



# SAGA

A GENERIC UNIVERSAL ROLEPLAYING SYSTEM

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# LEGAL NONSENSE

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## WHAT IS SAGA?

*Saga* is a free traditional pen and paper roleplaying game, written by a veteran gamer and overt anarchist. This system is set apart from conventional RPGs by several unique traits. The *Saga* system is universal, meaning it can be used to explore any gaming genre or campaign setting. It is also rules-light and focused on storytelling rather than statistics and point counting, meaning that the system is primarily narrative in nature. It is not a diceless system, but dice do not dominate gameplay in a *Saga* adventure.

All you need to begin playing is some paper, a writing implement, a group of 3 or more friends, and at least one person willing to take on the role of Narrator/Storyteller. You'll also need a variety of polyhedral dice, depending on which rolling method you choose. A handful of d10s (ten-sided dice) is essential, though optimally every player and the narrator would each possess at least 5 d10s. A d6 (six-sided die) is also necessary in certain circumstances, such as luck and randomization. Play groups may also wish to acquire other optional dice, such as d4s, d8s, d12s, and d20s. These aren't necessary, but could potentially be useful in certain random generation situations. Once these things are assembled, look over the rules and you're ready to begin.

## WHAT SAGA IS NOT: A NOTE ON STEREOTYPES IN ROLEPLAYING GAMES

*Saga* is NOT a stereotypical roleplaying game. This game seeks to abolish harmful, nonsensical stereotypes so commonly found in storygaming. You're surely familiar with such type-casting: all Dwarves are Scottish-accent having, beer-drinking, bearded, axe-wielding miners, while Elves are all lithe archers who live in and love the woods. Or, worse yet, Orcs are all stupid, evil, hulking brutes whose only love in life is destruction. Even beyond these things, the idea that all fantasy worlds must have Dwarves, Elves, and Orcs is itself a bad stereotype.

Similar stereotypes apply to character classes as well in the form of ridiculous restrictions. You're a thief, therefore you can't wear heavy armors or use certain types of weapons. Or, you're a magic user so you can't wear any armor or use anything but staves as weapons. Or, you're a warrior, so you can't also be a magic user, or thief, or chef, or all of the above. Or, most harmful, you're a fantasy game character, therefore you must be a warrior or thief or magic user.

Stereotypes are also often found in adventures themselves. What else is there for characters to do but crawl through dungeons and kill things? Are you a warrior? Kill things. A mage? Use magic to kill things. A thief?

Backstab baddies in the dungeon and kill them. While this system seeks to create a deadly and believable combat system, it is NOT combat focused. The idea that PCs exist only to do battle is absurd.

*Saga* has no such idiotic stereotyping. Surely, some Elves must perform functions other than frolicking through the woods with bows killing things, or Elvish society would very quickly collapse. The same goes for Dwarves and their mines – where would Dwarven society be without farmers or hunters, craftspeople, diplomats, magic users, and other non-miner non-combatants? Certainly, not all Orcs are evil vile warriors who love to kill, or their society, too, would fall apart very fast.

When creating characters and playing *Saga*, please be creative and avoid these pitfalls of fantasy gaming. If you want to be a thief who wears noisy metal armor, you'll suffer the consequences, but by all means do it. If you want to be a brilliant Orcish poet and orator, able to lead and convince others, all the better. Break out of these harmful molds and your gaming adventures will surely be richer.

## SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION

Roleplaying games are among of my deepest passions, but they're certainly not my only one. Besides all the free *Saga* roleplaying material, I also write, edit, publish, and distribute radical literature. Many of my other zines focus on primitive skills, plants, and anarchist/feminist/primitivist theory. I also occasionally dabble in fiction, and I enjoy republishing the works of other folks that I find compelling or spot-on. As with the *Saga* roleplaying supplements, all the zines and literature I publish are absolutely free and available via the interwebnets at: [yggdrasildistro.wordpress.com](http://yggdrasildistro.wordpress.com).

## FUNDAMENTAL RULES & CONCEPTS

At its core, *Saga* is a storytelling game. Adventures using this system are run by a Narrator or Storyteller, who dictates the path the story takes and obstacles the player-characters (PCs) face. Players narrate their characters' actions, just as Storytellers narrate the actions of Non-player Characters (NPCs). Both Players and Narrators will occasionally roll dice to determine the outcome of conflicts between two or more forces.

Like so many other systems, *Saga* uses dice rolling as a mechanic to resolve conflicts. This is true of Conflicts Between Characters, such as one character firing a gun at another and the second attempting to dodge, or two characters arm wrestling. It is also true of Conflicts With Environment or Objects, as when a character attempts to pick a lock, leap across a chasm, or walk across a tightrope. Conflicts of both kinds are resolved as described in the section entitled *Conflict Resolution*.

# GENRES & CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

One of the key concepts of this game is its universality. That is, *Saga* can be played in any universe, campaign setting, genre, or world. The choice of which genre to play in is left to the entire group to decide. Making such a decision is the first choice the group must make before creating characters and beginning play. There is little distinction between genre and campaign setting, and the words are often used interchangeably. Genre is typically a broader term, referring to categories of play. Campaign settings, on the other hand, tend to be more specific and well-defined.

Below is a list of campaign settings written by yours truly that are compatible with and written for the *Saga* system. This is not an exclusive or exhaustive list, however, as *Saga* is a universal system and can be adapted to any campaign setting. All of these Campaign Settings can be found and downloaded for free at <http://yggdrasilastro.wordpress.com/free-diy-roleplaying-material/>.

## *SAGA Campaign Settings*

### THE NAHMURG WASTES (POST-APOCALYPTIC)

This setting is a post-apocalyptic North America – called Nahmurg by the inhabitants – that is heavily influenced and based upon the CRPG *Fallout* series, the novel *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, the Mad Max movies *The Road Warrior* and *Beyond Thunderdome*, and the indie comic *Wasteland*. It also takes influences from green anarchism, and the anticipation that this civilization will come crashing tumultuously down, as civilizations always do. Campaigns set in Nahmurg will focus on characters' struggles for survival in a grim and desolate world.

### CHRONICLES OF MAGNAMUND (HIGH-FANTASY)

This high-fantasy campaign setting is an adaptation of the world Magnamund from the famed *Lone Wolf* series of gamebooks. Anyone who played roleplaying gamebooks in the 80s knows this series intimately. This setting is geographically quite similar to the original, though many flaws within that world have been altered and improved. (E.g.: there is no strict dichotomy between good and evil, the Kai Lords are no longer the most important religious order, giaks are no longer all evil, and all the other racist stereotypes in the *Lone Wolf* books have been removed.) This setting blends all the beloved high-fantasy tropes – magic use, a diverse pool of races and creatures, and a pseudo-medieval world – with a vast and comprehensive body of unique nations and provinces, organizations, and power groups.

### BRAYTHMAR – OF RESISTANCE TO EMPIRE IN AN AGE OF BRONZE (HIGH-FANTASY BRONZE AGE)

As the name suggests, this high-fantasy campaign setting concerns the resistance of traditional hunter-gatherer peoples to their world's first empire. This setting takes place in a land known as Braythmar, a land that resembles ancient Mesopotamia. One Braythmari tribe, the *Jakkiolenna*, have conquered their neighbors and confederated themselves into a series of powerful city-states. This Empire, the Lennar Confederacy, is Braythmar's first civilization, and exhibits all the symptoms of this vile disease: slavery, centralized hierarchy, agriculture, the domination of the natural world, oppression of women and minorities, and the conquest of the indigenous. The native tribes of Braythmar are determined to continue their traditional existence. For many, this means actively and violently opposing the Empire.

## THE HYBORIAN AGE

### (LOW-FANTASY, SWORD & SORCERY, WORLD OF CONAN)

This campaign setting is based on the works of Robert E. Howard, creator of the legendary character Conan of Cimmeria. This is Conan's world, a pre-historical world of sword and sorcery, civilized villainy and barbaric honor. Empires strive to conquer the world, civilized peoples plot and murder, and the barbarians and traditional peoples of this grim age fight for their survival. This setting is characterized by extreme violence, warfare, theft, drunken revelry, high adventure, and a touch of the arcane and otherworldly.

## ARCANUM – OF STEAMWORKS & MAGIC OBSCURA (STEAMPUNK, FANTASY)

This campaign setting, which draws heavily from the computer game of the same name, is a unique blend of Victoriana, steampunk, and high-fantasy. Arcanum is a world currently undergoing the beginning stages of industrialization, steam technology, and clockwork. It's also a world of traditional cultures, magic, and lost ancient knowledge about the world's gods and goddesses. Arcanum is beset by dichotomies: Law vs. Chaos, Magic vs. Technology, Urban vs. Rural, Highborn vs. Lowborn, etc. This setting borrows heavily from *Arcanum*, the *Thief* series of video games, *Planescape Campaign Setting* for D&D, *Neverwhere* by Neil Gaiman, and the *Saga* fantasy campaign settings preceding it.

## NEVERWHERE (DARK URBAN FANTASY)

This setting is a contemporary dark urban fantasy setting, based on the novel and BBC series of the same name by Neil Gaiman. In *Neverwhere*, every major city in the world sits atop an underworld unknown to and unexplored by the above-ground inhabitants. Monsters prowl, magic thrives, feudal political intrigues unfold, and all manner of unsavory peoples and creatures lurk in the gloom.

## MAGIC THE GATHERING (HIGH-FANTASY, M:TG)

This campaign setting really needs no introduction nor explanation. It's a massive 300-page tome of information about all the planes of existence and all the races and creatures who inhabit them in the Magic: the Gathering multiverse.

## SHADOWRUN

The most recent addition to the the SAGA body of work is an adaptation and conversion manual for running Shadowrun campaigns using the SAGA ruleset.

## *Non-SAGA Campaign Settings*

As previously mentioned, *Saga* is a universal and generic system. It can (and ought to) be used to run campaigns in every conceivable genre and setting. It works well with traditional favorites like *Forgotten Realms*, *Middle-earth/LotR*, the *Star Wars* multiverse, etc., and can certainly run less popular or home-brew settings as well. By using this system, unlike its many rules-heavy contemporaries, players are limited only by their imaginations and desires.

# ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, CHARACTER CREATION

## Statistics

Characters in *Saga* have a number of statistics that describe their physical traits, skills, appearance, intellect, and life experience. These attributes and skills all have both a **descriptor** (adjective) and a **numerical value** (number). The descriptor is any colorful word that describes the level of achievement in the attribute or skill being described. The numerical value is used to determine the outcome of conflicts, as described in the chapter *Conflict Resolution*. Descriptors and Numerical Dice Values correspond: the better the descriptor, the higher the die value.

The sample chart below shows descriptors and their corresponding dice values. These are but a few descriptive terms. Narrators should encourage the use of maximum variety in descriptive language in the game.

Numerical Value	Descriptor
1-2	Horrible, Awful, Really Bad, Hopeless, Rotten, Atrocious, Crappy, etc.
3-4	Poor, Lacking, Beginning, Novice, Inferior, Weak, etc.
5-6	Fair, Average, Decent, Okay, Moderate, Mediocre, So-so, etc.
7-8	Good, Talented, Adept, Apt, Superior, Strong, etc.
9-10	Excellent, Superb, Amazing, Accomplished, Outstanding, etc.
11-12	Masterful, Elite, Virtuoso, Gifted, Superlative, etc.
13-14	Legendary, Heroic, Mythic, Epic, Herculean, Homeric, Fabled, etc.
15+	Superhuman, Supernatural, Otherworldly, Transcendental, Uncanny, Sorcerous, Godlike, Eldritch, Unfathomable, Divine, Arcane, etc.

Most characters in a *Saga* campaign will have stats ranging between 1 to 10. This represents the full range of accomplishment for average, mundane humanoid characters. All mundane PCs and NPCs will have stats within this range, and will rarely exceed 10 in any of their attributes or skills. In strict mundane campaign settings (e.g.: the Modern World, Medieval Europe or Japan, non-magical Ancient World, etc.), statistics should only exceed 10 if the character is a world-level master in his or her chosen skillset. This includes character stats, weapon and armor stats, and difficulty values determined by the Narrator.

Characters in non-mundane campaign settings, and truly unique and gifted individuals in mundane campaign settings, may have stats of 11 or rarely 12. A score of 11-12 represents the lifelong devotee, the master of her trade, the head of the thieves' guild, the warrior who all warriors aspire to be. This is the true master, more skilled than all other typical humanoids. Think DaVinci.

A score of 13-14 represents a skill or attribute that is the stuff of myth and legend. Hercules and Gilgamesh would have a Strength attribute of legendary 14. Legolas' Bow Skill is certainly a mythic 13. Conan would undoubtedly have a heroic 13 in Swordsmanship, as would Bêlit, his greatest love and companion. Archmage Ged of the Earthsea mythos definitely boasts a fabled 14 skill in Wizardry and Common Sorcery.

Imarennen, first of all the iron-workers, would likely have an epic 13 in Smithing.

11-12 is achievable by devoted characters. 13-14 is only available to legends and myths, heroes and heroines, or likewise, non-mundane characters enhanced by magic or cyberware. A value of 15 or greater in any statistic represents that which is superhuman or arcane. A 15 is the 3000-year-old undead sorcerer, the spandex-clad superhero with mutant powers, gods, spirits, demons, at so forth.

There is no upward limit or ceiling to statistics, although in most *Saga* campaigns, players are not likely to see or encounter anything above a 15. Beyond this level of expertise lies the realm of almighty deities, benevolent and malevolent gods, and horrendous, insanity-inspiring Elder Things like Cthulhu and Nyarlathotep. Such beings are so powerful that they rarely even need statistics, but it is conceivable that such stats could come into play.

The Descriptors listed above but a few examples. Players and Storytellers should feel free to use descriptive terms that apply to whatever attribute or skill they're describing, and to the flavor of particular characters. For example, if a character's Strength has a value of 1, it could be called Wimpy or Feeble, but if that character has a Strength value of 9, they could be called Bruiser, Swole, or Ripped. The same variety of language goes for all other stats.

Other statistics- the deadliness of weapons and the protective value of armor, the difficulty of performing certain tasks, and so on- have similar values and descriptors. These are described in subsequent chapters.

## Attributes

Every character, including PCs and NPCs, has a few Attributes in common. Attributes are a character's physical and mental traits that do not involve the use of a skill. Each attribute can be called a number of different synonyms, and several of these are listed for each. The attributes in *Saga* are:

### ENDURANCE (CONSTITUTION, HEALTH)

This attribute represents a character's immune system and general health. This is the body's ability to resist poison, sickness, fatigue, exhaustion, dehydration, hunger, and extreme cold or heat. Endurance drops when a character is fatigued or ill. If this value drops to 0, a character is dead or has passed out from exhaustion.

### INTELLIGENCE (INTELLECT, BRAIN POWER, SMARTS)

A character's ability to reason and learn; I.Q.

### SPEED (SWIFTNESS, QUICKNESS, REACTION, REFLEXES)

How quickly a character moves, and how quickly a character avoids being hit.

### STRENGTH (POWER, MUSCLE, BUILD, PHYSIQUE)

Raw power and ability to resist injury from physical damage.

### WILLPOWER (FOCUS, DRIVE, MENTAL INDEPENDENCE)

This is a character's ability to focus and avoid distraction, and to resist psionics and other mental control.



Attributes can increase and decrease with many factors: fatigue, damage, magic, etc. Serious injuries can have long-term, lasting attribute penalties. Many such effects are described in later chapters.

## *Skill Generalizations*

Skills represent a character's ability to do various things. Other than the physical and mental traits of a character, skills make up everything else about them. Characters all have a number of skill generalizations in common, though characters choose to specialize in specific skills within these sets and thus distinguish themselves from other characters. If characters do not have specific skills that relate to any given conflict, they use the value and descriptor of the skill generalization that applies. The skill areas in *Saga* are as follows:

### **Acrobatics**

Jumping, running, swimming, climbing, tumbling, cartwheeling, and otherwise moving fall into this category.

### **Animals**

Represents a character's ability to take care of animals, use animals for labor, and ride animals for sport, pleasure, or battle. Also shows how well characters tame and calm wild animals, and how well they train tamed animals.

### **Art**

A character's ability to create pleasing or interesting art. Includes painting, sculpting, tattooing, culinary arts, spraypainting, etc..

### **Bushcraft**

Includes all wilderness survival skills, like fire starting, knot tying and rope skills, foraging, navigation, shelter building, skinning and tanning hides, and so on. Ability to stay alive with ancient skills and to live off the land in the wilderness.

### **Combat, melee**

Shows how well characters attack and defend with melee weapons like swords, daggers, lawnmower blades, axes, golf clubs, baseball bats, and so on. Also shows how well characters use shields to avoid attacks.

### **Combat, ranged**

How well a character attacks with distanced weapons like pistols, rifles, bows, crossbows, slings, and the like. Also shows a character's ability to attack with thrown weapons like javelins, throwing stars, and thrown knives.

### **Combat, unarmed**

This is a character's ability to brawl and to grapple, using punches, kicks, elbows and knees, headbutts, armbars, chokeholds, jointlocks, and so on. Also a character's ability to defend against physical attacks.

### **Communication**

A character's capacity to charm, lie, swindle, comfort, convince, embolden, intimidate, and inspire through communication. Also used for haggling and bartering.

### **Courage**

A character's ability to withstand fear and terror.

### **Crafting & Repair**

The ability to make a huge number of items, from simple hand tools, to furniture, to bows, to swords and armor, to nets for fishing. Also the ability to fix broken things. If it can be made or fixed by one person, it falls into this category.

## Detect

Perceptual abilities, like spotting a hidden attacker, finding a hidden trap, smelling or tasting hidden poison, detecting the presence of another, detecting lies and half-truths.

## Entertainment & Performance

Shows a character's ability to entertain others through song, dance, storytelling, acting, juggling, and telling jokes. Also a character's ability to play music.

## Gambling & Gaming

The ability to win at games, including gambling games like poker, blackjack, and hot dice, and physical games like basketball, tennis, and other sports.

## Magic & Psionics

A character's ability to use lifeforce magic and psionics if they exist in the chosen campaign setting or world, and the ability to defend against magic and psionics from others.

## Medicine

A character's ability to tend wounds. This covers the use of first aid kits, prescription industrial medicine, herbal medicine, doctoring skills, stitching up wounds, performing surgery, and so on. Also used to diagnose illnesses and maladies.

## Science & Gadgets

This represents the ability to work with science equipment and methods, including the use of computers, cell phones, and other post-industrial garbage.

## Stealth

Shows a character's ability to sneak, hide, camouflage herself, walk silently, pick pockets, arm and disarm traps, shoplift, etc. Ability to avoid detection.

## Vehicles & Machines

The ability to pilot a number of moving craft, including everything from simple carts and wagons, to bicycles, to automobiles and motorcycles, to tanks and ships, to space shuttles and fighters. Ability to engage in combat in vessels capable of fighting. This is also the ability to activate and operate heavy machines, like cranes.

## *Skill Specializations*

As mentioned above, characters can specialize in specific skills that fall under the areas previously listed. There are far too many individual skills to innumerate them all, but following below is a sizable sample of skills that fall under each of the preceding categories. Players and Storytellers are welcome to add to these lists. For example, a PC in a recent campaign chose "Not From Around Here: 1" to describe his communication skill with foreigners! This is excellent roleplaying.

When creating a character, as detailed in a following section, Players may choose to assign any legal value to these skills, regardless of the area they fall under. This is because the areas represent the general capability of characters in all the skills within each area. Thus, some skills must be above and below the value for the area itself. For example, a character with Mediocre 5 skill in Bushcraft might have Excellent 9 Fire Building and Novice 2 Tracking. Distinguishing these two skills shows that, while the character is average in bushcraft skills as a whole, they are an accomplished fire maker and a sub-par tracker. Assigning values such as these isn't necessary, but it adds great flavor and depth to characters and is highly encouraged.

When a character is engaged in any attempt that uses a particular skill, if that character has the specific specialized skill involved in the attempt, they use the value and descriptor of that skill in the attempt roll (described in the Conflict Resolution section). Otherwise, if a character doesn't have a specialized skill related to any given attempt, that character uses the value/descriptor of the skill generalization instead.

For example, if Fadros is attempting to hit an opponent with a sword, but doesn't have the specialized skill Long Blades, his player uses Fadros' Combat, Melee generalization value/descriptor for the attempt. On the other hand, if Fadros does have a value and descriptor for Long Blade, any time he attacks with a sword or other long bladed weapon, his player uses this specialized value/descriptor for the attempt instead.

Another example: a character is being attacked in melee combat and is blocking with a shield. If the character has no specialized Shield skill, the controlling player uses the character's Combat, Melee value in the attempt. If the character does have a Shield value, the player uses this value instead.

Again, any time a character has a specialized skill that pertains to an attempt, the Player/Narrator controlling the character uses the value of the specialized skill in the attempt roll, not the value of the general skill area.

### Acrobatics

Jumping, swimming, climbing, tumbling, cartwheeling, hurdling, mantling, contortion or escape artist.

### Animals

Animal riding (can be further specialized by animal, like Horse Riding, Bull Riding, \_\_\_ Fictional Animal Riding, etc.), Animal Taming, Animal Training, Animal Care, Animal Calling (further specialized by animal).

### Art

Body Piercing, Brew, Calligraphy, Drawing, Sculpting, Painting, Photography, Prepare Drink, Prepare Food,, Stenciling or Spraypainting, Tattooing.

### Bushcraft

Cordage/Rope Making, Fire Building, Fishing by Line, Fishing by Net, Fishing by Spear, Foraging, Knot Tying, Navigation, Shelter Building, Skinning, Tanning, Tracking.

### Combat, melee

Axes, Blunt Weapons, Long Blades, Polearms, Shields. Short Blades,

### Combat, ranged

Assault Rifles & Sub-machine Guns, Big Guns, Bows, Crossbows, Pistols, Rifles, Slings, Throwing Axes, Throwing Knives, Throwing Spears, Throwing Sticks, Throwing Stones.

### Combat, unarmed

Brawling, Grappling.

### Communication

Charm, Convince, Empathy, Hagglng/Bartering, Intimidate, Leadership, Lie, Lip Reading, Gesturing/Sign Language.

### Courage

Courage Toward Dragons, Courage Toward Humanoids, Courage When Facing Death, Courage in the Dark, Courage Against Demons, Courage In the Water, Courage Toward Water Creatures, Courage Toward Demons/Spirits/Deities, etc.

## Crafting & Repair

Blacksmithing, Bladesmithing, Bowyer, Candle Making, Carving, Coppersmithing/Bronzesmithing, Fletching/Arrow Making, Gem Cutting, Glassworking, Leatherworking, Spinning, Stonemasonry, Tailoring/Sewing, Weaving, Welding.

## Detect

Detect Lie, Detect Hidden Motives, Detect Hidden Objects, Detect Hidden People, Detect Traps, Eavesdropping, Smell Poison, Taste Poison.

## Entertainment & Performance

Acting, Dancing, Juggling, Joke Telling, Musical Instrument (specialized by instrument, e.g.- Drum, Flute, Fiddle) Singing, Storytelling, Ventriloquism.

## Gambling & Gaming

Card Games (by individual game, e.g.- Poker, Blackjack, Magic the Gathering) , Dice Games (by individual game), Physical Games (by individual game)

## Magic & Psionics

See the *Magic & Psionics* section for schools and disciplines.

## Medicine

Bandaging, Bone Resetting, Diagnose, Prescribe/Use Civilized Medicine, Prescribe/Use Herbal Medicine, Stitching, Surgery/Operate.

## Science & Gadgets

Cell Phones, Computers, Explosives, Hacking/Cracking, Phone Taps, Wiring.

## Stealth

Camouflage/Hide, Disguise/Impersonate, Forgery, Lock Picking, Pickpocket/Steal, Silent Movement, Shoplifting, Trap Arming & Disarming.

## Vehicles & Machines

Carts, Wagons, Canoes, Galleons, Catamarans, Automobiles, Bicycles, Motorcycles, 18-wheelers, Tanks, Commercial Aircraft, Fighter Jets, Space Shuttles, Space Fighters, Space Bombers, Space Capital Ships.

# Knowledge

Knowledge represents what a character knows, and acts very similarly to attributes and skills. All knowledge that PCs and NPCs have must also have a descriptor and dice value. For example, a preacher might choose the following knowledge: Christian Theology: Educated 9, The Bible: Authoritative 10. When choosing knowledge for characters, try to pick subjects that aren't covered by skills and attributes. For example, a character doesn't need knowledge of swordsmanship, as this is represented by the Combat, Melee skill area and the Long Blade skill. However, a character might have Knowledge of Swords, Sword History, etc.

Characters can be asked to roll knowledge versus difficulty any time their memory or use of such knowledge comes into play. Characters can also roll knowledge of a subject versus another character's knowledge of the same subject to see who knows more about a particular topic or to see who remembers it first. Basically, any time knowledge can be used and no attribute or skill is in play, use the value of the knowledge.

For example, in one instance in a Hyborian Age adventure called *The City of the Spider God*, characters come across a statue in the likeness of an ancient god. If they successfully roll Knowledge of Religion, Gods, Statuary, the Province Zamora, Zamoran Religion, or any other related knowledge vs. a predefined Difficulty (in this case Challenging 8), they successfully identify the statue as a depiction of the ancient Spider God Omm. What they do with this knowledge is up to them.

## Creating Characters, Character Sheets

When creating characters, Players must fill out a character sheet. These short, standard templates help keep track of the character, but without the unnecessarily complex stat counting found in so many other systems. Character Sheet templates are found at the end of this manual.

The first step in creating a character is filling out that character's basic information, including the character's name, age, race, height, weight, and so on. Usually races in roleplaying games impart bonuses and penalties to characters. This is not the case in *Saga*, as racial stereotyping is offensive and stupid. Race has no bearing on the nature of your character, except for the character's general appearance and perhaps place of origin. This is all straightforward.

Following the basic information are the character's attributes and skill categories, as well as the character's skill specializations. Choosing numerical dice values and corresponding descriptors for attributes and skills makes up the bulk of character creation.

Generating values for Attributes, Skill Areas, and Specialized Skills can be done in several different ways. These are detailed below.

### FREE CHOICE

This is the recommended method. If your gaming group all trust one another not to ruin the story with too-powerful characters, everyone creating a character can simply assign whatever values they want to all attributes and skills, and can choose whatever knowledge, profession, and gear you want. This allows everyone to play characters that they want to play, and adds an element of realism to the story. If you use this method, try not to get carried away. And keep in mind, the more invincible your beginning character is, the more likely the storyteller is to throw every earth-shattering death machine she can conceive of your way. As always, Storytellers have veto power if they feel that players are making starting characters too strong and well-equipped.

### STAT CAP

For those who want more structure, this method is the best. The Narrator sets a ceiling that no player can exceed when setting values and descriptors for statistics, such as "nothing above Good 8". Or, the Narrator can set the limit of 8s, 9s, and 10s characters can assign to starting stats. This method is best suited for campaigns in which a lot of character growth and development is desired.

## RANDOM CHANCE

The third method is a chaotic but fun way to play. With this method, players all roll a d10 (10-sided die) for each of the attributes and skill categories on their character sheets. The number that Players roll is the numerical value for that stat. Depending on what comes up, players can choose their specialized skills (and roll randomly for these too) and their classes/professions and gear based on the results.

When choosing values for these stats, irrespective of the method used, try not to be limited to roleplaying stereotypes. If you want to play an outdoorsy ranger who is also skilled in magic, go for it. Or, if you want a warrior who is also good at charming people and embroidery, that's great too. Troll who hacks computers aided by her patron spirit Coyote? Awesome.

After filling out Attributes and Skill Areas, players must then choose specialized skills (if any), and decide on the weapons, armor, and gear their character is carrying.

## A NOTE ON CHOOSING SPECIALIZED SKILLS & CREATING GOOD CHARACTERS

Regardless of the method Players and the Storyteller agree upon, all Attributes and Skill Categories must have a value and descriptor. After filling in Attributes and Skills, players then have the option of choosing specialized skills within the various categories. As mentioned previously, Players don't have to choose specialized skills, and entire campaigns can be played using only the values and descriptors for skill areas, as these areas represent one's general competency in all the skills encompassed within that area.

However, characters are much deeper and more complex if Players give them skill specializations, and it is highly recommended that Narrators encourage and help Players to do so. It is especially helpful if Players create characters with specializations above AND below the umbrella generalized score. This helps flesh out character concepts and makes characters believable.

For example, when helping a friend create a character for a Hyborian era campaign, we decided his character has a Good 7 in his general Courage Skill Area, meaning he's typically pretty brave. However, we also decided since his character is from a society of ancestor-worshippers, that he is deathly afraid of Demons, Gods, and Deities. So, we gave him the skill specialization Courage Toward Demons/Gods: Terrified 1. Another player in this campaign wanted his farmer character to have some armed fighting skills even though his Combat, Melee skill area was ranked Horrible 2. So, since this character has experience with rakes, scythes, and shovels, we gave him the specialized skill Farm Implements: Talented 8. The very best characters in *Saga* campaigns will follow these examples.

# SIZE

A stat that all characters and creatures share is Size, which describes how massive or diminutive a character or creature is. Size factors into the game mostly in battle, where it can make a huge difference. The following chart gives the sizes of all creatures, vehicles, and buildings in the game. Following the chart is an explanation of each category.

Because most humanoid are Size 1, almost all PCs and NPCs in *Saga* will also be Size 1. Exceptions include faeries and gnomes, who are Size 0, and Trolls, Ogres, Giants, and Orcs who are all Size 2 (in certain campaign settings). As a game mechanic, Size mostly comes into play in combat. Please see the chapters *Basic Combat Rules* and *Conducting Mass Battles & Wars*.

## Comparative Sizes of Creatures, Vehicles, & Buildings

0	Minuscule Creatures
1	Small Creatures, Small Vehicles
2	Medium Creatures, Medium Vehicles, Small Buildings
3	Large Creatures, Large Vehicles, Medium Buildings
4	Huge Creatures, Huge Vehicles, Large Buildings
5	Enormous Creatures, Enormous Vehicles, Huge Buildings

### CREATURES

Minuscule Creatures: Tiny Animals, Fish, Gnomes, Pixies, Faeries, Sprites, Birds, etc.

Small Creatures: All Humanoid Races, Deer, Wolves, Small Horses, etc.

Medium Creatures: Small Giants, Warhorses, Bears, Elephants, Rhinos, etc.

Large Creatures: Large Giants, Dinosaurs, Dragons, Whales, Giant Squid, etc.

Huge Creatures: Demons, Space Creatures, Small Gods, etc.

Enormous Creatures: Large Demons, Large Gods, Elder Gods, Great Old Ones, etc.

### VEHICLES & MACHINES

Small vehicles & machines: Motorcycles, bikes, row boats, canoes, catamarans, etc.

Medium vehicles & machines: Cars, trucks, biplanes, WWII jet plane, siege engines, small tanks, speeders

Large vehicles & machines: 18-wheel trucks, fighter jets, helicopters, galleons, trains, space fighters, space shuttles, walker-style Mechs, etc.

Huge vehicles & machines: Jumbo jets, (sea)destroyers, submarines, aircraft carrier, (sea)battleships, space corvettes, space frigates, etc.

Enormous vehicles & machines: Space destroyers, space stations, space capital ships, etc.

### BUILDINGS

Small buildings: Shacks, primitive shelters, small walls and fences

Medium buildings: Houses, huts, longhouses, other dwellings, barns, sheds, walls

Large buildings: Forts, castles, malls, office complexes, towers, warehouses, guildhalls

Huge buildings: Skyscrapers, massive fortified castles, super-malls, cyberpunk buildings

# CLASSES, JOBS, PROFESSIONS

After choosing a character's attribute and skill category values and descriptors, Players should then choose a few classes to assign to their character based on their skills. Unlike other RPGs *Saga* encourages multiple classes for every character, as most people in any society in the real world have a variety of skills and functions in society. For example, I practice *muay thai* and Brazilian *jiu jitsu*, I write, I practice a number of primitive skills and bushcraft skills, I juggle, and I make music. Thus, if I were a *Saga* character I could be called a Brawler, Grappler, Writer, Bowyer/Fletcher, Bushranger, Juggler, and Musician. It may seem excessive to have so many classes, but the more complex and intricate your characters are, the better your campaigns and adventures will be.

When assigning classes, Players should also use Class Descriptors to further engage in narrative. Class Descriptors are colorful terms that detail the amount of skill characters have in each of their jobs. For example, I'm not a master grappler yet (I'd probably have a Average 5 value), so I might be called Run-of-the-Mill Grappler. However, I do juggle really well and I'm a pretty fierce stand up fighter (probably a Good 7), so I might also be called a Talented Juggler and a Brutal Brawler. Using terms such as these helps create believable characters.

Classes depend largely on campaign setting, like everything else. You won't be a wizard in a sci-fi campaign, and you certainly won't be a cowboy in a high-fantasy campaign. Following below is a sample list of classes available in *Saga*. Use reason when deciding whether or not each class fits into your chosen campaign setting, and please feel free to adapt and change pre-existing classes and to create new classes to fit your adventure.

## Sample Classes

Acrobat or Gymnast, Actor, Archer, Artist, Assassin, Author or Poet or Writer, Bartender/Barkeep, Bard or Minstrel or Singer-songwriter, Beastmaster or Animal Trainer, Beggar or Panhandler, Blacksmith, Blade Master, Bladesmith, Bodyguard, Bounty Hunter, Bowyer or Bow Maker, Brawler or Pugilist, Burglar, Carpenter, Chef, Chemist, Cleric or Healer, Cop or Police Officer, Demolitionist, Diplomat, Doctor or Midwife or Master Healer, Druid or Geomancer, Electrician, Farmer, Firefighter, Fisherman, Fletcher or Arrow Maker, Gambler or Gamer, Geographer, Gladiator, Glassblower, Guard or Sentry or Sentinel, Gunner or Pistolero, Hacker or Cracker, Herbalist, Historian, Hunter, Illusionist, Investigator or Detective, Jester or Clown, Jeweler, Marksman, Master-at-Arms, Master of the Hunt, Master Herbalist, Master Smith, Master Warrior, Mathematician, Martial Artist, Mechanic, Medic or Nurse or Fieldmedic, Medium or Oracle or Diviner, Merchant or Peddler or Purveyor or Vendor, Midwife or Wisewoman, Mobilized Soldier or Cavalry, Monk-warrior or Sohei, Musician, Necromancer, Ninja or Shinobi, Paladin or Battlemage or Shugenja, Philosopher, Photographer, Pickpocket or Thief, Pilot, Pirate or Space Pirate, Priest or Pastor (et al.), Psionicist (Telepath or Telekinetic), Psi-warrior, Psi-war-weaver, Psi-weaver (psi-shaman, etc), Ranger or Rover or Adventurer, Ronin, Rifler or Sharpshooter, Rogue or Hijacker or Highwayman, Samurai or Knight or Retainer, Scholar or Academic or Intellectual, Scientist, Scout, Sculptor, Shaman or Soothsayer or Witchdoctor, Shipwright, Singer, Skipper or Captain or Admiral, Sniper, Sociologist, Soldier, Spy, Stalker, Stonemason, Storyteller or Orator, Swordsman or Fencer, Swashbuckler, Tailor or Designer, Tanner, Tattoo Artist or Piercer, Trapper, Warrior or Fighter, Weaponsmith, Wizard or Mage or Sorcerer.

Besides these generic classes, individual campaign settings will have a variety of more specific ones. For example, a campaign set in the *Dune* universe will have Mentat, Dukes and Barons of the Landsraad, Fremen Warrior, Fremen Wormrider, and so on. A character in a recent Hyborian Age (world of Conan) campaign was an Acolyte of Bel, and another was a Hyrkanian Horsearcher. Look to particular campaign settings for information on specific classes.



## RAISING & LOWERING STATS

There are several ways attributes and skills can change throughout the course of a *Saga* campaign. Characters who use multiple skills in a skill category for an extended period of time will increase that category by 1 point and descriptor. Also, if characters use a specialized skill enough times, that skill will increase. Some attributes can also improve with time, such as a character lifting weights and increasing her Strength, or eating healthier and running long distances to increase Endurance. Gaining experience in such a way is left entirely to the discretion of the Players and Storytellers, and should fit the story. Storytellers have the right to veto players' decisions to increase their stats if they feel the choice is unjustified or unwarranted.

Statistics can also decrease permanently. This usually only happens through extensive disuse. For example, a character who ages and never exercises will lose Strength. Characters who don't practice skills can get rusty and lose points in these areas too. This probably won't be too common in a *Saga* campaign, but it is possible.

Stats also frequently change for a temporary duration of time. This happens when characters are injured, exhausted, ill, enchanted by a spell, blessed or cursed by some deity, and so on. Temporary stat effects typically heal over time, especially when characters rest and recover.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

### *Types of Conflict*

The two main types of conflict in *Saga* are Conflicts Between Characters and Conflicts With Environments. The two operate very similarly.

**Conflicts Between Characters** are all those disputes involving the attributes and/or skills of two characters. This usually comes in the form of conflict between a PC (player-character) and an NPC (non-player character) controlled by the Narrator, although two PCs or two NPCs can square off against one another too. In these types of conflicts, players and narrators use their attribute and skill statistics in rolls to determine who is victorious. Statistics and their values and descriptors are described in the chapter *Attributes & Skills, Knowledge, Character Creation*.

**Conflicts With Environments** come about when a PC or NPC is attempting to do something and is hindered by an obstacle in the world. This includes things like locked doors, chasms to leap, falling stones that must be dodged, scavenging for food in the wild or in urban areas (i.e.- dumpster diving). navigating tough terrain, breaking down a door, swimming in rough waters, and so on. Conflicts of this nature are resolved by using a character's attribute or skill statistics and the Difficulty of the task at hand.

# Difficulty

Difficulty of tasks is determined by the Storyteller, and is based on the difficulty of the task itself and the added difficulty given the surrounding environmental/situational conditions. Difficulty operates the same as attributes and skills, in that it has a value and descriptor. Since environments and environmental conditions don't have statistics like PCs and NPCs, Difficulty is used in Conflicts With Environments. The following chart gives suggestions for descriptors for each numerical level.

<i>Difficulty</i>	<i>Descriptors</i>
1-2	Very Easy, Rudimentary, Basic, Painless, Effortless, etc.
3-4	Easy, Simple, Plain, Straightforward, Unchallenging, Below Average
5-6	Average, Moderate, Mediocre, Fair, Decent, So-so, Standard, etc.
7-8	Challenging, Tough, Demanding, Problematic, Tricky, Above Average
9-10	Difficult, Hard, Complex, Nearly Impossible, Taxing, Trying, etc.
11-12	Masterfully Difficult, Impossible, Insurmountable, Elite, etc.
13-14	Legendary, Heroic, Mythic, Epic, Herculean, Fabled, etc.
15+	Unfathomable, Transcendental, Arcane, Eldritch, Supernatural, etc.

The following chart provides more specific, tangible examples of Difficulty values and descriptors. All of the following tasks are related to the Lockpicking Skill for continuity's sake.

<i>Difficulty</i>	<i>Task</i>
1 or 2 (Very Easy)	Pick a low-security lock (warded/wafer-tumbler) with adequate tools
3 or 4 (Easy)	Pick a low-security lock (warded/wafer-tumbler) with improvised or shoddy tools
5 or 6 (Average)	Pick a medium security lock (pin-tumbler padlock) with adequate tools; pick a high security lock (pin-tumbler doorknob) with superior tools (automatic lockpicking gun, bump key)
7 Or 8 (Challenging)	Pick a medium-security lock (pin-tumbler padlock) with improvised or shoddy tools; pick a high-security lock (pin-tumbler doorknob) with adequate tools; pick a very high-security lock with superior tools (automatic lockpicking gun or bump key)
9 or 10 (Difficult)	Pick a high-security lock (pin-tumbler doorknob) with shoddy or improvised tools; pick a very high-security lock with adequate tools
11 or 12 (Masterful)	Pick a very high-security lock with improvised or shoddy tools; pick a magically-enchanted lock with adequate or sub-par tools
13 or 14 (Legendary)	Open the lock to the Tombs of Atuan with magic; open an ancient, rusty, magically-enchanted lock with improvised tools during an earthquake?!
15+ (Unfathomable)	Decipher and pick the magically-enchanted, madness-inspiring, incomprehensibly-complex, searingly-painful lock on a timeless tome of forgotten evil lore, etc.

As with the values given for attributes and skills, most difficulties encountered in a *Saga* campaign will be rated between 1-10. This represents the range of difficulty for normal, mundane, physical actions in the material world. An average humanoid PC or NPC will very rarely encounter a difficulty beyond 10, excepting the rare case of a masterful 11 or 12. 13s, 14s, and beyond are reserved for legendary and arcane

situations.

Difficulty is also frequently subject to change due to circumstantial bonuses and penalties. Please refer to the chapter *Bonuses & Penalties in Conflict Resolution* for more information.

## Resolving Conflicts

*Saga* uses a simple system of die-rolling to determine the outcome of conflicts. Unlike previous incarnations of this system (and many other systems, at that), conflict resolution in *Saga* is a simple, easy process. Conflicts Between Characters and Conflicts With Environments are performed identically, except that Conflicts With Environments use a **Difficulty Statistic** as described in the previous section.

Any time two forces are in conflict – whether it be two characters or a character and an external force or impediment – the first step and only step in resolving the conflict is a **Conflict Resolution Roll**, described below.

**NOTE:** All of the rolls discussed below assume that the default dice used in resolving conflicts are all d10s (ten-sided dice). Although these are the recommended denomination, players and storytellers are welcome to substitute any other denomination *as long as they are consistent and homogeneous*. For example, a given gaming group may substitute d6s (six-sided) or d20s (twenty-sided) for all such rolls, but only if they use ALL six-sided or ALL twenty-sided. Mixing dice within conflict resolution rolls breaks the mechanic, and is NOT allowed.

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION ROLLS

To perform such a roll, the acting player rolls a number of d10s (ten-sided dice) equal to her relevant attribute or skill. Then, the opposing force does the same. In a Conflict Between Characters, the player or storyteller controlling the opposing PC or NPC rolls a number of d10s equal to the relevant attribute or skill. In Conflicts With the Environment, the storyteller determines the Difficulty of the attempt then rolls a number of d10s equal to the Difficulty of the task. There may be some in-game scenarios in which the narrator is controlling an NPC (non-player character) who attempts a task with a difficulty. In such cases, the narrator rolls for both the acting NPC and the Difficulty of the task.

Whichever force rolls higher wins the conflict. If the acting PC (or NPC) rolls higher than the opposing character or Difficulty of the task, she succeeds in whatever she's attempting. If the acting PC (or NPC) rolls lower than the opposing character or Difficulty of the task, she fails in whatever she's attempting. It's that easy.

## Example Conflicts

### Example 1: Conflict Between Characters

Thujax and Jidar are facing each other in mortal combat. Thujax attempts to hit Jidar by swinging her halberd at him (Polearm Skill). Jidar attempts to block the blow with a warhammer (Blunt Weapons Skill). Thujax has the specialized skill Polearm Weapons Fair 5. Jidar has no specialization, so he uses his Good 7 Combat, Melee Generalization. The player controlling Thujax rolls 5d10 for a total of 34. The narrator rolls 7d10 for Jidar, getting a total of 49. Thujax's attack fails, as Jidar successfully blocks the blow.

### Example 2.: Conflict With Environment

A player dictates that his character, Sprinting Lion, is attempting to make a short self-bow, having gathered the materials necessary to do so. The storyteller announces a Difficulty of Moderate 6. Sprinting Lion has the specialized skill Bowyearing at Excellent 9. The player rolls 9d10 for a combined result of 66. The narrator rolls 6d10 for a combined result of 42. After a few hours of labor, Sprinting Lion succeeds in crafting a self-bow.

### Example 3: Conflict Between Characters

The PC Willow is attempting to punch an enemy NPC with her Masterful 10 Drunken Monkey Kung-fu Specialization. The NPC has no relevant specialized skill, so he attempts to block with his Pitiful 1 Combat, Unarmed Generalization. Willow's player rolls 10d10 for a result of 73. The narrator rolls a single d10 for the NPC, getting a 10. Willow successfully pummels the NPC in the face.

## GENERATING RANDOM NUMBERS, LUCK

There may occasionally come a time when Luck is involved in a conflict between forces, such as taking a blind shot around a corner, swinging weapons wildly without aiming, using the chaotic force known as magic, or playing games of luck within a *Saga* campaign. At any time luck or random chance is involved in a conflict, there are two options for resolving the conflict.

The first is that characters can give themselves a Luck attribute stat (with a value usually between 1-10), to be generated at character creation, and used any time luck comes into play. Similarly, characters can have specialized skills related to specific situations of luck. For example, "Terribly Unlucky at Cards 1" or "Lucky Shot 4". These methods are useful and easy, but somewhat less fun than the other method, and they fail to capture the random essence of luck.

The other way to generate a value for situations involving random chance is by random chance itself. That is, by rolling a d10 (10-sided die). This yields a number 1-10, which falls within the typical mundane humanoid scale. This stat is then used in the current conflict as a substitute Stat or Difficulty value, and represents the true randomness of "luck".

## BONUSES & PENALTIES IN CONFLICT ROLLS

Many items, magic effects, status effects, cyberware, and circumstances can impart bonuses to the user or target. There are also many items, magic effects, status effects, and circumstances that impart penalties to various stats. Most bonuses and penalties in *Saga* give +/- 1, but there are exceptions with larger bonuses and penalties. Bonuses and penalties are also cumulative, so if a character has a camouflage cloak that gives +1 to hide and a spell of invisibility that gives +1, that character gets +2 when attempting to hide.

When a bonus or penalty is incurred, it comes in the form of a d10 roll that is then added (if a bonus) or subtracted (if a penalty) to the relevant conflict resolution roll.

For example, if the previously mentioned character is attempting to hide while wearing a camouflaged cloak, he rolls 8d10 (Talented 8 Hiding skill) then rolls and adds an additional d10 (cloak's +1 bonus) in any attempt to hide. On the opposite hand, if the same character were wearing a neon pink cloak (thus making himself more visible), he'd get a -1 penalty instead. In such an event, he'd roll 8d10 (Talented 8 Hiding), then the narrator would roll a d10 and subtract that result from the 8d10 total. (Likewise, in the same situation, the -1 penalty to hide due to the pink cloak could translate into a +1 bonus to Detect for any opposing PC/NPC if that's easier for the narrator.)

Just bear in mind that bonuses and penalties are extra d10 rolls added to or subtracted from relevant attempts. Characters who incur penalties DO NOT lose d10s from their attributes and skills (e.g., a -1 penalty to hide does NOT reduce the character's hide skill by 1 point, but applies a negative d10 roll to their attempts).

On the *Saga* character sheet (found at the end of this document and elsewhere), there is a space entitled "Status Effects". This space is provided to record semi-permanent and permanent bonuses and penalties to stats that characters receive. It is not meant to be used for fleeting status effects that don't actually change a character's stats (like darkness, for example).

Typically, Narrators will narrate bonuses and penalties accrued as a result of circumstance, situation, or environment by simply telling PCs when they receive bonuses and penalties. For example, "Your character is attacking from the high ground with an axe, so I'll give you a circumstantial +2 to your rolls to hit." or "You're terrified, so you suffer -1 to all attempts in conflicts until you recover".

Another type of bonus that players are likely to incur is **Reward Dice**, which are described in the next chapter.

### *Circumstantial Bonuses & Penalties*

As mentioned in the previous section, many circumstances and situations can impart bonuses and penalties onto PCs and NPCs. To help Narrators understand how this works and to emphasize that it is important to the game's mechanics, this section contains a few examples. Many other specific instances are likely to occur in gaming sessions.

<i>Circumstance(s)</i>	<i>Circumstantial Bonus/Penalty</i>
Pitch Black Darkness	-1 or -2 in all attempts involving use of sight (attack/defense rolls, detect rolls)
Blinding Bright Light	-1 or -2 in all attempts involving use of sight (attack/defense rolls, detect rolls)
Drunkenness, intoxication	-1 or -2 in all attempts
Attacking an Enemy From the Side	+1 in rolls to hit
Attacking an Enemy From Behind	+2 in rolls to hit
Knowledge of a Creature's Behaviors	+2 in rolls to hit, +2 in rolls to tame
Charming an NPC of the same race	+1 to communication
Climbing a Wall in the Heavy Rain	-2 in attempts to climb (or +2 to difficulty)
Taming a Horse in a Thunderstorm	-1 in attempts in tame (or +1 difficulty)

## *Examples of Bonuses & Penalties in Conflict Resolution Rolls*

### EXAMPLE 1

Seth attacks an NPC from behind using his Poor 2 Short Blade Specialization, and the narrator gives him a +2 circumstantial bonus to hit due to attacking from behind. The NPC attempts to dodge using her Speed of Average 5. Seth rolls 2d10 for his skill, netting 12, then rolls an additional 2d10 for the bonus, this time getting 14, for a combined total of 26 on the attempt. The narrator rolls 5d10 for the NPC's speed, getting a total of 23. Seth succeeds in his roll to hit.

### EXAMPLE 2

Having failed his previous Courage rolls, Worf is presently scared witless. The beast he is facing reels and attacks him with its Brawling Specialization of Average 6. Worf tells the Narrator he's going to block with his cutlass, using his Longblade Specialization of Good 7. The Narrator tells Worf that he receives a circumstantial -2 in this attempt to block due to his terror. Worf rolls 7d10 for his longblade skill, totaling 54. The narrator rolls 6d10 for the beast's brawling, getting 49. The narrator then rolls 2d10 for Worf's terror penalty, getting a total of 14, then he subtracts 14 from Worf's roll of 54, giving him a final result of 40, less than the beast's roll. Worf fails to block and the beast succeeds in swiping him.

## REWARD POINTS: INCENTIVES FOR GOOD ROLEPLAYING

The purpose of *Saga* is primarily to tell a good story and to entertain the players and Narrator alike through good storytelling. As such, *Saga* implements a system of Reward Dice to encourage good roleplaying and to discourage the Munchkinism so common among roleplayers.

Any time a player exhibits excellent roleplaying or storytelling for his/her character or toward the story in general, the Narrator should give that PC a Reward Point (recorded on the character sheet). These points can be redeemed in any conflict roll or action that the rewarded PC is engaged in, and they impart a circumstantial +1 to the PC's attempt. Reward Points are cumulative, and PCs can accumulate any number of rewards for good roleplaying. Storytellers are encouraged to be sparing in giving out rewards for good roleplaying, since they give great power and influence to the PCs.

# BASIC COMBAT RULES

## *Battle Basics*

The rules for combat in *Saga* are meant to be quick, deadly, and reflective of real combat.

Battle in the *Saga* system is narrated, just like all of the other actions characters take. Movement, weapon range, ammo, rate of fire, and all other simulationist statistics are not terribly important to keep track of. All of these things can be narrated by the Player-Characters and the Storyteller as battle occurs.

Roleplaying groups may want to use miniatures to represent their characters visually. Doing so adds a tangible element to the game, and allows for the representation of battle tactics.

## *Battle Situation & Sequence, Turns & Rounds*

The first aspect of battle that a storyteller must take into account is the situation or atmosphere surrounding the battle, which in turn helps to determine the sequence. There are three types of battle situation: ambush, mutual, and surprise.

In an ambush battle, characters are unaware of the presence of enemies and are totally unprepared for battle. In such a battle, all enemies act first in order of their speed attribute (highest first), then, after all enemies have acted, player characters act in order of their speed attribute (highest first), and turns continue in the same order.

In a mutual battle, player characters and their enemies are equally aware of the presence of each other, and all parties present know that battle is going to take place. In such a battle, all parties present – character and enemy – act in order of their speed attribute (highest first). If two or more parties have the same speed attribute, the Narrator determines the order according to the situation. This is the most common kind of encounter.

In a surprise battle, player characters successfully sneak up on their enemies and surprise them with attack. In such a battle, player characters act first in order of their speed attribute (highest first), then, after all player characters have acted, enemies act in order of their speed attribute (highest first).

After battle situation and sequence have been determined, PCs and NPCs act in the appropriate order in a series of turns and rounds. A round represents about 1 to 3 seconds of time, and a round has elapsed after every character has taken a turn. A turn represents a character's actions within a particular round. During a turn, Players vocalize what their characters are doing, then make appropriate rolls to determine success or failure. In any given turn a character can do many things: try to intimidate other characters, move, attack, recover an item off a fallen body, revive a friend, hide behind cover, try to inspire courage in others, and a number of other things.

## Size In Battle

As mentioned in earlier sections, size can have tremendous impact on the game. The most apparent effect comes in battle, and it's important to learn these rules in campaigns where player characters will be facing creatures much larger than themselves.

Two characters or vehicles acting upon each other in battle will receive bonuses or penalties depending on which is larger and which is smaller, and by how much. These bonuses affect rolls to bypass armor, rolls to wound, rolls to knock out, and any rolls involving strength. If an acting character is larger than his target, the character receives bonuses; if an acting character is smaller than his target, he receives penalties.

If the size difference between two things is 1 level, the larger receives a +1 circumstantial bonus to all rolls listed above if acting, or the smaller receives a -1 circumstantial penalty to all rolls listed above if acting.

If the size difference between two things is 2 levels, the larger receives a circumstantial +2 bonus to all rolls listed above if acting, or the smaller receives a -2 circumstantial penalty to all rolls listed above if acting.

If the size difference between two things is 3 levels or more, the larger is completely immune to the smaller and will always win in bouts of strength, and the smaller will always fail in tests of strength and is automatically severely wounded or killed if hit by the larger.

In the equipment section following later in this guidebook, weapons all have a size statistic. This is the size of creatures and vehicles normally affected by the weapon. Size bonuses/penalties are judged counting from this number. So, Size 2 weapons get +1 in rolls against humanoids (size 1), and size 3 weapons get +2. This means your character will most likely die if you get hit by one and it bypasses your armor. Be careful.

All creatures encountered in a *Saga* campaign have a size value. Some of them have a range, such as Size 1-2, which means these creatures can come in a variety of sizes. As such, if a creature has a size range, say 1-2, and it also has natural weapons like a vicious bite or claws, those natural attacks also have the same range but will always be the same as the size chosen for the creature by the Storyteller. So, if a storyteller wants a size 2 griffin as an enemy, the griffin's bite and claw attacks are also size 2. Any armor these creatures have also corresponds to their size.

## Attacks of Opportunity

Characters engaged in melee combat – brawling or with weapons – are normally prevented from moving on their turn. If a PC or NPC engaged in melee combat wishes to turn and run away, the enemy she is engaging gets to make an Attack of Opportunity. This counts as a regular attack, and it's one of the only times a character will be able to attack on another character's turn. Rolls to hit, to bypass armor, and to wound are made as usual. A fleeing character turns and flees successfully if she is not badly wounded. However, there's always a chance that turning and fleeing will end in injury. It's always dangerous to turn one's back in battle.

For the sake of simplicity, Storytellers and Players who don't want to use this rule can omit it.



## Courage & Intimidation

Some creatures are innocuous, and other are downright terrifying. In a fight it's good to use whatever advantages one has to defeat the enemy, including that horrendous mug, those bulging muscles, or an ear-shattering scream.

In battle any character can take one entire turn to attempt to intimidate another character by rolling communication or intimidate (if the character has specialized intimidate) vs. courage of the target. If successful, the target is scared and suffers a -1 penalty to all future rolls, including rolls involving courage, for an amount of time appropriate to the source of the fright. For example, being shouted at by thugs might frighten you for a few seconds, seeing a ghost might frighten you for several minutes, and being chased and growled at by a raging dragon might frighten you for several hours.

Characters can accumulate multiple intimidation and fright penalties. Anything greater than -3 represents total blithering madness, at which point characters don't really need to roll anyway.

There are also other actions that cause a character to make a courage check that may or may not be performed by another character. Having a gun held to one's head, having a knife held to one's throat, hearing a horrifying scream from somewhere nearby, witnessing a horrible mass killing, exploring a haunted place, being confronted face to face by a colossal beast, watching a friend or loved one die in some nasty manner, and witnessing an explosion are all things that could cause fear penalties outside of battle.

Any time a character is suffering from fear/intimidation, she make take an entire turn to attempt to recover, thus nullifying the penalties. This is done by rolling courage vs. communication/intimidation of whatever inflicted the fear, not forgetting to take bonuses/penalties into account. If a character is successful, she steadies herself and all penalties from fear/intimidation are removed.

Fear penalties can also be dispelled by a number of sources outside battle: watching the source of dread die or disappear, being comforted by a friend or loved one, emerging from a horrible place into calm daylight, taking solace in a place a character considers holy, hiding under the sheets, and so on. Any of these actions can help remove some or all of the penalties related to fear and intimidation; it's up to the storyteller to decide within the confines of the story.

# ATTACKING & DEFENDING

To commence an attack, a character must declare who they are attacking and how. After declaring how and with what a character is attacking, the acting character must take these steps to determine the outcome of the attack.

These are:

**Roll to Hit:** This is the first roll in an attack sequence. If it succeeds, the character who is performing the attack strikes the target; if this roll fails, the character who is attacking misses the target. If this roll succeeds and the target is armored, move on to the roll to bypass armor. If this roll succeeds and the target is unarmored, move on to the roll to wound.

**Determine hit location:** This is done by player dictation or by Narrator discretion.

**Roll to Bypass Armor:** This roll follows a successful Roll to Hit. It determines whether or not the attacking character's weapon breaks through the target's armor. If the target is not wearing armor that covers the area of the body that's being attacked, or if the target is wearing no armor at all, skip this roll and move directly to the roll to wound. If the target is wearing armor and this roll fails, the target's armor protects from the attack. If the target is wearing armor and this roll succeeds, move on to:

**Roll to Wound:** This follows a successful Roll to Hit on an unarmored target and a successful Roll to Bypass Armor on an armored target. This is a crucial roll, as it can severely wound or kill the target. The location of the attack is important in determining what happens if this roll succeeds.

The next sections examine each of these rolls in detail and show exactly how they're performed.

## *Rolling to Hit*

To attempt a roll to hit a player must understand two things: 1. the type of weapon and technique being used to attack, and 2. the type of weapon or defense being used to avoid the attack. When both have been determined, the attacker rolls his skill against the target's skill if he is blocking or speed if he is dodging. If the attacker's roll is higher, he successfully hits the target. If the target's roll is higher, he dodges or blocks.

If a roll to hit is successful, move on to Determining Hit Location. If a roll to hit fails, the attacker has missed and his turn is over.

The charts below list all the ways a character can attack and defend:

<i>Means of Attacking</i>	<i>Corresponding Skill Area</i>
Melee Weapons	Combat, Melee or Applicable Skill (if specialized)
Ranged Weapons	Combat, Ranged or Applicable Skills (if specialized)
Punches, Kicks, Headbutts, etc.	Combat, Unarmed or Brawling (if specialized)
Wrestling Techniques	Combat, Unarmed or Grappling (if specialized)

### *Means of Defending*

Dodging  
Blocking with a shield  
Parrying/blocking with melee weapons  
Blocking with hands & feet  
Avoiding a wrestling technique  
Dodging while riding an animal  
Dodging while in a vehicle

### *Corresponding Skill Area*

Speed Attribute  
Combat, Melee or Shield (if specialized)  
Combat, Melee or Applicable Skill (if specialized)  
Combat, Unarmed or Brawling (if specialized)  
Combat, Unarmed or Grappling (if specialized)  
Animal Skills or Animal Riding (if specialized)  
Vehicles or Applicable Skill (if specialized)

Most ranged weapons can't be used to block attacks, except larger guns like rifles, miniguns, and rocket launchers that can be used to block melee attacks. Melee weapons can't be used to block ranged weapons, except thrown projectiles. Brawling may be used to block melee attacks, but not against ranged attacks. Grappling may only be used against grappling. If an attack or defense is in question, it is left to the discretion of the Narrator.

### *Examples of Rolling to Hit:*

1. When Publius attacks Gen'tao Ir, he is using a long bow to try and shoot Gen'tao, and Gen'tao Ir is trying to dodge the arrow. Publius rolls 6d10 (using his Average 6 Bow skill); Gen'tao Ir rolls 9d10 (using his Outstanding Speed 9). If Publius rolls higher, he hits Gen'tao Ir; if Gen'tao Ir rolls higher, he dodges Publius' attack.
2. Fargoth sloppily swings his tremendous axe at Jiub. Jiub is a slow dodger and has no other weapons or shields, so he decides to block the attack with his rifle butt. Fargoth rolls 1d10 (using his Horrible 1 Melee Combat skill), while Jiub rolls 3d10 (using his Poor 3 Rifle skill). If Fargoth rolls higher, he succeeds in axing Jiub; if Jiub rolls higher, he deflects Fargoth's attack.

## *Rolling to Hit Non-humanoid Animals & Monsters*

When attacking non-humanoid animals, attackers can roll against the Speed attribute of the target creature if it is attempting to dodge. However, if it is attempting to block an attack, its only defense is in the form of brawling, hence its Combat, Unarmed value.

## *Rolling to Hit Non-resisting Targets at a Distance*

Occasionally, PCs will have the chance to attack opponents who are unaware the attack is coming. This happens most often at a distance, when characters are attempting to snipe their target. It can also come about when a character is performing a melee sneak attack. Sneak attacks are covered in the Stealth section below.

When a PC or NPC makes an attack on a target who is unaware, that target is not attempting to resist. So, the target cannot use his skills to prevent the attack from hitting. When a PC or NPC makes a ranged attack on an unaware target, he compares his Combat, Ranged or Applicable Skill vs. the Difficulty of the

shot. Difficulty is left to the discretion of the Storyteller, and depends on many factors. A shot with no interfering obstacles, little wind, and little distance is Very Easy 1. Difficulty increases with distance, obstacles, and the amount of wind present when shooting.

Upon a successful Roll to Hit this way, Hit Location, Roll to Bypass Armor, and Roll to Wound must still be made.

## *Rolling to Bypass Armor*

After a Roll to Hit succeeds and the hit location is determined, this roll follows if the target is wearing armor where he is struck. If the target is not armored where he has been hit, move on to the Roll to Wound.

Every weapon listed in the weapons section has a stat called Penetration, which describes how well it pierces or breaks through armor. This stat is used when Rolling to Bypass Armor. If a character is attacking unarmed, his Strength attribute is used instead of Penetration when Rolling to Bypass Armor. Many armors are immune to unarmed attacks altogether.

Armor also has a statistic used in Rolls to Bypass Armor. This is called Protection, which shows how tough it is to breach that armor and how comprehensively it protects the wearer. After a successful Roll to Hit, if the target is wearing armor where he is hit, the attacking character must bypass the target's armor. Rolling to Bypass Armor is done by rolling the Penetration of the attacker's weapon vs. the Protection of the target's armor. Or, if the attack is unarmed, roll the attacker's Strength vs. Protection of the target's armor. If this roll succeeds, the attack breaches the target's armor and the attacker can then move on to the Roll to Wound. If this roll fails, the target's armor has stopped the attack and the attacking character's turn is over.

All armors also have a stat called Fire Resist, which shows how well the armor prevents flame damage. When attacking with a flame weapon, characters Roll to Bypass Armor by finding the Conflict Ratio between Deadliness of the weapon and Fire Resist of the target's armor. Some armors, like leather, resist fire very well even if they're not strong against ballistics and melee attacks.

## *Rolling to Bypass Armor with Shields*

In cyberpunk and future settings, characters often wear armor with shields for added protection against ballistic and melee attacks. Armor with shields is immune to brawling attacks and flame weapons, but EMP weapons ignore or disable shields.

When an attack hits a target who is wearing shielded armor, the attacker must attempt to bypass both the shields and the armor itself. This is done by comparing the Penetration of the weapon vs. the armor's Shields; if successful, attacker then compares the Penetration of the weapon and the armor's Protection. If either roll fails, the armor stops the attack and the attacker's turn is over. If an attacker manages to bypass the shields and the armor itself, move on to the roll to wound.

This same effect takes place when magic is used to create protective shielding around the caster or the caster's targets. Treat magical shielding just as armor shielding is treated, with the Shield Protection value equal to the amount of magic energy or skill value of the caster used to successfully create it.

## Rolling to Wound

### Attacks to the Limbs and Torso

This is the final roll in an attack, and follows a successful Roll to Hit and Roll to Bypass Armor if the target is wearing any. The Roll to Wound differs according to what part of the target's body has been hit.

Once a target has been hit in the limbs or torso region, the attacker rolls the Deadliness of his weapon against the Strength of the target. If the roll fails, the target comes away with minor scratches or bruises, but is otherwise unharmed. If a Roll to Wound succeeds, a Severe Injury is inflicted on whatever body region is hit. This can be a huge gash, broken bone, mangled limb, deep wound, internal bleeding, or outright death in the case of a torso wound. The severity is usually determined by the Storyteller, or the Storyteller may allow the attacking player to roll a d10 to determine results (a higher roll equals a bigger injury).

### Attacks to the Head

When a target is hit in the head by an attack, there's a much greater chance that she will be wounded. Whereas characters can resist injury to the body and limbs by increasing their Strength stat, the head is essentially unprotected by muscles and fat. For that reason, when a target is hit by an attack to the head, the attacker makes a different Roll to Wound. Since there is no skill or attribute involved in attempting to resist injury, the chance of a character not getting hurt when hit in the head is left to random chance.

The target rolls to generate a random stat as described earlier or uses their Luck attribute if they chose that options.. The resulting number represents the character's chance to avoid injury and is used as a substitute for their Strength stat. This applies to humanoid characters and non-humanoid animals and monsters.

After a character's random chance to avoid injury is determined, the attacking character must roll the Deadliness of his weapon vs. the target's Random Chance value to avoid injury. If this roll fails, the target comes away with a minor scratch or bruise and the attackers turn is over. If the roll succeeds, the target receives a severe injury to the head. This can be a fractured skull, broken cheek, shattered teeth, concussion, broken nose, internal hemorrhaging, or instant death. The severity can be dictated by the Narrator, or attacking players can roll a d10 to determine severity (higher rolls equal bigger injuries).

To make battle faster and more believable, many weapons can auto-kill targets struck in the head. This includes pretty much all firearms, bows, crossbows, and large melee weapons. If gaming groups wish, it can include all weapons to make battle even faster and deadlier.

### Example 1

Thufir has hit his enemy in the head, bypassed the enemy's helmet, and is about to roll to wound. The Storyteller rolls a d10 and determines that the target's chance to resist injury is a 3. Thufir rolls the deadliness of his Sledgehammer, Excellent 9 (i.e.: 9d10), while the storyteller rolls the chance to resist injury 3 (i.e. 3d10). If Thufir succeeds, he has successfully wounded (and probably killed) the target. If the storyteller rolls higher, Thufir's attack has glanced off the target and done no lasting damage.

## Rolling to Wound With Flame Weapons & Explosives

Due to the extremely deadly nature of flame-based weapons and explosives, these weapons require no Roll to Wound if they have hit and bypassed the armor of their target. Rolling to Hit and Rolling to Bypass Armor are done as usual when using these weapons, except that they have no Penetrate value. Simply use the Deadliness of the weapon for the Roll to Bypass Armor. No Roll to Wound is necessary if these weapons breach armor. This does not apply to creatures/vehicles of a larger size. Rolls to Wound must be made as usual when using explosives and flame weapons against larger creatures. Flame weapons and explosives must still penetrate shields on armors that have them.

Most explosives affect a large radius around them. Any creatures caught within this blast are subject to Rolls to Bypass Armor and Rolls to Wound. This can kill a lot of characters very quickly.

## Reloading Ranged Weapons

Another important aspect of battle is reloading ranged weapons. The speed at which a character reloads such weapons depends completely on that character's Speed attribute. The following charts show the reloading times for various weapons according to speed.

### Bows, Slings, Blowguns, & Projectile Weapons

<i>Speed</i>	<i>Time to reload</i>
Fair to excellent 5-10	0 turns, less than 1 second
Horrible or poor 1-4	1 turn, about 3 seconds

### Crossbows, Arbalests

<i>Speed</i>	<i>Time to reload</i>
Fair to excellent 5-10	1 turn, about 3 seconds
Horrible or poor 1-4	2 turn, about 6 seconds

### Matchlocks, Flintlocks, Blunderbusses, Windlasses

<i>Speed</i>	<i>Time to reload</i>
Fair to excellent 5-10	7 turns, about 20 seconds
Horrible to poor 1-4	10 turns, about 30 seconds

### Revolvers, Breakneck Shotguns, Guns With No Mag.

<i>Speed</i>	<i>Time to reload</i>
Fair to excellent 5-10	4 ammo rounds per turn
Horrible to poor 1-4	2 ammo rounds per turn

### Guns With Clips, Magazines, or Cartridges

<i>Speed</i>	<i>Time to reload</i>
Fair to excellent 5-10	1 turn, about 3 seconds
Horrible to poor 1-4	2 turns, about 6 seconds

## *Knocking Targets Unconscious with Blunt Weapons*

### ROLLING TO KNOCK OUT

Characters can be knocked unconscious by blunt weapons and brawling attacks. This section is concerned with blunt weapons. All blunt weapons can knock out targets, and some non-lethal blunt weapons can only be used to knock out. When a target is struck in the head with a lethal blunt weapon, roll to hit, to bypass armor (if necessary), and to wound as usual. Whether or not the target was wounded, roll the weapon's Deadliness and the target's Endurance (unless target was killed). If the Endurance roll is higher, the target retains consciousness and continues acting. If the Deadliness roll is higher, the target is knocked unconscious. Obviously, a character who has been fatally wounded and has died from a blunt weapon attack cannot be subject to a roll to knock out.

When a character is hit with a non-lethal weapon- that is, weapons used only to wound and to knock out- roll to hit and to bypass armor (if necessary) as usual. Then, instead of rolling to wound, roll to knock out as described above.

When a character loses consciousness, the amount of time they're knocked out widely varies. Unconsciousness usually lasts anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes, but it can stretch toward half an hour to an hour in extreme cases. Unconsciousness in such extreme duration usually only happens when a severe injury or concussion has been inflicted.

A round of battle represents between 1 and 3 seconds, and a lot of bad things can happen to a character who is unconscious for this length of time. Unconscious characters are subject to kidnapping, robbery, and worst of all, Sneak Attacks. Sneak Attacks are covered later in the section on Stealth. They should be considered a grave threat by all players and storytellers, especially those whose characters are unconscious.

Size bonuses and penalties, as described in the section on size in battle, apply to rolls to knock out.

For information on how characters can be knocked out in hand to hand combat, see the next section which covers Physical Attacks: Brawling and Grappling.

### KNOCK OUT PENALTIES

If you've ever been knocked out you know that when you regain awareness you're a bit groggy. Characters who've been knocked out suffer a -1 penalty to all attempts and rolls once they regain consciousness. Penalties last until they have a chance to rest and recover. Further K.O. penalties have no accumulative affect. The amount of time it takes to recover is up to the discretion of the Narrator and should be based on the severity of the attack.

## *Using Brawling in Battle*

### ROLLING TO HIT, TO BYPASS ARMOR, TO WOUND, & TO KNOCK OUT

Brawling works differently than attacking with weapons, though the general mechanics are the same. As always, the first roll in an attack is the roll to hit. When engaged in physical combat, an attempt to hit is done by comparing Combat, Unarmed or Brawling (if specialized) to whatever the target is using to defend. Defenders can use Speed to dodge, a shield to block, or unarmed combat to block physically.

Once hit location is decided on, attackers must then roll to bypass armor if the area of the target's body that has been hit is protected by armor. If the target's body is not armored, move on to the roll to wound. If the target's body is armored, the roll to bypass armor is done by rolling the attacker's Strength against the Protection of the target's armor. If the Protection roll is higher, the target's armor protects the wearer and the attacker's turn is over. If the Strength roll is higher, move to the roll to wound.

When attempting to wound in a brawling attack, the acting player rolls Strength against the target's Strength. If the defender's roll is higher, the defender's body withstands the attack, suffering nothing more than a scratch or bruise, and the attacker's turn is over.

If a roll to wound with brawling succeeds, the attacker has inflicted a severe injury and a Fight Fatigue Penalty on the target. This can be a broken bone, internal bleeding, torn muscle or ligament, ripped-off ear, broken nose, incapacitated limb, etc. To learn about Fight Fatigue Penalties, see the following section. The severity of wounds inflicted this way is up to Storyteller discretion.

Characters can also be knocked unconscious by brawling attacks. When a target is struck in the head (including face) by a brawling attack, the final roll in the series of attack rolls is the Roll to Knock Out. This is done following the roll to wound, whether the victim has been wounded or not.

Attempting to knock out is done by rolling the attacker's Strength against the target's Endurance. If the Endurance roll is higher, the target remains conscious and the attacker's turn is over. If the Strength roll is higher, the target is knocked unconscious. As with blunt weapons, the duration of unconsciousness is left to the Storyteller's discretion, and usually falls somewhere between a few seconds and several minutes.

Remember that characters who are unconscious are susceptible to sneak attacks which kill their target instantly. For more on sneak attacks, see the Stealth section.

## FIGHT FATIGUE PENALTIES

When a character is wounded by a brawling attack, he suffers a fight fatigue penalty. Fight fatigue penalties give a character a temporary -1 Endurance. These penalties last until the character has a chance to rest and recover.

Characters who suffer more than one wound from brawling attacks suffer multiple fight fatigue penalties. If Endurance is reduced to 0 in this manner, the suffering character passes out from exhaustion. This counts as being knocked out, which also gives penalties as described below.

**Fight Fatigue Penalties only lessen Endurance for the purpose of being knocked out.** They do NOT affect Endurance in terms of severe wounds, sickness, or poison, or any other life threatening Endurance modifier.

## KNOCK OUT PENALTIES

As mentioned in the section on knocking targets out with blunt weapons, when a character regains awareness after being knocked out, he will be a little groggy. Characters who've been knocked out suffer a -1 penalty (ST discretion) to all rolls once they regain consciousness. Penalties last until they have a chance



to rest and recover. Any character in combat can suffer both K.O. penalties and fight fatigue penalties listed above at the same time. Duration of penalties is left to Storyteller discretion.

## *Using Grappling in Battle*

### ROLLING TO TAKE DOWN & ROLLING TO PIN, CHOKEHOLDS & JOINTLOCKS

Grappling operates differently from brawling, because wrestling is, of course, much different than bashing heads. Grappling can be very useful for ending a fight quickly and peacefully, as it can be used to make other characters submit without harming them.

The first thing a character must do in grappling to gain an advantage is take another character to the ground. So, the first roll when using grappling is the Roll to Take Down. Characters must be in close quarters for grappling to commence. Skip this roll if the target is already on the ground.

**Rolling to take down** is done by rolling the attacker's Combat, Unarmed or Grappling (if specialized) and the target's Speed (if target is dodging) or Combat, Unarmed or Grappling (if target is resisting by wrestling). If the target's roll is higher, the target remains standing and the attacker's turn is over. If the attacker's roll succeeds, that character moves on to the **roll to pin**.

Before the attacker can put the target in a chokehold, stranglehold, or joint lock, she must pin the target. The **roll to pin** is done by rolling the attacker's Combat, Unarmed or Grappling and the target's Combat, Unarmed or Grappling, because once on the ground the target can only try to escape by wrestling. If a roll to pin fails, the attacker's turn is over, and the target avoids being pinned this turn. Targets who avoid being pinned are still in the grapple on the ground and must roll to escape or to pin the attacker during their next turn. If a roll to pin succeeds, the target is rendered defenseless, and can be put in a chokehold or a jointlock.

If an attacker puts a target in a chokehold, she can restrain the target until the target submits, or she can apply pressure and cause the target to lose consciousness. If an attacker chooses to **choke out** the target, the target loses consciousness and stays unconscious for an amount of time determined by the Storyteller. Characters who are choked out in this way suffer Knock Out Penalties when they regain consciousness.

If an attacker is feeling rough, she can put the target in a jointlock instead of a chokehold when a roll to pin succeeds. When a target is in a **jointlock**, he is defenseless, and can no longer wrestle. Attackers can make targets submit and agree to stop fighting this way by applying pressure, or they can attempt to break the target's joint if they wish.

Attempting to break the target's joint is done by rolling the attacker's Strength against the target's Strength. If the target's roll is higher, the target resists joint breakage, although he is still pinned and useless, and the attacker's turn is over. If the attacker's roll is higher, the target's joint or limb is broken, he receives a Severe Wound, and he is still pinned.

## *Severe Wounds, Heavy Bleeding*

Any time a character suffers a Severe Wound, she begins Heavy Bleeding. When a character is suffering Heavy Bleeding, he loses 1 point of Endurance, Strength, and Speed every hour (60 minutes) of game time, until the bleeding is halted. This can be done by bandaging, applying styptic herbs, or magic. If a character drops to or below 0 Endurance this way, he dies. These losses can be undone by resting, eating, and recovering, and they can be cured more quickly by magic.

In or out of battle, characters can attempt to stop bleeding and help severe wounds heal in several ways. A character can attempt to bandage a wound by rolling Medicine or Bandaging (specialized) vs. the wound's Severity as determined by the storyteller. To make such an attempt, a character must have appropriate supplies. Certain healing herbs are styptic or hemostatic, meaning they help stop bleeding. A character can use such plants on their own to attempt to stop bleeding or in combination with an attempt to bandage. If used on their own, it's up to the storyteller whether they halt bleeding or not. If used with bandages, such herbs can give a small +1 or +2 bonus to help stop bleeding. If characters fail this attempt, they can try again with more supplies.

Characters can also attempt to reset a broken or dislocated bone. This is done by comparing Medicine or Bone Resetting (specialized) to the Severity of the wound as defined by the storyteller. Using the necessary supplies, a character can then compare Medicine or Bandaging (specialized) to Moderate Difficulty 3 to fashion a splint for the victim. This helps wounds heal and can allow some use of an otherwise useless limb.

## *Cover, Hiding Places*

When a character is partially behind cover, he is more difficult to hit. This is reflected in a penalty to Rolls to Hit done by attackers up close and at a distance (or a bonus to dodge or block to characters hidden behind cover). This penalty to hit applies whether or not the target is aware of the attack. If a character is completely behind cover, she cannot be struck by attacks.

Cover penalties usually range between -1 and -3. Any greater than this, and it is likely that the attacker will automatically fail the attempt to hit as the target's body is too concealed to be attacked.

## *Attacking at Random, Blind Firing*

When characters are completely behind cover, they can fire at their enemies without looking. Since this involves no skill, it is done by generating a Random Chance number as described earlier. This value is used in the subsequent Roll to Hit.

# CONDUCTING MASS BATTLES & WARS

## *Basic Concepts in Mass Combat*

### NPC CARDS, UNITS & INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS

*Saga's* very adaptable rules-light system can be used to run large scale battles in which hundreds or even thousands of combatants can participate in a fight. Most of the rules for doing so have already been covered. However, running a huge battle or war changes a few of the rules already covered.

First, Narrators or Players controlling large regiments of warriors must fill out an NPC card for their troops. Instead of filling them out individually, NPC sheets are filled out for entire units of troops, and must include how many troops are in the unit. So, for example, if your army consists of 3 units of 15 spearmen and 2 units of 10 archers, you must only fill out 5 NPC cards.

All of the troops in a unit have identical statistics, representing that they train together and are therefore similarly skilled. Usually, even if your troops are divided into different units, troops of the same type will have identical stats. For example, all the archers of one nation, no matter how many units they are divided into, will have received the same training, and thus have the same stats. The same goes for pikemen, knights, primitive scouts and archers, and so on.

Besides units of troops, there are also individual characters. This is probably the PCs and important NPCs, as well as powerful characters like magic users, generals, and so on. Characters operating individually on the field of battle usually serve to lead other units, help rally units when they are scared, and use powerful spells and machines to devastate the enemy.

### URNS, ROUNDS, VICTORY CONDITIONS

Storytellers determine the narrative surrounding mass combats before they begin. Thus, it should be clear to all players and to the Storyteller how the battlefield is arranged, where each force is in relation to each other force, how individual units and characters are arranged, and which force has the initiative. Typically, the PCs will fight on (and control) one side of a conflict in mass combats, and the Narrator will control the opposing force. However, depending on certain situations, PCs may have control over their own individual armies. In the event that more than two armies/forces are present, the Storyteller determines which army/force acts first (i.e.: takes the first turn).

During a turn of Mass Combat, all of the units and individual characters in the acting army may act. In Mass Combat, actions that can be taken during turns are limited to Movement and Attacking. Units may move up to their maximum movement value each turn and may make one attack as a coherent unit (which actually involves many die rolls and attacks). Individual characters may move up to their maximum movement value each turn and make one attacks. Certain weapons, such as stationary cannons and very large guns, require their users to remain motionless during their turns. Such troops cannot move and attack on the same turn, it's one or the other.

Once all of the units and individual characters in one army have taken their actions, that army's turn is done. The next army then takes its turn, and so on. When all armies have taken a turn, a round has elapsed. Mass Combat continues until a predefined number of rounds has elapsed (i.e.: holding out for

reinforcements, rescue op, holding the sacred ground, etc.), or until victory conditions are met.

Victory conditions are defined by the storyteller. The most obvious Victory Condition is total victory, or the annihilation of all enemy forces. In other situations and scenarios, the storyteller may require the PCs' army to capture ground, recover an artifact, weaken the enemy forces to a certain threshold, kill prominent members of the enemy leadership, or whatever.

## MINIATURES & MOVEMENT

Mass Combat in *Saga* requires miniature figurines to represent the units and characters involved. It isn't crucial to have realistic miniatures, but it is essential to have some small representation or facsimile of units in Mass Combat. If you can't acquire actual roleplaying and wargaming minis, you can always construct and draw your own paper miniatures. This can be an incredibly rewarding process, though a time-consuming one to be sure. If paper minis aren't an option, use whatever's around: coins, glass counters, matchsticks, wine corks, whatever! It's also especially rewarding to have terrain miniatures to make realistic battlefields for your mass combats.

Movement in Mass Combat is closely tied to miniatures. All troops in Mass Combat can move a number of inches each turn equal to their Speed X their Size Value. For example, a brigade of Size 1 soldiers with Speed 4 can move up to or less than 4" per turn. A unit of Size 2 Giants with Speed 4 moves up to or less than 8" per turn. Units or characters mounted on fast animals move up to the animal's Size X Speed in inches each turn. So a unit of knights mounted on Size 2 Warhorses with Speed 5 moves 10" each turn. Units or characters mounted in vehicles should simply be assigned a movement value in inches, as machines all move at very different speeds irrespective of their size. For example, a Mech might move 24" each turn.

Units always move and act together in battle. They can assume a number of formations, as long as each member is within 1" (on the table; three feet in game terms) of at least one other member of the unit. This is called Unit Coherency. When units move during a turn in a certain formation, they don't necessarily have to stay in that formation. Talented units can certainly rearrange themselves while they rush at the enemy. However, regardless of formation, units must retain Unit Coherency.

Individual characters move on their own in Mass Combat, and require no proximity to other units.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION ROLLS IN MASS COMBAT

Another key difference in large scale battle and war is the process of rolling to hit, to bypass armor, and to wound. When rolling in combat, Units have statistics different than PCs and NPCs. Rather than having many attributes and skills, they have a only a few stats to describe their prowess in battle. The first is Strength, which is used exactly as the attribute for PCs and NPCs. The second is Speed, which shows how far the unit moves each turn and how well the troops within the unit are able to dodge enemy attacks. And the last, and most important, are the combat skills: Melee Combat and Ranged Combat. All units will have a score for each, even if they aren't a melee or ranged unit. These skills work the same way that PC and NPC skills work.

In Mass Combat, there are three main rolls in resolving combat. These are: the Roll to Hit, the Roll to Bypass Armor, and the Roll to Kill. These are very similar to the rolls described in the standard combat

section. Each of these rolls is slightly different than the one-on-one equivalents in previous chapters. The most noteworthy difference is that **all Mass Combat rolls use a d20 rather than a d10!**

Rolls to hit are done by comparing the attacker's relevant skill (Melee Combat or Ranged Combat) to either the target's Speed (if they are dodging) or Melee Combat (if they are blocking). This is no different than Rolls to Hit described in the standard combat rules, except that defenders do not have a choice which stat to use- they must use whichever stat is higher. This represents the fact that units of troops are trained to avoid enemy attacks in a certain way. Either they are trained to dodge, or they are trained to fight attacks off with weapons and shields. Plus, tactically, it doesn't make any sense to use the lesser stat. PCs may of course choose how they avoid attacks.

When Rolling to Hit in large scale battle, the controlling player or Narrator must roll to hit for every troop in a unit. That means if you have a unit of 12 soldiers, you roll to hit 12 times. This applies even if you're attacking fewer than 12 targets, as individual targets can be hit more than once.

For every roll to hit that succeeds, the controlling player must then Roll to Bypass Armor. This is done by comparing weapon Penetration to the Protection of the target's armor. In large scale battles, there are no particular pieces of armor. Troops within units wear entire suits or nothing at all. For units with shoddy, incomplete armor, use values like: "Piecemeal Armor 2/1/0" or "Patchy Peasant Leathers 1/3/0".

Once rolls to bypass are done, the controlling player must then Roll to Kill. There are no rolls to wound in Mass Combat, in order to avoid excessive hassle. Besides, the whole point of battle is to slay one's foes, and usually those who are wounded in a battle are put to death when the battle concludes.

Rolls to kill are done by comparing the Deadliness of the attacking unit's weapons to the Strength of the target unit. For every roll to kill that succeeds, one of the enemy unit's troops dies.

When attacking with an individual character or important leader figure, roll to hit, to bypass armor, and to kill only once. Only large units get more than one attack per turn.

All of these attack rolls require a great deal of dice rolling. However, since entire units can be wiped out in one turn of battle, the process isn't quite so bad. Besides, what roleplayer doesn't like rolling dice?

### FASTER MASS COMBAT CONFLICT RESOLUTION: THE ROLL CHART

Though rolling dice is fun, in truly massive mass combat scenarios, die rolling could take hours. Just so, this section contains a method for making mass combat conflict resolution rolls much faster: **the Mass Combat Roll Chart**. To use this in any mass combat situation, simply compare the relevant statistic of the attacker (or attacker's weapon) on the left column, then find the defender's relevant stat on the top row. Then, find where the two stats meet. This is called the **Target Number**. In order to succeed in any mass combat roll, the acting player must **roll equal to or higher than the Target Number on a d20**. In this way, players can roll a single d20 for each acting character in mass combat, thus allowing them to throw a handful or dozens of d20s for groups of characters, thus resolving multiple characters' conflicts each throw.

		Defender's Stat														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15+
<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	F	F	F	F	F
<b>T</b>	<b>2</b>	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	F	F	F	F
<b>T</b>	<b>3</b>	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	F	F	F
<b>A</b>	<b>4</b>	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	F	F
<b>C</b>	<b>5</b>	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	F
<b>K</b>	<b>6</b>	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>E</b>	<b>7</b>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<b>R</b>	<b>8</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	<b>9</b>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	<b>10</b>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<b>11</b>	S	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	<b>12</b>	S	S	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	<b>13</b>	S	S	S	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	14	15
	<b>14</b>	S	S	S	S	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	<b>15+</b>	S	S	S	S	S	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

The defender's stats are across the top; attacker's stats are along the left side. The numbers in the middle are target numbers. S equals an automatic success in the attacker's roll. F equals automatic failure in the attacker's roll.

**EXAMPLE:** If a force of 20 spearmen with melee combat skill 8 are attacking a unit of skirmishers with melee combat skill 6, the attacking player compares 8 to 6 and finds a target number of 9+. That player then rolls 20d20 (one for each spearman), and for every roll of 9 or greater, one spearman succeeds in his roll to hit.

## COURAGE

One more difference in large scale battles is courage. There are generally no rolls to frighten and no rolls to remain courageous. However, if more than half of a unit's original number of troops is killed, the unit turns and begins to flee the battle at their maximum speed each turn. Leadership units (usually including the PCs) can attempt to rally fleeing units by comparing Communication or Leadership to Fear of Death 10. Targeted units must be within earshot for leaders to attempt to rally them (15 feet or 5" on a mini game board). If a roll of this sort is successful, the unit stops fleeing and resumes battle as if its original number of troops is its current number. So, if a unit of 100 members who gets killed down to below 50, begins to flee, but is then rallied with 46 remaining members, it acts as if 46 is its original number. Therefore, if this unit of 46 gets taken down to below 23, it begins to flee again.

If an army in Mass Combat contains some creature or machine that is terrifying to behold, Storytellers are welcome to include Courage as a dynamic. In such cases, when a unit comes into close proximity to a

terrifying creature or machine, compare the unit's Courage to the Intimidation of the creature/machine. Roll once for every member of the unit. Every roll that fails results in a trooper turning and fleeing at maximum Speed at the beginning of next turn.

## STEALTH, BRAWLING & GRAPPLING

Stealth, as described below, doesn't usually play in to large scale battles. Narrators and Players are welcome to factor stealth into their large battles and wars, but generally these types of battles are head-on and overt. As with stealth, brawling and grappling don't have much of a place within large battles and warfare. It doesn't make much sense to run into battle unarmed, so it probably won't happen very often.

## COVER

Cover operates identically in Mass Combat, except that in order for a unit to receive cover benefits, the unit must be more than 50% in cover.

## *Tactics!: Circumstantial Bonuses & Penalties in Mass Combat*

The idea of tactics and strategy is a fundamental concept in Mass Combat in *Saga*. As always, circumstantial changes in rolls are left to the discretion of the Narrator. As with other circumstantial bonuses and penalties, there are far too many options available in mass combat to explore them all. Following below, then, is a list of circumstantial bonuses and penalties that are very likely to happen in many Mass Combat scenarios:

<i>Circumstance</i>	<i>Circumstantial Bonus/Penalty</i>
Attacking with Axes from higher ground	+2 to hit, +1 to bypass armor and to kill
Ranged attack from higher ground	+2 or +3 to hit
Cavalry attacking Infantry	+2 or +3 to hit, +1 to bypass armor and to kill
Spearmen/Pikemen attacking Cavalry	+2 or +3 to hit, +1 to bypass armor
Infantry bogged down in difficult terrain	-1 to movement (min. 1), -1 to attack or defend

# STEALTH: SILENT MOVEMENT & CAMOUFLAGE

## *Silent Movement*

Silent movement skill comes into play any time a character wants to avoid being heard. This can be while walking, running, swimming, climbing, or standing still in a dark room. Any time a character does something involving movement within 25 feet of enemies who are on the lookout, she must attempt to remain unheard.

This is done by rolling Stealth or Silent Movement (specialized) vs. Detect of each enemy in hearing range. If the acting character succeeds, she remains undetected, and enemies remain oblivious to her presence. However, if a character fails even one roll to remain unheard, her movement is detected by the enemy. Whether or not enemies investigate sounds they hear is left to the storyteller to decide.

Making rolls to remain unheard is only necessary when trying to infiltrate an area where enemies are actively searching for the acting character or protecting something from thieves. In an area where there's a deafening amount of noise or frequent footsteps, and in areas where the acting character isn't out of place or suspicious, these rolls aren't needed.

If there is some kind of background noise or a distracting sound nearby when a character is rolling to remain unheard, she gets a bonus to her roll. In the case where enemies are scouring a room for a character and there is such noise, they receive -1 (or more) penalties to their rolls to detect. For example, a cat meowing when a character is trying to sneak past the enemy would give a small bonus. Or, enemy NPCs might receive -2 to their rolls to detect when searching for a character who is sneaking near a trainyard.

Sometimes, characters can intentionally make noise as a distraction. For example, throwing a rock into some bushes in order to make a rustling sound could be useful for drawing the attention of enemy guards. This type of intentional noise making is very dependent on the story line and the storyteller's discretion.

Atmosphere can also play a roll in remaining unheard. Thunderstorms, heavy rainfall, loud wind, the noise of a brushfire, the natural sounds of the forest, and any number of other natural phenomena can give bonuses to rolls to remain unheard. Atmospheric conditions can also hinder a character, as with the crunching of leaves, the crackling of gravel, the breaking of a twig underfoot, and so on. These conditions are left to the PCs and ST to determine through the storyline.

As with many other parts of the game, Size is an important factor in attempt to remain unheard. Unlike the usual bonuses and penalties given by size, smaller characters have an advantage in stealth rolls against larger characters. That is, it's easier for small characters to observe larger characters who are trying to be stealthy, and it's harder for large characters to observe smaller characters who are doing the same. Any time a smaller character is attempting to remain unheard against a larger target, the smaller character receives a bonus. Any time a larger character is attempting to remain unheard against a smaller target, the larger character receives a penalty. The degree of penalty depends on the difference in size between the two, and follows the pattern established in the *Size in Battle* section in the chapter *Basic Combat Rules*.

1 size difference gives +/-1, while a size difference of 2 gives +/-2. Size differences of 3 or more render



automatic success or failure. For example, a Size 3 giant is on the lookout for intruders, and a size 0 gnome is attempting to sneak quietly by. No roll is necessary, as the gnome is too small for the giant to detect. If the situation were reversed, the gnome would automatically detect the giant, as it is too big to avoid detection.

## Camouflage

Camouflage is a little more complicated than silent movement. To remain hidden from enemies, a character must stick to cover, dart from shadow to shadow, and stay out of the enemy's direct line of sight. Most people are totally oblivious to their surroundings, and don't really care what others are doing as long as they look like they're supposed to be doing it. When situations like these appear in the game, characters don't need to worry about staying hidden. In many other instances, hiding is a character's first priority.

If a character wants to go unseen, she must first get behind cover: under foliage, behind a tree, in some shadows, whatever. Then, if a character wishes to remain unseen by enemies in the area, she must stay in cover, or dart or crawl to other cover quickly. If enemies are looking in the direction of the character, and she attempts to move from one spot of cover to another, she must compare Stealth or Camouflage (specialized) to Detect. If she succeeds, she makes it without being seen. If she fails, she's been spotted.

There are also times when a character is stationary in cover and enemies are on the move looking for her. If an enemy looks in an area where a character is hidden, the enemy attempts to detect the hidden character by comparing detect to camouflage. If the roll succeeds, the character has been spotted and enemies will act accordingly. If the roll fails, the character remains hidden.

A roll to detect done this way can still apply even if the hidden character is entirely invisible. Completely invisible characters are still detectable because they can cough, shift their weight, sigh, breathe too heavily, or knock into some loud object. If a character is completely invisible and an enemy succeeds in detecting him, the storyline should reflect how and why the character would be detectable.

Another action a character can take that uses camouflage is peeking around a corner or outside cover to get a better view. For all enemies looking in the direction of the peeking character, the character compares Stealth or Camouflage (specialized) vs. Detect. If she fails, enemies spot a little head or foot protruding, and will probably look into the matter. If she succeeds, she gets a quick look around and disappears back into cover.

As with silent movement, atmosphere sometimes makes camouflage easier and makes characters harder to detect by sight. Characters get a bonus when attempting to go unseen on dark, moonless nights, and their enemies get a penalty when attempting to detect by sight. Stormy weather also makes characters harder to detect by sight. Many items give bonuses to remain unseen, like camouflage clothes, cloaks, dark clothes, etc.

## Stealth Attacks

### CLOSE-QUARTERS

Perhaps the most important advantage of being stealthy is the ability to conduct stealth attacks. When a character successfully sneaks up to melee range on another character, he can execute a Sneak Attack. These

include slitting throats, stabbing backs, snapping necks, stabbing hearts, suffocating others with plastic bags or sacks, garroting targets with piano wire or a cord, and taking point blank head shots. If PCs and storytellers can imagine other stealth attacks, these are permissible too.

Executing a stealth attack means instantly killing a target by using stealth and surprise. No roll is necessary to hit, to bypass armor, or to wound when a character is in a position to perform a stealth attack.

Most stealth attacks are executed using a bladed weapon, although creative PCs and STs are welcome to use other weapons and methods as well, within reason. For example, a character will most likely never perform a stealth attack with a cumbersome sledgehammer, but a character could most definitely use small spiked cudgels or hatchets to dispatch foes with stealth. Characters can also use their environment to execute stealth attacks, such as drowning a foe who is knocked out in or near water.

Because characters have time to aim for critical spots when stealth attacking, they can also take the opportunity to knock other characters unconscious. This can be done with blunt weapons, chloroform-soaked rags, or chokeholds. Rolls to hit and to knock out aren't necessary. However, characters who stealth attack with blunt weapons must still roll to bypass armor if the target is wearing head protection. So, it's probably best to use a different technique, like chokeholds, to render armored foes unconscious.

Keep in mind that any time a character is unconscious, he is subject to stealth attacks. Stealth attacks apply to creatures of all sizes that are affected by the attacker's weapon. A stealth attack performed on a creature of a larger size still requires no roll to hit or bypass armor, but it does require a roll to wound.

## RANGED

Several sections of the rules have discussed ranged attacks on targets who are unaware. These are ranged stealth attacks. Ranged stealth attacks can happen any time an attacking character decides to fire a ranged weapon or throw a projectile from cover at an oblivious target. Since the target is unresisting, the Roll to Hit is done against the Difficulty of the shot. Subsequent Rolls to Bypass Armor and Rolls to Wound are done as usual.

## MAGIC & PSIONICS

Magic and Psionics are a popular feature of many roleplaying games, and for good reason: they're fun. Magic and Psi in *Saga* is radically different from the magic systems offered by other RPG systems, so Narrators should make sure to familiarize themselves with this section and the mechanics herein.

First, before learning the rules governing magic and psi in *Saga*, Storytellers and Players should make sure that magic is available in whatever campaign setting they're using. Sci-fi settings, historical settings, and most post-apocalypse and cyberpunk settings don't have magic or psi. However, most fantasy and medieval campaigns do.

Whatever campaign setting you're using, if magic and psionics are available, they are governed by a number of rules that are very different from most conventional RPG magic systems. First, magic in *Saga* is chaos! Most RPGs treat magic as a codified, structured, easily understood and always identically-cast collection of

Spells. This is silly. Magic is supposed to be an untameable, unpredictable, arcane, meaning that it can never be codified, analyzed, structured,, and used identically more than once.

There are no lists of spells in *Saga*, and for good reason. As a chaotic and unpredictable force, no two attempts at casting the same type of magic can possibly turn out the same. Storytellers and Players who are used to the extensive lists of spells and psionic techniques in D&D and similar systems will find this unfamiliar and perhaps uncomfortable. However, the way magic works in *Saga* is much lighter on the rules and writing, and much more heavily focused in rich storytelling and narration.

## *Basic Rules & Mechanics*

As mentioned above, there are no written spells or psionic techniques in *Saga*. Without spells and techniques, it's important to understand how magic and psionics are used. This section explains the mechanics of magic and psi in detail.

First, although there are no spells or techniques, Magic is still separated into Schools or Colleges, and Psionics is separated into Disciplines. Schools and Disciplines describe general areas of magical energy that produce a variety of effects of the same flavor. Necromancy/Death, for example, involves the energies of decay, destruction, illness, rot, and the termination of life. For a full list of Magic Schools/Colleges and Psionic Disciplines and descriptions of each, see below.

Schools and Disciplines are each a Specialized Skill under Magic & Psionics, and magical or psionic characters who are interested in one or more specific areas of magic should take on the specialized skills. These work the same way as any other specialized skill except that they don't produce the same effects time and again. For example, a character attempting to pick a lock always compares Lockpicking to Difficulty, rolls, and either succeeds or fails. A character using Transmutation magic, however, always uses their Transmutation/Alteration skill to roll against difficulty, but a *huge* variety of effects can take place.

When characters wish to use magic or psionics in the game, they first declare what type of magic or psi they're using (as in School or Discipline). Or, characters can use their general Magic & Psionics skill area. They then declare what effects they're trying to achieve. Then, regardless of their intent in using a particular specialized magic or psi skill, they compare their skill to a randomly-determined Difficulty. This represents that the magical force ebbs and flows, and that it is sometimes much more difficult to wield it than others.

Storytellers have some leverage in determining Random Difficulty for magic use. For characters whose magic abilities are still within the standard human range (1-10), use the method described in the chapter *Generating Random Numbers, Luck*. For characters who exceed this level into mastery (11-12), roll random difficulty with a d12 instead. When characters broaden their magical skills into the mythic/legendary range (13-14) and otherworldly/godly (15+) range, start rolling random difficulty with d10+d6. This isn't always necessary, since those characters who truly master the arcane arts will have little difficulty performing minor magics. However, when powerful characters attempt world-altering, unfathomably potent magic, don't be afraid to up to the difficulty (and the negative effects of failure) a bit.

If a character succeeds in a roll as described above, they have successfully used the type of magic in question. Characters using their general skill area can produce effects from any school or discipline or from several. The effects of successfully using a school of magic or psionic discipline depend on several factors, and are up to the Storyteller's discretion. For a suggested list of effects based on magic school and many other factors, read on below.

Characters who succeed in rolling a magic or psi skill against difficulty don't necessarily have to stop casting. Instead, they can continue rolling the same skill against a new randomly-defined difficulty every few seconds or minutes (or turns in battle) to replicate performing a long incantation or ritual. Characters who do this can continue until they fail a roll, which shows that their connection to and use of the magical force has ended. The more time and energy PCs and NPCs put into their magic (thus, the more successful rolls they make), the greater the effects AND the greater the drain on their bodies and minds. Casting effects can become magnificent if enough time is spent on them. A list of effects for successfully cast magic can be found below.

There are a few other basic rules governing magic and psi that all Narrators and Players should know. The first is that any time a character uses magic or psionics, there is a small possibility that the magic or psi used will backfire and effect the caster. This chance is much higher when characters fail a magic or psi roll against difficulty. The effects of a backfiring spell are left to the storyteller to decide. A suggested list can be found later on.

Another basic rule governing magic is that any spell that directly injures or wounds another character has a Spell Strength (i.e. Deadliness) and Potency equal to the caster's magic or psionic skill. When using psionics, any successfully cast technique has Spell Strength and Potency equal to the caster's Willpower. Magic effects that protect, like Magical Shield-Auras and Magical Armor, have a Protection value equal to Spell Strength.

Such values are used in a few ways. When direct-damaging spells affect target characters, they compare Spell Strength to the target's Strength. Successful rolls are treated as Rolls to Wound. When psionic attacks affect other characters, they roll Spell Strength vs. target's Intelligence, and are also treated as Rolls to Wound. Usually, magic and psi don't require rolls to hit (as they use Difficulty to Cast instead), and they don't involve penetrating armor unless they manifest physically. For example, a successfully cast Elemental-Plant incantation or ritual that causes sharp vines to attack targets or trees to brandish their branches as clubs still requires rolls to penetrate armor. The values for Penetration depend on the forces animated by the spell. If the spell is a pure manifestation of the caster's energy, rather than an animation of the natural world, the Penetration for the magical attack equals the Spell Strength.

The final basic rule of magic and psionics is that using these arts is physically and mentally taxing on those who use them. Usually, using magic or psi is no more draining than any other physical or mental activity. However, when magic or psi casting fails, casters can suffer moderate to heavy fatigue, temporary or permanent attribute or skill penalty, sickness, death, or other severe effects. Fatigue Penalties to Endurance can be accrued normally by using magic and psionics. Endurance reduced to 0 in this way most often causes casters to pass out, but in extreme circumstances and instances of failed casting, characters can die this way.

## *Magical Schools/Colleges & Psionic Disciplines*

As mentioned above, all magic fits into certain Schools and psionics into Disciplines. These schools and disciplines are simply categories used to describe magical effects of similar type and flavor. All of the schools described in this section correspond to a specialized skill.

As always, Narrators and Players are highly encouraged to create new schools and disciplines, and to change the ones provided. For example, if you decided to play a character interested exclusively in spider-related magic, this character could be said to specialized in the school called Arachnomancy.

Each of the schools listed below has a number of names used to describe it that all mean the same thing. Necromancy and Death Magic are the same school, for example. All such names are used interchangeably, and players and storytellers are encouraged to use them all to foster a variety of language.

Listed within each school description below is a small list of suggested Sub-Schools or specializations that fall under the domain of the governing school. These are but a small listing of sub-schools, and players and narrators are welcome to create a variety of others. If Storytellers and Players wish, PCs and NPCs who use magic can specialize in sub-schools such as these, and will thus have a corresponding specialized skill. Arachnomancy, as listed above, could be a sub-school of elementalism, for example.

When creating characters, these sub-schools also provide a variety of names for characters of different focuses. For example, a PC who focuses in reading entrails could be called a Hepatomancer, rather than the more generic terms Diviner or Oracle.

The Schools of Magic and Psionic Disciplines are as follows:

### **DECAY, NECROMANCY, DESTRUCTION, & DEATH MAGIC**

This school focuses on destroying life, causing illness and injury, raising and controlling the undead, communion with demons (in campaign settings where they exist), dealing with patron deities of death and destruction (in campaign settings where they exist), tainting crops and land, and cursing others and removing blessings.

Contrary to popular thought, this is not necessarily an "evil" school, and those who practice it are not necessarily evil people. It is generally considered the opposite of the School of Rejuvenation, Restoration, Healing, & Life Magic.

Sub-schools: Reanimation, Dark Summoning, Hexing/Cursing, Pestilence/Plaguing, Dark Warding (protective spells against rejuvenation and life magic), Destruction (damaging and ending life), Dark Fetishcraft (cursing with fetishes or charms), etc.

### **REJUVENATION, RESTORATION, HEALING, & LIFE MAGIC**

This school is concerned with preserving life, healing the sick and injured, putting the undead to rest, banishing demons (in campaign settings where they exist), dealing with patron deities of healing and life (in campaign settings where they exist), and blessing others and removing curses.

Contrary to popular thought, this school is not necessarily "good", and those who practice it are not necessarily good people. It is generally considered the opposite of the School of Necromancy, Decay, Destruction, & Death Magic.

Sub-schools: Resurrection, Healing (mending wounds), Curing (fighting disease and illness), Banishing, Fetishcraft (blessing and protecting with charms or fetishes), Warding (protective spells against necromancy), etc.

### ILLUSION, TRICKERY, PRESTIDIGITATION, THAUMATURGY, & SHADOW MAGIC

This school is devoted to deception, illusion, hallucinations, obfuscation, bewilderment, stealth, subterfuge, and secrecy, and to dealing with patron deities of such things (in campaign settings where they exist). This school is usually thought of as opposite to the School of Divination, Clairvoyance, Prophecy, & Soothsaying.

Sub-schools: Obfuscation, Invisibility, Shadowmancy, Facechanging etc.

### DIVINATION, CLAIRVOYANCE, PROPHECY, & SOOTHSAYING MAGIC

This school is focused on solving puzzles, providing clarity, seeing what can't be seen, foretelling the immediate and distant future, discerning the truth in lies and deceit, and dealing with patron deities of such things (in campaign settings where they exist). This school is usually thought of as opposite to the School of Illusion, Trickery, Prestidigitation, Thaumaturgy, & Shadow.

Sub-schools: Cartomancy (reading cards), Tasseomancy (reading tea-leaves or coffee grounds or other plant matter), Omen Reading, Hepatomancy (reading livers/entrails), Augury (reading the patterns of bird flight), Oneiromancy (reading dreams), Runecasting (reading runes), Scrying (reading mirrors/bowls of water/reflective surfaces), Lithomancy (reading rocks), Crystallomancy (reading crystals or crystal balls), Osteomancy (reading bones), etc.

### ELEMENTALISM, GEOMANCY, SHAMANISM, & NATURE MAGIC

The spells of this school revolve around the wilderness, plants and animals, the earth, ecosystems, the elements (fire, water, soil, air), the weather and climate, and dealing with the spirits and patron deities of these things (in campaign settings where they exist). Because this school deals with using the force of the natural world as it is rather than changing it, it is sometimes considered the opposite of the School of Transmutation, Alteration, Enchanting, & Physical Magic.

Sub-schools: Pyromancy/Fire Magic, Hydromancy/Water Magic, Geomancy/Earth Magic, Aeromancy/Air Magic, Floramancy/Plant Magic, Faunamancy/Animal Magic, Weather Magic, Lycanthropy, Arachnomancy (spider magic), Lupomancy (wolf magic), Dendromancy (Tree Magic), Apimancy (Bee magic), etc.

### TRANSMUTATION, ALTERATION, ENCHANTING, & PHYSICAL MAGIC

This school focuses on changing the physical world, altering bodies and minds, imbuing objects with magical powers or curses or blessings, removing powers and curses and blessings from enchanted items, erecting magical shields and auras, levitation, invisibility, enlarging or shrinking objects or creatures, speeding up and slowing down time, and so on. Due to the expansive atmosphere of this school, many of its spells are also found in other schools of magic. Because this school changes and mutates the physical world rather than use

it as is, it is sometimes considered the opposite of the School of Elementalism, Geomancy, Shamanism, & Nature Magic.

Sub-schools: Temporomancy/Time Magic, Auramancy/Aura Magic, Transformation or Shapeshifting, Teleportation or Portalmancy, etc.

### TELEPATHY, THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE, & MIND-TO-MIND PSIONICS

This Discipline involves the transfer of thoughts, emotions, and influences between minds. Telepathy is different than telekinesis in that it only involves thought and does not affect the physical world.

### TELEKINESIS, PSYCHOKINESIS, & MIND-TO-MATTER PSIONICS

This Discipline involves the conversion of thoughts into physical force. It differs from Telepathy in that it actually influences and affects the material world, rather than solely affecting minds.

### EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION, E.S.P.

This Discipline deals with using mental power to perceive hidden, concealed, and future things and events.

## *Magical Ingredients*

Although the use of magic and psionics is dynamic and unpredictable, the use of ingredients in casting magic and psi allows casters some degree of influence in the effects of their spells. All organic objects and many inorganic substances (like metals and minerals) have magical energy stored within them. Magic users devote a great deal of time and effort to discovering which ingredients influence which types of magic and in what ways.

Using ingredients does not assure that a spell will take the course and produce the effects that the caster desires. However, the more ingredients a caster uses that are related to the type of magic used and the effects desired, the more likely the spell or technique is to do what the caster wills. The following list contains a number of ingredients and their influences in casting magic and psionics. Ultimately, the effects of magic and psi use are up to the Narrator's discretion, but some degree of control should be given to PCs who devote time and care (as well as good roleplaying) to collecting and using ingredients.

Many ingredients can only be used once, such as small plant matter, handfuls of bonemeal or soil, metal shavings, and so on. Other ingredients have enough magical essence within them that they can be used

#### School of Decay, Necromancy Destruction, & Death

- Blood
- Flesh
- Bones, Bonemeal
- Corpse, Fresh or Old
- Dirt from a Graveyard or Tomb
- Headstone
- Being in a Graveyard or Tomb (many ingredients)
- Being on a Battleground, recent or ancient (many ingredients)
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of death and destruction (many ingredients)
- Incense

- Human body parts (or parts of similar humanoid races, like elves)
- Nightshade, Monkshood, Poison Hemlock, Foxglove, Destroying Angel, Yew, other poisonous plants
- Ivy, Kudzu, Blackberry, other invasive choking weeds
- Snake Venom, Spider Venom, other animal poisons
- Any Carnivorous Plant (parts or whole)
- Any Poisonous Animal (part or whole)
- Obsidian, Onyx, Jet, Opal, Amethyst, Moonstone (similar fantasy stones)
- Charcoal, Charred Remains
- Souls
- Totem, Fetish, or Charm of the target to be cursed or destroyed
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### School of Rejuvenation, Restoration, Healing, & Life Magic

- Any Plant with healing properties
- Any Plant with calmative or sedative properties
- Any part of the Birch tree, Ash tree,
- Cooking Oil
- Any Incense
- Pure Water
- White Cloth
- Amber, Chalk (calcite), Lapis Lazuli, Sunstone, Silver
- Nutrient-rich Soil
- Totem, Fetish, or Charm of the target to be protected or healed
- Being in/near a temple to healing or life spirits/demons/deities (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Mask, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### School of Illusion, Trickery, Prestidigitation, Thaumaturgy, & Shadow

- Smoke
- Incense
- Wine, other alcohols
- Any psychoactive plant or drug (opium poppies, marijuana, amanita muscaria, ergot, etc.)
- Opal, Onyx, Amethyst, Agate, Malachite, Moonstone (similar fantasy stones)
- Sand, Clay, or Soil
- Cloth or Silk of many swirling, chaotic colors
- Raw plant fiber
- Any part of a target's body
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of illusion and shadow (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask/Veil, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### School of Divination, Clairvoyance, Prophecy, & Soothsaying

- Smoke
- Incense
- Transparent Sphere of glass or other stone
- Mirrors
- Clear Water
- Any item used for divination (birds, bones, cards, entrails, scat, thunder/lightning, runes, tea leaves, etc.)
- Any part of a target's body
- Crystal or Glass Ball
- Diamond, Quartz, Sunstone, Tiger's Eye, Topaz
- Any part of a Rowan Tree
- Being in/near any temple or place considered to be holy or sacred (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, or Musical Instrument made of organic material



## School of Elementalism, Geomancy, Shamanism, & Nature Magic

### Animal-related Elemental Magic

- Part of the animal targeted/desired
- Excrement or Urine of the animal targeted/desired
- Full Hide of animal targeted/desired
- Blood of animal targeted/desired
- Fat of animal targeted/desired
- Bones or Bonemeal of animal targeted/desired
- Ointment made from targeted/desired animal's blood and/or fat
- Sculpture, Drawing, Carving, or other image of the animal targeted/desired
- Being in/near a temple to animal spirits/demons/deities (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### Plant, Tree, and Fungus-related Elemental Magic

- Part of the plant targeted/desired
- Any Plant, Fruit, Vegetable, Tree, Seed, Nut, Root, Tuber, Bark, or Flower
- Sickle, Scythe, Knife, Digging Stick, Shovel, Hoe, Rake, or any other plant-associated tool
- Jade, Green Jasper, Topaz, Emerald, Peridot, Alexandrite/Chrysoberyl (or similar fantasy stones)
- Cloth of woven plant fiber
- Incense
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of plants, trees, forests, etc. (many ingredients)

### Air-related Elemental Magic

- Fan
- Feather, Feathers
- Wing, Talons, or Beak of any flying creature
- Silk or Colored Streamers
- A Hollow Tube
- Diamond, Aquamarine, Quartz, Sunstone, Moonstone, other stones (similar fantasy stones)
- Light to Strong Wind
- High locations, locations nearer to the sky
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of air, wind, sky, etc. (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### Earth-related Elemental Magic

- Any Metal, Stone, or Ore
- Any Soil or Dirt
- Being Underground in a Cave, Cavern, etc. (counts as many ingredients)
- Any Ground-dwelling Creature (moles, earthworms, beetles, etc.)
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of earth, underground, rock, etc. (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### Fire-related Elemental Magic

- Open Flame or Fire
- Embers, Coals
- Pepper, Ginger, other spicy foods
- Fireweed Pine, Rowan, Alder, other plants associated with fire
- Copper, Bronze, Gold
- Amber, Topaz, Ruby, Mandarin Garnet, Red Jasper (similar fantasy stones)
- Salamander (whole or parts) and other fire-related creatures
- Large Fire (forest fire, burning city, etc.; counts as many ingredients)
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of fire, flame, lava, etc. (many ingredients)

- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### Water-related Elemental Magic

- Water
- Submersion in Water (counts as many ingredients)
- Part of any aquatic or amphibious creature
- Willow, Cacti, Cattails, Cypress, Ash, other plants associated with water
- Aquamarine, Turquoise, Sapphire, Tanzanite, Lapis Lazuli, Pearl, Shell (similar fantasy stones)
- Green, Blue, or White Cloth
- Cup or Bowl
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of water, sea, rivers, etc. (many ingredients)
- Any Wand, Staff, Knife, Mask, Jewelry, or Musical Instrument made of the materials listed above

### School of Transmutation, Alteration, Enchanting, & Physical Magic

- Bell, Rattle, Mirror
- Totem, Fetish, or Charm of the target
- Part of the target's body
- Feathers, Wings
- Body Parts (including humans and non-human animals)
- Agate, Amethyst, Jade, Jasper, Malachite, Lapis Lazuli, Sunstone, Moonstone, Tiger's Eye, Topaz
- Any part of a Yew tree, Oak tree, Rowan tree, Ash tree, Fig tree, Palm tree, Pine tree, other trees
- Caterpillars, Butterflies, Larvae, Snake Skin (shed), Tadpoles, other creatures who transform
- Any sprouted seeds
- Hatched eggshells, eggs with two yolks
- Four-leafed (or more) clovers, Autumn Leaves
- Smelted metals (bronze, steel, etc.)
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of change, enchantment, and/or chaos (many ingredients)

### Discipline of Telepathy, Thought Transference, & Mind-to-Mind Psionics

- Mirror, any polished surface
- Sunstone, Moonstone, Glass, Diamond, Quartz, Lapis Lazuli, Malachite, Tanzanite, other stones
- Transparent Glass Sphere or Flawless Quartz/Diamond Sphere (1" or more diameter)
- Obelisk of at least 1" height of any of the above stones
- Transparent hollow tube
- Sculpture of any head
- Skull, Brain, or Horns of any creature
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of thought, learning, the mind, etc. (many ingredients)

### Discipline of Telekinesis, Psychokinesis, & Mind-to-Matter Psionics

- Mirror, any polished surface
- Ruby, Mandarin Garnet, Jasper, Chalcedony, Jade, Topaz, Obsidian
- Sphere of 1" or more diameter of any of the above stones
- Obelisk of at least 1" height of any of the above stones
- Feathers and Leaves
- Skull, Brain, or Horns of any creature
- Opaque hollow tube
- Being in/near a temple to spirits/demons/deities of thought, learning, the mind, etc. (many ingredients)

### Discipline of Extra-sensory Perception, ESP

- Any of the ingredients listed for the School of Divination, Clairvoyance, Prophecy, & Soothsaying

## Effects of Successfully Cast Magic & Psionics

This section contains an extensive list of suggested effects for successfully cast magic and psionics. The effects are listed by school or discipline and by the amount of energy and time put into the spell (by number of successes). This list is by no means complete, and should be expanded on by Narrators and Players alike. Campaign Setting-specific effects should also be added.

In the list that follows shortly, several terms are used to denote how many successful rolls have gone into a spell or technique, and thus how much time and effort has been put into it. The first of these is **Chants & Incantations**, which represents up to a few minutes of casting, and only a few successful rolls. The next is **Rituals**, which represents between an hour and many hours of casting, and many successes. **Epic Rituals** are those that require a day or more of casting and hundreds of successes. Storytellers and Players can further subdivide these if they wish into categories of effects like "Short Chants & Incantations," "Long Chants & Incantations," "Short Rituals," "Long Rituals," and so on.

### School of Decay, Necromancy Destruction, & Death

#### Chants & Incantations

Temporary penalty to one or more of an enemy's attributes or skills at a distance; temporary caster control over 1-2 undead; temporary bonus to caster's Strength and/or Endurance by sucking energy from a fresh corpse; caster can wound enemies by touching them for a short period (Spl Str vs. target Str); caster can drain targets' Endurance and Strength by touch for a short period; caster can paralyze targets' by touch for a short period (Spl Str vs. Courage); a hand of some dead creature shoots up from under the earth and grabs an enemy by the ankle; one or more targets are afflicted by a common disease (Spl Potency vs. Endurance); caster can infect targets with a common disease by touch for a short period (Spl Potency vs. Endurance); caster can wither and rot plants by touch for a short period; caster can make plants poisonous by touch for a short period (Potency = Spl Str); one or more targets see their own death and must roll Courage vs. Spl Str or suffer temporary paralysis; caster can poison targets by touch for a short period (Spl Potency vs. endurance), etc.

#### Rituals

Long penalty to one or more stats of one or more targets ; caster can control many undead for a long period; caster raises several undead skeletons, zombies, beasts, etc.; communication with and possible help from patron deities/demons of death, destruction, and necromancy; long temporary drain to one or more targets' stats at a distance; one or more targets is stricken with a disease or poison at a distance (Spl Potency vs. Endurance); one or more fields of crops/plants wither and rot at a distance; one or more targets suffer long hallucinations of torture and death and are paralyzed for a long duration (Spl Potency vs. Courage); a plague of snakes, biting flies, mosquitoes, or other creatures descends on one or more targets; one or more targets are wounded at a distance (Spl Str vs. Strength); etc.

#### Epic Rituals

Caster becomes an immortal undead liche; caster raises an undead army of thousands; caster controls many undead permanently; one or more targets die an agonizing death at a distance; caster summons and controls one or more deities/demons of death and destruction; caster withers and rots entire bioregions of plants and animals; permanent penalty to one or more targets' stats; caster can temporarily kill by touch or glance or voice; permanent boost to one or more of caster's stats by sucking life from a target; caster creates a huge wall of bone and gore that lasts for some duration; etc.

### School of Rejuvenation, Restoration, Healing, & Life Magic

#### Chants & Incantations

Caster has the ability to heal by touch for a short period; caster has the ability to cure one or more diseases by touch for a short period (Spl Str vs. Potency); caster can wound the undead by touch temporarily (Spl Str vs. Strength); small bonus to one or more of caster's stats for a short period; small bonus to one or more targets' stats for a short period; caster or target is protected from

the undead for a short period; caster or target receives a small bonus to one or more stats for a short time; caster draws in healing energy from the natural world and heals minor wounds; caster or target is protected by an aura for a short time (Protection = Spl Str); caster can cure paralysis by touch for a short time; caster can relieve fear by touch for a short time; etc.

### Rituals

Caster, target, and/or multiple targets receive bonus to one or more stats for a long period; caster can heal major wounds by touch and/or can heal minor wounds at a distance for a long period; caster can cure diseases and poisoning at a distance for a short time; immunity to one or more diseases or poisons for caster or targets for a short time; caster creates a protective barrier that keeps out the undead; caster creates auras of protection around multiple targets; (Protection = Spl Str); caster can kill the undead by touch or caster can wound the undead at a distance for some time; communication with and possible help from patron demons/deities of healing, rejuvenation, and restoration; etc.

### Epic Rituals

Permanent increase to one or more of caster's stats; permanent increase to one or more of target's stats; complete immunity to one or more diseases or poisons for caster and/or targets; caster creates a huge protective barrier that instantly kills the undead and heals all those within it; caster summons a demon/deity to serve for some period of time; caster cures insanity, permanent paralysis, or other life-crippling maladies in one or more targets; etc.

## School of Illusion, Trickery, Prestidigitation, Thaumaturgy, & Shadow

### Chants & Incantations

Caster can make targets hallucinate by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Int); caster or one or more targets gain bonuses to one or more stealth skills for a short time; caster can obfuscate items or traps by touch for a short time; caster and/or targets are surrounded by an aura that makes their movements quieter for a short time; caster and/or targets are surrounded by an aura that bends light and creates shadow for a short time; caster can cause confusion and bewilderment to targets by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Int); caster can make targets forget knowledge by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Int); caster can detect Divination Magic at a small distance; caster can dispel Divination Magic by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Spl Str); etc.

### Rituals

Caster can make targets hallucinate at a distance for a long time (Spl Str vs. Int); caster and/or one or more targets gain bonuses to one or more stealth skills for a long time; caster can obfuscate items and traps at a distance for some time; caster and/or targets are surrounded by an aura that bends light and creates shadow for a long time; caster is completely invisible for some time; caster can cause confusion and bewilderment to targets at a distance for some time; caster can make targets forget knowledge at a distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Int); caster can detect Divination Magic at a great range; caster can dispel Divination Magic at a distance for some time (Spl Str vs. Spl Str); communication with and possible help from patron demons/deities of illusion/trickery/shadow; etc.

### Epic Rituals

Caster makes targets suffer hallucinations, confusion, or even madness simply by being looked at (Spl Str vs. Int); caster can make targets forget knowledge at a distance for a long time or permanently (Spl Str vs. Int); caster and/or one or more targets gain long-lasting or permanent bonuses to one or more stealth skills; caster can make items and traps completely invisible at a distance for a very long time; caster creates a huge aura that makes everything within it invisible to everything outside it for some time; caster can detect and correctly identify Divination Magic at a huge distance for a long time; caster can dispel Divination Magic at a huge distance for a long time (Spl Str vs. Spl Str); caster summons a great demon/spirit of illusion to serve her; etc.

## School of Divination, Clairvoyance, Prophecy, & Soothsaying Magic

### Chants & Incantations

Caster can cure hallucinations, madness, confusion, and other mental maladies by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty/Potency); caster and/or targets gain bonuses to one or more detect skills or to intelligence for a short time; caster can give one or more targets penalties to one or more stealth skills by touch for a short time; caster can decipher foreign

languages/symbols/speech for a short time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty); caster or one or more targets gain a bonus to knowledge for a short time; caster gains new knowledge for a short time; caster catches a tiny glimpse of what may or may not happen in the very near future; caster can detect Illusion Magic at a short distance; caster can dispel Divination Magic by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Spl Str); etc.

### Rituals

Caster can cure hallucinations, madness, confusion, and other mental maladies at a distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty/Potency); caster and/or targets gain bonuses to one or more detect skills or to intelligence for a long time; caster can give one or more targets penalties to one or more stealth skills at a distance for a long time; caster can decipher foreign languages/symbols/speech for a long time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty); caster or one or more targets gain a bonus to knowledge for a long time; caster gains new knowledge for a long time; caster sees some likely possibilities of things that will occur in the near or semi-distant future; caster can detect Illusion Magic at a long distance for a short time; caster can dispel Illusion Magic at a distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Spl Str); communication with and possible help from patron demons/deities of Divination and Knowledge; communication with and possible help from *any* demons/deities/spirits; etc.

### Epic Rituals

Caster is surrounded by an aura that cures hallucinations, madness, confusion, and other mental maladies at a distance for a long time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty/Potency); caster and/or targets gain permanent bonuses to one or more detect skills or to intelligence; caster can give one or more targets penalties to one or more stealth skills at a distance for a long time; caster gains knowledge (learns) a new language or set of symbols; caster sees several almost-definite possibilities of things that will occur in the near, semi-distant, and distant future; caster sees events that will certainly happen to herself in the near future; caster can detect Illusion Magic at a huge distance for a long time; caster can dispel Illusion Magic at a distance for a long time (Spl Str vs. Spl Str); long communication with and probable help from patron demons/deities of Divination and Knowledge; long communication with and probable help from *any* demons/deities/spirits; etc.

## School of Elementalism, Geomancy, Shamanism, & Nature Magic

### Chants & Incantations

Light aid from one or more creatures, elementals, or plants (a squirrel jumps onto an enemy and distracts him, a water spirit splashes water in the face of one enemy, etc.- millions of options); bonus to one or more of the caster's bushcraft skills for a short time; caster can boost one or more bushcraft skills of targets by touch for a short time; light aid from one or more of the elements for a short time (e.g. vines reaching up and entangling targets, strong wind blowing dirt in the face of enemies, etc., millions of options); small change in the weather for a short time; etc.

### Rituals

Moderate aid from one or more creatures, elementals, or plants (a wolf joins the caster as an ally for a fight, a swarm of bees attacks a group of enemies, etc.- millions of options); bonus to one or more of the caster's bushcraft skills for a long time; caster can boost one or more bushcraft skills of targets at a distance for a short time; heavy aid from one or more of the elements for a long time (e.g. vines reaching out and suffocating targets to death, strong wind blowing enemies off a cliff, lightning striking one or two foes, millions of options); large change in the weather for a short time or small change for a long time; communication with and possible help from natural and elemental spirits/demons/deities; etc.

### Epic Rituals

Heavy aid from one or more creatures, elementals, or plants (a massive fire elemental bursts forth and consumes a whole band of enemies, blackberry undergrowth tangles and consumes a group of pursuers, etc.- millions of options); one or more permanent elemental, plant, or animal companions (wolf, water elemental, carnivorous plant, etc.); permanent bonus to one or more of the caster's bushcraft skills; caster can boost one or more bushcraft skills of targets at a distance for a long time; hugely intense aid from one or more of the elements for a very long time (e.g. brush fires sweep the plains and incinerate an entire army, caster parts a sea to pass through its waves, an earthquake is summoned that swallows a city, millions of options); caster controls the local weather for some time; long communication with and probable help from natural and elemental spirits/demons/deities; etc.

## School of Transmutation, Alteration, Enchanting, & Physical Magic

### Chants & Incantations

Caster gains a bonus to one or more stats for a short time; caster can give a bonus to one or more of a target's stats by touch for a short time; caster can enchant items with one or more stat bonuses or penalties for a short time by touch; caster can dispel enchantments on objects for a short time by touch (Spl Str vs. Spl Str/Difficulty); caster can levitate for a short time; caster creates a shield-aura around himself for a short time (Protection = Spl Str); caster can create a small force-wall for a small space for a short time (Protection/Durability = Spl Str); caster can damage or strengthen physical objects (including weapons and armor) by touch for a short time; caster can move small objects short distances for a short time; caster can create an aura of breathable air around herself for a short time; caster can teleport small objects short distances for a short time; etc.

### Rituals

Caster gains a bonus to one or more stats for a long time; caster can give a bonus to one or more stats of one or more targets by touch for a long time or at a distance for a short time; caster can enchant items with one or more stat bonuses or penalties for a long time by touch or for a short time at a distance; caster can dispel enchantments on objects for a long time by touch or for a short time at a distance (Spl Str vs. Spl Str/Difficulty); caster can levitate for a long time; caster can cause others to levitate for a short time; caster creates a shield-aura around himself for a long time (Protection = Spl Str); caster can create a small force-wall for a small space for a long time OR a large force-wall for a small or large space for a short time (Protection/Durability = Spl Str); caster can damage or strengthen physical objects (including weapons and armor) by touch for a long time or at a distance for a short time; caster can move small objects long distances for a long time OR large objects short distances for some time; caster can create an aura of breathable air around himself for a long time; caster can teleport small objects long distances for a short time or large objects/people short distances for a short time; communication with and possible help from spirits/demons/deities of change, chaos, and enchantment; etc.

### Epic Rituals

Caster gains a permanent bonus to one or more stats; caster can give a bonus to one or more stats of one or more targets permanently by touch or at a distance for a long time; caster can enchant items with one or more stat bonuses or penalties permanently by touch or for a long time at a distance; caster can dispel enchantments on objects for a long time by touch or at a distance (Spl Str vs. Spl Str/Difficulty); caster can levitate for a long time; caster can cause others to levitate for a short time; caster creates a shield-aura around himself for a long time (Protection = Spl Str); caster can create a small force-wall for a small space for a long time OR a large force-wall for a small or large space for a short time (Protection/Durability = Spl Str); caster can damage or strengthen physical objects (including weapons and armor) permanently by touch or at a distance for a long time; caster can move small objects huge distances for a long time OR large objects long distances for a long time; caster creates a huge aura of breathable air around herself and others for a long time; caster can teleport small objects huge distances for a long time or large objects/people long distances for a short time; caster can alter the molecular structure of objects and people by touch for a short time (Spl Str vs. Strength/Construction); long communication with and probable help from spirits/demons/deities of change, chaos, and enchantment; etc.

## Discipline of Telepathy, Thought Transference, & Mind-to-Mind Psionics

### Chants & Incantations

Caster can communicate basic thoughts with a willing target at a short distance for a short time; caster can attempt to read the minds of others at a short distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Willpower or Telepathy); caster can gain one or more types of knowledge from one target by touch for a short time; caster can sense danger and hidden motives and objects around him at a short distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty); caster can use telepathy and verbal commands to make one target in earshot obey (Spl Str vs. Willpower or Telepathy); etc.

### Rituals

Caster can communicate complex thoughts with a willing target at short distance for a long time; caster can communicate complex thoughts with a willing target at a long distance for a short time; caster can communicate basic thoughts with a number of targets at short distance for a short time; caster can attempt to read the minds of others at a short distance for a long time or at a long distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Willpower or Telepathy); caster can gain one or more types of knowledge from one target by touch for a long time or from one target at a distance for a short time; caster can sense danger and hidden motives and objects

around him at a short distance for a long time or a long distance for a short time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty); caster can use telepathy and verbal commands to make several targets in earshot obey (Spl Str vs. Willpower or Telepathy); communication with and possible help from spirits/demons/deities of thought, learning, the mind; etc.

### Epic Rituals

Caster can communicate complex thoughts with any number of targets at any distance for a long time; caster can communicate with single willing targets at a short distance indefinitely; caster can attempt to read the minds of others at a long distance for a long time (Spl Str vs. Willpower or Telepathy); caster can permanently gain one or more types of knowledge from one target by touch or from targets at a distance for a short time; caster can sense danger and hidden motives and objects around him at a long distance for a long time (Spl Str vs. Difficulty); caster can use telepathy and verbal commands to make many targets in earshot obey (Spl Str vs. Willpower or Telepathy); long communication with and probable help from spirits/demons/deities of thought, learning, the mind; etc.

### Discipline of Telekinesis, Psychokinesis, & Mind-to-Mind Psionics

#### Chants & Incantations, Rituals, Epic Rituals

Same as the School of Transmutation, except for stat-altering effects and enchantment effects.

### Discipline of Extra-sensory Perception, ESP

#### Chants & Incantations, Rituals, Epic Rituals

Same as the School of Divination, except for stat-altering effects and curative effects.

## *Effects of Failed Attempts to Cast Magic & Psionics*

Though many other roleplaying systems treat magic as if it is formulaic and scientific, on the contrary, in SAGA, magic is chaotic, unpredictable, and, well, magical! This means that when a magic user fails in his or her attempt to utilize magical power, the effects can range from simple exhausting or taxing to catastrophic and devastating, or, in other cases, to outright bizarre and totally unforeseen.

In game, whenever a PC or NPC fails at magic or psionics, Narrators should consult the lists in the previous section regarding *Effects of Successfully Cast Magic & Psionics*. An easy way to determine what happens when magic fails is to consult what happens when magic succeeds, then invert it. Better yet, in cases where a character fails really drastically at magic (i.e., rolls significantly less than the opposing roll), the effects can be scaled up to mythically devastating or narrators can choose to make the effects totally bizarre, eldritch, and/or unrelated to the school or type of magic being practiced.

For example, a character attempting to enhance his perception via magic might face an hour of horrendous ringing in his ears upon failing such a spell. Or, if he fails especially badly, he might open an auditory channel to a plane of hellish torture, and may be forced to hear its goings on for some time, or might perhaps be magically tapped into a fight between some couple bickering on the other side of the planet.

The effects of magical failure can be relatively innocuous, also. A failed spell might simply tire out a mage, or give him a circumstantial penalty to Endurance for a short time. Maybe it causes mental taxation and therefore a circumstantial penalty to Intelligence, or maybe renders temporary dyslexia.

Narrators should incorporate this facet of magic into SAGA campaigns, but should not be so brutal as to punish PCs for even trying magic. The effects of magical failure should reflect the degree of failure, and can provide fun and creative outlets for storytelling in in-game play.

## HARMFUL AGENTS & PHYSICAL NEEDS

There are many harmful agents characters will encounter in their adventures in a *Saga* campaign. These include primary needs like hunger, thirst, and the need for rest, as well as external factors like poison and the elements. These can all have a great impact upon the game. The rules provided below are entirely optional.

### *Hunger, Thirst, Fatigue*

Characters in *Saga*, as people in real life, must eat, drink, and sleep to remain healthy. If a character goes without food, water, and/or sleep for an extended period, he suffers penalties depending on the severity of his ailments. This begins at -1, but can increase to -2 or even -3 or more in extreme cases. Because hunger, thirst, and fatigue affect every action a character takes, the penalty applies to all rolls the character makes until healed. Characters who are starving lose -1 Endurance and -1 Strength for every week they spend starving. These penalties remain until character builds them back up, even after eating to relieve the hunger.

A character who goes two months while starving, he dies. Similarly, a character who goes several days without water dies. If a character goes a few days without sleeping, she collapses into unconsciousness and sleep until disturbed or rested. Characters kept awake through herbal or chemical stimulants or magic lose sanity slowly bit by bit until they sleep or go completely insane.

### *Diseases & Poison*

Characters may be exposed to a number of illnesses and toxins in their travels. These agents can harm and kill characters if not resisted.

When a character comes into contact with a Disease, the Narrator rolls the Disease's Potency (defined by Narrator) and the character's Endurance. If the disease succeeds, the character is infected, and suffers the negative consequences. Consequences of diseases are left to Storyteller discretion, but usually involve decreased Strength, Speed, and Endurance, and sometimes death.

Characters can also ingest or be attacked with poisons. If a character ingests or is attacked with a poison, the Storyteller must determine the Potency of the dose. Potency for lethal doses is at least 10, but can also be 11, 12, or higher, depending on how much is administered. Once Potency is determined, the Narrator rolls Potency against the character's Endurance. A successful roll kills the character in the manner of the poison's effectiveness. Failure means that the character's immune system survived the toxin.

Characters who survive diseases and poisons can build up resistance and eventually immunity. When a character survives an agent, he gains +1 Resistance to that agent. This is used when exposed to the same agent again. In such a case, Resistance acts as a circumstantial bonus toward the character's Endurance roll. Resistance is cumulative, and characters can become immune to agents this way.

As with the ancient King Mithridates in the real world, characters in SAGA campaigns can intentionally introduce themselves to less-than-lethal doses of poisons and toxins in order to intentionally build immunity.



# WEAPONS & ARMOR

## Weapons

Although combat is not the main focus of *Saga*, Player Characters will discover and use a huge variety of weapons in their travels. Weapons all have two statistics, one called Deadliness, the other called Penetration. Deadliness represents the total effectiveness and lethality of the weapon. Penetration shows the weapon's likelihood to pierce or find gaps in armor.

Like every other stat in the game, Deadliness and Penetration range from 1-10 with appropriate descriptors for mundane weapons. Masterfully crafted and especially unique weapons may have stats of 11 or 12. Legendary weapons, such as *Excalibur* or *Glamdring the Foehammer*, may have stats of 13-14. Fantasy campaign settings will certainly have many weapons with stats of 11-14. Weapons with stats of 15 or greater are the stuff of potent magic, the swords of angels, wands that can damn the Elder Ones. Likewise, some mundane weapons that are masterfully crafted or have a huge caliber, etc., may have stats higher than those listed below. Further, weapons and armor in cyberpunk and sci-fi settings may also have slightly greater than mundane stats to reflect their technological superiority.

There are several non-lethal weapons, like truncheons and other small bludgeons, that are used primarily for knocking out one's foes. These weapons still have a Deadliness value to show their effectiveness, though they are not actually deadly.

Following below is a rough guide to various weapons and their Deadliness values. If a weapon you want to use in a campaign is not listed, find the closest equivalent and give it similar stats. For example, the Japanese *yari* is not listed, but its pretty much the same as any other spear. Thus it has: D6/P8, Sz1. Please keep in mind that these are generic weapon templates. More complete, detailed, and comprehensive information about weapons and armor can be found in individual campaign settings. Also note that many of these weapons have a range in stat values for Deadliness and Penetration. This is due to the variety of individual types, differing manufacturers, different calibers for ranged weapons, and different materials of construction (yew longbow versus pine self-bow, for example).

Weapon	Deadliness/Penetration	Size
ANY CAMPAIGN SETTING		
Cutting knives, dagger, knife, tanto, dirk, sickle, bladed fan	4/1	1
Katar, push-dagger, claw hands, wristblade, spiked knuckles	4/Strength	1
Stabbing knives, Stiletto, shiv, sai, shank, poignard	4/6	1
Wooden swords, Bokken or bokuto, waster	5/1, usually non-lethal	1
Short swords, gladius, wakizashi, bill, falx, kopis, kukri	6/3	1
Thrusting swords, rapier, estoc, tuck, small sword	5/7	1
1-handed swords, katana, falchion, cutlass, scimitar, talwar, saber	7/4	1
2-handed swords, claymore, great sword, zweihander, nodachi	10/6	1
Hatchet, tomahawk, throwing axe, adze, kama, crow's beak	5/5	1
Axe, battle axe, military pick	7/7	1
War axe, executioner's axe, great axe	9/7	1
Club, cane, branch, jitte, blackjack	5/2, usually non-lethal	1
Mace, cudgel, morningstar, hammer	5/7	1
Battle mace, battle hammer, battle morningstar, flail (1 head)	6/8	1

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Deadliness/Penetration</i>	<i>Size</i>
Maul, warhammer, war mace, war flail (2-3 heads)	7/9	1
Quarterstaff, staff, walking stick, long stick or branch	6/1, usually non-lethal	1
Spears, javelin, trident, pilum, spetum, pitchfork, lance	6/8	1
Large spear, harpoon, pike	7/8	1
Glaive, halberd, bardiche, voulge, poleax, naginata, scythe	8/7	1
Cestus, metal knuckles, weighted gloves	+1 to KO/+1 to bypass armor	1
Whip	4/0, non-lethal, no K.O.s	1
Short self bow	Depends on arrow/3-5	1
Long self bow	Depends on arrow/5-6	1
Short composite bow	Depends on arrow/6-7	1
Long composite bow	Depends on arrow/7-8	1
Arrows, Straight-head, Field Points	5/0	1
Arrows, Small Broadhead, Bird Point	7/0	1
Arrows, Large Broadhead	8-10/0	1
Crossbow pistol	Depends on bolt/6	1
Crossbow rifle	Depends on bolt/8	1
Arbalest	Depends on bolt/10	1
Bolts, Straight	5-7/0	1
Bolts, Broadhead	8-10/0	1
Blowgun	0/1 non-lethal, easily poisoned	1
Throwing knife, chakrum, throwing spike, shuriken	3/5	1
Sling	5/2	1
<b>RENAISSANCE/AGE OF SAIL</b>		
Fencing swords, court swords, spadrons	6/8	1
Blackpowder pistols, flintlocks, matchlocks, pepperboxes	5-7/4	1
Blackpowder rifles, arquebus, flintlock/matchlock musket	6-8/6-7	1
Blunderbuss	8/3	1
Cannon, grapeshot	8/8, wide arc	2
Cannon, ball	9/10	2
Cannon, explosive shot	10, explosive, 15' diameter	2
<b>WILD WEST/VICTORIAN ERA</b>		
Bowie knife	6/3	1
Early revolvers, Colt .45, Schmofield Mo. 3, etc.	5-6/4-5	1
Bolt-action rifles, Winchester, Smith and Wesson	7-8/6-7	1
Double-barrel shotgun	9/4	1
Gatling gun	5-6/5-6	1
Harpoon gun	6/8	1
Steam cannon	9, flame-based	1
Steam grenade (steampunk only)	8, explosive, 10' diameter	1
Mechanic's tools: monkey wrench, metal pipe	6/5	1
Steam hammer (steampunk only)	10/10	1
<b>EARLY MODERN WORLD, INDUSTRIAL ERA</b>		
Modern cutting knives, kitchen knife, trench knife	4/2	1
Screwdriver, ice pick, letter opener, bayonet	3/7	1
Semi-automatic pistols (depends on caliber)	3-7/4-7	1

## Weapon

	Deadliness/Penetration	Size
Semi-automatic rifles (depends on caliber)	4-9/4-9	1
Early sub-machine guns	3-8/4-8	1
Machine guns (.50, 12.7mm, 14.5mm)	8-10/8-10	1
Grenade	9, explosive	1
Early rocket launcher, M1A1, M9A1, M20A1, etc.	10, explosive	1
Flamethrower	10, flame-based	1

## MODERN WORLD, POST-INDUSTRIAL ERA

Broken bottle, box cutter, etc.	3-4/1-2	1
Lawnmower blade, machete, big combat knife, kukri, etc.	4-6/2-5	1
Baton or nightstick	5/2, usually non-lethal	1
Stun gun	10/0, non-lethal, rolls to K.O.	1
Chainsaw, hedge-trimmer	9/6	1
Modern hatchet, modern throwing axe, meat cleaver	5/5	1
Pickaxe, maddox, fireman's axe, logger's axe	7/7	1
Bush-axe, scythe, branch-trimmer, etc.	8/6	1
Baseball bat, spiked bat, metal pipe, monkey wrench, golf club	6-7/5-6	1
Sledgehammer, maul	8/8	1
Modern recurve bows	see bows above	1
Modern compound bows	Depends on arrows/6-9	1
Modern crossbow pistol	Depends on bolts/5-6	1
Modern crossbow rifle	Depends on bolts/6-9	1
Bolts, Straight-headed, Field Point	6/0	1
Bolts, Broadheaded	9/0	1
Modern shotguns, Benelli M2/M3, Franchi SPAS 12	Depends on shell/7	1
Automatic shotguns, Pancor Jackhammer, H&K CAWS	Depends on shell/7	1
Shotgun shells, Shot	8/0	1
Shotgun shells, Sabot Slug and Flechette	10/0	1
Semi-auto Pistols, machine pistols, Tec-9, Skorpion, Mini-uzi	3-6/4-6	1
Submachine guns, H&K MP-5, UMP-40, UMP-45, others	4-8/4-8	1
Semi-automatic rifles (depends on caliber)	6-10/5-9	1
Assault rifles, AK-47/74/94, AR-15, M-16, FN-FAL, Galil	6-10/5-9	1
Sniper rifles, Barrett .50, PSG-1, Dragunov, others	8-10/8-10	1
Machine guns (.50, 12.7mm, 14.5mm)	8-10/8-10	1
RPG Launchers, M72LAW, RPG 7, SMAW, IMI Shipon	10, explosive	2

## CYBERPUNK & SCI-FI

Energy blade, energy knife, lightdagger	5-7/10-12	1
Ripper blade, ripper knife, vibroblade	10-12/6	1
Energy sword, lightsaber	7-8/10-12	1
Ripper sword, vibrosword	10-12/8	1
Ripper axe, vibroax	11-12/10	1
Energy lance, energy spear	8/11-12	1
Gauss pistol, bolt pistol	6/8, silent, no flash	1
Endoatmospheric Particle Beam (EnPB) Pistol, Laser Pistol, Blaster	9/11-12	1
Electro-magnetic Pulse (EMP) Pistol, Ion Pistol	5-7/0, affects machines/vehicle system	1
Weirding pistol	user's willpower/user's willpower	1
Gauss rifle, Bolt Rifle	8/10, silent, no flash	1

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Deadliness/Penetration</i>	<i>Size</i>
EnPB Rifle, Laser Rifle, Blaster Rifle	10/11-12	1
EMP rifle, Ion rifle	7-10/0 affects machines/vehicle systems	2
Weirding rifle	user's willpower/user's willpower	1
EnPB cannon, Laser cannon, Heavy Blaster	11-12/11-12	2
EMP cannon, Ion cannon	11-12/0 affects machines/vehicle systems	2
Weirding cannon	user's willpower/user's willpower	2
EnPB Grenade, Thermal Detonator	11-12, explosive	2
EMP Grenade	8-12 affects machines/vehicles	2
Minigun (.50, 12.7mm), "Avenger"	10-12/8-12, huge rate of fire	1-2
EnPB Minigun, Laser Minigun, "Vindicator" Minigun	10-12/10-12	2
20mm HE Minigun, "Annihilator" Minigun	10, explosive	2

## VEHICLE WEAPONS

Gatling gun (Steampunk/Wild West)	7-9/6-7	1
Machine guns (WWI-modern)	9-10/6-8	1
Rockets (WWII)	8, explosive	2
20mm machine guns (WWII-modern)	10/8	2
Turret (WWII, modern)	9-10/7-8	2
Vulcan cannon (modern)	10/8	3
Size 2 Bomb	10, explosive	2
Size 3 Bomb	10, explosive	3
Size 4 Bomb	10, explosive	4
Rocket launcher (modern, cyberpunk)	10-12, explosive	2
Missiles (modern, sci-fi)	10-12, explosive	3
Small Blasters, Small Lasers (cyberpunk/sci-fi vehicles)	6-8/8-12	2
Small EMP blasters (cyberpunk/sci-fi vehicles)	8-10/0, affects vehicles/machine systems	2
Large Blasters, Large Lasers (cyberpunk/sci-fi vehicles)	8-10/10-12	3
Large EMP blasters (cyberpunk and sci-fi vehicles)	9-10/0, affects vehicles/machine systems	3
30mm HE cannon (cyberpunk/sci-fi vehicles)	10-12, explosive	3
Warhead	10-12, explosive	4
Large blaster cannon, large laser cannon	11-12/11-12	4

## *Armor*

All armors have two stats in common, Protection and Fire Resist. Protection is the armor's ability to resist melee attacks and ballistic attacks. Fire Resist shows how well the armor resists flame-based attacks. Some armors also have Shields, which presents another layer that weapons must breach.

Each of these stats is rated 1-10, like all other stats, for mundane armors. Mastercrafted and unique armors will have stats of 11-12 (masterful). Armors with stats of 13-14 (mythic, legendary) will occur in high-fantasy and cyberpunk/sci-fi settings. Armors with stats of 15+ (arcane/otherworldly) are rare in any setting, and are likely found only in other realms, the wardrobes of ancient liches, and the highest echelons of cyberpunk corporate R&D, etc.

In addition to its regular stats, armor can be made to give characters bonuses to certain stat rolls. For example, many armors can be Camouflaged to give a +1 or more bonus to hide. Armor can also be made

Emboldening, which gives the wearer +1 or more to Courage rolls. This is done with flourishes, epic embroidery, or symbols that make a character feel braver. Armor can also be made Hardcore, which gives a +1 or more bonus to Intimidate others. Hardcore armors are covered with spikes, skulls or bones, blood, trophies from enemy bodies, scenes of slaughter, and so on. None of these are magical effects, they are purely physical. Typically, armor cannot be both Hardcore and Camouflaged, but it can be Emboldening and Camouflaged.

Armors can also be Noisy/Visible. This is the opposite of Camouflaged, and represents loud, shiny, metal armors. Such armor gives a -1 or greater penalty to Move Silently and to Hide, depending on how loud and visible they are. All metal armors, like chainmail and platemail have such a penalty. Many armors are also Immune to Brawling, as they offer enough protection to prevent wearers from taking damage in hand to hand combat.

For armors that give bonuses or penalties, the amount of bonus or penalty depends on the amount of armor worn. For example, if PCs are wearing only camouflaged leather gloves, the bonus would be very small, like +1 or even +0. However, if a PC is wearing an entire suit of camouflaged leather armor, the bonus could be +3 or even greater. For noisy/visible armors, the penalties apply the same way. If a character is wearing only a chainmail coif or metal helm, the penalty is probably -0 or -1. If a character is decked out in full plate, the penalty could be -3 or even automatic failure to be stealthy. These values are left to Narrator discretion.

Following below is a list of sample armors in *Saga*. Although individual pieces of armor are listed, gameplay is faster and easier if PCs and NPCs use full suits of armor. Alongside the individual pieces of armor listed below are the full suits themselves. Obviously, if a character is not wearing a full suit, only the parts of their body covered in armor are protected by the armor. For example, helms protect heads, but not torsos. As with weapons, if you don't find what you're looking for below, find a similar armor and assign the same stats.

(Please note: the stats on quilted armors and leather armor are not a mistake below. Gambesons actually have superior protective value and were used extensively. Leather armor was practically non-existent historically and is more easily penetrated than layers of linen. Check out some tests on youtube if you're skeptical!)

<b>Armor</b>	<b>Protection/Fire Resist/Shields</b>
Fantasy, Middle Ages, Feudal Japan	
Animal armor plates	depends on animal, can be sewn to cloth/leather for bonus
Quilted Linen or Cloth Armor	
Quilted Cap	5/4/0
Gambeson, Aketon, or Padded Jack	5/4/0
Quilted Pants or Trousers	5/4/0
Quilted Mittens	5/4/0
Leather Armor	
Leather Cap	3-4/8/0
Leather Jerkin	3-4/8/0
Leather Pants	3-4/8/0
Leather Gloves or Bracers	3-4/8/0
Leather Boots	3-4/8/0
Brigandine, Jack of Plate (torso armor)	7-8/3-6/0
Brigandine/Jack of Plate + Chainmail Shirt	9-10/3-6/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling

## Armor

### Chainmail + Quilted Linen Padding

Padded Chainmail Cap or Coif	8/4/0, noisy/visible
Padded Chainmail Shirt or Hauberk/Haubergeon	8/4/0, noisy/visible
Padded Chainmail Leggings or Chausses	8/4/0, noisy/visible
Padded Chainmail Gloves, Mitons, or Bracers	8/4/0, noisy/visible

### Chainmail + Leather Padding

Padded Chainmail Cap or Coif	7/8/0, noisy/visible
Padded Chainmail Shirt or Hauberk/Haubergeon	7/8/0, noisy/visible
Padded Chainmail Leggings or Chausses	7/8/0, noisy/visible
Padded Chainmail Gloves, Mitons, or Bracers	7/8/0, noisy/visible

### Scalemail, Scale Armor, Lamellar Armor, Splint Armor

Scalemail Cap or Helm	6/7/0, noisy/visible
Scalemail Shirt or Cuirass	6/7/0, noisy/visible
Scalemail Pants or Leggings	6/7/0, noisy/visible
Scalemail Gloves	6/7/0, noisy/visible

### Plated Mail, Splinted Mail, Splintmail

Plated Mail Cap or Coif	8/8/0, noisy/visible
Plated Mail Shirt or Hauberk/Haubergeon	8/8/0, noisy/visible
Plated Mail Leggings or Chausses	8/8/0, noisy/visible
Plated Mail Gloves, Mitons, or Bracers	8/8/0, noisy/visible

### Plate Armor + Quilted Linen Padding

Plate Helm, War Hat, or Skullcap	9/9/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Breastplate or Cuirass	9/9/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Plate Gauntlets or Bracers	9/9/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Plate Leggings or Upper Greaves	9/9/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Plate Greaves or Boots	9/9/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling

### Heavy Plate Armor + Padded Chainmail Beneath

Heavy Plate Helm or War Hat	10/10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Heavy Breastplate or Cuirass	10/10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Heavy Plate Gauntlets or Bracers	10/10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Heavy Plate Leggings or Upper Greaves	10/10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
Heavy Plate Greaves or Boots	10/10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling

Shields: Buckler, Small Shield, Round Shield, Kite Shield, Crescent Shield, Tower Shield, Pavise

## Armor

### Victorian Era, Wild West, & Steampunk Worlds

#### Frontier or Cowboy Leathers

Leather Cowboy Hat	2-4/8/0
Leather Duster	2-4/8/0
Leather Pants	2-4/8/0
Leather Gloves	2-4/8/0
Leather Boots	2-4/8/0

#### Aviator or Mechanic's Leathers

Aviator Cap or Welding Cap	1-4/9/0
Aviator Jacket or Mechanic's Overalls	1-4/9/0
Aviator Trousers or Mechanic's Overalls	1-4/9/0
Aviator Gloves or Mechanic's Gloves	1-4/9/0
Aviator Boots or Mechanic's Boots	1-4/9/0

## Protection/Fire Resist/Shields

## Protection/Fire Resist/Shields

## Armor

Armored Submersible Diving Suit  
Steam-driven Exo-Suit (powered armor)

Early Modern Era

Early Flak Armor

Flak Trenchcoat or Flak Jacket

Kettle Helmet

Modern World, Post-industrial Worlds

Leather Clothes

Hard Hat

Welding Mask

Padded Motorcycle Leathers

Motorcycle Helmet

Motorcycle Jacket

Motorcycle Gloves

Motorcycle Pants

Motorcycle Boots

Sports & Martial Arts Pads

Helmet or Headgear

Chest Protector

Shin Pads

Arm Pads

Fireproof Gear

Fireproof Cap

Fireproof Suit

Fireproof Gloves

Light Tactical Armor

Light Tactical Helmet

Light Tactical Vest

Light Tactical Leggings

Light Tactical Shin Guards

Heavy Tactical Armor

Heavy Tactical Helmet

Heavy Tactical Vest

Heavy Tactical Leggings

Heavy Tactical Shin Guards

## Protection/Fire Resist/Shields

7/9/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling, provides air

10-12/10-12/0. noisy/visible, immune to brawling, douses flame

6/7/0

8/7/0

see above

7/8/0, immune to K.O.s

6/8-10/0

7/10/0, immune to K.O.s

6/9/0

6/9/0

6/9/0

6/9/0

5/2/0

5/2/0

5/2/0

5/2/0

0/10-12/0, can be worn under clothes & armor

0/10-12/0, can be worn under clothes & armor

0/10-12/0, can be worn under clothes & armor

0/10-12/0, can be worn under clothes & armor

6-7/6-7/0

6-7/6-7/0

6-7/6-7/0

6-7/6-7/0

8-10/8-10/0, immune to K.O.s

8-10/8-10/0

8-10/8-10/0

8-10/8-10/0

Shields: Riot Shield, Tactical Shield, Trashcan Lid, Grill Top, Car Door, Street Sign, etc.

Post-apocalyptic Worlds

Animal Armor Plates

Leather Clothes

Studded Leather

Motorcycle Leather

Sports & Martial Arts Pads

Fireproof Gear

Light Tactical Armor

Heavy Tactical Armor

Brigandine

Brigandine + Chainmail Shirt

Chainmail

Padded Chainmail

depends on animal, can be sewn to cloth/leather for bonus

see above

+1 to standard leather armor Protection

see above

see above

see above

see above

see above

see above

see above

see above

see above

## Armor

### Scrap Metal Armor

- Bucket/Colander Helm or Scrap Metal Helm
- Scrap Metal Breastplate/Metal Washer Shirt
- Scrap Metal Bracers
- Scrap Metal Greaves or Shin Guards

### Reinforced Scrap Metal Armor

- Reinforced Bucket/Colander Helm
- Reinforced Scrap Metal Breastplate
- Reinforced Scrap Metal Bracers
- Reinforced Scrap Metal Greaves/Shin Guards

## Protection/Fire Resist/Shields

- 6-8/4-6/0. noisy/visible, immune to brawling
- 6-8/4-6/0. noisy/visible, immune to brawling
- 6-8/4-6/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
- 6-8/4-6/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling

- 8-10/8-10/0. noisy/visible, immune to brawling
- 8-10/8-10/0. noisy/visible, immune to brawling
- 8-10/8-10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling
- 8-10/8-10/0, noisy/visible, immune to brawling

Shields: Hubcap, Trashcan Lid, Barrel Lid, Grill Top, Car Door, Street Sign, Sheet Metal, Wood Shield, Riot Shield

## Cyberpunk & Sci-fi Worlds

### Stealth Suit

- Stealth Suit Cap
- Stealth Suit Jumper

### Shield Generator Belt, Low-quality

### Shield Generator Belt, Average-quality

### Shield Generator Belt, High-quality

### Combat Armor, Advanced Polymers

### Combat Armor Mk.II

- Combat Helmet Mk.II
- Combat Vest Mk.II
- Combat Pants Mk.II

### Powered Armor

- Power Armor Helmet
- Power Armor Suit

### Power Armor Mk.II (Size 2 armor)

- Power Armor Helmet Mk.II
- Power Armor Suit Mk.II

### Battlesuit (Size 2 armor)

0/0/0. gives +1 to +4 bonus to be stealthy

0/0/0, gives +1 to be stealthy

0/0/0, gives +3 bonus to be stealthy

0/0/1-4, can be worn with other armor

0/0/5-8, can be worn with other armor

0/0/9-12, can be worn with other armor

10-12/10-12/1-4

10-12/10-12/1-4

10-12/10-12/1-4

10-12/10-12/1-4

10-12/10-12/5-8, noisy/visible, immune to brawling, self-contained

10-12/10-12/5-8. noisy/visible, immune to brawling, HUD

10-12/10-12/5-8, noisy/visible, immune to brawling, self-contained

10-12/10-12/9-12, noisy/visible, immune to brawling, self-contained

10-12/10-12/9-12. noisy/visible, immune to brawling, HUD

10-12/10-12/9-12, noisy/visible, immune to brawling, self-contained

10-14/10-14/10-14. noisy/visible, immune to brawling, self-repairing, adds +2 strength and speed, allows 2 attacks per turn

Shields: Riot Shield, Combat Shield, Nano-shield

## Weapon & Armor Condition

Condition describes the physical state of repair or disrepair of a weapon or piece of armor. The stats given for weapons and armor above assume that these items are in good condition. However, weapons and armor take a beatings on a regular basis. This is bound to change their condition over time, and characters will likely come across a wide spectrum of quality in armor and weapons.

Weapon and armor condition is denoted by the use of colorful descriptors. These descriptors tell the quality of an item, and its stats reflect the substandard condition as told by the descriptors.

The weapon profile for hand axes reads:



Hatchet, tomahawk, throwing axe, adze, kama, crow's beak: 5/5, sz 1

So, if a character comes across a standard quality hand axe, it will have Fair 5 Deadliness and Fair 5 Penetration. This is a hatchet in good condition. If a character comes across a hand axe in less-than-normal condition it will have different statistics and an accurate descriptor. For example:

Dull hand axe, 5/3, sz 1

Rusted hand axe, 3/3, sz 1

Badly chipped hand axe, 3/4, sz 1

These are but a few examples, though the possibilities of condition descriptors are many. In relation to the weapons and armor PCs carry, condition operates on a strict roleplaying basis. It would be a lot of writing and erasing and paper wasting if PCs had to keep precise records of the condition points of each of their items.

Characters can use their Crafting skill area and related skill specializations to repair weapons and armor in less-than-perfect condition. This is done by rolling Crafting or the relevant skill (blacksmithing, bladesmithing, leatherworking, etc.) vs. the Difficulty of the task. Difficulty depends on the amount and type of damage. Characters must have the necessary tools at their disposal to attempt to repair. Successful repair rolls improve the condition of damaged items, though failures can further damage or destroy items if characters are particularly unskilled.

Following below is a sample list of condition descriptors. Please feel free to add others to your weapons and armor as you see fit. Some descriptors only apply to certain materials. Leather cannot corrode, for example, and metal cannot be moth-eaten. Use your best discretion.

#### SAMPLE WEAPON CONDITION DESCRIPTORS

Dull, damaged, fractured, rusted, corroded, old, antiquated, poor-quality, low-quality, weak, split, chipped, terrible, awful, ineffective, loose, battered, jammed (guns), crooked, bent, splintered, malfunctioning, etc.

#### SAMPLE ARMOR CONDITION DESCRIPTORS

Damaged, rusted (metal armor), corroded (metal), antiquated, old, poor-quality, weak, ripped (non-metal), chipped (metal), dented (metal), rotten (non-metal), badly made, awful, terrible, unprotective, gaping, moth-eaten (non-metal), battered, ill-fitting, etc.

## *Weapons & Armor Specific to Campaign Settings*

The lists of weapons and armor above are incredibly generic. It is certain that weapons and armor specific to certain campaign settings can and will be used in *Saga* adventures, but there isn't enough space to list them here. This includes things like Elven *mithril* (Tolkien), Fremen Robes and Crys-knives (*Dune*), Armored Vault Suits (*Fallout*), the Sommerswerd (*Lone Wolf*). Feel free to adapt and create your own setting-specific arms and armors, and look to specific *Saga* Campaign Settings for more information.

# EQUIPMENT

Besides weapons, characters in *Saga* will come across a vast number of useful and some not-so-useful items. Many situations in the course of their adventures will demand that PCs have the appropriate items, whether they be a key, magical orb, or fire starting equipment and a bedroll for sleeping outdoors.

Certain items confer bonuses to those who use them. For example, scopes can give +1 or +2 in Rolls to Hit at a distance. Binoculars and spyglasses can give a +1 or +2 bonus in Rolls to Detect hidden enemies at a distance. Dark clothes and cloaks can give bonuses in Rolls to Hide at night. There are far too many items and bonuses to list them all, but keep in mind that items can help a character significantly in the course of the game.

Characters can access items by finding them, stealing them, or buying them. However, they can also craft just about anything conceivable. To make most items, PCs must have hand tools (which they can also find, steal, buy, or make) and the materials appropriate to the task. To make a bow, one must have wood. To make a torch, one must have a branch, a rag, and some oil or fat.

When rolling to create items, characters roll their Crafting & Repair skill generalization or applicable specialization against the Difficulty as defined by the Narrator. Most crafting tasks have a difficulty of Average 3. Some, like making a bamboo fishing pole or preparing a meal or making plant-fiber cordage, are very easy. Others, like picking a complex lock or forging a sword blade, are very difficult. The Difficulty is left to Narrator discretion, but should seem reasonable. Narrators can have PCs make multiple attempt rolls when crafting involved or time-consuming items. Numerous successes equal a perfect product, while one or more failures equal a shoddy or entirely ruined product.

Just as characters can craft a multitude of items, they can also repair damaged or broken items. This is done by rolling Crafting & Repair or applicable repair skills against the Difficulty of the damage. The difficulty of fixing broken things increases with the complexity of the item and the amount of damage sustained. Most repair tasks will be Average 3. Some will be very easy, like sewing up a tear in a shirt. Others will be very difficult, like mending the damage done to weapons and armor in battle.

Following below is a large list of items PCs and NPCs may encounter and use in a *Saga* campaign. This list is not exhaustive. Please feel free to add and use other items in your adventures. Also, be reasonable when choosing items to include in a campaign: metal detectors aren't found in fantasy worlds, just as dynamite is not common in feudal Japan.

## SAMPLE ITEMS

Blacksmith/carpentry tools, Artists' tools, Arrowhead, Arrow or Bolt, Automatic Lockpick or Bump Key, Bag or Pouch, Backpack or Sack, Barrel, Bedroll or Sleeping Bag, Bedroll (sub-zero), Blade, Blunt weapon head, Blinding Powder, Binoculars, Bow or Crossbow, Beer or Liquor or Wine, Candle, Caltrops, Camera, Cell Phone, Chain, Chest or Trunk, Climbing Spikes, Cloth or Fabric, Clothes, Composite Bow, Cordage or Rope, Dishware, Cracking or Hacking Software, Dynamite, Electronic Bug, Electronic Lockpick, Firearms, Fishing Hook, Fishing Line, Fishing Pole, Flashbang, Flask or Vial or Bottle, Flint and Steel and Tinder, Fire Starting Kit, Friction Fire Kit (spindle, hearthboard), Fur or Pelt, Gasmask, Glass, Glassblower's Pipe, GPS, Grappling Hook, Hammock, Handcuffs, HazMat suit, Heat Vision Goggles, Horseshoe, Hookah, Industrial Tools (wrench, hammer, screwdriver, etc.), Ink (tattoo), Ink (writing), Jug or Urn or Vase, Key, Ladder, Laptop, Laser Pointer, Leather armor, Leather Boots, Leather, Leg Trap, Lighter, Loaded Dice, Lock, Lock Picks, Meal or Food, Medic's Kit or Medikit, Medicinal Plants, Melee Weapons, Metal Armor, Metal, Metal Detector, Motion Sensor, Multitool, Musical Instrument (huge variety), Nails, Night Vision Goggles, Paint (oil-based), Paint (tempera), Paper or Papyrus or other plant fiber sheets,, Paper (parchment or vellum), PC, Pepperspray, Pipe (metal), Pipe (smoking), Plastic Explosives or C4, Plow, Pot or Pan, Rock or Stone, Rope, Rope Ladder, Saddle or Stirrups or Reins,, Scabbard or Sheath, SCUBA Gear, Scope, Selfbow, Shield, Silencer, Skeleton Key, Spyglass, Surgeon's Tools, Wooden club/staff or Weapon Stalk, Tarp or Tarpaulin, Tattoo Rod, Tattoo Machine, Thread, Tent, Torch, Typewriter, Universal Translator, Vat, Waterskin or Wineskin, Wooden Furniture, Yoke.

# INDEX OF CONFLICTING STAT ROLLS

This section lists just about every roll you can and will use in *Saga*. Any time a Skill Generalization/Area is listed, you may of course use the corresponding Specialized Skills instead. Most of these corresponding skills are detailed in the list below. Information on how to use statistics in rolls and on rolling to resolve conflicts can be found in the chapter *Conflict Resolution*.

## *Attribute Related Attempt Rolls*

- Arm wrestle another character: strength vs. strength
  - Avoid psionic attack or other mental control: willpower vs. relevant psionics skill or potency of technique
  - Dodge an attack: speed vs. combat skill area or combat skill (of opponent)
  - Endure harsh weather or sickness: endurance vs. potency
  - Knock out another character while brawling: strength vs. endurance
  - Lift and move a heavy or cumbersome object: strength vs. difficulty
  - Outrun an attack: speed vs. ranged combat skill area or ranged combat skill
  - Outrun another character: speed vs. speed
  - Stay focused/concentrate under pressure or with distractions: willpower vs. difficulty
  - Understand something, learn a fact, solve a puzzle or riddle: intelligence vs. difficulty
  - Understand gesturing or sign language: intelligence vs. difficulty
- The better a person is at gesturing, the easier it is to understand them. So, when rolling to comprehend:  
gesturing 1 = difficulty 5, gesturing 2 = difficulty 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, and excellent gesturing 5 = effortless 1.

## *Acrobatics, Movement, & Bodily Rolls*

- Balance on a given surface: acrobatics category or balance vs. difficulty
- Balance something on one's hands or feet: acrobatics category or acrobatics skill vs. difficulty
- Climb a given surface or object: acrobatics category or climb skill vs. difficulty
- Leap over an obstacle or gap: acrobatics category or jumping skill vs. difficulty
- Squeeze through a tight space: acrobatics category or acrobatics skill vs. difficulty
- Tumble, cartwheel, handspring, etc.: acrobatics category or gymnastics vs. difficulty
- Out-swim another character: acrobatics or swimming vs. acrobatics or swimming
- Swim in turbulent waters: acrobatics or swimming vs. difficulty

## *Combat & War Rolls*

- Block a melee weapon with a weapon: combat melee area/weapon skill vs. combat melee area/weapon skill
- Block a melee attack with hands/feet: combat unarmed/brawling skill vs. combat melee area/weapon skill
- Block a physical attack with hands/feet: combat unarmed/brawling skill vs. combat unarmed/brawling
- Break a limb with a limb bar (after rolling to pin): strength vs. strength
- Hit a target using with a melee weapon:
  - combat melee or weapon skill vs. speed (if target is dodging)
  - combat melee or weapon skill vs. combat melee or shield (if target is blocking with a shield)
  - combat melee or weapon skill vs. combat melee or weapon skill (if target is blocking with a weapon)
- Hit a target with a physical attack:
  - combat unarmed or brawling vs. combat unarmed or brawling (if target is blocking with his/her body))
  - combat unarmed or brawling vs. speed (if target is dodging)
  - combat unarmed or brawling vs. combat melee or shield (if target is blocking with a shield)
- Hit a target with a ranged/thrown weapon:
  - combat ranged or weapon skill vs. speed (if target is dodging)
  - combat ranged or weapon skill vs. combat melee or shield (if target is blocking with a shield)

Hit an unaware target with a ranged weapon: combat ranged/weapon skill vs. difficulty  
Hit target vehicle: combat ranged/weapon skill vs. vehicles/piloting skill  
Pin a target with a wrestling move: combat unarmed/grappling vs. combat unarmed/grappling  
Take down a target with a grappling/wrestling attack:  
    combat unarmed/grappling vs. combat unarmed/grappling (if target is blocking with a wrestling move)  
    combat unarmed/grappling vs. speed (if target is dodging)

## *Culinary & Artistic Rolls*

Brew alcohol, booze, etc: art or brew vs. difficulty  
Draw a pleasing and accurate picture: art or drawing skill vs. difficulty  
Make an enjoyable drink: art or prepare drink skill vs. difficulty  
Make enjoyable food: art or prepare food skill vs. difficulty  
Mold or sculpt a statue or other piece of art: art or sculpting skill vs. difficulty  
Paint a beautiful/accurate picture: art or painting skill vs. difficulty  
Pierce a target's body: art or body piercing skill vs. difficulty  
Stencil/spraypaint a design: art or spraypainting skill vs. difficulty  
Take/develop beautiful photographs: art or photography vs. difficulty  
Tattoo a target's body: art or tattooing vs. difficulty  
Write beautiful script: art or penmanship/calligraphy vs. difficulty

## *Crafting & Repair Rolls*

Cut a gem from mineral rough: crafting/repair or gem cutting vs. difficulty  
Join 2 pieces of metal: crafting/repair or welding skill vs. difficulty  
Make a blade for a weapon: crafting/repair or bladesmithing skill vs. difficulty  
Make a bow/crossbow: crafting/repair or bowyering skill vs. difficulty  
Make an object out of metal: crafting/repair or blacksmithing vs. difficulty  
Make armor, clothes, etc. out of leather: crafting/repair or leatherworking vs. difficulty  
Make arrows/bolts: crafting/repair or fletching skill vs. difficulty  
Make art by blowing glass: crafting/repair or glassworking skill vs. difficulty  
Make/build something out of stone/bricks: crafting/repair or stonemasonry vs. difficulty  
Make candles from wax: crafting/repair or candle making skill vs. difficulty  
Make/tailor clothes: crafting/repair or tailoring/sewing skill vs. difficulty  
Make lumber, carve a design/make a tool from wood or bone: crafting/repair or woodworking vs. difficulty  
Make yarn/thread out of natural fibers: crafting/repair or spinning vs. difficulty  
Make a basket, clothes, or net from plant fibers: crafting/repair or weaving vs. difficulty  
Repair a blade: crafting/repair or bladesmithing vs. difficulty  
Repair a weapon head: crafting/repair or blacksmithing vs. difficulty  
Repair a weapon stalk: crafting/repair or woodworking vs. difficulty  
Repair leather armor: crafting/repair or leatherworking vs. difficulty  
Repair metal armor: crafting/repair or blacksmithing vs. difficulty  
Repair other items: crafting/repair or applicable skill vs. difficulty

## *Entertainment Rolls*

Amuse another character/group of characters: entertainment or amuse vs. mood  
Juggle some objects: entertainment or juggling vs. difficulty  
Perform a dance routine: entertainment or dancing vs. difficulty  
Perform a scene, skit, or play: entertainment or acting vs. difficulty  
Perform ventriloquism or throw voice: entertainment or ventriloquism vs. difficulty

Play an instrumental piece/song: entertainment or musical instrument skill vs. difficulty  
Play a song and sing lyrics: entertainment/musical instrument skill vs. difficulty for the song, singing vs. difficulty for lyrics  
Sing a song: entertainment or singing vs. difficulty  
Tell an interesting and entertaining story: entertainment or storytelling vs. mood of target (i.e.- difficulty)

## *Gambling & Gaming Rolls*

Score a point or make a successful shot in a physical game with interference:  
gambling/gaming or physical game skill vs. opponent's gambling/gaming or physical game skill  
Score a point or make a successful shot in a physical game without interference:  
gambling/gaming or physical game skill vs. difficulty  
Win a round of a card/board game: gambling/gaming or card/board game skill vs. target's skill  
Examples of card/board game skills include: Poker, Monopoly, Spades, Warhammer, Video Games, etc.  
Examples of physical game skills are Billiards, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer, Hammer Throwing, etc. If a game is won purely by luck, and therefore involves no skill, just roll two opposing di20s, and the winner is the player with the highest roll. In fictional worlds, feel free to make up your own games.

## *Machine & Vehicle Rolls*

Dodge enemy vehicle fire while in a vehicle: vehicle/piloting skill vs. vehicle/piloting  
Dodge ground troop fire while in a vehicle: vehicle/machine or piloting vs. enemy weapon skill  
Shoot an enemy with a vehicle's weapons:  
vehicle/machine or piloting skill vs. speed (if target is dodging)  
vehicle/machine or piloting skill vs. combat melee or shield (if target is blocking with a shield)  
Operate a machine: vehicle/machine or machine operation skill vs. difficulty  
Pilot a vehicle over challenging terrain: vehicle/machine or piloting skill vs. difficulty  
Repair a machine or vehicle: vehicle/machine or repair vs. difficulty

## *Magic & Psionics Rolls*

Use Magic or Psionics: magic & psionics/specialized skill vs. random difficulty (changes every time)  
\* See the Magic & Psionics Section for more information.

## *Detect & Courage Rolls*

Detect a hidden character: detect or applicable skill vs. difficulty  
Detect a hidden element or clue: detect or applicable skill vs. difficulty  
Detect a lie or untruth: detect or applicable skill vs. lie  
Detect a noise made by a character or creature: detect or applicable skill vs. silent movement  
Detect a trap or bug: detect or applicable skill vs. concealment  
Focus when scared or intimidated: courage or applicable skill vs. intimidation/difficulty

## *Bushcraft, & Animal Rolls*

Build a fire: bushcraft or fire building vs. difficulty  
Catch a fish: bushcraft or fishing vs. difficulty  
Dodge attack while riding an animal: animals or animal riding vs. attack skill  
Find an herb/food in the wild: bushcraft or foraging vs. difficulty  
Find an herb/food in a city: bushcraft or foraging vs. difficulty  
Track a creature or person: bushcraft or tracking vs. stealth or camouflage  
Jump over/avoid obstacle while riding an animal: animals or animal riding vs. difficulty  
Make cordage, thread, or rope from plant fibers: cordage/rope vs. difficulty (usually easy 2)

Navigate a path or follow map: bushcraft or navigation vs. difficulty

In a lightly wooded area with open spaces, difficulty is moderate, but in an area of complete nothingness, like a desert, or in a densely wooded area, difficulty is challenging to difficult.

Skin a dead animal for its hide: bushcraft or skinning vs. difficulty

Tan an animal hide: bushcraft or tanning vs. difficulty (usually fair 5, varies with animal)

Tame or calm an animal: animals or animal taming vs. independence

Independence decreases occasionally when this roll succeeds many times, and can be reduced to Loyal 0.

Train an animal to do a trick/feat: animals or animal training vs. independence

Tie a knot: bushcraft or rope/knots vs. difficulty

## Communication & Interaction Rolls

Charm another character: communication or charm vs. target's mood (i.e.- difficulty)

Understand gesturing or sign language: intelligence vs. gesturing

The better a person is at gesturing, the easier it is to understand them. So, when rolling to comprehend: horrible gesturing 1 = difficult 5, poor gesturing 2 = challenging 4, fair gesturing 3 = moderate 3, good gesturing 4 = easy 2, and excellent gesturing 5 = effortless 1.

Convince a character of something: communication or convince vs. target's conviction (i.e.- difficulty)

Comfort another character: communication or empathy vs. mood (i.e.- difficulty)

Haggle for a better price: communication or haggling/bartering vs. target's conviction (i.e.-difficulty)

Inspire or embolden others: communication or leadership vs. mood of target or group (i.e.- difficulty)

Inspire others to regain courage: leadership vs. difficulty

Intimidate or scare a target: communication or intimidate vs. courage or applicable skill

Lie to a target: communication or lie vs. detect or applicable skill

Read a target's lips: communication or lip reading vs. difficulty

## Science & Medical Rolls

Bandage a wound to stop bleeding: medicine or bandaging vs. severity of wound

Construct a bomb/explosive: science/gadgets or explosives vs. difficulty

Crack encrypted software: science/gadgets or computers vs. encryption (i.e.- difficulty)

Diagnose an illness/malady: medicine or diagnose vs. difficulty

Hack a target computer system: computers/gadgets vs. systems

Perform surgery: medicine or surgery/operate vs. difficulty

Reset a broken/fractured bone: medicine or bone resetting vs. severity

Set/disarm a bomb: science/gadgets or explosives vs. difficulty

Sew skin back together: medicine or stitching vs. difficulty

Tap a phone line: science/gadgets or wiring vs. difficulty

Wire a system/house/computer: science/gadgets or wiring vs. difficulty

Repair frayed or broken wiring: science/gadgets or wiring vs. difficulty

## Stealth Rolls

Disguise one's personality/mannerisms: stealth or disguise/impersonate vs. detect or applicable skill

Impersonate another: stealth or disguise/impersonate vs. detect or applicable skill

Move silently: stealth or silent movement vs. detect or applicable skill

Pick a lock: stealth or lockpicking vs. lock's difficulty

Pick a pocket: stealth or pickpocket vs. detect or applicable skill

Set/disarm a trap or bug: stealth or trap setting/disarming vs. difficulty

Stay hidden: stealth or camouflage/hide vs. detect or applicable skill

Shoplift from a shelf/store/vendor: stealth or shoplifting vs. detect or applicable skill

# NPC & ENEMY TEMPLATES

## *Individual NPCs, Important & Recurring NPCs*

Name/Type:	Sex/Race:				
Classes/Titles:	Size:				
Endurance:	Intelligence:	Speed:	Strength:	Willpower:	
Acrobatics:	Animals:	Art:	Bushcraft:	Combat, Melee:	Combat, Ranged:
Combat, Unarmed:	Communication:	Courage:	Crafting & Repair:	Detect:	
Entertainment & Performance:	Gambling & Gaming:	Magic & Psionics:	Medicine:		
Science & Gadgets:	Stealth:	Vehicles & Machines:			

Weapons, Armor, Equipment, Other Skills, Other Information:

Name/Type:	Sex/Race:				
Classes/Titles:	Size:				
Endurance:	Intelligence:	Speed:	Strength:	Willpower:	
Acrobatics:	Animals:	Art:	Bushcraft:	Combat, Melee:	Combat, Ranged:
Combat, Unarmed:	Communication:	Courage:	Crafting & Repair:	Detect:	
Entertainment & Performance:	Gambling & Gaming:	Magic & Psionics:	Medicine:		
Science & Gadgets:	Stealth:	Vehicles & Machines:			

Weapons, Armor, Equipment, Other Skills, Other Information:



# NPCs/Enemies in Groups

Name, Type:	Sex/Race:			
Classes/Titles:	Size:			
Enemies Remaining:				
○ ○ ○ ○ (5) ○ ○ ○ ○ (10) ○ ○ ○ ○ (15) ○ ○ ○ ○ (20) ○ ○ ○ ○ (25)				
○ ○ ○ ○ (30) ○ ○ ○ ○ (35) ○ ○ ○ ○ (40) ○ ○ ○ ○ (45) ○ ○ ○ ○ (50)				
Endurance:	Intelligence:	Speed:	Strength:	Willpower:
Combat, Melee:	Combat, Ranged:	Combat, Unarmed:	Courage:	Detect:
Piloting/Riding:	Stealth:			
Weapons, Armor, Equipment, Other Skills, Other Info:				

Name, Type:	Sex/Race:			
Classes/Titles:	Size:			
Enemies Remaining:				
○ ○ ○ ○ (5) ○ ○ ○ ○ (10) ○ ○ ○ ○ (15) ○ ○ ○ ○ (20) ○ ○ ○ ○ (25)				
○ ○ ○ ○ (30) ○ ○ ○ ○ (35) ○ ○ ○ ○ (40) ○ ○ ○ ○ (45) ○ ○ ○ ○ (50)				
Endurance:	Intelligence:	Speed:	Strength:	Willpower:
Combat, Melee:	Combat, Ranged:	Combat, Unarmed:	Courage:	Detect:
Piloting/Riding:	Stealth:			
Weapons, Armor, Equipment, Other Skills, Other Info:				





## Units in Mass Combat

Unit Name, Type:

Size: Leadership (if applicable):

Troops Remaining:

○ ○ ○ ○ (5) ○ ○ ○ ○ (10) ○ ○ ○ ○ (15) ○ ○ ○ ○ (20) ○ ○ ○ ○ (25)

○ ○ ○ ○ (30) ○ ○ ○ ○ (35) ○ ○ ○ ○ (40) ○ ○ ○ ○ (45) ○ ○ ○ ○ (50)

○ ○ ○ ○ (55) ○ ○ ○ ○ (60) ○ ○ ○ ○ (65) ○ ○ ○ ○ (70) ○ ○ ○ ○ (75)

○ ○ ○ ○ (80) ○ ○ ○ ○ (85) ○ ○ ○ ○ (90) ○ ○ ○ ○ (95) ○ ○ ○ ○ (100)

Strength:

Speed:

Melee Combat:

Ranged Combat:

Weapon 1:

D/P: /

Weapon 2:

D/P: /

Armor:

PR/FR/SH: / /

Other Gear, Special Rules & Skills, Experience:

Unit Name, Type:

Size: Leadership (if applicable):

Troops Remaining:

○ ○ ○ ○ (5) ○ ○ ○ ○ (10) ○ ○ ○ ○ (15) ○ ○ ○ ○ (20) ○ ○ ○ ○ (25)

○ ○ ○ ○ (30) ○ ○ ○ ○ (35) ○ ○ ○ ○ (40) ○ ○ ○ ○ (45) ○ ○ ○ ○ (50)

○ ○ ○ ○ (55) ○ ○ ○ ○ (60) ○ ○ ○ ○ (65) ○ ○ ○ ○ (70) ○ ○ ○ ○ (75)

○ ○ ○ ○ (80) ○ ○ ○ ○ (85) ○ ○ ○ ○ (90) ○ ○ ○ ○ (95) ○ ○ ○ ○ (100)

Strength:

Speed:

Melee Combat:

Ranged Combat:

Weapon 1:

D/P: /

Weapon 2:

D/P: /

Armor:

PR/FR/SH: / /

Other Gear, Special Rules & Skills, Experience:

# SAGA CHARACTER SHEET

Following below is a generic character sheet for PCs in SAGA campaigns, On the Yggdrasil Distro website, there are a number of campaign setting-specific character sheets that are redesigned and stylized in the aesthetics of those settings. For example, the Magic: the Gathering campaign setting has a corresponding character sheet complete with the mana symbols used to denote a character's color-affinity. There's also a SAGA Shadowrun character sheet for use with the SAGA Shadowrun adaptation that includes mechanics such as "Essence", and other shadowrun-specific mechanics.

The character sheet below is a generic one, as mentioned previously. As such, it may not include all the stats that a given PC in a SAGA campaign might have. For example, a PC belonging to a fantasy race that has wings will need a "Flying" attribute or skill to represent their ability to maneuver mid-air and to dodge attacks while flying. In such events, please feel free to alter and write in your own information, or create entirely new templates or new editions of the generic character sheet on the following pages.

# SAGA CHARACTER

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Name:  
Age, Sex/Gender:  
Race:  
Size, Height, Weight:  
Appearance, Distinguishing Features:

Classes, Professions, Titles:

## ATTRIBUTES

Endurance:  
Intelligence:  
Speed:  
Strength:  
Willpower:

Status Effects (bonuses/penalties):

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## SKILL GENERALIZATIONS

Acrobatics:  
Animals:  
Art:  
Bushcraft:  
Combat, Melee:  
Combat, Ranged:  
Combat, Unarmed:  
Communication:  
Courage:

Crafting & Repair:  
Detect:  
Entertainment & Performance:  
Gambling & Gaming:  
Magic & Psionics:  
Medicine:  
Science & Gadgets:  
Stealth:  
Vehicles & Machines:

## SKILL SPECIALIZATIONS

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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## KNOWLEDGE & LANGUAGES

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## WEAPONS, ARMOR, & EQUIPMENT

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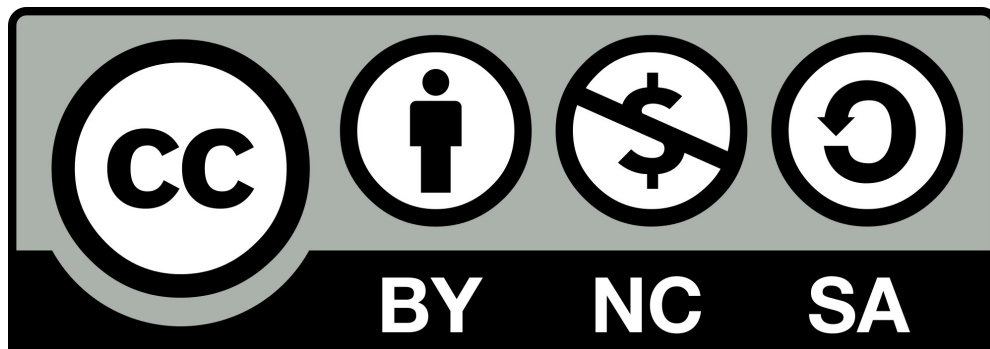
## MOTIVATIONS, FLAVOR TRAITS, QUESTS, OTHER INFO, NOTES

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# SAGA 6<sup>th</sup> EDITION

*Published in 2018 by Rowan WalkingWolf*  
walkingwolf@riseup.net

*For other free SAGA publications & anarchist literature, please visit:*  
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# WHAT MAKES SAGA UNIQUE, WHY CHOOSE SAGA?

- All *Saga* products are **absolutely free, anti-corporate, and DIY!**
- *Saga* is an adaptable **universal system**: *Saga* can run a campaign in any genre or campaign-setting!
- **Combat is deadly, realistic, and fast paced!**
- *Saga* is **narrative and non-combat-oriented**; **non-combat skills are important in *Saga!***
- *Saga* is **skill-based**; there are **no levels in *Saga!***
- **Character creation is flexible, intelligent, and realistic!** Players create and play the character they want to play!
- There are **no class-based restrictions or penalties!** Players make choices and play characters the way they want to play.
- There are **no racist stereotypes, restrictions, or penalties!** Races and their individuals are diverse and multifaceted as in reality.
- **Magic is chaotic, unpredictable, arcane, and *magical!*** There are no formulaic spells and lists in *Saga*, and magic is apt to have negative consequences when it fails.

**THIS CORE RULEBOOK MANUAL CONTAINS everything you need to play a campaign in any genre or campaign-setting. The rules cover combat, magic and psionics, stealth, crafting, diplomacy, other non-combat skills, large-scale warfare, physical needs, disease, poison, equipment, weapons and armor, and much, much more!**