



Chapter 1

Another World Another Time



Endragon is a distinctive roleplaying game.

The rules are focused and fit into a simple system designed to promote a singular gaming experience. The setting

may seem strange at first, but you only need to know the rules of knighthood, and you will be as knowledgeable as the heroes of old.

This is Another World.

The medieval Britain of history, inherent in the old literature, was a dismal, violent, and cruel place, with outdated standards of behavior. Setting the game in this world was a deliberate choice, for alongside the dark overtones comes hope for a brighter tomorrow.

In the campaign, the Gamemaster paints a harsh background as the reality within which

the characters move. Initially, the Gamemaster's characters are merciless and brutal. Player-knights may choose to remain in that unenlightened realm of history—this kind of behavior does not penalize them, but neither rewards them. But they also have a choice to join the fight to improve the world. Their actions can stand as shining lights of exceptional behavior, breaking the old ways, and preparing for a better realm.

The story of King Arthur is about the struggle to improve life. With his faithful knights, he manifests the dream of a better world. The game dramatizes this heroic effort in its play. Great rewards go to those who strive to improve the kingdom.

King Arthur changes the world, slowly to be sure, but in general for the better. Bloodthirsty warlords, selfish sorcerers, and even the environment itself in the form of enchanted woods and forbidden wastelands, all conspire against these changes. The Player-knights are an important part of the struggle for the betterment of Britain.



Britannia in the time of Arthur Pendragon



Ireland

THE NORTH

CUMBRIA

CAMBRIA

LOGRES

CORNWALL

Kingdoms of France

For Players & Gamemasters

Players and Gamemasters alike may read this book. It presents an overview of the customs and the law of the land, the expectations and role of knights in society, the importance of Glory and Honor, how Traits and Passions work in the game, and the core game mechanics of combat and task resolution, Winter Phase, and Solo Scenarios.

The improvements in the lives of women and commoners are hallmarks of Arthur's efforts. Ladies make great gains both socially and legally over the course of his reign. Women may become knights if they wish, gain the power to choose their own husbands, and, whether knight or noblewoman, eventually may inherit their due estates and take care of them without a warden. Commoners are among King Arthur's earliest supporters, and he even forms Parliament to give them a place to exercise their powers alongside the clergy and lords.

The Gamemaster decides how much resistance hinders these changes. You may, of course, decide on presenting a fantasy realm that is better than our modern world, with fairness, justice, and goodwill everywhere. However, that attitude significantly alters the stories and what the stories mean. The best balance comes when the world is at first medieval, reactionary, and reluctant to change; yet slowly yields under the influence of the Player-knights and their allies in Arthur's court, working to create a luminous realm.

Customs of the Realm

The system of government, social classes, customs, and law in Arthurian society is called feudalism. The king controls the government with the aid of his household and sheriffs, who oversee the commoners, while the clergy sees to the spiritual well-being of all. Social class ranks follow a hierarchy of the king, his barons, knights, and, finally, peasants at the bottom. Customs are ancient, totally oral traditions protecting the specific rights of each social class, while the king's law works to maintain those rules and punish whoever breaks them.

Arthurian Britain is a feudal society, where rights and authority flow from the king based on ancient custom and written law.

The Oath of Chivalry

After Arthur promulgates the concept of chivalry in the year 511, all Chivalrous Knights take the following oath as a way of announcing their ideal to the world:

"I [name], hereby swear to protect the widow, the orphan, the poor; not to slay a vanquished and defenseless adversary; not to take part in a false judgment or treason, or to withdraw if it cannot be prevented; to never give evil counsel to a lady; to help, if possible, a fellow being in distress."

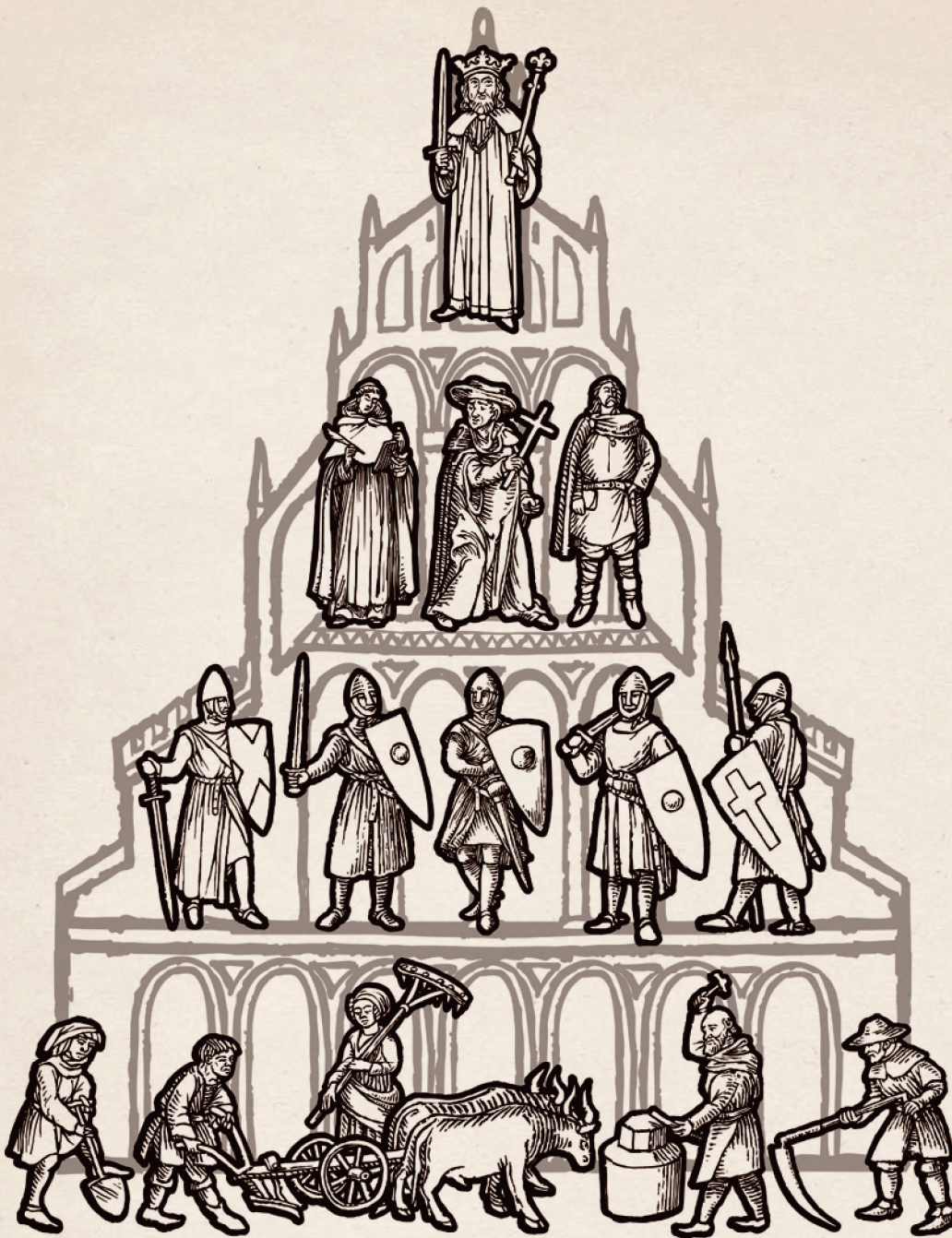
Everything belongs to the king. All rights derive from him. He has distributed some of his rights and responsibilities among his lords, who, in turn, may distribute some rights to rule to their knights. All obligations are personal, dependent upon the relationship between a lord and his follower. The followers swear to follow the lord and afterward are known as vassals of that lord.

The lord ensures the loyalty of his favored followers by giving them land, i.e., a benefit (*beneficium*), the single most valuable commodity in the realm. To receive gold is a lesser honor since gold can bribe even a peasant. But a transfer of land is sacred.

So long as the landholder performs their obligations, then the benefits are legally theirs, and no one can justly take them away. Typically, a knight's obligations are to loyally serve in their lord's military campaigns for forty days a year and to advise their lord on important matters. In return, the lord owes the vassal protection, sustenance, and livelihood. Thus, there is a non-equal but reciprocal agreement between lord and vassal.

If the knight violates their sworn loyalty, they can lose the land, which returns to the lord. Typical reasons for land to revert to the lord are: treason, failure to support the lord, or the lack of an heir when the grant holder dies.

Ranks of feudal vassalage begin with those closest to the king, both in friendship and wealth. In **Pendragon**, they are the British kings outside Logres, lords, and office holders. In turn, these lords appoint their own vassals. Knights are the next-to-last class of noble vassals, with squires,



knights-in-training, and esquires as a single class beneath knights. Knights may hold their land from the king, a great lord, a baron, or even from a higher-ranking knight, called a banneret.

Church officials and monasteries also rely upon land grants in return for support, holding their properties as vassals of the king, but in a peculiarly special relationship. Bishops and abbots are royal vassals with the title of baron, and have their own knights to protect them,

but everything except treason is outside royal authority and subject only to their canon law.

Simply holding an office in the church does not guarantee moral behavior.

Knights

Starting Player-knights begin as young adults who are about to realize or have just attained their lifetime goal of taking the oath of knighthood. Each knight is an immensely powerful and

Everyone starts the game on the cusp of knighthood.

Chapter 1: Another World Another Time

privileged person in a world where most people are downtrodden commoners whose ancestors long ago traded their freedom for safety. Knights are their protectors, with a sacred duty to spend—or even sacrifice—their life on behalf of others.

Knights are born into privilege, and commoners are born into servitude. No one questions this. Everyone obeys this. Knights live off the labor of the commoners and, although entirely dependent upon that labor, come no closer to it than ordering commoners around and making sure they work hard. Custom forbids knights to labor, whether in farming or business, and they risk losing their revered status if they do.

Knights are warriors whose sole duty is to protect their lords, commoners, clergy, and noblewomen. Knights have armor, weapons, and powerful horses to perform their dangerous job. They live in well-protected castles or halls; they eat well, with plenty of meat, and drink wine or ale. They live by a code of honor that dominates their every action and whose loss would break them from their noble status down to that of a commoner.

Knights are not entirely free. They must conform to custom and law. Most importantly, every knight is honor-bound to obey their liege, a higher-ranking lord who interprets that custom and law for their underlings. To disobey one's lord is to destroy a knight's honor. To speak back to the lord is dangerous, even if they have ordered a heinous crime to be committed. A knight's primary duty is to faultlessly obey their lord, even superseding the protection of the weak. At the start of Arthur's reign, wicked lords and their duty-bound knights do much evil across the land; the Boy King begins changing this dynamic by introducing Chivalry and the idea that knights and lords must always strive to do what is good for society at large.

THE MEASURE OF A KNIGHT

The measure of a knight's greatness is their Glory, a combination of renown, reputation, prestige, position, fame, and infamy. It reveals the magnitude of a knight's accumulated deeds. Nothing is important to a knight if it does not contribute to their Glory.

Honor is a measure of a knight's qualities: Their integrity, reliability, decency, and morality. Glory without Honor is the measure of a bad knight.

Only knights and other combatants have Glory, and only knights, lords, and ladies have Honor.

FEMALE KNIGHTS

Knights in **Pendragon** may be of any gender.

In **Pendragon**, “knight” is a gender-neutral term suitable for both women and men who have undergone a ceremony of knighting and taken up a life at arms. If something concerning just one gender comes up in the text, then you will find the gendered terms “male knight” or “female knight” as specifications. The correct honorific to address a female knight is “Dame,” which is equivalent to the male knight's “Sir.” Thus, Dame Briant is a knight, with all the knight's privileges and obligations.

The rights of the female knight go beyond simple fighting. Her role encompasses all the privileges of knighthood: she is the head of her household and family, inherits the family name, arms, and armament, and the right to pass them on to her heiress or heir. If she marries a male knight, then they both have knightly rights and share responsibilities according to however they or their liege sees fit.

Other gender-related issues may come up as well, depending on how the Gamemaster and Players wish to construct the social and gender roles in their version of Arthur's Britain. The important rule is that everyone at the table is comfortable and having fun.

WHAT KNIGHTS DO

Following is a brief description of the primary responsibilities of knights as combatants, and the day-to-day, mundane lives of household knights, the default Player-knights.

Responsibilities

Every knight has three responsibilities: *auxilium*, *consilium*, and aids.

Auxilium, the first responsibility of a knight, is to be a soldier for their lord, obeying every command. The loyal knight must wield their sword in battle and on quest, facing death without

Female knights have always been a part of the Pendragon game experience. It is up to each group to decide how common they are in their version of Arthur's Britain. The default assumption is that about one in twenty knights are women, though this varies by region and kingdom.



cowardice. The knight must provide troops when called for and attend to any other military duties their lord asks of them.

Consilium, the second responsibility, obliges the knight to offer their person in service to their lord. This may come in the form of advice given when asked for, serving as a personal guard, standing in as a hostage for the lord, or providing their children as squires for training at the lord's court.

Aids, the third responsibility, covers the knight's financial obligations to their lord, most notably in the form of paying the lord's ransom in the event of capture. Other aids include knighting of the lord's firstborn or helping to pay for the lord's marriage.

The obligation of obedience cannot be stressed enough. If the lord commands a knight to do anything, the knight must jump to it. That is an essential part of the feudal bond. Knights pledged to an evil lord do evil things, but ironically, do so because they are good, loyal, obedient knights. If their lord dies, they are obviously freed from their oaths and may feel some measure of relief—if they do not, they are as wicked as their lord!

As King Arthur's benevolence spreads over the kingdom, a knight's responsibilities extend to include protecting all non-martial women, the weak and powerless (including commoners), and the church. These new responsibilities remain a personal choice, not a hard-and-fast requirement.

Daily Life

The daily schedule in a castle or manor hall follows the cycles of nature. Everyone rises around dawn, washes, dresses, and—if they are spiritually oriented—prays. Breakfast follows at midmorning.

First, everyone clears the great hall of blankets and other personal goods. Servants place the boards where knights slept last night upon trestles to make tables, forming long rows whose front ends are perpendicular to the raised dais at the front of the hall, where the lord sits. Benches are brought from the sides of the hall and set up on either side of the tables. The seating order is fixed, with those most honored closest to the front by the high table.

The officers of the castle enter from their private quarters and take their places at the high table. The last to enter is the lord. If the lord is married, their spouse may be beside them; for a noblewoman, her female staff is present among the other servants.

Squires, or staff from the kitchen, are normally tasked to serve knights. During the meal, people both enjoy congenial conversation and discuss plans for the day. Afterward, servants clear the hall, putting the trestles and boards to the side.

The morning business takes place as the lord or officers tell the knights their duties for the day. A knight's daily tasks include one or more of the following: guarding their liege, riding patrol, standing sentinel, weapons practice, battle maneuver practice, hunting from horseback, caring for their horses, escorting someone to a distant site, instructing and training their squire, and anything else the liege asks of the knight.

A knight has little spare time but can squeeze in moments of conversation, gossip, and news from visitors at court between tasks or when doing something that does not require their entire attention.

Around midday, a light meal is available, followed by a break during which off-duty knights may sleep, play games, or engage in other private activities. Then the afternoon business occurs, much like in the morning.

Dinner takes place late in the afternoon. Servants again set up tables and bring out food, placing it at the center of the tables. Knightly fare includes meat at each meal, a hollowed-out loaf of crusty bread as a bowl, or a "plate" of stale bread, cheese, and perhaps some vegetables. Meat roasting follows recipes that create a tasty meal from local fare. Fruits and dainties comprise dessert for the evening meal. Ale is the usual drink, while the liege and favored advisors get wine.

Entertainment follows, with torches or rushlights providing lighting after sunset. In private quarters, candles may replace torches, but they are unsuitable for general lighting. Knights keep straw-filled mattresses and blankets rolled up by their personal chest of possessions that are lined up around the room's edges.

Another day has ended.



Chapter 2

The Game System



Pendragon uses a single mechanic for all task resolutions, and another mechanic to determine damage given and taken.

Concepts

Before discussing the rules of the game, it is necessary to discuss core concepts and terminology.

DICE

Pendragon uses two types of dice: the common six-sided and the well-known twenty-sided ones. Six-sided dice determine damage and generate certain randomized outcomes. A twenty-sided die determines success or failure for all Statistic tests. Both can provide results on random tables. Ideally, you should roll all the necessary dice at the same time when indicated.

*To play **Pendragon** you will need at least one twenty-sided die and a half-dozen six-sided dice.*

Here are some standard terms and notations describing dice use in the game:

- ✦ D designates the number and type of dice to be rolled. The number to the left of the D tells how many individual dice are rolled; the number to the right, how many sides the die has. Thus, “ $5D6$ ” indicates a roll of five six-sided dice.
- ✦ $1D20$ indicates a single twenty-sided die.
- ✦ $1D3$ indicates the roll of a six-sided die, where a roll of 1–2 counts as a 1, 3–4 counts as a 2, and 5–6 counts as a 3.
- ✦ $+x$ indicates a number (x) to add to the die roll result, such as +2 being added to sword damage. In this instance, a character’s Damage Characteristic with a sword is written as $5D6+2$.

STATISTIC

Statistics quantify the qualities of your character. Traits, Passions, Characteristics, Skills, Glory, and Armor, Parry, and Shield Protection are all Statistics. Each has a numerical value.

Statistic values nearly always range between 1–20.

You always “roll” against a Statistic. If you succeed, you might “check” it by placing a check mark on your sheet.

*In **Pendragon**, it is always preferable to roll as high as possible without exceeding your target value, a concept similar to the card game Blackjack.*

VALUE

Any number that quantifies a Statistic is its value. For example, a knight’s Courtesy Skill has a *value* of 6; the sum of the *values* for a Trait pair is always 20. A value might go up or down over time or receive a modifier for a single die roll. Values are recorded next to each Statistic (e.g., Valorous 16, Sword 15, etc.). Values are useful to determine the outcome of opposed and unopposed rolls.

Rounding Numbers

Values and die outcomes are always rounded to the nearest whole number.

ROLL & CHECK

It is important to understand the difference between the words “roll” and “check,” for they each have distinctive meanings in the game.

To roll means to roll the designated die or dice to generate a random number.

To check means to place an experience check mark in the box next to the indicated Statistic on the character sheet. Checks serve as a reminder to test for improvement of the Statistic during the Winter Phase.

For example, the Gamemaster might say, “Roll your Chaste Trait, and if you succeed, check it.”

RESOLVING SUCCESS & FAILURE

A single method is used to determine the success or failure of any action in the game, whether a knight is riding a horse, fighting an enemy, seducing a lover, attempting a feat of strength, or testing their own virtues.

Most things a character does are automatically successful. The Player simply tells the Gamemaster what their character is doing, such as, “My knight walks up the aisle towards the throne,” or, “I ride out of the castle to my manor.” Likewise, Gamemaster characters may execute any number of actions without needing to roll.

However, sometimes a character attempts actions that require skill, discipline, or talent, or is acted upon by an outside force, which therefore might not succeed. During such critical times, the Gamemaster or Players must make dice rolls for their characters to determine success or failure. Rolls are also required whenever a



Chapter 2: The Game System

character attempts to do something under stress or otherwise acts without deliberate forethought.

Unopposed Resolution

Unopposed resolution rolls happen when a character must test their own abilities but is not contesting these abilities against anyone else. The Player or the Gamemaster rolls directly against the character's pertinent Statistic value using a single twenty-sided die.

***Example:** Sir Clarion tries hard to identify the source of some rustling in the trees above. This calls for using his Awareness Skill. Sir Clarion's Player makes an unopposed Awareness roll and gets a 12, which is higher than his Awareness value of 5, and so he fails. Without warning (since Sir Clarion failed to hear him), a bandit on a vine swings down from a tree and attempts to knock the knight off his horse.*

Success

A success occurs when the die roll is less than the value of the Statistic being tested.

In general, whenever the Gamemaster asks for a roll, and the result is a success that has great significance for a character or the adventure, then the Gamemaster may grant an experience check to the Statistic being tested. A Player simply saying they are going to make a roll does not automatically warrant a check for success.

Critical Success

A critical success, or "critical," is when a die roll exactly matches the Statistic value. A roll of 17 for a character with Charge 17 is a critical success. The character has achieved the ultimate success with a critical and usually gets some added benefits beyond a success.

Unopposed rolls generate one of four outcomes—critical success, success, failure, or fumble.

Opposed rolls generate one of four outcomes—win, loss, partial success, or tie.



Always compare the roll against the final, modified value of the Statistic. A Skill with a value of 6, for example, receives a +5 modifier for a final value of 11; a die result of 11 now scores a critical, while a result of 6 (normally a critical) counts as a regular success.

Failure

A failure occurs when the die roll is greater than the value of the Statistic being tested. The intended action does not succeed, the Trait or Passion is not activated.

Fumble

A fumble occurs whenever a character rolls a natural 20 *unless* the Statistic value is 20 (in which case, a result of 20 becomes a critical success). A Statistic value of 20 has no chance of a fumble.

A fumble is a disastrous stroke of bad luck resulting in such things as dropping or breaking a weapon during combat or coughing or cursing in the midst of a romantic ballad. The Gamemaster relates the specific effect of a fumbled roll based on the guidelines provided in the following chapters.

A fumble is not an excuse for the Gamemaster to inflict incessant grief on their Players. The Gamemaster who insists that every fumble means a major disaster soon spoils the game for everyone.

Opposed Resolution

Opposed resolution rolls happen in the same manner as unopposed rolls, but the Player must compare their roll against the outcome of another roll, either against a fixed value or an opponent's Statistic. To win, the Player must succeed with their own roll yet also roll a higher number than that of the opposing Player or Gamemaster. A common example of opposed resolution is melee combat.

Opposed resolution may result in either a winner and loser, a tie, a winner and a partial success, or two losers.

***Example:** To continue from the earlier example, having kept his seat, Sir Clarion sees another bandit charging on horseback and draws his sword. A fight ensues; the robber has Sword 12, and Sir Clarion has Sword 15. In the first*

round, the robber rolls a 13 and fails, but Sir Clarion succeeds with a roll of 1. Sir Clarion is the winner and inflicts damage on the robber.

In the next round, Sir Clarion rolls a 12, the robber an 11. Both succeed this time, but Sir Clarion wins since his roll is higher. Although the loser in this round, the robber has a partial success, and his shield grants him protection.

Winner

If you roll equal to or less than your Statistic value and higher than the roll of your opponent, then you are the winner of the opposed resolution.

A critical success beats any other outcome in an opposed resolution and guarantees a win (or at least a tie). This is true even if a character with a Statistic of 1 rolls a 1 because all critical successes are equal and greater than a success.

Loser

If you roll greater than your Statistic value, you are the loser of the opposed resolution. Both parties involved may lose (mutual failure).

Partial Success

A partial success occurs when a roll is successful (i.e., less than the Statistic value) and lower than the opponent's roll. Characters usually gain some minor benefit from a partial success.

Tie

A tie occurs when opponents both fail or succeed and roll exactly the same number. The value of a critical success is never counted—all criticals are equal; therefore, if both sides critical, it is a tie.

If both rolls are successful (critical or otherwise), then it is impossible to determine the winner. If both fail (or fumble), each suffers negative consequences. In any case, the opponents may roll again next round or choose other actions.

A tie result that is also a success in combat indicates that both combatants strike, with some special applications and exceptions. See **Chapter 6: Combat** for more details.

Modifiers

Modifiers are temporary bonuses or penalties to Statistic values. A bonus adjusts the values up, while a penalty brings values down. Modifiers are

given to Players or requested by them, depending on the situation in the game. The Gamemaster may grant or deny bonuses or penalties at their discretion.

Bonuses and penalties are always added or subtracted from Statistic values. The only time a resolution die roll is modified is when a critical bonus applies (see “**Values Greater Than 20**” on p. 12).

Trait & Passion Modifiers

Traits and Passions may be modified when the current situation affects a character's normal behavior or emotional state. For example, a character who has not eaten in days may get a -10 modifier to Temperate when presented with a tempting morsel from a strange witch in the woods. Note that all Trait modifiers are reflexive; in the preceding example, a +10 Indulgent modifier would balance the -10 Temperate modifier.

Characteristic Modifiers

Sometimes a Characteristic value may get a modifier. Usually, this comes in the form of a penalty due to some external restriction interfering with the character.

Damage Modifiers

Modifiers to the Damage Characteristic alter the number of points of damage done to a character by adding dice to or subtracting dice from the number rolled.

Many individual weapons give special damage modifiers due to their size or the opponent's type of protection. See **Chapter 7: Arms & Armor** for more details.

Skill Modifiers

Modifiers may adjust a character's Skill to reflect a particular situation. Skill modifiers make actions harder or easier. Most combat modifiers are Skill modifiers based on weapon types, position of combatants, etc. Skill modifiers affect a character's Skill value.

Example: In the same forest adventure described in previous pages, Sir Clarion is wary and again attempts to spot an ambush using his Awareness Skill of 5. This time the Player

Anytime you see a temporary bonus or penalty, remember that it always applies to the Statistic and not the dice roll

Chapter 2: The Game System

states that Sir Clarion is carefully scanning each tree near the trail for robbers before passing underneath. The Gamemaster permits Sir Clarion a +5 modifier to his Awareness value because treetops are indeed the favorite ambush spot for the local group of bandits; Sir Clarion's Awareness value becomes 10 for this roll. The Gamemaster tells the Player that Clarion is going to have to travel slower to be so cautious.

A few moments later, the Gamemaster (instead of the Player, since this is an inquiry) rolls for Sir Clarion and gets a 10, a critical success (given the +5 modifier). Sir Clarion spots two bandits lurking in a tree about a hundred yards ahead and quietly leaves the trail, bypassing them before they see him. The Gamemaster decides to grant a check to the knight's Awareness Skill.

Reflexive Modifiers

A reflexive modifier affects both values in an opposed resolution, giving a bonus to one and a penalty to the other. For example, a mounted knight gains a +5 bonus while attacking a foe on foot; the opponent, in turn, gets a -5 penalty for fighting versus a mounted character. This reflexive modifier is written as +5/-5.

Reflexive modifiers and other modifiers may be added together, sometimes canceling each other out.

Values Greater Than 20

With the exception of Characteristics, no Statistic value may ever exceed 20. However, situational modifiers or improvements during the Winter Phase may raise the effective value of a Statistic to greater than 20.

Any points in excess of 20 become the *critical bonus*. This bonus is shown as “(+x)” with the x-value added to the result of any relevant die roll. A modified die roll equaling or exceeding 20 counts as a critical success.

For instance, a knight with Sword 20 (+4) has a +4 critical bonus. If the Player rolls a 16, the final result is modified as 16+4 = 20, a critical success. Thus, the critical bonus increases the probability of rolling a critical success since, in the above case, the knight would score a critical on any roll for that Skill that is greater than or

equal to 16. The critical bonus also increases the odds of winning any given opposed roll, even if the roll is not a critical success, since it is always better to roll higher than your opponent.

Remember: All criticals are equal. Although the modified value of the die roll may be greater than 20, its result is simply a critical success. If a Player-knight's modified roll is 21, and his opponent has a modified roll of 30, both count as criticals, and two opposed criticals are always a tie.

Statistic modifiers or Inspiration from Passions may create a temporary critical bonus. If a modifier raises a value above 20, convert the difference from 20 into a critical bonus. For example, if your Sword Skill is normally 18 and you receive a +5 Height Advantage modifier, adding 5 to 18 yields 23. The difference between 23 and 20 then becomes a +3 critical bonus for Sword as long as the Height Advantage applies.

Values Less Than 1

A Statistic value may be temporarily reduced to zero or less. **Pendragon** does not use negative values, even if a modifier would reduce the value to a negative number. Instead, the Statistic value is simply counted as zero; as usual, a roll of 20 counts as a fumble.

In such circumstances, the character must still roll. Failure is automatic. However, the range of die roll results indicating a fumble increases by one point for every point below zero.

For example, a character with a Dancing Skill of 3 receives a -5 modifier. Although mathematically, the total value would be -2, their effective value is counted as zero, but their fumble range is now increased by two points, becoming 18-20.

Experience

One of the most exciting aspects of roleplaying games is watching characters grow and develop over time. In **Pendragon**, Player-knights become more powerful and adept through experience checks gained during adventures and through training during the Winter Phase.

EXPERIENCE CHECKS

Every Trait, Passion, and Skill has a checkbox () next to it. The Player checks off the box at

With the exception of Characteristics, Statistic values never exceed 20. Points in excess are called the “critical bonus” and are applied to the roll as a bonus—the only time in the game when a modifier applies to the dice roll!

If penalties reduce a Statistic's value below zero, it becomes more likely the character will fumble rather than simply fail.

Characters receive experience checks for rolling critical successes, fumbles, or significant successes. The Gamemaster may award checks at any time, even without a roll.

the Gamemaster's discretion or whenever the Player rolls a critical success.

The check reminds the Player to make an experience roll during the Winter Phase to determine if their character learned anything. See **Chapter 11: The Winter Phase** for more details.

Experience checks are not automatic whenever a roll is successful. The ability to award or deny an experience check is one of the key powers of the Gamemaster.

However, the Player-knight normally gains a check for a Statistic when:

- ✦ They roll a critical success. If characters do their best, learning is likely.
- ✦ They achieve success under significant circumstances.
- ✦ They roll a fumble. Learning from our greatest mistakes is a human characteristic.

The Gamemaster may also grant checks in response to Player actions. Not all checks are the result of a dice roll.

For example, Sir Avalloc is in love with Lady Done and announces that he will compose a love song in her honor. Sir Avalloc's Player writes a clever song and actually sings it to the group. The Gamemaster decides that Sir Avalloc succeeds and states that the Player may check the Compose Skill. Note that no roll was necessary here, only Player creativity and Gamemaster approval.

Checking Traits & Passions

The Gamemaster may sometimes tell the Player to check one of their character's Traits or Passions without having made a roll. This means that the character has displayed significant behavior in accordance with the Trait or Passion. It is not necessary that others have seen the behavior.

Characteristics

Five Characteristics quantify every character's physical qualities. Several Derived Characteristics are calculated from various combinations of the five Characteristics.

Size (SIZ): Measures a character's relative height and weight compared to others. It is also the threshold value for the Derived Characteristic called Knockdown; see **"Determining Knockdown"** on p. 35.



Dexterity (DEX): Measures a character's agility and nimbleness. DEX keeps a character upright or horsed and when there is a possibility of knockdown in combat.

Strength (STR): Measures a character's physical power and their ability to exert force or pressure on an object. STR helps determine the Derived Characteristics of Weapon Damage (a number of six-sided dice equal to STR+SIZ divided by six) and Brawling Damage (a flat number equal to STR+SIZ divided by six), as well as Movement Rate (equal to STR+DEX divided by two, plus five).

Constitution (CON): Measures health and vitality. CON is important in determining how much of a beating you can take and how quickly you recover. The Derived Characteristic called Major Wound is equal to your CON value; your Total Hit Points are equal to CON+SIZ, and your Unconscious value is equal to Total Hit Points divided by four. Lastly, your Healing Rate is equal to your CON value divided by five.

Appeal (APP): Measures the character's natural charm, presence, and physical attractiveness. As such, it often provokes deep responses in people, automatic and outside their conscious awareness. Gamemasters may roll it as a general method for gauging a character's impression on others.

USING CHARACTERISTICS IN THE GAME

Characteristics have many uses in the game of **Pendragon**. Most often, these uses are subtle or not immediately obvious. However, from time to time, characters may need to test their raw abilities. For this purpose, they roll against an appropriate Characteristic. In general, Characteristic rolls are simple resolutions, with no additional effects deriving from criticals or fumbles. Characteristic rolls sometimes include a modifier, most often due to environmental factors.

The Glory Roll

At times, the Gamemaster may ask the Player-knights to make a Glory Roll. This is a roll against the character's Glory divided by 1,000 (rounding to the nearest whole number). For example, if a character has 3,755 Glory, they must roll 4 or less ($3,755/1,000 = 3.755$, rounded up to 4) to succeed.

It is possible to have two knights make an opposed Glory Roll to resolve a minor social impasse at any time.

Movement

Movement and actions are abstracted for the purposes of quick resolution and simplicity. Different situations call for different approaches to the question of movement and speed in the game. The Gamemaster must be ready to settle specific situations, often by calling for opposed Movement Rate rolls.

MOVEMENT RATE

The average Movement Rate for humans is 16, or 1.6 yards/second or 3.2 miles per hour.

For some Combat Actions, the Movement Rate value is used in an opposed resolution roll against an opponent's action.

Squires

Pendragon allows Players to control and command minor characters in their entourage. Rich knights may command entire households of background characters and supporters, but all save the poorest of knights have one follower in common: their trusty squire!

Part of a knight's duty is to train young nobles in skills at arms, courtesy, and the other domains of knowledge necessary to bear the title of knight. Squires graduate from the rank of page around the age of fourteen and enter into a knight's service.

THE SQUIRE SKILL

Player-knights may call upon their own squire to make a Squire Roll for normal servant-type activities (making camp, tending horses, cleaning armor, etc.) and for combat-related duties. In combat, for instance, a Squire Roll is used for the "**Call Squire**" action (see p. 37).

If the Gamemaster decides the squire needs a specific Skill value (most commonly for the Skills of Awareness, Battle, Charge, Courtesy, First Aid, Horsemanship, Hunting, Recognize, Sword, or any other Weapon Skill), the default equals the squire's current age minus 11.

The Derived Characteristics are: Knockdown (SIZ), Major Wound (CON), Weapon Damage (STR + SIZ/6), Brawling Damage (STR + SIZ/6), Healing Rate (CON/5), Movement Rate ((STR + SIZ/2) + 5), Total Hit Points (SIZ + CON), and Unconscious (Total HP/4).