



# GoldenSword GM's Guide

Credits:

Game Rules by Ken Goudsward

Logo by Reed Vander Werff & Ken Goudsward

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# What is GoldenSword?

The GoldenSword RPG system is an open-source tabletop RPG system featuring a simplified rules system and highly consistent core mechanic. It is optimized for medieval fantasy with a scientifically based magic system.

In GoldenSword, each player creates a character, gives him some skills, and equipment, and maybe some magic, then takes the character out adventuring. They roll some dice, kill some monsters, get treasure and XP, so he can progress.

As the GameMaster, you will be “running” the game. You determine the basic storyline for the session or campaign, by creating goals for the players and giving them an environment to explore; non-player characters to interact with, monsters to defeat, treasure to find, problems or puzzles to solve, etc. You will be using your imagination, and it might be a lot of work to come up with great ideas. We are here to help you with a framework for how your ideas can work together.

## The Core Mechanic

The core mechanic is how the game “works”. It utilizes a simple lookup table. See Appendix - Lookup Table. This determines what the player needs to roll on a d20 in order to succeed on any given task. As GM, you will compare each character’s relevant skill or attribute number against the difficulty level of the task or opponent. The player will roll d20. You then let you know if they succeeded.

The table features a built in “bell curve” that gives equal odds to evenly matched opponents but makes hard stuff easier and easy stuff harder so that nothing is impossible and nothing is too easy. There is always a chance of failing the simplest of tasks, and there is always the chance of beating even the toughest foe.

The table works for combat, spell casting, attribute checks, skill checks, and everything.

## What Do We Need?

Before you play, you are gonna need some dice. We use standard die sets as used in D&D and other games. Each player can bring their own set of dice, or you can all share.

You will need d20 for attacks, skill checks, attribute checks, and spell casts (pretty much everything). You will also need d4, d6, d10, d12, as these are used for certain weapons damage rolls.

If you want to start playing immediately but don’t have any fancy dice yet, there are many dice apps available for smart-phones. Don’t like the feel of computerized dice? Try substituting 3d6 for a d20. (3-18 is statistically similar to 1-20)

Optionally, you may want to use minifigures on a gridded game mat. We suggest lego minifigs and a dry-erase mat.

# Character Creation

Give each player a blank Character Sheet to create their character. Distribute 60 points among the following attributes:

- Strength
- Constitution
- Agility
- Charisma
- Perception
- Reason
- Knowledge
- Magery

These attributes directly determine secondary characteristics such as Hit Points & Magic Points, and also affect Skill levels.

- Strength determines the type of armor and shields you can use.
- Constitution determines HP.  $HP = 2 \times \text{Constitution}$ .
- Agility determines Attack & Defense ratings.
- Most weapons skills are affected by Strength or Agility (or both).
- Magery determines MP and affects spell casting success rolls.
- Reason & Knowledge limit maximum Magery. Magery cannot exceed Reason + Knowledge.

See Appendix - Character Sheet

As the GM, you will also need to create a variety of Non Player Characters (NPCs) that the player characters will interact with during the campaign. You may want to use this same character creation process and character sheet for each NPC, particularly if there is a chance of that NPC participating in combat or adventures as either a friend or foe of the player characters. Other NPCs may be limited to more limited supporting roles; such as a simple shopkeeper, for example. It would be overkill to perform the full character build for these types of characters.

# Character Progression

After each adventure, the GM should award XP, which the players can spend to upgrade their character's attributes and skills.

- Attributes are upgraded at a rate of 50 XP per attribute point.
- Skill levels are upgraded at a rate of 10 XP per level.
- New Skills may be added at the default skill level (as per the GM) for no XP cost, then may also be upgraded at a rate of 10 XP per level.
- Magic Spells are upgraded by reducing difficulty level at a rate of 1 XP per difficulty point.
- New Spells are learned at a rate of 1 XP per spell difficulty point.

# Buying Equipment

It is highly recommended that each character “purchase” armor and a weapon as part of the character creation phase. As GM, you decide how much money the characters start with to spend on supplies. They can get very basic gear for about \$100. You should build additional weapons & armor into the campaign, so that characters can find upgrades along the way. Also, make sure that they occasionally have the opportunity to visit a store.

## Weapons & Armor

Weapons and armor are the heart of combat, and combat is the heart of an RPG. Your combat rolls are based on your weapons skills. Having better weapons skills makes it easier to hit your opponent. Your opponent’s combat rolls are based on your armor rating. Wearing better armor makes you harder to hit.

Please see the Combat section for more details on the stats and their effects on combat rolls.

Please see the Appendices for weapons & armor item costs etc.

## Other Equipment

Oftentimes, players may find that they really wish they had a certain piece of equipment. It may be a rope, a pencil, or a candle. As GM, throw in some scenarios where equipment is useful, but try to avoid situations where there is really only one way to solve a problem and the party is completely blocked without that certain tool.

How much can a character carry? That is up to you as the GM. We don’t lay out specific rules for this. You may want to estimate the total weight of each character’s stuff, and set a specific limit based on your Strength attribute or something. You may decide to set a certain limit on number of items carried. For example, they can only fill up the “items on hand” list on the character sheet. Some GMs prefer to take a “if you can afford to buy it, you can carry it” approach.

## Skills

Characters need skills. The sheer number of possible skills that each player might think of is almost limitless, so we do not specify a skills list. We encourage creativity. Let each player discuss with you what skills they would reasonably have. Use the Appendix - Sample Skills, to help you determine default skill for an average character.

Let each player pick a few skills that they want to start out with. Start them at the default level you determine for an “average” character for that skill. Then let them spend initial XP on skill upgrades. As the GM, you determine how much Initial XP they are allowed. Typically it will range between 20 and 50. This initial XP can be spent on upgrading Skills and/or learning (and possibly upgrading) a few spells.

Weapons use also requires skill. Each weapon specifies a default skill level. This means that when a character purchases (or finds) a weapon, they are assumed to have that default level of skill with it. This can be upgraded with XP. Weapons skill are specific to the type of weapon. Switching weapon types means starting at that weapon’s default skill level. At the GM’s discretion, similar weapons may “share” skills.

# Campaigns

Campaigns provide a setting for an adventure to take place. They are made up entirely from the imagination of the GM. A campaign may be a simple one-shot dungeon crawl, or it may be an elaborate world with intricate politics and socioeconomics. Designing this world can easily become your new hobby (obsession).

## Turns

Everyone must take turns. This is true to a degree during regular game-play, but it is especially true during combat. Many game systems use “initiative” to determine turn order. We prefer a simple turn order clockwise around the table, beginning on the GM’s left. Feel free to use whatever system you prefer, and be as flexible as you like. The main concern here is that everyone fairly gets a chance to do stuff. Even during combat, sometimes it is best to coordinate your efforts with your team-mates. Therefore, a player may want to wait on their attack, until after a team-mate has attacked. A good example of this is a team with one archer and two swordsmen. The archer may choose to wait, even if his turn is first, because, he wants to see if either of his team mates can kill the monsters near them, before he decides which monster to shoot. This is at the GM’s discretion, you may allow this flexibility, or may stick to a strict turn order.

A turn during combat is roughly equivalent to a second or a couple seconds. It is exactly enough time to make one attack.

Players may also make one minor action during each combat turn, either before or after your attack. The minor action may consist of unsheathing a weapon, switching weapons, grabbing an item (if it is handy, NOT rummaging through their back-pack), or moving (up to  $\frac{\text{Agility}}{2}$  squares).

An attack may be substituted by a major move; that is, moving up to  $\text{Agility}$  squares, OR something which takes a bit longer like rummaging through their pack to find a certain item.

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## Moving

During combat, a character may normally move a certain maximum number of squares. That number = his Agility attribute value.

During regular game-play (not combat). Characters typically travel one league per hour, or up to ten leagues per day if travelling on foot. You may adjust this distance if all characters are on horses, or if you have pack animals, etc.

A league equals 3 miles or 5 km.

# Success Rolls

Success rolls are performed with a d20. Every attempted action a player attempts has a difficulty value. As GM, you make these numbers up. This determines how hard each task is, and therefore, what each character's chances of success are.

Assign a difficulty number. Use that number as the top of the lookup chart (see appendix). Use the character's appropriate skill or attribute along the left axis of the chart. The chart will tell you what roll of a d20 the player needs in order to succeed. This core mechanic works exactly the same for Skill Checks, Attribute Checks, and even Combat Attack Rolls. For a more detailed example, see the section on Combat on the next page, and the appendix - Combat Example.

If a player rolls a 20, it's a Critical Success. Something great happens! You get to decide what. If it's an attack roll, see the "critical hit" section on page 12.

If they roll a 1, it's a critical fail. They failed to do what they intended, and instead, something went horribly wrong! Again, you get to decide what. If it's an attack, they might accidentally hit their self or a friend.



# Combat

Combat in GoldenSword is designed to be simple and straightforward, but still exciting and dramatic.

We get to roll cool dice, but we have minimized the amount of adding you need to do.

Basically, it works like this:

- A character has a weapon
- The character has skill with that weapon
- Enemies and monsters have defenses (determined by agility and armor)
- GM looks up what roll is needed in order to HIT
  - (based on weapon skill vs defense)
  - Using Appendix - Lookup Table
- The character rolls d20
- if she HITs (roll  $\geq$  than the number on the lookup)
  - She rolls for damage (dice determined by weapon)
  - enemy takes that much damage off his Hit Points

Attack and defense stats are calculated as:

- Attack = Agility + Weapon Skill
- Defense = Agility + Armor + Helm + Shield

Characters may carry multiple weapons, but (normally) can only USE one at a time. They must tell the GM before attacking. If they don't say, assume it is the one they last used. Different weapons have different skill level, damage, range, etc. See Appendix - Weapons List.

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## Weapons Skills

Each type of weapon has a default skill level. Typically this is based on the wielder's Strength or Agility, or the average of the two. Weapons skills may be upgraded using XP (see Character Progression).

Upgrading weapons skills applies to all weapons of that type; for example if a character upgrades his Sword skill it improves his rating with ANY sword, not just the sword he is currently using.

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## Dealing Damage

Each type of weapon deals a certain range of damage, based on a dice roll. For example, most swords deal d6 damage, daggers deal d4.

### Critical Hits

If a player rolls a 20 on her attack roll, it is a critical hit. She gets a bonus! The bonus is her choice of either:

1. Double Damage: roll for damage as usual, then double it.
2. Max Damage: deal the highest possible roll (but don't double it)(eg. For a d6 weapon, deal automatic 6 damage)

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## Advanced Attack Options

These are not listed in the Player's Handbook. Use your discretion how you let them be known. These features can be abused. Advanced Attack options may be disallowed at the GM's discretion. However, because we do not use "perks" like some systems do, these are included to allow additional variety for more advanced characters. In addition to the advanced attack options indicated below, there are a few magic spells that will allow other attack advantages. These are detailed in the spell writeup for each individual spell.

### Dual Wielding

Many game systems do not allow dual wielding. We feel that it is more life-like to allow it. Think about it. If I have a stick in each hand, you're darn right I'm gonna try to hit you with both of them.

Only single handed melee weapons can be dual wielded. This means the character has a weapon in each hand and gets to attack with both in a single turn. To do so, they make two separate attack rolls. However, characters are usually not ambidextrous. Subtract 5 from the d20 attack roll of the non-dominant hand.

Dual wielding requires a skill level of 15 or greater with both weapons. When dual wielding, the effective skill is reduced by 3 points on each weapon. So, even though a character may have skill 15, they will only roll for attack as if they had skill 12.

Knives and daggers may be dual wielded at skill 12 rather than 15, and their effective skill is only reduced by 2 points.

If this all sounds too complicated, you as the GM have every right to simply disallow dual wielding.

## **Double Attack**

Double attacks are possible but require weapons skill level of 15 or greater and agility of 15 or greater. Performing a double attack lets a character perform 2 attacks (with the same weapon) in a single turn, however, there is a -2 penalty to the weapon's normal damage (on both attacks). Double attack may be used with single-handed or two-handed weapons.

## **Defensive Attack**

Shields and certain weapons allow a skilled warrior to perform a minor attack whenever they are attacked by an opponent. This requires a weapons skill of 15 or greater. Eligible weapons are: Shield, Quarterstaff, Halberd, Battle Spear.

When attacked, (on each attacking opponent's turn), the player rolls an extra attack roll (at their usual skill). On success, they deal d2 damage.

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## Defending

Defense is an automatic action based on the character's Agility, Armor, & Shield. There is no roll for defense. Defense is already taken into account in the lookup table for the attacker's attack roll.

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## Taking Damage

Successful attack rolls result in dealing damage to the target, reducing their HP. For player characters, if HP reaches zero, that character is considered incapacitated and can not act. (They are not necessarily dead, yet - see Death section below). For NPCs, monsters, etc. the monster is generally considered dead at 0 HP. If however, there is some kind of narrative reason to allow resurrection, feel free to apply the Healing, Death, and resurrection rules as you would to a Player Character.

## Healing

Whatever your HP, healing is possible, either by healing spells, or healing potions. However, during combat, there may not be time to perform the healing.

It is a very good idea to ensure that more than one party member learns some healing spells as soon as possible. (A vial or two of Healing Potions may be a handy item to find).

## Death

If you remain at zero HP for 24 hours, you are considered dead.

## Resurrection

Once a character is considered dead, they can no longer be healed and can only be resurrected by a Raise Dead spell. This spell must be cast within 3 days of death.

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## Mismatched Opponents

One feature of GoldenSword is that it uses a built in "bell curve" that gives equal odds to evenly matched opponents but makes hard stuff easier and easy stuff harder so that nothing is impossible and nothing is too easy. There is always a chance of failing the simplest of tasks, and there is always the chance of beating even the toughest foe. This works to the advantage of a weaker foe, which is great if that weaker foe happens to be you. If you are the stronger foe, no biggie. It just means that as you level up higher and higher, your levelling makes a smaller and smaller difference. This also prevents characters from reaching "god-like" strengths too quickly.

For more details about this please see

[http://goldensword.dimensionfold.com/goldenswordwiki/doku.php?id=bell\\_curve](http://goldensword.dimensionfold.com/goldenswordwiki/doku.php?id=bell_curve)

# Magic

In GoldenSword, there are no wizards - Everyone gets to use magic! However, magic is not exactly commonly known, so characters must learn spells - typically by finding ancient spellbooks in a lost dungeon somewhere, or by befriending someone who already knows some spells - if they can find such a person, and he isn't trying to kill them.

We encourage players to try using magic. We have designed the Magic system specifically to be easy and fun.

What kinds of things can magic do? Anything from healing, to walking through walls, from teleportation, to shooting fireballs.

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## Magery and Magic Points

Each character has an intrinsic skill in magic. This is their Magery attribute. To use magic, the character must have a Magery attribute greater than zero. To cast spells they will roll a success roll based on your Magery attribute vs. the Difficulty rating of the spell. The Magery attribute also determines the number of Magic Points (MP) the character can use in a day.

Magic Points (MP) = 3 x Magery.

The character's MP number determines how many spells they can cast in a day, because each spell uses up a certain number of points. The more MP a character has, the more spells he can cast in a day. (See Powering a Spell section below)

A character with low Magery, can still use magic, but they will have lower skill and cast fewer spells per day.

If a character is to have NO magic ability, their Magery should be set to ZERO. This will zero out their casting and spell learning abilities and they will not be able to use spells, (but still can use enchanted items). Having ZERO Magery gives a character a an automatic 10 point "Resist Magic" defense bonus against magic attacks or other spells (by adding 10 to the spell's difficulty).

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## Spells

Spells must be learned - and, there's a catch. Characters can't just learn any spell they like. Spells have prerequisites. They are prerequisites that make sense. Just as you learn to crawl before you learn to walk, so it is with magic. This allows the mage an ever-evolving development arc, and gives him something to hope and plan for, much like the swordsman ever seeking a more mythic sword.

Spells function as incremental knowledge which builds synergistically. Essentially, the mage acquires both an understanding of physical reality, coupled with a knowledge of how to apply that understanding to bring spiritual action to bear onto that physical reality.

Each spell has the following characteristics:

<b>Time to Cast</b>	how long the caster must concentrate while casting. Typically 1 second
<b>Difficulty</b>	affects Spell Cast Roll success, as well as spell learning
<b>MP cost</b>	how many Magic Points it uses up
<b>Power</b>	some spells "strength" may be controlled; cast a little or a lot. This may affect MP cost
<b>Duration</b>	how long the spell effects last
<b>Range</b>	how far away can you cast it
<b>Other</b>	counteractions, defenses, other notes, etc
<b>Prerequisites</b>	spells which must be learned before you can learn this spell

There are quite a few spells - more than can fit in this book. Please look at our website or pick up the GoldenSword Magic Manual.

<http://goldensword.dimensionfold.com>

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## **Casting a Spell**

To cast a spell, the character must concentrate or meditate for the specified time to cast then roll for success based on his Magery attribute vs the spell's difficulty rating.

Normally, failed casts do not consume MP as they simply have no effect. The exception to this is that critical failures do expend the MP but result in strange, catastrophic or humorous effects pertinent to the intended effect.

## **Powering a Spell**

Casting a spell takes energy, in the form of Magic Points. When a character casts the spell, he must pay this cost in MP. His Maximum MP does not change, but his current MP is reduced. This should be tracked by pencil on the character sheet, in the \_\_/MaxMP section. If a character runs out of MP, he can no longer cast spells for the rest of the day. However, there are some workarounds to this. His companions can use pooled MP to allow him to cast his spell with their MP. See the Magic Manual for more details.

MP is restored by sleeping. A decent night's rest will restore full MP back to the character's maximum of 3 x Magery. It is at the GM's discretion to prorate MP regeneration for reduced or disturbed sleep.

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## Learning spells

Each magic spell must be learned - characters can only cast spells they have learned. Spells may be learned from other mages, or from found or purchased grimoires (spell books). The GM should build interesting ways of finding new spells into the campaign. For example, use ancient grimoires as loot that characters can find in dungeons, or make a few Mage NPCs in your villages, or maybe out in some wilderness location so that just finding the mage becomes part of the adventure. Keep in mind that there are too many spells for anyone to learn them all. So try to get an idea of what types of spells the players are interested in, then tailor the available grimoires to enable the required prerequisites, and eventually, the sought-after spells.

XP is expended to learn a spell. The amount of XP required to learn the spell is based on the spell difficulty. XP to learn = 1 XP per Spell Difficulty level. For example, a spell of difficulty 20 takes 20 XP to learn.

Most spells have prerequisites. A character may not learn a spell unless he already has learned its prerequisites. If learning multiple spells at once, prerequisites may be included at the same time, as long as the player pays the required XP. For example, assume a new character wants to learn "Detect Lie" and "Detect Truth". Detect Lie has no prerequisites, but is itself a prerequisite for Detect Truth. Each of these two particular spells is difficulty 5. Both spells can be learned at once for the combined cost of 10 XP.

Players must keep track of which spells their character knows, by using a grimoire listing all the spells. The Magic Manual includes a handy reference sheet specifically designed for this purpose. It includes the difficulty level, MP cost, & time to cast, for each spell. These stats are needed during game play in order to perform casting rolls.

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## Improving Spell Skills

Players may spend XP to improve spell skills. This can be done two ways:

1. Spend 50 XP per point to improve Magery attribute. This will effectively improve all spells, by reducing the required success roll. It also increases MP, thereby increasing the number of spells the character can cast per day.
2. Spend 1 XP to lower any single spell's difficulty rating by 1 point. This is particularly useful for "favorite" spells, as it will increase the character's chances of successfully casting that particular spell. As an additional bonus, any spell with effective difficulty of 3 or less, has its Time to Cast lowered to 1 second. This protects the spell cast from interruption as discussed in the next section.

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## Magic in Combat

Any spell can be used during combat, provided the casting character has a chance to concentrate; but more difficult spells may be interrupted by enemy attacks. Any cast time greater than 1 second may be interrupted by a hit and must be started over. This can be avoided by reducing the spells difficulty to 3 or less as per method 2 of the previous section.

Usually, magical melee and ranged attack spell can be defended as usual, using existing armour. However, certain types of attacks may negate certain types of armour. These effects are specified in the spell details. Unless otherwise specified, ranged attack spells fly in a straight line to the target. Physical barriers affect it just as they would affect any ranged weapon.

# Appendix - Character Creation Example

Actually, this is 2 examples rolled into one. We will walk through the process, creating 2 characters. One will be a "fighter" type character named Alice, and the other a "mage" named Bob.

You can create any type of character you can imagine. You just have to tweak the balance of attribute points until they make sense for that character. Want an acrobat? - Boost Agility. How about an acrobat who can read people and make them like her? - Boost Agility, Perception, and Charisma.

When you are thinking about this character design, you may also want to look at how attributes influence skills. If you want the character to have a certain skill set, check which attributes those skill are based on.

Give each character a total 60 points distributed across the attributes, in whatever fashion we wish. No need to roll dice or anything. As long as the total adds to 60, it's all good.

Don't forget; Strength influences your armor options (you have to be strong to wear full steel armor. See armor for Minimum Strength rating for each armor type). Constitution determines Hit Points. (HP = 2 x Constitution). Agility is important for combat. Many weapons skills are based on Agility.

And 2 more rules:

- No attribute may be less than 1
- Magery must not exceed Reason + Knowledge

OK so here is Alice. The height, weight, gender, etc. don't matter for statistics; they are just to give you a good feel for the character. Although the GM may take them into consideration for certain scenarios (like whether you can fit through a narrow tunnel, etc)

<b>Name</b> Alice the sample fighter		<b>Race</b> human	
<b>Character Belongs To</b> Ken Goudsward		<b>Height</b> 5'5"	<b>Weight</b> 120 lb
		<b>Gender</b> female	<b>Comeliness</b> 12
<b>Attribute</b>			
<b>Strength</b>	9		
<b>Constitution</b>	10	<b>HP</b> <input type="text"/> / 20	(2xCon)
<b>Agility</b>	12	<b>Armour</b> 3 Leather	
<b>Charisma</b>	8	<b>Shield</b> 3 Small Wooden	<b>Defence</b> 18 (Agil+Armor+Helm+Shield)
<b>Perception</b>	6	<b>Helm</b> 0 none	
<b>Reason</b>	7		
<b>Knowledge</b>	7		
<b>Magery</b>	1	<b>MP</b> <input type="text"/> / 3	(3xMagery) Magery must not exceed Reason + Knowledge
<b>Total Level</b>	60		

  

<b>Weapon</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Attack</b>	<b>Dmg</b>	<b>Favorite Combat Spells</b>	<b>TTC</b>	<b>Diffic</b>	<b>MP</b>
Hunting Knife	14	26	d4				

Attack = Agility + Weapon Skill



Let's compare Alice & Bob - they are optimized very differently

Attribute	Alice	Bob
Strength	9	5
Constitution	10	6
Agility	12	8
Charisma	8	5
Perception	6	6
Reason	7	8
Knowledge	7	8
Magery	1	14

As you can see, their attributes are very different. Alice is pretty strong and tough. Her 20 HP comes from the standard Hit Points calculation. ( $HP = 2 \times Constitution$ )

Alice's main optimization is for Agility. Most weapons skills are based on Agility or Strength, so Alice has a good foundation to build on for weapons skills. Agility is also the basis for Defense. ( $Defense = Agility + Armour + Shield$ )

Still, Alice is fairly well balanced. She's no dummy, and has decent perception and charisma too.

On the other hand, Bob is pretty weak. He is optimized for magic use by loading up his Magery attribute to 14. This gives him 42 Magic Points. ( $MP = 3 \times Magery$ ) Bob is hoping to learn some killer spells to wreak havoc instead of messing around with swords.

Bob also has to ensure that his Reason and Knowledge are fairly decent because *Magery cannot exceed Reason + Knowledge*. As Bob progresses, he may want to increase his Magery even more. If he wants to exceed 16, he will also need to increase his Knowledge or Reason as well.

One potential issue for Bob is that his strength of 5 will limit his armour use. He is too weak to walk around in plate mail. But for now, leather armour will suffice, and he can always decide later to upgrade this strength when he gets some XP. On the other hand, he might learn some cool defense spells instead.

## Attribute Rules Summary

- Hit Points = 2 x Constitution
  - Most weapons skills are based on Agility or Strength
  - Defense = Agility + Armour + Shield
  - Magic Points = 3 x Magery
  - Magery cannot exceed Reason + Knowledge
- 

## Adding Weapons and Skills

OK let's go shopping! Usually, the GM will allow you to do some shopping before, or at the beginning of an adventure. Presumably, there is a nearby town which you can purchase weapons etc.

We have given both characters a basic \$100 adventurers starter kit consisting of basic leather armor, a small wooden shield, and a hunting knife. This really is the bare minimum for survival.

Depending on how much money you start out with, you may want better weapons and armor, but it is typically fairly easy to upgrade after an adventure, once you find some treasure (in fact, there's a good chance some enemy will attack you soon, and assuming you survive, you may take THEIR weapons & armor). Note however, that some of the better armor types are quite heavy and have a minimum Strength requirement.

Our GM has given us the minimal 20 XP for Initial skill upgrades. Even that small amount is going to make a big difference though if we spend it wisely.

### Alice

The standard hunting knife has a default skill level = AGILITY, so Alice starts out with Knife Skill = 12. Not bad, but she chooses to spend her 20 initial XP on upgrading that skill. At 10XP/level, she is able to upgrade to Knife Skill = 14.

### Bob

Bob decides to spend his XP on Spells. Spells are learned and upgraded at a cost of 1XP per Spell Difficulty. Bob reckons that some healing spells are a fine idea, and with a stroke of luck, the prerequisites work out nicely so that Bob is able to purchase "Heal Injury" and all of the necessary prerequisite spells.

## Appendix - Character Progression Example

Let's say Alice & Bob have just completed a quest, and have each been granted 50 XP by the GM. They may spend their XP on upgrades to attributes, skills, or spells; at the following costs:

• Attributes are upgraded at a rate of 50 XP per attribute point.
• Skill levels are upgraded at a rate of 10 XP per level.
• New Skills may be added at the default skill level (as per the GM) for no XP cost, then may also be upgraded at a rate of 10 XP per level.
• Magic Spells are upgraded by reducing difficulty level at a rate of 1 XP per difficulty point.
• New Spells are learned at a rate of 1 XP per spell difficulty point.

So what will our intrepid adventures spend their XP on?

Alice decides to beef up her Knife skill. It was originally at 14, so she can spend the 50 XP to improve it 5 levels, up to level 19. Very decent!

Bob wants to invest his 50 XP into some more spells. However, the GM informs him that he cannot learn new spells outside of gameplay; he will need to find a way in-game to get the information. Bob convinces Alice that they should go look for an accomplished mage in a nearby city. For now though, Bob upgrades his Heal Injury spell. It is normally difficulty 10, so Bob spends 9 XP to bring the difficulty down to 1. This will greatly increase his success rate when attempting to cast this spell. He still has 41 XP left that he will save until he finds an elusive mage to learn from, at which point he can learn more spells during gameplay.

## Appendix - Combat Example

Combat uses the attacking character's Attack rating vs her opponent's Defense rating:

- $\text{Attack} = \text{Agility} + \text{Weapon Skill}$
- $\text{Defense} = \text{Agility} + \text{Armor} + \text{Helm} + \text{Shield}$

Alice has Agility 12 plus hunting knife skill of 14 for Attack of **26**.

Charlie has Agility 13 and staff skill 11 for Attack = **24**.

Bob has Agility 8 and bowie knife skill 8 for an Attack is **16**. (Obviously, Bob's attack is quite a bit lower than the other characters'. That's because during character creation, Bob's "player" decided to optimize him for Magery, by sacrificing a few points from Agility. Once Bob learns a few spells he should be able to do some cool magic attacks instead of using the typical combat attacks.)

The group happen upon a *random monster* with agility 7 & a small wooden shield (3) for a total defense of **10**. The monster has 7 HP.

Typically, monster stats (and therefore success target numbers) are generally not known to players but are kept secret by the GM. This is not strictly necessary, but it is entirely at the discretion of the GM how much she chooses to reveal.



	Defense															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
Attack	1	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15		
	2	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15		
	3	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14			
	4	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14	14	14			
	5	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14	14			
	6	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14			
	7	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13			
	8	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13			
	9	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12			
	10	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12			
	11	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11			
	12	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	9	10	11			
	13	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	9	10			
	14	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	8	8	9			
	15	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	8	8			
	16	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6			
	17	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6			
	18	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6			
	19	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6			
	20	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6			
	21	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6			
	22	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6			
	23	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5			
	24	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5			
	25	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5			
	26	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5			
	27	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5			

So, on our handy-dandy lookup chart, we find the monster's defense of 10 at the top, and follow it down as the black line shown. The pink line is Alice's attack of 26. The green line is Bob's attack of 16, and the purple line is Charlie's attack of 24.

Where the lines cross shows the number to beat when rolling. Alice and Charlie needs to roll 5 or higher to hit the monster. Bob needs to roll 7 or higher to hit the monster. Since all the numbers are lower than 10, it should be relatively good odds to hit so it shouldn't be too hard of a fight.

Our little band of adventurers are in a plucky mood and they happened to see the monster before he saw them, so they attack first.

We determine turn order by going clockwise around the table starting at the GM's left. Alice is sitting to the left of the GM, so she attacks first.

Alice rolls a d20 and gets a 12. She only needed a 4 to hit so no problem there, it was a good solid hit. Alice rolls d4 for damage (bowie knife = d4), and gets a 1, so she deals 1 point of damage to the monster and hit HP goes from 7 to 6

Bob rolls a 15. Bob needed a 7, so again it is a hit. He rolls d4 for 2 damage. Monster is now down to 4 HP.

Charlie rolls a 13. He only needs 5 so again it's a hit. His d4 rolls 3, taking the monster down to 1 HP.

The monster is almost dead. Normally, the players, would not know how much HP a monster had, or has left, but when it gets very low like this, the GM probably says something like "you notice the monster staggers almost like he's about to fall over".

Now it is the monster's turn. The monster has Strength of 15 and is carrying a Great Club, for which his skill is 13. So his Attack is (Agil + WeapSkill) = 7 + 13 = **20** and the club does d8 damage.

Now if the monster knew what we know (the defense stats of each of the characters) he may decide to attack the weakest character first. But he doesn't know, so he chooses to attack the first character that attacked him - Alice.

Alice's Defense is 18 (Agil + Armor + Helm + Shield = 12 + 3 + 0 + 3 = 18)

		Defense																				
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Attack	1	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16
	2	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16
	3	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16
	4	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	16	16	16	16
	5	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	16	16	16	16
	6	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	16	16	16
	7	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	16	16
	8	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	15	15	16	16
	9	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	15	16	16
	10	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	16	16
	11	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	16
	12	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14	14	15	16
	13	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14	14	15
	14	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14	15
	15	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	14
	16	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13
	17	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13
	18	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12
	19	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12
	20	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11
	21	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10
	22	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9

So the GM looks up the monster's attack 20 vs Alice's defense 18, and finds that the monster needs to roll an 8 in order to hit Alice.

Oh dear, Monster rolls a 15 so he hits Alice alright. Then he rolls d8 (great club) and gets a 6. Ouch, poor Alice takes 6 points damage, and is now at 14 HP. But that's OK, cuz it's her turn again, and she intends to finish old Monster off.

Alice rolls a 20! That's a critical hit! That means she gets to choose one of the following bonuses:

1. double damage: roll for damage as usual, then double it.
2. max roll: take the highest possible roll (but don't double it), so in this case 4.

Alice chooses double damage, so she rolls d4. Unfortunately she only rolls a 1, which doubled means 2 damage. The good news is that it's good enough to kill this monster, since he only had 1 HP left.

The monster is now dead.

The characters can now search the body for coins or whatever. Alice decides to take the club, even though it is too heavy for her to wield. She can try to sell it back in town.

They also find 10 Gold Pieces which they have to figure out how to divide up between the three of them, and a ring of extra stealth.

Alice will probably want to get some healing.

## Appendix - Weapons List

Weapon	Damage	Default Skill Level	Min Strength	# Hands	Price	Notes
Fist	d2	Agility	6	1	free	(includes kicking, head-butt, etc)
Rock	d3	Agility	N/A	1	free	thrown range Strength meters
Club	d4	Agility+2	n/a	1	\$10	
Dagger	d4	Agility	n/a	1	\$30	
Melee Knife	d4	Agility	thrown 10	1	\$10	thrown range 8 meters
Throwing Knife	d4	Agility-1	9	1	\$50	range 10 meters
Shovel	d4	Agility-3	9	2	\$25	
Quarterstaff	d4	Agility-2	n/a	2	\$10	
Cat o 9 tails	d4	Agility-4	9	1	\$25	
Crossbow - Hand	d4	12	n/a	1	\$600	range 15 meters
Sling	d6	Agility-3	N/A	1	\$5	range 20 meters
Throwing Star	d6	Agility-2	8	1	\$50	range 15 meters
Nunchuck	d6	Agility-4	n/a	1	\$100	
Rapier	d6	Agility-2	n/a	1	\$300	
War Shovel	d6	Agility-3	11	2	\$100	
Sword	d6	Agility	9	1	\$200	
War Hammer	d6	Strength-1	8	1	\$100	
Mace	d6	Strength	8	1	\$100	
Shield (bash)	d6	Average (Str,Agil)-2	10	1		small & medium shields only

Bow - Light	d6	Agility	8	2	\$50	range 20 meters
Crossbow - Standard	d8	13	7	2	\$400	range 20 meters
Battle Axe	d8	Agility-2	8	1	\$170	
Flail - Spiked	d8	Agility-4	9	1	\$200	
Great Club	d8	Strength-2	15	2	\$50	
Halberd	d8	Average (Str,Agil)-3	13	2	\$250	
Longsword	d8	Average (St,Agil)-1	11	1	\$300	
Morning Star	d8	Strength	8	1	\$200	
Battle Spear	d8	Average (Str,Agil)-1	thrown 11	2	\$10	range 15 meters
Bow - Standard	d8	Average (Str,Agil)	10	2	\$100	range 40 meters
Bow - Long	d10	Average (Str,Agil)-2	13	2	\$300	range 100 meters
Bow - Composite	d10	Average (Str,Agil)	9	2	\$400	range 60 meters
Great-hammer	d10	Average (Str,Agil)-3	16	2	\$200	
Greatsword	d10	Average (Str,Agil)-3	14	2	\$400	
Crossbow - Heavy	d12	11	12	2	\$700	range 40 meters, 1 turn to reload
Great Axe	d12	Average (Str,Agil)-3	14	2	\$300	

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## Projectiles

Projectile	Price	Description
Arrows	\$20	20 standard arrows, for use with bows
Crossbow Bolts	\$20	20 standard bolts, for use with crossbow
Heavy Crossbow Bolts	\$50	20 large bolts, for use with heavy crossbow
Caltrops	\$100	20 caltrops

## Appendix - Armor List

Armor Rating is how many points your armor adds to your defense. Defense = Agility + Armor + Shield.

In order to wear a certain type of armor, your Strength must be at least as high as its Armor Rating.

Armor Type	Armor Rating	Price
Padded Armor	1	\$40
Leather Armor	3	\$70
Studded Leather	5	\$150
Scale Mail	7	\$300
Banded Armor	9	\$400
Banded Mail	11	\$500
Chain Mail	13	\$900
Light Plate Armor	15	\$1500
Medium Plate Mail	17	\$2000
Heavy Plate Mail	19	\$3000

## Armor Descriptions

- Padded Armor is a lightweight, cloth armor with “plates” of thicker, tougher cloth sewn on where additional protection is needed.
- Leather Armor is made of leather with thicker “plates” of leather are attached to breast, shoulders, arms, and any non-flexible parts. It is easy to move around in.
- Studded Leather is like Leather but with metal studs closely riveted in for additional protection.
- Scale Mail is made of leather with thin metal scales layered on, riveted to the uppermost layer of the leather. Scales overlap, giving an appearance similar to fish scales.
- Banded Armor is made of leather with thick bands of metal riveted on across nonmoving areas. Bands are arranged to maximize mobility while providing superior protection.
- Banded Mail is made of leather with thick overlapping bands of metal attached over the top. Small portions of chain are used to protect armpits and other vulnerable joints.
- Chain Mail is made with tightly interlocking rings of metal. Worn with cloth garments underneath for comfort and insulation.
- Light Plate Armor is made of Chain mail with additional plating over nonmoving areas. Worn with cloth underneath.
- Medium Plate Mail is a comprehensive suit of plates with joints to accommodate movement. Chain in tricky areas, such as armpits and crotch. Cloth worn underneath.
- Heavy Plate Mail is like medium plate mail, but with thicker, more robust plates.



## Appendix - Helms List

Helm Type	Armor Rating	Price	Min Str
Light Leather Helm	1	\$50	
Hardened Leather Helm	2	\$100	
Scaled Helm	3	\$200	
Chain Helm	4	\$300	
Metal Helm	5	\$500	10
Great Helm	6	\$1000	15

Hardened Leather, Metal, & Great Helms may be ornamented with additional fixtures such as horns, spikes, etc.

## Appendix - Shields List

In order to use a certain type of shield, your Strength must be at least as high as its Armor Rating.

Shield Type	Armour Rating	Price
Small Wooden	4	\$20
Medium Wooden	6	\$40
Large Wooden	8	\$80
Small Iron	10	\$100
Iron	12	\$200
Large Iron	14	\$500
Great Shield	16	\$1000

- Small shield can be held or strapped to the forearm.
- Wooden shields usually have a band of metal shaped around its edge for additional strength

## Appendix - Sample Skills

Use this list as a guide, not a rule. These suggested values and other skills values are at the discretion of the GM. Certain campaign types may require different default values.

For weapons default skills, see the Weapons tables.

Skill	Default Value	Notes
Cooking	10	pretty average skill
Hunting	8	pretty common, but harder than cooking
Riding (horses)	Average(Agil,Char)	requires Agility and Charisma; average them
Foreign languages	Knowledge-9	very specialized, dependent on Knowledge attribute
Ladder Climbing	Agility+5	very easy, but dependent on Agility attribute
Kennelry	Charisma+3	pretty easy, but dependent on Charisma
Blacksmithing	Strength+Knowledge-8	
Swimming	Agility-2	
Bartering	Charisma	
Lockpicking	Average(Agil,Reas)-9	
Pickpocketing	Average(Agil,Char)-8	

# Appendix - Sample Spells

Here are a couple sample spells, please refer to the Magic Manual for a full list.

## Force Field

Creates a moderate strength shield or wall using fundamental forces. Can be cast across tunnels or hallways to block passage. Can be cast as a “bubble” around someone to act as a cage. Can be created to allow “one-way” blockage only, at double MP.

<b>Time to Cast</b>	2 seconds
<b>Difficulty</b>	20
<b>MP cost</b>	1 MP per square meter
<b>Power</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	
<b>Range</b>	5 meters
<b>Other</b>	
<b>Prerequisite</b>	Alter Force

## Fireball

A fireball is essentially an inferno, propelled by a force.

<b>Time to Cast</b>	3 seconds (Major Action)
<b>Difficulty</b>	15
<b>MP cost</b>	20
<b>Power</b>	Deals d4 damage per turn until extinguished
<b>Duration</b>	lasts about a minute if no fuel added
<b>Range</b>	20 meters
<b>Other</b>	difficult to smother, but may be terminated at caster's will.
<b>Prerequisite</b>	Inferno, either Raw Force OR Propel Fluid



# Appendix - Lookup Table

For more printable PDF versions of this table, see  
<http://goldensword.dimensionfold.com/GMtools.html>

	Defense																													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Attack 1	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	18
2	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
3	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
4	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	17	17	17
5	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	17	17
6	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	17
7	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17
8	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	17
9	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
10	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16
11	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16
12	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16
13	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16
14	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16
15	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16
16	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15
17	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15	15
18	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15	15
19	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	15
20	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	14
21	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	14
22	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14	14
23	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13	14
24	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13	13
25	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13	13
26	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	13
27	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	12
28	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11	12
29	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10	11
30	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10