

IRON EDDA WORLD OF METAL & BONE



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Dwarven Destroyers stretch shadows across Midgard, a harbinger of war to come.

Brave human warriors abandon clan and holdfast to bond themselves to the bones of dead giants, hoping to push back the Destroyers.

Strangers from others lands appear in Midgard, bringing with them strange powers, and tales of war abroad.

Seers advise and divine the future, but the fate of the world is murky and dim.

Jarls, thralls, and warriors ght in common cause, shouting “victory or Valhalla!” as they charge into battle.

Ragnarok has come, and you live in a World of Metal and Bone. Will you dine with the gods in Valhalla, or dance with the dishonored dead? Choose your fate.



IRON EDDA WORLD OF METAL & BONE

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based on *Iron Edda: War of Metal & Bone*

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Based on Iron Edda: War of Metal & Bone by Tracy Barnett

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Prologue

Long had the Dwarves, | forgers of iron and metal,
Bent and twisted, rotten fork | of Ymir's life-river,
Kept to the ground | holding in their homes
The secrets of the world | long left hidden.
Their dark hands darker | with the blood of the earth
They crafted in secret; | would you yet know more?

A liar, monster-father, trickster, | whispered to them of lost days,
Dripped mind-poison in their ears, | made promises of lost glory regained.
Incensed, the duergar took the forms | of giants of old,
Wrought by hammer and steel | not by natural means.
Metal giants made in mock | of their grave-laid ancestors
Built for war and destruction; would you yet know more?

Rising from the ground | across the world, in all nations
The humans and elves alike | were caught unawares.
Mighty warriors blunted | their spears and axes
On the surface of the | dwarf-forged giants.
Where hammers wrought | the deaths of the brave,
Flowers grew to show | their blood-marked passing.

Hope faded and desperation | etched every face.
Eyes to the heavens turned | pleading for aid
From the Aesir, the gods | of the old long held.
The gods, knowing their fate | held back action, no aid given.
All save Loki, liar, monster-father, trickster; | would you yet know more?

From the depths of the earth, | old jotunn bones were
Pulled forth; The trickster god | working his mischief.
Loki gave the secrets needed | to raise the bones,
To bind the spirits of true warriors | to the spirits of dead bone.
Old giants, flesh-lacking, | rising to meet the dwarves.

The Elves, too, with the willows | of Alfheimr, strong
And true, came to battle; | how else to fight their doom?
Giants, true children of Ymir |, full of rage, few of number,
Rose in challenge, daring | Men, Elves, and Dwarves alike.
The mock made of their forms | and the pillaging of jotunn bones
Drove them to mind-fury, | raging against all.

Grinding war rends | the earth asunder,
Rivers of blood crashing | through axe-made canyons.
The seers proclaim truths | hidden truths, eye-hiding things
That speak of the end. | The death of all things, world-ender, Ragnarok.
Some accept, bending to Fate | as in times before.

We do not bend. We fight, | no matter the means.
This is our world | which we fight to protect
And for which we will die. | Our home, gift of the
Gods, we will fight for, always; | would you yet know more?

- Penned by Selvie Half-axe, skald to Jarl Elsebet.



Introduction

Iron Edda: World of Metal and Bone is a game of epic adventure in a world inspired by the myths of medieval Scandinavia. The world is vast, a place of wonder and danger. In the middle of it all is Midgard, where heroes rise with the might of Thor and the wisdom of Odin. Rumors are swirling of metal giants climbing out of the earth. The three roosters crow, but the mighty may yet forestall Ragnarok.

Your group begins by creating a holdfast, from which new legends will hail. Players take the roles of the heroes of this epic: warriors, sages, and sorcerers. Through the strength of their bonds and the focus of their vows, they will stride the land, write new sagas, and possibly save the world.

Even epic heroes are not immune to fate, however. Fortunes can turn with the fall of an axe. When the stakes are the lives of whole cities or kingdoms, missteps can be disastrous.

THE GAME

World of Metal and Bone is a roleplaying game Powered by the Apocalypse, the rules behind games like *Apocalypse World*, *Monsterhearts*, and *Dungeon World*. If you're familiar with any of those games, you have a good start learning **World of Metal and Bone**. Of the existing games powered by the Apocalypse, this one bears the strongest resemblance to *Dungeon World*, though there are many differences.

If you don't have experience with those other games, or even with any roleplaying game, the rules at the heart of this game are not hard to pick up. The important thing to remember is that the game comes out of the fiction, not the other way around.

As you play, you describe what your character does in response to the world around them. Sometimes, the outcome is obvious and everyone carries on without any questions. Other times, the result of your action is in doubt, or the Game Master needs to know how the world around you reacts. That's when the rules kick in, to help you discover what happens to your character.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

When you start a game of World of Metal and Bone, you need a few things that are easy to find.

- ◆ A copy of these rules.
- ◆ Copies of the archetype sheets.
- ◆ Blank paper for drawing maps and making notes.
- ◆ Something to write with, like pens or pencils.
- ◆ Some six-sided dice (d6), at least two (2d6) for each player.

TERMS & JARGON

Sometimes, we'll use special terms in the rules. Here's what we're talking about when we do.

Bond: A bond is a statement that describes a relationship between one player character and another. Resolving bonds earns you experience.

Bonebonded: A human who has joined their soul with the spirit of a dead giant. In return, they can draw the bones of the giant from the earth and ride within them. This grants incredible physical and possibly magical power. If your character is a Bonebonded, they are likely the first of their kind.

Ferð: Literally “journey,” this trait represents how prepared you are, mentally and physically, for an extended journey. As you travel, you deplete these resources until you must return to the holdfast.

Fiction: When we refer to the “fiction,” we're talking about the action, setting, and characters of the imaginary world within the game. This is in contrast to the game itself, which is the intersection of the fiction and the rules.

Game Master (GM): The Game Master is the player in charge of describing the world to the other players and for providing the monsters and antagonists who oppose the heroes.

Hit: A result of 7 or more on a roll, indicating a partial or (on 10+) total success.

Holdfast: The community that forms the center of the campaign, created by the group at the start of play. Some moves can only be performed at the holdfast.

Miss: A result of 6 or less on a roll, indicating failure and triggering a consequence, usually in the form of a GM move.

Move: A move is a specific rule that triggers when something happens in the fiction. Some moves tell you to roll dice, and the outcome is determined by the result. Other moves just have an effect and are done.

Player: While everyone at the table is a player, when we use the term, we're referring to everyone who isn't the GM. A *player character* is one played by someone other than the GM.

Vow: You vow to complete some task. A vow is sworn to the gods in a ceremony witnessed by others. Striving to complete a vow earns experience.

Wound: Wounds are the ways in which a character experiences injury and physical danger. When a character suffers a wound, the player marks off a box on their sheet, which describes the wound.



FERÐ AND OTHER THORNY WORDS

World of Metal and Bone draws a number of game terms from Old Norse and other languages. One, *Ferð*, appears on every character sheet. Here's a quick pronunciation guide for those who need it.

The Norse alphabet includes a few letters that English has discarded. The first, þ (“thorn”), is pronounced like the th in “thick” or “path.” The second, ð (“eth”), is pronounced like the th in “them” or “father.” So *Ferð* would sound like “Fairth.”

The letter j is pronounced like the letter y in English. So, *jarl* is pronounced “yarl.” The exception is the name of foreign Jgoll, which is pronounced “j-GOLL.”

- ♦ **Æsir**, “AY-seer”
- ♦ **Alfheim**, “alf-hame”
- ♦ **Berserkergang**, “berserker-gahng”
- ♦ **Duergar**, “dwehr-gahr”
- ♦ **Fehu**, “feh-hoo”
- ♦ **Ferð**, “fairth”
- ♦ **Galdr**, “gahl-dur”
- ♦ **Gebo**, “geh-bo”
- ♦ **Ginnungagap**, “guh-noon-ga-gap”
- ♦ **Goði**, “go-thee;” pl., **Goðar**, “go-thar”
- ♦ **Jarl**, “yarl”
- ♦ **Jotunheim**, “yo-ton-hame”
- ♦ **Jotunn**, “yo-ton”
- ♦ **Muspelheim**, “moo-sþel-hame”
- ♦ **Naudiz**, “now-deez”
- ♦ **Niflheim**, “nif-ul-hame”
- ♦ **Níðhögr**, “NEETH-eugur” (“öggr” sounds like “burger” without the middle r)
- ♦ **Reið**, “raith”
- ♦ **Seiðkona**, “SAYth-koe-nah;” pl., **Seiðkonur**, “SAYth-koe-noor”
- ♦ **Svartalfhame**, “svart-alf-hame”

- ♦ **Burisaz**, “THOOR-ee-sahz”
- ♦ **Vanaheim**, “vahna-hame”
- ♦ **Vanir**, “vahn-eer”
- ♦ **Vargr**, “var-gur”
- ♦ **Yggdrasil**, “IGG-drah-seel”
- ♦ **Ymir**, “EE-meer”

The World

The world of Men is but one of the Nine Worlds, arrayed among the branches of Yggdrasil, the world tree. The whole realm is properly called Midgard, though that name is claimed only by the people of the Land. Other peoples have their own words for the world they share.

The world resembles our own in many ways. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. There is a single moon that waxes and wanes in the course of a month. A visitor from Earth would recognize the mundane plants and animals.

But Midgard is not our world. It is a place of epic power, of magic and monsters, of gods and heroes. And it may be on the verge of its final tale.

CREATION AND THE GODS

In the beginning, there were two worlds: fiery Muspelheim, and icy Niflheim. Between them stretched the void, Ginnungagap. As fire warmed ice, the melting water gave birth to the first giant, Ymir, and the first cow, Auðumbla, from whose milk Ymir fed. Auðumbla licked the salty ice of Niflheim and freed the first god, Búri.

Búri’s grandsons were Odin, Vili, and Vé. Together, these three slew Ymir and drowned all of his giantkin in his blood, save his grandson Bergelmir and his wife. From Ymir’s flesh, the gods made the earth; from his bones, they made the mountains; and from his blood, they made all the waters of the world. This is how Midgard came to be.

The many gods come from different orders, and they have warred among themselves in the past. Odin, Thor, and their kin are called Æsir. Njörðr, Freyr and Freyja come from the Vanir. Even some giants, like the shapeshifting Loki, are counted among the gods.

Midgard



Whale Road Ocean

Frostweave Wastes

Northern Sea

Snow Watch Hold

Fimbubhur

Northlands

Fellheim

Edda's Watch

Sval

Hrid

Sigr

Leiptborg

Leiptborg

Cliffborg

Stonheim

Bridge to Asgard

Ginnungagap

Ygr

Hnitborg Mountains

Land of the Jorunfaegir

Fjordheim

Midlands

Root of Yggdrasil

Vid

Voltendi

Sea of Blades

Gateway

Gunthra

Southlands

Gjorn

Gjoll

Mountainheim

Petruvian Empire

Desert of J'goll

Hel's Gate



MIDGARD

Midgard (or less formally, the Land) stretches from the frozen north to the wooded south, from the eastern mountains to the western sea. It is a land of farmers and explorers, warriors and priests, Jarls and carls and thralls. The Land is the area of highest concern for our tales.

The people of Midgard gather in holdfasts, towns or cities surrounded by farmlands. A holdfast is ruled by a Jarl, though many have councils of advisors who wield considerable authority. However, Jarls are subject to the will of public assemblies called *things*, in which every free person is awarded a vote.

Priests (called *goði*) interpret the will of the gods and conduct ceremonies that bind the holdfast together in devotion. Skalds compose poems extolling the deeds of the holdfast's warriors and heroes. Those warriors include wild berserkers and dedicated shieldmaidens alike. And *seiðkonur* spin folk wisdom into subtle and powerful magics.

Everyone in Midgard belongs to one of nine warrior clans. These are not accorded by blood; rather, each soul is tested in a ceremony at the age of adulthood. They are then fostered to the clan they best match. It is possible to change clans later in life in response to major events or simply if you feel your original clan is no longer a good fit. However, most in Midgard remain in one clan their whole lives, and some may distrust those who "shop around."



BEAR CLAN

Powerful and proud, the Bears are the most widespread clan. With warriors in every hold, Bears are reliable and stolid. Natural leaders, Bears protect any in their territory, clanmates or no. Each Bear wears the claws of their namesake, and must have taken those claws in single combat; either from a clanmate, or a beast in the wild.



DRAGON CLAN

Implacable warriors, Dragons strike fear into the hearts of their enemies. Said to carry the blood of the great dragon Níðhöggr in their veins, the Dragons are known for their berserker rages. The fury of the Dragons shocks their enemies, and even allies stand clear when the battle-lust is upon them.



HAMMER CLAN

Forge fires and the ring of metal on metal are the songs of the hammers. Hammers focus on crafting and smithing above all else. It would be a fool who assumes they do not know the use of their own creations, though. Hammers tend to be slow to anger, but like the fires they work with, their rage immolates all before them when it is released. All Hammers see potential in the world around them.



HORSE CLAN

Fleet of foot and swift of thought, the Horses are scouts and messengers. Like Sparrows, they travel the whole of Midgard. And, like their flighty counterparts, a Horse rarely stays in one place for long. There is always another horizon, always a river to cross or a mountain to climb. This restlessness makes the Horse clan the most widely-traveled outside of the Land.



OX CLAN

The clan of farmers and herders, the Ox are stubborn and steadfast. If an Ox digs in, expect not to move them, even come Ragnarok. And should you raise an Ox to anger, beware all in its path. This clan prides itself on supporting those around it, through food, through labor, and through unmatched hard work.



RAVEN CLAN

Odin's own clan, or so the Ravens claim. Much like the Allfather, this clan's interests are spread far and wide. Preaching wisdom in all things, a Raven may spend years perfecting their skill with a blade, then move on to the study of a foreign land. It is said that the Ravens produce the mightiest skalds. Some whisper that Odin himself blessed this clan with special knowledge of the runes.



SNAKE CLAN

The snakes strike quickly, lashing out with a quickness that surprises even those familiar with them. Favoring short-bladed knives in combat, the lightly armored snakes are often the first into battle. Some Snakes choose to coat their weapons in powerful poisons. This earns them mistrust from the other clans. The Snakes simply shrug and say it is their way.



SPARROW CLAN

The skalds of the Sparrow Clan sing the sweetest and spin tales with the greatest. Said to be blessed by the gods with golden throats, the warrior-poets of the Sparrows are poets and advisors to Jarls. They also travel the length and breadth of Midgard, telling tales and collecting stories. And everywhere, Sparrows have ears.



WOLF CLAN

A Wolf's loyalty is the one thing that no person can ever question. Wolves work as a pack, fight as a pack, and live as a pack. No matter how scattered they are, a Wolf will always answer the pack's call, crossing vast distances to support sisters and brothers.



BONE CLAN

There have always been rumors of a tenth clan, outside the structure of Midgard society, moving in shadows. Now there are stories of men bonded to the souls of giants, able to pull their bones from the earth and ride them like suits of armor. Even worse, it is said that this gift came from mischievous Loki himself. Could there be a new clan of Bone forming? What terrible end does this foretell?

PETRUVIAN EMPIRE

The Petruvian Empire rules the warm and fertile lands south of Midgard. Once a proud and mighty republic, Petruvia fell under the rule of despots and now looks outward hungrily. Its Legions are known across the world, perhaps the greatest military force ever assembled. Fortunately for its neighbors, the Empire is burdened by a dense web of scheming Senators, ambitious generals, and grasping merchants. The wolf is slow to rise these days.

The Petruvians worship countless gods, because they have the habit of adopting divinities from the lands they conquer. As long as a local god is not offensive to Petruvian culture, a place can be found for them among the long-standing pantheon.

Patronage is an important concept to the Petruvians. Wealthier or more powerful individuals will take clients, providing political or monetary assistance in exchange for loyal service. It is said that every Petruvian is beholden to another through this system of patronage, from the Emperor to the lowliest artisan.

ISLES OF MIST

The Isles of Mist lie in the western sea and are home to a culture not entirely unlike the people of Midgard. They believe in different gods, true, and they don't hold public assemblies, but they have a strong sense of personal honor and are brave warriors.

The druids of the Isles of Mist perform strange magics. They revere trees and plants, and they carve runes unknown in Midgard. Explorers of the Horse clan have returned from those lands with tales of great statues of wicker shaped into the form of a man and set alight. They even say that these statues move under their own power, giants of fire and wood.

Native legends say that true giants were the first inhabitants of the isles. It is unknown if any live there still, or if the people have learned the ways of the Bonebonded.

J'GOLL

The deserts of J'goll lie south of Midgard and east of the Petruvian Empire. They are home to tribes of horse nomads and to shining cities of great wealth. The natives practice both ancient magic and the most modern of philosophies. Their systems of mathematics surpass any in the known world.

Eschewing the pantheons of other lands, the people of J'goll revere a single god above all others. This god, they say, sends prophets so the people can know Her will. They also believe in many monsters and other beings, the most formidable being the djinn, powerful spirits made of smokeless fire. Some djinn can grant wishes, including great supernatural gifts.

THE NINE WORLDS

The other realms are home to the many races of gods and monsters. The Aesir live in mighty Asgard, and the Vanir reside in Vanaheim. The giants, if they still live, hail from Jotunheim. The elves, sometimes-friends, come from Alfheim, while the wretched dwarfs call Svartalfheim home. The goddess Hel rules the world that bears her name, where go the honorless dead. And all of the cosmos was formed between the fires of Muspelheim and the ice of Niflheim.



Moves & Rolls

Most actions your character takes will simply happen within the fiction, but some will trigger moves that have a game mechanic attached to them. In many cases, this will require a roll of the dice. Whenever a move tells you to “roll,” it means to roll two six-sided dice, or 2d6, and total them.

Every move has a trigger, an action or event that occurs within the fiction and calls for some rule or mechanic. Triggers are general. For example, Deal Death doesn't care how you do battle, triggering whether you are swinging a sword, shooting a bow, or slamming an enemy against a cliff.

Moves that require a roll will explain the results of the move for different results. A result of 10 or higher means you succeed at whatever action you are performing with little or no cost. A result of 7 through 9 can still result in success, but there will be some real cost to you. Often, this is decided by the GM, but some moves specify a condition or choice of trade-offs. A result of 7 or more is sometimes called a “hit.”

A result of 6 or less not only means your action fails, but there will be a major consequence, often in the form of a move by the GM. As a consolation, when you roll a 6 or less, you mark experience. A 6 or less is sometimes called a “miss.”

Many moves will tell you to “roll+something.” This means you add the value of something, usually an Attribute (Page 36), to your 2d6 roll before you determine the result. So, if you **Deal Death**, you roll+Arm. If your Arm is +1, you roll 2d6 and add 1.

Some moves will grant bonuses or impose penalties on rolls. If a bonus or penalty is “forward,” it applies to the next roll of the appropriate type, whenever that roll would occur. If a bonus or penalty is “ongoing,” it applies as long as described in the originating move. If a move doesn't specify either “forward” or “ongoing,” it should be clear from the fiction and the rule when the bonus or penalty should apply.

BASIC MOVES

These basic moves are available to all characters and will be used throughout an average session.

AID OR INTERFERE

When you **help or hinder someone**, roll+bond with them. On a 10+, they take +1 or -2 to their roll, your choice. On a 7-9, they still get a modifier, but you also expose yourself to danger, retribution, or cost.

This move triggers when you describe your character providing assistance to another character or acting to hinder them. However you do this, the effect of your aid or interference is determined by how emotionally invested you are in them (the number of bonds you have with them). For NPCs, you roll without a modifier.

The GM should ask the player how they aid or interfere. As long as they can answer that, the move will trigger. Sometimes a player will say they are doing something and not realize that it could help or hinder another player. The GM should ask them if they want to do that and point out that it could trigger this move, especially if their action would interfere.

DRIVE THEM BEFORE YOU

When you **exhibit your prowess against a force of unworthy opponents**, you eliminate any number of them, and the GM makes a move against you.

DEAL DEATH

When you **wield your power against a worthy foe**, roll+Arm. On a 10+, you inflict a wound. On a 7-9, you inflict a wound, and your enemy makes an attack against you.

HOLD GROUND

When you **stand firm against an overwhelming enemy**, roll+Heart. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, the GM chooses 1.

- The enemy is slowed, buying time.
- The enemy is weakened in a real way.
- You reveal a significant opening that can be exploited against the enemy.
- You save something precious that is at risk.

After the roll, regardless of the result, you Face Death.

These three moves determine the ways a character can interact with other characters in any kind of physical conflict. Any character can wade into battle. The specific move triggered depends on the relative power of the enemy.

Unworthy opponents have no reasonable hope of killing an epic warrior, even in great numbers, though they may inflict some injury. The unworthy may have little training, lack suitable equipment, or simply exist at a different scale, in the case of a Bonebonded character. Drive Them Before You frees the GM from tedious bookkeeping and gives the player the thrill of wading through armies with barely a scratch.

A worthy foe is one that can dish out punishment on par with the character. A berserker facing down a vicious troll or a vargr dueling with an assassin on a J'goll rooftop would both Deal Death. This move takes scale into account as well. A Bonebonded battling a dwarven destroyer uses Deal Death, because the two fight at the same level.

An overwhelming enemy is to an epic character as that character is to an unworthy opponent. A destroyer stomping toward a shieldmaiden is more an animate disaster than a target. Hold Ground allows for moments of epic heroism where one character offers their life to save their companions. If you succeed at all, you will gain some notable benefit, but no matter what, the cost is potentially death.

DEFY DANGER

When you **act despite an imminent threat or suffer a calamity**, say how you deal with it and roll. If you do it...

- ...by deflecting, avoiding, or powering through, +Arm.
- ...with quick thinking, +Eye.
- ...through mental fortitude, +Heart.
- ...using charm and social grace, +Tongue.

On a 10+, you do what you set out to; the threat doesn't come to bear. On a 7–9, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch: the GM will offer you a worse outcome, a hard bargain, or an ugly choice.

Threats that endanger a common warrior may not give an epic hero pause. Ignoring the attacks of a single levy soldier, for example, does not count as

“acting despite an imminent threat.” The same considerations for the combat moves should apply when you Defy Danger.

DISCERN REALITIES

When you **closely study a situation or person**, roll+Eye. On a 10+, ask the GM 3 questions from the list below. On a 7–9, ask 1. Either way, take +1 forward when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
 - What is about to happen?
 - What should I be on the lookout for?
 - What here is useful or valuable to me?
 - Who’s really in control here?
 - What here is not what it appears to be?
-

The amount of study will depend on the situation or person in question, as will the definition of “closely.” Particularly dangerous situations may require you to Defy Danger before you can study them.

Once you’ve rolled to Discern Realities, you don’t need to ask all of your questions right away. As long as the information you gathered remains valid, you can hold questions to ask as the fiction develops.

PARLEY

When you **have leverage on an NPC and manipulate them**, roll+Tongue. Leverage is something they need or want. On a 10+, they do what you ask if you first promise what they ask of you. On a 7–9, they will do what you ask, but need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now.

The key word in this move is “leverage.” Simply asking an NPC for something won’t trigger this move. You trigger parley when you have something the NPC wants or needs and you use it to get some concession from them.

They could want anything, from simple treasure to information to your dealing with a problem they can’t solve on their own. If you have a blade to an enemy’s throat, they probably want very badly for you not to kill them.

SPEAK WISDOM

When you **draw on the teachings of your clan or your own experience about a subject**, roll+Heart. On a 10+, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation. On a 7–9, the GM will only tell you something interesting—it's on you to make it useful. The GM might ask you “*How do you know this?*” Tell them the truth, now.

You speak wisdom when you take time to think about what you know on a subject and then reveal that information. On a 7-9, the GM will give you facts. On a 10+, they will also tell you how those facts are immediately useful. On a miss, the GM will probably make a move based around the time spent thinking. You stand there pondering for a few moments; meanwhile, the enemy is sneaking up on you unseen.

SPECIAL MOVES

These moves are more specialized, dealing with things that may or may not come up every session but that are important to every game.

END OF SESSION

When you reach the end of a session, choose one of your bonds that you feel is resolved (completely explored, no longer relevant, or otherwise). Ask the player of the character you have the bond with if they agree. If they do, mark experience and write a new bond with whomever you wish.

Now, look at your vow. How did you work toward accomplishing your vow in this session? What do you need to accomplish next, in broad terms? Answer these questions for the GM and mark experience. Did you complete your vow? If so, refresh all of your spent Ferð.

ENCUMBRANCE

When you make a move while carrying weight, you may be encumbered. If your weight carried is:

- Equal to or less than your Load, you suffer no penalty.
 - Less than or equal to your Load+2, you take -1 ongoing until you lighten your burden.
 - Greater than your Load+2, you have a choice: drop at least 1 weight and roll at -1, or automatically fail.
-

A character's load is determined by their archetype and Arm. You can only carry so much. This can lead to difficult decisions when you are journeying into danger.

Weight listed for equipment is relative to a normal human. A Giant character can ignore most weight. When a Bonebonded can carry a loaded merchant's wagon in one hand, a few suits of armor are not going to weigh them down. Just how much any Bonebonded can carry is left as an exercise for your group.

Further, this move should only apply when the character is still able to reasonably act while carrying a load. Carrying a family out of their burning house is not encumbrance—you're not going to be swinging a sword while doing that. It affects what other moves you can make.

FACE DEATH

When you are **laid low by your wounds**, the Valkyries will determine if you live or die. Roll. On a 10+, you survive. On a 7-9, the gods will offer you a new vow. If you accept, you will survive. On a 6-, you are among those the Valkyries carry to Valhalla.

There is normally no bonus to this roll. If you accept the new vow offered by the gods, you can either replace a vow or add on the new one. If you have more than one vow, you must have worked toward all of them during the session to mark experience during End of Session.

RECITE YOUR SAGA

When you **tell your story to a new audience**, recite a section of your saga and refresh one Ferð.

REST

When you **get at least a few hours of uninterrupted rest**, spend a Ferð and heal one wound box. If another character treats your wounds, heal a number of additional wound boxes equal to your bond with that character.

Treating wounds doesn't require a roll. You can treat the wounds of one other character during rest. So if the character you have the most bonds with is treating another, you'll have to settle for someone else.



UNDERTAKE A PERILOUS JOURNEY

When you travel through hostile territory, choose one member of the party to act as trailblazer, one to scout ahead, and one to be loresinger. Each character with a job to do rolls, +Eye for the trailblazer and scout or +Heart for the loresinger. On a 10+:

- the trailblazer reduces the amount of time it takes to reach your destination (the GM will say by how much).
- the scout will spot any trouble quick enough to let you get the drop on it.
- the loresinger reduces the Ferð cost of the journey by one.

On a 7–9, each role performs their job as expected: the normal number of Ferð are used (usually 1), the journey takes about as long as expected, no one gets the drop on you but you don't get the drop on them either.

This move triggers only when you are going on a *perilous* journey. Look at the combat moves and Defy Danger for more on matching degrees of hazard to specific moves. If your group is traveling through tended fields in clear summer weather, there's not much peril and this move won't trigger. Some dangers cannot be avoided. A hit from the scout means you approach on your own terms.

BONEBONDED MOVES

These moves are only available to those characters who have the Bonebonded origin.

DRAW THE BONES FROM THE EARTH

When you **call on the power of the giant bonded to your soul**, its bones rise from the earth and surround you. You ride inside, wreathed in magical fire. You gain Giant while within it.

Some moves give additional bonuses “while Giant.” They trigger when you use this move. Unless otherwise noted, you retain all abilities and moves while Giant. Particularly, your Giant form has the properties of your gear, even forming oversized bone versions of your weapons.

CONSULT THE ANCIENT

When you Speak Wisdom, you may choose not to roll and instead listen to the giant's soul. The GM will tell you two true things and one lie, based on the giant's understanding and motives.

You cannot use Discern Realities or Speak Wisdom to learn which statements are true. You must decide for yourself.

STRIDE THE EARTH

When you undertake a perilous journey while Giant, you can do so alone, and you only need to roll as the scout. Consider the trailblazer and loresinger to have rolled 10+.

As a Bonebonded, you face even less danger than a normal hero, so the Undertake a Perilous Journey move will trigger far less often when you are Giant. Still, you may find yourself traversing lands patrolled by a Petruvian legion or home to a tribe of fire giants.

HOLDFEAST MOVES

These special moves can only be made at the holdfast. They are generally reserved for downtime.

FEAST

When you **return to the holdfast and enjoy the comforts of a mead hall**, heal all wounds and mark experience.

Look at your character's saga. Write up to three lines about your exploits and mark experience for each line.

Finally, look at your vow. Have you completed the task you swore to perform? If you have, cross your vow off.

OATHSWEARING

When you **have no vow**, you may swear a new one in a ceremony with another character as witness. Write your new vow on your character sheet.

RESUPPLY

When you **gather supplies before starting on a journey**, regain all of your Ferð and any lost gear on your sheet.

TAGS

Many rules reference tags that have an effect on the fiction and the mechanics. Gear will have tags that apply when you use it. Moves may say that you gain a tag.

Some items and moves increase the value of a tag, specifically Deadly or Protection. A character is assumed to start with a 0 in these tags, which can be modified by other rules.

Applied (poison): You have to carefully apply it to the target or something they eat or drink.

Close (range): It's useful for attacking someone a foot or two beyond arm's length.

Deadly *n* (attack): It inflicts an extra *n* wounds.

Far (range): It's useful for attacking someone within shouting distance.

Forceful (attack): It is so powerful that it knocks things around or sends them flying.

Giant (creature): It is an enormous being.

Hand (range): You can use it to attack someone at arm's length or closer.

Near (range): It's useful for attacking at range when you can see the whites of their eyes.

Piloted (creature): It is actually a vehicle or shell with a smaller creature inside, controlling it. The pilot may be vulnerable to certain attacks.

Protection *n* (defense): You ignore *n* wounds from each attack.

Reach (weapon range): It's useful for attack someone several feet away, maybe as far as 10 feet.

Touch (poison): The poison just needs to touch the target. It can even be used on the blade of a weapon.

Thrown (equipment): It's still dangerous when you throw it.

Two-handed (equipment): It takes two hands to use it.

Worn (equipment): It's only useful if you wear it like clothes.

Holdfast Creation

The holdfast will be the center of your campaign. Adventures may take you far across the world, but you will always return here, where songs will be sung of your journeys.

Creating your holdfast is a collaborative process. To begin, put a blank piece of paper in the middle of the table. This will be your map of the holdfast and its surrounding area, populated with issues that will drive the campaign.

Each player will take turns working through the following steps. If you have a particularly small group, or if they just feel like it, the GM can take a turn as well.

1. First, roll 2d6 and consult the table below to find a category.
2. Roll a d6 to randomly choose an issue under that category.
3. Read that issue aloud to the group. Answer any questions it asks.
4. Draw something on the map to represent the issue. This should be a location outside of the holdfast itself. Don't worry about scale.

HOLDFAST CREATION TABLE	
2	Curse of the Gods
3	Time of Sacrifice
4	Tidings of War
5	Clan Matters
6	Sword Talk, Axe Talk
7	Local Resources
8	Political Maneuvers
9	Trade and Commerce
10	Fortune Favors the Bold
11	Dictates of Fate
12	Blessing of the Gods

On your turn, you are in control. You can answer any questions however you like. Feel free to ask other players for help if you get stuck. Ultimately, whatever you decide becomes true within the campaign. If an issue asks

about the Jarl of the holdfast, and you refer to the Jarl as “she,” then the Jarl is a woman. What you say is how it is, but talk to the GM and other players to make sure that’s how it is.

Once everyone has taken their turn, decide as a group where the holdfast should be located and draw it on the map. Give it a name.

While the players are taking their turns, the GM should be taking notes. They should also ask further questions of the players to learn more about the world as it takes shape.

CURSE OF THE GODS

- (1): One of the clans has fallen out of favor with the gods. Which is it?
What did they do to lose the gods’ blessing?
- (2): The priests say that warriors from your holdfast are not being taken to Valhalla when they die, but instead are being taken to dine with Hel.
What happened to cause such a thing? How can those lost warriors be accorded their place at Odin’s table?
- (3): A renegade Valkyrie is plaguing your holdfast. Who is the target of her wrath? What did they do to earn her terrible ire?
- (4): The weather has been horrendous for weeks. What was done to offend the gods? What will happen if the weather doesn’t break?
- (5): A calf has been born with two heads. What coming tragedy does this foretell? Who is responsible for this offense towards the gods?
- (6): The river has stopped flowing! How is this possible? What does this lack of water flow mean for the holdfast? How can it be made to flow again?

TIME OF SACRIFICE

- (1): A drought is gripping the land, and only so much water can be spared for the crops. How has the holdfast prioritized the land around it?
Who has suffered under this system?
- (2): An important resource has been cut off by the holdfast’s enemies.
What is this resource? Why is it vital to the holdfast that it

be recovered?

- (3): An enemy assault has the holdfast crippled. A scout claims that allies are on the way. How do the enemy have the holdfast in such a position? What is needed to hold out until help arrives?
- (4): The Jarl's treasury has been depleted by war. To what lengths will the Jarl go to cover the loss? How will this affect the war?
- (5): A living giant has arrived outside of the holdfast and is demanding tribute. What does the giant want for tribute? How is the Jarl responding?
- (6): The Jarl has been poisoned! Who is stepping up to fill the void in leadership? Why is their move a contentious one?

TIDINGS OF WAR

- (1): War rages in nearby lands, but the fighting has avoided your holdfast until recently. Why has the war not come near until now? How is the Jarl responding to the broken peace?
- (2): The holdfast's most renowned warrior has died in a recent battle. How is the holdfast honoring them? Where is the honoring ceremony taking place?
- (3): The Jarl's heir has been killed in battle. Where did the battle take place? What has the Jarl sworn to do to gain vengeance?
- (4): The fields are running red with blood. Whose blood has been spilled? Why does it spell hard times for the holdfast?
- (5): Crucial supplies need to get to a nearby holdfast. What is preventing the supplies from getting there? How can this obstacle be circumvented?
- (6): Rumors are swirling that a metal giant has emerged from beneath the earth. What is the nature of this monster? Who knows its secrets, and what will the information cost?

CLAN MATTERS

- (1): The clans are united and working together in your holdfast! What event brought about this unity? What could ruin the peace?
- (2): The Clan of the Raven claims they know of a dark omen for the future. How are the other clans reacting to the news? How will the Ravens work to prove themselves right?
- (3): The Horse Clan has been losing a large number of scouts in the area. How is information being taken from holdfast to holdfast? What is needed to make sure the scouts are safe?
- (4): A few hot-headed young members of the Wolf Clan started a fight in the mead hall recently. What was the fallout from that event? Why is one of the hot-heads missing?
- (5): Members of the Snake Clan are dying. Who is killing them? Why is the Jarl doing nothing about it?
- (6): Rumors of the Clan of the Bone are flying through the holdfast. People talk of dark sacrifices and evil rites. Have any true Bonebonded heard the rumors? Have the people of the holdfast seen any true Bonebonded?

SWORD TALK, AXE TALK

- (1): A great victory has been won over enemy forces! Who was responsible for turning the tides? What did they do ensure future victories will come?
- (2): Tempers are high in the holdfast. Duels over honor are at an all-time high. What is causing the tension?
- (3): Murder in the holdfast! Who has been killed? Who is the killer? How can they be stopped?
- (4): An old warrior craves a death that will assure them their place in Valhalla. To what lengths will they go to ensure their proper end? Who are they pulling into their plans?

- (5): Two warrior clans are feuding. Which clans are fighting and what is the source of their strife? Can anything end it?
- (6): A local coalition hates and fears one of the warrior clans. What have they done to sabotage the local contingent? How is the clan fighting back?

LOCAL RESOURCES

- (1): A wealth of gold has been uncovered in a nearby mine. How will this bounty affect your holdfast? What must be done to ensure the mine's profitability?
- (2): The land around your holdfast is particularly well-suited for the cultivation of bees and honey. How has the war affected the hives? How can they be protected?
- (3): A vital resource is located near your holdfast. What is it? Why is it so difficult to access?
- (4): The river is the lifeblood of your holdfast. What threat is being posed to those who ply the river? How can their way of life be maintained?
- (5): A new method of spinning wool has been found. It creates durable cloth more quickly than ever before. Who created this method? How are they profiting from it? How is the holdfast profiting?
- (6): Scarcity plagues the lands around your holdfast. What is causing the shortages? How will you survive until the next season?

POLITICAL MANEUVERS

- (1): A delegation from Alfheim has arrived in the holdfast. The elves bear credible warnings of a coming darkness and offer their support, but for a price. What do they want? Why is the Jarl reluctant to take the deal?
- (2): A nearby Jarl is styling themselves as the Jarl of Jarls and is demanding fealty of all local lords and ladies. What is the reaction to this in your holdfast? How is this affecting the ongoing war with the dwarves?

- (3): A group of merchants is demanding restitution for enemy raids, claiming the Jarl did not give them promised protection. How is the Jarl responding? What are the merchants withholding until their demands are met?
- (4): A powerful warrior is stirring up trouble, claiming that the Jarl is weak and foolish. What is the Jarl preparing to do in response? What will it take to silence the dissident warrior?
- (5): The Jarl is gravely ill. Some whisper that their spouse is responsible. What is the true nature of the Jarl's illness? What will happen if they do not recover?
- (6): Rebellion! A group of clan warriors has risen up against the Jarl. With whom are the people siding? What will happen when danger threatens the holdfast?

TRADE AND COMMERCE

- (1): A bountiful harvest means an abundance for the people of your holdfast. Why was the harvest so good this year? What new trade alliances are being formed as a result?
- (2): A trader has begun dealing in dwarven artifacts. Where do the artifacts come from? How are they being obtained?
- (3): Caravans from J'goll have begun traveling across the whole of Midgard. What goods do the foreign traders bring? Why are people loathe to trust them?
- (4): Warrior-traders from the west bring fine furs from strange animals. What is unique about these goods and why are people clamoring to have them?
- (5): Weapons and armor are in scarce supply. What threat has caused this shortage? How can the warriors be outfitted in time to stop it?
- (6): Traders from the Petruvian Empire are threatening to cut off relations. What has them so willing to destroy years of trade? What can be done about it?

FORTUNE FAVORS THE BOLD

- (1): A mighty warrior is renowned in your holdfast. Who are they? What deeds made them famous?
- (2): The Jarl is planning a night assault on an enemy position. What preparations are needed to make the maneuver successful?
- (3): A local scoundrel claims that Loki has given them knowledge of a vast treasure. What is the item? What must be done to secure it?
- (4): The Norns have marked a young child for great deeds. What will the child accomplish? What needs to be done to ensure those deeds come to pass?
- (5): Couples are making their vows in record numbers. What is needed to make sure that the ceremonies are proper in the eyes of the gods?
- (6): The Jarl is hiding behind the walls of the holdfast while their warriors are clamoring for war with their enemies. Why is the Jarl so hesitant? What are the warriors willing to do to force the Jarl's hand?

DICTATES OF FATE

- (1): A great sacrifice has been made and victory has been promised by the priests of Odin and Thor. What was sacrificed? How will the victory come to pass?
- (2): A great flock of ravens, Odin's own messengers, has alighted on the Jarl's longhouse. How is this portent being interpreted?
- (3): A skald claims to have visited Mimir's Well, at the root of Yggdrasil itself. The tale is spreading far and wide. What is the skald's agenda? How are the priests reacting?
- (4): A number of young warriors have heard rumors of the Bonebonded and are abandoning their chosen clans to chase this new power. How are the clans reacting to this?
- (5): A shadow passes over the moon on two consecutive nights. What do the legends say this portends?

- (6): A priest walks through the streets claiming that the gods have abandoned the holdfast. What event does the priest blame for this loss of divine favor?

BLESSING OF THE GODS

- (1): Folk say the forges of the blacksmith ring with the sound of Thor's own hammer. Who is this blacksmith? What did they do to earn such an honor? What does this honor mean for your holdfast?
- (2): Word has reached the holdfast of the first Bonebonded, said to have pieces of Ymir, the Father of Giants in his skeleton. What special properties does this give the Bonebonded? How can your holdfast benefit from this legendary force?
- (3): The waters of your river are said to give strength and agility to those that drink of it. How has the river been protected? What needs to be done to keep the waters safe for all time?
- (4): Your Jarl has Odin's own wisdom. How has this benefited your holdfast? How have these benefits affected relations with the surrounding lands?
- (5): Frigg has blessed your holdfast! What is the nature of this blessing? How do the women of the holdfast greatly benefit from it?
- (6): The blessing of Loki? What double-edged blessing has the trickster bestowed on your holdfast?

Characters & Traits

While each of the character archetypes in the following chapters is distinct, every character shares certain traits. These traits determine how your character functions in the game, and they both influence and are influenced by the fiction. If something happens during an adventure to change your character, you don't need to find something that's already on the sheet to reflect it. Just write down the change; you and the GM can decide how it affects the rules as you go.

NAMES

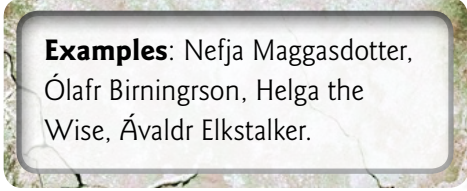
A character's name should be derived from their place of origin. Different cultures have different naming conventions. Here are the rules for the four major cultural groups open to characters.

MIDGARD

When creating a character from Midgard, choose a given name from this list.

*Ávaldr, Birningr, Darri, Eivindr,
Faði, Hjálmgímr, Jólgeirr, Magnus,
Ólafr, Páll, Steinbjörn, Teitr,
Þórormr, Unnuftr, Vafri*

*Agata, Beyla, Dýrhildr, Gunngerðr,
Helga, Ingigunnr, Jórinna, Magga,
Nefja, Ragnfríðr, Síða, Sigríða, Tonna, Una, Ynghildr*



Examples: Nefja Maggasdotter, Ólafr Birningrson, Helga the Wise, Ávaldr Elkstalker.

Surnames are not used in Midgard as such. Instead, people adopt names that honor a parent or important ancestor. This takes the form of that ancestor's name plus "-son" (or "-sson") or "-dottir." Both the ancestor's name and the suffix are chosen by the individual at the time of their clan testing and reflect their personal identity.

Some forgo an ancestor's name in favor of an epithet honoring their own skills or accomplishments. This name is given in plain terms. If you want your character to have an epithet, you can choose one from this list.

The Black, the Brave, Elkstalker, Forgettender, Gravefiller, Longshanks, the Patient, the Red, Sealord, the Wise.



PETRVIAN EMPIRE

Names in the Petruvian Empire follow a system of rules that appears incoherent to outsiders, but they can be simplified to a typical pattern: a given name (praenomen), the name of the individual's clan (nomen), and the name of the individual's family line within that clan (cognomen).

When creating a Petruvian character, choose one name from each of these lists.

Praenomina: *Aulus (Aula), Caelus (Caela), Camillus (Camilla), Decius (Decia), Flavius (Flavia), Lucius (Lucia), Mettius (Mettia), Publius (Publia), Servius (Servia), Titus (Tita)*

Nomina: *Actoria, Betucia, Cania, Domitia, Ennia, Fulvia, Gavia, Horatia, Julia, Livia, Memmia, Octavia, Pompeia, Rutilia, Sempronia, Terentia, Ulpia, Valeria*

Cognomina: *Amandus, Brutus, Candidianus, Draco, Eborius, Furius, Gaius, Herma, Lupercus, Momus, Otho, Procyon, Quietus, Renatus, Sura, Taenaris, Urbicus, Verres, Zosimus*

Examples: Aulus Fulvia Verres, Decia Sempronia Draco.

ISLES OF MIST

Names on the Mist Isles use the same patterns as those in Midgard. In place of “-son” or “-dotter,” use “Mac” or “Nic,” followed by the parent's name.

When creating a character from the Isles of Mist, choose from these names.

Airell, Bran, Cahal, Duer, Ewyn, Fearghus, Iden, Kynthelig, Leigh, Morvyn, Neil, Pryderi, Sloane, Turi, Vaughn

Alfe, Beatha, Cordelia, Donia, Elsha, Gwentyver, Isolde, Keelin, Lavena, Maeveen, Nola, Rowena, Selma, Ula, Wynne

Examples: Fearghus Mac Neil, Rowena Nic Alfe.

J'GOLL

Names in J'goll are often quite long, listing the individual's lineage back several generations. Rather than affixing “-son” and “-dotter,” add the word “ibn” or “bint”

followed by the ancestor's name; you can link multiple generations in this way, appending the next parent in line to the end of the name.

When making a character from J'goll, choose one of these names and at least one more for one of the character's parents.

Asif, Baraka, Daiyan, Fileeb, Irmiyaa, Ismail, Jabalah, Karim, Maliki, Nuhaid, Omeir, Sem, Suleiman, Turab, Yaakoub

*Aabidah, Aanaa, Badiah,
Chana, Daborah, Fathiyah,
Hawaa, Leya, Majdala,
Maryam, Moussa, Raaheel,
Safurah, Sara, Ujala*

Some J'goll conclude their names with a surname indicating their home town or tribe. This takes the form of the prefix "al-" ("the") and the adjective form of the town or tribe's name (ending in "-iyy" or "iyyah").

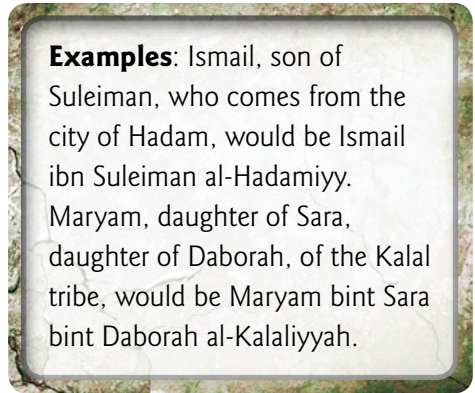
If you want to include a surname, make up a name for your character's home or tribe. Tell the GM a little about them.

ATTRIBUTES

Your character has four attributes, named metaphorically after four body parts: Arm, Eye, Heart, and Tongue. These attributes have a modifier ranging from -1 to +3, distributed according to your archetype. When a move says to roll+an attribute, you add that attribute's modifier to your 2d6 roll.

ARM

Arm represents a character's ability to physically influence the world. Obviously, this can mean strength, but it doesn't have to. A nimble character may be quite adept at creating physical change through finesse or speed.



EYE

Eye is how well your character perceives and understands the world. A high bonus in Eye could represent acute senses, but it may also mean that you think quickly, analyzing all the information you can gather.

HEART

At the core, Heart is your intuition of the truth of things. It represents your own emotional center as well as your empathy for the emotions of others. More, it is an expression of how you have internalized the lessons of the past, the wisdom of your own experience, and that of others who came before you.

TONGUE

Your ability to charm, inspire, or influence people is measured by Tongue. A character with a high bonus in Tongue may be fast-talking, forceful, or quiet but inherently respected.

ORIGIN

Your origin reflects your culture, and it provides its own bonus or move. Most characters will hail from Midgard, though each archetype can come from another culture as well. The origin choices for characters from Midgard are broken down by the clans that are most representative of each archetype.

If you choose a foreign origin for your archetype, you were born in another land, but you are now a member of a holdfast in Midgard. How you came there is up to you, but the holdfast is now your home.

The final origin option, which is available to every archetype, is to be one of the Bonebonded. Choosing this origin gives you access to the Bonebonded moves (Page 22) in addition to those of your archetype.

CHANGING ORIGINS

It may be possible to change your origin. If you are a member of a clan, you can forswear your allegiance and join a new clan. An outsider could integrate into Midgard society and be inducted into a clan. And anyone could bond themselves to a giant and become one of the Bonebonded.

If you go through such a change in play, you may cross out your origin and choose the appropriate new one. If you become a member of a group

not represented in your archetype's starting origins, you should work with the GM to create a new origin move.

VOW

Your character has made a vow to the gods to perform some great task. At the end of each session, you will mark experience if you worked toward fulfilling your vow. Some moves allow or require you to take a new vow in addition to or replacing one you already have.

BONDS

Bonds are the ways you view the other characters, and they represent how much of a connection you have to each of your companions. You can have more than one bond with the same character, and you don't have to have a bond with every character. Some archetypes have more bonds than others.

SAGA

When you return to the holdfast and enjoy a feast, you will be asked to write a few lines from your saga, the poetic account of your character's deeds. You can also recite part of your saga to someone new to remind yourself of where you come from and what deeds you've done.

WOUNDS

Your archetype comes with a list of wounds that describe how you react to damage. A few are predefined, and you can choose more from the larger list. When you take a wound, you will mark off one of these wound boxes. Tougher archetypes not only have more wounds, but their wounds reflect less impact from the damage they receive.

Every archetype includes a wound level indicating possible death. When you mark off this wound box, you must **Face Death** (Page 21).

FERÐ

This trait abstractly represents physical and mental preparation for extended journeys. This includes laying in provisions, gathering items that remind you of the holdfast, and being seen off by loved ones. As you journey, you will mark off Ferð to represent your depleted resources and your increasing longing for home.



Each character starts with six Ferð. If at any time you would have to mark off Ferð and cannot, you may carry on, but you are at -1 ongoing until you regain Ferð. You regain Ferð by reciting your saga to others you encounter on your journey, by completing your vow, and/or by resupplying at the holdfast.

GEAR

Each archetype has a list of gear important to that type of character. This includes choices between different items of the same general type, such as weapons or armor. Each archetype also includes advanced gear that you can gain as you earn experience.

CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

The process of creating a character in *World of Metal and Bone* is simple. Everything you need to do is spelled out on your sheet. It follows this sequence.

1. CHOOSE AN ARCHETYPE

The GM will present the archetype sheets. Look them over and take the one you would like to play. Two players can't choose the same archetype. If you and another player want the same archetype, come to an agreement however you like.

2. CHOOSE AN ORIGIN

Your archetype lists a number of Origins. Choose one. Your origin gives you a special move.

3. CHOOSE A NAME

See the section on Names (Page 6) and generate a name appropriate to your origin.

4. CHOOSE APPEARANCE

Your archetype gives options for appearance. Choose one from each list.

5. CHOOSE ATTRIBUTES

Your archetype lists options for your beginning attribute modifiers. Choose one set from the list.

6. CHOOSE WOUNDS

Your archetype lists one or more wounds that you start with automatically. It also lists more wounds and tells you to choose some number of them. Do so, then cross out any moves you didn't choose.

7. CHOOSE STARTING MOVES

Your archetype may give you an option of starting moves. If it does, choose from the options listed.

8. CHOOSE GEAR

Your archetype lists any gear you start with and gives you options for additional starting gear. Choose gear from all such lists.

9. CHOOSE VOW

You start with a vow for your character. This is a task you hope to accomplish early in the campaign. It should tie into the issues you created along with the holdfast. Write down your vow.

10. INTRODUCE YOUR CHARACTER

You should have a strong image of your character in your mind now. Going around the table, each player will introduce their character to the others. Share your name, appearance, archetype, and anything else you think is important.

During this step, the GM will ask questions. These questions will help build relationships between characters or tie the group together in preparation for the first adventure. The GM will also ask for more information about interesting things about each character. It's up to the players to provide the answers. Don't worry; there are no wrong answers. If you say it's true, and everybody else agrees that it's okay, then it's true.

11. CHOOSE BONDS

Having met all the other characters, you can now choose who will share your bonds. You must fill in at least one bond in this step. You probably want to fill in them all, as they help you help each other, but you may not feel comfortable committing to some bonds just yet. That's fine.



You can fill them in later as you learn more about your fellow characters.

As you discuss your bonds, the GM will ask questions again to help clarify the relationships and any events that they imply. These questions shouldn't fill in every answer, though. There should be room to explore the bonds in play.

12. GET READY TO PLAY

After choosing bonds, you're done with character creation. If you need to, take a break. Stretch your legs, grab some snacks, and give the GM some time to look over their notes. When they're ready, they'll launch you into your first adventure.

ADVANCEMENT

Certain moves tell you to mark experience. This means to fill in one of the experience boxes on your character sheet. You will mark experience at end of session, when you return to the holdfast and feast, whenever you roll a 6-, and in response to some other moves.

When you mark your eighth experience box, you can immediately advance. Erase your experience and choose one of these advancements.

- ◆ Increase an attribute by +1 (to a maximum of +3).
- ◆ Choose an advanced move for your archetype. (You can choose each advanced move once unless the move says otherwise.)
- ◆ Choose an advanced gear item or upgrade for your archetype. (You can choose each advanced gear once.) The GM may ask how your character finds a new item on their journey. Tell them.

Berserker

The fearsome warriors called berserkers know the fury of Odin himself. They call on this rage in battle, shouting and gnawing on their shields, and they enter a state called the berserkergang in which they perform feats of strength and prowess that few others can match. When the blood-red fury takes them and a berserker claims you as their enemy, pray your steel is up to the task.

APPEARANCE

Choose one from each list.

- ◆ Braided hair, cropped hair, matted hair, tangled hair.
- ◆ Clear eyes, one eye, sunken eyes, wild eyes.
- ◆ Empty smile, lopsided smile, warm smile, wolf's grin.
- ◆ Battle scarred, clean-limbed, heavily thewed, travel-worn.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one of the following sets of attributes modifiers.

- ◆ Arm +2, Eye +0, Heart +1, Tongue -1
- ◆ Arm +2, Eye +1, Heart +0, Tongue -1
- ◆ Arm +3, Eye +0, Heart +0, Tongue -1

ORIGINS

Choose one of these origins and gain the listed move.

- ◆ **Snake (Clan):** When you strike first in a battle, catching your enemy unaware, your attack gains Deadly 1 against that enemy until they are dispatched.
- ◆ **Dragon (Clan):** When you enter the berserkergang, gain an extra hold.
- ◆ **Isles of Mists:** When you are in the berserkergang, you can spend hold to overcome the limits of the human form by contorting your body into unnatural shapes.
- ◆ **Bonebonded:** You gain the Bonebonded moves. In addition, when you are in the berserkergang and Giant, you ignore Protection 1.

BONDS

I will awaken the fighting spirit within _____.

I can see fear in _____'s eyes when I show my fury.
This is wise.

_____ spilled blood beside me, and I knew courage
that day.

WOUNDS

You have the following wounds.

- My leg! I will drag myself over my foes.
- My arm is ruined, but I fight on.
- I hear the horns of Valhalla. (Face Death)

Choose five more.

- I beat my shield and ask for more.
- All that did was push me back.
- Pain! Reminds me I'm alive!
- Rrarrgh!
- My blood steams on the snow.
- One good blow deserves another.
- Dropped my weapon. I'll use my teeth.
- My head! The blood-red mist clouds my sight.

GEAR

Your load is 8+Arm. You carry a shield (+1 Protection, 2 weight). Choose your weapon(s).

- Battleaxe (Close, +1 Deadly, 2 weight).
- Spear (Reach, 1 weight) and 2 javelins (Thrown, Close, 2 weight).

Choose your defenses:

- Fur shirt, wool pants, and warm boots (0 weight) and adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight).
- Light mail (+1 Protection, worn, 1 weight).



ADVANCED GEAR

When you advance, you may choose from these items or upgrades.

- ◆ Add spikes or a bladed edge to your shield (+Close).
- ◆ Fearsome helmet (+1 Protection, on a 12+ on Anguishing Rage choose 3, Worn, 1 weight).
- ◆ Greataxe (Close, +1 Deadly, extra +1 Deadly when you roll 12+, Two-handed, 3 weight).
- ◆ Throwing axe (Thrown, Close, 1 weight).

STARTING MOVES

You start with this move.

BERSERKERGANG

When you **whip yourself into the berserker fury**, roll+Arm.

On a 10+, enter the berserker gang and hold 3. On a 7-9, enter the berserker gang and hold 1. You can spend hold 1-for-1 to do any of the following things.

- Inflict an additional wound that ignores Protection when you attack.
- Ignore all wounds that would be inflicted on you by a single attack.
- Overcome the limitations of mortal strength.
- Endure an otherwise unbearable hardship.

When you have spent all of your hold, you leave the berserker gang and take a wound.

In addition, choose one of these moves.

BATTLE FOCUS

When you are in the berserker gang, you can ask an additional question when you Discern Realities and roll a 7+.

TERROR

When you are in the berserker gang, your allies present can use that state as leverage when parleying with NPCs and take +1 forward when doing so.

ADVANCED MOVES

When you advance, you can choose from these moves.

ANGUISHING RAGE

When you are in the berserker gang and **cry out with the full force of your rage at a foe**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, choose 1, or choose 2 and the GM makes a move. On a 7-9, choose 1 and the GM makes a move.

- Inflict a wound, ignoring Deadly and Protection.
- Give an ally +1 forward against your foe.
- Take +1 forward against your foe.

BLOOD AND GUTS

Choose an additional wound.

NOT DEAD YET

Requires Blood and Guts

If you mark off your final wound box while in the berserker gang, you do not Face Death until you leave the berserker gang.

CLEAVING BLOW

When you Deal Death and defeat your enemy, choose another worthy opponent within range. You may inflict a wound on that opponent, ignoring Deadly and Protection.

KILLER INSTINCT

When you are in the berserker gang, your physical attacks gain +1 Deadly.

UNTOPPABLE FURY

When you are in the berserker gang, your physical attacks gain Forceful.

Goði

Priests and leaders among the people of Midgard, the goðar perform rituals that bind the people together and show reverence to the gods. A goði does not wield the magic of the seiðkona, but instead focuses the will and belief of the holdfast into a subtle enchantment.

APPEARANCE

Choose one from each list.

- ◆ Full hair, gray hair, thinning hair, wispy hair.
- ◆ Kind eyes, hard eyes, shrewd eyes, wise eyes.
- ◆ Caring smile, full smile, thin smile, wary smile.
- ◆ Bowed back, broad shoulders, round face, willowy limbs.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one of the following sets of attributes modifiers.

- ◆ Arm -1, Eye +0, Heart +2, Tongue +1
- ◆ Arm -1, Eye +0, Heart +1, Tongue +2
- ◆ Arm +0, Eye +0, Heart +1, Tongue +1

ORIGINS

- ◆ **Hammer (Clan):** You have a maximum of 7 Ferð and start with artisans tools (1 weight) that let you resupply ruined gear even on the road. When you take time to craft useful items and otherwise replenish their supplies, you can give your allies Ferð, 1-for-1.
- ◆ **Ox (Clan):** When you defy danger by standing firm and taking what comes, roll+Heart. On a 12+, take +1 forward as you are steeled in your resolve.
- ◆ **Petruvian Empire:** In place of the Steward starting move, you gain the following move.

When you **take another character as your client and advise them**,

roll+Tongue. On a 10+, take 3 patronage. On a 7-9, take 2 patronage.

On a 6-, take 1 patronage, and the GM will tell you how your client causes you trouble. You can spend patronage 1-for-1 to do one of the following.

- ◆ Give your client +1 forward.
- ◆ Grant your client a minor boon by invoking one of the Petruvian gods.
- ◆ Learn something about your client's fortunes, wherever they may be.

Bonebonded: You gain the Bonebonded moves. In addition, when you consult the ancient, the GM will identify one of the two true things.

BONDS

I remember when _____ was born. The gods smiled that day.

Much glory to _____, who will make a noble sacrifice.

_____ does not honor the gods as one should.

I must watch for the danger _____ may bring upon us all.

WOUNDS

You have the following wounds.

- ◆ I die so my people can live. (Face Death)

Choose five more.

- ◆ My ancestors stand with me against this foe.
- ◆ By the gods, that was close!
- ◆ Ah! Give me strength...
- ◆ I will not succumb. The others need me.
- ◆ My vision swims. I must focus.
- ◆ I can't feel my arm.
- ◆ Blood is a small price to pay.
- ◆ When this is over, I think I'll pass out.

GEAR

Your load is 5+Arm. You carry a staff (Close, Two-handed, 1 weight). Choose your defenses.



- ◆ Robes of office (0 weight) and adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight).
- ◆ Leather armor (+1 Protection, Worn, 1 weight).

ADVANCED GEAR

When you advance, you may choose from these items or upgrades.

- ◆ **Adventuring gear** (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight).
- ◆ **Rune-carved staff** (ignores 1 Protection)
- ◆ **Scroll containing a written invocation** (you can lead a ceremony by simply reading the scroll, then it is used up until you resupply, 0 weight)

STARTING MOVES

You start with these moves.

LEADER OF CEREMONIES

When you **lead your people in ceremony**, tell the GM what god(s) you are invoking. You are granted a boon related to the god(s) you invoked. The GM will tell you what it is.

OATHWITNESS

When you **witness another character swear a vow**, make a note of it. If you aid or interfere with any roll that would affect the outcome of that vow, treat a 7-9 as if you had rolled a 10+. When that character completes the vow and feasts, mark experience.

PRAYER OF RESPITE

When you **utter a prayer to the gods over a wounded ally**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, that ally heals one wound. On a 7-9, that ally heals one wound, but you draw the gods' displeasure.

STEWARD

When you **set aside your own vow and dedicate yourself to a charge** (a person, place, or object) in a ceremony at the holdfast, you gain these boons.

- You always know the direction to your charge.
- You are aware of any harm that befalls your charge.

- You can perform a ceremony in which you ask the gods for insight into your charge's immediate future, and the gods will answer truthfully, if cryptically.

You can relinquish your charge at any time and return to your previous vow(s). You do not mark experience at end of session for working toward your own vow while dedicated to a charge. In addition, the GM will choose one of the following for you to experience as long as you are so dedicated.

- You share in any harm that befalls your charge.
- Anyone who means your charge harm can sense your connection.
- You cannot act in any way that might harm your charge, directly or indirectly.

ADVANCED MOVES

When you advance, you can choose from these moves.

DIVINE GUARDIAN

When you are dedicated to a charge, you can perform a ceremony in which you ask the gods for protection. If your charge is another character, they gain Protection equal to your bond with them. If your charge is a place or object, it gains the blessing of the gods and is more difficult to harm.

GATHER THE PEOPLE

You call to the people of your holdfast, and if they could hear you at all, they will hear your words clearly. Anyone who can hear you takes +1 ongoing to defy danger while traveling back to you.

HANGING FROM YGGDRASIL

You gain Rune Mastery from the Seiðkona's advanced moves.

MUTTON AND MEAD

When you rest, you and your allies each heal an additional wound.

SWEAR BY THE GODS

When you **witness another character swear a new vow**, roll+Heart. On a 10+, that character gains blessing 3. On a 7-9, that character gains blessing 1. A player can spend blessing 1-for-1 to gain +1 on a roll that directly works toward that vow.

Seiðkona

The wise woman, the sorcerer, and the runecaster: these are seiðkonur. Many of the secrets of magic are known only to women, but men can be sorcerers too. Consider Odin hanging himself for nine days to learn the lore of the runes. Whether you weave protections into cloth, strengthen blades with runic inscription, or cast lots to divine the future, magic is yours to command.

APPEARANCE

Choose one from each list.

- ◆ Curled hair, flat hair, smooth hair, wavy hair.
- ◆ Knowing eyes, liquid eyes, stern eyes, wary eyes.
- ◆ Broad smile, easy smile, tense smile, weak smile.
- ◆ Blushing cheeks, full figure, narrow frame, weak back.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one of the following sets of attributes modifiers.

- ◆ Arm -1, Eye +1, Heart +2, Tongue +0
- ◆ Arm -1, Eye +0, Heart +2, Tongue +1
- ◆ Arm +0, Eye +1, Heart +2, Tongue -1

ORIGINS

Choose one of the following origins and gain the listed move.

- ◆ **Raven (Clan):** When you Speak Wisdom, treat a 7-9 as a 10+.
- ◆ **Wolf (Clan):** When you Aid an ally, you give them +Heart, instead of the normal bonus.
- ◆ **J'goll:** You can use the Spellcarving move to imbue power into alchemical preparations rather than carving objects with runes. These preparations require special materials to produce, but the magic is held within until it is used or consumed.
- ◆ **Bonebonded:** You gain the Bonebonded moves. In addition, you start with one Rune Mastery advanced move, but you can only use it while Giant.

BONDS

There is something in _____'s future, terrible or great I cannot tell.

_____ courts disaster, but I can set them right.

_____ respects my magic, but I don't think they trust it.

WOUNDS

You have the following wound.

- ◆ Death is the last great mystery. (Face Death)

Choose 4 more wounds.

- ◆ I must weave new protections after that blow.
- ◆ The pain must not distract me.
- ◆ The gods are displeased with me.
- ◆ These scars may spell out wisdom.
- ◆ My bones are broken, but my spirit is whole.
- ◆ Please, no more!

GEAR

Your load is 5+Arm. You have a bag of carved lots (0 weight). Choose your weapon.

- ◆ Dagger (Hand, 0 weight)
- ◆ Staff (Close, Two-handed, 1 weight)

Choose your defenses.

- ◆ Normal clothing (0 weight) and adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight)
- ◆ Woven protection (+1 Protection, Worn, 1 weight)



ADVANCED GEAR

When you advance, you may choose from these items or upgrades.

- ◆ Adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight)
- ◆ Rune stones (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to sing Galdr, weave protections, or to any roll you have Rune Mastery over, 1 weight)
- ◆ Rune-carved staff or dagger (ignores 1 Protection)

STARTING MOVES

You start with the following moves.

CAST LOTS

When you **cast lots and read their markings**, ask the GM “Are the gods pleased with this course?” The GM will respond truthfully.

SING GALDR

You start with knowledge of two Galdr songs. When you **sing one of the Galdr songs you have learned**, roll+Heart. On a 10+, the magic is successful. On a 7-9, you missed a note or a syllable, and the song has an unexpected effect. Choose one.

- You draw unwelcome attention or put yourself in a spot. The GM will tell you how.
 - The song goes awry, is uncontrolled, or affects the wrong target. The GM will tell you what happens.
 - You weaken your ability to perform magic. Take -1 ongoing to sing Galdr until you rest.
-

SPELLCARVING

When you **inscribe an object with runes of power**, tell the GM what you want the magic to do. The GM will tell you the cost. The magic occurs immediately, though it can have lasting impact.

- The carving takes longer than expected.
 - The item inscribed cannot contain the power of the spell.
 - The runes are inscribed imperfectly, corrupting the magic.
 - The magic requires a personal sacrifice.
 - The magic draws the attention of something powerful.
-

WEAVE PROTECTIONS

When you **weave a protective garment for another character**, roll+Heart. On a 10+, choose both. On a 7-9, choose 1. The character wearing your garment gains the chosen wound(s). These wounds cannot be healed, and they disappear if you weave protections for another.

- Missed me by that much.
 - Torn cloth, not flesh.
-

ADVANCED MOVES

When you advance, you can choose from these moves.

GALDR KNOWLEDGE

You learn an additional Galdr song. You may take this move multiple times. Each time, choose a different Galdr song to learn.

RUNE MASTERY

You have mastered one or more of the elder runes that hold magical power. You can choose this move multiple times. Each time, choose a different rune to master.

- **Fehu**: When you use wealth or possessions as leverage to Parley, treat a 7-9 as a 10+.
 - **Gebo**: When you Aid another character, treat a 7-9 as a 10+.
 - **Naudiz**: When you Interfere with another character, treat a 7-9 as a 10+.
 - **Reið**: When you Undertake a Perilous Journey, treat a 7-9 as a 10+.
 - **Purisaz**: When you Deal Death, your attacks are Forceful and ignore 1 Protection.
-

GALDR SONGS

These are the 18 Songs passed down from Odin himself. There may be others, but the Allfather does not share the full extent of his wisdom.

You can learn the following Galdr songs. Any song with the Ongoing tag will stay in effect as long as you continue to sing it.

BAPTISM

Sing this song over a newborn child, and you will ensure that they will not likely die in battle. (Perhaps the heroes of *World of Metal and Bone* received the gift of this song, explaining their resilience.)

BEWILDER WITS

Anyone looking for you cannot find you until the sun next rises.

BLUNT SWORDS

Ongoing

While you sing this song, one enemy inflicts one fewer wound with each attack.

CALM HATE

Ongoing

While you sing this song, thoughts turn away from hate. Anyone who hears you sing and still seeks violence takes -1 ongoing to do harm to another.

CHARM

You can sing this song to manipulate someone in place of the Parley move.

CORPSE SPEECH

When you sing this song before a dead body, its spirit will appear. You may ask the spirit one question about the past, present, or future. The spirit will answer truthfully, to the best of its knowledge.

FARE FORTH MIGHTILY

Sing this song before a battle, and any who hear it can ignore the first wound they would take in that fight.

FOLK-STIRRER'S SONG

Ongoing

Once while you sing this song, you can choose another character. When that character next makes a move that calls for a roll, treat a 7-9 on that roll as a 10+.

HELP IN ALL WOES

Ongoing

While you sing this song, one character takes +1 ongoing to Defy Danger through mental fortitude.

HEAL

Another character heals one wound.

KNOW NATURE UNTAUGHT

Immediately know the location and nature of all non-human beings around you.

LIGHT THE ILLS

Reverse the effects of a curse or spell such that they afflict whoever cast them instead.

SAVE FROM FLAME

Immediately douse any fire.

SECRETS KNOWN TO ONE

Sing this song before you tell a secret to another character. That character cannot reveal that secret without your permission.

SOOTHE ALL THE SEA

Immediately calm waters stirred up by storm.

SPRING FETTERS

One character is immediately freed from bondage.

STAY SPEAR

Ongoing

While you sing this song, one character gets +2 Protection against thrown weapons and arrows.

TURN MIND

When you sing this song, issue a brief command to another character. On a 10+, that character will obey, unless doing so is directly contrary to their nature. On a 7-9, they resist, hesitate, or misinterpret the command. You can reinforce the command, but doing so will put you in a spot. (Unlike Charm, this is a single, brief command, not a complicated manipulation.)



Shieldmaiden

A shieldmaiden is a warrior, disciplined and brave. She is devoted to her people and to her holdfast, and she will lay down her life to protect them. The Valkyries smile upon her as she enters every battle with honor.

Many male warriors show the same valor in battle as their counterparts.

APPEARANCE

Choose one from each list.

- Coiled hair, dark hair, light hair, shorn hair.
- Determined eyes, hooded eyes, stern eyes, watchful eyes.
- Broken smile, calm smile, rueful smile, winsome smile.
- Commanding voice, familiar presence, imposing stature, strong build.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one of the following sets of attributes modifiers.

- Arm +2, Eye +1, Heart +0, Tongue -1
- Arm +2, Eye +0, Heart +1, Tongue -1
- Arm +2, Eye +0, Heart +0, Tongue +0

ORIGINS

Bear (Clan): Your physical attacks gain Forceful.

Wolf (Clan): When you fight in concert with an ally against the same worthy foe, you both get +1 Protection.

Petruvian Empire: Your shield gives an extra +1 Protection. When you defend another character and spend hold to redirect an attack to yourself, take +1 forward.

Bonebonded: You gain the Bonebonded moves. When you are not giant, you can set your bonded soul to Defend a person, item, or location under attack. Roll+Heart. If you spend hold to redirect an attack to yourself, damage from that attack ignores Protection.

BONDS

I do not trust _____ in battle.

_____ saved my life once. I must repay the debt.

_____ is noble yet misguided.

WOUNDS

You have these wounds.

- ◆ 'Tis but a scratch.
- ◆ I can still fight you!
- ◆ I die as I lived: with honor. (Face Death)

Choose 5 more wounds.

- ◆ That bit deep.
- ◆ My blade is broken, but I am not.
- ◆ My blood on the ground will not deter me.
- ◆ Better that I know pain than they.
- ◆ Face me! I yet live!
- ◆ I will come home with this shield or on it.
- ◆ Soon, you will tend to me, my friends.
- ◆ I will gladly trade my death for yours.

GEAR

Your load is 8+Arm. You carry a shield (+1 Protection, 2 weight). Choose your weapon(s).

- ◆ Longsax (broadsword) (close, +1 Deadly, 2 weight).
- ◆ Spear (Reach, 1 weight) and 2 javelins (Thrown, Close, 2 weight).

Choose your defenses.

- ◆ Light mail (+1 Protection, Worn, 1 weight) and adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight).
- ◆ Heavy mail (+2 Protection, Worn, 3 weight).

ADVANCED GEAR

When you advance, you may choose from these items or upgrades.

- ◆ Adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight).

- ◆ Defender's shield (+1 Protection, +1 hold on 7+ when you Defend, 2 weight)
- ◆ Helmet (+1 Protection, Worn, 1 weight)
- ◆ Scale armor (+3 Protection, Worn, 4 weight)

STARTING MOVES

You start with these moves.

DEFEND

When you **stand in defense of a person, item, or location under attack**, roll+Arm. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7–9, hold 1. As long as you stand in defense, when you or the thing you defend is attacked you may spend hold, 1-for-1, to choose an option:

- Redirect an attack from the thing you defend to yourself.
 - Halve the attack's effect or damage, after Protection.
 - Open up the attacker to an ally giving that ally +1 forward against the attacker.
 - Inflict a wound on the attacker, ignoring Deadly and Protection.
-

DRAW A LINE

When you **Hold Ground**, treat a 7-9 as a 10+. You take +1 to Face Death after you Hold Ground.

ADVANCED MOVES

When you advance, you can choose from these moves.

HEALER

When you bind another character's wounds while resting, they heal an additional wound.



LAST ONE STANDING

When you have two or fewer wounds left unchecked, take +1 ongoing.

STAUNCH DEFENDER

When you Defend you always get +1 hold, even on a 6-.

IMPERVIOUS DEFENDER

Replaces Staunch Defender

When you Defend you always get +1 hold, even on a 6-. On a 12+, instead of getting hold, the nearest attacking creature is stymied, giving you a clear advantage. The GM will describe it.

THROUGH DEATH'S EYES

When you go into battle, roll+Heart. On a 10+, name someone who will live and someone who will die. On a 7-9, name someone who will live or someone who will die. Name NPCs, not player characters. The GM will make your vision come true, if it's even remotely possible. On a 6- you see your own death and consequently take -1 ongoing throughout the battle.



Skald

Skalds compose the Eddas, epics, and poems that record life in Midgard. They make heroes into legends, and the stories they write live on for generations. As much as the shieldmaidens protect it and the goði fortify it, the skalds shape the holdfast through their works.

The best way to record the acts of heroes is to be one yourself. Some skalds take up the sword or spear and adventure alongside berserkers and shieldmaidens. These warrior-poets are rarely remembered in their own legends, preferring to extoll their companions virtues.

APPEARANCE

Choose one from each list.

- ♦ Fine hair, glossy hair, sculpted hair, thick hair.
- ♦ Bright eyes, deep eyes, laughing eyes, mysterious eyes.
- ♦ Clever smile, jester's smile, lop-sided smile, wise smile.
- ♦ Clear voice, easy grace, fair features, noble bearing.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one of the following sets of attributes modifiers.

- ♦ Arm +0, Eye +0, Heart +1, Tongue +1
- ♦ Arm -1, Eye +0, Heart +1, Tongue +2
- ♦ Arm +0, Eye +0, Heart +0, Tongue +2

ORIGINS

- ♦ **Raven (Clan):** When you enter an important location (your call) you can ask the GM for one fact from the history of that location.
- ♦ **Sparrow (Clan):** When you return to a civilized settlement you've visited before, tell the GM when you were last here. They'll tell you how it's changed since then.
- ♦ **Isles of Mist:** You gain the Seiðkona's Sing Galdr move, but you know only a single Galdr song.
- ♦ **Bonebonded:** You gain the Bonebonded moves. In addition, you choose a second area of expertise for Loremaster.

BONDS

I will write many poems about _____.

I will teach _____ to trust themselves.

_____ must learn how to be worthy of song.

I composed my first tale about _____'s deeds.

I know something about _____ that I must never tell.

WOUNDS

You have the following wound.

- ◆ Every poem has a final line. (Face Death)

Choose four more wounds.

- ◆ This will make a thrilling tale!
- ◆ A wound to lend weight to this story.
- ◆ A hero's tale is written in scars.
- ◆ I've had too much excitement now.
- ◆ It'll be hard to sing with a broken rib.
- ◆ It grows dark, yet I go on.
- ◆ I will walk away from this, with help.

GEAR

Your load is 5+Arm. Choose your weapon(s).

- ◆ Seax (shortsword) (Close, 1 weight).
- ◆ Short bow (Near, 1 weight).
- ◆ Spear (Reach, 1 weight).

Choose your defenses.

- ◆ Fine-looking clothes (0 weight) and a musical instrument (take +1 to Skald starting moves when you accompany yourself with music, 1 weight).
- ◆ Leather armor (+1 Protection, Worn, 1 weight).



ADVANCED GEAR

When you advance, you may choose from these items or upgrades.

- ◆ Add fine silk under leather armor (+1 Protection, 1 weight).
- ◆ Adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight).
- ◆ Books and scrolls (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to Speak Wisdom, 1 weight).
- ◆ Musical instrument (take +1 to Skald starting moves when you accompany yourself with music, 1 weight).

STARTING MOVES

You start with these moves.

LOREMASTER

Choose an area of expertise:

- Runes and Magic
- The Dead and Undead
- Grand Histories of the Known World
- A Bestiary of Creatures Unusual
- The Nine Worlds
- Legends of Heroes Past
- Gods and Their Servants



When you **first encounter an important creature, location, or item covered by your lore** you can ask the GM any one question about it; the GM will answer truthfully. The GM may then ask you what tale, song, or legend you heard that information in.

A POEM, MY LORD

When you **perform for someone of stature and importance**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, they are impressed with your skill, believe your tale, and offer you their hospitality. On a 7-9, one of those three things is not true; choose which. On a 6-, you have offended them and must deal with the consequences.

In addition, choose one of these moves.

INSPIRING TALES

When you **tell your companions a tale to inspire them**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. You can spend hold, 1-for-1, to choose an option.

- Reveal an ally's strength, giving them +1 forward.
 - Reveal an enemy's weakness.
 - Reveal a welcomed truth about your situation.
-

THRILLING TALES

When you **recite your saga to a new audience**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+ choose both, or choose one and double it. On a 7-9, choose one.

- You regain an extra Ferð.
 - An ally regains one Ferð.
-

ADVANCED MOVES

When you advance, you can choose from these moves.

ADVISOR

When another character comes to you for advice and you tell them what you think is best, they get +1 forward when following your advice and you mark experience if they do.

BOUNDLESS TALES

You gain the starting move you did not choose.

COMPOSE AHEAD

When you take the time to compose a poem about your future exploits, name your goal(s) and ask the GM these questions. When acting on the answers you and your allies take +1 forward.

- Who stands in our way?
 - What is the greatest danger we face?
 - How long will it take?
 - What will it cost?
-

STINGING WORDS

When you **reveal a painful secret about your enemy or attack them with words**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, choose 1, or choose 2 and the GM makes a move. On a 7-9, choose 1 and the GM makes a move.

- Inflict a wound, ignoring Deadly and Protection.
 - Give an ally +1 forward against your foe.
 - Take +1 forward against your foe.
-

STORIES OF HOME

When you and your allies Rest, do not mark off Ferð. When you act as loresinger on a perilous journey, treat a 7-9 as a 10+.

TO THE GODS' EARS

When you **swear a new oath**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, the gods smile on your goal. Take 3 hold. On a 7-9, the gods offer you a second vow. If you accept it, take 3 hold. You can spend 1 hold to re-roll a single die in any roll that directly works toward your vow.

Vargr

The vargr is an outcast, exiled for some crime and forced to live in the wilderness. Some gather in companies and take to banditry, while others choose to live as hermits. A few travel the land in search of a new place to call home. All learn to survive by whatever means necessary.

While you are an outsider, you are at least tolerated around the campaign's holdfast. Perhaps you trade meat or furs. Maybe you are secretly the Jarl's spy. For whatever reason, you are tied to the community.

APPEARANCE

Choose one from each list.

- ◆ Dirty hair, matted hair, twig-strewn hair, woven hair.
- ◆ Cat's eyes, dark eyes, hunter's eyes, nervous eyes.
- ◆ Disturbing smile, narrow smile, predator's smile, uncomfortable smile.
- ◆ Coiled muscles, leathery skin, runner's build, tense posture.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one of the following sets of attributes modifiers.

- ◆ Arm +0, Eye +1, Heart -1, Tongue +2
- ◆ Arm -1, Eye +1, Heart +0, Tongue +2
- ◆ Arm +0, Eye +1, Heart +0, Tongue +1

ORIGINS

- ◆ **Horse (Clan):** When you are traveling through natural surroundings, you cannot be overtaken or caught unless you want to be. If you are undertaking a perilous journey through the wilderness, treat it as if the scout rolled 10+ without anyone having to take that role.



- ◆ **Bear (Clan):** You gain the Steward starting move from the Goði, but you can only choose a place as your charge. You do not have to perform the ceremony in the holdfast, but it must be witnessed.
- ◆ **J'goll:** You start with the Poisoner advanced move.
- ◆ **Bonebonded:** You gain the Bonebonded moves. When you Deal Death while Giant, you may roll+Eye.

BONDS

_____ reminds me of the home I left behind.

I mistakenly trusted _____ with a secret.

_____ has suffered as much loss as I.

WOUNDS

You have the following wounds.

- ◆ I've had worse.
- ◆ That I would meet my end here... (Face Death)

Choose 5 more wounds.

- ◆ ...I haven't had *much* worse.
- ◆ I can't wait around for that to heal.
- ◆ It's just a flesh wound.
- ◆ Damn blood leaves a trail.
- ◆ Can't feel it through the scars.
- ◆ Only humans kill for fun, you know.
- ◆ I just sewed that back together.
- ◆ That was my last unbroken bone.

GEAR

Your load is 5+Arm. You have adventuring gear (spend 1 Ferð to get +1 to a roll if the right tool would help, 1 weight). Choose your weapon.

- ◆ Hunter's bow (Near, Two-handed, 1 weight)
- ◆ Seax (shortsword) (Close, 1 weight)

Choose your defenses.

- ◆ Leather armor (+1 Protection, Worn, 1 weight)
- ◆ Warm clothing (0 weight) and camouflaged cloak (you may move slowly while making the Camouflage move, 1 weight)

ADVANCED GEAR

When you advance, you may choose from these items or upgrades.

- ◆ Bodkin arrows (Hunter's bow ignores 1 Protection, 0 weight)
- ◆ Heavy mail (+2 Protection, Worn, 3 weight)
- ◆ Dagger (hand, thrown, +1 Deadly when attacking with seax, 0 weight)

STARTING MOVES

You start with the following moves.

CAMOUFLAGE

When you **keep still in natural surroundings**, enemies never spot you until you make an obvious movement.

HUNT AND TRACK

When you **follow a trail of clues left behind by passing creatures**, roll+Eye. On a 7+, you follow the creature's trail until there's a significant change in its direction or mode of travel. On a 10+, you also choose 1:

- Gain a useful bit of information about your quarry, the GM will tell you what
 - Determine what caused the trail to end
-

OUTLAW

When you **return to a civilized place where you've caused trouble before**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, word has spread of your deeds and everyone recognizes you. On a 7–9, as above, and the GM chooses a complication:

- The local authority has a warrant out for your arrest.
 - Someone has put a price on your head.
 - Someone important to you has been put in a bad spot as a result of your actions.
-

ADVANCED MOVES

When you advance, you can choose from these moves.

CONNECTIONS

When you **put out word to the criminal underbelly about something you want or need**, roll+Tongue. On a 10+, someone has it, just for you. On a 7–9, you'll have to settle for something close or it comes with strings attached, your call.

ESCAPE ROUTE

When **you're in too deep and need a way out**, name your escape route and roll+Arm. On a 10+ you're gone. On a 7–9 you can stay or go, but if you go it costs you: leave something behind or take something with you, the GM will tell you what.

FOLLOW ME

When you Undertake a Perilous Journey, you can take two roles. You make a separate roll for each.

OBSERVANT

When you Hunt and Track, on a hit you may also ask one question about the creature you are tracking from the Discern Realities list for free.



POISONER

Choose a poison from the list below; that poison is not dangerous for you to use. Whenever you have time to gather materials and a safe place to brew you can make three uses of the poison you choose for free.

- **Oil of Tagit (applied):** The target falls into a light sleep.
 - **Bloodweed (touch):** The target deals 1 less wound ongoing until cured.
 - **Goldenroot (applied):** The target treats the next creature they see as a trusted ally, until proved otherwise.
 - **Serpent's Tears (touch):** Anyone dealing damage to the target deals 1 additional wound until cured.
-

POISON MASTER

Requires Poisoner

After you've used a poison once, it's no longer dangerous for you to use. When you have time to gather materials and a safe place to brew you can create three doses of any one poison you've used before.

ENVENOM

Requires Poisoner

You can apply even complex poisons with a pinprick. When you apply a poison that's not dangerous for you to use to your weapon, it's touch instead of applied.

WELL-PREPARED

You have a maximum of nine Ferð.



Running a Campaign

The Game Master is responsible for setting up a campaign, though you should let the players take as much of a role in the process as you like. Still, there is a big responsibility on the GM's shoulder. The rules are here to help you out, however. There are three sets of things you should keep in mind during every game session: your agenda, your principles, and the moves you can make.

AGENDA

The Game Master's agenda is simply the things you should be doing in every session. In broad terms, they are...

- ◆ Portray an epic world.
- ◆ Fill the characters' lives with adventure.
- ◆ Play to find out what happens.

First, try to present an epic world to the players. Everything the characters experience will come through you in the description you give and in the way other characters react to them. Midgard is a world of epic adventure, and your descriptions should reflect that. Make the mountains taller, the forests darker, and the rivers more wild. Don't be afraid to go big with your villains, either. You're working in a world that has giants, war machines, and gods in it. If the rival Jarl is too subtle, he's going to get lost in the background.

You should look for ways to make the characters' lives more exciting. These are epic heroes. Heroes don't sit around waiting for adventure to happen. Either it's coming at them full on, or they are hunting it down themselves. You should either be throwing danger at them or placing hints of future danger in their path.

Finally, don't plan too far ahead. You're not writing the story. The story is what happens after the game is over, and the players are reminiscing about the awesome game you ran a month or a year ago. Certainly have ideas about where the game could go, but leave room for your players to surprise you. In fact, leave more room than you think you'll need. And be ready to improvise when your players flood into that space.

PRINCIPLES

Principles drill a layer down from the loftiness of the Agenda into things you can actually do at the table. They are...

- ◆ Address the characters, not the players
- ◆ Begin and end with the fiction
- ◆ Make a move that follows
- ◆ Never speak the name of your move
- ◆ Embrace the epic
- ◆ Give every enemy life
- ◆ Name every person
- ◆ Ask questions and use the answers
- ◆ Be a fan of the characters
- ◆ Think dangerous
- ◆ Think offscreen, too

You should address the characters because doing so keeps the focus in the fiction. Don't want remove yourself from the action by asking the player "*What does Erik do?*" Just ask "*What do you do?*" The player isn't in Midgard; the character is. They should respond in kind.

This ties into beginning and ending with the fiction. The fiction is all the stuff going on in the imaginative world of the game. Sometimes that will trigger dice rolls and other "gamey" stuff, but you should come back to the fiction. After a move, ask someone "What do you do?"

When something happens in the fiction, make a move that follows. That means do something that makes sense. If the characters are facing a group of enemy soldiers, and the berserker shouts out an insult, maybe those soldiers will attack. That's a move that would follow from the berserker provoking them.

You'll make a lot of moves during a game, but your players may not realize it. That's because you should never say the name of your move. Just describe the effect. If those enemy soldiers attack, that's you making a move.

But don't tell the players, "I'm using the soldiers' Charge Into Battle move to attack you." Just describe the soldiers' discipline breaking as they run screaming at the heroes.

Whatever moves you make, think about how to make them epic. Norse myth is full of broad action, amazing feats, and horrible monsters. The myths don't just have a big snake; they have Jörmungandr, a snake so large it wraps around the world, who will poison the sky and destroy the world during Ragnarok.

In a similar vein, make your enemies interesting. Give each one life. A villain with personality, quirks and desires is more memorable than a set of statistics on a notecard. If you breathe life into an enemy, your players will remember them and tell stories about them later—even if they get the name wrong.

Still, give everyone a name. This makes them more real, which goes back to the give them life principle. If nothing else, have a list of names handy that you can cross off whenever the players ask you what the blacksmith is called.

You should be asking the players questions as much as they ask you. When a character makes the Speak Wisdom move, ask them how they know the information. Did they hear it in a skald's poem? What clan custom led them to pick a particular piece of gear? Whatever answers your players give you in return, use them. It'll fill in the setting, and it just makes your job easier not to have to come up with everything off the top of your head.

Your characters are the heroes of an epic story that hasn't been written yet. You should get excited to see what happens to them next. When you have to decide where to go next, think about what you'd like to see happen to these characters if you were watching them in a fantasy blockbuster movie. If you think of something that makes you think "Oh, cool!" go with it.

Don't be afraid to put them in peril, though. Epic stories feature a lot of danger. What kind of heroes would they be if they didn't get put through the wringer every once in a while?

Finally, think about what's going on away from the characters. The villains have plans of their own, and they can advance them without the characters being aware. Look at the moves, yours and the characters'; a lot of them can be done "offscreen." In order to show signs of an approaching threat, you need to know what threats are approaching. This is where you should have something prepared, but remember you're playing to find out what happens.

MOVES

You never roll dice, but you will make moves as the GM. You make a move...

- ◆ When everyone looks to you to find out what happens.
- ◆ When the players give you a golden opportunity.
- ◆ When they roll a 6-.

Your moves will be either soft or hard. A soft move does not have an immediate effect or require a direct response. Think of it like the build-up to a hard move. You may string a few soft moves together before finally escalating. Generally you make a soft move when the players are just looking at you to find out what happens.

The players give you golden opportunities by ignoring your soft moves. That's when you hit them with a hard move. A hard move does something right now and should force the characters to react. This could mean inflicting a wound, trapping them, or worse. Of course, any time the players roll a 6 or less, that also gives you a golden opportunity, because not only do they fail, but things get worse.

Your GM moves are...

- ◆ Use an enemy, danger, or location move
- ◆ Reveal an unwelcome truth
- ◆ Show signs of an approaching threat
- ◆ Give them a wound
- ◆ Use up their resources
- ◆ Separate them

- ◆ Turn their move back on them
- ◆ Give an opportunity that fits an archetype's abilities
- ◆ Show a downside to their archetype, origin, or gear
- ◆ Offer an opportunity, with or without cost
- ◆ Tell them the requirements or consequences and ask
- ◆ Put someone in a spot

Every enemy, the dangers you build into your fronts, and even some locations possess special moves that expand this list. Enemy moves will show up frequently in response to player moves like Deal Death.

Use your opportunities for moves to give your players information. Since you're following your principles and thinking offscreen, you should have some idea of what's going on in the world aside from what is immediately obvious. When you reveal an unwelcome truth, you give the players a hint that something they know is wrong or unveil something unpleasant that was hidden. If you show signs of an approaching threat, you increase tension while also allowing the players to plan their response.



When the players hand you a golden opportunity by ignoring danger or exposing themselves to harm, you are free to inflict wounds. A normal danger will inflict a single wound, while hazards that deal up to five wounds at once should give even epic heroes pause. Some sources, like magic or poison, may even ignore a character's protection.

Wounds aren't the only things players should be afraid to lose. Your move can part them from other resource. You can send their axes flying, splinter their shields, and punch holes in their armor. Resources aren't just physical, either. Your move can cost the heroes time, or it can drive off their followers.

The heroes' greatest resource is the fact that there's a group of them. Sometimes, you should split them up and make them rethink their tactics. If it follows that their actions would leave them separated, or if something in the world comes between them, make that move.

Any of the players moves can be turned around to provide some interesting move of your own. Sometimes, this is built into the move, like Deal Death which says that the enemy gets to make an attack when the player rolls a 7-9. But what if the player rolls a 6 or less on Parley? The enemy may stall them in negotiation while sending for reinforcements.

You're a fan of the characters; give them a chance to shine. You can spotlight one hero by putting them in a situation where their skills are the easiest or cleanest solution. Maybe the *seiðkona* is the only one who can activate the runes blocking their path.

On the other hand, sometimes it's more interesting to showcase the characters by playing on their weaknesses. Every archetype has a downside. The *vargr* is an outcast and criminal. The *goði* is a fine leader but relies on the strength of others. And the berserker just does your job for you. The same is true of origins and even choice of gear. The berserker who chose the battleaxe may find themselves wishing they had a *spear* when the 10-foot troll is holding them off with its long arms.

A good way to motivate characters is to offer opportunities, especially ones they weren't expecting. Sometimes the new choice comes with a cost. They can gain this advantage, but it will be difficult or they'll have to give

something up. Other opportunities are just there to light a fire under the characters.

When the players give you a golden opportunity or miss their move with a 6 or less, you can give them a second chance. Tell them what they can do to make things right, or what success will cost them, and ask them if that's what they want.

When in doubt, just put someone in a spot. A lot of other moves can be looked at as implementations of this one, taken to the next logical step. Threaten them, injure them, take away their toys, show them what's around the corner, and then ask them what they do next.

THE FIRST SESSION

When you gather your players for the first session of *World of Metal and Bone*, you'll want a few things. Look at the list in the introduction for the physical items you'll need. Beyond the paper and the dice, the only thing you should bring is a few ideas you'd like to see in the campaign. During this process, remember that you're a player, too. If there's something you think would be fun in the game, you have a right to try to get it in there.

To start, let the players look at the archetype sheets and pick which ones they'd like to play. Let them get excited and start thinking about their new characters, but don't have them write anything down on the sheets just yet.

Instead, turn to the Holdfast Creation chapter. Go through that process as a group, rolling for the issues that face the community and drawing things on the map to represent them. Because the players have picked out what archetypes they want, they have a better idea what may matter to their characters and can frame the issues in more interesting ways.

After you finish creating the map and the holdfast, let the players start filling in their sheets. The setting is partially formed in their minds, which gives them an idea how these heroes fit in and gives them ideas for how they can play.

While the players are creating their characters, take notes of the choices they make. If something sparks your interest, ask questions and jot down the answers. Every decision the players make right now is a string for you to

tug on later. Be ready to answer questions they may have. There are no right or wrong answers. That's really important to remember.

When the players have filled out their archetype sheets, put the characters into an interesting situation and start playing. You will have a number of ways to start this adventure, between the issues you established in holdfast creation and the vows and bonds the players chose for themselves. Don't worry about where things may be heading; play to find out what happens.

The purpose of this first session is to let everyone get comfortable with their characters and the setting, and if they're new to **World of Metal and Bone**, with the rules as well. Take notes about what is going well and what isn't. When the session is over, you can use all of this to form your fronts (Page 84).

CREATING CUSTOM MOVES

Eventually a character will try to do something that isn't covered by any of the basic moves or archetype moves. You can create new moves to cover these situations. Every move has two parts: a trigger, and an effect.

The trigger is an action in the fiction that sets the move off. This should be a clear, simple action that a character can take, and it should be obvious that doing it will lead to an interesting result.

Not every move calls for a roll of the dice. The effect may just be "something happens." But many moves involve uncertainty or hard choices, and that's where the dice come in.

When creating a move with a roll, remember the basic structure of move results (Page 78). On a 10+, the player succeeds with little or no cost. You may instead offer some cost in exchange for an even stronger success. On a 7-9, they may succeed, but there will be a strong cost. Alternately, you can offer them a choice between succeeding at a cost or failing gracefully. Most of the time, you don't need to establish a result on a 6-; you always get to make a GM move when they fail. However, if you think the outcome of failure doesn't fit into an existing GM move, go ahead and spell it out.



Fronts

Fronts describe the enemies, dangers, and possible dooms that make up your campaign. You prepare fronts so that you have the tools you need to keep play moving forward. By the time you finish the first session of your campaign, you are already on your way to creating a number of fronts. “Fronts” harkens to the idea of the fronts of a war: they’re dangerous, exciting, and there’s usually more than one of them at any one time.

You make your fronts between sessions. The work you put in away from the table will make the play at the table possible. You should adjust your fronts in response to what your players do, but the bulk of the process will happen when you are alone, thinking up new ways to make the character’s lives epic and dangerous.

You’ve already come up with a few issues at the start of the campaign, during holdfast creation. When you create fronts, draw upon those issues. Fronts will help you organize your thoughts about how these issues may progress and how the players can interact with them. When you’re at the table, you can look at your fronts to get an idea about where to go next.

CREATING FRONTS

Putting a front together follows these simple steps:

1. Choose an issue, if one would make an exciting front.
2. Create 2-3 dangers.
3. Create a doom for each danger.
4. Add portents that signal the dooms, 2-4 for the entire front.
5. Write 1-3 questions that set the stakes for the characters.
6. Create a list of characters important to the front.

DANGERS

Dangers are the tangible threats in each front. Some can be dealt with directly. These are the villains to be thwarted or the monsters to be slain. Others are more abstract, like an unnatural winter caused by fell magics.

They must be endured until a solution is discovered.

There may be many dangers that could apply to a given front, but you should limit yourself to no more than 3. Keeping the number small lets you focus on what's really important. It also keeps you from overwhelming the players and making the adventure feel hopeless.

Every danger has an **impulse** that turns a passive obstacle into an active threat. For a creature, this will drive its behavior. For more abstract dangers, the impulse serves as a guideline for you as the GM. The impulse is a process, something that can continue in stages over the course of an adventure.

Each danger will have a **doom**, a consequence which will occur if the danger is left unchecked. The doom is the ultimate expression of the danger's impulse: the completion of the villain's goals or the final devastation from a disaster.

To play fair, you need to let the players know the doom is coming. The signs of an impending doom are called **portents**. These are events or scene elements that you weave in so the players know that bad stuff is happening. Come up with one or two portents for each danger or two to four overall.

STAKES

Stakes are questions you want to answer as the adventure plays out. This goes back to your agenda: "Play to find out what happens." Stakes are a reminder of what you're playing for.

Stakes should be concrete. "Will a hero sacrifice their hand to rebind Fenrir?" is a solid stake. It is something that could happen "on screen."

A front won't matter if it doesn't affect the characters somehow. Usually, impending dooms are enough to motivate epic heroes, but you should make a deeper connection whenever possible. The outcome of a stake should clearly affect the characters and the world.

Stakes are your way of setting down something you want to explore and letting your players do the exploring. Once you've written the stakes down, the entire group gets to see how they play out.

DESCRIPTION AND CAST

Once you've got the dangers and stakes sorted out, you can write a short description that sums up the front. This should be short, just something to jog your memory when you get back to the table.

Also write down any characters that are important to the front. If there's a villain as part of one of the dangers, give them a name and a few physical features or quirks. You only need one or two details for any character. Leave room to fill in more as you play.

RESOLVING A FRONT

Resolving a front is usually straightforward, although it shouldn't be easy in the fiction. When all the dangers have either been averted or progressed to their dooms, the front is resolved. The characters have emerged victorious, in whole or in part, or they were tragically defeated.

When you resolve a front, you can set it aside. There may be elements of the front that carry over into others, depending on how the characters dealt with them. You can copy these to the new fronts or just keep your old notes to reference.

If the front was created around an issue from holdfast creation, and it is now resolved, go back to your map and make changes. The location associated with the issue may no longer be as important to the campaign. You may want to redraw it or add some element or note indicating that the issue was resolved. Clearing up the issues you created at the beginning of the campaign is a fine way to mark your progress.



Enemies

Enemies are the characters, monsters, constructs, and other physical, active opponents the characters face during their adventures. Being a game of epic heroes, many of these enemies will try to kill the characters. The characters are hardy and resourceful, and they are good at defending themselves.

Keep in mind the idea of scale that determines what moves characters can make against enemies. Each enemy in this chapter is presented as if they were a worthy foe (Deal Death, Page 16). But the relative strength of an enemy depends on many factors within the fiction, and different archetypes may face the same enemy on different footing. The GM may decide that a barbarian facing a number of disorganized, poorly equipped J'goll raiders will use Drive Them Before You. But if the J'goll have good weapons and are using the desert terrain to their advantage, the barbarian will need to Deal Death. And a goði facing just one expert raider on their own will find them more than worthy.

Enemies have tags that describe them and their abilities. They also possess a certain number of wounds; when they have suffered this many wounds, they are eliminated. An enemy will possess some kind of attack, a move that inflict wounds, with the same tags characters have on their attacks. They also have a few other moves they can make in the right circumstances.

Even when a character can use Drive Them Before You on a collection of unworthy opponents, the GM still gets to make a move. This can include an enemy move or attack. The entire mob is dangerous enough to get one good hit in or otherwise affect the character, even as they are taken out in large numbers.

After a battle, the players may collect their enemies' gear for their own use or profit. Epic tales are not the place for crass looting, but they do occasionally feature a hero earning a powerful item from a vanquished foe. You may allow a player to take an item from a fallen enemy with their next advancement, as if it were advanced gear. Tell them what the item does, and decide how much weight it has, using the enemy's description and other advanced gear as a guide.

PEOPLES OF MIDGARD

The people of the Land are not united in peace. Holdfasts war with holdfasts over resources, land, and other less noble reasons. The skills of the warrior are highly prized; even farmers learn to fight.

BEAR-CLAN WARRIOR

PROTECTION

1

WOUNDS

6

WEAPON

Maul (Close, Deadly 2, Forceful)

This mighty warrior leads from the front, charging into battle with a heavy maul. A Bear is a ferocious defender, willing to die to protect what they love. They would much rather dispatch what threatens it, though.

- ◆ Bellow mightily
- ◆ Defend what's dear

DRAGON-CLAN WARRIOR

PROTECTION

2

WOUNDS

5

WEAPON

Longsax (Close, Deadly I)

“He had a fire inside him so hot, I swear I saw it in his breath. His blade swung wide, and he was rarely in the right mind to care who it caught. When the red mist took him, he had no friends, only victims.”

- ◆ Fly into a rage
- ◆ Frighten all around you

HAMMER-CLAN CRAFTSMAN

PROTECTION

0

WOUNDS

3

WEAPON

Hammer (Hand)

“I loathe destruction. I would much rather build something than tear it down. So when I see you coming, bent on destroying what me and mine have created, well, that just makes me mad. You may kill me today, but I will die defending what I’ve lived for.”

- ◆ Sunder weapon

HORSE-CLAN SCOUT

PROTECTION

0

WOUNDS

5

WEAPON

Longbow (Far, ignores I Protection)

A scout of the Horse clan is not likely to stay and fight. Instead, they will quietly observe, then ride off to report what they saw to the ones they serve. When they must fight, they do so at range, allowing more avenues of escape.

- ◆ Flee with haste

Ox-Clan Conscript

PROTECTION 0

WOUNDS 3

WEAPON **Spear** (Reach)

"This land is mine. I tilled it. I tend it. I will water it with my blood if I must. You will not move me from it."

- ◆ Stand your ground

Raven-Clan Sage

PROTECTION 1

WOUNDS 4

WEAPON **Mastered Blade** (Close, Deadly I, ignores I Protection)

Ravens seek to master whatever pursuits they explore. From warfare to politics to magic, a Raven does nothing by half. And woe be to anyone who stands between a Raven and their goal.

- ◆ Call on the runes
- ◆ Grant an unsettling vision
- ◆ Utter a curse

Snake-Clan Rogue

PROTECTION 0

WOUNDS 4

WEAPON **A Dagger in the Dark** (Hand, Deadly I)

"You are among friends. What could you possibly have to fear?"

- ◆ Steal something valuable

Sparrow-Clan Skald

PROTECTION 0

WOUNDS 4

WEAPON **Short bow** (Near)

The traveling skalds of the Sparrow clan make for fine allies and subtle enemies. They possess intimate knowledge of many holdfasts, and they have been known to barter their secrets. You never know who owes one a favor or who has earned their ire.

- ◆ Recite a moving poem
- ◆ Whisper in the right ear

WOLF-CLAN WARRIOR

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	5
WEAPON	Axe (Close, Deadly 1)

You never face just one wolf. Even if you catch one alone, they have an almost unnatural gift for summoning more of their kind. And together, they are deadlier than forces twice their size.

- ◆ Fight in a pack
- ◆ Howl for help

BONEBONDED RIVAL

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	5
WEAPON	Rune-carved Spear (Reach, Thrown, ignores 2 Protection, Forceful while Giant)

BONEBONDED RIVAL (PILOTED WHILE GIANT)

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	5

“I didn’t believe it was possible. The enemy’s champion strode alone onto the field of battle, armed only with a spear and clad in furs. Then she reached down, and from the ground, she drew up a skeleton taller than the Jarl’s great hall. Wreathed in fire, she rose into the air surrounded by bones. It was then I knew the tales were true.”

- ◆ Draw the bones from the Earth
- ◆ Consult the ancient



FACES OF NEIGHBORING LANDS

As far as its people are concerned, the Land is the center of the world. But it's a big world, and there are a lot of people outside of Midgard. Here are just a few that characters may encounter.

<i>J'GOLL ASSASSIN</i>	
PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	5
WEAPON	Hidden Dagger (Hand, Thrown, Deadly 1)
<p>The Assassins are a hidden society formed centuries ago in the mountains of northeastern J'goll, where they maintain a nigh-impenetrable fortress. Masters of disguise and misdirection, the Assassins kill for money, for honor, and for their own arcane purposes. Few outside J'goll know they exist, a fact more than one has used to great advantage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Inflict poison◆ Vanish from sight	

<i>J'GOLL RAIDER</i>	
PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	4
WEAPON	Horse bow (Far, Deadly 1, ignores 1 Protection)
<p>The nomad tribes of J'goll are highly mobile, able to slip in and out of the desert in the blink of an eye. These raiders descend on caravans and unprotected towns, stripping them of everything they can carry. Some are known to consort with djinn, capricious spirits of smokeless fire, which they summon to their aid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Appear without warning◆ Summon desert spirits	

<i>MIST ISLES DRUID</i>	
PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	4
WEAPON	Ogham-scribed Staff (Close, Deadly 1, ignores 1 Protection)

The Druids are the religious leaders of the Mist Isles. They pass on the accumulated knowledge of their people verbally; each Druid must memorize their master's teachings unaided. The Druids' runes are called ogham, an ancient language they claim comes from the trees themselves. Wherever it came from, it gives the Druids great power.

- ◆ Cast a spell
- ◆ Spell out doom

MIST ISLES WARRIOR

PROTECTION	2
WOUNDS	6
WEAPON	Massive Broadsword (Close, Deadly 2, Forceful)

Stories say that the warriors of the Isles of Mist fight naked, covered in blue dye. Some do, but not all. Most wear armor and carry heavy blades that can cleave through an average shield.

- ◆ CHARGE!
- ◆ Splinter and shatter

PETRUVIAN CENTURION

PROTECTION	3
WOUNDS	5
WEAPON	Gladius (Close, Deadly 2)

The Centurion leads a centuria, consisting of 80 men. Some are elevated for political reasons, but many rise to their position by displaying great valor and prowess in battle. The Petruvian Centurion is among the most fearsome opponents you will ever face.

- ◆ Inspire the troops

PETRUVIAN LEGIONARIES

PROTECTION	2
WOUNDS	6
WEAPON	Gladius (Close, Deadly 1)

A single Petruvian soldier is not much of a threat, but the Legions are the most organized fighting force in the world. Eight men form a contubernium, ten contubernia form a centuria, and so on. The Legions are disciplined, well supplied, and relentless.

- ◆ Advance inexorably
- ◆ Form a wall

NATIVES OF THE NINE WORLDS

There are many other peoples among the Nine Worlds. The most commonly encountered in Midgard are the Duergar (or dwarfs) and the elves.

DUERGAR MACHINIST

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	4
WEAPON	Powered Fist (Hand, Deadly 2, Forceful)

The Duergar have been building for centuries in anticipation of a coming war on Midgard. Much of this activity has gone into their towering destroyers, but some Duergar have turned their efforts toward more personal weaponry. This tinkerer has many strange toys that they are hoping to try out on unsuspecting humans.

- ◆ Construct contraption
- ◆ Throw explosives

DUERGAR SOLDIER

PROTECTION	2
WOUNDS	5
WEAPON	Axe (Close, Deadly 1)

Historically, Duergar have only come to Midgard in search of one resource: slaves. They pour out of the secret roads from Svartalfheim and swarm a human town, dragging anyone they can back to work in their mines. Whoever resists dies under the stroke of the axe.

- ◆ Shackle
- ◆ Swarm

ELF SCOUT

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	4
WEAPON	Elven bow (Far, Deadly 2)

Elves visit Midgard for many reasons, but they avoid the eyes of humans whenever they can. Their scouts are known for their ability to blend into their surroundings. The elves only appear when they want to, often to dance in hidden glades. Humans who witness elves dancing may find they have lost years in what felt like mere moments.

- ◆ Disappear in nature
- ◆ Play tricks on the unwary

ELF WARRIOR

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	6
WEAPON	Flashing blade (Close, Deadly 2, ignores 1 Protection)

The elves of Alfheim are fickle. Some make treaties with human Jarls. Others follow the trods in search of battle. Their warriors are faster, stronger, and more resilient than humans. It is their pride that proves their greatest weakness.

- ◆ Walk without weight
- ◆ Weave subtle magics



MONSTERS AND MACHINES

These creatures and constructs are often quite hostile to humans. Some are natural beings, while others are machines or even the undead. All are powerful and dangerous.

DRAUGR	
PROTECTION	2
WOUNDS	4
WEAPON	Heavy Blow (Hand, Deadly 1)
<p>A draugr is a corpse risen from the dead to protect a location, often a tomb, or simply to wreak havoc on the living. They possess incredible strength, and they carry the stink of the grave with them. They can also increase their own size; an enlarged draugr can swallow a grown person whole. Many draugr possess different magical abilities such as shapeshifting, control over the weather, and the ability to see the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Grow to giant size ◆ Inflict madness ◆ Cast an uncanny spell 	

DWARVEN DESTROYER (GIANT, PILOTED)	
PROTECTION	2
WOUNDS	5
WEAPON	Metal Claws, Metal Teeth (Close, Reach, Deadly 2, Forceful)
<p><i>"Believe me or don't, but I saw it. Taller than the trees, a giant made of metal. It belched smoke and fire, and with every step it screamed. And I swear, just before it destroyed my house, I saw faces inside it. Hideous, ugly faces. Dwarves, they were. And they were laughing."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Destroy the works of humanity ◆ Sow terror 	

JOTUNN

PROTECTION	2
WOUNDS	6
WEAPON	Great Fists (Close, Deadly 3, Forceful)

The giants of Jotunheim once visited Midgard, though there are few alive that claim to have seen one. Were a living giant to walk the Land again, no mortal warrior could stop it. If one is seen, the people will pray that stories of the Bonebonded are true.

- ◆ Hurl boulders
- ◆ Flatten buildings
- ◆ Stir up storms

TROLL

PROTECTION	1
WOUNDS	4
WEAPON	Great club (Close, Forceful)

Trolls are beings that inhabit the wild places, away from human civilization. They vary in size from smaller than a child to taller and broader than great boulders. All trolls are powerful, as they must be living in such harsh environs. They dislike humans, preferring only the company of their own kind. Some can be reasoned with, while others will attack on sight. Some trolls even know magic, and will curse trespassers.

- ◆ Punish invaders
- ◆ Draw on the power of the land



IRON EDDA WORLD OF METAL & BONE

NAME

DESCRIPTION

ARM

EYE

HEART

TONGUE

DEADLY

PROTECTION

FERð

MOVES

ORIGIN

VOW

BONDS

CLASS

WOUNDS

XP

CAMPAIGN FRONTS

CAST

STAKES

DANGER

TYPE:

IMPENDING DOOM:

GRIM PORTENTS:

DANGER

TYPE:

IMPENDING DOOM:

GRIM PORTENTS:

DANGER

TYPE:

IMPENDING DOOM:

GRIM PORTENTS:

DANGER

TYPE:

IMPENDING DOOM:

GRIM PORTENTS: