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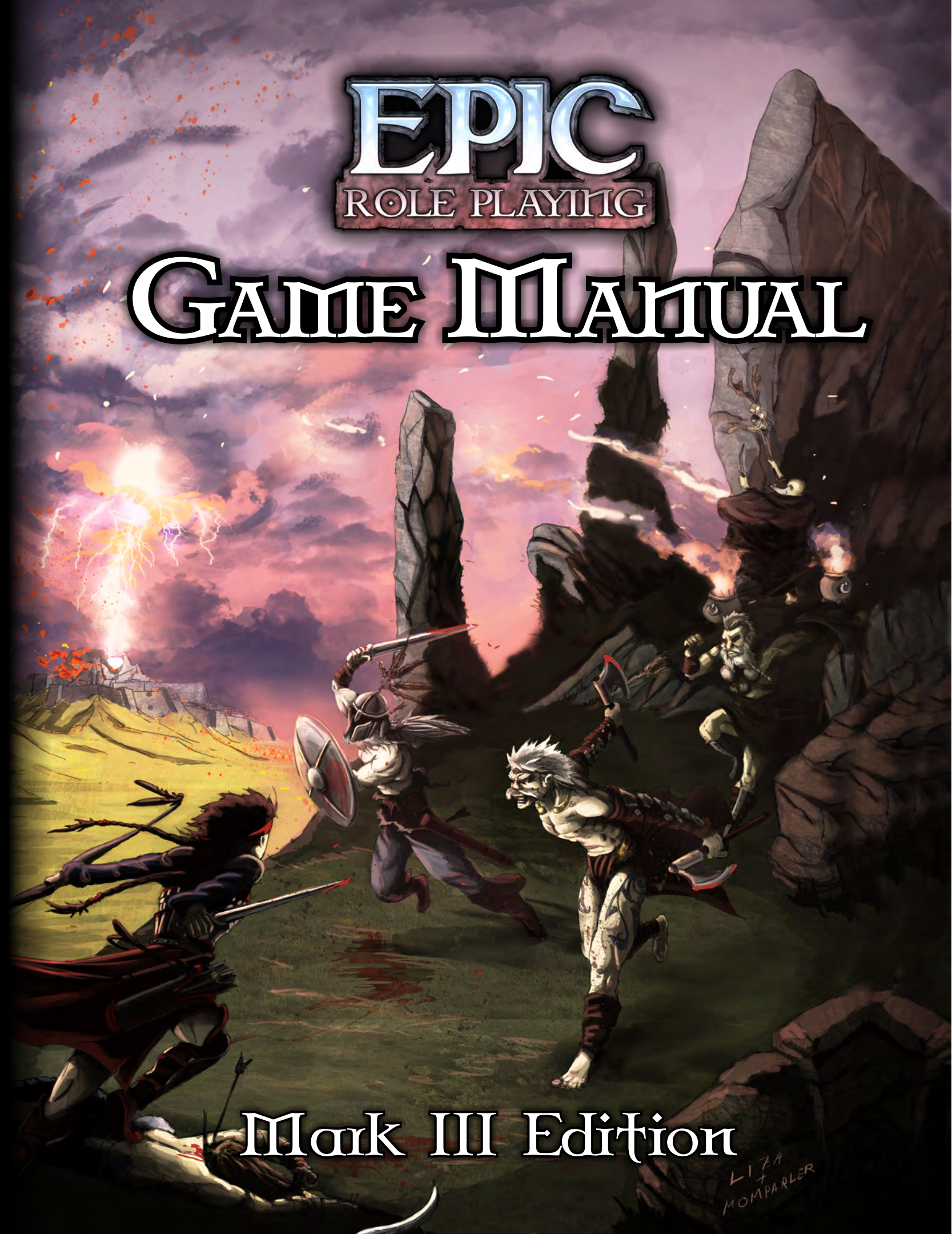
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Epic Role Playing Game Manual

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# EPIC ROLE PLAYING

# GAME MANUAL

## Mark III Edition

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# GAME MANUAL

MARK III EDITION



Dark Matter Studios, LLC

Bozeman

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Mark III Game Design: Chris Organ and Kent Davis

Original Game Design: Chris Organ, Kent Davis, Andrew Merz, and Andy Monroe

Layout and Artwork: Chris Organ and Darren Calvert

Cover: Alejandro Lizaur (art) and Jorge Momparle (color)

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# BOOK I

## RULES MANUAL



# King

# CHAPTER 01

# R

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he Pons Noron monk balanced barefoot on the windowsill of the abandoned tower room, fifty feet above the mist-swept Silverthrone forest, an infant cradled in his arms. The mercenaries, rabid from a two-weeks long chase, had finally found an axe and would be through the barred but time-worn door in moments. He watched the woman in the guttering light of the oil lamp as she tightened her greaves and caught a brief grimace of pain fly across her features, quickly mastered. He could not believe she was even standing just five hours after such a difficult birth, never mind preparing to face a full squad of the Black Boar Brigade. Pale, her hands quivering, she checked the grip on her short swords, rolled her shoulders, glanced up at monk and child and whispered, "Go. His name is Lleyden. Tell him that he is the son of a warrior." As he found footholds in the tiny cracks of the tower wall and lowered himself from sight, he heard the door splinter....



## How Do I Start?

This book is full of quick reference boxes like this one, which will give you the bare bones of game play and an accelerated avenue to the halls of adventure. To begin, you need to:

1. Designate a Game Master, who will create and people your playing world with inhabitants besides your characters (the Game Master should read Chapter 6, The Campaign).
2. Assemble the players in your gaming group - we recommend three to seven.
3. Grab some ten-sided dice, pencils and paper, and various Epic manuals, plus chips and salsa.
4. Craft your characters, as detailed in Chapter 2, Character Creation.
5. Send your heroes into legend with an adventure created by your Game Master or use the tutorial adventures, *The Butchers of Umbrion* or *The Weird of Skellbrith*, available at [www.epicrpg.com](http://www.epicrpg.com).

*Welcome to Epic! Experienced role players may wish to scan the quick reference boxes and then skip this section and move on to Chapter 2, Character Creation. Previous Epic players might also want to take a quick stop at the end of this chapter, to familiarize yourself with the broad strokes of the Mark III Revision changes.*

If you are new to Epic or an old patron of the game, this book will be indispensable. Its contents should be taken as game law, but, as all good rogues know, the spirit of the law is more important than the letter. Your gaming group, especially your Game Master, should always have the last word in interpreting that spirit. Epic is designed to be a flexible and open role-playing system that fits the needs of gamers, avoiding imposing unrealistic and illogical rules on them in the form of dogma. Rules should be altered at the Game Master's discretion to fit the situation at hand. We hope that in using this system you will find (or create!) all of the answers you ever wanted in a game. We know we have ...

## What is Role-playing?

Role-playing is nothing more than pretending you are someone else, just as you did when you were a child. It's play, pure and simple. With Epic, you can fully create the personage that you will be acting out, using a combination of your own creativity and the roll of the dice to birth a hero who may die a quick and inglorious death or live through the most difficult of trials to grow into a legend. The best role-playing happens when each player in your group creates a unique character that has individual beliefs, desires, hopes and fears. Epic has been designed to offer a great many choices and a maximum amount of flexibility toward that goal.

## The Goal

The goal of gaming is to have fun. Just how your gaming group chooses to have fun with Epic is up to you. The system is perfect for down-and-dirty hack-and-slash, divide-the-booty role-playing and also for extended campaign settings with as much history, detail and culture as one could manage. Unless a campaign is specifically designed to enable the players to win in some manner (not necessarily a bad idea) the Game Master will eventually have to choose some point in the characters' lives to end the campaign. This could happen in the main characters' older years or after they survived an untoppable adventure while still young. However the campaign ends, the actual goal is to hang out with friends once in a while and have a good time.

## The Game Master

The Game Master (GM) is the story teller and runs the game. Every person the players encounter on their journeys is played by the Game Master: an insane count hunting the adventurers, an old family friend in a tight spot, even the local bouncer at the Topsy Fiddle. The Game Master also creates the adventures and scenarios through which the players journey.

## The Players

With the aid of the Game Master, each player (except for the GM) will roll up a character according to the process in Chapter 2: Character Creation. Each player's character begins life with a complement of inherited and learned skills and possibly a little money, but beyond that, the choice is the player's. There is no 'class' system as such in Epic. If a player decides his character wants to join a mercenary company when starting up, that doesn't rule out, a few gaming months or even days down the road, the character deciding to quit the guild and join up with an opposing sellsword company, or wandering outside of the guild system, or even becoming a curate. The player's task is to create a well fleshed-out human being in the midst of the GM's well fleshed-out world.

## Decision Rolls

Interactions between characters and the world around them are often resolved through the roll of the dice. Players roll two ten-sided dice to discover if their characters are successful climbing a wall, swinging an axe or even baking a pie. This rolling of the dice is called making a "decision roll." To achieve success in a task, players may find themselves attempting to reach a specific number determined by the Game Master, or comparing the total of their roll to that of an adversary. Essentially, you roll the dice to achieve a specific number or to better an opponent's roll. See Chapter 5: Rules of Play, for specific details.

## What About Rules For . . .

The rules provided in this book are here for the Game Master to start out with and to create a beginning point for the group. However, any good collection of gamers will create their own campaigns, magic and/or house rules. If there is argument about a rule during play, resolve the issue quickly and firmly. Discuss possible rule disagreements later. In the same way, do not be afraid as a Game Master to set the difficulty of some maneuvers, potency of poisons, etc., on the fly; it will make game-play much smoother.

## Essential Materials

The most important material needed to play Epic is a good imagination and an ability to relax and have fun. However, several tools will be very useful:

- One or more ten sided dice per player.
- Pencils, erasers, writing surfaces.
- *Epic Game Manual* (includes the *Rules Manual* and *The Book of the Arcane*), and *The Atlas of Eslin* or *Audbium*, Game Master's campaign log and Character logs.

Of course, the right environment is important as well and may include a good table, lighting and many snacks. Ambiance, such as mood music and candles, can really enhance the role-playing experience. For the technically minded, computers are also fantastic for providing organization and even adventuring soundtracks.

## Dice

Epic uses ten-sided dice. A number before "d10" - for example, 3d10, indicates the player should roll that many dice, in this case, three. If a d00 roll is called for, the roller should roll 2d10, declaring one die "tens" and one die "ones" before the roll. This creates a range between one and one hundred.

## Using Miniatures

Miniatures are small metal figures used on a large grid map that allow the Game Master and players to see where their characters are in relation to companions, objects, structures and opponents. Some groups informally use miniatures and do not apply rules when moving or calculating ranges, while other groups do. Painting these items is an art in itself and the results are very satisfying. Many groups buy miniatures to represent each character.

## The Map

If you are using miniatures, you will need a hexagonal or square dry-erase grid map. You will be able to purchase these items at your local hobby store. We recommend hexagonal maps since the spatial relationship between figures is more realistic. Make sure you get dry-erase markers to draw hallways, rooms, etc. onto the map; many maps have permanent

## Organizing a Gaming Session

Once your group is up and running, use this quick guide of stuff that will make your Epic experience consistently fun:

### For the Game Master:

1. Review the Game Master's log and roughly determine what will happen, with enemies and background characters at hand; don't overplan.
2. Order pizza.
3. Have quick reference sheets ready for you and your players. Clear plastic folders will keep them pristine and free of salsa stains.
4. Use mood music. Give the players a soundtrack to their own adventure.
5. Keep the tempo moving: avoid too much philosophizing. Think about the momentum of great adventure movies like *Raiders of the Lost Ark*® or *The Lord of the Rings*® films.
6. If you have a notebook computer, use it to organize notes and the combat log. A three-ring binder also works well.
7. Use random generators to simplify naming that inn the characters just walked into. There's some great freeware at [www.mapmage.com](http://www.mapmage.com).
8. Use a set of dice to remember variant durations by rotating them every turn.
9. Resolve rules questions quickly and firmly, then move on; talk about it after the session.
10. Have a player volunteer to take notes.
11. Make sure to organize the next gaming session at the end of this one. Email is also great for this.

### For the Player:

1. Bring pencils/dice so you don't have to mooch.
2. Bring some chips and salsa or soda or whatever snack strikes you.
3. Make sure to grab a quick reference sheet: it simplifies combat. Arcane users also need them.
4. Designate a party leader. It makes things so much simpler! Some parties have one military leader and one for social occasions. Leave thieving to the thieves.
5. Have a note taker. You can rotate this position.
6. Play your character's VAs and background: a socially inept character can be great fun to play; Fosts won't know anything about salad forks.
7. Don't hog playing time: let every member of your party have their moment in the sun.
8. Avoid arguing rules with the Game Master. If you see a legitimate mistake, fine. Otherwise, let it go and focus on having fun. Rules arguments are a huge pain.
9. If you fire into melee, ask your party mates first....

drawings on them from the wrong type of marker. One hex should equal one yard (3 ft). Use this proportion to calculate movement, room size and distances. Characters may normally move about 10 yards per turn when not engaged in combat. Use these same proportions to calculate ranges for distance weapons.

## What's New in Mark III?

The Mark III Edition of Epic Roleplaying continues to hone our primary design goal of maximizing both simplicity of play and satisfying modeling of the real world. We took a good, long look under the hood, and made some significant changes. Almost all of the revisions aim directly at improving elegance, while holding on to the grit we never want to give up.

Here is a brief overview of what has been changed from the previous revision:

1. Vital Attributes: they now range from -10 to 10. VAs in the range of -2 to 2 are considered average, while -10 and 10 represent the extreme ranges of human variation. VAs now more directly modify facets of play, and VA rolls have been given a more robust functionality.

2. Progression: Progression rolls for skill advancement take the place of adding and tracking experience, and are directly linked to important moments of play in the game:

- The epiphanies created by great success or failure, as indicated by critical success or failure rolls.
- Moments where characters play to their Drive.

Characters also receive progression rolls at the beginning of every session. Experience points have been removed from the game.

3. Tactical Play: Attack rolls now directly affect damage and the damage roll has been removed, greatly streamlining the combat experience.

These three major changes created a cascade of smaller adjustments across every corner the Epic rule set, and we hope you like them as much as we do. As usual, we could not have achieved the continuing evolution of the game without the contributions of our passionate players. To them we offer our everlasting thanks and appreciation!



# CHAPTER 2

## CRAFT YOUR HERO

**T**imodred slipped onto his back into the manure again. The Bliss-Night festivals had filled his drunk uncle's tavern for five nights running, and the fifteen-year-old had barely slept in the past three. He roundly cursed the muck, horses in general, his bruises, and the connections his papa had used to get him the "apprenticeship" in the run-down inn. He longed for something more, something greater. Looking up, he noticed that The Man was back, watching him over the half-door to the stable: he rarely spoke, was a good tipper, and had taught him that intricate puzzle game with coins and rushes. The Man raised his arm. The robe fell away from his forearm, which was suddenly covered by a glowing blue tattoo, a salamander, eating its own tail. "My name is Aubine," he said. "You don't belong here. Come with me." Timodred glanced back at the inn nervously as the two strode down the bustling streets. "Be easy, you will never see that place again," Aubine said. "Tell me boy, how are you at numbers...?"

## Creating a Hero

Epic is a game of adventure set in a universe of flexible dimensions. It is designed to tell an absorbing story of heroic fantasy, where development of character and plot are integral and cleave to game mechanics. To begin, the GM and player must first craft the tale of a fledgling adventurer, perhaps destined for the halls of legend, or possibly headed into the mists of obscurity.

This chapter is organized in a step-by-step manner, helping you (with the GM's aid) to form your character's physical background (geography, race, Vital Attributes, physical features, special traits) before determining defining emotional and experiential factors (culture, family, history), and then finally, choosing an occupation and consuming ambitions. We designed the process to walk the line between chance and choice; you have control over some aspects of character creation, but fate also takes a hand. Each step is described in detail, including instructions for recording all pertinent information on the character log. Not all players prefer to follow this approach. Some like to flesh out the narrative, background elements before the concrete particulars of their characters. Feel free to do as you wish. The following step-by-step process is recommended for most (especially first-time) players. It provides a guided tour of the game and ensures that you do not miss anything important.

### Step I: Birth

The first step for entering the world of Epic is to imagine your character's origins. You are setting the stage for a grand tale, and these opening elements can have dramatic results, not just for the statistical life of your character, but also to jump-start your imagination. Here are some questions that will have a huge impact on your character:

What race is my character and where is my character from?  
 What geography may have shaped his background? Is my character from a city in a populous, rich kingdom, or a nomad accustomed to sleeping under the stars on a vast, lonely steppe?

**Step I** provides answers to all of these questions and more. With the GM's assistance, you roll the dice and conceptualize the birth, culture and genetic makeup of your character. To aid in this task, we provide a sample setting called Rullaea (Chapter 15), one of the many realms in our default setting of Eslin. You can refer to this setting for inspiration throughout the character creation process. You can also download a full-color PDF map of Rullaea at [www.epicrpg.com](http://www.epicrpg.com). Don't let that stop you as a GM from creating or adapting your own campaign setting; we've designed the game system of Epic Role Playing to be easily portable to any fantasy world.

### Using Your Own Setting

Want to use a campaign setting different from Eslin, such as a homebrew world or a published setting for a different game? This is easy to do since the character creation process in Epic RPG is modular. All you need to do is provide alternate choices for nationality and race (Step I), cultural background (Step II), and perhaps most importantly, the character's occupation (Step III). Making occupations is easy to do and if you are converting a new setting to Epic Role Playing, let the players join in and prepare some professions and guilds themselves. Just refer to the advice in Chapter 6 of this volume, double check skills for power-balance, the relative power and cultural significance of masteries and grandmasteries, and send the would-be hero into legend!

### Race and Homeland

Rullaea is one of many realms in the world of Eslin, and will be used as an example here and is described in detail in Chapter 15 of this volume. If your group will be playing in a different realm, your GM will provide you with appropriate information and race tables. As an example, Rullaea, or the Heart Realm, is home to three distinct races of humans and other beings, any of which you may choose for your character. Such a choice need not be a daunting task. Consult the GM. He has already determined the region of Rullaea in which the story begins, and may have some suggestions for you. If, after reviewing your choices, you wish to choose a race from another realm (as published in the *Atlas of Eslin*) consult the GM for a final determination. There is no rule stating that a story must begin with its characters' races all from the same realm, but a very wide range may disrupt the GM's conception of the campaign.

Take a few minutes to read the racial descriptions of the realm to which the GM directs you. GMs can alter Table 2.0 to reflect the appropriate realm. Detailed descriptions of races are found in the *Atlas of Eslin*, as well. There are also racial summaries in the quick reference boxes at the beginning of each realm chapter.

**Table 2.0: Races of Rullaea**

Roll	Race
1	Celarri (non-human), see Chapter 15
2-4	Merethi (human), see Chapter 15
5-9	Rullaeen (human), see Chapter 15
0	Fost (human), see <i>Atlas of Eslin</i>

Note: Fosts are included on this table to allow characters a tribal society from which to choose.

# CRAFT YOUR HERO

**Step I:** The character's Race and name is entered onto the Character Log. The character's occupation will be entered later.

**Step I:** Vital attributes and physical features are fleshed out. Faedus' player rolled a 2 for unusual features (indicating the presence of one, which is recorded as well (Page 6).

**Step II:** Social class, family occupation, apprenticeship are determined. Afterward, random childhood and adolescent events are rolled (Page 11).

**Step II:** Skills and languages from childhood and apprenticeship are entered (Page 11).

**Step III:** Faedus trains with the Storm Wardens. Skills from Faedus' initial occupation are entered as well as a bonus skill. Random ethos components are rolled (Page 16).

**Step IV:** Faedus' summary statistics are recorded for easy future reference (Page 19).

**Step IV:** Faedus gets equipped and weight limit is determined (Page 19).

## CHARACTER LOG

Name: Faedus  
 Race/Ethnicity: Rullaeen  
 Occupation: Storm Wardens  
 Languages/Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Created on 5/2011

Body		Level
Agility (AGL)	-1	
Dexterity (BTY)	1	
Stamina (BLD)	2	
Strength (MGS)	0	
Vitality (VIT)	2	

Mind		Level
Intelligence (ESS)	-2	
Insight (ITU)	0	
Presence (PRS)	0	
Reason (RSN)	-1	
Willpower (WLL)	3	

Portrait or Symbol: \_\_\_\_\_

Childhood/Apprenticeship Skills	Talent Level
Stewardship	1
Animal handling	2
Visual arts	1
Farming	+3 1
Fieldcraft	2

Professional Skills	Talent Level
Athletics	-1 1
Stealth	1 1
Maneuvering	-1 1
Melee arms	+3 1
Ranged arms	1

Specialties: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Masteries & Grandmasteries: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Life Points = (20-VIT-BLD)5  
 Injury Levels = each can hold up to your LP before spilling over to the next box

0	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

Protection Level = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Order = -1 (reaction speed) - impediment  
 Move = -1 (footwork) - impediment  
 Evasion = -1 (maneuvering) - impediment

Age: 19 Sex: M Hgt: 6'1" Wgt: 178 Handed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eyes: dark brown Hair: auburn  
 Features: sharp nose and heavy brow  
 Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Racial Traits: +1 talent to theology and visual arts  
 Unusual Traits: Calico Eyes

Disposition: Practical  
 Morals: Humble  
 Motivations: Duty

Home Land: Meath Social Class: Lower  
 Languages: Donnsih  
 Family Occupation: Falconer  
 Schooling/Apprenticeship: Groom  
 Childhood Events: Near-death experience  
 Adolescent Events: Fall in love with 2 people

Weapons	wgt	grp	range	impact	ord	att	dmg
Spear	4	hf	3	0	-5	+1	0

ord = Maneuvering (reaction speed) - weapon wgt att = Melee/Ranged arms (weapon) dmng = weapon impact + MGT (for melee or thrown weapons)

Region	Clothing & Armor	wgt	PL
Legs			
Arms			
Body	Mail hauberk	25	5
Head			
Other			
Total PL			5

Shield

Shield	wgt	cover	mod	Block
Buckler	4	0	0	+1

Block = Melee arms/shielding \* shield block modifier

Items on Person	wgt

Items in Pouch	wgt

Ammunition: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Disposition: Practical  
 Morals: Humble  
 Motivations: Duty

33 Total Weight carried on person  
 Pack Weight = \_\_\_\_\_

12 WL Weight Limit = 10+BLD - MGT  
 Impediment = each box can hold your WL

0	1	2	3	4
12	12	9	3	4

You can follow along during the creation process of Faedus. The player first enters the character's race and homeland or realm onto the Character Log.

## Character Creation Checklist

### Step I: Birth

1. Choose or roll a race for the character on the Races of Rullaea table (Table 2.0). Talent from Race or other sources provide a bonus to progression rolls - you'll make progression rolls throughout the game to advance your character's level in different skills.
2. Consult with the GM and/or choose the nationality and hometown of the character.
3. Roll d00 for each of your vital attributes (VAs) using Table 2.3 or allocate 3 points among the various VAs and then exchange. Calculate and record VAs on side 1 of your character log. Body VAs directly affect the physical life of the character and mind VAs are used to calculate Talent level for many skills.
4. Choose or roll for gender. Also, choose any appropriate/interesting physical features for your character. Refer to Chapter 15 for racial physical feature guidelines and height and weight averages. Incorporate Build VA (10 is huge, -10 is tiny) into your description.
5. Roll for unusual traits (Table 2.4). Record on your character log, and make any necessary adjustments.
6. Your character is born, marked by his or her parentage, but is still undefined. Move on to **Step II**, the Character Creation Checklist on page 11.

Now that you know where your character comes from - realm and race - it is time to create their specific attributes. Numeric values are used to measure various physical and mental characteristics, which affect the way your character interacts with the world and learns how to live in it.

How strong, smart, and fast is my character? How sensitive to the arcane powers of Eslin? How witty and talented?

Is the character female or male? How tall is she? How much does he weigh? Is she plain looking or does she have a distinguishing mark?

## Vital Attributes

Genetic material forms a singular being that represents not only the traits of both mother and father, but also his own inclinations and potential. In Epic, these Vital Attributes (VAs) are inherent at the outset of your character's journey as a result of her heredity, but are also improvable through training (by attaining masteries and grandmasteries in certain skill specialties - see Chapter 3 for more details).

There are five vital body attributes and five vital mind attributes. VAs range from -10 to 10, with the middle range (0) describing the average human condition. An Agility of 10

signifies jaw-dropping, superhero-level balance and body control, whereas a Might of -10 indicates serious trouble lifting more than your feet. A VA of -2 to 2 is average for a man or woman and does not overtly impact the course of the game. VAs on the outer limits of the range of human possibility carry more significant positive or negative weights, which have a direct impact on game play.

VAs fall into two very specific and complementary categories - vital attributes of the body and vital attributes of the mind. Body VAs affect the character's physical interactions with her environment, and Mind VAs predominantly affect the character's Talent: her aptitude for developing the skills necessary to get by as an adventurer.

## Talent

Talent is one of the most important aspects of Epic, as it controls the rate of a character's advancement in all skills. It sets the learning curve for many skills and specialties. In game terms, a high VA increases the chances of skill progression. If your character has a high Talent for a skill, she will be able to learn much more quickly than those with a low Talent.

**Table 2.1: Impact of Vital Attributes**

Body VAs Impact	Mind VAs Impact
Agility: talent for athletics & maneuvering	Essence: talent, QP
Beauty: talent for some social skills	Intuition: talent
Build: life points, weight limit	Presence: talent
Might: damage, weight limit	Reason: talent
Vitality: life points	Will: talent

## Vital Attributes of the Body

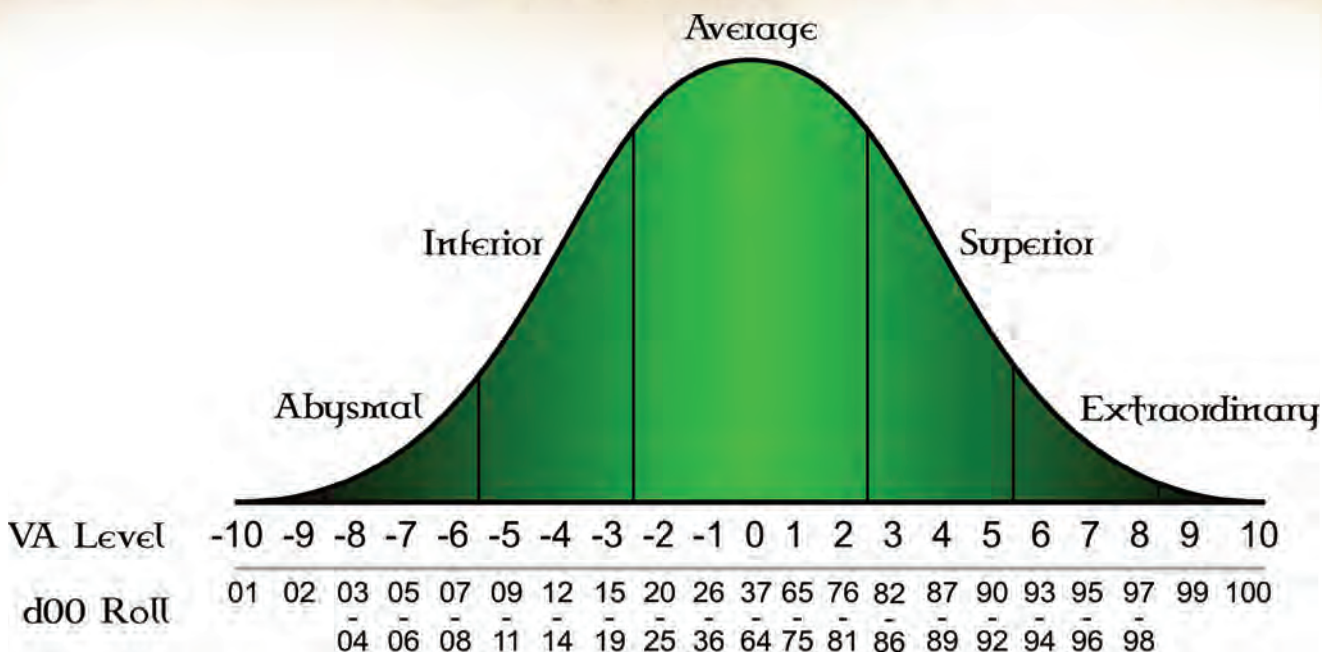
Body VAs detail the physical reality of the character. In game play, they directly impact the character's basic interactions with her material environment, enhancing or diminishing hardiness, athletic prowess, social interaction, and the like.

**Agility (AGL):** Balance, flexibility, and manual dexterity. Agility sets the learning curve for several physical skills, like athletics.

**Beauty (BTY):** Physical appearance and attractiveness. A character with a high Beauty attribute possesses most or all of the physical qualities his race considers beautiful. Beauty sets the talent of some social skills.

**Build (BLD):** Robustness and sturdiness of the body's frame. It also affects overall size. Build directly determines the character's weight limit\* (along with Might) and life points.\*

**Might (MGT):** Pure muscular strength and application of force from muscles and body weight. It also affects overall size. Might determines the character's weight limit (along with Build)\* and modifies weapon damage.\*



**Table 2.3: Generating Vital Attributes.** *The distribution of Vital Attribute scores for humans. The range of -2 to 2 is considered average, while a -10 and 10 represent the extreme ranges of human variation.*

**Vitality (VIT):** Health, vigor, and resistance to sickness and disease. Vitality modifies life points.\*

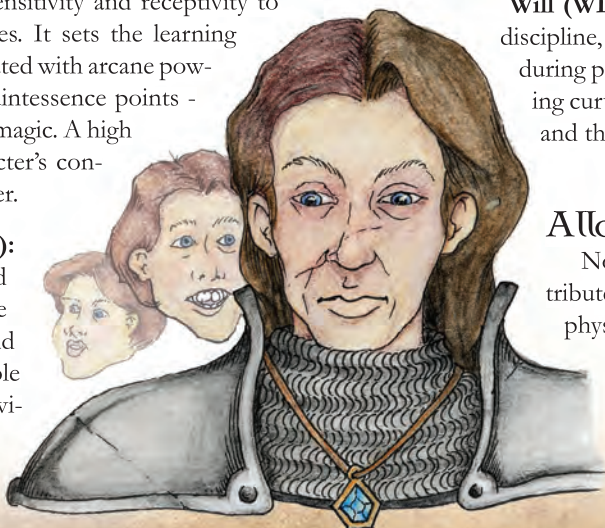
\*Note: Full descriptions of life points, weight limit, and damage can be found in **Step IV** of the Character Creation process beginning on page 18, where they will be calculated. Briefly, life points are the body's ability to absorb damage, weight limit is carrying capacity, and damage enhances damage delivery in melee combat.

### Vital Attributes of the Mind

Mind VAs detail the interior landscape of the character. In game play, mind VAs set the Talent for the majority of skills and specialties.

**Essence (ESS):** Sensitivity and receptivity to forms of arcane energies. It sets the learning curve for the skill associated with arcane power, called arcana, and quintessence points - the power used to work magic. A high essence ensures a character's connection to mystical power.

**Intuition (ITU):** Perception, instinct and creativity. Intuition is the capacity to comprehend things about other people and the character's environment on an almost subconscious basis. It sets the learning



curve for many outdoor and combat skills, as well as the arcane discipline called shen. Woe betide the archer or woodswarden with a low intuition.

**Presence (PRS):** Bearing, self-assuredness and charisma, in addition to pure force of personality and un-learned leadership ability. It sets the learning curve for many social skills and also the arcane discipline of theurgy.

**Reason (RSN):** Rational problem-solving ability and memory. Reason affects skills involving deduction, induction and the ordering of things. It sets the learning curve for academic skills and some trade skills, as well as the arcane disciplines of alchemy and metaphysics. If you set off into arcane studies governed by this VA, make sure your reason is high.

**Will (WLL):** Strength of mind, it also includes self-discipline, courage and the ability to control oneself during physical and mental hardship. It sets the learning curve for athletics, many trade skills, melee arms and the arcane discipline of mentalism.

### Allocating Vital Attributes

Now that you have an idea of what Vital Attributes signify, it is time to create the mental and physical nature of your character. Heroes usually possess physical or mental powers greater than those of normal humans, but game balance is not really served if some players in your party get lucky and roll up astonishing VAs across the board while you



are stuck with a range of mighty negative threes and fours. Hence, in Epic, it is up to you to decide where your hero's great strengths and weaknesses lie!

*Method 1:* VAs can be randomly determined on Table 2.3 above by rolling them up in order. GM's may allow players to switch one, two, or three VAs once all are rolled up.

*Method 2:* Each VA starts at 0 and the player has 3 points to increase VA levels (so that a character could have 3 VAs, each at level 1 or 1 VA at level 3, for example). VAs can be increased by taking a point from a different VA. For example, ESS could be increased by 2 by decreasing AGL by 2. Consult your GM as to the preferred method.

**Options and suggestions:** Warriors or other occupations assuming the frequent reception of physical damage would do well with high Build and Vitality, as the difference in life points is significant. Make sure not to ignore the VAs that control Talent for the primary two or three skills your character will use. For example, the melee arms skill necessary for a swordsman requires an above-average Will, at the very least, while a potential rogue would be well advised to have good VA scores in Intuition and Reason, which govern the skills of stealth and thieftcraft, respectively. A good balance of bumping up a few of the mental and body VAs you deem important for your soon-to-be character is probably best.

## Gender and Physical Features

Based on character race and player preference, now choose the hue of skin, hair and eye color, birth marks and other genetic features of your character. Refer to Chapter 15, the *Atlas of Eshin*, or your GM's prepared material for physical feature guidelines of various races. Your character's height and weight is based on the racial average for the gender, your character's Build and Might, and an age of young adult (more or less fully grown), though you could choose someone older, too. Creative choices (a shock of white hair, the lack of a knuckle on one finger, or an interesting birthmark, for example) can make a character memorable and more fun to play, unless, of course, you're leaning toward a sneaky character that values blending into the background....

## Unusual Traits

During a character's early years, significant traits may appear that add to her individuality. Such traits, whether affected by genetics or the environment, are unusual in nature and set the character apart from the madding crowd. Of course, it is possible that a character has none of these traits, which in no way detracts from playability. Players and GMs may discard characteristics that are undesirable or too bizarre, depending upon their discretion and the flavor of the story. Roll 1d10; 1-4 indicates the presence of an unusual trait. If the character

possesses an unusual trait, roll d00 on the table below. Otherwise, proceed to choosing an occupation. Talent from Unusual Traits or other sources provide a bonus on progression rolls. Players are encouraged to embrace the negative traits, as well as the positive ones. They make for great storytelling, as well as excellent nicknames from other gaming group members.

Table 24: Unusual Traits

d00	Trait	Description
1-10	Natural swimmer	+2 on swimming rolls
11	Superior Agility	Increase AGL to 9
12	Superior Beauty	Increase BTY to 9
13	Superior Build	Increase BLD to 9 (gigantism)
14	Superior Essence	Increase ESS to 9
15	Superior Intuition	Increase ITU to 9
16	Superior Might	Increase MGT to 9
17	Superior Presence	Increase PRS to 9
18	Superior Reason	Increase RSN to 9
19	Superior Vitality	Increase VIT to 9
20	Superior Will	Increase WLL to 9
21	Inferior Agility	Reduce AGL to -9
22	Inferior Beauty	Reduce BTY to -9
23	Inferior Build	Reduce BLD to -9 (dwarfism)
24	Inferior Essence	Reduce ESS to -9
25	Inferior Intuition	Reduce ITU to -9
26	Inferior Might	Reduce MGT to -9
27	Inferior Presence	Reduce PRS to -9
28	Inferior Reason	Reduce RSN to -9
29	Inferior Vitality	Reduce VIT to -9
30	Inferior Will	Reduce WLL to -9
31	Premature Balding	BTY -1, but PRS +1
32	Hairy	Excessive body hair. -1 to BTY
33	Artistic savant	Visual arts at level 5
34	Math savant	Science at level 5
35	Amatory savant	Persuasion at level 5
36	Polyglot	Starts with the polyglot mastery (see the Linguistics skill)
37	Dyslexia	-1 on progress rolls, academic skills
38	Natural artisan	+1 on progress rolls, trade skills
39	Natural scholar	+1 on progress rolls, academic skills
40	Mystical	+1 on progress rolls, arcane skills
41	Natural athlete	+1 on progress rolls, athletics
42	Outdoorsman	+1 on progress rolls, outdoor skills
43	Courageous	+1 on progress rolls, combat skills
44	Gregarious	+1 on progress rolls, social skills
45	Polymath	+1 on all progression rolls
46	Slow learner	-1 on all progression rolls
47	Driven	+1 on Drive progression rolls
48	Superior vision	+3 on sight-based perception rolls, no combat penalty for faint light conditions (twilight, fog, etc.)
49	Superior hearing	Hear ultrasound, +5 on hearing-based perception rolls
50	Superior touch	+3 on touch-based perception rolls
51	Superior taste	+3 on taste-based perception rolls
52	Superior smell	+3 on smell-based perception rolls, +2 on tracking
53	Sixth sense	+2 on all perception rolls
54	Drools	-1 PRS
55	Cleft palate	-1 on BTY
56	Albino	Colorless skin, hair and eyes (50% chance - +1 or -1 to BTY)

d00	Trait	Description
57	Strange metabolism	10 PL against poisons
58	Color blind	Cannot distinguish between colors (-1 on sight-based perception)
59	Deaf	-10 on hearing-based perception rolls, but immune to hearing based attacks
60	Allergies	-1 on all rolls when affected
61	Fast healer	Heals 2 LP per day
62	Slow healer	Heals 1 LP every 2 days
63	Ambidextrous	0 penalty for offhand rolls (dual handed fighting penalty reduced to -5+AGL bonus for each hand)
64	Contortionism	Able to escape from bonds by dislocating joints - +15 to escape rolls
65	Flat feet	-1 evasion rolls
66	Polydactylism	Extra fingers or toes
67	Asexual	Possesses no sexual organs
68	Hermaphrodite	Possesses both sex organs
69	Anemic	Bleeds (-1 LP/min) when wounded
70	Strong frame	+5 on weight limit
71	Weak frame	-5 on weight limit (min of 1)
72	Strange odor	Easily identifiable
73	Smelly	-1 on persuasion rolls
74	Stutter	-1 on persuasion rolls
75	Mute	-1 on persuasion rolls
76	Calico eyes	Different colored eyes
77	Birthmark	Large and distinctive birthmark
78	Epileptic	Seizures occur every few random gaming sessions
79	Erebus blood	Knows arcana skill, lvl 1
80	Touched	Detect magic within 3 yards
81	Open mind	-5 on mentalism defense rolls
82	Closed mind	+5 on mentalism defense rolls
83	Superstitious	-2 on all arcane defense rolls
84	Dweomer	+2 on all arcane defense rolls
85	Shielded	10 PL against arcane damage
86	Light sleeper	Wakes automatically from sounds
87	Heavy sleeper	Takes 5 turns to wake from sleep
88	Tough	Immune to unconsciousness in the 5th injury level (IL)
89	Hardy	+1 LP
90	Meek	-1 LP
91	Narcolepsy	Falls asleep uncontrollably every few random gaming sessions
92	Fearful	-1 on progress rolls, combat skills
93	Kleptomania	Persistent impulse to steal
94	Paranoia	Persistent fear of persecution
95	Bipolar moods	Wide emotional swings
96	Phobia, mild	Fear of an object or situation such as: heights, crowds, small or open spaces, magic, foreigners, water, a plant or animal, and so on. Causes -1 on all actions when afflicted
97	Phobia, strong	Extreme fear of an object or situation (see mild phobias for examples) that causes catalepsy in which no actions can be performed
98	Megalomania	Delusions of grandeur & power
99	Pathological liar	Persistent urge to exaggerate and lie
00	Blackouts	Forget traumatic events

## Character Creation Checklist

### Step II: Growing Up

1. Roll on either the Chieftom/Tribal Social Class table (Table 2.5) or the State Social Class table (Table 2.6). *Add your character's PRS to this roll.* Record social class, occupation (of the character's family) and associated skills (at level 1) on the front of the character log.
2. Roll again on either the Chieftom/Tribal Social Class table (Table 2.5) or the State Social Class table (Table 2.6) for the character's adolescence. *Add your character's PRS to this roll.* Record social class, occupation (of the character's apprenticeship or schooling) and associated skills on the front of the character log. If any skills are duplicated from childhood, skill level is +1.
3. Record languages (refer to the Atlas of Eslin or the GM for available languages in the relevant realm), from the highest social class in which the character has lived and starting money (in silver) from the social class during the adolescent phase.
4. Roll random childhood events (Table 2.7). Record this on the front of the character log.
5. Roll random adolescence events (Table 2.8). Record on the front of the character log.
6. Roll or choose elements of the character's ethos on Table 2.9. Record on side one of your character log.
7. Congratulations! Your background is in place. Move on to the Step III, Character Creation Checklist on page 16.

### Step II: Growing Up

What did my character's parents do for a living? Were they rich or poor? Were they common folk, slaves, or nobility? Did they work with their hands, minds, or both? Does my character have any brothers and sisters?

What significant events shaped the fate of my character as she was growing up? How did these events affect her outlook on life?

What memories and events have shaped my character's outlook on life? Do family secrets or personal tragedies color his actions on a daily basis?

These considerations can deepen the process of character creation and provide you and the GM with a strong foundation on which to build, as well as providing numerous plot possibilities. The twists and turns of a character's childhood and early adulthood offer rich veins of ore for creative miners.

Fate (in the form of the dice) may influence your character in many ways. The following tables provide ideas for describing significant early events that affect your character's

life and provide a starting point for generating his ethos. You and the GM will flesh out details of each event based on the setting and concept of the story. Flexibility is key! Remember that the tables are tools to spur the imagination, not limit it. A Celarri from the far north can absolutely begin a campaign set in southern Goe'Lad, especially if the GM and you work out a creative reason why the northern tree-person is so far from home.

Some options and guidance: ignore contradictory results if you wish. Re-roll if you do not like the results. Choose an event if you do not wish to roll for one. Make up the background yourself without even consulting the tables. The GM will provide you direction if needed. Remember that contradictions can make for more exciting stories. You never know when the skills inherited from your warrior's childhood as the daughter of a potter might come in handy!

### Social Class, Childhood & Adolescence

It is now time to determine the social class into which the character was born. This affects available avenues for family occupation, apprenticeship, bonus languages, and starting money (in silver). Do not lose hope for characters with low social classes: the random events tables are designed to implement flexibility for those seeking freedom from the bonds of servitude. Also, many hands-on skills inherited from the more blue collar sections of society can be very useful in the rough-and-tumble world of the adventurer. Random events tables are not set in stone and can be rerolled at the discretion of the GM, or even chosen by the GM or player if desired.

Next, roll d00 on Table 2.5 for tribal societies or Table 2.6 for state societies to determine your character's primary family occupation and social class. This category reflects the profession of either the character's mother or father (your choice), continued exposure to which has given your character a basic skill set to carry out of childhood. For an extra wrinkle, add the character's Presence (positive or negative) to the roll. Record the appropriate skills on the front of the character log, each at level 1. Record starting money and languages on the front of the character log, social class on the back.

Next, roll d00 again on Table 2.5 for tribal societies or Table 2.6 for state societies to determine your character's apprenticeship. Add the Presence to the roll here, as well. "Apprenticeship" is a loose term used to reflect the character's adolescent development with a teacher from outside the immediate family. This development can include anything from a formal master/apprentice relationship to skills the character learned from running with a street gang. In any event, the experience provides the character with an additional skill set. Record the appropriate skills on the front of the character log, each at level 1. If these skills duplicate any attained from childhood, add +1 to the level of the skill in question.

NOTE: When rolling on these tables, embrace any contradictions that might occur. These are opportunities for flesh-

ing out the events early in the life of your characters. If he was the son of a kitchen whelp, but apprenticed with a prince, use that seeming dissimilarity to flesh out the character. Perhaps the young son - with a WLL of 8, say - of a kitchen peon (02 on Table 2.6) impressed a visiting general, who took him under his wing (94 on table 2.6) as a young man. You can garner fuel for this process from the upcoming childhood and apprenticeship events.

The fun arrives in this scenario when you and the GM begin looking at connecting the dots between point A (kitchen whelp) and point B (apprenticed with Military Lord). Don't limit those possibilities to being consistent and boring. Let the dice throw you some curves!

**Table 2.5: Chieftom & Tribal Social Class**

d00	Class, Occupation and Skills
Slave (1 language, 0 money)	
01-10	Concubine (Persuasion, Stewardship, Performance)
11-20	Outcast (Athletics, Fieldcraft, Stealth)
21-30	Thrall (Craftsman, Clothier, Farming)
Lower (1 language, 5 money)	
31-35	Laborer (Craftsman, Athletics, Clothier)
36-40	Farmer (Stewardship, Craftsman, Farming)
41-44	Herder (Athletics, Farming, Animal handling)
45-49	Hunter (Fieldcraft, Perception, Stealth)
Middle (1 language, 25 money)	
50-54	Warrior (Military arts, Craftsman, Athletics)
55-59	Metalworker (Craftsman, Commerce, Visual arts)
60-64	Scout (Athletics, Fieldcraft, Stealth)
65-69	Carver (Craftsman, Commerce, Visual arts)
70-74	Builder (Craftsman, Commerce, Science)
75-79	Beast Master (Animal handling, Fieldcraft, Athletics)
Upper (2 languages, 100 money)	
80-82	Minor Noble (Statecraft, Military arts, Persuasion)
83-85	Bard (Performance, Lore, Linguistics)
86-89	Healer (Medicine, Theology, Farming)
90-92	Shaman (Theology, Lore, Arcana)
Royalty (2 languages, 500 money)	
93-95	Thane (Military arts, Statecraft, Animal handling)
96-98	Chief (Military arts, Statecraft, Persuasion)
99-00	King (Military arts, Statecraft, Animal handling)

**Table 2.6: State Level Social Class**

d00	Class, Occupation and Skills
Slave (1 language, 0 money)	
01	Servant (Stewardship, Clothier, Persuasion)
02	Kitchen Whelp (Stewardship, Commerce, Athletics)
03	Laborer (Craftsman, Farming, Athletics)
04	Concubine (Persuasion, Clothier, Performance)
05	Dancer (Performance, Persuasion, Athletics)
06	Gladiator (Athletics, Animal handling, +1 LP)
07	Field Worker (Farming, Fieldcraft, Athletics)
Lower (1 language, 10 money)	
08	Fisherman (Nautical arts, Fieldcraft, Athletics)

**d00 Class, Occupation and Skills**

09	Peasant Farmer (Farming, Craftsman, Clothier)
10	Peddler (Commerce, Persuasion, Perception)
11	Messenger (Animal handling, Linguistics, Athletics)
12	Arcane Renegade (Lore, Science, Arcana)
13	Beggar (Persuasion, Perception, Performance)
14	Pimp (Persuasion, Commerce, Performance)
15	Forester (Fieldcraft, Athletics, Craftsman)
16	Digger (Craftsman, Athletics, +1 LP)
17	Limner (Craftsman, Farming, Visual arts)
18	Tavern Worker (Stewardship, Perception, Commerce)
19	Foot Soldier (Athletics, Craftsman, +1 LP)
20	Miner (Craftsman, Athletics, +1 LP)
21	Porter (Athletics, Commerce, +1 LP)
22	Quarrier (Athletics, Craftsman, Farming)
23	Archer/Arbalist (Athletics, Perception, Animal handling)
24	Hunter/Trapper (Athletics, Fieldcraft, Perception)
25	Teamster (Farming, Animal handling, Commerce)
26	Seamstress (Clothier, Stewardship, Commerce)
27	Groom (Stewardship, Animal handling, Visual arts)
28	Tinker (Craftsman, Visual arts, Commerce)
29	Weaver (Clothier, Visual arts, Commerce)
30	Herder (Athletics, Fieldcraft, Farming)
31	Mercenary (Athletics, Animal handling, +1 LP)
32	Assassin (Stealth, Perception, Persuasion)
33	Falconer (Farming, Fieldcraft, Animal handling)
34	Laundress (Clothier, Stewardship, Commerce)
35	Prostitute (Persuasion, Commerce, Performance)
36	Horsemaster (Animal handling, Farming, Athletics)
37	Houndmaster (Animal handling, Athletics, Fieldcraft)
38	Charlatan (Persuasion, Performance, Perception)
39	Barber (Visual arts, Statecraft, Medicine)
40	Petty Thief (Thieftcraft, Persuasion, Performance)
41	Cavalry (Animal handling, Military arts, Statecraft)
42	Scout/Ranger (Perception, Fieldcraft, Stealth)

**Lower Middle (1 language, 50 money)**

43	Spy (Stealth, Perception, Statecraft)
44	Leather Worker (Farming, Visual arts, Clothier)
45	Siege Engineer (Military arts, Craftsman, Statecraft)
46	Cobbler (Clothier, Stewardship, Commerce)
47	Draper (Clothier, Commerce, Stewardship)
48	Glassblower (Craftsman, Visual arts, Commerce)
49	Gardener (Farming, Visual arts, Fieldcraft)
50	Bowyer/Fletcher (Commerce, Craftsman, Fieldcraft)
51	Scribe (Linguistics, Statecraft, Visual arts)
52	Brewer/Vintner (Farming, Commerce, Stewardship)
53	Butcher (Farming, Stewardship, Commerce)
54	Animal Trainer (Farming, Animal handling, Perception)
55	Minter (Statecraft, Commerce, Craftsman)
56	Mason (Craftsman, Athletics, Science)
57	Playwright/Poet (Lore, Linguistics, Performance)
58	Performer (Athletics, Performance, Persuasion)
59	Artist (Visual arts, Craftsman, Theology)
60	Tailor (Clothier, Visual arts, Commerce)
61	Apothecary (Medicine, Linguistics, Philtrology)
62	Locksmith (Craftsman, Visual arts, Commerce)
63	Carpenter (Craftsman, Commerce, Visual arts)
64	Instrument Maker (Craftsman, Visual arts, Stewardship)
65	Wainwright (Craftsman, Commerce, Animal handling)
66	Interpreter (Linguistics, Lore, Statecraft)
67	Potter (Visual arts, Craftsman, Commerce)
68	Sailor (Athletics, Nautical arts, Perception)
69	Burglar (Commerce, Thieftcraft, Perception)
70	Guard/Constable (Athletics, Statecraft, +1 LP)

**d00 Class, Occupation and Skills**

71	Baker/Cook (Farming, Stewardship, Commerce)
72	Weapons Master (Military arts, Craftsman, +1 LP)
73	Herald/Valet (Statecraft, Linguistics, Performance)
74	Herbalist (Philtrology, Science, Farming)
75	Castellan (Statecraft, Stewardship, Military arts)
76	Gold/Silversmith (Visual arts, Craftsman, Commerce)
77	Shipwright (Craftsman, Nautical arts, Visual arts)
78	Architect (Craftsman, Science, Visual arts)
79	Innkeeper (Commerce, Stewardship, Perception)
80	Armorer (Craftsman, Commerce, Visual arts)

**Upper Middle (2 languages, 100 money)**

81	Magistrate/Burgomaster (Statecraft, Persuasion, Commerce)
82	Military Commander (Military arts, Statecraft, Animal handling)
83	Clergyman (Theology, Persuasion, Linguistics)
84	Ship's Captain (Statecraft, Nautical arts, Military arts)
85	Cartographer (Science, Visual arts, Fieldcraft)
86	Scholar (Science, Linguistics, Lore)
87	Minor Noble (Statecraft, Military arts, Theology)
88	Jeweler (Visual arts, Science, Craftsman)
89	Merchant (Statecraft, Persuasion, Commerce)
90	Arcane Scholar (Arcana, Linguistics, Lore)
91	Royal Advisor (Statecraft, Military arts, Science)
92	Knight (Animal handling, Military arts, Statecraft)

**Upper (2 languages, 500 money)**

93	Noble (Persuasion, Military arts, Statecraft)
94	Military Lord (Statecraft, Military arts, Science)
95	Merchant/Guild Lord (Persuasion, Commerce, Statecraft)
96	Religious Lord (Statecraft, Theology, Linguistics)

**Royalty (3 languages, 1000 money)**

97	Earl/Baron/Count (Military arts, Statecraft, Persuasion)
98	Duke (Military arts, Statecraft, Theology)
99	Prince (Lore, Statecraft, Persuasion)
100	King/Emperor (Persuasion, Statecraft, Military arts)

## Language

As a by-product of his social class, your character begins play with the knowledge of one or more languages. New languages can be learned for each level of the linguistics skill or the language specialty. Check in Chapter 15 of this volume, the *Atlas of Eslin*, or with your GM for relevant languages, and the linguistics skill listing in Chapter 3 for more detailed information.

## Childhood Events

Next, roll d00 on Table 2.7 to discover an event that shaped your character's younger years. Childhood events can have whimsical, material and even traumatic effects. Record on your character log, and apply any immediate effects as directed. Creative GMs can use childhood events as an excellent platform for subplots or even additions to the overall campaign structure.

Table 2.7: Random Childhood Events

d00	Event Description
01	Kidnapped but later returned to parents
02	Least favorite child
03	Learns that he/she was "immaculately" conceived
04	Character has fraternal twin or triplet siblings
05	Favored child
06	Parents make character think he has a special purpose
07	Abducted by mysterious person
08	Parents instill a strong ethos
09	A strong bond with one parent; the other was not involved
10	One parent is alcoholic and/or abusive
11	One parent dies of disease or accident
12	Raised by grandparents whom the character deeply loves
13	Hometown or village destroyed by fire
14	Raised by uncle or aunt
15	Raised in an orphanage and never adopted
16	A gift is bestowed for service (100 coins)
17	Raised in an orphanage and abused mentally or physically
18	Family changes societies
19	Kills abusive father
20	A pirate's or thief's hidden treasure is found (100 coins)
21	Raised in an orphanage, rogues adopted the character
22	Ran away from home
23	Character is a bastard
24	Seduced by rogues or gypsies
25	Parent imprisoned for life
26	Inheritance from distant uncle (100 coins)
27	Relative becomes famous
28	Character has identical twin or triplet siblings
29	Best friend of the character dies of disease or accident
30	Switched with a similar-looking child of opposite social class
31	Separated at birth from a Siamese twin who died
32	Sold to a merchant and travel
33	Family fortune is robbed (lose starting money)
34	Owes debt of honor to someone
35	Both parents die of the plague
36	One parent murders the other parent's lover
37	Almost drowns and sees an apparition
38	Becomes very devout, then discovers mentor is a con artist
39	Parents sell character into slavery
40	Saves the life of a noble and benefits from it in some way
41	Parent blamed for a murder that he/she did not commit
42	Run away with friend to a foreign land (switch tribal and state or change realm)
43	Strong bond with a sibling
44	Incident occurs that causes a phobia
45	Family moves to another nation within the same realm
46	Character becomes aware that birthmark is symbolic
47	Witnesses a pagan ritual
48	Promises debt to mysterious stranger to save parents
49	Finds entrance to Erebus or other dimension
50	Plague sweeps through area, character gets sick (-1 VIT)
51	Befriends a member of a different race
52	Family is wrongly persecuted as religious heretics
53	Witnesses a horrific murder
54	Close encounter with a fantastical beast
55	Has a forgotten and unrecognized relation to royalty
56	Tricks others into thinking that he/she is a prodigy
57	Follow bard to different culture
58	Lifelong dispute with family

d00	Event Description
59	Near-death experience leaves character with positive outlook
60	Befriends a social misfit
61	Becomes a local sports hero
62	Witnesses an organized crime
63	Stolen by traveling minstrels
64	Father joins a posse to hunt down a killer, then is killed
65	Rich relatives takes interest in character
66	Inherits an oath of honor from father
67	Befriend a local scholar - learn one academic skill
68	Pushed into working the family trade against his/her will
69	Runs away to become a sailor and see the world
70	Becomes caught up in an intrigue wholly by accident
71	Family exiled from the province, tribe, barony, etc.
72	Inherits an item of good quality (roll on tables in Chapter 7, The Treasury)
73	Parents die in accident, fostered
74	Saves the life of local noble child and the two become fast friends
75	Becomes indentured to a stranger
76	Family becomes embroiled in a rebellion
77	Inherits great monetary debt of 200 coins from grandparents
78	Works with scholarly grandparent, learn science skill
79	Becomes famous for catching the largest fish in the area
80	Has a "religious" experience, with a different religion
81	A friend dies whose family blames the character
82	Parents executed for political views
83	Inherits an item of high quality (roll on tables in Chapter 7, The Treasury)
84	Invasion of the area, family slain
85	Barely survives strange sickness
86	Promised to someone for marriage
87	Family strikes it rich finding gold
87	Family is ruined (lose money)
89	Attacked by a wild animal, leaving scars and phobia
90	Fostered to a lower class family
91	Mysterious stranger leaves secret information with character
92	Witnesses a political crime of great magnitude
93	Witnesses a fantastic astral event
94	Suffers from a social stigma
95	Close friend is persecuted as a religious rebel
96	Finds or inherits an item of imbued power
97	Suffers amnesia and is lost for a year
98	Raised for some time by animals (-1 RSN)
99	Family enslaved by invaders
100	Has strange and vivid dreams concerning the future

### Adolescent Events

Adolescence can embolden or scar a teenager. Roll d00 on this table to see how your character fares. Connect the dots with what you know of your character's apprenticeship and family professions. As with the childhood events table, consult with the GM to flesh out the results of your roll and to allow for wrinkles to your character's history and possibly that of the campaign as a whole. Record on the character log and apply any changes.

**Table 2.8: Random Adolescence Events**

d00	Event Description	d00	Event Description
01	Unexpected inheritance of 50 coins	56	Receives a medal of honor from guild
02	Sibling becomes a drug addict	57	Parents forbid the relationship the character is pursuing
03	Has an affair with minor lord or lady	58	Joins a pilgrimage
04	Betrayed by best friend	59	Spouse mysteriously disappears
05	Bit by poisonous beast (1/2 damage from poisons)	60	Meets a famous person and become friends
06	Involved in a supernatural event, (learns arcane arts skill)	61	Finds the ruins of an ancient lost city
07	Gains armor of quality (+1 PL, random piece)	62	Required by law to foster a child
08	Gains weapon of quality (+1 DMG, random weapon)	63	Spouse gets eaten by a wild beast
09	Gains item of good quality	64	Travels for guild business (learn a new language)
10	Parent bestows an heirloom (worth 50 coins)	65	Child and spouse die by disease or fire
11	Falls deeply in love	66	Noble steals spouse and children
12	Falls in love with two people	67	Falls in love and is happily married
13	Parents disown character until character can prove his/her worth	68	Natural disaster strikes the region
14	Involved in a coup d'état	69	Mistakenly enslaved (lose all money and items)
15	Slays a beast and becomes local hero	70	Finds or inherits a mysterious book, scroll, or rune tablet
16	Follows renowned adventurer (learns perception skill)	71	Becomes privy to secret guild knowledge
17	Joins ship's crew to see the world (learns nautical arts skill)	72	A foreign army conquers the character's homeland
18	Fall deeply in love, and motivated to impress his/her parents	73	Tries acting in a local theatre (learns performance skill)
19	Caught committing a crime, spends time in a dungeon	74	Catches a plague and barely survives, scarred
20	Drafted into the army (learns military arts skill)	75	Joins a political group at a local eatery
21	Falls deeply in love and has heart broken	76	Falls in love with twin sisters/brothers
22	Important personage mentors character	77	Obese as a child, but loses excess weight upon adulthood
23	Goes through a period of substance abuse	78	Guild accuses character of treachery
24	Earns money and saves 100 coins	79	Family member killed in horrific accident
25	Teacher/mentor goes insane	80	Falls in love with a prostitute
26	Teacher/mentor is assassinated	81	Delivers a baby, child named after character
27	Learns a secret about his organization or teacher	82	Falls from cliff but survives, suffers acrophobia
28	A poor mother leaves her baby with the character	83	Best friend disappears
29	Teacher/master dies due to old age, accident, disease	84	Has spiritual experience resulting in a religious geas
30	Gets someone pregnant or becomes pregnant	85	Lover has an affair
31	Organization becomes embroiled in a rebellion	86	Experiences a close encounter with an arcane power
32	Joins best friend on travels and adventure	87	A wanderer tells a fascinating tale of a distant land
33	Falls in love with a social outcast	88	Lost at sea and stranded on an island (learns fieldcraft skill)
34	Involved in a duel, barely survives but kills enemy	89	Develops strong taste for imported ethnic food or drink
35	Makes an enemy from rival organization	90	Invents a new type of technology for organization or master
36	Gets hit in one eye with a stick and goes blind (-1 on all actions that require field of view or sense of depth)	91	Finds a gem in a forest (worth 25 coins)
37	Spurned lover now seeks revenge	92	Becomes a cult's object of obsession for some reason
38	Lingering sickness leaves character coughing often (-1 VIT)	93	Survives a calamitous storm in which many perish
39	Visited by ghosts	94	Finds a map of a distant land and lost treasure hoard
40	Had to resort to cannibalism to survive	95	Best friend is executed for political crimes
41	Receives medals for bravery and heroic actions	96	Robbed (loses all money)
42	Family disappears without a trace	97	Lover is slain
43	Almost dies in a fire	98	Develops a non-lethal disease (see diseases in Chapter 5, Rules of Play)
44	A major fire destroys the character's place of training	99	Meets a long-lost relative who relates a family secret
45	Arrested for a crime he/she did not commit	100	Wrongfully imprisoned, languishes in captivity for a year
46	Civil war in the region		
47	Struck by lightning, hair turns white		
48	Best friend becomes wealthy and turns against character		
49	Someone falls hopelessly in love with the character		
50	Becomes a good friend to royalty		
51	Loses finger or hand in an accident		
52	Character's organization is destroyed for political reasons		
53	Sibling kidnapped and taken to another country or realm		
54	Saves a prominent person from assassination		
55	Finds a cure for a disease or plague by accident		

## Ethos

During your character's youth, distinguishing attitudes, habits, and beliefs are developed. While determining the events of your character's childhood, you have already built the foundation of his ethos. Now that you know your character's profession, it is time to add to and polish this structure. Consider your own tastes and propensities and think about what beliefs, tenets, codes (or lack thereof!) your character's training might have instilled. Remember to read the description of your character's culture and race for ideas. These driving forces are of paramount importance for determining how your character acts in various situations.

Ethos encourages action. Think of it not as a stricture or manacle on play, but as a spur or fuel to character behavior.

The following table contains food for thought. Remember that between each element exists a vast realm of middle ground; personae almost never reach the ultimate extreme of any given category. If these adjectives don't fit your conception of the character, by all means, pick something else!

Table 2.9: Components of Ethos

d00	Disposition	Morals	Motivations
01-02	Agreeable	Affectionate	Accomplishment
03-04	Aloof	Agnostic	Adventure
05-06	Ambitious	Altruistic	Amusement
07-08	Annoying	Appreciative	Bravery
09-10	Argumentative	Belligerent	Celebrity
11-12	Aristocratic	Callous	Challenge
13-14	Arrogant	Compassionate	Compulsion
15-16	Articulate	Conscientious	Deliverance
17-18	Assertive	Considerate	Devotion
19-20	Audacious	Cooperative	Dignity
21-22	Boisterous	Cruel	Discover purpose
23-24	Bored	Deceitful	Distinction
25-26	Bossy	Decent	Duty
27-28	Calm	Detached	Education
29-30	Conceited	Disciplined	Excitement
31-32	Condescending	Dishonest	Faith
33-34	Controlling	Egotistic	Fame
35-36	Cowardly	Embittered	Fate
37-38	Cynical	Flirtatious	Find love
39-40	Defiant	Forgiving	Forget past
41-42	Disorganized	Friendly	Freedom
43-44	Distant	Gentle	Friendship
45-46	Driven	Honest	Glory
47-48	Eccentric	Humble	Greed
49-50	Egocentric	Hypocritical	Hatred
51-52	Extroverted	Insensitive	Honor
53-54	Finicky	Intolerant	Insight
55-56	Flamboyant	Jealous	Liberation
57-58	Focused	Judgmental	Loyalty
59-60	Frugal	Kind	Lust
61-62	Gloomy	Manipulative	Obligation
63-64	Gregarious	Merciful	Passion
65-66	Grumpy	Modest	Patriotism
67-68	Indecisive	Passive	Peace
69-70	Insecure	Perverted	Popularity
71-72	Introverted	Philanthropic	Power
73-74	Liberated	Pious	Prestige

d00	Disposition	Morals	Motivations
75-76	Melodramatic	Polite	Pride
77-78	Meticulous	Rational	Profit
79-80	Miserly	Righteous	Rebirth
81-82	Nostalgic	Ruthless	Recognition
83-84	Philosophical	Selfish	Reconciliation
85-86	Practical	Sensitive	Redemption
87-88	Private	Sensual	Revenge
89-90	Reactive	Shallow	Romance
91-92	Sassy	Sincere	Servitude
93-94	Talkative	Sympathetic	Sow oats
95-96	Verbose	Tolerant	Spiritual journey
97-98	Withdrawn	Uninhibited	Spite
99-00	Zealous	Virtuous	Vision

## Step III: Choosing a Path

- What are my character's occupation and associated skills?
- What possessions and equipment does my character own?
- What do I do with all of these numbers? What do the numbers mean?
- What pushes my character on to great deeds? What is his Drive?

## Occupation

Choosing your character's occupation is a pivotal moment of the creation process. Your choice describes what the focus of your character's life has been up to the point that the story actually begins. This includes skills learned and life outlook developed through training and comradeship with certain types of people. Each country in your campaign setting (such as Rullaea) has its own occupations - called professions or occupations - from which to choose (chiefdoms also have tribal

## Character Creation Checklist

### Step III: Choosing a Path

1. In conjunction with your GM, choose a profession or organization from Chapter 15 in this volume or from material prepared by your GM. Record any starting skills on side one of your character log, adding +1 to skills you already possess from your background. Record the cadre's name, your mentor, and any duties, oaths, symbols...
2. Choose any one skill as a bonus skill that your character may have picked up during their lifetime (arcane skills are restricted unless permission is granted by your GM). This bonus skill can also be used to raise the level of any skill already known.
3. Determine your character's Drive, given your play preferences, as well as the character's culture, background, and ethos.
4. Your character is an adult and has chosen their initial path in life. Move on to Step IV, Finishing Up, on page 19.

## Custom Occupations/Mentors

Sometimes players want to create their own occupation, profession, or guild. Maybe this is a wandering hermit master, the character's big brother, a new secret society of spies, or a new religious order. The simplicity of Epic's skill system easily accommodates these desires. The following guidelines can be followed by players that can't find an organization. Just remember, the occupation chosen during character creation represents the character's initial adulthood training - there is no compulsion that the character belong to this organization during the campaign (in fact leaving a profession, lone master, or guild may help immediately build plot threads for the GM).

1. Come up with a general idea of the organization's or mentor's purpose and what role do they play in society (how do they fit into the campaign world).

2. Decide if the organization or mentor has any tenets, rules, dues, or vows that characters must follow.

4. Choose four basic skills that all initiates of the organization learn during their apprenticeship. Here are some ideas:

- Unorthodox Priest: statecraft, persuasion, theology, lore
- Andus the Short, Bandit at Large: Stealth, perception, thieftcraft, maneuvering
- Elmoos, Lone Ranger: stealth, melee arms, maneuvering, fieldcraft.
- Street Urchin: perception, commerce, thieftcraft, performance (no secret masteries)
- Minion of Lossless Ping: arcana, mentalism, theurgy, lore
- Tutelage of a Father Knight: animal handling, melee arms, maneuvering, and military arts or statecraft.

5. For the fifth skill, we encourage you to choose something that isn't all that tactically useful. Oftentimes, such a skill can round out of the feel and individuality of an organization or mentor. Tie this skill to the secret mastery for the organization (note that character's informally trained, such as characters "raised on the street", will not have access to secret masteries).

6. Create masteries and grandmasteries a character can learn when and if the character is inducted into the inner secrets of the organization, also identifying specialties that lead to these secrets. See Chapter 15 of the Game Manual for examples of secret masteries). Some trial or test should be completed to the liking of the senior members of the organization before the character is trusted to wield such power.

societies which function effectively as occupations). There are orders of knights, councils of arcane scholars, powerful merchant guilds, mysterious priesthoods, elite armies, roving mercenary bands, wandering performers, schools of espionage, and associations of thieves, among many others. For more detailed descriptions, refer to Chapter 15 in this volume, the *Atlas of Eslin*, or material prepared by your GM if you are using a different campaign setting.

Each occupation teaches its own set of skills, specialties, and secret masteries. A character apprenticed to a particular profession begins play at level 1 in each of those skills, or a +1 to level if the skill is already known. When choosing an occupation, check the skills carefully. Your character's vital attributes make her naturally talented in some skills, and naturally untalented in others. This may affect your choice of profession. Now is the time to wheedle the GM into allowing you to switch a couple of VAs if you haven't already.

Your character's occupation is indeed an important moment in the character creation process. It is not, however, the end of that process. As mentioned above, choosing your profession describes what your character's main focus has been *up to this point*. This point meaning the *beginning* of the game. Epic is not a class-based role playing system. You are not locked into playing a fighter for the rest of your character's life. You can certainly progress upward through the ranks of your organization, garnering status, secret masteries and all the benefits of membership. If, however, your character wants to join a different profession or even has a moral epiphany and wants to lay down his glaive to pursue herb lore, more power to you! Just start allocating progression rolls to medicine and philology instead of melee arms and maneuvering. Your character doesn't lose any of the skills he spent so much time developing, and the only consequences of the decision will be roleplaying ones from your former mercenary army mates who might not appreciate your character forsaking their brotherhood of steel to play with pretty flowers.

## Bonus Skill

Choose any one skill as a bonus skill that your character may have picked up during their lifetime (arcane skills are restricted unless permission is granted by your GM). This bonus skill can also be used to raise the level of any skill already known.

## Drive

This mechanic is a simple way to reward characters for long-term, goal-oriented play and to encourage such play without getting bogged down in extra mechanics. Drive is the synthesis of all of the other information created up to this point. It is your declaration to the world of what the character wants.



Heroes and would-be heroes have large emotional appetites, even as they begin their careers. They have goals. They want. Using the Drive mechanic allows players and GMs to create a lens and tools that will lead both toward specific situations that feed those appetites, and author change in the lives of the characters. The idea is simple. Look at the events, realities and surprises of the character's life up to this point. Create an ambition for your character, and then look for situations that might, we repeat, might help them toward their goals. This process involves both the player and the GM.

Examples might include:

- I will be known throughout the village as an honorable man.
- I want to depose the king.
- I want to find the perfect love.

I want to be promoted to the post of my guildmaster's lieutenant.

I want to die with no regrets.

I want to avoid the spotlight at all costs.

I want to start a caravan route between these two cities.

I want my mentor to recognize my enlightenment.

I want to kill the man who murdered my mother.

Look for concrete goals - things that there will be no question whether you have achieved or not. During the course of game play, the GM or the player can notice a situation that might further the drive. If the player attempts to exploit the opportunity, an open progression roll (discussed in Chapter 5, Rules of Play) on the spot is the reward. Success or failure is immaterial. The important thing is that the character is working consciously toward goals that define them. Of course, Drive can change over time. If there's some earth-shattering

## Character Creation Checklist

### Step IV: Finishing Up

1. Consult Chapter 4, Goods and Services in this book for a list of goods available for purchase. Unless stated otherwise, your character is given 50 units of money (usually silver coins) by his or her profession, mentor, guild, or organization. Record all equipment in the appropriate places on the log. For weapons, also record grip, range and damage. For armor, also record impediment and weight.
2. **Life Points (LP):** used to determine how much physical damage a character can sustain before succumbing to unconsciousness and death.  $LP = (20 + VIT + BLD) / 5$ . Calculate and record under LP on side one of the character log.
3. **Protection Level (PL):** Shows the degree that armor protects the character from physical attacks. PL is subtracted from the damage of each blow your character sustains.  $PL = \text{sum of the PL's of all armor pieces}$ . Calculate and record under PL on side one of the log. PL cannot go below zero.
4. **Weight Limit (WL):** is equal to  $10 + BLD + MGT$  (minimum of 1). It is the limit of weight that the character can carry before he has an impediment penalty. Calculate and record under WL on side one of the log.
5. **Impediment:** the penalty your character receives to her movement each turn. It is the *number of times that the WL has been exceeded*. For example, someone carrying a load of 32 lbs with a WL of 10, suffers a 3 impediment. Impediment affects everything where movement is involved, from evasion to footwork.
6. **Order:** This modifies order rolls in general (order modifiers specific to each weapon are calculated in a bit). Calculate ORD by taking the *maneuvering(reaction speed) skill - impediment*.
7. **Movement:** the number of yards your character can move in a turn of combat without sacrificing any actions.  $Move = maneuvering(footwork) - impediment$ . Record on side one of the log.
8. **Evasion:** the ability to dodge a blow in combat.  $Evasion = maneuvering(evasion) - impediment$ . Record on side one of the log.
9. **Weapon Modifiers:** The following modifiers affect how fast and deadly your character is with a particular weapon. For each weapon calculate the following:
  - Order (ORD):** This modifies order rolls and is unique for each weapon. Calculate ORD by taking *maneuvering(reaction speed) - impediment - the weapon's weight*. Record separately for each weapon.
  - Attack (ATT):** This modifies attack rolls and is unique for each weapon. Calculate ATT by taking the *melee or ranged arms skill level plus appropriate specialties*. Record on side one of the log.
  - Damage (DMG):** This modifier is based on MGT, and the weapon's impact. DMG is added to the attack total (roll plus skill) to determine damage from the attack. Record separately for each weapon on side one of the log.
10. **Quintessence Points (QP):** measures the character's ability to use arcane variants.  $QP = ESS + Arcana(variance)$ . Calculate and record under QP on the variant quick reference sheet.
11. **Arcane Variants:** Characters with variant-based arcane skills (alchemy, mentalism, metaphysics, philtrology, shen and theurgy) get 1 variant (level 1) under each specialty.
12. You have finished the creation process. Forward!

(or subtle) event that makes you realize the character's larger goals have changed, simply inform the GM and move on from there.

## Step IV: Finishing Up

Now you determine your character's starting money and equipment. Social class and profession are the determiners. Your social class for your apprenticeship is the arbiter of your starting money. Your parents might have been living high on the hog when you were a kid, but that doesn't mean they can give you any money as you set out into the world now. Consult your character's profession description in the Atlas of Eslin or by using the professions and occupations of Rullaea from Chapter 15 of this volume or wherever your GM dictates. Unless stated otherwise, your character is given 50 units of money (usually silver coins) by his or her profession, mentor, guild, or organization.

After determining starting money and equipment, you may consult Chapter 4 and use your character's funds to purchase additional gear, but check with the GM because certain items may not be available in your character's realm. All characters begin with clothing appropriate to their social class at no additional cost.

## Age and Vital Information

Based on race, language and most importantly, your imagination, choose a name for your character. Make sure it is a good one! If you're stumped, the Atlas contains many suggestions for names listed by race. Choosing a strange or silly name is your prerogative, but beware the possible consequences (teasing by fellow players, or harassment by creatures with whom the character interacts in the story).

At this stage the character is ready for adventure and is 16-35 years old or the equivalent age if the character is not human. You may assign any serviceable age to your character (check with the GM). Having an older or younger character can add excellent flavor to the story.

Your character is complete. Let allies rejoice and enemies beware!

## Creating Older Characters

There are many reasons that you may want to create a more advanced character. Maybe your gaming group wants to play a "high level" campaign or maybe your group is already playing in such a campaign and your character has just died. Or maybe you want to make an old coot who is just a bit more salty than the young'ns. Whatever the reason, playing an older or more advanced character can be a fun change of pace. However, proceed with caution, because you also tend to lose those early vital years that shape and challenge a character;

that character development is arguably the most interesting and fun aspect of role playing, just as it is in books or movies. Remember, too, that age is a two-way street! As experience hones the skills of a character, time wears away at the body. When your character reaches his full age, remember that all body VAs are reduced by one level for every 5 years past the age of forty.

## Adult Events

Shaping events do not end with adolescence. The mists of childhood may echo faintly to an adult, but a pivotal moment of the year past could have an infinitely larger impact. As directed in the following adult steps, roll d00 on this table to see how your character fares. As with the childhood and adolescent events tables, consult with the GM to flesh out the results of your roll and to allow for wrinkles to your character's history and possibly that of the campaign as a whole. Record on the character log and apply any changes.

Table 2.10: Random Adulthood Events

d00	Event Description
01	Tax collectors believe character owes 100 coins
02	Sibling dies from a drug addiction
03	Has an affair with minor lord or lady
04	Betrayed by best friend for professional reasons
05	Mother wants to move in with character
06	Becomes obsessed with lawn or garden
07	Gains armor of quality (+1 PL, random piece)
08	Gains weapon of quality (+1 DMG, random weapon)
09	Gains item of good quality
10	Parent bestows an heirloom (worth 50 coins)
11	Falls deeply in love with a foreigner
12	Falls in love with two people (both are married)
13	Character's professional organization goes bust
14	Involved in a coup d'état
15	Discovers previously unknown talent (learn a new skill)
16	Gets an ulcer
17	Wins deed to a ship in a card game
18	Spouse leaves character for competitor
19	Caught committing a crime, spends time in a dungeon
20	Has a child
21	Character's true love marries someone else
22	Asked to be a mentor or teacher
23	Goes through a period of substance abuse
24	Earns money and saves 300 coins
25	Asked to join a professional organization
26	Former Teacher/mentor is assassinated
27	Learns a secret about his organization or teacher
28	A poor mother leaves her baby with the character
29	Character's professional organization becomes corrupt
30	Gets someone pregnant or becomes pregnant
31	Organization becomes embroiled in a rebellion
32	Promoted in professional organization
33	Falls in love with a social outcast
34	Involved in a duel, barely survives but kills enemy
35	Makes an enemy from rival organization
36	Rival organization hires character
37	Spurned lover now seeks revenge
38	Lingering sickness leaves character coughing often (-1 VIT)

d00	Event Description
39	Character develops back problems (-1 move)
40	Child marries into rival organization
41	Receives medals for bravery and heroic actions
42	Family disappears without a trace
43	Primary emotional relationship is with pet
44	A major fire destroys the character's residence
45	Arrested for a crime he/she did not commit
46	Character develops unusual body hair
47	Parents die of age-related disease
48	Best friend becomes wealthy and turns against character
49	Underage person falls in love with the character
50	Becomes a good friend to royalty
51	Loses hand or arm in an accident
52	Characters' organization is destroyed for Political reasons
53	Child kidnapped and taken to another country or realm
54	Saves a prominent person from assassination
55	Finds a cure for a disease or plague by accident
56	Receives a medal of honor from organization
57	Evicted - residence purchased by city or merchant
58	Spouse becomes a political powerhouse
59	Spouse mysteriously disappears
60	Meets a famous person and become friends
61	Needs medication for chronic health problem (1 dose of a healing herb per week)
62	Required by law to foster a child
63	Spouse gets eaten by a wild beast
64	Travels for business (learn a new language)
65	Child and spouse die by disease or fire
66	Noble steals spouse and children
67	Marriage is strong and healthy with many children
68	Professional organization puts character behind a desk
69	Mistakenly enslaved (lose all money and items)
70	Develops bad knees (-1 move)
71	Becomes privy to secret guild knowledge
72	Becomes major play in organization (200 coins/month)
73	Real estate investment brings fortune (1000 coins)
74	Catches a plague and barely survives, scarred
75	Joins a political group at a local eatery
76	Falls in love with twin sisters/brothers
77	Becomes fat and lazy - bored with life
78	Organization accuses character of treachery
79	Child member killed in horrific accident
80	Starts successful business (75 coins/month)
81	Delivers a baby, child named after character
82	Life lessons improves a random mental VA by 1
83	Tough living has its rewards (+1 LP)
84	Has spiritual experience resulting in a religious geas
85	Lover has an affair
86	Gains access to secret mastery outside of organization
87	Becomes political advisor (200 coins/month)
88	Lost at sea and stranded on an island (learns fieldcraft skill)
89	Child becomes famous and gives character 200 coins
90	Invents a new type of technology for organization or master
91	Makes friends with villain or evil genius
92	Develops near sightedness
93	Survives a calamitous storm in which many perish
94	Child is object of prophecy
95	Best friend is executed for political crimes
96	Robbed (loses all money)
97	Lover is slain

d00	Event Description
98	Develops a non-lethal disease (see diseases in Chapter 5, Rules of Play)
99	Meets a long-lost relative who relates a family secret
100	Wrongfully imprisoned, languishes in captivity for a year

## Step V: Journeyman

Caution! Do not proceed unless directed by the GM. The following stages represent a compression of time comprising the character's prime adventuring years.

### Advancement†

The character acquires 5 progression rolls to be allocated to skills and specialties. The player must make the rolls in turn, each for a declared skill. This ensures that skill progression improves properly using the character's Talent for that skill. Two new non-arcane skills may be learned. To obtain a new skill at level 1, a progression roll must best the easy difficulty (5) using the appropriate Talent from the VAs.

### Drive & Ethos Evolution

The character's ethos evolves and matures through their life. Consider how advancing through early adulthood alters the character's ethos. Did the apprenticeship event have something to do with the change? Did the character have huge dreams that failed to come to fruition? How might that alter ethos?

### Age

The character ages 1d5 years.

## Step VI: Expert

### Advancement†

The character acquires 5 progression rolls to be allocated to skills and specialties. The player must make the rolls in turn, each for a declared skill. This ensures that skill progression improves properly using the character's Talent for that skill. One new non-arcane skill may be learned. To obtain a new skill at level 1, a progression roll must best the easy difficulty (5) using the appropriate Talent from the VAs.

### Random Event†

Roll on the random adult event Table (2.10).

### Wealth

The character gains 1d100 standards of the respective culture and may roll once on the treasure table.

**Age**

The character ages  $1d5 + 2$  years. All body VAs are reduced by one level for every 5 years past the age of forty.

**Drive & Ethos Evolution**

The character's ethos evolves as she becomes an entrenched adult member of society. Such shifts in ethos are molded primarily through her profession, which now dominates the character's sense of self. Is the character burdened by responsibilities? Does society look to her for guidance, or is she persecuted? Does her chosen life allow for romance, children, close friends?

**Step VII: Master****Advancement†**

The character acquires 5 progression rolls to be allocated to skills and specialties. The player must make the rolls in turn, each for a declared skill. This ensures that skill progression improves properly using the character's Talent for that skill. Two new non-arcane skills may be learned. To obtain a new skill at level 1, a progression roll must best the easy difficulty (5) using the appropriate Talent from the VAs.

**Random Event†**

Roll on the random adult event Table (2.10).

**Wealth**

The character gains  $2d100$  standards of the respective culture and may roll once on the treasure table.

**Item of Quality**

The character receives an item of quality respective to their occupation. Examples would include weapons, armor, holy symbols, alchemical manuals, etc.

**Age**

The character ages  $1d5 + 5$  years. All body VAs are reduced by one level for every 5 years past the age of forty.

**Drive & Ethos Evolution**

The character's ethos evolves as he becomes an established authority figure in some aspect of society. Again, such shifts in ethos are molded primarily through his advancement through a profession, which may so dominate the character now that he confuses his titles for his identity. How do years of training and development weigh on the character? Is he cynical? Does he wish he had married his first love or pursued a different life? Does the character now head the family and take care of aging parents? Do these duties pull the character in different directions?

**Step VIII: Grandmaster****Advancement†**

The character acquires 5 progression rolls to be allocated to skills and specialties. The player must make the rolls in turn, each for a declared skill. This ensures that skill progression improves properly using the character's Talent for that skill.

**Random Event†**

Roll on the random adult event Table (2.10).

**Wealth**

The character gains  $3d100$  standards of the respective culture and may roll once on the treasure table.

**Age**

The character ages  $1d5 + 10$  years.

**Drive & Ethos Evolution**

The character's ethos evolves and matures as the character views life from the vantage point of middle age. The character has grown and established herself, survived the turmoil and trials of adulthood and now contemplates what her life means and what legacy she will leave. Philosophically unprepared characters may experience an emotional dilemma or mid-life crisis. Others may leave society having fulfilled what they see as their responsibilities, while still others contribute more than ever, offering wisdom and guidance to the next generation.