The Most Important Rule:

Have fun. Nobody's playing for money, and I promise not to be offended if you don't interpret the rulebook right. NeRP was designed to not break down if a rule or two gets forgotten a couple times. When in doubt, do what makes sense to you, and don't look back.

"Gentle" Exploding Rolls:

Unless stated otherwise, all d20 rolls in NeRP explode gently. This means that, if you roll the max number on a die, you add 1d6-1 to the result. If you roll a 6 on that, you add 5 and roll again, and so on until you do not roll a 6. If you roll the lowest value on the original die, you do the same thing but subtract the value.

Character Creation:

NeRP has no classes, and currently no race rules. Creating a new character has three steps.

First, determine ability scores. Roll 1d4+1d6+5 12 times, recording each result. Assign these 12 results to your abilities as you see fit. This is the most important part of character creation, because these abilities determine how good you are at any task, and how your character plays. There is no special rule distinguishing the sneaky thief from the wrathful barbarian; only different arrangements of ability scores.

Second, you will need to select a number of educations as defined in that section below. While ability scores determine how good you are at things, educations list the actual tricks and techniques you know.

Finally, select equipment. While rules exist for all kinds of weapons and armor, you will notice no prices, or other kinds of gear. For the time being, the process of deciding what gear a new character has is in the GM's hands.

Basic Attributes:

Simple physical attributes of all objects in the game. These tend to be inherent to your race, the laws of physics, or whether or not you are a chair. Either way, you don't pick them, the DM does.

Size: A combination of the volume occupied by an object, the surface area of the average face it provides to its target, and its mass, represented as an integer. A size 0 object is the size of a human. A human shrunk to one half size in all dimensions would be size -1, but so would a human squished to one half height, despite being a little bigger. Things are assumed to be a dense as a human, but if they aren't the volume is used instead. For example, a stone pillar 5 feet across is way heavier than a double-sized human, but because it's about twice as big as a human it's still a size 1 object.

Ability Scores:

There are 12 Abilities in NeRP 2e: four physical, four mental, and four soul. Once your ability score is determined, your ability modifier for each is equal to the score minus 10.

These 12 are the core of NeRP, and most checks are a combination of these abilities. For example, a DC 16 Dex+Int check would mean roll a d20 and add both your Dexterity and Intelligence bonus. This might, for example, be a roll to craft fine jewelry, where both your ability to plan how to handle the tiny metal and your ability to manipulate it precisely are key to success. All checks are either against a fixed DC or against an opposed roll. Against a DC, ties count as a success. If two opposed rolls tie, results go 50/50: roll again, but this time add no modifiers. If you tie again, keep rolling until there is a winner.

Abilities can suffer from drains and damage. They are identical when determining your effective score in that ability (add all drains and all damage together), but when healing drains can only be removed by special circumstances (specified by the rule giving you the drain). If a source of healing can heal drain or damage, but does heal enough points for both, the healer can choose what is healed.

Physical

Strength: Your ability to move physical objects in the world. At 0 Strength, you can't move. You immediately fall on the ground, and cannot take voluntary actions other than purely mental ones.
Speed: The rate at which you can move your own body. At 0 Speed, you can't move, and are paralyzed on the spot. You remain in position, and may still make defensive Strength checks, to resist being pushed for example.
Dexterity: Your level of control over your physical movement. At 0 Dexterity, you have no real control over your body, and can only flail. You are now prone, but you can still move 5ft per round.
Toughness: The ability of your body to maintain function under physical stress and damage. At 0 Toughness, you die.

Mental
Intelligence: Your capacity to think of new ideas. At 0 Intelligence, you can no longer think without great effort. You can still take reactions, but you suffer 1d4 passion damage for each action you take until you have positive Int.
Wisdom: Your collected knowledge, and common sense. At 0 Wisdom, you have no awareness of the world around you. You are blind and deaf, and take 1d4 Discipline damage every time you are hit with an attack or spell, pushed, or otherwise aggressively interacted with.
Leadership: A combination of your personal ambition and ability to inspire others. At 0 Leadership, you cannot make your own choices. You cannot take an action unless instructed to by someone else, and must pass a DC 15 Loy+Wis check to choose to not do the action. If you fail (or want to do it), you do it on your next turn as a normal action. If multiple people try to make you do something, everyone who you did not ignore must make Leadership rolls, with the highest having their way with you.
Charm: Your capacity to please others and tell them what they want to hear. At 0 Charm, you cannot speak or understand language, but are otherwise unharmed.

Soul
In addition to normal sources of soul damage (which are very rare and usually self-inflicted), the GM may chose to add or subtract points from your soul attributes to represent your recent actions. As a general rule, an action has no effect if it reflects something someone with your level of that attribute would do. This mean, among other things, that the same thing shouldn't change a stat every time you do it.
Discipline: Your capacity to resist corruption. At 0 Discipline, your soul is a slave to chaos, and madness is inevitable. After every month, and whenever you take a check of DC 11 or greater involving a soul attribute, you suffer one soul damage to one of the other three abilities (roll 1d3 to determine)
Passion: Your drive for both life and moral rightness (as you define it). At 0 Passion, nothing matters in life anymore. You suffer a -4 on all checks involving any mental or soul abilities. If a check involves two or more, this does not stack.
Loyalty: Your capacity to follow rules and keep your promises. At 0 Loyalty, no god will accept you,

for your word means nothing. You cannot cast any divine magic, helpful divine magic cast upon you fails unless the caster succeeds a DC 20 Loy + Pass check on your behalf. In addition, should you die in this state, no one awaits you in the afterlife, and your soul is lost forever.

   Empathy: Your desire to care for others. At 0 Empathy, even the most compassionate spirits find your soul impassable ground. All divine healing magic fails on you automatically.

Derived Stats:

These scores are just mathematically derived from other scores. Later sections will cover what they are actually used for.

Size Modifier:

size	modifier	size	modifier	size	modifier	size	modifier
size	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
modifier	-4	-2	-1	0	1	2	4

   HAC(Hit Armor Class) = 10+speed bonus+shield bonus-size modifier
   WAC(Wound Armor Class) = 10+toughness bonus+armor bonus
   Staying Power: 5+discipline bonus+ passion bonus
   Maximum Initiative = 10 + wisdom bonus + int bonus (note: only add bonuses IF POSTIVE. Low scores don't penalize you here)
   Action Points per Turn = speed score

Educations:

You have a total amount of educations equal to 10 + discipline bonus + wisdom bonus. Each education may either be proficiency in a class of weapon you can use, a language you can speak, read, and write, a prayer you know, a type of arcane energy you can summon, or a skill.

If you lose discipline or wisdom for any reason, at the end of about a month's time you must select the appropriate amount of educations to fall out of practice on and forget. If damage or drain is healed, it takes about a month to get back up to speed as well. Points gained from XP result in immediate educations, since it's assumed you picked up the new hobbies while leveling.

Skills:

Things that would be considered a "skill check" are ability checks in NeRP, often involving two ability modifiers for a more complex or nuanced task. If a character happens to have a skill that describes the task, they gain an additional +2 to the roll. Somewhat related checks gain a +1, or a +2 if multiple skills intersect partially. No matter how many skills apply, however, a character never gets more than +2 from all skills combined .

Creating a conclusive and balanced list of skills is futile; The importance of any non-combat roll is always up to the GM. Therefore, skills in NeRP are completely open: you can write down whatever you want, with two restrictions.

First, the skill needs to not cover an area already defined in the rules. For example, "hunting" is an entirely acceptable skill, but it won't give you an attack bonus with bows (it might help you track prey though). "sneak" is not an appropriate skill; stealth rules are covered later. In short, skills don't make you even better at "normal" things; they grant situational bonuses to a wider diversity of situations.

Second, a skill should only apply "sometimes". What this means varies wildly based on campaign, and is entirely up to GM interpretation, but for a normal fantasy setting here are some examples:

Okay	Not Okay
"barrel-making" "bluffing" "seeming innocent" "noticing things out of the ordinary"(maybe) "magical knowledge"(but it doesn't help spells)	"expertise" "winning" (applies to everything) "strength" "charm" (these are abilities) "chopping heads off" (covered by combat rules)

Combat:

Initiative and Action Points:

Initiative is a number to represent a complex mesh of your character's situational awareness, how busy you are with other things, and how caught up the game is with what you've been doing in combat compared to everyone else. Action Points represent the amount of things your character is doing on this turn. While initiative determines *when* you act, and Action Points determine *what* you can do, the two are closely related and cunning warriors will find themselves transferring points between the two almost every turn.

Your initiative starts at a fixed value depending on the circumstances of the combat. Usually, whoever started the combat starts at maximum init. As a general rule, if someone says, "Screw this, I swing", the swing doesn't happen until the first turn, but they get the init bonus for starting the fight. The starter's allies can also start at maximum if they either planned the attack in advance or the starter is their leader (see special rules). Anyone who wasn't aware the combat starter(s) were there starts at max init -10. Everyone else starts at max init - 5. In the event of an agreed upon duel, or a pitched battle where everyone knew they were going to be fighting for a while now, everyone just starts at max init - 5.

Characters take one turn each round in order of initiative from highest to lowest, with opposed speed checks resolving ties. At the start of your turn, you have a full pool of Action Points to spend on actions (see derived stats). If you need more, you may spend up to half your initiative (rounding up) as action points this turn. This represents a combination of your character acting faster at the expense of focus and awareness, and the game's "camera" spending a little more time on your character this turn, meaning we'll need to wait longer next round before coming back to catch everybody else up.

If you choose to end your turn without having spent all your Action Points, the remaining points are added to your initiative, up to your max init. Some actions may take more points than a full pool of Action Points for your character, meaning the only way to accomplish them is to save up points. Some enormous and slow beasts can't even attack every turn!

Delay:

Sometimes your current turn is too soon to do something, but next turn would be too late. At any point in your turn, you may choose to delay with your remaining action points (if you choose to delay, you may NOT spend initiative for Action Points). This immediately ends your turn, but at any

point you may declare that you are taking a second turn for the round. This interrupts (but does not end) whoever's turn it currently is, and can even "pause" and action halfway through completion (e.g. taking a shot at someone halfway through then running between two trees). For your second action, you have all the Action Points you saved when you started the delay, but your initiative is now lowered to that of whomever you interrupted. After this second action, the turn that was interrupted resumes.

If everybody else's turn goes by and you never interrupted anyone, you've spent your turn waiting for something that didn't happen. You don't take a turn this round, and your initiative is equal to the amount of points you were delaying with or your max init, whichever is lower.

In the event that two or more characters are delaying, it's possible that two players will want to interrupt at the same time, or that one will want to interrupt the other's interruption. In that case, all delaying parties roll speed checks, with the winner deciding the order of events.

Delaying more than once in a round is allowed, and spending init for Action Points on a turn created by delaying is allowed, but a character may never spend init *and* delay on the same turn.

Sacrificing Init:

Sometimes a situation will involve you "sacrificing" initiative. In these cases, the sacrifice comes straight out of your current initiative, and doesn't count as being used on your turn for any other purposes. If that would bring your current initiative negative, then you can't do whatever it is that requires the sacrifice.

Combat Actions:

Speak (cost 1): Very basic one or two word shouts are easy enough to to spurt out while fighting, but saying anything more complicated draws your concentration, and listening takes precious time. As a general rule, every clause said takes an action. "Drop your weapons!" is one speak action, for example, as would "Drop your weapons please!", but "Don't shoot! I'm a friend.", or "Don't shoot, I'm a friend!" would both take two.

Move (cost 4): Move up to 30ft. Crossing difficult terrain or obstacles may cost extra movement points. For example, if a fence crosses through a square, it might cost 10ft to hop it and stay in the same square, or 15ft (10+5) to cross the whole square. If at least 5 ft of this movement takes place within range of an enemy, you provoke an attack of opportunity from them.

Dash (cost 6): Make a spd + str check. If you get 11 or higher, you may move 40ft + 5ft per one point above 10. If you roll 9 or lower, you move 40ft - 5 ft per point below 10. This movement must be in a straight line, and obstacles penalize like in normal movement. If at least 5 ft of this movement takes place within range of an enemy, you provoke an attack of opportunity from them.

Charge (cost 6): Move up to 40ft. In addition, you gain +2 on rolls to wound on your next melee attack, as long as that attack occurs before the start of your next turn. Like a dash, movement across difficult terrain or obstacles penalizes you in the same way as normal movement, the movement must be in a straight line, and moving while in range of an enemy provokes an attack of opportunity.

Sidestep (cost 3): Move 10ft. Movement over more difficult terrain costs extra just like the move action, but you do not give foes a chance to attack you. This more careful movement doesn't allow foes to get early strikes on you, like other movement does.

Kneel (cost 1): You are now kneeling. For a biped, being prone makes you one size lower for purposes of being attacked, grants +1 to any checks involving dexterity, but gives you a temporary -4

to checks involving speed, and a -8 to effective speed when calculating HAC against melee attacks, to a minimum of 0 effective speed. Move and Dash actions also only let you move half as far as normal.

Drop Prone (cost 1): You are now prone. For a biped, being prone makes you two sizes lower for purposes of being attacked, grants +2 to any checks involving dexterity (but some weapons can't be used prone), but gives you a -4 to any checks involving speed, and a -4 to effective speed when calculating HAC against melee attacks, to a minimum of 0 effective speed. Move and Dash actions also only let you move half as far as normal.

Stand (cost varies): You aren't prone or kneeling anymore. This costs 2 if you were kneeling, or 6 if you were prone.

Drop Defense (cost -4): You may only do this once per round. Your turn costs four less init, but anyone who wants to take an attack against you in melee until your next turn may make two rolls for the initiative cost of a single attack.

Attack (cost of weapon): With a ranged weapon, you fire a single projectile at a target, while in melee "attack" just refers to doing the normal amount of frantic jabbing and slashing as appropriate to your weapon. Attacks are divided into two parts: rolls to hit and rolls to wound. Attacking someone in melee who doesn't have any shield or weapon with the "defends" special rule allows you to two attacks against that target for the price of one as a single action.
Then roll 1d20+dex-size modifier+weapon hit bonus against HAC of your opponent. If this fails, nothing happens, but if this passes you hit.
If you hit, roll 1d20+weapon wound bonus (or 1d20+bonus+str if melee) against WAC of your opponent. If that also passes, you deal an amount of wounds equal to the amount you beat the defense by. For example, if an opponent has a 14 WAC, and you get a 16, you deal 2 wounds. If you match WAC you still deal 0 wounds, which is better than not wounding at all.
If you don't want to hurt your target as badly, you may choose to intentionally lower your strength (down to 0) on your roll to wound. This is your only way to attack someone "safely". There is no surefire way to beat someone unconscious without hurting them.
This action costs the amount defined in the weapon description. In addition, you may spend additional points of initiative to do one of the following special attacks:

Attack of Opportunity(cost of weapon): This is identical to a normal attack except that you don't do it as a normal action, instead, if someone provokes an attack of opportunity against you for some reason, you can sacrifice the init cost immediately to do the attack outside of your turn. You may only do this once per time you are provoked, but there is no limit per round other than your available initiative.

Draw Weapon (cost 2): You now have a weapon of your choice in your hand. If you already had one, you drop it on the ground.

Withdraw Weapon (cost 4): Your weapon is now on your person, leaving your hand free.

Drop Weapon (cost 0): Your weapon is now on the ground, leaving your hand free.

Wounds and Damage:

Wounds:

While ability damage represents your longer term, "set" injuries, wounds represent new injuries that still hamper your ability to fight. In the heat of battle, it can be hard to tell exactly what happened to you, but it isn't wise to ignore the issue for long.

Every character has three pools of wounds, separated by urgency: immediate, hourly, and daily. If you have any amount of wounds in a category, even 0 or a negative number, you are bleeding at that rate (see bleeding).

For the most part, the only difference between these three pools is the "interest rate" at which you continue taking more wounds until you get them treated. The exception to this is that while you still have immediate wounds, every time you roll a check involving a physical ability score (besides toughness) and roll (after explosions but before modifiers) equal to or less than your immediate wounds, you take another. Note this doesn't mean your check fails.

Resolving Wounds:

There's no way to know what's wrong with your arm while you're still swinging a sword like a madman, and it's also not going to get any better that way. You can resolve your own immediate wounds (checking yourself, pushing broken bits back in, adjusting weight and the like) as a 4 initiative action that provokes attack of opportunity, or someone else can resolve them by performing first aid (see below).

To resolve the wounds, first roll 1d4. The physical ability you rolled takes half of the wounds in ability damage, rounding up. Toughness takes half the remaining wounds. The remaining two physical abilities split the rest, with any remainder going back to toughness. You now have 0 immediate wounds (you are still wounded!).

Then roll a toughness check (with your new toughness) against a DC of 10+the amount of wounds you are resolving. If you pass, you now have no immediate wounds, and are no longer bleeding every round, but you now have 0 hourly wounds.

After your total wounds become more than your current toughness score, you MUST resolve your wounds, albeit at no initiative cost (and no attack of opportunity). Only resolve after checking for incapacitation.

Resolving hourly or daily wounds requires either the first aid action (see below) or waiting until you have enough wounds to force resolution.

Incapacitation:

If you ever get more total wounds than your staying power, and every time you take a wound (even for zero or less) thereafter, you must roll a discipline+passion check against your wounds in order to press on. If you fail, you become incapacitated.

If you fall incapacitated, you drop prone and cannot take any actions, even reactions, with the exception of receiving first aid (which you are always count as having enough initiative to do). For purposes of HAC, you count as having 0 speed.

If brought back by magic or a special rule, you return to the battle with 0 initiative, but otherwise you don't have a chance to recover until an hour later, and every hour thereafter. In order to try and recover, roll discipline+passion against the amount of wounds you have. Success means you are able to do things again, and automatically resolve your wounds. Failure does nothing.

You may or may not be "conscious" while incapacitated, but you certainly aren't paying attention to the battle anymore, can't speak coherently, and only notice glimpses of what happens after, at best.

Bleeding:

While you have wounds in a category, you automatically take an additional wound in that

category at the end of that period (end of each round for immediate wounds, end of the hour for hourly, end of each day for daily wounds). If this brings you to more total wounds than your staying power, immediately roll for incapacitation. Even if you were already over the threshold, you will need to roll to keep standing every time you bleed until you find a way to deal with your wounds.

Ability Damage:

Damage represents injuries that you have tracked, and hopefully can do something about. Use the lower score until you are healed. In addition, should an ability hit 0, you suffer additional issues (described in the abilities section). Abilities cannot go negative; ignore any further damage.

Most physical damage comes from resolving wounds, but other sources can apply ability damage directly to one ability, or one of the three groups (physical, mental, soul). In the latter case, roll 1d4 to pick one ability to take all the damage.

Shortcuts and Time Saving:

During large fights, all these rules can get very tedious. Fortunately, there are a few mathematical shortcuts that can save you some unnecessary rolling.

If a target takes 4 or more times its toughness score in wounds, the target will ALWAYS die immediately. No need to check or roll for anything else.

Once incapacitated, a character or monster cannot wake itself up before an hour has passed. In addition, the effects of bleeding and resolving wounds don't impact the battle going on for those still in the fight, and wouldn't be clearly visible. Therefore, you can save time and arguably increase realism but just counting how long ago someone went down, and only resolving the issue at the end of the battle or when first aid is applied. For those unlucky enough to not have a buddy around who might use first aid, even tallying rounds is unnecessary; 600 rounds pass in one hour, so anyone is either dead or transferred to hourly wounds at that point. At the end of the battle, just roll to see if they make it.

On average, a check to avoid incapacitation will total in staying power + 5.5. Simply adding 5 to SP of anybody not important enough to roll for and using that as a max wounds before passing out isn't exactly the same mathematically as actually doing the rolls, particularly once bleeding factors in, but it is close.

Healing:

Once you have wounds or damage, there are several ways to recover based on the type and what risks you are willing to take. Any method that reduces wounds to less than one removes all wounds in that category.

Violent Waking:

If you really need to get your buddy up, you can just slap him in the face as a two initiative action. The incapacitated character may choose to suffer one mental damage to roll another discipline+passion check to get back up.

First Aid:

First aid will help stabilize a wounded ally (or yourself). As a ten initiative action for both you and the patient, you can resolve your patient's immediate wounds for them if they are incapacitated, and they add your dex, int, and wis to the toughness roll. By tending to a patient for a full hour or day, you can do the same for the other categories. Roll the resolution before bleeding for that period.

You may tend to two people at a time on hourly checks, but patients can only benefit from one doctor at a time. For daily checks, you only need to be attentive and providing care for the waking hours of the day, and you can tend to other issues if needed. You may tend to up to ten patients in this way at a time, but a patient can still only benefit from one doctor at a time. If not incapacitated, you can tend to yourself.

Natural Healing:

Time heals most physical injuries, albeit slowly. At the end of every day after the physical damage (but not drain), roll a toughness check. Any one individual (possibly you) can add their wisdom and empathy bonus to your check. If the total is 12 or higher, you heal one physical damage per two points above 10, from physical abilities of your choice. If your result is below 5, one point of your damage cannot be healed naturally and becomes a drain that can only be healed by operations or magic.

Operation:

If restorative magic isn't an option but you need a tricky wound healed, you can perform an operation. Note that this doesn't always mean surgery, and can also apply to things like pushing a particularly tricky joint back into place, or any other procedure that presents a risk. First, choose the number of points of drain or damage you want to try and heal. You may split this healing between any physical abilities. Roll an int+dex check to perform the operation. Up to three assistants may roll a DC 10 int+dex check to help you. Each that passes gives you +1, each that fails gives you -1. Your DC is equal to 10+5 per point you want to heal. If you fail, you deal a point of physical damage per two points you failed by (rounding down). If you succeed, you heal the damage or drain, but the patient suffers 1d4 physical damage anyway. In either event, the patient, if conscious for the operation, must pass a DC 15 discipline check or suffer 1d4 mental damage. As a general rule, better medical tools give a bonus to checks to do the operation, while anesthetics provide a bonus to not suffering the mental damage.

Magic:

If you do have magic, life becomes much easier. Magic always removes immediate wounds first followed by hourly then daily, unless noted otherwise. The target of any magic that removes wounds may also resolve wounds at no init cost, adding the caster's empathy to the toughness roll. If the target has 0 wounds in a category, you don't need to allocate any points of healing to that category to get this effect.

Emotional Support:

Mental damage can be helped by the support of a friend. One ally can attempt to heal mental damage over the course of a day via normal social interaction. At the end of each such day, roll 1d20 plus the ally's empathy plus the sufferer's discipline. If the total is 12 or higher, one point of mental damage is healed per two points over ten, from mental abilities of your choice. If the total is below 5, the ally suffers one empathy damage.

Vice:

Of course if you lack friends or are in a hurry, there is always a relaxing walk, or just getting stupid drunk. When attempting to de-stress, select an amount of vice to engage in, between 0 and 10. The GM may chose to limit your vice level based on your material means. Roll a discipline check adding your vice level. If your result is greater than 14, heal one mental damage per point you beat 14 by, from attributes of your choice. However, you must also make a discipline check against your vice level. If you fail, you take soul damage equal to the amount you failed your check by. Unlike normal damage though, the first point always goes into discipline, then each point after that is rolled for independently.

Soul Damage:

There is no one size fits all way to heal soul damage. Some can seek atonement from the gods for sins directly against them. Some make good on oaths of vengeance, or find true love. Others are forced to put themselves together to complete a quest of dire importance. Still others simply grow in those areas via character advancement (see below), but carry their inner wounds to the grave.

Armor:

Armor grants an armor bonus to WAC. Some also give a speed penalty (to the speed attribute, not movement speed). Armor is often not complete. For example, the city guard may only have budget for 3 points of chain mail, providing +3 WAC, and -1 speed. If needed, a suit of armor can be split into multiple suits of partial armor, with the sum total of the bonus of all the new partial sets being equal to the total of the original.

If a character tries to put on two partial sets, roll to see how much of the suits overlap. For each armor point in the partial armor who's original offers the most protection, roll a die with a number of sides equal to the armor bonus of the original armor of the other partial suit. If you roll above the armor bonus of the other partial suit, this part of the armor isn't redundant and you get that armor point. If you roll below, it collides with something else on the suit and you can't use it. You get all the armor points for the set that you didn't roll for.

Armor Type	Max Bonus	Speed penalty	Special
Leather	2	none	Cannot combine with higher armor types
Scale Mail	4	-1/4 points (round up)	
Chain Mail	5	-1/3 points (round up)	
Banded Mail	6	-1/3 points (round up	
Plate Mail	8	-1/4 points (round up)	

Shields:

Shields give an armor bonus to HAC. Most also provide a speed penalty. For an init cost of 2+the speed cost of the shield, you may make a shield bash. A shield is a +0/-4 weapon, but if your attack hits and wounds, or fails to wound by 4 points or less, your opponent loses one initiative. Shields fully use the hand they are in, preventing you from using a weapon or other item in that hand.

As an initiative cost 6 action, you may duck behind a shield and gain double the armor bonus against all attacks within a 180 degree arc in front of you.

Shield Type	Bonus	Speed penalty	Special
Buckler	1	none	
Small Shield	2	none	Must spend at least 4 init when using dodge action
Large Shield	4	-1 points	Must spend at least 4 init when using dodge action
Tower Shield	8	-2 points	Must spend at least 4 init when using dodge action

Weapons:

Every weapon has a class for determining proficiency. Gaining education in a class makes you

proficient in any weapon of the class. Not being proficient with a weapon confers a -4 to any rolls to hit. The exception to this is the unarmed strike, which everyone is naturally proficient with.

Weapons with a listed range increment are ranged. Weapons with range can be used beyond that range, for -2 to hit and wound for each increment beyond the first up to a maximum range of one increment per total strength of the attacker. Attacking someone in melee who doesn't have any shield or weapon with the "defends" special rule allows you to two attacks against that target for the price of one as a single action. Weapons with reach distance can attack targets that far away instead of 5ft, and no less.

There is no penalty for wielding two weapons at the same time, nor is there any inherent benefit. If you wish to use both weapons in a round, you will need to pay to attack with each separately, although having weapons of two different costs may give you more options...

Weapon	Class	Attack Cost	Accuracy Bonus	Wound Bonus	Range Increment	Special
Unarmed Strike	none	4	0	-2		Wounds from unarmed strikes go into the hourly pool instead of immediate.
Dagger	Short Blade	3	2	-1		When rolling to wound, soft explosions trigger on a 19-20
Parrying Dagger	Short Blade	3	1	-1		Adds +1 to HAC. This stacks if you use one in multiple hands.
Tomahawk	Axe	4	0	-1		Can be thrown with range increment 20, defends
Short Sword	Short Blade	4	1	0		defends
Light Pick	Mace	4	-1	2		defends
Rapier	Short Blade	4	2	-1		defends, when performing a dodge, add a bonus +1 to HAC
Quarterstaff	Staff	4	2	0		Requires two hands, defends
Long Sword	Long Blade	6	1	1		defends
Battle Axe	Axe	6	0	2		defends
Heavy Pick	Mace	6	-1	4		defends
Short Bow	Bow	6	1	2	60ft	Requires two hands
Great Sword	Long Blade	8	0	4		Requires two hands, defends
Long Bow	Bow	8	1	3	80ft	Requires two hands
Spear	Staff	6	0	2		10ft reach, defends

| Pike | Staff | 8 | 0 | 2 | | 10ft reach, defends, +2 to wound if target charged this round |
| Crossbow | Crossbow | 4 | 2 | 6 | 100ft | Costs 8 init to reload, don't add strength to rolls to wound |

Divine Magic:

For an education you may select a prayer that you can pray to gain advantages brought to you from your god. The exact gods you may seek the favor of changes from setting to setting, but in general a god will favor high values in certain soul attributes and that a character's soul attributes reflect those valued by the god he or she chose. To use a prayer that just says to "pray", you just spend the initiative and do nothing else besides thinking. You don't need a free hand, and can even do this if you are bound or can't move. If it says you need to "touch" something or someone, you need a free hand and the ability to move.

Using a prayer also drains some of your soul attributes for the rest of the day. If the bonus of one of these abilities is used by the prayer, use the pre-drain value. Resting 6 hours restores all drain from using prayers.

If you are ever required by a prayer to take a test of faith, roll 1d20+loyalty+passion. If you roll lower than 10, your faith has been shaken and you cannot use prayers again until you take roughly ten minutes to pray. Praying for divine forgiveness, however, is a trying and humbling experience, and drains all soul attributes by one until you rest for 6 hours. Should you need to pray more than once in a day to recover from multiple failed tests, these penalties stack. It is possible to drive oneself all the way to madness in an effort to prove worthiness to the gods.

Unless otherwise noted, no prayer with a constant effect (not damage or healing) stacks with itself.

Prayer	Init cost	Drains	Effect
Healing Light	4	1 empathy or 1 discipline	Take a test of faith. If you can still use prayers, touch one ally (possibly yourself). The target heals twice your empathy bonus plus one times the target's empathy bonus (minimum zero) in combined wounds and physical damage. You may choose how these points are distributed.
Divine Sight	4	1 loyalty	Pray to bestow a bonus of four plus your loyalty bonus to any checks to Intelligence or Wisdom you make in the next ten minutes, excluding those used for arcane spellcasting.
Holy Judgment	6	1 passion	Pray to gaze upon a target within 120ft. Roll passion+loyalty opposed by discipline+loyalty of your target. If you succeed, your target suffers mental damage equal to your passion+loyalty+discipline MINUS empathy (empathy below 10 just counts as +0). If you fail, take a test of faith.
Shield of Faith	4	1 passion or 1 discipline	Touch one ally (possibly yourself). The target now adds your discipline+loyalty to WAC (minimum zero). The

			effect ends when you chose to have it wear off, become incapacitated, or until a physical attack gets past WAC (including a zero damage wound), at which point you must take a test of faith. Failing ends this effect.
Hate's Mark	4	1 discipline	Pray to gaze upon a target within 60ft. The target now suffers a penalty to WAC equal to your passion MINUS any empathy bonus (empathy below 10 just counts as +0) for as long as you concentrate (a 4 init action each round) and the target remains within 60ft. You may have multiple marks running at a time as long as you have the initiative to spend on them.
Hallow	15	1 loyalty	You mark the area 60ft in any direction as under your god's protection. If you are on a landmark a little bit larger, the effect instead extends to the borders of the landmark. Any character your god does not approve of must roll passion verses your discipline+loyalty to succeed in any prayers used while on hallowed ground. On a failure, the prayer doesn't work, but your foe still pays the ability drain and must take a test of faith. On a success, it works and you must take a test of faith. This effect lasts as long as you want it to, until you become incapacitated, or until you fail a test of faith (which ends all hallowed areas you support). Using hallow on ground hallowed by another god negates both prayers.
Temptation	2	1 passion on failure only	Pray to gaze upon a target who can see and hear you and speak forbidden words. They roll discipline+loyalty vs your passion. If you win, they take 1 drain to either discipline or loyalty (defender's choice) that is healed when they rest for 6 hours. If you lose the roll-off with your target, they have no effect, but you take one passion drain that is restored by resting as normal. If you have more than 60 total points in discipline, loyalty, and empathy combined, you must make a test of faith to deal with the conflict of using this power. Failure deals you one soul damage, but don't lose the ability to use prayers.
Righteous Fury	4	1 passion or discipline	Touch one ally (possibly yourself). That ally now gains your passion+discipline bonuses to both rolls to hit and rolls to wound. When your beneficiary fails to wound with an attack (even for zero damage), you may choose to either let the effect end or make a test of faith to keep it going. If you or the beneficiary rests or becomes incapacitated, the spell also wears off.

Arcane Magic:

For an education, you may select a type of arcane energy you are able to conjure. Using this magic in a trivial way, to practice or to demonstrate to someone else familiar to that magic that you really can cast, for example, can be done at will and in perfect safety. To cast spells of any real importance, however, puts the arcane caster in danger.

Channeling:

At the start of your turn, you may select an amount of energy to summon of a specific type you know. Roll a wisdom check, subtracting the speed penalty (if any) imposed by your armor. If the result is at least the amount you choose to summon, you gain that much energy of that type, which is now in your "aura". This magic stays around you, granting the aura bonus of that type, until an hour passes or you use the magic. If you fail, you generate no magic, and suffer one mental damage per point you failed the check by. You must have both hands open in order to summon magical energy.

Casting:

Using your magic is a 2 init action, which also requires you to have both hands free. Select any or all of the points of each type of magic in your aura to use in your spell. Whichever kind of magic has the most points (you may select in the event of a tie) uses that type's primary effect, while the rest use their secondary effects.

Unless modified by another magical effect, a spell takes effect starting from the exact spot where the caster touches the target (this is part of the casting action). If targeting an unwilling creature, the caster must roll dexterity to hit, like any melee attack. Should this attack fail to hit, the spell is NOT cast, and the caster keeps the energy. If this is ever modified into a ranged spell this changes; all ranged spells are lost on a miss.

Counterspelling:

Any other casters able to clearly see you casting can use any amount of the magic in their auras to add to your spell, changing the effects for better or worse, by sacrificing 2 init immediately. If the original caster doesn't like this manipulation, roll opposed int checks per caster trying to mess with the spell. If the original caster wins, the energy is not added. If there is now a different energy type in the lead, that becomes the primary type and the spell changes into another. The caster must declare a target before counter-spelling is attempted, and may not re-target because the spell has been changed.

Formula Spells:

In addition to the basic abilities in the chart below, special combinations of energy types can be used to cast formula spells, which have more specialized effects not useful for combat. Casting one of those spells also costs 2 init. If interfered with, a formula spell becomes a normal spell as dictated by the points in the spell.

Magic Energy Types:

Type	Aura bonus	Primary spell effect	Secondary spell effect
Abjuration	Each point of abjuration adds one point to your HAC. Every time an attack rolls high enough to have hit you without the bonus from your abjuration, one point of abjuration is dissipated from your aura.	The target(s) temporarily heal one point of immediate wounds per point of abjuration used. This can even take the target(s) total immediate wounds negative. In addition, while under this spell effect, the target(s) also cannot bleed until immediate wounds are equal to or greater than the caster's intelligence. These temporarily healed points go	The target(s) may use your intelligence instead of any of their mental ability scores when the target needs to make a check. The target may use this for one check per point of abjuration used until the spell wears off. If not used it still wears off after an hour.

		away at a rate of one per round, starting with the start of the caster's next turn. When all points are gone, the target can bleed as normal.	
Anti-Mana	Incoming spells affecting you must first burn through your anti-mana, which cancels out points one for one. If you have more anti-mana than the incoming spell has total points, the spell is fully dispelled and you lose that much anti-mana from your shell. If the spell has more points, you lose all your anti-mana and may choose which points of the offensive spell are countered. This can change spell effects, and even the primary energy of the spell.	The target(s) lose connection with magic. Targeted casters lose all the magic in their auras if they fail an Intelligence check against the amount of anti-mana used. Magic items don't work until the start of the caster's next turn. Inherently magical creatures lose one point of initiative per point of anti-mana used	For each point of anti-mana, all other effects of the spell count as having that many less points. For example, a spell of 5 fire, 3 mana, and 2 anti-mana would count as 3 fire and 1 mana for all purposes except for the total amount of points in the spell.
Arcana Special: When Arcana is used as the primary energy type of a spell, the spell also gains the secondary effect	Whenever you summon energy with arcana already in your aura, you may convert any or all of the arcana to the type you are summoning for free.	Once the spell is completed, one point of arcana dissipates. Then select 3 points of energy in the spell per 2 points of arcana remaining (round down). Those points remain in their own aura at the target point of the original spell. You can cast from this seperate aura at any time as a 2 init action, using the target point as the caster's location and your ability scores. You can also counterspell additional points of energy into this spell as per normal rules. At the end of each of your turns, all auras you maintain outside yourself lose one point of energy. You may choose which type.	The spell may now be shot out of your fingertips at a range of 10ft per point of arcana used. Roll a ranged attack to hit unwilling targets; add both int and dex.
Blood Special: The gods loathe blood magic. For the next 24 hours after channeling blood, the channeler suffers a -2 to empathy for the purpose of resolving prayers, and	When you are wounded with a physical attack. you can choose to take the wounds as damage out of the blood points in your aura instead	Roll intelligence + total blood in the spell. If this beats 10+discipline bonus+passion bonus of your target (which must be a living creature), you deal 1 wound per point you beat it by, and gain that many points of blood into your aura, up to a maximum of the target's toughness score.	The target (which must be a single corpse; see below) is ripped back from the afterlife. The undead has 2+points of blood used+your int bonus in speed. The other physical abilities match those of the subject in life, with any damage healed. Drains that the subject had in life persist, and it suffers penalties of 1 strength and 2 dexterity per month left to rot until reaching 8 strength and 9 dexterity. The undead has no mental ability scores. The soul attributes are the same as the

any offensive prayers gain +2 passion against them.			subject in life, but the subject must pass a DC 20 discipline save or suffer 6 empathy damage from the trauma of a soul being forced into an expired body, and every month into being undead must pass a check of the same DC or lose one of every soul attribute, until all attributes are at 4 for eternity. The undead is bound to your will, but has a 25% chance of collapsing every day it isn't fed another point of blood energy. If this effect is spread over an area that targets multiple corpses, only one rises as undead, but any other bodies in range can be absorbed into the new creation per three points of blood used (rounding down). Each body so absorbed grants the new undead +1 to strength and toughness.
Conjuration	Each point of conjuration adds one point to your WAC. Every time you are hit with a physical attack, however, one point of conjuration is dissipated from your aura.	A tentacle arises from the ground in the square(s) this spell was cast in. It always acts at your initiative (starting this turn) by taking a single action to either attack or push around an object, and has Dexterity equal to your Intelligence and 2 strength per point of conjuration used. It uses only these ability scores to roll to hit and wound. It cannot reach into neighboring squares unless this spell is improved to have an area of effect, in which case the tentacle can reach anything in the area (it doesn't create multiple tentacles). Every round after summoning, roll an intelligence check. On a 4 or less, the tentacle disappears.	Instead of all other effects, this spell creates a magical entity (with an appearance of your choosing) at the target. It has speed 10 and dexterity equal to your intelligence, but only has one strength. The entity generates no initiative; you have to spend your own init on your turn for its actions. It has no toughness score, and is immune to non-magical attacks. If hit with a spell that uses anti-mana (in primary or secondary), the caster must pass an int check of DC equal to the amount of anti-mana used or the entity is destroyed. Any other points of magical energy in the spell are stored in the entity, and for 2 init you may discharge the remaining points as a spell centered on the entity's current location, destroying the entity. If not destroyed the entity wears off after 15 minutes.
Mana	You can now see magical auras of other arcane casters, as well as magical items, within 10 ft per point in aura. You can see these even through obstacles or in total darkness, but you cannot discern any details other than	This spell automatically hits its target(s).	Once the spell arrives on target, all effects burst outward into a spherical area 5 ft in radius per point of mana used. Roll to hit any creatures in range, while objects (most likely including the floor) are hit

	that magic is present.		automatically.
Fire	When you make a melee attack, the heat surrounding you adds +2 to rolls to wound. One point of fire in your aura dissipates every time this happens.	Roll to wound against target(s), with your intelligence bonus+the amount of fire in the spell	For one round per point of fire after casting, any and all targets are on fire. They suffer a roll to wound at -1 that ignores armor each round. For 10 initiative a target on fire can put themselves out early, suffering no further damage. If the spell effects an area, the floor in that area is also on fire, rolling to wound anyone standing on it at -1 for the duration. Any combustible objects hit remain burning even after the duration has ended.
Frost	When you wound with a melee attack (even for zero damage), you burn one point of frost from your aura, and your opponent loses one initiative per point of frost in your pool while the chill courses through your foes blood.	Roll to wound against target(s), with your intelligence bonus+the amount of frost in the spell	The 5ftx5ft square under your target (or that is your target, or multiple squares if the spell has been modified to effect an area) is icy and slick. Anyone attempting to walk in the area must pass a DC 10 dexterity save or fall prone and immediately lose 4 initiative. This melts after one round per point of frost used.
Lightning	When you are attacked in melee, lightning strikes out and lashes your target. This spends one point of lightning and counts as an attack with +2 to hit and -1 to wound.	Roll to wound against target(s), with your intelligence bonus+the amount of lightning in the spell	If your target is, or is wearing, something made of metal, your spell can reach out up to 5ft (or 5ft more if the spell already has range) in order to reach the target, and gains +1 per point used to hit
Nature	While you have points of nature in your aura, you have power over wind. You can burn points to give -2 to all dexterity checks to everyone in 20ft/point spent. By spending 10 points, you can move or form a small storm system, either bringing rain over the course of an hour, remove one in the same time frame, or divert a storm on its way.	The target(s) gain the ability to move earth for the next hour. Distribute all points of nature between any targets. They now keep those points until expended. One point can either be spent to move a 5x5 square up or down 5 ft over the course of a minute, or to instantly throw a fistful at a target, using the int bonus of the caster as the hit bonus and +3 as the wound bonus. Either use costs 2 init.	You move water contained within the target. If you hit a body of water, you can move a total of 1 5x5x5ft cube 10ft per point of water used. You may spend 2 points to move a cube 20ft, and so on. This doesn't hurt creatures it hits, but they are moved 5ft in the same direction as the water (per cube that hits them) as it rushing around them. If the target is a living thing, roll an intelligence check against the target's toughness score. If you beat it, you deal 2 physical and 1 mental damage per point you beat it by.

Formula Spells:

Mage Hand (2 mana, 1 conjuration): A magical hand appears, which is able to lift or carry 20lbs. This lasts one hour and can never travel more than 10ft from you. In combat, it may only use two initiative points per turn and always acts on your turn. It cannot store up initiative like a character.

Bottomless Pocket (1 mana, 1 conjuration): A small object appears in your hand, weighing no more than 2lb. You cannot create anything you can't clearly picture in your head (like a key that isn't a copy of one you already are looking at or memorized for some reason), or isn't mostly made of wood, paper, metal, leather, or glass. The item is permanent, but not of the best quality; your GM may require intelligence checks to either make an object that is intricate or to have a tool not break after repeated use.

Invisibility (3 Arcana, 2 Anti-mana): You are now impossible to see by normal means. This lasts for ten minutes plus five more per point of intelligence bonus (if any).

See Invisibility (3 arcana, 2 abjuration): You can now see invisible characters normally. You are able to tell that they are invisible. This lasts for ten minutes plus five more per point of intelligence bonus (if any). This does not let you see creatures who are behind something, in darkness, or otherwise impossible to see by non-magical means.

Character Advancement:

Characters earn experience points during their adventures. Track these both in terms of total experience, and unspent experience. After resting for 6 hours, you may spend experience points to raise your ability scores or buy traits. Raising an ability score one point costs its current value. For example, raising your strength from 12 to 13 costs 12 experience. Traits cost what the list says. You may only take a trait once unless stated otherwise.

Traits:

Curiosity (cost: 8): In addition to your discipline, you also now have an education for each point of intelligence.

Skill Talent (cost: 4): Pick one skill. You now gain an additional +3, which can stack with an education.

Skill Mastery (cost: 4): Pick one skill you have an education in. You now add your wisdom bonus to checks with that skill (double your wisdom bonus if it's a wisdom check), which stacks with that education and can stack with a talent.

Arcane Blood (cost: 30): When channeling arcane energy, you may add your passion bonus to the roll to not take damage.

Arcane Haste (cost: 15): Instead of just channeling at the start of your turn, you may take a 6 init action to summon energy a second (or third, or fourth, or...) time in a round.

Concentration (cost: 10): When making any check involving dex, int, or wis, you may add one to your roll in exchange for a drain of one discipline that goes away after resting for 6 hours.

Two Weapon Fighting (cost: 10): Attacking with a melee weapon after having attacked with a melee weapon in a different hand in the same round grants +2 to rolls to hit.

Martial Art (cost: 10): Your unarmed strikes are now a +1/+1 weapon.

Special Rules:

There are many special circumstances in NeRP. These are not powers that certain characters unlock, but situations that could in theory come up for anyone.

Cleave: If a melee attack deals enough wounds to force the target to resolve, you slice all the way through some part of your foe and may swing into another. You may make a free attack against a foe both in range of you and adjacent to the one you just downed, with a -2 to the rolls to hit and wound. You may keep cleaving as long as you keep downing foes, adding an additional -2 each time.

Critical Hit: On any mundane attack or magical effect that involves rolling to hit followed by rolling to wound, if you beat the HAC by a full ten points, you may add 5 points on your roll to wound. For every additional ten points you may add another 5 (+10 for 20 pts over, +15 for 30, etc.). In addition, if you wound you may choose to only deal 0 wounds and apply all the points directly into ability damage to a physical ability of your choice instead.

Note that this is optional; if you don't want to hurt someone too hard you are allowed to ignore the wound bonus bonus and damage effect by intentionally veering away from a critical area at the last minute. You may NOT choose to just ignore the wound bonus and keep the direct damage option.

Diplomacy: Short term conversations require no rolls unless you tell a significant lie or are trying to convince someone of something. When the impact of a character's words really matter, however, the following rules come into play. Conversation isn't mind control, but there can be subtle consequences to going against those you think you trust. Therefore, even player characters are not immune to the persuasion of others.

Deception:

Exactly what counts as a "significant lie" is up to the GM, but in general this is any time you are intentionally misleading someone with consequences if the truth is discovered. Saying "fine" when asked how your sleep was when in reality there was a lump in your bed is effortless. If a guard asks what you are doing here and you say "I'm here to see the duke", you may not have told a literal lie if you are in fact here to find and kill the duke, but you are still trying to deceive, and you still have a chance of revealing your true intentions.

To not reveal a lie, roll a intelligence + charm versus the intelligence + wisdom of your opponent. This should be rolled in secret. If the liar wins, the liar doesn't seem suspect or inconsistent, but the subject does not automatically believe whatever was said. If the liar loses, the target of the lie is now pretty convinced that the statement was deceitful. If the target rolls below a 5 in attempting to sense the lie, however, the statement is automatically believed to be deceitful, regardless of if it was the truth.

Convincing:

Sometimes, you want to convince someone that what you think is best. For game rule purposes, you never have to roll for this until you actually want something from someone, regardless of if you ask it directly, or just hint at it long enough that the target gets the idea. You roll a charm check, adding any modifiers (listed below), against the wisdom and discipline of your target. If you fail to beat your opponent, they aren't swayed (although they might agree with you anyway).

Modifiers for convince rolls:

Target's connection level to attacker	+1/level
Target has connection to attacker, and thinks this would be bad for attacker	-1/2levels
Request is absurd ("I wanted a pony that can FLY!!!")	-20
Request puts target in serious danger ("You are my butler, so it's your job to fetch my coat, even if we are under attack...")	-10
Request doesn't make sense ("I doubt those orcs mean any trouble. Let's let them inside")	-4
Request puts target in some danger ("A REAL knight of the realm would come aid me in my quest.")	-4
Request is clearly selfish ("I would be so happy if you let me ride your horse.	-4

Please?")	
Agreeing with attacker brings an advantage to the target ("If you let me inside, I guess I'll just have to leave my horse with you, and never come back for it...")	+4
Target hates attacker, or would like to see attacker harmed	-8
Attacker in genuine danger ("Scar! Brother! help me!")	+8

A target who loses the check is still free to make any choice, but if he decides to go against your wishes after a failure, he suffers a -1 penalty to all mental checks per two points he lost the roll by due to a combination of guilt and cognitive dissonance from what seemed like a very good choice. The duration of this modifier is up to the GM, but generally lasts for as long as the offending course of action is being taken, and for a day or two afterwards.

A mortal's heart can only hold so much guilt. If at any point a character's total penalty from failure to defend against convince rolls is higher than half that character's empathy, excess penalties are forgotten. In addition, a character can't suffer two penalties at the same time from the same attacker trying to convince them of the same thing.

A special case where a convince roll may benefit the target is when the target doesn't have free will. If the target of a convince roll is under magical compulsion, and that compulsion is making them do something in contradiction to what the attacker is trying to convince them of, the attackers roll may be used in place of whatever roll (if any) can be used to resist compulsion.

Connections:

Over longer periods of time, deeper relationships can develop between characters who come to know each other. In NeRP, this is represented by connection levels, which symbolize good business relationships, childhood friends, romantic love, and much more.

Connection reference

lvl 0	I don't know you well (regardless of first impressions or opinion based on reputation)
lvl 2	I value your opinions, and think of you often. It would be unfortunate if I were to lose your favor.
lvl 6	You are a significant part of my life. I'm willing to sacrifice things I want to retain your companionship.
lvl 12	I make life choices based on what you would want, and what keeps you in my life, and I pray the two don't conflict.
lvl 16	I would hurt me to keep you.
lvl 21	I would hurt YOU to keep you.

Connected characters know their own connection levels to others, but not those of anyone else. Any starting connections with others should be assigned by the GM, but adventurers often start with no connections with any folks they will be running into in their journeys.

Once per day, a character who has a connection may add one point per two connection levels

(rounding down, to a maximum of +5) to a check that is in the benefit of someone your care about, dealing yourself one passion drain that ends when you rest for 6 hours. In extreme cases where the ones you care about are in serious danger, you may add your full connection level to all of your soul stats for the rest of the day (ie until you rest), but afterwards the stress lowers your connection level by one. If you discover the character you were trying to save was actually tricking you just to exploit this ability, you also suffer one empathy damage.

Forming Connections:

It normally takes about 30 hours of actual contact and interaction before any noteworthy connection forms, but this amount of time can vary dramatically, and is up to the GM. This time period will also increase based on the existing level of connection between the characters.

Once enough time has elapsed, either character may attempt to connect either with or against each of the soul attributes, trying to guess if the other's scores are high or low. For example, a character may choose to connect with passion, against discipline, ignore loyalty, and connect against empathy. The other is then free to select any pattern, with both selecting in secret so as not to influence each other's choices.

Then roll the up to eight attempts at connection. For each attempt, add the charm bonus of the "attacker" to the roll, and start with a DC of 10+the wisdom bonus of the "defender". Then, if the attempt is for the soul attribute, add the ability bonus of the "attacker" to the roll and subtract the bonus of the "defender" from the DC. If the attempt is against the attribute, subtract the bonus from the roll and add it to the DC. If the roll is successful, the defender's connection level with this character increases by one. In addition, if you succeed on a roll with an ability score the other party chose not to make an attempt on, they automatically make the same attempt back on you (either for or against the stat, same as what you did).

Dodge: After determining that a melee attack would hit, the defender may elect to sacrifice 3 or more init to move 5ft and try to get out of the way of the attack. The amount sacrificed is added to HAC for this one attack. The target MUST have an open space to move into to perform a dodge, and must move into a different space.

Fractional Ability Scores: In some cases, game mechanics break down for very small and weak creatures. To compensate, sometimes a monster (using the term very loosely) will have a strength or toughness score of "½", "¼" or less. This works exactly like having a score of 1 (-9 modifier), with the exception that if a check succeeds, the magnitude by which it passed is divided by the score, and rounds using the ability score as a unit.

For example, an angry squirrel rolls to wound with ½ strength. It rolls 19 against a scrawny man with WAC 8. Normally, this would be a wound for (19-9-8) 2 points, but in this case it only deals one.

In a more complicated example, a big scorpion (str ¼) attempts to attack a frog (tou ½, so WAC 1) with its claw. It manages to wound with a roll of 13, beating WAC by (13-9-1) 3. Dividing by the fractional strength, this results in ¾ wounds. As per normal rules, this is higher than the frog's ½ toughness, forcing the frog to resolve wounds. The frog rolls strength to take half wounds rounding up, which in this case would round to 2 fourths. Half of the remaining fourth damage goes to toughness, but this would round right back up to ¼ damage to toughness, reducing the frog to ¼ current toughness.

Fortunately, this doesn't hamper the following toughness check to stop bleeding since this roll is pass/fail (½ and ¼ both function like toughness 1 in this case). Unfortunately, if the frog fails even one round of bleeding will deal a full wound, which will automatically kill the animal. Fortunately, that means you can stop playing as a frog.

Grapple: As a 6 initiative action, you may attempt to grab a target within reach of you. This is treated as a roll to hit with a +2 accuracy bonus. If you hit, you enter the same space as your opponent. The two of you are now in a grapple, and you have one grab on your target (see below). If there is already a grapple underway, entering costs no initiative.

Once in a grapple with someone, you have the following choice of actions. Normal actions are not allowed while in a grapple, except for at GM's discretion:

Grab (cost 6): Roll to hit someone else in the grapple with a +2 accuracy bonus. If you hit, roll opposed strength checks with your opponent. If you beat your target, you now have an additional grab on your opponent. Every grab incurs a penalty of -4 speed (min 0) to the target and -2 speed (min 0) to you. In addition, with each grab you have you may specify a item your target is no longer able to reach.

Break Grab (cost 2): Roll opposed strength checks to break free of a grab someone else has on you. If you win the grab is over, but the speed penalty does not end for either of you until the start of the next round. If you lose you take one passion drain that ends once you leave the grapple. Once your effective passion drops to 10 or below, losing and further attempts to struggle free cause one mental damage.

Attack (cost varies): Attacks work normally in grapples, but if you attack someone in the same grapple as you you gain +2 to hit, and attacks that cost 5 or more initiative are not possible in such close quarters. In addition, two-handed weapons cannot be used. On the upside, everyone in the grapple gets a special attack that can only be used against others in the grapple. Representing a wide array of elbows, headbutts, and cross-hilt strikes, or just pushing a guy, this "weapon" has +2 to hit, -4 to wound, and drains 1 initiative point (min 0) from the target on a hit.

Tackle (cost 4): Make opposed strength checks with a target to throw them to the ground. If you have no grabs on your target and they have no grabs on you you must roll to hit first just like with a grab. You gain +2 to the strength roll for each grab you have on your opponent, your opponent gains +2 for each grab on you, and the attacker suffers a -2 penalty for every foot the defender has on the ground. If the attacker succeeds, both of you are prone.

Drop prone/stand: Works exactly the same as when not in a grapple, but this cannot be done when an opponent has a grab on you.

Leave (cost 4): Move 5ft in any direction from the grapple, and leave the grapple. This cannot be used if someone has a grab on you, or if something else would prohibit you from moving to that spot. You lose all grabs you have on anyone else.

Bind (cost 10): If you have a rope or some such means, and at least one grab on your target, you tie them up. This provides three grabs on the target from the rope. The target is free to try and break these grabs, but your average rope counts as rolling 20 on each strength check.

Leaders: Any character with at least 10 loyalty may select one or more leaders. Beyond a mere "boss", this is someone they have personal faith in, and see as a source of wisdom and rightness. A leader's presence and actions confer certain bonuses, particularly in combat, but it comes at the cost of independence. If your leader asks you to do something major (what constitutes an important order vs a meaningless request is up to the GM) you don't want to do, you must choose to comply or lose one Loyalty. Note that this is a permanent change, not damage, and cannot be healed in any way. That individual is also no longer your leader. Note that reinterpreting orders based on new information doesn't trigger this rule; this is supposed to represent the kinds of instructions that shake one's faith in leadership altogether.

You may decide someone is your leader freely, up to a maximum amount of your loyalty bonus plus one at the same time. To remove a leader, you either have to disobey (see above), take the -1 loyalty to immediately break faith in your leader, be dismissed by your leader, or believe the leader to

be dead or missing. If your loyalty is damaged so that you can no longer support your current amount of leaders, you must remove the excess leaders, but take no penalty.

You gain a bonus in a variety of situations with a leader. When your leader initiates a combat in such a way as to start with max initiative, you do as well, even if you had no way of knowing that he was going to attack, because you are assumed to already have been watching his moves. If incapacitated in a combat where your leader is visible, you may make a second roll to avoid incapacitation. If your leader passes a check to avoid fear or other mind-altering effect, or see past an illusion, and you need to take a check for the same thing, you gain +2 to your own check.

Negative Wounds: In some rare casts, a special attack will cause you to deal negative wounds. This doesn't mean you healed the target; if the target is unwounded, they now have that negative number of wounds, and is now bleeding just like having 0 or positive wounds. An already wounded target that suffers a negative amount of wounds is unaffected. When resolving a negative amount of wounds, no physical ability scores are effected; simply roll to determine if you now have 0 wounds or no wounds.

Power Attack: If your current Passion is 11 or higher, you can re-roll a roll to wound after seeing the result, draining your Passion by one point until you rest for 6 hours.

Riposte: If a melee attack fails to hit by a small margin, you have a chance to attack back. When an attack misses you by less than your intelligence bonus, take your HAC and subtract the actual result of the attack against you. You may spend that many points of initiative immediately after your opponent's attack (out of turn order), but only for an attack of opportunity. For example, if you have HAC of 18, an Int bonus of 5, and an opponent rolls a 15 to hit you, you may spend three init to attack with a dagger, but you may not use, for example, a longsword. You may not drop below 0 init when doing this, and you must use a weapon you already have in hand.

Stealth: It's common to not want to be seen. In order to use stealth, you need some kind of cover to hide behind. Stealth is automatic until someone actually tries to find you, at which point those who wish to avoid being spotted must roll dexterity + intelligence – size modifier -1 per person beyond the first trying to spot you (who could reasonably see you). A group of people all with the same leader may roll together at the leader's abilities, at a penalty of -1 per person beyond the first. This always uses the dexterity + intelligence bonus of the leader, unless one member of the group is exceptionally clumsy or loud, but the group uses the size modifier of the largest member.

If this beats 10 + the spotter's wisdom bonus + the spotter's discipline bonus, you are not seen. Starting a combat from this situation guarantees the unaware start with 5 init (unless there is another foe they are already aware of). If the spotter can hear but can't see you, you may add 8 to your roll.