

CATCHING RATS & ROBBING GRAVES



Being a treatise on the running of adventures
most perilous and grim

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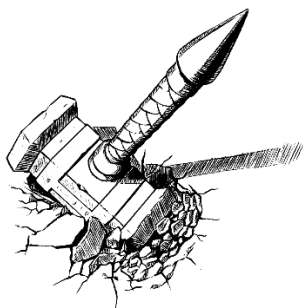
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INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Catching Rats and Robbing Graves (CRARG)**, a rules-lite system for running fantasy role-playing games in the British grimdark tradition.

Specifically, CRARG allows existing material for the Original Games (*page 37*) to be enjoyed with a reduced level of complexity.

The intention is not to replace the Original Games. Rather, it is to provide an unobtrusive set of simplified mechanics that can be used in conjunction with the original content whilst preserving its unique flavour.

A copy of at least one of the Original Games is recommended for their all-important background content.

This supplement is a fanwork that is intended to be used in conjunction with the Original Games. It is not intended as a replacement for any of those games, nor as a challenge to any of their copyrights.

HACK100

CRARG is derived from the generic **Hack100** role-playing game, a simple, flexible percentile-based system.

You do not need a copy of Hack100 to run CRARG – this ruleset is self-contained.

For more resources relating to CRARG and Hack100, including downloads and a blog that provides a commentary on their development, visit hack100rpg.com.



DICE

CRARG uses ten-sided dice. These are either rolled individually to generate a number between 1 and 10 (a roll of zero is a 10) or in pairs with one die designated as the “tens” and the other as the “units” to generate a number between 1 and 100.

So, for example, if the “tens” die rolls an 8 and the “units” die rolls a 2, then the overall result is 82. Zeroes on both dice is a roll of 100. For greater clarity, ten-sided dice are available that label the “tens” die in multiples of 10.

In describing dice rolls, the usual conventions are followed:

- **d10** is shorthand for a ten-sided die.
- **d100** is shorthand for using two ten-sided dice to generate a number between 1 and 100 (as described above).
- **2d10** - roll two ten-sided dice and add the results together to generate a number between 2 and 20.
- **3d10+4** - roll three ten-sided dice, add the results together, and then add 4 to the result to generate a number between 7 and 34.
- A **d5** can be simulated by rolling a d10 and dividing the result by two, rounding up.



PLAYER CHARACTERS

CHARACTER CREATION OVERVIEW

Player character creation in CRARG is quick and easy. The following eight steps summarise the process. Further details are provided on the pages that follow.

A character sheet is available for download at hack100rpg.com

1. Determine the character's **Species** - Human, Dwarf, Elf or Halfling (*page 8*).
2. Roll their **Abilities** (*page 9*).
3. Note the character's **Health**, **Luck Points** and **Movement** (*page 11*).
4. Choose their **Career** (*page 12*).
5. Note any **Trappings** (equipment) (*page 13*).
6. Decide upon the character's **Background and Motivation** (*page Error! Bookmark not defined.*).
7. Roll any accumulated **Free Experience Checks** (*page 15*).
8. Name them.

SPECIES

Roll the character's **Species** randomly using the table below.

If the random result is accepted, one **Free Experience Check** is awarded that can be used to improve the character (*page 15*).

Alternatively, select the character's Species and forego the Free Experience Check.

SPECIES	
Species	d10
Human	1-7
Dwarf	8
Elf	9
Halfling	10

For descriptions of the four Species, including their cultural backgrounds, preferences and prejudices, refer to any of the Original Games or Tribute Games (*page 37*).

Innate Characteristics

The Night Vision of Dwarfs, Elves and Halflings is represented as an **Innate Characteristic** (*page 35*). All three species can see well in darkness for distances of up to 20 yards.

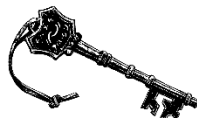
ABILITIES

The relative strengths and weaknesses of a character are described by ten **Abilities**. These represent common attributes, characteristics, skills and knowledge possessed, to varying degrees, by all.

Each Ability has an associated percentage value. The higher the value, the more likely a character is to succeed when undertaking a task related to that Ability.

Starting Abilities

Roll 2d10+20% for each of the character's ten **Abilities**. Then modify those Abilities according to the character's Species by referring to the table opposite.



SUMMARY OF ABILITIES

Ability	Description	Examples of Use
Melee	Close combat skills	Striking and parrying with hand weapons; brawling; martial arts
Ranged	Throwing/shooting skills	Throwing knives; shooting bows; firing guns
Strength	Brute strength	Lifting, pushing or pulling a heavy object; holding back a crushing trap; arm wrestling
Toughness	Physical resilience	Resisting the effects of poison, disease or harsh environments; extended exercise
Agility	Physical dexterity	Jumping; balancing; climbing; dodging
Reasoning	Mental dexterity	Comprehending complexity; recalling details from memory; resisting an illusion
Willpower	Mental resilience	Resisting temptation; maintaining morale; overcoming fear
Influence	Persuasiveness	Haggling; intimidating; extracting information; convincing others
Stealth	Ability to pass unnoticed	Moving silently, travelling without leaving tracks; blending into a crowd
Perception	Observational skills	Finding hidden objects; spotting small details; reading the intentions of others

STARTING ABILITY MODIFIERS BY SPECIES

Ability	Human	Dwarf	Elf	Halfling
Melee	-	+10	+10	-10
Ranged	-	-	+10	+10
Strength	-	-	-	-10
Toughness	-	+10	-	-
Agility	-	-10	+10	-
Reasoning	-	-	+10	-
Willpower	-	+20	+10	+10
Influence	-	-10	-	-
Stealth	-	-10	-	+10
Perception	-	-	+10	-

It is, of course, compulsory to record a character's Abilities in a horizontal array like this:

Mel	Ran	Str	Tou	Agi	Ste	Rea	Wil	Inf	Per

The ten Abilities should be rolled in the order they are presented in the table. If the results are accepted in the order rolled, two Free Experience Checks are awarded.

Alternatively, the ten rolls can be reallocated across the ten Abilities as preferred, but with the loss of the Free Experience Checks.

Ability Bonus

Each Ability has an associated **Ability Bonus** equal to its "tens" value. For example, if a character's Strength is 32, then their Strength Bonus is 3



HEALTH

Health (page 26) is a measure of the general well-being of a character.

To calculate a character's Health, add their Toughness Bonus and their Willpower Bonus, and then multiply the result by two.

e.g. if Toughness = 28 and Willpower = 41, then Health = (2 + 4) x 2 = 12.

LUCK

Luck Points (page 18) provide a safety net for characters against unfortunate dice rolls. They vary with Species as defined in the table below.

MOVEMENT

The **Movement** (page 22) values in the table below represent the number of 2-yard squares an unarmoured character can move during a combat round in addition to taking one Action.

LUCK POINTS AND MOVEMENT BY SPECIES

	Human	Dwarf	Elf	Halfling
Luck Points	1d5	1d5-2*	1d5-3*	1d5-1*
Movement	8	6	10	6

*minimum of 1



CAREER

A character's **Career** is one of the aspects that defines them most strongly. Careers imply a level of natural talent, training, or expert knowledge.

For new characters, their Career describes what they were doing in their pre-adventuring lives. As characters progress, they can move into new Careers that broaden their expertise.

Three approaches for determining a character's initial Career are suggested:

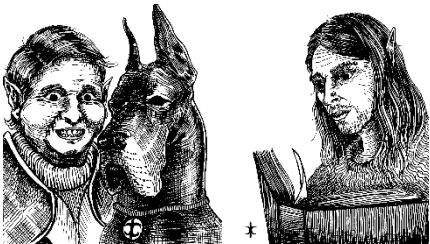
1. Refer to the Career tables and descriptions in the Original Games (*page 37*). This is the recommended approach.
2. Use the table on the right.
3. With the agreement of the Referee, a player can devise a new Career for their character.

If a character's Career is determined randomly, they receive three Free Experience Checks.

New characters in skilled professions (e.g. Engineer, Physician, Priest, Wizard) are likely to be apprenticed to a master. Priests should declare which god they follow. Wizards should align themselves with a particular school of magic. The Original Games are the best source of inspiration on such matters.

In the same way as Abilities, a character's relative competence in their Career is expressed as a percentile number. For new characters, their Careers have a starting value of $2d10+30\%$.

CAREERS	
d100	Career
01-04	Beggar
05-08	Bounty Hunter
09-12	Coach Driver
13-16	Engineer
17-20	Grave Robber
21-24	Herbalist
25-28	Hunter
29-32	Merchant
33-36	Noble
37-40	Outlaw
41-44	Pedlar
45-48	Physician
49-52	Priest
53-56	Rat Catcher
57-60	Road Warden
61-64	Sailor
65-68	Scholar
69-72	Scout
73-76	Servant
77-80	Smuggler
81-84	Soldier
85-88	Thief
89-92	Watch Officer
93-96	Witch Hunter
97-00	Wizard



TRAPPINGS

If a character's Career was selected with reference to one of the Original Games then their **Trappings** (starting equipment and money) will be listed therein.

Otherwise, the player and the Referee should agree upon a plausible set of Trappings based on a character's Career. Bear in mind that, traditionally, starting characters in this style of game tend to be poorly equipped.

Weapons and Armour

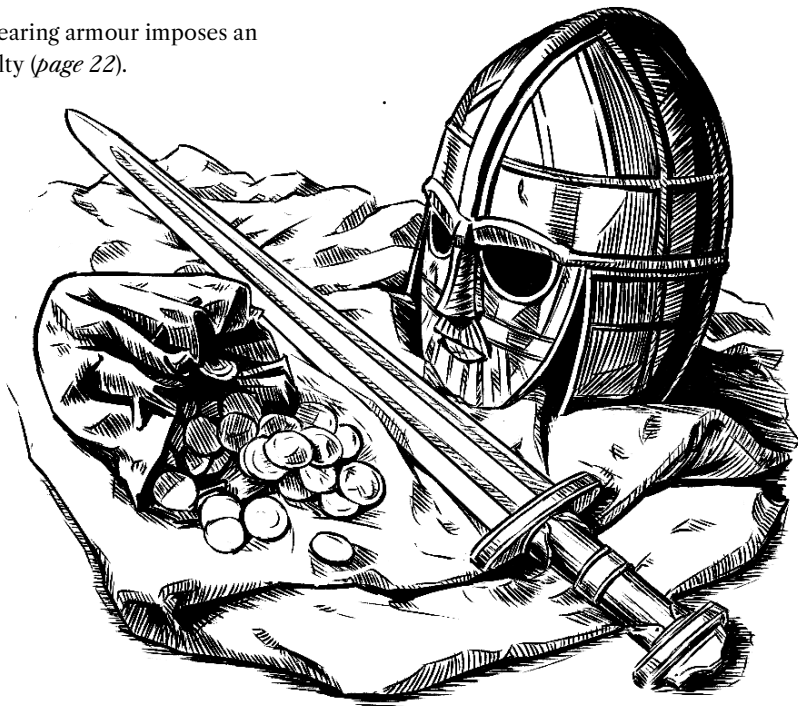
The effectiveness of different types of weapons and armour is described in the Combat chapter on *pages 21 and 22* respectively.

Note that wearing armour imposes an Agility penalty (*page 22*).

Encumbrance

There is no quantitative encumbrance system in CRARG. Instead, each character must specify, on their character sheet, where each item of equipment is stored about their person.

By requiring characters to declare how they are carrying each item of equipment, it immediately makes it obvious as to whether this seems plausible. It also helps to visualise the character.



BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Every character should be summarised with a single sentence that describes their **Background** (which could be related to their Career – see *page 12*), and their wider **Motivation** for adventuring.

This gives the character context without the need for lengthy biographies and backstories.

It also provides the Referee with plot hooks for future adventures.



Random Examples

For inspiration, the table opposite can be used to generate random Backgrounds and Motivations. Pick an option (or roll 1d10) for each column.

Not all of the combinations will necessarily make sense, so adjust, elaborate, or re-roll accordingly.

Group Motivations

Whilst different characters within a group might have a range of Backgrounds, it often makes sense for two or more members of a group to share a Motivation. This provides a common cause for adventuring.

EXAMPLE BACKGROUNDS AND MOTIVATIONS

Background			Motivation	
1	addicted	[insert character's Species and Career]	avoiding	a specific item [details].
2	cheated		documenting	answers [about ...].
3	crippled		escaping from	a specific person [details].
4	downtrodden		fighting for	a specific place [details].
5	exiled		investigating	a specific organisation [details].
6	indebted		pursuing	justice [for ...].
7	penniless		representing	knowledge [about ...].
8	sickly		researching	revenge [for/against ...].
9	unappreciated		resisting	the truth [about ...].
10	wrongly accused		seeking	wealth.

FREE EXPERIENCE CHECKS

Depending upon the degree of randomness embraced during their creation, new characters might have accumulated up to six **Free Experience Checks** (one for a randomly-rolled Species, two for accepting their Ability scores in the order rolled, and three for a randomly-rolled Career).

These Free Experience Checks can now be used to potentially increase a character's Abilities or Career. The Experience Checks are made in the usual way (as described on *page 32*) and can be allocated to any Ability or Career (although each can only be checked once).

CHARACTER NAMES

Reference to the Original games (*page 37*) is recommended when naming characters. This will ensure that names are a good fit with characters' species and the game setting.



TASKS

TASK ROLLS

Whenever a character's action has a non-negligible chance and consequence of failure, the Referee should call for a **Task Roll**.

Performing a Task Roll

1. Select the Ability or Career that is most relevant to the task at hand. This provides the base **Target Percentage**.
2. The Referee might then adjust the base Target Percentage by a **Difficulty Modifier**.
3. Roll 1d100. If the roll is less than or equal to the **Modified Target Percentage**, the task is successful. Otherwise, the task fails.
4. A roll of 01-05 is always successful. A roll of 96-00 is always a failure (except with **Opposed Tasks** – see *page 17*).
5. A roll that is a success and a double is a **Critical** (e.g. 11, 22) and brings extra benefits. A roll that is a failure and a double (e.g. 99, 00) is a **Fumble** and there are additional consequences.

DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS

Sometimes the Referee might decide that a certain Task Roll is either easier or more difficult than usual. This could be for a variety of reasons including the prevailing local conditions, the specialist nature or complexity of the task, or that something is disrupting the undertaking.

In such cases, a **Difficulty Modifier** is applied to the Target Percentage.

DIFFICULTY MODIFIER

Difficulty	Modifier
Trivial	Automatic Success
Easy	+20%
Normal	-
Hard	-20%
Very Hard	-40%

Where multiple factors are in play, the Difficulty Modifier represents the net effect of those factors. For example, the Referee might rule that the net effect of trying to shoot a large, but distant, target is a zero modifier.

CRITICALS AND FUMBLES

Sometimes things go better or worse than usual.

Criticals

A successful Task Roll that is also a double (e.g. 11, 22) is a **Critical** and the character receives some extra benefit. This might mean that the task is performed particularly well or quickly, or that it brings some additional (but related) advantage.

In combat (*page 23*), it could result in additional damage being inflicted or an opponent dropping their weapon.

A non-combat example would be a critical Influence Task Roll leading to the target divulging additional important information.

Fumbles

Conversely, a failed roll that is also a double (e.g. 99, 00) is a **Fumble** and something has gone badly wrong.

Weapons are dropped, unintended offence is caused, or tasks generally take longer or are performed more noisily.

Deciding Consequences

For both Criticals and Fumbles, players should be encouraged to offer suggestions as to the nature of the outcome. Nevertheless, the Referee's decision on such matters is final.

OPPOSED TASKS

Situations might arise in which a character pits one of their Abilities against an Ability of an adversary. For example:

- A character attempting to sneak past a guard would pit their Stealth Ability against the guard's Perception Ability.
- A character attempting to hold a door shut would test their Strength Ability against the Strength Ability of whoever was trying to open the door.
- A character trying to bribe someone might pit their Influence Ability against the target's Willpower Ability.

Such "contests" are **Opposed Tasks**.

Resolving an Opposed Task

Each competitor performs a Task Roll as usual, but rather than there being a pass/fail outcome, the two results are compared.

A Critical beats an ordinary success, which beats an ordinary failure, which beats a Fumble.

In the case of a tie, the highest roll wins if both were successful (Criticals or ordinary successes). The lowest roll wins if both were unsuccessful (Fumbles or ordinary failures). If the rolls are also tied, the character with the highest Ability wins.

Only the winner of an Opposed Task receives the extra benefits of a Critical. Similarly, only the loser suffers the penalties of a Fumble.

CAREER TASK ROLLS

The application of a character's **Career** when making Task Rolls requires some interpretation.

The players and the Referee should be flexible and creative when describing and agreeing upon how a given Career might be relevant to a particular activity.

For example, a character with a Rat Catcher Career might be competent at setting traps, navigating sewers and handling diminutive but ferocious pets.

Similarly, a Grave Robber will excel at manual labour, might have a (very) basic understanding of anatomy, and is likely to be connected to a range of interesting individuals.

Referees should be generous in such regards. When the relevance of a Career to a certain task is slightly tenuous, allow the roll albeit with a suitable Difficulty Modifier.

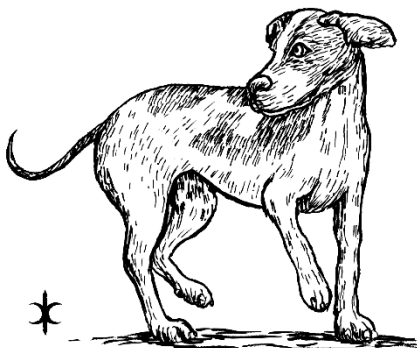
Characters gain additional Careers as they become more experienced. This is discussed in the Improvement chapter (*page 32*).

LUCK POINTS

Luck Points provide a safety net for characters against unfortunate dice rolls.

The procedure for using Luck Points is as follows:

- At the start of every session, each player rolls their character's Luck Points randomly according to their Species (*page 11*).
- A Luck Point can be spent to re-roll any Task Roll.
- Each re-roll replaces the previous result (so it might be worse).
- Multiple Luck Points can be spent on the same task.
- Luck Points can only be spent by the character performing the Task Roll.
- Any unspent Luck Points at the end of each session are lost. A character's Luck Points are re-rolled at the start of the next session.





COMBAT

COMBAT OVERVIEW

Combat in CRARG uses the task resolution system described in the previous chapter.

A **Ranged Task Roll** is used to determine whether an attack with a missile weapon is successful.

An **Opposed Melee Task Roll** is used to resolve close-quarters combat.

In addition to these Task Rolls, it is also necessary to introduce:

- An **Initiative** system for deciding the order in which combatants act.
- A means of determining the **Damage** inflicted by a successful attack, factoring in the effects of different weapons and armour types.



COMBAT SEQUENCE

Combat takes place over a series of rounds in the following sequence.

Initiative

Each combatant rolls for **Initiative** on 1d10 + their Agility Bonus.

They then act in Initiative order, highest first. Tied Initiatives act simultaneously.

A combatant can decide to delay their activity until later in the round.

Movement and Actions

Each round, a combatant can move up to their **Movement** allowance and take one **Action**.

Movement is discussed on *page 22*.

An **Action** is something that requires a combatant's full attention. For example, making an attack, using a Career, retrieving something from a backpack, or administering first aid.

This Movement and Action can take place in any order. Movement can also be split on either side of an Action provided a combatant's total Movement is not exceeded.

Ranged Attacks

Missile attacks are made using a **Ranged Task Roll**.

Melee Attacks

Close-quarters attacks are made using an **Opposed Melee Task Roll**.

A defender can oppose using either their Melee Ability (an attempt to parry) or their Agility Ability (an attempt to dodge).

In order to parry using their Melee Ability, a combatant must have an appropriate weapon or shield. For example, whilst parrying “unarmed” is fine in a fist fight, it’s not against a sword.

Calculate Damage

The **Damage** from a successful attack is calculated as the “tens” die from the Task Roll plus the net **Damage Modifier** due to the attacker's weapon and the defender's armour.

Typical Damage Modifiers for weapons (*page 21*) and armour (*page 22*) are provided in the tables that follow.

Apply Damage

Any resulting Damage is deducted from the defender's **Health** (*page 26*).

Repeat

When all combatants have acted, a new round starts.

WEAPONS

Every weapon has a **Damage Modifier** – a value that is added to the “tens” die of a successful attack roll when determining Damage.

The table below lists some typical Damage Modifiers that Referees can use as the basis for the weapons in their game. These can be adjusted or expanded accordingly to suit particular preferences.

WEAPON DAMAGE MODIFIERS

Weapon	Damage Modifier
Unarmed	0
Improvised	+1
Sling	+2
Dagger	+2
Bow	+3
1-Handed Weapon	+4
Crossbow	+4
2-Handed Weapon	+5
Blackpowder	+6

Blackpowder Weapons

Blackpowder weapons (typically primitive pistols or rifles) are notoriously unreliable. Any Fumble results in the weapon exploding in the user's hands, dealing 1d10 Damage (modified by armour) to the firer. The weapon is rendered useless until it can be repaired by a gunsmith.

ARMOUR

Armour provides the wearer with a negative Damage Modifier, reducing the effect of any hits received. A shield can also be used to further reduce Damage. Details are provided in the table below.

However, armour is also, to varying degrees, cumbersome. It reduces Agility

and Movement when worn. Characters cannot wear armour that takes their modified Agility below zero.

Again, Referees should feel free to amend or expand the armour table to suit their own game setting

ARMOUR			
Armour	Damage Modifier	Agility Penalty	Movement Penalty
None	0	0	0
Leather	-1	-10%	-1
Chain Mail	-2	-20%	-2
Plate	-3	-30%	-3
Shield	-1	-10%	0

MOVEMENT

A character’s **Movement** is determined by their Species (*page 11*).

Movement values, and the Movement penalties in the armour table above, are expressed as a number of 2-yard squares. A “square” is the space occupied by an average-sized combatant.

Characters can move before their Action, or after their Action, or they can split their Movement on either side of their action. They can also forego their Action and take a second move.



Movement is reduced by any armour a character is wearing as indicated in the table above. So, for example, a Dwarf (Movement 6) wearing chain mail armour (-2 Movement penalty) can move up to 4 squares (8 yards) in each combat round in addition to taking one Action.

Armour also provides a negative Difficulty Modifier to any Agility Task Rolls whilst worn.

Referees should feel free to modify Movement rates accordingly. Some creatures might be naturally faster or slower. Terrain can also affect Movement, e.g. wading through water, climbing stairs, clambering over a wall, or traversing a crowded room.

ENGAGING AND DISENGAGING

As soon as a combatant makes a Melee Task Roll against an opponent, the two are said to be **Engaged** in combat. Once Engaged, there are three typical ways in which a combatant can disengage.

Subduing

A combatant is free to disengage if they subdue their opponent, even if only temporarily. For example, by knocking them over, rendering them unconscious, or otherwise incapacitating them.

Tactical Withdrawal

A combatant can make a controlled tactical withdrawal by moving up to half of their Movement allowance directly away from their opponent(s). This counts as both their Movement AND their Action for the round. The disengaging combatant can still oppose any attacks upon them during that round by attempting to parry or dodge.

Running Away

A combatant can turn and flee at up to twice their Movement allowance directly away from their opponent(s), foregoing any Action that round. Each Engaged opponent gets an Easy (+20%) free attack that the disengaging combatant CANNOT oppose.

CRITICALS AND FUMBLES IN COMBAT

As discussed in the chapter on Tasks, there are no pre-defined benefits or penalties attached to Criticals and Fumbles. The Referee, with input from the players, is free to decide, on a case-by-case basis, the additional consequences of Criticals and Fumbles as befitting the narrative of the game.

However, because combat is likely to be a relatively frequent source of Criticals and Fumbles, some suggested outcomes are offered in the tables overleaf. These are just examples. There are many more possibilities depending upon the exact situation within a game. For example, if a character is standing on a table whilst fighting and rolls a Fumble, then perhaps the table collapses from underneath them.

Remember, only the winner of an Opposed Task receives the extra benefits of a Critical. Similarly, only the loser suffers the penalties of a Fumble.

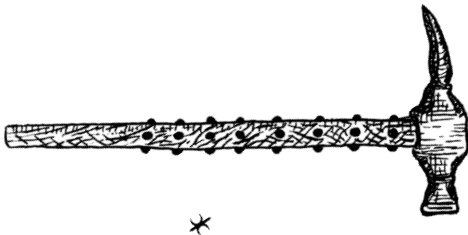
In general, the intention is that whilst Criticals and Fumbles should tip the balance of a fight in favour of one combatant or another, they shouldn't necessarily be decisive in determining the eventual outcome of an encounter.



Criticals in Melee Combat

The Original Games are well known for their escalating critical hit tables. In that spirit, the following table can be used for Criticals in melee combat.

CRITICALS IN MELEE COMBAT		
Critical Roll	Description	Effect
11	Pushed Back!	Your opponent is pushed back 1 square / 2 yards. This disengages the two of you. You can choose to immediately follow up and remain engaged.
22	Knocked Down!	Your opponent is knocked to the ground. They must spend their next Movement and Action standing up before they can attack again.
33	Disarmed!	Your opponent's weapon or shield (your choice) is dislodged from their hand and lands 1d5 squares away in a random direction.
44	Mighty Blow!	You can add either: (i) your Strength Bonus, or (ii) the "units" value of your Task Roll to the amount of Damage you inflict upon your opponent.
55	Follow-up!	A blow to their stomach winds your opponent, forcing them to pause to catch their breath. You can immediately attack again. Your opponent parries or dodges this follow-up with a -20% Difficulty Modifier.
66	Loss of Limb!	A blow to one of your opponent's limbs leads to a permanent loss of function. Held items in lost arms are dropped. Lost legs cause the opponent to fall.
77	Knocked Unconscious!	A blow to their head renders your opponent unconscious for 1d5 rounds. They are at your mercy.
88, 99	Decapitated!	Instant death. Your opponent's head lands 1d5 squares away in a random direction.



Other Example Criticals and Fumbles in Combat

EXAMPLE CRITICALS AS A DEFENDER

Description	Effect
Disarmed!	The attacker's weapon is parried from their hand.
Driven back!	The attacker is pushed back, disengaging them from combat.
Counterattack!	The defender's parry inflicts Damage upon their attacker, calculated in the normal way.
Sidestep!	The dodging defender wrong-foots the attacker creating an opening. The defender's next attack has an Easy (+20%) Difficulty Modifier.

EXAMPLE FUMBLES AS AN ATTACKER

Description	Effect
Dropped!	The attacker drops their weapon.
Breaks!	The attacker's weapon breaks.
Lost!	The attacker's thrown weapon misses and is permanently lost.
Ouch!	The attacker inadvertently injures themselves, with Damage calculated in the normal way.

EXAMPLE FUMBLES AS A DEFENDER

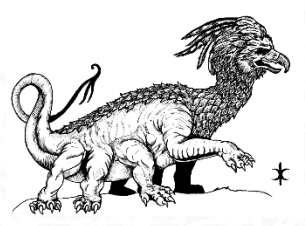
Description	Effect
Dropped!	The defender drops their weapon or shield.
Breaks!	The defender's weapon or shield breaks.
Trips	The defender trips and falls whilst attempting to dodge.

FEAR

It is not uncommon for characters to face fear-inducing creatures or scenes.

Such situations can be handled with a suitably modified Willpower Task Roll. If successful, a character can continue to act normally. If failed, the Referee and the player agree upon the outcome. This might range from a character refusing to move any closer to the source of their

fear, to temporary paralysis or fleeing in abject terror.



HEALTH

Health is a measure of the general well-being of a character. In Hack100, there are two main ways in which a character can lose Health:

- From physical damage, e.g. through combat, falling, or some other mishap.
- Through the draining effects of using magic and miracles.

The magic and miracles of Wizards and Priests are discussed in more detail in the next chapter (*page 28*). For now, it is enough to know that the loss and recovery of Health from using such powers works in the same way as it does for physical damage.

ZERO AND NEGATIVE HEALTH

When a character's Health reaches zero, they fall unconscious. When their Health reaches a negative value equal to their Toughness Bonus plus their Willpower Bonus, they die.



RECOVERING HEALTH

Characters recover Health naturally at a rate of 2 Health per day, 4 if resting fully.

Health can also be replenished through the use of a relevant Career, such as Herbalist, Physician or Priest. The Referee should determine the effectiveness of such interventions.

As a guide, it is suggested that everyday Career-based healing should be limited to one application per character per day, with each successful application restoring 1-5 Health (in addition to any natural recovery). This requires a successful Career Task Roll. A Critical automatically recovers 5 Health, whilst a Fumble causes 2 points of further damage, negating any natural recovery.

The effectiveness of restorative magic or miracles should be proportional to the Health invested in it by the applicant. For example, each point of Health committed by the Wizard or Priest might restore 2 Health to the beneficiary. A Wizard or Priest cannot heal themselves in this way.

When a character's maximum Health goes up due to an increase in their Toughness or Willpower Ability, these additional points are added to their current Health total.

CORRUPTION

The risk of **Corruption** arises when characters are exposed to the ruinous influence of Chaos. Encounters with agents of Chaos (e.g. cultists, demons), entering Chaos-tainted environments, or coming into contact with chaotic artefacts are all possible sources of Corruption

Effects of Corruption

Depending on its nature, Corruption leads to the mental or physical deterioration of a character. It is tracked as an additional character attribute in CRARG. Corruption typically starts at 0% (unless, through their Background, a character has some pre-existing exposure). It then accumulates during play.

When exposed to a corrupting influence, a character must make a suitably modified Willpower Task Roll to resist its effects. If unsuccessful, a number of Corruption percentage points are accumulated as determined by the Referee. This might be a fixed amount, or a random number (e.g. d5%, d10%).

Accumulated Corruption points then provide a negative Difficulty Modifier to any relevant Task Rolls (as decided by the Referee on a case-by-case basis). This occurs when there is a conflict between the actions of a character and the forces of Chaos.

There might also be instances when Corruption provides a positive modifier to certain Task Rolls. For example, when a character embraces their dark side. Or for characters (or non-player characters)

with dubious Careers (e.g. Demonologists, Necromancers).

Removing Corruption

There are two ways in which characters can reduce their Corruption points.

1. By accepting a mutation. With the agreement of the Referee, a character can exchange a number of Corruption points in return for a mutation. The severity of the mutation should be proportional to the number of Corruption points removed. Some mutations might alter (positively or negatively) one or more of a character's Abilities. Refer to the Original Games (*page 37*) for inspiration.
2. By overthrowing their corrupting influence. This should not be easy and would most likely be a major plot arc.



MAGIC AND MIRACLES

The miracles and magic of Priests, Wizards and other similar Careers are known in Hack100 as **Powers**.

The underlying consequence of using Powers is that they are mentally and/or physically draining.

As such, whenever a character uses a Power, there is an associated Health cost. The more significant the Power, the higher the Health cost.

Therefore, characters with Powers must manage their use carefully. Do the benefits of using a Power in a given situation outweigh the detrimental effect on the character's Health?

USING POWERS

In CRARG, there are no predefined lists of Powers. Instead, a flexible approach is adopted based on an open-ended collaboration between a player and the Referee.

The exact nature of a Power, in terms of its effect, intensity and duration, along with the associated Health cost, are agreed upon at the point of use, with the Referee always having the final say.

The procedure for using a Power is as follows:

1. The character describes the desired effect of using the Power.
2. Taking into account the nature of the effect, as well as its intended intensity and duration, the Referee rules on the associated Health cost.
3. The Referee might also impose a Difficulty Modifier for the upcoming Task Roll if the desired effect seems particularly challenging. Similarly, a player might accept a higher Difficulty Modifier in return for a lower Health cost.
4. Steps 1-3 are repeated until the player and the Referee reach a negotiated agreement on the balance between the effect of the Power, the corresponding Health cost and any Difficulty Modifier. This isn't intended to be a prolonged bargaining exercise. Rather the Referee and the player reach an agreement on the use of the Power. The Referee ultimately makes the final ruling.
5. The character makes a Task Roll against their relevant Career.
6. If the Task Roll is successful, the Power takes effect and the Health cost is applied. Otherwise, nothing happens.

7. A Critical means that the Power only costs 1 Health. A Fumble means that the Power consumes the full Health cost, but nothing happens. Alternatively, Criticals and Fumbles might modify a Power's outcome.
8. It is recommended that Referees keep records of negotiated Power uses. This saves time when the Power is used similarly again. It also provides a benchmark or precedent for future Power usage.

PRIESTS

A **Priest** must be a devout follower of a single god. The Original Games (*page 37*) provide a wealth of information on typical religions.

A Priest's ability to perform miracles is bestowed upon them by their deity. It is therefore important that Priests always act according to the strictures of their religion. If they don't, they will be unable to perform miracles until they atone for their sins.

Concerning the effects of specific miracles, either refer to the Original Games for inspiration or follow the freeform approach described above. Any miracle must be in keeping with the tenets of the god bestowing it.



Example Miracles

Below are some examples of typical miracles. For each, suggestions are provided as to how they might be handled. All, of course, require a successful Task Roll against the character's Priest Career.

- **Restore health.** Normal Difficulty. Costs 1 Health per 2 points of Health restored. Instantaneous. Priests cannot heal themselves in this way. A Critical doubles the healing effect. A Fumble causes Damage to the target.
- **Increase an ability.** Normal Difficulty. Costs 2 Health per 5% increase. Lasts for one encounter. A Critical doubles the Ability increase. A Fumble decreases the Ability.
- **Turn Undead.** Normal Difficulty. Opposed Task Roll: Priest's Career vs the Undead's Willpower. Cost 2 Health. Each additional 1 Health provides a +5% Difficulty Modifier to the Priest's Task Roll. A win with a Critical destroys the undead rather than turning them. A Fumble increases the Undead's Abilities by 10%.
- **Remove corruption.** Hard (-20%) Difficulty. Costs 3 Health per point of Corruption removed. Must be applied within 1 hour of the target suffering the Corruption. A Critical removes twice the number of Corruption points. A Fumble results in both the Priest and the target gaining 1d10 Corruption points.

WIZARDS

A **Wizard** should align themselves to a particular “school” of magic (even if it is an unlicensed, unofficial one). Again, the Original Games (*page 37*) are the best source of background information on such matters.

Wizards draw their Powers from the invisible (to most) pervasive magical energies that surround everything. However, such energies are unpredictable and difficult to control. A Critical Wizard Career Task Roll when casting results in the effects of a spell being magnified significantly (possibly with unintended consequences), whereas a Fumble means the spell has an opposite or radically different effect.

Wizardly magic is dangerous and not to be trifled with!



Example Spells

- **Create a magical light equivalent to a torch or lantern.** Easy (+20%) Difficulty. Costs 1 Health per hour.
- **Magically move an object.** Easy (+20%) Difficulty. Costs 1 Health per kg per minute.
- **Magically increase a weapon's damage or armour's protection.** Normal Difficulty. Costs 2 Health per additional point of damage/protection. Lasts for one encounter.
- **Perform a magical attack (e.g. fireball, lightning bolt).** Normal Difficulty. Costs 1 Health per point of Damage (ignores the target's armour). Instantaneous.

All of the above miracles and spells are just illustrative examples. Players and Referees should negotiate their own effects and their associated costs as they occur in the game. Overall, the Difficulty and Health cost should be proportional to the effect whilst remaining consistent from one Power to the next.

Optionally, a Referee might decide that there are additional factors that influence such Powers - wands, staves, spell books, ingredients, religious symbols, the ability to voice or gesticulate, etc. The presence or absence of such factors would affect the Difficulty Modifier of the associated Task Roll.

MAGIC POINTS

(OPTIONAL)

If the Referee prefers that miracles and magic do not deplete the Health of characters, then a separate resource, **Magic Points**, can be introduced.

A Wizard's or Priest's Magic Points are calculated as the sum of their Reasoning Bonus and their Willpower Bonus, multiplied by two.

In all respects, Magic Points are costed and consumed when performing miracles or casting spells in the same way as described above for Health.

If a character's Magic Points reach zero, they fall unconscious.

Magic Points are recovered at a rate of 1 per hour.



IMPROVEMENT

IMPROVING ABILITIES AND CAREERS

As characters utilise their Abilities and Careers, they improve.

Experience Checks

When a character makes a successful Task Roll against an Ability or Career, an **Experience Check** is awarded. This represents the character learning through application. The box next to the Ability or Career on the character sheet is ticked.

For an Experience Check to be awarded, there must have been a meaningful consequence of the Task Roll failing. For example, practising swordplay against a training dummy would not yield an Experience Check.

When a Task Roll has a positive Difficulty Modifier (making the Task Roll easier – page 10), an Experience Check is only awarded if the successful roll is equal to or less than the Ability or Career (not the Modified Target Percentage).

For Opposed Tasks (*page 17*), only the winner receives an Experience Check and only if their Task Roll was successful (i.e. a Critical or an ordinary success). If the winner's roll was a failure or Fumble, no Experience Check is awarded.

Experience Rolls

At the end of each play session, an Experience Roll is made for each Ability or Career that has an Experience Check against it.

To make an Experience Roll, the player rolls 1d100. If the result is greater than the current value of the character's Ability or Career, it increases by 1d5%. Only one Experience Roll can be made for each Ability or Career per session.



CHANGING CAREERS

At some stage, most characters change their **Current Career**. As they embark on their adventures and leave their old lives behind, some find that they progress naturally into new occupations (e.g. Bounty Hunters, Mercenaries, Outlaws, Tomb Robbers). Others seek training in more specialist arts (e.g. Engineers, Physicians, Priests, Wizards).

Such progression should be encouraged. It is an important element of this style of game. When a character is thinking of changing their Career, the following general guidelines apply:

- There should always be an in-game rationale for a character's change of Career. The change might have been driven by recent events. Or a character might have actively sought, found and undertaken the training needed to assume the new Career.
- Any necessary training should have an appropriate cost in terms of time, money and/or favours. The Referee should determine such details on a case-by-case basis.
- Newly acquired Careers have a starting value of 4d10%.
- Each character can only have one **Current Career** that reflects their primary day-to-day focus. However, **Previous Careers** are not lost. Characters can continue to make Task Rolls using Previous Careers and benefit from Experience Checks when such rolls are successful. An exception to this is the miracles bestowed upon Priests by their god; these can only be performed if "Priest" is the character's Current Career.



NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

CREATING NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-Player Characters (NPCs) are the inhabitants of the game world encountered by the player characters whether friendly, indifferent or hostile, including creatures.

In keeping with CRARG's flexible approach, there is no standard "bestiary". Rather a ten-step methodology is presented for quickly creating any NPC. The intention is to ensure that all NPCs have clear and consistent rationales for their presence in the game.

Description

Write a single evocative sentence that describes the player characters' first impressions of the NPC.

So, for example, rather than introducing an NPC as simply "*a goblin*", instead it's described as "*a short, green-skinned humanoid with large pointed ears and a mouth of sharp teeth*".

Background and Motivation

In the same way as for player characters, write a single sentence that describes the NPC's Background and Motivation. This provides the Referee with a rationale for

why the NPC is being encountered and what their possible reactions to the player characters might be.

Continuing our goblin example, we have: "*a wolf handler of the Splintered Skull tribe tasked with guarding the entrance to the tribe's lair*".

Base Ability Value

Specify the NPC's **Base Ability Value**, a general percentage that is assigned to all of their Abilities (apart from those modified in the next step below).

For our goblin, a relatively weak creature, we assign a value of 20%.

Modified Abilities (Optional)

Based upon the NPC's description, Background and Motivation, modify any Abilities that are meaningfully higher or lower than their Base Ability Value.

Unless the NPC is particularly significant, there should be no need to modify more than a couple of Abilities. The Base Ability Value should be adequate for most aspects of the NPC, particularly those that are peripheral to their core role.

Our goblin is a guard, so we raise their Melee and Toughness Abilities to 30%.

Career (Optional)

Again, based on the NPC's Background and Motivation, add any Careers (Current or Previous) that meaningfully differentiate them from others in the world. Assign whatever percentage value to that Specialism that seems reasonable.

We give our goblin a “Wolf Handler” Career at a value of 60%. This represents the goblin's ability to successfully control a wolf that has been trained to respond to simple commands.

Innate Characteristics (Optional)

Some creatures have Innate Characteristics - instinctive actions they are naturally capable of performing without the need for a Task Roll. Fish can swim, griffons can fly, spiders may have venomous bites, etc. List any such innate characteristics that are likely to be relevant to the game.

Our goblin can see in the dark so we list “Night Vision” as an Innate Characteristic.

Health

Health is calculated in the usual way by summing the NPC's Toughness Bonus and Willpower Bonus and then multiplying the result by two.

Our goblin has a Toughness of 30% and a Willpower of 20%, giving it a Health of $(3 + 2) \times 2 = 10$.

Movement

As described on *page 11*, unarmoured Humans can normally move up to 8 two-yard squares in a single combat round in addition to taking one action. If the NPC is significantly faster or slower than this, update their Movement value accordingly.

Movement is not only relevant to combat. The relative speed of an NPC is also important in pursuits or races.

Goblins are small humanoids with short legs, so we set its Movement as 6 (the same as Dwarfs and Halflings).

Equipment (Optional)

List any equipment or possessions the NPC is carrying about their person. Include armour, weapons, money and any personal effects of interest. For ease of in-game reference, include the Damage Modifiers of any armour and weapons.

We give our goblin leather armour, a spear, 1d5 coins, a wolf-tooth necklace and a stolen silver brooch. It also has a wolf companion, but that is a separate NPC.

Notes (Optional)

Finally, add any remaining details about the NPC that are relevant to the game.

This might include relevant information the NPC possesses, their recent activity within the context of the adventure, or particular loyalties, phobias, prejudices or weaknesses.

EXAMPLE NPCs

As examples, here are the full descriptions of our goblin wolf handler and its trusty hound.

Goblin [20%]

A short, green-skinned humanoid with large pointed ears and a mouth of sharp teeth

Background & Motivation: A wolf handler tasked with guarding the entrance to the tribe's lair

Abilities & Career: Melee 30%; Toughness 30%; Wolf Handler 60%

Innate Characteristics: Night vision

Health: 10

Movement: 5 (includes armour modifier)

Equipment: Leather armour [-1], spear [+4], 1d5 coins, wolf-tooth necklace, silver broach (stolen)

Notes: Was a member of the raiding party that attacked the village last night (hence the stolen broach)

Wolf [30%]

A mangy-looking creature with matted flea-ridden fur, slobbering chops and piercing yellow eyes

Background & Motivation: Divided loyalties between its handler and an insatiable appetite for fresh meat

Abilities: Bite 40% [+3]

Innate Characteristics: Acute sense of smell

Health: 12

Movement: 12

Equipment: Collar and leash

Notes: Trained to respond to simple commands from its handler ("Attack!", "Stay!", "Go find!", etc.), but only if the handler makes a successful Wolf Handling Task Roll



REFERENCES

ORIGINAL GAMES

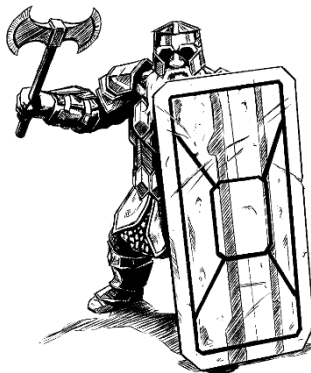
It is strongly recommended that at least one of the Original Games listed below is used in conjunction with CRARG for its background content. All are available from DriveThruRPG.com.

- *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, 1st Edition by Richard Halliwell, Rick Priestley, Graeme Davis, Jim Bambra, Phil Gallagher, et al. Published by Games Workshop Ltd, 1986.
- *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, 2nd Edition by Chris Pramas, et al. Published by Black Industries, 2005.
- *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, 4th Edition by Dominic McDowall, Andy Law, et al. Published by Cubicle 7 Entertainment Ltd, 2018.

TRIBUTE GAMES

The following Tribute Games are all inspired by the Original Games and also contain a wealth of useful background information.

- *Zweihänder Grim & Perilous RPG* by Daniel Fox. Published by Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2019.
- *Warlock!* by Greg Saunders. Published by Fire Ruby Designs, 2020.
- *Small but Vicious Dog*, Version 0.3 by Chris Hogan. Available for download at <http://vaultsofnagoh.blogspot.com/2011/07/small-but-vicious-dog-steals-hearts.html>, 2011.



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CATCHING RATS & ROBBING GRAVES

Being a treatise on the running of adventures most perilous and grim

Catching Rats and Robbing Graves is a complete rules-lite system for running fantasy role-playing games in the British grimdark tradition. Specifically, it allows existing material for the Original Games to be enjoyed with a reduced level of complexity.

The intention is not to replace the Original Games. Rather, it is to provide an unobtrusive set of simplified mechanics that can be used in conjunction with the original content whilst preserving its unique flavour.

- Classic percentile-based d100 system using the Hack100 ruleset.
- Includes full rules for:
 - Career-based character creation.
 - Task resolution.
 - Combat.
 - Corruption.
 - Magic & miracles.
 - Customised non-player characters and creatures.

A copy of at least one of the Original Games is recommended for their all-important background content.

hack100rpg.com