

GEAS



QUICK START GUIDE

OVERVIEW

What is GEAS?

This is a high fantasy heroic role-playing game. Players choose a hero (or anti-hero) to play, taking on their roles as an adventure unfolds before them. The game is managed and run by one of the players called the “Game Master”. While not forced to, the general assumption is the players work together as a team. There is no end game, or “winning” at the end. You win if your group is having fun crafting the story together.

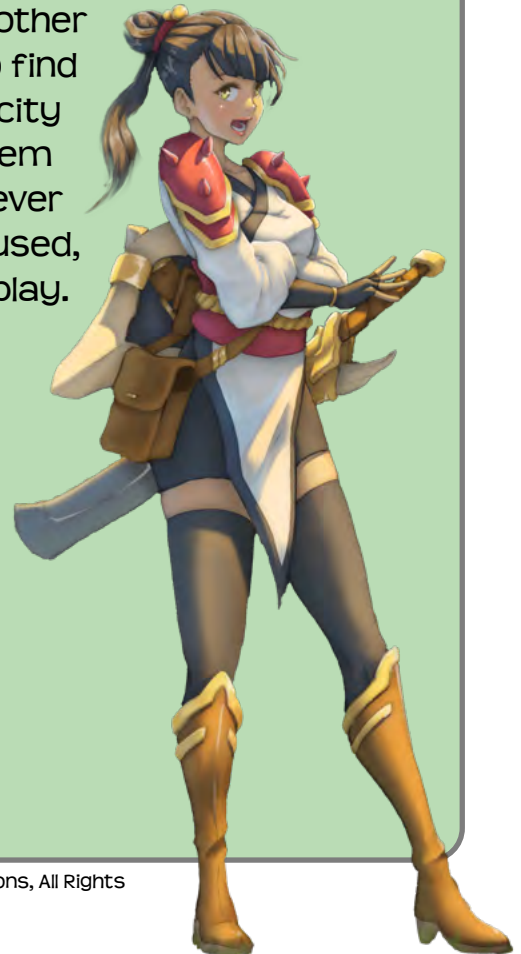
Tone

You can play GEAS in any style you want--gritty, gonzo, cartoony, etc.--but the default style as presented here is high fantasy. Player Characters are adventurers, overcoming both trap and monster to become heroes.

Design

There are several design goals that makes GEAS stand out from a field of hundreds of other fantasy role-playing games. First is to find that perfect marriage between simplicity and player options. The dice pool system in this game helps achieve that. Whenever possible, the same game mechanic is used, ensuring it’s easy to learn and fast to play.

The second goal is to allow as much player agency as possible without taking away any agency from the Game Master. This game is designed for collaboration of all players, not competition. If everyone is having fun, mission accomplished!



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to get you right into the action as soon as possible. The rules won't all be described up front, overwhelming you with terms and details, but will be introduced slowly as you progress through the pre-generated mini-adventure. While you will be choosing a pre-generated character straight away, don't feel like you need to know what everything on the character sheet means. That will be explained as we go.

This guide uses the GEAS CRUX version of the game, but don't worry! Once you complete this guide, you'll have the knowledge to run the full game of GEAS. This guide is just to get you familiar with the core rule system and common terms used in the game.

Step 1: Choose a pre-generated character. Either **Warrior** (weapons and armor), **Sorcerer** (spell casting), or **Operator** (skill mastery).

Step 2: Ensure you have a pencil and dice.

Step 3: Start the adventure!

Note: This guide is designed to be played by at least two people (a player and a Game Master), but you can play this solo if needed, taking on the roles of both.

Game Master (GM): The person running the game. Plays the role of all creatures other than the player characters. Organizes the game and leads the story.

Player: Each player plays the part of a character in the adventure. While playing, you take on the role of that character as if it were you in the game world experiencing what they experience, making choices from their perspective.

TERMINOLOGY

It is the nature of RPGs to use acronyms. Many of them. The world's more popular RPG has more than 40 of them appearing in the first edition of the game. Too many acronyms can be confusing to keep track of, especially for newer players. While GEAS does have acronyms, the design intent was to keep these to a minimum. The following are the important acronyms to remember, and that's pretty much it! (feel free to come back and reference this page as needed).

ADP: Attacking Dice Pool. When you make an attack, you roll the number and type of dice in this pool.

AP: Action Points. Each action you want to perform on your turn costs action points. You are assigned a number of AP, which reset at the start of every round.

ASP: Arcane Spell Pool. The type and number of dice used when casting spells.

DEF: Defense rating. Your DEF roll corresponds to the TCN the opponent needs to beat in order to successfully hit you.

Dice Pool: The total number and type of dice you use when making Challenge rolls.

PD: Proficiency Dice. The die type you use in your dice pool based on proficiency. In this guide, everyone uses a d6 as their Proficiency Die.

TCN: Target challenge number = the number rolled based on the skill level. I.e., if the difficulty of what you're trying to do gives a dice pool of 3d8, and the highest value is 6, then the TCN = 6.

THE CHARACTER

Character Record Sheet **CEAS CRUX**

Character Name: **Noxil**

Profession: **warrior**

Character Arc: **courage**

Ancestry: **Dwarf**

Circle: 1

XP:

Heroic Points:

Physical: 2

Mental: 0

Sway: 1

DEF: 3d6

Vitality:

Max: 8

PD: d6

Notes & Traits: **night vision 50 feet**
stances (+1 DEF, +1 PD, or +2 AP)

AP: 6

Speed: 10

Attack Type: **axe** AP: 4 ADP: 2d6 Range: _____ ft

Attack Type: **short bow** AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: _____ ft

Attack Type: _____ AP: _____ ADP: _____ Range: _____ ft

Equipment: **leather armor shield**

Treasure: _____

Character Record Sheet **CEAS CRUX**

Character Name: **Shade**

Profession: **operator**

Character Arc: **knowledge**

Ancestry: **Ffolk**

Circle: 1

XP:

Heroic Points:

Physical: 2

Mental: 1

Sway: 0

DEF: 2d6

Vitality:

Max: 6

PD: d6

Notes & Traits: **ix per breather, reroll any challenge roll.**
dirty fighter: +1 pd to any creature you haven't attacked yet.
+1 bonus to combat order
+1 DEF when not wearing armor

AP: 7

Speed: 10

Attack Type: **broad sword** AP: 4 ADP: 2d6 Range: _____ ft

Attack Type: **short bow** AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: _____ ft

Attack Type: _____ AP: _____ ADP: _____ Range: _____ ft

Equipment: _____

Treasure: _____

Character Record Sheet **CEAS CRUX**

Character Name: **Fox**

Profession: **sorcerer**

Character Arc: **friendship**

Ancestry: **elf**

Circle: 1

XP:

Heroic Points:

Physical: 1

Mental: 2

Sway: 1

DEF: 1d6

Vitality:

Max: 3

PD: d6

Notes & Traits: **ASP: 3d6**
Incantations: minor illusion, repair, druidspell
Tier I: Curing Shout, fan of elemental fury

AP: 6

Speed: 15

Attack Type: **staff** AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: _____ ft

Attack Type: **shortbow** AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: 320 ft

Attack Type: _____ AP: _____ ADP: _____ Range: _____ ft

Equipment: _____

Treasure: _____

These are the three pre-generated characters (full sized copies at the back). Don't worry about knowing what each of these things mean.

Noxil is a dwarven warrior, skilled in weapons and armor. At the start of Noxil's turn, they can decide to take what is called a "stance". When Noxil chooses a stance, they choose either to increase defense, increase attack, or increase how many action points they get per turn.

Shade is a ffolk operator, skilled in trickery and utility. Shade has several traits that reinforce this theme.

Fox is an elven sorcerer. Magic is their game. While not very skilled in weapons and unable to wear armor, Fox has several spells they can cast on their turn.



DICE POOLS EXPLAINED

CEAS uses a dice pool system meant to accomplish three things:

- No math whenever possible to speed up play
- Simple and easy to learn mechanic



The Dice Pool: When you roll your dice pool, you only look at the highest number if you're defending. If you're attacking, you see how many of your dice beats the highest number of the Defender.

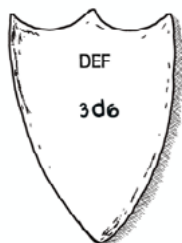
The Challenge Roll: Each side rolls their dice pools. The person with the highest wins! Ties go to defender. If more than one of your dice beats the highest from the opponent, you gain additional successes!



VS. TCN: 5

Not all checks are contested. Sometimes you have to beat a **Target Challenge Number (TCN)**. Again, just take the highest die result and if you are higher, you succeed!

Trading Up/Down: You can trade in two dice of one type to get one die of the next higher type. Trade in 2d6 for 1d8, 2d8 for 1d10, and so on. This gives you a chance to get a higher result at the cost of lower potential result. You may also trade one die type for two of the type one category smaller.



Here is an example from Noxil's character sheet. Noxil's defense (DEF) is 3d6. That means Noxil's DEF dice pool consists of three 6-sided dice. When Noxil is asked to roll to defend against an attack, they will roll 3d6 and take the highest value.

And here is an example from Fox's character sheet. ASP is Fox's Arcane Spell Pool. Whenever Fox casts a spell to attack a creature, Fox rolls 3d6 and sees how many of them beat the defender's highest die.

Notes & Traits
ASP: 3d6
Incantations: minor illusion, repair, druidspell
Tier I: Curing Shout, fan of elemental fury

CAVES OF DOOM!

GM: As the GM, you will be running this mini-adventure. Only you will be privy to the maps and their inhabitants. As the players describe what they do and where they go, you describe to them what they see and what happens.

As a GM, it's important to be fair and impartial, and to do your best to describe the scene as well as you can. If battle starts, you control all of the creatures except the Player Characters (PCs).

The map will be numbered from 1 to 5, each number representing an important area. Read the entire adventure before starting to play, as it will be easier to run the creatures if you know who is in what location beforehand.

Players: You control one of the pre-generated characters. Control them via first person narrative as if you were in their place. Describe what you do or what you want to do.

Background: The PCs have been tasked with clearing a cavern complex from the giant vermin that have taken residence within. They find themselves standing outside of the cavern entrance at location #1.

1

Description: The mouth of the cave descends into the darkness beyond. A foul musky odor wafts from within.

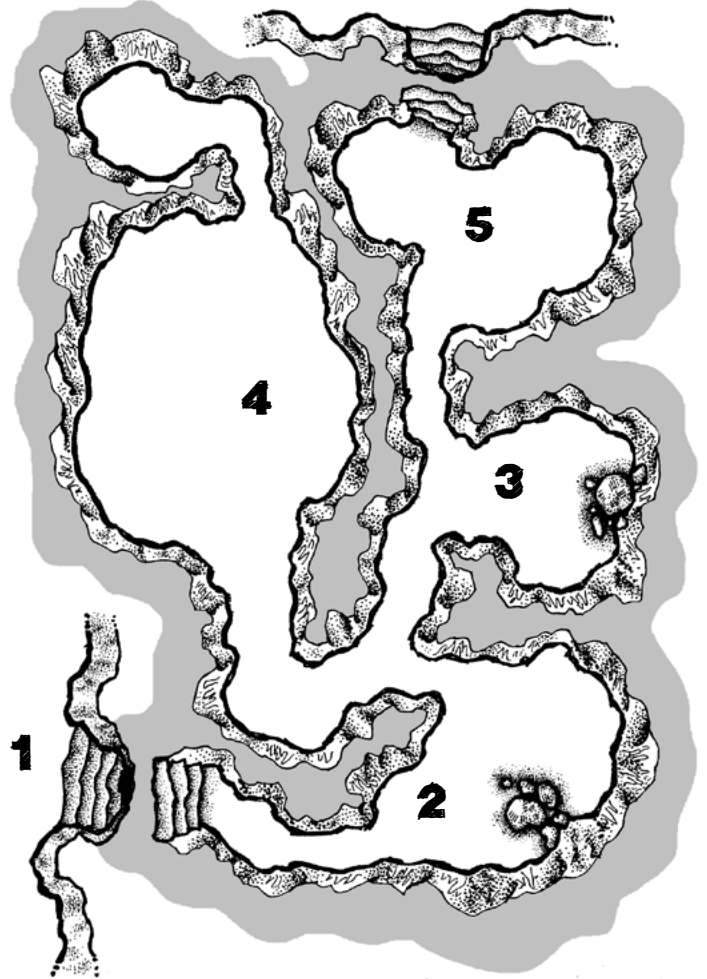
GM Info: This is your first opportunity to introduce what is called an **ability check**. Ability checks are used when a player says they want to try something that has a real chance of not succeeding. If something almost always certain to succeed, then no check is needed. For example, you wouldn't call for an ability check if a PC wanted to jump over a small stream. For purposes of this guide, ask the players if they want to search the entrance.

In this case, if any of the players say they want to search the entrance of the cave, ask them all to make a Mental ability check. You choose Mental because of the three abilities (Physical, Mental, and Sway), Mental best covers observation and thinking. The Target Challenge Number (TCN) they need to beat is 2.

When a character attempts an ability check, they look at their character sheet to see how many bonus dice they add to their pool. Let's look at Fox's abilities:



Fox has a Mental score of 2. For Ability checks, everyone always starts with 1 dice in their pool for free and adds a number of dice showing here. In this case, Fox would roll 3d6, taking the highest value, when making a Mental ability check.



All PCs can make the attempt once. If any succeed, describe how the entrance seems to have several footprints leading in and out. The prints look like to be a rat or mouse, but very large, suggesting the creature is roughly the size of a small dog.

2

Description: The cavern is completely dark. Any light source reflects poorly on the rough-hewn cave walls. The smell of decay is strong here.

GM Info: The Rat King (see entry #5) has placed a trap here. A tripwire crosses the entrance. Any creature not searching for the wire will need to make an Agility ability check as they pass or they will trip the wire (TCN 3). If the wire is tripped, a dart will shoot out from the wall, striking the PC who tripped it for 1 point of physical damage.

Description: The cave here is also completely dark. When a PC enters the cave, they will be attacked by giant centipedes. There is one centipede for each PC. At the back of the cave is a suit of mail armor (only Noxil can wear, and if so, increases DEF pool by +1d6).

You've reached a Combat Encounter!

When an encounter results in combat, the first thing you need to do is see who goes first, who goes next, and so on. The GM only rolls once for all the creatures they control.

FLEXIBLE INITIATIVE

GEAS uses a mechanic to determine combat order that aligns with the flexibility and player agency theme. Each participant rolls a d10. The players and GM then organize all the participants from lowest to highest. The lowest result is set as the baseline. The next highest result **chooses** if they want to go before or after the baseline. The next highest result chooses where they want to go in the order, and so on until all participants have chosen.

This rewards those who rolled the best, allowing them to choose where they want to go without suffering a penalty for holding an action.

Giant Centipedes

DEF: 1d6, Vitality: 1, AP: 6, Speed: 10, Attack: bite [AP: 3, ADP: 1d6, and if successful, the target must succeed on a TCN 2 Physical check or become poisoned until the end of their next turn. A poisoned creature loses 2 AP from their available pool].

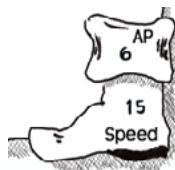
What does all of that mean?

DEF = the dice pool you roll when defending against an attack. In this case, you roll 1d6. You take the highest value, and tell the attacker what that number is, which is the number they have to beat in order to hit.

For each dice that beats the defender's highest dice, one point of damage is inflicted. Reduce the vitality of the creature hit by that amount. Zero vitality means death.

Vitality = how many points of damage the creature can take before dying.

AP = Action Points. Every creature has a pool of action points they get every round. Actions take away from this pool.

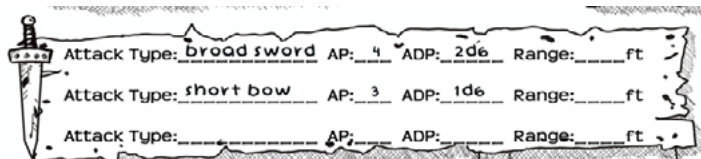


This shows that the character has 6 AP in their pool, and a speed of 15.

Speed = how many feet the creature can move for every AP they spend.

Attack = the description of the attack. In this case, a centipede can spend 3 AP to bite. It rolls 1d6 for its Attacking Dice Pool (ADP). If it succeeds (it's highest dice beats the defender's highest die), then the target not only takes 1 point of physical damage, but must also succeed on a TCN 3 Physical check or become poisoned as per the description.

Now let's look at one of the characters. Here is Shade:



Shade has two options: broad sword, or short bow. If Shade chooses to use the broad sword, it costs 4 AP and Shade rolls 2d6 in their attacking pool. If they use their short bow, it costs 3 AP but only rolls 1d6 when attacking. (Don't worry about range for the short bow, consider everything within range in this cave complex).

But wait!

Notes & Traits

- 1x per breather, reroll any challenge roll.
- dirty fighter: +1 pd to any creature you haven't attacked yet.
- +1 bonus to combat order
- +1 DEF when not wearing armor

Shade also has the Dirty Fighter trait. So if Shade is attacking a creature for the first time, they get an extra 1d6 added to their ADP.

Notes & Traits
 ASP: 3d6
 Incantations: minor illusion, repair, druidspell
 Tier I: Curing Shout, fan of elemental fury

Fox isn't that great with weapons, but is skilled with spells. For Fox, the same dice pool mechanic is used as with weapons, only Fox uses their ASP instead of ADP. Of Fox's spells, Fan of Elemental Fury is the only offensive one.

When Fox attacks with that spell, they roll 3d6 (their ASP). Every creature within the area of effect rolls their DEF pool. Just like attacks, for each dice that Fox beats the highest DEF dice, one point of elemental damage is inflicted.

Things to keep in mind:

- Do not re-roll combat order every round. Only at the start of each encounter. When everyone has gone in a round, go back to the top.
- Noxil can choose a stance at the start of every round. Don't forget!
- Shade not only get the bonus to attack for Dirty Fighting, but they can re-roll their dice pool once every breather (once per encounter in this guide). Roll all 1s? Re-roll them and take the new result!
- If the players are really loud, they might alert the denizens of their presence and take appropriate actions.

Post-Combat

Hopefully the players were able to defeat the centipedes without much effort. And hopefully you now have a good grasp of how the combat encounter works. That's the hardest part! With some practice, you'll find yourselves breezing through combat quickly and without immersion-breaking delays.

4B

Description: The tunnel opens up to a large dark cavern. A small cave in the back contains a chest containing 9 gold crowns and 26 silver plates. In this chamber are giant rats, one for each of the PCs. The players can hear faint scuttling and scratching noises from this chamber.

Giant Rats

DEF: 1d6, Vitality: 2, AP: 6, Speed: 15, Attack: Bite [AP: 3, ADP: 2d6].

5B

Description: This chamber contains an actual bed, desk, and table. The stairs leading up have been blocked off to prevent access. A large truck is locked (TCN 3 to pick the lock) and contains 23 gold crowns and a potion of healing (heals 2 vitality when drunk).

Also in this room is the Rat King and a pet giant rat. If the party isn't convincing in some way to avoid combat, they will attack.

Giant Rat

DEF: 2d6, Vitality: 3, AP: 6, Speed: 15, Attack: Bite [AP: 3, ADP: 2d6].

Rat King

DEF: 3d6, Vitality: 6, AP: 7, Speed: 15, Attack: Claws [AP: 3, ADP: 2d6] or Bite [AP: 4, ADP: 3d6].

CONCLUSION

Hopefully this small mini-adventure has allowed you to experience ability checks, attacks, and spells. That is 90% of the complexity of the game. While the full game brings a lot of additional options and flexibility, if you've got these basics down, you're good to go!

Character Record Sheet GEAS CRUX

Character Name **Noxil**

Profession **Warrior**

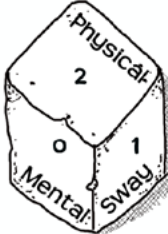
Character Arc **courage**

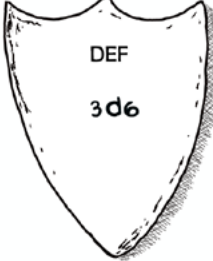
Ancestry **Dwarf**

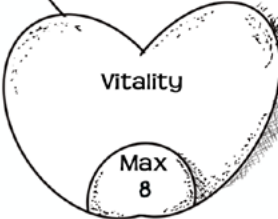
Circle
1


XP

Heroic Points










Notes & Traits **night vision 50 feet**

Stances (+1 DEF, +1 PD, or +2 AP)

AP
6

10
Speed

	Attack Type: <u>axe</u>	AP: <u>4</u>	ADP: <u>2d6</u>	Range: <u> </u> ft
	Attack Type: <u>short bow</u>	AP: <u>3</u>	ADP: <u>1d6</u>	Range: <u> </u> ft
	Attack Type: <u> </u>	AP: <u> </u>	ADP: <u> </u>	Range: <u> </u> ft

Equipment

leather armor
shield


Treasure

Noxil can take a stance at the start of each of their turns. When your turn starts, choose either:

- Gain a +1d6 to your DEF dice pool
- Gain a +1d6 bonus to your ADP
- Gain a +2 bonus to your AP

When you choose a stance, any benefits from a previous stance are lost.

Night vision allows Noxil to see in the dark up to 50 feet away.



Character Record Sheet

Character Name: **Fox**

Profession: **sorcerer**

Character Arc: **friendship**


Ancestry: **elf**

Circle

1

XP

Heroic Points




Physical: 1
Mental: 2
Swau: 1

DEF

1d6

Vitality

Max 3



PD

d6

Notes & Traits

ASP: 3d6

Incantations: minor illusion, repair, druidspell

Tier I: Curing shout, fan of elemental fury

AP

6

15

Speed

Attack Type: staff AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: ft

Attack Type: shortbow AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: 320 ft

Attack Type: AP: ADP: Range: ft

Equipment

Treasure

Fox's incantations cost 3 AP for each spell, and their Tier I spells cost 4 AP to cast.

Minor Illusion: create a 5-foot diameter visual illusion. No audible or thermal effects. Only visual. Lasts for as long as you concentrate and spend 3 AP

Repair: Repair any rip or tear in an object.

Druidspell: create any small sound, smell, or illumination effect.

Curing Shout: Once per encounter, heal 2 vitality to any creature you touch.

Fan of Elemental Fury: Create a 10-foot long by 5-foot wide cone of elemental magic (fire, acid, cold, or electricity). Creatures within this area must roll DEF to avoid damage.

Character Record Sheet CEAS CRUX

Character Name **Shade**

Profession **operator**

Character Arc **knowledge**

Ancestry **Ffolk**

Circle

1

XP

Heroic Points

Physical

2

Mental

1

Swau

0

DEF

2d6

Vitality

Max 6

PD

d6

Notes & Traits

1x per breather, reroll any challenge roll.

dirty fighter: +1 pd to any creature you haven't attacked yet.

+1 bonus to combat order

+1 DEF when not wearing armor

AP

7

10

Speed

Attack Type: broad sword AP: 4 ADP: 2d6 Range: ft

Attack Type: short bow AP: 3 ADP: 1d6 Range: ft

Attack Type: AP: ADP: Range: ft

Equipment

Treasure

Once per encounter, re-roll any one challenge roll, taking the new result.
 When you attack a creature for the first time, add +1d6 to your ADP.
 When everyone rolls for combat order, you add +1 to your d10 result.

JUST A START!

This guide is only meant to get you familiar with the core mechanics and rules. In the full game, several more options are available to you. You have more flexibility with dice pools, you have something called “vigor” which you use to power maneuvers and spells, and you have dozens of specialties choose from, each with dozens of unique traits you can learn. you also have something called “Heroic Points” in which you can use to alter the narrative, and a mechanic for incorporating your unique character arc into the game.



CHARACTER OPTIONS

Choosing your Character

CHAR offers many options for you to create a unique character. First, choose your ancestry. Then choose your profession and specialty within that profession.

Ancestries

Beastkin: You are a humanoid animal. Along with appearance, you have certain beneficial physical traits of your animal ancestry.

Centaur: Speed and endurance are your strengths. Leaders? Not so much.

Devilkin: Your fiendish heritage offers some great benefits, even if your appearance is unsettling to many.

Dwarf: Whether Plains or Granite dwarf, your shorter stature is made up for in robustness.

Elf: Elven elves are magical and regal. Forest elves are silent and meld with nature.

Ffolk: You may be short, but your sense of community and knack for avoiding damage goes a long way.

Hobgoblin: An ancient creature of folklore, you are loyal, even if diminutive, and inherently magical.

Human: The most common ancestry, you are extremely versatile.

Mountain: Strength and power with a great sense of direction.

Mosskin: You have a bond with nature directly, so much so, that your physical form seems to be one with nature itself.

Orc: Mountain orcs are large with great endurance. Plains orcs are nomadic with a sense of community and nature.

Wyrmlin: Your ancestry is tied to a specific true dragon, and you share many of those dragon's traits.

Deciding your Profession and Specialty

Nearly every profession has a specialty. Within each specialty are dozens of traits you choose as you gain experience. This design allows you to create unique characters that fit your preferred archetype.

Professions

Operation: You rely on wit, agility, and guile. Specialties include assassins, martial artists, swashbucklers, treasure hunters, and evocants.

Paladin: Mind over matter is what gives you power. Specialties include telegenesis, psycho-metabolism, and telepathy.

Rune Mage: The power of rune magic is unlocked for you. Combine runes together for various spell effects.

Sorcerer: You have unlocked the secret to compel elemental spirits to do your bidding, creating many different magical effects. Specialties include ritualist, necromancer, elementalists, scholar, summoner, and fiendish.

Warrior: Arms and armor are your lifeblood. Choose brute, mercenary, banneret, blackcaster, or heroquester specialties.

Wilder: Wilders are nature focused. Your specialties are animalists, symbiote (insectifera), pack masters, and hunters.