



the ONE RING™

Adventures
over the Edge of the Wild

- Adventurer's Book -

FANTASY ROLEPLAYING IN THE WORLD OF THE HOBBIT™ AND THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

FRANCESCO NEPITELLO



- CREDITS -

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Dedicated to Anita, who was born when The One Ring was first discovered.

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... my friend, I wish I could persuade you to come here and see for yourself that what we accomplished together was not wasted in idleness. We have done much good since the slaying of the Dragon and the liberation of the Lonely Mountain. The splendour of our works far surpasses Thorin's grandest dreams of what we would accomplish, back when we were planning our little adventure.

To think that almost five years have passed! You might say that we didn't think much of you at the time. Now I miss very much our days together, and I would readily forfeit my peaceful life for one of dangerous adventure. Quite astonishing, I know, but I feel that sleeping under the stars with a sword at my side would ease my troubled mind.

I do not know precisely what troubles me, but disquiet weighs heavily upon my heart. The scourge of Smaug has been vanquished, the Necromancer has been driven out of his forest stronghold and, after the Battle of the Five Armies, the Goblins are afraid to leave their mountain holds. We have every reason to look forward to a new age of prosperity!

But something is wrong. I am not the only one to perceive it. A shadow, felt but unseen. The presence of a nameless threat that forbids people to rejoice fully in the hope and confidence that should follow the return of the light.

Nonsense? Possibly. I am an old Dwarf after all, and those who hearken to me are but a few. For every voice that dares to whisper words of warning, far too many answer that our recent victories have earned us a respite. Despite my nagging sense of unease, complacency is rife.

Dearest Bilbo, deep inside of me I feel that we should remain vigilant and warn others against the risks of self-congratulation. Everyone around us seems to look inwards instead, to their own concerns and the goings-on right in front of their noses. Soon I will confer with Gandalf upon these matters, and possibly come to visit you in the kindly West.

From a letter from Balin, son of Fundin, to Bilbo Baggins, Esq.



Home is behind, the world ahead, And there are many paths to tread

It is the year 2946 of the Third Age, and the lands east of the Misty Mountains are astir. From the cloud-shrouded peaks above the High Pass to the spider-infested gloom of the forest of Mirkwood, paths long-deserted are trodden once again. Busy merchants carry their wares to new markets, messengers bring tidings from foreign realms, and kings send forth armed men to extend their influence and the rule of law. Some say that a new age of freedom has begun, a time for adventure and great deeds to reclaim glories lost in long centuries of oppression and decline.

But adventures are not really things that people go out and look for. They are dangerous and rarely end well. While it is true that a handful of valiant individuals set out to make their mark on the world, for others it seems that adventure chooses *them*, as though it is the path they are fated to tread. They are restless warriors, curious scholars and wanderers, always eager to seek what was lost or explore what was forgotten. Ordinary people call them *adventurers*, and when they return successful, they call them *heroes*. But if they fail, no one will even remember their names...

In The One Ring roleplaying game, you take the part of the heroes of Middle-earth. You will travel the land, uncover its secrets, take part in its unfolding history and encounter its inhabitants and legends. As the Shadow creeps back across the lands of the Free Peoples, you will uncover hints of what is happening, and have the chance to play a part in the struggle against the Enemy.





- Part 1: Introduction -





- PROLOGUE -

**“This is the Master-ring,
the One Ring to rule them all.”**

The One Ring is a roleplaying game based on the *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, two extraordinary works of fiction by the beloved author and respected academic, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. With these books, Tolkien introduced readers to his own greatest creation, the world of Middle-earth. A mythic land from a remote past, its rich history and detailed geography were created over the course of many years.

With *The One Ring*, Middle-earth is yours to explore. The two books contained in the core set – *The Adventurer’s Book* and *The Loremaster’s Book* – provide you with the rules of the game and rich information on the people, places and adversaries you could encounter during your adventures.

WHERE TO START

The *Adventurer’s Book* (which you are currently reading) contains all the information players need to know to get started. The introductory section discusses the way roleplaying games work, describes the area of Middle-earth where your first adventure will begin, and outlines the basic rules of the game. The following sections show you how to create your own unique hero – the character that you will take the part of in your adventures. Finally, the book introduces some of the more commonly-used rules – such as combat and travel – in more detail. But don’t be put off by the length of the book – the game is not as complicated as the page count might suggest. The basic rules are only a few pages long and most of the time only require you to make one or two dice rolls to resolve your actions.

The *Loremaster’s Book* is the other volume in the set, intended for the Loremaster, the person who will be

running the game; don’t worry if you’re not familiar with this terminology, it is described below. The book contains the rules needed to create adventures and tie them together into an ongoing epic. All important game mechanics are discussed in depth, to introduce even an inexperienced Loremaster to the world of roleplaying, and the book also includes an introductory adventure to get things started.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

Thanks to video, computer and online games, millions of people today are familiar with roleplaying games. Players create fictional heroes and explore shared worlds populated by computer-controlled creatures and, in online games, accessed by a multitude of other players. *The One Ring* is a pen-and-paper version of the same type of game, with players meeting face-to-face around a table and the computer replaced by one person – the Loremaster – acting as narrator and referee.

Each player plays the role of a single character during the game. The player designs every part of the character, from personality to appearance, and chooses its skills and abilities. Players are encouraged to play ‘in character’ as much as possible, as this helps to bring the game alive.

The Loremaster doesn’t take the role of a character, but is instead in charge of describing the setting and managing what happens to the players when they interact with the game world. He begins each session of play by setting the scene, plays the parts of the people and creatures the characters encounter, and adjudicates the consequences of the heroes’ actions. Gameplay takes the form of a continuous conversation between the Loremaster and his players; a dialogue that, with the help of the rules, gives birth to a story that is created by and enjoyed by everyone involved.

As much as *The One Ring* is a storytelling experience, it remains a game. To play it, everybody relies on a set of rules not very different from those of a traditional board game.

Dice are used to determine the success – or failure – of the characters' most important actions (with more simple actions resolved through common sense). The rules for the game are straightforward and easy to learn and, most importantly, should not interfere with everybody having a good time.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Imagine that we are listening in as a game session begins. There are four people sitting around the table – Jennifer, Stuart, Claire and Nick...

Nick (the Loremaster): Okay, at the end of the last session you had arrived in Dale with the message of warning that King Thranduil demanded you deliver to King Bard. You emerge from the Traders' Gate into the Merchants' Quarter. Large warehouses line the street ahead of you, and carts laden with goods are heading in both directions. From a gap between warehouses to the right, you can see a large boat tied to the jetty on the river – you can hear its timbers creak as it heaves on its moorings. Which way are you going to head?

Jennifer (playing Lifstan, a Barding): Lifstan grew up in Dale, so he'd know where we should go, wouldn't he?

Nick: Yes, he would know that King Bard's Royal Palace is near the centre of the town – straight ahead to the market square then off to the left a bit.

Jennifer (as Lifstan): "Follow me; I'll take us to Bard's palace."

Stuart (as Trotter): "Lead the way."

Jennifer: I lead everyone up the street towards the palace.

Claire (playing The Bride): I'm following.

Nick: You walk along the street, being careful to avoid the carts and porters bustling around you. It takes you about five minutes to get to the square, a large expanse

opening up from the narrow streets of Dale, crowded with canvas-roofed stalls and thronged with people. The noise of haggling traders, laughing children and musicians entertaining the crowd is overwhelming. At the side of the square to your left is an impressive building with marble columns. In front of it is a fountain featuring an enormous Dragon; Jennifer, Lifstan would know that it commemorates the defeat of Smaug, and stands in front of the palace.

Jennifer (as Lifstan): "There's the palace. Let's see if my liege is accepting visitors."

Claire (as The Bride): "He'd better be. King Thranduil seemed to feel his message was urgent!"

Stuart (as Trotter): "Let's find out." We make our way around the square to the palace.

Nick: It takes a few minutes to get around the edge of the crowd, but you're soon approaching the palace gate. Two men-at-arms stand in front of the closed doors, eyeing you suspiciously.

Jennifer (as Lifstan): "Well met, countrymen. I have urgent business with King Bard."

Nick (playing one of the men-at-arms, in a gruff voice): "The King will receive no more visitors today. Come back tomorrow."

Stuart: Are there any trees that I can try to sneak behind while they are talking to Lifstan?

Nick: Sadly not.

Claire: I'm going to try to awe them with my war-like appearance and the importance of our cause.

Claire (as The Bride): "We come directly from King Thranduil with a message of dire warnings. Surely the wise King Bard would wish to hear such tidings, that we have bested many foes to deliver."



Nick: Okay, you need to make an **Awe** task roll with a difficulty of 14.

Claire: I have three levels in my **Awe** skill, so I'm rolling three Success dice and the Feat die... for a total of 18, including two success icons!

Nick: The men-at-arms visibly pale at the thought that they might have slighted such awe-inspiring warriors on such a quest. They stammer their apologies and usher you through the door. They ask that you wait for a moment in the grand entrance hall, and one rushes off through a doorway to alert the King to your presence...

A NOTE ON GENDER

All references to players and the Loremaster in the game text use the masculine pronoun for ease of expression: this should not be interpreted as excluding female players, characters or Loremasters. Although Middle-earth in the Third Age is not a place where women often choose a life of adventure, the books introduce some memorable exceptions, providing ample inspiration to players who want to play female heroes.

SETTING

The One Ring is set in the period between the conclusion of the events narrated in *The Hobbit* and the culmination of the terrible struggle described in the pages of *The Lord of the Rings* – the Twilight of the Third Age.

Encompassing more than seventy years, this time is ushered in when Bilbo the Hobbit finds the Ruling Ring, and culminates many decades later with the final confrontation between the Free Peoples and the Dark Lord Sauron, and the destruction of the Ring. It is an exciting time, offering plenty of opportunities for adventuring in a land witnessing the end of an era.

THE ONE RING TRILOGY

The One Ring breaks the Twilight of the Third Age into three periods, presented in three separate core sets, published in succession and bridged by a number of supplements. Each set will cover a period from twenty-five to thirty years, and will present a different region of Middle-earth and the cultures inhabiting it.

In this, the first core set, the game introduces the dangerous lands known collectively as Wilderland and covers the years immediately following the adventures of Bilbo the Hobbit and his companions. This region provides an excellent starting point for players entering Middle-earth for the first time, as recent events have brought the area to the forefront of history. This set introduces the main rules of the game, and is all you need for many hours of adventure in Middle-earth.

The second and third sets of The One Ring will progressively widen the geographical boundaries of the setting, and will detail events further along the timeline.

- WILDERLAND -

... he knew how evil and danger had grown and thriven in the Wild, since the dragons had driven men from the lands, and the Goblins had spread in secret after the battle of the Mines of Moria.

The lands extending from the Misty Mountains as far as the Running River are known as Wilderland. There are many good reasons for such an ominous name. Not only did the region once host a Dragon's lair, but its greater part is occupied by the forest of Mirkwood, home to giant spiders, Orcs and other dangerous creatures.

Nevertheless, Wilderland has changed significantly in recent years. Smaug, the Dragon of Erebor, bane of the Northern world, has been killed, and the Necromancer has been driven from his fastness in Southern Mirkwood.

Many proud folk are reclaiming their lost dominions: to the north rises the Lonely Mountain, a solitary peak that houses an underground stronghold of Dwarves of the line of Durin; on the valley below stands Dale, a city of Northmen newly rebuilt from its ruins, close to the trading town of Esgaroth on the Long Lake; from hidden halls dug under the northern eaves of Mirkwood issue again the hosts of King Thranduil, ruler of the Wood-elves; near the Ford of Carrock on the river Anduin, the Beornings, a folk of Men following the lead of Beorn the Skin-changer, keep their watch; while to the south the settlements of the Woodmen are multiplying along the vale of the Great River.

YEAR 2946 OF THE THIRD AGE

Five years ago, in the year 2941 of the Third Age in the reckoning of the Elves and the Men of the West, a fierce battle shook the roots of Erebor, the Lonely Mountain.

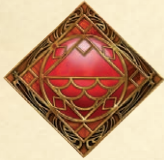
Orcs, Wild Wolves, Men, Dwarves and Elves clashed under a sky darkened by giant bats, their hatred fuelled by ancient quarrels. Many deeds of renown were done that day, and some heroes prevailed while others fell, in the end delivering a crushing victory for the Free Peoples of the North.

A new alliance was born from the aftermath of that battle, now remembered as the Battle of Five Armies. In fact, if it hadn't been for the threat of Bolg's invading host, rallying the Free Peoples under a single banner, the long years of petty misunderstandings would have flared into open warfare. The spirits of Elves, Men and Dwarves were embittered and made miserable by the growing darkness of Mirkwood and the ever-present menace of the great Dragon of Erebor. Each community had become suspicious of its neighbours and limited their dealings to meagre trades. When the din of battle subsided, the surviving Free Peoples looked upon each other with an open heart once again.



THE FREE FOLKS OF THE NORTH

Once freed from the threat of Smaug the Dragon, and with two thirds of the Goblin warriors of the North eradicated, the inhabitants of the northern regions of Wilderland have the opportunity to finally look forward to a prosperous future. But five years after the Dragon's demise, peace is still a fragile thing over the edge of the Wild, to be cared for and looked after, especially for those who dwell in its darkest corners.



BARDINGS

Bard the Bowman, of the line of Girion – slayer of the Dragon, shooter of the Black Arrow – has been crowned King of Dale after successfully reclaiming his kingdom. Five years ago, he led those who chose to follow him north, leaving behind the ruins of Lake-town. Warriors and craftsmen from the Long Lake came to rebuild Dale, and farmers from the lands to the south and west tilled the fields. Trees soon started to bear fruit and birds sang again where the desolation of Smaug once extended in ominous silence. Much sought-after help arrived from King Dáin of Erebor, and from King Thranduil of the Woodland Realm. Both rulers remember and honour Bard's role in their present fortunes, and his generosity after the Battle of Five Armies.

The number of Bard's followers has steadily increased as ever more people gather in the valley under the Mountain to recognise his valour and rightful kingship. The Bardings, as the inhabitants of Dale are now known, are becoming a powerful folk. They finally feel safe from direct threats and are prosperous and well armed, with a king whose daring might soon prompt him to unite the scattered settlements found along the River Running into a wider kingdom of Men.



BEORNINGS

In the years following the liberation of the Lonely Mountain, Beorn the Skin-changer became a great chief, gathering many men from far and wide under his command, starting with solitary hunters and fighters used to the harsh life of the wild. Now, under Beorn's leadership, the Beornings are recognised by all to be a valiant and trusty people, sworn to fight the Shadow and its minions (when they are not following Beorn's footsteps and acting as beekeepers and bakers of honey-cakes!).

Nobody knows why Beorn, a lonely hunter of Orcs and Wild Wolves, decided to welcome outsiders to his hall. He did so all of a sudden, after the Battle of Five Armies and the death of Thorin Oakenshield.

Today the Beornings rule a domain comprising the Carrock, the Old Ford and High Pass, and the land around them. They have made it their duty to watch over the passes and river crossings of their land, exacting tolls from all who ask to pass under their escort, and forbidding passage to all sorts of malevolent creatures.



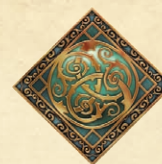
DWARVES OF THE LONELY MOUNTAIN

When Thorin Oakenshield died during the Battle of Five Armies, his close kinsman Dáin Ironfoot from the Iron Hills stepped in to lead the people of Durin. Dáin, a battle-hardened warrior, proved to be a wise King from the very beginning when he dealt out treasure from the Dragon's hoard with an open hand to those who could rightfully claim a share of it.

Under his reign, Erebor has thrived, enjoying good relations with the neighbouring realms, and the magnificence of the Kingdom under the Mountain itself has exceeded Thorin's dreams: the vast underground stronghold, dug after the fashion of the Dwarves since they first awakened in Middle-earth, is now the most prosperous dwarf-colony active in the Northern world.

Dwarf craftsmen labour in the city of Dale, Barding apprentices work the bellows in the forges under the mountain, and traders come and go from the Front Gate of Erebor to bring the products of the Dwarves' cunning handiwork to distant lands.

Innumerable treasures of worth far surpassing anything made by modern hands are said to grace the deep chambers of the Dwarven city. The few envoys who have been granted access to the halls of the King speak of the wonders of the subterranean palace, foremost among them that which now sits on the unmoving breast of Thorin Oakenshield: the fabled Arkenstone, Heart of the Mountain.



ELVES OF MIRKWOOD

Thranduil the Elvenking sits on his throne of carven wood, the ruler of his realm since the end of the previous age of the world. A prince of lofty lineage, he is a survivor of cruel wars that have had an enormous effect on his personality and outlook. Obeying his own foreboding heart's counsel, he long ago resolved to forsake the light of the stars and build a strong fastness under the earth to guard his people.

The great hall of Thranduil lies underground, dug within the northern borders of the Forest of Mirkwood. This choice, odd as it may seem for a lord reigning over a people so fond of the rustling of leaves, is in truth not so unusual for one who has fought the forces of darkness for countless centuries, and could often only find refuge from the Enemy in secrecy and remoteness.

Though under siege, the Wood-elves were still able to find solace above ground; some live in houses and huts deep in the forest, or high among the branches of the tallest beech trees, unseen to mortal eyes who cannot distinguish their abodes from their surroundings. The few guests who enter the gates of Thranduil's Palace on an invitation from the Elvenking, thinking to descend into a cold dungeon of stone, will be surprised, for this stronghold is unlike any fortress built by Men or even Dwarves. Its passages are twisting and echoing; its halls are airy, with pillars hewn out of the living stone and darkness chased away by bright lamps and red torchlight. Its inhabitants are ready to sing and take up the harp, as soon as their hands have let their bows and spears rest along the tapestried walls. But let any trespassers beware: for the Elves of Mirkwood are as cruel with foes as they are gracious to friends.



HOBBITS OF THE SHIRE

The slaying of the Dragon Smaug and the diminishing power of the Goblins and Orcs have had a profound effect even beyond the Misty Mountains. Rumours have reached the West of a new prosperity for all folks living in the Northern world. But even if the mountain passes are not as dangerous as before, the Wild is still the Wild and, for Hobbits living in their distant and comfortable holes, every hint of inconvenience or danger is a good reason to stay home and to forget about dwarf-gold and dragon-hoards!

But buried inside many young Hobbits is an adventurous side, a hunger to see the world and meet other folks. Stories of brave deeds and adventure can sometimes overwhelm certain Hobbits' natural resistance to impulsive behaviour and send them out on the Road to see mountains and Elves.

But who knows where these unfortunate fellows have actually gone? Did they even cross the Shire boundaries before Hobbit common sense turned them back, or did they succeed in following the East-West Road to the mountain passes?



WOODMEN OF WILDERLAND

The Woodmen of Wilderland are Northmen dwelling in the lands south of the Old Ford as far as the Gladden Fields, between the Misty Mountains and the southwestern eaves of Mirkwood. They are a hardy folk, composed of many families and greater clans, but much diminished by the many wars that have wracked Middle-earth. It is a testament to their tenacity that they have overcome every difficulty they have faced, even learning how to survive in the shadow of a fortress of the Enemy itself: the dreaded tower of the Necromancer.

The strength of the Woodmen is in their unity. They all feel an unshakeable bond of kinship with each other, scattered as they may be in their homesteads and small towns, inside the western borders of the forest or on the other side of the Great River, at the roots of the mountains, and gather often, to celebrate seasonal festivals, marriages and funerals, to form hunting parties to gather food, or to assemble a host in time of need. For many years they have been assisted by the wizard, Radagast the Brown. A tender of beasts, Radagast has instructed birds and other creatures to watch over the Woodmen's homes, to warn them in case of danger. Often, Woodmen go to his abode to seek the wizard's advice, looking for him inside the fenced garth of Rhosgobel.

THE SHADOW

The darkest legends of all folks living in the Northwest of Middle-earth speak of an evil power, an age-old Enemy whose greatest desire is to cover all the lands in darkness. Ancient beyond reckoning, this Shadow has taken many shapes, always in the attempt to conquer and consume all who opposed it. It suffered many defeats at the hands of valiant kings and the Powers of the world themselves, only to rise again in a new guise.

Almost two-thousand years ago, this Shadow entered Greenwood the Great, the forest of Wilderland. It secretly crept around a naked hill in the south, and built Dol Guldur, the Hill of Sorcery. From there, the darkness spread under the eaves of the forest, slowly turning it into a place of horror and dread. Many animals fled, leaving behind them an eerie silence, while other creatures crept in, as though heeding the call of a dark master: Orcs and giant spiders began to multiply, threatening all who entered or lived near the Forest. The folks who called the wild wood their home suffered greatly, and soon forgot the beauty of Greenwood the Great, renaming it Mirkwood. Among them, the Silvan Elves and the Woodmen living along its western borders endured to this day, but not without much strife. The Elves retreated to their fortress underground beyond the mountain range that crosses the forest in the north, while the Woodmen learnt to survive in small groups to escape the Shadow's notice. They started to refer to the dark presence occupying Dol Guldur as the Necromancer, failing to recognise it as the ancient Enemy.

Some years ago, a council of the Wise resolved to chase away the Shadow in the Forest once and for all. Powerful lords gathered their strength, and the Shadow fled to the East. The Forest finally knew a moment of respite, but the darkness of Mirkwood is now centuries old, and its hold on the forest's deepest recesses is still strong. It will take many years for the Free Folks of the North to reclaim and cleanse the wood in its entirety, and only if the Shadow is kept away.

REGIONS OF WILDERLAND

Wilderland stretches between the Misty Mountains to the west, the forbidding Grey Mountains to the north, the river Redwater to the east and the Brown Lands to the south. In this age of insular communities and limited travel, most new maps cover small areas, rarely extending beyond the land governed by the king or chieftain who commissioned them.

The map overleaf of Wilderland is a rare piece, compiled using information collected by Bilbo the Hobbit during his journey, and completed with material gathered at a later date from wandering Elves and Dwarves visiting the Shire.



ONE RING the Wilder-land



- how to play -

“The board is set, and the pieces are moving.”

In The One Ring roleplaying game, the players assume the role of adventurers, bold individuals travelling across Middle-earth. The exception to this is the person who takes the mantle of the Loremaster – the referee and director whose task is presenting the players with interesting challenges, worthy opponents and exciting stories. The One Ring can be played with as few as two people (one player plus the Loremaster), and with as many as six players or more. All that is needed is paper, pencils, imagination, and a love for Tolkien’s imaginary world.

To start the game, all players must create the character they wish to play, using the rules contained in the following chapter, while the Loremaster comes up with an adventure ‘hook’, the beginning of a story (a ready-to-play adventure is included in the Loremaster’s Book to help speed things up). The characters created by the players begin the game as a newly-formed group of adventurers, recently united by a common cause or pressing need. They are going to be the protagonists of the tale about to be told, and their actions will determine if they are destined to become heroes, whose deeds will help turn back the encroaching darkness, or if they will perish in the attempt.

PLAYER-HEROES

Players experience the dark years of Middle-earth’s late Third Age by playing the roles of the characters they create. To accomplish this, a player needs to step into his character’s shoes and guide his actions, trying to think as the hero would think and reacting as the hero would react. It is a game of make-believe, a story in the making, created in collaboration with the Loremaster.

The next chapter, Hero Creation, presents all the information needed to design a fully detailed hero.

Players should beware, though, that the rules and information contained in this book must be used as a painter would use colours: it needs *imagination* to give depth to your character, to add meaning to the numbers, and to really bring them to life.

THE LOREMASTER

The entire world and history of Middle-earth lie in the hands of the Loremaster and his players, ready to be explored, interpreted and reinvented. As players develop the story of their adventures, the Loremaster confronts them with unforeseen problems and plot twists, leading to the creation of a new epic, focused entirely around the deeds of the company and its members. To achieve this goal, the Loremaster describes the locales where the action is taking place, plays the part of the people they meet, and uses the rules to fairly adjudicate the outcome of the actions proposed by the players.

The Loremaster’s Book contains additional rules and guidelines that a Loremaster might need in his role of referee, narrator and director, along with suggestions on how to work with his players to create stories that are both engaging and faithful to the world as depicted in the source material.

STRUCTURE OF THE GAME

Telling and participating in stories is at the heart of The One Ring. The Loremaster sets the scene, plays the parts of the people encountered and interprets the outcomes of the players’ actions, but what makes these stories come alive is the interaction between the Loremaster and the players.

To facilitate this creative interaction, each adventure is structured in two phases: an Adventuring phase, usually taking the largest part of the gameplay, and a closing Fellowship phase.

During the Adventuring phase, the Loremaster presents the beginning of the adventure to the players. Seen at their most basic level, most adventures start with one or more challenges that the players *react* to. As the phase develops, the course of action chosen by the players take the gameplay in different directions, leading to further challenges or to the conclusion of the adventure. When the players finally overcome the challenges put forth by the Loremaster, or fail without recourse, the Adventuring phase comes to an end.

At this point the players start a Fellowship phase, narrating what their characters do when they finally return from their adventuring or rest for a while. During this phase, it is the *Loremaster's* turn to act reactively, by listening to his players' propositions and wishes, and making sure that the rules are correctly applied.

Following this structure, every adventure will see the player-heroes take part in a significant chain of events and follow them through a conclusive resolution.



Structure and the Experienced Gamer

The game structure presented here is a tool to help the Loremaster. Experienced gamers might find it artificial or intrusive, but the same structure is present in most roleplaying games – it just isn't referred to as explicitly. For example, at the end of an adventure, players usually pause to spend experience points. In *The One Ring*, the Fellowship phase not only allows this to happen, but provides a narrative reason for it, and also presents a lot more options. If the players are not ready to stop for a Fellowship phase, they can have a short pause representing a week's rest at a nearby settlement, or even carry straight on into the next adventure, if they prefer.

Other elements of the structure, such as episodes, narrative time, and storytelling initiative, are included to help new Loremasters structure the story, but are likely to be something that an experienced Loremaster already features in his games.

In short, the structure can be as obvious or invisible as you want it to be, depending on your group's preferred style of play.

Usually, a full adventure should not take more than two or three sessions of play to complete, with the Adventuring phase taking up most of the game time, and the Fellowship phase occupying the last half evening of play or so. After a few games, players and Loremasters alike will find that what happens in the two distinct phases of the game is actually closely interrelated, as the events arising during an Adventuring phase lead the players to make certain choices during the following Fellowship phase. In turn, the Loremaster will find it very easy to tie the next Adventuring phase into what happened during the previous Fellowship phase. The final result is an ongoing epic that grows out of the lives of the characters created by the players and their deeds.

By way of comparison, the events narrated in *The Hobbit* can be seen as a series of four linked adventures:

1. The first Adventuring phase sees the characters leave Hobbiton to journey into the Wild and reach Rivendell; the conclusive Fellowship phase is spent as guests of Elrond Half-elven.
2. The following Adventuring phase sees the company reach the Misty Mountains, travel across them, and eventually spend the Fellowship phase in the house of Beorn.
3. The third Adventuring phase follows the Hobbit and his Dwarf companions as they travel across Mirkwood and are made prisoners of the Elvenking, to finally spend a Fellowship phase in Lake Town.
4. The final Adventuring phase witnesses the exploration of the Lonely Mountain, the killing of Smaug, and the final battle of Five Armies. The last Fellowship phase is resolved with all companions having returned to their respective homes.

EPISODES AND NARRATIVE TIME

Time passes at different rates in stories: one evening spent playing *The One Ring* may detail a single day in the life of an adventurer, or skim over a year or more of his career. During a session, the passage of time is represented mainly in two ways: with detailed, focused *episodes* that require players to closely interact with the story, or in a quicker, less descriptive fashion called *narrative time*, most appropriate when dealing with prolonged or time-consuming events, like journeys, sieges or other endeavours that occur 'off-screen'. The Loremaster and his players don't need to acknowledge when the gameplay shifts from one time scale to another, as the average game session actually passes smoothly from one mode to the other, but the rules presented here use this distinction for the sake of explanation.

STORYTELLING INITIATIVE

During the game, and especially in the two distinct phases of play, the Loremaster and his players take turns in holding the main *storytelling initiative*. This means

that while in the Adventuring phase, the Loremaster is the primary storyteller – he is in charge of coming up with the story hook, managing challenges and narrating the results of all characters' actions as determined by the rules – during a Fellowship phase, it is the turn of the players to present to the Loremaster their ideas and intentions – for example, to choose where they are going to rest, and to decide what they will do while they are there.

But things are not always so clear-cut; there are several moments during the game when the storytelling initiative passes from the Loremaster to the players or vice versa. For example, while players are usually considered to have the storytelling initiative for everything concerning their characters, as they choose their player-heroes' actions and words at any time, it is possible to lose that prerogative when a hero suffers from the taint of corruption and loses control of himself. And while the Loremaster is, under most circumstances, the primary storyteller during an adventuring phase, the clever use of a character's qualities might let a player briefly derail the narration to conform to his own wishes.

CHARACTER SHEET

A hero is defined in the game by a collection of traits and numbers, describing his physical, spiritual and mental attributes and the extent of his knowledge and capability as an adventurer. These values influence how the character interacts with the game rules, so it is important that they are close at hand and easy to keep track of.

For ease of reference, all players get a character sheet, a descriptive form that is easily compiled and updated as a player-hero grows in experience. A character sheet has two sides: the front of the sheet contains all the information concerning the personal characteristics of the adventurer, while the back is used mainly to record his deeds and the exploits of the company he belongs to.

A blank character sheet can be found on the next two pages (and on page 188), and a .PDF version can be downloaded from www.theonering.info

The ONE RING™

Name _____

Culture _____ Standard of Living _____

Cultural Blessing _____

Calling _____ Shadow weakness _____

- TRAITS -

Specialities _____

Distinctive Features _____

Experience



Valour



Wisdom



- ATTRIBUTES -



- COMMON SKILLS -

<i>Awe</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Inspire</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Persuade</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Athletics</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Travel</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Stealth</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Awareness</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Insight</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Search</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Explore</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Healing</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Hunting</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Song</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Courtesy</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Riddle</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Craft</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Battle</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Lore</i>	□□□□□□

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality	◆◆◆◆
movement	◆◆◆◆
perception	◆◆◆◆
survival	◆◆◆◆
custom	◆◆◆◆
vocation	◆◆◆◆

- WEAPON SKILLS -

_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc
_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc
_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc
_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc



- REWARDS -

- VIRTUES -

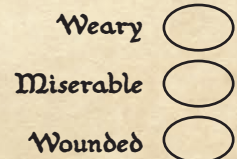
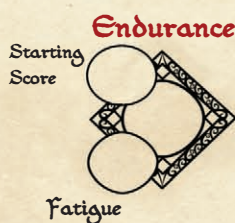


Armour



- GEAR -

armour	_____	enc
headgear	_____	enc
shield	_____	enc
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



Fellowship



Advancement Points



Treasure



Standing



- BACKGROUND -

Four horizontal lines for background text.

- COMPANY -

Guide

Scout

Huntsman

Look-out Man

Fellowship Focus

Five horizontal lines for company details.

- FELLOWSHIP PHASE -

Sanctuaries

Patron

Two horizontal lines for fellowship phase details.

- TALE OF YEARS -

Year

Event description

Year

Event description

Table with 4 columns: Year, Event description, Year, Event description. Contains 12 rows of horizontal lines for data entry.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

As you can see from the character sheet, the game makes use of several specific terms. Here are some definitions to help you get started.

Character Sheet Front

Name: Here is where a player writes the name chosen for his character. As the various folks of Middle-earth follow different naming conventions, players are advised to select a name from those provided as typical examples of each culture in the hero creation chapter.

Culture: The cultural group the player-hero belongs to. Choosing a character's culture is probably the most important choice to be made when creating a player-hero. There are six playable cultures in the first core set for *The One Ring*: Bardings, Beornings, Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain, Elves of Mirkwood, Hobbits of the Shire and Woodmen of Wilderland.

Standard of Living: This summarises a culture's level of prosperity. A cultural standard of living can limit a hero's ability to get hold of certain items.

Cultural Blessing: A cultural blessing describes a special ability or quality so profoundly ingrained in a given community that in the game it is made available to all its members.

Calling: A character's calling is what motivated him to seek a life of adventure and keeps him on that dangerous path every day. There are five different callings to choose from, each one exemplifying a different adventurous drive: player-heroes can be *Scholars*, *Slayers*, *Treasure-hunters*, *Wanderers* or *Wardens*. Callings let a player customise his character concept and help him focus on the beliefs and goals that give him a sense of purpose.

Shadow Weakness: This represents a hero's main flaw, the weak point that the Shadow might exploit to corrupt his spirit. Shadow weaknesses are based upon a character's calling.

Traits: Traits are peculiar features that individualise a player-hero, qualities (and sometimes flaws) that are used by players to personalise their characters, building upon their strengths and weaknesses. Players select Traits when they choose their character's culture, background and calling.

Attributes: Body, Heart and Wits describe respectively the physical, spiritual and mental profile of a character. These numerical scores are the primary building blocks of a character, and describe his aptitudes and natural capabilities. Each Attribute has a *basic* rating, determined by his background, and a *favoured* rating, found by adding a bonus. An Attribute's basic rating is recorded in the bigger square box, and the favoured rating is recorded in the smaller circle.

Common Skills: Common skills represent the things a hero has learnt to do. Their value is recorded by filling the relevant number of boxes. At several moments during character creation, players are instructed to underline with a pencil the name of a skill, to mark it as favoured. Favoured skills describe a character's peculiar talent in the field described by the ability.

Skill Categories: Skills are organised vertically into columns, grouping the abilities by the Attribute that is considered most influential. Thus, there are six Body skills, six Heart skills and six Wits skills.

Skill Groups: The eighteen Common skills are organised by relationship into rows, defining six skill groups: *personality*, *movement*, *perception*, *survival*, *custom* and *vocation*. Each skill group name is followed by a row of three boxes, to be checked when a hero does something worthy of an Advancement point.

Weapon Skills: Weapon skills describe a character's ability with weapons, like swords, axes, or bows. Players

choose their heroes' Weapon skills from two predefined cultural fighting styles. As happens with Common skills, Weapon skills may also be underlined to be marked as favoured skills. Weapon skill names within brackets indicate a cultural weapon skill, allowing a character to use a wider selection of weapons - for example: (Spears).

Experience: When they start adventuring, characters change and grow by gaining and using Experience points, accumulated by players after each session. The bigger box is used to record any Experience points received during the current Adventuring phase, while the smaller box is used to keep track of the total Experience received - and spent - by a player thus far.

Valour: A character's Valour rank describes his stature as a doer of great deeds, and is a measure of his courage in the face of dangerous situations or opponents. Each time a player-hero attains a new Valour rank, he receives a Reward, as an acknowledgement of his actions.

Wisdom: A character's Wisdom rank defines his self-understanding and capability for good judgment, and is a measure of his resistance to the corrupting power of the Shadow. Each time a player-hero attains a new Wisdom rank, he receives a Virtue, as a consequence of his awareness.

Virtues: Virtues are unique abilities and special talents, characteristic of a given culture. Players select a Virtue when their player-hero is raised to a new Wisdom rank.

Rewards: Rewards are pieces of war gear of superior craftsmanship, granted to a player-hero as an award for his deeds. Players receive a Reward when their player-hero attains a new Valour rank.

Gear: The equipment carried by the character, along with its Encumbrance rating.

Endurance: Endurance is the expression of a player-hero's physical stamina and determination. It is reduced when a character is subjected to physical harm, stress and exhaustion.

Fatigue: The weight and encumbrance of the gear carried by a character may limit his performance. A hero is considered Weary as long as his Endurance score is found to be equal to or lower than his Fatigue threshold.

Hope: A character's Hope score defines the reserves of spiritual vigour that heroes draw upon when put in danger. Players can choose to spend a point of Hope to tap a player-hero's energy reserves and possibly push him beyond his limits.

Shadow: A hero's Shadow rating undermines his Hope score, as his spirit is being weakened and corrupted. A hero is considered Miserable as long as his Hope score is equal or lower than his current Shadow rating.

Damage: The character's Damage rating indicates the potential of a hero to do substantial harm to an opponent when able to hit with force and precision, using a close combat or ranged weapon. The smaller damage box on the character sheet, marked *ranged*, is used when a hero's damage using close combat differs from that when using ranged weapons.

Parry: A hero's Parry score reflects his ability to deflect or in any way avoid an incoming blow. Carrying a shield of any type enhances a character's Parry rating.

Armour: Characters wear armour to avoid suffering lasting damage in combat. Usually composed of several layers of protective garments, armour is always burdensome and heavy. A character can wear a headpiece to complement his defensive gear.

Weary: This box is checked when a hero has been made *Weary*. A Weary character suffers a penalty when taking actions until he is able to rest properly.

Miserable: This box is checked when a hero has been made *Miserable*. A Miserable character is in danger of suffering a bout of madness and temporarily lose control of himself



Wounded: When the attack of an enemy successfully overcomes a character's defences and his protective garments fail to safeguard him, he is wounded. If a wounded character is wounded a second time, he is knocked out.

Character Sheet Back

Fellowship: This box is used to record the number of points left in a Company's Fellowship pool. Every player keeps track of its current score, even if the pool is a common one.

Advancement Points: Here players keep track of the number of Advancement points their heroes have accumulated. These points are spent to raise a hero's Common skill scores.

Treasure: Heroes gain Treasure when they gain possession of materials and items of uncommon worth, like silver, gold and precious gems. Representing a wealth much beyond the ordinary, players may invest their Treasure when they are not actively adventuring.

Standing: A character's Standing score represents the respectability, acclaim or prestige he enjoys as a member of his community. It measures the character's ability to participate in or influence the shaping of his culture's history.

Background: Each cultural description offers six examples of backgrounds, brief descriptions offering, among other things, details of a character's past and upbringing. The choice of a background during the creation of a new hero has several consequences in gaming terms, as for example it defines a character's starting Attribute scores.

Although players new to roleplaying may adopt a background as it stands, players are encouraged to create their own characters' backstories from the ground up, using the existing ones as examples.

Company: Here every player records the names of his fellow companions, possibly indicating which role every one of them plays in the group.

Fellowship phase: The headings listed under 'Fellowship phase' are used to record the names and whereabouts of those places where the Company spends time recovering from their adventuring, and the names of the individuals that occasionally help them.




Tale of Years: Players use this space to keep track of the memorable events they witness or take part in during their career as adventurers.

- DICE -

Like many games, The One Ring uses dice to determine whether the adventurers succeed or fail when they attempt difficult tasks or confront dangerous threats. The dice used in The One Ring are a set of specialised dice, including six 6-sided dice (also called *Success dice*) and one 12-sided die with two special icons (called the *Feat die*). While this set contains exactly the right amount of dice used during a game, players may find it useful to bring some more as it will be more comfortable for each player to have a set close at hand (these additional dice may be easily customised to work as the ones that come with the game, or left as they are and used with minimum adjustments – see the 'Using your own dice' sidebar).

Using your own dice

If you already have a set of dice you use for games, you can easily use them for The One Ring.

Just remember that on the 12 sided dice, the 11 is the Eye of Sauron symbol  and the 12 is a Gandalf rune . On the six-sided 'success' dice, the 6 shows also a tengwar rune .

DIE ROLLS

Dice aren't always necessary. Heroes are supposed to be proficient enough to complete many actions without effort. But during the course of play characters will sooner or later be confronted with difficult situations involving a level of risk. When this happens, a hero's characteristics will be taken into account to determine their chances to succeed: this is when players 'make a roll'.

All die rolls in *The One Ring* require the Feat die, plus a number of Success dice, depending on the character's skills.

The results rolled on all dice (Feat die plus a number of Success dice) are added together, and the total is compared to a Target Number (a numerical value expressing the difficulty of the action attempted). If the rolled total is equal to or higher than the TN, the action is successful; otherwise, it has failed.

HOW TO READ THE FEAT DIE

The Feat die is a special 12-sided die that is used every time the game requires a die roll. It has been customised to produce numerical values ranging from 1 to 10, and features two special icons - a Gandalf rune (𐌵) and the Eye of Sauron (👁️). The two icons are normally read as follows:

The 𐌵 rune is considered to be the highest result obtainable on the die. When the die comes up showing the 𐌵 rune, the action succeeds, whether the total result of the roll was enough to match or beat the TN set for the roll or not.

The 👁️ icon is considered to be the lowest result possible on the Feat die. Under most circumstances, when the Feat die comes up showing the 👁️ icon, the die counts as zero.

Both special icons are used in the game to trigger additional effects; for example, when using weapons, or the characters' unique abilities. In general terms,

obtaining a Gandalf rune 𐌵 in any one roll is always good, while the Eye icon 👁️ can potentially be very bad.

DIE ROLLS FOR ADVERSARIES

When the Loremaster is making a die roll to determine the outcome of an action attempted by a servant of the Shadow it can be considered more appropriate to the theme to switch the meaning of the two special icons: the 👁️ icon becomes the highest result possible and yields an automatic success, while the 𐌵 rune becomes the lowest result possible and produces a value of zero (the rules on adversaries presented in the Loremaster's Book are written taking this into consideration).

HOW TO READ THE SUCCESS DICE

Success dice are special 6-sided dice, customised to show the numbers 1, 2 and 3 in outline, and the numbers 4, 5 and 6 in solid black. In addition, a special icon - the tengwar numeral 1 (ᚠ) appears along with the number 6. These dice are rolled together with the Feat die when a character has a higher chance to succeed with an action, generally thanks to high skill or special aptitude.

CONDITIONS

The physical and spiritual state of a character may affect his performance. In *The One Ring*, player-heroes are considered to be normally hale and fit to take action, but can be made weary or miserable during the course of play, for example by being hurt in combat or travelling across blighted areas.

When a Weary hero makes a roll, all the Success dice that come up showing a result in an outlined number are considered to have given a result of zero (in place of the numerical value shown on the face).

When a Miserable hero makes a roll and gets an 👁️ on his Feat die, he suffers a bout of madness and temporarily loses control of himself.



SKILLS

Most actions attempted by players during a game are affected by the abilities possessed by the acting hero. Based on the circumstances, one skill is generally judged to be more relevant than the others (**Courtesy** to impress an important personality, **Awareness** to notice the sound of approaching enemies, etc.).

On the character sheet, every skill name is followed by a string of diamond-shaped boxes, some of which have been filled with a pencil during character creation.

The number of filled boxes shows how many Success dice a player is entitled to roll along with the Feat die.

If no boxes are filled, then the character simply rolls the Feat die.

Sometimes, a roll might involve the quality of a piece of equipment in place of a hero's level of proficiency, or his ratings in a different characteristic, such as his Valour or Wisdom score.

When this is the case, the characteristic or quality rating determines the number of Success dice to roll in addition to the Feat die.

ATTRIBUTES

A hero who trusts in his own potential may find the strength to overcome an obstacle that is considered almost insurmountable by less optimistic individuals. When confronted by difficult odds, players may invoke a bonus based on their Attribute ratings:

When a player fails at a roll, he may spend one point of Hope to receive a bonus equal to the Attribute score that is considered most pertinent for the action. Apply the favoured Attribute rating if the character is making use of a favoured skill, or the basic value otherwise.

Naturally, a player will only spend a Hope point if the modified result lets him overcome the difficulty for the action. It is only possible to spend one point of Hope on a single die roll (it is not possible to spend more points to get multiple bonuses).

*A player is attempting a roll of **Athletics** against a TN of 14, but obtains a result of 10 on the dice. The player invokes a Body Attribute bonus: by spending a point of Hope, he gets to add to the roll a number equal to his character's Body score. Since the hero's Body rating equals 6, the roll is boosted to a result of 16, enough to overcome the difficulty of the action and turn a failure into a success.*

TARGET NUMBER

Sometimes, the outcome of an action is almost guaranteed, while in other cases the player-heroes are risking their very lives. This is reflected by the Target Number (TN), a value ranging from a minimum of 10 – an action that poses a substantial challenge only to inexperienced adventurers, to 20 or more – a challenging obstacle for all but the hardest of heroes. In theory, a Target Number can even be as high as 30, for a task of legendary difficulty, but such extremes should be incredibly rare.

The table on the below describes the level of difficulty of a range of Target Numbers for a hale character possessing a skill rating at good level (◆◆):

TN	Difficulty (skill rank ◆◆)
10	Very Easy
12	Easy
14	Moderate
16	Hard
18	Severe
20	Daunting

To succeed in a roll, a player must compare his total result to the Target Number set by the Loremaster: if it is equal or greater, then the attempt is successful; otherwise, it has failed. As already explained above, obtaining a Ψ result on the Feat die automatically makes the action attempted a success, whether the total result matched the Target Number or not.

DEGREE OF SUCCESS

Sometimes it is useful or even necessary to determine the quality of a positive outcome. For example, the Loremaster might need to know just how far a character has jumped, how fast is he running, or how convincing his speech was.

To determine the quality of a success, the player counts how many special icons τ showed up on his Success dice, if any:

(-) if no τ icons were scored at all, the action attempt was narrowly successful (a success);

(τ) if a single τ icon was scored, then the character's accomplishment was out of the ordinary (a great success);

($\tau \tau +$) if two or more τ icons were scored, the feat was absolutely exceptional and memorable (an extraordinary success).

The Loremaster should describe what happens when a player rolls a superior success, as it could become a tale fondly recalled by the heroes.

“EYEBALLING” A DIE ROLL RESULT

As players will notice, in *The One Ring* it is not always necessary to know the precise total result obtained with a die roll, but only if it was enough to match or beat the Target Number. Together with the way the degree of a success is determined, this occasionally allows players and Loremasters to ‘eyeball’ the results of their rolls, quickly assessing success – and degree of success – without needing to count up the results every time.

For example, Robert tests his hero's Insight $\blacklozenge\blacklozenge$ against a TN of 12. He gets a 6 on his Feat die, and 6 τ , 4 and 3 on his Success dice. As 6 plus 6 already sums up to 12, Robert rapidly ‘eyeballs’ the result, and notes he pulled it off with a great success.







- Part 2: Characters -





- HERO CREATION -

“He had a strange feeling as the slow gurgling stream slipped by: his old life lay behind in the mists, dark adventure lay in front.”

Adventurers are often simply common individuals born in exceptional times. They have most likely led an ordinary life until the day something happened and changed the way they looked at their world and the people they knew. For some reason, the place they grew up in didn't look as interesting and boundless as before, or they started to realise that they weren't doing enough for the safekeeping of their loved ones by staying at home in idleness, pretending shadows weren't growing nearer and nearer every year.

Whatever their motivation or purpose, most characters created for The One Ring are individuals who have chosen to abandon their day-to-day activities and become adventurers. They are not soldiers or captains following the commands of a lord, nor are they subtle wizards trying to weave the threads spun by fate: they are bold souls putting themselves in peril by their own free will, sometimes simply for the love of adventure itself.

The following pages show you how to craft an adventurer drawn from one of six heroic cultures. Using the guidelines presented in this chapter, all players will be able to create their hero, complete with strengths and weaknesses, possessions and aspirations.

HOW TO CREATE A CHARACTER

The character creation process takes a number of steps, and aims to create fictional individuals that are as close as possible to their player's wishes, and that at the same time conform to the source material.

The Loremaster should assist his players during this process, providing insight into the rules when needed, or simply to advise a player in making choices that are both true to the game's background and make for a satisfying character to play.

FOCUSED CHOICES

The aim of The One Ring is to let players feel what it means to go adventuring in a wild and perilous land, out of a forgotten past. It is a threatening world that has more in common with the world depicted in Nordic sagas or with the Dark Ages of Europe than with our contemporary world. Players are invited to leave the age of information and fast travel behind, and adopt the point of view of individuals whose horizons often didn't extend further than a few miles from their birthplace. For every member of the Wise and the Great, for every Wizard or Noldor or Ranger of the North, there are countless more like Samwise Gamgee, simple people who never crossed the boundaries of their own village or town, or individuals like Gimli son of Glóin, who ignored the existence of Rohan until he visited it, or Men like noble Faramir who, while learned in many lores, never encountered an Elf or a Hobbit before the War of the Ring.

The landscape revealed by this perspective is a world with uncertain boundaries, and only vague hints of distant realms and the folks who inhabit them; a place that for these very reasons offers plenty of opportunities for exploration and adventure.

The Free Folks of the North

Each core publication created for The One Ring roleplaying game offers its players the opportunity to create a selection of character types, based on the cultures that are most appropriate to the period covered in the volume: all characters created using this book come from those regions of Middle-earth that Bilbo the Hobbit explored along his journey to the Lonely Mountain.

HEROIC CULTURES

The character creation process begins with the choice of the *Culture* to which the character belongs. This defines the hero's race, his most basic descriptive features, and the area of Middle-earth he comes from.

Players are asked to read the description of the Cultures found in the following pages and make some simple choices (or determine at random). All data generated during this step should be recorded on a player's character sheet in pencil.

CUSTOMISATION

Once players have chosen their character's cultural template and have accordingly compiled their character sheet, they then customise their characteristics, by making some additional choices. This step lets players define what motivated a character to become an adventurer (for example by selecting one of the five *Callings*) and what skills and knowledge he has picked up before the game begins.

Players should be consistent during character design, ensuring that their player-heroes are well-rounded but believable characters.



Hero Creation Summary

Select a Heroic Culture

Record a character's Cultural blessing and skill list

Select two Specialities

Roll (or choose) Background

Record Basic Attributes and Favoured Skill

Select two Distinctive Features

Customise your Hero

Choose your hero's Favoured Attributes

Spend Previous Experience to buy skill levels

Choose a Calling and Favoured skills

Generate the scores for Endurance and Hope

Prioritise the scores for Valour and Wisdom

(choosing, accordingly, your starting Reward or Virtue)

Record Starting Gear and Fatigue

HEROIC CULTURES

In a world where different races coexist, the culture to which a character belongs often defines him more profoundly than simply in terms of customs and traditions. Even good and evil in the broadest term can sometimes depend on culture in Middle-earth, as evil is manifest and the various peoples collectively pledge allegiance to the Shadow, or fight against it.

All cultures presented here belong to the Free Folks of the North, brave nations that refuse the darkness and are often at open war with it.

Bardings	page 35
Beornings	page 41
Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain	page 47
Elves of Mirkwood	page 53
Hobbits of the Shire	page 60
Woodmen of Wilderland	page 66



To choose a culture, players should read through the summary description, maybe even reading some or all the background examples provided, and then choose which description is closer to the hero concept that they have in mind.

The cultural descriptions are detailed in the following pages, in the format below:

Introduction

The geographical area that is home to the Culture, some information on how they live and an overview of their history and origins.

Description

Some details that typically distinguish the appearance of the hero type.

Standard of Living

A culture's standard of living is a rough indication of the resources of one of its members. The game ranks the average economic status of a folk in five tiers: *Poor*, *Frugal*, *Martial*, *Prosperous*, and finally *Rich*. It is used to gauge the approximate economic background of a character, and his ability to make out-of-pocket expenses.

Typical Adventurers

Each culture description contains some information regarding the motivations that might push one of its members on the road to adventure (a character's calling). The text lists two 'suggested' callings, which heroes from that culture are likely to take up when they become adventurers.

In some cases, an 'unusual' calling is listed, which heroes from that culture are very *unlikely* to follow, certainly not without causing comment. Both are presented for guidance only: players are free to choose any calling they might find suitable to their character concept. The listed callings simply provide an example of what sorts of motivations can be considered plausible for a member of a given race.

What the King Says...

A selection of quotes concerning the cultures presented in this chapter, showing attitudes towards each of the other cultures from the point of view of an eminent member of the community.

Cultural Blessing

A special ability displayed by all player-heroes belonging to a given culture.



Starting Skill Scores

All characters belonging to a given folk receive a set of Common and Weapon skill ranks. Players should note that an underlined skill name denotes a favoured skill, while a Weapon skill name in (brackets) indicates a Cultural weapon group. All skill ratings should be recorded faithfully on the hero's character sheet.

Traits

Talents and aptitudes typically displayed by heroes from a given culture. Players add nuance to their hero's build by choosing two items from the list, and copying them under 'Traits' on the character sheet.

Backgrounds

Six example 'packages' appropriate to the culture. Each package offers a brief description of the hero's personality, or some details regarding how a hero spent his formative years, and lists the hero's starting basic Attributes, an additional favoured skill, and a number of Distinctive features (see *Traits*, p.94) for the player to choose from.

Players that are new to roleplaying games, or that are not particularly knowledgeable about Tolkien's world, may let the roll of a die make the decision about which background applies to their character. Hobby veterans, Middle-earth scholars or simply players who are feeling creative right away may roll or choose their background to obtain their characters' values and Traits, and then should use the given descriptions only as starting points to customise, or inspiration for inventing their own.

Common Names

Guidance on naming conventions and lists of common male and female names.



CONCERNING NAMES AND LANGUAGES

Every reader of Tolkien knows how much the professor loved languages – their structure, origins and evolution – and to what length he laboured to devise the various names native to his fictional world, or to find suitable real-world ones.

The language of most folks inhabiting Middle-earth has been given some attention, and the most important ones, like the different Elven tongues, sport a sizeable vocabulary and consistent grammatical rules. Every name in the books has been carefully crafted, building upon solid linguistic foundations, and represents a precise cultural influence. The native language of every character-type presented in this chapter has been identified, and a list of personal names appropriate to each culture is provided below for players to choose from.

The different languages can provide intriguing roleplaying opportunities if the Loremaster and his players are interested. This shouldn't get in the way of the fun, however: while Tolkien used the linguistic differences among the various realms of Middle-earth to good narrative effect, he also found it simpler to avoid steep cultural barriers and gave most ethnic groups (even Orcs and other more fantastical creatures, like Ents) at least a passing knowledge of what constituted a 'lingua franca,' the so-called Common Speech, or Westron. This allows players who don't want to deal with the complex relations between the various peoples and their languages to ignore the entire subject altogether without damaging the setting. But if you are willing to explore this extremely interesting angle, it is certainly worth investigating.

Languages in the Game

In the game, all player-heroes are considered to be able to speak the Common Speech at least at an acceptable level of fluency, in addition to their own native languages. The table on the following page lists the languages spoken by the cultures presented in this chapter.



Additionally, there are several characteristics that can be used to represent knowledge of foreign or ancient tongues:

Elven-lore

An Elf hero possessing this Trait possesses some knowledge of the High-elven speech (Quenya), also known as the Ancient Tongue. At the end of the Third Age, Quenya is used in Middle-earth mostly as a ceremonial language, on inscriptions or in invocations.

Folk-lore

A character with a knowledge of Folk-lore can communicate on a basic level with most folks among the Free Peoples, knowing key words and expressions in most languages.

Trading

Characters who have often had to deal with merchants in foreign countries have generally picked up a word or two in various local languages, and can state their intentions fairly clearly, as long as they do not need to communicate overly complex or profound matters.

CULTURE	MAIN LANGUAGE	SECONDARY LANGUAGE	NOTES
Bardings	Dalish	-	<i>Bardings speak what can be described as a very old form of the Common Speech.</i>
Beornings and Woodmen	Vale of Anduin tongue	-	<i>The language of the folks of the Vale of Anduin is an old form of the Common Speech, closely related to Dalish.</i>
Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain	Dalish	Dwarvish (secret tongue)	<i>The Dwarves of Erebor speak the tongue of the Bardings, but preserve a knowledge of their 'secret language'.</i>
Elves of Mirkwood	Grey-elven (Sindarin)	Woodland Elvish	<i>The Silvan Elves used to speak an original Woodland tongue, but are gradually embracing the use of Sindarin.</i>
Hobbits of the Shire	Common Speech	-	<i>Hobbits have forgotten their native languages, and use the Common Tongue, preserving the use of only a few words and names of their own.</i>

Adventuring Age

Players choose the starting age of their character using the information in this section as a guide. A character's age is recorded on the back of the character sheet, under 'Background'.

Heroes rarely start their adventuring career before they are deemed fully grown by their culture. On the other hand, if they progress too far into adulthood without answering the call to adventure, then they probably won't heed it at all.



- BARDINGS -

“Bard had rebuilt the town in Dale and men had gathered to him from the Lake and from South and West, and all the valley had become tilled again and rich, and the desolation was now filled with birds and blossoms in spring and fruit and feasting in autumn.”

The city of Dale lay in ruins for almost two centuries, under the shadow of the Lonely Mountain. It was destroyed by the Dragon Smaug when he descended from the north to claim the vast treasure of the Dwarves of Erebor. Five years ago, the Dragon was killed and Men, led by Bard the Bowman, the Dragon-slayer, started to rebuild the city. Since then, Bard has been crowned King, and Dáin Ironfoot, the Dwarf-lord from the Iron Hills, is the new King Under the Mountain. Under their rule, Men and Dwarves have laboured hard, collaborating to rebuild Dale as they used to do before the Dragon came, and the city is approaching the glory it attained hundreds of years ago.

Bardings are descended from the same cultural group as the Beornings and the Woodmen of Wilderland. They are rapidly becoming the most powerful group of Men in Wilderland, strategically positioned as they are between the Elven kingdom of the Woodland Realm and the Dwarven Kingdom under the Mountain.



Under the guidance of the new king, the city of Dale provides the Dwarves of Erebor with everything from food and clothes to wood and ceramics, in exchange of the many products of their skillful metalworking and stonework. Trading with the Elves gives access to the superior quality of their woodworking.



DESCRIPTION

The Men of Dale are Northmen of noble origins. They are often tall and strong-limbed, with fair hair, although dark or even black hair is not unknown. Their men usually shave their beards completely unless they are very old, and cut their hair shorter than the Woodmen of Wilderland. Women let their hair grow very long, but often braid it in tight tresses. Adventurers from Dale can be easily recognised as they carry the best equipment to be found among the Men living in Wilderland.

STANDARD OF LIVING

Thanks to their trade with Elves, Dwarves and far lands to the south, a Barding can choose any trade and be almost sure to thrive. Craftsmen from Dale include carpenters, cartwrights, shoemakers, tailors, tanners, weavers, not to mention those apprenticed to Dwarven weaponsmiths and masons. For these reasons, Bardings are considered a *Prosperous* folk.

BARDING ADVENTURERS

The figure of King Bard himself and the memory of his great deed inspires the most loyal among the youth of Dale to suppress their adventurous side and put their swords at the service of the city. But not everyone shares

this ambition, and some dream of forgotten hoards buried in distant lands, and of exotic courts under foreign skies...

Suggested Callings: Scholar, Treasure-hunter. As Dale regains its former glory, it has become a place of learning as well as of enterprise, and the wise sometimes strike out into the world, to broaden the city's knowledge. In the meantime, the stories of Smaug's great wealth have inspired many of Bard's followers to seek their own treasures abroad.

Unusual Calling: None.

WHAT KING BARD SAYS...

- **Bardings:**

"Ours is a small kingdom, and a very young one; we cannot claim much more than what is encircled by the walls that protect our city. But within these walls now dwells a folk whose blood is the same of those lords of old whose banners flew in many winds. Today I accept this Crown that once was theirs, and a day will come when all Men from the North will recognise its rule, from the Running River to Redwater. And even if I won't live to see that day, my heirs will."



- **Beornings:**

“Beorn does not welcome guests easily in his hall, but he recognises that our two folks are of one blood. A sea of darkness separated us, but after the Battle of Five Armies, ours is a bond that neither hundreds of leagues of distance nor centuries of estrangement can sever.”

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:**

“Dáin Ironfoot is our greatest ally and most trusted friend. The fate of the Folk of the Mountain is closely tied to our own.”

- **Elves of Mirkwood:**

“The Silvan Elves are formidable warriors, and their king is strong. Unfortunately, he rarely concerns himself with anything taking place beyond the borders of his forest.”

- **Hobbits of the Shire:**

“Bilbo the Hobbit has shown us an aspect of valour that our fathers did not tell us about. I wish that more like him could find their way to our lands.”

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:**

“As hard as it can be to recognise it, we and the woodland dwellers share a common heritage. I hope that one day they will find a leader capable of demonstrating that they can join us in our destiny.”

CULTURAL BLESSING

– Stout-hearted –

“Which King?” said another with a grim voice. “As like as not it is the marauding fire of the Dragon, the only King under the Mountain we have ever known.”

Living for many a year under the ever-present menace of Smaug the Dreadful has made the Bardings a courageous race. After all, there are not many creatures more fearsome than a great Dragon...

- When making a Fear test, Barding characters can roll the Feat die twice, and keep the best result.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	1	<u>Inspire</u>	2	Persuade	3
Athletics	0	Travel	2	Stealth	0
Awareness	0	Insight	2	Search	1
Explore	2	Healing	0	Hunting	0
Song	1	Courtesy	2	Riddle	0
Craft	1	Battle	2	Lore	1

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

- 1) (Swords) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Great Bow 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1

SPECIALITIES

Choose two Traits from:

Boating, Old lore, Smith-craft, Swimming, Trading, Woodwright



BACKGROUNDS

1 - By Hammer and Anvil

Your parents paid richly for a Dwarf-smith to take you as an apprentice in his forge, and you worked hard under his severe discipline, to prove that your craft could reach his people's high standards. In the long hours you spent hammering on the anvil under the close scrutiny of your master, you have learnt that it is possible to create amazing things, but it is only by putting your heart into your work that you can succeed in creating a masterpiece.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 7, Wits 2

Favoured Skill

Craft

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Cautious, Determined, Generous, Hardy, Merciful, Proud, Stern

2 - Wordweaver

King Bard has earned his throne by accomplishing a feat deemed unthinkable by most, setting an example to generations to come. But it is another deed that caught your interest and fired your imagination: that of the witty halfling who crossed words with Smaug the Golden in his lair. While you yourself do not expect to ever see a living Dragon, you look forward to your chance to win renown with your cunning.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 6, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Riddle

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Clever, Eager, Fair-spoken, Lordly, Reckless, Tall, Trusty



3 - Gifted Senses

You grew up in Lake-town, the son of a merchant who traded goods with the Raft-elves from the woods. You often joined them to row on their crafts, proud of your strength as a youth. Under the shadow of the Dragon, your family's business struggled for survival and you dared not venture far, but since the death of Smaug, you and your brothers have started to journey to the Elvenking's forest stronghold. After many visits to those magical halls, your eyes and ears seem to notice details that escaped your attention in the past; perhaps a subtle gift from the Fair Folk.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 6, Wits 2

Favoured Skill

Search

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Cautious, Cunning, Fair-spoken, Patient, Steadfast, True-hearted, Wary

4 - Healing Hands

You have long served on a trading boat from Esgaroth, first leaving the Long Lake when you were very young. Once, staying for months in a distant haven to the South, waiting for a caravan from the East to arrive, you fell victim to a foreign sickness, and were succoured by a lady speaking a strange tongue. She saved your life, and taught you how to save others in time of need.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 7, Wits 3

Favoured Skill

Healing

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Clever, Fair, Hardy, Lordly, Proud, Reckless, Tall

5 - Dragon-eyed

Your great-grandfather witnessed the destruction of his father's house, burnt when the Dragon razed Dale. He escaped with his life, but from that day his eyes turned the colour of pale ashes. Through your grandfather and your father after him, his unrelenting gaze lives on in your ashen eyes.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 6, Wits 3

Favoured Skill

Awe

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Cunning, Determined, Eager, Generous, Just, Stern, Trusty

6 - A Patient Hunter

Faithful to your ancestors' heritage, your family never embraced the ways of the Lake-men, and since you were a child, you spent long days hunting on the mainland. For many years it was a dangerous trade bearing little fruit, but now the land is again blooming with every new spring, and birds and animals alike are returning to claim their old nests and lairs. Now, you will have a chance to properly hone your skills once again.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Hunting

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Just, Fair, Merciful, Patient, Steadfast, True-hearted, Wary



BARDING NAMES

A traditional Barding name is usually composed of one or two elements (eg. *Dag*, *Day*, or *Lif-stan*, *Life Stone*). Like most Northmen, Bardings often name their sons and daughters after a renowned ancestor or relative, or choose a name beginning with the same sound or sharing one element with that of the father (whose name is often given with their first name when introduced formally – for example, *Lifstan son of Leiknir*, or *Ingrith daughter of Ingolf*).

Male Names: Aegir, Agmund, Agnarr, Alfrim, Alfwald, Arn, Arnulf, Bain, Balki, Bard, Bern, Bragi, Brand, Brandulf, Dag, Domarr, Drengi, Egil, Einar, Eirik, Erland,

Erling, Farald, Farmann, Farulf, Fastarr, Finn, Finnulf, Folki, Folkmarr, Galmann, Galti, Gautarr, Geirmund, Gismund, Gorm, Grimarr, Guthorm, Hafgrim, Haki, Hakon, Halfdan, Hamarr, Hedinn, Helgi, Hergrim, Hildir, Holgeir, Holti, Holvidur, Hord, Ingi, Ingolf, Ioli, Isolf, Jarl, Jarmarr, Joalf, Joar, Jofur, Jokell, Karl, Ketill, Ketilmund, Kol, Kolbeinn, Kori, Leiknir, Lifstan, Lodin, Lomund, Magni, Mord, Munan, Nari, Nefstan, Nerulf, Odd, Oddmarr, Odvarr, Olaf, Olvard, Omund, Ornolf, Ottarr, Ragnarr, Randur, Reinald, Runolf, Sandarr, Saxulf, Sigdan, Sigfast, Sigmarr, Sigvald, Sigward, Sigmund, Skarf, Skefill, Smidur, Steinarr, Thorald, Thorfast, Torwald, Ulfarr, Ulfied, Unnarr, Valbrand, Valdimarr, Vali, Vandil, Varinn, Varr.

Female Names: Aldis, Aldrif, Asfrid, Asny, Astrith, Bera, Bergdis, Brinhild, Dagmar, Dagny, Dalla, Edda, Eilif, Erna, Eydis, Estrild, Frida, Geira, Gerda, Grimhild, Gudrun, Gundrid, Gunnhild, Halla, Halldis, Halldora, Helga, Hild, Holma, Inga, Ingirun, Ingrith, Lif, Linhild, Kelda, Ragna, Runa, Saldis, Sigga, Signy, Sigrid, Sigrun, Solveig, Thora, Thordis, Thorhild, Thorleif, Ulfhild, Ulfrun, Una, Valdis, Vigdis, Walda.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

Bardings don't usually become adventurers before their 16th year of age, and rarely continue beyond their forties, when they retire to serve their family and folk.





- BEORNINGS -

“Beorn indeed became a great chief afterwards in those regions and ruled a wide land between the mountains and the wood...”

The region along the upper portion of the river Anduin was once home to many men, but their number dwindled as the years passed. Only recently the land around the Carrock, a stony river-island, has started to see men returning to watch the Old Ford and the road to the High Pass on the Misty Mountains. Though few in numbers, they rapidly demonstrated to trespassers that only those who are welcomed by Beorn the skin-changer can hope to cross the Great River with their lives. And Beorn does not welcome anybody with ease...

When Beorn broke his isolation, he became a leader of men. His legendary ferocity attracted mountain-hunters and fighters without allegiance, warriors who lost their families or who forsook their clans due to their violent tempers, and needful souls drawn to his protective nature. In time, all kinds of individuals flocked to his side, giving rise to the Beornings.

Faithful to the teachings and will of their chieftain, they protect the mountain passes and the road that leaves the forest to cross the river Anduin, watching for every creature, on two legs or four, that dares defy them. Men, Elves and Dwarves still have to earn the trust of this suspicious folk, and often must pay heavy tolls for safe passage across the Beornings' domain.





DESCRIPTION

Beornings are rugged men with brawny arms and legs, and lively women with undaunted eyes. Their spirit is reflected in their appearance: the women have long, wild hair and the men unkempt beards. Born free, they pay no tribute nor bow to any crown, keeping at peace the strip of land they have chosen as their own. All foes of the Beornings are mortal foes, but friends who prove to be trustworthy are friends for life.

STANDARD OF LIVING

The Beornings sustain themselves by breeding cattle and horses and keeping hives of great bees. Recently, Beorn is considering requesting a safe-passage toll from *all* travellers crossing their lands. For the moment, though, the Beorning culture ranks as *Martial*.

BEORNING ADVENTURERS

Beorn and his chieftains cannot really oppose the many youngwarriors who express their desire to leave their land to explore. Many Beornings are naturally adventurous people who like to see things with their own eyes.

Moreover, their tendency to be bluff and direct guarantees a never-ending supply of enemies. Whatever the reason for their leaving, every Beorning is expected to return home at least once a year, at Yule-tide, to feast at Beorn's bidding.

Suggested Callings: Slayer, Warden. Beornings make enemies readily, and many is the slaughtered man's son who goes seeking vengeance. Other Beornings are more inspired by their chieftain's fiercely protective demeanour.

Unusual Calling: Treasure-hunter. Mere gold is of little interest to the men of the Carrock, who are more likely to be swayed by glory or adventure.

WHAT BEORN SAYS...

- **Bardings:**

"They are a good folk, the Bardings, but all that gold makes them lazy. I would grow hungry waiting for a Barding to hunt for my food!"



- **Beornings:**

“If you choose to follow me, know that I don’t ask for your obedience, nor do I need your support. All I wish of you is to be as vigilant, as relentless and fiercely determined as you have been all your life, living here close to the edge of Mirkwood. I only ask that you remain true to yourselves.”

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:**

“Dwarves are a strange race. Some say they are cut from the living rock. Their heads are certainly hard enough...”

- **Elves of Mirkwood:**

“The Elvenking has a weakness for silver and white gems, and other useless trinkets. It would be funny if it wasn’t dangerous!”

- **Hobbits of the Shire:**

“Stout-hearted folk! Although they should be, with the amount they eat!”

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:**

“You think that they hide behind their stockades, and the cloak of a wizard. Fools! Radagast showed me a trick or two in his time, and he has certainly done the same with the Woodmen. You should know that sometimes appearances are misleading...”

CULTURAL BLESSING

– **Furious** –

Swiftly he returned and his wrath was redoubled...

A Beorning is filled with a red wrath when he is smitten in battle and his blood is spilled.

- When a Beorning is wounded in battle, he ignores the effects of being **Weary** and **Miserable** for the duration of combat.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	3	Inspire	1	Persuade	0
<u>Athletics</u>	2	Travel	0	Stealth	0
Awareness	2	Insight	3	Search	1
Explore	0	Healing	1	Hunting	3
Song	0	Courtesy	0	Riddle	1
Craft	1	Battle	0	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

- 1) (Axes) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Great spear 2, Axe 1, Dagger 1

SPECIALITIES

Choose two Traits from:

Anduin-lore, Beast-lore, Cooking,
Fishing, Mountaineer, Story-telling





BACKGROUNDS

1 - Child of Two Folks

Many years ago, your father came down from the mountains and took as his wife a woman from the tribes of Mirkwood. You grew up among two worlds, seen as a stranger by both folks. For many years, you encountered suspicion and mistrust, and many scoffed at the colour of your eyes and hair. But you endured and were finally able to take what your heart deemed good from both your mother's and your father's kin.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 6, Wits 2

Favoured Skill

Insight

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Fierce, Grim, Gruff, Hardened, Proud, Tall, Wilful

2 - Errand-rider

Since the time your family joined Beorn's folk you have been a runner, a messenger carrying news for your folk. In your hide shoes, you have countless times trodden the path that goes from the High Pass to the Old Ford, always welcomed by chieftains and families eager to hear your tidings. At times you have brought joy and merriment with news of victory, but also woe and distress with tales of war and defeat.

Basic Attributes

Body 7, Heart 5, Wits 2

Favoured Skill

Inspire

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Determined, Energetic, Forthright, Grim, Hardened, Robust, Swift, Trusty



3 - Head of the Family

Beorn, the great chieftain of your folk, sent your father to watch the mountain passes for the best part of the year, leaving you to provide for your family. Whenever the pursuit of an animal's trail led you westward towards the mountains, your heart leapt in anticipation of the day your father would be back, with new stories to tell and fresh scars to testify to their truthfulness.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 4, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Awareness

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Curious, Determined, Generous, Grim, Hardy, Steadfast, Trusty, Wilful

4 - Light-foot

They say that when your father was on the look-out, he could hide even from the sight of the Great Eagles. From him you learnt that there is no dishonour in stealth, whether it is your task to spy upon your enemies or when you are keeping watch over a village of your folk. You have listened to your father's advice and observed his crafty movements, trying to discover and learn his tricks.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Stealth

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Curious, Energetic, Forthright, Grim, Reckless, Suspicious, Swift

5 - Keeper of Tales

According to the old men of your folk, when your grandfather died he was more than one hundred years old. He was a hardy warrior, but you remember him best wrapped in his white wolf-skin, recounting tales about the bygone days of his youth. He could use words as precious as fine diamonds or as loud as clashing iron as he spoke of battles won and lost, of kings forgotten and buried, and of a threatening Shadow so old its age could not be counted in men's lives. You treasure his tales as an invaluable inheritance.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 5, Wits 3

Favoured Skill

Lore

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Fierce, Grim, Gruff, Hardy, Reckless, Suspicious, Vengeful, Wrathful

6 - Voice from the Past

The elders and ancient warriors of your tribe spend the long evening hours talking in front of the hearth, on the stepped dais of the main hall. To the young and restless, their soft speaking may seem idle talk, but you loved to listen to their wise words as they exchanged tales and songs, as old as the intricate images wound around the wooden pillars of the hall. One day you might well end up adding your own words to the songs of your folk, strengthening the bonds of tradition.

Basic Attributes

Body 7, Heart 4, Wits 3

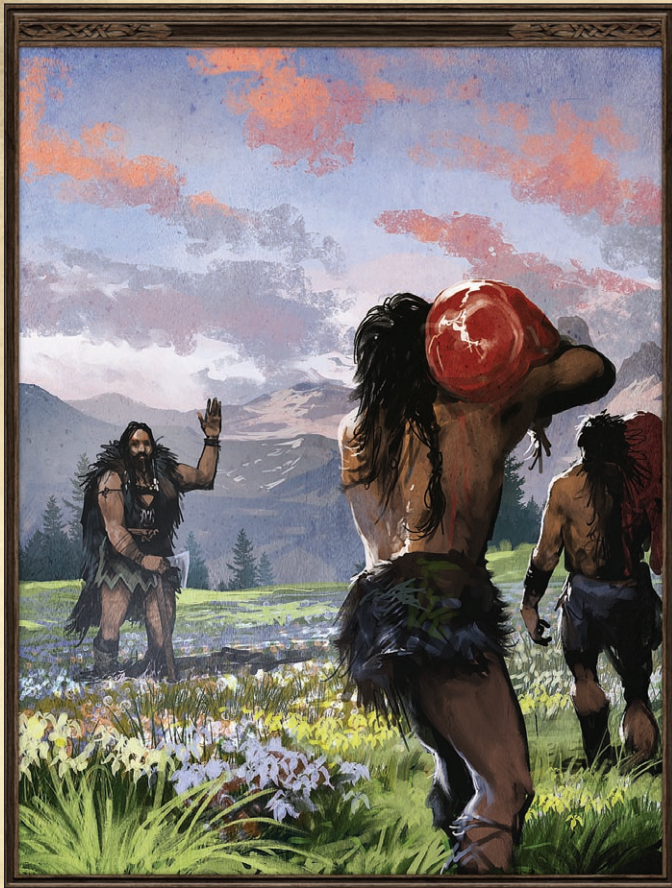
Favoured Skill

Song

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Generous, Grim, Proud, Robust, Steadfast, Tall, Vengeful, Wrathful



BEORNING NAMES

The Northmen inhabiting the Vales of the Anduin River speak the same language and share a common vocabulary of personal names. The Beornings and the Woodmen favour different names, but they are set apart especially by their peculiar use of bynames and nicknames.

The Beornings are gradually embracing the custom of choosing for themselves names honouring their renowned chieftain, either by having a B as the first letter or containing the word for Bear (eg. *Balderic*, *Beranald*, *Beormud* etc). They further individualise their names by adding a byname, referring to their provenances or occupations, or physical or temperamental qualities (*Arnulf the Old*, *Berangar the Eloquent*). Bynames are often bestowed by an event, especially if connected to a special feat of skill or deed of renown.

Male Names: Adalard, Ageric, Agilfrid, Agiulf, Alaric, Alberic, Amalric, Amand, Andagis, Atalaric, Atanagild, Ansegisel, Ansovald, Aregisel, Arnulf, Audovald, Avagis, Badegisel, Baldac, Balderic, Barald, Beorn, Beran, Beranald, Berangar, Bertefried, Beormud, Cilderic, Eberulf, Eboric, Ebregisel, Ebrimuth, Ediulf, Ermanaric, Euric, Eutaric, Evermud, Evoric, Frideger, Gararic, Garivald, Geberic, Gisalric, Gerold, Grimald, Grimbald, Grimbeorn, Grimfast, Gundovald, Hartgard, Hartmut, Hartnid, Hathus, Heriwulf, Hildebald, Imnachar, Ingelram, Ingund, Iwald, Iwgar, Leudast, Magneric, Malaric, Maracar, Merovech, Munderic, Odo, Odovacar, Otbert, Ragnacar, Ramnulf, Rathar, Reginar, Ricfried, Rigunth, Roderic, Sigeric, Sigibert, Sunnegisil, Theodard, Theodebert, Theodemir, Theodwin, Theudebald, Theuderic, Thorismund, Walcaud, Waleran, Widuven, Willicar, Wulferd.

Female Names: Adosinda, Amalfrida, Amalina, Avagisa, Avina, Beranhild, Brunihild, Gailavira, Garsendis, Geleswinta, Gelvira, Grimhild, Hermesind, Heva, Hilduara, Radegund.

Beorning Bynames: ...from a specific place (*Baldac from the High Pass*, *Beran of the Mountains*, etc.), the Bald, the Black, the Bold, the Captain, the Cloaked, the Crooked, the Eloquent, the Foresighted, the Good, the Good-sword, the Loyal, the Old, the Pugnacious, the Quick-witted, the Quiet, the Red, of the Red-shield, the Rich, the Runner, the Sad, the Sharp, the Smith, the Thin, the Trouble-maker, the Wise, the Young, etc.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

Beornings don't usually become adventurers before their 16th year of age, and rarely continue beyond their forties, when they retire to serve their family and folk.



- DWARVES - of the lonely mountain

“There now Dáin son of Nain took up his abode, and he became King under the Mountain, and in time many other Dwarves gathered to his throne in the ancient halls.”

When the Dwarves first settled on Erebor, the Lonely Mountain, they dug deep and far, carving a kingdom of stone and jewels beneath its slopes. Lamps and candles burned ceaselessly to illuminate their busy hands, and their treasure grew along with their fame in the Northern world. One day, the Dragon came on the wings of greed; Smaug the Golden burnt the Kingdom under the Mountain to ashes, smashing its pride with a lash of its tail. But Dwarves can hold a grudge that outlasts a Dragon's life, and at the end of an incredible adventure, Thorin Oakenshield and thirteen fellow conspirators lived to see the death of Smaug. Today, the halls of the Dwarves resound again with the din of hammer and anvil, and their masons craft the roads and buildings of Dale and Erebor with stones of many colours. The Men of Dale, now also called 'Bardings' in honour of their lord, the Dragon-slayer, provide the busy Dwarves with everything they need to sustain themselves, in exchange of the fruits of their exceptional stone and metalworking.

Since the killing of the Dragon, the Dwarves have ceased to be a wandering folk of exiles, and have undertaken great labours to restore the Kingdom under the Mountain.

Its wealth and renown are rapidly growing, and seem destined to grow greater than before: new halls are dug, cavernous streets under the earth are adorned with pillars as numerous as trees in a forest, while superior armour and keen swords leave their smiths' workshops in ever greater number. More Dwarves arrive every year from distant lands and join King Dáin's underground court.





DESCRIPTION

Dwarves are an ancient and secretive race, whose customs and traditions are mostly unknown to outsiders. At the end of the Third Age, they are a proud but dwindling people, survivors from a distant past. Almost all Dwarves that can be encountered speak of themselves as belonging to 'Durin's folk'. They are probably the most redoubtable warriors in Middle-earth, hard to break or corrupt, but often at odds with other Free Peoples over old quarrels or new slights.

Dwarves are short and stocky, with robust limbs and heads crowned with long hair and longer beards that give them their typically elderly appearance. They are long-lived, known to reach 250 years of age.

STANDARD OF LIVING

With the fabulous Dragon-hoard of Erebor reclaimed and their Kingdom restored, the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain rank as a *Rich* culture.

DWARVEN ADVENTURERS

To most denizens of the Lonely Mountain, taking part in the making of future splendours is enough to fill their life with purpose. To some, the memory of even greater halls still lost to the enemy fills their heart with longing and bitterness, driving out any interest in the concerns of other folks. These restless spirits become emissaries and adventurers, and their wandering carries the name of Erebor to many foreign realms.

Suggested Callings: Slayer, Treasure-hunter. Few have been as wronged as the Dwarves of Erebor, who now strive to rid the world of the Shadow. Many, though, seek only to reclaim the lost marvels of Durin's folk.

Unusual Calling: Warden. As mindful as they are of their own settlements, the Dwarves rarely concern themselves with the well-being of outsiders.

WHAT KING DÁIN SAYS...

- **Bardings:**

"If it wasn't for Bard the Bowman, there would be no King under the Mountain. We will always do whatever is in our power to help him and his people."

- **Beornings:**

"Beorn is unfortunately not overly fond of Dwarves, and his followers appear, if anything, to be of a grimmer sort than him! Nonetheless, they have our trust, as they hate Orcs and Wargs as much as we do."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:**

"Since the day of the Awakening, we have delved deep, travelled far, and toiled hard. The fruits of the labour of our ancestors have outlasted the lives of their makers, to the enrichment of their descendants. In these halls of stone, we will endure any storm, and here our kin will find refuge in this and the next age of the world."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:**

"Once we fought together in battle and prevailed. But these days the emissaries of the Elvenking never say either yea nor nay, and their fair words cannot conceal his reluctance to ever leave his halls again."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:**

"If there is something I learnt about Hobbits, it is that there is much more about them than anyone expects."

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:**

"I hear they are skilful hunters and trackers, and that's all. We are not concerned with their ways."

CULTURAL BLESSING

- Redoubtable -

Dwarves too can go swiftly, and they do not tire sooner than Orcs.

The legendary stubbornness of Dwarves lets them endure burdens that would break the back of the sturdiest of Men.

- Dwarf characters calculate their Fatigue threshold by adding up the Encumbrance ratings of all the items they are carrying, and then subtracting their favoured Heart score from the total.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	2	Persuade	0
Athletics	0	Travel	3	Stealth	0
Awareness	0	Insight	0	Search	3
Explore	2	Healing	0	Hunting	0
Song	1	Courtesy	0	Riddle	2
<u>Craft</u>	3	Battle	1	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

- 1) (Axes) 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Mattock 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1

SPECIALITIES

Choose two Traits from:

Fire-making, Smith-craft, Smoking, Stone-craft, Trading, Tunnelling



BACKGROUNDS

1 - A Life of Toil

You and your family have laboured hard in the mines of the Iron Hills, dreaming that one day you will be able to delve deeper once again for far more precious ore. Unfortunately, to this day most ancient Dwarf-holds are no more than Dragon's lairs or Orc-infested pits. You toil patiently, peering into the gloom with eyes hungry for the gleaming of gems and gold.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Explore

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Energetic, Fierce, Hardened, Proud, Stern, Vengeful, Wary, Wilful

2 - Far Trader

By the reckoning of the Dwarves, you were only a stripling when you left your home in the Blue Mountains to follow your kinsmen along the trading roads. You have since seen many places and met different folks eager to trade goods for the product of dwarven handiwork. You remember little of the roads you took, as you were led by your more experienced kin, but those journeys have awoken in you a desire to see the world.

Basic Attributes

Body 7, Heart 2, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Courtesy

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cautious, Cunning, Eager, Hardy, Honourable, Secretive, Steadfast, Wilful



3 - Bitter Exile

Long ago, your ancestors were driven out of their underground halls in the far North. Since you were born, you have assisted your ailing father as he suffered from his enforced exile. His malady proved infectious, and over the long years, your longing for the lost home of your forefathers consumed you day after day. You tried to quench your spite in forgetfulness, but the embers of your anger never died completely.

Basic Attributes

Body 7, Heart 3, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Healing

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Fierce, Gruff, Hardened, Robust, Secretive, Stern, Wilful, Wrathful

4 - Eloquent Orator

The hardships endured by your folk during two ages of the world have inspired many songs. But the words that come easier to your lips are those recounting deeds of courage and valour or, even better, those exalting the craft of your forefathers in works of cunning and skill. Your tales are testimony that your people has suffered much, but can still see beauty in the Northern World.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Persuade

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cautious, Determined, Energetic, Honourable, Proud, Steadfast, Wary, Wilful

5 - A Lesson in Revenge

Your grandfather never relented in his hunt for the Orc chief from Mount Gundabad who killed his wife. Leading you along dim underground passages, he told you much about the cruel ways of the servants of the Shadow, and how to fight them. His words scared you when you were young and haunted your dreams, but now that you have started down the road to adventure you begin to see the value of his advice.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 3, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Battle

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Cunning, Determined, Hardy, Lordly, Suspicious, Vengeful, Wilful

6 - A Penetrating Gaze

Your elder brother instructed you to judge others by their deeds, not their words, especially when dealing with the fair-spoken Elves. But in time you have come to trust your instinct above all else, as your heart is not easily swayed. Thieves and liars do not dare to meet your eyes, as you seem able to lay bare their plots.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 4, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Insight

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Eager, Gruff, Lordly, Robust, Suspicious, Wilful, Wrathful



LONELY MOUNTAIN DWARF NAMES

All Dwarves of Durin's Folk receive a true name at birth that they do not reveal to members of other races. In their dealings with other people, they adopt personal names in the language of other friendly cultures. The Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain are no exception, and commonly use names after the fashion of the Men of the North. This custom has been in use for so long that a number of names have become traditionally associated with Dwarves, and are used almost exclusively by them. Dwarves of renown are sometimes given a byname, usually an honorific title celebrating an exceptional deed or distinctive quality (eg. *Thorin Oakenshield*, *Dáin Ironfoot*).

Male Names: Ai, Anar, Balin, Beli, Bifur, Bláin, Bofur, Bombur, Borin, Burin, Bruni, Dáin, Dori, Durin, Dwalin, Farin, Fíli, Flói, Frár, Frerin, Frór, Fundin, Gimli, Ginar, Glóin, Gróin, Grór, Hanar, Hepti, Iari, Kíli, Lófar, Lóni, Náin, Náli, Nár, Narvi, Niping, Nói, Nori, Núr, Nýrád, Óin, Ónar, Óri, Póri, Regin, Svior, Thorin, Thráin, Thrór, Veig, Vidar.

Female Names: Dís, Hón, Kóna, Már.

Adventuring Age: 50-100

Dwarves generally start their life on the road in their fifties, and do not usually consider retiring before their nineties. Around that time, they feel they can no longer stay away from their family, or want to dedicate themselves solely to the perfection of their crafts. But Dwarves can remain active until they are more than two hundred years old, and may return to adventuring if a great need arises, like the opportunity to avenge an old insult or injury, or to recover a treasure or reclaim a long-lost dwarf-hold.





- elves - of MIRKWOOD

"In a great hall with pillars hewn out of the living stone sat the Elvenking on a chair of carven wood."

The Elvenking of the Woodland Realm has ruled over his subjects from the times when Mirkwood was called Greenwood the Great. For centuries, travellers and wanderers have heard the eerie sound of their laughter echoing in every corner of the wood; today, the court of Thranduil is an underground fastness in the northernmost region of Mirkwood, a bastion protected by magic and held in arms against the Shadow that has fallen on the forest. Its denizens are ever-vigilant sentinels, members of a diminishing people that have suffered greatly in many wars.

They have grown suspicious of trespassing foreigners and what they may bring. Now, however, the great victory at the Battle of Five Armies has somewhat eased the relationships between Elves, Dwarves and Men living in the area, and trade has increased after years of seclusion.

The Elves of Northern Mirkwood are members of the Firstborn, the earliest denizens of Middle-earth. Also called Wood-elves, the followers of Thranduil the Elvenking are a reclusive folk. They may be less wise or ambitious than nobler Elves, but they have chosen to live a simpler life.

Their attachment to all things natural lets them rejoice in leading hunts and holding feasts, even under the threat of what lurks in the dark of Mirkwood. It is this love for Middle-earth and their hopes of reclaiming the entire forest from the Shadow that prevents them from abandoning their home and sailing to the uttermost West.





DESCRIPTION

Elusive warriors devoted to the preservation of their hidden realm, Silvan Elves are a fair but hardy folk. Their experiences have made them suspicious of other peoples, but have not robbed them of the ability to delight in the simple pleasures of living. Even though their power is slowly waning, Elves are staunch fighters dedicated to resisting the encroaching darkness, either alone or side-by-side with trusted allies. As all those who belong to the Firstborn, they are not subject to illness or old age, and thus can dwell within the circles of the world until they choose to leave it, or are slain.

STANDARD OF LIVING

The Elves of Mirkwood are a folk at a war, and dedicate much of their wealth to their defence, ranking their culture as *Martial*.

WOOD-ELF ADVENTURERS

Silvan Elves are not often seen outside of their woodland kingdom. In their attempt to preserve its beauty, they turned the forest's shadowy canopy and its green glades into a fortified sanctuary, where they struggle to hold the Shadow at bay. When an Elven adventurer leaves his home, he risks being considered just short of an outlaw: to many of his peers and family, he is forsaking his duties.

Suggested Calling: Scholar, Warden. Although rustic by Elven standards, Silvan Elves are old and wise by the reckoning of Men, and often seek to learn more about the world. Others, having dedicated their lives to fighting the servants of the Shadow in Mirkwood, strike out to protect those who suffer at its hands abroad.

Unusual Calling: Wanderer. Devoted to their homeland in the great Wood as they are, Wood-elves may leave their home for many reasons, but rarely out of simple restlessness.



WHAT THE ELVENKING SAYS...

- **Bardings:**

"I have seen the downfall of many mortal kings. Bard seems of a wiser kind than most of them, but what about his subjects?"

- **Beornings:**

"Beorn has gathered around him an unruly lot, wild and unrestrained. At least they keep a good watch over our western borders."

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:**

"They are doughty warriors, but they are as stubborn and haughty in times of peace as they are fierce in battle."

- **Elves of Mirkwood:**

"The times we live in force us to hide deeper and deeper inside this living maze of trees and shadow. We know its intricate paths as if they were the twisting corridors of our underground palace, but we are making it always more difficult for others to follow."

- **Hobbits of the Shire:**

"They seem a merry and resourceful people. Let us hope that their spirit won't be darkened now that they have seen the world outside their borders."

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:**

"The Men of the Woods share our love for the great forest, and have seen the same Shadow that we first faced long ago and still haunts our thoughts."

CULTURAL BLESSING

- Folk of the Dusk -

...the Wood-elves lingered in the twilight of our Sun and Moon but loved best the stars; and they wandered in the great forests that grew tall in lands that are now lost.

While fond of the Sun, the Elves of Mirkwood find themselves at greater ease under moonlight or starlight, or among the shadows of a forest; their senses are keener, their motions exceedingly sure and graceful.

- When an Elf of Mirkwood is inside a forest or under the earth, or it is night, all his Attribute bonuses are based on his favoured rating.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	2	Inspire	0	Persuade	0
Athletics	3	Travel	0	Stealth	2
<u>Awareness</u>	2	Insight	0	Search	0
Explore	0	Healing	1	Hunting	1
Song	2	Courtesy	0	Riddle	0
Craft	0	Battle	2	Lore	3

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

- 1) (Spears) 2, Sword 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Bow 2, and Sword 1, Dagger 1

SPECIALITIES

Choose two Traits from:

Boating, Elven-lore, Fire-making, Mirkwood-lore, Swimming, Woodwright



BACKGROUNDS

1 - New Hope

You have lived among the Raft-elves, often dealing with the Men of Lake-town on behalf of King Thranduil. At first, it was only your sire's command that made you leave your forest home, but now you have no regrets. The world beyond the King's realm is wide and, while full of hidden threats, is also populated by other valiant peoples, enemies of the same Shadow that your kin has fought for centuries. It could well be your mission to find worthy and trusted allies to join you in your fight...

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 2, Wits 7

Favoured Skill

Travel

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Clever, Determined, Merry, Patient,
Quick of Hearing, Swift, Wary, Wilful

2 - A Musical Legacy

Your father was a minstrel of great virtue, whose work will be praised for countless years. His talent passed along to you, but transformed into a love for the music that lies in plain speech. Your voice is pleasing to all listeners, and you choose your words much as your fingers choose the strings on the harp.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 4, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Courtesy

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cautious, Cunning, Elusive, Fair-spoken,
Merciful, Proud, Quick of Hearing, Secretive

3 - Memory of Suffering

A long time ago, Elves akin to your folk dwelt around the Naked Hill in the south of Greenwood the Great, before the Necromancer claimed it to build his fastness of sorcery. Now that the Shadow has fled, you have often journeyed there to spy upon that dreaded place, to ponder on the hurt suffered by your people in many years of cruel warfare. Many of your kinsmen prefer to forget and be merry, but you know that evil is seldom conquered forever.

Basic Attributes

Body 5, Heart 3, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Stealth

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Determined, Elusive, Hardened, Keen-eyed,
Patient, Quick of Hearing, Suspicious, Wary

4 - Noble Blood

In your veins runs the blood of Elven adventurers of great renown, who in ages past chose to dwell among the Silvan Elves, seeking refuge and peace in troubled years. They say their superior wisdom is reflected in your noble countenance, and much is expected of you in the coming wars. You have sworn never to betray these expectations, and you will die before you see your fair home reduced to ruins.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 4, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Inspire

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Fair, Honourable, Lordly, Proud,
Quick of Hearing, Suspicious, Swift, Wilful



5 - Wild at Heart

The beauty of Greenwood the Great seems lost forever in the shadows of Mirkwood, but you still find solace running alongside its wild beasts, as your kinsmen did for centuries. The wood sings to you as tree branches sway and leaves rustle; enchanting music you strive to decipher. Some find your ways to be simple and rustic, but they fail to see the wisdom of choosing to live your life fully in these waning years.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 3, Wits 7

Favoured Skill

Athletics

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cautious, Clever, Fair, Honourable, Keen-eyed, Merry, Nimble, Quick of Hearing

6 - Envoy of the King

You have journeyed far from the borders of the Woodland Realm with your father, on his errands to the courts of Men and Dwarves. Standing by his side, you have learnt much in a handful of months; more than in years spent in the gilded cage of your home. Sadly, you have also discovered how the Shadow is creeping upon the outside world, gaining in strength with each passing year.

Basic Attributes

Body 6, Heart 2, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Lore

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cunning, Fair-spoken, Hardened, Lordly, Merciful, Nimble, Quick of Hearing, Secretive



MIRKWOOD ELF NAMES

For the most part, the Wood-elves bear names fashioned in the Grey-elven language.

Male Names: Aerandir, Amras, Amroth, Aredhel, Caranthir, Denethor, Edrahil, Elladan, Erestor, Galdor, Galion, Guilin, Haldir, Legolas, Lindir, Orophin, Oropher, Thranduil.

Female Names: Finduilas, Míriel, Nimrodel.

Adventuring Age: 100-500

Elves are invulnerable to age, and may become adventurers at any time after they reach adulthood (at about a century of age). Considering the level of ability of a starting hero, players should avoid choosing an excessively venerable age for their character - heroes older than 300 years old should definitely possess the Elven lore speciality, to reflect their deeper knowledge of the past.





- hobbits - of the shire

“Hobbits are an unobtrusive but very ancient people, more numerous formerly than they are today; for they love peace and quiet and good tilled earth: a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside was their favourite haunt.”

The Shire, a pleasant corner in the Quiet of the World, has stood safe and peaceful for many years. Its inhabitants, a little people called Hobbits, possess a love for solid traditions and respectable ways, and a strong dislike for anything out of the ordinary. If Hobbits had their way, the days would go by in an unchanging world, as they have since anyone can remember. But even if most Hobbits pretend not to heed it, there are dark things moving beyond the borders of the Shire; and while someone has long been taking care that no shadow interrupts their well-ordered lives, these shadows are lengthening.

Since Mr. Bilbo Baggins' astonishing adventure with a group of Dwarves and a travelling wizard, all kinds of stories concerning remote lands, dark woods, Giants, Elves, and dark halls beneath the earth have started to circulate among Hobbits of the more adventurous sort.

Now, certainly not everyone believes that Mr Baggins really left his comfortable hole at Bag End to go anywhere, but some actually do, and every year another lad or lass leaves home to go adventuring. Gandalf, the conjuror, has often been blamed for such incidents, and the sight of his pointy hat is sure to ruin the day of all respectable Hobbits.



DESCRIPTION

Hobbits are much smaller than Men, even smaller than Dwarves, and are often mistaken for children by Men who see them. Such likeness may be explained through a long-forgotten common ancestry, which would also explain why Hobbits often like or dislike the same things as Men do. A merry folk, Hobbits are good-natured individuals. When pushed to resort to weapons, they choose small swords and short hunting bows, which they can shoot with uncanny precision when needs be.

STANDARD OF LIVING

Hobbits live in peace and relative prosperity. Their land is rich and their borders protected. They seldom trade with other folk, with the occasional exception of travelling Dwarves. Their culture's economy ranks as *Prosperous*.

HOBBIT ADVENTURERS

The peaceful inhabitants of The Shire like to stay well away from adventures, unless driven by their dangerous curiosity. When a Hobbit commits the unthinkable social offense of going on an adventure, he is sure to lose his good name; he starts to be attributed all sort of oddities, and ends up quickly with a reputation for a 'queer' or

'mad' character. Much more grounded in good sense than their quieter fellows credit them with, Hobbits on the road do not forget that a small pleasure can work wonders on a weary traveller, and make sure to bring with them some source of gratification, be it a supply of pipe-weed, a set of favoured cooking tools, or simply a small token that reminds them of home.

Suggested Callings: Treasure-hunter, Wanderer. More than anything, the little folk of the Shire may be driven from their comfortable lives by curiosity. Most Hobbit adventurers wish only to find interesting things or visit exotic places.

Unusual Calling: Slayer. Hobbits are a sensible, level-headed sort, and unlikely to be vengeful. Besides, little in the way of misfortune ever befalls their quiet home.

WHAT BILBO SAYS...

- **Bardings:**

"King Bard is a generous young man, with many eager followers of like mind. Hobbits will always be welcome in his kingdom."





- **Beornings:**

“My Dwarven friends have written me all sorts of frightful stories about these Beornings, but since Beorn chose them I am sure that in heart they are just as good as their leader.”

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:**

“We Hobbits cannot count on friends as good and trusty as the Dwarves, these days.”

- **Elves of Mirkwood:**

“The Silvan Elves of Mirkwood are and remain Elves, despite their suspicions and secret ways, and so are Good People.”

- **Hobbits of the Shire:**

“We and the Big Folk are as different as peas and apples, not to mention Elves, or even Dwarves! That’s why I say that we Hobbits must stick together.”

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:**

“Gandalf says that the language spoken by these Woodmen share many words with our own. What we certainly have in common is the friendship of wizards! Do they know about pipe-weed, I wonder...?”

CULTURAL BLESSING

– **Hobbit-sense** –

... they have a fund of wisdom and wise sayings that men have mostly never heard or have forgotten long ago.

Hobbits possess a cheerful spirit and a friendliness that makes them good companions. Additionally, they have learned their place in the world a long time ago, and a deep-rooted sense of proportion has found its place in their hearts. No visions or wild fantasies can tempt them, as they do not seek power or control over others.

- Each Hobbit character in the group increases the company’s Fellowship rating by one point. Additionally, when making a Wisdom roll, Hobbits can roll the Feat die twice, and keep the best result.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:



Awe	0	Inspire	0	Persuade	2
Athletics	0	Travel	1	Stealth	3
Awareness	2	Insight	1	Search	2
Explore	0	Healing	0	Hunting	0
Song	2	Courtesy	3	Riddle	2
Craft	0	Battle	0	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

- 1) Short Sword 2, Bow 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Bow 2, Short Sword 1, Dagger 1

SPECIALITIES

Choose two Traits from:

Cooking, Gardener, Herb-lore, Smoking,
Story-telling, Tunnelling



BACKGROUNDS

1 - Restless Farmer

You were born into a family of farmers in the Southfarthing, where the best pipe-weed grows. To satisfy your curiosity – and your father's expectations – you started to work at a very early age, learning a lot from farmhands and traders. From time to time, you feel your closeness to the earth move you, awakening a desire to sleep in the fields, under a canopy of stars.

Basic Attributes

Body 3, Heart 6, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Craft

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Eager, Generous, Merciful, Merry, Patient,
True-hearted, Trusty

2 - Too Many Paths to Tread

Your father was a tradesman and you were supposed to take his place in his workshop in Hardbottle at the age of 33. But before that time, a mysterious wanderlust took you and you were away from home for months. When you came back, you renounced your position, to the outrage of your whole neighbourhood. But you know that secretly your father approves: he always dreamed of leaving the Shire to 'go and see Elves'!

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 5, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Travel

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Clever, Curious, Eager,
Keen-eyed, Nimble, Robust, True-hearted



3 - A Good Listener

Your uncle was a Sheriff, and often brought you along with him when he went 'beating the bounds', that is, when he was appointed to watch the Shire's borders for Outsiders. More often than not, his watch included a visit to The Ivy Bush, a small inn on the Bywater Road. There, you have heard told the best stories over deep mugs of excellent beer.

Basic Attributes

Body 3, Heart 7, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Riddle

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cautious, Curious, Energetic, Fair-spoken, Honourable, Quick of Hearing, True-hearted, Trusty

4 - Witty Gentleman

You come from a well-to-do family of landed gentry of the Westfarthing, living in a Hobbit-hole in Michel Delving. It is rumoured that your great-grandfather once vanished, only to show up three days later at the local inn, talking of a giant Tree-man he had seen on the North Moors. Some believe your family's fortune is based on the giant's hoard your ancestor discovered, but you have been able to dispel such rumours with your humorous remarks.

Basic Attributes

Body 2, Heart 6, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Persuade

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Cautious, Clever, Elusive, Honourable, Keen-eyed, Patient, Proud, True-hearted

5 - Bucklander

Your parents belong to the folk of Buckland, and you were brought up on the 'wrong side of the Brandywine River', as they say. If half the tales be true, members of your family have always displayed a certain queerness of character, and an unusual fighting spirit, a strangeness you seem to possess yourself.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 6, Wits 4

Favoured Skill

Awe

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Energetic, Fair-spoken, Merry, Nimble, Proud, Quick of Hearing, Reckless, True-hearted

6 - Tookish Blood

You grew up peacefully in a farmhouse in the Marish, Eastfarthing, until something Tookish stirred in your blood and overcame your respectability. It first happened on your way home one night, when you spotted some outlandish folk around a bright camp-fire. When you described them to your grandmother, she told you they were Dwarves, on their way to the Blue Mountains. From that night you started to shun well-trodden paths, hoping to meet other wayfarers secretly crossing the Shire.

Basic Attributes

Body 2, Heart 7, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Explore

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Bold, Elusive, Generous, Merciful, Reckless, Robust, True-hearted

HOBBIT NAMES

Hobbits names are composed by a first name and a family name. First names for boys are usually simple and short, with Hobbit girls being often given names of flowers or precious stones, but among the older families survives a custom of giving more heroic and high-sounding names whose origin can be traced back to a time before the Shire. Names like *Fredegar* or *Hildibrand* betray a common root with similar names used by Men in the vales of the Great River. Family names seem to fall into three main categories: surnames without a traceable meaning (*Baggins*, *Boffin*, *Took*), 'descriptive' surnames (*Hornblower*, *Proudfoot*), and surnames hinting at a geographical feature (*Burrows*, *Hayward*).

Male Names: Adalgrim, Adelard, Andwise, Balbo, Bandobras, Berilac, Bilbo, Bingo, Blanco, Bodo, Bowman, Bucca, Bungo, Carl, Cotman, Cottar, Dinonas, Doderic, Dodinas, Drogo, Dudo, Erling, Everard, Falco, Fastred, Ferdibrand, Ferdinand, Ferumbras, Filibert,

Flambard, Folco, Fortinbras, Fosco, Fredegar, Frodo, Gerontius, Gorbado, Gorbulas, Gorchendad, Gormadoc, Griffio, Halfred, Hamfast, Hamson, Harding, Hending, Hildibrand, Hildifons, Hildigard, Hildigrim, Hob, Hobson, Holfast, Holman, Hugo, Ilberic, Isembard, Isembold, Isemgrim, Isengar, Isumbras, Largo, Longo, Lotho, Madoc, Marcho, Marmadas, Marmadoc, Marroc, Meriadoc, Merimac, Merimas, Milo, Minto, Moro, Mosco, Mungo, Nob, Odo, Odovacar, Olo, Orgulas, Otho, Paladin, Peregrin, Polo, Ponto, Porto, Posco, Reginard, Robin, Rorimac, Rudigar, Rufus, Sadoc, Samwise, Sancho, Saradas, Saradoc, Seredic, Sigismund, Ted, Tobold, Togo, Tolman, Wilcome, Will, Wiseman.

Female Names: Adaldrida, Adamanta, Amaranth, Angelica, Asphodel, Belba, Bell, Belladonna, Berylla, Camellia, Celandine, Chica, Daisy, Donnamira, Dora, Eglantine, Elanor, Esmeralda, Estella, Gilly, Hanna, Hilda, Lily, Linda, Lobelia, Malva, Marigold, May, Melilot, Menegilda, Mentha, Mimosa, Mirabella, Myrtle, Pansy, Pearl, Peony, Pervinca, Pimpernel, Poppy, Primrose, Primula, Prisca, Rosamunda, Rosa, Rose, Ruby, Salvia, Tanta.

Family Names: Baggins, Banks, Boffin, Bolger, Bracegirdle, Brandybuck, Brown, Brownlock, Bunce, Burrows, Chubb, Cotton, Gamgee, Gardner, Goldworthy, Goodbody, Goodchild, Goold, Greenhand, Grubb, Hayward, Headstrong, Hornblower, Maggot, Noakes, North-Tooks, Proudfoot, Puddifoot, Roper, Rumble, Sackville, Sandyman, Smallburrow, Took, Twofoot, Whitfoot.

Adventuring Age: 25-60

Hobbits do not easily abandon their comfortable lives, but when they do they usually wait at least for their coming of age at 33. But a particularly reckless Hobbit might feel the call to adventure when in his *tweens*, as Hobbits call their twenties.



- WOODMEN - of WILDERLAND

“There were many of them, and they were brave and well armed, and even the Wargs dared not attack them if there were many together, or in the bright day.”

Almost two thousand years ago, a shadow crept from the South and slowly drew all light from the heart of Greenwood the Great to its farthest eaves. People began calling the forest Mirkwood, and learnt to fear its deepest recesses. In spite of the darkness, many lingered along the forest's borders, fearless sons of Men who defied the menace of the Necromancer in his dreaded abode. These Woodmen have fought the growing darkness for as long as their oldest tellers of tales can remember, and they will continue the fight now that the Shadow has deserted its lair.

The Woodmen of Wilderland are frontiersmen of the North, having a shared heritage with the Bardings. They live in sparse, isolated villages and homesteads surrounded by wooden stockades, built along the borders of the great forest, or in the valleys to the west of the river. Threatened by the shadow of Dol Guldur and what lurks in the depths of Mirkwood, the Woodmen are hunters and trackers of wild animals, battling Orcs and Spiders in self-defence.

Traditionally, women fight and hunt alongside their men, or even alone if unmarried or widowed, in their struggle to survive in the hostile environment.

The wizard Radagast, one of the Wise of Middle-earth, has chosen to live amongst the Woodmen since time immemorial, taking residence in Rhosgobel. A master of shapes and a tender of beasts, his teachings have proven invaluable to the hunters and animal-tamers among the Woodmen.



DESCRIPTION

As all Men of the North, they are commonly light-haired and tall, but often brown-skinned with a little red in their cheeks thanks to a life in the open. Sometimes deemed surly of speech and unforthcoming by other folk, they are rangers and hunters, haters of Orcs and Spiders, skilled in fighting in the deep of the woods with bows of yew, stout spears, and long-hafted axes. They were once skilful tamers of steeds and hunting dogs, but their life under the Shadow has forced them to mostly abandon the training of horses, and to favour that of hounds.

STANDARD OF LIVING

The Woodmen carve a living out of meagre hunts, burning charcoal and breeding animals. Their constant fight with the Wood and its wild things leaves them struggling to do more than simply survive. Their culture ranks as *Frugal*.

WOODMAN ADVENTURERS

All Woodman fathers and mothers fear the day when they will see their favoured sons' and daughters' eyes gleam with faraway thoughts, for they know that the wild-

wood and its secrets may fill the bravest of hearts and entangle them with a longing that cannot be satisfied if they remain at home. But, if that day cannot be averted, they hope at least that their road to adventure won't lead them to forsake the defence of their own folk, as every Woodman knows the very real threat posed by the Shadow.

Suggested Callings: Wanderer, Warden. The Woodmen are as wild as their savage home, and when they travel it is not for any purpose, but for wildness's sake, although many continue to guard against the Shadow wherever they go.

Unusual Calling: Scholar. Dour and practical, Woodmen take little interest in study.

WHAT RADAGAST THE BROWN SAYS...

- **Bardings:**

"I dearly hope their friendship with the Dwarves doesn't make them equally as blind to the beauty of the things that live and grow."





- **Beornings:**

“Beorn and his folk are stalwart allies of all true enemies of the Shadow. He knows that the peace we are enjoying is a fragile thing, to be cherished and fostered.”

- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:**

“The Dwarves reserve their love for stone and gems, things that they can shape with their hands rather than things that are truly alive. That is why you and I can never fully understand them.”

- **Elves of Mirkwood:**

“King Thranduil knows what lurks in the dark and fears it, but he doesn’t let his fear be the master of him.”

- **Hobbits of the Shire:**

“There was a time when a folk of halflings lived and fished along the river shores. The Woodmen know nothing more than a few old songs and children’s tales today.”

- **Woodmen of Wilderland:**

“A long time ago I came here out of the West that is forgotten. The people of the Wood gave me a name, and a reason to remain. Since that day they have brought me their children so that I could bless them, and to this day in their innocent eyes I see the spirit of a folk that doesn’t claim dominion over the things that grow and live, but yearns to live in harmony with them.”



CULTURAL BLESSING

- Woodcrafty -

"Radagast is... a master of shapes and changes of hue..."

The Woodmen know the woods so well that they can put a name on every shade of green found in a forest. Wearing the proper raiment and adopting clever ploys suggested by the Brown Wizard, they can trick the eyes of others and use the many obstacles found in the woods to their advantage.

- When the Woodmen fight in the woods, they use their favoured Wits score as their basic Parry rating.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Common Skills

Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the favoured skill:

Awe	0	Inspire	1	Persuade	0
Athletics	2	Travel	0	Stealth	2
Awareness	2	Insight	0	Search	0
Explore	3	<u>Healing</u>	3	Hunting	2
Song	1	Courtesy	0	Riddle	1
Craft	1	Battle	1	Lore	0

Weapon Skills

Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on the character sheet:

- 1) (Bows) 2, Long-hafted Axe 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Long-hafted Axe 2, and Spear 1, Dagger 1

SPECIALITIES

Choose two Traits from:

Anduin-lore, Beast-lore, Fishing, Herb-lore, Leechcraft, Mirkwood-lore

BACKGROUNDS

1 - The Hound

The dogs bred by the folk of Woodland Hall are dun in colour, long of limb, sharp-nosed, gaunt and great. Since you were a child, you have always felt drawn to their natural grace and ferocious loyalty. But, above all, you share their love for the hunt, and you can feel their excitement when they are closing in on their prey.

Basic Attributes

Body 3, Heart 4, Wits 7

Favoured Skill

Hunting

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Eager, Elusive, Forthright, Generous, Gruff, Hardy, Proud



2 - Wizard's Pupil

Many years ago, you and your sisters and brothers used to challenge each other to recall the stories depicted in the woven tapestries hung along the walls of the great hall of Rhosgobel. One day, you caught the attention of the wizard Radagast, and he told you how the deeds of your ancestors were handed down from generation to generation as songs. He taught you that there are important lessons to be learnt from the past, and from the actions of those that came before you.

Basic Attributes

Body 3, Heart 5, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Song

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Cunning, Forthright, Just, Patient, Proud, Swift, Tall

3 - Fairy Heritage

They say your mother was as fair as an Elf-maiden, and that your father spirited her away from the Wood of Sorcery far in the South. You don't know if this is true, although you doubt it, as there was nothing sorcerous in her true love for you and your father. You remember that her senses oftentimes proved to be very sharp, as yours promise to be.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 4, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Search

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Bold, Just, Curious, Fair, Reckless, Tall, True-hearted

4 - Apprentice to the Mountain-folk

The precious ore that hammer and anvil shape into tools and weapons is difficult to come by in the vales of the Great River, and commerce has grown thin in the years of ever-growing darkness. When you were younger, you and many other children of your age were sent by the alderman of your clan to join the workers in the mines above Mountain Hall. You remember long days as dark as winter nights, spent underground searching for the glimmer that would put swords into the hands of the warriors of your folk, and needed tools for shepherds, hunters and farmers alike.

Basic Attributes

Body 4, Heart 5, Wits 5

Favoured Skill

Search

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Elusive, Hardened, Hardy, Gruff, Stern, True-hearted, Wary

5 - Seeker

The wild-wood can scare the hardiest of men, but that didn't stop you and your brothers from climbing every tree and running along any path you could find under the eaves of the forest. Your father's rules prevented you from straying from the paths connecting Woodland Hall to the southern homesteads, but at times you have seen glimpses of queer things where the shadows in the woods are deeper. Now that you have outgrown your father's authority, your thirst for adventure won't be easily quenched.

Basic Attributes

Body 2, Heart 5, Wits 7

Favoured Skill

Athletics

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Adventurous, Bold, Curious, Determined,
Eager, Generous, Reckless, Swift

6 - Sword-day Counsellor

When he was a youth, your uncle severely injured his own right leg, mishandling his axe. Deprived of his rightful place among the active warriors of your folk, he instead turned to his wits and experience to contribute to the fight against the Shadow. His cunning was instrumental in many a victory on the field of battle. He proved to you that when war is at hand, good advice is as important as good swords to ensure triumph.

Basic Attributes

Body 2, Heart 6, Wits 6

Favoured Skill

Battle

Distinctive Features

(choose two Traits from those listed)

Bold, Cunning, Determined, Fair, Gruff,
Hardened, Patient, Wary

WOODMEN NAMES

The Northmen inhabiting the Vales of the Anduin River – the Beornings and Woodmen – speak the same language and share a common vocabulary of personal names. The two folk favour different names, but are set apart by their peculiar use of bynames and nicknames.

The Woodmen do not show particular preferences, but it is a common practice among adventurers to keep their real name a secret, preferring to let themselves be known only by a nickname (*The Bride, The Hound*).

Male Names: Adalard, Ageric, Agilfrid, Agiulf, Alaric, Alberic, Amalric, Amand, Andagis, Atalaric, Atanagild, Ansegisel, Ansovald, Aregisel, Arnulf, Audovald, Avagis, Badegisel, Baldac, Balderic, Barald, Beorn, Beran, Beranald, Berangar, Bertefried, Beormud, Cilderic, Eberulf, Eboric, Ebegisel, Ebrimuth, Ediulf, Ermanaric, Euric, Eutaric, Evermud, Evoric, Frideger, Gararic, Garivald, Geberic, Gisalric, Gerold, Grimald, Grimbald, Grimbeorn, Grimfast, Gundovald, Hartgard, Hartnut, Hartnid, Hathus, Heriwulf, Hildebald, Imnachar, Ingelram, Ingund, Iwald, Iwgar, Leudast, Magneric, Malaric, Maracar, Merovech, Munderic, Odo, Odovacar, Otbert, Ragnacar, Ramnulf, Rathar, Reginar, Ricfried, Rigunth, Roderic, Sigeric, Sigibert, Sunnegisil, Theodard, Theodebert, Theodemir, Theodwin, Theudebald, Theuderic, Thorismund, Walcaud, Waleran, Widuven, Willicar, Wulferd.

Female Names: Adosinda, Amalfrida, Amalina, Avagisa, Avina, Beranhild, Brunihild, Gailavira, Garsendis, Geleswinta, Gelvira, Grimhild, Hermesind, Heva, Hilduara, Radegund.

Woodman Nicknames: The Bird-keeper, the Bowman, the Bride, the Bright one, the Eagle, the Healer, the Hound, the Hunter, the Quick, the Shepherd, the Shield-bearer, the Silent one, the Spear-shaker, the Wood-goer.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

Woodmen don't usually become adventurers before their 16th year of age, and rarely continue beyond their forties, when they retire to serve their family and folk.

- customisation -

Once players have chosen their characters' culture, background and Distinctive Features, and copied relevant information to their character sheet, they can further customise their hero's characteristics and abilities.

CALLINGS

Leaving home and setting off on the road is a courageous choice; it can also be a reckless one, and is often disapproved of by a Hero's family and folk. Characters will be leaving behind all they know and love, so they must have a strong motivation to become an adventurer. This motivation is known as a character's *calling*.

Each player chooses his character's calling from the list below. These descriptions do not represent a character's profession or trade, but the ambitions and aspirations that eventually set him on the road. While a calling can be used to summarise a character's drive as he starts out, they should not be viewed as restrictions; the heroes are likely to evolve in the course of the game. From a gaming perspective, the choice of a calling offers players a way to customise their characters and add details.

Favoured Skills

Each calling description lists two Common skill groups. When a player selects a calling, he chooses two skills from the favoured groups (from either group, or one from each group), and underlines them as *favoured skills*.

Additional Trait

Those who follow a calling have an interest or ability in common. Each calling gives characters a unique Trait.

Shadow Weakness

The driving motivation behind an adventurer's calling can be twisted and perverted if he succumbs to evil temptations or seeks to exert his own will upon others. A character's Shadow weakness suggests the path he would follow if he failed to resist the Shadow's influence (see Chapter Three of the Loremaster's book for details).

- scholar -

"Speak no secrets! Here is a scholar in the Ancient Tongue."

For you, knowledge makes the wild world a less threatening place to live in. Strangers become friends if addressed properly, yellowed maps in lost books replace a fear of the unknown with curiosity and wonder of places you have yet to explore, songs composed in ages past strengthen the weariest of hearts. A love of learning guides your every step, and illuminates the way for you and those who listen to your advice.

Favoured Skill Groups: Perception, Vocation

Trait: Rhymes of Lore

Shadow Weakness: Lure of Secrets



- slayer -

*"The day will come when they will perish
and I shall go back!"*

You or your family have suffered a terrible loss at another's hands. You have become an adventurer to take your revenge on whoever wronged you, or maybe just to leave behind a life that you are not able to enjoy any more. Yours is a difficult path to tread, as what you have been through makes it hard to give your trust to anybody.

Favoured Skill Groups: Movement, Personality

Trait: Enemy-lore (choose one enemy type from Dragons, Giants, Orcs, Spiders, Trolls, or Wolves)

Shadow Weakness: Curse of Vengeance



- treasure - hunter

*"Far over the misty mountains cold
To dungeons deep and caverns old
We must away ere break of day
To seek the pale enchanted gold."*

This world has seen the passing of the glory of many Dwarven kings and Elven lords, and their heritage is now buried in deep dungeons and dim caverns. Pale gold and bright jewels beckon all who dare to find them. Be it a family treasure stolen by raiding Goblins, or the golden hoard of a Dragon, you seek what is lost, even when this means you will have to brave unspeakable dangers.

Favoured Skill Groups: Movement, Perception

Trait: Burglary

Shadow Weakness: Dragon-sickness



- WANDERER -

“...most of our kindred have long ago departed, and we too are now only tarrying here a while, ere we return over the Great Sea.”

You see the wonders of living in Middle-earth even where the Shadow is deepest. Every corner of the land holds a promise of untold secrets, and this is why you have decided that any dell, cave and river vale can be your home, albeit briefly. For when the morning comes, another horizon will show your new destination.

Favoured Skill Groups: Custom, Survival

Trait: Folk-lore

Shadow Weakness: Wandering-madness



- WARDEN -

“Travellers scowl at us, and countrymen give us scornful names.”

In this age of the world where shadows grow deeper with every passing year, you have sworn to defend all who cannot defend themselves. Often, your choice forces you to forsake civilised areas, to better guard their inhabitants from what lurks right outside their fences. This has made you a stranger to the eyes of the common folk, a threatening figure like those you are protecting them from.

Favoured Skill Groups: Personality, Survival

Trait: Shadow-lore

Shadow Weakness: Lure of Power



FAVOURED ATTRIBUTES

Body, Heart and Wits are the fundamental ratings of all heroes in the game. Each character starts with a set of basic values determined by their chosen background. Players now get to generate their characters' Favoured Attributes, by adding bonuses to the basic scores. Favoured Attribute scores represent the character's potential to excel when drawing on his experiences and training.

To generate the scores possessed by a hero as Favoured Attributes, players add 3 to one Attribute, 2 to a second Attribute, and 1 to the remaining one, copying the new totals in the smaller boxes overlapping the Attribute boxes on the character sheet.

Peter is determining the Favoured Attributes for his Woodman warden. The background for his character has given him the following basic scores: Body 3, Heart 4, and Wits 7. Peter decides to enhance his already high Wits score by adding a+3 (raising his favoured Wits score to 10), and then to add 2 to his Body and 1 to his Heart, raising both favoured Attribute scores to 5.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Players may now raise some of their skill levels, to represent their heroes' experiences prior to their life as fully-fledged adventurers.

Players have 10 points to spend on raising their skills. The cost of raising each skill is shown in the two tables below. The first table gives the costs for Common skill levels, while the second shows the costs for Weapon skill levels.

Players are free to raise their skills as they see fit, as long as they have enough points to buy the desired skill level. They can also buy ranks in skills they previously didn't possess at all, or buy multiple ranks in the same skill, as long as they pay the cost of each level individually.

Players may also buy a first level in a new individual Weapon skill, but not a new Cultural weapon skill.

Common Skill level to attain	Cost
◆	1 point
◆◆	2 points
◆◆◆	3 points
◆◆◆◆	4 points
◆◆◆◆◆	5 points

Weapon Skill level to attain	Cost
◆	2 points
◆◆	4 points
◆◆◆	6 points

*A player wanting to go from **Athletics** ◆ to **Athletics** ◆◆◆ would spend a total of 9 points (2 to raise it from ◆ to ◆◆, 3 to go from ◆◆ to ◆◆◆ and 4 to go from ◆◆◆ to ◆◆◆◆).*

ENDURANCE AND HOPE

Endurance and Hope are the fundamental resources that keep a character going. Their starting scores are based on a hero's basic Heart rating and modified by his Culture (as shown on the table below).

Starting Resources:

CULTURE	ENDURANCE	HOPE
Bardings	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
Beornings	24 + Heart	8 + Heart
Dwarves	28 + Heart	6 + Heart
Elves	22 + Heart	8 + Heart
Hobbits	16 + Heart	12 + Heart
Woodmen	20 + Heart	10 + Heart



STARTING GEAR

All heroes start their adventuring career fully equipped with all the personal items and gear they consider best suited to a life on the road. For the sake of simplicity, the game presents such possessions as a character's travelling gear and war gear.

Fatigue Score

A player-hero's travelling equipment and each piece of war gear possesses an Encumbrance rating, representing the hindrance that the item causes to the carrier, both in terms of weight and discomfort (for example, a helm which significantly limits its wearer's vision has a higher Encumbrance rating than a suit of leather armour, regardless of weight).

All the Encumbrance ratings of the various items normally carried by a hero are added up to find his Fatigue score, to be recorded on a character sheet alongside his Endurance rating (see Chapter Three to learn about the effects of Fatigue on a hero).

Travelling Gear

A hero's travelling gear includes all the typical belongings that he carries when travelling, in addition to his weapons and armour. Players only take into consideration the Encumbrance rating of their travelling gear when they are using the rules for resolving a Journey (see Chapter Five).

The Encumbrance rating of travelling gear varies depending on the time of the year:

Winter and autumn gear (in the cold months of the year): thick warm clothes (jackets, fur-lined cloaks), blankets, water, food. Winter travelling gear for one character has an Encumbrance rating of 2.

Summer and spring gear (in the warm months of the year): light clothes and cloaks, blankets, water, food. Summer travelling gear has an Encumbrance rating of 1.

Both sets of travelling gear include food supplies for one week of travelling (if the journey is going to last more

than a week, the companions will generally have to rely on their skills as hunters).

Musical Instruments

Music and song is an important part of the culture of the Free Peoples. Skilled musicians will usually carry one or more musical instruments with them on their travels.

If a player-hero possesses a **Song** skill level of one or more, his travelling gear may include a musical instrument appropriate to his culture.

Gear of War

Any weapon, suit of armour, helm or shield carried by an adventurer must be individually recorded on the character sheet, along with its Encumbrance rating. Their total Encumbrance score is taken into account to find a hero's Fatigue threshold.

Small-sized Heroes

Due to their reduced size, Hobbits and Dwarves cannot use larger weapons effectively. Dwarves fare somewhat better than Hobbits, as they are usually taller and their work as miners and smiths endows them with powerful arms and shoulders. The weapons available to Hobbits and Dwarves are as follows:

Dwarves: short sword, axe, great axe, spear, mattock, dagger, bow.

Hobbits: short sword, axe, spear, dagger, bow.

Additionally, Dwarves and Hobbits cannot use a great shield.

Weapons

A starting player-hero is assumed to carry one weapon for each of the Weapon skills he has a rating for.

A Barding hero starts the game with Great Bow ♦♦ and Spear ♦. He is entitled to have a great bow and a spear among his possessions.

Heroes with Cultural weapon skills may choose one specific weapon among a wider selection as part of his hero's possessions.

A Wood-elf hero with (Spears) ♦♦ is entitled to choose between carrying a spear or a great spear.

The lists at page 110 include all weapons that are available to players. Players should record the statistics for their chosen weapons on their character sheets.

Armour and Shields

A newly-created player-hero starts with one suit of armour, and may choose one piece of headgear and one shield. Players should record their chosen armour, headgear and shields on their character sheets, paying attention to the following notes:

The protection score of a coat of armour is recorded separately from that of a piece of headgear (as sometimes,

during combat, a hero might resort to dropping it to avoid becoming Weary too soon).

Shields do not offer direct protection from wounds, but make a hero less likely to be hit, by adding to the Attribute used to parry incoming blows (usually Wits). A shield's rating is recorded separately from the main box devoted to parry, as a shield can be smashed by an opponent's blows.

Additional Gear

If a player would like to expand his character's equipment beyond the scope of a hero's travelling gear and war gear, the decision is up to the Loremaster. If the Loremaster agrees, they should take the character's Standard of Living into consideration, to determine the quantity and quality of any additional items (see Chapter Three). In general terms, the amount of extra equipment carried is as relevant as a Loremaster and his players want it to be: usually, Encumbrance is closely monitored only as far as war gear is concerned.

Weapons:

WEAPON	DAMAGE	EDGE	INJURY	ENCUMBRANCE	GROUP	NOTES
Dagger	3	♣	12	0	-	-
Short sword	5	10	14	1	Swords	-
Sword	5	10	16	2	Swords	-
Long sword	5 (1h) 7 (2h)	10	16 (1h) 18 (2h)	3	Swords	A Long sword can be used with one or two hands. The Damage and Injury entries list two separate ratings.
Spear	5	9	14	2	Spears	Can be thrown.
Great spear	9	9	16	4	Spears	Two-handed weapon. It cannot be thrown.
Axe	5	♣	18	2	Axes	-
Great axe	9	♣	20	4	Axes	Two-handed weapon.
Long-hafted axe	5 (1h) 7 (2h)	♣	18 (1h) 20 (2h)	3	Axes	A Long-hafted axe can be used with one or two hands. The Damage and Injury entries list two separate ratings.
Bow	5	10	14	1	Bows	Ranged weapon.
Great bow	7	10	16	3	Bows	Ranged weapon.
Mattock	8	10	18	3	-	Two-handed weapon.



Shields:

SHIELDS	ENCUMBRANCE	PARRY MODIFIER	NOTES
Buckler	1	+1	-
Shield	3	+2	-
Great shield	5	+3	-

Armour:

ARMOUR	ENCUMBRANCE	PROTECTION	TYPE	NOTES
Leather shirt	4	1d	Leather armour	-
Leather corslet	8	2d	Leather armour	-
Mail shirt	12	3d	Mail armour	-
Coat of mail	16	4d	Mail armour	-
Mail hauberk	20	5d	Mail armour	-
Cap of iron and leather	2	+1	Headgear	-
Helm	6	+4	Headgear	May be removed in combat to lower Fatigue by 3 points

These values are explained in more detail in the Combat chapter starting on page 156. In brief:

- **Damage** is the harm inflicted, in Endurance points, on a successful hit.
- **Edge** is the number the attacker needs to match or exceed on the Feat Die to force the defender to make a Protection test to resist taking a Wound.
- **Injury** is the TN for the defenders' Protection test. If they fail, they will take a Wound from the blow.
- **Parry Modifier** is the bonus a shield gives to a defender's Parry rating.

- **Protection** is the bonus used when a defender rolls for a Protection test; armour adds one or more additional dice, while headgear adds a numerical bonus.

COMBAT RATINGS

Sooner or later, every hero on the road to adventure faces a situation where his life will be threatened by hostile individuals or creatures. Indeed, many people in Middle-earth experience this without even leaving their home. An adventurer's basic combat abilities are reflected by his Parry rating and Damage bonus.

Damage

When a character hits his opponent in combat, he inflicts lost Endurance equal to his weapon's Damage rating.

If he achieves a great success, he adds his character's Damage rating as a bonus to his weapon's Damage rating. If he scores an extraordinary success, he adds double his Damage rating to that of his weapon.

Usually, a character's Damage rating is equal to his basic Body score, both for attacks made with a close combat weapon or a ranged weapon.

Players should record their heroes' Damage bonus scores on the character sheet. Should a character's ranged attack Damage rating differ from that of close combat attacks, the player should record it in the separate box (special abilities and items might benefit one type of attack or the other).

Parry

This is a defensive bonus, reflecting a character's ability to keep his head in a dangerous situation, to be aware of opponents' actions and to ward off an opponent's attacks.

Usually, the Parry rating of a character is equal to his basic Wits score, modified by a positive bonus if the hero is using a buckler, a shield or a great shield (see the equipment tables above).

Players should record their heroes' Parry score on the character sheet.

VALOUR AND WISDOM

Valour and Wisdom measure a hero's resistance to Fear and the Shadow, and track his stature in terms of power and renown. Both scores range from one to six, and rise over the course of the game.

Starting Scores

At this point in character generation, players are asked to simply prioritise one characteristic over the other:

A starting player gives a score of 2 to one characteristic, and 1 to the other. Both numbers are entered on the character sheet in the boxes labelled Wisdom and Valour.

Virtues and Rewards

Starting with rank 2, characters receive a special benefit with every new rank they reach in either Valour or Wisdom. Benefits obtained by raising a character's Valour score are called Rewards, while benefits granted by ranks in Wisdom are called Virtues.

Thus, when players choose between the characteristics during hero creation, they are also choosing if their characters will start the game with a Reward, or with a Virtue.

So, if a starting character has...

Valour 2 - Wisdom 1: the hero receives his first Reward. The player should refer to Chapter Four: Virtues and Rewards and note the details of the first Reward due to a hero of his character's culture.

Wisdom 2 - Valour 1: the hero has displayed his first Virtue. The player should go to Chapter Four: Virtues and Rewards and read about how to choose a Virtue among those available to a hero of his character's culture.



- company - creation

**“The Company of the Ring shall be Nine;
and the Nine Walkers shall be set against
the Nine Riders that are evil.”**

The group of characters created by players is a recently formed company of like-minded heroes. They may share a common short-term goal appointed by elders or a council of peoples, or they might all be young members of the same folk, ready to leave home for the first time to see the world.

After the players have finished creating their characters, they should discuss with the Loremaster the circumstances that brought the group together and forged them into a company of adventurers. The more detailed the description of the events that led to the characters setting off adventuring the better, as this will give the Loremaster valuable story hooks to turn into adventures that directly link to the characters' back-story.

HOW TO CREATE A COMPANY

The process of creating a company can be considered to be the first Fellowship phase played by the group (see page 168 for more on Fellowship phases). During company creation, the players are assisted by the Loremaster as they define the characteristics of their group of adventurers.

FIRST MEETING

The first thing to do is decide where the company was formed. To do so, the players choose a suitable place from those named on the Adventurers' Map. Locations that qualify as havens or sanctuaries are an ideal choice, as these are Free Peoples strongholds, cities or villages known to welcome or, at least, tolerate the presence of adventurers (Rivendell cannot be chosen as a starting haven: it is a hidden place, and the company must first find its way there during the game).

As soon as everybody agrees on a location, its name is recorded by every player on the back of their character sheet.



When this is settled, the players briefly introduce their heroes, making sure to mention how and why they arrived at the selected location in the first place; the heroes' cultures and callings can prove useful as starting points. The Loremaster could take this opportunity to provide information about the setting to less knowledgeable players. Some places are particularly suited as locations for the first meeting of a company:

Beorn's House

The renowned chieftain of the Beornings is known to welcome wayfarers who aren't too demanding of his hospitality. The house of Beorn is an ideal place for a company interested in going hunting in the Misty Mountains.

Esgaroth

Lake-town faces the unknown East and stands between three kingdoms: the Woodland Realm, the Lonely Mountain, and Dale. It is a free city, full of opportunities for adventure.

Rhosgobel

The abode of the Brown wizard, Rhosgobel stands facing the darkness of Dol Guldur, the hill of sorcery. Here, a community of Woodmen have gathered close to the home of the wise Radagast, and many travellers arrive every year to seek his counsel.

RELATIONSHIPS

All adventurers share a feeling of loyalty towards each other, but each of them can develop a particular level of companionship with another member of the group: it may be uncommon respect for someone wiser or nobler, a special friendship shared with an old acquaintance, the kinship felt for a fellow countryman, or deep affection for a dear family member.

Whatever the nature of the relationship, each player may elect another member of the company as his character's Fellowship focus, writing the name of this companion in the appropriate space on the character sheet.

Every player is free to indicate one companion of his choice as his focus. It can be any other player-hero, even one that has already been chosen by somebody else as his focus. The bond doesn't have to be mutual: a hero who has been chosen by another hero as his focus is free to choose any other character as his own. A Fellowship focus lets a character recover Hope without spending Fellowship (at the risk of gaining Shadow should the focus be harmed or killed); see page 105.

FELLOWSHIP RATING

The group of player-heroes is more than a band of roving mercenaries brought together by mere necessity. At its foundation are communal goals and mutual respect. This is recreated in the game by a shared pool of Fellowship points. During the game, players use these points to recover spent Hope.

The number of points available to a company of heroes at the beginning of the game is equal to the number of heroes in the group.

All players record the company's Fellowship total in the appropriate box on their character sheet. This score is updated every time that a companion uses a point to recover Hope, and it is fully replenished at the beginning of every game session; (see the rules concerning Fellowship on page 105).







- Part 3: fundamental Characteristics -



- ATTRIBUTES -

“...you have been chosen, and you must therefore use such strength and heart and wits as you have.”

Adventurers are a diverse group of people, each with a unique combination of skills, abilities and traits. When faced with threats and difficulties, some favour strength and prowess to overcome them, some rely on fortitude and integrity to endure, and others opt for reasoning and astuteness to find a solution.

In *The One Ring*, numerical values are used to gauge each hero's capabilities in different fields. *Attributes* are characteristics that describe the character's fundamental physical, emotional and mental capabilities: **Body**, **Heart** and **Wits**.

Body (physical aptitude)

A character with a high Body score can be tough and fit, or tall and agile, or even attractive or imposing. Every aspect of a character that relies on vigour or physical well-being is represented in the game by Body.

Heart (force of spirit)

Measures a character's capacity for emotion, energy and enthusiasm. A hero with a high Heart score can be fiery, intense, and hard to demoralise. Activities that benefit from a passionate or energetic temper may be influenced by a character's Heart score.

Wits (mental aptitude)

A hero with a high Wits rating can be clever, attentive and strong-willed. A sharp-witted person is a quick thinker, and probably alert and vigilant, so any action that calls upon these qualities benefits from a hero's Wits score.

HOW ATTRIBUTES WORK

Attribute scores help players visualise their heroes, as the comparison between the three ratings provides a rough outline of a character that is recognisable at a glance: is a hero physically stronger than he is spiritually robust? Or are his wits his distinctive quality? Attributes describe a hero in broad strokes. During the game, Attributes come into play in a number of situations, most often as a bonus to die roll results.

Attribute Bonus

Whenever dice are rolled, players may choose to spend a point of Hope to gain a bonus to the result equal to the rating of the most appropriate Attribute. This is called an *Attribute bonus*.

A physical task or test may be modified by Body, a challenge affecting the morale of the character or their relationship with another person would use the Heart score, while a contest of cunning may be affected by their Wits.

Summary of the Uses of a Character's Attribute Scores

Body is used to determine a character's starting Damage bonus. As an Attribute bonus, a hero's Body score can be added to all attack and Protection tests in combat.

Heart may be called upon as an Attribute bonus to a player-hero's Fear and Corruption tests, and when recovering or **healing** from wounds. A hero's Endurance and Hope score are based upon his Heart rating.

Wits is used to determine the difficulty to hit a player-hero, as its rating determines a hero's base Parry score. In addition, Wits may be used to determine who acts first when two or more characters are fighting in the same stance (see Chapter Five: Combat).

ATTRIBUTE RATINGS

Attributes range in value from 1 to 12; a score of 1 is extremely weak, while 12 represents the highest level of excellence.

Attribute ratings:

RATING	DESCRIPTION
1-2	poor
3-4	average
5-6	good
7-8	superior
9-10	outstanding
11-12	prodigious

Heroes generally start the game with ratings ranging from 2 (*poor*) to 7 (*superior*), before calculating favoured Attributes.

Basic and Favoured Attributes

As can be seen on the character sheet, there are two boxes to be filled in for each Attribute, one larger and one smaller. The larger square boxes are used to record an Attribute's *basic score*, while the smaller round ones are used to write an Attribute's *favoured score*.

The basic score of an Attribute is the one a player has copied from the chosen (or randomly selected) background entry, found listed in the culture template selected for the hero. An Attribute's basic rating is used as an Attribute bonus in most tests (those not involving favoured skills) and to generate a hero's characteristics (like his Endurance and Hope scores, Parry rating and Damage bonuses). An Attribute's favoured score is determined during the 'customisation' stage of character creation (page 72), and is used as an Attribute bonus when the hero is using a favoured skill.

A hero's favoured Attributes reflect his greater affinity with those skills he finds more familiar.

Improving Attribute Scores

A character's Attribute ratings can be altered only by choosing the Gifted Mastery (see *Virtues*, page 123), either by starting the game with a score of Wisdom 2, or by raising it during play:

By selecting the Gifted Mastery one or more times, a player can raise his character's favoured Attribute scores.

- skills -

"There is food in the wild," said Strider; "berry, root, and herb; and I have some skill as a hunter at need."

Heroes reveal themselves through their actions, as their strengths and weaknesses emerge when they are put to the test. The result of their families' teachings, their culture's traditions and their own training and study, skills are the foundations of what a character can achieve, and how he develops during play.

Skills represent abilities that a character has gained during his life. They show what he is able to do and how good he is at doing it. Almost everything that can be done by a character is represented in gaming terms as a level of proficiency in a skill; whether the heroes are traversing the land trying to get back home (**Travel**), running away from a threat (**Athletics**) or listening intently to an orator's speech to weigh his words (**Insight**), players will resort to skills to attempt any action.



HOW SKILLS WORK

The skill ratings possessed by a hero at the start of the game represent the result of years of instruction and education, received according to his culture, background and early personal experiences. As soon as the character enters play, his abilities are going to be shaped by his own feats and actions.

SKILL RATING

A hero's proficiency in a skill is represented by his skill ranks, ranging from 0 (lowest) to 6 (highest). Players record their heroes' ratings in each skill separately, by filling the diamond-shaped boxes to the right of the skill's name. Heroes generally start the game with scores between 0 (*unskilled*) and 3 (*good*).

RATING	DESCRIPTION
-	unskilled
◆	poor
◆◆	average
◆◆◆	good
◆◆◆◆	superior
◆◆◆◆◆	outstanding
◆◆◆◆◆◆	prodigious

When using a skill, the player rolls a number of Success dice equal to his character's skill ranks, in addition to the Feat die.

If a hero is unskilled (rank 0) he is usually entitled to try normally, by rolling only the Feat die.

Favoured Skills

Every individual tends to excel in some areas, either due to natural talent, or from long experience, or because his family and community have handed down secrets through the generations. In the game, abilities that come more easily to a hero are called *favoured* skills, and are represented on the character sheet by underlining the skill's name.

A player chooses some favoured skills during character creation, and can develop additional ones in the course of his career by selecting the Expertise Mastery (see Virtues, page 123).

When invoking an Attribute bonus on a favoured skill, a hero adds the (higher) favoured Attribute rating to the die roll results.

COMMON SKILLS

The 18 Common skills cover wide areas of knowledge or ability possessed by the majority of individuals living in Middle-earth, enabling the players and Loremaster to resolve most situations encountered during play.

A character's Common skills may improve rapidly during the game, if he puts his abilities to good use and earns Advancement points (see page 120).

COMMON SKILL CATEGORIES

Common skills are divided into three categories, depending on which Attribute most influences the skill. For ease of reference, the skills on the character sheet are organised into three columns, under the three Attributes, Body, Heart and Wits, from left to right.

Body Skills

All skills in this category rely largely on the hero's physical aptitude. A character with a high Body is more likely to be imposing (**Awe**), to have a clear singing voice (**Song**), to be fit and agile (**Athletics**), to have good sight and hearing (**Awareness**, **Explore**) and to possess skillful hands (**Craft**).

Heart Skills

The skills under this category depend on the hero's force of spirit more than anything else. A character with a high Heart score may be a charismatic leader (**Inspire**, **Battle**), an energetic guide (**Travel**), a gracious gentleman (**Courtesy**), be able to read the hearts of others (**Insight**) or to understand their hurts and how to heal them (**Healing**).

Wits Skills

A hero's mental aptitude affects those skills that rely on quick thinking and creativity. A hero with a high Wits value will quickly learn clever oratory (**Persuade**), the arts of a burglar (**Stealth**), or attentiveness (**Search**, **Hunting**), and will be intelligent and studious (**Riddle**, **Lore**).

COMMON SKILL GROUPS

Aside from being classed by governing attribute, the 18 Common skills are also collected into six *skill groups*, each of which is associated with a different type of activity.

The names of the six groups, are printed on the rightmost side of the character sheet:

Personality Skills (**Awe**, **Inspire**, **Persuade**)

A hero's personality comes through in his capacity to impress, encourage and influence others. A good level of proficiency in all three skills in this group is the mark of a leader.

Movement Skills (**Athletics**, **Travel**, **Stealth**)

Overcoming obstacles, enduring long journeys and moving secretly are the stuff adventurers are made of.

Perception Skills (**Awareness**, **Insight**, **Search**)

The ability to catch hidden details often pays off, be it noticing an odd noise that gives away an ambusher, catching the gleam in the eyes of a liar or spotting the crack in the wall that reveals a secret door.

Survival Skills (**Explore**, **Healing**, **Hunting**)

The three skills of this group, essential for a roving adventurer, make a hero an invaluable member of a company.

Custom Skills (**Courtesy**, **Song**, **Riddle**)

While heroes are often held to be uncivilised brutes by the common folk, their lives can sometimes depend on knowing the proper words, wisest song or cleverest answer. Excelling in these skills is considered a noble achievement.

Vocation Skills (**Craft**, **Battle**, **Lore**)

Before his resolve hardened and pushed a hero on his road to adventure, he probably led a life much like an ordinary individual of his folk; learning a trade, defending his people and absorbing their accumulated wisdom.



COMMON SKILLS DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes what each skill means in the game. Each Common skill's category and group is indicated after the skill's name, while the Weapon skills are listed below, with the names of Cultural weapon skills given in brackets.

Awe (Body, Personality)

For a moment it seemed to the eyes of Legolas that a white flame flickered on the brows of Aragorn like a shining crown.

This skill measures a hero's capacity to provoke respect in onlookers, and determines the impression a hero makes on someone he meets for the first time. Depending on the circumstances and the hero's intentions or disposition, it can be used to instil wonderment, admiration, or even fear. **Awe** arises from a character's native charisma, but can also be engineered with a dramatic entrance or impressive attire.

A successful use of the skill provokes the chosen effect. A failure fails to have any impact, or can even lead to the opposite result! Achieving a great success means that the hero has won the hearts of the onlookers, or cowed them into silent submission. An extraordinary success may produce open reverence, or panic.

Inspire (Heart, Personality)

...the grim-voiced man... ran to and fro, cheering on the archers and urging the Master to order them to fight to the last arrow.

A hero able to **Inspire** others can instil positive feelings in others, urging them to act on the matter at hand. This is a feat achieved mainly through example, charisma and personal conviction, rather than through the effective use of words (which falls under **Persuade**, below). It can be used on individuals, but is especially effective in influencing crowds. Heroes with high **Inspire** ratings can be forceful orators, passionate agitators, and well-loved leaders of men.

A successful **Inspire** roll awakens a chosen feeling in the subject, so long as it is not in opposition to their current mood. A great success is enough to influence wholly disinterested individuals, and an extraordinary success may turn rivals into supporters.

Persuade (Wits, Personality)

Aragorn laughed. "Every man has something too dear to trust to another. But would you part an old man from his support? Come, will you not let us enter?"

This skill allows a hero to apply his or her reasoning to convince another individual of an idea or course of action. It can be used to influence small groups of listeners, but only if used in an appropriate context, such as a common hall. An attempt at persuasion requires more time than other *Personality* skills, but can have a more lasting impact on other characters' actions. A high **Persuade** score denotes an uncommon eloquence, a love of speech and knowledge of its proper use and its effect on listeners. Wise men, advisors to chieftains and kings and their messengers all share this passion for the spoken word.

The successful use of the skill lets the hero convince his audience of the flaws in their current position. A great success convinces the subject of the quality of the hero's stance, while an extraordinary success may turn the subject into an ardent believer.

Athletics (Body, Movement)

Poor Mr. Baggins had never had much practice in climbing trees, but they hoisted him up into the lowest branches of an enormous oak that grew right out into the path, and up he had to go as best he could.

Athletics is a broad skill, covering most of the physical activities that a hero might undertake while adventuring, including running, leaping, climbing, swimming and throwing stones or other small objects. Heroes with high **Athletics** skill scores exhibit a winning combination of physical prowess, grace and control, generally gained through continuous exercise and daily exertion.

A successful **Athletics** roll produces a satisfactory outcome in the physical activity, while a failed roll might even lead to serious harm, depending on the circumstances. A great or extraordinary result suggests a spectacular achievement.

Travel (Heart, Movement)

The country was much rougher and more barren than in the green vale of the Great River in Wilderland on the other side of the range, and their going would be slow...

In the Third Age, the cities, villages and towns of Middle-earth are often separated by many leagues of wild or deserted areas. Roads that used to lead safely to distant realms now end in broken trails that go nowhere. When the company needs to cover a distance across uncertain territory, including by boat, every companion is required to perform one or more tests using the **Travel** skill to avoid becoming weary too soon. While certainly the product of experience, the use of Travel benefits mostly from a hero's strength of spirit.



Stealth (Wits, Movement)

So silent was his going that smoke on a gentle wind could hardly have surpassed it, and he was inclined to feel a bit proud of himself as he drew near the lower door.

A hero resorts to **Stealth** whenever he needs, or is forced, to act in a furtive or secret way. The skill includes hiding,

moving quietly and shadowing others. These activities often rely on quickness and precision, so a stealthy hero combines practiced caution with the ability to judge the right moment to take a chance. Hunters, burglars, and solitary fighters use **Stealth** to prosper in their trade.

A successful **Stealth** roll indicates that the character has gone unnoticed, while a failure has almost certainly attracts unwanted attention.

A great or extraordinary success produces an outcome so flawless that it even be impossible to trace the hero's actions after the fact.

Awareness (Body, Perception)

"Well, it is the first time that even a mouse has crept along carefully and quietly under my very nose and not been spotted," said Balin, "and I take off my hood to you."

The **Awareness** skill represents a hero's readiness to react and his ability to notice something unexpected, out of the ordinary, or difficult to detect. High skill reflects both keen senses and the experience to understand what you see and hear.

A high **Awareness** rating expresses an extraordinary watchfulness, and is extremely useful to a companion who serves as a look-out for the company.





Insight (Heart, Perception)

“There are locked doors and closed windows in your mind, and dark rooms behind them,” said Faramir. “But in this I judge that you speak the truth. It is well for you.”

Insight is the ability of a hero to see beyond appearances, recognising people’s hidden thoughts and beliefs. Heroes with **Insight** can recognise when someone is lying, and can draw useful conclusions about people’s motives. A hero with a high **Insight** score is often recognised as being a sensible and discerning individual, and many might seek his counsel.

A successful **Insight** roll provides the hero with a faithful, if partial, portrait of the character observed. A great or extraordinary success reveals truths about an individual of which he himself is ignorant. **Insight** tests may be rolled in opposition to an adversary using **Persuade** or another *Personality* skill.

Search (Wits, Perception)

“Less welcome did the Lord Denethor show me than than of old, and grudgingly he permitted me to search among his hoarded scrolls and books.”

Search is used when trying to find something by close examination. This skill may let a hero search a library to locate a piece of relevant information, look for concealed doors or hidden inscriptions, recognise a familiar face in a crowd or even search a suspected thief’s clothing. One roll is required for each inspection of a small area, such as a room. **Search** rolls are generally initiated by the player rather than the Loremaster; **Awareness** is used to see if the characters passively notice something.

A successful **Search** roll generally lets the characters find what they are looking for if it is to be found. A great or extraordinary success usually means the object is found more quickly. If an item is particularly well hidden, the Loremaster could decide that a higher level of success is required to uncover it.

Explore (Body, Survival)

“We have found a dry cave,” they said, “not far round the next corner; and ponies and all could get inside.”

Adventurers rely on their **Explore** skill when they move through an unfamiliar area of the Wild. An **Explore** test may be required during a journey to find the company’s heading, or to get back on track after a detour; to cope with adverse weather conditions or other natural hazards; to create paths through the wilderness suitable for others to follow; or to choose a suitable place to set up camp. A high **Explore** rating is an invaluable resource for a companion acting as a scout for his group of adventurers.

Healing (Heart, Survival)

As a matter of fact, Gandalf, who had often been in the mountains, had once rendered a service to the eagles and healed their lord from an arrow-wound.

The knowledge of how to relieve pain and apply remedies to restore health to the suffering is an ancient one, and treatments differ from culture to culture. Almost all traditions, however, agree on the treatment of serious injuries, which must be immediately tended to keep from worsening.

The **Healing** skill includes bone setting and the use of herbs or salves, but the outcome relies on the ability of the healer to understand what ails the sufferer and determine what should be done.



Hunting (Wits, Survival)

They dwelt most often by the edges of the woods, from which they could escape at times to hunt, or to ride and run over the open lands by moonlight or starlight...

Knowing how to hunt is a fundamental skill common in much of Middle-earth. A **Hunting** roll may be required when pursuing a creature through wild areas, or to locate tracks and follow them, or to identify a quarry by its spoor.

The skill also covers preparing traps and the training and use of hunting dogs or birds. In wilder areas, hunters learn to apply their trade to more dangerous quarry, such as Orcs, Spiders or Wargs, or else risk becoming the prey.

Song (Body, Custom)

As they sang, the Hobbit felt the love of beautiful things made by hands and by cunning and by magic moving through him, a fierce and jealous love, the desire of the hearts of Dwarves.

Hobbits and Men, Elves and Dwarves, even Goblins and maybe Orcs: all the creatures of Middle-earth celebrate by playing music and singing songs. Great deeds and grim misfortunes are remembered in verse, and pleasant or even comic stories are told to ease spirits and find comfort.

Song is used to recite poems, sing songs or play instruments suitable to the character's culture. It can also be used to learn new works or create original compositions.

Courtesy (Heart, Custom)

"You have nice manners for a thief and a liar," said the Dragon.

The Free Peoples recognise common norms of decency and ancient conventions of behaviour. Observing these traditions demonstrates respect and is a way of quickly establishing a friendly footing even with complete strangers.

A hero succeeding in a **Courtesy** roll knows what to say at the right moment to make a good impression with their host, or is mindful of his manners when receiving guests.

Riddle (Wits, Custom)

*"A Hobbit waded out into the water and back; but I cannot say how long ago."
"How then do you read this riddle?" asked Gimli.*

Owing its name to the ancient Game, the **Riddle** skill represents a hero's ability to draw conclusions from seemingly unconnected scraps of information, by deduction, reasoning and intuition.

An adventurer also relies on **Riddle** whenever he is forced to talk about a subject but wants to conceal part of what he knows, for example to explain something about himself without revealing his true identity.

An accepted custom among many creatures, speaking in riddles is usually allowed among strangers meeting for the first time who want to speak guardedly. This skill is also used to gain helpful insight from a spoken or written riddle.



Craft (Body, Vocation)

...the only craft little practised among them was shoe-making; but they had long and skilful fingers and could make many other useful and comely things.

The **Craft** skill doesn't really cover the whole range of abilities of smiths, wrights and other artisans, but reflects the talent of a character for making or mending things by hand, although Traits like *Smithcraft* or *Woodwright* can be used to reflect proficiency in a specific craft. **Craft** could be used to attempt to repair the wheel of a cart, or construct an improvised raft with wood found on a river shore, or even when trying to start a fire on a windy hill.

A high **Craft** score may indicate that the hero was a craftsman before starting his life of adventure. Some races, such as the Dwarves and Noldor Elves, revere crafts as the highest expression of creativity.



Battle (Heart, Vocation)

"Fools!" laughed Bard, "to come thus beneath the Mountain's arm! They do not understand war above ground, whatever they may know of battle in the mines."

A hero's proficiency in this skill shows his grasp of the rules of battle, and his ability to keep his head when involved in a violent confrontation. The **Battle** skill can be used to gain an advantage when involved in a fight with a group of foes, or to lead a company of men in

open battle and maintain order in the midst of chaos (combat itself is covered by Weapon skills).

Lore (Wits, Vocation)

He knew many histories and legends of long ago, of Elves and Men and the good and evil deeds of the Elder Days.

Lore expresses a hero's love for learning, be it a fascination with descriptions of distant lands, or an interest in family genealogy. Whenever an action involves knowledge of some kind, a **Lore** roll is required.

Heroes are considered to be knowledgeable in the traditions of their own people, and so the Loremaster should rarely require a player to make a **Lore** test for information regarding their character's culture, background or the area they originally come from.

WEAPON SKILLS

Adventurers roam a world where all too often the difference between life and death depends on an individual's ability with a weapon. A character's expertise in this field is represented by his *Weapon skills* and *Cultural weapon skills*.

WEAPON SKILLS

An ordinary Weapon skill represents a hero's proficiency in the use of a specific weapon.

In the game, a Weapon skill is always indicated with a specific weapon's name, in its singular form, such as Long sword.

A Weapon skill can only be used with the named weapon. A hero cannot use the skill to fight with a different weapon, no matter how similar it might be.

CULTURAL WEAPON SKILLS

Most members of a cultural group receive basic martial instruction so that they can defend their homes in times of need, and many instruments of war are often adapted from tools otherwise used in daily life, such as bows and spears for hunting, large knives for skinning, and axes for woodcutting.

If a character's cultural background exposes him to a broad class of weapons, he is given the choice to add a Cultural weapon skill to his set of abilities.

A Cultural weapon skill is a collective skill, representing a level of ability in the use of a category of similar weapons, like all swords, all spears, all axes or all bows. Cultural weapon skills are always indicated with a weapon's name, in its plural form, in brackets – for example, (Bows).

Proficiency in a Cultural weapon skill is applied when the character is using any weapon belonging to that category. So, a character with (Axes) ♦♦ possesses two skill ranks while using any axe, be it a simple axe or a long-hafted axe.

Player-heroes can acquire Cultural weapon skills only during character creation, and *never again during play*. Most culture descriptions offer the choice between selecting a Cultural weapon skill or a favoured individual Weapon skill. It is up to the player to choose whether he wants to start with greater competence, or greater flexibility.

A Cultural weapon skill cannot ever be selected as a favoured skill.

WEAPON SKILLS CATEGORY (BODY)

All Weapon skills and Cultural weapon skills belong to the Body category, as using swords, spears, axes and even bows benefits the most from physical aptitude (and as such profit from a character's Body score when invoking an Attribute bonus).



IMPROVING WEAPON AND CULTURAL WEAPON SKILLS

A hero's weapon skills may be improved by spending Experience points. Rules and costs for raising a Weapon or Cultural Weapon skill can be found at page 171, in Chapter Six.

WEAPON SKILLS DESCRIPTIONS

The following list includes all the Weapons skills available to player-heroes. Under each Cultural Weapon skill group is listed the weapons that it allows a character to use. Each weapon listed in a group is also available as an individual Weapon skill. Descriptions and characteristics of the various weapon types can be found at page 110, in the Gear chapter.

**(Axes)**

He was clothed in a tunic of wool down to his knees, and was leaning on a large axe.

- Axe
- Great axe
- Long-hafted axe

(Bows)

Now he shot with a great yew bow, 'til all his arrows but one were spent.

- Bow
- Great bow

Dagger

...a burglar with less professional pride would perhaps have stuck a dagger into each of them before they observed it.

Every player-hero starts the game with a rating of 1 in the Dagger skill. As detailed in the rules for combat (page 156), the Dagger skill is used also to handle unarmed brawls.

Mattock

In battle they wielded heavy two-handed mattocks ...

Only Dwarven characters may start the game with proficiency in this unusual weapon.

(Spears)

Behind the arrows, a thousand of their spearmen leapt down and charged.

- Spear
- Great spear

(Swords)

...among them were several swords of various makes, shapes, and sizes.

- Sword
- Short sword
- Long sword

- traits -

“(Elrond) ... was as noble and as fair in face as an Elf-lord, as strong as a warrior, as wise as a wizard, as venerable as a king of Dwarves, and as kind as summer.”

The three Attributes – **Body**, **Heart** and **Wits** – give a good impression of the general make-up of a character, but they fall short in defining what exactly sets one individual apart from another. *Traits* are characteristics that add detail and nuance to a character, reflecting their preferences, interests and personality.

At various points during character creation (page 30), players are asked to select Descriptive Features and Traits to add to their character sheets. These features help players to picture their characters, and encourage good roleplaying by offering useful hooks to help players ‘get in character.’



HOW TRAITS WORK

Traits describe aspects of an adventurer's build, temper and capabilities that under certain circumstances can give them an advantage. There are different uses for Traits, but all are governed by the same principle:

The *description* of the Trait is essential. In other words, it must be reasonably plausible for someone with the features or qualities described by the Trait to fare better under the circumstances than an individual without them.

Traits are unranked, and cannot be improved.

Trait Etiquette

Players can invoke a Trait when they think it applies to the situation at hand (sometimes, the Loremaster himself may invoke one of a hero's Traits). To do so, they briefly explain why they think the Trait should give their character an advantage. If nobody at the table objects, then the player resolves his chosen course of action. If anyone finds the argument for invoking the Trait questionable, the Loremaster adjudicates.

The advantages conferred by Traits aren't powerful enough to unbalance the game, so players and Loremasters are advised to avoid discussing the validity of a Trait at length. A well-detailed or entertaining explanation adds to the enjoyment of the game, and should earn the player the benefit of the doubt. In all cases, the Loremaster's word is final.

USES OF TRAITS

There are three main reasons to invoke the use of a Trait: to trigger an *Automatic action*, to propose an *Unforeseen action*, or to gain an *Advancement point*.

Automatic Action

When a player is using one of his Common skills to make a roll, he may invoke a Trait possessed by his hero to ensure a successful performance.

If the Trait considered for the action is agreed to be relevant, the Loremaster may allow the acting player to score an automatic success without even rolling the dice. When a player invokes a Trait to get an Automatic success he is considered to have unspectacularly achieved his goal: an ordinary success.

A group of adventurers has just overwhelmed a goblin tower near Mount Gram. The dreary place now seems deserted, but the players want to use their Search skill to find any hidden ambushers. Janet points out that Rose, her Hobbit heroine, is 'keen-eyed.' The Loremaster agrees, and lets Rose automatically spot grimy tracks leading to a dark corner of an underground chamber.

The Loremaster may agree with a Trait invocation to speed up play, especially if failing at the roll would not lead to dramatically relevant consequences, or if the action wasn't difficult. In some occasions, the Loremaster may ask his players whether they possess a pertinent Trait, in order to move the story on.

*The company has gained possession of a wooden casket found in a barrow, and the heroes are looking for a way to open it. The Loremaster announces that a simple **Craft** roll will do, and to speed up play asks whether any hero possesses an applicable Trait. Fili the Dwarf is a woodwright: the Loremaster is content, and lets Fili open the casket without further ado.*



Unforseen Action

Sometimes the Loremaster may decide that a situation doesn't allow a skill roll at all, due to events or factors out of the players' control. A player may invoke one of his Traits if he believes it should allow him a chance to intervene.

If the invocation is judged favourably, the Loremaster interrupts the narration to allow a standard action attempt.

After a short but fierce battle outside the gates of Mount Gram, Katherine, the Loremaster, is telling her players how a sneaky Goblin is escaping the battlefield after being left for dead and ignored. She rules that the Goblin is too far away for the players to intervene. Hugo, whose Dwarf is 'cautious,' says that Fili was certainly keeping an eye on the wounded, exactly to avoid this problem. The group agrees, and the Loremaster lets Hugo test Fili's Awareness skill to see if he observed the Goblin in time.

Advancement Point

During the game, players earn Advancement points that will later be used to improve their characters' Common skill ratings (see page 120 for details); invoking a pertinent Trait improves the chances of a hero earning an Advancement point. When a hero succeeds in an action that strongly reflects one of his Traits, he may invoke the Trait to ask for an Advancement point.

If the Trait is agreed to be relevant, the player earns an Advancement point and checks the appropriate box.

*In the dead of night, Beran, a Beorning Warden, is dozing by the fire when he spies a Wild Wolf about to pounce on one of his sleeping companions. Not even pausing to grab his sword from beside him, he throws himself in harm's way with an **Athletics** roll and then successfully*

defends against the wolf's attack unarmed, giving his companions time to wake and dispatch the beast. The player, David, invokes Beran's 'Bold' Trait, and Loremaster agrees and awards Beran an Advancement point.

TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes in brief all Traits offered in the game.

Traits are organised in two categories. *Specialities* are chosen along with a hero's culture, while *Distinctive Features* are selected as part of a hero's background (see Chapter 2: Hero Creation, page 30).

SPECIALITIES

Specialities represent the knacks, insights and 'craft secrets' handed down by different cultures over the years, giving heroes raised in those cultures an edge in given trades or activities. Specialities marked with an asterisk (*) are particularly useful to a specific calling.

Beast-lore

The forests, plains, marshes and mountain ranges of Wilderland teem with life. Your knowledge of beasts can provide information regarding an animal you are hunting, or tell you whether a cave you chose as refuge is likely to be the den of a dangerous creature.

Boating

You know how to handle a boat in the running waters of a river, or in the tricky currents of a lake.



Burglary*

This venerable talent includes pickpocketing, lock picking and, in general, any shadowy way to get hold of the possessions of others or access protected areas. *Treasure-Hunters* are generally skilled burglars.

Cooking

You know how to prepare food, from simple bread to your folk's special dishes.



Elven-lore

The memory of three ages of the world, Elven-lore preserves recollections of deeds and places lost to the Old lore of other races. You are also versed in the Ancient Tongue of the Elves beyond the Sea.

Enemy-lore*

Enemy-lore is not a single Speciality; you must select the race of enemies this Speciality applies to. This Trait gives you knowledge of the characteristics, habits, strengths and weaknesses of your chosen enemy; warriors and hunters often owe their survival to such knowledge. *Slayers* invariably dedicate themselves to the destruction of an enemy.

Fire-making

You know how to make a fire almost anywhere out of almost anything, if needs be.





Fishing

You are able to catch fish with net, spear, bow or line, or even with your hands, if you are given time to exercise your patient craft.

Folk-lore*

You possess some knowledge of the many traditional customs, beliefs and stories of the various communities that compose the Free Peoples. Likely the result of your wanderings, this information may help you when dealing with strangers, letting you come up with some useful fact regarding their folk or a smattering of the appropriate language. *Wanderers* generally pick up this Trait during their time on the road.

Gardener

The tending of gardens has awoken in you a love for all growing things, and lets you recognise easily those plants and fruits that are wholesome and most nourishing.

Herb-lore

Whether used to identify a spice, a plant with curative properties or a blend of pipe-weed, herb-lore is a knowledge favoured by many races of Middle-earth. Among other uses, this Trait may prove helpful when cooking, or when preparing a healing salve.

Leechcraft

You are skilled, according to the tradition of your people, in the healing of wounds and sickness.



Mountaineer

You are familiar with the difficulties often encountered when crossing mountain passes, and with the ways of overcoming them.

Old lore

You are learned in the traditions and the rumour of bygone days. Your knowledge may derive from different sources, from stories heard around the fire to the dusty records of a chronicler.

Rhymes of Lore*

Rhymes of Lore are brief compositions in verse created by many cultures to remember significant facts from ancient history. Your knowledge of them can supplement a test of **Lore**, but is used especially in conjunction with any Custom skill (**Courtesy**, **Song** or **Riddle**). *Scholars* may credit much of their knowledge to rhymes.

Region-lore (Anduin-lore, Mirkwood-lore)

You may call upon your knowledge of an area when planning to traverse it as part of your journey.



Smoking

You have mastered the art of smoking the herb called *pipe-weed* or *leaf*, using a pipe of clay or wood. Practitioners of the art say it gives patience and clarity of mind, and helps them greatly to relax, concentrate or to converse peacefully with others.

Smith-craft

You love making things with hammer and anvil, and have spent many hours in front of the searing fire of the forge. You can judge the quality of most products of metalwork.

Stone-craft

Cutting rock to build works of stone such as walls, halls and towers is a precious skill, revered among the highest forms of craftsmanship. You are able to discern the diverse qualities of the many building materials employed in Middle-earth, and to evaluate the use they are put to.

Story-telling

You are a masterful narrator of deeds and stories, able to weave plots and facts with passion and vividness.

Shadow-lore*

You have recognised that there is a shadowy thread unifying most of what is malicious, dark and terrible in Middle-earth, and that the thread is thickening year after year. A quality shared by the wise of the land, the truth behind this knowledge is getting plainer as the time passes. *Wardens*, committed to opposing the Shadow at every turn, collect this knowledge wherever they can.

Swimming

You are an accomplished swimmer, able to cross a swift stream, or to swim for an extended period.

Trading

You find yourself at ease when negotiating the buying and selling of items, or even information.

Tunnelling

You are accustomed to the difficulties of moving in passages dug under the earth; for example, you do not easily lose your sense of direction while underground.



Woodwright

The art of cutting and carving wood deftly to create useful tools or beautiful things has long been your trade. You can easily mend broken instruments and even weapons with wooden parts.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Distinctive Features define a character's personality traits and physical peculiarities, whether inborn or developed during their upbringing.

Adventurous

Your spirit is attracted by new experiences and challenges, especially when they seem perilous enough to put your mettle to the test.

Bold

You trust your capabilities to the point that you are not easily daunted, readily placing yourself in danger.



Cautious

You prefer a careful approach to all your endeavours, as you know that things can always go wrong.

Clever

You are ingenious and smart, quick to learn and able to make intuitive leaps.

Cunning

Your wit is sharp, and you are ready to use it to your advantage.

Curious

Your inquisitive nature is easily aroused by what is often not your concern.



Determined

When you set yourself a goal, you pursue it relentlessly.

Eager

When an endeavour appeals to your interest, you are filled with excitement and impatience.

Elusive

When you choose not to be seen, you can be as evasive as a fish in muddy waters.

Energetic

You are forceful, vital and enthusiastic, which often proves contagious.

Fair

You are considered beautiful by most people, even by those not belonging to your folk.

Fair-spoken

Your speech and manners are naturally pleasant and respectful.

Fierce

When provoked by deed or word, or when you deem it necessary, you let loose your savage side, demonstrating your aggressiveness.

Forthright

Your speech is plain and direct, as your words relate your thoughts without evasiveness.

Generous

You give with an open hand, always mindful of the need of others.

Grim

Your countenance is threatening, and betrays the harshness of your spirit.

Gruff

You often appear taciturn and surly; the truth is that you have little patience in dealing with others, and prefer to keep to yourself rather than indulge in conversations of little consequence. To some, your abruptness is a sign of your reliability.

Hardened

You show the mettle of a seasoned adventurer. Misfortune has taken its toll on you, or your eyes have already witnessed too many hard deeds.

**Hardy**

You can withstand long hours of toil and travel far without rest, or under extreme conditions.

Honourable

You abide by a set of high principles that, among other things, require you to treat others (even you enemy) with respect, to keep your word when given, to bear yourself with dignity in any circumstance, and to seek to be fair in judgment.

Just

You are not easily deceived by appearances, and can usually tell right from wrong.



Keen-eyed

The keenness of your eyesight surpasses that of most folk.



Lordly

Your dignified bearing arouses feelings of reverence and respect in onlookers.

Merciful

You show forgiveness to enemies and are quick to pity, as the hurts or sadness of others deeply move you.

Merry

Your spirit is not easily discouraged, and you can find light in the darkest of shadows.

Nimble

Your movements are sure and agile.

Patient

You are slow to lose your temper, and can suffer fools, delays or even hardship without complaint.

Proud

You hold in high esteem all your feats and achievements, or those of your people.

Quick of Hearing

No sound escapes your attention.

Reckless

You often do not think about the consequences of your actions, daring to do things that others are afraid to even contemplate doing.

Robust

You are blessed with vigorous health, and seldom suffer from ailments or diseases.



Secretive

You do not easily share your thoughts, and prefer to conceal your intentions from the eyes of others, especially outsiders to your folk.

Steadfast

You are firm in temperament and belief, and usually base your actions solely on your own judgement.

Stern

You possess a severe nature, and express it in your behaviour, body language and speech.

Suspicious

You strongly believe in the old proverb that says that 'he who trusts not, is not deceived' and live by its words.

Swift

You move swiftly, and are quick to take action.

**Tall**

You tower above most of your folk.

True-hearted

You are sincere, and your words and actions show your honest intentions.

Trusty

You are reliable and faithful, and your word is a valid pledge.

Vengeful

You do not forget slights and insults, not to mention betrayals. You are prone to holding grudges or actively seeking satisfaction.

**Wary**

You are always mindful of your surroundings, and observant of the speech and behaviour of strangers.

Wilful

Your confidence in your own judgement makes you deaf to all counsel but your own.

Wrathful

You are easily angered, and when seriously provoked you cannot contain your fury.



- ENDURANCE - and hope

“Their clothes were mended, as well as their bruises, their tempers and their hopes.”

While Attributes and Skills are the basis for all actions a character attempts, and Traits provide qualities that set heroes outside the norm, Endurance and Hope are what keep an adventurer on the road or provide him with reserves of energy – often the only chance for a hero to succeed against overwhelming odds.

Endurance and Hope are internal resources that are tapped in a moment of need, or that are consumed when some form of threat takes its toll on the character.

HOW ENDURANCE AND HOPE WORK

The chapter on hero creation details how to calculate a character’s Endurance and Hope ratings. During play, heroes use up Hope and Endurance points as they are hurt or frightened, or attempt difficult tasks, and restore them through rest or life-affirming events.

A hero’s total Hope and Endurance scores are maximum values; recovered points cannot take either pool above its total. Players should be prepared to erase and rewrite their values on the character sheet, or could track them using different coloured counters or glass beads.

ENDURANCE

Endurance represents a hero’s resistance to injury, physical or psychological stress, even torture. Whenever a character is subjected to some form of harm or toil, his Endurance score is reduced accordingly. Endurance loss should not be confused with being Wounded: while every successful attack in combat provokes a loss of Endurance, a player-hero is only at risk of a wound when

hit by a piercing blow, a precise attack that threatens to bypass the target’s armour and defences completely and cause them serious injury.

Fatigue

Fatigue determines when the weight and bulk of the equipment normally carried by a hero starts to effect his performance. A character’s Fatigue threshold is first calculated during hero creation and is normally equal to the sum of the Encumbrance ratings of the adventurer’s selection of weapons and protective gear (see the Gear chapter at page 107 for details).

Losing Endurance

During play, player-heroes lose Endurance points to blows suffered in combat, as the consequence of strenuous efforts, and to other sources of physical harm.

When, for any reason, the Endurance score of a character drops to a level equal to or lower than his Fatigue score, the hero is considered to be *Weary*. Check the *Weary* box on the character sheet, and apply the effects to the character (see page 142).

If a character’s *Weary* box was already checked, then losing Endurance doesn’t provoke any additional effect.

When a character’s Endurance score is reduced to zero points, he is physically exhausted and falls unconscious.

Lost Endurance points are recovered swiftly if a hero is allowed to rest and feed, unless a hero is wounded or sick (see the Life and Death chapter, page 142).

HOPE

Hope is a character’s reserve of spiritual fortitude and positivity. A hopeful character can keep going when physically stronger heroes have already succumbed to despair.

Shadow

Shadow points reflect the marks left on a character when his spirit is tainted by doubt and despair. Starting characters begin the game with a Shadow rating of zero.

Spending Hope

During play, a player-hero spends Hope to invoke Attribute bonuses or to trigger the effect of a Cultural Virtue.

When the Hope score of a hero decreases to reach his Shadow rating, the hero is considered to be Miserable. Check the Miserable box on the character sheet, and apply the effects to the character.

If a character's Miserable box was already checked, then losing Hope doesn't provoke any additional effect.

If a character finds his Hope score reduced to zero points, he is spiritually spent. A hopeless hero cannot bear to continue a struggle of any sort, and will flee from any source of danger or stress, by escaping from the field of battle, for example, or storming out on a debate.

Heroes may recover Hope during a game session spending Fellowship points, and possibly through their Fellowship focus (see The Fellowship below for details).

- fellowship -

"You can trust us to stick to you through thick and thin – to the bitter end."

The life of a hero is one of excitement, but it is often full of hardships and trouble, and burdens easiest to bear when shared with others. For this reason, adventurers of all sorts gather in groups of companions, united by a common cause, be it to fight the Enemy, to lead a hunt for a prized prey, or to scour the land seeking for a lost or stolen treasure.

Representing friendship, loyalty and trust, Fellowship points and Fellowship focuses can be used by all player-heroes. Both provide a companion with a way to recover Hope points.

HOW FELLOWSHIP POINTS WORK

Hope is an ever-dwindling resource: to overcome the many formidable challenges he is going to face, a player-hero who has just started his adventuring career is bound to count on it quite often (veterans might come to rely more on their own abilities).





To recover their much-needed trust and self-confidence, player-heroes should look no further than their own companions. Points taken from the Fellowship pool can be spent to refresh a character's Hope, while the company of a hero's Fellowship focus can allow him to recover points for free.

FELLOWSHIP POINTS

Members of the company may recover spent Hope by tapping into the Fellowship pool: for every Fellowship point spent, a character may raise his Hope score by one. To do so, a player must get permission from at least half the other members of the Company:

If this consensus cannot be found, he may either agree not to spend any points, or spend them anyway and gain a Shadow point for each Fellowship point used.

Players may recover any number of Hope points up to their maximum Hope score, as long as there are Fellowship points left. A player may tap into a company's Fellowship pool at any time. This means that a character can recover some of his lost Hope even as he exchanges blows with a hostile creature or as he bandies crooked words with a cunning diplomat.

Desperately trying to ward off a Giant Spider deep in Mirkwood, Ada Took spends her last Hope point for a Body Attribute bonus to her attack roll. But the fight is not yet done, and she cannot afford to become hopeless and flee. Ada's player, Suzie, appeals to her companions to be allowed to draw from the Fellowship pool; they readily agree, and she claims two points, bringing her Hope score back up to 2. Ada thinks of her friends, unconscious and bound in webs in the trees around her, and redoubles her efforts...

A company's Fellowship pool is completely refreshed at the beginning of each new gaming session.

Players may take advantage of their entire Fellowship pool of points, of use just a part of it, or not at all. 'Unused' Fellowship points do not carry over to the next session.

FELLOWSHIP FOCUS

Fellowship focuses represent the strong ties between brothers in arms, close kinsmen and compatriots. Fellowship focuses have two effects in gameplay, as sources of Hope or as sources of inspiration.

As a Source of Hope

The presence of a Fellowship focus affects the way a character recovers Hope:

A player-hero recovers one point of Hope at the end of a session if his Fellowship focus wasn't wounded or otherwise harmed during play, and is in the same location as them.

A character gains one point of Shadow at the end of the session if his Fellowship focus was wounded, or three points if the focus was killed.

As a Source of Inspiration

Successfully keeping their Fellowship focus safe might inspire a character so much that it lets him recover points of Hope:

If a player spends a Hope point to get an Attribute bonus to accomplish an action that can be considered to directly protect or favour his Fellowship focus and succeeds, he immediately recovers the Hope point he just spent.

Frár son of Frór eased down the corridor towards the cells, as quickly and quietly as Dwarven feet will allow, and found his brother Fli in the second cage.

"The Orcs are all eating and drinking," he hissed, fumbling with the crude lock, with only a dagger as a tool. "I'll set you free." Frár's player Jamie spends a point of Hope for a Body Attribute bonus to his **Craft** roll to break the lock; Frár releases his brother and the two embrace awkwardly. As Fíli is Frár's Fellowship focus, the Loremaster immediately awards Frár a Hope point to replace the spent point.



- GEAR -

"They went down the slope, and across the stream where it dived under the road, and up the next slope, and up and down another shoulder of the hills; and by that time their cloaks, blankets, water, food, and other gear already seemed a heavy burden."

Adventurers do not see a familiar roof above their heads for much of the year. Some choose to live outdoors, but for many it is because they find refuge in strange quarters, or are forced to find shelter out in the wild. Selecting the right amount of things to carry is the first test of their mettle, and a light pack on a traveller's back is an indication of his experience in the trade. The same applies to an adventurer's war gear: they should fight the urge to choose the biggest weapons and the heaviest suits of armour, as a weighty and cumbersome burden is bound to seriously hamper their adventuring capabilities.

HOW ENCUMBRANCE WORKS

The Encumbrance rating of an item is used to limit the carrying capacity of a character to within reasonable limits.

As a general rule, an adventurer can carry gear with a total Encumbrance up to the character's maximum Endurance rating.

Since a hero's carried equipment determines his Fatigue score, it is generally much wiser to keep that total much lower than the maximum allowed. Players record their heroes' Fatigue scores on their character sheets (the Fatigue box is found under the Endurance box) when the adventurer is first created (see Chapter Two: Characters).



When a player raises the total Encumbrance of the equipment carried by a hero (for example, by adding a weapon to those he carries) his Fatigue rating is immediately adjusted to reflect the increased burden.

By contrast, if during play a player removes something from a hero's carried equipment, his Fatigue score is adjusted only after a prolonged rest (as the character is considered to have already suffered from the burden of the carried equipment).

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

As explained during character creation, player-heroes leave home prepared to spend long periods of time travelling and sleeping in the open. For this reason, every character is supposed to be carrying the essential equipment for a life of adventuring. This equipment is summarised as a character's travelling gear and war gear.

Should a character feel the need to acquire different or unusual equipment, possibly because the current adventure demands it, the Loremaster and his players may find the following guidelines helpful (weapons and other war gear are not covered by the following rules, as acquiring such prized possessions is a different matter entirely).

STANDARDS OF LIVING

The characters in *The One Ring* are adventurers, individuals used to relying on their abilities to find sustenance in the wild, rather than by putting their hands into their money bags. To avoid the need for a lengthy equipment list or overly-detailed rules for economics, a character's culture provides them with a Standard of living. This rating describes the affluence of an individual coming from that culture.

The Standard of living rankings are *Poor*, *Frugal*, *Martial*, *Prosperous* or *Rich*. A character's Standard of living is used to determine his access to resources; for

example, to assess whether he can afford to buy a new pair of boots to replace the one he lost, or if he can give something to a fisherman in exchange for renting his boat, or even if he could reasonably have a length of rope already stashed somewhere among his travelling gear.

Out of Pocket Expenses

Using the following guidelines, the Loremaster and his players should be able to judge in most circumstances what a character can afford.

Buying a round of beers for all patrons at an inn should not be a problem for a Barding character who comes from a Prosperous culture, while it could be difficult for a Woodman hero, coming from a Frugal folk.

Sometimes, it could be helpful to compare a character's Standard of Living with that of the individual selling an item or providing the service.

For example, Ulf, a Beorning hero, has a mind to buy passage on a cart led by a merchant from Dale headed for Esgaroth. Beornings are a Martial folk, and the Prosperous merchant from Dale doesn't see anything among Ulf's possessions worthy of his time and discomfort. It is probably time for Ulf to look for different ways to persuade the merchant...

Equipment

The same approach can be used when a player is wondering whether his character should already have a particular item among his standard possessions. When this happens, the player should ask himself (or the Loremaster) how relevant the object in question is to his character's trade. In this case, a character's Calling should provide most answers, especially if combined with an appropriate Standard of Living.

For example, should a Barding Treasure-hunter have among his possessions a set of lock-picks? Yes, and a high-quality set it is, too.

STANDARDS OF LIVING DESCRIPTIONS

The material comforts and relative wealth enjoyed by an average person at each Standard of living are described below (including advice and notes regarding the spending capability of a hero when actively adventuring). Presented in order of increasing relative wealth, each Standard of living rank is roughly twice as affluent as the rank preceding it.

Poor (none)

Impoverished people are probably suffering from a bad harvest season, a fell winter, or the aftermath of a disease or war. They struggle every day to find what they need to survive, and have no time or resources to look for anything beyond the bare necessities, let alone equip themselves for adventure.



Frugal (Woodmen of Wilderland)

Frugal folk usually sleep in comfortable common halls (or tents, if nomadic) and eat the produce of their own lands and pastures. They wear simple clothes at most times, although they may possess finer garments for special gatherings like season festivals, marriages or funerals. Jewels and other superior ornaments, if any are in the keeping of members of the society, are treasured as possessions belonging to the community, and are passed down through generations of appointed keepers.

Adventurers coming from a Frugal folk do not usually carry anything of unusual worth (unless as part of their war gear), with the possible exception of one or two pieces of expensive clothing or common jewellery, like a rich mantle or a golden necklace or bracelet; probably a token of their status among their peers. Consequently, Frugal adventurers can rarely afford to pay for anything, and prefer to find or make what they need instead.

Martial (Beornings, Elves of Mirkwood)

Individuals belonging to a Martial culture often live according to their status in the military hierarchy, with simple warriors and soldiers sleeping together in a common area; probably as part of the household of a renowned chieftain or noble. Meals are usually consumed in large halls, with seats and tables arranged to observe rules of precedence or respect. Clothing reflects the military status of an individual as well, or that of his family.

Martial player-heroes have enough resources to look after themselves, and to pay for such things as simple accommodation and meals. Ever mindful of the cost of any luxury, they often lead an austere life, or resort to haggling to lower the price of whatever they are trying to get hold of.

Prosperous (Bardings, Hobbits of the Shire)

Almost all families belonging to a Prosperous culture can afford to live in separate, private houses. Important individuals wear fine clothing and often have one or more servants in their service at home.



Characters coming from a Prosperous culture can usually pay for their share of any out of pocket expense encountered along their journey, and might even pay for another companion, if need be. This includes, for example, paying for comfortable accommodation, spending some time drinking in company at an inn, and hiring beasts of burden (such as ponies).

Rich (Dwarves of Erebor)

Members of a Rich culture live amidst all sorts of luxuries, reaping the fruits of flourishing trade or vast treasure. Although those less well-off warn that affluence can easily lead to spiritual or even physical weakness, the availability of material wealth may instead set an individual free to focus on more lofty matters, like the perfection of a trade or art.

Rich adventurers fare better than their Prosperous fellows, but not excessively so. Their life on the move does not let them take full advantage of their resources, as a good proportion of their wealth will be made up of land and riches.

WAR GEAR

As seen in the Hero Creation chapter (page 30), at the beginning of the game players may equip their characters with any weapon their heroes have the ability to use, and any shield and suit of armour they choose to carry or wear. If a hero loses or breaks any of these items, they can be replaced automatically, at the next friendly settlement they reach or other appropriate moment in the narrative. At most, a small favour may be demanded if the settlement is not of their own culture, such as the performance of a task, or simply a song or tale.

Below are flavourful descriptions for each type of weapon or protective gear available to characters beginning their adventures in Wilderland.

HEADGEAR

Worn in battle or for ceremonial purposes, helmets are usually made of leather or iron, but sometimes of more precious metals. The shape of a headpiece is often distinctive, as it helps in identifying the wearer individually or at least as belonging to a particular folk. More often than not, the protective features of the helmet, especially nose-guards or close-fitting cheek-guards, make it impossible to recognise the wearer otherwise.

Helm

A headpiece providing full protection, sporting a nose-guard and cheek-guards and protection for the back of the neck.



Cap of iron and leather

An open helmet, the cap sacrifices some protection for comfort and a wider field of vision.



ARMOUR

A suit of armour is an essential asset for any warrior in battle. The level of protection, weight and beauty of armour depends on the material used and the cunning of its maker.

Leather Armour

The simplest suit of armour available, leather armour is made of layers of cured and hardened animal hide sewn together. It is ideal for hunting or travelling as it is lightweight and comfortable, especially compared with mail armour. Leather armour may be crafted as a shirt, or a close-fitting corslet with long sleeves, extending its protection to the wearer's hips.



Mail Armour

The most effective type of armour encountered in Middle-earth at the end of the Third Age is mail armour: suits of close-fitting rings of metal, created to protect from cutting and thrusting weapons. From the shining hauberks of Elven lords to the black mail of Orc-chieftains, mail

armour appears in widely different qualities. Ancient mail-coats of dwarf-make, when found, are matchless and prized possessions.

A mail shirt is a chain garment protecting the back, chest and abdomen of its wearer, while a coat of mail is a shirt with long sleeves. A mail hauberk is a longer coat with skirts of mail covering the knees of the wearer, making it ideal for those riding into battle.



SHIELDS

Armour is often ineffective against the heaviest of weapons, such as maces or other blunt instruments of war, and many warriors use shields to deflect incoming blows. Usually made of wood covered in leather and reinforced with metal, shields vary in form and purpose. They are held and manoeuvred with one hand (or forearm, for larger shields), leaving the other free to wield a weapon. When a shield is not in active use, for example when wielding a weapon with both hands, or when travelling, it can be carried on a person's back, using a strap.



Often, shields are painted in the colours of a warrior's folk, household or allegiance. Soldiers from many Free Peoples' armies are trained to form a shield wall when defending a position, standing in formation shoulder to shoulder, holding their shields so that each man benefits from his neighbour's shield, as well as his own.

Most Orcs also bear shields, made of metal, wood or animal hide, to use with their scimitars or cruel spears. Orc shields are blazoned with their Lord's ghastly devices. Shields portrayed in legends and rhymes of lore are often scored with runes to ward off wounds and harm from the warrior bearing it.

Buckler

Circular and made of wood reinforced by a protruding metal boss, bucklers are usually smaller and lighter than regular shields.



Great Shield

Huge and round or barrel-shaped, these shields are carried in battle by the sturdiest of warriors, and are used to carry back their bodies should they fall, but are considered too cumbersome and unwieldy by some.



Shield

Round, oval or kite-shaped, shields are made of several layers of wood, often reinforced by a large central iron boss, usually decorated and engraved. A regular shield offers good protection from arrows, and is very effective at close quarters.



SWORDS

The sword with a straight blade has always been the weapon of choice among free Men and Elves. A mark of nobility or rank, swords of superior craftsmanship are passed down by generations of warriors, and arms of ancient lineage are often imbued with spells and curses, the bane of the servants of the Shadow.

Swords vary in size, shape, and quality, as diverse as the folks that craft them. Many malevolent creatures have devised swords after their own fashion, usually crude counterfeits of those made by Men and Elves.

Short Sword

Daggers and knives of unusual size, or smaller swords created for combat at close quarters.



Long Sword

Only superior craftsmen can produce longer blades. These wonderful Elven and Dwarven weapons, and the keen blades forged from strange metals by the Men of the West, are often known as long swords. A long sword may either be wielded with one hand, or used to hack and sweep with two hands.



Sword

A straight-bladed, two-edged sword, wielded in one hand to hew or thrust. This is the most common type of sword.



AXES

The axe is the weapon of choice for most Dwarves, and in their culture it surpasses the sword in both nobility and respect. Dwarven weaponsmiths apply their cunning to making axes of many different shapes and uses, from metals of various colours.

Axes are often preferred to swords by warriors who favour a more brutal approach, as the heavy head of a heftily wielded axe is more likely to cleave through armour or shield than a sword swing.

Axe

A simple fighting variation on the common woodcutting tool, axes hang from the belt of many adventurers raised in or near forests.





Great Axe

Sometimes double-headed, the great axe is an impressive heavy weapon that can only be wielded with two hands.



Long-hafted axe

Borne with one or two hands, a long-hafted axe is designed to hack through the toughest of armour. It is difficult to manoeuvre but when mastered it is a fearful weapon, as a skilled fighter learns to fight with the long haft of the axe and its reinforced tip in addition to the blade.



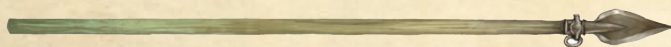
SPEARS

The spear is arguably the most widespread weapon across Middle-earth, arming kings and soldiers, riders and footmen. It is often no more than a long wooden shaft, tipped by a leaf-shaped metal head, but some spears are works of majestic craftsmanship, valuable heirlooms of noble households.

The length of a spear varies according to the use it is designed for. Spears can be wielded one or two-handed to thrust and lunge, cast to pierce from a distance, or used from horseback as lances. Warriors equipped with a spear will almost always use it in conjunction with a shield, and they will usually carry an additional weapon such as a sword or axe.

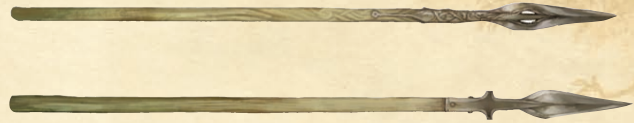
Great Spear

With a shaft longer than any other spear, a great spear cannot be used as a ranged weapon and must be wielded with two hands.



Spear

Approximately six feet in length, a spear can be hurled as a javelin or deftly thrust with one hand.



BOWS

A traditional hunting weapon, the bow is also commonly used in warfare. Made from a single piece of wood, or from a composition of wood, horn, or even metal, bows are a versatile weapon and can be used during sieges, from horseback, in dense woodland or in the open field.

Warriors bearing bows into battle usually carry another weapon, to draw when the enemy gets closer; they seldom carry shields, as they can't use them when shooting a bow.

Bow

The simple bow is not very different from a hunting-bow. It never measures more than five feet in length, so as to be strung the more quickly. Elves from Mirkwood use bows, as they do not need the superior range of a great bow while fighting under the eaves of their forest.



Great Bow

As tall as a man and offering superior potency, a great bow can only be used by warriors with the height and stature to bend it fully. An arrow from a great bow can pierce the toughest of armour.



OTHER WEAPONS

Dagger

One-handed blades have a range of uses, from skinning animals to settling disputes among brutes. Daggers and knives are very common, and in the wild areas of the land, no man, woman or child is found without one in their belt.



Mattock

A heavy digging implement sporting a curved head with a point on one side and a spade-like 'blade' on the other, it was used to fearsome effect by the Dwarves who followed Dáin Ironfoot during the Battle of Five Armies.



CHARACTERISTICS OF WEAPONS

Chapter Five details the rules for all types of combat engagements.

Damage

A weapon's damage rating indicates the harm, in Endurance, inflicted on the target with every successful attack. This value is modified by a character's Damage bonus when the attack roll produces a great or extraordinary result.

Edge

On a successful roll, the Feat die result is compared to the Edge rating of the weapon used: if the result matches or overcomes that number, the roll inflicts a *piercing blow* and the target must make a Protection roll to avoid being Wounded.

Injury

This is the Target Number for a character's Protection roll to avoid being wounded when they are hit by a *piercing blow*.

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Thrown and Ranged Weapons

Spears and bows are ranged weapons capable of striking the enemy from a distance. The following table shows the distance in yards at which the weapons are effective.

Ranged Weapons:

WEAPON	SHORT RANGE	MEDIUM RANGE	LONG RANGE
Thrown spear	5 + Body rating	10 + Body rating	20 + Body rating
Bow	10 + Body rating	20 + Body rating	30 + Body rating
Great bow	20 + Body rating	30 + Body rating	40 + Body rating





- TREASURE -

“...about him on all sides, stretching away across the unseen floors, lay countless piles of precious things, gold wrought and unwrought, gems and jewels, and silver redstained in the ruddy light.”

Travelling across a land that has seen three ages of the world, the adventurers are sooner or later bound to discover some form of treasure, and possibly claim it for themselves. Whether it is the forgotten hoard of a dead Dragon, a pile of gold and gems closely guarded by a Troll or the loot accumulated by generations of raiding Goblins, treasure provides players with a possible focus for their adventuring, a means for their characters to raise their personal prosperity, and another way to bring to light obscure tales from previous ages of Middle-earth.

HOW TREASURE WORKS

The value of a treasure is reflected in a rating, ranging from a minimum of 1, equating roughly to the amount of money needed to sustain an adventurer for one month at a Prosperous Standard of living, and possibly going up to 100,000.

Treasure:

RATING	DESCRIPTION
1	Enough for one adventurer to spend one month at a Prosperous standard of living
2	Enough for one adventurer to spend one month at a Rich standard of living
5	A princely gift
10	Goblin hoard
50	Orc-chieftain hoard
100	Large hoard, or very rare and precious item
200	Troll loot including rare and precious objects
500	Silver and gold to last the rest of a middle-aged Hobbit's lifetime
1000	A hundredth share of the fabulous hoard of Smaug the Dragon

Players record their individual Treasure rating on the back of their character sheet, and update it as they find and spend their hoard. This means that when a company of adventurers stumbles upon a source of treasure, its members must divide it among themselves, splitting its rating as they see fit and recording their resulting share on their character sheets.

Player-heroes are allowed to use the wealth represented by their Treasure rating when they opt to spend a Fellowship phase at home.

During the Fellowship phase, there are different types of investment that can be made, each of which costs a certain amount of Treasure points. Chapter Six, Fellowship phase, contains all the rules concerning how to invest treasure.

Carrying Treasure

Players may burden themselves with their newfound riches, carrying along chests filled with valuables or stuffing their pockets with coins.

Every point of Treasure carried translates into one point of Encumbrance. This means that a character sees his Fatigue rating increased by one point for every point of Treasure he chooses to carry.

Hiding Treasure

The amount of gold, silver, gems or other valuables represented by a few points of Treasure might prove to be more than what a character is willing to carry when adventuring. Adventurers may opt for hiding their treasure close to where they found it, with the intention of returning later to recover it.

- standing -

“It is true that for ever after he remained an Elf-friend, and had the honour of Dwarves, wizards, and all such folk as ever passed that way; but he was no longer quite respectable.”

When heroes return home after months or even years spent travelling abroad, they should not be surprised to find themselves receiving suspicious looks, or even presumed dead by hasty officials and neighbours. Valour and Wisdom may mean much to the Wise and Powerful, but for the common folk there is nothing as damaging to one's respectability than going away to have adventures, especially if one cannot disguise one's new queer habits and keeps disturbing the peace by disappearing on a regular basis.

HOW STANDING WORKS

A hero's Standing represents his position amongst the members of his own folk. Depending on the traditions of a culture, Standing may translate to admiration, acclaim or simple respectability. Standing ranges from 0 (lowest) to 6 (highest), and players record their rank on the back of their character sheet. Adventurers start their career with no rank in Standing.

In game terms, Standing is used to gauge how influential a hero can be when dealing with individuals and issues related to his home country. A hero's rating is put to practical use especially during the Year's End segment of a Fellowship phase (see page 174).



Standing Ranks:

RATING	STANDING COMPARABLE TO THAT OF...
-	Homeless vagrants, wandering conjurors, unknown adventurers
1	Rangers
2	Respectable citizens
3	Officers, Shirriffs
4	Counsellors, Deputies, Marshals, Prominent personalities
5	Alderman, Chieftain, Master, Mayor, Thain, Steward
6	King





- Part 4: Character Development -



- CHARACTER - DEVELOPMENT

“Somehow the killing of the giant spider, all alone by himself in the dark, without the help of the wizard or the Dwarves or of anyone else, made a great difference to Mr. Baggins.”

One distinction between roleplaying games and other forms of gaming is that characters change through their experiences, much like people in real life, or heroes drawn from myth and fiction. When an adventurer has completed the task he set out to undertake, overcoming all obstacles that fate presented him with, he finds himself deeply transformed by the experience.

In *The One Ring*, characters gain Experience points during play, and spend them to improve their abilities or to acquire new ones, and earn Advancement points that will let them develop their Common skill scores.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

A hero's sense of accomplishment, his confidence and skill at arms and the hard-earned respect paid to him by his peers are represented by the award of Experience points. These points allow players to buy Valour and Wisdom ranks, and to attain superior levels of proficiency in their chosen Weapon skills.

Players receive one Experience point each at the end of every gaming session they attend. Moreover, if the Loremaster deems that the group has made substantial progress toward the achievement of their chosen Company objective, each hero is awarded with a supplementary Experience point.

Players keep track of the number of Experience points they gain during play by updating their score on the character's sheet. To do so, they use the larger box - the smaller box, labeled *Total*, is used to record how many Experience points a player has received and invested

already in the development of his hero. The rules concerning the expenditure of Experience points are found in the Fellowship phase chapter, at page 170.

ADVANCEMENT POINTS

Characters develop their Common skills by using them and earning Advancement points. During the game, a player can be awarded an Advancement point by the Loremaster when he uses a Common skill and succeeds - or fails! - in a distinctive or memorable way. A hero successfully invoking a Trait for an action is more likely to earn an Advancement point. Usually, a character earns an Advancement point when the outcome of an action surprises the acting player, his companions, and possibly the Loremaster. The rules governing Advancement point awards are found in the Loremaster's book.

When an Adventuring phase is over, players may spend some or all their Advancement points during the Fellowship phase to raise the ratings of their Common skills. Advancement points are recorded on the character sheet by putting a 'check mark' on one of the three circles to the right of the Skill group that the skill used belongs to. Player-heroes may earn up to a maximum of three points in each Skill group in the course of an Adventuring phase: when the Adventuring phase is over, all points are accounted for and the check marks are erased from the character sheet.

COMPANY OBJECTIVE

A Company objective is a goal shared by all companions, something that is usually decided upon by all players at the beginning of a session of play. When they have finished considering how to proceed with the adventure presented to them by the Loremaster, the players should briefly confer and then choose a short or mid-term goal for them to try to achieve as a group.

A Company objective should be relevant, arising either from the situation introduced by the Loremaster in the first session of a new Adventuring phase, or from the latest developments in the phase to date.

Choosing a Company objective helps the players to focus on their characters' motives for adventuring, and helps them to identify their own objectives for the current session of play. The Loremaster should let the heroes gain the supplementary Experience point under most circumstances, unless there are very good reasons to consider that the group hasn't progressed toward its goal (i.e. the possibility of denying this Experience point 'award' should not be used as a form of generic 'punishment' for the group).

- VALOUR and - WISDOM

"There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West. Some courage and some wisdom, blended in measure."

The heroic stature of an adventurer can be measured in different ways. The One Ring uses two gauges to show how the character has grown over the course of the game: Wisdom and Valour. These scores increase as heroes overcome difficulties that others do not dare to even challenge; they are profoundly different to the other characteristics, both in what they represent and in their influence on the game.

When a hero is first created, his player assigns values to both Wisdom and Valour, setting one at 1 and the other at 2 as he prefers. Later, players may spend earned Experience to raise the two ranks. Which score they favour has many consequences in the long run, as it will alter a hero's fundamental abilities and play a big role in determining his identity.

WISDOM

A character's knowledge of his own capabilities, his self-confidence and capacity for good judgement changes and improves with struggles and strife. A characteristic with deeply personal implications, a hero's rank in

Wisdom also determines the stature of the hero in the eyes of those that prize these qualities.

When Wisdom is chosen over Valour when spending Experience points, it suggests that the hero's adventures are affecting him subtly but profoundly. Starting as a more or less ingenuous individual with an adventurous spirit, the hero can achieve the maturity and sagacity of the Wise.



VALOUR

Valour is a measure of a character's courage, as tempered by dangerous deeds. A man of valour is willing to place himself in danger for the safety of others. In a time where new threats arise each day, courage is highly prized, and a valiant adventurer is often esteemed above all other individuals. For this reason, a hero's rank in Valour also reflects the level of renown he attained as a doer of great deeds.



When a player decides to favour Valour over Wisdom, his hero's actions, not his judgement, will tend to prove his status in the eyes of others. From the lowliest start as a wandering adventurer, a hero might one day equal the repute and respect earned by a famous champion or king.

HOW WISDOM AND VALOUR WORK

Valour and Wisdom are ranked from 1 to 6, reflecting the gradual transformation of a novice adventurer into a veteran hero. The characteristics affects the game in several ways: a character's Wisdom or Valour might affect social interactions, provide a character with special abilities and superior equipment, and let a hero resist dangerous influences, such as corruption.

ENCOUNTERS

A particularly wise or valiant hero is more likely to provoke a positive reaction from others. When adventurers are involved in any form of social interaction, the Loremaster takes into consideration a hero's rank in either of the two ratings. Usually, the Loremaster considers which score is more important in the eyes of the character the hero is interacting with: a warlike chieftain may favour Valour, for example, while a wizard will almost certainly prize Wisdom.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Starting from rank 2, when a hero gains a new rank in either Wisdom or Valour, he receives a boon, a special ability. The special abilities granted by Wisdom are called Virtues, while those bestowed with ranks of Valour are called Rewards; both are presented in the next chapter.

A newly created hero starts the game either with his first Reward or his first Virtue, depending in which of the characteristics he set at level 2 at character creation.

TESTS RELYING ON VALOUR AND WISDOM

When facing the challenge of a dangerous fight, a long trek in difficult terrain, or another sort of arduous task, a hero relies upon his Endurance. If this doesn't prove to be enough, he can draw upon his reserves of Hope. But some threats are more insidious, and these can be opposed only by good judgement or plain courage.

When characters are confronted by the temptations of the Shadow, like the thirst for power or gold, they will have to put their Wisdom to the test to avoid becoming corrupt (Corruption tests). If they are set against a menace capable of inspiring blind fear, they will have to prove their Valour (Fear tests).

Tests using Valour or Wisdom are very much like any other test, made using the Feat die and a number of Success dice equal to the rating possessed in the relevant characteristic.

Attribute bonus (Heart)

Players may invoke a **Heart** Attribute bonus to modify their Fear and Corruption test results.



- VIRTUES and - REWARDS

“...the Dwarf alone wore openly a short shirt of steel-rings, for Dwarves make light of burdens; and in his belt was a broad-bladed axe.”

There are many things that may reveal an experienced adventurer. It may be his weather-beaten look, the quality of his weaponry or the grim determination that surfaces when he sets himself to a difficult task. Everything about a veteran is the result of many years of struggle. This is particularly apparent when an adventurer's uncommon Virtues and accumulated Rewards are taken into consideration.

Complementing his skills and Traits, a character's Virtues and Rewards describe the qualities that truly turn an adventurer into a hero. Virtues are aptitudes that come naturally to a member of a given race, or abilities that arise through time and practice, while Rewards are gifts from grateful lords and generous chieftains, trappings of respect that valiant men earn accomplishing memorable deeds.

HOW VIRTUES WORK

“But I say: let a ploughman plough, but choose an otter for swimming, and for running light over grass and leaf or over snow – an Elf.”

Of all the options offered to players, the choice of Virtues is probably the one that allows for the easiest individualisation of a hero. They represent the special qualities of a people, or talents practised until they become second nature.

Every time a hero's Wisdom score goes up one level – including at character creation, if he begins with a Wisdom of 2 – he receives a Virtue.

Virtues distinguish themselves from all other characteristics in their diversity. All are beneficial, but often apply only under strict conditions. As these requisites are as varied as the effects of the Virtues themselves, players are advised to read each Virtue description carefully, to understand when best to use it. There are two types of Virtues – Masteries and Cultural Virtues.

Masteries are six special abilities that any hero can develop; players can select any one Mastery when their character is entitled to a new Virtue (the six Masteries available to all players are described at page 124).

Cultural Virtues are the secrets of the dwellers of Middle-earth, from the proverbial stubbornness of Dwarves to the subtle magic of Elves. There are five different Cultural Virtues for every culture presented in the game. Their descriptions are presented at the following pages:

Bardings	page 124
Beornings	page 126
Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain	page 127
Elves of Mirkwood	page 129
Hobbits of The Shire	page 131
Woodmen of Wilderland	page 132





MASTRIES

These talents can be acquired by adventurers from any culture. Each Mastery can be acquired more than once by the same character.

Confidence

Overcoming difficulties has hardened your spirit, and at the same time renewed your faith in a brighter future.

Raise your maximum Hope rating by two points. When you choose this mastery, set your Hope score again to its maximum rating.

One-handed

When you throw a weapon or bend your bow, your hand is steady and your aim is sure.

Raise your ranged Damage rating by one.

Expertise

You have practised a skill until it has become as natural as breathing.

You can choose a new favoured skill (either a Common skill or a Weapon skill).

Two-handed

You have learned to put all your strength into your blows in hand-to-hand battle.

Raise your close combat Damage rating by one.

Gifted

Adventuring is honing your inborn talents.

Raise one of your favoured Attributes (page 75) by one.

Resilience

Your determination and stamina have improved through hardship and toil.

Raise your maximum Endurance rating by two points. When you choose this Mastery, set your Endurance score again to its maximum rating.

CULTURAL VIRTUES - BARDINGS

The Bardings are Northmen of the noblest blood, valiant men with a tradition of powerful kings. Considered lost for many long years, their ancient heritage has been tempered anew in dragon-fire, and is today once again in capable hands. The same qualities that were once doubted or even derided by lesser men will now be put to good use by their rightful King.

Birthright

"Bard is not lost!" he cried. "He dived from Esgaroth, when the enemy was slain. I am Bard, of the line of Girion; I am the slayer of the Dragon!"

You are a rightful heir to an illustrious household that was powerful in the city of Dale. To many, your family history and fortune destine you for greatness, as they did your ancestors.

Raise your standard of living from Prosperous to Rich; from now on, your Standing rating doesn't decrease during a Fellowship phase.

If, during play, you receive a wound that would normally kill you (a *coup de grâce* or a killing blow) you can choose between the following options:

1. You die, and let your direct descendant inherit the *Birthright* Virtue as an additional Cultural blessing (a free Virtue at character creation), *or*
2. You are saved by some miraculous circumstance that leaves you wounded but alive. You then reset your Standing rating to zero, as you are then presumed dead by your own folk. You can do this only once, and never again.



Fierce Shot

The great bow twanged...the arrow smote and vanished, barb, shaft and feather...

You have learnt to bend your bow so fiercely that you hear its string crack like a whip when it sends its arrows flying.

When you are using a great bow your ranged Damage bonus is based on your favoured Body score.

King's Men

But there was still a company of archers that held their ground among the burning houses.

The former glory of the proud hosts of Dale has been restored by King Bard, and so the martial discipline that once made the city powerful is again imparted to all young men and women alike, lest the city be caught

unprepared by assailants. You have sworn to protect the city and its king with your life, and in return you are regularly trained by the most expert swordsmen and bowmen of the realm.

Raise your maximum Endurance score by 3 points. Additionally, from now on the cost of raising your skill rating in Sword, Long Sword, Spear or Great Bow is lowered by 1 Experience point at each level.

Swordmaster

...and beside them came the men of the Lake with long swords.

A skilled warrior can use his sword to deflect blows that would have otherwise hit their mark. You have learnt to fight defensively using your weapon to full advantage.

When you are fighting in a defensive stance, you get a bonus to your Parry equal to the Encumbrance rating of your sword (either a sword or a long sword).

Woeful Foresight

"You are always foreboding gloomy things!" said the others. "Anything from floods to poisoned fish. Think of something cheerful!"

Many citizens of ancient Dale found themselves blessed – or cursed – by a sort of foresight following Smaug's destruction of the city. As a descendent of one of these bloodlines, you share this gift.

Sometimes, you feel a sense of foreboding that warns you of impending catastrophe and other gloomy events. But the future is always uncertain, and sometimes what you foresee never materialises.

Raise your maximum Hope score by 1 point. Additionally, once every Adventuring phase, you may invoke your power of foresight. When this happens, the Loremaster should give you a relevant piece of information regarding negative events likely to occur during your current adventure. If no such information is available



– or the Loremaster prefers not to divulge it – at the start of the next Fellowship phase, he must award you one Experience point instead (your foresight contained a more intimate message, leading to a sudden bout of insight or deeper understanding).

Your foresight manifests in many forms: it can be a hazy vision, a recurring and enigmatic dream, or a cryptic message borne by a talking bird.

CULTURAL VIRTUES - BEORNINGS

Due to the extraordinary nature of their leader, the Beornings are said to possess all sorts of queer and dangerous qualities. Some of these Virtues seem to bear a resemblance to the fabled powers of the skin-changer himself, and could be attributed to the chieftain's teachings. What is certain is that nobody questions the fierceness with which the Beornings defend their chosen territory, sparing no weapon at their disposal.

Brothers to Bears

I once saw him sitting all alone on the top of the Carrock at night watching the moon sinking towards the Misty Mountains, and I heard him growl in the tongue of bears...

Beorn has taught you to heed the call of an ancient animal heritage. When the moon is high in the sky and the world is fully revealed in an argentine glow, no sound escapes your ears, as the night speaks to you in the language of the Wild.

Raise your maximum Endurance score by 3 points. Additionally, from now on your sight and hearing are greatly enhanced at night, and let you see or hear better than under the light of the sun, and at a greater distance: when you make a roll using a Perception skill at night you always add your Attribute score to the result, as if enjoying an Attribute bonus.

Night-goer

As the light faded, Bilbo thought he saw away to the right, or to the left, the shadowy form of a great bear prowling along in the same direction.

At night you can slip into a dream-like state, and leave your body in spirit form to swiftly travel along the tracks made by animals across the length and breadth of Wilderland.

In this state, you can spend a point of Hope to explore an area within three days of travel, until sunrise wakes you.

Your spirit form takes the appearance of a full-grown bear. It is visible to onlookers, and leaves tracks on the ground. While you are outside your body, any action you attempt is resolved using your Attributes and skills as usual, but any strenuous activity causing the loss of Endurance wakes you up. Any harm suffered while travelling in spirit form is transferred to your body at the moment of awakening.



Skin-Coat

...nothing could withstand him, and no weapon seemed to bite upon him.

Tales say that a warrior's own courage will turn steel and iron better than the smith's hammer-work.

When you are hit by a Piercing blow in combat, you may choose to reduce your Endurance score by a number of points before rolling for Protection, to lower the Injury rating of the blow by an equal number.

Great Strength

Standing near was a huge man with a thick black beard and hair, and great bare arms and legs with knotted muscles.

As long as you can move freely while fighting, you may profit from great strength and nimbleness.

If your Fatigue rating is equal to or less than 12, when you are fighting in a close combat stance, you receive a bonus of +3 to your Parry score.

Twice-baked Honey Cakes

The making of these was one of his secrets; but honey was in them, as in most of his foods...

The honey-cakes of the Beornings are legendary among travellers. You can march far by eating just a little of them, and they are much more pleasant than cram, the waybread that Dale-men make for journeys in the wild. You have been shown the secret of baking such cakes, and can prepare them for the consumption of all members of your Company.

Raise your company's Fellowship rating by one point. Additionally, when you are on a journey, you and your fellow travellers reduce the difficulty of all your Fatigue tests by a value equal to your Wisdom rating.

CULTURAL VIRTUES - DWARVES OF THE LONELY MOUNTAIN

The reserved and surly character of Dwarves has often been misinterpreted by others as hostility or untrustworthiness. Their dealings with Elves have ended in disaster at least once, and Men long feared that these reclusive creatures were under the Shadow's influence. Moreover, their secretiveness regarding their ways and crafts has led other folks to believe that Dwarves possess strange and uncanny powers, confusing their formidable abilities with dark sorcery.

Broken Spells

*The Dwarves of yore made mighty spells,
While hammers fell like ringing bells.*

You have been taught some long-remembered fragments of old spells that retain power to this day. Some require you to cut or engrave a Runic inscription, usually in stone or metal, or sometimes carved in wood. You can learn a total of three spells: secrecy, prohibition and exclusion, and opening and shutting.

You must choose one spell when you first select this Virtue, and you may learn a new one by spending one Experience point as your undertaking during a Fellowship phase.

Spells of Opening and Shutting

This fragment must be recited in front of a door or gate, to magically lock it, or recited backwards to open it if locked. The spell has no effect on a door that has been blocked by magic and now requires a particular word to open it, but might work if the entrance was barred by the same type of magic.

The spell starts working as soon as you have finished reciting it.

Spells of Prohibition and Exclusion

This Runic inscription was usually placed on gates and on doors, to protect an area from unwanted visitors.



You may carve these signs on a rock or on the bark of a tree within the perimeter of your camp, and their power will wake you at the first sign of danger.

Carve the runes and go to sleep. You will immediately awaken if any threatening presence approaches.

Spells of Secrecy

Carve these runes on a concealed door, personal hiding place or object, and it will be noticed only if someone searches for it with great care. These signs are invisible to the untrained eye as long as the power within them is still working; they can only be seen and read when the spell is spent or broken.

The object concealed by the spell can only be found with an extraordinary Search result, unless the searcher is a Dwarf (in which case a simple success is enough).



Durin's Way

That was the beginning of the War of the Dwarves and the Orcs, which was long and deadly, and fought for the most part in deep places beneath the earth.

You have been taught how to defend yourself while fighting under the surface of the earth. You know how to exploit corners, darkness and other natural obstacles to your advantage.

When fighting underground, your Parry rating receives a bonus of +3.

Old Hatred

"Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!" An axe swung and swept back. Two Orcs fell headless.

When you face your kin's most hated enemies you feel the strength of your ancestors, slain by the foul hands of Orcs, flowing impetuously in your veins.

When you are fighting Orcs and their kind using hand-to-hand weapons, add a bonus of +3, or your Valour rating (whichever is higher), to the total Endurance loss inflicted by each of your blows.

Ravens of the Mountain

There used to be great friendship between them and the people of Thrór...

You have befriended a raven of the ancient breed living around the Lonely Mountain. Long-lived and able to speak the common tongue, these birds are often wise companions, bound to your kin by ties of old friendship. Many times in the past they have provided invaluable help by gathering news or sending messages for your folk.

If you are in Wilderland, your raven friend is never far away. You can sound a call and summon him to your presence in a matter of minutes. As soon as he joins you, you may command him.

Usually, the raven is eager to please you, but an unusual or less than reasonable request might put their faithfulness to the test and require a **Courtesy** roll against a TN of 14. The raven does not ask for anything in return, but repeated requests over a short time might sooner or later lead him to feel entitled to compensation (his precise terms are up to the Loremaster, and might lead to interesting story developments).

The time needed for a raven to complete the errand depends on the request, on the distance to be covered, and on the complexity of the assignment. A raven flies at an average speed of thirty miles per hour (enough to cross the whole width of Mirkwood in one day)

The following list shows some of the possible errands you can assign to your winged ally, but should in no way limit your inventiveness.

Bring tidings: a raven is always well informed about the latest events concerning the Wild, and is eager to report them.

Carry messages: the raven can deliver messages anywhere in the region, passing its content to others of his kin.

Investigate: the raven can be sent to gather information on a specific subject. It must be something naturally accessible to one of its kind.

Carry food: a raven might be persuaded to carry some food if able to steal or borrow it from a location within a day's flight.

The Stiff Neck of Dwarves

"...yet he was ever a Dwarf with a stiff neck."

Dwarves are deemed to be stubborn and unyielding. Their natural inclination to persevere against all odds is strengthened by the taint of the Shadow.

You add a number equal to your current Shadow score to all your rolls involving the use of a Common skill (with the exception of all Custom skills).

CULTURAL VIRTUES - ELVES OF MIRKWOOD

Elves and magic are almost synonymous to most inhabitants of Middle-earth. The word itself invokes images of their grace, the products of their craft, and their unearthly beauty. But the ancient tribes from which many Wood-elves descend never went over the Sea to grow fairer and more learned, and devoted their arts to devising cunning ways of deceiving the Enemy and its servants. This is probably why they are accounted by some to be among the 'lesser kindreds,' and are deemed to be more dangerous and less wise.

Deadly Archery

...their small knives... would have been of no use against the arrows of the Elves that could hit a bird's eye in the dark.

Most members of your kin possess a natural talent for hitting the mark when using their bows. You seem to possess that quality yourself, as your arrows find their target with uncanny precision.

When you spend a point of Hope to invoke an Attribute bonus on a ranged attack roll using a bow, you receive an additional bonus equal to your basic Heart score.

Elvish Dreams

"...he could sleep, if sleep it could be called by Men, resting his mind in the strange paths of elvish dreams, even as he walked open-eyed in the light of this world."

You have learnt to recover from your exertions while engaging in a repetitive task, like walking, or rowing in a boat.

At the end of a day of activity, you recover a number of Endurance points equal to your Wisdom rank. If you then take a prolonged rest, you recover normally.



Shadow Bane

The Elves were the first to charge. Their hatred for the Goblins is cold and bitter.

Your folk have suffered grievous losses during many wars against the Shadow. Even the passing of centuries cannot quell the bitter hate that your kindred harbour for the Enemy.

When you are fighting in a Forward stance (page 158) against servants of the Shadow, your attack rolls gain a bonus equal to +3, or to your Valour rating (whichever is higher).

The Speakers

“Only I hear the stones lament them: deep they delved us, fair they wrought us, high they builded us; but they are gone.”

You have learnt how to communicate with almost everything, from any living being to grass, stone and water. This means, for example, that you can hear from the stones in a path who trod it recently, or sing to soothe an unquiet animal.

To use this gift you must make an appropriate skill roll. Which skill you use depends on what you are trying to do and is at the Loremaster's discretion, but here are a few examples: to interpret the words of the stones in a path requires a roll of **Riddle**; to restrain a scared horse requires a roll of **Song**; to listen to the voice of a river requires a roll of **Insight**.

Wood-elf Magic

Though their magic was strong, even in those days they were wary.

You are mastering what mortals might call ‘Elf-magic.’ You learn how to fling a *Stinging Arrow* when you first select this Virtue. You may later master the making of *Elf-lights* as your undertaking, and spending one Experience point during a Fellowship phase; finally,

you discover the secret of *Enchanted Sleep* by spending another Experience point as another undertaking during a later Fellowship phase.

Stinging Arrow

You can make an arrow flicker as if with a magical fire, making it fly true.

Spend a point of Hope when you let loose an arrow and it will fly up to twice its normal range, OR spend a point of Hope after a successful ranged attack using a bow or great bow to produce an automatic Piercing blow.

Elf-lights

You know how to make a torch or a lamp burn with a peculiar flame that attracts all mortals who see it.

Spend a point of Hope to light a torch, or a lamp. Any speaking creature who sees its flame must try to get near it by any means possible, or spend a point of Hope (or Hate) to ignore the spell effect.

You may snuff out the light at will, even from a distance, either to extinguish the flame quickly and quietly, or to cause it to flare suddenly to blind and confuse your enemies (those standing close to the flare are fight as if *Weary* for one round of combat).

Enchanted Sleep

Having used an elf-light to attract an unwary victim, you can enchant him into slumber.

You may snuff out the elf-light when someone enters the area illuminated by the light. The first living creature with an Attribute level lower than 6 that enters the area drops immediately in an enchanted sleep.

CULTURAL VIRTUES – HOBBITS OF THE SHIRE

Hobbits rarely display Virtues considered to be heroic by other races, which partly explains their absence from history as written by Elves and Men. But to the discerning eye, these merry fellows reveal subtle qualities, often excelling in fields where stronger individuals might fail. It is another sign showing that the world is changing, and it is said that small hands will one day move the wheels of the world...



Art of Disappearing

There is little or no magic about them, except the ordinary everyday sort which helps them to disappear quietly and quickly when large stupid folk like you and me come blundering along...

You have learnt to choose exactly the right moment to turn away from the attention of others, sometimes unconsciously anticipating the need to disappear.

At the start of an episode where the location you are in is entered by newcomers, and if the location offers even the smallest opportunity to hide or sneak silently away, you can spend a point of Hope to disappear. You could slip into a convenient shadowy corner, a thick patch of undergrowth, a crowded room, a sharp bend in a passage underground or any other potentially concealing feature – the final decision on whether there is available concealment lies with the Loremaster.

No roll is needed, and you are considered to be present in the area, but unseen to the eyes of the interlopers. If the newly arrived individuals knew that you were present, it is as if you actually disappeared into thin air. You can at any moment choose to reveal yourself, simply stepping into the open from your hiding place.

Brave at a Pinch

Then something Tookish woke up inside him, and he wished to go and see the great mountains, and hear the pine-trees and the waterfalls, and explore the caves, and wear a sword instead of a walkingstick.

One of the Wise once said that you have to put a Hobbit in a tight place before you find out what is in them (the problem being that they try their best to avoid tight places...).

When you spend a point of Hope to invoke an Attribute bonus, you additionally cancel all penalties enforced from being Weary.

Fair Shot

As a boy he used to practise throwing stones at things, until rabbits and squirrels, and even birds, got out of his way as quick as lightning if they saw him stoop.

You have spent a great deal of your time practising with all sorts of throwing games, and your accuracy is exceptional.

When you make a ranged attack, you can roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result.



Tough in the Fibre

...they can move very quietly, and hide easily, and recover wonderfully from falls and bruises...

When you are allowed to take a prolonged rest, you recover your health at a prodigious pace, whether you are hurt or simply tired.

If you are uninjured, you recover three Endurance points plus your favoured Heart rating every day; if you are Wounded and your injury has been treated successfully, you recover four Endurance points; if you are Wounded and your injury hasn't been treated you recover two Endurance points.

Small Folk

Pippin stabbed upwards, and the written blade of Westernesse pierced through the hide and went deep into the vitals of the Troll, and his black blood came gushing out.

You have learnt how to gain an advantage in a fight from being smaller than most of your opponents.

When you are being attacked in close combat by a creature bigger than you (very often), your basic Parry rating is calculated using your favoured Wits score, instead of your basic Wits.

Outside of combat, you gain the 'Small' Trait, and can invoke it using the usual Trait rules (see the Traits chapter for details).

CULTURAL VIRTUES - WOODMEN OF WILDERLAND

The qualities that let the Woodmen clans survive in one of the most dangerous corners of Wilderland are subtle and diverse, and all have been put to the test during years of constant struggle against the darkness of Dol Guldur. The Woodmen have a worthy friend in Radagast, the Brown Wizard, and the mysterious wise man has passed many small secrets to those who would listen to his counsel.

A Hunter's Resolve

On and on he led them, tireless and swift...

You have learnt to tap into the inner strength of the indefatigable and relentless hunter.

Once per day you may spend a Hope point to recover a number of Endurance points equal to your favoured Heart rating.

Herbal Remedies

Radagast... has much lore of herbs and beasts...

Mirkwood is shunned by many men and beasts, yet its shadowy eaves are still good for the growing of herbs. You are learning the ancient craft of concocting salves and herbal remedies from your village elders and wise-women.

You learn to recognise which herbs qualify as *Fragrant Weeds* when you first select this Virtue, and can master the secrets of *Poison Remedies* as your undertaking during a Fellowship phase, and spending one Experience point.

Fragrant Weeds

You have developed the habit of chewing some herbs and roots that are said to bring vigour back into a man's limbs. As long as you are in a wild area, you can collect enough herbs for their effect to be noticeable:

When your Endurance rating drops to equal or below your Fatigue score for the first time, you are not yet considered *Weary*. You become *Weary* only when your Endurance drops again.

Poison Remedies

You can find the necessary ingredients to concoct a drink that, when ingested, will help a victim shake off the effects of spider-poison, or to prepare a salve that when applied to a wound or a bruise will neutralise the action of Orc-poison.

Spend a point of Hope and roll **Craft** against a TN of 16 to neutralise the effects of a single poison type on all members of your Company.


Hound of Mirkwood

“...in trotted... several large, long-bodied grey dogs.”

Your folk have always delighted in training great, long-jawed hounds, stronger than wolves. You have chosen a wolfhound of Wilderland to accompany you in your wanderings and the faithfulness of your hound reinforces your spirit.

Raise your maximum Hope score by 2 points.

But such trust comes at a price: a Hound of Mirkwood is a valourous and noble beast, always ready to take the side of his human companion during combat.

When you are engaged in **battle**, if an attack aimed at you produces an  result, the blow hits and automatically wounds the hound instead (in place of the effects of a normal hit). You may prevent this by taking the automatic wound yourself (you cannot roll for Protection). A wounded hound is put out of combat for the remainder of the scene, and will return at your side at the start of the next session only if you succeed in a **Healing** roll with a TN of 16. If you fail, the hound will not recover until the next Fellowship phase.

The training of a Hound of Mirkwood is an endeavour in itself; the teachings of Radagast have turned this craft into an art. When you first choose this Virtue, your hound learns to assist you with one Common skill as described under *Support* below, without paying the Experience point cost. You can train him to *Support* additional skills, as well as to assist you in combat, as a separate undertaking during later Fellowship phases, as follows:

Support

You can train your hound to assist you in one activity. A dog can be trained to support you when making

any *one* of the following skill rolls: **Awe**, **Awareness**, **Explore**, or **Hunting**. It takes a Fellowship phase and one Experience point to teach your dog to complete an additional task.

When you are making a roll using one of the skills imparted to your dog, you may roll the Feat die twice, and keep the best result.

Harass Enemy

You may spend a Fellowship phase and two Experience points to teach your animal companion to harass your opponent when fighting at close quarters.

When you are fighting alongside your animal companion, your immediate adversary in close combat is always considered to be **Wearry**.

Protect

You may spend a Fellowship phase and one Experience point to teach your hound to steadfastly defend you when you withdraw to attack your enemies with a ranged weapon.

If you want to fight in a rearward stance, your dog protects you, counting as a companion fighting in a close combat stance (so that you need only another companion in close combat). Additionally, you are allowed to choose a rearward stance even if the total number of enemies is more than twice the number of companions (up to three times) - see Combat at page 156).

Natural Watchfulness

The wood was full of the rumour of him, dreadful tales even among beasts and birds.

Whether travelling, exploring or even resting, the behaviour of animals can communicate much to those who know how to interpret the signs. It could be the sudden silence of a bird, or the distant rustling of a beast in flight. You have learnt to recognise which sounds and sights reveal the approaching of enemies, and to read much from your surroundings.



When you are outside, you may upgrade the quality of a successful **Awareness** roll by one level, turning a success into a great success, or a great success into an extraordinary one. Additionally, during the day, you may make an **Explore** roll with a TN of 14 to gather information regarding the area surrounding you, as if you were observing it from a vantage point (the top of a tall tree, a small hill).

*A Woodman possessing Natural Watchfulness, finding himself in a clearing deep in the woods, might roll **Explore** to notice that a forest stream passes nearby, and that a cave opens a few hundred meters to the east.*



Staunching Song

“They are... singing many songs, after the manner of the children of Men before the Dark Years.”

This song has been taught to the worthiest members of your clan since your people first descended along the

banks of the Great River. Its tune echoes Elven songs from a time of war and weapons, and its precious knowledge has been passed with great care from one generation to the next. Singing its words over a wound can reduce the loss of a warrior’s life-blood to a trickle, letting it flow back to the heart.

At the end of a fight, if you have been Wounded, you may roll **Song** against TN 14. On a successful roll, you recover a number of additional Endurance points equal to your Wisdom rating, twice your Wisdom rating if the roll was a great success, or three times your Wisdom rating if the roll was an extraordinary success. Additionally, your injury is considered to have been treated successfully (see Chapter Four: Life and Death). You may spend a point of Hope to do the same for another member of your Company.

HOW REWARDS WORK

Háma knelt and presented to Théoden a long sword in a scabbard clasped with gold and set with green gems. “Here, lord, is Herugrim, your ancient blade...”

In a world of growing darkness, trade is mostly limited to small areas, and is often practised only among trusted individuals. High-quality weapons, especially, are considered priceless, and are guarded as treasured belongings. Traditionally, items of unusual craftsmanship are buried with their owners. As such, finely crafted weapons or suits of armour cannot be purchased, but may – rarely – be awarded for service or heroic deeds.

IMPROVING THE STANDARD OF EQUIPMENT

At the beginning of the game, each player selects his adventurer’s possessions. Starting equipment includes weapons, a suit of armour, and possibly a helm or shield, all at an ordinary level of quality, with the characteristics listed in the tables at page 77. Heroes receive superior gear when they gain new ranks in Valour.

Every time a hero's Valour score goes up one level – including at character creation, if he begins with a Valour of 2 – he receives a Reward. A Reward entitles a player to bestow a new special quality upon one equipment item.

Rewards may be tributes given to the hero by his own folk or family, or by a munificent lord honouring an adventurer by letting him choose a weapon or a suit of armour from his personal armoury. There are two types of Rewards – Qualities and Cultural Rewards.

Qualities and Cultural Rewards

Qualities are generic enhancements that affect a single characteristic of any item.

Players can select any one Quality from among those listed when their character is entitled to a new Reward, and can apply its effects on any weapon or suit of armour they use. See below for the descriptions and game mechanics of Qualities.

Cultural Rewards are more specific improvements, typical of the military traditions of each folk.

There are three different Rewards for every culture presented in the game: a player can select one of them when his character is entitled to a new Reward. Each Cultural Reward may be taken only once. Cultural Rewards may be combined with Qualities, where appropriate.

The description of each culture's exclusive Rewards are presented at the following pages:

Bardings	page 137
Beornings	page 138
Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain	page 138
Elves of Mirkwood	page 139
Hobbits of the Shire	page 140
Woodmen of Wilderland	page 140

One or More Items?

Rewards are upgrades enhancing the characteristics of the equipment carried by a hero. It is up to a player to decide whether a Reward represents a change in their existing weapon or armour, the discovery of a previously unknown property, or an entirely new item.

This is particularly important as far as Cultural Rewards are concerned, as they represent a gift received from a character's own folk.

The company of heroes have made their way to Rivendell, and are enjoying a respite from their labours. Three of the players have recently raised their Valour scores, and decide the Fellowship phase is an excellent time to select their Rewards.

Dwalin son of Dori hands his father's cracked, battered shield to the Elves, which, when returned is beautifully restored, with a fine steel rim fixed to the edge (adding the Reinforced Quality to his existing shield). Míriel is presented by her hosts with one of the finely crafted bows of her people (presenting her with a new Woodland Bow). Andwise Burrows, meanwhile, having struggled with a suit of heavy armour for weeks, learns how to remove some of the sections and adjust the straps, making the armour considerably more comfortable (discovering the suit's Cunning Make Quality).

Whatever their choice, players should integrate the decisions into their stories, telling the tale of how one hero received a gift, or another had his equipment improved, during the Fellowship phase. If the player anticipates an increase in Valour before the end of an Adventuring phase, he could discuss with the Loremaster the possibility of making the Reward a part of the end of the current adventure. A Lord of the Free Peoples making a ceremonial award to the hero at the culmination of an adventure is a highly satisfying note to end on.



Availability

Upgraded items enjoy a certain degree of 'plot immunity'; they should never be lost, broken or in any way be taken from a character. If a Loremaster or his players do not like this level of abstraction in their games, then a hero should at least receive a new object of equivalent worth as a replacement for a lost item. After all, a Reward is a token of recognition of a hero's renown, and that cannot be taken away!

Naming Weapons of Quality

Warriors and adventurers sometimes bestow names on items of war gear that prove worthy. This is most common with blades and spears, rarer with helms and shields, and almost unknown with suits of armour. Elves and Northmen follow similar naming traditions, bestowing titles upon their weapons glorifying their effectiveness in battle, such as 'Orc-cleaver,' 'Foe-hammer,' or 'Battle-friend,' in their respective languages (weapons with loftier or more poetic names, such as 'Snow Point' or 'Cold Star,' are almost always items of nobler lineage or greater antiquity, rarely given as Rewards).

Weapons of worth are so highly esteemed among the Bardings that sometimes they even name their sons and daughters after pieces of war gear ('Bard' can be translated as 'Battle-axe'), especially if there is a family heirloom to be passed along generations of warriors.

On the other hand, the Beornings do not often call a weapon the same name more than twice during the same day, but use many variations on a similar theme (the same sword can be called at times 'Life-taker,' at other 'Byrnie-biter,' another 'Throng-plough,' then 'Thicket-clearer,' and so on). Beorn has been heard saying that he calls any weapon good which is true to his master.

Hobbits rarely give titles to their weapons. If they do, it is probably because such an item has saved their lives. In any case, they tend to choose simple or otherwise unpretentious names taken from ordinary life.

Dwarves do not name their weapons at all, even renowned artefacts, which are most likely to be known by their legendary owners (such as the Axe of Durin). Nevertheless, it is entirely possible that they give names to their weapons but keep them secret.

QUALITIES

There are several types of Qualities, allowing players to raise the effectiveness of their armour, helm, shield or weapon. Most Qualities may be applied more than once to the same piece of gear, unless the upgrade is specifically highlighted as unique.

Each single piece of equipment can receive a maximum of three Qualities in total. An item with one Quality is considered to be of fine make, one with two Qualities is a superior piece of equipment, and one with three Qualities is an object of worth.

An item enhanced by one or more qualities may be further empowered by the acquisition of a Cultural Reward (if applicable).

Olvard from Dale has just reached rank 3 in Valour, and is entitled to a new gear upgrade. He already possesses a fine sword with a Keen blade; he decides to give his sword a second Quality, making it Grievous. Now, he carries a superior sword, with a Keen and Grievous blade.

Cunning Make (armour, headpiece or shield)

A skilled craftsman has made this piece of equipment lighter or less cumbersome than its lesser counterparts, thus reducing its Encumbrance.

The Encumbrance rating of the selected item is reduced by 2 (to a minimum of zero Encumbrance).

This upgrade may be applied to any defensive item, and can be selected multiple times (always up to a maximum of three Qualities per item).

Close-fitting (armour or headpiece)

A skilful smith has made this piece of protective equipment more difficult to overcome with a piercing blow.

The selected item's Protection rating gets a bonus of +1.

This upgrade may be applied to any suit of armour or helm, and can be selected multiple times (always up to a maximum of three Qualities per item).

Reinforced (shield, unique)

The shield's structure is reinforced, possibly with a metal rim or a larger iron boss, letting its wearer parry blows with greater ease.

The shield's Parry bonus is raised by one. In addition, the shield cannot be smashed.

This upgrade may be applied only once, to any type of shield (buckler, shield or great shield).

Grievous (weapon, unique)

The weapon is strong and heavy, inflicting more harm on its targets.

The weapon's Damage rating is raised by two (a weapon that can be wielded with one or two hands gets the bonus to both its damage ratings).

This upgrade may be applied only once, to any one weapon.

Keen (weapon, unique)

Sharp and well-balanced, this weapon is more likely to produce a piercing blow when hitting its target.

The weapon's Edge rating is reduced by one (note that an Edge rating of Ψ becomes a rating of 10).

This upgrade may be applied only once, to any one weapon type.

Fell (weapon, unique)

Hard and straight, a piercing blow from a fell weapon is stopped less easily by a suit of armour.

The weapon's Injury rating is raised by two.

This upgrade may be applied only once, to any one weapon type.

CULTURAL REWARDS – BARDINGS

The city of Dale prospered in the North for centuries. When it was finally rebuilt, many relics of its proud heritage were found. Other valuables had been kept away from the ruin, as the prized possessions of ancient families that fled to Lake-town.

Dalish Longbow (great bow)

The bowyers of Dale used prodigiously tall and powerful staves of fine yew wood to make bows for their King's men.

When you get a Ψ on the Feat die using a Dalish longbow, the target must roll the Feat die twice and choose the worst result for his Protection test roll.





Spear of King Bladorthin (spear)

The Dwarves of the Mountain forged these spears for a king who lived before the Dragon came. Their thrice-forged heads never lose their keenness, and their shafts are inlaid with gold.

When you make a ranged attack using a Spear of King Bladorthin, you roll the Feat die twice and choose the best result.

Tower Shield (great shield)

The soldiers of Girion, Lord of Dale, carried great shields that were so tall that it was said that a grown man could completely hide behind them.

When you are using a Tower shield, your Parry bonus gets an additional +2 against ranged weapons.

CULTURAL REWARDS - BEORNINGS

The Beornings have gathered many uncommon pieces of war gear under the roof of Beorn's wooden hall: the heirlooms of ancient families and the findings of years of life in the Wild.

Giant-slaying Spear (great spear)

A giant-slaying spear is an unusually long great spear made of ash wood, once used only from horseback.

When you attack using a Giant-slaying Spear, your close combat Damage rating is raised by +4 against creatures greater than human-sized.

Noble Armour (leather armour)

Craftsmen of old have long laboured on these coats of leather, shaping and decorating them with lacquers and other ornaments.

When wearing Noble armour, your Valour and Wisdom scores enjoy a bonus of +3 as far as calculating Tolerance for an Encounter is concerned.

Splitting Axe (axe or great axe)

A Beorning splitting axe has a wedge-shaped head, capable of rending armour with its strokes, a hold-over from a time when a Northman needed a weapon capable of piercing the skin of a Dragon.

When you get a ♣ on the Feat die using a Splitting axe, the target rolls one Success die less on his Protection test.

CULTURAL REWARDS - DWARVES OF THE LONELY MOUNTAIN

The fabulous hoard of Smaug contained countless treasures, artefacts created by craftsmen whose secrets are now lost. And many other precious things have been added to the riches of Durin's Folk since the restoration of the Kingdom under the Mountain.

Axe of the Azanulbizar (great axe)

It is said that every Dwarf that survived the Battle of Azanulbizar returned from that battlefield bowed under a heavy burden, as he carried the weapons of those who died that day and whose bodies were burned in the pyre.

When you are attacking an enemy with an Attribute level of 6 or less, if you get a ♣ on the Feat die using this axe, your opponent is made Weary for the remainder of the combat.

Dwarf-wrought Hauberk (mail armour)

The Dwarves of the Mountain make good coats of steel rings, but they cannot match the work of the armourers that lived before the Dragon came.

When you invoke an Attribute bonus on a Protection test, use your favoured Body rating as a bonus.



Helm of Awe (helm)

The Dwarven heroes of old wore helms with visors crafted by the hammer of the smith in hideous shapes, to better dismay the enemy that looked upon them.

When making a roll using **Awe**, you roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result.

CULTURAL REWARDS - ELVES OF MIRKWOOD

The weaponsmiths of the Woodland Realm spent long years devising more efficient ways to defeat their enemies. The armouries of the Elvenking are filled with enough weapons to fight in many wars.

Bitter Spear (spear)

These spears were made with ash wood from what is now called Dol Guldur, once home to many woodland Elves.

If you get a ♣ on the Feat die when attacking with a Bitter Spear, you get a +4 to your Injury rating.

Spearman's Shield (buckler)

The agile Elven warriors learnt long ago to profit from the protection of a small shield when using a great spear. These leaf-shaped bucklers are smaller than most.

Apply the Parry bonus of this buckler even if you are using a two-handed weapon in close combat.

Woodland Bow (bow)

The Silvan Elves have always eschewed the great bows favoured by many folks in the North. They prefer shorter and lighter bows that can be bent as quickly as possible, as in a forest the enemy can be anywhere.

You are always allowed to make one additional opening volley, even when no opening volleys are allowed (unless you are surprised).



CULTURAL REWARDS - HOBBITS OF THE SHIRE

The Mathom-house at Michel Delving contains many weapons of different and unusual provenance, and some hang as trophies above the hearths of old houses in the Shire.

Bow of the North Downs (bow)

One of the oldest stories told in the Shire remembers how a company of the best archers that the Shire could muster went north to aid the King in battle. They never returned, but a number of very strong bows are said to have been recovered from the battlefield and preserved to this day.

When making a ranged attack using a Bow of the North Downs, ignore the bonus given by a shield to your target's Parry rating.

King's Blade (short sword)

At times, country Hobbits find ancient swords inside fallen mounds, amid tilled fields or washed ashore along a watercourse. Unable to discover their precise origin, they call them simply 'King's blades.'

If you roll a great or extraordinary success on an attack using a King's blade, you automatically inflict a Piercing blow.

Lucky Armour (armour)

Suits of armour are very prized ornaments in the houses of the greater families of the Shire. The best among them can be still put to proper use, if an adventurous Hobbit demonstrates he deserves it.

If hit by a Piercing blow while wearing Lucky Armour, roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result on the Protection test.

CULTURAL REWARDS - WOODMEN OF WILDERLAND

The four Houses of the Woodmen have always chosen keepers among their wise ones to guard the riches stored in their great halls. It is from their hands that worthy warriors receive their hard-earned Rewards.

Bearded Axe (long-hafted axe)

The most prized axes have a wide 'bearded' head, often scored with ancient runes of victory. The longer blade bites into enemies' shields, and its hooked end can be used to disarm them.

When you get a ♣ on the Feat die using a Bearded axe, you may smash your opponent's shield OR disarm him (in addition to the normal effects of a successful attack).

Feathered Armour (armour)

Radagast has blessed these suits of armour with his cunning, and now they don't seem to make a sound when worn, whether they are made from animal skins or rings of steel.

When making a roll using **Stealth** wearing Feathered Armour, roll the Feat die twice and keep the best result.

Shepherds-bow (bow or great bow)

When a bow of any type is deemed very powerful, the Woodmen of Wilderland call it a 'shepherds-bow,' as they would use it to protect their herds and cattle from the preying claws of the Eagles of the Misty Mountains.

When you get a ♣ on the Feat die using a Shepherds-bow, inflict extra damage equal to your Damage rating (regardless of the level of success).





- LIFE and DEATH -

“Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life.”

For heroes adventuring in the twilight years of the Third Age, harm and injury have grievous consequences, and even a survivable wound can keep a character out of action for a long time. It is a dark age, where houses of healing are rare and knowledge of the proper treatment of wounds is mostly lost, not least in lordly households where wisdom, if not lore, has slowly withered away.

STATES OF HEALTH

Based on their condition, heroes could be considered to be **Weary**, **Miserable**, **Wounded**, and even **Poisoned**. While normally hale, the Endurance of characters can decrease rapidly or their Hope may dwindle. They can find themselves suddenly **Weary** or **Miserable** as a consequence, or they might be **Wounded** or **Poisoned** in combat. They could even be knocked out, or fall into unconsciousness through sheer exhaustion.

WEARY

A hero becomes **Weary** when his current Endurance score is equal to or lower than his Fatigue rating. Other sources of harm may make a hero temporarily **Weary**, even if his Endurance is still above his Fatigue rating.

As long as a hero is **Weary**, all the Success dice he rolls for any test that end up giving a result of 1, 2 or 3 (the outlined numbers) are considered to have rolled a zero instead.

When a character is made **Weary** through the loss of Endurance, check the **Weary** box on the character sheet with a cross (✕).

When this is the case, the hero suffers the consequences of being **Weary** until properly rested (see **Resting** on page 145).

Sources of strain other than the loss of Endurance generally make a hero only temporarily **Weary**, usually for as long as the source of strain lasts (for the length of a combat encounter, for instance).

When a character is temporarily **Weary**, place a tick (✓) in the **Weary** box.

When the temporary weariness passes, the mark is simply erased and the hero is once again **Hale** without the need for an extended rest.

Exhaustion

When a character's Endurance score drops to zero, he is exhausted and drops unconscious (see **Unconscious** below). Players whose characters are made unconscious due to loss of Endurance should be careful to check the characters' **Weary** box, too (if he wasn't **Weary** already).

Miserable

A hero is considered to be **Miserable** when his Hope score is equal to or lower than his Shadow rating. Other sources of harm may also cause a hero to become temporarily **Miserable**, even if his Hope score didn't fall below his Shadow rating.

As long as a hero is **Miserable**, he is in danger of suffering a bout of madness and temporarily lose control of himself (see page 58 of the **Loresmaster's Book** for details).

When a character is rendered **Miserable** through the loss of Hope, the **Miserable** box on the character sheet is checked with a cross (✕).

When this happens, the hero is considered **Miserable** until his Hope score rises above his Shadow rating once again.

When this happens, the character is immediately restored to his usual spiritual state and no longer experiences the negative effects of being Miserable.

Factors other than the loss of Hope make a hero only temporarily Miserable. Temporary Misery usually lasts for as long as the cause remains in effect (for the length of a combat encounter, for instance).

When a character is made temporarily Miserable, place a tick (✓) in the **Miserable** box.

Spent Heroes

If a character's Hope score is reduced to zero, the adventurer is spiritually drained. A spent hero cannot bear himself to continue a struggle of any sort, and will flee from any source of danger or stress at the first opportunity, unless cornered and forced to fight.

WOUNDED

A Wounded character has received a life-threatening blow: an open wound or other critical injury. While losing and recovering Endurance is an everyday occurrence for an adventurer, being Wounded is a more serious predicament, which is going to affect a character for much longer. Characters are Wounded most often in combat.

When a hero is Wounded for any reason, the player checks the **Wounded** box on the character sheet as a reminder.

Players should note that a Wounded character is not necessarily Weary, unless the appropriate box is checked too.

Knock Out

Being Wounded does not have any immediate consequences on the fighting performance of a character, as it is a warrior's prerogative that of being able to endure such pain, but the injury puts a character in danger of being knocked out of combat:

When a character whose Wounded box has already been checked is Wounded again, he immediately becomes unconscious (see below).

The second Wound is not recorded in any way. The character was simply knocked out, or passed out from shock.

UNCONSCIOUS

A character who receives a second Wound or who isn't Wounded but is reduced to zero Endurance passes out and drops unconscious. He is now totally in the hands of his companions – or worse, in those of his opponents.

As soon as an unconscious character gains one or more Endurance points, he wakes up immediately (whether he fell unconscious due to loss of Endurance or because he was Wounded after his Wounded box was already checked).

DYING

When a Wounded hero is reduced to zero Endurance, he passes out and is considered to be dying.

A dying character will perish if he doesn't get help soon (see Getting Better, below).

KILLING BLOW

Adventurers are at risk of death when they drop to zero Endurance while Wounded, but they can also be killed outright:

A character whose Wounded box was already checked is killed immediately when he receives another Wound AND is reduced to zero Endurance points at the same time.



Narvi the Dwarf has just been Wounded by a Spider bite, and the following rounds of combat have taken their toll on his Endurance: he is left with 8 points! Braving the threat to his life, Narvi keeps fighting, as the enemy's onslaught seems to be finally on the verge of relenting. Unfortunately for the Dwarf, a Spider hits him with its parting shot, for a great success and a Piercing blow! He is hit for 12 points of Endurance loss, and the iron mandibles of the Spider cut through his armour, causing a second Wound. Narvi's thoughts fly far away as his eyes see no more...

Coup de Grâce

An unconscious, or otherwise defenceless, hero is killed automatically if an opponent has the time to administer a *coup de grâce* (one combat turn). The action doesn't require a roll, but the adversary must possess the means to kill the character quickly and efficiently (a weapon or a lethal form of attack).

POISONED

Adventurers can be Poisoned in several ways: they could be bitten by a giant Spider, hit by an Orcish broad-bladed sword, or end up eating venison hunted in the wrong part of Mirkwood.

A Poisoned character is considered to be Wounded. Thus, if an already Poisoned character is wounded once, he falls unconscious as if Wounded twice (likewise, a Wounded character falls unconscious when Poisoned).

Different poisons may provoke different additional effects. A Poisoned character remains as such until a proper remedy is applied, or the effects of the particular poison affecting him wear off.

GETTING BETTER

Characters improve their health mainly by resting. A good night's sleep might successfully mend a hero's spirit, as well as his body. But some injuries are so terrible that they require greater attention and care.



RECOVERY

Fighters soon learn to fully exploit the briefest of pauses to recover their much-needed energies.

A character who is not Wounded, and who at the end of combat is given the time to catch his breath (to rest for at least half an hour) recovers a number of Endurance points equal to his Heart score.

A character who fell unconscious because his Endurance was reduced to zero, but wasn't Wounded, is allowed to recover normally (and thus wakes up after a short rest).

If a player-hero's Endurance score is not yet fully replenished after recovery, he will recuperate the remaining points at the normal rate for resting (see Resting below).

TREATING WOUNDS

A Wounded character may attempt to speed his recovery by making a Healing roll against a moderate difficulty (TN 14). A character who is not unconscious may attempt the roll himself, or allow another character tend to him.

A successful Healing roll does not remove a Wound, nor does it restore lost Endurance points, but it lets the player underline the Wounded label on the character sheet, to mark the injury as *treated*.

The Loremaster should not allow a failed Healing roll to be repeated until at least a day has passed, as the failure of the treatment won't be immediately apparent.

A Wounded character whose injury was treated successfully recovers more rapidly than a hero with an untreated injury (see below).

Treating Dying Characters

Dying characters must have their Wound successfully treated with a Healing roll within approximately 12 hours, or they will die. As soon as their wound is treated successfully, they are not considered to be dying any more.

RESTING

Adventurers recover by resting regularly, as they regain Endurance points, shake off Weariness and see their injuries finally mend.

Recover Endurance

Player-heroes recover a number of Endurance points for every prolonged rest they enjoy every day (usually, a night's sleep). The amount of points recovered depends on the current health of the character:

A Wounded hero with an untreated injury recovers one Endurance point.

A Wounded hero with a treated injury recovers two Endurance points.

An uninjured hero recovers two Endurance points, plus a number of points equal to his Heart rating.

Shake off Weariness

A weary adventurer whose Endurance score is higher than his Fatigue rating after a night's sleep or comparable rest is now properly rested.

A character who was Weary before he rested may now uncheck the **Weary** label on his character sheet.

Heal Wounds

When the Endurance score of an injured character reaches its maximum rating after a prolonged rest, the hero is considered to have been finally restored to full health, and the Wounded label on his character sheet can be unchecked.

Update Fatigue Rating

If a hero reduced the total Encumbrance of his carried gear before taking a prolonged rest, he may now update his Fatigue rating accordingly (see page 107 for details).





- Part 5: Adventuring Mechanics -





- action - RESOLUTION

“Of the various burglarious proceedings he had heard of, picking the trolls’ pockets seemed the least difficult...”

When heroes leave their homes to become adventurers, they leave behind much more than their usual abodes. They abandon the day-to-day tasks, crafts and routines to face new challenges with every new dawn. With time, some actions become second nature to the seasoned adventurer, especially those necessary to survive in foreign lands or while traversing the empty wilderness. But surprising trials await even the most prepared of heroes...

This chapter provides players with a detailed explanation of the fundamental mechanics underlying the game. Armed with such knowledge, players will not only be able to make their die rolls and interpret the results, but will know how to enhance their character’s performance, by taking advantage of their abilities at the right moment.

HOW ACTIONS WORK

The One Ring roleplaying game unfolds around a continuous interaction between the Loremaster and his players: the Loremaster sets the scene, the characters explore the world and he describes the consequences of their actions, the new situations they find themselves in and any obstacles to their progress. The players steer the story their own way by relating how their characters resolve their hurdles.

Of course, this interaction sometimes leads to situations that can’t be resolved simply through roleplaying or

common sense, as they challenge the talent and the abilities of their characters. When this happens, the Loremaster and his players turn to the rules of the game.

There are three common types of actions:

The majority of the actions taken by players during a game are *automatic* actions that do not require die rolling. Heroes who are attempting to open a normal, unlocked door, or who are trying to convince someone of something he already believes, or who are wading across the waters of a shallow forest stream, should be allowed to succeed automatically.

An action is called a *task* when it is called for by a player, whose character is trying to achieve something.

An action is a *test* when it is required by the Loremaster.

While automatic actions do not require any game mechanic to be resolved, tasks and tests both involve rolling dice, and are resolved in slightly differing ways (how *tests* are resolved is detailed in the Loremaster’s Book).

RESOLVING TASKS

A player may initiate a task when he wants something and already knows that he has to make a roll to get it, or when a player is describing what his character is going to do and the Loremaster informs him that to pull it off he has to make a roll. Most actions attempted by players are resolved as tasks.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

When he initiates a task, the acting player states clearly what his intentions are:

A clear statement of intent includes a description of the task being attempted, the name of the ability that the character is going to use to accomplish it (usually a Common skill), and the general objective that the character is trying to achieve.

*It is Yule-tide, and Trotter is celebrating with the other adventurers and many villagers in the main hall of Rhosgobel. For his own secret motives, the Hobbit's player says that Trotter is leaving the feast-hall unnoticed. The Loremaster asks how Trotter will achieve this, as the hall is crowded, and Trotter's player announces that the Hobbit is going to sneak out using his **Stealth** skill, trying to avoid attracting any attention to himself.*

*Beli's player is of a different mind: a few moments earlier at the same feast, Beli noticed that a Woodman chieftain is wearing an intricately-wrought mail coat and dropped a few casual remarks to inquire about it. Met with a wary look, Beli's player declares that the Dwarf starts to chat with the chieftain using his **Courtesy** skill, with the intention of slowly steering the conversation back towards his excellent suit of armour.*

Choose Ability

As the examples above show, it is up to the acting player to pick the ability that his character is going to use. Players are trusted to choose the ability most appropriate to their purpose (the description of skills and their use is found starting from page 85, and a series of examples can be found below) but, as is the case with the use of Traits, their judgement is subject to the approval of the other players; in case of any objection, the Loremaster will be called upon to select the ability he deems to be most appropriate.

Typical Tasks:

TASK	ABILITY
Choose location to set up camp	<i>Explore</i>
Climbing	<i>Athletics</i>
Cook meal	<i>Craft</i>
Find food in the Wild	<i>Explore or Hunting</i>
Find traps	<i>Search</i>
Find solution to an enigma	<i>Riddle</i>
Follow tracks	<i>Hunting</i>
Hiding	<i>Stealth</i>
Interpret writing	<i>Lore</i>
Move quietly	<i>Stealth</i>
Negotiate a deal	<i>Insight or Persuade</i>
Obtain an audience with an important person	<i>Awe or Courtesy</i>
Open lock	<i>Craft</i>
Public speech	<i>Inspire</i>
Riding	<i>Athletics</i>
Speak with a live Dragon	<i>Riddle</i>
Start a fire	<i>Craft</i>
Swimming	<i>Athletics</i>

Set Objective

Selecting a pertinent ability for the task is important, but setting a proper objective is even more so: what the acting player chooses as his hero's goal for the task is what will happen if the ensuing roll is successful. Players should propose tasks only when they actually want something particular to happen: it must be an action with definite consequences, something that will have a clear impact on the game.

Trotter wants to leave the party without attracting attention, because he wants to find the wizard Radagast for a private conversation. If the player simply wanted Trotter to leave the hall for a breath of fresh air, he probably wouldn't mind if his character's actions were noticed or not.

Beli is curious about the chieftain's armour as he knows that in the past there were Northmen who claimed the hoard of a Dragon. Beli wants to know if this suit of armour came from a similar treasure hoard.

SETTING THE DIFFICULTY

As soon as a player has stated his intent clearly, the Loremaster rates the difficulty of the action by assigning it a Target Number.

Tasks are normally assumed to be set at TN 14 (moderate difficulty), unless the Loremaster has good reasons to make the action harder or easier (the Loremaster's Book contains a set of guidelines aimed to help the Loremaster rate his players' tasks).

*In the example above, nobody objects to Trotter's intention to sneak out using his **Stealth** skill. The Loremaster asks the player to continue with his narration, making it a task with TN 14.*

The chieftain that Beli is talking to is an elder who remembers many traditional rhymes warning Men of the double-dealing of Dwarves. The Loremaster decides that the chieftain is wary of Beli's inquiries, and sets the difficulty at TN 16 (hard).

BEFORE THE ROLL

When the Loremaster has set the difficulty of the task, the acting player may announce that he is going to use a special ability that applies to the situation at hand (a Trait or a Virtue, for example, to possibly improve his chances to succeed).

Trotter's player is afraid that it is going to be difficult for the Hobbit to exit the hall unnoticed. He decides to try a clever ruse: he invokes Trotter's 'smoking' Trait, saying that the Hobbit pretends to reach a torch by the door, as if he needed to light his pipe. The other players cheer at his idea and let him run with it: the Loremaster determines that the action is an automatic success.

AFTER THE ROLL

When a die roll results in a failure, the acting player may invoke an Attribute bonus and add to the result a value equal to the Attribute linked to the skill used for the attempt. If the modified result now matches or exceeds the action's TN, then the failure is turned into a success and the player spends a point of Hope.

Beli is not the most graceful of speakers and his die roll testifies it: a result of 13, a failure! The acting player invokes an Attribute bonus, adding 3 to the result - Beli's Heart rating. The new result is equal to 16, a success. Beli's player happily spends a point of Hope.

CONSEQUENCES

When the player and the Loremaster have decided on the factors affecting the task, the dice are rolled and their result is evaluated. There are two possible outcomes: the task was either successful or it failed. In any case, the story will be affected for better or worse.

The Task was a Success

When the acting player rolls the dice for his task and scores a success, he gets what he aimed for and briefly narrates how his stated objective has been achieved. On an ordinary success, the player must limit his narration to what he defined when he announced the task in the first place (the objective). If the roll produced a great or extraordinary success, then the player may suggest how his achievements outstripped his expectations.

Beli's roll resulted in a great success. His player describes how the Dwarf successfully introduces himself to the chieftain. Since the player obtained a great success, he proposes that Beli was so courteous that it is the chieftain himself that wants to talk about his mail coat, probably taking the chance to brag about his prized possession.

When describing the consequences of a successful roll, players must remember not to invent details that are in the Loremaster's hands, or that isn't pertinent to the task they accomplished.

For example, Beli's player cannot determine what the chieftain will say about his mail coat, as these details are part of the Loremaster's planned story.

The Task Failed

If the acting player fails his roll, he doesn't accomplish his objective. When this happens, the Loremaster narrates the consequences of the missed task. This usually follows intuitively from what the player was trying to do.

Whatever the case, the Loremaster must make sure that the task has a definite impact and produces consequences that cannot be ignored.

*If Beli failed his **Courtesy**, the chieftain might have taken Beli's curiosity as an insult, seeing an implicit accusation of theft in the words of the Dwarf, and reacted accordingly!*

DETAILED DIE-ROLL SEQUENCE

A dice roll is required when any action might reasonably result in failure. All actions in the game are resolved using the following rules:

1. First, determine the ability to be used for the roll. If the action is a task, the ability is selected by the acting player; if the action is a test, the ability is chosen by the Loremaster.
2. The difficulty for the action is set by default at *moderate* (TN 14), unless the Loremaster or a specific rule indicates otherwise.
3. Depending on the circumstances a character possessing a pertinent Trait may be granted an automatic success by the Loremaster.
4. If the action is not automatic, the acting player rolls one Feat die, and a number of Success dice equal to his rating in the appropriate skill or other characteristic.
5. All numerical dice results are added up, to find the action result.
 - a. *Weariness*. If the acting character is *Weary*, all Success dice results in outline are ignored (i.e.: they are considered to have given a result of zero).
 - b. *Attribute bonus*. A player may invoke an Attribute bonus and add the pertinent Attribute score (or favoured Attribute, if appropriate) to the rolled total.
6. If the total action result is equal or superior to the Target Number, the action is a success. If the result is lower than the Target Number, the test has been failed.
7. If the action was successful, the degree of success is found by counting how many τ icons were produced by the roll: one τ icon indicates a great success, two or more τ icons an extraordinary success.

PLAYER OPTIONS

Players who do not use all the options available to them to affect the outcome of their actions might find themselves depending all too often on a sizeable element of chance. Fortunately for their characters, players can always limit the randomness of an action test by invoking an Attribute bonus.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS

Talented heroes tend to fare better than less capable individuals, often overcoming with ease challenges that may appear very difficult at first. Whenever they fail at a die roll, players may capitalise on their innate aptitudes and reverse the outcome of the action.

As explained previously, players invoking an Attribute bonus add a value equal to the rating of the character's relevant Attribute to the roll total.

When the action is being resolved using a skill, the Attribute for the bonus depends on the skill's *category* (see Chapter Three: Skills). If the action attempt does not require the use of a skill, then the relevant Attribute is probably defined by the action type.

Tests relying on Wisdom or Valour, for example, can be made easier by invoking a Heart Attribute bonus.

Players always take into consideration the basic value of an Attribute, unless the action is making use of a favoured skill. When this is the case, the bonus is equal to the favoured Attribute rating instead.

Players usually trigger an Attribute bonus by spending a Hope point.

- HEROIC - VENTURES

"He had many hardships and adventures before he got back."

A truly seasoned adventurer is familiar with the trials and challenges that attend the dangerous lifestyle of a wandering hero, travelling to distant or unknown places, fighting dangerous enemies and encountering new people or important personalities. Very often, these activities call upon the skills and abilities of all members of the company, testing the strength and unity of the group itself.

These trials, the building blocks of all adventures set in Middle-earth, are the focus of this chapter.

JOURNEY

Now they rode away amid songs of farewell and good speed, with their hearts ready for more adventure...

A company of heroes will often end up travelling across inhospitable or unfamiliar areas on their errands and quests. When this happens, the company is said to be on a Journey.

A Journey can be seen as a stretch of narrative time dividing two episodes. During this time, the Loremaster requires a number of skill tests from all companions, to represent hardships of the journey, and to determine how it affects the performance of the adventurers when the next episode starts.

Finally, a Journey sequence may trigger an unexpected episode if the adventurers fail some travelling tests catastrophically and trigger a Hazard episode (see below).

THE ADVENTURERS MAP

As obvious as it may seem, the members of a travelling company must at least know approximately where their destination is to be found to be able to reach it. At the end of the Third Age, Wilderland is a dangerous place and the folks inhabiting it have been long sundered from each other, to the point that most people do not know the precise whereabouts of places just a few days away – if they don't ignore their existence completely.

Most adventurers are a bit more knowledgeable, even at the start of their careers, as represented by the Adventurers Map shown at page 16 (all adventurers are of course considered to be familiar with their places of origin).

Players should update their geographical lore during play by taking notes or by writing directly on the map itself, adding the places they visit and recording the routes they have travelled during the game.

When the players have decided on a destination, they need to choose the best route to get there. Using their

map, they indicate the general route that they intend to follow, and the Loremaster advises how long it will take them to complete it and how many rolls will be required.

The hardships and difficulties encountered by the heroes when traversing the Wild are represented in the game by Fatigue tests.

The number of tests is based on the length of the journey, on the area and terrain traversed, and on the season in which the journey is taking place (journeys in the cold months of the year require more rolls than the warm ones). The Loremaster's Book contains all the information and rules required to calculate the length and difficulty of a journey (see the Loremaster's Book).

It is summer, and the company intends to reach the dwarven fortress in the Iron Hills from the town of Dale. The company will be travelling on foot. After making his calculations, the Loremaster says that the journey will cover approximately 140 miles, will take 11 days and require two Fatigue tests.



PLANNING AHEAD

The Dwarves and the Hobbit, helped by the wise advice of Elrond and the knowledge and memory of Gandalf, took the right road to the right pass.

When the Loremaster has determined the final length of the journey in days and the number of tests required to complete it, all players may check to see if their characters know something about the lands they are going to traverse:

All characters may attempt a **Lore** roll. The best roll, and all failed rolls, are taken into consideration.

Best Successful Lore Roll

Depending on whether the best roll was a success, a great success or an extraordinary success, the players proceed to choose among the options presented below.

Players may choose one option on a success, two on a great success, and all three on an extraordinary success (note that the same option cannot be chosen more than once).

Successful Lore Roll Options

1. Reduce the length of the journey by one day (to a minimum of one).
2. Allow one character to automatically pass one Fatigue test.
3. Reduce the TN of all Travel rolls made by one character by one level, (eg. from moderate to easy).

The company plans to walk for 11 days to get to the Iron Hills, and the journey requires two Fatigue tests with TN 14. Rathar the Hunter achieves a great success on his Lore roll, and the players decide to reduce the journey's length to 10 days, and to lower the TNs of both poor comfort-loving Bungo Maggott's Fatigue rolls to 12.

Failed Lore Rolls

For every failed **Lore** roll, the length of the journey is extended by one day, as the routes suggested by the failing adventurers is ill-informed, leading to bad 'short-cuts' and dead ends.

Attribute Bonus

If a character attempting the **Lore** test is already familiar with the route taken by the company (if, for example, he comes from a nearby area) the rolling player may be granted a free Attribute bonus; the same applies if the route has already been recorded on the company's Adventurer's Map.

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

*Balin, who was always their look-out man, said:
"There's a light over there!"*

An experienced company differs from a random group of adventurers in the capability of its members to collaborate effectively. When they are travelling, the companions usually divide up some of the duties according to ability.

Players assign their characters a role for the journey, roughly summarising what their characters will be doing for the length of the trip.

The duty chosen for a character comes into play when a failed **Travel** roll triggers a Hazard sequence. For example, if the track disappears into a bog, the company's scout will be the first to stumble across it. With the exception of the company's guide, more than one player-hero may be assigned the same role (i.e. there may be more than one character acting as look-outs, or more heroes going hunting regularly), but normally no character may assume more than one role at the same time (posing as the group's huntsman AND scout, for example). In time, players will probably assign the various roles on a permanent basis as they discover which character works best in each role.

Guide

One companion should have the responsibility of guiding the group during the journey. The guide of the company is responsible for decisions such as when the group should stop for a rest, or how to manage their reserves of food.

- The main asset of a good guide is a superior **Travel** skill.

Scouts

A character acting as a scout can be called upon to find a suitable location for setting up camp, or when a situation forces the company to abandon the road it was following to find a new one. Leaving a well-trodden path is difficult and dangerous, involving climbing up steep hills, wading wide streams or scaling doubtful paths along cliff-sides.

- A good scout is characterised by a decent **Explore** skill.

Huntsmen

When travelling with haste, a company can soon run out of provisions, especially when completing a journey that is going to take several weeks.

- A companion skilled at **Hunting** is always ready to track prey into the woods before making camp.

Look-out Men

A journey brings a company through wildly different territories, most of them dangerous. The look-out man is a vital duty that often puts a hero in the position of saving the lives of all members of a group, or of dooming them all through inattention.


- The look-out man's skill is **Awareness**, usually tested at the Loremaster's request.

JOURNEY RESOLUTION

When the preliminary rolls and choices have been made, it is time to resolve the Fatigue tests. Travelling companions face all sorts of difficulties, and must account for the additional weight and inconvenience of things like sleeping cots or blankets, food rations and such like. Fatigue tests are required to check whether the gear carried by each hero has proven too burdensome, or if they ended up encountering unexpected complications.

All tests are resolved at the same time for all characters.

When a player-hero fails a Fatigue test, he increases his Fatigue score by a number equal to the Encumbrance value of his Travelling gear (see below).

If at least one player fails the test and the Feat die ends up showing the  icon, a Hazard sequence has been triggered (see below).

Travelling Gear

As seen on page 76, the Encumbrance rating of a character's travelling gear depends on the season during which the journey is taking place, and is equal to 2 points during the cold months of a year, and to 1 point during spring and summer.

At the end of the journey, should a character find his Endurance rating to be equal to or lower than his Fatigue score (possibly raised by failed Fatigue tests), he will start the following episode being **Weary**.

Ponies and Boats

When travelling overland, companions may ease their toil by bringing ponies, or may journey on boats when along a river, lake or sea.


A companion embarked on a vessel or equipped with a pony halves the total Fatigue increase due to failed **Travel** rolls (round fractions up).

Companions looking for a ride must start their journey in a settlement of the Free Peoples. Additionally, the adventurers must be able to afford the expense, according to their current Standard of living and the table below:

STANDARD OF LIVING	EXPENSE
Poor	may not afford the expense
Frugal	may not afford the expense
Martial	may borrow one pony or boat if in region of origin
Prosperous	may afford to pay for one companion
Rich	may afford to pay for two companions

HAZARDS

Many misfortunes may attend a group of adventurers out in the Wild. Food transported by the company members might have been lost or spoiled, a water supply might prove to be insufficient, or a track might disappear into a bog that didn't appear on any map.

When a player fails a Fatigue test and the Feat die ends up showing the  icon, the result triggers a Hazard.

Hazards range from simple problems such as crossing a swollen stream, to difficult and potentially deadly challenges such as escaping from a ravenous pack of Wargs. The Loremaster's Book contains several examples of events for a Hazard sequence.

Hazards and Duties

Most Hazard descriptions require the presence of at least one character posing as the group's Guide, Look-out Man, Scout or Huntsman. That hero is presented with a challenge, usually in the form of a test.

If no hero is currently assigned to the required duty, another hero may spend a point of Hope to step up and temporarily cover the assignment. If no one volunteers, then the hazardous event takes place without anyone trying to prevent it.

Failing to overcome a Hazard always has negative consequences, such as delays, or the loss of additional points of Endurance or Hope.

ENCOUNTERS

A journey is arguably the most appropriate moment to present the company with an unforeseen meeting with new characters, including important personalities.

An encounter is almost never the product of a random die result, and is usually part of the Loremaster's plans for the current adventuring phase (although it might be improvised, based on the circumstances faced by the company). Unexpected meetings made during a journey can be resolved following the encounter sequence presented at page 163.

COMBAT

There was a ring and clatter as the Company drew their swords.

Part of the reason heroes join a company is strength in numbers: a party composed of diversely talented adventurers has a far better chance of survival out in the wild or deep under the mountains than individual fighters. When a company is forced into combat, each companion find supports from the other members of his group.

When members of the company find themselves entering the fray, the normal flow of the current episode is interrupted and time is organised in combat rounds.

As combat moves quickly and a lot happens in a short space of time, there are a few extra rules to help keep the action flowing.

COMBAT ROUNDS

A combat round represents the time it takes a hero to accomplish a significant action, like attacking with a weapon, breaking down a door, freeing a tied captive, etc. Trivial actions, like opening a door, passing an object to another character, or dropping an item, don't take up any significant time, and can be carried out at the same time as more important tasks. A number of combat-specific tasks that players may attempt during a fight are listed at the end of this chapter.

During each round of combat, all companions take it in turns to resolve their actions:

Stance: at the start of each round, all players declare their characters' stances (Forward, Open, Defensive, or Rearward). Characters can only take a Rearward stance if two other characters take Forward, Open or Defensive stances.

Action Resolution: characters take their actions in order of stance, from forward to rearward.

STANCES

...Gimli stood with his stout legs apart, wielding his dwarf-axe. The bow of Legolas was singing.

A character's stance describes the attitude of a hero during a round of combat, from boldest to most cautious, and determines both his basic combat Target Numbers and the order in which each character acts.





During the first round of combat, all players select a stance for their heroes, choosing one of the four available options from the table below. Characters may change their stance at the beginning of each round.

There are no restrictions on a hero's stance unless a hero wishes to assume a rearward stance (see below). A hero who spent his previous round in a rearward stance may flee combat at the beginning of a round.

Combat Stances:

STANCE	COMBAT TN	ORDER OF ACTION	DESCRIPTION
Forward	6	1	Exploiting any opportunity to attack, to the point of exposing yourself to the retaliation of your enemies.
Open	9	2	Fighting without sparing yourself, but giving proper attention to your enemies' actions.
Defensive	12	3	Fighting conservatively, trying to protect yourself or others and holding your ground.
Rearward*	12	4	Staying away from the press, to attack your foes from a distance.

*A character is allowed to assume a rearward stance only if there are at least two other characters fighting in a close combat stance (see Ranged Combat Stance: Rearward, below).

Order of Action

When it is the company's turn to act, the characters' actions are resolved starting with those fighting in a forward stance, and progressing through the stances until those in a rearward stance have acted. If two or more characters are fighting in the same stance, the character with the highest basic Wits score acts first, then the second highest, and so on.

Close Combat Stances

The first three stances (forward, open and defensive) see a character exchange blows in the thick of the fight, using close combat weapons.

As long as his hero maintains a close combat stance, a player uses the stance's combat TN when making an attack roll using a close combat weapon; the same TN is used by the Loremaster for all close combat attack rolls directed against the character during a round.

A hero fighting in a forward stance has a combat TN of 6. He will use this number when rolling to hit an enemy. The Loremaster, in turn, will use this same TN when the enemies attack the player-hero in close combat. The forward stance makes a hero's attacks easier, but makes him much easier to hit.

Ranged Combat Stance: Rearward

Once a confrontation is underway, player-heroes are allowed to make ranged attacks only if they choose a Rearward stance.

A character is allowed to assume this stance only if at least two other characters protect him by fighting in a close combat stance, AND if the total number of enemies facing the Company isn't more than twice the number of characters in the Company.

If a character finds himself unable to satisfy these requirements at the beginning of a round, he must choose a different stance.

Characters in a Rearward stance may not attack using close combat weapons, and may be targeted only by attackers using ranged weapons.

The basic Target Number for all ranged attacks is 12.

ATTACKS

An attack is an action roll made using a Weapon skill or Weapon skill group.

Close Combat Attacks

Combatants exchange blows using close combat weapons as soon as the sides involved in the fight make contact.

The Target Number of an attack made using a close combat weapon is based on the attacking hero's combat stance (see above) and modified by the Parry rating of the target (and by his shield, if he carries one).

Trotter is fighting in an Open stance (TN 9); his Parry rating is 5, and he carries a buckler (+1). A spider attempts to bite him in close combat! The Loremaster rolls against Trotter's TN of 15 (basic TN 9, +5, +1 for the buckler).

Brawling Attacks

A character attempting a close combat attack without a proper weapon (either unarmed or wielding an improvised weapon) can make a brawling attack:

Brawling attacks are made using the Dagger weapon skill, causing 1 Endurance point's worth of damage on a successful roll, and additional harm equal to the attacker's Damage rating on a great or extraordinary success. A brawling attack cannot result in a Piercing blow.

Ranged Attacks

Usually, heroes may attack with their ranged weapons before close combat is joined, if the Loremaster deems that a preliminary exchange of volleys is allowed by the situation, generally if the groups enter the fray from a distance (see the Loremaster's Book). As soon as combat at close quarters starts, a character may use a ranged weapon only in the Rearward stance (see Ranged Combat Stance: Rearward, above).

The TN to attack a target involved in a fight using a ranged weapon is equal to 12, plus the Parry rating of the target, and modified by a shield if the target is using one.

The high basic TN reflects the difficulty of aiming at a moving target, while being careful not to hit another companion engaged in the fight.

The Bride is fighting in a Rearward position. She is trying to skewer a Black Uruk engaging Trotter in close quarters by throwing her spear (ranged attack: TN 12); the Black Uruk's Parry rating is 5, and he carries a shield (+2). The Bride will need to roll 19 or more to hit (basic TN 12, +5, +2 for the shield).

Throwing Attacks

A character attempting a ranged attack using a stone or another object not specifically designed for throwing makes a throwing attack:

Throwing attacks are rolled using the Dagger weapon skill, and inflict 1 Endurance point's damage on a successful roll, and additional loss of Endurance equal to the attacker's ranged Damage rating on a great or extraordinary success. A throwing attack cannot result in a Piercing blow.



Attribute Bonus for Attack Tests (Body)

The effectiveness of a weapon relies on the skill of its user, but may also profit from his physical prowess and strength.

When a player is using a Weapon skill to resolve a test, he may spend a point of Hope to invoke a Body Attribute bonus.

ENDURANCE LOSS

A well-placed blow always has unpleasant consequences for its target, whether or not the hit is successful in producing long term damage: a combatant can be disoriented by the sudden pain, lose his wind, or be sent reeling by the powerful impact. When a melee or ranged attack roll succeeds, then the attack was successful in hurting the target in some way: the target suffers an immediate loss of Endurance, based on the quality of the roll and possibly modified by the attacker's Damage bonus.

On a success, the target loses Endurance points equal to the damage rating of the weapon used.

On a great success, the target loses Endurance points equal to the damage rating of the weapon PLUS the Damage rating of the attacking hero.

On an extraordinary success, the target loses a number of Endurance points equal to the damage rating of the weapon PLUS double the Damage rating of the attacking hero.

Óri son of Póri, fighting in a defensive stance, swings his mighty great axe at a slaving Orc's head, with a TN of 19 (TN 12 for his stance, +5 for the Orc's Parry rating, +2 for the Orc's shield). He rolls a 5 on his Feat die and a 6, a 6 and a 3 on his three Success dice (for his Great Axe skill of ♦♦♦), for a total of 20, which hits; and as two dice came up with the τ icon, the attack is an extraordinary success!

The great axe's base damage is 9, and Óri adds his Damage rating of 7 (Óri has a high Body) twice, for a total of 23 Endurance points (9+7+7). The Orc is likely to be downed in a single swing...

Knockback

Fighters soon discover that sometimes it is better to literally 'roll with the punches,' and reduce the force of an attack by stepping back or to the side or by kneeling under the force of a blow – in gaming terms, they learn to let themselves be 'knocked back' by their opponent

Characters may halve the Endurance loss caused by a successful attack (rounding fractions up) by letting themselves be thrown off-balance.

A character who is knocked back cannot change his stance and will spend his following round recovering his fighting position, unable to take any further action that turn. If an adversary attacks while a hero is recovering from knockback, the attack is resolved normally.

Removing a Helm

Warriors fighting in a full helm enjoy better protection, but suffer from its rather hefty Encumbrance rating. Unlike the rest of the equipment making up a hero's gear of war, some relief can be found if a fighter takes the time to drop the helm and take a breath of fresh air.

A character involved in combat wearing a helm can forfeit his attack for the turn to remove it. Removing a helm causes the hero to lower his Fatigue score by 3 points (and, of course, to lose the helm's Protection bonus).

Players should note that a character that is already Wary doesn't gain anything from lowering his Fatigue score (as Weariness is normally removed only after a prolonged rest – see page 145 for details).

PIERCING BLOWS

During combat, a fighter can see his stamina be slowly whittled away, as fatigue and blows suffered take their toll, or he can be suddenly and unexpectedly cut down by a vicious stroke that bloodily penetrates his protective equipment.

In addition to causing the loss of Endurance points, any successful attack may inflict a Piercing blow:

If the Feat die result in the initial attack roll is equal to or higher than the Edge rating of the weapon, the attack resulted in a Piercing blow.

Characters hit by a Piercing blow must immediately make a *Protection test* to avoid being Wounded.



Protection Test

A Protection test determines whether a character's armour prevented the blow from causing lasting damage. The character rolls the Feat die plus a number of Success dice equal to the Protection value of his suit of armour (modified by a helmet, if worn). The Target Number for the roll is equal to the Injury rating of the weapon used by the attacker.

If the roll fails, then the character has been Wounded. The player must check the **Wounded** box on the character sheet as a reminder.

Players may spend a point of Hope to invoke an Attribute bonus (**Body**) on a Protection test.

CALLED SHOTS

A fighting character who is feeling very confident – or desperate – may announce that he is trying a 'called shot' before rolling his attack dice. When a called shot hits home, a special attack result occurs, depending on the weapon used to attack (see the table below).

The roll for a called shot is resolved normally, with the following differences:

A called shot hits only when the roll matches or beats the Target Number set for the attack AND the player obtains at least one τ icon on his rolled Success dice.

If the roll result doesn't produce any τ icons, the attack misses altogether (even if the total result matches or beats the attack TN).

If the roll result doesn't match or beat the attack Target Number AND the player gets a (☹) icon on his Feat die, the called shot attempt fails in a catastrophic way, called a *fumble*. A fumbling attacker loses his footing, exposing himself: the next time the fumbling character is attacked, the difficulty to hit him will be equal to his basic combat TN (he loses any bonuses from his attributes, Virtues or equipment).

The following table details the effects triggered by a successful called shot: these effects are applied *in addition* to the normal consequences of a successful attack (loss of Endurance, Piercing blow, etc.). Players should note that the effects aren't always applicable: for example, attempting a called shot while wielding an axe isn't particularly useful when fighting against an opponent who is not carrying a shield.

Called Shots:

WEAPON TYPE	SUCCESSFUL CALLED SHOT
Axes	The target's shield has been smashed.
Bows	The attack resulted in a Piercing blow, regardless of the outcome of the Feat die.
Mattock	The target's shield has been smashed.
Swords	The target drops his weapon.
Spears	The attack resulted in a Piercing blow, regardless of the outcome of the Feat die.

TASKS IN COMBAT

Described below are a number of special tasks commonly employed by adventurers involved in combat. In general, these tasks require a hero to be fighting in a specific stance, and as usual require a skill roll. Difficulties are usually set at TN 14.

Forward stance: Intimidate Foe

"Depart, or not one of you will be spared. Not one will be left alive to take back tidings to the North. You do not know your peril."

A hero may attempt to intimidate his foes with a display of his prowess or ferocity in battle. When it is his turn to take action, a hero may forego his chance to make an attack roll and make an Awe or Battle roll instead. The TN for the roll is 10, plus the highest Attribute level

among all foes. A hero who received a Wound during the previous round cannot attempt to intimidate his foes.

On a successful roll, the enemy's morale has been shaken, and the opponents lose a number of Hate points (see the Adversaries chapter in the Loremaster's Book); if the roll is failed, the acting hero loses one point of Hope.

The number of Hate points lost by the enemy is based on the quality of the success produced by the roll:

- **Ordinary success:** one Hate point
- **Great success:** two Hate point
- **Extraordinary success:** three Hate point

The Loremaster assigns the Hate point loss in any way he sees fit.

Hate Points

Hate points represent the intensity of a creature's determination and resourcefulness. The loremaster uses a creature's Hate points rating to gauge its resolve and to fuel its special abilities.

Open stance: Rally Comrades

"To me! To me! Elves and Men! To me! O my kinsfolk!"
he cried, and his voice shook like a horn in the valley.

A brave leader, standing amongst his friends, is always heedful of his surroundings, and may attempt to rally his companions when their hearts begin to fail them.

When it is his turn to take action, a hero may forego his chance to make an attack roll and make an **Inspire** or **Song** roll instead.

If the roll is successful, all fighting companions who suffered a loss of Endurance during the current combat (including the rallying hero) recover a number of Endurance points (see below); if the roll is failed, the acting hero loses one point of Hope.

The number of Endurance points recovered is based on the quality of the success:

- **Ordinary success:** one Endurance point
- **Great success:** two Endurance points
- **Extraordinary success:** three Endurance points, or a number of points equal to the rallying character's **Heart** rating, whichever is higher.

Defensive stance: Protect Companion

Fili and Kili had fallen defending him with shield and body, for he was their mother's elder brother.

A character fighting in a defensive stance may strive to protect another hero fighting in an open or forward stance. He must announce the name of the character he wants to protect right after choosing his stance for the coming turn.

When the protected character is attacked, the protecting hero may choose to spend a point of Hope and become the target of the attack in his place. The attack is resolved normally, as if the attack was originally aimed at the defending character.

Rearward stance: Prepare Shot

As soon as they had landed, he had bent his bow and fitted an arrow... Now he sent a swift and sure shot into the leaping beast.

A hero fighting in a rearward stance may spend an entire round preparing a ranged attack, and get a clearer shot the following round.

If the player succeeds in a ranged attack during the following round, he is considered to have successfully achieved a Called shot.

Any close combat stance: Escape Combat

"Fly! This is a foe beyond any of you."

A hero who spent his previous round in a rearward stance may flee the combat zone at the beginning of a round.

Companions engaged in close combat may attempt to escape when their turn to act comes.

At the end of a combat round spent fighting in a close combat stance, a player-hero may attempt to escape the field by making a roll of **Athletics**. The TN for the roll is equal to 10 plus the highest Attribute level among the opponents that the character is facing.

On a successful roll, the companion has successfully escaped. A great or extraordinary success is needed if the hero was engaged by multiple opponents. If the escape attempt fails, the acting hero remains engaged and cannot attack when his next turn to act comes.

ENCOUNTER

"Who are you and what do you want?" they shouted, leaping to their feet and gipping for weapons. "Chorin son of Thráin son of Thrór King under the Mountain!" said the Dwarf in a loud voice, and he looked it, in spite of his torn clothes and dragged hood.

Adventurers meet many travellers and wanderers along the road, and may visit foreign courts and realms if their adventuring brings them far enough from their homelands. Whenever they deal with strangers, they should exercise some caution, as theirs is a trade considered peculiar or even dangerous by the common folk, and their arrival is often met with fear and suspicion. Even when meeting enemies of the common Enemy, player-heroes should watch their tongues and be mindful of their manners, as even trusty friends can be quick to anger in days of doubt.

When the company meets an individual worthy of note, or the companions are taking part in a social event that can be influenced by their behaviour, the current episode is going to unfold around an encounter sequence.



ENCOUNTER GOAL

In the course of a typical encounter, the adventurers will be trying to demonstrate their good intentions to a wary audience. Sometimes they could be trying to attain a more complex objective: are they trying to intimidate the people they met? Do they want to get help from them? Are they trying to learn something? The players taking part in an encounter should decide on their purpose in the meeting, and use the guidelines below to select suitable tasks.

Most encounters entail two stages, an introduction and an interaction. A complex encounter, like being guests in a foreign court, will feature both stages and allow for several tasks and tests. A simpler encounter, like meeting a company of wandering Dwarves in a tavern, might include only the introduction, and fewer die rolls.

INTRODUCTION

“Thorin Oakenshield, at your service! Dori at your service!” said the two Dwarves bowing again.

At the beginning of most encounters, the companions must present themselves, generally attempting to establish their identity in a way that is appropriate

to their goals. At this stage, all players must choose whether their characters prefer to introduce themselves individually, or if they want to be represented as a group by a spokesman.

While at times it could be wise to let only one companion do the talking, as it lets the group take advantage of the best speaker among the company, electing a spokesman might prevent the remaining characters from eventually taking part in the following interaction phase (see below), especially at a formal meeting.

Useful Abilities

The skills that might be useful during an introduction vary, based on the nature of the encounter, the opposing party’s attitude toward the company, and the companions’ goals. If the player-heroes can reasonably be assumed to have learnt something about the other group’s customs and traditions prior to the encounter or had enough time to observe them, they may attempt a **Lore** or **Insight** roll to divine the most appropriate course of action.

Skills that are usually instrumental in establishing a good introduction are listed below, with some commentary regarding their uses and consequences.



Awe

Best used by a single spokesman, a roll of **Awe** conveys a powerful message without using a lot of words. A player-hero using **Awe** to impress someone usually does so to rectify a negative early reaction, or to quickly set the terms for the coming discussion. When a player has successfully used **Awe**, there won't be many questions regarding his or his company's identity, as deeds, lineage and other personal information are usually mentioned for the action to achieve the fullest effect.

Courtesy

If any companions choose to introduce themselves individually, they do so by making a roll of **Courtesy**. A polite introduction is the best way to smooth a relationship before asking for support or another form of assistance. It is most useful when already on friendly terms, as to unfriendly ears a courteous speaker might sound duplicitous. The action is made easier if the speaking companion does not intend to hide much information about himself from the listeners, but it is possible to politely refuse to reveal too much.

A failed **Courtesy** roll usually prevents a character from taking an active role in the encounter.

Riddle

When in doubt about the opposing party's intentions, the spokesman of a company may turn to his ability to craft questions and answers in a way to extract a lot of information in exchange for very little. A riddling spokesman must be wary, though, as a poor performance is sure to provoke mistrust in the opposing party, and compromise the outcome of the encounter.

INTERACTION

"P'raps ye sits here and chats with it a bitsy, my preciousss. It like riddles, praps it does, does it?"

This is the main part of most social challenges, from a birthday party to a formal council. Usually, only characters who were properly presented during the introduction may propose further actions.

The following skills can be used to various effect by players engaged in an interaction.

Insight

Player-Heroes can use **Insight** to gauge the emotions of those they interact with, possibly revealing unspoken purposes or hidden feelings. A successful **Insight** roll lets a character filter others' reactions, and thus works better when at least another companion is provoking useful responses with some kind of action.

Inspire

Requiring a crowd of listeners, or at least the complete attention of a single individual, a player may attempt a skill roll using **Inspire** to capitalise on an already positive introduction. The purpose of the skill roll could be raising the spirit of an endangered community, or that of a downcast leader. The objective of the inspiration attempt must be obvious or the effects of even a successful action will be weak.

Persuade

A player may take advantage of his persuasiveness to make up for a poor first impression or a bad introduction, or to strengthen his hold on already-captivated listeners. Unlike **Inspire**, **Persuade** may be used discreetly, during any kind of social interaction.

Riddle

The skill of **Riddle** can be used again by players acting in a social environment, either to formally play the ancient riddle-game, practised and respected even by the unlikeliest of wicked creatures, or to gather information and news. In the latter case, a successful **Riddle** roll may allow a player-hero to put together all sort of titbits that incautious speakers might accidentally give away in their conversation, or simply to gather interesting facts while appearing uninterested or unconcerned.

Song

A good song or tune is almost never out of place at a relaxed social encounter, but can also be a powerful diplomatic device if the singer finds the proper song or intones well-chosen words.





- Part 6: fellowship phase -

- fellowship - phase

*“When winter first begins to bite
and stones crack in the frosty night,
when pools are black and trees are bare,
'tis evil in the Wild to fare.”*

Heroes are not always busy navigating deep caverns, fighting back the Shadow, or fleeing from dangers beyond their ability to face. Even the most eager of adventurers need some time to rest and enjoy what life has to offer, spending days practicing a craft, reading a good book, or even writing one.

Whether it is spent in the pursuit of a noble goal, or simply resting comfortably to recover energy before setting out on the road once again, the time characters pass when not adventuring is called the Fellowship phase.

HOW A FELLOWSHIP PHASE WORKS

A Fellowship phase is a session of play driven by the players' choices. While during the Adventuring phase, players usually react to the Loremaster's storytelling, during a Fellowship phase they get to elaborate upon their characters' stories and ambitions. The Loremaster is the final judge regarding the interpretation of the rules, but is invited to sit back and follow what his players have to say about their characters.

A Fellowship phase marks the conclusion of the current Adventuring phase, and as such ideally takes place at the end of a gaming session.

THE PASSING OF YEARS

The default pacing of gameplay for *The One Ring* sees a group of adventurers take part in one adventure per year of game time. If this pace is kept, then a Fellowship

phase can also be used as a milestone to mark the end of one year of game time and the beginning of the following one.

On average, a Fellowship phase marking the passing of a year should represent a pause from adventuring lasting for approximately an entire season.

Three months are enough for any companion to return home from any location in Wilderland and leave him some time to be among his family and folk. Moreover, spending the colder months of a year as a Fellowship phase is a natural choice, as it will leave the warmer seasons open for the following Adventuring phase: a life in the Wild is an unforgiving one, and adventurers prefer to have a roof over their heads when the wind is howling and the land is buried in snow...

STRUCTURE

A Fellowship phase lasts from a week to one full season of game time, depending on the Loremaster's structuring of the game. At the beginning of a Fellowship phase, the players must choose whether the company retires somewhere to spend the phase as a group or if they temporarily disband and each hero returns home by himself. Once they are set upon a decision, they start taking individual turns to tell the Loremaster and the other players what they are going to do and where they are going to do it. In addition, players get to record the growth of their characters by spending their Experience points and Advancement points.

DESTINATION

The players are free to spend the phase at any place they have already visited during the game. The Adventurer's Map comes in useful here, especially if the players have updated the information on it and kept track of their journeys.

The route bringing the company or each individual player-hero to his chosen destination is considered to take place 'behind the scenes' without Fatigue tests and consequences, unless the Loremaster or his players have a mind to play out the details.

Players should generally choose a place within a reasonable distance from the area where they were adventuring during the recent sessions of play, also taking into consideration how long the Fellowship phase is going to last and where and when they have agreed to meet up afterwards.

The Company Repairs to a Sanctuary

A number of locations are considered sanctuaries, special places particularly suited to support the needs of a company of adventurers, and inhabited by a host willing to welcome them. At the beginning of the game, there is only one place that adventurers may consider already a sanctuary: the town of Esgaroth on the Long Lake. Other locations may be gained access to by visiting them and choosing the Open New Sanctuary undertaking (see on page 173).

Characters in a sanctuary dedicate their time to telling and listening to stories and to the exchange of adventuring experiences.

The Company Disbands Temporarily

When a company disbands temporarily, each player chooses the location where his character repairs to. Usually, heroes return home, as the player has decided that maybe the character needs to spend some time among his own folk, to refocus or meditate, or that he intends to develop his personal relationships at home.

When a hero intends to invest his earned Treasure, he needs to return home.

Standing Upkeep

Adventurers find friendship and allies in unlikely places, but are very quick to lose their respectability at home, unless some measure is taken to prevent that.

When a companion passes a year's end Fellowship phase away from home (see Year's End below), he must reduce his Standing rating by one point, unless he spends a number of Treasure points equal to his current Standing rating.

This upkeep cost represents what a hero does to ensure that his efforts in taking care of his own folk are widely recognised. Heroes with no Standing don't need to maintain it.

Finnulf from Dale has recently attained the coveted role of advisor to a local noble (Standing 4), but his adventuring career is requiring him to spend Yule-tide (and the Fellowship phase) at the House of Beorn, together with his companions. The Loremaster announces that Finnulf will see his Standing score decrease to 3, unless he spends 4 points of Treasure to maintain it at its current rating.





ACTIVITIES

When players start relating their characters' actions, they should respect the time limit set by the duration of the phase and a geographical limit, defined by the place where their characters are supposed to be spending the phase.

Players are free to narrate in detail what their characters do, as long as they abstain from activities that require the introduction of new background information (like exploring a location they have never visited before, or making the acquaintance of personalities they haven't encountered yet, etc.). In general, they should avoid doing things that are better suited to an Adventuring phase.

Considering these restrictions, when his turn comes, each player is allowed to develop his character by spending his Experience points and Advancement points, and then he is entitled to choose one single undertaking for his hero to pursue.

This chapter describes several typical undertakings for a player to choose from, but players are invited to exercise their creativity and find new and exciting ways to spend the phase. Often, players need look no further than the recently concluded Adventuring phase, as the story that was just completed might have provided several leads worth following, like a new friendship to consolidate, or a new sanctuary to be granted access to. Any activity that could have a lasting impact on the character can be considered an undertaking.

HEROIC DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the players follow their heroes' adventuring careers by gaining Experience points and Advancement points during the Adventuring Phase, and by spending them during the Fellowship phase.

SPENDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

Heroes may spend their accumulated Experience points to gain a new rank in either Wisdom or Valour, and to enhance their proficiency in their Weapon skills.

Players are not obliged to spend all the Experience points they have received at once, but may save them from session to session to acquire more expensive upgrades, or they may spend a portion of them to get a smaller upgrade and save the remaining points for later. Whatever their choice, players should pick their options wisely, as the choices they make when spending Experience points determine the growth of a player-hero.

Players keep track of how many Experience points they gain and how many they spent so far by updating the relevant boxes on their character sheets

Buying a new Valour or Wisdom Rank

No other characteristics express the stature and maturity of a player-hero better than Wisdom and Valour. If a player chooses to spend his hard-earned Experience points to advance in one of the two ratings, he should keep in mind how much gaining a new rank is going to influence his character's life, both from a gaming standpoint and a from a storytelling angle.

Heroes may buy a rank in Valour or Wisdom if they have enough points to attain the new rating: the first column of the Experience Points Cost table below indicates the cost in Experience for buying a new rank. The character also gains a new Reward or Virtue (see page 123).

Heroes cannot buy more than one rank in either Wisdom or Valour during the same Fellowship phase. When a player-hero advances in either Wisdom or Valour, care should be taken to adjust the scores of all related abilities and features.

Buying Weapon and Cultural Weapon Skill Ranks

The only method for a player-hero to raise the proficiency of his Weapon skills is to spend Experience points.

Players are free to raise their skills as they see fit, as long as they have enough points. Players can buy multiple ranks in the same Weapon skill, as long as they pay the cost of every new level.

The Experience Points Cost table below indicates the cost for raising any combat skill, whether an individual Weapon skill or a Cultural weapon skill.

Experience Points Costs:

VALOUR AND WISDOM RANK	WEAPON SKILL LEVEL	COST TO ATTAIN NEW RANK OR LEVEL
-	◆	2
2	◆◆	4
3	◆◆◆	6
4	◆◆◆◆	10
5	◆◆◆◆◆	16
6	◆◆◆◆◆◆	25

Improving a Weapon Skill from a Cultural Weapon Skill

It is possible to buy a level for an individual Weapon skill belonging to the category of a Cultural skill group the hero already possesses, starting from the proficiency level of the Cultural weapon skill.

Lifstan has a Cultural Weapon skill for (Swords) ◆◆. His player wants to spend his Experience points to get him an individual skill rating in Long Sword: to do so, he spends 6 points and gives Lifstan a Long Sword ◆◆◆ level (starting from his Cultural skill level of ◆◆).

While there is no savings in buying a specific Weapon skill, players may choose to do this if planning to later make the new individual Weapon skill a favoured skill (as Cultural weapon skills cannot be made into favoured skills).

SPENDING ADVANCEMENT POINTS

Players spend Advancement points to raise their Common skill ranks, using the costs in the table below. Players are not obliged to spend all their Advancement points, but may save them to acquire more expensive upgrades during a later Fellowship phase. Players can also buy multiple ranks into the same Common skill, as long as they pay the cost of every new level individually. Any remaining Advancement points are kept track of using the appropriate space on the back of the character sheet.

Cost to Raise a Common Skill:

NEW LEVEL TO ATTAIN	COST
◆	4
◆◆	8
◆◆◆	12
◆◆◆◆	16
◆◆◆◆◆	20
◆◆◆◆◆◆	24

UNDERTAKINGS

When a player is done updating his character's abilities, he may choose to undertake a task for the rest of the Fellowship phase. Here is a list of typical endeavours that characters may choose during a Fellowship phase.

MEET PATRON

"I am looking for someone to share in an adventure that I am arranging, and it's very difficult to find anyone."

A patron is a usually renowned or powerful personality, who may from time to time offer a company a purpose to go adventuring, often providing support and counsel. Companions may choose to meet a patron when they are spending the Fellowship phase in the location where the individual is to be found, if the patron is available for a meeting.



A company may have several patrons at the same time, if its members are able to satisfy the requirements to ensure their allegiance (very often, these characters ask something in return for their friendship).

At the start of the game, two important personalities are particularly suited for the role of patrons: Beorn the Skinchanger and Radagast the Brown. The descriptions given from page 112 of the Loremaster's Book give directions on how to handle their introduction as patrons in the game.

GAIN NEW DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

Indeed, within a week they were quite recovered, fitted out in fine cloth of their proper colours, with beards combed and trimmed, and proud steps.

A player who has played his adventurer for a long time might eventually grow tired of the set of distinctive features of his hero, and feel the need for a change. During a Fellowship phase, a player may replace an old Distinctive feature with a new one (it is not possible to gain a new Speciality).

Players looking for a change should exercise some common sense when they choose the new Trait, and the old one being replaced, to avoid completely reinventing their characters.

The new Trait may be chosen from any list of Distinctive features, or even invented by the player (who in this case needs the approval of the Loremaster).

HEAL CORRUPTION

Merely to be there was a cure for weariness, fear, and sadness.

Heroes feel the burden of the Shadow weigh heavily upon their shoulders for long after their adventures are over. Their minds remain bent on dark thoughts, and visions haunt them in their dreams, if not even during their waking hours. But those who chose to fight the encroaching darkness have a way to oppose the taint of corruption:

Heroes reduce their current Shadow rating attempting a **Craft** or a **Song** roll with TN 14. On a successful roll, they reduce their score by two points on a success, four points on a great success, and six points on an extraordinary success (Permanent Shadow points gained when suffering from a bout of madness can never be healed - see page 59 of the Loremaster's Book).

Characters spending their Fellowship phase in a sanctuary are entitled to two rolls, while heroes who returned home are allowed a single roll instead.



*Frár ends the current Adventuring phase with 5 Shadow points and repairs to Esgaroth with the company. Deeming the amount to be dangerous, he decides to reduce his Shadow score by choosing the 'Heal corruption' undertaking: he rolls **Craft**, getting an extraordinary success: he gets rid of all his Shadow points, restoring his score to zero.*

Companions belonging to different cultures resort to different methods to get rid of corruption: Dwarves usually turn to the forge to burn their frustration smiting the red iron on the anvil, Hobbits dedicate themselves to a beloved activity, like gardening, painting or writing a diary, and Elves and Men generally create, play or recite poems and songs.

RAISE STANDARD OF LIVING

The riches he had brought back from his travels had now become a local legend...

Having several chests filled with gold under the bed makes it far easier for an adventurer to go around with a pouch filled with coins. Players spending their Fellowship phase at home may reduce their heroes' treasure rating to raise their Standard of living as far as out-of-pocket expenses and the acquisition of equipment are concerned.

It costs 1 Treasure to spend one month at a Prosperous standard of living, and 2 Treasure to spend it at a Rich one. At the end of the month, the character must spend the amount again or revert to his previous Standard of living. Players may invest as much Treasure as they like to maintain their characters at a higher standard of living for longer periods of time.

RAISE STANDING

His gold and silver was largely spent in presents, both useful and extravagant...

The more adventurous members of most cultures indulge in the tradition of gift-giving or public spending,

as a demonstration of their worth, affluence and loyalty to their culture, and as a mean of acquiring influence among their own folk.

Players spend Treasure points to raise their Standing rating, using the costs indicated in the table below. Players can also buy multiple ranks, as long as they pay the cost of every new level individually.

Raise Standing:

STANDING TO ATTAIN	TREASURE POINTS
1	12
2	24
3	36
4	48
5	60
6	72

OPEN NEW SANCTUARY

"Hidden somewhere ahead of us is the fair valley of Rivendell, where Elrond lives in the Last Homely House."

In the course of their exploration of the Wilderland, the company of adventurers will sooner or later find new places they might consider suitable for resting during a Fellowship phase. If, during an Adventuring phase the company has entered a location and has established friendly relations with its denizens, they can make it a sanctuary, securing permission to enter it regularly to spend there a Fellowship phase.

To turn a suitable location into a sanctuary, all companions must spend the phase there and choose Open New Sanctuary as their current undertaking.

The collective undertaking cements their relations with the important personalities of the place.

YEAR'S END

When a Fellowship phase sees the end of a year of game time, as soon as all players have taken their individual turns, the Loremaster takes back the storytelling initiative to update the company on the changes that have taken place in the world that their characters are entitled to know about. Middle-earth is a living world, whose history is unfolding at the same time as the player-heroes live their lives: for this reason, the Loremaster keeps the players informed on the actions of important personalities and the passing of major events affecting the land.

To determine what the heroes should be informed of, the Loremaster may use the information contained in the 'Tale of Years' chronology found in Chapter Four of the Loremaster's Book as a starting point, and then tailor it around the current circumstances and whereabouts of the group of companions.

A Tale of Years' entry relates how Gandalf the Grey visits the courts of Elves, Men and Dwarves of Wilderland, looking for new allies for the White Council. If the companions are spending their end of the year's Fellowship phase in any one of the places the wizard will visit, the Loremaster may inform them of the coming of the Grey Pilgrim.

Player-hero Intervention

Players with a Standing score are allowed to elaborate on the year's end narration, to testify how their heroes may have affected events taking place in their home settlement or region. When the Loremaster has finished describing the changes occurring in their homeland for the current year's end, one or more players may intervene to let their characters participate in the events taking place (all players belonging to the same culture may take part in the narration together).

Player-heroes may affect the course of events either directly or indirectly, depending on whether they can plausibly be present or possess the resources or abilities to make a difference.

A player argues his case to intervene, describing how his character might have affected the current course of events; if the Loremaster accepts, then the player can propose a task roll summarising his intervention. Upon a successful roll, he briefly describes an alternative course of events describing the presence of his character or the effects of his influence.

Standing Rating

The intervention of a player must be proportionate to his current Standing score. An ordinary intervention, like being present when an important personality happens to pay a visit to a character's home town, requires a Standing of at least 1 (and probably a successful **Courtesy** roll). More dramatic or less plausible interventions require a higher Standing. For instance, being invited to speak at an exclusive gathering of the Wise is unlikely for heroes with a rating of less than 4.

*Finnulf of Dale returned home for the Fellowship phase and hears about the coming visit of Gandalf the Grey. He is an important personality of the city (Standing 4), and has the ear of Lord Reinald, advisor to the King himself. Finnulf's player demands that his hero be invited to court when Gandalf will meet King Bard, and the Loremaster readily agrees. During the meeting, Finnulf asks to speak before the assembled dignitaries and the Wizard, and takes his chance to make an **Inspire** roll to propose his King as a new member of the White Council.*

Starting the Following Adventuring Phase

When the Loremaster has finished bringing his players up to date and the players are done with their interventions, the Fellowship phase is over. The next Adventuring phase will take place during the first season of the following year. If the Fellowship phase took place during the year (i.e. the Loremaster is running more than one adventure in that year), then skip this last phase and proceed straight to the start of the next adventure, with the characters leaving their sanctuary or reforming the company at the appointed place.



- Appendix -
PRE-GENERATED
CHARACTER SHEETS





- BARDINGS -

LIFSTAN, SON OF LEIKNIR

Your father was a smith. When you were a child, the sound of the hammer ringing in his forge was as music to your ears. One day, when the city of Dale was finally rebuilt and the entrance to the Lonely Mountain opened once again, your father brought you to see the forges of the Mountain-folk. There, you have seen the work of the dwarf-smiths of old, a treasure beyond what your imagination could dream up.

From that day you haven't stopped thinking about the vast hoards that lie unmolested in deep places beneath the mountains...



the ONE RING™

Name: Lifstan, son of Leiknir

Culture: Barding

Standard of Living: Prosperous

Cultural Blessing: Stout-hearted (better at Fear tests)

Calling: Treasure-hunter

Shadow weakness: Dragon-sickness

Experience
Total

Valour

Wisdom

- TRAITS -

Specialities: old-lore, smith-craft

Distinctive Features: adventurous, burglary, hardy

- ATTRIBUTES -

Body

Heart

Wits

- COMMON SKILLS -

Awe

Athletics

Awareness

Explore

Song

Craft

Inspire

Travel

Insight

Healing

Courtesy

Battle

Persuade

Stealth

Search

Hunting

Riddle

Lore

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality

movement

perception

survival

custom

vocation

- WEAPON SKILLS -

(Swords)	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
Spear	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
Dagger	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
_____	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____

Damage
Ranged

- REWARDS -

Tower Shield
(+2 parry bonus against ranged attacks)

- VIRTUES -

Parry
Shield

Armour
Head gear

- GEAR -

weapons: Sword, spear, dagger enc 4

armour: Mail-shirt enc 12

shield: Great Shield enc 5

Endurance
Starting Score

Fatigue

Hope
Starting Score

Shadow

Weary

Miserable

Wounded



- BEORNINGS -

BERAN OF THE MOUNTAINS

You were born into a family of shepherds and hunters near the eastern edge of the Misty Mountains. Since you were a child you felt a great fascination for the high and snowy peaks, and spent most of your time climbing and looking for new paths over the mountains. After you met Beorn and embraced his cause, you chose to protect any friendly traveller that finds himself journeying through the mountain passes in these times of growing peril.



the ONE RING™

Name: Beran of the Mountains

Culture: Beorning

Standard of Living: Martial

Cultural Blessing: Furious (ignores the effects of weariness when wounded)

Calling: Warden

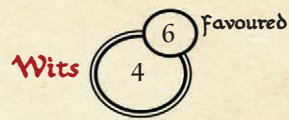
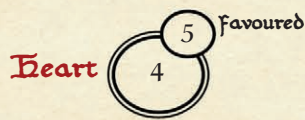
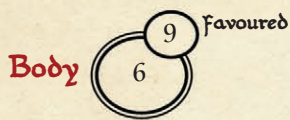
Shadow weakness: Lure of Power

- TRAITS -

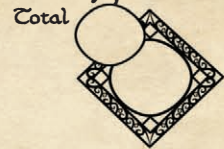
Specialities: Anduin-lore, mountaineer

Distinctive Features: grim, Shadow-lore, trusty

- ATTRIBUTES -



Experience



Valour



Wisdom



- COMMON SKILLS -

Awe	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Inspire	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Persuade	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Athletics	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Travel	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Stealth	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Awareness	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Insight	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Search	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Explore	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Healing	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Hunting	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Song	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Courtesy	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Riddle	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Craft	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Battle	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Lore	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
movement	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
perception	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
survival	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
custom	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
vocation	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

- WEAPON SKILLS -

(Axes)	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
Spear	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
Dagger	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
_____	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____

Damage



Parry



Armour



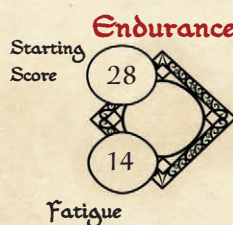
- REWARDS -

Splitting axe
(If roll a ♣ on the Feat die, the target rolls one
Success die less for its Protection test)

- VIRTUES -

- GEAR -

weapons: Great Axe, Spear, Dagger enc 4, 2
armour: Leather corslet enc 8
shield: enc



Weariness
Miserable
Wounded



- DWARVES - of the lonely mountain

BELI

When you were a child, your father went north to find the hoard of an ancient Dragon and never returned. In his absence, you honed your skills preparing to follow him on the road to adventure and now you think the day has arrived to take up the challenge: you are clever, well-equipped and without fear - you are ready to go and seek what secret treasures are still hidden in the remote corners of the world.



the ONE RING™

Name: Beli

Culture: Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain

Standard of Living: Rich

Cultural Blessing: Redoubtable (subtract favoured Heart to final Fatigue rating)

Calling: Treasure-hunter

Shadow weakness: Dragon-sickness

Experience
Total

Valour

Wisdom

- TRAITS -

Specialities: fire-making, tunnelling

Distinctive Features: burglary, cunning, suspicious

- ATTRIBUTES -

Body

Heart

Wits

- COMMON SKILLS -

Awe □□□□□□
Athletics ■□□□□□
Awareness ■□□□□□
Explore ■■□□□□
Song ■■□□□□
Craft ■■□□□□

Inspire ■■□□□□
Travel ■■□□□□
Insight □□□□□□
Healing □□□□□□
Courtesy ■□□□□□
Battle ■■□□□□

Persuade □□□□□□
Stealth □□□□□□
Search ■■□□□□
Hunting □□□□□□
Riddle ■■□□□□
Lore □□□□□□

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality ◆◆◆◆◆◆
movement ◆◆◆◆◆◆
perception ◆◆◆◆◆◆
survival ◆◆◆◆◆◆
custom ◆◆◆◆◆◆
vocation ◆◆◆◆◆◆

- WEAPON SKILLS -

Mattock	■□□□□□	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
Short sword	■□□□□□	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
Dagger	■□□□□□	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
_____	□□□□□□	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____

Damage
Ranged

- REWARDS -

- VIRTUES -

Confidence (+2 Hope)

Parry
Shield

Armour

Head gear

- GEAR -

weapons: Mattock, short sword, dagger enc 3,1
armour: Coat of mail, Helm enc 16,6
shield: enc

Endurance
Starting Score

Fatigue

Hope
Starting Score

Shadow

Weary ○
Miserable ○
Wounded ○



- elves - of MIRKWOOD

CARANTHIR

Many decades have passed since the last time you left the halls of your King to once again breathe the air of what used to be Greenwood the Great. In the hallowed silence of your underground dwelling you studied the lives of those who fought the darkness before your time, secretly hoping that you would return to see the Moon wane on a world already free from the Shadow. But your dreams were obviously just that, dreams.

What was waiting for you was a place much darker than your King's dusky palace, and it will take more than the red torch-light of your folk to cleanse Mirkwood once and for all. But you have resolved that you can be the light that chases away the shadows, and you will teach others how to do the same.



the ONE RING™

Name: Caranthir

Culture: Elves of Mirkwood

Standard of Living: Martial

Cultural Blessing: Folk of the Dusk (advantage at night, underground and when in woods)

Calling: Scholar

Shadow weakness: Lure of Secrets

Experience
Total

Valour

Wisdom

- TRAITS -

Specialities: Elven-lore, Mirkwood-lore

Distinctive Features: Rhymes of Lore, secretive, quick of hearing

- ATTRIBUTES -

Body

Heart

Wits

- COMMON SKILLS -

Awe	Inspire	Persuade
Athletics	Travel	Stealth
Awareness	Insight	Search
Explore	Healing	Hunting
Song	Courtesy	Riddle
Craft	Battle	Lore

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality
movement
perception
survival
custom
vocation

- WEAPON SKILLS -

(Spears)	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
Sword	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
Dagger	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
_____	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____

Damage
Ranged

- REWARDS -

Great spear of fine make
(Keen, Edge -1)

- VIRTUES -

Parry
Shield

Armour

Head gear

- GEAR -

weapons: Great spear, sword, dagger enc 4, 2
armour: Leather shirt, Helm enc 4, 6
shield: enc

Endurance
Starting Score

Fatigue

Hope
Starting Score

Shadow

Weary
Miserable
Wounded



- hobbits - of the shire

TROTTER

You left your peaceful life in the Shire when you ran away to find Gandalf, the Conjuror, after he paid a visit to your family at your coming of age party. He tried to convince you to turn back, but as you stubbornly refused, he caught something in your eyes that convinced him to let you have your way. You spent many weeks with him, until he deemed you ready to find your own path.

The dreams you had in the Shire are now your plans for the future: you want to light your broken-stemmed pipe in the halls of Beorn the Shapeshifter and walk side by side with the wizard Radagast in the fenced garth of Rhosgobel, you want to visit the royal palace of Dale and see the throne of the King under the Mountain.



the ONE RING™

Name: Trotter

Culture: Hobbits of the Shire

Standard of Living: Prosperous

Cultural Blessing: Hobbit-sense (better at Wisdom checks)

Calling: Wanderer

Shadow weakness: Wandering-madness

Experience
Total

Valour

Wisdom

- TRAITS -

Specialities: smoking, story-telling

Distinctive Features: folk-lore, keen-eyed, true-hearted

- ATTRIBUTES -

Body

Heart

Wits

- COMMON SKILLS -

Awe	Inspire	Persuade
Athletics	Travel	Stealth
Awareness	Insight	Search
Explore	Healing	Hunting
Song	Courtesy	Riddle
Craft	Battle	Lore

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality
movement
perception
survival
custom
vocation

- WEAPON SKILLS -

Bow	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
Short sword	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
Dagger	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____
_____	damage _____	edge _____	injury _____	enc _____

Damage
Ranged

- REWARDS -

- VIRTUES -

Tough in the Fibre (fast recovery)

Parry
Shield

Armour

Head gear

- GEAR -

weapons: Bow, short sword, dagger enc 1, 1
armour: Leather corslet enc 8
shield: Buckler enc 1

Endurance
Starting Score

Fatigue

Hope
Starting Score

Shadow

Wearied
Miserable
Wounded



- woodmen - of WILDERLAND

THE BRIDE

You were born west of the Great River, in one of the villages nearest the mountains. You were scarcely fifteen when you first saw him who would become your groom, at a folk-moot held at Mountain hall, in a time when the Orcs were sorely threatening your people.

Only a few months later you moved across the river to be near him, as he was from the folk dwelling in the forest. As you waited for your wedding, you learned how to seek a prey among the trees, and your love for the hunt rivalled that for your future husband.

One night, only a handful of days before your wedding-day, he left with a company of men from the village, refusing to bring you with him and giving no explanations. Only his faithful hound returned, grievously wounded.

When the elders of the village saw the claw marks on the hound they shook their heads, speaking of the dreaded Beast of Mirkwood...



the ONE RING™

Name: the Bride

Culture: Woodmen of Wilderland

Standard of Living: Frugal

Cultural Blessing: Woodcrafty (tactical advantage when in woods)

Calling: Slayer

Shadow weakness: Curse of Vengeance

Experience
Total

Valour

Wisdom

- TRAITS -

Specialities: beasts-lore, leech-craft

Distinctive Features: Enemy-lore (wolves), forthright, gruff

- ATTRIBUTES -

Body

Heart

Wits

- COMMON SKILLS -

<i>Awe</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Inspire</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Persuade</i>	□ □ □ □ □ □
<i>Athletics</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Travel</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Stealth</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
<i>Awareness</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Insight</i>	□ □ □ □ □ □	<i>Search</i>	□ □ □ □ □ □
<i>Explore</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Healing</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Hunting</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
<i>Song</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Courtesy</i>	□ □ □ □ □ □	<i>Riddle</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
<i>Craft</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Battle</i>	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<i>Lore</i>	□ □ □ □ □ □

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
movement	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
perception	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
survival	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
custom	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
vocation	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

- WEAPON SKILLS -

Long-hafted axe	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
Spear	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
Dagger	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____
_____	□ □ □ □ □ □	damage	_____	edge	_____	injury	_____	enc	_____

Damage
Ranged

- REWARDS -

- VIRTUES -

Hound of Mirkwood
(a faithful companion) _____

Parry
Shield

Armour

Head gear

- GEAR -

weapons: Long-hafted axe, spear, dagger enc 3, 2
armour: Leather corslet enc 8
shield: Buckler enc 1

Endurance
Starting Score

Fatigue

Hope
Starting Score

Shadow

Wearied

Miserable

Wounded

The ONE RING™

Name _____

Culture _____ Standard of Living _____

Cultural Blessing _____

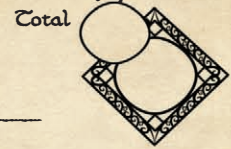
Calling _____ Shadow weakness _____

- TRAITS -

Specialities _____

Distinctive Features _____

Experience



Valour



Wisdom



- ATTRIBUTES -



- COMMON SKILLS -

<i>Awe</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Inspire</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Persuade</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Athletics</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Travel</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Stealth</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Awareness</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Insight</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Search</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Explore</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Healing</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Hunting</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Song</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Courtesy</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Riddle</i>	□□□□□□
<i>Craft</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Battle</i>	□□□□□□	<i>Lore</i>	□□□□□□

- SKILL GROUPS -

personality	◆◆◆◆
movement	◆◆◆◆
perception	◆◆◆◆
survival	◆◆◆◆
custom	◆◆◆◆
vocation	◆◆◆◆

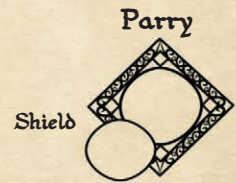
- WEAPON SKILLS -

_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc
_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc
_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc
_____ □□□□□□	damage	_____ edge	_____ injury	_____ enc



- REWARDS -

- VIRTUES -

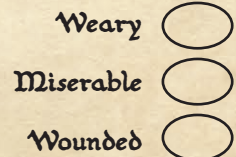
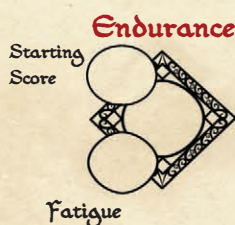


Armour



- GEAR -

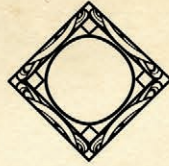
armour	_____	enc
headgear	_____	enc
shield	_____	enc
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



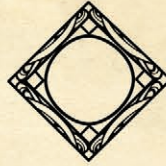
Fellowship



Advancement Points



Treasure



Standing



- BACKGROUND -

Four horizontal lines for background information.

- COMPANY -

Guide

Scout

Huntsman

Look-out Man

Fellowship Focus

Five horizontal lines for company information, corresponding to the labels on the left.

- FELLOWSHIP PHASE -

Sanctuaries

Patron

Two horizontal lines for Fellowship Phase information.

- TALE OF YEARS -

Year

Event description

Year

Event description

Table with 4 columns: Year, Event description, Year, Event description. Contains 12 rows of horizontal lines for data entry.



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