, which may be further improved if you stay in Rhemuth long enough.

It's relatively easy to pick up a new skill provided your character has reason and opportunity to learn something new. But the higher the skill level, the harder it will be for your character to improve that skill. Learning the general layout of the streets of Rhemuth is easy (raising Area Knowledge: Rhemuth from Poor to Mediocre). Discovering the best hidey-holes and escape routes in Rhemuth is much more difficult (raising Area Knowledge: Rhemuth from Good to Great). The GM will take this learning curve into account in determining when characters' skills improve.

Formal Training

The GM may require your character to receive formal training in the skill you wish to raise. This will require a teacher and in-game training time. The GM sets training time and costs, and the difficulty encountered in finding a teacher. (The teacher is usually a GM-run NPC.)

The player makes a Wits check to see if his character successfully learns the skill at a higher level. The GM may request a single die roll, or a roll per week, month, etc., depending on the skill and the length of training time involved. If multiple rolls are called for, at least half of them should succeed to earn the skill improvement. The Difficulty Level for this "learning check" is equal to the target level of the skill. Raising a skill from Good to Great requires a learning check of Great or higher.

The teacher's skills (in both Teaching and the skill being taught) will affect the learning check as follows:

- Add (or subtract!) the teacher's skill level in Teaching to the learning check. A Mediocre teacher will penalize the check by –1, while a Great teacher will add +2 to the roll. If the teacher doesn't have the Teaching skill, the modifier is –2.
- Add +1 for every level of difference between the target skill level and the teacher's level in the skill being taught. If the student currently has the skill at Mediocre and wishes to raise it to Fair, the teacher must have the skill at Fair or higher. If the teacher has the skill at Great, add +2 to the learning check.

If the character fails the learning check (or fails to be successful in at least half the rolls if the GM asks for multiple rolls), the character's skill remains at the original level. The character can of course try again. Every time a character tries and fails to improve a skill, he'll earn a +1 to his next attempt. (Note that an attempt to learn a skill may encompass multiple die rolls, in which case the overall result determines future bonuses, if any.) These bonuses are cumulative. Once successful, the player changes the skill level on his character sheet.

If you're using Fudge Points to regulate character advancement (see sidebar), no Fudge Points are spent on failed training. When training is successful, the player spends the appropriate number of Fudge Points.

Training Examples

Jaksmar decides he needs to improve his Climbing skill. His player asks the GM if recent experiences have taught him enough to raise his Climbing skill from Fair to Good — after all, you can learn from your mistakes. The GM thinks Jak needs to work at it some more before he'll actually be Good at Climbing.

Jak has a few options, though. He can purchase climbing gear that will grant him bonuses to his Climbing skill. He could actually practice climbing — on trees, over walls, up trellises, etc. The GM determines how long that will take, though, and rules that Jak will need to practice his Climbing skill at every opportunity for a month before his skill improves enough to go up a

level. Or Jak can look for a teacher who can teach him a few climbing tricks, which will cut the time needed in half or better.

Jak decides to try it on his own. The GM says he'll need a learning check every week, for a total of four learning checks. He'll need to succeed in at least two of those four learning checks to become a Good climber. Without a teacher, there is no modifier for the learning check.

The player rolls the learning check for the first week. Jak's Wits attribute is Fair. The dice come up two blanks, a plus, and a minus, for a total result of Fair. The Difficulty Level was Good (the level Jak hopes his Climbing skill will reach at the end of all this practice), so the first roll failed.

Later, when a week has passed in game time, Jak's player tries again. The learning check is +3, a Superb result! The second learning check was successful.

A week later (in game time), Jak's player makes the fourth and final Wits check for Jak's attempt to improve his Climbing skill through practice. Jak rolls +0 for this final learning check, for a result of Fair — but he needed a Good result. Jak has failed to learn enough on his own to warrant raising his Climbing skill from Fair to Good.

When the troupe is next in Rhemuth, Jak finds a master thief who is willing to teach him some Climbing tricks — for a fee. The GM says that with a teacher (plus all the trouble Jak went to trying to improve on his own), it will take only a week of training and a single learning check. This check will be at +1 because Jak already tried — and failed — to improve his skill.

Optional: Using Fudge Points for Character Development

Your Gamemaster may prefer to use Fudge Points to improve your character's skills and attributes. First make sure your GM agrees that in-game actions and outcomes warrant improvement to specific traits. Then spend your Fudge points based on the following chart.

Raising a skill from:	**To:**	**Costs:**
Terrible	Poor	1 FP
Poor	Mediocre	2 FP
Mediocre	Fair	5 FP
Fair	Good	10 FP
Good	Great	15 FP
Great	Superb	25 FP
Superb	Legendary	50 FP + GM permission

Raising an attribute costs three times as many Fudge Points as raising a skill of the same level.

You can add a Gift for 20 Fudge Points (with your GM's approval).

The GM may adjust these development costs as she sees fit. It is rather unrealistic for the player characters to have all their skills at Superb or Legendary. If characters are improving too rapidly, the GM can increase the cost of improving traits, reduce the number of Fudge Points she's awarding, or set some limits on character development. Note that a Trait can only be raised one level at a time and you can only raise Traits that saw significant use during the game.

The master thief has Teaching at Fair (no modifier) and Climbing at Great — worth a +1 bonus (the target level is Good). Jak's player rolls a Great learning check, modified to Superb by his teacher's skill. Jak's Climbing skill is now Good!

As another example, Sendai the Magnificent decides that he needs to improve his skill in Basic Spellcasting. The first problem he faces is finding a teacher. This will be difficult, as the teacher must be an accomplished Deryni mage, and such people are hard to find in Gwynedd. They will also need to work in secret or risk condemnation by the Church. Finding the teacher, and improving his Spellcasting skill, could very well become a full-fledged adventure. If Sendai is unable to find a teacher in Gwynedd, he might try his luck in Torenth or at the famed University of Nur Sayyid in R'Kassi far to the east. And he might take his troupe with him.

Other Ways a Character May Develop

Not all character development and advancement is about increasing skill levels or character traits. Characters may rise in Rank during the course of the game (perhaps by marriage or some stroke of good fortune or showing heroic valor on the battlefield, resulting in a grant of land). They may acquire wealth, political power, or other in-game rewards and comforts. Advantages gained as part of the story played out during the game do not require Fudge Points.

Animals in the Game

For the most part, animals play secondary roles in the Deryni novels — as transportation (horses), decoration (wolfhounds lying by the hearth), diversions (wild animals to be hunted), and novelties (a cheetah on the back of a Torenthi noble's horse). Gamemasters are welcome to use them in similar roles within the game.



However, some players may prefer to have animals play a more important role — as companions and aides. A knight's warhorse can be far more than a means of transportation. Ballads are sung of the slain knight watched over by his faithful horse, hounds, and hawks.

In this case, individual animals can become characters in their own right (as NPCs unless the Gamemaster grants permission for a player to roleplay his character's animals). They don't need to be as fully detailed as player characters — just define any essential traits. You can always add details later in the game if needed.

There is one special trait that animals have: Scale. This is a measure of how massive and strong they are, and it affects the amount of damage they can do in combat as well as how easily they're hurt or killed. The larger the animal the more damage it can deal out — and the more damage it can take. If a horse kicks a barn cat, the cat could very well die. But if the cat leaps on the horse it's not likely to hurt it very much.

Scale can also affect how easily an animal can be hit. Large animals are generally easier to hit in combat than smaller animals (although you have to do proportionally more damage to seriously injure a large animal). The Gamemaster will reflect this in the Difficulty Levels she sets when your characters are combating an animal.

Scale runs from very tiny (–12 or more) to human-sized (0) to very large (+7 or more). Each level of Scale represents roughly half again as much strength and mass as the previous level. Scale can be further quantified in game terms: see Scale, p. XX, in ***Chapter 8: Advanced Combat Rules***. If you're playing in a narrative game and doing without the advanced combat, rules, your GM will simply use Scale as a guide to relative sizes.

Here are some sample animals and their traits. Each can be individualized if necessary.

Camel

Camels are real rarities in most of the Eleven Kingdoms, and few people in Gwynedd have even heard of them. Nomadic tribesmen in the eastern deserts breed camels for their milk, meat, and wool, and use them as draft and riding animals. A very few of the beasts have been imported from the eastern lands for royal menageries.



Strength: Good to Great

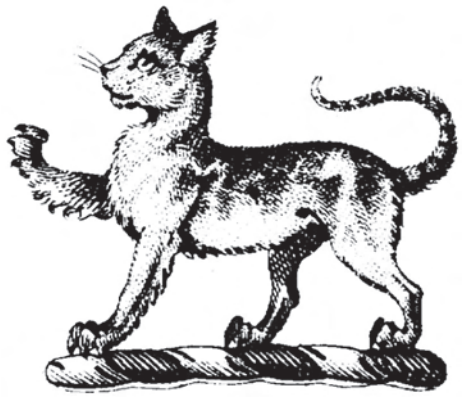
Scale: +5

Stamina: Great to Superb

Skills: Mediocre to Superb (tailor to specific training received; examples include riding, driving, packing, racing)

Gift: Desert Survival

Cat



Some domestic cats are kept as pets, but most cats earn their keep by keeping rodent populations under control. Cats are welcome in most barns, where they protect the grain stores.

Agility: Great to Superb

Scale: –6 or –7

Skills: Survival, Hunting, Playing

Gifts: Night Vision

Faults: Independent-minded, Curious, Lazy, Vain

Combat: Fair to Superb

Dodging: Legendary

Deer



There are several species of deer in the Eleven Kingdoms, from the small fallow deer to elk. Red deer are popular quarry in noble hunts.

Perception: Good to Great

Scale: –1 to +4 depending on species

Skills: Running, Dodge

Combat: Fair to Good

Dog

There are several breeds of dogs throughout the Eleven Kingdoms. Noblemen keep hounds for hunting (sighthounds such as greyhounds, wolf hounds, and deer hounds; and bloodhounds, so called because of their "pure blood") and mastiffs for war. Commoners have their own breeds used as sheepherders, cattle drivers, and livestock guardians. Poachers prize "lurchers" — illicit crosses between the noble sight hounds and peasant breeds — for their hunting abilities, stealth, and loyalty.



Perception: Great to Superb

Scale: –7 to 0 depending on breed

Skills: Mediocre to Superb (tailor to specific training received; examples include attack, guard, guide, track, hunt, and tricks)

Gifts: Loyalty, Legendary Sense of Smell

Combat: Fair to Superb

Falcon (or Hawk)



There are many species of falcons and hawks used for hunting, primarily by nobility.

Agility: Good to Superb

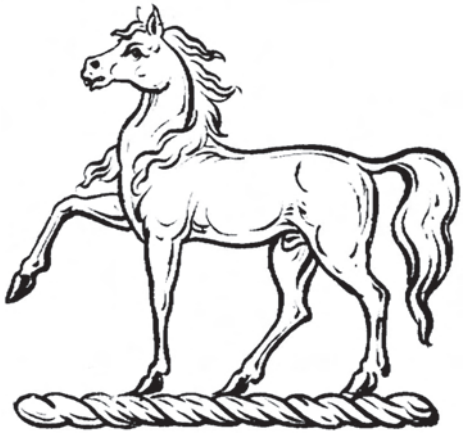
Scale –9 to –6 depending on species

Skills: Mediocre to Superb (tailor to specific training received; examples include hunting ground mammals, hunting birds, aerial acrobatics, trained to the lure, and manning, a measure of the degree of taming)

Gifts: Flight, Superb Courage

Horse

There are several types of horses found throughout the Eleven Kingdoms. Destriers — knights' warhorses — are the most impressive. Common farm, cart and riding horses are called "rounceys." Palfreys are good-tempered riding horses, usually ridden by women. Swift racing are known as "coursers." Small ponies are called "hobbies." The large ponies common in the Highlands are a tough breed with lots of stamina.



Strength: Good to Great

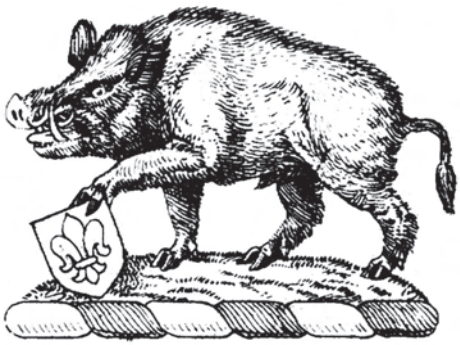
Stamina: Good to Great

Scale: +3 (small pony) to +5 (horse)

Skills: Mediocre to Superb (tailor to specific training received; examples include riding, driving, racing, fighting, and various tricks)

Faults: Tailor to specific animal (Runaway, bites, kicks, etc.— not all horses have faults!)

Combat: Fair to Superb depending on training



Wild Boar

Wild boar are prized targets in noble hunts. They are much more dangerous than deer as they'll stand and fight or even charge their pursuers.

Strength: Good to Great

Stamina: Good

Scale: +1 (female) to +2 (male)

Faults: Bad Temper

Combat: Great to Superb

Wolf

No longer common in Gwynedd, wolves can occasionally be found in more remote lands. Like wild boar, they are popular quarry for huntsmen.



Perception: Great to Superb

Scale: –1 to 0 depending on breed

Combat: Fair to Superb

Roleplaying Animals

Your Gamemaster will usually take on the role of any animals your characters interact with, whether as companions or opponents. If you prefer, and your Gamemaster agrees, you may roleplay your character's animal companion as a secondary character. However, your GM may overrule the actions you choose to have the animal perform if she believes the animal would do something else (or nothing at all!) instead. Animals have their own personalities and motivations and don't always act as commanded or expected.

As with normal character actions, the GM will require dice rolls for your animal companion's actions only if the outcome is uncertain. A well-trained dog is likely to obey his master's commands under normal circumstances, but may require a skill check under unusual or stressful circumstances. In such cases you may need to roll twice — once on your character's animal handling or training skill, and again for the animal's attempt to perform the requested action!

Animals in the Eleven Kingdom are pretty much the same as they are in the real world, so try to keep real-world animal behaviors and capabilities in mind as you roleplay your animal companion. If your GM encourages it, you may stretch that realism a little bit, having your animal companion behave a bit more like legendary or fictional animals. You know the type — the dog who races to find help when her young master falls down a well, the horse who valiantly carries his unconscious knight through the battle to safety…

The Sport of Kings

Falconry is an ancient art. Originally used primarily for hunting, it became a sport involving much pageantry and prestige. A good bird can be worth more than its weight in gold, and trained falcons make excellent gifts or may even be part of a ransom payment. They're expensive to keep, though, as most falcon owners house their birds in their own mews and employ skilled falconers to train and care for the birds.

There are two general types of birds used in falconry: the falcons proper (long-winged raptors, most suited to hunting in open terrain) and the hawks ("accipiters," best suited to hunting in woods and used for small prey).

Tradition reserves the larger and more powerful birds for nobility. The higher a character's Rank is, the more valuable a bird they may own and fly. Here are the traditional falcon and hawk species according to social status:

King:	Gyrfalcon
Prince:	Falcon Gentle
Duke:	Rock Falcon
Earl:	Falcon Peregrine
Baron:	Bustard
Knight:	Saker
Squire:	Lanner
Lady:	Merlin
Priest:	Sparrow Hawk
Servant:	Kestrel



Falcons are captured in the wild, ideally when they're fully fledged (their juvenile feathers grown in) but before their first flight. They're "manned" (tamed) through a process involving slowly acclimating the bird to humans, the paraphernalia of falconry (jesses and hoods and lures, etc.), and inuring them to dogs and torch- or firelight and other things that would normally terrify them.

The basic practice of falconry is to release the bird, flush the game, and retrieve the falcon and game when the kill has been made. The sequence may vary in that the bird may be released from the fist after prey is sighted. This is especially true of hawks.

But falconry is much more than a way to put food on the table. A hawking party provides an opportunity to enjoy a brisk ride over the countryside, socialize with one's peers, show off one's wealth and prestige, and perhaps even stop for a picnic along the way.



Chapter Eight: Advanced Rules (Optional)

Some players and Gamemasters prefer more precision in their game rules than Chapter 7 provides. This chapter presents some optional "objective" combat rules and the Scale rules for dealing with disparately sized creatures.

The two approaches to roleplaying ("subjective" and "objective") are by no means mutually exclusive. GMs can mix and match rules from both chapters as desired. Encounters with minor foes may be best handled with "narrative combat" while the climactic showdown with a major villain may call for a more detailed, blow-by-blow approach. Whatever the GM and players find works best for them!

Although this chapter is titled "Advanced Rules," the combat system presented here is still fairly freeform and a lot of the details are left up to the Gamemaster. Weapons and armor are defined in broad terms and do little more than provide bonuses to wound determination. (Of course, you can also use your character's choice of weapons and armor to add "flavor" to his description and how he presents himself to the world.)

If you want even more precision and detail in your game rules, you can find alternative combat systems in the ***Fudge*** *10th Anniversary Edition*. The "Weapons and Armor in Fudge" system is especially appropriate for detailed combat in the Deryni universe, with rules for weapon Scale, reach, different types of damage (bludgeoning, slashing, and piercing) and more.

Advanced Combat Terms

Combat Rounds define a blow-by-blow method for determining the events and outcome of a combat situation. A combat round is an arbitrary length of time used to divide action in combat situations into detailed but easily tracked segments. In the *Deryni Adventure Game* a combat round lasts about 3 seconds — enough time for a character to perform one significant action in each round, although the GM can alter this if she likes. For the sake of easy math, some GMs define a round as 10 seconds.

Offensive Damage Factors (ODF) influence the amount of damage a character can inflict on an opponent. A weapon's size and type will influence the offensive damage factor, as will a character's Strength (except when using a mechanically powered weapon such as a crossbow or siege engine).

Defensive Damage Factors (DDF) reduce the severity of damage inflicted by an opponent. Armor is the primary means for a character to get a good defensive damage factor. Some Gifts and Faults can also affect the defensive damage factor.

Total Damage Factor (TDF or simply ***Damage Factor)*** is the attacker's offensive damage factor minus the defender's defensive damage factor. This is compared to the character's Wound Track (see p. XX) to determine the severity of any wounds inflicted.

Determining Numerical Damage Factors

In the previous chapter, we talked in broad terms about the weapons and armor. Here, we present a more detailed set of mechanics (statistics) for weapons and armor, and damage inflicted or sustained in combat.

With these rules, you can determine the Offensive Damage Factor (ODF) for each of your character's weapons and the Defensive Damage Factor (DDF) for armor or other means of protection. These numerical factors are then used as modifiers to dice rolls to determine the amount of damage inflicted on an opponent (or inflicted by an opponent on your character.) Note that you only need to determine DDFs once, for each weapon. These factors will not change unless his Strength or weapons and armor change.

Offensive Damage Factors (ODF)

As with the basic game system, players and GM should consider the potential strength and deadliness of a weapon in determining how effective it may be. Use the following charts to determine a weapon's effectiveness by totaling all bonuses and penalties.

Weapon Strength:

For Melee (hand-held) weapons:

+3	Most two-handed weapons (polearm, greatsword, battle-axe, etc.)
+2	Large one-handed weapons (broadsword, axe, large club, etc.) and light two-handed weapons (spear, bow, etc.)
+1	Medium-weight one-handed weapons (small club, short sword, hatchet, large hunting knife, etc.)

Note: for Bladed weapons, add +1 for sharpness. Thus a knife becomes +1, small sword +2, large sword +3, great-sword +4, etc.)

For Unarmed Combat

+0	Wrestling or other Unarmed Combat Skill, or for small weapons (blackjack, knife, brass knuckles, sling, thick boots if kicking, etc.)
–1	No weapon (just fists & feet) and not using Wrestling, Grappling, or similar Unarmed Combat Skill

For Ranged weapons (including bows, crossbows, siege engines, etc.):

Add or subtract the intrinsic strength of the weapon (see p. XX).

Character Strength:

Your character's Strength directly affects the amount of damage he can do in melee combat.

+3	Superb
+2	Great
+1	Good
+0	Fair
–1	Mediocre
–2	Poor
–3	Terrible

After determining the total ODF for a given weapon (including the character's Strength bonus or penalty, if applicable), write the resulting number next to the weapon listed on the character sheet.

Note: Any item that is not designed for actual combat (such as a chair, a candlestick, or a wine bottle) is considered to be "improvised" and is rated as if it were one size smaller.

Optional: For a less lethal game, subtract 1 from each type of weapon except sharpness. (Note, however, that this will make combat last longer.)

Sample Weapon Damage Factors

Refer to the following lists for some common weapons and their inherent damage factors. (Remember to adjust for Strength or other factors your character has to these numbers.)

Melee Weapons:

Small sword	+2
Hatchet, javelin, hammer	+2
Broadsword, axe, spear	+3
Sledgehammer, pickaxe, great sword	+3
Halberd and other polearms	+4



Missile Weapons:

Sling	+1
Knife or hatchet, thrown	+1
Javelin*	+1
Handheld crossbow	+2
Bow	+2
Spear*	+2
Longbow	+3
Compound bow (short horseman's bow)	+3
Medium crossbow	+3
Large handheld crossbow	+4

*This factor is used when the weapon is thrown. When thrust at the opponent, the damage factor is determined as for melee weapons. Thus a spear's damage factor is +2 when thrown, and +3 when used in melee.

Armor and Defensive Factors

Armor can be rated numerically with a Defensive Damage Factor (DDF). Use the following guidelines for determining your character's Defensive factors.

Defensive Factors:

+0	Normal (cloth) clothing or bare skin
+1	Light, pliable non-metal armor (leather, quilted and padded cloth armor, etc.)
+2	Heavy, rigid non-metal armor (hardened leather etc.)
+2	Light metal armor (light chain mail, metal-reinforced leather, ringmail)
+3	Medium metal armor (heavy chain mail, breastplate, etc.)
+1	Add for Tough Gift
–1	Subtract for Fragile Constitution Fault

Note your character's Defensive Damage Factors on the character sheet. In addition to a DDF for armor, you should determine his DDF when unarmored. One never knows when the enemy might catch him sleeping….

Sample Armor Defensive Factors

Refer to the following list for some common armor and its inherent damage factors. (Remember to add any other factors your character has — such as the Tough gift or the Fragile Constitution fault — to these armor damage factors!) The GM will help you to determine any others not found on the list.



Armor:

Leather jacket	+1
Chain mail	+2
Breastplate	+2
Heavy chain mail	+3
Heavy breastplate	+3

Damage Factor Examples

Let's take a look at the Damage Factors for Sendai and some of his troupe.

First, we check Sendai's character sheet for any trait that would affect his Damage Factors. His Strength is Fair, so his Damage Factor for melee weapons starts at +0. He has only one weapon, his staff, which qualifies as a "light two-handed weapon" for a Damage Factor of +2. It's not sharp, so his total Offensive Damage Factor with his staff is 0 + 2 = 2.

Sendai's Defensive Damage Factors are +0. He has no armor, and does not have the Tough gift. Fortunately, he doesn't have the Fragile Constitution Fault either, which would have made him even more vulnerable.

Jaksmar, it turns out, has the same Damage Factors: +2 for his weapon (a small but sharp dagger), and +0 for his Defensive Factor.

Larsten, Sendai's son, would do better in a fight. His Strength is Good, lending a +1 to his Offensive Damage Factors. He has skill in three weapons, so he actually has three Offensive Damage Factors:

- Bow: +2 (light two-handed weapon, from the Missile Weapons chart), +1 for Strength = +3
- Sword: +3 (large, sharp weapon), +1 for Strength = +4
- Lance: As noted in Chapter 7, the lance is a special case, because it's most often used in mounted combat. If Larsten were using it as a spear, the Offensive Damage Factor would be +3 (two-handed weapon) and +1 for Strength = +4. Used as a piercing weapon in a mounted charge, the lance can do far more damage. In this case, the Strength bonus is based on the horse's Strength and Scale (see p. XX) rather than Larsten's Strength. With an average horse, the lance's Offensive Damage Factor would be +8!

Larsten's Defensive Damage Factor is +0, as he too has no armor. He does have a leather jacket, which gives him a Defensive Factor of +1, but he does not wear it outside of performances. Although it is painted to look like chainmail, it proves no more protection than any other leather.

The GM determines damage factors for any foes (NPCs) the characters face.

Damage Factors and Wounds

So, what do all these numbers mean?

Basically, they're a simple way to compare characters' ability to wound one another in a fight.

There are three major components to determining appropriate wound levels:

- The deadliness of the victor's weapon and strength of the blow (the ODF)
- The defender's armor and hardiness (the DDF)
- The relative degree the attack succeeded by — the better the hit, the greater likelihood of damage.



These Damage Factors are used during Combat Rounds in an equation that determines how many "points" of damage the combatant inflicts on his opponent:

Relative Degree by which victor of the round beats his opponent in combat roll
plus
Victor's ODF
minus
Loser's DDF
equals
Damage Points inflicted on loser of that round

The result is a number that may or may not be a positive number. If it's zero or less, no damage was inflicted. Look at the numbers above the Wound Track on your character sheet. If the number is positive, look up the result across the top of the wound track to determine the wound level.

	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8	9+
Wounds	***Scratch***	***Hurt***	***Very Hurt***	***Incapaci-tated***	***Near Death***
	OOO	OO	O	O	O

If the Damage is only one or two points, it's just a Scratch. Seven or eight points of damage received in one combat round Incapacitates a character, and so on. See *Wounds and Healing, p. XX,* for more information.

Combat Rounds

For climactic conflicts or whenever you want to know what happens in blow-by-blow detail, the *Deryni Adventure Game* offers the "Combat Rounds" means of resolving combat within the game.

As noted above, the GM sets the length of a combat round. A combat round of only a few seconds provides true blow-by-blow detail, but some actions will take multiple rounds to complete. Combat rounds lasting longer can cover a flurry of blows, or a single strike, depending on the circumstances.

The length of a combat round is by no means set in stone, and doesn't have to be exact. Some GMs use combat rounds as tiny story elements in a narrative approach, resulting in quite fluid combat rounds with no set length. When in doubt, use a three-second combat round. That's long enough for a typical action.

Combat rounds are resolved as a series of actions among the combatants. Most fights will require multiple combat rounds. Examples of actions characters can take each round include engaging in ranged combat with missile weapons, fighting hand-to-hand, assessing tactics, performing acrobatic stunts, evading an attack, retreating, etc.If a character is unaware of an attack (generally at the beginning of combat) or unable to defend for any reason, the action is treated as Unopposed. The first attack in a successful ambush is an example, as is any other surprise attack. Attacks against restrained foes (the target is tied up or otherwise restrained) are also Unopposed.

Otherwise, combat rounds consist of a series of Opposed actions. The dice roll for a given combat round represents the overall result of the character's actions in that round, including attacks on his opponent and any defensive movements he makes. His opponent's actions for that round occur simultaneously. After all, few real combats consist of fighters taking turns whacking at each other. For those who prefer resolving combat with each combatant in turn, ***Fudge*** does offer a system of alternating combat turns. See the ***Fudge*** game for more information.

As with Narrative Combat (see p. XX), the GM sets the scene and asks for player characters' reactions. Describe what your character plans to do during the round. A combat round generally allows one significant action from each character involved. The GM determines which traits to test, depending upon the weapon(s) and/or skills your character plans to use. Several skills may come into play during combat, including Acrobatics, Dodge, Jumping, Riding or Running, Throwing, and of course any of the various skills from the Combat skill group. As always, the GM is the final arbiter of which Skills will be tested. She will inform you of all applicable modifiers and then ask for an Opposed action roll for each player character. She will roll for the NPCs.

The result for each character will be based on that character's Trait level, plus or minus any GM-specified modifier, plus or minus the dice roll results.

If the relative level is 0 (the fighters get the same results after adding their dice modifier to the Trait being used), the combat round is a stand-off. The fighters either circled each other looking for an opening, or exchanged glancing blows but nobody was hurt. There will also be a stand-off if all combatants score Terrible results, as a fighter needs at least a Poor result to successfully hit an opponent.

If one fighter's result is greater than his opponent's, determine the *relative degree* — the number of levels of difference in the results. As an example, if you get a Good result and the GM announces a Mediocre result for your NPC opponent, you've won that round by a relative degree of +2. (Your opponent has lost the round by a relative degree of –2.) The greater the relative level of success, the greater the likelihood of inflicting damage. (See Wounds, p. XX, for information on determining and recording a character's injuries.)

Combat Rounds Example

A day's travel outside Rhemuth, Larsten and his wife Ancara have made camp along the side of the road. The two had made a side-trek with one of the troupe's wagons while the rest of the party went on to Rhemuth. Larsten and Ancara are tired, and a bit discouraged, having been unsuccessful in their attempt to purchase a magnificent R'Kassan stallion Larsten had seen in Ramos.

GM: *The two of you are sitting by your campfire, eating the last of the stew, when you hear the snap of a twig.*

Ancara (the player speaking in character): *"What was that?"*

Larsten's player: *Where'd the sound come from?*

GM (to Larsten's player): *The sound came from deeper into the woods.*

Ancara's player: *I jump up and reach for my knife.*

Larsten's player: *I head for the wagon…*

Ancara: *"Who's there?"*

Larsten's player: *Do I have time to get to the wagon for my sword?*

GM (to Larsten's player): *Sorry, no time. Realizing they've been discovered, three men rush out of the woods into your campsite. They're rough-looking, in clothes that are dirty and ragged. You can almost smell them from here…*

Larsten's player (describing his character's actions and then speaking in character): *I grab a brand from the fire that's only burning on one end. "What do you want? We have no money…"*



GM: *One of the men leers at Ancara by way of reply. Two of them advance on you, and you see they're armed with large knives.*

Ancara's player: *I dig my toe into the dirt, getting ready to kick it into their faces.*

Larsten's player: *We move back to back, relying on our years of performing together to work as a team.*

Ancara: *"You 'gentlemen' really should move along. It's not safe for you here."*

Larsten: *"We have nothing for you here."*

Ancara (under her breath): *"except cold steel…"*

Larsten: *"So, unless you want to be both burnt and sliced, I'd find another campfire."*

GM: *They don't look impressed. After all, you're just a slender man and an even more slender woman. Two leap on Larsten, while one grabs at Ancara.* (To Larsten's player): *What's your Brawling skill?*

Larsten's player: *Fair.*

GM (to Ancara's player): *What are your relevant combat skills?*

Ancara's player: *Great Agility, and Mediocre Dodge. I've got my knife, but no Knife skill for close combat.*

GM: *Larsten, with two leaping on you at once, it's a bit hard to fend them off and maintain your position with Ancara.*



Larsten's player: *Okay. Does shoving the flaming brand into one's face drive him off? And, can I manage a slash with a knife into the other's face?*

GM: *Larsten's better off concentrating on one of his weapons or the other, not trying to use both brand and knife at the same time. Ancara, your attacker tries to grab you by an arm. What do you do?*

Ancara's player: *I twist out of his grasp, come around behind him, and whack him in the kidneys. Hard. Very hard. With clenched fists.*

GM: *Each of you roll the dice.* (She rolls dice herself, resulting in –1, 0, and 0 for the three thugs.)

Larsten's player: *Rats! A –1.*

Ancara's player: *Whoo-hoo! A +3!*



The GM takes a moment to calculate the wound result for the thug Ancara has whacked. Ancara has no skill in brawling or other unarmed combat, so her skill level defaults to Poor. With her +3 dice roll, that's a Good result.

The thug has brawling at Fair, brought down to Mediocre by the –1 result of the dice the GM rolled. Ancara wins the round by a Relative Degree of +2. Her fists, with no unarmed combat skill, do –1 damage. The thug has no armor, so no Defensive Damage Factor.

A –1 (Ancara's Offensive Damage Factor) plus +2 (Relative Degree) minus 0 (Defensive Damage Factor for the thug) equals +1. That's just a Scratch. Ancara wasn't able to hit nearly as hard as she'd hoped.

(Note: In play, all this happens quickly once the GM and players are familiar with the system.)

GM (to Ancara's player): *You hit him in the lower back, and he stumbles forward with an "Oomph!"*

Larsten: *"That's my girl!"*



GM: *Larsten, you're not faring as well. You swing your flaming club at your attackers, managing to make one reel back a step, but the other one closes in on you as you're swinging. No blows land this round.*

Okay, next round. Ancara, your thug is still standing, now facing away from you and towards Larsten. He's pretty close to where Larsten's trying to fend off the other two, but he's turning back towards you now. Larsten, the one who closed with you is trying to grapple, and he's already close enough to make wielding the club against him pretty tough. The other thug is looking for an opening. Tell me what your next move is, and roll the dice.

Ancara's player: *I thrust my knife thrust* ***hard*** *up into his side.*

Larsten's player: *I want to hit one over the head with the brand. After that I plan to drop and roll, knocking over the second to the ground.*

Ancara's player: *I roll a +2!*



Larsten's player: *Me too!*

GM (rolls 0 for the thug Larsten's clubbing, +3 for the one trying to grapple him, and 0 for the third thug): *Ancara, your thug has come after you with a knife and it looks like he knows how to handle it fairly well. You try to thrust your knife into him, but he blocks your thrust. Larsten, you manage to conk one thug over the head, and hear a satisfying* ***thud*** *with a hint of a* ***crack****!*

The wound result for the thug on the receiving end of Larsten's blow is: Great brawling result for Larsten versus the thug's Fair brawling result = +2 relative degree, plus damage factor for club with fire (+3) = +5, Very Hurt. The GM rolls a Resistance Check (see p. XX) for the thug. The Difficulty level is Good for Very Hurt wounds. She rolls –3 for the thug, a Terrible result! The GM decides that not only is the thug now at –2 for all actions, he's Stunned for a round or two as well.

GM (to Larsten's player): *But the other one's grappled with you. Make an Agility check.*

Larsten's player: +1, that's Great.

GM: The thug who grabbed you tries to take you down but you remain on your feet. He does have a strong grip on you, though. He's grappling you and is too close for your club to be very effective. What do you do next?

Larsten's player: I use Brawling Fair and Agility Good to crouch and try to roll him over my back onto the ground — or into the fire.

Ancara's player: I'm going to knee the thug I'm fighting, using my Great Agility.

GM (to Ancara's player): That's actually a Brawling move, but I'll let you have it at Fair rather than Poor because of your Great Agility. Go ahead and roll. (The GM rolls some dice herself, this time only twice as one of the thugs is out of the fight. The results are +1 for the one grappling Larsten, –2 for the thug with Ancara.)

Ancara's player: *+1!*

Larsten's player: *+3!*

GM: *Ancara, you manage a solid blow to the guy's groin, which he wasn't expecting at all. He's Incapacitated at the moment.* (The GM doesn't bother figuring out the wound level by the numbers — a blow like that to a man's groin is incapacitating in real life, so in the game the thug's doubled over and gasping.)

Larsten: *"Excellent foot work, my dear! Well done!"*

Ancara: "Thank you, my love."

GM: *Larsten, you have your thug on the ground, not quite in the fire but close enough for his eyes to get wide. What are you next moves? Ancara, you have plenty of choices, and you can completely ignore your thug if you like.*

Larsten's player: *I'd probably just bring both elbows down into his face at this point,'cause he's going to land with his head on the ground toward me.*

GM: *What about your club?*

Larsten's player: *Oh, yeah! I'll club him in the head.*

Ancara's player: *I kick the guy for good measure. Do I need to roll for that?*

GM (to Ancara's player): *Yes, but it's an Unopposed action. He doesn't get to roll. Difficulty level Mediocre.* (to Larsten's player): *Go ahead and roll for Larsten.* (The GM rolls –2 for the thug defending himself from Larsten.)

Ancara's player: *I draw back my foot and then reconsider. It would be too heartless.*

Larsten's player: *+1*

GM: *Larsten, you win this round by 3 levels. Are you going for as much damage to his face as you can, or trying for a knockout?*

Larsten's player: *Knockout. I wanna string him up with his hands tied behind his back and leave him as a warning for others.*

GM: *Ancara, is there anything else you want to do?*

Ancara: "Dear, we really should truss them up and take them to town. Let the authorities deal with them."



Larsten's player: *Did I get the knockout, or do I need to roll?*

GM: *You get the knockout, as you won that round by three levels and he was already on the ground.*

Larsten's player: ***Hah***!

GM: *You should probably tie them up quickly. The thug who took that crack to the head still looks dazed, but could recover. And the guy Ancara kneed is already beginning to straighten up.*

Ancara: *"So... do we do our civic duty and take them to town?"*

GM: *I assume you make quick work of tying them up, rather than standing about discussing it first...*

Larsten's player: *Yes, of course. The question is leaving them there or taking them in.*

Ancara's player (smiling): *Oh, we chat while we truss.*

GM: *That's it, then. You make short work of tying up the thugs and making sure they're securely bound to the wagon's wheels for the night. In the morning you'll go on to the next village, prisoners in tow. You set the watch rotation between you and settle down for a cautious night's rest…*

Advanced Combat Options and Modifiers



The Special Circumstances and Combat Modifiers presented in Chapter 7 can be used with the Combat Rounds system as well as with the Narrative Combat system. Here are some more options that are specifically designed for use with the Combat Rounds rules.

Disarming: To disarm an opponent, you must declare that as your attack. A disarm can be applied in many ways (like catching the weapon with your own or with your shield) so describe the method you are using. If your character wins the combat round, roll an Opposed roll of either Strength (using brute force) or Agility (using finesse). If you win, you send your opponent's weapon flying away out of his reach.

Grazing: Any relative degree of +1 (the winner of the combat round wins by only one level) with an Offensive Damage Factor of +3 or less will do at most a Scratch. (It may do no damage at all, depending on the opponent's defensive factors: a fist hitting a breastplate or shield won't hurt the armored knight in the slightest.) Fighters with greater Offensive Damage Factors will only Hurt their opponent with a graze.

*Heavy Blunt Weapons :*for heavy blunt metal weapons, such as maces and flails, halve any protection from the defender's armor, round down. The concussive damage from such weapons is slowed, but not totally stopped, by most armor. *Example:* if using a large mace (+2 weapon) against plate armor (+4 armor), the armor only counts as +2 armor in the Defensive Damage Factor.

Offensive and Defensive Maneuvers: Attempting an all-out offense grants a +1 to your combat roll. If an all-out attacker ties or loses the Opposed action, the other fighter wins and inflicts increased damage. Attempting an all-out defensive stance earns a +2 to your combat roll, but you cannot harm an opponent except with a critical result.

Off-Hand Weapon: Some fighting styles use a secondary weapon rather than a shield in the off hand, and occasionally a character might find he must use his primary weapon in the off hand due to injury. Any use of an off-hand weapon should be treated as a normal action, with a –1 penalty in addition to any other modifiers. The Gift of Ambidexterity negates this penalty.

Taking Stock: A successful all-out defense paired with a successful Perception check imposes a –1 penalty to the opponent on the next round. The fighter takes a few seconds to scope out the area and maneuvers to take advantage of any terrain or conditional irregularity. Similar combat subtleties are possible, and encouraged—taking a successful all-out defense one round can allow a player to try an acrobatics maneuver the next combat round without risk of being hit, for example.

Targeted Blow: Before the dice are rolled, the player can announce that his character is aiming at a specific body part. The GM decides the minimum relative degree necessary for such a shot to succeed, usually ranging from 2 to 4, though extreme locations (such as an eyeball) are harder to hit. If the character then does win by the minimum necessary relative degree, the targeted area is hit, and the wound is specific to that area. If the attacker wins the combat round, but not by the minimum relative degree needed to hit the called target, the *defender* names which part of the body — or shield! — is hit. This will most likely be general body (if there is no shield), but it could be the off hand, which would carry a lesser combat penalty than a wound to the torso. A Hurt body part is generally at –1 to its normal use. A Hurt sword arm gives a –1 penalty to combat, for example, while a Hurt leg is –1 to any running, acrobatics, etc. A Hurt eye is –1 to vision, and so on. After battle is the time to decide if an Incapacitated body part can be healed, or is permanently Incapacitated.

Unopposed Rounds: If one combatant is unable to fight in a given round (possibly because he's unaware of the attacker, or because he's been Stunned), the combat with become an Unopposed Action for the active fighter, usually with a Poor Difficulty level. If a character can defend himself in some way, such as using a shield, it is still an Opposed Action, but the defending character cannot hurt his attacker even if he wins the combat round.

Animals in Combat

The combat rules presented here so far assume that the combatants are all humans. What about someone being attacked by a guard dog? Or a rampaging wild boar or a bear?

Damage Factors for Animals

If using the "objective system" for combat, you can determine an animal's Offensive and Defensive Damage Factors the same way you determine ODF and DDF for a character's weapons and armor.

Offensive Factors for Animals:

Natural Weapons:

Many animals have natural weapons — teeth, claws, hooves, horns, antlers, and tusks. (Other weapons are possible — including poison, especially with snakes — but these are best handled as gifts and special powers rather than bonuses to the animal's ODF.)

+2	Large, sharp teeth or tusks; large, sharp claws; large horns; antlers
+1	Large or sharp claws; large or sharp teeth or tusks; small horns or antlers; hooves

Animal Strength:

Most animals will have Fair Strength *in comparison with other animals of the same species or breed.* Some animals, however, are stronger or weaker than average. Strength bonuses to the Offensive Damage Factor apply just as well to animal Strength as they do to human Strength.

+3	Superb
+2	Great
+1	Good
+0	Fair
–1	Mediocre
–2	Poor
–3	Terrible

In addition to Strength, large animals have size on their side! The larger the animal, generally the more damage it can do. (The reverse is true as well — small size will reduce the damage an animal can inflict.) This is accounted for with another trait that animals have: Scale (see below for a full explanation of Scale).

An animal's Offensive Damage Factor is the sum of all the factors from natural weapons, Scale, and Strength. Note that small animals may have a negative ODF — they may need to win a combat round by a greater relative degree to be able to do any damage at all.

Defensive Factors for animals:

Some animals have natural defenses such as thick, wooly coats or tough hides. (Other defenses are possible, such as the ability to rapidly change direction at speed or good dodging ability, but these are best accounted for in the GM-set minimum Difficulty level to hit the animal.)

+0	Bare skin or normal hide
+1	Thick coat; tough hide; soft shell; loose skin or feathers (damage is often to skin or feathers rather than vital organs)
+2	Hard shell

Scale also figures into an animal's Defensive Factors. Large animals can generally withstand more damage as there's more muscle protecting the vital organs. Small animals are relatively fragile and easily hurt.

An animal's Defensive Damage Factor is the sum of the factors from natural defenses and Scale. Note that small animals may have a negative DDF — which means that their Defensive Factor will actually cause them to sustain *more* damage than otherwise. (Positive Defensive Damage Factors subtract from Offensive Damage Factors, but negative Defensive Damage Factors *add* to the ODF!)

Scale

The ***Fudge*** game system uses a numerical "Scale" modifier to represent damage factors involving creatures that are significantly larger or smaller than their opponents. The Scale centers around humans, who are considered Scale 0 because they have no size-related modifiers when in combat with other humans or human-sized creatures. Larger creatures have a positive Scale number and smaller creatures have a negative Scale rating.

In combat, Scale is added to the creature's ODF (larger creatures tend to be capable of inflicting more damage, smaller creatures inflect less) and to its DDF (the same blow will do less damage, relatively speaking, to a horse than it would to a dog).

Here are some sample Scale values. For game descriptions of some of the animals listed, see *Animals in the Game,* p. XX.

Scale Factor	Creature
–10	Ferret (female), Peregrine Falcon, Goshawk (3 lbs.)
–9	Ferret (male), Rabbit (4 lbs.)
–8	Chicken (6 lbs.)
–7	Golden Eagle (9 lbs.)
–6	Housecat, Goose (13 lbs.)
–5	Small Dog, Fox (20 lbs.)
–4	Badger, Caracel, Swan (30 lbs.)
–3	Medium-sized Dog, Roe Deer, Lynx (45 lbs.)
–2	Large Dog (68 lbs.)
–1	Wolf, Cheetah, Goat, Sheep
0	Human, Very Large Dog or Wolf, Small Deer (150 lbs.)
+1	Wild Boar (female), Mastiff (225 lbs.)
+2	Wild Boar (male), Brown Bear (female), Lion (female), Pig (333 lbs.)
+3	Brown Bear (male), Large Deer, Lion (male), Hog, Donkey (500 lbs.)
+4	Highland Pony, Elk, Mule (750 lbs.)
+5	Horse, Camel, Highland Cattle (1125 lbs.)
+6	Oxen (1700 lbs.)

The weights listed in parentheses represent the midpoint, size-wise, of each level of Scale. When determining the Scale of a given creature, don't worry too much about where one level ends (in terms of pounds of weight) and another begins. Just assign the level that makes the most sense to you.

You may notice that Scale –1 and Scale +1 have mid-point weights that are well within the range of normal human sizes. For simplicity's sake, though, assume all humans are at Scale level 0. Well-designed characters will have their Strength set to an appropriate level for the character's size. The Fragile Constitution fault (–1 to Defensive Damage Factors) and Tough gift (+1 to Defensive Damage Factors) take the place of a change in Scale.

Note that many creatures, including falcons such as kestrels, merlins, and sparrow hawks, are actually smaller than Scale –10. But for all practical purposes, a –10 Scale modifier is sufficient to model how fragile the animal is in comparison to a human. Likewise, some creatures are larger than Scale +6, although none are known in Gwynedd (except in the Atalantic Ocean).

Scale and Strength

The Scale level is also a good indication of a creature's Strength relative to a human (or to other creatures). The difference in Scale levels is roughly equivalent to the differences in the levels of human Strength (from Terrible to Superb). Each level of Scale is about 1.5 times heavier and stronger than the Scale beneath it.

Individual creatures are of Fair Strength, or Good Strength, etc., relative to those of their own Scale. The creature's Scale adds to Strength (and hence to the creature's Offensive Damage Factor): a wolf (Scale –1) with Great Strength is roughly as strong as a human (Scale 0) with Good Strength. Both are at +1 Strength compared to humans of Fair Strength.

Scale also adds to a creature's Defensive Damage Factor; the more massive a creature is the harder it is to inflict serious damage. It's this effect of Scale on the Defensive Damage Factor that distinguishes a wolf with Great strength versus a human with Good strength — the wolf, despite being as strong, will be a little easier to hurt simply because it's smaller than the human.

Scale and Minimum Difficulty levels in Combat

The differences in Scale can make it easier or harder to hit a target. The smaller the target, the harder to hit.

Target is:	Minimum Result Required
3+ Scale > combatant	Terrible
Roughly same Scale	Poor
3-4 Scale < combatant	Mediocre
5-6 Scale < combatant	Good
7-8 Scale < combatant	Great
9+ Scale < combatant	Superb

Thus a human (Scale 0) hunting a fox (Scale –5) would need a Good or better result to successfully hit the fox (there is a difference of 5 Scale levels between them). Of course, the hunter would also need to win the Opposed action (the fox gets a chance to use its speed and agility to escape!)





Scale Options and Modifiers

While Scale is a handy way to quickly compare relative strengths and damage capacities for opponents of widely differing size, it doesn't always reflect reality. A housecat (Scale –6, +1 Offensive Damage due to sharp claws and teeth) would need to win a combat round by 6 levels to even Scratch a human. (Of course, the cat can scratch the human, breaking skin, but this type of injury isn't serious enough to warrant even a Scratch on the wound track.)

Here are some options and modifiers that make it possible for a smaller creature to damage a much larger opponent, or to survive an attack that the numbers say would be deadly.

- If the smaller combatant wins the combat round by a Relative Degree of 3 or more, it counts as a Scratch regardless of actual damage done.
- A relative degree in of +1 in a combat round can inflict at most a Hurt result regardless of Scale.
- If a single blow from a much larger opponent (5 or more Scale levels larger than the loser of the combat round) results in an Incapacitated or Near Death wound, roll a Situational Roll. On a Fair or better result, the loser is only Hurt, but is also "knocked back" several feet and Stunned (unable to react in the next combat round).
- "Scale piercing" weapons that are designed for combat with larger creatures — such as a soldier's pike, set at an angle to confound charging cavalry — significantly reduce the effect of Scale on the victim's Defensive Damage Factor. In the case of a cavalry charge, if the pikeman wins the combat round by a Relative Degree of 2 or more, exclude the horse's Scale +5 modifier to its Defensive Damage Factor when calculating the wound level.

Other Combat Systems

The ***Fudge*** system offers more ways to determine the results of combat in addition to the ones in Chapters 7 and 8. You can find alternative combat systems, options, and modifiers in the *Fudge 10th Anniversary Edition* book and online. Visit the Grey Ghost Press website at http://www.fudgerpg.com for more information.





Chapter Nine: Magic

The ability to use magic sets the Deryni apart from ordinary mortals. It is said the Deryni can bless and curse, see and influence the future, and, most dreadful of all, peer into and even twist a person's mind and soul. Some of these things are true, others only legend, but to the average peasant, the Deryni wield a fearsome and mysterious power.

What is Magic?

Many see magic as an abomination before God, a tool of the Devil. Deryni believe their gifts bring them closer to the Creator. Despite Church dogma to the contrary, magic is neither good nor evil; it is merely a tool that can be used toward either good or evil ends.

Deryni are born with the ability to draw upon inner reserves of power. With training and focused concentration, they can shape and control this power to produce a variety of results. Many scholars of magic have attempted to explain the exact nature of the Deryni gift. While their studies yield new insights and push the boundaries of magic further, they seem no closer to an answer.

At its core, Deryni magic consists of several natural inherent abilities directed by acts of will. Concentration is all that is required to invoke most magical applications a Deryni is likely to use during an ordinary day. A Deryni need only concentrate on a person to Truth-Read and know whether or not that person is telling the truth. Likewise, Deryni can conjure Handfire with little more than a thought.

Some magic goes beyond these basic Deryni skills, however, using rituals to tap into deeper reserves of inner power and shape it towards the desired result. As Deryni receive formal training in magic, they learn to access their power more efficiently and develop more complex and advanced uses of their innate talents.

There is a magic and power beyond the abilities of accomplished Deryni — something even the Deryni consider supernatural. Deryni ordained as priests (exceedingly rare in Gwynedd during the times of persecution) seem to experience a more direct connection with the spiritual than their human brethren. Or perhaps it is that they simply perceive the power flowing through them more readily.

Deryni Magic



Contrary to what some may believe, Deryni are not all-powerful. They must develop their powers, just as one might with any skill. Magic also comes with several limitations: physical contact is necessary for much of what the Deryni can do, the power they can access is limited, and circumstances must allow for focused concentration and time to prepare. There is also the danger of exposure; being discovered wielding Deryni magic in Gwynedd during the persecutions could lead to charges of heresy and burning at the stake — that is, if one has avoided a quick and simple lynching without benefit of a trial.

Magic in the Game

Players and GMs familiar with magic as presented in the Deryni novels may allow their Deryni characters to perform any feats of magic that make sense in the context of the setting, keeping character concepts in mind, and with the GM's permission, of course. This works especially well if you are using Subjective Character Creation (see p. XX) and Narrative Combat (see p. XX). In this case, just use your knowledge of the books as your guide as to what is and is not possible and don't worry about the rules — just fudge it!

For those who prefer more concrete rules, or are not well versed in Deryni lore, this chapter presents everything you need to use Deryni magic in the game.

Magical Traits

Two main traits govern the use of magic in the *Deryni Adventure Game*: the Power attribute and various Magic skills. Power is innate (although it can sometimes be granted), while skills are learned.

Power

Power is an attribute measuring the inherent strength of a character's ability to perform magic. Most Deryni have a Power attribute of Fair, although a few are more or less powerful. But with magic, knowledge and skill count for more than sheer power. Most humans lack Power (see Humans With Magic, p. XX, for the exceptions).

The Power attribute comes into play when a Deryni attempts powerful and potentially exhausting magic. This includes stretching abilities to their limits (e.g., using Mind-Speech over great distances), and advanced and difficult spells (e.g., shape-changing or weather magic). The Power attribute can also affect how tiring a particular magical action will be. See *Using Magic,* below, and *Fatigue,* p. XX.

With the GM's permission, you can create a character with a Power level of Mediocre (trade one level of Power to raise another attribute by one level) or Good (by lowering another attribute by one level to raise Power).

A Deryni character can also gain Power (increase his Power attribute by one or more levels) in the course of the game. The GM is the final judge as to whether the character's actions and the story warrant such a change. Just as a person can increase his Strength with a lot of effort (exercise and so forth), a Deryni can gain more Power by exercising his magical abilities.

Keep in mind that in the ***Fudge*** game system, an increase of even one level in an attribute or skill is a significant jump in capability. It would not make much sense for a Deryni to go from Fair to Good Power (let alone Superb) in the space of only a few game sessions, unless there was an in-game reason provided by the Gamemaster.

See *Character Development*, p. XX, for more on improving traits.

Skill

The ability to use magic is governed by various Magic skills, each covering a different application of magical Power. Deryni have default levels of Poor in some innate Magic skills (see Innate Magical Abilities, p. XX), Terrible in the rest, and none in Arcane Lore because it requires special training. Some Magic skills have applications requiring a certain level of arcane training and knowledge (represented by the Arcane Lore skill).

Using Magic

For the most part, magic works like exercising any other kind of skill in the *Deryni Adventure Game*: Roll the dice and add the result to the level of the appropriate Magic skill to determine the outcome.

Some simple magical actions, such as calling forth handfire, don't require any rolls — once a Deryni knows how to do it he can create handfire whenever he wishes, provided he's not Exhausted or otherwise incapacitated. For magical actions that have a chance of failing, the Gamemaster will set a Difficulty level. Some magical tasks have a suggested difficulty described in the text, while others vary according to circumstance. If the magic is resisted, an Opposed roll may be required.

The following guidelines apply to using magic in general.

Concentration

Using magic requires at least a modicum of concentration, while more advanced spells and rituals require considerable mental discipline and a deep state of trance or meditation. Anything disrupting the Deryni's concentration can spoil the magic. In some cases, the GM may ask for a Meditation check to see if the character can maintain concentration under difficult circumstances.

Touch and Rapport

Many magical abilities require physical contact, while others are simply easier to do with it. Still other abilities require mental contact — that is, the user and the subject must be in rapport (see *Rapport*, p. XX). Lack of physical or mental contact makes certain feats of magic more difficult or altogether impossible.



Fatigue

Some innate and basic Deryni abilities require no more effort than thinking or talking, but more advanced and complex magic can exhaust the practitioner. One of the primary limits on Deryni magic is fatigue; even the most powerful Deryni tires eventually. The less well trained a Deryni is, the greater will be the energy output and concentration necessary to succeed.

As with physical activities, the GM can choose to simply tell the players when their characters are Tired or Exhausted, based on what's happened in the game. If you're using the optional fatigue rules and keeping track of Tiring and Exhausting activities or doing Stamina and Willpower checks (see *Fatigue and Effort,* p. XX), treat a Deryni's use of magic as you would any skill requiring concentration and energy.

Your GM will take into account your Power attribute and skill levels in the magic you're using when she categorizes each magical activity (as Effortless, Tiring, or Exhausting). If your Power is Fair (average for a Deryni), determine fatigue normally. The greater your Power, the more energy you have to commit to your magical efforts without drawing on your physical Stamina. You may be able to Effortlessly accomplish something another Deryni would find Tiring. If your Power is Mediocre or lower, you may find any but the simplest spells Tiring. The higher the levels of the skills you're applying, the more efficient your channeling of energy will be, and the less fatigue you'll feel. The extent to which your Power and skill levels influence how fatiguing your use of magic may be is up to the GM.

There's one way in which fatigue caused by using magic differs from that caused by physical activity: failure can itself be exhausting. Many magical tasks are second nature to a Deryni, requiring little effort and having little chance of failure. (The GM won't even ask you to roll when creating handfire, for instance, assuming you know how.)

Deryni Magic

But Deryni magic can fail if you're attempting an unfamiliar use of your magic for the first time, if the magic you're attempting is complex and difficult (see *Rituals,* p. XX), or if you lose the Opposed roll when your magic meets resistance. Repeated efforts — retrying a magical action that has failed — count as one level more fatiguing than usual. An additional attempt at a magical action that normally causes no fatigue is Tiring, while retrying a Tiring action is Exhausting. If you've failed an Exhausting magical task, a second attempt will certainly Incapacitate you and may prove fatal — even if you succeed. Far better to rest for a while, recover from your fatigue, and try again — possibly with the help of other Deryni mages (or with more study).

Fatigue as a result of magical activity is otherwise the same as (and cumulative with) normal fatigue. Characters recover from magical fatigue normally. See *Fatigue and Effort,* p. XX, for further details.

Magical Action Resolution

Generally, magical actions are resolved in the same manner as other actions in the *Deryni Adventure Game* (see Chapter 7: Playing the Game). However, there are some specific action modifiers that apply to magical actions: Combined Skill Use, Effort, and Preparation. Note that these modifiers only come into play if the GM requires a die roll. If there's no question that your magic will work, no modifiers are needed.

Combined Skill Use

Some magical tasks actually involve two (or even more) Magic skills, in which case they are referred to as a Combined Skill Use. The effective skill level for a Combined Skill Use is equal to the level of the lowest-rated skill (after all, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link). So, for example, for a Combined Skill Use of skills rated Good, Fair, and Mediocre, the character's skill level is considered Mediocre.

Effort

Magicians can expend additional effort on a magical action to insure success in that endeavor. Increasing the fatigue level of the task by 1 provides a +1 bonus (see *Fatigue,* p. XX). This makes an effortless task Tiring and a Tiring task Exhausting. Putting effort into an Exhausting task is considered the same as an Exhausted character attempting an Exhausting action: whether or not the action succeeds, the character is Incapacitated following the attempt.

Option: Dying Effort

Deryni can, when the need is dire, push themselves beyond the limits of their strength, giving up their very life force, if need be, in order to succeed. In essence, they can increase the fatigue level of a task one level beyond Incapacitated, but it means they very well may die upon completing the task!

Given the extreme nature of this sacrifice, the GM may simply decide that the character succeeds, regardless of the relative Difficulty level. Certainly, any player willing to sacrifice a character in such a way that is dramatic and furthers the story should be rewarded with success, making the character's final effort count for something.

Preparation

A Deryni typically takes a moment (sometimes more) to focus and center himself in preparation for exercising a Deryni power. Ritual magic that encompasses more complex magical activity requires more preparation. Proper preparation for a magical action improves the chances of success. Preparations include cleansing the working space, achieving a proper state of meditation, saying prayers, lightning incense, and so forth. This provides a +1 bonus.

The Color of Magic

Deryni often manifest glowing auras or halos of light. Some see a connection between these and the halos associated with saints and other religious figures.

Manifesting one's aura is effortless. Deryni sometimes unconsciously "flare" their aura while working difficult magic, during periods of deep meditation, or in other circumstances where their control slips. With slightly more effort (a Fair Shields task) Deryni can make their auras visible only to other Deryni. In Deryni culture, auras are often displayed on ceremonial occasions, worn like cloaks or crowns of light. After the Restoration in Gwynedd, auras are carefully concealed, since they are clear signs of Deryni nature.

The aura's color is unique and individual, although some colors run in family lines. This color also appears in manifestations of the Deryni's magic, most notably Handfire (p. XX). Aura colors include red (Kelson and other Haldanes), green (Morgan, Rhys, and many Healers), silvery-white (Duncan and Dhugal), and blue (Charissa), as well as with yellow-gold, blue-violet, and violet.

Encourage players to choose a suitable color for their character's aura and magic. The colors mentioned above are only suggestions; others are possible, and players should be encouraged to be creative.

Innate Magical Abilities

Certain magical abilities are innate for the Deryni. Even Deryni with the Lost Heritage fault (p. XX) have these abilities; they simply do not know it yet. Innate Deryni abilities are Body-Control, Casting, Mind-Reading, Mind-Speech, Shields, and Truth-Reading. These Magic skills all default to Poor, but can be raised by purchasing skills in the Magic skill group. They also improve with practice and training, like other skills.

Other magical abilities come naturally to Deryni, but not as easily. All other Magic skills default to Terrible for Deryni — except for Arcane Lore, Latin, and Meditation, which are available from other skill groups and default to Poor.

Magic Skills

Magic — like any other broad discipline — is divided into various skills. The Magic skills are listed on p. XX and characters acquire them just like skills from other groups, except only those characters with Power (Deryni and some rare humans) can actually use most of them. The game effects of the various Magic skills are described here.

Arcane Lore

Arcane Lore is the scholarly study of magic, its history, lore, theories, rituals, and so forth. For humans, it is little more than a curiosity (and a dangerous one at that, according to Church doctrine). For the Deryni, it is the key to unlocking greater levels of magical power. Since the Restoration and the Council of Ramos, many Deryni families have stopped passing on their lore, and some Deryni are ignorant of even the most basic magical knowledge (or even their own magical heritage and Deryni blood, for that matter).

In the *Deryni Adventure Game*, Arcane Lore has two main uses. First, it measures the degree of the character's magical knowledge and training, from idle dabbler (Terrible) to sage and learned adept (Superb). Second, it measures the character's training in the advanced techniques of other Magic skills. These techniques are discussed in the individual skill descriptions. In all cases, unless noted otherwise, the character's effective rating in an advanced technique is equal to the *lower* of the Magic skill level or Arcane Lore, just like any other combined application of Magic skills.

Some Deryni have mastered the fundamental Magic skills, but know only a little advanced lore, while others have considerable knowledge and a high level of Arcane Lore but little practice (hence, lower levels in their Magic skills). Ideally, Deryni adepts balance knowledge (Arcane Lore) with practical application (Magic skill levels).

Deryni Esoteric Texts

Arcane Lore provides familiarity with the great Deryni esoteric texts, scholarly works on magic, and their use (and sometimes misuse). The GM can use these texts for background color when describing magical lore. A search to find one of these rare and valuable documents can easily provide a story hook for an adventure as well.

Known Deryni esoteric texts include the following:

The Annales of Sulien of R'Kassi, an ancient Deryni adept.

The Codex Orini, bound with a violet cord, contains commentaries and working notes of the great adept Orin, including "Holding Off Death," "Conversations with the Holy Guardian Angel," "Preserving Life Beyond Death," and "Bringing Life Back Out of Death" (see *The Forbidden Spell,* p. XX, for more information).

"The Ghosting of Ardal l'Etrange," by Eamonn MacDara, a Mearan poet, circa 700.

Haut Arcanum by the Gabrielite philosopher Dom Edouard.

History of Kheldour by Mahael, featuring insights into Torenthi magical lore.

Lays of the Lord Llewllyn, famed Deryni bard and troubadour who died circa 850. His lyrics contain hints about many ancient Deryni spells and magical techniques.

Liber Fati Caeriesse, the collected prophesies of Nesta, a 6th-century Deryni seeress. Many hint at a connection between the Deryni and the fabled lost land of Caeriësse.

Liber Ricae, or *The Book of the Veil,* an extremely rare and arcane magical text.

Liber Sancti Ruadan, by Ruadan of Dhassa, a Deryni mystic text based on the author's meditations and visions.

Principa Magica, by Kitron; fundamental magical monograph, often encoded or couched in metaphor.

The *Protocols of Orin*, by the famed Deryni philosopher-mage Orin, consist of several scrolls, each bound in a different color cord and involving different lore. The Black Protocol deals with Placing Another's Shape on the Dead, Re-Animating the Dead, and Calling Up Creatures. The Vermillion Protocol includes Setting Wards, Scrying, and Construction of Portals (including trap Portals). The Yellow (or Golden) Protocol has Taking a Dead Man's Shape, Reading Memories of the Dead, and Assimilation of Memories of Another, and was instrumental in Camber's impersonation of Alister Cullen. The Green Protocol is a comprehensive text on Healing, while the Blue Protocol (also known as the Fifth Protocol or the "Scroll of Daring") contains essays On Staring Patterns, Moon-Scrying, and Blocking of Power in Those of Magical Inheritance (indicating the Blocking technique was known at least theoretically in Orin's time, before Rhys Thuryn re-discovered it).

Feel free to create your own additional esoteric texts to add authenticity to your game.

Duel Arcane

Arcane Lore is the primary skill for the Duel Arcane, a formal, ritualized struggle between two or more Deryni. See *Duel Arcane,* p. XX, for details.

Ritual

Arcane Lore measures a character's knowledge of magical rituals and strongly influences effectiveness in performing rituals. Rituals are all effectively combined uses of Arcane Lore and one or more Magic skills. See *Ritual,* p. XX, for details.

Blocking

As rare as the healing gift is among Deryni there is an even rarer gift: certain Healers have the ability to block a Deryni's magical powers, effectively removing them! Rhys Thuryn discovered the blocking ability by accident during the events detailed in *Camber the Heretic*. Later, Healer Tavis O'Neill also proved to have the ability, as did Rhys's son Tieg. So far as is known, the gift for blocking is found only in Healers. Camber speculated it was somehow related to the healing function. Certainly, the ability to "turn off" a patient's magical powers is a valuable tool for a Healer!

To acquire the Blocking skill, a Healer must have the Blocker Gift (p. XX), which allows him to use the skill at a default Terrible level. As with other skills, training and practice enhance the character's Blocking skill level.

Using the skill requires physical contact and a skill check. The Difficulty level is Fair. When working with a familiar subject, the Difficulty level drops to a minimum of Mediocre. Shields do *not* protect against Blocking; the "trigger" apparently exists outside a Deryni's normal shields. Once a Deryni has used the Blocking skill a few times, further uses will be effortless. (The GM may continue to require skill checks if she wishes. A Deryni with Blocking skill of Fair or higher can probably block someone's powers any time he tries — no roll needed — unless his subject resists.)

A successful Blocking check "turns off" the subject's Power, reducing it to nothing. For all intents and purposes, the subject becomes a normal human, unable to use magic. What's more, blocked Deryni cannot be detected as Deryni in any way. They are even immune to *merasha*! The subject retains all magical knowledge, but simply can't use it. Another use of Blocking (at the same Difficulty level) can remove a block and restore the subject's Power. The Healer who restores the subject doesn't need to be the same as the one who did the blocking in the first place.

Blocked Deryni can and do pass on their magical potential to their progeny, who are not themselves blocked. After the Council of Ramos, Deryni used Blocking to hide some of their people from the Church's inquisitors. While this allowed many Deryni families to survive, it also led to many lost bloodlines, with their descendants completely unaware of their true heritage (see *Lost Heritage,* p. XX).

Body—Control

Deryni can exercise mental control over their bodies, which allows them to perform a number of physical feats:

- slower breathing
- controlled heart rate
- the ability to fall asleep in difficult conditions (Poor Difficulty);
- control body temperature (Mediocre Difficulty);
- control bleeding (Difficulty depends on the severity of the wound)
- ignore the effects of being Hurt (Fair Difficulty) or Very Hurt (Good Difficulty)

Deryni trained in other skills can apply Body-Control in additional ways:

The Second Sight

Borderers in Cassan, Kierney, and Meara speak of "the Second Sight," a knack for sensing things beyond the ordinary; and indeed, many Borderers (human and Deryni alike) seem to be gifted with uncanny insight. Although it is akin to Deryni magic, Borderers accept the Second Sight with nary a raised brow, and tend to overlook such "talents" in terms of official Church doctrine that has declared magic anathema. Those with the Second Sight may be humans with the Magical Sensitivity Gift (p. XX), Deryni who have concealed (and perhaps forgotten) their heritage, Humans With Power (p. XX), or some combination of all three.

Affecting Others

An accomplished Deryni can use Body-Control to affect others. This requires establishing rapport with the subject (see *Rapport,* p. XX), allowing the mage to use any effect of Body-Control on the subject's body as if it were his own. Healers use Body-Control to aid healing by blocking pain, slowing bleeding, and the like. Non-Healers can achieve some of the same benefits, although their efforts are not augmented by the Healing gift (unless they have the Healing gift but do not yet know it.)

Energy Augmentation

Deryni in rapport with a subject can use Body-Control to draw upon that person's energy to augment their own for magical actions. In essence, the subject takes on the fatigue of magical actions performed by the Deryni. Even humans can provide energy in this way, although few are willing to do so. The subject does not need to be willing, merely in rapport. Unscrupulous Deryni (such as Lord Ian in *Deryni Rising*) can and do exert control over unwitting humans to use them as sources of energy. Deryni may also use energy augmentation to put additional effort into magical tasks (see Effort, p. XX).

Fatigue-Banishing

Deryni trained in Arcane Lore can use Body-Control to overcome the effects of Fatigue temporarily (see p. XX), either for themselves or someone else with whom they are in rapport. The Gamemaster determines how long the spell keeps fatigue at bay (four hours is a good starting point). Any previously acquired fatigue penalties are eliminated as long as the spell is in effect. However, when the Fatigue-Banishing ends, the subject suffers the effects of all the banished fatigue plus the equivalent of one Tiring action per use of the fatigue banishing spell.

So a Tired Deryni who banishes his fatigue twice in order to operate normally for eight hours goes back to being Tired at the end of that time, and also experiences the effects of two additional Tiring actions (which may exhaust or even incapacitate him), one for each application of the fatigue banishing spell.

Note that a fatigue banishing spell counteracts fatigue penalties brought on by previous actions but it doesn't protect the character from the effects of additional tiring or exhausting activities he undertakes after his banishing his fatigue. Another fatigue banishing spell could be used to counteract additional fatigue penalties — but the Deryni will pay the price when fatigue finally catches up with him.

If a Deryni casts a fatigue banishing spell on someone else, it counts as a Tiring action for the caster (unless the Deryni's Power or skill level warrants a different categorization), but there will be no additional penalties. The subject on the receiving end of the spell will experience a rush of fatigue when the spell wears off, but the extent of that fatigue depends solely on his actions before and since the spell was cast. He does not feel any tiring effects from the spell itself as he was not the caster.

For each repetition of the Fatigue-Banishing skill, the effectiveness of the spell may diminish, depending on how tired the practitioner already is. The effect may wear off sooner, giving the subject three hours of normal function rather than four, etc. Other factors, such as the subject's pre-spell health and energy, may affect the Fatigue-Banishing as well.

For more information concerning fatigue, see pp. XX and XX.

Inducing Sleep

Body-Control can impose sleep or unconsciousness on a subject through rapport. This is relatively easy if done to someone who is willing or unaware (no roll necessary unless the caster hasn't done this before), more difficult if the subject resists (in which case it becomes an Opposed roll of Body-Control and Willpower). Since it requires rapport, the user must already be inside the subject's Shields (if any).

Death-Triggers

A Deryni who fears being Mind-Ripped or otherwise overwhelmed by a superior foe can choose to set a Death-Trigger. When the trigger's circumstances occur, such as the subject's Shields failing or an intruder trying to Mind-See a particular piece of information, the subject dies instantly. Deryni use Death-Triggers as a means of last resort to keep themselves from being captured, interrogated, or mind-ripped. The Death-Trigger may be combined with a Mind-Wipe which erases most of the Deryni's memories as he dies. Deryni can also forgo setting and waiting for a Death-Trigger, simply willing their own deaths.

A dose of *merasha* neutralizes a Death-Trigger (or an attempt to will death to come), leaving the subject open to interrogation, so even these deadly measures are not foolproof.

Casting

This skill allows Deryni to "cast" their senses out around them to gather information not readily apparent to the normal five senses. Casting can identify a person on the other side of a door (Poor Difficulty), find hidden things such as a transfer Portal or a secret passage, or see a Deryni's shields (Mediocre Difficulty or higher), or sense poison or search for signs of danger (Fair Difficulty or higher). Casting can also detect magical workings, signs of life, and similar energy-based signs (Fair Difficulty).



Sometimes Deryni sense things without consciously casting. They may "feel" the death of a loved one, or sense an ambush or other danger without even trying. The GM can work this into the story as desired, since these abilities are outside the player's control.

Opening Locks

Deryni can use Casting to extend their senses inside a lock, providing a +1 bonus to attempts to pick it. In conjunction with Move Objects (p. XX), this makes opening most locks a simple task for most Deryni.

Tracking

By Casting about, Deryni can find even the faintest of traces when tracking, providing a +1 bonus to the attempt (or more, at the GM's discretion).

Detecting Other Deryni

Casting can detect other Deryni by sensing their Shields (even lowered Shields are sensed as a dormant presence). At the height of the great persecutions by the Council of Ramos, "Deryni sniffers" collaborated with the Church to hunt down others of their own kind, usually because of threats to their family or loved ones. Hiding from a sniffer requires an Opposed roll of Shields against Casting, or a use of Blocking (p. XX) to remove the Deryni's powers, hiding them completely.

Dowsing

Dowsing is a form of searching, and an extension of Casting. It uses a dowsing rod, and may assist in locating underground water (Mediocre Difficulty) or minerals (Fair Difficulty). The caster needs to be in the vicinity of the element(s) or item(s) he seeks.

Healing

Even among Deryni, with all their wondrous abilities, the power to heal is a rare and special gift. Deryni must possess the Healer Gift (p. XX) to learn and use the Healing skill. Deryni Healers tend to be male. Female Healers are extremely rare for as yet unknown reasons, although it is possible that the healing talent is sex-linked. If your GM allows female Healers as player characters, the Healer Gift is the same regardless of gender.

Healers with the Gift have a default level of Terrible in Healing without any training. Deryni without the Healer Gift have no level in Healing and cannot learn or use the skill. Before the Council of Ramos, Deryni Healers were formally trained in anatomy, herbalism, and other useful medical skills. However, by King Brion's time, the healing gift was thought to be extinct. Alaric Morgan was the first Gwyneddan Deryni in generations to demonstrate the ability to heal.

Healing has limits: it can close wounds and ease pain, but it cannot cure disease or poisoning. Healing a Serious or worse wound leaves a faint pink line on the skin, which fades slowly over a few days. The area may be tender for a time, but is otherwise good as new.

The Difficulty level for healing is based on the severity of the wound. If it's "just a Scratch," a Deryni Healer can heal the wound effortlessly (no roll needed). The Difficulty is Fair for a Hurt patient, Good for Very Hurt, Great for Incapacitated, and Superb for Near Death. Unless the patient is Near Death, even an unsuccessful attempt of Healing will stabilize the subject, offering the opportunity for additional healing attempts after the Healer has rested and re-examined the patient with the use of non-magical medical skills (to gain a better understanding of what needs to be Healed). A failed Healing skill check with a patient who's Near Death indicates that the damage was simply too great for the Healer's skills.

Add +1 to the Difficulty level if the patient's shields are up (see *Shields,* p. XX). Healing anything more than a Scratch is Tiring and Exhausting for Incapacitated or greater wounds.

Healers sometimes use other skills to aid their work. Body-Control (in conjunction with rapport) can ease pain or induce sleep, while Move Objects shifts bones or torn ligaments back into place so they heal property. At the GM's discretion, use of a supporting skill counts as preparation for Healing (p. XX) providing a +1 bonus.

Latin

Magic is a scholarly pursuit, and most scholarly texts in the Deryni world are written in Latin, particularly those composed by religious scholars. Any serious student of Arcane Lore needs to study Latin, and possibly other languages as well. Latin is also commonly spoken in ritual (see Ritual, p. XX). When working from a magical text or performing a ritual with a heavy reliance on Latin, the Gamemaster may want to consider the task a Combined Skill Use (p. XX), using the lesser of the character's Magic skill level and Latin skill level.

Meditation

Although it is not a skill for performing magic per se, Meditation is still a vital tool for the practitioner because it allows Deryni to attain the altered state of consciousness best suited for performing magic. A Fair or better Meditation check counts as preparation for a magical action, providing a +1 bonus (see Preparation, p. XX).

Meditation is also useful for resting and recovering from the fatigue of extensive magic use. A Mediocre Meditation check halves the time to recover from fatigue (p. XX) and four hours of meditation counts as a full night's sleep for rest and recovery.

At the Gamemaster's discretion, meditating can also serve as a supporting skill when trying to figure out some puzzle or problem. Clearing and quieting the mind can enable the character be more receptive to perceiving the answer, and provides a +1 bonus to the appropriate skill.

Mind—Control

Many fear the infamous Deryni power to usurp the will of others and corrupt them mind and soul. In truth, Mind-Control is far more difficult to achieve than most believe, and is used sparingly by ethical Deryni.

Establishing control requires the user to be in rapport with the subject (although the subject need not be willing, see *Rapport*, p. XX). This means the user must already be inside the subject's shields. The Deryni extends control by making an opposed Mind-Control check against the higher of the subject's Willpower or the Shields skill (if the subject is another Deryni). If successful, the subject is under Mind-Control. If the victim wins, that attempt is resisted but the Deryni may try to exert control again. Exerting and resisting Mind-Control is Tiring, so such mental struggles can quickly Exhaust both parties.

A subject under Mind-Control is in a deep trance and follows the controller's commands (which can be given verbally or via rapport or Mind Speech). Orders that strongly contradict the subject's nature or self interest require another Opposed roll. If the subject wins the opposed role, he or she can resist the order but this does not break the control.

Maintaining Mind-Control requires concentration, so any distraction may break the controller's control. The Gamemaster may require Willpower checks for the Deryni to maintain control over his subject under difficult conditions.

Compulsions

Deryni can use Mind-Control to implant commands or compulsions, which are activated at a later time. To plant the command, the Deryni makes a Mind-Control check. The result determines the Difficulty level of the Willpower check to resist the compulsion when it is activated later.

Control Triggers

Once in control of a subject's mind, a Deryni can implant control "triggers" that make it easier to control that subject in the future. This is regarded as a Fair Mind-Control task. If successful, the controller receives a +1 bonus to any skill check required to re-establish control of that subject and doesn't need to bypass Shields.

Memory Alteration

Mind-Control can alter a subject's memories by blurring certain recollections or replacing actual memories with fabrications. If the controller wins a contested roll of Mind-Control versus the subject's Willpower, he can blur or alter memories of specific events. Altering each particular set of memories is a Tiring task and requires a new Opposed roll; extensive memory alteration can be Exhausting. The rolled result is also the Difficulty level to discover the alterations using Mind-Reading and undo them using Mind-Control. (The GM can assume a Difficulty level of Fair if she's not sure how successful the Deryni was in altering the memories.)

Mind-Reading

Perhaps the best known — and most feared — Deryni power is the ability to read minds, and with good reason, since few humans can prevent Deryni from reading their thoughts and learning their innermost secrets. They would perhaps be less afraid if they knew that Mind-Reading, or Mind-Seeing as it is sometimes known, almost always requires physical contact, at least the first time a Deryni tries to touch a particular mind.

When the user wishes to establish contact with the subject, he makes a contested roll of Mind-Reading versus Willpower. Success allows the Deryni to read the subject's thoughts. A rolled degree of +1 or more allows access to the subject's memories as well. A successful Mind-Reading check is also required to establish a rapport (p. XX).

Mind-Ripping

If a Deryni subject resists a Mind-Reading attempt with his Shields, the controller can try to force his mental probes into the other's mind. This is not always done to harm a person. For example, sometimes it is necessary for a Healer to breach a patient's shields by force if the patient is unwilling or unable to do drop them. The ultimate intent in that case is benevolent; to heal whatever damage there is so that the patient will regain health and control.

Even if an unethical Deryni forces his way into a victim's mind, he may only be interested in obtaining information or taking control, and while it may cause the victim extreme discomfort, it does not mean the damage to the victim will be permanent.

Magic and Animals

Deryni mind-powers can affect animals as well as humans, although animals have simpler minds, which are in some ways easier to influence and harder in other ways. Still, Deryni can use their powers to charm and gentle beasts, both wild and domestic. Indeed, many Deryni with the Hidden Heritage Gift (and Humans with Power) are noted for their uncanny knack with animals even before they discover their true Gifts.

Mind-Reading and Mind-Speech can be considered a supporting skill for abilities like Animal Handling, providing a +1 bonus from the insights it grants into the animal's mind and the ability to better communicate the handler's intent.



"Mind-ripping" is the most extreme force, an agonizing, purely destructive act that leaves the victim either dead or totally mentally incapable, and it is not reversible. Even the most ruthless Deryni may shrink from doing that if they have a scruple or two left. See *Shields* (p. XX)

Death Reading

Deryni trained in Arcane Lore can actually Mind-See the memories of the recently deceased. The mind becomes chaotic after death, as memories fragment and vanish. A mind-seer who performs a Death Reading shortly after death (no more than a few hours) can still retrieve some recollections including, most likely, the experience at the moment of death itself.

A Death reading is at least Fair Difficulty, higher if the subject has been dead for any length of time: Good for more than an hour, Great for more than a few hours, Superb for up to a day, Legendary for more than a day. Longer than that and there is nothing to be read from the deceased. Death Readings are Tiring, and may be Exhausting in particularly difficult or traumatic circumstances.

Memory Assumption

Esoteric texts like the *Protocols of Orin* (see p. XX) discuss techniques for assuming the memories of another person through a combination of Arcane Lore and Mind-Reading. In effect, the Deryni becomes the other person, or a melding of the subject and his own identity. The process has two parts: taking on the memories, and then integrating them into his own mind.

Taking on the memories requires a combined Mind-Reading and Arcane Lore check and is considered a Tiring task. The roll is opposed if the subject is alive; otherwise it is a Death Reading (see above). Integrating another's memories involves a deep meditative trance and a Great ritual that requires Arcane Lore and several hours to prepare. It is an Exhausting task. Once complete, the Deryni can access the subject's integrated memories as if they were his own, allowing for a near-perfect impersonation that can fool even another Deryni's Mind-Reading.

It is vital to integrate assumed memories quickly. Each day that goes without integrating the memories is considered a Tiring task — one that mere rest cannot recover from. If the Deryni waits too long, his mind may collapse and he risks madness and even death. The same is true if the integration ritual fails and he passes out from Exhaustion, unable to cope with the foreign memories any longer.

Mind—Speech

Just as Mind-Reading involves peering into others' minds, Mind-Speech is the Deryni ability to "speak" to the minds of others. Like Mind-Reading, Mind-Speech usually requires physical contact initially, although familiar minds can be contacted from farther away with time and effort. Once the Deryni is in contact with the subject, Mind-Speech requires a roll only if the subject tries to resist, in which case the character must make a contested roll of Mind-Speech and Willpower.

Once a Deryni has touched the mind of another person, subsequent uses of Mind-Speech become easier. Deryni who are familiar with one another can use Mind-Speech without physical contact, although the greater the distance the more difficult it is. Generally, it is a Mediocre Mind-Speech Difficulty for short distances, Fair for line of sight distance, and Good or higher for further distances. When one Deryni calls to another with Mind-Speech, the other Deryni must accept the link before communication may occur.

Mind-Speech is at least as rapid as normal speech; essentially the participants project their thoughts to each other. As in normal conversation, it is possible to lie or evade using Mind-Speech.

Rapport

Using Mind-Speech and Mind-Reading in conjunction, Deryni can establish rapport with other minds. This is a state of deep mental sharing. Deryni in rapport can share thoughts, memories, and feelings, and communicate effortlessly, as if they shared one mind. Establishing rapport requires both skills of Mind-Speech and Mind-Reading. It is possible to force a rapport but Deryni consider this extremely unethical and a deep personal violation (see Mind-Ripping, p. XX).

Rapport is often used as a prelude to more advanced magical work, particularly deep forms of meditation, trance, and healing, as well as Mind-Control (p. XX).



Move Objects

Although physical effects are often more difficult to achieve, Deryni can learn to move objects with their minds, which can prove useful for a number of things.

Generally, the magical ability to move objects is limited to fairly small things. A Deryni can levitate a flagon, dagger, or clay pot. This requires a great expenditure of energy, and anything much heavier would require help from others. Multiple Deryni can team together to move a larger/heavier object, however; for example, Michon de Courcy's pallbearers moved his coffin in this way. Move Objects' effective Strength is based on Power, but on a scale of about a tenth of a person's physical Strength. (For experienced ***Fudge*** players, Move Objects has Scale –6 Strength at a level equal to the user's Power attribute. See the ***Fudge*** rules, available at www.fudgerpg.com, for more information.)

Deflecting Arrows

Move Objects can deflect arrows in flight, either toward or away from their target. A Deryni archer with the opportunity to use magic can use Move Objects as a supporting skill for an Archery check, providing a +1 bonus. Likewise, he can use Move Objects to knock arrows off course, by making an Opposed roll against the archer. Success means the arrow goes wide and misses. Even failure may lower the relative degree of the Archery check by putting the arrow off target, turning a bull's-eye into a graze, for example (see Magic in Combat, p. XX).

Opening Locks

A Deryni can combine Move Objects and Casting to open most locks (see Casting, p. XX). A character uses Move Objects skill to pick the lock, with a +2 bonus for the superior access and insight into the lock's inner workings. This allows even untrained Deryni (Poor skills) to open most locks easily.

Heart-Stopping

Arcane Lore teaches a technique for using mind over matter to kill. The Deryni reaches out and magically "clutches" the victim's heart, causing a fatal heart attack. Roll the lower of Arcane Lore or Move Objects, which is opposed by the victim's Willpower. If the attacker wins, the victim is Near Death, and dies shortly thereafter. Fortunately, this technique is entirely ineffective against anyone with active Shields. To use it against another Deryni, the attacker must first overcome the target's shields, either battering them down or (more likely) through treachery, such as drugging the target with merasha (as Charissa did with King Brion).

Shields

Without Shields, Deryni would be as helpless against magic as humans are. While Deryni have their shields raised, other Deryni cannot use Mind-Reading or any other invasive magic against them. Shields do not protect a Deryni from Truth-Reading, and an attacker with greater power or skill can overcome them. Shields inhibit, but do not prevent Healing; Healers can work around them, but it's easier with the patient's full cooperation, or at least lack of resistance.

Deryni shields are normally not visible, although they can be made so (see *The Color of Magic,* p. XX). Other Deryni may be able to see them when Casting, although this can be countered by making one's shields transparent to even Deryni senses (an Opposed roll of Shields vs. Casting). Avoiding detection is harder when *actively* using Shields, as there's a faint psychic "snap" associated with shields being raised. Once raised, shields require no effort to maintain and protect the Deryni from mental intrusion unless the invader actively seeks to tear down or overwhelm his opponent's shields.

Breaking Down Shields

It is possible, although difficult, to breach through someone's Shields. This requires an Opposed roll of Mind-Reading and Shields. If the attacker wins, add his Power to the relative degree and subtract the defender's Power. Read the result as damage to the defender's Shields as though this were physical combat (see *Wounds*, p. XX). Once the Shields are Incapacitated, they collapse. This sort of violation may inflict lasting harm. The victim must make a Willpower check with Good Difficulty; failure means he acquires some mental Fault as a result.

Attempting to break down someone's Shields, or resisting such an attempt, is Tiring. One side or the other may be Exhausted before achieving success. Because of this and the lasting psychological effects, most attackers prefer other methods of getting around a Deryni's shields, such as trickery and *merasha*. (See *Mind-Ripping*.)

Spellcasting

The Spellcasting skills govern the ability to use various spells. Common spells include producing handfire, setting wards, attuning objects, conjuring flames, and more. See *Basic Spells,* p. XX, for examples.

The Spellcasting skill can be raised during character creation with points applied to Magic skills. Any Deryni with Formal Magical Training (p. XX) has a default level of Poor in this skill, and adds +1 to the skill level purchased. Other Deryni have a default level of Terrible with basic Spellcasting. (See *Chapter 6: Character Creation* for more information.)

Spellcasting is particularly potent when used in combination with Arcane Lore. A Deryni mage with the right knowledge can change the weather, observe events at great distances, and even change their appearance. See *Advanced Spells,* p. XX, for examples of advanced magic combining Arcane Lore with Spellcasting.

Legends whisper of mighty spells that have been lost to time. See *Lost Magic and Forbidden Lore,* p. XX.

The Truth and Nothing but...

Gathering information is a common use for Deryni magic. When a Deryni successfully reads another's mind, scans his surroundings, or otherwise gains information through magic, the Gamemaster is faced with the question of just how much information the character receives from his endeavor.

For Truth-Reading, the GM might use an index card with "Truth" written on one side and "Lie" written on the other. While roleplaying the questioning with the nonplayer character being Truth-Read, the GM holds up the index card with the appropriate side facing the player while she speaks for the NPC.

With other Deryni powers, it can be more difficult to decide just how much information to reveal. The Gamemaster needs to provide enough information to move the story along (or to add "flavor" to the narration) without revealing too much. Keep in mind that Deryni do not use abilities like Mind-Reading casually. It usually requires physical contact, and most people are not likely to cooperate willingly when Deryni try to probe their thoughts. Shields protect Deryni from casual Mind-Reading. Death-Triggers (p. XX) may prevent Deryni from getting any information from prisoners.

Spellcasting is sometimes referred to as "Operative Magic" in treatises on Deryni rituals. For the details of spells and spellcasting, see *Spells* on p. XX.

Truth-Reading

Deryni have the ability to determine when someone is lying. There are limitations, however. Truth-Reading does not detect lies of omission or misdirection, nor does it reveal the actual truth. The questioner must ask the right questions. Observation, knowledge of the facts, and keeping a close eye on the responses can help fill in the gaps. Truth-Reading is also based on what the subject believes to be true. For example, it will not reveal a horse is stolen if the person believes it was purchased from a reputable dealer.

Unlike Mind-Reading, Truth-Reading is a passive ability, requiring no contact with the subject's mind. This makes it difficult for even a Deryni to determine if someone is Truth-Reading him. Shields do not protect against Truth-Reading, either; the only defense is to not answer questions when you suspect you are being read.

Truth-Say

Truth-Say involves compelling a subject to speak the truth. It is a combination of Truth-Reading and Mind-Control, and uses the lesser of the two skill levels in an Opposed roll against Willpower. Shields protect other Deryni against Truth-Say, but this technique is quite effective against humans. Using or resisting Truth-Say is Tiring. If the user wins the Opposed roll, the subject must answer questions truthfully. At the GM's option, certain sensitive questions may require an additional Opposed roll to force compliance. Deryni sometimes set Death-Triggers to prevent Truth-Say from forcing someone to reveal information (see Death-Triggers, p. XX).

Spells

Spells are particular applications of magical power, either through advanced uses of innate or basic magical abilities or through more advanced Magic skills. Spells are governed by the Spellcasting skill. Basic spells cover the fundamentals, abilities that most Deryni learn to master. Advanced spells are the abilities of true Deryni adepts and require a combination of skill in Spellcasting and Arcane Lore.

Basic Spells

All Deryni have a default level of Terrible in the Spellcasting skill. Basic spells are just that — simple magic most Deryni learn as part of their basic education. Those with the Formal Magical Training Gift have a default level of Poor, and add +1 to their skill level if they spend points on the Spellcasting skill during character creation.

Activation

Many magical tools — such as ward cubes or transfer Portals — require activation by a mind trained to do so. Deryni trained in Spellcasting learn how to activate and use these tools. (See p. XX for more information.)

Attack

Spellcasting allows Deryni to channel magic power into potentially devastating attacks. Attack spells are Tiring, and so rarely used. (See *Magical Attack*, p. XX, for guidelines.)

Attunement

Deryni can "attune" objects to themselves for various purposes, as discussed in the *Magical Tools* section on p. XX.

Conjury

There are basic spells that allow Deryni to conjure things. Generally, these are mere illusions, although small feats of conjury can also produce seemingly real things, such as a coin or two, a flower, or some other small, inconsequential item. Viewers can see through conjured illusions with a Perception check versus a Difficulty level of the Spellcasting result that created the illusion.



Flame Conjuring

This useful basic spell can conjure fire, causing candles to light, for example, or kindling a hearth-fire or torch without need for flint and steel. Lighting a single candle is Difficulty level Poor, several candles or a torch is Mediocre, a dozen or more candles or a hearth fire Fair. Extinguishing fires requires the same Difficulty level as starting them. Flame Conjuring does not allow Deryni to create fire without fuel or to ignite things that are not readily flammable.

Handfire

Deryni can summon Handfire, a cold light roughly equal to that of a bright torch and usually colored according to the creator's aura (see *The Color of Magic,* p. XX). A globe of Handfire is typically about the size of a torch-flame and floats where its creator wills. Deryni use Handfire to provide light for reading, rituals, or any of the other times where humans might use a torch or lantern. Handfire is not particularly safe in post-Restoration Gwynedd. Deryni certainly do use Handfire, but usually just among themselves or non-skittish humans. For instance, Duncan rarely uses Handfire, as it might have betrayed his Deryniness to the Church

years ago with possibly deadly results.

Warding

Wards serve to safeguard a place or thing from harm and are commonly used by Deryni to protect their privacy and persons. More complex warding involving all the participants accompanies a major magical ritual. Few sensible Deryni would undertake any magic of consequence without first warding their working area.

Wards are placed on an object or more often an area, usually defined by the walls of a room or structure. They create a magical barrier that can stop any magic crossing their boundaries. To determine how much (if any) magic can breach the Wards, use an Opposed roll. Compare the result of the Spellcasting skill that set the wards (modified by +1 for the use of the wards) versus the result of the skill used to create the magic being blocked. If the Wards win the Opposed roll, they block all the magic. Otherwise, the Gamemaster determines how much magic may get through the wards, based on the Relative Degree of difference between the winning and losing rolls.

Wards can also be set to send an alarm to the Deryni when crossed or compromised. Warding is a temporary measure, lasting only a day or so, although Deryni often regularly renew wards on private sanctums and similar places. For even greater protection, Deryni make use of a Wards Major matrix or ward cubes (see p. XX). Ward cubes are most often used when an individual Deryni needs to protect something or someone for a short period of time.

Advanced Spells

Advanced spells are a combination of advanced Spellcasting knowledge and the study of Arcane Lore. Advanced Spellcasting is the province of true adepts. Such spells must be learned from another Deryni adept or found in rare esoteric texts written by great Deryni scholars and mages. It is possible (indeed, likely) that Deryni lore once consisted of many more spells than are described here, but much ancient knowledge has been lost over the centuries, particularly after the Restoration and the purges by the Council of Ramos. See *Lost Magic and Forbidden Lore*, p. XX, for more information.

Preservation (Requires Healer gift)

A preservation spell keeps dead organic matter from decaying. It is usually used to preserve corpses, particularly since embalming and refrigeration are non-existent in the Eleven Kingdoms. This spell allows a body to be preserved while lying in state (or during transportation back home to lie in state). It requires a Fair Spellcasting check to preserve the body for a few days, with a greater result extending the spell's effect an additional day per level. Healers may extend the spell's duration by pouring some of their energy into the spell. Hot and humid conditions apply a penalty of –1 or more while cold and dry conditions can provide a +1 or greater bonus. Setting — or extending — a Preservation spell is an Exhausting action.

Scrying

Scrying involves casting the senses out much further than a Deryni's usual range (see *Casting,* p. XX). Scrying requires a suitable medium, like a crystal, mirror, candle flame, or even the dark surface of a goblet of wine or a basin of blackened water. The caster sees visions of the subject and the area around it, although these are often vague and unclear. The Difficulty level is based on the connection between the caster and the subject. Having a personal item (lock of hair, favorite piece of jewelry or clothing, etc.) is Fair Difficulty, having something the subject has handled recently is Good Difficulty, and having no real connection is Great Difficulty. Distance may also affect the chance of success, with distances over a few hundred yards bearing a –1 penalty and those over a few miles being at –2. Scrying is Tiring.



Shape-Changing

Shape-Changing Magic allows a Deryni to alter his appearance or that of others. Shape-Changing requires a Great Spellcasting check and transforms the subject's appearance to be as the caster wishes. The new form can duplicate an existing person's appearance, so long as the caster is familiar with it. Most shape-changes require a "model" to work from (a Deryni mage putting the features of one person onto the face of another, for example). Shape-Changing is Tiring. While the spell requires only a modicum of concentration to maintain, it does draw energy from the caster. Maintaining the spell for 8 hours counts as a Tiring action (above and beyond the Tiring action of initially casting the spell).

Deryni Magic

Shape-Changing can only provide different *human* appearances, and changes in overall mass are impossible. Despite legends, Deryni cannot Shape-Change into animals or other beasts. Using Shape-Changing on others requires a combined use of Arcane Lore, Spellcasting, and Body-Control, using the lowest level of those skills.

Sympathetic Magic

Sympathetic magic is based on the principle that "like creates like." The primary example from the Chronicles involves Ariella working weather magic: she sprinkles water on a map of Gwynedd to summon rain to bog down Cinhil's army and dampen their spirits. In general, sympathetic magic attempts to influence the course of otherwise random events (such as weather, the growth of crops, the melting of snow in mountain passes, and so forth). The Gamemaster is encouraged to allow players to come up with their own uses for sympathetic magic, keeping in mind that its effects usually appear to be random chance. Such spells cannot produce impossible effects, although they sometimes create improbable ones. The result of the Spellcasting check determines the outcome; usually at least Fair level is required to have much effect at all.



Lost Magic and Forbidden Lore

It is clear that in the world of the Eleven Kingdoms much arcane lore remains hidden in ancient scrolls and books, or in the traditions of certain religious sects or houses (like the Michaelines, Gabrilites, Knights of the Anvil, and Servants of Saint Camber). Although the Camberian Council has worked to preserve magical knowledge, even they do not know everything their predecessors once knew. There are always lost magical secrets waiting to be found, and lore that previous generations have declared forbidden because of the danger to body, mind, or soul.

A Deryni adept wishing to acquire this ancient power must seek out esoteric texts and scrutinize them for hints of what might be possible and glimpses of the rituals involved (see *Deryni Esoteric Texts,* p. XX). Camber of Culdi's extensive research recovered some of this forbidden lore, but it has since been lost again.

Each spell must be learned as a separate skill, which requires exensive study over weeks or months or even years (see *Character Development,* pp. XX-XX). Such powerful and dangerous spells should not be attempted unless the Deryni mage has the Spellcasting and Arcane Lore skills at Good or better. Casting these spells requires combining the mage's skill in the specific spell with the Spellcasting and Arcane Lore skills (see *Combined Skill Use,* p. XX). The minimum Difficulty level for one of these spells is Good, and some spells are much more difficult. Below are some examples of potent arcane spells.

Summoning

Summoning is the art of calling creatures to serve the sorcerer. It is considered dubious magic at best, a black art by more conservative Deryni. The full range of creatures one can summon is unclear. In *Deryni Rising,* Charissa summons a stenrect crawler to menace Kelson. Lyfangs and caradots are also mentioned as legendary beasts summoned by Deryni sorcerers. The quasi-real creatures summoned during the Duel Arcane between Charissa and Kelson may also be examples of this art. The Gamemaster should feel free to come up with other suitably sinister creatures conjured up by sorcerers to do their bidding, and to keep this power out of the hands of the player characters (assuming the ethical implications alone aren't enough to do so). Or ignore magical summonings entirely — villainous human opponents can be just as menacing as supernatural creatures, and often moreso!

Binding Souls

One of the darkest magics known to the Deryni is that of binding the souls of the deceased, either to the corpse or the place where they died. This is a terrible (and possibly eternal) torment, considered anathema by all ethical Deryni. Such a soul-binding is a feat of advanced Spellcasting (Great or higher Difficulty level) and can only be undone in a similar fashion. At the GM's discretion, a priest may also be able to free a bound soul with the proper prayers and a Power or Willpower check.

The Forbidden Spell

There is ancient Deryni lore that refers to "the Forbidden Spell," an attempt to cheat death through the magic for binding souls. The spell binds the user's soul to the physical body, which keeps it from moving on. There is the potential for reintegrating body and soul at a later time, although there are no records of anyone doing so successfully. Ariella attempted the spell when pierced by Alister Cullen's sword — but she failed. Camber may have succeeded at it, although this is not completely clear. This spell may be responsible for Camber's unique "status" and his involvement in later events (… or

perhaps the Defensor Hominium really is a saint). Although not as heinous as Soul-Binding, the matter of the Forbidden Spell is definitely a moral gray area at best, given that it keeps a soul from its final judgment. The Forbidden Spell is regarded as a Superb feat of Spellcasting, at the very least.

Other Secrets

Legends suggest that Deryni of old knew many other magical secrets, that they could raise the dead, move massive stones, walk the hidden paths between places (perhaps without use of Transfer Portals), and much more. How much of this is based in truth and how much is merely legend no one knows. Gamemasters should feel free to create and introduce their own unique spells and secret magical lore in their *Deryni Adventure Game* stories.

Rituals

Many uses of magic are fairly simple and straightforward, involving no more than a moment's concentration. Ritual, on the other hand, involves considerable time and preparation, and often requires several Deryni to cooperate and create effects greater than they could on their own. A Deryni's Arcane Lore skill determines the extent of his knowledge of magic rituals. Humans can study Arcane Lore as well, and participate in rituals even though they cannot actually cast magic.

Ritual Actions

There is nothing innately magical about ritual itself. Rather, rituals are simply a way to raise and focus energy. The structure of a ritual also helps to ensure that the participants enter the proper frame of mind and that the magical working is not disturbed.

Ritual Difficulty

Each ritual has a Difficulty level, just like any other action. Ritual Difficulty levels, however, take into account certain factors: they assume the ritual is performed properly, for one, and that all the usual precautions are observed. Ritual Difficulty level also assumes the ritual is performed by a group of two or more Deryni. Lacking any of these elements may make a ritual more difficult or even impossible.

Note: For experienced ***Fudge*** players, think of ritual as taking place on a different Scale from more routine magic. Performing the ritual allows the participants to operate at that Scale, so the Difficulty level is similar to individual magic, even though the effects are greater.

Ritual Modifiers

The modifiers for magical actions (p. XX) apply to rituals as well. Preparation for a ritual may involve going beyond the usual steps before doing magic and could include fasting, holding a vigil, extensive preparation of the physical working area, and detailed planning and rehearsal of the ritual itself. Preparation for a ritual provides the usual +1 bonus.

Conversely, hasty or impromptu rituals, without even a minimal preparation, suffer a –1 penalty due to the makeshift conditions.

Ritual Fatigue

Roleplaying Rituals

Rituals are an important dramatic element in the Deryni world and should be in the Deryni Adventure Game as well. Do not allow rituals in your game to become simply an exercise in calculating modifiers and making die rolls or you will cheat your players out of a big part of the fun of playing Deryni!

This is one of the reasons why the ritual guidelines (and those for magic in general in the *Deryni Adventure Game*) are so broad and general. They require a fair amount of Gamemaster and player input, but they make it quick and easy to handle most things during the game.

Encourage players to play out the rituals, including the preparation, Quarter calls, and invocations. If you wish, you can write rituals out beforehand, giving the players parts to read, or allow them to design their own rituals. Enhance the atmosphere by roleplaying the rituals by candlelight, if you wish. Make them fun and atmospheric! Ritual is a magical experience and roleplaying it should be, too.

This is not to say that every ritual in the game has to be an amateur theatre production. Try to balance the drama and atmosphere of ritual with the rules and mechanics of the game. Try not to allow one to overwhelm the other and you can ensure your players have fun while creating a dramatic story.

The fatigue from any magical action affects all participants in a ritual. If the ritual is tiring, everyone taking part has effectively performed a Tiring action. This includes the application of effort (p. XX). Everyone in the ritual must apply the effort to gain the bonus; otherwise there is no effect. This is an area in which human assistants can aid in a ritual, by providing energy to augment the participants' stamina (see *Energy Augmentation,* p. XX).

Ritual Structure



Rituals follow a particular format, traditional in Deryni lore. This format is important, since it is the structure of ritual that provides its usefulness as a focus for power and energy. The traditional format is as follows:

1. Preparation of the working space: lighting candles, exorcism by water and salt, asperging (sprinkling with holy water), censing (burning incense), etc.
2. Casting the circle
3. Invocation of the Quarters: In traditional Deryni rituals, the archangels of the quarters are invoked: Raphael in the East, Michael in the South, Gabriel in the West, and Uriel in the North.
4. Statement of Intent, sometimes incorporated into the Invocation above.
5. Invocation of the Deity for guidance and protection.
6. The Ritual Working
7. Mediation or "grounding" of excess power (making sure the bound energies dissipate harmlessly).
8. Dismissal of the Quarters.
9. Cutting of the circle and ending the ritual.

Leaving out steps of a ritual applies the –1 penalty for rushed or makeshift conditions and may make the ritual impossible, at the Gamemaster's discretion. Leaving out certain steps, notably casting the circle and mediating or "grounding" excess energies, may also have some dangerous side-effects, ranging from additional fatigue to whatever magical backlash the Gamemaster decides to apply. Most Deryni know better than to skimp when it comes to performing rituals properly!

Ritual Applications

Rituals in the *Deryni Adventure Game* have two main uses. Magical rituals are used when performing acts of magic that require extensive preparation and assistance. Initiation rituals are used when bestowing Gifts upon the subject of the ritual, usually Assumed Powers, although the ritual of ordination — which grants priestly Authority — can be considered an initiation ritual as well (and carries its own special brand of magic). The same can be said of knighting rituals and the crowning of kings. A successful initiation ritual bestows a Gift on the subject (a title, authority, etc.) and doesn't necessarily involve Deryni magic.

Sample Rituals

To illustrate how rituals work in the game, here are some examples from the novels and how they might play out in *Deryni Adventure Game* terms:

Scrying With the Haldana Necklace

To discover the strength and location of Ariella's forces, Camber and his associates perform a ritual to scry upon her. They use the Haldana Necklace — which Ariella wore often — as their link to her.

Joram, Rhys, Evaine, and Alister Cullen cast the wards around their place of working. Camber then places the necklace in a plain silver bowl of water, adding a liquid to blacken the water. Joram sets incense to smoldering, so the smoke carries across the surface of the water. Camber then goes into a trance, reaching out in search of Ariella's mind.

The Gamemaster sets the base Difficulty level at Superb. Fortunately, Camber has Superb Arcane Lore and Spellcasting. Camber's player generates a rolled result of Superb, so Camber just meets the Difficulty level. He sees images of Ariella's child, confirming that her child has been born and thrives. He tries again. The rolled result is Superb once more, giving

Camber an image of Ariella working her weather magic over a map of Gwynedd. The GM rules that each roll in the ritual is a Tiring action.

Camber is beginning to feel the fatigue now, so the player tries one more time. This time, the rolled result is Superb+2! The Gamemaster tells the player that Camber senses the locations of Ariella's forces. However, the GM has been secretly rolling each time to see if Ariella notices the scrying and this time she does. She tries to surge back across the link to destroy Camber's mind! The player makes a Shields check to fend off the sorceress' attack, then breaks the link, ending the ritual. Fortunately, the party has learned what they needed to know.

Arilan Creates a Transfer Portal

Urgently needing to confer with the Camberian Council, Bishop Denis Arilan enlists the aid of Kelson, Morgan, and Duncan MacLain to create a transfer Portal to take him to the Council's chambers. Arilan also asks Prince Nigel, Bishop Cardiel, and Warin de Grey to contribute energy to the ritual, although they will not otherwise participate.

Once the space is prepared, Morgan casts Wards Major using his ward cubes. Then Arilan raises the energy to perform the ritual. The makeshift ritual preparations provide a –1 penalty, Arilan uses the additional energy provided by the humans in the ritual to make up for it. He has Great Arcane Lore and Spellcasting skills and the Gamemaster has set the Difficulty level at Superb, so a rolled result of +1 or better is necessary. To further improve their chances, Arilan's player decides to make the ritual Exhausting rather than Tiring (another +1 bonus). Arilan's player gets a +0 roll, success! A wind blows through the tent as the Portal comes into being. The participants are exhausted, but their plans are ready to move ahead.

Cinhil's Power Assumption

Camber, Joram, Rhys, and Evaine ward the chapel for their working. They have made extensive preparations for this rite, which grants them with a +1 preparation bonus. The Gamemaster has set the Difficulty level of the ritual at Great. With Camber's Superb skill and guidance, the ritual goes off without a hitch. Cinhil drinks the magically-charged wine, catalyzing his Haldane potential, although the trigger for that latent potential will not appear until King Imre strikes at the Haldane heir through treachery most foul....

Magic in Combat

Even the simplest magic requires focus and concentration, and distractions — like those on a battlefield — can be fatal. Therefore, Deryni tend to use magic in combat only under certain circumstances, and only for certain things.

It is easier to use magic in the back ranks, away from the immediate fighting. This is particularly true while mounted because the caster is better able to see the whole battlefield and still be far enough away from the action to allow for the necessary concentration. Deryni in these situations may try working magic, but even then they leave themselves vulnerable to archers or to a concerted charge by the enemy to reach them.



Most "battle magic" tends to be either showy or very subtle. Deryni may flare their shields, creating a halo or aura of light to impress and intimidate the enemy. Illusions are also common: conjuring walls of fire, roiling mist, or cracks in the earth. However, these things have no substance. They may startle or intimidate unprepared foes, but can do little against a determined enemy (especially one that has been warned to watch out for such magical trickery).

Subtle battle magic usually involves influencing objects, particularly the flight of arrows. With concentration, a Deryni

can turn aside arrows so they go wide of their target or nudge them so they are on target. Again, this sort of concentration is almost impossible to maintain in the thick of battle, but it is an option for Deryni archers who are away from the main battle or defending themselves in the open. It is also a difficult feat when more than a few arrows are involved; deflecting a full volley of deadly shafts is beyond the ability of most Deryni.

The other sort of "battle magic" employed by Deryni is direct magical combat. This ranges from the formal Duel Arcane to exchanges of spells on the battlefield by Deryni sorcerers. Such magical struggles, while spectacular, tend to be limited solely to Deryni opponents, and have little effect on the outcome of great battles.

Magical Attack

Sorcerers can fight with weapons other than steel — they can wield the power of magic to strike at each other directly.

A magical attack is a focused blast of pure Power launched against a foe. It is treated as a ranged attack, using the Spellcasting skill. A magical attack can only be opposed by another mage using Spellcasting (to cast a counter-spell or set wards) or Shields (to block it).

Even if the defender loses the Opposed roll, some of the attack may be blocked or deflected. The amount of Power that gets through to the defender depends on the Relative Degree of difference between the winning and losing Opposed rolls (see p. XX). Losing the Opposed roll by one level will leave the defender stunned. Greater losses result in greater damage. Magical attacks primarily cause psychic damage — more than enough to kill, in some cases — but can also cause physical damage.

If the defender wins the Opposed roll, he will not be harmed by the attack. However, bystanders may not be so fortunate. That much energy has to go *somewhere*, and unless the defender is able to mediate or ground the energy it may strike those around him. If the defender and attacker are evenly matched (the Opposed roll results in a tie), the defender will escape harm but collateral damage is inevitable. The greater the Relative Degree by which the defender wins the roll, the more successful the defender's attempt to ground the energy from the attack.

While a powerful sorcerer can overwhelm a less powerful or skilled opponent, it is difficult to harm an equally-skilled and powerful foe with a direct magical attack. Open magical attacks are also Tiring, and a sure giveaway of a Deryni's true nature. Most Deryni prefer to avoid direct magical attacks, favoring subtle trickery or the more formal challenge of the Duel Arcane (which also has the virtue of safely containing the magical battle).

Sword Spells

On two occasions in the history as we know it, Deryni in dire need have channeled all their magical power into their swords for a desperate final strike against a foe. So powerful was the force that the hilts of the blades were twisted and charred by the energies unleashed. Since both combatants were mortally wounded and died shortly afterward, this is clearly an option of last resort. Since both events involved Michaeline Knights (Alister Cullen and Jebediah of Alcara), it is possible the technique was specific to that Order. It may have been lost following the Order's dissolution, although some Michaeline secrets still abide with the Knights of the Anvil. (See p. XX).

Such "sword spells" are essentially a dying effort (p. XX) applied to a magical attack. If the GM wishes to allow characters in the *Deryni Adventure Game* to perform a similar "final strike," it is probably best to just fudge it and say the hero valiantly sacrifices his life in order to strike down his foe (accompanied by a suitable dramatic description, of course.) Alister Cullen pierced the sorceress Ariella through with his magically-charged sword, while Jebediah unleashed a blast of power from his own blade to fell his foe. Such a valiant sacrifice should not be dependent on a die roll for success; if the player is willing to sacrifice his or her character in the name of a good story, it is only fair to ensure the hero's dying effort is a success!

The Duel Arcane

Few feats of Deryni magic evoke as much awe as the Duel Arcane, which pits power against power, skill against skill. Surrounded by a dome-shaped ward, the energies of the sorcerous struggle are contained and focused solely on defeating one's opponent.

Duels Arcane follow a strict set of rules based on traditions that existed even before there was a Camberian Council to adjudicate them. A Duel Arcane allows Deryni to test themselves against opponents in a controlled situation, in much the same way as sword duel or trial by combat differs from a brawl or combat on the open battlefield.

The Challenge

The first step of a Duel Arcane is the challenge itself. If the challenged Deryni chooses not to accept, the challenger is assumed to have won the right of the claim. Once accepted, the challenged Deryni chooses the time and place for the duel. However, the challenger may demand satisfaction then and there. When Charissa challenged Kelson, he tried to put it off, but she refused to wait, and her presence and that of her guards in the cathedral made it impossible for the Coronation to proceed.

The challenge contains the terms of the duel. Most duels are fought to a clear victory, where one side is Exhausted or submits. Duels to the death are rarer and frowned upon among Deryni in general, but some feel strongly enough about their cause — and their abilities — to risk all. In times when the Camberian Council exists — and is known to the participants — either side may request adjudication by a representative chosen by the Camberian Council. Important duels may have up to three judges, a determination left up to the Council.

Camberian Council rules also stipulate who may be challenged. Deryni who are not full-blooded are exempt from challenges, to prevent the strong from preying upon the weak. The Council may declare anyone else exempt, either in whole or in part (as they did when they ordered Charissa not to challenge Kelson.) They may also grant exceptions the other way, as they did with Alaric Morgan, treating certain "half-breeds" as full Deryni and therefore eligible for challenge.

Warding

Once the challenge has been issued and accepted, the duelists meet at the appointed time and place and raise the wards (a Mediocre combined action of Arcane Lore and Spellcasting.) Generally both participants do this in turn, although only one may do so if need be. Formal poetic phrasing is sometimes used in the warding phase and throughout the rest of the duel, but the traditional stanzas are mostly for show and provide no real benefits. The wards are determined by the terms of the duel — for a mortal duel, one side must die before the wards can be lowered at all.

Testing

Once the wards are in place, the challenged gains the right of first strike, and casts the first spell. A man is expected to yield this right to a woman, although this rarely makes a difference in the outcome because the first exchanges are "testing spells" designed to feel out the scope of an opponent's capabilities. Neither side rolls dice at this time; instead, the two players simply compare raw Spellcasting skill and Power level. After a few testing spells on each side, it will be clear whose abilities are greater, or if they are evenly matched.



The Duel

After the testing spells, the duel begins in earnest. The duelists trade spell and counter-spell (Opposed Spellcasting checks). A player who offers a good dramatic description for a spell or counter-spell may receive a +1 bonus on the roll. Each exchange is a Tiring action.

The spells used in a duel arcane take the form of attacking creatures or items sent to do harm to the opponent, and the counter-spell is one that defeats that particular attacking form. The creatures or their counters are not actually summoned; energy is simply shaped into a visible form, much like an illusion.

Whoever wins the opposed Spellcasting check scores a blow. A tie results in no damage. Losing the Opposed roll by one level causes the psychic equivalent of a Hurt, leaving the victim Stunned. A Relative Degree of 2 leaves the loser Very Stunned, etc. (see p. XX). (If you are using the Advanced Combat rules in Chapter 8, see p. XX for the damage track, which is the same for physical or psychic attacks. To determine the extent of the damage, take the Relative Degree of the Opposed roll and modify it based

on the attacker's Power, in the same way Strength modifies a physical attack).

Duelists trade spells until one is too Exhausted to continue, incapacitated, or killed, depending on the terms of the duel. A duelist killed in a Duel Arcane vanishes, leaving no trace behind, although the nature of the disappearance of the vanquished varies according to the duel and the victor's final spell.

The Rush of Victory

The winner of a Duel Arcane immediately recovers one level of fatigue (going from Exhausted to merely Tired, or Tired to fully recovered) due to the rush of victory and the flow of magical power within the circle. This gives the victor a slight edge over a vanquished foe who chooses not to abide by the terms of the duel (assuming the duel was not to the death).

Human Magic

Although magic is considered the sole province of the Deryni, and most of those who practice magic belong to that race, there are examples of humans with magical powers of their own. Some have learned magical tricks from the Deryni, while a rare and select few have been invested with Deryni-like powers. This may point to some hidden potential in some or even all humans, so that the gulf between Deryni and human may not be as great or as wide as many would like to believe.

In the *Deryni Adventure Game* a human must have the Human With Power Gift (p. XX) to have a Power attribute and be allowed to invest points in Magic skills. The few humans with Power usually acquire the abilty to work magic in one of two ways: by learning magic skills (they are born with Power and can thus learn Magic skills) or through a power assumption ritual. (There's a third option, discussed in the *Deryni Who Aren't* sidebar).

Deryni Who Aren't

Occasionally there are people with Deryni-like powers who are not Deryni but who have not undergone a power assumption ritual or any sort of Deryni training. Warin de Grey is the prime example: he has shields, and the power to heal, but is not Deryni, at least according to Morgan and Duncan.

Warin claims his powers are divinely granted. But are they? No one really knows. It is possible that Morgan and Duncan are mistaken (although skilled, they do lack formal training and the experience of High Deryni). Perhaps Warin is a Human With Power who gained certain skills spontaneously in some as yet unknown way. Since Warin fades into the background after the events in High Deryni, it remains yet another mystery about the Deryni and their powers.

Ultimately, the Gamemaster decides the truth about such individuals in any given *Deryni Adventure Game*. Perhaps the character's powers are some quirk of inheritance, a long-dormant Deryni bloodline, some version of what is known as the "Haldane potential," or, perhaps, such powers truly are divinely granted….

Learning Magic Skills

A few humans have the potential to learn and develop skill in magic (the Human With Power Gift). This latent potential is rare and tends to follow human bloodlines, the most famous of whom are the Haldane Kings of Gwynedd, inheritors of the so-called "Haldane potential" for magic. Other humans have displayed similar potential, which can be brought out with magical training and experience.

In essence, a human with the Human With Power Gift has a Power attribute of Fair, but no default or innate skills like the Deryni except for Poor Shields. The human must learn *all* Magic skills independently. This usually also requires the Formal Magical Training Gift (p. XX) before the game begins, indicating the human received training from a Deryni in various Magic skills. Otherwise a Human With Power can only put one point into Magic skills. Higher levels in Truth-Reading and Shields are the most common skills such humans develop on their own.

Power Assumption Rituals

Teaching a human with potential all the skills of the Deryni is a slow process, to say the least, since humans have to learn everything from scratch, even the basic abilities Deryni take for granted. However, during the Haldane Restoration, Camber of Culdi discovered another means for conferring magical abilities onto humans with the right potential. An initiation ritual can give a subject full-blown magical skills all at once rather than requiring him to go through the tedious process of learning them.

A human who has successfully undergone a power assumption ritual has the Assumed Powers Gift (p. XX) which is essentially the equivalent of Formal Magical Training, except without the actual training. The subject simply *knows* the necessary skills, which spring to mind full-formed. This allows a Human With Power to put more than one point into Magic skills *immediately*. In the context of the game, the Gamemaster may want players to set aside points during character creation or save them up

Unique Magic Items

The Eleven Kingdoms posses some unique items with mysterious or magical properties, like the Eye of Rom and the Ring of Fire, passed down through the line of Haldane Kings and often key to their power assumption; King Cinhil's gold-washed mail, that has a strange, otherworldly, glow to it; the mysterious ward-cube altar found in the ruins under Grecotha; and others. The exact properties and origins of these items are unclear, and perhaps that is as it should be, if they are to maintain their mysterious and mystical feel.

Gamemasters should feel free to introduce the occasional unique or unusual magic item in their own *Deryni Adventure Game* stories. These items are plot devices, so they can have whatever abilities you want, keeping in mind that magic in the *Deryni* world is often subtle and mysterious. These items may include ancient artifacts (remnants of lost Caeriësse, perhaps?), Deryni-made items from ages past, or even holy relics, from the bones of saints to pieces of the True Cross to the Holy Grail itself.

for improvement, so that they can use them all at once to acquire Magic skills once the character undergoes the power assumption ritual.

There are several known cases of a power assumption rituals. Cinhil and Kelson, as adult kings, assume the full Haldane power all at one go, although this is not always the case with underage Haldane heirs. Sometimes the intent is to phase in the powers when the heir either comes of age or is crowned king. Sadly, that did not work so well in the case of Cinhil's three sons.

Kelson was unaware of his Deryni heritage when he undertook the ritual to obtain his father Brion's powers. In game terms, Kelson possessed the Deryni Gift rather than the Human With Power Gift, but the ritual still gave him full-blown Magic skills (including the ability to fight a Duel Arcane with Charissa) instantly rather than requiring months or years of training to improve his default skill levels.

Magical Tools

Although the ability to do magic is innate to the user's mind and spirit, Deryni occasionally use various tools to assist them in their magic. The trappings of ritual are an example (see *Ritual*, p. XX), but most rituals have no innate power of their own other than that provided by the participants in the ritual. Some magical tools do have innate power that makes them capable of creating greater effects than the user could achieve working without them.

Attuned Items and Seals

Deryni can "attune" items, making them sensitive to certain psychic vibrations. Signet rings are common attuned items in the chronicles. One use of attuned items is as a magical key to a lock, ward, or Portal. Merely bringing the item into contact with the lock or ward is sufficient to unlock it.

Deryni can also implant messages in items with Mind-Speech which other Deryni can then "read" using Casting. Implanting a short message is a Fair action, while reading it is a Mediocre one. Deryni often use the wax seals of mundane correspondence to carry implanted messages, where no human can detect them. Some Deryni have also discovered ancient messages implanted in stones, altars, and similar mediums that have survived for decades, even centuries. A notable example is Dom Emrys' message implanted upon St. Neot's destroyed transfer Portal, which Morgan and Duncan are able to read clearly two hundred years later.

Merasha

Deryni universally fear the drug merasha because it can rob them of their powers, leaving them as helpless as any human; more so, in fact, and because it is a common tool for those who hate Deryni and wish to destroy them.

Merasha can be introduced to the victim's system either through ingestion (typically in wine) or through a cut or scratch. Church inquisitors once used "Deryni prickers," slender needles treated with *merasha*, to test suspected Deryni. Likewise,

since the Council of Ramos, the Church of Gwynedd has secretly dosed the sacramental wine used in priestly ordinations with *merasha* specifically to weed out Deryni attempting to join the priesthood. Since it only affects Deryni, *merasha* makes an effective means of detecting them. In humans, the drug acts only as a mild sedative.

A Deryni dosed with *merasha* immediately experiences a flat, metallic taste in the mouth and severe disorientation (a –3 on all actions). He is also unable to use any Magic skills, including Shields, which quickly collapse, leaving the victim vulnerable. A Great Willpower check (made without the –3 penalty) can reduce the penalty to –1 for one action, but otherwise the victim is helpless against the drug's effects. Fairly small doses can incapacitate an adult Deryni for four to eight hours, and he will feel pretty rocky for a few hours after that due to severe nausea and headache. Nor will his powers be normal and reliable for about another 24 hours. The higher the dose, the worse the effects, and the longer they last. If a Deryni has been taken prisoner, it is likely he may receive several doses to keep him helpless. Even after the major effects wear off, the victim usually suffers from headaches and fatigue (see *Fatigue*, p. XX), requiring rest to fully recover from the after-effects.

Jeraman Crystals

Jeraman crystals are stones capable of holding a magical "charge." They are used to carry spells intended to take effect at a later time, often triggered by some particular circumstance, such as when the crystal is exposed to light. Deryni can "implant" a spell in a jeraman crystal, requiring a Fair Arcane Lore check. The spell can then be activated — once — at a later time, having its normal effect.

The one appearance of a *jeraman* crystal in the *Chronicles* was Bethane's ill-fated spell in *Deryni Checkmate*, suggesting that Poor or worse results in setting a *jeraman* can result in disaster — such as a blast of magical power at least equal in level to the original, intended, spell.

Shiral Crystals

These naturally polished honey-amber colored crystals are found in streambeds and even on the ocean shore. They have the unusual property of being sensitive to magical energies, making them useful as a focus for meditation. Anyone with Power who meditates with a shiral can cause the stone to glow faintly. Among other things, this ability can serve as a test for humans with latent Power (the Human With Power Gift). A shiral crystal provides a +1 bonus on Meditation checks, +2 for an especially large and perfect crystal.

Transfer Portals

One of the great wonders of Deryni magic is the power to cross great distances with little more than a thought through the medium of a transfer Portal. A Portal is an area, usually no more than a few feet square, that has been magically empowered to connect to other transfer Portals. Anyone with Power who stands on a transfer Portal can feel a faint tingling from it. Anyone with both Power and a level of basic Spellcasting, as well as knowledge of the coordinates of another Portal, can use that Portal to go there. This requires only a moment of concentration and a Mediocre Spellcasting check. The caster disappears from one Portal and reappears at the other, no matter how far apart they may be.

When several people wish to use a Transfer Portal at the same time, only one can activate the Portal. The others must be in rapport with the "guide," meaning Deryni must lower their Shields and allow someone else to take over if they are going to be passengers in a Portal jump. While humans cannot activate a Transfer Portal, a human in rapport with a guide can go along on a Portal jump.

This and the size of most Transfer Portals generally limit use to no more than three people at a time. While it is possible (in theory) to take an animal through a Transfer Portal, the animal must be small enough to fit in the physical space governed by the Portal. The animal would

also need to be controlled (physically or mentally) to ensure it in no way interferes with the guide's concentration.

Trap Portals

Deryni can "attune" or "trap" Portals using Spellcasting and Arcane Lore. Attuning a Portal "locks" it, so that only certain individuals can use it. A trap Portal keeps any unauthorized visitors trapped inside a ward, unable to leave the bounds of the Portal. It also locks the entry to the Portal so they cannot return the way they came.

There are rumors of more serious trap Portals, where the intruder simply does not reappear at all, but vanishes forever into the space in between. More usually, if the transfer is somehow blocked, the travelers will "bounce back," essentially remaining where they were after a brief psychic suspension in space and time.

"Unlocking" an attuned Portal or sensing a trap at a destination Portal before jumping requires a skill check (basic Spellcasting or Casting, respectively) against the level of the rolled result used to lock the Portal or set the trap. Once a trap Portal is triggered, there is nothing the victim can do except hope for rescue from the outside.

Creating Portals

Creating a Transfer Portal is a difficult and involved process, requiring a considerable amount of energy. It is a Superb ritual of Arcane Lore and Spellcasting (see *Ritual,* p. XX).

Transfer Portals are established in a particular area of the ground or floor. Deryni often use square flagstones to define the area of the Portal. A Portal cannot be placed on a "temporary" space like a carpet, which can be easily picked up and moved, although covering a Portal with a carpet or rug does not affect its function. There are reputed to be many Transfer Portals throughout the Eleven Kingdoms, created by the Deryni over the centuries, the most common in castles, noble estates, and churches (which often once held Deryni priests). The vast majority of Portal locations were kept private, with the result that information about them was lost following the death of their creators during the persecutions of Deryni after the Restoration.

Destroying Portals

Destroying a Transfer Portal requires considerable power. A Deryni must make a Superb Power check to destroy a Portal and it is an Exhausting task. Additional effort (p. XX) is often required to succeed. In the past, solitary Deryni who have had to destroy Portals have often died doing it. Safe dismantling of a Portal optimally requires at least four skilled Deryni.



Ward Cubes

While the basics of warding are part of a Deryni's training (see *Ritual,* p. XX), a set of ward cubes, or a "Wards Major matrix" as some Deryni call them, provide a potent form of magical defense. The set consists of eight cubes, four black and four white. Unlike dice, the cubes are featureless, lacking pips or other markings. They can be any size, but having a set that is approximately the size of gaming dice makes them easily portable for the character and easily accessible for the player. (Not coincidentally, black and white *Deryni Adventure Game* dice make excellent ward cube props!)

The user activates the ward cubes by placing the white ones together in a square, the black at the corners of the square, then touching and naming them in turn: *Prime, Seconde, Tierce, Quarte* for white; *Quinte, Sixte, Septime, Octave* for black. Properly done, this causes the cubes to glow faintly. The user then places