



LONG  
XVI<sup>th</sup>

Written & Designed BY Will Phillips





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## CHAPTER I

# CHARACTER CREATION

*Characters are built around a handful of core narrative hooks while abstracting away much of the minutiae of record-keeping and avoiding an overabundance of mandatory historical scholarship.*

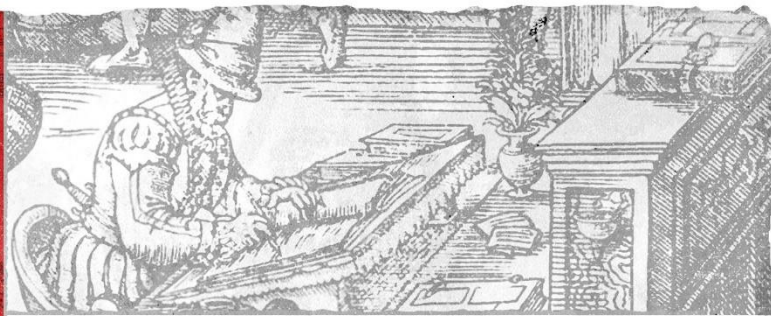


You will be able to choose the broad nature of your Character, but be warned: in the spirit of the oldest RPGs, the dice decide the details... *and they are fickle.*

## 1. Select Attributes

Your Character will have four Attributes: narrative descriptions that help place them into the historical context of the Renaissance era.

TEMPERAMENT, SOCIAL CLASS, and PROFESSION have a handful of options (again inspired by the tradition of old school games), while the factional ENTANGLEMENT will have a longer list tailored to the campaign itself.



*Attributes are broad by design: it is up the Player to flesh out the impact and meaning of each on their Character.*

See the following chapter on Attributes for details. Depending on the GM's preference, **YOU MAY SELECT YOUR CHARACTER'S ATTRIBUTES AS YOU WISH, OR YOUR GM MAY HAVE YOU ROLL D10 FOUR TIMES**, record each roll's result, and select Attributes from those results.

*Fig. 1: List of Attributes*

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**Temperament:** Overall personality based on the classical Greek model: **SANGUINE**, **CHOLERIC**, **MELANCHOLIC**, or **PHLEGMATIC**.

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**Social Class:** What skills and perspective does your origin bring? **LOWER CLASS** (Laborer or Peasant), **MIDDLE CLASS** (Burgher or Yeoman), **UPPER CLASS** (Nobility, Gentry, or Patrician), or **FOREIGNER** (from the periphery of Europe).

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**Profession:** Archetypes that embrace – or are forced into – the adventuring life: **SOLDIER**, **SCOUNDREL**, **FACTOR** (a road-savvy merchant), **MINSTREL**, **CHAPLAIN**, or **DOCTOR** (of letters, dubious medical remedies, and “natural philosophies” of many scientific & esoteric varieties).

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**Entanglement:** A powerful **RELATIONSHIP WITH A KEY FACTION** in the campaign setting that can complicate or make easy the Character's life; **CAN BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE**.

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### Example Character: Attributes

John the Player envisions his Character, *Hans Grunwald der Ghoul* as a nervous sort prone to skullduggery. He chooses a *Melancholic* temperament, a *Lower Class* background, and a *Scoundrel* profession. Lastly, John gives Hans a *Positive* entanglement with the *River Folk* who trade and smuggle along the Inn River valley.

## 2. Attribute Scores

ROLL 1D6-3 FOUR TIMES, RECORD THE RESULT OF EACH ROLL (COUNTING NEGATIVE RESULTS AS ZERO), AND ASSIGN THOSE NUMBERS TO EACH CHARACTERISTIC in a way that represents the narrative importance you'd give each.

Mechanically, these scores will add Bonus Successes and Failures (see pg. ##), but they also guide roleplay: a Character with higher numbers in their Temperament will be played differently than one with high scores in their Professions or Entanglements, for example.

But these values *are* generated randomly, so this advice has its limits if you roll relatively high or low for all Attributes. *Caveat emptor!*

### Example Character: Attribute Scores

John the Player rolls 2, 1, 1, and 0. He envisions Hans' chiefly as a nervous, pensive type, more defined by his place in society than any actual thieving or burglarizing he's taken to.

With that in mind, John assigns the results as follows: *Melancholic 2, Lower Class 1, Scoundrel 0, River Folk entanglement 1*

## 3. Instincts

Three Instincts broadly describe Characters' natural inclinations and strengths – rather than exact abilities or capabilities. These scores act as target numbers for Players to roll against (see pg. ##).

ROLL 1D6+1 THREE TIMES AND RECORD THE RESULT OF EACH ROLL. THEN ASSIGN YOUR NUMBERS TO THE THREE CHARACTER SKILLS in a way that reflects your vision of your PC's Attributes. *Higher scores are better.*

Fig. 2: List of Instincts

**Grit:** Acting and remaining cool under pressure; forceful uses of strength and violence; bullying and intimidation; challenges that would weaken health, stamina, or constitution, *etc.*

**Wits:** Knowledge, memory, or clever thoughtfulness; patience and the ability for creative problem solving; deductive reasoning and abstract thinking; attention to detail, *etc.*

**Panache:** Social charisma; persuasive or seductive instincts; performative chops; the ability to inspire others to follow or obey orders; ...or the coin and resources to accomplish much of the above

### Example Character: Instincts

John the Player rolls 5, 3, and 6. Hans the Melancholic Scoundrel is tough and can think his way out of trouble, but flair or force of personality is not a strong suit.

John assigns him *Grit 6, Wits 5, Panache 3.*



## 4. Values

A Character's worldview and social mores are tracked with three Values of particular importance to the Renaissance-era setting. Consider them as an alignment system with teeth, reenforcing the historical – often foreign and alien – context of the game.

**ROLL 1d10 THREE TIMES AND RECORD THE RESULT OF EACH ROLL. THEN ASSIGN YOUR NUMBERS TO THE FOLLOWING VALUES AS YOU WISH.**

It is perfectly okay to have a 1 or 10 in a Value, as these scores represent your Character's worldview, *they create opportunities for conflict and interesting roleplay*. This is why Players roll a full 1d10.

*Fig. 3: List of Values*

**Station:** High Station scores believe the order of Renaissance-era society and its institutions provides benefits to society: the high provide charity, and the lowly give respect.

Low Station scores give into to cynicism, iconoclasm, or heretical beliefs, more likely to flout the mores of society.

**Honor:** Men and women rose and fell on their reputation. High Honor scores hold closely to dignity and maintaining face. Slightings must be challenged and your reputation must be maintained – even at risk to yourself.

Low Honor scores are pragmatists willing to risk mockery and shame being for profit... or simple self-preservation. How can a situation be made more bearable or better for yourself, your family, or your masters?

**Belief:** High Belief scores hold religious dogma, folklore, and superstitions to be absolutely true. Angels, demons, witches, are certainly real. Magic, alchemy, and astrology are fact, and the work of the Devil is to be feared.

Characters with low Belief scores hold some suspicion about these religious and magical views. Although, in this historical era, *note that only the very lowest Belief scores will represent anything close to the materialist, atheistic worldview common today.*

### Example Character: Values

John the Player rolls 2, 9, and 4. He sees Hans as a pious, superstitious type who may be a bit of a traditionalist, but can little afford the luxury of honor and such pompous ideals.

John assigns the results as *Station 4, Honor 2, Belief 9.*

## 5. Supply Points

Questions of inventory and encumbrance are abstracted into Supply Points, which are tracked *when important to the story*. **WHEN IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE STORY THAT ADVENTURING SUPPLIES ARE NEEDED, USE A SUPPLY POINT** to declare what is needed is at hand.

*Fig. 4: Max Supply Calculation*

$$\text{SOCIAL CLASS} + \text{PROFESSION} + \text{WITS} =$$

### Maximum Supply (2-13)

- **MOST ITEMS COST ONE SUPPLY POINT.** Large or fragile objects may cost two (up to the GM).
- Supplies may be **MUNDANE** (e.g. rations, water, sources of light), or **MORE NICHE OR EXOTIC.**
- **EACH PROFESSION** grants a unique use of Supply Points, as well.

### RESUPPLY

IF A CHARACTER'S MAX SUPPLY POINTS ARE REACHED, they have run out of supply and cannot resupply until they return to a settlement.

Make an Action Roll (up to the GM to decide the number of dice needed). Each success counts as half Max Supply Points, rounded up, so that **A CHARACTER NEEDS TWO SUCCESSES TO BE FULLY EQUIPPED.** Failures can indicate debt, favors, or other complications.

### ON COMMONERS & FOREIGNERS

If your Character is of lesser means or in strange new lands, it may be helpful to attribute a high Max Supply to being resourceful, a good negotiator, or scrappy.

### ON WEAPONS & ADVENTURING GEAR

**CHARACTERS ARE ASSUMED TO BE EQUIPPED ACCORDING TO THEIR PROFESSION AND SOCIAL CLASS.** In normal circumstances, Supply Points shouldn't be used to reflect weapons, armor, and professional equipment.

## 6. Retinue Size

Adventuring is dangerous work that frequently needs hired hands or loyal allies. But it takes a big personality or a prominent reputation to find those willing to risk their lives.

*Fig. 5: Retinue Size Calculation*

$$\text{ENTANGLEMENT STRENGTH} + \text{PANACHE} - 5 =$$

### Maximum Retinue Size (0-5)

Treat any negative numbers as zero. **PCS CAN TAKE ON A NUMBER OF HENCHMEN OR HIRELINGS EQUAL TO THEIR MAX RETINUE SIZE AND NO MORE.** These followers are not automatic and must be sought out. See Retinue (pg. ##) for more.

## 7. Fortitude

Fortitude is ability to persevere in the face of hardship and focus in the midst of danger: a combination of determination, discipline, ...and even desperation. **IT IS ROUGHLY ANALOGOUS TO HP.**

Your Fortitude score determines what Conditions (see pg. ##) your Character may accumulate. *Cross out those your Character does not have on your character sheet.*

*Fig. 6: Fortitude & Conditions Calculation*

$$\text{COMPARE TEMPERAMENT SCORE} + \text{GRIT} =$$

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**Fortitude 2-5:** 2 Minor, 2 Moderate, 1 Major

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**Fortitude 6-7:** 3 Minor, 2 Moderate, 1 Major

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**Fortitude 8-10:** 3 Minor, 2 Moderate, 2 Major

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## 8. Divine Providence

**YOUR GM WILL SECRETLY ROLL 1D6+1** and record the result as your Character's predestined, maximum moments of Divine Providence.

Invoking Providence is how Characters increase in power, but be warned: no one knows when their luck will run out (see more on pg. ##).



## 9. Select Weapons

WEAPONS ARE GROUPED BY THOSE SOCIAL CLASSES WHO WOULD BE MOST LIKELY TO USE THEM (i.e. Commoners weren't likely to be dueling with ornately gilded rapiers, while the Upper Class weren't likely to bring repurposed farm implements to battle). These are listed in Chapter Three: Weaponry, pg. ##.

Select two or three from your Social Class for your Character to be equipped with, knowing that they will *largely* be used for narrative effect rather than for metagaming tactical advantages.

## 10. Other RP Details

Your Character will certainly have a name, and it is helpful to consider their gender presentation in this historic – yet swashbuckling and pulpy – context.

Beyond that, assign them what details you like. These rules offer up questions of religion and regional identity to each GM and table. If you are interested in those questions, see the Appendix for options appropriate to the post-Reformation Peace of Augsburg of 1555 through the end of the era.

### ON LANGUAGES AND COINAGE

To our modern eyes, Europe of the sixteenth century would have seemed to be a chaotic, interconnected web of dialects and inconsistent, regional monetary systems.

The mainstreamed languages we learn from dictionaries and grammar books were evolving and being codified in the first books of those kind. Numerous dialects could vary significantly.

Likewise, money was a jumble of differing weights, with the value of coin types changing – often drastically – over time. Dealing in that multitude of differing types of coinage was made only more complex

by the rapid inflation caused by the influx of American silver. LONG XVlth SIDESTEPS QUESTIONS OF LANGUAGE AND COINAGE ENTIRELY:

- GMs should work with Players to identify a “common” regional dialect – e.g. players in the Alps should speak German.
- Resolve questions of money and costs with Panache: the Instinct is good for bargaining, but also assumes material wealth!

### Hans Grunwald the Ghoul

#### Temperament:

Melancholic 2

#### Social Class:

Lower Class 1

#### Profession:

Scoundrel 0

#### Entanglement:

River Folk (Positive) 1

#### Instincts

Grit 6

Wits 5

Panache 3

#### Values

Station 4

Honor 2

Belief 9

#### Equipped Weapons

Lange Messer (*Slashing*)

Morgenstern (*Crude,*

*Two-Handed, Piercing,*

*Bludgeoning*), Dagger

(*Piercing, Short*)

#### Fortitude

3 Minor

2 Moderate

#### Max Retinue (0)

#### Supply Points (6)

Produce daggers, saps, cudgels, or lock-pickers

2 Major





## CHAPTER II

# ATTRIBUTES

*Your very-human character has embarked on an uncertain, dangerous path. What has bidden them so – and how are they so equipped to face such troubles? Their Attributes hold clues to those answers.*



Most fundamentally, Attributes are permissive: they **INFORM A CHARACTER'S OVERALL CAPABILITIES, SKILLS, AND WHAT THEY CAN ATTEMPT.** For example, even a Soldier 3 would not be able to *even attempt* the complex formulae and poultices that a “lowly” Doctor 0 could.

## Social Class

Renaissance Europe was an era of strictly-defined social hierarchies that were both deeply embedded in its cultures and widely enforced through social norms, cultural prestige, and generational & commercial wealth. Complicating this striation was the growing presence of non-Europeans from various parts of the world as the Age of Discovery brought distant peoples, goods, and markets back to the continent.



**LONG XVITH ADVENTURES COME FROM ACROSS SOCIETY.**

Commoners do not represent “hard mode” and the Upper Class will not be “easy mode.” *However, because Foreigners can come from so many different locales and cultures, Players should check with and work closely with their GM to account for the difficulties these Characters may present.*

*Fig. 7: Social Class Summary & d10 Random Results*

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**1-4: Commoner** (*Urban Laborer or Rural Peasant*): You make your life by the sweat of your brow and the burden on your back. Endure what you must, avoid the ire of powerful men, and be thrifty and resourceful in all things.

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**5-7: Middle Class** (*Burgher or Yeoman*): You are a man or woman with a trade and a hard-earned knowledge of the way the world *really* works. You’ve skills, tools, and some network that can help you along – or let you earn some coin for your pocket.

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**8-9: Upper Class** (*Nobility, Gentry, or Urban Patrician*): You sit atop the social ladder, and you have the manners, education, social connections, and – if you’re lucky – wealth to prove it. You may traffic with the high and mighty, but such affairs come with obligations and costs.

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**10: Foreigner** (*i.e. from the Periphery of Europe*): You are a sight of wonder, feted wherever you may go... or a source of fear and superstition that you leverage to your advantage. With your outsider’s perspective, you notice details and have insights the Europeans miss.

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## THE CHALLENGE OF CLASSISM, RACISM, & COLONIALISM

*[This text is a work-in-progress draft.]* For all the interesting ways it makes for fun roleplaying adventures, the historic experience of those living in sixteenth-century Europe was one of a patriarchal society, rigid class distinctions, and social and sexual mores that trouble twenty-first century TTRPG players.

Some games and tables may choose to embrace these uncomfortable historical realities, but the default intent of Long XVIth is a sometimes-swashbuckling, sometimes-gritty pulp homage to the sixteenth century: there should be space for women adventurers, non-Europeans, and characters of diverse sexual and gender identities to have their adventures within this recreation of a historical era.

Speak up, be courteous, and find the balance that everyone at the table is comfortable with.

## Character Profession

While Renaissance Europe is ripe for tabletop adventures, not any and every individual from that era would – or could! – have taken up the “adventuring” life common to our modern roleplaying games.

Long XVIth uses **SIX BROADLY-DEFINED PROFESSIONS** that would have plausibly made that decision. *Squint closely, and you can see the classic RPG antecedents of the fighter, thief, ranger (vaguely!), bard, cleric, and wizard.*

*Fig. 7: Social Class Summary & d10 Random Results*

*Fig. 8: Profession Summary & d10 Random Results*

**1-3: Soldier:** Mercenary pikemen and musketeers, nobles trained in the art of war, or town militia – you’ve been trained in the school of war and now well the ways of weapons, violence, and intimidation.

*Armored:* May spend Supply Points to negate damage from physical attacks and combat that would become Conditions. A higher supply point score represents better or more armor.

**4-5: Scoundrel:** Fleet-footed, nimble-fingered, and wary-eyed thieves, beggars, poachers, hucksters, performers... or out-and-out criminals. You know how to read a person, look for an easy score, and get your way, by force or farce. **SCOUNDRELS CANNOT BE UPPER CLASS** (for those sorts of Scoundrels have transcended the toils of the adventuring life).

*Conniving:* May spend a supply point to produce a dagger, sap, or thieving tools (e.g. lock picks or lampblack) from somewhere on their person.

**6-7: Factor:** Savvy merchants who travel dangerous road and sea, Factors know where to find money, seize opportunity, and assess most goods and services. You know the signs of bad weather, dangerous people, and questionable surroundings.

*Roadwise:* May spend a Supply Point to produce a bag of coin or valuable trinket from their person. If they have their goods close by (in storage, in a saddlebag, or a wagon), they may spend *two* Supply Points for more coin or goods.

**8: Minstrel:** A catch-all term for those performers and entertainers who entertained both noble courts and town markets. They kept their bellies full on their ability to read people and their performances: a song, story, music, acrobatics, or trained animals.

*Goodwill & Cheer:* May spend Supply Point to negate damage that would become negative Conditions from social errors and tensions... by producing drink or distracting bauble.

**9: Chaplain:** Rouse spirits, calm the mob, and counsel the low and the mighty - whether they are clergy of the Roman church, a Protestant creed, some heterodox sect, or Jewish rabbis.

*Good Shepherd:* May spend a Supply Point to produce an extra religious item (i.e. to give away; not part of their own clerical kit), extra food, or incendiary (or rousing) pamphlets or broadsheets.

**10: Doctor:** Physicians and natural philosophers who delve into esoteric topics as alchemy, medicine, astrology, and ancient languages. You are driven out of curiosity - or social stigma - into the adventuring life where you may use your knowledge to treat wounds and better understand the natural world. **DOCTORS CANNOT BE LOWER CLASS.**

*Natural Philosophy:* May use a Supply Point in lieu of an Action Check to produce astrological readings, attempts at medicine and alchemy, or complex machinery.

## Temperaments

The rules categorize each PC into **ONE OF THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS**: a classical model of describing physiology and personality traits that was widespread during the Renaissance.

*Fig. 9: Temperament Summary & d10 Random Results*

**1-3: Sanguine:** Lively and charismatic, with a longing for adventure, pleasure, and, often... excitement and addiction.



**4-5: Choleric:** Courageous, resolute, and focused on results, your stubbornness often creates devoted followers... or enemies.



**6-8: Phlegmatic:** Seeking peace and harmony, their tranquil consistency can often turn into sloth and fear of conflict.



**9-10: Melancholic:** Thoughtful and analytical, whose tempest of thoughts often lead to both great creativity and moodiness.





## USING TEMPERAMENTS

In fiction, some characters are best known by their personalities than even their profession or social class. Temperament has been included to empower your roleplaying rather than be a straightjacket.

Consider these examples:

- **FRIAR TUCK** of Robin Hood's Merry Men: in this game he'd be a Chaplain most certainly, but points in his Choleric Temperament would grant him Bonuses Successes in fights and other bull-headed confrontations.
- **CYRANO DE BERGERAC**, that large-nosed musketeer Soldier had points in his Melancholic Temperament, which would have helped in his poetry and duels of wits.
- **SHAKESPEARE'S FALSTAFF** is an example of a Character framed around a Sanguine Temperament – which benefits all that boasting, drinking, and joviality.



## Entanglements

No Character exists in isolation – much less adventurers who have likely left their normal life behind (for a season or permanently). **THE PCS' OWN REPUTATIONS ENTANGLE THEM WITH THE CAMPAIGN'S KEY FACTIONS** – making them pawns, allies, or targets and thereby setting the Characters into larger context of the setting.

Generally, these factions are self-serving, making moral choices in various shades of grey. Given the historical setting, factions are rarely purely *good* or *evil*, but the extent to which death, suffering, and judgement is so commonly tolerated can be hard for a Western twenty-first century mind to imagine at first glance.

Entanglements *should not* be with the primary NPC or their faction (as to not overpower other factions), *but should* relate to other significant players in region. **THESE ENTANGLEMENTS CAN BE OF A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE NATURE** (i.e. a negative entanglement will find common allies against that faction) and should disrupt the Characters' plans – making life difficult and forcing hard decisions.

- **POSITIVE ENTANGLEMENTS** become relevant when acting on behalf of that faction – or interacting with people or in situations when a positive relationship with them would be beneficial (e.g. “Unhand me! Don’t you realize I am a friend of Faction X, too!” granting an Entanglement bonus to a Panache roll in a social setting).
- **NEGATIVE ENTANGLEMENTS** are relevant in the opposite way, insomuch as “the enemy of my enemy becomes my friend” (e.g. “Stand fast and face my sword, you servant of Faction Y!” granting an Entanglement bonus to a Grit roll).

## EXAMPLE FACTIONS

Long XVIth's default setting is the mountainous region of the Tyrol in the 1570s – a time of border unrest between the Catholic Habsburg realm and the Swiss-aligned Protestant Three Leagues, banditry along remote mountain roads, and competition between noble lords and bishops.

However, the Renaissance era was long and diverse.

**YOUR GM MAY SET YOUR GAME IN A WHOLLY DIFFERENT TIME AND PLACE.** If so, they will have a unique set of factions to choose from.

*Fig. 10: Example Entanglements from Tyrol c. 1570s*

**Tyrolean Nobility:** The nobles present a united front through the Tyrolean Council in keeping the highways and byways safe (and overwhelming adherence to the Roman church), but all know they continually jockey for position and favor.

**The Fugger Family:** The wealthiest merchants in the land, who – through their offices in Steirzing – oversee a good deal of trade over the Brenner Pass, silver mines in Hall, and salt mines elsewhere in Tyrol.

**Prince-Bishopric of Brixen:** He holds both spiritual *and* political powers – through the Church, its tendrils into the nobility, and in his rapacious hunger for humanist learning and works of art (in that he rivals Count Ferdinand II himself).

**Anabaptists:** Though mostly fled to Bohemia and other points north, remnants of the radical Protestants remain throughout Tyrol via support from local communities and the Three Leagues.

**Teutonic Order:** Houses of the knightly monks are scattered throughout the south. Stocked with nobility, the Teutonic Order are staunch – if old-fashioned – defenders of the Church and ancient chivalric ideals.

**Boatmen & Teamsters:** If you need to move goods or people in the Alps, you'll need a man capable navigating the rapids of mountain rivers – or one who can drive a team of mules over treacherous passes. In fact, you'll need both.

**Jesuits & Täuferjäger:** Scholarly-minded Jesuits roam the countryside, bring blessings and threats: hold close to Rome, educate yourselves and your children, and avail yourselves not of heretical Protestantism – lest the Täuferjäger, their Anabaptist Hunters, come for you.

**Three Leagues:** A Swiss-aligned, deeply Protestant, vociferously anti-Habsburg confederation of towns in the Engadin valley – prone to raids and brigandry across the Tyrol border.

**Benandanti:** Not a centralized faction, but a wider mystic tradition, the Benandanti claim their souls leave their bodies at night, to fight the predations of witches and warlocks, and to lead rural communities in strange rituals (with masked figures known as the *Perchten*) for fertility and good harvests.







## CHAPTER III

# WEAPONRY

*This was a remarkable age of transition in military technology and weaponry. Brutally medieval arms and armor were used right alongside pistols and muskets.*



The weapons of the era *are* iconic – and their differences *should* be noted. These differences are overwhelmingly narrative, informing how a fight plays out and the wounds that are dealt.

## Weapon Rules

In these rules, **DAMAGE DEALT – AND AVOIDED – IS A FUNCTION OF A CHARACTER’S GRIT AND RELEVANT ATTRIBUTES**: IT’S THE WEAPON’S WIELDER WHO MAKES THE DIFFERENCE. After all, Soldiers and Scoundrels – and certain Temperaments under certain circumstances – are going to have a better handle on the deadly use of such things than a Chaplain, Doctor, or Merchant.

- Each Social Class has a number of **WEAPON PROFICIENCIES** reflecting a common base of exposure to and availability of certain weapons.



(Does this mean *all* members of a common social class could handle these weapons? Of course not, but the Player Characters are *adventurers*.)

- **CHOOSE A FEW WEAPONS FROM YOUR SOCIAL CLASS** to begin play with at character creation.
- Note that using weapons in certain ways **MAY GRANT BONUS SUCCESSES OR FAILURES** (see pg. ##).

### WEAPON TAGS

**MOST WEAPON TAGS ARE DESCRIPTIVE**: they provide clues to players and the GM on the type of wounds they deal (e.g. bludgeoning & piercing) and how they fit into the world (e.g. crude or high-status).

**OTHER WEAPON TAGS DEFINE THE WEAPON’S USE AND LIMITATIONS**. This includes range and size tags (e.g. short reach, point-blank, ranged) and other forms that may be beneficial – or dangerous – depending on context (e.g. explosive, best kept dry, awkward, etc.)

Remember that Weapon Tags, like a Character’s four Attributes, are permissive – they **DETERMINE WHAT IS REAL AND CAN BE DONE** in the fiction of the game (*e.g. even without detailed tactical rules, you still need a Ranged weapon to attack those brigands on the other side of the river*).

## Commoner Proficiencies

**Bows (RANGED, TWO-HANDED)**: While the world moved onto firearms, the common sort retained their knowledge of the bow.

**Cudgels (CRUDE, BLUDGEONING)**: A man’s head is caved in as easily with a club of wood as an ornate mace.

**Daggers** (CUTTING OR PIERCING, SHORT REACH, REQUIRES SHARPENING)

**Farm & Work Tools** (ONE OR TWO-HANDED, CRUDE, BLUDGEONING OR CUTTING OR PIERCING, sometimes LONG REACH): Taken to a fight as-is or roughly repurposed by a local blacksmith: billhooks, scythes, pitchforks, flails, hand sickles, and more.

**Hatchets & Axes** (CUTTING, ONE OR TWO HANDED, REQUIRES SHARPENING, sometimes SHORT REACH): What serves as a tool can serve to defend one's own.

**Messers & Long Messers:** (CUTTING, ONE OR TWO-HANDED, REQUIRES SHARPENING): Large, single-edged knives that grew to sword-like proportions.

**Staves** (TWO-HANDED, CRUDE, BLUDGEONING, LONG REACH, DEFENSIVE): A six-foot tall staff may not intimidate, but it'll handily crack a man's skull... or keep a foe at a safe distance.

## Middle Class Proficiencies

**Broad Swords & Side Swords** (CUTTING, REQUIRES SHARPENING): Both holdover "arming" swords from the medieval era and their newer varieties with complex guards: "side swords" and basket-hilted varieties. *Sabers could also fall under this categorization.*

**Blunderbuss** (POINT BLANK, MULTIPLE TARGETS, TWO-HANDED, BEST KEPT DRY, LONG RELOADS): A firearm with a (comparatively) short barrel and large bore, designed for close range attacks upon multiple enemies with "hail shotte."

**Bucklers** (BLUDGEONING, DEFENSIVE): A small, usually round, shield used in conjunction with bladed weapons.

**Daggers:** *As the Commoner proficiency*

**Messers & Long Messers:** *As the Commoner proficiency*

**Muskets & Arquebuses** (RANGED, TWO-HANDED, BEST KEPT DRY, LONG RELOADS, UNWIELDY): Usually fired with smoldering match cord. The heavier musket fired a much larger ball, enabling it to punch through plate armor at the cost of needing a forked rest to set the barrel on to aim and fire. The arquebus – the first firearm used en masse – and the later culivern were both examples of lighter long guns.

**Short Sabers** (CUTTING, SHORT RANGE, REQUIRES SHARPENING): A wide category with many regional variants – designed for cutting; usually with short, curved blades; often very broad; frequently with complex hilt protection. *e.g. dussack or tessack, storta, cutlass, hanger or hunting sword, cinquedeas, katzbalger, etc.*

**Staves:** *As the Commoner proficiency*

## Upper Class Proficiencies

**Broad Swords & Side Swords:** *As the Middle-Class proficiency*

**Bucklers:** *As the Middle Class proficiency*

**Cavalry Sidearms** (BLUDGEONING, sometimes PIERCING): One-handed warhammers, picks, maces, and axes designed to punch through plate armor were still used by high born horsemen.

**Crossbows** (RANGED, PIERCING, TWO-HANDED, STATUS SYMBOL): By this era, crossbows had been relegated to the hunt and became a frequently ornamental sporting weapon of the nobility.

**Daggers:** *As the Commoner proficiency*



**Fowling Pieces** (RANGED, MULTIPLE TARGETS, TWO-HANDED, BEST KEPT DRY, LONG RELOADS, UNWIELDY): Long-barreled shotguns designed for hunting of game birds. Rarely a wartime weapon.

**Longswords** (PIERCING, CUTTING, TWO-HANDED, REQUIRES SHARPENING): These “hand and a half” or “bastard” swords persisted in use through the end of the century, often with increasingly ornate and protective hilts.

**Muskets & Arquebuses:** *As the Middle-Class proficiency* – Upper Class adventurers are more likely to have access to wheellock firearms, however (a finicky action, but one that does not run the risk of rain or water preventing the firing of the gun).

**Pistols** (POINT BLANK RANGE, LONG RELOADS, STATUS SYMBOL): Pistols were widely used by the cavalry, with relatively long barrels and wheellock actions that could be kept ready for action. Shorter barreled “puffers” were also used by officers of foot... and hidden under cloaks for safety down dark alleyways.

**Rapiers & Estocs** (PIERCING, STATUS SYMBOL, UNWIELDY, Estocs are sometimes TWO-HANDED): Long bladed swords intended primary for thrusting – either in civilian duels, or into the gaps of armor on the battlefield.

**Rotellas or Targets** (BLUDGEONING, UNWIELDY, sometimes a STATUS SYMBOL): Large circular shields, usually convex, that cover from head to hip. Many are ornately decorated.

**Short Sabers:** *As the Middle Class proficiency*

## Foreign Proficiencies

If you play a Foreigner, WORK WITH YOUR GM TO IDENTIFY AND SELECT WEAPONS YOUR CHARACTER WOULD BE PROFICIENT WITH. Weapons in common use in the Americas will be different from those in the Indies and again from those across the Islamic World.

## Soldier Proficiencies

Commoner, Middle Class, and Upper Class Soldiers gain additional proficiencies common of the “pike and shot” battlefields of this era:

**Muskets & Arquebuses:** *As the Middle-Class proficiency*

**Pikes & Polearms** (TWO-HANDED, PIERCING OR SOMETIMES CUTTING, LONG REACH, UNWIELDY):

Long weapons with fearsome implements on the end of shafts five to six foot or more. They took many different forms throughout the period, often changing radically by decades and regions.

*e.g. Pikes, Spears, Boar Spears, Halberds, Glaives, Partisans, etc.*

**Rotellas or Targets:** *As the Upper Class proficiency*

**Zweihänder, Montante, or Spadone** (TWO-HANDED,

CUTTING, LONG REACH, UNWIELDY, REQUIRES

SHARPENING): The massive *greatsword*, sometimes as tall as a man, was used on battlefields against pike and polearm.





## CHAPTER IV

# DIVINE PROVIDENCE

*“...I am God & that there is els no God, yee, & that there is nothings, lyke unto me. In the begynnyng of a thyng. I shewe the ende therof: & I tell before, thinges that are not yet come to passe...”*

– Isaiah, Chapter 46

THE GREAT ENGLISH BIBLE OF 1539



Every adventurer's FATE IS FIXED.

THE LUCKY FEW will earn their scars and see old age.

The prudent renounce these dangers to return to LESS CAPRICIOUS daily lives of toil and mundane troubles.

Yet, many a foolhardy adventurer will WAGER ON ILL ODDS AND GALLANT LAST STANDS... only to meet that grim end that God, or Providence, or fate had laid in waiting.

*But oh, what stories they will leave in the telling to those that remember.*



## Calling on Providence

This is as much a game of swashbuckling adventure as it is a gritty embodiment of the historical Renaissance era. As such, CHARACTERS WON'T NORMALLY FACE LETHAL CONSEQUENCES UNLESS THEY CHOOSE TO (see Conditions, pg. ##). But it is those moments Players choose to chance death that their Characters may become stronger, more capable adventurers.

IN A MOMENT OF DANGER AND NARRATIVE IMPORTANCE WHEN ALL THEIR CONDITIONS ARE FILLED, A CHARACTER CAN “CALL ON PROVIDENCE” FOR THEIR DELIVERANCE – if not outright success. The GM will compare their notes for this Player Character: the set number for Divine Providence (rolled for at character creation: a number between 2-7) versus how many times the Character has *already* called on Providence.

- Providence *should* occur in moments of high tension, with high stakes, and – ideally – of narrative importance to the Character, or at least the Party as a whole.
- This is to say that Players *should not be allowed to frivolously invoke Providence* on garden-variety thugs or heavily-wagered gaming at the nobleman's manor.

IF THIS INSTANCE DOES NOT EXCEED THE TOTAL PROVIDENCE SCORE, THE CHARACTER LIVES! The GM will narrate how the scene concludes itself with the Character's survival (keep all other Characters in mind – any Conditions stay as-is and resolve as normally). Depending on tone of the game, it may be miraculous,



comical, or a roaring tale of bravery and derring-do.

*The Player will then mark this as a miraculous moment of Providence on their character sheet.*

**IF THIS INSTANCE EXCEEDS THE TOTAL PROVIDENCE SCORE, THE CHARACTER IS DOOMED!** The GM then concludes the scene as above, but in this case the Character in question's fate is in the hands of the GM.

*Usually, this means death.* But it could be a crippling injury, post-encounter religious epiphany, or a sudden disappearance or departure from the party. Whatever the case, the fate of a Character who calls on Providence one too many times is permanent, and their story is at an end. The GM should insert the new Character as soon as plausible in the story.

#### RULES FOR CALLING ON PROVIDENCE

- Players *can* call on Providence after a dice roll *before* their Character suffers additional harm or failures.
- **A PLAYER CAN ONLY CALL ON PROVIDENCE ONCE EVERY OTHER SESSION... BUT IT SHOULD BE MUCH LESS COMMON THAT EVEN THIS.** As it is potentially lethal and *the* driver of mechanical character advancements, GMs may veto Calling on Providence at inappropriate times.
- **MOMENTS OF PROVIDENCE SHOULD CARRY A LOT OF NARRATIVE WEIGHT AND EXCITEMENT.** The game's pacing ideally results in them *only* occurring a couple times a session, tops.
- Only one moment of Providence can occur *per scene* (which the following point implies).
- Once the GM gives it the go-ahead, **CALLING ON PROVIDENCE ALWAYS ENDS A SCENE.** The GM will then narrate how the event closes out and what happens to the Characters.

## Character Advancement

If a Character survives calling on Providence, mark it down. **FOR EVERY TWO OF THESE MOMENTS, CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ADVANCEMENTS** during an extended down time (weeks of light garrison duty, an extended stay as guests, or over the course of winter).

- Characters have a total of **SEVEN POSSIBLE MOMENTS OF PROVIDENCE.** Advancements occur three times: at the 2nd, 4th, and 6th.
- Characters **MIGHT NOT HAVE ALL SEVEN** moments of Providence (see the preceding), but this number is known only to the GM.
- **EACH ADVANCEMENT CAN ONLY BE TAKEN ONCE.**

*Fig. 11: Fortitude & Conditions Calculation*

---

**Might:** +1 to Grit – *what has made you stronger?*

---

**Insight:** +1 to Wits– *how have you become smarter, more observant, or quicker thinking?*

---

**Comeliness:** +1 to Panache – *what has grown, your personal charisma or your coin purse?*

---

**Wisdom:** +1 to Temperament (max 3) – *how has your personality changed? What lessons have you learned?*

---

**Experience:** +1 to Social Class (max 3) – *what have you learned about the world... and your place in it?*

---

**Mastery:** +1 to Profession (max 3) – *has adventuring made you a more capable member of your Profession, or has it given you more tools and equipment?*

---

---

**Reputation:** +1 to Entanglement (max 3) – *you’ve made a name for yourself; how so?*

---

**Estate:** + 3 Supply Points, to a maximum of 15 points – *good fortune, or close calls, has taught you the value of being prepared... and the ability to be so.*

---

**Leadership:** +2 Max Retinue Size, to a max of 5. *Can only be taken once, and only by those who do not already have a Max Retinue Size of 5.*

---

**Sidekick:** You gain a **permanent member of your Retinue**. Your sidekick counts against your Max Retinue Size. If that score is 0, it increases 1 one with this choice.

---

**Duelist:** Select a proficiency listed in the Weaponry chapter. **WHEN ATTACKING WITH THESE WEAPONS, YOU NOW GAIN TWO BONUS SUCCESSES.**

- *If not from your Social Class*, this negates the Bonus Failure, effectively granting one Bonus Success.
  - *If from your Social Class*, your two Bonus Successes act the same as higher Attribute scores do and are limited by the number of dice rolled.
- 

**Discipline:** You now can track **two Major Conditions** – *how and why has adventuring hardened your resolve?*

---

### CHANGING VALUES

After *each* successful moment of Providence, a Player can choose to **INCREASE OR DECREASE A SINGLE VALUE BY ONE POINT** – thereby showing their Character’s changing worldview. This in addition to any Advancement they are able to take.

### NARRATING ADVANCEMENT

**CHARACTERS GAIN THE MECHANICAL BENEFIT OF THE ADVANCEMENT THEY SELECT AND/OR ANY CHANGE TO THEIR VALUES** as soon as they miraculously survive their moment of Divine Providence.

At an appropriate moment in the story, that Player **SHOULD NARRATE THE NATURE OF THESE CHANGES**, why the Character came into it after their climactic brush with fate, and how that shapes them moving forward.

## Retirement & the Epilogue

Having had enough close calls with death– or having become too old, too injured, or too exhausted to continue – **A CHARACTER MAY CHOOSE TO RETIRE FROM THE ADVENTURING LIFE AT ANY POINT.**

When a Player announces that their Character will retire, immediately mark how many tiers of Conditions (e.g. Minor, Middling, and Major, see pg. ##) the Character has. The first scene the Character is able to reasonably and safely depart the party, they will do so:

- It is feasible to turn back while on the road or make a departure from in town.
- It is impossible to depart if locked in a castle dungeon or on a ship at sea.

### THE EPILOGUE ROLL

The Player will then make a special Action Roll according to the following steps to frame the Character’s epilogue. One Instinct or Value will define the remainder of the Character’s days. This virtue may not be a Character’s adventuring strength or motivating Value. *Such is the capriciousness of the dice and the unexpected twists and turns of the hero’s journey.*



**1. Determine Guiding Instinct or Value:** Roll a d6 twice

and compare your two results. Choose one:

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| 1. Grit    | 4. Station |
| 2. Wits    | 5. Honor   |
| 3. Panache | 6. Belief  |

Roll doubles? *Tough luck; your choice is made.*

**2. Make the Epilogue Action Roll:** Roll a number of dice equal to their moments of Divine Providence:

0: *Roll nothing:*

no Successes or Failures.

1-2: Roll 1d10

3-4: Roll 2d10

5-6: Roll 3d10

7: *No roll is needed:*

treat it as three Successes.

**3. Add Bonus Successes & Failures:** These are

calculated uniquely for the Epilogue roll.

**SUCCESSSES:** Equal to Temperament score  
(*A focus on personality and inner self is more likely to lead to peace and success in retirement.*)

**FAILURES:** Equal to the number of tiers of Conditions the Character had at the time they made the choice to retire:

- Minor only? 1 Failure
- Minor, Middling, and Majors? 3 Failures

(*The circumstances that lead them out of the adventuring life will gnaw at a Character, making contentment a difficult prospect.*)

**4. Calculate Results:** Failures cancel out Successes.

Count the final, total number of Successes from the dice, Temperament, and tiers of Conditions:

0: Life takes a tragic turn, related to a failure or an unhealthy focus on your virtue. *How so?*

1-2: Life takes an unexpected twist. Your virtue becomes prominent in an unexpected way. *What happens?*

3 OR MORE: Life provides you with the happy ending. Your virtue – and your stories of adventure – keep you in high regard and comfort. *What does this look like?*





## CHAPTER V

# BASIC GAMEPLAY

*These rules drape an old school spirit over an abstract, narrative framework. Not every game possibility is covered herein.*



When – not if – you encounter something not clearly outlined, the GM should make a judgement call and keep play moving. Don't get bogged down by minutiae.

## Action Rolls

The core dice mechanic is one of risk vs. reward – in *cinematic, swashbuckling, pulp adventure ways*. Odds are a question of derring-do, not practical difficulty.

When an outcome is in doubt, **SELECT A RELEVANT INSTINCT (E.G. GRIT, WITS, OR PANACHE) AND CHOOSE HOW DANGEROUS OR SAFE YOUR ATTEMPT IS**



If Careful  
or Controlled

**Roll 1d10**

If Risky  
or Rushed

**Roll 2d10**

If Reckless  
or Desperate

**Roll 3d10**

- Add an element to your narration for each die rolled.
- Treat Action Rolls as short vignettes as the “camera zooms in” rather than just a single attack action.
- *All results count.* **ROLL EQUAL TO OR UNDER THE INSTINCT TO SUCCEED!** Rolling over is Failure.
- Remember Bonus Successes and Failures (*as follows!*)

---

### For Each Success, A Player May:

Add to a Condition or Danger's Threshold.

*(This is the default, most obvious option.)*

Reveal a minor, unnoticed detail or clue.

*(Larger investigative efforts are their own Dangers.)*

Put the Character – or an ally – in a better, more advantageous position in the scene.

Have an NPC react more favorably.

Cancel out a Failure.

*Etc.*

---

### For Each Failure, The GM Might:

Impact the acting Character, an ally, or the scene itself via a negative Condition.

Reduce a Danger's Threshold.

Separate Characters from one another.

Have an NPC react poorly – or place new expectations or hurdles before the Character

Foreshadow or introduce new Dangers.

Cancel out a Success.

*Etc.*

---

**BOTH SUCCESSES AND FAILURES CAN VARY IN NARRATION:** a result of the character, their enemies, environmental factors, or even sheer luck. Be creative and don't be afraid to let the table help determine what the results mean.

### DIFFICULT ACTIONS & ROLLS

These rules do not overly concern themselves with questions of difficulty (rather than the risk a Character is willing to take to accomplish what they want).

However, in some circumstances, a GM may decide a proposed action is too difficult or lethal to be accomplished in one Action Roll. They may ask the Player for a successful Reaction Roll first to put their Character in a better position.

### CHARACTERS HELPING CHARACTERS

A Character wishing to assist another should make an Action Roll of their own to create a positive Condition that their ally can take advantage of.

### OPPOSED ROLLS BETWEEN CHARACTERS

Players should decide on the number of dice to roll (e.g. one side playing conservatively, while the other risks a great deal). Only Successes count, inasmuch as they become the Failures suffered by the opposing PC, and **THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF SUCCESSES WINS.**

## Bonus Successes & Failures

When they would either help or hamper the action, **RELEVANT ATTRIBUTES, WEAPON USAGE, OR CONDITIONS** can grant additional Bonus Successes or Failures beyond the dice results from the Action Roll.

The **MAXIMUM POSSIBLE NUMBER OF BONUS SUCCESSES AND FAILURES EQUALS THE NUMBER OF DICE ROLLED** (e.g. a Safe Action of 1d may have one Bonus Success and one Failure; 3d Reckless Checks may have up to three of each.)

This rule exists **TO KEEP SPEED OF PLAY UP AND** not bog down turns looking for a dozen bonuses. In situations where Players would have more available than they could use, decide on what feels narratively important.

**Attributes** may grant Bonuses up to their score, while remaining within the bounds of the max bonus framework (e.g. a Chaplain 3 must roll 3d10 to get all three of those Bonuses Successes).

**Conditions and Weapons** only ever grant one Bonus Success or Failure per Action Roll.

**Weapon Usage** also can grant these Bonuses:

**DUAL-WIELDING OR TWO-HANDED WEAPONS** grant a Bonus Success to attacks. But, actions requiring a free hand cause a Bonus Failure.

**USING WEAPONS A CHARACTER IS NOT PROFICIENT WITH** also grants a Bonus Failure.

### Example Action Roll

*Hans Grunwald der Ghoul and his allies have been cornered in a butcher's shop. The garrison is closing in. Can he spring a trap?*

John the Player reasons that Hans has enough experience in the muck and mire, courtesy of his **LOWER CLASS** (1) attribute, so he tells the GM that Hans will hurriedly search for where the meat hooks and lockers are to be found for his ambush.

The GM says that's seems risky, which entails a **2D ACTION ROLL** targeting Han's **WITS** score of 5.



John rolls 2d10 with a result of 3 and 9: one success and one failure from his Wits score of 5, and one bonus success from the Lower Class attribute.

The GM gives Hans and another close by PC the “**WAITING IN AMBUSH**” MINOR CONDITION for the two successes, but narrates their enemies closing in faster than expected as the failure.

## Reaction Rolls

Some circumstances will force the PCs to make a Reaction Roll to **SAVE THEMSELVES FROM CERTAIN HARM - OR TO REVEAL HOW THEIR CULTURAL VALUES CAUSE THEM TO REACT**. The GM will call for Reaction Rolls when the story demands it.

- Reaction Rolls are **ALWAYS 1D10 AND NEVER USE BONUS SUCCESSES OR FAILURES** – they are sudden twists that rely on immediate Instincts and Values.
- Reaction Rolls target **BOTH INSTINCTS AND VALUES** – (*this is the primary use of Station, Charity, and Belief*).
- **ROLLING EQUAL TO OR UNDER AN INSTINCT’S SCORE IS A SUCCESS**: otherwise, something bad happens to the character according to the GM and the narrative circumstances.

Reaction Rolls for Values are different:

- Roll over a Value score and the Character **DOESN’T BELIEVE OR BEHAVE ACCORDING TO THAT SOCIAL MORE**: they may have religious doubt, scoff at honor and reputation, or display contempt at tradition and the social order.
- Roll equal to or under, and the Character **ACTS ACCORDING TO PREVAILING SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS**.
- Characters with a Value of 4+ who roll a 1 or 2 react so strongly that **THEY GAIN A COMPULSION**.

## COMPULSIONS

**THESE ARE AMBIGUOUS (+), MAJOR (6PT) CONDITIONS** (see pg. ##) that represent a Character reacting so strongly to a social or emotional moment that they become fixated – for good and ill effect.

Compulsions can only be cleared by resolving what prompted them (such as a duel resolving a Vendetta of Honor), failing a later Reaction Roll with that same Value, or having it voided by another Negative (-) Major Condition.

The exact nature of the Compulsion will vary based on the Character and circumstances of the Reaction Roll, but there are general archetypes for each Value:

### *Fig. ##: Types of Compulsions*

**Obligation (Station)**: A focus on less adventurous obligations, scheming at court or with patrons, meticulously observing protocol, or prioritizing social or cultural goals over adventuring opportunities.

**Vendetta (Honor)**: To save face and not tolerate shame or insult; often focused on the individual who offered said insult, their family, or their fellows.

**Vow (Belief)**: Specific expressions of religious or superstitious belief that extend until a certain date, event, or set of circumstances have come to pass. Obeying this vow is of utmost importance.

## Training & Appropriate Equipment

- Does the task require proper training or experience to attempt? (e.g. certain scientific endeavors or social practices of etiquette) **THE PC MUST HAVE A RELEVANT SOCIAL CLASS OR PROFESSION.**
- Does the task require specialty adventuring equipment a Character wouldn't reasonably have by virtue of Social Class or Profession? **THE PC MUST MARK OFF A SUPPLY POINT FIRST.**

In these circumstances, PCs who lack a relevant Character Tag or do not have any remaining Supply Points simply **MAY NOT EVEN ATTEMPT THE ROLL.** The GM is the arbitrator of this decision.

## Conditions

What are all manner of wounds, mental states, helpful and hindering parts of the environment, and any other important effects that impact a Character or the scene?

These are all **CONDITIONS**, AN ABSTRACT REPRESENTATION WHAT'S NARRATIVELY IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO BE GIVEN MECHANICAL WEIGHT.

Each and every Condition has four different parts:

1. **SHORT DESCRIPTION:** Make it succinct but evocative. It should also be understandable enough to intuit its effect at that given Tier.
2. **APPLICATION – ONE CHARACTER OR THE WHOLE SCENE?** Track a Character's Conditions on their respective character sheet, while a Scene Condition is tracked by the table – and can be applied to all Characters when relevant.
3. **TYPE:** Some Conditions are Positive, some only ever Negative, others Ambiguous. *See following.*
4. **TIER:** Conditions vary in strength. *See following.*

### TYPES OF CONDITIONS

**Positive (+):** Something that is clearly beneficial at all times. More frequently used for Characters than for an entire Scene.

**Ambiguous (±):** Circumstances, mentalities, or physical considerations that may help or hamper a Character – or an entire scene, depending on the nature of the action taken.

**Negative (-):** Injuries, mental trauma, social impediments, or other issues that will only have a negative effect on the Character. *These are most often created by Failures from Action Rolls.*

### CONDITION TIERS

**Minor (1-2pts):** A looming danger or trouble that may become a problem if not addressed – or a potential benefit if helped along.

*Minor tags have no mechanical benefit, but inform the narrative by creating tension or building hope. Examples:*

- **Fire ±1:** Coals and burning logs have been knocked out of the fireplace, which start to smolder the rug and curtains.
- **Wounded -2:** You've suffered a few cuts and bruises, but they are only a minor distraction.

**Middling (3-4pts):** The Tag has become significant and may impact characters and the scene when relevant.

*Characters can gain a Bonus Success or Failure from a Middling Condition. Examples:*

- **Fire +3:** Those coals have created a small fire in the corner of the room, enough to be dangerous with fire and smoke if too close.
- **Wounded -4:** You've taken a significant wound, but you're still in the fight. Your pain and exhaustion is starting to become noticeable.

**Major (5-6pts):** An overwhelming impact that will not easily go away or resolve on its own.

*Like Middling Conditions, Major Conditions can also grant a Bonus Success or Failure when relevant. Examples:*

- **Fire +5:** The room is fully ablaze, risking engulfing everyone.
- **Wounded -6:** You're significantly hurt.

## CREATING AND USING CONDITIONS

While Dangers – the threats, enemies, and obstacles that face the Player Characters – use a separate, streamlined mechanic called Thresholds (see pg. ##), **CONDITIONS ARE THE PRIMARY WAY CHARACTERS ARE BUFFED, HINDERED, AND DAMAGED.** Keep in mind these specifics:

**Conditions can be tagged for Bonus Successes and Failures on Action Rolls.** This applies when the Condition is relevant. Use your best judgement.

**Players can create Positive Conditions for themselves or the Scene** by making Action Rolls and applying their Successes to new or existing Conditions.

**Condition Tiers are tracked by points**, i.e. the number of Successes that have been applied to them.

**Conditions should represent temporary or transient statuses** – not something permanent or unchanging, e.g. **Stone +5** or **Dead -1** are not appropriate.

**Conditions can build up and change Tiers**, especially if a Character would take similar or overlapping tags. Feel free to rename the Condition as it grows and evolves, e.g. suffering more Failures could turn **Tangled -2** into **Trapped -4**.

**Type (Positive, Ambiguous, or Negative)** determines the **impact of Successes & Failures.** Use what seems reasonable. A Success may reduce a Negative Condition and add to a Positive one, for example.

**Negative (-) and Ambiguous Conditions (±) scale up in Tier when a lesser Tier is unavailable.** They can also replace a Positive (+) Condition entirely (but Positive Conditions cannot do the same, vice versa). When taking the next highest Condition, note the points as the lowest possible for that Tier. For example:

Hans the Character has accumulated **Sword Cut to Arm -2**, **Hungry +1**, **Busted Lip -1**, **Broken Sword -4**, and **On the Trail of the Killers +3**. He suffers three Failures in jump across a gap in roofs, and the GM decides to give him a new Negative Condition.

Hans has no more Middling Conditions left (a max of two based on his Fortitude). So the GM could swap out **On the Trail of the Killers +3** with **Sprained Ankle -3** or leave that Positive Condition in place by moving up to the next available spot, the Major Condition with **Broken Leg +5**.

## Healing or Removing Conditions

Conditions resolve themselves in a number of ways:

**While a Scene is ongoing**, Conditions can be changed – even reduced to zero points and removed from the character sheet or Scene entirely – by making relevant Action Rolls.



**At the end of a Scene**, Minor Conditions go away. Any Middling Conditions are reduced to Minor Conditions of 2pts (given the Character has enough Minor slots, which they usually will).

**Characters with Major Conditions at the end of a Scene** will find they persist and are not easily gotten rid of if Negative or Ambiguous – or are ephemeral, if Positive Conditions. *Major Conditions persist under the narrative circumstances of the game would reduce them or remove them entirely.*

This may require rest or medical treatment. This may require certain quest objectives being met. All of these circumstances may require additional Action or Reaction Rolls per the GM's judgement.

**IF A CHARACTER WOULD TAKE ON A NEW CONDITION, BUT LACKS THE AVAILABLE SLOT TO DO SO, THEN THEY ARE TAKEN OUT!**

This is usually a result of suffering more Failures than they can manage (e.g. Middling and Major Condition slots are all Negative or Ambiguous, but then a Character takes a 3pt Negative Condition), but this can also occur with Positive (+) or Ambiguous (±) Conditions, representing a Character's focus and attention going elsewhere.

The GM will decide what happens to the Character. It's not good, but shouldn't be lethal: grievous wounds, captured by an enemy, becoming lost, etc. – whatever makes sense for the Action Roll and narrative.

## Death & Being Taken Out

These rules are not designed to be capriciously high lethality. The choice to risk death is made by the Player in calling on Divine Providence (see pg. ##).





## APPENDIX

# RENAISSANCE EUROPE

## Nationalities

Games are likely to be set in specific geographic regions. Your GM may ask all Characters to be of a small set of Nationalities and/or cultures. If not, **SELECT YOUR CHARACTER'S NATIONALITY OR ROLL D10 ON THE FOLLOWING TABLE TO RANDOMLY DETERMINE A HOME REGION. THEN, SELECT A NATIONALITY FROM THERE.** Note that Foreigners, by definition, should only select “the Islamic World” and “the Colonial Periphery” as home regions.

Fig. 1: Home Regions

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**1: British Isles or Scandinavia:** England & Wales, Ireland (Tudor or Gaelic control) Scotland, Denmark-Norway, and Sweden

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**2: France or Savoy:** Considering the many regions of France

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**3: Greater Germania & the Holy Roman Empire:** The empire itself being composed of many German states and petty principalities, kingdoms (e.g.

Bohemia), and the vast reaches of Habsburg dominion. Consider as well the Swiss

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**4: Mediterranean Europe:** The united Spanish Crowns under Habsburg control, Portugal, the Papal states, and the many city-states, maritime empires, and small duchies and counties that composed the Italian peninsula.

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**5: Poland-Lithuania:** One of the largest expanses in Europe

---

**6: Ottoman Controlled Europe:** Whole swathes of Eastern Europe had been brought under Ottoman Turkish control by this point in history: Greece, most of Hungary, the Balkan states...

---

**5: Poland-Lithuania:** One of the largest expanses in Europe

---

**5: Poland-Lithuania:** One of the largest expanses in Europe

---

**9: The Islamic World:** An exceptionally broad category ranging from core Ottoman territories west to the Barbary Coast and east to Arabia and Persia... and beyond.

**10: The Colonial Periphery:** European exploration had begun to reveal much of the world to the Continent, bringing commerce, colonialism, war, and exploitation in its wake to the Americas, Africa, and Southeast Europe. *Your Character may be native to these lands, or a European recently living there.*

## Religions & Worldviews

The Reformation was a seismic shift in culture and belief for much of Europe. The following table is appropriate for Characters in games set in post-Reformation Catholic and Protestant Europe. GMs for other times or regions should adjust as needed.

Renaissance Europe was thoroughly Christian. In the wake of the Reformation (as the following table assumes), its adherents fractured along three primary lines: Roman Catholicism and the two branches of Protestantism: the Lutheran and Reformed (“Calvinist”) churches. Amid this were Jewish communities and a minority of other overriding philosophical worldviews of influence.

**EUROPEAN CHARACTERS SHOULD SELECT OR ROLL D10 AGAINST THE FOLLOWING TABLE TO RANDOMLY DETERMINE A RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEW.** Foreigners should choose a religion or philosophy appropriate for their Character’s nationality (as should those from the Balkans who may be under Ottoman suzerainty).

Note that this table *does not* claim to represent any historical distribution of religious belief. It’s designed to create a wide number of options based on prominent historical religious traditions.

Fig. 2: Religions & Philosophies

**1-2: Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox:** Historically dominant churches of the East and West: liturgical with focuses on tradition, monasticism, and complex church governance. *Russians and some Eastern Europe are generally Eastern Orthodox rather than Roman Catholic.*

**3-4: Lutheran Protestant (or Anglican):** The largest branch of Protestantism, believes the state should have power over the church and retains liturgical aspects of worship. *English Characters may be Anglican (Church of England), which is largely unrelated, but socially fills the same post-Catholic role in England.*

**5-6: Reformed Protestant (i.e. Calvinist):** The second largest branch of Protestantism, believes in the primacy of church authority over society & the state, education, a focus on the Bible, and are frequently derided for their austere, humorless morality.

**7: Humanist\*:** Scholars and philosophers interested in the wisdom of both the ancient Greeks and Romans, but also the original languages of the Christian Bible – and how the study of both applies to current affairs.

**8: Politique\*:** Politically-conscious moderates who prioritized peace and stability over a particularism of any church’s creed.

**9: Jewish:** Jewish communities exist across Europe, but their experiences varied wildly. On the



whole, there was always a lingering danger of intolerance and violence that would drive out whole communities.

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**10: Minority Sect:** An array of smaller Christian sects proliferated and survived in the margins of society, often heavily persecuted and meeting in secret. Examples include Anabaptists & Mennonites, Bohemian Brethren, the Family of Love, etc. *Like the Foreigner Social Class, the Minority Sect choice is often more complex and not generally advised for newer players or those unfamiliar with the historical era.*

\* **HUMANISTS AND POLITIQUES** are not standalone philosophies. Their adherents will also publicly profess – however nominally – one of the major strands of Christian religion, as well.

\*\* **JEWISH CHARACTERS** may take Hebrew as a free, bonus language.