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FANTASY AGE

Welcome to *Fantasy AGE*, a roleplaying game that lets you be the hero in your own sword & sorcery adventures. In *Fantasy AGE* you and your friends take on the personas of warriors, mages, and rogues in a fantastical world and try to make your names by overcoming sinister foes and deadly challenges. You may face down a monstrous ogre in ancient dwarven ruins, engage in a duel of wits with a haughty noble, or uncover the secrets of lost civilizations. You may win renown or you may die alone in the trackless wilderness. Whatever your fate, your story is your own to tell. In *Fantasy AGE* you make the choices and try to survive the consequences.

## WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

*Fantasy AGE* is what's known as a tabletop roleplaying game, so named because you usually play while sitting around a table with your friends. The action is similar to computer roleplaying games. You will play a character who goes on exciting and dangerous adventures in a fantasy world. The difference is that you do it all with your imagination instead of a computer. One person must be the Game Master (GM). The GM presents the story and acts as a referee. Those remaining are the players. Each player makes a character and roleplays him or her in the ensuing adventures.

If you don't grasp how this works, don't worry. Keep reading and by the time you finish the introduction, you should understand the basics of tabletop roleplaying and the *Fantasy AGE* RPG.

## GETTING STARTED

The first thing you need is a group of friends to play with, and one of you must take on the role of Game Master, or GM. While you can play with as small a group as one GM and one player, the game works best with one GM and three to five players. It is possible to play with more players, but that can slow down the pace of the game.

The GM has a key position, so try to make sure that he or she really wants the job. Running a game is fun, but it's a different experience than playing. The second half of this book (starting with CHAPTER 7: THE GAME MASTER), explains the GM's role in detail. The GM (and only the GM) should read that part of the book. If you are a player, you should only read the first half of the book (CHAPTERS 1-6).

Once you've settled on a GM, everyone else needs to make characters, known as PCs or Player Characters. In *Fantasy AGE* your character has the potential to become a great hero,

but begins as just another hungry adventurer scrabbling for glory. You do not get to start play as a knight or master mage. Those are positions that must be earned, and that's what playing the game is all about.

Your character is your primary responsibility as a player in an RPG. This is your alter ego in the fantasy world where your adventures takes place. Over the course of many game sessions, your character will grow and change, but every hero needs a starting point. That is exactly what CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION provides, giving you not only game stats – the abilities and corresponding numbers that tell you what your character is good at – but also a character concept, starting goals, and ties to other Player Characters. Once play begins the portrayal and development of your character is all up to you. Playing your character, achieving goals, and navigating the perils of a fantasy world – this is the fun of playing an RPG.



## PLAYING YOUR CHARACTER

### "WHAT DO YOU DO?"

When playing an RPG, that's the question you must ask yourself all the time. The Game Master will describe a situation, framing a scene for one or more of the Player Characters. It is then up to you to decide what your character does and why. You tell the GM what you want to do, as do the other players, and

then you all work out what happens. Sometimes, you use dice to resolve actions. Other times, you simply interact with the other players and the characters portrayed by the GM, which are known as Non-Player Characters, or NPCs.

### "WHO ARE YOU?"

This is the question to keep in mind when making decisions. When you create your character, you will decide on some traits and goals as a starting point. You can then flesh out your PC, and there are two basic approaches to this. The first is to paint your character in a few broad strokes and then jump right in to playing. The intention here is to come up with details about your character during play, often by using the springboard of the current adventure to create touchstones to your character's past. This is a common storytelling technique and a perfectly valid approach if you don't want to spend a lot of time working on your character before starting play. The second approach is to come up with a lot of details and roleplaying ideas before the first session. If you can come to the table with a good idea of who your character is before the first die is rolled, that can help get the game going.

However you approach your character, playing the game will help you refine your ideas. After you have played your character for a while, you should have a strong sense of person-

*Fantasy AGE's* rules system is known as the *Adventure Game Engine* (or AGE). It was originally designed for the *Dragon Age* RPG, also by Green Ronin Publishing. If you learn *Fantasy AGE*, you can easily pick up *Dragon Age* and vice versa. The games are not identical but they share the same DNA.

One of the goals of *Fantasy AGE* was to create a baseline for the Adventure Game Engine. That's one reason this is called the *Basic Rulebook* (the other is that it is friendly to people who have not played tabletop RPGs before). Green Ronin will be expanding AGE in different directions and exploring other genres over the coming years, starting with *Blue Rose: The RPG of Romantic Fantasy* in 2016. *Fantasy AGE* will be the basis of that development, so learning the rules will be a portal to a whole family of related games.



ality and an intuitive sense of what your character would do in a particular situation. Of course, not all situations present easy choices. It is from difficult choices that tension and drama emerge.

## ADVENTURE, CAMPAIGN, AND SETTING

An adventure is a discrete story and scenario in an RPG. You can think of it as a single novel or an episode of a TV show. There may be several plot threads, but in the end it tells one story. The difference between a roleplaying adventure and a book or show is that you have authorship. The decisions made by you and your fellow players drive the story to its exciting conclusion.

A campaign is a series of interlinked adventures. If an adventure is a novel or TV show, a campaign is a series or a season. Some adventures may have self-contained plots, while others will tie together to tell a larger story. During a campaign the characters of the adventuring group earn experience points and gain levels. Over time they will gain more powers and abilities, face greater challenges, and perhaps gain renown for their deeds. A full *Fantasy AGE* campaign will take characters from levels 1 through 20, and provide hundreds of hours of game-play and entertainment.

The game takes place in a fantasy world, though which one is up to your group. There are many worlds to choose from, or you can have the fun of making up your own. Since the world is where your campaign takes place, it is known in RPG parlance as a "campaign setting" or just setting for short. The GM can find out more about them in CHAPTER 11: THE CAMPAIGN SETTING.

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

What follows is an example of play with three characters. This should give you an idea of what a game of *Fantasy AGE* is like. You'll note various points where the example refers to dice rolling and its results. You don't need to worry about the particulars of that right now. Just follow along with the action and see how the GM uses the rolls to test the skill of the characters.

In this example Jack is the Game Master (GM). Kate is playing an elf rogue named Najah, Chris is playing a gnome mage named Varuker, and Nicole is playing a human warrior named Brigitte.

**JACK (GM):** You've been traveling for several hours under the hot midday sun. The road passes through a small forest and for a few minutes at least you find some respite in the shade the trees provide. As you emerge on the other side of the forest, you see a caravan up ahead. It is not moving, but neither has it set up camp.

**KATE (ROGUE):** Do I see any guards around the caravan?

**JACK (GM):** Make a Perception (Seeing) test and tell me your result.

**KATE (ROGUE):** [Rolls dice] I got a 13.

**JACK (GM):** Good roll. Your eyes quickly adjust to the sunlight and you scan the caravan. You see many carts and wagons but no people. The only things moving are the draft animals and they seem restless.

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** This doesn't look good. I want to take a closer look.

**JACK (GM):** Just you, or are you all going?

**CHRIS (MAGE):** Let's all go. If this is a trap, better to be together than separated.

**KATE (ROGUE):** Why don't you two go straight up the road and I'll swing around the right side and approach from there. I'll try to move quietly, crouched down with my bow out.

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** My two-handed axe is at the ready and I'm heading straight up the road.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** I stay behind the warrior and keep an eye on the woods as we advance. We don't need any surprises from that direction.

**JACK (GM):** You approach the caravan and no threats emerge. When you get close, you see the bodies. There are at least six corpses spread out around the carts. They look like dwarves.

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** That seems strange.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** Not really. My dwarf cousins are great merchants. They buy and sell all over.

**KATE (ROGUE):** How did they die? Do I see any arrows sticking from the corpses?

**JACK (GM):** You can try to figure that out with a Perception (Seeing) test or an Intelligence (Healing) test.

**KATE (ROGUE):** I'm better at Perception so I'll stick with that. [Rolls dice] Ha, I got a 15 this time.

As many of you surely know already, the *Fantasy AGE* RPG is the game played on *Titansgrave: The Ashes of Valkana*, Wil Wheaton's web series on Geek & Sundry. Wil is a big fan of Green Ronin's *Dragon Age* RPG and had featured it in Season 1 of his *Tabletop* show. When it came time to do *Titansgrave*, he approached Green Ronin about using the AGE rules and of course we said yes! We worked hard to make the show a reality and we're really excited to be a part of something that's introducing new people to the fun of tabletop RPGs. If you've enjoyed the show or just want a cool science fantasy adventure series, you can check out our companion book *Titansgrave: The Ashes of Valkana*! It has all the adventures from Season 1 plus world info, rules support, and new options so you can make the story your own.

# TITANS GRAVE

## THE ASHES OF VALKANA

**JACK (GM):** You approach one of the corpses and look it over. The wounds were not made by weapons. The way the clothing and armor are torn, you'd guess claws. Big claws.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** Do the corpses smell?

**JACK (GM):** Now that you are closer, yes, they do. The hot sun is making it worse by the minute, too.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** So they've been dead for a while, which probably means the attack ended some time ago. I don't see any creatures with claws in the area, so I'm going to move into the caravan and search for survivors.

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** I'm going to climb on the one of the carts and use the vantage point to keep an eye on things.

**JACK (GM):** Roll a Perception (Searching) test, Chris.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** [Rolls dice] I got a 9. Not a great roll.

**JACK (GM):** No, not great. You find more bodies but no survivors.

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** Maybe some of the dwarves ran away. If I watched my friends get torn open like that, I might hoof it.

**KATE (ROGUE):** You could be right. I'll look for tracks. That's a Perception (Tracking) roll, right?

**JACK (GM):** That's correct.

**KATE (ROGUE):** I rolled an 11.

**JACK (GM):** The tracks are confusing around the caravan. You can see many sets of prints, some dwarf and some from larger bipeds.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** Bipeds with large claws. I don't like the sound of that.

**JACK (GM):** You do find one set of dwarf prints leaving the scene though. Whoever it was seems to have been wounded, as there are drops of blood every few feet. The trail leads off the road and back towards the forest.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** Let's follow it.

**KATE (ROGUE):** Agreed. I will lead the way.

**JACK (GM):** You follow the trail back into the woods. Maybe 30 feet from the edge you find a dwarf under a fallen log. He looks unconscious and wounded, but alive.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** No time to mess around. I approach the dwarf and cast my Healing Touch spell. I'm using 2 magic points.

**JACK (GM):** Make your casting roll. As I recall, Heal has a Target Number of 10.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** It does indeed. [Rolls dice] And I got a 12. [Rolls dice again] He gets back 7 Health from the spell.

**JACK (GM):** You touch the prone dwarf and the healing magic spreads from your hands. He's lost a lot of blood but the spell revitalizes him and he wakes up with a start.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** Easy, friend. You're safe now.

**JACK (GM):** The dwarf relaxes a bit and regards the three of you. "Thank you for helping me. Where are the rest of my kin?"

**KATE (ROGUE):** You are the first dwarf we've found alive I'm afraid.

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** Can you tell us what happened?

**JACK (GM):** "It was the damn caravan master," says the dwarf. "He thought we could save time if we pulled up camp in the middle of the night. I argued with him but he wouldn't listen. I was worried when we passed into those woods but thought we were all right once we made it through. Then they came at us from the shadows – big brutes with claws as big as my head. After I saw three of the guards go down, I made a run for it. One of them caught me in the shoulder with a claw but I kept running. I made it to the woods and hid. After some time the screams and sounds of battle faded, then I passed out. Next thing I saw was you."

**NICOLE (WARRIOR):** The size makes me think ogres but that doesn't seem quite right.

**CHRIS (MAGE):** No, it doesn't. Ogres are not stealthy and they usually attack with weapons, not claws. We've got a mystery on our hands.

**KATE (ROGUE):** As usual! So much for a sunny day of leisurely travel.

## THE GROUP DYNAMIC

Much of this book is focused on teaching you the rules and how to make a character. It is important to remember that roleplaying is a group activity. There are two aspects to this: the adventuring group and the player group.

Your character is one member of the adventuring group (also known as a party). Each character in the group has individual goals, but there are also larger group goals. The characters may have their disagreements and even feuds, but for the game to go on they must remain together. The adventures

themselves often assure this by their plot and structure, but a good group dynamic can help. This can start during character creation when everyone is settling on what they want to play. It's a smart idea, for example, to make sure you have at least one character of each class in the group. When working out ties and goals amongst the PCs, you can build in reasons for the characters to adventure together.

The people gaming with you make up the player group and that too has a dynamic. You and your friends are going to be spending a lot of time together, so you want a group of people who fundamentally get along. Roleplaying is meant to be fun for everyone, so be aware of tension around the table. Some players try to make the game all about them, hogging the spotlight and trying to insert themselves in every scene. Don't act that way; everyone deserves a chance to shine, so be ready to take a step back when someone has a good idea or is pursuing something important for his or her character.

If a game session didn't go well for some reason, talk about it afterwards. It won't do any good if everyone goes home to stew. Try to figure out where things went wrong and see if you can come up with solutions so it doesn't happen again.

A common problem is a player who is unhappy with their character. Maybe the character doesn't fit into the group well, or maybe the player finds another class preferable after some play experience. This doesn't have to be a problem. It's perfectly fine for a player to make a new character of the same level and retire the old character. It is preferable to do that than to make a player continue to play a character they aren't having fun with.

## BASIC GAME CONCEPTS

Before you delve into the rest of the book, here's a brief overview of the basic concepts of the game. You'll learn more about all of these things as you read on.

### CHARACTERS

In the *Fantasy AGE* RPG you will make a character. You can play a dwarf, an elf, a gnome, a halfling, a human, or an orc. You then pick one of three classes: mage, rogue, or warrior. Your class defines the core of your character and determines the powers at your command. Your character begins at level 1 as an inexperienced adventurer. By surviving encounters and overcoming challenges, your PC gains experience points and rises in level. Your character may eventually make it to level 20 and become one of the mightiest heroes of the campaign setting. It won't be easy, though.

### ABILITIES

Your character has nine abilities, such as Intelligence and Strength, and each one has a numeric rating, with 1 being average. When your character wants to do something, the GM may call for an ability test. This is a dice roll to determine success or failure, and it's the most common roll in the game. To make an ability test, you simply roll three six-sided dice (3d6), add the results together, and add the appropriate ability. This generates a test result, which you want to be as high as possible.

### TEST RESULT = 3D6 + ABILITY

You may have to apply other bonuses or penalties, most commonly ability focuses that represent areas of special expertise. Once you determine your test result, the GM will let you know if it's a success or a failure and what happens.

Your character also has a Health score. When damage is inflicted, this reduces Health. If it reaches 0, your character may die.

### STUNTS

In combat your character can perform stunts. When doubles are rolled on an attack roll, this generates "stunt points." You can then use these points to pull off a number of special maneuvers. Stunts help keep combat dynamic and fun. There are also spell stunts, which let mages enhance their spells.

### GAME DICE

*Fantasy AGE* only uses one type of dice: the six-sided die, also known as the d6. This is the most common die and it can be found in many classic boardgames if you need to scrounge for some. In general dice are rolled four different ways in *Fantasy AGE*:

- **1D3:** Sometimes you need to generate a number from 1-3. In that case you roll a d6 but halve the result, so a roll of 1-2 = 1, a roll of 3-4 = 2, and a roll of 5-6 = 3.
- **1D6:** You roll a single die and simply read the result. Sometimes there is a modifier attached, for example 1d6+3. In that case, just add the modifier to the die roll. If you rolled a 2, for example, you'd add the modifier of 3 to get a result of 5.
- **2D6:** As above, but you roll two dice and add them together. If you rolled a 3 and a 6, for example, your result would be 9.
- **3D6:** As above, but you roll three dice and add them together. If you are making an ability test, you must ensure that two of the dice are one color and the third a different color. That third die is known as the Stunt Die, and it's important. The result of the Stunt Die can determine your level of success and allow you to perform stunts.

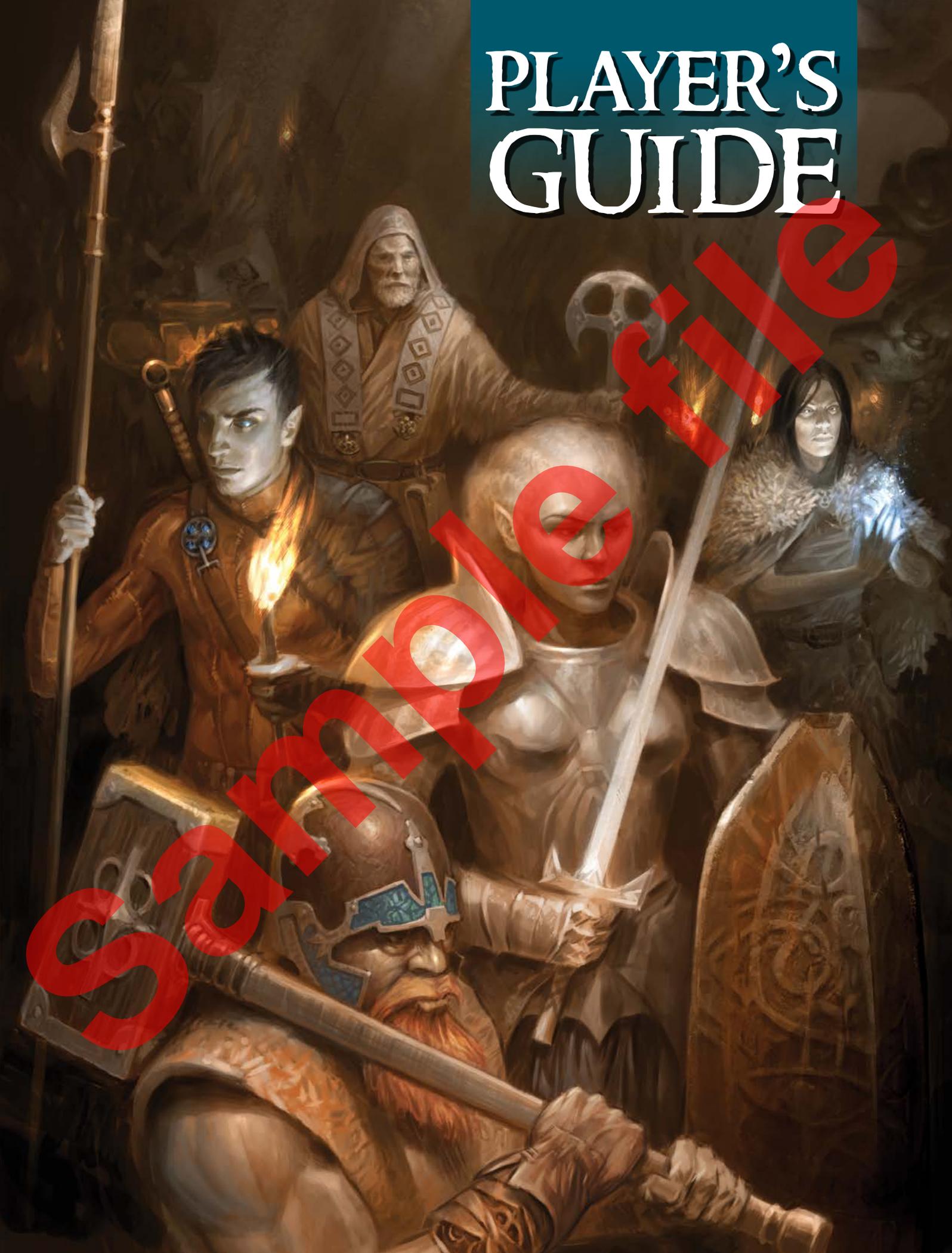
## WHERE NEXT?

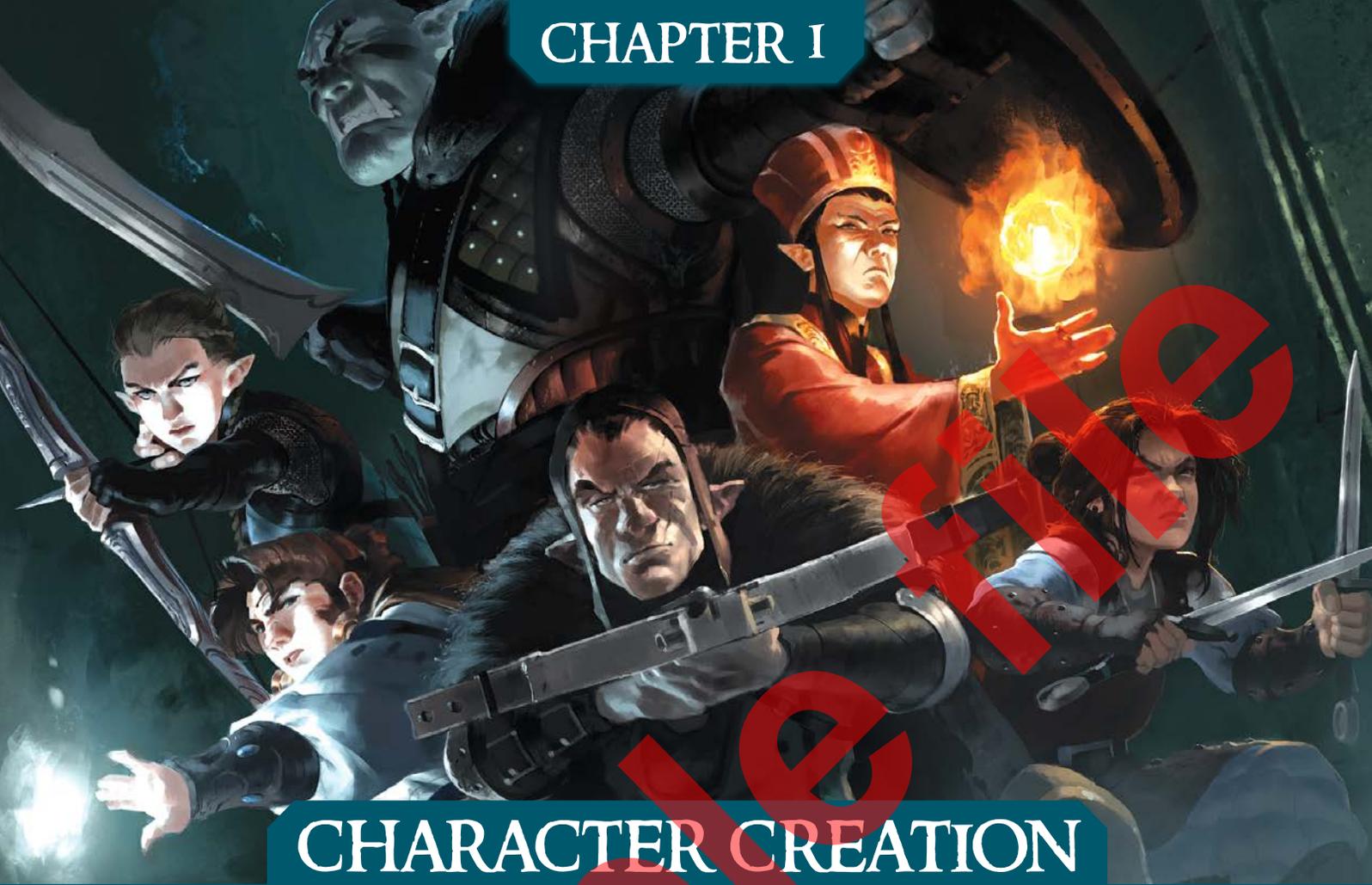
If you are a player, Chapters 1-6 are for you. They provide the key information you need to know about the game. When you are ready to make a character, go to **CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION**. That will explain the process and get you going.

If you are the Game Master, you should familiarize yourself with these chapters as well, as they contain the core rules of the game. You should then move on to **CHAPTERS 7-12**. They explain your unique and important role in a tabletop RPG and give you valuable advice and resources.

You are now ready to enter the world of *Fantasy AGE*. Game on and may fate protect you!

# PLAYER'S GUIDE





## CHARACTER CREATION

To play in a roleplaying game, you must first make a character. This is your alter ego in *Fantasy AGE*, the persona you'll take on as you experience exciting and perilous adventures. Since your character is the focus of your play experience, making the right character for you is quite important. If you end up with a character you find unappealing or who isn't fun to play, your enjoyment of the game will diminish. So don't be afraid to take some time and put some thought into creating your character. This chapter explains the whole process and provides examples so you can see how it's done. When you are finished, you'll have a character ready to play.

### GETTING STARTED

The first time you read this chapter, you will come across rules and terms you don't understand yet. Don't panic. You'll learn everything you need to know as you work your way through the chapters and you'll want to at least skim the first six chapters before you sit down to make a character. Also remember that there is a glossary at the back of the book. You can look up important terms there at any time.

Before you start making a character, you will need a character sheet. This is a record of your character and you use it to keep track of your various abilities and powers. You'll find a blank character sheet in the back of this book that you can copy if you wish. You can also download a PDF version of the sheet from [greenronin.com](http://greenronin.com).

### MAKING A CHARACTER IN 9 EASY STEPS

Making a *Fantasy AGE* character is a straightforward process that you can complete in nine easy steps. The steps are listed here, and the rest of the chapter covers each step in order.

1. **CREATE A CHARACTER CONCEPT.** This is a rough idea of the sort of character you'd like to play.
2. **DETERMINE ABILITIES.** These are your character's core physical and mental attributes.
3. **CHOOSE A RACE.** Your character can be an elf, dwarf, gnome, halfling, human, or orc.
4. **DETERMINE SOCIAL CLASS AND BACKGROUND.** Your background is what you did before becoming an adventurer.
5. **CHOOSE A CLASS.** This is your character's calling in life. You can choose mage, rogue, or warrior.
6. **PICK STARTING EQUIPMENT.** Your character needs gear before the adventures begin.
7. **CALCULATE DEFENSE.** This helps your character survive combat encounters.
8. **PICK A NAME.** Every hero needs a good name!
9. **CHOOSE GOALS AND CHARACTER TIES.** They help give your character personality.

# CHARACTER CONCEPT

Before you sit down to make a character, you should learn a little bit about the setting you'll be playing in. *Fantasy AGE* can be used with a wide variety of settings, so talk to your GM to find out where your game will be set. Once you've found out some basic information about the world, you can start thinking about what kind of character you want to play. You'll make the three most important choices—your race, background, and class—in steps 3 to 5 of character creation, but before you get there it's a good idea to come up with a basic character concept. This can be quite broad to start; the process of character creation will help you focus it.

When coming up with a character concept, remember that one of the conceits of the game is that your character begins as an unknown and struggling adventurer. You don't get to start play as the crown prince or an archmage. You have to earn your honors, and you can be sure there will be a price. So start thinking about who your character is and how they became an adventurer. Here are some example character concepts:

- Street urchin who'll do anything to survive.
- Free spirit who fled from an arranged marriage for a life of adventure.
- Naïve farmer who wants to travel farther than 5 miles from where he was born.
- Child of a disgraced knight who wants to return honor to her family name.
- Cynical mercenary who trusts little but coin.
- A seeker of forbidden knowledge who often acts before thinking.
- An artist seeking inspiration in dark and dangerous places.
- A refugee whose village was sacked and destroyed.
- A child of the forest more comfortable around animals than people.
- Scion of a merchant family who wants more from life than ledger books.

## EXAMPLE

*Nicole and her friends are starting a Fantasy AGE campaign, so she must make a character. After talking over the setting with the group, Nicole decides that the despotic King executed her character's parents on trumped-up charges for political reasons. Her character grew up hard in a church-run orphanage and as an adult she yearns for justice and vengeance in equal measure.*

# ABILITIES

Your character is defined by nine abilities: Accuracy, Communication, Constitution, Dexterity, Fighting, Intelligence, Perception, Strength, and Willpower. Taken together these abilities map out your character's strengths and weaknesses. You determine your abilities randomly by rolling dice, giving each one a numeric rating ranging from -2 to 4. The higher the ability, the better. A -2 is quite awful while a 4 is outstanding; a 1 is average.

## ABILITY OPTIONS

The character creation rules were designed with the beginner in mind. Random elements make the process easy because they cut down on decision making. If you have some RPG experience or just want more control when determining your abilities, however, you can use one of the following two options for determining abilities, with your GM's permission.

### OPTION 1: ARRANGING ABILITIES

In this option you roll your abilities randomly as described below. However, you can assign the results as you wish, so you can decide which rating goes with which ability. Instead of rolling in the ability order of the character sheet, you simply roll nine times on the **Determining Abilities** table and note the results on a piece of scratch paper. Then you assign each rating to the ability of your choice.

### OPTION 2: BUYING ABILITIES

Option 1 provides you with more power over your character's starting abilities, but some players want total control. In this option your character's abilities start at 0 and you get ten advancements to increase them. Each advancement you spend raises an ability by 1, but no ability can be greater than 3. You must spend all ten advancements. Races and backgrounds then modify these starting ratings as normal.

Note that unlike some similar systems in other RPGs, this option does not allow you to make some abilities worse so you have more advancements to spend on others.

During play your abilities can increase as you gain experience and learn how to better harness your natural aptitudes.

Abilities are a key component of the game and you'll be using them frequently. You'll find it useful to understand the nature of each ability, so descriptions of them follow.

- **ACCURACY** represents your character's physical precision and skill with finesse and ranged weapons, such as bows and rapiers.
- **COMMUNICATION** covers your character's social skills, personal interactions, and ability to deal with others.
- **CONSTITUTION** is your character's fortitude and resistance to harm.
- **DEXTERITY** encompasses your character's agility, hand-eye coordination, and quickness.
- **FIGHTING** is your skill at combat with heavier weapons, such as axes and spears.
- **INTELLIGENCE** is a measure of your character's smarts, knowledge, and education.
- **PERCEPTION** covers all the senses and the ability to interpret sensory data.
- **STRENGTH** is your character's physical prowess.
- **WILLPOWER** encompasses mental toughness, discipline, and confidence.

## DETERMINING ABILITIES

3D6 ROLL	STARTING ABILITY	3D6 ROLL	STARTING ABILITY
3	-2	11	1
4	-1	12	2
5	-1	13	2
6	0	14	2
7	0	15	3
8	0	16	3
9	1	17	3
10	1	18	4

## DETERMINING ABILITIES

You roll dice to determine your starting abilities. You will need three 6-sided dice (3d6). Roll all three and add them together to get a result. If you rolled 3, 4, and 6, for example, your result would be 13 (3 + 4 + 6 = 13).

You need to make nine of these rolls all together—one per ability. On your character sheet, you'll notice a list of abilities. Starting at the top, make a dice roll for each one, and consult the **Determining Abilities** table to determine your starting ability. A roll of 11 on the chart, for example, means the ability's starting score is 1. Continue this process until all nine abilities have starting scores.

When you are done, you may swap any two abilities. This gives you a chance to customize your character a bit.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole must now roll for her character's abilities. She rolls 3d6 and gets a 10. Looking at the character sheet, Nicole sees this gives her character a starting score of 1 on her first ability (Accuracy). She makes 8 more dice rolls, getting 7, 13, 10, 13, 8, 14, 13, and 16. Her character's starting abilities are thus Accuracy 1, Communication 0, Constitution 2, Dexterity 1, Fighting 2, Intelligence 0, Perception 2, Strength 2, and Willpower 3. She then has the option of switching two of her scores. Nicole decides to swap Strength and Willpower, so she ends up with a Strength 3 and Willpower 2.*

## ABILITY FOCUSES

A focus is an area of expertise within the larger ability. While Intelligence as a whole determines how smart your character is, for example, a Heraldry focus would indicate a special knowledge of coats of arms and royal families. In game system terms, if you have a focus, your ability is effectively 2 higher than normal when working within that specialty. This is explained in greater detail in **CHAPTER 2: BASIC RULES**.

Ability focuses (or focuses for short) are one of the ways to make your character unique. There may be another warrior in your adventuring party, but your focuses can be completely different. You don't need to worry about choosing focuses now; that happens later in the character creation process.

Your character will get access to focuses through backgrounds, classes, and talents. For more information about ability focuses, see **CHAPTER 3: CHARACTER OPTIONS**.

*Fantasy AGE* includes the following focuses. You may find new focuses in various *AGE* setting books.

- **ACCURACY FOCUSES:** Arcane Blast, Bows, Black Powder, Brawling, Dueling, Grenades, Light Blades, Staves.
- **COMMUNICATION FOCUSES:** Animal Handling, Bargaining, Deception, Disguise, Etiquette, Gambling, Investigation, Leadership, Performance, Persuasion, Seduction.
- **CONSTITUTION FOCUSES:** Drinking, Rowing, Running, Stamina, Swimming.
- **DEXTERITY FOCUSES:** Acrobatics, Calligraphy, Crafting, Initiative, Legerdemain, Lock Picking, Riding, Sailing, Stealth, Traps.
- **FIGHTING FOCUSES:** Axes, Bludgeons, Heavy Blades, Lances, Polearms, Spears.
- **INTELLIGENCE FOCUSES:** Arcana (Various), Arcane Lore, Brewing, Cartography, Cryptography, Cultural Lore, Engineering, Evaluation, Healing, Heraldry, Historical Lore, Military Lore, Musical Lore, Natural Lore, Navigation, Religious Lore, Research, Writing.
- **PERCEPTION FOCUSES:** Empathy, Hearing, Searching, Seeing, Smelling, Tasting, Touching, Tracking.
- **STRENGTH FOCUSES:** Climbing, Driving, Intimidation, Jumping, Might, Smithing.
- **WILLPOWER FOCUSES:** Courage, Faith, Morale, Self-Discipline.

## RACE

You can choose from six races in *Fantasy AGE*: dwarf, elf, gnome, halfling, human, and orc. Your choice may have important implications in the setting you're playing in, so check with your GM if you have any questions. It also has concrete effects on your developing character. Your choice of race will modify one or more of your abilities, give you one or more focuses, determine the languages you can speak and write, and possibly provide other benefits as well. Once you decide on your race, you'll get certain benefits automatically, plus two more rolled on a random table.

This rulebook covers what are considered the classic fantasy races. Your campaign setting may have some more unusual options. Your GM will let you know if that's the case.

### EXAMPLE

*Nicole considers the various races, but decides to stick with human for her character. This allows her to increase her Fighting from 2 to 3. She can then choose between two focuses: Dexterity (Riding) or Constitution (Swimming). She decides equestrian lessons were pretty unlikely at the orphanage, so goes for Swimming. She then notes her basic Speed and that she speaks and reads the Common Tongue. She then rolls twice on the **Human Benefits** table and gets a +1 to her Constitution (bringing it to 3) and the focus Accuracy (Brawling). Apparently it was a hard knock life at that orphanage.*

## MIXED HERITAGE CHARACTERS

Some campaign settings include mixed heritage characters (half-elves, to pick a classic example). Exactly which races can procreate together varies depending on the setting, so talk to your GM about what you'd like to do before making such a character. You can create a character of mixed heritage easily enough with the rules. First, decide which race in the character's heritage is dominant. Use that race's basic rules with one exception: Instead of rolling twice on the dominant race's **Benefits** table, you'll roll once on that and once on the **Benefits** table of your character's other race.

### EXAMPLE

*Kate wants to play a character whose parents were an elf and a human. She decides her character's elfen heritage is dominant. While making her character, she uses the elf rules. However, she only rolls once on the **Elf Benefits** table. Her second roll is on the **Human Benefits**, to represent her character's human heritage. She rolls +1 Accuracy from the **Elf Benefits** table and +1 Strength from the **Human Benefits** table.*

## DWARF

Courageous and stalwart, dwarves are known for their skill at arms and their talent as miners and builders. They call the hills, mountains, and underground cities home, but many dwarves are wanderers or merchants, responsible for bringing both trade and news back to their holdfasts. Dwarf enclaves are also common in human cities. While not xenophobic, they are considered gruff and exclusionary by many of the other races. However, once a dwarf considers someone a friend, they are loyal and kind forever after. By the same token, a dwarf who's been betrayed has a long memory and will bear that grudge for centuries.

Dwarves are organized into clans of varying sizes, which are connected by a web of alliances and rivalries. The amount of responsibility an individual dwarf holds depends entirely on their standing in the clan. A young but trustworthy dwarf could hold significantly more power than an older, more experienced family member who's proven unreliable.

Not as small as halflings, nor as tall as humans, adult dwarves range in height from four to five feet, but are stocky and solidly built. Dwarves are famous for their beards, which they grow long and wear plaited, braided, in tails, or any number of other styles.

### DWARF NAMES

**FEMALE NAMES:** Ailine, Dara, Kalin, Klara, Mora, Telka, Ulma.

**MALE NAMES:** Bodag, Crag, Doffin, Hador, Gurt, Throrik, Warrik.

**CLAN NAMES:** Bronzeblade, Highcliff, Ironshield, Rockhammer, Steelhelm, Stonebones.

### PLAYING A DWARF

If you choose to play a dwarf, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Constitution ability.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Constitution (Drinking)** or **Intelligence (Evaluation)**.
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 8 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).

- You can speak and read Dwarven and Common Tongue.
- Roll twice on the **Dwarf Benefits** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

### DWARF BENEFITS

2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Willpower
3-4	Focus: Intelligence (Historical Lore)
5	Focus: Constitution (Stamina)
6	Weapon Group: Axes*
7-8	+1 Fighting
9	Focus: Strength (Smithing)
10-11	Focus: Intelligence (Engineering)
12	+1 Strength

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Fighting (Axes) instead.

## ELF

Elves are graceful and perceptive people with intrinsic connections to the natural world. They make consummate hunters and scouts, and are heirs to ancient magical traditions as well. They favor woodlands, rainforests, and jungles, constructing their dwellings and cities in and amongst the trees, sometimes high off the ground. Some branches of elfkind leave the forests behind for mighty stone cities or life on the seas.

Elves are a mercurial race, changing attitude and course of action like the wind changes direction. This often takes them far from home as they explore the world beyond their homelands. Elves embrace the adventure of meeting new people and going to new places. They are open and friendly, but it's often difficult to tell if they're being sincere or sarcastic. Regardless, most elves are brave and helpful, often coming to the aid of those who don't know as much as them about surviving in the wild.

Elves are tall, thin, and graceful people. They run in height from five to six feet with a slight build. Elves are particularly long lived, and their leaders are usually selected for their age and wisdom.

## ELF NAMES

**FEMALE NAMES:** Alowar, Celemor, Elowen, Faerenel, Hereal, Lanathiel.

**MALE NAMES:** Alagolin, Effolond, Kyriell, Larrendir, Melloran, Serren.

**FAMILY NAMES:** Andurarl, Arvanor, Derendil, Ellendi, Kellovan, Talloran.

## PLAYING AN ELF

If you choose to play an elf, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Dexterity ability.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Intelligence (Natural Lore)** or **Perception (Seeing)**.
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 12 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Elven and the Common Tongue.
- Roll twice on the **Elf Benefits** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

### ELF BENEFITS

2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Communication
3-4	Focus: Intelligence (Cultural Lore)
5	Focus: Perception (Hearing)
6	Weapon Group: Bows*
7-8	+1 Accuracy
9	Focus: Dexterity (Initiative)
10-11	Focus: Communication (Persuasion)
12	+1 Perception

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Accuracy (Bows) instead.

## GNOME

Gregarious and clever, gnomes are natural builders, tinkers, and engineers. They are always busy doing something, whether it's expanding their warren-like homes, fixing broken contraptions, or negotiating business deals. Like dwarves, they are known for their love of gold and gems, but unlike dwarves, they aren't miners. Gnomes would rather work or trade for the valuables they desire. A long history as merchants and wanderers have made them a race known for their business acumen. Gnomes also have magic in their blood, and commanding arcane power has helped them stand up to larger races on countless occasions. For this reason mages are always welcome in gnomish settlements and caravans.

Gnome cities are typically underground, though some branches prefer to live in wooded hills. Other gnomes take to the road and live in gnomes outfitted with all the comforts of

home (and a number of traps to keep thieves at bay). Whether on the road or in a settlement, gnomes defer to the wisest of their community for leadership and guidance.

Gnomes have large eyes, bulbous noses, big heads, and knobby fingers. They stand only three to four feet tall and are slight compared to their dwarf cousins.

## GNOME NAMES

**FEMALE NAMES:** Alyce, Emma, Flora, Gale, Muriel, Ruby.

**MALE NAMES:** Cog, Flinder, Garret, Hoster, Weldon, Yost.

**FAMILY NAMES:** Gemspinner, Goldwarren, Minder, Rocktapper, Trundle, Underhill.

## PLAYING A GNOME

If you choose to play a gnome, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Dexterity ability.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Constitution (Stamina)** or **Dexterity (Legerdemain)**.
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 8 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Gnomish and the Common Tongue.
- Roll twice on the **Gnome Benefits** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

### GNOME BENEFITS

2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Constitution
3-4	Focus: Dexterity (Traps)
5	Focus: Intelligence (Evaluation)
6	Focus: Perception (Hearing)
7-8	+1 Willpower
9	Focus: Intelligence (Arcane Lore)
10-11	Focus: Communication (Bargaining)
12	+1 Intelligence

## HALFLING

Kindly folk who are known mostly for their love of food, drink, and the simple life, halflings are a hardworking people who make their way in life as farmers, innkeepers, and merchants. There are always those halflings who yearn for a life of adventure, however. To them the quaint villages of yeoman farmers are stultifying, so they leave at the first opportunity to see the wider world. While often stereotyped as thieves, halfling adventurers have many and varied pursuits.

Halflings call the farmlands and rolling hills home. Some build their homes inside the hills, while others prefer human-style buildings. When they live in human dominated cities,



halflings often build their homes in basements and construct larger accommodations aboveground if they expect to have boarders or do business with non-halflings.

Roughly half the size of humans (as one might expect from their name), adult halflings rarely stand more than three feet tall. They are sometimes portly, but this extra weight does little to hinder them.

### HALFLING NAMES

- FEMALE NAMES:** Brook, Fiona, Merriel, Rose, Violetta, Yvonda.  
**MALE NAMES:** Braddock, Dougal, Hallaver, Samson, Perrin, Tamshan.  
**FAMILY NAMES:** Brewster, Buckleberry, Hornbuck, Pennywise, Summerton, Tankard.

### PLAYING A HALFLING

If you choose to play a halfling, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your **Dexterity** ability.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Communication (Bargaining)** or **Dexterity (Stealth)**.
- Your **Speed** is equal to 8 + **Dexterity** (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Halfling and the Common Tongue.
- Roll twice on the **Halfling Benefits** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

HALFLING BENEFITS	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Perception
3-4	Focus: Communication (Persuasion)
5	Focus: Dexterity (Initiative)
6	Focus: Willpower (Courage)
7-8	+1 Communication
9	Focus: Perception (Hearing)
10-11	Focus: Strength (Climbing)
12	+1 Accuracy

## HUMAN

Humans are most numerous and adaptable of all the races. In fact, it's their ability to adapt to their environment that's allowed them to spread far and wide across the world, inhabiting lands alongside all the other races and making new homes for themselves in the harshest environments. Whereas there are a number of traits closely associated with the other races, humans aren't as easily pigeonholed. Some humans are greedier than the greediest dwarf, while others reject the entire concept of wealth and give away all their worldly possessions. Humans represent that which is best and worst in the world.

Human settlements run the gamut from small hamlets to vast cities, with homes from tents and wagons all the way to huge mansions and castles. Their forms of government are also many and varied. The only thing one can say with certainty

about humans is that they will always find new and inventive ways to divide themselves, squabble and even wage war on each other. The other races are grateful for this, as humans would likely take over if they could ever stop fighting amongst themselves.

Humans usually stand between five and six feet tall, but their height can vary up to a foot or more above and below that range.

### HUMAN NAMES

**FEMALE NAMES:** Catrin, Iona, Lyn, Nikki, Sienna, Zara.  
**MALE NAMES:** Aarin, Donal, Jorm, Kellan, Marric, Thom.  
**FAMILY NAMES:** Apart from noble lineages, common human surnames include professions (Baker, Cooper, Smith, Ward, etc.) and place names (Highgate, Lakeside, Silverton, and so forth).

### PLAYING A HUMAN

If you choose to play a human, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Fighting ability.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Dexterity (Riding)** or **Constitution (Swimming)**.
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read the Common Tongue.
- Roll twice on the **Human Benefits** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

HUMAN BENEFITS	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Intelligence
3-4	Focus: <b>Constitution</b> (Stamina)
5	Focus: <b>Perception</b> (Searching)
6	Focus: <b>Communication</b> (Persuasion)
7-8	+1 <b>Constitution</b>
9	Focus: <b>Communication</b> (Deception)
10-11	Focus: <b>Accuracy</b> (Brawling)
12	+1 <b>Strength</b>

### BUT WAIT, AREN'T ORCS EVIL?

Orcs became a fantasy staple because of *Lord of the Rings*, and to many folks they retain the essential character of Tolkien's novels. In this view orcs are foot soldiers of evil, a vicious horde ever ready to destroy civilization. Orcs have now appeared in many fantasy worlds, however, and they are not always such clichés. Orcs walk the streets in Green Ronin's Freeport setting, for example. This is why we offer orcs as a core race in *Fantasy AGE*.

## ORC

Considered brutes by most races because of their practice of raiding settlements for food and supplies, orcs are powerful warriors with an undeniable ability to survive in the worst of environments. Most orcs live in wastelands, badlands, rifts, and ruins because everywhere else in the world has been claimed by the other races. In order to survive, orcs scavenge what they can from the land and attack surrounding towns and cities for everything else they need.

Orcs organize themselves into tribes controlled by the most cunning, physically powerful, or magically adept orcs. Orc chieftains maintain their positions through strength and leading successful raids, but they must always be on the watch for rivals who will challenge them to become chief.

Orcs are the most bestial of the intelligent races, with pointed, bat-like ears, slits for nostrils, hairy bodies, broad mouths, often with under bites that expose tusk-like teeth. They stand between five and seven feet in height with broad, sturdy builds. They take no great pains to cultivate their appearance, except to accentuate whichever features make them more intimidating.

### ORC NAMES

**FEMALE NAMES:** Beska, Eldra, Grisha, Mag, Oota, Vol.  
**MALE NAMES:** Feld, Gar, Harsk, Kurg, Scag, Tor.  
**CLAN NAMES:** Blackfire, Heartblood, Irontusk, Redaxe, Sunder.

### PLAYING AN ORC

If you choose to play an orc, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Strength ability.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Constitution (Stamina)** or **Strength (Might)**.
- You have Dark Sight, which allows you to see up to 20 yards in darkness without a light source.
- Your Speed is equal to 10 + Dexterity (minus armor penalty if applicable).
- You can speak and read Orcish and the Common Tongue.
- Roll twice on the **Orc Benefits** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

ORC BENEFITS	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 <b>Constitution</b>
3-4	Focus: <b>Perception</b> (Smelling)
5	Focus: <b>Dexterity</b> (Stealth)
6	Focus: <b>Strength</b> (Intimidation)
7-8	+1 <b>Fighting</b>
9	Weapon Group: Bludgeons*
10-11	Focus: <b>Accuracy</b> (Brawling)
12	+1 <b>Willpower</b>

\* If the class you choose provides this already, you can take the focus Fighting (Bludgeons) instead.