

# CATCHING RATS & ROBBING GRAVES

Being a treatise on the running of adventures moste  
perilous and grim using Hack100

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# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Catching Rats and Robbing Graves (CRARG)**, a supplement for Hack100 that provides guidelines for running fantasy role-playing games in the British grimdark tradition.

Specifically, CRARG introduces a rules-lite system that allows existing material for the Original Games (*page 17*) 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 the Hack100 rulebook is required to use this supplement. This can be downloaded for free from [hack100rpg.com](http://hack100rpg.com). As an aid to cross-referencing, CRARG follows the same chapter structure as Hack100.

A copy of at least one of the Original Games is also recommended for the 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.*

## HACK100RPG.COM

For more resources relating to CRARG and Hack100, including a blog that provides a commentary on their development, visit [hack100rpg.com](http://hack100rpg.com).

# PLAYER CHARACTERS

## CHARACTER CREATION OVERVIEW

Player character creation in CRARG is very similar to Hack100. However, certain aspects have been rearranged to better reflect the Original Games. There are eight steps:

1. Determine the character's **Species** - Human, Dwarf, Elf or Halfling (*page 5*).
2. Roll their **Abilities** (*page 6*).
3. Note the character's **Health, Luck Points** and **Movement** (*page 7*).
4. Choose their **Career Specialism** (*page 8*).
5. Note any **Trappings** (equipment) (*page 9*).
6. Decide upon their **Background and Motivation** (*page 9*).
7. Roll any accumulated **Free Experience Checks** (*page 9*).
8. Name them.

A character sheet is available for download at [hack100rpg.com](http://hack100rpg.com).

## 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 9*).

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

### SPECIES

| D10      | Species |
|----------|---------|
| 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 17*).

## Innate Characteristics

The Night Vision of Dwarfs, Elves and Halflings is represented as a Hack100 **Innate Characteristic**. All three species can see well in darkness for distances of up to 20 yards.

# ABILITIES

Roll 2d10+20% for each of the character's ten **Abilities**. Then modify those Abilities according to the character's Species referring to the table below. The Abilities are exactly the same as those described in the Hack100 rulebook. However, they have been reordered to map them more closely to the equivalent attributes in the Original Games.

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

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

To maintain alignment with the Original Games, do NOT add a further 20% to one Ability and 10% to one other in the usual Hack100 way. The Free Experience Checks (*page 9*) partially compensate for this.

## 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

# HEALTH, LUCK & MOVEMENT

**Health** is calculated in the usual Hack100 way as:

$$(Toughness Bonus + Willpower Bonus) \times 2$$

**Luck Points** vary with Species as defined in the table below. Their use is described in the Optional Rules section of the Hack100 rulebook. Luck Points are rolled anew at the beginning of each game session. They do not carry over from one session to the next.

The **Movement** values in the table below represent the number of 2-yard squares an unarmoured character can move in a single 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 SPECIALISMS

A character's **Career** is one of the aspects that defines them most strongly. For new characters, their Career describes what they were doing in their pre-adventuring lives. As characters progress, they will move into new Careers that broaden their expertise.

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

1. Refer to the Career tables and descriptions in the Original Games (*page 17*). This is the recommended approach.
2. Use the table on the right.
3. With the agreement of the Referee, a player may 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.

From a Hack100 perspective, a character's Career is their **Specialism** (*Page 10*). It has a starting value of  $2d10+30\%$ .

For Priests, Wizards and similar, their Career Specialism is their **Power**. (*page 15*). The normal Hack100 Power rules apply. 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.

## CAREERS

| D100  | Career        |
|-------|---------------|
| 01-04 | Beggar        |
| 05-08 | Boatman       |
| 09-12 | Bounty Hunter |
| 13-16 | Coachman      |
| 17-20 | Engineer      |
| 21-24 | Grave Robber  |
| 25-28 | Herbalist     |
| 29-32 | Hunter        |
| 33-36 | Merchant      |
| 37-40 | Noble         |
| 41-44 | Outlaw        |
| 45-48 | Pedlar        |
| 49-52 | Physician     |
| 53-56 | Priest        |
| 57-60 | Rat Catcher   |
| 61-64 | Road Warden   |
| 65-68 | Scholar       |
| 69-72 | Scout         |
| 73-76 | Servant       |
| 77-80 | Smuggler      |
| 81-84 | Soldier       |
| 85-88 | Thief         |
| 89-92 | Watchman      |
| 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, use the normal Hack100 approach of agreeing upon a plausible set of Trappings based on a character's Career Specialism. Bear in mind that, traditionally, starting characters in this style of game, tend to be poorly equipped.

# BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

In the usual Hack100 way, write a single sentence that describes the character's **Background and Motivation**.

For inspiration, the table below is an updated, CRARG-flavoured, version of the Background and Motivation table from the Hack100 rulebook.

## EXAMPLE BACKGROUNDS AND MOTIVATIONS

| Background |                 | Motivation    |                                    |
|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 1          | addicted        | 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          | peniless        | representing  | knowledge [about ...].             |
| 8          | sickly          | researching   | revenge [for/against ...].         |
| 9          | unappreciated   | resisting     | the truth [about ...].             |
| 10         | wrongly accused | seeking       | wealth.                            |

[insert character's Species and Career]

A(n)

# FREE EXPERIENCE CHECKS

Depending upon the degree of randomness embraced during their creation, characters may 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 Specialism).

These Free Experience Checks may now be used to potentially increase a character's Abilities or Career Specialism. They are made in the usual Hack100 way and may be allocated to any Ability or Career Specialism (although each may only be checked once).

# TASKS

## TASK ROLLS

**Task Rolls, Difficulty Modifiers, Criticals, Fumbles and Opposed Tasks** all work as described in the Hack100 Rulebook.

## LUCK POINTS

Hack100's optional rules for **Luck Points** are used in CRARG. Luck Points allow players to re-roll unfortunate dice outcomes.

The number of Luck Points a character has at the start of each session is rolled randomly according to their Species (*page 7*).

## CAREER SPECIALISMS

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

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

For example, a character with a Rat Catcher Career Specialism might be competent at setting traps, navigating

sewers and handling diminutive but ferocious pets.

Similarly, a Grave Robber will excel at manual labour, may 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 Specialism to a certain task is slightly tenuous, allow the roll albeit with a suitable Difficulty Modifier.

Characters will gain additional Career Specialisms as they become more experienced. This is discussed in the Improvement chapter (*page 16*).

# COMBAT

Combat follows the sequence described in the Hack100 rulebook. However, there are a few aspects that need to be refined for a CRARG-style game.

## WEAPONS

The weapon **Damage Modifier** table is updated as shown.

### 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.

### 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              |

## ARMOUR

The armour table is updated as follows:

### 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 7*).

Movement values, and the Movement penalties in the armour table (*page 11*) are expressed as a number of 2-yard squares. 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.

## FEAR

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

Such situations can be handled with a suitably modified Willpower Task Roll. If successful, a character may 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.

# CRITICAL HITS

The Original Games are well known for their escalating critical hit tables. In that spirit, here's a table that can be used with CRARG as an optional alternative to Hack100's usual freeform approach to Criticals.

## CRITICAL HITS 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 may 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 may 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 may 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.   |

# HEALTH

Health, its loss and its recovery, are as described in the Hack100 rulebook.

## CORRUPTION

**Corruption** was presented as an optional rule in Hack100. In CRARG it becomes a core element.

The risk of Corruption arises when characters are exposed to the ruinous powers 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 will usually occur when there is a conflict between the actions of a character and the forces of chaos.

There may 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 NPCs with dubious Career Specialisms (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 may 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 may alter (positively or negatively) one or more of a character's Abilities. Refer to the Original Games (*page 17*) for inspiration.
2. By overthrowing their corrupting influence. This should not be easy and would most likely be a major plot arc.

# POWERS

The most common character **Powers** in CRARG will be the miracles and magic of Priests and Wizards. These should both follow the general guidance on spellcasting presented in Hack100. However, here are some additional CRARG-specific notes on such matters.

## PRIESTS

A **Priest** must be a devout follower of a single god. The Original Games (*page 17*) provide a wealth of information on typical religions in this style of game.

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

With respect to the effects of specific miracles, either refer to References<sup>1-4</sup> for inspiration or follow the freeform, collaborative approach described in Hack100. Any miracle must be in keeping with the tenets of the god bestowing it.

The Referee and the player should agree on the Difficulty and Health cost of each miracle in the usual Hack100 way. A successful Task Roll against the character's Priest Career Specialism will be required to perform the miracle.

## WIZARDS

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

Wizards draw their Powers from the invisible (to most) pervasive magical energies that surround them. However, such energies are unpredictable and difficult to control. It is therefore recommended that additional implications are attached to Criticals and Fumbles arising from a Wizard's Power Task Rolls.

In Hack100, a Critical spellcasting Task Roll only results in a lower Health cost for casting the spell. In CRARG, the Health Cost remains the same, but the effects of the spell are magnified significantly (possibly with unintended consequences!).

Similarly, rather than a Fumbled spellcasting Task Roll consuming Health but having no effect, instead the spell is cast but has an opposite or radically different effect.

Wizardly magic is dangerous and not to be trifled with!

# IMPROVEMENT

## EXPERIENCE CHECKS

Session-to-session increases in a character's Abilities, Specialisms and Powers follow the **Experience Check** procedure described in Hack100.

## CHANGING CAREER SPECIALISMS

At some stage, most characters will want to change their **Current Career Specialism**. As they embark on their adventures and leave their old lives behind, some will find that they progress naturally into new occupations (e.g. Bounty Hunters, Mercenaries, Outlaws, Tomb Robbers). Others will 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 Specialism the following general guidelines apply:

- There should always be an in-game rationale for a character's change of Career Specialism. The change may have been driven by recent events. Or a character may have actively sought, found and undertaken the training

needed to assume the new Career Specialism.

- 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 Career Specialisms have a starting value of 4d10%.
- Each character can only have one **Current Career Specialism** that reflects their primary day-to-day focus. However, **Previous Career Specialisms** are not lost. Characters may continue to make Task Rolls using Previous Career Specialisms and benefit from Experience Checks when such rolls are successful. One 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 Specialism.



# REFERENCES

## ORIGINAL GAMES

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

1. *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition by Richard Halliwell, Rick Priestley, Graeme Davis, Jim Bamba, Phil Gallagher, et al. Published by Games Workshop Ltd, 1986.
2. *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Chris Pramas, et al. Published by Black Industries, 2005.
3. *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition by Dominic McDowall, Andy Law, et al. Published by Cubicle7 Entertainment Ltd, 2018.

## TRIBUTE GAMES

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

4. *Zweihänder Grim & Perilous RPG* by Daniel Fox. Published by Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2019.
5. *Warlock!* by Greg Saunders. Published by Fire Ruby Designs, 2020.
6. *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.