

MICROLITE 20 – Fantasy Expansion: Character Creation Options

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Based on the Microlite 20 Purest Essence Rules: www.microlite20.net/files/Microlite20_purest_essence.pdf
including ideas from Seth Drebitko, Greywulf, dymond, weeot, KeithCampbell and others
on the Microlite 20 forums and elsewhere

The following is a number of optional methods for creating and playing Microlite 20 fantasy characters (though in many cases they apply to any Microlite 20 game, regardless of genre). Any of these can be used in addition to or in place of the rules listed in the Microlite 20 Purest Essence document. These rules options are meant to help you create a fun and easy-to-play game the way you want it. They blend fantasy RPG rules for specific tactical measurements, with free-form rules for “making it up as you go,” and with a comprehensive set of rules that many gamers already know.

Choose as many options as you wish, as long as the other players and game master are using them too, or at least as long as they approve of the changes you’re making to your character. Make the game your own – use the options you like, change the options you sort of like, and ignore the options you don’t like.

It’s assumed that characters are using Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), Mind (MIND), Physical, Subterfuge, Knowledge, Communication and Survival. Most other RPG skills are covered by these five skills. For example, Technology is part of the Knowledge skill, and Perception is part of the Subterfuge skill. In the same way, other stats are just a mix of a stat and skill. Charisma is MIND + Communication, and Endurance is STR + Physical, for example.

STATS

Quick Stats

To generate a character even faster, assign stat scores of 16, 13 and 11 to STR, DEX and MIND any way you wish. You can increase a stat score by decreasing another stat score by the same amount.

Kjell the Bear is a classic all-muscle, no brains fighter. I assign 16 to his Strength, 13 to Dexterity and 11 to Mind. Because I want to “max out” his Strength stat score, I boost it by two to 18, and to make up for that increase, I drop his Mind stat score by two. His stat scores are now STR 18, DEX 13, and MIND 9.

Stat Bonus Chart

After adjusting stat scores for race and class, determine your stat bonuses by using (stat score -10) /2, round down. This math is done for you here.

<u>Stat Score</u>	<u>Stat Bonus</u>
3	-4
4 – 5	-3
6 – 7	-2
8 – 9	-1
10 – 11	+0
12 – 13	+1
14 – 15	+2
16 – 17	+3
18	+4

Stat Points

Characters start with 40 stat points to assign to the three stat scores. Each has a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 18. Any stat points not spent are lost. For a “grittier” game, try 30 stat points, and for a more heroic game, try 45 or even 50 stat points.

Adding New Stats

Though the three stats of Microlite 20 cover everything a character does, some game masters or game settings may call for changing or adding stats (like the popular choices of Charisma and Perception). To add a new stat after a character has been created, simply roll 1d6 +10 to determine the stat score.

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

While it’s always up to a player to determine how his or her character performs in the game, giving mechanical rewards for personality traits can help some players do more than wait for the next fight. Using this option, each character begins with a personality characteristic, or two if the game master agrees. In many cases, one characteristic represents the character’s behavior toward others, and another represents how they really are inside, and among close friends.

This option can also be used for the classic alignment systems found in many RPGs. For example, a character's personality characteristics might be "neutral" and "good."

The game master can also assign a personality characteristic to a character whenever he or she finds it appropriate, though characters shouldn't have more than three or four total. All characteristics must be approved by the game master before the character begins play (to prevent a party of loners, for example).

When the character does something significant that aligns with one of his or her characteristics (as determined by the game master), he or she gains a *check mark*. A character will usually gain no more than one to three check marks in any one game session, even with multiple characteristics.

At the end of each game session (each night of playing, not necessarily when the adventure is over), roll 1d6 for each check mark. On a result of 5 or 6, each player gains experience equal to the amount it would get for an encounter of the party's level. On a result of 4 or less, no experience is gained. All check marks are erased before the next game session. This way, personality characteristics that would otherwise be a hindrance to the party can still contribute to the game by earning experience, assuming they are played out during the session.

Several personality characteristics are listed below. Use these as examples to create your own.

Aggressive (intimidating, competitive): You enjoy picking fights and bullying others around. Even if you aren't physically intimidating, you still do whatever you can to win. As the saying goes, "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing."

Earn a check mark when you start any kind of competition (from an argument to actual combat).

Arrogant (prideful): You know you're right, and if someone else has a good idea, you still find a way to make yourself the center of attention. You know you're better than others, but sometimes having someone else around can be useful.

Earn a check mark when you are able to make yourself the center of attention.

Brooding (morose, gloomy): You feel your special abilities make you an outcast in society. No one

truly understands you, and though they may try to sympathize, you truly are all alone.

Earn a check mark when you accomplish something using an ability, power or talent no one else in the party has.

Cautious (shy): You like to make sure everything is in order before you take action, and prefer to let other people take the lead. You have no problem joining in, but you'd prefer to never have to be in charge.

Earn a check mark when you get through combat without making an attack, or when an action you have planned out ahead of time works perfectly.

Comic (wisecracking): You're here to have a good time. You think of funny things to say all the time, and even when you know it's not appropriate you can't help yourself. You're a lot of fun to be around, at least for most people.

Earn a check mark when you make the other players (and/or characters) laugh out loud.

Creative (artistic): You live to design, build and perform. You like creating beautiful things (however you define beauty) because something flawless or original makes the world a better place.

Earn a check mark when you create something new (a weapon, a work of art, etc.)

Dilettante (partier): Life is short; party hard. You want to experience everything you possibly can, because you never know when it could all disappear. You're a lot of fun to be around – life is meaningless, so why think too much about it?

Earn a check mark when you have a good time in a social situation (make new acquaintances, become the "life of the party," etc.).

Diplomatic: You prefer talking to fighting. You don't necessarily have a problem with combat, but you're skilled at getting two sides to come to an agreement – it usually turns out better for you and your allies than a fight would.

Earn a check mark when you are able to act as the negotiator between two sides and mediate a successful agreement.

Focused (driven, single-minded): You are disciplined to accomplish a certain goal, even if it's a goal that's impossible, like bringing all criminals to justice, or creating harmony between all people. You often make for a good leader, though you're not always the easiest person to be around.

Select a goal when you choose this characteristic.

Earn a check mark when you refuse someone or something because it would distract you from your chosen goal.

Giving (kind, martyr): You always try to help others, because the world needs more goodness and hope. You'll hold the line against those who deliberately perform evil acts for no reason (often, adventuring parties cause damage and destruction, but it's usually in the name of good). You're the one others depend on to help them through tough times.

Earn a check mark when you successfully protect or help someone else (aside from minor healing).

Honorable (lawful, virtuous): Many adventurers follow moral codes of some kind, but for you, honor is life. You don't lie unless there is absolutely no other way to get out of a situation, and are uncomfortable when others cheat or steal. You don't insist others live the way you do, just that they understand the rules you have set for yourself, and respect you enough to not try and encourage you to break them.

Earn a check mark when you follow your code of honor, at a time when doing so makes things more difficult for the party.

Impulsive (curious, eager): You always want to know what's ahead, what's around the next corner. You like trying new things that get your adrenaline going — stunts, dangerous situations, anything that shakes yourself and others out of boring, every day existence. Sometimes you're crazy and wild, always doing the unexpected either because you can't help yourself or because you truly are out of your mind.

Earn a check mark when you get into a daring situation that surprises others, especially if you rush in without any preparation (combat doesn't count).

Inspiring (noble): Those who know you turn to you for advice or to lead the way. Those who don't know you respect you (even your enemies), and you work at all times to make life better for yourself and your kind.

Earn a check mark when you accomplish a task that helps a larger group you belong to (not your adventuring party, but your race, nation, organization, etc.).

Intellectual (scholarly, scientific): The world can be explained with rigid rules; you just haven't

learned them all yet. You love solving puzzles and figuring out problems. Sometimes you may alienate others, by spending your time in your own head rather than talking with people.

Earn a check mark when you solve a complicated problem.

Judgmental (by-the-book): You like to be in charge, and look down at others who don't live their lives your way. For you, everything must be perfect — your manner of dress, your behavior, and the world: it's either with you or against you. You like making things run smoothly, making you a good leader, if others can handle your opinions of them.

Earn a check mark when you accomplish a task without a single mistake, injury, obstacle or point of confusion.

Loner (deviant, rebel): You simply don't fit in, whether by choice or because others have made you that way. You don't dwell on your outsider status, but live like a "lone wolf," often hitting the road and not making many close friends. Some loners enjoy their independence, so much so they have a problem with any leadership, and like to make things difficult even when it won't help their cause.

Earn a check mark when you succeed at a task without anyone's help, or when you cause significant trouble without retaliation.

Loyal (zealous, fanatic): You are true to your friends or a certain group (the target of your loyalty), even when they're making mistakes. You would never do anything that would harm or betray your target. The only thing that matters to you is your target's well-being and success — you'll sacrifice yourself and work hard to advance your cause. Select a single friend, adventuring party, or group to which you are loyal.

Earn a check mark when you aid your target, especially if it's in a way that does you personal harm.

Mysterious: Your true self is hidden — maybe even you don't know who you are, and where you came from. You speak in riddles and disguise your origins, which puzzles others. It may also conceal your true skills and powers.

Earn a check mark when someone else makes an untrue assumption about you that gives you an advantage.

Naïve (innocent, childlike): You may be a child, a sheltered adult, or an outsider being exposed to

the real world for the first time. You aren't stupid, and learn from your mistakes. Even when an error turns you bitter or teaches you responsibility, you still feel optimistic in new situations.

Earn a check mark when you learn something after trying a task for the first time.

Responsible (reliable): You can teach and protect others who can't help themselves. You don't like to see others get hurt; you'd rather they learned from your experiences, or never have to learn what you've learned the hard way.

Earn a check mark when you are able to protect or help someone who can't help themselves.

Sarcastic (cynical): The world is a tough place, and you're better off criticizing everything about it, keeping it at arm's length. You try hard, but even when you don't ask for much you can't get it. You know how things "really" work, and just have to laugh when you see others try and fail — like you knew they would. Sometimes it's a grim statement on the world; other times it's a witty, biting comment.

Earn a check mark when you point out a mistake or flaw in yourself or others that led to tragedy.

Suave (convincing, smooth): You don't like to work hard, so you've developed the ability to make others do it for you. You might be good at fast-talking others into doing your job, or seducing a lover, or pulling a tricky con that makes you a lot of money.

Earn a check mark when you trick someone else into doing your bidding.

Tortured (haunted): Your past has come back to trouble your present. Something horrible happened to you once, and it has affected everything that's happened to you since. You feel guilty and shamed, and work every day to try and clear your conscience. You're afraid it may never be clear. Select an action in your past (before you started play) that led to your current state when you choose this characteristic.

Earn a check mark when you do something because it helps calm your tortured mind.

Whiny (petulant, long-suffering): You suffer, either honestly because it helps take the burden from others or (more commonly) because you've led an easy life, and don't like doing anything difficult. Sometimes whining irritates others so much you get your way after all. But don't do it too often, or everyone will start to ignore you.

Earn a check mark when you get your way after whining about your situation.

Wise (deep, thoughtful): You know a great deal and have reached a point in life where you're ready to pass that knowledge along to others. You may meditate serenely, or be smart about dozens of things and want to teach others. In your experience, ignorance is the greatest evil, and the light of knowledge will lead the way to a better life.

Earn a check mark when you learn someone has done good because of something you taught him or her.

Kjell has the personality characteristic of "Responsible." He's big and dumb as a man can come, but he's always first in line when an enemy is threatening his friends. During a game session, I say that Kjell charges to the forefront of a skirmish, where an orc is about to draw his sword on young human children. The game master awards me a check mark. At the end of the game session, I roll 1d6 and get a 5. Kjell and all the other heroes earn experience points for good role playing — and I also earned experience for slaying that vile orc during the game.

RACES

Race Points

Instead of selecting a race and taking the listed benefit, each character begins with TWO Race Points, to be spent on the following. Any Race Points not spent are lost. Since your race will not normally change, you will never gain more Race Points.

- 1 Race Point for +1 to one stat score (stat scores can go above 18)
- 1 Race Point for +1 to two different skills
- 1 Race Point for a special ability. Several are listed below, along with the race which most commonly has that special ability. You can select any special ability, no matter what race you decide to make your character.

Battle Fury (half-orc): When making a melee/hand-to-hand attack, if you roll the maximum amount of damage on at least one of your damage dice (for example, an 8 when rolling 2d8), roll an additional 1d6 to determine damage. If you roll a 6 on that die, do not roll again. If you are using critical hit rules, figure the battle fury damage before applying the effects of the critical hit. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your STR bonus.

Magical Step (elf): Once per battle, instead of your regular move, you can teleport to any open spot you can see from your current location, within 50 feet (10 spaces).

Many Talents (human): When you use this ability, roll 1d6 along with the 1d20 you normally roll when attacking or making a stat + skill roll. Add the results together to find your final die result for the attack or action. You can use this ability 3 times per day.

Minor Arcana (gnome): Choose one first level spell when creating the character (for gnomes, this is typically the illusionist spell Silent Image). You can use this spell without having to spend hit points 3 times per day.

Resist Fear (halfling): On a MIND + Surv roll to resist fear and terror, add +3 to your roll.

Stand Fast (dwarf): If an enemy attempts to knock you down or push you in any direction, make a STR + Phys +3 roll (DC is enemy's STR + Phys). On a success, the enemy's attempt fails, and you stay in place.

SRD Races And Race Points

The races found in the SRD use race points in the following way.

- *Dwarf*: +2 Strength
- *Elf*: +2 Mind
- *Gnome*: +1 Dexterity, +1 Mind
- *Half-Elf*: +1 Mind, +1 to any two skills
- *Halfling*: +2 Dexterity
- *Half-Orc*: +1 Strength, +1 to Physical, +1 to any other skill
- *Human*: +1 to any four skills

Kjell the Bear is a human, but I like the Stand Fast special ability, so I spend one Race Point on that. My other Race Point is spent on a +1 to Strength, boosting that stat score to 19. His stat bonus is still +4.

CLASSES

Class Points

Instead of selecting a class with pre-determined abilities, you can select the abilities you want for your character. See the "Class Points" part of this document.

Divine Domains

You have the special powers granted by a deity or another mystical force. You must be able to cast divine or nature-based spells (like a cleric or druid) to use this option. See the "Divine Domains" part of this document.

Patron Deity

You are a servant of one particular god, goddess or philosophy, and gain several abilities unique to that deity. See the "Patron Deity" part of this document.

Schools Of Magic

You are a specialist magic-user, especially talented with one specific type of spell at the expense of another. See the "Schools Of Magic" part of this document.

Sorcerous Bloodlines

You have the gifts of one sorcerous bloodline, though you do not have to be a sorcerer or even a spell-casting class to use this option. See the "Sorcerous Bloodlines" part of this document.

SKILLS

Spending Skill Points

In the basic Microlite 20 rules, every character has some degree of talent with every skill. But characters in fiction often have just a few areas of expertise – that’s why they team up.

In the Purest Essence rules, skill rank is simply character level + class bonus. Replacing the character level part of the skill rank with skill points lets characters emphasize a few skills instead of being evenly good at everything.

Determine the character’s skill points = total number of skills x level. You can assign these skill points to skills any way you wish, with a limit of level +5 skill points in any one skill. Skills without skill points have a skill rank of 0 (zero). Any skill points not assigned are lost. The character gains additional skill points equal to the number of skills the character has each time he or she gains a level.

The character will also gain a total +3 class bonus for one or more skills. This is added to skill points to determine skill rank, and doesn’t count against the skill point limit. Remember, your final skill rank will be: skill points + class bonus.

Variants To Skill Points: Characters who gain a level earn skill points, as described in this option, and a +1 to each skill for each character level (or only at first level). This variant gives characters very high skill ranks as they gain levels, which fits the fantasy genre: it’s rare that a hero fails at what he’s trying to do. It also brings characters more in line with SRD characters that have feats and other benefits that boost skills.

Alternately, when a skill has a rank of 10 or more, it “costs” 2 skill points to improve it by one rank, as advanced levels of training require more from a student.

Chance Of Failure: To keep characters from being perfect at everything, the game master may want to include a chance of failure: A d20 roll of 1 automatically fails a stat + skill roll, even if the character’s skill rank is high enough to succeed at the action.

Kjell has the standard five skills of a Microlite 20 fantasy character. At first level, he has (5 x 1 = 5) five skill points to spend on skills, and he can have at most six points in any one skill. I assign three points to Physical, one to Communication, since

he’s good at intimidating people, and the last skill point to Survival. As a fighter, Kjell gains a +3 class bonus to Physical, which doesn’t count against his limit of six skill points in a single skill. His final skill ranks are: Physical 6, Subterfuge 0, Knowledge 0, Communication 1 and Survival 1.

When he reaches second level, Kjell earns another five skill points, and assigns two to Physical, one to Subterfuge, and two to Communication. He doesn’t get any other bonuses to skills, so his new skill ranks are: Physical 8, Subterfuge 1, Knowledge 0, Communication 3 and Survival 1. He can have at most 7 points in any one skill (level 2 +5), but the +3 his class gave him for the Physical skill does not count against that limit.

If I was starting Kjell as a fifth level character, he would have 5 skills x level 5 = 25 skill points, and have a +3 total bonus for one or more skills due to his class. His maximum skill rank (not counting his class skill bonus) would be 10.

Trained Skills

For more variety in skill ranks between characters, choose one skill to be the character’s trained skill. If you choose a pre-designed class, it’s the skill that is assigned the +3 class bonus (or one skill that gains part of that bonus – player’s choice, but once selected the skill cannot be changed). If you choose a rogue-type class, you have Subterfuge as your trained skill, and also choose a second trained skill (you can’t choose Subterfuge twice). All other skills are untrained.

Physical + Subterfuge:

Duellist, Street Tough, etc.

Knowledge + Subterfuge:

Demolitions, Trap-Builder, etc.

Communication + Subterfuge:

Diplomat, Spy, etc.

Survival + Subterfuge:

Commando, Highwayman, etc.

Using this option, your character does not receive a +3 class bonus. Instead, at level 1, you start with 3 skill points for each trained skill, and 1 skill point for each untrained skill. Starting with level 2, you gain +1 per level in trained skills, and +1 at each even-numbered level in untrained skills. Every five levels (5, 10, 15, etc.) you can make one untrained skill into a trained skill. You still add your level to your skill points determine your final skill rank.

Kjell's traveling companion is Galan, a classic halfling rogue who trained under the finest trap-defusers in the kingdom. At first level, Galan has the trained skills of Subterfuge and Knowledge, which provide 3 skill points each (for a skill rank of 4 in each). Physical, Communication and Survival have 1 skill point a piece (for a skill rank of 2 in each). When he reaches second level, Galan will add +1 to each of his skills, since he gains +1 to trained skills each level, and +1 to untrained skills at even-numbered levels. At third level, Galan will add +1 to only Subterfuge and Knowledge, his trained skills.

Aptitudes

The five skills Microlite 20 characters have cover nearly any activity a character might try. For characters who are especially talented in specific areas, they can select aptitudes (also called affinities). An aptitude gives the character an additional +2 when that aptitude applies to a skill use, or a character can reroll the skill attempt when an aptitude applies to a skill use. Decide whether the character's aptitudes provide a bonus or a reroll when selecting aptitudes.

For example, a character with the aptitude "Tracking," which is related to the Survival skill, gains +2 to MIND + Surv rolls when he is attempting to track, but not when he is attempting something else using the Survival skill and STR, DEX or MIND.

A character can have up to three aptitudes. If you choose fewer than three, you begin with +2 hit points for each aptitude you do not select, or you can reroll any die roll you make once per game session, with one reroll per aptitude you do not select. All characters in the game should use this option if it is used, since it makes characters slightly more powerful than others of their type.

Suggested aptitudes include:

Physical: Climb, Endurance, Lift, etc.

Subterfuge: Move Silently, Pick Locks, Pick Pockets

Knowledge: Arcana, Dungeoneering, History

Communication: Bluff, Intimidate, Persuasion

Survival: Animal Empathy, Poisons, Tracking

I've decided that Kjell is good at intimidation, and I'll give him a strong constitution, durable enough to withstand disease and poison, at least to a degree. He has the aptitudes intimidation (Communication) and resist disease/poison (Physical). I don't have a good idea for a third

aptitude, so instead I get one reroll per game session.

Heroism Points

Heroism points represent a character's determination and their importance to the plans of the gods or the forces of fate. A character has a number of Heroism points equal to his or her level x 2 (or simply equal to level, for a less heroic game).

Heroism points can be used to add to any attack, damage or stat + skill roll at a rate of +1 per 1 Heroism point spent. You can only spend up to your level in Heroism points on one single roll (for example, a level 10 character can only spend up to 10 Heroism points, for a +10 bonus).

Heroism points do not need to be spent all at once, but when they are completely spent, they are gone for the rest of game session. A character's Heroism points are restored to their starting amount at the beginning of a game session. Alternately, the game master may restore 1 or more Heroism points on a die roll of 20 and/or if the character does something especially entertaining (funny, exciting, or appropriate to the character's personality).

Role Playing Description

If you're interested in telling a story and bringing a fantasy world to life, but some of the players are only focused on the amount of damage they cause and suffer, provide a small bonus (+1 or +2) to stat + skill rolls or attack bonuses that add "flavor" to the story. "I shoot at the orc" or "I try to pick the lock" would not provide a bonus, but "I quickly peek around the corner and loose an arrow before the orc can react" or "I juggle through my picks, remembering when my thieves guild master first taught me to jimmy a lock" might provide a description bonus.

EQUIPMENT

Modern Money

One gold piece is equivalent to \$20 modern U.S. dollars, but good luck finding a bank that will do the conversion either way!

Fourth Edition-Style Equipment

Instead of spending gold pieces, simply select one of each of the following. One weapon, armor or other item has a +1 bonus to attacks and damage, Armor Class, or appropriate stat + skill rolls.

- Melee weapon
- Ranged weapon (and 20 ammunition, if needed)
- Armor
- Shield, if a fighter-type class and using a one-handed weapon as main weapon
- Adventurer's kit (backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, belt pouch, 2 torches, 10 days trail rations, 50 feet hempen rope, waterskin)
- Simple clothing, which has no armor bonus
- Class-appropriate gear (spellbook for wizard, holy symbol for cleric, thieves tools for rogue, etc.)
- 1d6 + 10 gold pieces (or 3d8)

Galan begins with a short sword, a light crossbow and 20 bolts, leather armor, an adventurer's kit, simple clothing, thieves tools, and 12 gp. One item becomes a +1 item, and I'll make it his short sword. It provides a +1 to hit and damage.

Ammunition: Arrows And Bolts

In most situations, it can be assumed that characters have enough ammunition available to them that they'll never run out in battle. The price of the ammunition can be ignored when buying a new bow or crossbow, though special ammunition (like magic arrows or bolts with unusual heads) should be purchased separately. Alternately, on a missile/ranged attack roll of 1, the game master may rule that the weapon is "empty," or alternately has just enough ammunition for one more attack — then it's out of commission for the rest of the battle.

Generic Equipment

If detailed lists of weapons and armor aren't what you're looking for, try generic equipment. Each has the same set of statistics found in Microlite 20 Purest Essence. Maximum range for thrown weapons is 30 feet; it is 100 feet for ranged weapons.

Weapon Type	Cost	Damage
Unarmed	Free	1d3
Light	5 gp	1d6
One-Handed	15 gp	1d8
Two-Handed	20 gp	1d10
Thrown	1 gp	1d4
Ranged	40 gp	1d8

Armor Type	Cost	Armor Bonus
Light	10 gp	+2
Medium	50 gp	+4
Heavy	250 gp	+6
Light Shield	10 gp	additional +1
Heavy Shield	15 gp	additional +2

"Chainmail Bikini"

What's more 'microlite' than a skimpy suit of armor? Add ¼ the cost of the armor (round up) to its price, to pay for squeezing all that protection into just a few inches of loincloth or chest covering. Add ½ the character's Comm bonus (round up) to AC, because the more beautiful you are, the more distracted your enemies will be. Any kind of armor can be "bikini-ized" — traditionally, the armor is a chain shirt or hide, but the term "breastplate" has real meaning with this option!

Armor	Type "bikini-ized"	Cost	Bonus *
		* +½ Comm bonus (round up)	
Light	Padded	3 gp	+1
	Leather	13 gp	+2
	Studded Leather	32 gp	+3
	Chain Shirt	125 gp	+4
Medium	Hide	19 gp	+3
	Scale Mail	63 gp	+4
	Chainmail	188 gp	+5
	Breastplate	250 gp	+5
Heavy	Splint Mail	250 gp	+6
	Banded Mail	313 gp	+6
	Half-Plate	750 gp	+7
	Full Plate	1875 gp	+8

Kjell and Galan both look hideous in "bikini-ized" armor, so they'll skip this option.

Armor As Damage Resistance

In some RPGs, armor makes a character harder to hit, and reduces the amount of damage they suffer when they are hit. To determine the armor's damage resistance, divide the armor's normal armor bonus by 2 (round down). To determine the armor's new armor bonus, subtract the DR from the normal armor bonus.

<u>Armor</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>AC bonus</u>	<u>DR</u>
Light	Padded	+1	0 (zero)
	Leather	+1	1
	Studded Leather	+2	1
	Chain Shirt	+2	2
Medium	Hide	+2	1
	Scale Mail	+2	2
	Chainmail	+3	2
	Breastplate	+3	2
Heavy	Splint Mail	+3	3
	Banded Mail	+3	3
	Half-Plate	+4	3
	Full Plate	+4	4

Black Powder Weapons

In some game settings, firearms are available, and while they are deadly, they are also slow to load. If the game master allows black powder weapons in your game, use the information listed below. Any magical or other effects that apply to crossbows or normal bows apply to black powder firearms as well.

If the maximum is rolled on a black powder weapon's damage die (for example, 8 for a pistol), roll again and add the new result to the total. Keep rolling until the maximum is not rolled. A black powder weapon can only be fired once before it has to be reloaded, which takes a character's entire turn.

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Damage</u>	<u>Range</u>
Pistol	250 gp	1d8	50 feet
Rifle	500 gp	1d10	150 feet

COMBAT

Initiative

To determine which character or monster takes the first turn in combat, each character rolls 1d20 + DEX bonus. If there is a tie between two or more initiative results, the character or monster with the highest DEX score acts earlier.

On a combat turn, a character can take TWO actions, usually [1] move and [2] move again, make an attack, cast a spell, attempt another activity (requiring a stat + skill check), etc. Movement of 5 feet or less, drawing a weapon, speaking or similar activities are “free” and do not count as an action.

Kjell and an orc are ready for battle, weapons drawn. I roll 1d20 + 1 (for his DEX of 13) and have the higher result, so I go first.

Using Attack Bonuses

It should be clear from the type of attack a character is making which attack bonus should be used (for example, a sword would use melee/hand-to-hand, while a bow would use missile/ranged). In the SRD, spells call for “ranged touch attacks,” but in Microlite 20, they should use the magic/supernatural attack bonus instead. The spell caster may still need to physically touch the target of an attack, if the spell’s description demands it. Most spells, however, don’t require a die roll to take effect.

Critical Hits And Misses

A roll of 20 on the d20 is a critical hit, while a roll of 1 on the d20 is a critical miss on an attack roll. There are dozens of special rules for rolling a critical in various RPGs, but the simplest is that a critical hit causes double damage (determine the weapon’s total damage for the attack and double it), while a critical miss hits the attacker or one of his or her allies instead of its target.

Massive Damage

If a single attack causes 50 points of damage or more, the victim of the attack immediately makes a STR bonus + Phys roll vs DC 15. If the roll fails, the character is instantly killed. If the roll is a success, the damage takes effect normally.

Thanks to a magic cape, Galan has 10 points of fire resistance. But a red dragon blasts him for 53 points of damage. I roll 17 on a STR + Phys roll, enough to avoid the massive damage penalty. He still suffers 43 points of damage — he’s not killed, just very seriously burned.

Non-Violent Combat

The emphasis on combat rules shows how important swordplay and spell-slinging is to the Microlite 20 game. That level of detail can be brought to any sort of confrontation simply by renaming a few things.

In non-violent combat, the opponents aren’t trying to kill one another. Instead of making a roll of attack bonus vs. Armor Class, each combatant makes a stat + skill roll, using the same pair of stat bonuses and skills. If the attacker’s result is equal or higher, he or she causes “damage” equal to 1d6 + stat bonus of the stat used in the combat. That damage is removed from a set of imaginary hit points, equal to the stat score of the stat used in the combat. When those imaginary hit points fall to 0 (zero) or less, the combat is over, and the loser is defeated (knocked unconscious, humiliated, etc). These imaginary hit points are not related to the character’s actual hit points in any way. They cannot be healed, and all damage to imaginary hit points disappears when the combat is over.

For example, a boxing match would use STR + Phys rolls, and the STR stat score for imaginary hit points. A war of insults or an attempt to fast-talk a mark might use MIND + Comm rolls, and the MIND stat score for imaginary hit points.

Social Combat: In a game where characters rely more on their talents for intrigue, seduction and intimidation, the complex combat rules of standard Microlite 20 may not be appropriate. In that case, the game master and players may decide to revise the stats, combining Strength and Dexterity into Body (BOD) and splitting Mind into Mind (MIND), representing knowledge, and Charisma (CHA), representing social skills.

Attack bonuses remain the same, though both the melee/hand-to-hand and missile/ranged attack bonuses will be determined using BOD bonus + level. In the same way, other characteristics like hit points and special abilities will use the new stats. Stat + skill rolls also change to fit the new stats: A backflip over a charging bull is BOD + Subt, while calming an angry mob is CHA + Comm, and flashing a winning smile may be CHA + Phys.

Galan is trying to earn a few coins by entering a contest of skill for tricksters. He plans to show off his talent for mundane illusions like card tricks and the old rabbit-out-of-a-hat bit. The game master decides the contest is a non-violent combat, and will use DEX + Subt. Galan has a DEX of 18, giving

him 18 imaginary hit points for this combat. His opponent also has a DEX of 18. Galan wins initiative, and rolls 19 (11 on 1d20 + 4 for DEX bonus + 4 for Subt skill rank). His opponent scores 12, so Galan's first trick is more impressive than the other guy's. I roll 4 on 1d6 and add his DEX bonus for a total "damage" of 8. Now the opponent's imaginary hit points are 10. After a few more moments of trickery, the opponent's imaginary hit points fall to 0 (zero), and the judges announce that Galan has won the contest.

Signature Move

Many heroes have a favorite maneuver or fighting style. As you play your character, you may develop a signature move, one that the character tries to perform each time he or she is in combat. Using this option, the game master may award a +2 bonus on the character's first attack that uses the signature move. An enemy that is successfully injured by an attack using a signature move can also be worth 10 percent more experience points (round up). This bonus can be awarded once per battle.

A signature move may be determined while creating a character, but it is often discovered during play. A character can only have one signature move at a time. Signature moves may include climbing high and diving toward an enemy, giving a chilling battle cry, staring down a foe before drawing a weapon, leading the charge into battle, always head-butting enemies with unarmed attacks, singing or playing a personal "theme song" (in a silly game), etc.

Kjell and Galan are back to back as the orcs approach. Kjell draws his sword and growls. Galan does what he always does: pulls a dagger and tosses it lightly from hand to hand, smiling all the while. Then he suddenly whips the dagger toward the nearest orc. I gain a +2 bonus on the attack, because Galan performed his signature move.

Damage Marks

For a game that spends less time on detailed combat and more on telling a story, ignore hit points and determining specific damage from an attack. Instead, each successful attack causes an opponent to gain one "Damage Mark" (indicate this on the character sheet or with tokens like coins or poker chips). When the character has suffered four Damage Marks, he or she is out of action for the rest of the battle, and returns at full health (no Damage Marks) immediately afterward.

Minor enemies may only be able to take one Damage Mark, while major villains or powerful heroes may

be able to take 6, 10 or more. This option is good to simulate a variety of impediments to characters, not only cuts and bruises but also being bound in a net, stumbling over an obstacle, being intimidated by an enemy's challenge, etc.

During a battle, Kjell is surprised by a gang of hobgoblins, who tie him up in their enchanted ropes. One whacks him over the head with a club, and he is unconscious. Using the traditional hit point rules, it would take the hobgoblins several turns to whittle down Kjell's hit points, but using the Damage Marks option, the ropes and the club each cause one Damage Mark. His exact health status doesn't matter; what makes the story exciting now is that Kjell has been captured and brought before the hobgoblin king.

Knockback

Some attacks are so powerful, they can send an enemy flying backward. If a damage die shows its highest result (for example, a 6 on a d6), the opponent loses hit points from the attack, then moves backward in a straight line 10 feet (2 spaces) per die showing its highest result. Terrain effects are ignored, since the opponent is actually flying or stumbling back, but if the opponent strikes a solid object like a wall or tree, he or she takes 1d6 damage and must make a DEX + Phys roll (vs DC 10) or fall down. If the opponent strikes another character or creature, both must make a roll to avoid falling.

A wizard hurls a lightning bolt at Kjell, for 2d6 damage. The game master rolls a 6 on each die. Kjell takes 12 points of damage and is knocked backward 4 spaces. He slams into a rock wall for another 3 points of damage and a major headache.

Armor Class Adjustments

In the Purest Essence rules, AC = 10 + DEX bonus + armor bonus (from purchased armor and racial and class benefits). To represent characters who keep out of danger thanks to quick thinking and fast reflexes instead of suits of metal, the game master may rule that characters carrying a shield, other than a buckler, or wearing any armor except light armor (padded, leather, studded leather, chain shirt) cannot apply DEX bonus to AC.

Characters wearing no armor or light armor and/or holding a buckler can still use DEX bonus to determine AC. If this option is used, it should apply to all heroes and enemies in the game, not just characters who would benefit from it.

As a general guideline, armor and shield bonuses adding up to +5 or more do not allow the character to add his or her DEX bonus to AC.

For high-powered games, the game master may want to also award every character a bonus to AC equal to ½ level (round up).

Galan has a DEX bonus of +4, and wears leather armor (+2 armor bonus) for a total AC of 16. Kjell has chainmail armor (+5 armor bonus), and so he can't use his DEX bonus to calculate his AC. So his final Armor Class is 15. Kjell is slightly easier to hit, but much harder to take down (he has more hit points than Galan). He can also wear heavier armor than Galan, ultimately providing a higher armor bonus.

Alternate Defenses

Microlite 20 keeps combat simple with a single defense for all attacks, Armor Class. To add more variety to combat, use the four types of defense introduced in Fourth Edition.

Armor Class: 10 + DEX bonus + armor bonus

Use for weapon attacks
(swords, arrows, maces, etc.).

Fortitude Save: 10 + (STR bonus x 2)

Use for endurance
(swimming, resisting poison, etc.).

Reflex Save: 10 + (DEX bonus x 2)

Use for dodging area effect attacks
(dart traps, dragon breath, etc.).

Will Save: 10 + (MIND bonus x 2)

Use for resisting magical effects
(spells, psionics, etc.)

Galan's Reflex Save is 18 (as his DEX bonus is +4), while his AC is only 15. If a dragon breathes fire at him, he's better at dodging away from the blast than he is at trying to twist out of the way, hoping his armor is tough enough.

Descending Armor Class

Players of early versions of The World's Most Popular Role Playing Game have created fantastic monsters, treasures and rules sets that can easily be used in Microlite 20. While most aspects of the rules work the same, older games use a descending armor class, where a lower AC is better. To convert it to Microlite 20, simply subtract the listed AC from 19, if the listed AC is 9 or less. If it is 10 or more, use the AC as listed. For example, a bugbear has a descending armor class of 5, and a Microlite 20 AC of 14. A hero wearing plate mail might have a

descending armor class of -2, which converts to a Microlite 20 AC of 21.

Splintering Shields

Shields are used to add to a character's Armor Class, but they can also be "sacrificed" to prevent injury. Instead of taking any damage from a single successful melee/hand-to-hand attack made by an enemy, the shield's armor bonus can be reduced by -1. If it falls to +0, the shield is destroyed is no longer useful. Missile/ranged and magic/supernatural attacks are not affected by this rule.

Kjell carries a heavy wooden shield (with a +2 armor bonus) into battle against a bandit carrying a war hammer. The bandit hits Kjell for 10 points of damage, but Kjell puts his shield in the way just in time. He takes no damage, but his AC is reduced by 1 (since the shield's armor bonus is now +1).

Mob Fighting

It's dramatic and exciting to have heroes battle hordes of orcs or legions of evil soldiers all at once, but in many RPGs it's difficult to keep track of each in combat. An easy solution is to use the exact same characteristics for a monster or enemy as the game master would use in a one-on-one battle, but state that each member of the mob has only one hit point.

For example, the Purest Essence rules list an average goblin as having 5 hit points. Using this option, a hero could instead fight five goblins, each with one hit point. When it's the goblin mob's turn to attack, all five goblins would attack and cause damage as one (since they are minimal threats on their own, it would take multiple successful hits to truly injure an adventurer). If the hero defeats the mob, he or she gains experience equal to defeating a single normal goblin.

In the same way, a single attack against the mob represents several sword slashes, or a few quick arrow shots, enough to take out several members of the mob at the same time. Using this option, the rules don't really change, but a description of the action can change significantly.

Sanity

A fantasy adventurer's life is full of horrific visions — terrible monsters like dragons and demons, mind-bending magic, and bizarre images that violate the laws of reality. In some game worlds, the strangest sights and thoughts can destroy a hero's sanity.

Each character begins with a Sanity Rating (San) of MIND stat score (not bonus) x 5. Whenever the game master rules that the character has witnessed something that could damage his or her sanity, roll 1d% (1d100). If the result is less than or equal to the character's current San, the character can handle the weirdness and is not affected. If the result is greater than the character's current San, the character's psyche diminishes a little bit. Roll a die based on the intensity of the event, and subtract the result from the character's current San. If your character's San falls to 0 (zero) or less, the character has gone completely insane and is no longer available as an adventuring hero.

If the die is a d8, d10 or d12, and the roll is the maximum for that type of die (for example, a 10 on 1d10), the character may also develop a temporary insanity, like nightmares, a phobia or catatonia. It's up to the game master to determine exactly what the temporary insanity is, if any, and how long it lasts. Effects with a Sanity loss of 1d4 or 1d6 are not traumatic enough to trigger insanity.

<u>Sample Image/Event</u>	<u>San Rating Loss</u>
Animal-Like Monster (hell hound, owlbear, etc.)	1d4
Cult Ritual	1d10
Cultist	1d4
Death	None
Demon or Devil	1d8 or 1d10
Dragon	1d6 or 1d10
Evil Priest or Magic-User	1d8
Evil Spell	1d6 to 1d12
Giant Monster (giant, troll, large dragon, etc.)	1d10
Gruesome Death	1d4
Humanoid Monster (elf, human, orc, etc.)	None
Supernatural Fear Effect	1d8
Undead	1d8

Recovery: A MIND + Comm roll (usually vs DC 15) can restore 1d6 San points to a character in the form of "psychology," but only once per day. As with hit points, a character's Sanity Rating can only be restored to its starting amount. A character will never gain more San by advancing in level. The Sanity game option is often used in settings with little magic and few unusual creatures, and often leads inexorably to a character's total insanity.

Kjell, with his MIND stat score of 9, has a Sanity Rating of 45. During an adventure, he vanquishes a horde of skeletons during a search for an evil priest. Destroying skeletons is the kind of thing

Kjell does all the time, so the game master decides that won't affect his Sanity Rating at all. However, when Kjell reaches the cultists, they're about to sacrifice a young villager to their dark gods. Each cultist wears a mask made of bone and carries a sacrificial knife decorated with demonic runes. It's more concentrated evil than Kjell the Bear has ever seen in his life.

A cult ritual is a 1d10 San loss. I roll a 10, so Kjell's San falls to 35. The game master also rules that Kjell gains a temporary insanity: he loses his next turn staring blindly into space, as his mind tries to come to grips with the eternal forces that war among themselves in the cosmos.

Corruption

Dark magic and horrible choices offer incredible power, but at a dangerous cost. A character choosing to invite corruption can roll one or more d10 along with any other dice used in any roll (stat + skill, attack, damage, etc). The d10s can be rolled along with other dice, or after the original result is determined. Each d10 used by the character provides 1 Corruption Point. Other evil activities, like willfully harming innocents or wearing magic rings forged by dark gods, may also provide Corruption Points.

When a character's Corruption Points equal the character's MIND stat score (not bonus), the character has been corrupted by evil and becomes a terrible monster. The game master may decide the character is no longer playable, gains physical signs of evil (like mutations or an unpleasant aura) or has some other penalty. A character cannot lose Corruption Points unless he or she is killed and resurrected (at which time the character comes back to life with no Corruption Points), though accomplishing a significant mission for a divine power of good and light may also reduce Corruption Points.

In a fit of rage, Kjell slaughters an entire gnoll encampment, including the elderly and the children. He picks up 2 Corruption Points, and rolls 2d10 along with his normal weapon dice when damaging each gnoll in the camp.

Healing

While magic always provides healing, characters with more than 0 (zero) hit points at the end of a battle may be able to regain 1d4 hit points +1 per three levels (level 3, 6, 9, etc.) immediately in the form of bandages and catching their breath. This type of healing can only be done once after each

battle. A character will regain all of its hit points after a night's rest, even if the character has a turn on watch.

After a battle, Galan and Kjell stop and cover up their cuts and bruises with the healing herbs in the forest. Each rolls 1d4 and recovers a few hit points.

Duration

In most cases, an attack represents not just one swing of an axe or even one shot from a bow, but time enough to cross swords, loose a handful of arrows, leave a few nicks on the enemy's armor, and even hiss threats (for the villains) or call out challenges to fight with honor (for the heroes).

In an "old school"-style game, abilities and spells are measured in segments of real time, like minutes and days. A "new school"-style game calls for measurements in segments of game time, at least when using abilities and spells in combat. It's up to the game master to determine exactly how long a duration will last, but here are some guidelines:

- 1 minute is equivalent to 1 turn.
- 1 hour is equivalent to 1 battle.
- 1 day is equivalent to 1 game session.

At the beginning of a combat encounter, a wizard ally casts the Mage Armor spell on Kjell. His AC increases by +4 for one hour per level. If the wizard is a first level character, the spell lasts the length of the fight (one battle), but if the wizard is second level, the spell lasts for two battles, or one hour, whichever is shorter.

A third level druid casting Protection From Energy, which absorbs damage for 10 minutes per level, would be able to absorb damage for 30 minutes. In combat, a spell that lasts 30 minutes would last 30 turns – longer than the typical battle, but not long enough to last an entire day. The game master might say that spell might last for three battles (since the druid is third level).

Morale

Combat in fantasy RPGs is fun, but it can go on too long, especially if characters have used all their special abilities, and can't think of another creative way to use the battlefield environment to their advantage. The game master may rule that enemies flee a battle once more than ½ the total number of enemies in a battle are defeated, or if the major enemy of the battle (if there is one) is defeated. Mindless creatures (like skeletons) and player characters never flee using this morale option.

Alternately, morale can be decided by the roll of the dice. Roll 1d6 for each individual enemy that meets the requirements for fleeing above – if more than half the total foes the major enemy is defeated.

If the enemy's Encounter Level is equal to or less than the average level of the adventuring party (round down), the enemy will flee on a roll of 4 or more. If the enemy's Encounter Level is greater than the average level of the adventuring party, the enemy will flee on a roll of 6.

An enemy that flees turns to face as far away from the most immediate threat as possible, then spends its next turn in combat running away, or attempting to surrender, if it cannot escape the battlefield. On the turn after it flees, the enemy is considered to have dropped out of the combat (run away or surrendered), and counts as having been defeated, when collecting experience points and treasure.

Kjell wades into battle with a band of five goblins. He takes out two quickly, but it takes another turn before a third goes down. Since there's less than half the group left, it's time to check morale. The game master rolls a d6 for each goblin, with results of 1 and 3.

The last two goblins glance at one another and decide to flee. They both turn away from Kjell and start running. On his next turn, Kjell draws his bow and is able to pin down a fourth goblin. The final one is able to escape, though Kjell gets credit for defeating him too (that goblin won't threaten another well-armed adventurer any time soon!).

Speeding Up Combat

There are a few simple methods to pick up the pace of battles and get into another exciting fight, or continue telling the story. One option is simply to divide each enemy's listed hit points in half (round down).

Another is standard damage amounts: instead of rolling weapon damage for each enemy, simply assume it does the average amount of damage for its weapon (round up). For example, in the Purest Essence rules, a large monstrous spider causes 1d8+3 damage plus poison. The lowest damage the spider can cause is 4 and the highest is 11 for an average of 8, rounded up. Each time a large monstrous spider hits, it causes 8 points of damage, instead of having to roll and determine damage after each attack. The spider's poison also applies, like it does in the regular Microlite 20 rules.

A third method is to have each player (and the game master) roll 3 d20s at the beginning of a battle and write down those numbers, after determining initiative order. Instead of making a new attack roll each turn during combat, the player selects one of the d20 results he or she wrote down and uses it as his or her attack roll result for that turn. If the battle continues after all the d20 results have been used, the player simply rolls 3 d20s again. Players have to work with the numbers they have, which may lead to more tactical use of the battlefield and the abilities of allies.

Miniatures And Battle Maps

If you have miniature figures (about 1 inch or 25 to 28 mm tall) to represent the characters and their enemies, you'll need a ruler or a battle map covered in spaces (squares, hexes or 1 inch measurements). One space equals 5 feet or 2 yards, and the average character and monster moves 6 spaces per turn, even diagonally. This is the character's Speed or movement rate.

Small characters (like halflings or gnomes) move 5 spaces per turn, while characters wearing heavy armor (splint mail, banded mail, half-plate, full plate) move 1 space less each turn. On older-style maps, where one space equals 10 feet, the average character moves 3 spaces per turn.

Characters can move through the same space as another character or enemy, but cannot end movement in the same space as another figure. Rubble, darkness, heavy growth and other difficult terrain "costs" 2 spaces of movement per space moved by the character. Moving up and down is the same as moving horizontally (a character does not have to "spend" extra movement to climb or fly). Moving just 1 space is considered a "free" action, as long as the character does not move any farther that turn.

If there's a question whether a character could see an enemy to hit it, draw an imaginary straight line from the center of the attacker's space to the center of the target's space (or one of its spaces, if it takes up more than one space on the map). If there is no major obstacle or enemy in the path, the character can make the attack. Allies of the attacker do not block its path. Characters can attack through windows and other partial obstacles at a -2 penalty to hit.

To avoid calculating attack ranges each turn, melee attacks must be made against an enemy in a space adjacent to the character. Thrown and short-range weapon attacks can be made against an enemy up to 10 spaces away. Long-range weapon attacks can be made against an enemy up to 25 spaces away.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

By Encounter

Instead of adding up Encounter Levels, simply award characters a new level after 9 encounters that are appropriately challenging (i.e. a small gang of kobolds is no match for a group of level 10 heroes). Remember that each battle is an encounter – but so is a trap, a monster that's defeated without fighting and even high-stakes skill situations (for example, a simple roll to find the right trail probably isn't an encounter, but a roll to negotiate peace between warring kingdoms probably is).

Experience For Treasure

In many fantasy adventures, characters quickly collect thousands of gold pieces, dozens of gems and handfuls of magic items. Most of it simply goes unspent. With this option, each character can spend 10 percent of its total treasure earned on that adventure (round up) on "upkeep" (repairing damaged items, restocking spell components, food, lodging, etc.) and personal effects (a tithe to the local house of worship for a cleric, a drinking contest for a dwarf, a tribute to the thieves guild for a rogue, etc.). If all characters in the party do so, they gain experience equal to an Encounter Level of their own level. This can only be done once after each adventure.

After slaying a dragon, Kjell and Galan spend 10 percent of their treasure to repair their armor, eat fine meals, and enjoy wine, women and song until their next journey into the wilderness. That leaves them with less money to buy new weapons and magic items, but they decide it was worth it.

Training

In the standard Microlite 20 rules, characters gain skill ranks, hit points, attack bonuses and stat improvements automatically when they gain levels. With this option, characters must spend time and money with weapon masters, powerful mages and expert thieves to earn their advancements.

Whenever a character is ready to earn a new level, roll 1d4 + the character's current level. That is the number of weeks the character must spend in training. Multiply that number by 25; that is the number of gold pieces the character must spend to hire trainers, rent practice space, etc. At the end of the training period, the character gains the maximum hit points possible as well as skill, attack and other bonuses and abilities the character is entitled to. In addition, choose one of the character's stats (STR, DEX or MIND) and roll the

appropriate die according to the stat score: An existing score of 3 to 9 needs a 6 on 1d6 to increase by +1; 10 to 15 needs an 8 on 1d8; 16 needs 12 on 1d12; and 17 needs 20 on 1d20. A stat score of 18 or better can't be improved with training.

Kjell is ready to move to level 2, but he needs to practice with the captain of the guard first. I roll 1d4 and add his current level of 1 for a total of 3. It will take him three weeks to train, and cost (25 x 3) 75 gold pieces to pay for the captain's time, and also to hire a sage to improve his book-learning. As Kjell's STR is already 18, I decide to try and boost his MIND stat. It is currently 9, so I roll 1d6, hoping for a result of 6. I get a 4 – Kjell hasn't learned enough yet; he'll have to come back to the sage after his next adventure.

Immaterial Rewards

Heroes often collect powerful magical treasures and piles of coins, but they can just as easily gain other kinds of rewards after gaining levels and completing adventures, like membership in exclusive groups, noble titles, land and followers, etc. Most of these types of rewards offer a bonus to stat + skill or attack rolls, or a similar improvement, in exchange for participation in the group's activities or for managing the land.

For example, the Royal Society of Explorers might give a +1 per level to MIND + Know rolls to learn about the history and terrain of a particular kingdom, but it also comes with the responsibility to give a report on a previously unexplored place to the Society once per year.

Becoming Baron of the Iron Mountains might give a character access to the magical ironstone, providing an additional +1 die of damage with any metal weapon (an ironstone longsword does 2d8 damage). However, the Baron also has to hire and pay miners to search the Iron Mountains for ironstone.

Class Hit Points

In the standard Microlite 20 rules, all characters gain +1d6 hit points when gaining a level. Alternately, give fighter-types +1d10 hit points per level, cleric- and rogue-types +1d6 hit points per level, and wizard-types +1d4 hit points per level instead. Reroll any die result of 1.

Galan is a warrior with a few other skills, so he's not as tough as Kjell. He rolls 1d6 when he gains hit points.

Fast Hit Points

Instead of rolling a die for hit points each level, simply use STR stat score (not bonus), +4 hit points per level. For an “old school” experience, give fighter-types +6 hit points per level, cleric- and rogue-types +4 hit points per level, and wizard-types +2 hit points per level instead.

Kjell’s Strength stat score is 19, and as a “retro” character, he gets +6 hit points at first level for a total of 25 hit points.

Adventuring Years

Characters in games using this option age fairly regularly. One campaign, or three to five major adventures, counts as one “adventuring year,” with the rest of the time spent on personal business (family, study, faith, training, etc.) or being held up because of mundane travel time or bad weather.

Before the next “adventuring year” begins, increase the character’s age by 1 (which may affect stats and skills), and gain income equal to 3d6 x character level x 5 gold pieces in the form of property, wages, winnings (gambling, practicing theiving skills, etc.), taxes (for a character in a governmental position), etc. Also roll 1d20 on the events table below – this is especially appropriate for settings where characters are not just wandering adventurers, but the representatives of noble houses or lineages of magic.

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Event</u>
1 to 2	Death in the family/group of friends
3 to 5	Marriage among family/friends
6 to 8	Birth to someone in family/friends
9 to 11	Personal failure (crops did not grow, robbed, etc.)
12 to 15	Personal success (promotion, gained renown for an achievement, etc.)
16 to 20	No event this year

CLASS POINTS

With this character creation option, you don't select a traditional RPG class for your character, but instead select the talents that fit your concept for your character. Feel free to create new class abilities, using the examples below as guidelines. Many race features, class abilities and feats from other RPGs can easily become class abilities using this class points option.

Armor: Using this option, your character must have the Medium and/or Heavy Armor And Shields abilities to gain Armor Class bonuses for wearing some types of armor (see below). All characters can wear light armor (padded, leather, studded leather, chain shirt), and carry buckler shields.

Skill: Choose one skill. You begin with a +3 class bonus to that skill. Alternately, you can assign +2 to one skill and +1 to another, or +1 to three skills. Choose one skill to be your character's "class skill."

Class Points: You begin with FOUR Class Points. Any Class Points that are not spent are lost. Every third level (3, 6, 9, 12, etc.), you gain an additional Class Point, which can be saved or spent right away.

Spend 1 Class Point For...

Animal Companion or Mount: Choose a normal, "real world" animal with hit dice up to your level +1. It remains loyal to you and will perform tasks and fight for you to the best of its ability, but will not fight until death. When you increase in level, your animal companion or mount does as well. At level 10, you can take a fantasy creature (like a griffon or dragon, but not an orc or elf) as a companion or mount.

Because your companion or mount is magically linked to you, or is at least trained to respond to your every movement, it provides you with benefits. You gain +1 to one skill. As an optional rule, instead of providing an extra attack for a character each turn in combat and requiring the player to keep track of both a hero and an animal, the companion or mount instead provides +1 to one type of attack the character makes (melee/hand-to-hand, missile/ranged, or magic/supernatural) — choose the type of attack when selecting this ability. If the character successfully does damage with that type of attack, add 1d6 (for a smaller creature like a wolf) or 1d10 (for a larger creature like a warhorse) to the character's damage each time.

Attack Bonus: Select one kind of attack — melee/hand-to-hand, missile/ranged, or magic/supernatural. You gain +1 to attack and damage rolls with that type of attack. This bonus increases by +1 every five levels (+2 at level 5, +3 at level 10, +4 at level 15, etc.). You can spend Class Points for an attack bonus on one, two or all three types of attack.

Brute Force: Add your STR bonus to all damage with Melee/Hand-To-Hand attacks using a one-handed weapon, and STR bonus x 2 with

Melee/Hand-To-Hand attacks using a two-handed weapon.

Cleave: If you make a melee/hand-to-hand attack against an enemy and drop it to 0 (zero) hit points or less this turn, you may make an immediate single melee/hand-to-hand attack against another enemy, if possible. Alternately, you can use this ability with missile/ranged or magic/supernatural attacks instead (choose one type of attack when selecting the ability).

Cohesion: You follow a leader into combat, or pair up with another hero for a special "double team" technique. Once per battle, select another character. When that character ends its move, you immediately move to any open space or area adjacent to that character as a "free" action. This ability is best used in a game that uses miniatures and battle maps.

Connections: You can call on a friend or business acquaintance for a piece of special equipment, information or safe entry into a city or other area. It's up to the game master to decide exactly what the results of your request are. Your connections can be called upon a number of times per adventure equal to your MIND bonus + ½ level (round down).

Empowering Spells or Psionics: You can give any spell or power this metamagic adjustment by spending 4 extra hit points on the spell or power. This spell or power causes 50 percent more damage (round up).

Extending Spells or Psionics: You can give any spell or power this metamagic adjustment by spending 2 extra hit points on the spell or power. It has twice the listed duration.

Good Fortune: You can add dice to any one roll you make (attack, stat + skill, damage, etc.),

depending on your level. This can be done a number of times per day equal to your level. Level 1 to 3: 1d6; level 4 to 7: 1d8; level 8 to 11: 1d10; level 12 to 15: 2d6; level 16 to 19: 2d8; level 20: 2d10

Heavy Armor And Shields: You can wear heavy armor (splint mail, banded mail, half-plate, full plate) and use shields. You must have the Medium Armor ability before selecting this class ability.

Improved Heroism: You gain additional Heroism points equal to your highest stat bonus, if using the Heroism option (see above).

Improved Initiative: Use DEX bonus +4 to determine your character's Initiative.

Lay On Hands: You can heal a die's worth of hit points, depending on your level. This healing can be applied to any number of allies, but not yourself. This can be done a number of times equal to your MIND bonus + ½ level (round up) per day. Level 1 to 3: 1d3; level 4 to 7: 1d6; level 8 to 11: 1d8; level 12 to 15: 1d10; level 16 to 19: 1d12; level 20: 1d20

Leadership: On this character's turn, the hero can name one type of die roll (use of a particular skill, a type of attack, damage, etc.). All allies of the character, but not the character with this ability, gain a bonus to that die roll equal to ½ level (round up) until the character with Leadership's next turn. This ability can be used a number of turns per day equal to MIND bonus, though the turns do not have to be in a row.

Lesser Spell List: You cast spells from the illusionist or druid spell list, or you can cast spells from the arcane or divine spell lists, but only spell levels 0 to 4. Choose one list when selecting this ability.

Medium Armor: You can wear medium armor (hide, scale mail, chainmail, breastplate).

Monster Knowledge: Select one kind of monster, like orc, dragon, or even evil human. You gain a bonus to attack and damage that kind of monster equal to ½ your level (round up).

Multiple Attacks: If your attack bonus is +6 or more, you can make an additional attack of that type with a -5 penalty. If the total bonus is +11 or more, a third attack can be made at -10, and so on. All attacks must be made on the same turn and count as the same single action. For example, a character with a missile/ranged attack bonus of +12 and this ability can make three attacks per turn, at +12, +7 and +2 to hit. You must select this ability once for each type

of attack (melee/hand-to-hand, missile/ranged, or magic/supernatural).

Performance: You can use music, oratory or other performance to cause magical effects, usually by making a MIND + Comm roll. You can do this MIND bonus times per day, +1 time per level, but only one effect at a time. The effects are:

Countersong: Cancel one sound-based effect against an ally.

Fascinate: One target suffers -4 to any perception-type roll for a number of turns equal to your MIND bonus.

Inspire Courage: All allies within hearing distance gain +1 to attack and damage, +1 for every 5 levels (level 5, 10, 15, etc.) until your next turn.

Enhance Skill: All allies within hearing distance gain +1 to all stat + skill rolls, +1 for every 5 levels (level 5, 10, 15, etc.) until your next turn.

Quick Thinker: Roll 1d20 + MIND bonus instead of DEX bonus to determine your character's Initiative. This is useful for characters that prefer supernatural attacks, like spell casters and psionics.

Reputation: Choose a word or phrase that describes how you are treated by others (like "fearsome," "valiant" or "studious"). Gain +5 to stat + skill rolls when the reputation can be used (for example, to intimidate an enemy, or to research information). It's up to the game master to decide when a reputation can provide its bonus. You can spend more than one Class Point on this ability, choosing one word or phrase each time.

Resistance: Choose an energy type, like fire, cold, poison, electricity, etc. Subtract an amount of damage of that type equal to your level from the number of hit points you lose when hit. For example, a fireball that causes 10 points of damage instead causes 7 points of damage if you have Resistance (Fire) 3. You can spend more than one Class Point on this ability, once per energy type.

Smite: Choose a target you have just rolled a successful hit against. Add your level x 2 to the damage. You can do this MIND bonus times per day +1 time every three levels (level 3, 6, 9, 12, etc.).

Speed Boost: Move an additional 5 feet (1 space on a battle map) each turn. You can spend more than one Class Point on this ability.

Spontaneous Healing: Subtract hit points as if you had cast a spell of any level you can normally cast. Instead of casting the spell, however, you

cure 1d6 + spell level hit points for one ally, but not yourself. If you have the Turn Undead ability, you can trade in one use of Turn Undead to cure 1d6 + 2 hit points. You must have the ability to cast spells or the Turn Undead ability to select this ability.

Strikeback: If an opponent attacks you and only you and misses, you can make an immediate “free” attack against that opponent. This ability can only be used once per battle, succeed or fail.

Taunt: Your insults and boasts can distract your foes. Instead of making a normal attack, roll MIND + Comm vs an opponent’s MIND + Comm. On a success, the opponent suffers -2 to all rolls (stat + skill, initiative, attacks, damage, etc.) for the remainder of the battle. The opponent must be able to hear and understand you. It is also likely to turn its attention to you, angry at you for tricking and teasing it.

Trapfinding: You gain a +5 bonus to spot mechanical and magical traps and secret doors (using MIND + Subt), and a +3 bonus to disable traps of any kind.

Turn Undead: Make a magic/supernatural attack against an undead opponent (DC is the current hit points of the undead). On a success, the undead must turn around and move away from you on its next turn. If the DC is exceeded by 10, the undead is destroyed. This can be used successfully MIND bonus + ½ level (round down) times per day. This ability can be used for a different type of creature, like cold-based monsters or demons, instead of undead. Choose the type of creature that can be turned when selecting this class ability.

Twin Shot: You can make two missile/ranged attacks per turn, each at -2 to hit. Both attacks must be made on the same turn and count as the same single action.

Two Weapon Fighting: You can make two melee/hand-to-hand attacks per turn, each at -2 to hit. Each attack must be made with a separate weapon (or two unarmed attacks). Both attacks must be made on the same turn and count as the same single action.

Unarmed Damage: Your unarmed attacks cause extra damage, instead of the standard 1d3, depending on your level. Level 1 to 3: 1d6; level 4 to 7: 1d8; level 8 to 11: 1d10; level 12 to 15: 2d6; level 16 to 19: 2d8; level 20: 2d10

Wall Climb: You can move straight up walls and on narrow spans without losing your balance. On a DEX + Subt roll to climb or keep your balance, add +5 to the result. You are not slowed down

when moving along a wall or across any other similar area.

Wealth: Determine your character’s starting amount of gold as normal, then triple the result. After an adventure, when treasure is determined, figure out how much you earn, then multiply that total by 1.5 (round up). That’s the amount you actually earn, after all your investments, businesses and holdings are added to your adventuring income. For example, a character who gets 100 gp from a treasure hoard and another 20 gp from a grateful lord has not 120 gp for the adventure, but $120 \times 1.5 = 180$ gp.

Weapon Finesse: Your melee attack bonus is equal to DEX bonus + level, instead of STR bonus + level. You must be wielding a light weapon, rapier or whip to use this ability.

Widening Spells or Psionics: You can give any spell or power this metamagic adjustment by spending 6 extra hit points on the spell or power. This spell or power’s area of effect is twice as large as normal.

Wild Empathy: You have skill with nature, and are not affected by non-magical plant life (thorns, vines, etc.). You cannot be tracked on any terrain if you do not want to be, and you gain a +5 bonus to calm normal, “real world” animals (this is usually a MIND + Comm or MIND + Surv roll).

Wild Magic: Each time you cast a spell, roll 1d6.

- 1: Something is wrong, and the magic itself goes wild. The spell affects the spell caster instead of its intended target, or one ally of the game master’s choice.
- 2: The spell is a strong drain on the spell caster. Lose 1 additional hit point.
- 3 or 4: No special effects. The spell works normally.
- 5: Magical power flows out of the spell caster and back into him. Regain 1 hit point spent for casting this spell.
- 6: The forces of magic strengthen the spell. Choose a metamagic adjustment for your spell (empowering, extending or widening are all listed in this class abilities list).

Wuxia Defenses: As long as you are wearing no armor of any kind, you gain +1 to AC, +1 every three levels (level 3, 6, 9, 12, etc.).

Spend 2 Class Points For...

Anti-Magic Aura: Spells don’t work for you or on you. Magic weapons and supernatural abilities like lycanthropy and dragon breath still cause

their normal effects on you, but no spell, including magic healing, affects you if it is cast on you or in your vicinity (like a magic wall).

Divine Magic: You can use divine spells as if you were a cleric, as described in the Microlite 20 Purest Essence rules.

Magic Blast: You can fire a bolt of mystic energy, causing 1d8 damage +1 every three levels (level 3, 6, 9, 12, etc.). Use your Magic/Supernatural Attack Bonus to make this attack. This attack can be attempted a number of times per day equal to your MIND bonus +1, succeed or fail. The Magic Blast is not a spell, but a supernatural ability, so it does not require the user to spend his or her hit points.

Minor Psionics: You can use psionic powers as if you were a psion or psychic warrior, as described in the Microlite 20 psionics rules. However, you are limited to power levels 1, 2 and 3. Choose the combat (psychic warrior) or general (psion) powers when creating your character. When the psionics rules call for the Concentration skill, use the Physical skill (for combat psionic characters) or the Knowledge skill (for general psionic characters) instead.

Rage: Gain +2 to melee/hand-to-hand attacks and damage, +2 to STR bonus (not stat score), and -2 to AC for a number of turns in a row equal to twice your STR bonus (before the Rage bonus is applied), though you can end a rage early. You can shift into a rage a number of times per day equal to your STR bonus.

Shape Change: You can transform into a specific wild animal, and only that specific animal (so you always have the same markings, fur coloration, etc.), a number of turns per day equal to your MIND bonus +2. Alternately, a character with this ability might receive one small animal shape change per level divided by 3 (round down). So a level 6 character with this ability could change into any small animal (fox, badger, sparrow, etc.) twice per day for a

number of turns equal to MIND bonus each time. The character can trade 2 smalls for 1 medium (like a wolf or eagle), or 3 smalls for 1 large (like a bear or shark).

You do not gain hit points for shape-changing using this special ability, but use the abilities and bonuses of the creature instead of your own while in animal form. You cannot speak, use equipment or other abilities of your original form when in animal form. Changing shape is a “free” action.

Sneak Attack: If you successfully sneak up on a foe or target an enemy with a missile/ranged attack without their knowledge (DEX + Subt vs DC of MIND + Subt), add your Subt skill rank to the damage of your first attack against that enemy.

Weird Science: Choose one or more spells from any spell list of up to 4th level. You can instill those spells into a device, which can be used a number of times per day equal to 3 + ½ your level (round up) without spending hit points. The device costs 4 hours and 100 gp per spell level to construct. It is free for you to use, but it requires a MIND + Know roll (DC 15 + number of spells in the device) for anyone else to use. The spells in the device work exactly like the spells would as if cast normally.

Spend 3 Class Points For...

Arcane Magic: You can use arcane spells as if you were a magi, as described in the Microlite 20 Purest Essence rules.

Psionics: You can use psionic powers as if you were a psion or psychic warrior, as described in the Microlite 20 psionics rules. Choose the combat (psychic warrior) or general (psion) powers when creating your character. When the psionics rules call for the Concentration skill, use the Physical skill (for combat psionic characters) or the Knowledge skill (for general psionic characters) instead.

Purest Essence Classes And Class Points: The “big four” classes use class points in the following way.

Cleric: +3 Communication, Divine Magic, Medium Armor, Turn Undead

Fighter (Fighting-Man): +3 Physical, Attack Bonus: Melee/Hand-To-Hand, Cleave (Melee/Hand-To-Hand), Heavy Armor And Shields, Medium Armor

Magi (Magic-User or Wizard): +3 Knowledge, Arcane Magic, Empowering Spells

Rogue (Thief): +3 Subterfuge, Improved Initiative, Sneak Attack, Trapfinding

MICROLITE CONDITIONS: Many of the fantasy RPGs that inspired the Microlite 20 rules have a long series of conditions that affect characters and monsters at certain times (usually, as the effects of abilities or spells). In the spirit of the Microlite 20 rules, you can use the rules below in place of the condition information in an SRD. These rules don't cover every situation, but are enough to keep the game going quickly and smoothly. Outside of combat, 1 turn while affected by a condition is equivalent to 1 minute.

The word "character" refers to any being affected by a condition. A condition ends when the game master rules that it does (alternately, roll STR + Surv vs DC 15 at the end of your turn. On a success, one condition of your choice ends immediately).

Aid Another: All characters attempting the same type of activity attempt a stat + skill check. Each one with success adds +1 to the character who got the highest result to determine if the party succeeded at the action. For example, four heroes trying to search a room each roll MIND + Subt vs DC 10. They get rolls of 12, 18, 9 and 13. Three successes (the 18, 13 and 12) mean the characters that rolled 13 and 12 each add +1 to the character with the highest result (the 18) for a final stat + skill check result of 20.

Attack Of Opportunity: If a character is next to an enemy and does something other than move to a space not adjacent to that enemy, take a "free" action, and/or make a melee/hand-to-hand attack on its turn, the enemy can make a single melee/hand-to-hand attack (or a magic/supernatural attack, if the game master allows) against the character, which does not count as part of the enemy's turn. This condition is best used in a game using miniatures and a map board.

Blinded: The character cannot see (to read, discern colors, etc.). It suffers -5 to Armor Class, attack rolls and other situations that require sight. If another character uses one of its actions to help describe a situation to the blinded character, the penalty is reduced to -2.

Blown Away: A character thrown by a gust of wind or as the effects of a blast moves 1d6 x 10 feet directly away from the source of the blast.

Broken or Rusted: An object that is broken will not function until it is repaired. A missile/ranged weapon that is broken will not work, though its ammunition will still be useable. If a magic item is given the broken condition, roll 1d6: On a 1 to 3, the item is actually broken. On a 4 to 6, the magic keeps the item together. The rusted condition is exactly the same, though it only affects items that are more than half made of metal.

Called Shot: The character makes an attack with a -2 attack penalty (for a small target like a human's arm or leg) or a -4 attack penalty (for a

very small target like a human's head or the weapon in its hand).

Charge: Both of the character's actions on this turn are movements, but the second movement action must take the character adjacent to an enemy. The character can immediately make a melee/hand-to-hand attack, with a +2 attack bonus. The entire second movement action must be in a straight line, though the first movement action can be in any direction.

Confused: At the beginning of its turn, before taking any actions, roll 1d4 for the character.

1: The character can act normally.

2: The character stays in place, babbling incoherently. It takes no actions this turn.

3: The character causes 1d8 + STR bonus damage to itself somehow. It takes no actions this turn.

4: The character must attack a random ally this turn, but can still move normally.

Cover: Light cover (half-covered by a wall, in sparse woods, etc.) provides a -2 penalty to hit the character. Heavy cover (dense fog, looking out an arrow slit, behind a pile of rocks, etc.) provides a -5 penalty to hit.

Cowering or Shaken: The character is filled with fear, suffering -2 to Armor Class.

Damage Resistance: Subtract the listed Damage Resistance number from the amount of damage suffered by a character. What remains is the number of hit points the character loses.

Dazed or Helpless or Stunned: The character takes no actions this turn.

Dazzled: The character is momentarily blinded, suffering -1 to Armor Class, attack rolls and other situations that require sight for this turn.

Dead: The character's hit points have fallen to -10 or less. The character can be resurrected or reincarnated, as long as more than half its body is available, to a maximum of 1 day after death per character level of the victim.

Deafened: The character cannot hear. It suffers -5 to Initiative and other situations that require hearing.

Disabled or Nauseated or Sickened or Staggered: The character can only take one action per turn, not two.

Dying: If a character has -1 or fewer hit points, it loses -1 additional hit point at the beginning of each of its turns. This cannot be avoided in any way. It is also *unconscious* (see below). Another character can make a MIND + Surv or MIND + Know roll (DC 10 + number of negative hit points) to stabilize the character, preventing any more negative hit point loss. The character requires other healing to add hit points.

Energy Drained or Level Drained: The character suffers -1 to all rolls (attacks, stat + skill checks, damage, etc.) per level drained. It also loses 2 of its total hit points permanently per level drained, and 2 current hit points per level drained.

Entangled: The character is wrapped in some sort of obstacle, and must make a DEX + Phys roll to escape (usually vs DC 10 or 15). It can take only one action this turn, though it can be a move, an attack or anything else. This action is at a -2 penalty. The character's other action must be to attempt to escape the entanglement, by making an "escape" roll, using a spell, or something else.

Exhausted or Fatigued: The character suffers a -1 to all rolls (attacks, stat and skill checks, damage, etc.).

Fascinated: The character stays in place, and takes no actions this turn. Any obvious threats to the character immediately end the fascination.

Flanking: Two allies who are standing on opposite sides of a character each gain +2 to hit that character.

Flat-Footed/Combat Advantage: Enemies gain a +2 attack bonus against the character this turn.

Frightened or Panicked: The character is terrified, suffering -4 to Armor Class and -1 to attack and stat + skill checks. It must attempt to attack or escape the source of its fear at some point during its turn.

Grappled or Pinned: At the start of its turn, the character who is being grabbed must make a STR + Phys roll vs the grabber's STR + Phys roll to escape the grapple. That counts as either one of the character's actions on this turn. On a failure, the grabber automatically succeeds at a melee/hand-to-hand attack against the

character who is grabbed (this is a "free" action for the grabber).

Incorporeal: The character has a +2 Armor Class bonus, but only against non-spell attacks (do not add this bonus against magic weapons).

Invisible: Opponents must make a MIND + Subt (DC 15 + invisible character's level) to see the character. Invisible characters still make sounds, leave footprints, etc.

Ongoing Damage or Bleeding: A character suffering continuous damage (like being on fire) suffers that damage at the start of its turn, before it takes any actions.

Paralyzed or Petrified: The character can take no actions this turn, and though it must remain in place, it can still breathe and see normally (unless it is encased in ice, turned to stone, etc.). It gains a +2 to Armor Class while paralyzed, if appropriate (a character turned to stone would gain the bonus, while a character who simply could not move would not).

Poisoned: The character suffers the initial results of the poison like a normal attack. At the beginning of its next turn, before taking any actions, the character immediately suffers the listed secondary poison damage.

Prone: While on the ground, the prone character suffers a -2 penalty to Initiative, Armor Class and melee/hand-to-hand and missile/ranged attacks, but not magic/supernatural attacks. The character must spend one movement action on its turn to stand back up.

Slowed: The character's speed is reduced by half (round down). It can only make one movement action per turn (i.e., it cannot run).

Stable: The character has -1 or fewer hit points, but is not losing more hit points (see *dying*, above).

Trip: Make a DEX + Phys vs DEX + Phys roll to knock a character *prone* (see above).

Turned: Immediately after being turned, the character must move as far from the character that turned it as possible (its speed). Fleeing a turn is a "free" action, but the turned character can take no actions on its next game turn. After that, the condition ends.

Unconscious: The character has 0 (zero) or fewer hit points, or is otherwise out of action. The character immediately falls *prone* (see above) where it stands, and can take no actions until it is awakened (a "free" action for an adjacent character – friend or enemy).

SPELL LISTS: If your class allows you to cast magic spells, your character can use any spell the game master makes available. For example, in the Purest Essence rules, characters can only cast spells of a level equal to or less than half their class level (round up). To get your spell caster ready to play right away, select one of the following spell lists, and consider those spells your “signature spells” (they cost 1 less hit point to cast).

Battle Cleric Spells

First Level: Divine Favor
Second Level: Cure Moderate Wounds
Third Level: Searing Light
Fourth Level: Freedom Of Movement
Fifth Level: Flame Strike
Sixth Level: Harm
Seventh Level: Destruction
Eighth Level: Fire Storm
Ninth Level: Implosion

Supporting Cleric Spells

First Level: Bless
Second Level: Aid
Third Level: Prayer
Fourth Level: Restoration
Fifth Level: Raise Dead
Sixth Level: Heal
Seventh Level: Regenerate
Eighth Level: Holy Aura
Ninth Level: Mass Heal

Druid Spells

First Level: Entangle
Second Level: Barkskin
Third Level: Spike Growth
Fourth Level: Reincarnate
Fifth Level: Call Lightning Storm
Sixth Level: Transport Via Plants
Seventh Level: Control Weather

Illusionist Spells

First Level: Charm Person
Second Level: Invisibility
Third Level: Suggestion
Fourth Level: Confusion
Fifth Level: Seeming
Sixth Level: True Seeing
Seventh Level: Prismatic Spray

Mystic Wizard Spells

First Level: Sleep
Second Level: Knock
Third Level: Fly
Fourth Level: Polymorph
Fifth Level: Teleport
Sixth Level: Antimagic Field
Seventh Level: Plane Shift
Eighth Level: Irresistable Dance
Ninth Level: Gate

War Wizard Spells

First Level: Magic Missile
Second Level: Acid Arrow
Third Level: Fireball
Fourth Level: Black Tentacles
Fifth Level: Feeblemind
Sixth Level: Chain Lightning
Seventh Level: Finger Of Death
Eighth Level: Power Word Stun
Ninth Level: Meteor Swarm

A player at my table has never been part of a role playing game before. He wants to try a wizard, and while he understands his character can use any arcane spell, he doesn't want to have to hunt through pages and pages of spell information to play the game. He selects the “mystic wizard” spell list, and uses just those spells for his first game. The Sleep spell, as his first level favored spell from his spell list, only costs 2 hit points, while the Shocking Grasp spell, also a first level spell, would cost the standard 3 hit points.

STARTER SPELLS: If you want to start playing as a wizard or cleric without having to consult a book or web site for a set of spells, use this option. These spells are completely described below, though they assume the spell caster is level 1. In some games, a first-level spell caster may not be able to use level 2 spells (ask the game master).

ARCANE SPELLS

Detect Magic

Level 0 spell – costs 1 hit point to cast

With your palms face out, you turn in a circle. Things made of magic glow with a soft multicolored light.

All magical materials (items, spells and creatures) up to 60 feet (12 spaces) away that the spell caster can see light up. The more magical the materials are, the brighter the glow, though it never hurts the eyes. Only the spell caster can see the magical glow. It lasts 1 minute (out of combat) or turn (in combat). It ends immediately if the spell caster puts his or her hands down.

Light

Level 0 spell – costs 1 hit point to cast

You transform a stone into a torch.

The spell caster must touch an object. It lights up with the same amount of light as a torch, allowing everyone to see 20 feet (4 spaces) in every direction. The light gives off no heat. It shines with the same light until the spell caster touches the object again to cancel the spell, or until the spell caster casts the spell on another object. The spell will cancel a Level 0 magical darkness.

Magic Missile

Level 1 spell – cost 2 hit points to cast (signature spell)

A small dart of blue-white light streaks out of your finger toward a foe.

Choose one target, as long as the spell caster can see at least part of its body. The missile automatically hits, causing 1d4 +1 damage.

Sleep

Level 1 spell – cost 3 hit points to cast

As sand sifts between your fingers, your foes relax into slumber where they stand.

A single creature with 4 hit dice or levels, four creatures of 1 hit die or level each, or some combination in between adding up to 4 hit dice or levels immediately fall asleep, if they can fall asleep. The creatures must be no more than 110 feet (22 spaces) away from the spell caster. Each creature can roll MIND + Phys vs the spell caster's MIND bonus +11. On a success, the creatures do not fall asleep. It takes an action to wake up a sleeping creature, though injuring it will wake it immediately.

Acid Arrow

Level 2 spell – costs 4 hit points to cast (signature spell)

You don't need a bow to fire this green arrow, which burns with acid when it strikes an enemy.

Choose a target and roll a magic/supernatural attack. On a hit, the arrow causes 2d4 damage.

DIVINE SPELLS

Create Water

Level 0 spell — costs 1 hit point to cast

Cool, clear water pours from the thin air.

The spell creates 2 gallons of clean, drinkable water. The spell caster must have a container to hold the water, or the spell will simply drop water on the spell caster's head for a few moments, as if it was raining. The water disappears after one day if not consumed. Water cannot be created inside a creature (to drown it, for example).

Guidance

Level 0 spell — costs 1 hit point to cast

The gods give you a hint.

Choose a single attack or stat + skill check roll of the spell caster's or another character's. Add +1 to the roll. The bonus must be applied on the next turn after the spell is cast.

Cure Light Wounds

Level 1 spell — cost 2 hit points to cast (signature spell)

A white light spreads over a hero's wounds, as they shrink and disappear.

By touching a living creature, the spell caster can immediately restore 1d8 +1 hit points to it. If the creature is unconscious, it will also return to consciousness.

Undead creatures that are touched (with a successful melee/hand-to-hand attack) suffer 1d8 +1 damage instead. Undead creatures can roll MIND + Phys vs the spell caster's MIND bonus +11 to suffer half the amount of damage rolled (round down).

Bless

Level 1 spell — cost 3 hit points to cast

In the name of the gods, your skill in battle improves.

All allies within 50 feet (10 spaces) of the spell caster gain +1 to attack rolls and MIND + Surv rolls to resist fear. It lasts 1 minute (out of combat) or turn (in combat).

Cure Moderate Wounds

Level 2 spell — costs 4 hit points to cast (signature spell)

Deadly injuries become only a memory.

By touching a living creature, the spell caster can immediately restore 2d8 +1 hit points to it. If the creature is unconscious, it will also return to consciousness.

Undead creatures that are touched (with a successful melee/hand-to-hand attack) suffer 2d8 +1 damage instead. Undead creatures can roll MIND + Phys vs the spell caster's MIND bonus +11 to suffer half the amount of damage rolled (round down).

DIVINE DOMAINS: You can select one or more domains from any SRD. You gain the domain's power, and treat all the spells in the domain as signature spells. Cleric-type classes can select a maximum of 3 domains, while characters of other classes can only select 1 domain. Domains must be appropriate to the character concept. You must be able to use divine or nature-based magic, like a cleric or druid to gain a domain.

In exchange for a single domain, a character has a penalty of -2 to a roll for hit points at each level (minimum hit points gained when advancing a level is 1). If a character has the Turn Undead ability, the character can instead choose to permanently have 2 less uses of the Turn Undead ability each day.

Several example domains are below. Each uses information from the Pathfinder SRD (www.d20pfsrd.com). The domain's power is the SRD first level power, and the spells are the same. Details on those spells are available in the SRD.

Destruction

Power: *Destructive Smite*

Each time you use this power, all your melee attacks on a turn have a bonus to damage equal to ½ your level (round up). You can use this power a number of times a day equal to your MIND bonus +3.

Spells

First Level: True Strike
Second Level: Shatter
Third Level: Rage
Fourth Level: Inflict Critical Wounds
Fifth Level: Shout
Sixth Level: Harm
Seventh Level: Disintegrate
Eighth Level: Earthquake
Ninth Level: Implosion

Luck

Power: *Lucky Touch*

You can touch an ally to provide him or her with a bit of luck. Until it is your turn again, any time the target rolls any dice, he or she can roll the dice a second time and use the better result. You can use this power a number of times a day equal to your MIND bonus +3.

Spells

First Level: True Strike
Second Level: Aid
Third Level: Protection From Energy
Fourth Level: Freedom Of Movement
Fifth Level: Break Enchantment
Sixth Level: Mislead
Seventh Level: Spell Turning
Eighth Level: Moment Of Prescience
Ninth Level: Miracle

Sun

Power: *Sun's Blessing*

Whenever you attack an undead creature, add your level to the amount of damage you cause. You can also add your level to any die roll you make to turn an undead creature.

Spells

First Level: Endure Elements
Second Level: Heat Metal
Third Level: Searing Light
Fourth Level: Fire Shield
Fifth Level: Flame Strike
Sixth Level: Fire Seeds
Seventh Level: Sunbeam
Eighth Level: Sunburst
Ninth Level: Prismatic Sphere

Travel

Power: *Agile Feet*

You can move more quickly for a short time. On your next turn, you take no penalties and are not slowed when moving through difficult terrain. You also move 5 feet (1 square) more than normal. You can use this power a number of times a day equal to your MIND bonus +3.

Spells

First Level: Longstrider
Second Level: Locate Object
Third Level: Fly
Fourth Level: Dimension Door
Fifth Level: Teleport
Sixth Level: Find The Path
Seventh Level: Greater Teleport
Eighth Level: Phase Door
Ninth Level: Astral Projection

I create a druid class character with the Sun domain. I gain the Sun's Blessing power, and have Endure Elements and another first level spell as signature spells. I roll 1d6 - 2 for hp each level.

PATRON DEITY: Instead of gaining the +3 total skill bonus granted by your class, choose a god, goddess or philosophy from those available in your game world (ask the game master). Your deity will grant a +1 to one skill and a minor granted power. Each deity also has a favored weapon, and as a servant of that deity, you begin your adventuring career with a non-magical version of that weapon for free.

Any character can select a patron deity using this option, though it is most often clerics and paladins that do so (they're also called "specialty priests"). Several example generic deities are listed below; feel free to create your own deities. Since characters of any class can have a patron, a deity's granted power should be useful to more than spell casters.

Crusader God

Skill Bonus: +1 to Physical

Favored Weapon: Longsword

Granted Power: Strength Of Arms — Once per day, if you make a melee/hand-to-hand attack roll and dislike the result, you can reroll the attack roll and add +4 to the result.

God of the Dwarves (NOTE: You must be a dwarf to select this patron)

Skill Bonus: +1 to Physical

Favored Weapon: Axe (any)

Granted Power: Stone Knowledge — With just a glance, you can see the weak points in a block of stone. You automatically succeed at any attempt to inspect stone and rock for secret doors or similar purposes.

God of Death (NOTE: You must be an evil character to select this patron)

Skill Bonus: +1 to Subterfuge

Favored Weapon: Scythe

Granted Power: Closer To The Grave — When you roll damage dice for any melee/hand-to-hand attack, any die result of 1 automatically becomes 2.

Goddess of the Elves (NOTE: You must be an elf to select this patron)

Skill Bonus: +1 to Knowledge

Favored Weapon: Longbow

Granted Power: Ancient Wisdom — Once per day, if you make stat + skill roll and dislike the result, you can reroll that stat + skill roll and add +4 to the result.

Inner Harmony

Skill Bonus: +1 to Knowledge

Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff

Granted Power: Discipline — Once per day, you can double your skill ranks in a skill before making a stat + skill roll using that skill. Those "doubled" skill ranks disappear immediately after the die roll, succeed or fail.

Goddess of the Moon and Shadow

Skill Bonus: +1 to Subterfuge

Favored Weapon: Dagger

Granted Power: Stealth — On a stat + skill roll to do something without being noticed (hide, steal a small item, etc.), add +1 to your roll.

God of Storms

Skill Bonus: +1 to Physical

Favored Weapon: Hammer (any)

Granted Power: Thunder And Lightning — Once per day as a "free" action, you can call down a storm of divine power on an enemy. It hits automatically, causing an amount of damage depending on your level. Level 1 to 3: 1d6; level 4 to 7: 1d8; level 8 to 11: 1d10; level 12 to 15: 2d6; level 16 to 19: 2d8; level 20: 2d10

God of the Sun and Goodness

Skill Bonus: +1 to Communication

Favored Weapon: Heavy Mace

Granted Power: Purity — Each time you regain hit points (by magical healing, drinking a healing potion, etc.), you gain an additional +1 hit point.

Dandos' parents were slain by a necromancer's army of ghouls and skeletons as he watched, hidden beneath an overturned cart. As the army of the undead marched past his village, Dandos swore his life to the god of the sun, asking for power in return for a life of servitude. Dandos is my character, and I select the human race and cleric class for him. Instead of taking the cleric class bonus of +3 to Communication, I give him the abilities of a patron deity: +1 to Communication and the Purity granted power. He also starts with a heavy mace, alongside the weapons he buys to take adventuring.

SCHOOLS OF MAGIC: In each SRD, spells are separated into “schools,” or types of spell. Using this option, select two schools for your character. One school is your character’s mastered school: Each spell you cast costs 2 fewer hit points to cast, to a minimum of 0 (zero) hit points (some spells may cost 3 hit points less, if they are your signature spells). The other school you select is your forbidden school: You may never cast a spell belonging to that school.

In the SRD, spells are in broad schools by type of effect, like Conjunction, Enchantment and Transmutation. Fewer spells are listed in the Purest Essence rules, so if you are using spells only from that document, you may need to create your own schools of magic – for example, cold spells or inter-planar spells. Two schools of magic, using the Purest Essence arcane spell lists, are found below.

Fire And Lightning School

Level 0: Light

Level 1: Shocking Grasp

Level 2: Flaming Sphere

Level 3: Fireball, Lightning Bolt

Level 6: Chain Lightning

Level 7: Delayed Blast Fireball

Level 8: Incendiary Cloud

Level 9: Power Word Kill

Transportation School

Level 0: Mage Hand

Level 1: Floating Disk

Level 2: Levitate, Spider Climb

Level 3: Fly

Level 4: Dimension Door

Level 5: Teleport

Level 7: Ethereal Jaunt, Plane Shift

Level 9: Astral Projection, Etherealness, Gate

Bretasenth the sorcerer wants to burn things, so he selects Fire And Lightning as his mastered school. Now he can cast the first level spell Shocking Grasp at the price of just 1 hit point, instead of the 3 it usually costs spell casters.

SORCEROUS BLOODLINES: You can select one bloodline from any SRD, and gain its powers. In exchange for a bloodline, a character has a penalty of -2 to a roll for hit points at each level (minimum hit points gained when advancing a level is 1). Any character can select a bloodline, though most offer at least one power that can only be used by spell casters.

Several example bloodlines are below. Each uses information from the Pathfinder SRD (www.d20pfsrd.com). The bloodline's powers are found in the SRD as the bloodline arcana and the first listed power.

Aberrant

Extended Magic: Whenever you cast a spell of level 3 or lower, increase the duration of the spell by 50 percent.

Acidic Ray: You can fire an acidic ray as a missile/ranged attack up to 30 feet away. The ray causes 1d6 damage +1 for every even-numbered level. You can use this power a number of times a day equal to your MIND bonus +3.

Arcane

Familiar: You gain a small creature or an enchanted item, which provides magical enhancement to you as long as it is within your line of sight. Your familiar can be any shape you desire. Select one skill; you gain a +2 bonus to that skill. You can also use spells through the familiar, as if it was part of your body (for example, you can use a spell, requiring you to touch another character, from a distance by using the spell through your familiar, which could be a creature like a bat or bird, or even a bow with magical arrows).

Metamagic Adept: You can apply any one metamagic ability to a spell you are about to cast without it costing you extra hit points. The empowering, extending or widening are listed in the "Class Points" section of this document, but other abilities are available in the SRD as feats. You can use this power a number of times a day equal to your MIND bonus +3.

Draconic

Breath Weapon Magic: When you select this bloodline, also select an energy type: cold, fire, electricity, acid or poison. Whenever you cast a spell which causes damage with that energy type, the spell causes +1 point of damage per die you roll.

Claws: You can grow claws from your fingers and toes as a free action. These claws are natural weapons, causing 1d4 + STR bonus damage. You can attack twice in a turn with these claws.

Infernal

Charm Magic: Whenever you cast a spell that influences a person's behavior, increase the DC of the spell by +2.

Corrupting Touch: You can touch (make a melee/hand-to-hand attack) an enemy and cause it to become corrupted, suffering a -2 penalty to all die rolls for a number of turns equal to ½ your level (round up). You can attempt this power a number of times a day equal to your MIND bonus +3.

I choose the Arcane bloodline for my very traditional RPG-style wizard, Arianne. She carries an enchanted staff, which is not only a magic weapon (using the regular magic item rules), but is also her familiar. Arianne's spells radiate out of the head of her staff, and it provides a +2 to her Knowledge skill as well. She also can use metamagic abilities without it costing her extra hit points.

However, having a sorcerous bloodline means I roll 1d6 - 2 when determining how many hit points Arianne gains each level. If I was using a rule where I gained a fixed number of hit points, the penalty still applies. For example, if characters add 4 hp per level, Arianne would instead gain only 2.

Fantasy Character Creation, Domino Writing Style: Follow the steps below to quickly create a character using the Purest Essence rules and some of the options in this document. The completed character will be finished in about 15 to 20 minutes, have several special abilities and distinct characteristics, but won't be so complex that a beginner is overwhelmed by special rules. Assume the character is level 1.

- 1. STATS:** Use the Quick Stats option (assign 16, 13, 11 to the stat scores). Do not determine stat bonuses.
- 2. RACE:** Select a race from Fantasy Expansion: The Big Book Of Races & Classes or another source. Adjust stat scores and/or skill ranks, and record special abilities, if you select them. Now that stat scores are final, determine stat bonuses (stat score -10 /2).
- 3. CLASS:** Select a class from Fantasy Expansion: The Big Book Of Races & Classes or another source. Note the class skill bonus and record special abilities.
- 4. SKILLS:** Use the Spending Skill Points option (skill points = number of skills x level). Adjust skill ranks for race and class skill bonuses.
- 5. EQUIPMENT:** Use the Fourth Edition-Style Equipment option (one weapon, armor or other item has a +1 bonus to attacks and damage, Armor Class, or appropriate stat + skill rolls).
 - Melee weapon
 - Ranged weapon and 20 ammunition
 - Armor (possibly shield also)
 - Adventurer's kit
 - Simple clothing
 - Class-appropriate gear
 - 1d6 + 10 gold pieces
- 6. COMBAT:** Determine the following. Note that special abilities and equipment may adjust these numbers.
 - Armor Class (the Armor Class Adjustments option is used): $10 + \text{DEX bonus} + \text{Armor AC bonus}$
 - Attack Bonuses: Stat bonus + Level
 - Initiative (the Initiative option is used): Equal to DEX bonus
 - Speed (the Miniatures And Battle Maps option is used): 6 or 5, depending on race
 - Total Hit Points (the Fast Hit Points option is used): STR stat score + 4
- 7. SPELLS:** Choose, if allowed for the character's class.
- 8. LEVEL UP:** Adjust abilities, hit points, skill ranks, stat scores and stat bonuses if the character has a level higher than 1.

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