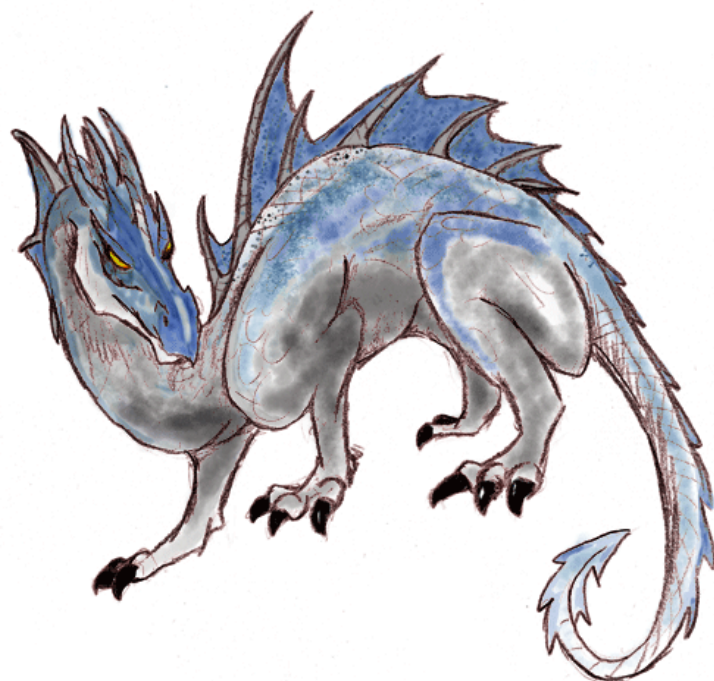


SPELLWOVEN

a roleplaying game



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Design Notes

These are just some placeholder notes for a work in progress. The basic aim here is to put together a rules medium fantasy framework that I'm reasonably happy with. I want to bring in a skill-ladder system that I toyed around with years ago and never put up online, as well as a few other little subsystems I think work well, or at least in a way that is interesting. Finally, the idea is to create a very basic framework that I can then elaborate on ad nauseam. If I have an interesting idea for a magic system, I'll be able to drop it into this game without too much trouble. The whole system will end up being quite 'modular' in that regard I think. If playing the game, you'd need to do some picking and choosing at the outset. Decide what is in and what is out.

CHARACTER CREATION

Guide to Character Creation

What follows is a step-by-step guide to creating a new character for play in *Spellwoven*.

Name, Gender, Age

Give your Character a name, age, gender and any other sundry details. You can do this now or return to it at a later point.

Homeland

Pick a landscape where you grew up and know well from one of the following:

- **Coastal** covers small fishing villages, coastal sea-trading towns or remote islands.
- **City** includes sprawling capitals, fortified citadels or vast carven strongholds. Any sprawling place of massed people is a city.
- **Rivers** includes river-lands, deltas, swamps and fens.
- **Rustic** includes green rolling hills, countryside, open woodlands, farmland and small farming communities.
- **Secludes** includes royal courts, hidden havens, cloistered magical orders, castles, or temples.
- **Wilderness** includes remote dark forests, tall mountains, snowy lands and tangled swamps.

Quick Reference

One. Fill in Name, Gender, Age, Appearance.

Two. Pick a Homeland from Coasts, City, Rivers, Rustic, Secludes and Wilderness.

Three. Allocate preferences to your Attribute groups: Primary, secondary, then tertiary.

All Attributes start at Rudimentary.

- **Primary:** 4 level increases split any way
- **Secondary:** 3 level increases split any way
- **Tertiary:** 2 level increases split any way

Skill & Difficulty Ladder

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. None | 7. Adept |
| 2. Childish | 8. Masterful |
| 3. Rudimentary | 9. Veteran |
| 4. Low | 10. Fabled |
| 5. Moderate | 11. Legendary |
| 6. High | 12. Mythic |

Five. Fill in zero Experience.

Six. Fill in 6 Effort.

Seven. Pick one Social Skill at Rank +1, and three General Skills are Rank +1 each.

Eight. Pick one Social Skill and one Fighting Skill that represent personal Weaknesses.

Nine. Pick items to hand from the list:

- Start with five Sundry items
- Three Common items
- One Expensive item

Ten. Known Persons. Either invent up to three people and split 3 **Influence** on them any way, or, write 3 into **Influence to spend**.

Eleven. Mental Toughness is based on Willpower. Physical Toughness is based on Stamina.

Rudimentary = 2, Low = 3, Moderate = 4 etc

Social Attributes

Characters have five Attributes that are used for social interplay: **Allay** (talking down someone who is angry, agitated or panicked), **Assess** (assessing the mood of a person, room or situation), **Interrogate** (questioning, getting information from someone), **Orate** (public speaking and leadership), and **Persuade** (arguing, haggling, changing someone's mind through rhetoric).

Intellectual Attributes

There are five Intellect linked Attributes that are used for problem solving, mental discipline and recall. These are: **Acumen** (rote learning, recall, deduction, slow problem solving), **Resolve** (courage, resistance to fear, despair, and mental or psychic attacks), **Subtlety** (creativity, insight, flashes of inspiration, sense of humour), **Willpower** (force of mind, ability to wield magic), and **Wits** (reaction time, reflexes, awareness and perception).

Physical Attributes

Finally, the physical Attributes are: **Finesse** (co-ordination, careful handwork), **Might** (raw strength), **Quickness** (full body agility, balance and speed), **Stamina** (endurance), and **Stealth** (moving quietly, hiding, leaving no footsteps, shadowing someone, or losing a tail).

Allocate preferences to your Attribute groups. Primary, secondary, then tertiary.

All Attributes start at Rudimentary

Primary: 4 level increases split any way
Secondary: 3 level increases split any way
Tertiary: 2 level increases split any way

Skill & Difficulty Ladder

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. None | 7. Adept |
| 2. Childish | 8. Masterful |
| 3. Rudimentary | 9. Veteran |
| 4. Low | 10. Fabled |
| 5. Moderate | 11. Legendary |
| 6. High | 12. Mythic |

Anima

Magical power used for spellworking. New Characters have three Anima.

Start with 3 Anima

Effort

Effort is used as a resource to improve your chances of success in Tests or Contests of Skill.

Start with 6 Effort

Skills

Skills represent specific areas of training and learning. They are more narrowly defined than Attributes. A list of Skills and definitions is provided in the appendix to the Character Creation chapter. Characters start with three general Skills at +1 each and one Social Skill at +1.

Three General Skills & one Social Skill:
+1 each

Pick from the list appended to this chapter

Weakness

Pick one Social Skill and one Fighting skill as weaknesses. You cannot learn these Skills and will be at a disadvantage if someone uses them against you.

Items to Hand

Equipment is chosen by picking from the item lists (overpage). The same item can be picked multiple times, if you wish to.

Start with five Sundry items
Three Common items
One Expensive item

Known Persons

You can invent people and spread three influence among them, or add 3 to your **Influence to spend**.

Divide 3 influence among people you know
or add 3 to *Influence to spend*

Toughness

Toughness has two components, a Wound Threshold (WT) and a Defeat Threshold (DT). Your mental **Toughness** (for **Resolve**) is based on **Willpower**. Your bodily **Toughness** (for **Health**) is based on **Stamina**. Your **Wound Threshold** is 2 for a trait of Rudimentary, 3 for Low, 4 for Moderate etc. Your Defeat threshold is WT + 15.

WT: Rudimentary = 2, Low = 3, Moderate = 4,
High = 5, Adept = 6, Masterful = 7 etc
DT: WT + 15

Items to Hand

Sundry (pick 5)

Backpack, Bedroll, Blanket (wool), Boneworking tools, Candles (tallow, x6, 30mins each), Boots (hobnail), Cask of beer (small), Cask of wine (small), Coinpurse (10 copper groats), Cooking pot (tin), Cudgel, Dagger, Fishing hand-net, Fishing rod & hooks, Flint & Steel, Handaxe, Handstaff, Leatherworking tools, Longknife, Rope (10m), Quilt Cloth Armour (tunic), Rough clothing (hemp, flimsy), Sap, Sling, Spears (throwing, x3), Stoneworking tools, Torches (x6, 30min each), Trail ration (for one week), Utensils (leather cup, wooden spoons, eating knife etc), Wooden stakes, Woodworking tools.

Common (pick 3)

Book (blank, leatherbound), Boots (soft leather, good quality), Candles (beeswax, x6, 1hr each), Cauldron (small, copper), Clay lamp & oil, Coinpurse (10 silver pennies), Cloak (fair quality, plain or hooded), Healer's kit (bandages, basic salves etc), Herbalists tools (brewing pots, small herb press, shears etc), Hunting bow (includes quiver & 20 arrows), Ink & quills (sepia, oxblood), Iron stakes, Ivory comb, Mace (one-handed), Mattock-of-War, Pipe & pipeweed (satchel, one week worth), Quarterstaff, Shield (small), Soft Leather Armour (tunic), Spear (melee), Sword, Thief's tools (lockpicks, grease etc), Travelling clothing (Wool, linen, sturdy),

Expensive (pick 1)

Battle-axe, Bottle of perfume, Book (blank, metalbound), Boots (felted leather, excellent quality), Box of spices, Brass storm-lamp & oil, Cloak (fur-trimmed, excellent quality, plain or hooded), Coinpurse (30 silver pennies), Crossbow (includes quiver & 20 arrows), Fine tea set, Fur blanket, Ink & quills (rare colours: lapis, ivory black, vermillion, purple etc), Longbow (includes quiver & 20 arrows), Longsword (two-handed), Mace (two-handed),

Armour & Weapons

Weapons

Weapons fall into three categories, light, medium and heavy. All Sundry weapons are **Light** (1d10 menace). All Common weapons are **Medium** (2d10 menace). All Expensive weapons are **Heavy** (3d10 menace).

Armour

The armour you can start with is Quilt Cloth, Soft Leather or Scale armour tunics. Armour adds to modified **Toughness**.

Quilt Cloth	+1	Tunic (vest)	+0
Soft Leather	+2	Sark (shirt)	+1
Hard Leather	+3	Hauberk (coat)	+2
Scale Armour	+4	Full suit	+3
Leather & Chain	+5		
Chainmail	+6		
Chain & Plate	+7		
Plate armour	+8		

When injured you roll a number of d10 equal to cover aiming to equal or beat the soak. Every dice roll that equals or exceeds the soak negates one wound level of injury.

Shields

Shields are classed as light (1d10), medium (2d10) or heavy (3d10), and when used grant the possibility of negating one or more wounds from an attack.

Background Points

Characters have three background points to spend. The below list outlines costs for various bonuses. Bonuses can be purchased multiple times where applicable. See the appended Skills List and Traits list for details regarding Skills and Traits.

- 3pts. Gain a Trait
- 3pts. Increase Mental or Physical Toughness by 1
- 3pts. Increase an Attribute one level
- 2 pts. Add +1 to a Skill you already have
- 1 pt. Gain a new Skill of +1

- 3 pts. One bonus Expensive item
- 2 pts. One bonus Common item
- 1 pt. One bonus Sundry item

- 3 pts. Gain 5 Anma
- 2 pts. Gain 3 Anma
- 1 pts. Gain 1 Anma

Example of Character Creation

Catherine is creating a character. She has spoken to her Gamesmaster about what sort of setting and story to expect. The story is going to start in a ramshackle poor district of a port town. Catherine decides to create a Character who is a pick-pocket in and around the docks. She opts for a female character, aged about fourteen, and names her Nimble Jan.

*Catherine ranks Jan's attributes as Social first, then Intellectual, then Physical. She writes Rudimentary in light pencil next to all Attributes. She increases **Interrogate** to **Moderate**, **Assess** to **Low** and **Persuade** to **Low** (4 bumps); **Subtlety** to **Low** and **Wits** to **Moderate** (three bumps); **Finesse** to **Low** and **Stealth** to **Low** (two bumps).*

*Catherine writes down 0 for Experience, and 6 in the circle next to Effort (the rectangle is for keeping track of how much Effort has been spent). For a Social Skill, Catherine picks **Falsehoods** and writes +1 next to it. She then picks three general skills, **One-handed Slash** (Fighting skill set), **Cutpurse** (Subterfuge skill set) and **Sprint** (Prowess skill set). She writes +1 next to each of these skills.*

*When considering Weaknesses, Catherine decides that Jan is a sucker for people who sounds wise, so picks **Sagacity** for her Social Weakness. She decides that Jan has no real experience with heavy weapons and finds them frightening, so picks **Two-handed** as a combat weakness.*

*She looks through the items list and picks blanket (wool), coinpurse (10 copper groats), dagger (light weapon, 1d10), rough clothing, utensils, clay lamp & oil, hooded cloak, thief's tools and felted leather boots. Because of her poor background, Catherine decides that the felted leather boots are probably stolen. Catherine would rather save Influence for non-player characters that Jan might meet in the game, so she writes down 3 next to **Influence to spend**.*

Next, she needs to work out her Defeat and Wound thresholds. Both Stamina and Willpower are at Rudimentary. This means that her Toughness for both mind and body is 2 (Rudimentary = 2).

*Catherine decides to spend her Background Points on Skills. She spends 3 points to gain **Wary Steps** at +1, **Pilfer** at +1 and the Social Skill **Ingenue** at +1.*

Now we're done and the Nimble Jan is ready for the game.

Appended Skill List

The following is a skill list for characters in *Spellwoven*.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Social Skills can be used with any of the **Social Attributes** where the Gamesmaster agrees that the combination makes sense. That is, you can use **Falsehoods** to **Persuade** another character, or you can use **Falsehoods** to **Orate** to a crowd. **Assess** often has to be used without a Social Skill because it is performed silently, observing a room or crowd, but if you assess a person's mood or intentions while talking to them, then Social Skills might be employed.

Start with one Social Skill at +1

Affable: Friendly, light-hearted and agreeable
Badgering: Tenacious and somewhat relentless
Barbed wit: Clever, if not always complementary, humour
Brooding: Melancholic and dark humour
Imperious: Demanding and expecting of acquiescence
Ingenue: Innocence, either pretended or real
Falsehoods: Lies, trickery and scams
Plain-speaking: Stating it how it is, unadorned
Sagacity: Tones of wisdom, either pretended or real
Violence: Thuggish or threatening words
Veiling: Dropping quiet hints, for good or ill

General Skills

General Skills are linked to set **General Attribute**. These traits are provided in brackets.

Start with three General Skills at +1 each

FIGHTING SKILLS

Brawling (Might) Unarmed fighting and wrestling
Evade (Quickness) Dodging an attack rather than parrying
One-handed bludgeon (Might) Clubs and maces
One-handed hack (Might) Axes and mattocks
One-handed slash (Quickness) Daggers and swords
Pole-arm (Quickness) Staves, spears and halberds
Ranged (Quickness) Bows and slings
Thrown (Quickness) Throwing axes, knives and spears
Two-handed (Might) Two handed swords, maces axes

CRAFT SKILLS

Artistry (Subtlety) Decorative arts, painting, embroidery
Cooking (Acumen) Preparing tasty meals
Healing (Acumen) Healing wounds, disease & poison
Herbalism (Acumen) Use of herbal properties
Leathercraft (Acumen) Make, decorate & repair leather
Masonry (Acumen) Carving and setting stonework
Metalworking (Acumen) Make, decorate & repair metal
Tailoring (Acumen) Make, decorate & repair clothing
Woodworking (Acumen) Make, decorate & repair woodwork

MENTAL SKILLS

Awareness (Wits) Alertness to danger or anything odd
Courage (Resolve) Ability to resist fear
Lore (Acumen) General and worldly knowledge
Memory (Acumen) Remembering the trivial and important
Problem Solving (Subtlety) Solving riddles & quandaries
Read & Write (Acumen) Literacy in one language
Volition (Willpower) Mental discipline and force of will

PROWESS SKILLS

Climb (Quickness) Climbing walls, trees or anything else
Endure (Stamina) Tireless trudging or labour
Initiative (Quickness) Speed of actions
Ride (Quickness) Riding a mount
Sprint (Quickness) Running and jumping
Strength (Might) Lifting, breaking or smashing
Swim (Stamina) Swimming in water

SUBTERFUGE SKILLS

Contortion (Quickness) Squeezing through tight spaces
Cutpurse (Finesse) Pickpocketing and stealing purses
Disarm traps (Finesse) Rendering a trap harmless
Hide in shadows (Stealth) Hiding in the gloom
Pick locks (Finesse) Unlocking or locking with a lockpick
Pilfer (Finesse) Stealing from shops and stalls
Wary steps (Stealth) Silent and soft to avoid detection

ROVING SKILLS

Boatmanship (Wits) Sailing and rowing
Forage (Wits) Finding food in the wilderness
Hide in Wilderness (Stealth) Hiding in foliage and rocks
Set snares (Wits) Setting snares for small game
Traceless Passing (Stealth) Leaving no footprints
Track (Wits) Tracking an animal or person
Wayfinding (Wits) Navigation by maps and stars

Appended Trait List

The following is a trait list for characters in *Spellwoven*.

MAGERY

This Trait is needed to learn and cast magical spells. Spells require both **Domains** and **Incantations**. New Mage Characters start with two motes to distribute among Domains (i.e. one Domain with two motes, or two Domains with one mote each) and two ranks to distribute among Incantations (i.e. one Incantation with +2 or two Incantations at +1). Gain 1 Anma if you pick Magery as a Trait.

**Spellcasting is tested against Willpower +
Volition**

Spellwoven

Name: _____
Gender: _____
Age: _____
Homeland: _____

Anma

Effort

ATTRIBUTES

SOCIAL

Allay: _____
Assess: _____
Interrogate: _____
Orate: _____
Persuade: _____

INTELLECT

Acumen: _____
Resolve: _____
Subtlety: _____
Willpower: _____
Wits: _____

BODY

Finesse: _____
Might: _____
Quickness: _____
Stamina: _____
Stealth: _____

CHARACTERISTICS

TRAITS

Weaknesses

SKILLS

KNOWN PERSONS

Name	Inf.	Obl.
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____

Influence to spend _____

Items to hand, armour, weapons & other notes

Armour

Skill & Difficulty Ladder

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. None | 7. Adept |
| 2. Childish | 8. Masterful |
| 3. Rudimentary | 9. Veteran |
| 4. Low | 10. Fabled |
| 5. Moderate | 11. Legendary |
| 6. High | 12. Mythic |

Skill Test	(2d10)
Two below	Automatic
One below	8
Equal	10
One up	12
Two up	14
Three up	16
Four up	18
etc	etc

Mental Toughness

Natural	Modified
WT	WT
DT	DT

Physical Toughness

Natural	Modified
WT	WT
DT	DT

RESOLVE

Calm	O
Uneasy	O
Troubled	O
Shaken	O
Distressed	O
Dismayed	O
Witless	O

HEALTH

Hale	O
Scathed	O
Wounded	O
Mauled	O
Crippled	O
Maimed	O
Incapacitated	O
Heroic	<input type="checkbox"/>

RULES FOR THE GAME

In Spellwoven you will sometimes need to resolve actions where the outcome is unclear. The rules presented here are to help provide a framework for resolution of actions...

Test of Skill

An unopposed **Test of Skill** occurs when a Character attempts to do something that the Gamesmaster thinks is either risky or difficult. When this happens, the Gamesmaster calls for a ('static' or 'uncontested') **Test of Skill** and nominates a **Difficulty Level**. The Player then tests their Skill level against the nominated level. A skill ladder is provided on your Character Sheet to help with this.

Skill & Difficulty Ladder

1. None	7. Adept
2. Childish	8. Masterful
3. Rudimentary	9. Veteran
4. Low	10. Fabled
5. Moderate	11. Legendary
6. High	12. Mythic

Skill Test	(2d10)
Two below	Auto
One below	8
Equal	10
One up	12
Two up	14
Three up	16
Four up	18
etc	etc

The Test of Skill involves rolling 2d10 and summing them together. If the value equals or beats the required threshold, then the task is carried off successfully.

Skill Modifiers

Where you have a relevant bonus from a Skill, you add this to your 2d10 roll. Only one modifier can be added to a given Test of Skill. Social Skills can be paired with any of the Social traits. General Skills must be paired with the linked trait. For example, although you can pair **Barbed Wit** with **Persuade** or **Orate**, the General Skill **Contortion** can only be paired with **Agility**. If you are unsure which trait should pair with which Skill, check the summary of Skills provided at the end of the Character Creation chapter.

Example

Nimble Jen is running along rooftops of her hometown, escaping the town guard. She needs to jump a gap between two roofs, and the Gamesmaster deems this to be sufficiently dangerous to require a Test of Skill. Jumping and running fall under Quickness and the Sprint Skill. Jen has an Quickness of Rudimentary and a Sprint Skill of +1. The Gamesmaster states that the jump requires a skill level of High. Jen's player, Catherine, checks the skill ladder and finds that it runs Rudimentary, Low, Moderate, High. This means that High is three above Low. Three up requires a score of 16 or better using 2d10. Catherine rolls an 8 and 4, making 12. She adds +1 for Sprint, making 13. This is below 16, so she doesn't make the jump. The Gamesmaster declares that Jen misses the jump and crashes through a window a level below, landing in someone's bedchamber.

Weaknesses

If you have a Weakness to your opponent's Skill, the opponent is allowed to add their Skill bonus twice. If your opponent has a Skill bonus of +2, and you have a weakness to this skill they get to add +4 (+2+2).

Effort

You can spend one Effort to roll and sum 3d10 instead of 2d10. Only one Effort per roll can be spent in this way. Spent Effort recovers at a rate of 1 per 2 hours of rest, or 1 per hour of sleep.

Optional: Partial Success

Optionally, where the Test of Skill is failed, but both dice roll 6 or higher, the Gamesmaster can deem this to be a partial success and narrate the outcome accordingly.

Optional: Exploding 10s

Optionally, you can 'explode' any natural 10s you roll. Exploding a 10 means that you get to re-roll and add the extra roll whenever you roll a 10. Another roll of 10 would explode too. So, if you roll 8 and 10, you re-roll the 10, and if you get a 7 your total score would be 8+10+7=25.

Contest of Skill

An opposed **Contest of Skill** occurs when two characters are at odds with each other. This happens during combat, but can also result from social conflict, games of strategy, or magical battles of will. Usually, a turn order is established, and an attacking Character is declared. This attacking Character declares a level of Difficulty, and then attempts to make a roll as per a Test of Skill. If this fails, then the attack fails, and the other Character is allowed to declare an attack. However, if the attack succeeded, then the defending player needs to defend themselves using the same level of Difficulty. If they succeed, they ward off the attack. If they fail, the attack succeeds. The consequence of a failed Contest of Skill will vary depending on the situation. During combat, injury or even death may result. In a social conflict or a battle of wills, the dynamic conflict may shift towards resolution and loss.

Example

Nimble Jen gets up from her tumble into the bedchamber and finds an irate housewife with an iron poker coming after her. The Gamesmaster decides that the housewife gets to launch an attack with the poker first. The housewife has a Fortitude of Rudimentary and no combat skills. She decides to launch a Low Difficulty attack, which is one up on her skill level, so requires a 12 or better to succeed. She rolls an 8 and 9, scoring a 17, beating 12. Now, Jen needs to evade. She doesn't have a weapon handy, so can't use her One-handed slash skill to parry. Instead she has to simply dodge. As she lacks the Evade skill, she needs to rely on her Quickness only. Her Quickness is Rudimentary, which is one below the Low attack from the housewife. This requires a roll of 12 or better. She rolls at 5 and 7 scoring and 12, which equals the threshold. Jen just dodges out of the way as the iron poker swipes past her. However, rather than return an attack, Jen makes a dash for the door.

Steps in a Contest of Skill

1. **Attacking character is nominated**
2. **Attacker declares a level of Difficulty**
3. **Attacker tests against this level**
4. **Did the test succeed?**
YES: Defender must roll against Difficulty level
NO: Attack has failed
5. **Did the defence roll succeed?**
YES: Attack is successfully blocked
NO: Attack is successful

A Contest of Skills requires a small degree of strategy, because it demands a trade-off between what will be easy for you to succeed at, and what might be difficult for your opponent. You will not know your opponent's level of skill going into a Contest of Skill, so some testing and guesswork may be involved to start with.

Optional: One Up Defences

Optionally, require any defensive roll in a Contest of Skill to be performed one level above the level of attack (instead of at the level of attack). So, if you attack successfully at Low, your opponent would need to defend at Moderate. If you attacked successfully at Moderate, your opponent would need to defend at Adept. This optional rule will tend to make prolonged contests and fights resolve more quickly.

Prolonged Conflicts

A **Prolonged Conflict** occurs when two or more characters are acting against one another over a drawn out period of time, struggling to overcome the other side. One example of a Prolonged Conflict is Combat, where physical attacks are used to try and wound, disarm, disable or kill an enemy. But other types of Prolonged Conflicts can be made use of too. A heated argument, an attempt to swindle or otherwise socially outwit another person or persons might be handled as a Prolonged Conflict. A chase through a crowded city, or an attempt to escape pursuers in a wooded wilderness could also be a Prolonged Conflict. As could a mental contest of wills between two magicians, a psychological battle that occurs entirely within the mind. You can also use a prolonged conflict against a dangerous natural threat: a storm at sea, putting out a fire, escaping an avalanche, although the natural threat will not act with intent unless driven by some will or force of magic.

Action Rounds

We divide the Prolonged Conflict into slices of time called an **Action Round**. An Action Round is an arbitrary period of time in which all Characters involved in a contested situation are allowed one action. Action Rounds can be used to manage combat, or set piece contents, such as chases, as well as Mental Contests, including arguments or psychic battles of willpower.

Quick Reference

One. Determine who is involved in the Action, and determine sides where relevant.

Two. Order of actions. Roll d10 for each Character. **Physical contests:** add your Initiative Skill. **Mental contests:** add your Awareness Skill. Start with highest score and work down to lowest. In the case of ties compare Quickness (physical) or Wits (Mental). Whoever is highest goes first. If this still results in a tie, re-roll the tying Characters.

Three. Declare Action. The first acting Character declares an action. This is resolved using a Test or Contest of Skill as required. Then, the second Character acts and so forth.

General Conflicts

All conflicts that are not combat are handled in the same way. A combat could also be handled using this method if desired, and large battles where many soldiers are on a field might be one place where you would use these rules instead of the usual personal combat rules.

- Determine sides and nominate a leader on each side
- Determine order of actions (**Action Rounds**, above)
- **First Character:** A Character taking an action is called an **Instigator**. Declare a **Contest of Skill** against one opponent Character. Resolve this Contest. Make a note of whether the **Instigator** or **Defender** wins.
- **Next Character:** Repeat as per the first Character until all Characters have taken an action.

Resolve the Round

- Each side gets 1d10 as a base dice pool.
- Add 1d10 for each attack that an Instigator on your side won. (i.e. if your side won two Instigated actions, you would have 3d10 as a dice pool.
- The Leader of each side rolls their dice pool and allocates dice in secret to the following options. The thresholds require a dice of that number or higher. So, for Threshold 3, you need to allocate a dice roll of 3 or higher to trigger that effect. Optionally, dice can be summed together to reach higher Thresholds.

Threshold 3. Reduce opponent dice pool by 1 before the next resolution roll. Otherwise the dice pool rolls over as a base pool for the next round.

Threshold 5. Block the removal of one of your dice (i.e. this counteracts the above action once).

Threshold 7. Remove one opponent Character who failed their Instigator Contest of Skill (i.e. their 'attack').

Threshold 9. Block the removal of a Character from your own side (i.e. negates one Threshold 7).

Reveal your allocations and resolve

- If you don't have any dice removed by the opponent, then your dice pool rolls over and forms the base dice pool for the next Action Round.
- If your dice pool reaches zero or if you lose all of the Characters from your side then you lose the Conflict.
- If two or more sides 'lose' in the same resolution, then whoever had the highest dice pool before the round was resolved wins. If this is still a tie, then the Conflict restarts with all Characters returned to the Conflict.

Example 1.

Nimble Jen is haggling with a stall owner over the price of a smoked kipper. The stall owner will take a loss if she sells it for less than three copper groats, but Jen only has one groat and she decides to try and persuade the stall owner to sell the fish to her for one groat. The Gamesmaster decides that this will trigger a Prolonged Conflict.

Nimble Jen has a Persuade of Low and a Falsehoods social skill of +1. Her social weakness is Sagacity, so luckily for her the fishmonger has the Social Skills Affable +1 and Badgering +2, but also has a Persuade of Moderate, which is one better than Jen's.

The sides and leaders are clear in this case because there are only two people involved. As a condition of victory, Jen wants the fishmonger to sell her the kipper for one groat. The fishmonger merely wants Jen to go away and stop bothering him and his genuine customers.

Jen doesn't have Awareness as a Skill, but the fishmonger has Awareness +2. Both Characters roll a d10. Jen rolls a 6. The Fishmonger rolls a 7 and adds +2, getting 9. He acts first.

He attempts to Persuade Jen to leave using a High level of skill. High is one up on his Persuade (Moderate) so he needs to equal or beat a 12 with 2d10. He rolls a 5 and 6 = 11, and uses Affable +1 to reach 12. Now Jen must pass a High test of Persuade to defend. She rolls a 3 and 4, making 7, and adding her Falsehoods +1, a total of 8. However, High is two up on her Persuade (Low), and she needed a 14 or better to pass. The fishmonger wins one round and the Gamesmaster makes a note of this.

Now Nimble Jen is allowed an Action. She uses Falsehood (+1) and Persuade (Low) to attempt a Moderate argument. Moderate is one up on Low, so she needs a 12 or better on 2d10. She rolls a 7 and 8, which with +1 from Falsehoods makes 16. She succeeds. But in his defence, the fishmonger only needs to score a 10 or better. He has a Moderate level of Persuade and is defending against a Moderate argument. He rolls a 4 and 7, making 13. He could add +1 from Affable or +2 from Badgering, but either way he passes 10 and defends himself.

This means that Jen failed in her Instigated attack. The round now needs to be resolved.

Both Characters roll d10s. The scores are visible to each other, but the allocations to Thresholds are secret. Jen rolls a 5, and her opponent rolls a 2 and 8. At this point it looks like Jen has probably lost. She allocates her 5 to 'Block the removal of a dice' but isn't hopeful.

When the Fishmonger's allocation is revealed, his 2 isn't allocated (it's below 3, so can't actually be allocated to any resolution), but has allocated the 8 to the Threshold 7 resolution 'Remove one opponent who failed their Instigator Contest of Skill'. As Jen is the only opponent, and as she ultimately failed her Instigator attack (her roll succeeded, but she was successfully defended against), Jen is removed from the argument and the contest is resolved. Jen slinks off wondering if she might have to resort to stealing something to eat instead.

Social Interaction

Social interactions and intrigues work slightly differently to other general Skill Tests. Whereas most Skills can only be used with a single Attribute, Social Skills can be used with any of the five Social Attributes. Skills can be mixed and matched, moment to moment.

The Attributes are **Allay**, **Assess**, **Interrogate**, **Orate** and **Persuade**. **Allay** is a skill used to calm another character who is angry, panicked, aggressive or hysterical. It could be used to convince a brigand to talk to you instead of rob you, or calm down a person who has been attacked by a wild animal so that you can find out what happened, or soothe an enraged king, or irate petty knight. **Assess** is used to study the mood of a person or room. It is also used to determine if someone might be lying to you or otherwise being deceptive in some way. **Interrogate** involves getting information out of someone using any approach from overt interrogation to more subtle plying for information. **Orate** involves speaking to a crowd, and encompasses leadership, inspiration or convincing a mob or royal court to take an action, or not take an action. **Persuade** is also a persuasion skill, but is specifically for individuals. Each Attribute will have a level of proficiency, starting at Rudimentary and topping out at Mythic.

The Social Skills that Characters can have were listed during Character creation, but are reproduced before for ease of reference. These would be listed with a bonus, such as Affable +1 or Ingenue +2.

Affable: Friendly, light-hearted and agreeable
Badgering: Tenacious and somewhat relentless
Barbed wit: Clever, if not always complementary, humour
Brooding: Melancholic and dark humour
Imperious: Demanding and expecting of acquiescence
Ingenue: Innocence, either pretended or real
Falsehoods: Lies, trickery and scams
Plain-speaking: Stating it how it is, unadorned
Sagacity: Tones of wisdom, either pretended or real
Violence: Thuggish or threatening words
Veiling: Dropping quiet hints, for good or ill

Each Character also has a **Social Skill Weakness**. This is a skill which the Character is particularly bad at defending against. The example Character we created, Nimble Jen, had Sagacity as a weakness, because she is very impressed by wisdom, even if it is largely assumed and false.

A Social Skill Weakness is handled in the same way as other skill weaknesses. Your opponent gets to add their Skill Bonus twice if you have a weakness to it. So, for example, if Jen were to tangle with a Character who had Sagacity +2, the wise-seeming Character would get to add +4 to social roles (+2, +2).

Influence

Characters start off with **3 Influence to Spend**, which is applied during Gameplay. Whenever you advance a Rank in a Social Skill you also gain 3 Influence to Spend, so that the pool will continue to grow if you don't spend it, or replenish if you do.

As a Player, whenever you meet a Non-Player Character, you can decide to put one or more point of Influence on them. When you do this you need to come up with a background reason why. The application of Influence is Permanent, and its a good idea to write down the name of the Non-Player Character, your shared background and the Influence on them for future reference. The Influence then acts as a bonus for any future attempts to socially manipulate said Character.

Example

Nimble Jen has been cornered by an angry shop's assistant after she stole some food. She decides to try and convince the shop assistant to let her go and not call the town guard. Jen has a Low Persuade (attribute) and Falsehoods +1 (skill), but she also has three Influence to Spend. She decides to put 2 Influence on the shop assistant, with the plan that she will come back and convince him to slip her some food later. She decides that they were childhood friends and used to play down by the docks together, and notes down his name, Hew the Shop's Boy and writes +2 next to Influence.

Influence then acts as a specific bonus to roll in the same way that a Skill does. So, if Jen were to try and ask Hew to give her food without lying to him, she would get a +2 bonus to her roll. If she did lie, then +3, though Hew might be upset if he later discovers she was making up stories to get his sympathy.

Obligation

Obligation works in reverse. The Gamesmaster gains 1 Obligation every time a Player Spends a point of Influence. This Obligation can be spent immediately (maybe you have Influence on someone but they have Obligation on you). Or the Obligation can be saved up and spent on another Character later on. The pool is shared, so that Obligation gained by one Character spending Influence could be spent on someone else. The Obligation has to be kept track of by the Gamesmaster and acts as a Skill Bonus against the Player.

Example

Nimble Jen has just spent 2 Influence. This adds 1 to the Gamesmaster's pool of Obligation. The Gamesmaster already has 4 Obligation from previous Influence spends, and so the +1 increases this to 5. He decides to hold onto the Obligation for now, but is considering putting some Obligation on the shop boy, Hew. Maybe Hew saved Jen from drowning when they were children and she still feels obliged to him. He decides to wait and see how the interaction plays out.

Curating Contacts

The object of this system is that Players will feel a desire to curate and manage their lists of social contacts much the same way a Player might usually want to manage their list of equipment or spells. Mastering a long list of people you have social influence over can be a lot of fun, and is one of the key ways that you can encourage a game more towards courtly or even just small village intrigue rather than the straight-up looting, fighting or adventuring that tends to dominate fantasy tabletop games.

Combat

Combat is resolved in a way similar to other Prolonged Conflicts, except that instead of chalking up wins and rolling resolution dice at the end of each Action Round, the battle is resolved by inflicting wounds.

Action Rounds. Establish an Action Round as per usual, but there is no need to decide on a leader for each side.

Contest of Skill. Using Combat Skills, Characters engage in Contests of Skill. The difference between combat and other Prolonged Conflicts is that a successful Instigated attack results in a Wounding roll.

Light Weapons: Use **Quickness** to attack or defend

Medium Weapons: Choose either **Quickness** or **Might**

Heavy Weapons: Use **Might** to attack or defend

Example

Nimble Jen has escaped the house but has been cornered by one of the town guard. He is armed with a short sword (medium weapon) and is wearing soft leather armour. Jen draws her dagger (light weapon), but has no armour. They roll a d10 each. Jen has no Initiative Skill, so she rolls a 7 and keeps it. The guard has an initiative of +2 and rolls a 4, getting a 6. Jen still has the higher score so acts first. As this is close combat, her Quickness is Rudimentary but she has a One-handed slash skill of +1. She tries a Low difficulty attack (one up on Rudimentary, requires a 12 on 2d10), and rolls a 7 and 7, +1 = 15 (success). Her opponent has a Rudimentary Quickness skill too. He defends himself by dodging as he has an Evade of +2. He rolls a 2 and 3, and even with the +2, only sums to 7. This is below the threshold he needed (12, because of the Low Difficulty attack), and so he is wounded.

Weapons

There are three levels of hand-to-hand weapon:

Light Weapons: 1d10 menace

Medium Weapons: 2d10 menace

Heavy Weapons: 3d10 menace

Roll a number of d10 equal to the menace of the weapon.

Example

Jen has a dagger, which is a light (1d10) weapon. She rolls the 1d10 and scores an 8.

Wounding

Characters have a Natural and Modified wound threshold called **Toughness**. Jen's Natural Toughness is 2, and her Modified Toughness is also 2 because she is not wearing armour. The guard has a Wound Threshold of 2, but is wearing Soft Leather tunic which adds +2 to Toughness, giving him a Modified Toughness of 4 (as long as he is wearing his armour). After a successful attack, the attacker can sum up weapon dice in any way to try and beat toughness as many times as possible. In the case of Jen's attack, she just has one dice, but the 7 beats 4, so she inflicts one level of injury, dropping the guard from **Hale** to **Scathed** on the wounding ladder. Multiple dice can be allocated to inflict more than one level of injury.

Example

The guard succeeds on an attack and rolls a (rather sad) 1 and 1. But he can still sum these to score a 2, which equals or beats Jen's Toughness, inflicting one wound level.

On a second attack the guard rolls a 4 and 5. Both of these rolls exceed 2, so he can allocate each dice separately and inflict two levels of injury from one blow.

Defeat

Defeat either comes when your Wound Levels reach Incapacitated, or if you suffer a one-hit Defeat because of an attack exceeding your Defeat Threshold. If a set of attack dice can be summed to exceed a Character's Defeat Threshold, then the Character is immediately defeated. In the case of a Player Character, this will usually mean being knocked unconscious, or otherwise incapacitated. Non-player Characters can be incapacitated or outright killed.

Example

The guard succeeds on an attack and rolls a (rather excellent) 10 and 8. He can still sum these to score an 18, which beats Jen's Defeat Threshold of 17 (her Wound threshold of 2 + 15).

This attack would outright incapacitate Jen, either leaving her immobile and unable to attack, or simply unconscious.

Death and Heroism

Player Characters cannot usually die in Spellwoven without the consent of the Player. The key way in which death can result from the rules is through the triggering of a doomed heroism. A player can negate all injury from one attack by ticking the Heroic box at the bottom of their Health. Triggering this doomed Heroism does three things: 1) All Effort is restored to full, 2) All Skill rolls get a +5 bonus until the end of the scene (ie. combat, chase, fight) and 3) if the Character is Incapacitated or Defeated via their Defeat Threshold they will die instead of merely being removed from the fight. This represents a state where the Player is able to decide that a victory is important enough to die for.

Summary:

Tick Heroic to negate damage from one attack. Effort is restored to full. All Skill tests gain a +5 bonus until end of the Action Sequence. The Character will die if defeated in a dice roll.

Combat Finesses

Shields: Defence

Shields are classed as light (1d10), medium (2d10) or heavy (3d10), and when used grant the possibility of negating one or more wounds from an attack. Roll the relevant number of d10 after an attack has succeeded and wounds have been determined. For each dice than rolls a 7 or higher, one wound level is 'soaked' by the shield. So, if you have a medium shield and roll a 3 and 7, then one wound level is absorbed by blocking with the shield. If the attack then delivers 3 wound levels of damage (a rather impressive attack using a heavy weapon), then the shield catches one of these, reducing wounds to 2 instead of 3.

Shields: Encumbrance

Shield can help deflect blows but a shield also makes it harder to attack cleanly. If using a light shield there is no penalty to attack rolls. A medium shield imposes a -1 penalty, handled as if this were a skill that had a -1 value. A heavy shield imposes a -2 penalty. This penalty is only for attacking, and does not apply to defensive rolls.

Ranged & Magical Attacks

Optionally, you can allow all Ranged Attacks to be declared and resolved before hand-to-hand attacks, and all magical attacks to be declared and resolved last. This effectively splits the Action Round into three phases. 1. Ranged attacks. 2. Hand-to-hand combat. 3. Magic.

Over-swing

Optionally, if you attack with a heavy weapon and miss, you cannot use your weapon skill to defend yourself on the next attack directed against you. Instead you need to evade, or rely on a shield. This optional rule incorporates the primary drawback of very large and heavy weapons, which is that a miss will tend to result in creating an opening for enemies.

Attack of Opportunity

Optionally, if a Character decides to disengage from a battle, flee or is otherwise distracted elsewhere, any nearby Characters can be permitted a free attack of opportunity at the Gamesmaster's discretion.

Multiple Opponents

Optionally, for each opponent past the first that you are fighting a -1 penalty is applied to your fighting skill rolls. However, as there is already a substantial disadvantage to simply being outnumbered, so that you can only make one attack while fending off multiple attacks in each Action Round, some player groups may decide that an additional penalty is unneeded. Alternatively, you could simply apply a situational modifier if a Character is outnumbered to a point that would reasonably invoke a clear disadvantage.

Situational Modifiers

Optionally, if a Player Character is fighting at a clear disadvantage, then the Gamesmaster can call for a roll of 3d10, taking the lowest two values. If a Player Character is at a significant advantage, then the Gamesmaster can allow a roll of 3d10, taking the highest two values. These situational modifiers are best only applied to Player Characters, otherwise the penalty doubles up across a conflict and becomes quite asymmetrical.