ULTIMO!

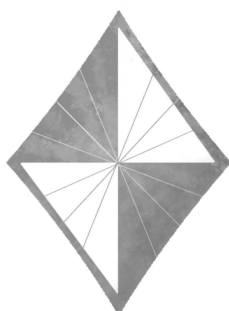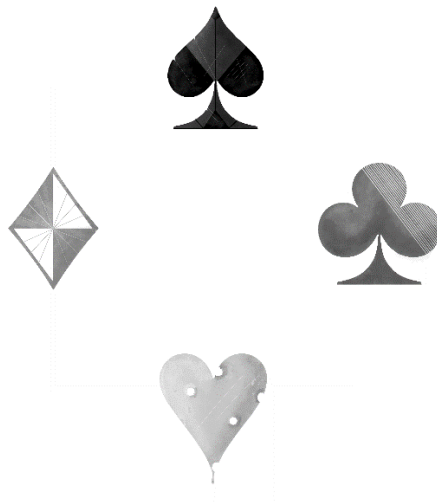## A High-Stakes Card-Based TTRPG System

by G.M. Harmon

ULTIMO

1st edition

Concept, Rules, and Art

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This is the basic version of Ultimo with generic rules that can be adapted to a variety of campaign settings. This version of the game is completely free for personal use.

Please join our Kickstarter, launching August 1st, 2023, to support the development of a full version of the handbook with additional rules, lore, and art in the Kings of the Heartland medieval fantasy campaign setting. Kickstarter rewards will include a pdf or print copy of Kings of the Heartland, 6 adventures, official cards and markers, art prints and maps, and more!

You can also support bitterdm's original webcomic, Song of Redsands at patreon.com/thebitterdm. If our Kickstarter is successful, we hope to develop more campaign settings for Ultimo, including Spades in the Sand, set in the Song of Redsands dystopian future; and Diamonds Over Sternwick, a gothic horror setting.

Table of Contents

ULTIMO is a narrative focused gaming system designed to give the players as much control over their fates as the Game Master and rolls of the dice have in other tabletop rpg systems.

In Ultimo, this is accomplished with a pick-and-choose resolution mechanic wherein players decide when they're going to perform poorly and when they're going to excel at the challenge by strategically playing cards from their hand. You can choose to not try as hard to fix the creaky door on your wagon in order to keep your better cards on the chance you might have to send the eldritch abomination back to hell later. You can choose to flub at a key moment to really capitalize on the drama, or if it seems like it would be more interesting if your character fails.

If you've been battered bloody in an alleyway or blasted in a shootout you'll be glad you've still got an ace up your sleeve for that final, desperate attack; or you'll curse yourself for spending it earlier to get that discount on that fancy top hat. Either way the choice is yours to make.

-Mike Carmony (playtester)

Deck not Dice

This system is inspired by games like *Space Kings* and the *Powered by the Apocalypse* systems which put roleplay above mechanical intricacies. To this end, in order to give the players more autonomy, Ultimo uses a standard 54 card deck (including jokers) rather than a set of dice. Each player should have 1 deck of cards and 6 markers (we suggest poker chips). The **Dealer** (known in other games as the game master) should have at least one deck. Unlike players, the Dealer may prefer to prepare more than one deck.

Players will also each need a character sheet and pen or pencil. It is also recommended that the Dealer keep a notebook.

> The Dealer will have to play more cards than each individual player, so some Dealers may prefer to use multiple decks.

Some Terms

Throughout this handbook we use specific terms to refer to specific roles within the game.

The Dealer

The role of the Dealer is to provide challenges for the players to overcome. However, the Dealer is not the only story teller and should only seek to act as a guide. For the sake of this relationship, the Dealer should follow these simple rules:

1) The Dealer cannot overrule a player's decision. The Dealer can only decide the difficulty of the proposed task. The task may be nearly impossible but the Dealer should allow players the chance to fail.

2) The Dealer is a force of nature. Good or bad, it is their job to set the stage and let it play out. Let the cards decide how the events of the game flow.

Player Characters

A player character is a unit that is created and played by a player.

The Player

A player is a person sitting at the table, playing a game of Ultimo. There are only a few circumstances where we will need to refer to what the player does, but it is important that this term distinguishes the person playing the game from their character.

Companions

Companions are NPCs that serve or aid a character in some way. They include friends or cohorts, cronies or henchmen, and soldiers or elites, which are detailed later in the book.

Foes

Foes are NPC units that are actively hostile to the party. Foes can take three forms–minion, greater minion, and hosts–which are detailed later in the book.

Units

The basic term for any creature or person acting in the narrative. This can include PCs, Companions, and Foe.

Creating A Character

Forming a concept

Players can create any kind of character they want, but should attempt to meet the themes and restrictions of the setting. For example, you probably don't want to play as a medieval knight in a spacefaring campaign unless there's a good explanation, such as time travel. With that in mind a good way to get started is to come up with a 3 to 5 word phrase which describes the character.

Examples for a gothic horror setting:

Amoral Mad Scientist
-Or-
Kind-Hearted Abomination.

We'll follow these two characters as our examples through character creation.

Attributes

Every character is governed by 5 key attribute scores. These scores range from 1 to 10. Attributes are paired with a skill to determine the total number of cards that can be played for each card challenge, sometimes also called a check.

Strength (STR)
Strength represents your raw physical power. This attribute is often paired with the Brawling skill and helps meet requirements for certain armor, weapons, and tools.

Agility (AGI)
Agility represents a your speed and flexibility. Agility determines speed and supports ranged attacks and stealth actions.

Vitality (VIT)
Vitality represents your health and hardiness. Vitality is not used with very many skills but it greatly affects your survivability.

Intellect (INT)
Intellect represents your mental power and acuity. This attribute governs all manner of studied knowledge, as well as the occult.

Personality (PER)
Personality is your ability to make friends and manipulate people, and perhaps commune with something… else.

Attributes increase the number of cards you can use in a card challenge by ½ your attribute score.

Attribute Ratings

Attribute Score	Level	Number of Cards
1	Very Poor	+0 cards
2-3	Poor	+1 cards
4-5	Average	+2 cards
6-7	Good	+3 cards
8-9	Very Good	+4 cards
10	Great	+5 cards

Allocating Attributes

Each attribute has a starting value of 1. Players then have another 20 points to allocate as they wish. An attribute score cannot exceed 10. Veteran characters should receive 2 more attribute points, for a total of 22.

> **Veteran Characters**
> Veteran characters have had some life experiences that have given them additional skills and abilities.
> *Examples*
> Wizened old mage
> Battle-hardened general

Example Characters

	Amoral Mad Scientist	Kind-Hearted Abomination
STR	1	10
VIT	6	6
AGI	6	1
INT	8	2
PER	4	6

The above shows our two characters, and each of them has been allocated 20 points. Intellect is chosen as the strongest attribute for the scientist, as he will rely on it for scientific endeavors. Attributes he suffers in are Strength and Personality, which represents his lack of attention to his physical health and his devolving people skills.

The abomination, conversely, has immense Strength and suffers in Agility and Intellect, which represents the toll that her bulky frame has on her speed and her lack of learning due to being created in a lab.

Skills

Skills are the main way characters can interact with a world. The full list of skills is available in the skills chapter.

Every character starts the game with 10 skills, representing the things they learned in their youth or during their adolescence (or similar upbringing).
2 primary skills - 3 ranks each
3 secondary skills - 2 ranks each
5 minor skills - 1 rank each

Veteran characters can increase each of these skill tiers by 1 - 3 primary, 4 secondary, and 6 minor skills.

Example Characters

Our mad scientist chooses Biology and Chemistry as his primary skills to represent his medical schooling. His secondary skills are Research, Investigation, and Awareness. These represent his analytical mind and growing paranoia. His minor skills are Espionage, Engineering, Hand-eye Coordination, Manipulation and Culture.

Our abomination chooses Brawling and Empathy as primary skills to reflect her strength of body and kindness. Her secondary skills are Occult, Culture, and Toughness, which are representative of her origin, gentle demeanor, and endurance. Her minor skills are Athletics, Survival, Ritual, Psyche, and Awareness.

Traits
Traits are optional upgrades for a character that give them specific benefits but sometimes come with drawbacks. Traits will often have prerequisites if they are particularly powerful. Characters start the game with one trait from their background and can add more traits later by spending experience points.

The full list of traits is available in the traits chapter.

Backgrounds

Backgrounds represent a character's later life career or training, usually an occupation or appointment. Backgrounds provide the player with 1 rank in 2 different skills and a starting trait. Backgrounds should also include an income level. Veteran characters get 2 additional traits free but must meet their prerequisites.

Gothic Horror Background Examples

Medical Student

Skills	o +1 Research o +1 Biology
Trait	*Youthful Ambition* Once per session, the player can shuffle all aces and jokers back into their deck.
Income	Struggling

Doctor of Medicine

Skills	o +1 Chemistry o +1 Biology
Trait	*Medical Knowledge* When using Biology to heal, reduce difficulty by 1.
Income	Comfortable

Outcast

Skills	o +1 Espionage o +1 Survival
Trait	*Low profile* Espionage checks to avoid detection get +2 cards.
Income	Destitute

Noble

Skills	o +1 Occult o +1 Culture
Trait	*Magician* Control glitches on failure, but not perfect failure, when casting.
Income	Wealthy

Glitch
Side effects that occur when a character fails to cast a spell. These are explained in more detail during the chapter on Magic.

Rail Driver

Skills	o +1 Engineering o +1 Athletics
Trait	*Working Muscle* Strength and load requirements for weapons and armor are reduced by one.
Income	Poor

Gambler

Skills	o +1 Culture o +1 Espionage
Trait	*Gamblin' Man* The little joker counts as an extra ace, but the big joker constitutes an automatic failure for the whole hand it's played in.
Income	Rich

Butler

Skills	o +1 Culture o +1 Empathy
Trait	*Exemplary Service* When this character aids others the party can play 17 cards instead of 15.
Income	Stable

Scientist

Skills	o +1 Chemistry o +1 Biology
Trait	*Person of Science* Lower the cap on Occult and Ritual by 2, and raise the cap on Biology, Chemistry, and Engineering by 1.
Income	Comfortable

Abomination

Skills	o +1 Brawling o +1 Biology
Trait	*Ironman* Increase soak by 1; character does not become unconscious at low health.
Income	Destitute

Players may also choose to make their own background simply by combining two skills and a trait. They should make an effort to show what path led their character to these abilities. Traits granted by backgrounds can ignore prerequisites.

Example Characters

The Amoral Mad Scientist chooses the scientist background and the Kind-Hearted Abomination chooses the Abomination background. Let's look at how this affects their stats.

Amoral Mad Scientist

Abilities

STR	1
VIT	6
AGI	6
INT	8
PER	4

Skills

Biology	4
Chemistry	4
Research	2
Investigation	2
Awareness	2
Engineering	1
Manipulation	1
Traits	Person of Science
Income	Comfortable

Kind-Hearted Abomination

Abilities

STR	10
VIT	6
AGI	1
INT	2
PER	6

Skills

Brawling	4
Empathy	3
Biology	1
Occult	2
Toughness	2
Culture	2
Athletics	1
Survival	1
Psyche	1
Awareness	1
Traits	Ironman
Income	Destitute

Character Abilities

Once we have determined a character's attributes and skills, we can determine their abilities. Characters have a number of statistics that govern their ability to interact with the world. The player uses the higher of their attributes to calculate an ability when there are multiple options.

Health
VIT + Toughness
A character's health is the amount of damage they can take before dying. Having full health increases a character's stamina by +1. When a character drops below 2 health they are unconscious. When health reaches 0, the character is dead. In Ultimo the only way to revive someone from death is through powerful magic.

Stamina
4+ ½ AGI or ½ VIT
Stamina represents your ability to withstand putting forth effort. It determines the number of cards that a player can have in their hand. The greater the character's stamina, the more cards the player has to help them face challenges. Players draw to their full stamina at the beginning of every round of play or when the Dealer tells them to. If a character's stamina ever reaches 0, the Dealer can apply a **major effect** to that character immediately. The Dealer should prioritize **foe effects**.

Effects

Effects are situations that complicate the story. The Dealer can employ these on the characters when characters fail at a task. More information about effects is available in the Dealer Actions section.

Load
4 + STR
Load is your carrying capacity and lift weight. All items have a load value. You can carry items up to your total load without being burdened. You can lift or push any object that is equal to or less than your total load. You must make a Strength + Athletics check on any item heavier than your total load, to a maximum of twice your load. A character can lift an item no heavier than twice their load. The card challenge rating is equal to the difference between the item's weight and the character's load.

Attunement
2 +INT
Attunement is your ability to equip and use magic items. Each magic item has an attunement cost and a character can only attune items with a value equal to or lesser than their attunement rating.

Focus
½ INT or ½ PER + Psyche
Focus is a tool for casting spells and boosting power. The focus cost of a spell varies, depending on its effects and abilities. Focus can also be used to boost the potency of card challenges. Spending a focus allows the character to draw an extra card and add it to their next card challenge.

Soak
Toughness + Armor + Shield
Soak is your ability to mitigate damage. Any incoming damage is reduced by your soak. Soak gained from armor can only absorb damage once before being destroyed, but soak gained from Toughness is permanent.

Attack Power
Melee: ½ STR or AGI + Brawling
Ranged: ½ STR or AGI + Shooting
This is your ability to attack targets with either melee or ranged weapons.

Bonds
2 + PER
Characters who go through some sort of emotional or traumatic event together can sometimes form a bond. Bonds are connections formed with other characters that make it easier to perform tasks together.
For every bond a character has with another character they can reduce the difficulty of joint challenges together by 1. If working with more than two people, only the strongest bond among the acting characters is counted.

Bonds are granted by the Dealer when characters:
- Save each other from danger
- Share an intimate moment
- Help each other in a time of need
- Make a sacrifice for each other

A bond allows both characters to:
- Add +1 to damage per bond level when in combat together
- Reduce the difficulty of combined non-combat checks by 1 per bond level
- Increase the number of cards that can be played during all combined checks by 1 per bond level

Characters can have up to three bond levels with a character. Characters can only bond with other player characters, unless they have one of the traits that allows bonding with NPCs.

Morale

A character's morale is set to 6 at the beginning of the game and can only be restored by spending 10 experience or by special means at the Dealer's discretion. Morale can be spent to automatically succeed on a challenge, to avoid damage, or to cheat death. Once a person reaches zero morale, death becomes permanent, or they may have found a darker fate…

Example Characters

	Amoral Mad Scientist	Kind-Hearted Abomination
Health	6	8
Stamina	7	7
Load	3	12
Attunement	10	4
Focus	4	4
Soak	0	3
Melee	3	9
Ranged	3	5
Bonds	6	8
Morale	6	6

Character Details

After the final tally all that's left are the character details such as name, age, and general appearance. Details such as age might affect the ability to take some traits.

Example Characters

Name	Dr. Marco Severs	Karla
Age	46	23
Height	5'10"	6' 5"
Weight	174 lbs	400 lbs
Hair	Brown	Black

Advancing a Character

Players can improve their character's skills and attributes by spending experience points. Characters can gain experience in a number of ways:

- Failing a card challenge - 1 experience
- Discovering a hidden secret or solving part of a mystery - 2 experience
- Destroying a powerful creature called a *Host* – all characters gain an amount of experience determined by the Dealer.
- NPCs with a higher skill than a character can train the character in that skill. The character can exchange currency for experience points in a skill at a rate set by the Dealer.
- Completing quests and tasks sometimes results in a reward of 1-5 experience.
- The dealer can also grant small experience bonuses for clever play or roleplaying.

When a character earns enough experience, they can spend those points to increase their power.

Upgrade	Cost
Learn a new skill	2
Increase a skill	2x rank
Restore Morale	10
New Trait	5
Increase Attribute	Equal to rank

Skills

Most card challenges require the use of both an ability and a skill. However, in some cases characters can draw on two skills for a card challenge to represent a very specialized knowledge that only benefits from skill rather than raw talent. An example might be performing brain surgery. This normally would call for an INT + Biology check but performing brain surgery using an experimental anesthetic could be determined with a Biology + Chemistry check.

Players are also encouraged to invent their own skills and there are slots available on the character sheet to write them in.

Skills start at rank 0 and can increase as high as rank 5. Each skill rank grants a character +1 card to checks that use that skill.

Athletics
Normally paired with STR or AGI
A character's skill in running, jumping, swimming, dunking, etc.

Awareness
Normally paired with INT or AGI
A character's skill in spotting danger before it happens.

Biology
Normally paired with INT
A character's knowledge of life sciences. This could represent a skill as a surgeon or general knowledge of the body and its functions and, rarely, the use of one's body as a weapon.

Brawling
Normally paired with STR
A character's skill in melee combat, whether using weapons or one's bare fists.

Chemistry
Normally paired with INT
A character's knowledge of compounds and reactions and the production of such things. This could represent a knowledge of medicine, poisons, or explosives.

Culture
Normally paired with INT or PER
A character's knowledge of the food, history, people and gossip of various cultures. Each rank in Culture allows the character to learn one additional language.

Empathy
Normally paired with PER
A character's knowledge and skill at discerning lies and connecting with people emotionally.

Engineering
Normally paired with INT
A character's knowledge of and skill at creating and maintaining mechanical and electrical devices, smithing weapons, and construction.

Espionage
Conditionally paired with AGI, INT, and PER
A character's skill in spy craft. This could represent forgery, stealth, and subterfuge.

Husbandry
Normally paired with STR or INT
A character's skill in animal handling. This could represent beast wrangling, farming, or raising animals.

Investigation
Normally paired with INT
A character's skill in finding clues and solving mysteries.

Leadership
Normally paired with INT and PER
A character's ability to plan battles and tactics, command troops, and keep their cool in heavy combat as well as organize small teams in non-hostile situations.

Manipulation
Normally paired with PER
A character's skill in confusing, coercing, and intimidating others into doing things they probably shouldn't.

Navigation
Normally paired with INT
A character's skill in reading maps and star charts.

Occult
Normally paired with INT or PER
A character's skill in tapping into eldritch magic and casting spells.

Piloting
Normally paired with AGI
A character's skill in driving land, air, and water vehicles.

- Rank 1 of Piloting allows the character to pilot an appropriate land vehicle from the campaign setting.
- Rank 2 of Piloting allows the character to pilot an advanced vehicle appropriate to the setting. Players may choose a large land vehicle, ship, plane, etc.

Psyche

Normally paired with INT or PER
A character's mental hardiness and fortitude. Psyche is typically used to fend off mental attacks. Each point in Psyche increases a character's focus by 1.

Research
Normally paired with INT
A character's skill in finding information, especially obscure.

- Literacy:
  Rank 1 of Research grants the character literacy and the ability to consume **manuals**.
- Tech Literacy:
  Rank 2 of Research grants the character literacy with contemporary technology.

Manuals
Manuals are scrolls, books, videos, cassettes, or any other media in a campaign setting that may contain information. Using a manual destroys it. Consuming a manual grants a character +1 to a relevant skill. A maximum of 3 ranks in a skill can be earned from manuals.
For example, our Mad Scientist from the gothic horror setting might read a book on brain surgery and increase his Biology skill by 1.

Ritual
Normally paired with INT and PER
A character's skill in casting intricate spells that require more concentration than Occult.

Theatrics
Normally paired with PER
A character's skill to perform, sing, dance, paint or just be a ponce.

Toughness

Normally paired with VIT or STR
A character's physical hardiness and
fortitude. Each rank in Toughness increases
a character's health and soak by 1.

Shooting
Normally paired with AGI or INT
A character's skill in using projectile
weapons, guns, bows and
arrows, alien space lasers. This skill
represents understanding of how the
character uses and maintains these
weapons.

Survival
Normally paired with INT or VIT
A character's skill in staying alive in
dangerous environments, camping,
knowledge of plants and animals, and the
ability to hunt.

Trait Table

	Name	Prerequisites	Page Number
Athletics	Core Workout	Athletics 1; STR 3	26
	Door Kicker	Athletics 3; STR 5	27
	Proper Lifting Form	Athletics 4; STR 7	35
	Natural Athlete	Athletics 2; VIT 3	33
	Marathoner	Athletics 3; VIT 5	32
	Going the Distance	Marathoner; Athletics 5	28
	Hardcore Parkour	Athletics 3; AGI 5	29
	Like Water	Athletics 4; AGI 7	32
Awareness	Saw It Coming	Awareness 2; AGI 5	36
	It's Coming Right for Us	Saw It Coming; Awareness 3; AGI 5	31
	Don't Trust Your Senses	Awareness 4; INT 5	27
	Uncanny Hunch	Awareness 5; INT 7	29
Biology	Inhuman	Must be taken at character creation; Biology 1	30
	Arcane Anatomy	Inhuman; PER or INT 3	24
	Natural Weapon	Inhuman; Biology 1; VIT 3	33
	Natural Armor	Inhuman; Biology 1; VIT 3	33
	Adhesive	Inhuman; Biology 1; VIT 3	23
	Spring-Loaded Legs	Inhuman; Biology 2; VIT 5	38
	Extra Limb	Inhuman; Biology 2; VIT 5	28
	Natural Camouflage	Inhuman; Biology 2; VIT 5	33
	Horrid Mutation	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	30
	Healing Factor	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	29
	Heat Resistant	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	29
	Cold Resistant	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	25
	Tun State	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	39
	Revolting	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	36
	Amphibious	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5	23
	Amorphous Physiology	Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 7; Incompatible with Natural Armor	23
	Triage Specialist	Biology 1; INT 3	38
	Medical Expertise	Biology 2; Chemistry 2	33
	Nursing	Biology 2; INT 5	34
	Diagnostic Medicine	Biology 3; INT 5	27
	Combat Medic	Biology 4; INT 7	26
	Improvised Medicine	Biology 5; INT 7	30
Brawling	Clad in Steel	Brawling 1; STR 3	25
	Juggernaut	Clad in Steel; Brawling 3; STR 5	31
	Shock Trooper	Juggernaut; Brawling 5; STR 9	36

	Name	Prerequisites	Page Number
Brawling	Unburdened	Brawling 1; AGI 3	39
	Act Without Thinking	Unburdened; Brawling 5; AGI 9	23
	Active Defense	Brawling 2; STR 5	23
	Weapon Mastery	Active Defense; Brawling 4; STR or AGI 7	39
	Hardened Fists	Brawling 2; STR or AGI 5	29
	Martial Artist	Hardened Fists; Brawling 4; STR or AGI 7	32
	Always Armed	Brawling 3; AGI 5	23
Chemistry	Studied Chemist	Chemistry 3; Biology 1; INT 5	38
	Exposure-Based Immunity	Studied Chemist; Chemistry 4; Biology 2; VIT 5	28
	Miracle Worker	Studied Chemist; Chemistry 5; Biology 3; INT 9	33
	Improvised Explosives	Chemistry 3; Engineering 1; INT 5	30
	Demoman	Improvised Explosives; Chemistry 4; Engineering 2; INT 7	26
	Explosives Expert	Demoman; Chemistry 5; Engineering 3; INT 9	28
Empathy	People Person	Empathy 1; PER 3	34
	Friendly	Empathy 1; PER 3	28
	Cohorts	Friendly; Empathy 5; PER 7	25
	Supportive	Empathy 1; PER 3	38
	Battlefield Compatriot	Supportive; Empathy 2; PER 5	24
	Here to Help	Battlefield Compatriot; Empathy 3; PER 7	29
	Calculated Risks	Here to Help; Empathy 4; Brawling 1; PER 7	25
	A Friend in Need	Supportive; Empathy 3; PER 7	23
	A Friend in Deed	A Friend in Need; Empathy 5; PER 9	23
	Nobody Has to Die	Empathy 4; PER 7	34
Engineering	Builder	Engineering 2; INT 3	25
	Mysterious Architecture	Builder; Engineering 3; INT 5	33
	Expert Builder	Builder; Engineering 4; INT 7	28
	Smith	Engineering 2; INT 3	37
	Masterworks	Smith; Engineering 5; INT 9	33

	Name	Prerequisites	Page Number
Engineering	Tinkerer	Engineering 2; INT 3	38
	Esoteric Design	Tinkerer; Engineering 3; INT 5	27
	Expert Tinkerer	Tinkerer; Engineering 4; INT 7	28
Espionage	Face in the Crowd	Espionage 1; INT or PER 3	28
	Keen Forgeries	Face in the Crowd; Espionage 3; AGI 3; INT 5	31
	Spymaster	Keen Forgeries; Espionage 4; INT 7; PER 5	38
	Many Faces	Spymaster; Espionage 5; PER 9	32
	Holdout Pistoleer	Espionage 1; AGI 3	30
	Is That a Banana in Your Pocket?	Holdout Pistoleer; Espionage 2; AGI 5	31
	Blade in the Dark	Is That a Banana in Your Pocket?; Espionage 4; AGI 3	25
	Assassin	Blade in the Dark; Espionage 5; AGI 9	24
	Sleight of Hand	Espionage 2; AGI 5	37
	Low Profile	Espionage 2; AGI 5	32
	Sneak Attack	Espionage 2; AGI 5	37
	Shadow	Espionage 3; AGI 7	36
Husbandry	Animal Companion	Husbandry 1; PER 3	24
	Man's Best Friend	Animal Companion; Husbandry 3; PER 5	32
	Beastkin	Man's Best Friend; Husbandry 4; PER 5	25
	Mythic Companion	Beastkin; Husbandry 5; PER 5	33
	Herder	Husbandry 1; INT 3	29
	Rancher	Herder; Husbandry 3; INT 5	35
	Quality Product	Rancher; Husbandry 4; INT 5	35
	Golden Goose	Quality Product; Husbandry 5; INT 7	29
Investigation	One More Thing	Investigation 2; INT 3	34
	Eidetic Memory	One More Thing; Investigation 3; INT 5	27
	Sleuthsayer	One More Thing; Investigation 4; INT 5; PER 5	37
	The Ocular Pat-Down	Investigation 2; INT 3	34
	Detect Weakness	Ocular Pat-Down; Investigation 4; INT 7	26
	Know Thy Enemy	Detect Weakness; Investigation 5; INT 7	31

	Name	Prerequisites	Page Number
Investigation	Trusted Investigator	Friendly; Investigation 5; INT 5; PER 5	39
Leadership	Soldiers	Leadership 3; PER 5; INT 3	37
	Platoon	Soldiers; Leadership 4; PER 7; INT 5	35
	Elite Forces	Soldiers; Leadership 5; PER 9; INT 7	27
Manipulation	Cronies	Manipulation 1; PER 3; INT 3	26
	Might Makes Right	Cronies; Manipulation 2; PER 5; INT 3	33
	Meat Shields	Cronies; Manipulation 3; PER 7; INT 5	33
	I Didn't Do It	Cronies; Manipulation 4; PER 7; INT 5	30
	Henchmen	Cronies; Manipulation 5; PER 7; INT 5	29
	An Honest Sucker	Manipulation 1; PER 3	24
	Protect Me!	An Honest Sucker; Manipulation 3; PER 7	35
	Irritating	Manipulation 2; PER 5	31
	Pest	Irritating; Manipulation 3; PER 5	35
	Over Here!	Pest; Manipulation 4; PER 9	34
	A Sucker Born Every Minute	Manipulation 5; PER 9	24
Navigation	Landmark Navigator	Navigation 2; INT 3	31
	Co-Pilot	Navigation 2; INT 3	26
	Stargazer	Navigation 3; INT 5	38
	Trailblazer	Navigation 4; INT 7	39
	Cartographer	Navigation 5; INT 9	25
	I know a Place	Navigation 3; INT 5; PER 3	30
	Routes and Trails	Navigation 4; INT 5; PER 5	36
	Convoy	Navigation 5; INT 7; PER 5	26
Occult	Neophyte	Occult 1; INT or PER 3	34
	Efficient Caster	Neophyte; Occult 2; INT or PER 5	27
	Wizard	Efficient Caster; Occult 3; INT or PER 7	39
	Third Eye	Wizard; Occult 4; INT or PER 7	38
	Grand Magus	Third Eye; Occult 5; INT or PER 9	29
	Erudite	Occult 1; INT 5	27
	Artificer	Erudite; Occult 2; INT 5	24

	Name	Prerequisites	Page Number
Shooting	True Aim	Distance Shooter; Shooting 5; AGI 9	39
Miscellaneous	Exemplary Service	None	28
	Jack of All Trades	None	31
	Long Live the Queen	None	32
	God Save the Queen	Long Live the Queen	28
	Aged Wisdom	Age 35+ Incompatible with Gamblin' Man	23
	Gamblin' Man	Incompatible with Aged Wisdom	28
	Ironman	VIT 5	31
	Large	VIT 3; Must be taken at character creation Not Compatible with Small	32
	Small	Must be taken at character creation Not compatible with Large	37
	Working Muscle	STR and VIT 4	39
	Youthful Ambition	Age -35 (when a character turns 35 they must exchange this for a new trait)	40
	Blood Feeding	Biology or Occult 2	25
	Bloodlust	Brawling or Shooting 2; Psyche 1	25
	Critical Precision	Brawling or Shooting 3; Biology 2	26
	Magician	Occult or Ritual 3	32
	Mental Fortitude	Psyche 1; PER or INT 5	33
	Observant	Awareness or Investigation 2; INT 5	34
	Hyper Observant	Observant; Awareness or Investigation 3; INT 7	30
	Person of Science	Biology, Chemistry, or Engineering 4; Occult and Ritual 3 or below Incompatible with Practioner of the Dark Arts	35
	Practitioner of the Dark Arts	Occult or Ritual 4; Biology, Engineering, and Chemistry 3 or below Incompatible with Person of Science	35
	Skilled Surgeon	Biology 4; Chemistry 3	36
	Soul Siphon	Occult and Brawling 2	37

Traits

Traits are optional upgrades for a character that give specific benefits but sometimes come with drawbacks. Traits will often have prerequisites if they are particularly powerful. It costs 5 experience points to adopt a trait. The Dealer is encouraged to create additional traits for their campaign setting.

Acolyte
Reduce the difficulty of buffing effects with ritual by 1.

Prerequisite: Ritual 1; INT or PER 3

Active Defense
You can use a weapon to block as if it were a shield and double the effectiveness of blocking with a shield that hasn't been ruined.

Prerequisites: Brawling 2; STR 5

Act Without Thinking
Doubles the effectiveness of dodging melee attacks when wearing no armor.

Prerequisites: Unburdened; Brawling 5; AGI 9

Adhesive
You can cling to flat surfaces without a check, unless moving.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 1; VIT 3

A Friend Indeed
You can spend your morale in place of another character and gain experience equal to your bond with the target character +2.

Prerequisites: A Friend in Need; Empathy 5; PER 9

A Friend in Need
Grants 2 experience instead of 1 when using empathy to convince another PC to do something you want them to do.

Prerequisites: Supportive; Empathy 3; PER 7

Aged Wisdom
All aces in your deck count as kings, except the ace of spades. Remove one of your jokers from your deck.

Prerequisites: age 35+
Incompatible with Gamblin' Man

Always Armed
Improvised weapons are no longer one-use and are instead defensive.

Prerequisites: Brawling 3; AGI 5

Amorphous Physiology
Your body can morph form at will. You must expend 2 focus to activate this ability. They must revert to their original shape after 1 hour.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 7
Incompatible with Natural Armor

Amphibious
You can breathe in both water and air.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5

An Honest Sucker
Other characters that you have manipulated to action get an additional +1 card when performing the task. This +1 is gained even on a normal success.

Prerequisites: Manipulation 1; PER 3

Animal Companion
You tame an animal companion and teach it 3 skills at 3 ranks each. These skills have to be something an animal can do. Animal companions can fight and will follow you even when afraid. They are capable of following more complex commands than pets. Animal companions may be taught tricks such as trick riding or seeking help when the character is injured. Characters may only tame 1 animal companion. Animal companions have 5 health and 3 melee attack power, unless otherwise noted by their stat block.

Prerequisites: Husbandry 1; PER 3

Arcane Anatomy
Can cast spells with Biology instead of Ritual, Occult, or Psyche.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; PER or INT 3

Archivist
Automatically identify items of otherworldly or arcane origin.

Prerequisites: Artificer; Occult 4; INT 9

Artificer
Attuned weapons deal an extra +1 damage and attuned armor adds an additional +1 soak.

Prerequisites: Erudite; Occult 2; INT 5

Assassin
Any weapon that is considered concealed deals double damage when attacking from stealth.

Prerequisites: Blade in the Dark; Espionage 5; AGI 9

A Sucker Born Every Minute
Restore focus equal to half your PER to characters manipulated to action by you.

Prerequisites: Manipulation 5; PER 9

Avant Garde
Your esoteric or strange art can reduce the threatening aura of any situation. Successful theatrics checks in combat reduce threat by 2 in addition to the intended effect of the check.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 3; Empathy 2; PER 7

Battlefield Compatriot
You can discard a card at the beginning of your turn. If you do so you can add temporary health to a target friendly character or NPC. The temporary health is equal to the level of bond you have with the character or NPC. This health lasts until it is lost or until you go to sleep. This can be done once per bonded character per turn. This ability cannot be activated on a character that already has temporary health points.

Prerequisites: Supportive; Empathy 2; PER 5

Beastkin
You can create bonds with your animal companion. The companion gets a bonus to damage, soak, health and luck rolls equal to the level of your bond.

Prerequisites: Man's Best Friend; Husbandry 5; PER 5

Blade in the Dark
You no longer require a check to conceal a concealable weapon.

Prerequisites: Is That a Banana in Your Pocket?; Espionage 4; AGI 3

Blaze of glory
When you use a vehicle as a weapon, damage dealt to the vehicle is also dealt to the target.

Prerequisites: Piloting 5; AGI 9

Blood Feeding
After killing a target in melee combat, shuffle cards from your discard pile equal to your Vitality back into your deck.

Prerequisites: Biology or Occult 2

Bloodlust
After killing a foe, restore 1 focus.

Prerequisites: Brawling or Shooting 2; Psyche 1

Builder
You take half the time to build stable structures and can build small structures by yourself.

Prerequisites: Engineering 2; INT 3

Calculated Risks
You can choose which cards to discard when using the protect action to protect another character.

Prerequisites: Her to Help; Empathy 4; Brawling 1; PER 7

Cartographer
You have become renowned for your map-making abilities. Other units following maps made by you can follow them without a check when not under duress. As long as nothing throws them off track, they will make it to their location.

Prerequisite: Navigation 5; INT 9

Clad in Steel
Decreases your load for all weapons and armor by 1.

Prerequisites: Brawling 1; STR 3

Cohorts
Bonded NPCs become cohorts who are willing to fight and die for you as long as you can honestly assure them the same. Betraying them comes with dire consequences, but they follow your orders with little complaint.

Prerequisites: Friendly; Empathy 5; PER 7

Cold Resistant
You have +3 soak against cold-based attacks and ignore penalties from freezing temperatures.

Prerequisites: Inhuman, Biology 3; VIT 5;

Combat Medic
You can stabilize a bleeding character without a check, but you still require a medical kit.

Prerequisites: Biology 4; INT 7

Compelling Performance
When using Theatrics to manipulate people, reduce difficulty by 1.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 5

Convoy
Other travelers in unexplored areas will automatically trust the party without a check. They may still betray you. They will form temporary caravans for safety if they do not have ulterior motives.

Prerequisites: Navigation 5; INT 7; PER 5

Co-Pilot
Reduces the difficulty of piloting checks that you assist in by 2.

Prerequisites: Navigation 2; INT 3

Core Workout
+1 to your load per rank of Athletics.

Prerequisites: Athletics 1; STR 3

Critical Precision
Knowledge of anatomy and warfare has manifested as extra damage. When attacking from stealth, deal +2 damage. On a perfect combat success, deal +5 damage instead of + 2.

Prerequisites: Brawling or Shooting 3; Biology 2

Cronies
You can create bonds with NPCs to make them cronies. Cronies require motivation for remaining loyal (payment, fear, vice, etc) but as long as they are sated they are willing to do questionable and dangerous things. Cronies will flee combat if demoralized. As long as there isn't anything more lucrative they could be doing they will follow you.

Prerequisite: Manipulation 1; PER 3; INT 3

Defensive Maneuvers
You have 2 additional soak when piloting a vehicle and vehicles you are driving are granted 3 soak.

Prerequisites: Piloting 3; AGI 3

Demoman
Prevents the premature detonation of bombs, even on critical failure.

Prerequisites: Improvised Explosives; Chemistry 4; Engineering 2; INT 7

Detect Weakness
A successful investigation check in combat provides a +2 bonus on all actions taken against a targeted foe and when you would deal 1 patience damage you deal 2 instead.

Prerequisites: Ocular Pat-Down; Investigation 4; INT 7

Devil's Might
Attack with Occult instead of Brawling for melee combat.

Prerequisites: Occult 3; STR 5

Devotion
Controlling a unit's mind with Ritual lasts 2x longer than usual.

Prerequisites: Acolyte; Ritual 2; PER 5

Diagnostic Medicine
This trait allows a character to diagnose common illnesses such as colds, flus, ear infections, etc, with no check.

Prerequisites: Biology 3; INT 5

Distance Shooter
Increase the range of all ranged weapons by 1 step.

Prerequisites: Skirmisher; Shooting 3; AGI or STR 5

Don't Trust Your Senses
You do not suffer a combat penalty from being blinded as long as you are not deafened, and do not suffer a combat penalty from being deafened as long as you are not blinded.

Prerequisites: Awareness 4; INT 5

Door Kicker:
Minor feats of strength like kicking in a normal door or lifting a person outside of combat can be performed without a check.

Prerequisites: Athletics 3; STR 5

Do Ya Like Jazz?
You attempt to distract the enemy with a performance. The challenge rating is reduced by 1.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 1; Manipulation 1; PER 3

Efficient Caster
Decrease the cost of additional spell effects by 1.

Prerequisites: Neophyte; Occult 2; INT or PER 5

Eidetic Memory
You have a perfect memory for faces and names and do not need a check to recall these things if necessary (the Dealer should keep track of this for the player if the player does not). Checks to spot disguised NPCs that a character has met before are reduced by 2.

Prerequisites: One More Thing; Investigation 3; INT 5

Elite Forces
A number of your troops equal to your Leadership + Personality are elite troops that are fully loyal. They no longer count toward the cost of soldiers and count as 3 soldiers each in large scale combat.

Prerequisites: Soldiers; Leadership 5; PER 9; INT 7

Erudite
Increases your attunement by 2.

Prerequisites: Occult 1; INT 5

Esoteric Design
You can create machines and devices that only you know how to use.

Prerequisites: Tinkerer; Engineering 3; INT 5

Exemplary Service
You can add +2 cards to any aid check, regardless of your number of bonds.

Prerequisites: None

Expert Builder
All buildings constructed by you have the trait Durable and will never crumble if given proper maintenance.

Prerequisites: Builder; Engineering 4; INT 7

Expert Tinkerer
You can create state of the art devices. These objects reduce the difficulty of their specific task by 3 but can only be used by characters with engineering 3 or higher.

Prerequisite: Tinkerer; Engineering 4; INT 7

Explosives Expert
You can disarm any normal explosive without a check and you get -1 difficulty to disarming rare explosives.

Prerequisites: Demoman, Chemistry 5; Engineering 3; INT 9

Exposure-Based Immunity
You cannot be harmed by poisons you make; other poisons are half as effective and last half as long.

Prerequisites: Studied Chemist, Chemistry 4; Biology 2; VIT 5

Extra Limb
You have an extra arm or leg that functions normally. This trait can be taken multiple times.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 2; VIT 5

Evasive Piloting
You can dodge as if you are not in a vehicle while piloting a vehicle.

Prerequisites: Defensive Maneuvers; Piloting 4; AGI 5; INT 3

Face in the crowd
Reduce difficulty of checks to alter appearance through disguise by 1.

Prerequisites: Espionage 1; INT or PER 3

Friendly
You can use your bonds on NPCs as well as PCs. Bonded NPCs become friends and are willing to do things for you as long as they are not being abused. The stronger the bond, the more likely they are to agree to do dangerous things as long as they feel you would also make similar sacrifices for them. If they do not have any other obligations, they will follow you.

Prerequisites: Empathy 1; PER 3

Gamblin' Man
Your little joker counts as an extra ace, but your big joker constitutes an automatic failure for the whole hand it's played in.

Prerequisites: None
Incompatible with Aged Wisdom

God Save the Queen
Raw queens have a value of 8 and the value of kings is reduced to 8. Once per rest a queen can return an ace.

Prerequisites: Long live the Queen

Going the Distance
Reduce card exhaustion by an additional 3.

Prerequisites Marathoner; Athletics 5

Golden Goose
As long as you can maintain housing and care for your pets, you can live as though you have lavish income.

Prerequisites: Quality Product; Husbandry 5; INT 7

Grand Magus
Cast an additional effect for free.

Prerequisites: Third Eye; Occult 5; INT or PER 9

Groovy
Allies who hear or see one of the character's successful performances get +1 to their stamina for 1 hour.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 1; Empathy 1; PER 3

Hardcore Parkour
You can perform light parkour, like fence vaulting, without a check.

Prerequisites: Athletics 3; AGI 5

Hardened Fists
+2 damage with unarmed strikes.

Prerequisites: Brawling 2; STR or AGI 5

Head-on Attack
Your vehicle is granted 5 additional soak when ramming.

Prerequisites: Precision Attack; Piloting 4; AGI 7

Healing Factor
You heal an additional +2 health per long rest.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5

Heat Resistant
You have +3 soak against heat-based attacks and ignore penalties from sweltering temperatures.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5

Henchmen
Your cronies are upgraded to henchmen. Henchmen are fully loyal to you and do not require payment, but can still be shaken by more dangerous or more powerful forces. If henchmen become demoralized they will flee combat unless you make a manipulation check with a difficulty of 7, minus the level of bond with the henchman.

Prerequisite: Manipulation 5; PER 7; INT 5

Herder
You have the knowledge to tend and care for herd animals. You can have as many herd animals as half of your Intelligence + Personality. Herd animals increase your income by one stage, and each animal has a cash value.

Prerequisites: Husbandry 1; INT 3

Here to Help
When you are trying to keep an NPC from danger, you can take an automatic partial success without a check.

Prerequisites: Battlefield Compatriot; Empathy 3; PER 7

Holdout Pistoleer
Reduce difficulty of checks to conceal weapons with the concealable tag by 1.

Prerequisites: Espionage 1; AGI 3

Horrid Mutation
You can attack with Biology instead of Brawling for melee combat.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5

Hyper Observant
Upon entering a new area, the Dealer reveals 1 detail to you for free before any cards are played.

Prerequisites: Observant; Awareness or Investigation 3; INT 7

I Didn't Do It
As long as there is an NPC to pass blame to, including cronies, NPCs do not become angered with you when you are caught in a lie. Doing this reduces your bond with the NPC, if any, by 1.

Prerequisites: Cronies; Manipulation 4; PER 7; INT 5

I Know a Place
When navigating a safe or familiar area, the character can make a luck check to find some sort of shop, inn or restaurant.
- On an ace the place is nearby and has whatever the party is looking for.
- On a face card the place is well stocked but out of the way.
- On a number card it's far off and kinda shady. There is a chance of danger.
- On a joker the Dealer gains 5 threat, and the location is abandoned and booby-trapped, overrun with foes, or something terrible has happened there.

Prerequisites: Navigation 3; INT 5; PER 3

Improvised Explosives
You can concoct an explosive on the spot, provided you have the materials and make a Chemistry check.

Prerequisites: Chemistry 3; Engineering 1; INT 5

Improvised Medicine
You can treat first aid wounds without any equipment. A card challenge is still required.

Prerequisites: Biology 5; INT 7

Inhuman
Allows adding inhuman biology traits to your character.

Prerequisites: Must be taken at character creation; Biology 1

Indy Hit
Your art is respected and individual performances or art earn twice as much.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 2; Empathy 1; PER 5

Initiate
Reduce difficulty of checks to heal permanent injuries when casting with ritual by 1.

Prerequisites: Ritual 1; INT or PER 3

Irritating
Every time you reduce a target's patience, reduce it by 1 more.

Prerequisites: Manipulation 2; PER 5

Ironman
Increase soak by 1. You do not become unconscious at low health.

Prerequisites: VIT 5

Is That a banana in Your Pocket?
You can treat light, one-handed weapons as though they are concealable.

Prerequisites: Holdout Pistoleer; Espionage 2; AGI 5

It's Coming Right for Us
You can still dodge when attacked from stealth.

Prerequisites: Saw it Coming; Awareness 3; AGI 5

Jack of all Trades
Jacks no longer block perfect successes. The ace of spades now functions as a joker.

Prerequisites: None

Juggernaut
Decreases your load of all weapons and armor by an additional 1 point, to a total of 2.

Prerequisites: Clad in Steel; Brawling 3; STR 5

Keen Forgeries
Reduce the difficulty of checks to forge documents, including maps, by 2.

Prerequisites: Face in the Crowd; Espionage 3; AGI 3; INT 5

Know Thy Enemy
At the beginning of combat you choose a foe. Whenever you engage with that foe you can see a number of the dealer's cards equal to half of your INT score. You can then adjust you card order if you want. This must be resolved before you reveal your cards.

Prerequisites: Detect Weakness; Investigation 5; INT 7

Landmark Navigator
You can make maps of places you have been to before with no check. This action takes the same amount of time as consuming a manual.

Prerequisites: Navigation 2; INT 3

Large
You are approximately 1 ½ x the size of a normal human.
- You have +2 load
- You can lift up to x2 load without a check
- -2 on espionage checks to sneak
- Adds +10 load when carried by another character or animal
- +1 damage with melee weapons and unarmed strikes

Prerequisites: VIT 3; Must be taken at character creation
Not compatible with Small

Like A Leaf on the Wind
You are no longer required to pass a check to avoid obstacles when not under duress.

Prerequisites: Evasive Piloting; Piloting 5; AGI 7; Int 5

Like Water
You apply your full AGI when dodging.

Prerequisites: Athletics 4; AGI 7

Long Live the Queen
A raw queen acts as a 5 instead of a 2. Queens can be placed anywhere in the card order. The value of Kings is reduced by 1.

Prerequisites: None

Low Profile
Espionage checks to avoid detection get +2 cards.

Prerequisites: Espionage 2; AGI 5

Lust for Knowledge:
You can reach rank 4 in a skill by consuming a *Manual.*

Prerequisites: Research 5; INT 9

Man's Best Friend
When taking actions with your animal companion reduce the difficulty of the check by 1.

Prerequisites: Animal Companion; Husbandry 3; PER 5

Many Faces
Create a number of ready and available aliases equal to ½ PER.

Prerequisites: Spymaster; Espionage 5; PER 9

Marathoner
Reduce card exhaustion by 2.

Prerequisites: Athletics 3; VIT 5

Martial Artist
Grants an additional +3 damage with unarmed strikes, to a total of +5.

Prerequisites: Hardened Fists; Brawling 4; STR or AGI 7

Magician
Control glitches on failure, but not perfect failure, when casting.

Prerequisites: Occult or Ritual 3

Masterworks
Weapons made by you deal 1 more damage. All arms and armor made by you have the durable trait. Their cash value is also tripled, as they are considered works of art.

Prerequisites: Smith; Engineering 5; INT 9

Meat Shields
Cronies will take damage for you in combat, but they will require immediate payoff for the risk.

Prerequisites: Cronies; Manipulation 3; PER 7 ; INT 5

Medical Expertise
When using biology to heal, reduce difficulty by 1.

Prerequisites: Biology 2; Chemistry 2

Mental Fortitude
+1 Focus. You can spend focus to dodge.

Prerequisites: Psyche 1; PER or INT 5

Might Makes Right
Reduce the difficulty of manipulation checks made to intimidate by 1 for every crony you have present.

Prerequisites: Cronies; Manipulation 2; PER 5; INT 3

Miracle Worker
You can create medicines for rare and exotic diseases and poisons that cannot be cured by common means.

Prerequisites: Studied Chemist; Chemistry 5; Biology 3; INT 9

Mysterious Architecture
Buildings constructed by you can have a number of secret tunnels and hidden rooms equal to ½ INT + Engineering.

Prerequisites: Builder; Engineering 3; INT 5

Mythic Companion
Your bond with your companion is deepened and being around the beast energizes you. Once per session the animal can restore focus to their master at an amount equal to 2x their bond level.

Prerequisites: Beastkin; Husbandry 5; PER 5

Natural Armor
This can take the form of a carapace or thick skin. You have 2 armor even when naked.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 1; VIT 3

Natural Athlete
You can play an array of sports without specific training, and the checks made for throwing, running, and jumping are all reduced by 1.

Prerequisites: Athletics 2; VIT 3

Natural Camouflage
The character has -2 difficulty on stealth checks to blend into natural environments.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 2; VIT 5

Natural Weapon
Unarmed strikes deal +1 damage.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 1; VIT 3

Neophyte
Reduce the focus cost of spell range by 1. Spells become natively long range, and only require a cost of 1 focus to bring to very long range.

Prerequisites: Occult 1; INT or PER 3

Nobody Has to Die:
You can calm foes, removing them from combat. This requires an empathy check vs the foe's calm threshold +2.

Prerequisites: Empathy 4; PER 7

Nursing
You have a nursing-level knowledge of medical procedures, including how to treat wounds that require first aid. You can perform first aid with no check as long as you are not under duress. First aid can be performed on characters with 1 or 2 damage.

Prerequisites: Biology 2; INT 5

Observant
You can ask an additional question when you succeed on the observe action.

Prerequisites: Awareness or Investigation 2; INT 5

Ocular Pat Down
Use investigation to read your enemies' weaknesses. Spending 1 focus, you can reveal the following about a target:
- Current level of patience
- Soak
- Health
- Magic defense
- One of their unique foe effects

The amount of information revealed this way is equal to your ranks in Investigation.

Prerequisites: Investigation 2; INT 3

One More Thing
You can use investigation on NPCs, allowing you to read an NPC's person and intentions. This is a regular investigation check but the answers the Dealer provides should pertain to any secrets or hidden details about the NPC. For example, a hunch that they are lying, or something out of place like strange mud on their shoe or a speck of blood on their coat.

Prerequisites: Investigation 2; INT 3

Over here!
If you reduce a foe's patience to 0, you can direct the first effect the foe activates afterward to any allied character you choose, including yourself but not including NPCS.

Prerequisites: Pest; Manipulation 4; PER 9

People Person
Reduce empathy check by 1 when trying to calm others.

Prerequisites: Empathy 1; PER 3

Person of Science
Lower the cap of Occult and Ritual by 2 and raise the cap of Biology, Chemistry, and Engineering by 1.

Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, or Engineering 4; Occult and Ritual 3 or below Incompatible with Practitioner of the Dark Arts

Pest
Double patience reduction for avoiding damage.

Prerequisites: Irritating; Manipulation 3; PER 5

Platoon
You can now command a number of soldiers equal to 5x the number of bonds you have. The cost of soldiers decreased to 1 income step per 15 soldiers.

Prerequisites: Soldiers; Leadership 4; PER 7; INT 5

Popstar
Your art is popular. Your income increases by 1 step.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 2; Manipulation 1; PER 5

Precision Attack
You have -2 challenge rating to checks when attacking with or from a vehicle.

Prerequisites: Piloting 3, AGI 5

Practitioner of the Dark Arts
Lower the cap of Biology, Chemistry, and Engineering skills by 2. Raise the cap of Occult and Ritual skills by 1.

Prerequisites: Occult or Ritual 4; Biology, Engineering, and Chemistry 3 or below Incompatible with Person of Science

Proper Lifting Form
You can lift 3x your load instead of 2x. Any object less than 3x your load can be thrown as a weapon, with a shooting STR check.

Prerequisites: Athletics 4; STR 7

Protect Me!
Other characters protecting you gain 1 experience for every 2 damage they take in your place.

Prerequisite: An Honest Sucker; Manipulation 3; PER 7

Quality Product
Products from your pets that produce milk, honey, wool, eggs, fur, meat, and leather are high quality and provide double the standard value of wealth and resources.

Prerequisites: Rancher; Husbandry 4; INT 5

Rancher
You can have as many herd animals as 2x Husbandry + INT. You must have the resources to care for and house them but you have the knowledge to maintain them passively.

Prerequisites: Herder; Husbandry 3; INT 5

Record Keeper
You don't destroy *Manuals* when consuming them.

Prerequisites: Research 4; INT 7

Revolting
This can take the form of a frightening appearance or wretched stink. Enemies have a -1 card penalty to card challenges against you for 1 round. You must expend 1 focus to activate this ability.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 3; VIT 5

Ritualist
Reduces time to complete rituals by ½.

Prerequisite: Initiate; Ritual 3; INT or PER 5

Routes and Trails
When traveling through explored areas travel time is halved and the cost of traveling (food and fuel) is halved.

Prerequisites: Navigation 4; INT 5; PER 5

Saw It Coming
You do not need a check to catch items tossed at you by other characters when not in combat. The first time you dodge in combat, your dodge does not expend cards.

Prerequisites: Awareness 2; AGI 5

Scion
Using ritual to communicate with other realms cannot result in a glitch.

Prerequisites: Spirit Vessel; Ritual 5; PER 9

Shadow
Upon a successful card challenge, regain stealth even during combat and when creatures have line of sight.

Prerequisites: Espionage 3; AGI 7

Shock Trooper
Decreases the load of extremely heavy weapons by 2.

Prerequisite: Juggernaut; Brawling 5; STR 9

Shocking and in Your Face
Your art is powerful, challenging, and easily offends. Successful Theatrics checks in combat reduce an enemy's patience by 1, if they have any, in addition to the intended effect of the check.

Prerequisites: Theatrics 3; Manipulation 2; PER 7

Skilled Surgeon
Reduce the difficulty of biology and chemistry checks used to heal by 3. You can attempt to revive recently dead characters with biology checks.

Prerequisites: Biology 4; Chemistry 3

Skirmisher
Characters with this trait reduce an enemy's melee attack power by 1 when firing within enemy melee range.

Prerequisites: Shooting 1; STR or AGI 3

Sleight of Hand
You can perform small acts of sleight of hand without a card check such as placing a very light or weightless item in someone's pocket, removing a very light or weightless item from someone's pocket, or hiding a small object on their person. This ability cannot be used against player characters and does not affect weapons.

Prerequisites: Espionage 2; AGI 5.

Sleuthsayer
Difficulty checks using Investigation to get information from NPCs are reduced by 2. Failing these checks cannot anger the NPC; instead, they simply do not have the information.

Prerequisites: One More Thing; Investigation 4; INT 5; PER 5

Small
You are approximately ½ the size of a normal human.
- You have -2 load and -2 on Strength-based Athletics checks
- Reduce the difficulty of Espionage checks by 1
- You only count as 2 load when being carried by another character or animal
- The first card you spend while dodging reduces damage by 2 instead of 1

Prerequisites: Must be taken at character creation
Not compatible with Large

Smith
Armor and shields made by you have 1 more armor value.

Prerequisites: Engineering 2; INT 3

Sneak Attack
When attacking from stealth, you can add your total AGI to a combat action, melee or ranged. (Replaces ½ STR or ½ AGI)

Prerequisites: Espionage 2; AGI 5

Soul Siphon
When you kill someone in melee combat you can restore 1 focus.

Prerequisites: Occult and Brawling 2

Soldiers
You can command a number of soldiers equal to 2x the number of bonds you have. These soldiers must be tended to and housed. They also require payment, which reduces your income by 1 step for every 5 soldiers. Soldiers can engage in large scale battles but if they are used in small skirmishes or dungeons, each soldier that participates will demand a cut of the loot and will leave if dissatisfied. Each soldier has 5 health, and an attack power of 3 (ranged and melee).

Prerequisites: Leadership 3; PER 5; INT 3

Spiritualism
When you use Ritual to summon a creature or make contact with other worlds you can add an additional effect to the spell for free.

Prerequisites: Acolyte; Ritual 2; PER 5

Spirit Vessel
Ritual spells that you cast on yourself have their difficulty reduced by 3.

Prerequisites: Spiritualism; Ritual 3; PER 7

Spring-Loaded Legs
You can jump 3x higher and further. You must expend 1 focus to activate this ability.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology 2; VIT 5

Spymaster
You can create a network of NPC spies equal to your number of bonds.

Prerequisites: Keen Forgeries; Espionage 4; INT 7; PER 5

StarGazer
As long as you can see the stars you cannot become lost.

Prerequisites: Navigation 3; INT 5

Studied Chemist
Allows the copying of a poison or medicine you already have once per day with no card check.

Prerequisites: Chemistry 3; Biology 1; INT 5

Summoner
When using Ritual to summon foes, reduce difficulty by 1. Remove a glitch from the glitch table when summoning with Ritual.

Prerequisites: Ritual 4

Summoning Circles
The character can spend an attune to create permanent summoning circles doing a ritual in one of these circles reduces its difficulty by 5

Prerequisites: Ritualist; Ritual 4; INT 7; PER 5

Supportive
Can spend one focus to add ½ PER to the next card challenge performed by a character that is bonded to you.
This cannot be used in combat.

Prerequisites: Empathy 1; PER 3

Teacher
You can spend time and experience to create *Manuals* for skills you already know. You cannot consume your own *Manuals*.

Prerequisites: Research 3; INT 5

Third Eye
Automatically detect magic at a range of long or closer.

Prerequisites: Wizard; Occult 4; INT or PER 7

Tinkerer
This character can create complex devices and reduce the difficulty of all checks made to repair by 2.

Prerequisites: Engineering 2; INT 3

Triage Specialist
This trait allows a character to reduce the difficulty of first aid checks by 1.

Prerequisites: Biology 1; INT 3

Trick Shooter
Treat enemy cover as one step lower for this character.

Prerequisites: Distance Shooter; Shooting 4; AGI 7 or INT 3

Trailblazer
Navigation checks to explore unexplored areas have their difficulty reduced by 2.

Prerequisites: Navigation 4; INT 7

True Aim
Critical hits on ranged attacks gain the penetrating tag.

Prerequisites: Distance Shooter; Shooting 5; AGI 9

Trusted Investigator
Your reputation as a truth seeker precedes you and other investigators and authority figures are willing to share information with you freely unless ordered not to or if it runs counter to their interests.

Prerequisites: Friendly; Investigation 5; INT 5; PER 5

Tun State
You can go into a tun state, or suspended animation. During this time you have +10 soak and immobility for 1 round. You must expend 2 focus to activate this ability.

Prerequisites: Inhuman; Biology rank 3; VIT 5

Unburdened
You have +2 soak when wearing no armor.

Prerequisites: Brawling 1; AGI 3

Uncanny Hunch
You can ask the dealer **1** meta question when you have succeeded with the observe action, explained in the story as a "hunch."

Prerequisites: Awareness 5; INT 7

Warded
You have immunity to the condition 'cursed.'

Prerequisites: Occult 5; INT 9

Weapon Mastery
Grants +1 damage with all weapons.

Prerequisites: Active Defense; Brawling 4; STR or AGI 7

Weirdling
Effects from spells you cast on yourself are permanent if they are the result of a perfect success.

Prerequisite: Ritualist; Ritual 5; INT 7; PER 5

Wizard
Doubles spell duration.

Prerequisites: Efficient Caster; Occult 3, INT or PER 7

Working Muscle
STR requirements for weapons and armor are reduced by 1. The load of weapons and armor is also reduced by 1.

Prerequisites: STR and VIT 4

Youthful Ambition
Once per session you can shuffle all aces and jokers back into your deck.

Prerequisites: Age -35 (When a character with this trait turns 35, they must exchange this for a new trait)

Gameplay

Card Challenges

Players draw a hand from their deck of cards at the beginning of each session. Hand size will vary based on character stats, which is detailed in character creation. Using these cards, the players compete in **card challenges** against the Dealer and the other players when necessary.

Card challenges are the primary mechanic of Ultimo. When a player takes an action that requires effort, they play cards against the Dealer in order to resolve these actions.

When a player wants to do something that requires extreme effort, acts while in danger, or engages in combat they are subjected to a card challenge. When this happens the Dealer decides on the difficulty of the check. This will usually be 1-10 and may rarely go as high as 15 for impossible tasks. The Dealer draws that number of cards from the top of their deck and looks at them, then plays them face down in descending order of value. There are exceptions for specific cards, which is noted in the card values section below.

The player selects which cards they want to play from their hand. The number of cards available in the player's hand is limited by their character statistics (for more information, see character creation). The player lays them face down where everyone can see in descending order of value, unless otherwise noted. The Dealer and the player then reveal their cards and compare.

The player is granted 1 **success** for each pairing in which their card is of greater value than the Dealer's. For every pairing that the Dealer wins the player earns one

failure. If paired cards have the same value it results in a **draw** and the cards are canceled out. If the player plays more cards than the difficulty, each card played over the difficulty earns the player one success**.** If the player plays fewer cards than the difficulty, the player earns one failure for every card below the difficulty. If a player has more successes than failures at the end of the challenge they have succeeded and their action continues as planned. If the player has more failures than successes, the action is halted. Instead, the Dealer can take actions against the players. The Dealer may deal damage, force players into a new position, capture players or perform a special effect on players. In some cases, the challenge may result in a **partial success**.

If players have an equal number of successes and failures it results in a partial success. If the difficulty is odd, the player's successes round up. In a partial success, the player succeeds at a cost. If play resolves in no failures for the player, the challenge is a **perfect success** and the player receives a special bonus based on the action they were trying to achieve.

Overwhelming Expertise

If a character can play 5 cards more than the difficulty of the check then the player can take an automatic partial success without spending cards.

If a character can play 7 cards more than the difficulty of the check then the player can take an automatic success.

Difficulty

Checks usually range in difficulty from 0-15. Some checks are static, such as an enemy's combat rating, but for many checks the dealer will have to consider the character's actions, skills, environment, and the relative complexity of the task and then assign a difficulty.

The Dealer then declares the difficulty out loud to all players or writes it down before any modifiers are calculated. The players and Dealer then apply any modifiers they are able to.

Difficulty Calculation

Dealer's Estimate

↓

Dealer's Modifiers

↓

Player's Modifiers

↓

Environmental/
Weather Modifiers
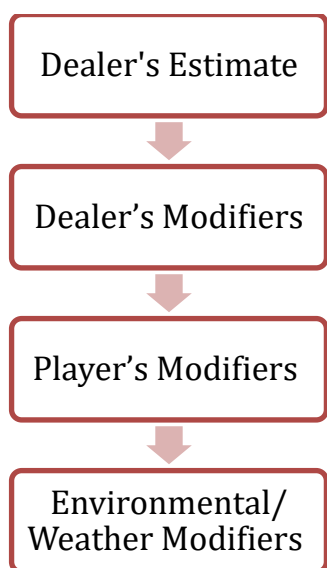
Example
You are trying to shoot at a target that is smaller than you in the rain. The target is more difficult to hit because it is both a small target and your vision and hearing are being obscured.

There are no hard and fast rules on how the Dealer should assign difficulty. The following list of examples should provide a guide for determining difficulty ratings.

Dealer's Note
This scale can and should be adjusted depending on how powerful you want the players to feel.

0-4

Checks between the values of 0-4 are considered trivial.

Something that requires little or no effort to do, these checks are often covered by the overwhelming expertise rule. A player never has to play cards on a 0 difficulty check.

Examples

C0
- Traveling a lonely familiar road. (Piloting)
- Playing a sport you are very familiar with in a low effort way (Athletics)
- Searching an old family photo album you've seen a million times (Investigation)

C1
- Playing hide and seek with a dim-witted child (Espionage)
- Changing a light bulb (Engineering)
- Arm wrestling a baby (Brawling)

C2
- Calming a beloved family pet during a thunderstorm (Husbandry)
- Noticing a bug crawling on you (Awareness)
- Remembering where you parked in a medium sized parking lot (Navigation)

C3
- Jumping a small gap or puddle (Athletics)
- Throwing a rock at a static object (Shooting)
- Writing a 3rd grade book report (Research)

C4
- Scaring a skittish person (Manipulation)
- Singing a song from memory correctly (Theatrics)
- Remembering all of the countries on a continent (Culture)

5-8

Checks of 5-8 represent median difficulty. Most combat will be in this range, as well as trivial tasks while under duress.

Examples

C5:
- Calming your punchy friend down from a drunken rage (Empathy)
- Treating a semi-serious injury outside of combat (Biology)
- Leading a strict church in prayer (Ritual)

C6
- Casting the simplest of magic without ripping your mortal soul in twain (Occult)
- Tracking a buck wounded by a longbow through a woodland (Survival)
- Training another character in the first rank of a skill (Leadership)

C7
- Reading through cold cases to find a link to a current slaying (Investigation)
- Dueling a well-trained swordsman (Brawling)
- Staying conscious after receiving physical trauma (Toughness)

C8
- Sneaking up on an alert sentry (Espionage)
- Shooting at a hostile flying target (Shooting)

- Neutralizing a volatile chemical with the appropriate compound while under duress (Chemistry)

9-12

Checks of 9-12 are difficult tasks. These are tasks that would take an average person all day to do. This is where group checks start to become necessary, as it can sometimes be impossible to complete these tasks alone without great personal expenditure.

Examples

C9
- Just straight up slamming a car into another car and surviving (Piloting)
- Calming a wild beast that has decided to eat you (Husbandry)
- Seducing a happily married person (Manipulation)

C10
- Communing with a force beyond your reasoning to ask for a boon (Ritual)
- Dueling a master swordsman (Brawling)
- Seeing through a decent disguise (Awareness)

C11
- Using magic to influence another person's thoughts (Occult)
- Shooting an arrow at a target in a storm (Shooting)
- Navigating an impenetrable fog while in hazardous seas (Navigation)

C12
- Commanding an army to siege a moderately defended castle (Leadership)
- Communicating with another person with whom you do not share a language (Culture)
- Building and maintaining a trebuchet (Engineering)

13-15

Checks of 13-15 are nearly impossible tasks. Completing a task like this alone would be considered a great feat of heroism. Even when these tasks are completed as a group, they would be something that would leave people talking about it for a while.

Examples

C13
- Leaping from the top floor of a burning building and aiming for the deep end of a pool (Athletics)
- Crafting a remedy for a potent and rare disease (Chemistry)
- Removing a tumor from a delicate organ (Biology)

C14
- Creating a conspiracy to help delegitimize a political rival (Espionage)
- Convincing two leaders of similar ideology to cease hostilities and to begin peace talks (Empathy)
- Create and perform a play from scratch in less than 12 hours (Theatrics

C15
- Fighting a monster or other-worldly entity (Brawling)
- Finding a new clue in a 50-year-old murder (Investigation)
- Catching an arrow (Awareness)

15+

Checks that are over 15 are considered impossible and should only be imposed if the players are trying to do something that breaks the fabric of reality. Certain things are truly impossible and that is up for the Dealer and players to decide.

Examples

- C17 Ending a war peacefully between two ideologically opposed groups (Empathy)
- C18 Sieging a castle with half as many troops and resources as the enemy (leadership)
- C20 Curing a plague (Biology)
- C25 Bringing the dead back to life with magic (Ritual)

Card Values

Number Cards
Number card values are equal to the value listed on the card, with 2 being the weakest and 10 being the strongest.

Jacks
A jack's value is equal to the card it is played against. Jacks can be played in any order in the card challenge. Jacks technically reduce the difficulty of the check, and they make it impossible to achieve a perfect success or a perfect failure if they are played.

Queens
A queen can take the value of any card in the player's discard pile, except for aces and jokers. A queen must be placed in the challenge order as if it is the value of the card it is replacing. A queen's value is 2 if the player chooses or if there are no cards in the player's discard pile.

Kings
A king's value is 10, but kings can be played in any order in the card challenge.

Ace
An ace automatically succeeds against any card it is played against except another ace, which results in a draw**.**

Jokers
Jokers result in an automatic failure for the player even when played against another joker. Jokers MUST be played first in the card challenge no matter what other cards are played in that hand. A card challenge in which the player plays a joker can only result in a partial success, regardless of the number of successful plays in that challenge. The dealer is encouraged to

have fun with jokers. A joker does not need to result in terrible failure, but jokers will always cause a complication.

Resolving a Card Challenge

When the card challenge resolves, players earn a perfect success, success, partial success, failure, or total failure.

Perfect Success
When a player earns no failures on a card challenge, unless they play a jack.

On a perfect success the player achieves their goal and receives a special bonus based on the action they were trying to achieve (detailed in character actions). In addition, the player is refunded half their personality attribute in **focus** on a perfect success. The dealer does not gain **threat** for focus spent on a perfect success.

> **Threat**
> Threat are units of danger. This is how the Dealer can put pressure on players. Threat is explained in more detail in Dealer Actions below.

Success
When the player's total successes equal more than half of the challenge rating.

On a success, the player's action goes as planned and the player or the dealer describes what happens as a result.

Partial success
When the player's total successes are equal to half of the challenge rating. Successes are rounded up for odd-numbered difficulty checks.

On a partial success the player achieves their goal, but the dealer gains 1 threat that they can use immediately

Failure
When the player's total successes are equal to less than half of the challenge rating.

On a failure the player fails to achieve their goal and receives a major effect from the dealer. The dealer gains 2 threat that they can use immediately and can apply 1 minor effect for free.
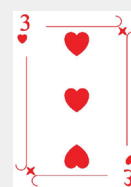
Total Failure
When a player earns no successes on a card challenge, unless the dealer plays a Jack.

The Dealer gains 3 threat that they can use immediately and applies one major or 3 minor effects for free.

Example Challenge (Challenge Rating 6)

Dealer's Cards
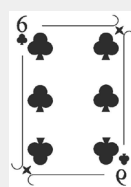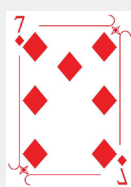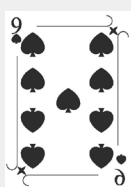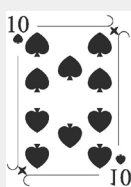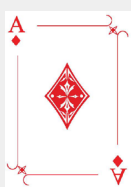
Player's Cards
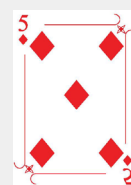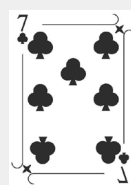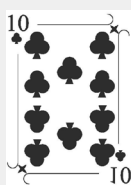
| Failure | Cancel | Cancel | Success | Success | Success |

In this example, the player has a **success**, because the cancels lower the challenge rating. In this example the player has three successes and one failure.

Dealer Actions

Threat

Threat are units of danger. This is how the Dealer can put pressure on players. Threat is generated in a number of ways.

Whenever a character uses focus, the dealer gains that much threat. When a character gets a partial success or lower, the dealer gains threat (detailed above).

Threat can be spent at any time but should typically be used immediately when it's gained to increase the stakes of failure. Threat carries over between sessions.

Threat reduces by 5 when the characters sleep for 8 hours. Threat reduces to 0 when the players finish their current mission or quest.

Effects

Minor Effects: Cost 1 Threat
- Receive 2 damage
- Drop an item
- Get stuck:
  The character cannot move for one round. The character can still act within very close range or attack with a ranged weapon or magic.
- Distract:
  The player can use 2 fewer cards on their next card challenge.
- Alert the enemy:
  The dealer causes nearby threats to start combat or begin stalking the players.
- Become Winded:

  The player discards 4 cards from the top of their deck.

Major Effects: Cost 3 Threat
- Receive 5 damage
- Ruin an item
- Find something horrible
- Become Injured:
  The player becomes either **Bleeding** or **Concussed** (described in Character Injuries).
- Become trapped or lost.
- Become dazed:
  The player can use 5 fewer cards on their next card challenge.
- Become Afraid:
  The player can use 1 fewer cards on all card challenges until they face their fear or escape from it.
- Become Cursed:
  Conditional. The Dealer should determine the effects of the curse.
- Fall Unconscious:
  The character can be revived by another character without a card challenge check as long as health is above 1.
- Run Ragged:
  The player discards 8 cards from the top of their deck.

Minor and major effects can be the result of the environment or engaging with foes. There are some effects that can only be used if there are foes present.

Character Actions

Character actions are open to the player's imagination, as long as the character has relevant skills to complete the action. However, there are also specific actions the character can take. The following is a list of some basic character actions to keep in mind.

Aid
When the dealer sets a difficulty that would be tricky or impossible, players may pool their cards and try to succeed as a team. Players acting as a team can play up to 12 cards together. Should they fail, any effects or damage can be split between all characters at the party's discretion.

Attack
You may choose to attack a creature or another character. When attacking, you will typically use either Brawling or Shooting as your supporting skill, combined with your Strength or Agility abilities respectively.

Attack actions are explored in more detail in the Combat chapter.

Manipulate/Empathize
You can attempt to convince an NPC or another character to do something you want them to do.

Manipulation and Empathy actions are explored in more detail on page 39.

Observe
You can take in your surroundings and attempt to glean truths about the scenario.

Observe actions are explored in more detail on the next page.

Protect
You may redirect a minor or major effect directed at another character to yourself. To activate this ability you must discard a card at random.

Resist
When resisting against mental or magical attacks that do not deal damage, players make a luck flip. The dealer decides on a difficulty of 1-5 and the player can flip as many cards as they have psyche.

Use Magic
When a character uses magic they draw on Personality or Intellect combined with Ritual or Occult skill. Characters spend focus to cast magic. You can cast spells that you create, with various effects. The focus cost of each spell depends on its qualities and effects.

Magic actions are explored in more detail in the Magic chapter.

Other Actions
All other action checks are decided at the Dealer's discretion. The dealer can require any combination of an ability and a skill or two skills.

Examples

Dr. Sever attempts to perform surgery on a wounded ally in a clean hospital with proper tools.
INT + Biology
Difficulty 5

Dr. Sever is attempting a similar surgery in a bunker while being attacked by demons and needs to keep his concentration while the walls are raining down.
Biology + Psyche
Difficulty 8

Observe

The character can take in their surroundings and attempt to glean truths about the scenario.

With successful observation challenges, players can ask the Dealer questions. Players should only ask questions that are based on their character's knowledge. For example, a player would not be able to ask "*what is the card challenge rating for this enemy?*" or "*where is the missing locket?*"

Observe challenges can use the Investigation, Espionage, or Awareness skills. The skill used determines the context for the information the player receives.

Example questions

- *Are there any entrances we haven't noticed?*
- *Has anyone been here recently?*
- *Is there any danger we haven't noticed?*
- *Is there anything of value in the area?*
- *Are there any escape routes?*
- *What is that person/thing about to do?*
- *Is there anything more you can tell me about what this looks like?*
- *Is there anything that seems out of place?*

½ Intelligence+Skill
Skills: Investigation, Espionage, or Awareness

Perfect Success:
The player asks the Dealer 3 questions about the surrounding area or creatures within it. The party gets +1 card to act on any information gained this way.
The Dealer must answer truthfully.

Success:
The player asks the Dealer 2 questions about the surrounding area or creatures within it.
The Dealer must answer truthfully.

Partial Success:
The player asks the Dealer 1 question about the surrounding area or creatures within it.
The Dealer must answer but they can bend the truth.

Failure:
The character gets no information. The character takes a minor effect of the Dealer's choice for no threat cost.

Perfect Failure:
The character gets no information. The character suffers 3 minor or 1 major effect for no threat cost. The character may choose whether the effects are minor or major but the Dealer chooses the effects.

Manipulate/Empathize

A character can attempt to convince an NPC or another character to do something they want them to do.

While players can attempt a manipulation or empathy check against another player character, no player can be forced to take an action they do not wish to take. When a character succeeds on a manipulation or empathy challenge against another character, the other character is instead given incentive to accept the character's suggestion by receiving bonuses for following through.

Manipulation/Empathy challenges will use the Empathy and Manipulation skills most often, but the Dealer and the player may agree to use a different skill in a specific situation. The skill used determines the context for the information the player receives. For example, the player may use Toughness to intimidate their target.

The challenge rating is equal to ½ Intelligence + Awareness when trying to manipulate characters, and equal to the Empathy/Manipulation threshold when trying to manipulate NPCs.

½ Personality+Skill
Skills: Manipulation, Empathy, or other

Perfect Success:

NPC The NPC does whatever the character asks,without question.
NPCs will not do self-destructive things.

PC The PC being manipulated gains 2 experience for following through with the action and gets +1 card for any move acting on this suggestion.

Success:

NPC The NPC does whatever the character wants, but the character has to assure their safety. Characters may lie to the NPC.

PC The PC being manipulated gains 1 experience for following through with the action.

Partial Success:

NPC The NPC does what the character wants but demands compensation immediately.

PC There is no partial success for this roll.

Failure:

NPC The NPC refuses to listen and the character suffers 1 minor effect (player's choice).

PC The PC being manipulated gains nothing from listening.

Perfect Failure:

NPC The NPC becomes actively hostile and the character suffers 1 major effect (Dealer's choice).

PC Characters lose a bond if they have one.

Foes

Foes in Ultimo take two forms, minions and hosts.

Hosts

Hosts are powerful foes that command lesser and greater minions. The term host is sometimes synonymous with the term boss. However, a host does not have to be a physical threat to the players themselves; their influence or tremendous army might be their source of power.

Hosts are always worth experience to players for defeating them. The value is decided by the dealer based on the difficulty to defeat them.

Defeating a host does not necessarily mean killing them. You can defeat a host in the following ways:
Killing them/Humbling them in combat
- Fully reducing their influence on the world
- Destroying the source of their power
- Befriending or employing them
- Destroying their defenses

Example Host: Horus the Corrupted

Horus is a chaplain of the black church cultists who follow his command without a second thought and are loyal to him through mutilation and death.

Health	18
Soak	10 5 from Toughness 5 from Armor (magical vestments)
Danger Sense	15
Manipulation Threshold	25
Empathy Threshold	30
Patience	20
Melee Attack Power	11 – *Spear of Betrayal* +5 damage Anyone who takes damage from the spear of betrayal takes a -2 on checks to resist foe effects
Ranged Attack Power	15 – *Blood Bolt* Cost: 1 threat As an additional cost to cast, deal 1 damage to self or nearest ally Launches a bolt of blood that has been crystalized and sharpened to a point
Special Abilities	
Patient Defense	If this foe were to take damage they can remove that from their patience instead. Damage absorbed by soak is not deducted from patience.
Fervor	Allies that can see or hear this creature cannot be charmed or manipulated.
Unreasonable	Even when defeated through empathy or manipulation, Horus will never turn away from his ideals.

Minor Foe Effects

Quick Jab	Cost: 1 threat Attacks a creature with half attack power rounded down.

Major Foe Effects

Blood Siphon	Cost: 2 threat After being engaged in combat, heal health by ½ damage dealt.
Dominate	Cost: 3 threat Target creature must succeed on a Psyche check or be brought under the control of Horus (players may draw to full before making this check).

Minions

Minions are the most common foes and vary greatly in strength. Some minions, called greater minions, can also exert influence over other minions. Greater minions also have patience and will carry valuable items.

All minions share these characteristics:

- They are worth no experience
- They are in service to a host
- They are dangerous
- They are difficult to reason with
- They have short term plans

Examples

	Fanatic (Minion)	Cultist (Greater Minion)
Health	6	8
Soak	1	2
Melee Attack Power	6	6
Ranged Attack Power	4	8 (magic) 1 threat
Behavior	Will follow the commands of cultists	Commands and corals fanatics, hides behind them and lobs spells
Special Move		Fanatical Sermon: Give +1 to the melee attack power of all fanatics (2 threat)
Gear	Hatchet Torch Brick Tattered clothes 50 cash	Black robes Crucifix Rosary 70 cash

Patience

Patience is a foe's threshold for keeping poise and composure in combat. When a foe's patience drops to zero, they become hyper-aggressive and release a devastating attack with their full power. This attack gains +3 damage and applies *engage* as well as a major foe effect. However, this leaves the foe vulnerable. The next time the player enters into combat with that foe, the dealer may only play one half of that foe's combat rating. Patience is reduced whenever

- a character deals more damage than the foe
- a character takes no damage from the foe's attack
- the player scores a perfect success on a combat check against the foe
- and upon a successful manipulation check.

Foe Manipulation and Empathy

When a character tries to manipulate or empathize with a foe, the player must complete a card challenge against the foe's manipulation or empathy threshold. This is the number of cards the Dealer can play against a manipulation or empathy challenge. Outside of combat, this works as described in the manipulation and empathy action table.

During combat, a successful empathy check will cause a foe to avoid the character for one round, and even to avoid damaging the character if they are engaged in group combat. A successful in-combat manipulation check will force the dealer to apply any foe effects to that character and reduces the foe's patience by 1, if it has any.

Basic Foe Effects

Engage	Forces a character and only that character to fight a specific enemy Cost: 1 Threat
Read (greater foe or host only)	Forces the player to reveal cards in their hand at random equal to half the foe's danger sense Cost: 2 Threat
Intimidate (greater foe or host only)	Forces the player to discard cards at random equal to half of the foe's remaining patience Cost: 3 Threat
Suppress (requires ranged attack rating)	Applies a -2 to brawling and shooting to target character for 1 round Cost: 2 Threat

Creating foes

Foes work very similarly to player characters and Dealers can choose to generate foes in a similar way as player characters if they want a fuller picture of a foe's skills and abilities. For faster character creation, Dealers may invent the foe based on these guidelines.

A foe must have:

- Health
- Soak
- Patience
- Danger Sense
- Manipulation and Empathy thresholds
- Melee and ranged attack power
- Special abilities
- Foe effects

Health and Soak

Minions	Should be able to survive 1 or 2 attacks from a character with 5 attack power.
Greater Minions	Should be able to survive 3-5 attacks from a character with 5 attack power.
Hosts	Should be able to survive 10+ attacks from a character with 5 attack power.

Patience

All hosts and some greater minions have patience, but all lesser minions do not. Foes who have patience should have between 10 and 20 based on how calm their personality is. A well-trained swordsman will be more patient than a raging barbarian.

Danger Sense

This is a foe's ability to detect creatures in stealth. The danger sense rating represents the difficulty of using espionage to sneak past this foe or attack this foe from stealth. When creating a foe using the player character creation method, danger sense can be determined by ½ INT + Awareness, Investigation, or Espionage.

Manipulation and Empathy Thresholds

Manipulation and Empathy thresholds are a foe's ability to resist a player's charms and attempts to reason with them. When creating a foe using the player character creation method, the manipulation and empathy thresholds can be determined by ½ PER + Awareness or Psyche, respectively. This number can be increased or decreased based on the relationship the characters have with this foe. When creating foes with the quick method, Dealers should make one lower than the

other. Someone who is easy to empathize with might be wary of lies and someone who is sniveling and cowardly might find it hard to empathize with others.

Melee and Ranged Attack Power

These are how a creature responds to combat and are played against a character's brawling, shooting, or magic attacks. The basic rules for deciding attack power are as follows:

Minions	2-5 attack power +0 -- +3 damage
Greater Minions	5-10 attack power +2 -- +5 damage
Hosts	10+ attack power +4 -- +8 damage

Any attack with 12 or more attack power must cost at least 1 threat to activate. If the dealer has no threat, the difficulty reduces to 10.

Special abilities

These are abilities that only hosts and greater minions can have. These abilities provide passive modifiers, similarly to traits. A few examples are provided with the example host, Horus the Corrupted. It is suggested that dealers come up with their own special abilities for individual foes but for fast foe creation many traits can be adapted to act as special abilities.

Foe Effects

Much like special abilities, these should be decided on a foe to foe basis. Some examples have been provided with the example foes. In addition to any special foe effects, all foes can use the basic foe effects. Dealers are encouraged to develop their own foe effects based on the creature they have created.

Combat

Turns in combat

There are two ways to determine turn order in combat.

Free Form

Each player takes their turn as they have an idea for what they want to do. The Dealer has opportunities to spend threat in between each player's turn.

Tactical

Turn order is determined by the higher of Intellect or Agility. The Dealer can only spend threat when a foe in play has its turn in the order. Hosts and greater foes can have multiple turns in the order.

Combat Moves

Attack
When you make an attack, you engage in combat. This results in a unique card challenge. In an attack challenge against a creature, the difficulty is equal to that creature's ranged or melee attack power. Players calculate their attack power as ½ STR or AGI + a relevant skill.

½ STR or AGI+Skill
Skills: Brawling, Shooting

Perfect Success:
You deal double damage to the target.

Success, Partial Success, or Failure:
You deal damage equal to the total number of successes + weapon damage. You receive damage equal to the total number of failures + enemy weapon damage.

Perfect Failure:
You immediately receive a major dealer effect or major foe effect with no threat cost.

Attack From Stealth
You may attack from stealth without risking damage to yourself. When you attack a creature from stealth, the creature does get its toughness added to its soak, but does not add its armor.

The difficulty rating for attacking a creature from stealth is equal to the foe's danger sense. The difficulty rating for attacking another character is ½ Intelligence + Awareness.

Dodge
You can dodge during combat. If you take the combat action and have incoming damage, you can discard a number of cards from your hand or from the top of your deck equal to ½ Agility to avoid damage. Each card discarded this way reduces damage by 1.

Block

You can choose to block during combat. Block works the same as dodge, you can discard a number of cards from your hand or from the top of your deck equal to ½ Strength to avoid damage. If you have an unruined shield you can use your full Strength.

Group Attacks

Characters can choose to attack an enemy together by pooling their cards. When characters attack together only the character that provides the majority of the cards deals weapon damage. Damage from the enemy is dealt based on each player's successes and failures. Foe weapon damage is applied to the person who provided the most cards.

Large Group Combat

In some cases, the players may find themselves in large group combat or commanding a large group of NPCs against another large group of NPCs.

Engaging Multiple Foes in Combat

If a character is forced to fight multiple foes at once they play against the combat rating of the most powerful target, +1 for each assisting foe. The character splits damage across every target. The most damage goes to the most powerful target and at least one damage goes to every foe in combat.

On the Battlefield

When a player character is part of large group combat, the card challenge works similarly to engaging multiple foes. However, in large group combat the calculation becomes slightly more complex.

The player will make a combat check against the enemy leader's leadership rating, with +1 for every 5 soldiers under the leader's command and -1 for every 5 soldiers assisting the player. Damage dealt by the player is dealt to any leaders first and then to the overall health of the group. Group health is determined by the total health of all members.

Damage dealt by the enemy army is dealt to the characters first and then to the overall group health.

Commanding Troops

A commander can also send in troops without joining them. This results in a Leadership check against the enemy leader's Leadership rating, with +1 for every 5 soldiers under their command and -1 for every 5 soldiers under the player character's command. The results of combat deal damage to the collective heath pools of each army.

Combat Morale

When an army loses ¼ of its health in large group combat, the leader must make a Leadership check to keep the army from being routed, or fleeing from combat. The difficulty of this check is equal to the enemy's Leadership skill +1 each time you have to make the check, to a maximum of +3.

When the army is routed, they take damage from the army they are fleeing but can regroup shortly after. If the leader is on the battlefield this check never increases in difficulty.

The dealer cannot make a foe act on their turn if that foe has already been engaged in combat by another character or characters.

NPCs in Combat

Sometimes players will have control of NPCs in combat and NPCs may need to fight.

NPC combat strength can be calculated in the following way:

Health	5 + Bond
Soak	Armor + Bond
Melee Attack Power	3 + Bond
Ranged Attack Power	3 + Bond
Damage	Determined by weapon

Specific NPCs might have a detailed stat block and players should use those stats instead. All NPC attacks are played from the Dealer's deck. NPCs can attack with players.

Tactical Combat

While the game is intended to be played in the theater of the mind, some groups may prefer to play with a battle map and figurines. The following rules are used when playing with a battle map and miniatures.

Combat Movement

Movement in Ultimo is usually very simple. The basic rule is that characters can close one rank of distance for each action at no cost. For example, a character can move from long range to close range in order to use their close-range weapon.

These general movement rules work for gridless mini-play. The Dealer can choose to use the more exact movement rules when playing on a grid.

A round of combat lasts approximately 6 seconds. Each character can move 3 squares per round for free. They must play a card from their hand to move each 3 additional squares. Characters can spend cards equal to half of their Agility or their ranks in Athletics, whichever is highest. Each square is approximately 5 square feet. Anything that impedes movement reduces the number of squares moved at one time to 1.

Flanking and Surrounding

When a unit has hostile units on either side of them, they are considered to be flanked. Flanked foes have a -2 to their melee attack rating and cannot use their ranged attack rating to return fire. A flanked foe cannot use monster effects except against those characters flanking it. Only characters and foes may initiate flanking.

A flanked character has a -2 to brawling while flanked and cannot use ranged attacks. When using tactical combat rules, only flanking characters can attack together.

If a unit is flanked and one or more creatures move into an adjacent square, they become surrounded. A surrounded foe can only use half their melee attack rating. A surrounded character can only use half of their brawling. Surrounded hosts are immune to this effect.

If a unit moves out of a flanked or surrounded position, they take 1 damage from every hostile unit adjacent to them. This damage is calculated at once and ignores soak gained from Toughness. Surrounded foes with patience lose one patience per character surrounding them at the end of each turn.

Weapon Range

Very Close	Adjacent targets
Close	Within 3 squares Free movement
Medium	Within 6 squares
Long	Within 18 squares
Very Long	Within 72 squares

Weapon Speed

A weapon's weight correlates to its speed. The lighter a weapon, the faster it is. This is only important for deciding the order in which damage is dealt.

Damage from a light weapon resolves before that of a medium, and medium before heavy, etc. If a unit were to die from receiving damage from a faster weapon, the damage that unit would deal in that combat does not resolve.

Cover

When a character is attacked in ranged combat, they can take cover behind sturdy objects.

¼ cover	Reduce the ranged attack power of enemies by 1
½ cover	Reduce the ranged attack power of enemies by 2
Full cover	The unit is immune to ranged attacks

Bonded Combat Bonus

When two bonded units are adjacent to each other in combat and have not engaged in group combat this turn, they benefit from the following bonuses based on their bond level.

1	-1 to the difficulty for all combat checks
2	2 soak that counts as toughness for damage calculations
3	cannot be flanked

Environmental and Battlefield Conditions

Rain

Effects of rain are additive. Rain becomes snow at freezing temperatures.

Light	movement reduced to 2 squares per stamina or by 1 step in free form combat
Medium	-1 to all ranged attacks
Heavy	- 1 on all attacks -2 on non-combat skill checks visibility reduced to close
Extreme	-2 on all attacks -2 on non-combat skill checks visibility reduced to very close

Wind

Mild	reduce temperature by one step
Consistent	reduce temperature by one step
Heavy	-2 to all ranged attacks it is difficult to hear and speak
Extreme	remove two cards off of the top of your deck every turn characters with less than 5 strength must make athletics checks to remain standing
Disastrous	it is impossible to hear or speak take 1 damage every turn remove 5 cards off of the top of your deck every turn

Temperature

Deathly Cold	-3 on all card checks movement requires 2 more stamina sleeping deals 1 more damage per hour
Freezing	-2 on all card checks movement requires 1 more stamina sleeping deals 2 damage per hour
Cold	-1 on all card checks don't heal from sleeping
Chilly	
Temperate	
Warm	
Hot	-1 armor to heavy armor dodging ½ as effective
Sweltering	-2 armor to heavy armor burn 1 card from the top of the deck for every card played during a check
Scorching Heat	-2 to all armor burn 2 cards from the top of the deck for every card played during a check

Terrain

Uneven	+1 stamina cost for movement
Frozen	Athletics checks required to stay standing
Muddy	Movement reduced by 1 square per stamina spend -3 armor to heavy armor
Sand	The cost of movement in heavy armor is doubled
Snowy	+1 stamina cost for movement Movement reduced by 1 square per stamina spend -3 armor to heavy armor

Magic

When a character uses magic they typically draw on Personality or Intellect combined with Ritual or Occult skill. Casting magic uses focus as a resource. Casting any sort of spell costs 1 focus.

Magic can be used to do one of the following:

- Attack with elemental or magical damage
- Do something beyond human capability
- Obfuscate presence
- Scry
- Heal wounds
- Summon otherworldly entities
- Alter the character's human form.
- Manipulate the character's surroundings
- Empower a weapon with an element or effect

The total focus cost of a spell is dependent on the range, number, and targets of its effects.

Magic and Ability Scores

Casting spells usually draws on Intellect or Personality.

As a general rule, casting a spell with Intellect is an act of imposing your will on the world and changing it in some way. Some examples include creating a force of energy such as a fireball, changing the material an object is made of, levitating an object, or transforming something with magic.

Personality spells are spells that affect and obfuscate the minds of others. Some example personality spells include reading minds, becoming invisible, creating an illusion, and dominating another creature.

However, this does not mean that characters cannot use the other three abilities along with their Occult or Ritual skill when the situation calls for it.

½ INT or PER + Skill
Skills: Occult, Ritual

Perfect Success:
Casting the spell comes naturally to you. You cast the spell and are refunded your focus cost.

Success:
You cast the spell.

Partial Success:
You cast the spell but with a glitch chosen by the player.

Failure:
You lose control of the magic and suffer one minor effect with no threat cost and two magic glitches chosen by the Dealer.

Perfect Failure:
You lose control of the magic with devastating results. Suffer 1 major effect with no threat cost, and 2 spell glitches chosen by the Dealer.

Glitches

When characters fail casting a spell they receive a glitch.

Fizzle	The spell does not take effect
Rebound	The spell does damage to the user
Backfire	The spell does the opposite of what the user wants
Overcharge	The spell was stronger than the user expected
Undercharge	The spell was weaker than the user expected
Fubar	The spell adds an element of danger to the situation

Spell Crafting

Spell Book

Each spellcasting character has a spell book, or a repository for spells that you favor. You can store as many spells as you have attunement levels. Spells stored to the spell books have their focus cost reduced by 1.

Spell Effects

Area
Cost: Varies
Spells affect an additional target per focus spent.

Charged
Cost: -1 focus per round
Spending time to cast a spell allows you to spend less focus to cast it. The cost of all spells can be reduced by adding an additional round to cast them, at a cost of -1 focus per round. The spell must cost at least 1 focus. Even if the cost of the spell is reduced, you cannot cast a spell with a cost that exceeds your maximum focus.

Commune
Cost: 3 focus
Use magic to talk with something from another plane or communicate across long distances.

Conjuring
Cost: 3 focus
The spell is used to summon and control a creature from beyond this reality. Conjuring spells have an advanced duration starting at 5 rounds. They are affected by lingering as if they started at 1. After this duration, the conjured creature fades away or dies.

Controlling
Cost: 2 focus
Take control of another living being.

Damaging
Cost: 1 focus
The spell deals damage to the target equal to the number of successes the character gets on the use magic check.

Empowering
Cost: 1-3 focus
Increase the strength of a unit or item by imbuing them with an element or raw magic. This bonus can be a +1/+2/+3, depending on the focus cost.

Healing
Cost: 2 focus
The spell heals damage equal to the number of successes you get on the use magic check.

Lingering
Cost: 1 focus per 2 rounds
The spell lasts longer than normal. Spells naturally last for 1 round. Rounds can be increased at a rate of 2 rounds for each additional focus. For example, a 5-round spell would cost an extra 3 focus. If a spell does direct damage to a target, then the focus cost for extending the spell is doubled.

Remote
Cost: 1-2 focus
The spell is cast from a great distance. Increasing the range of a spell increases the focus cost by 1 for long range and 2 for very long range. Spells are naturally cast at close range.

Scrying
Cost: 1 focus
The magic is used to gain information or reveal cards.

Taboo
Cost: -1 focus
If someone witnesses the character cast this spell the witness loses 2 focus, if they have any. If the witness does not have any focus they instead make a Psyche check. The difficulty rating of this check is equal to the difficulty to cast the spell. Should the witness fail, they lose a morale. If they have no morale, they are instead driven insane. If the witness is a player character, this results in the character's retirement. The spell must cost at least 1 focus. Even if the cost of the spell is reduced, you cannot cast a spell with a cost that exceeds your maximum focus.

Transmuting
Cost: 2 focus
Alter the state of a unit or object.

Volatile
Cost: -1 focus
Spells affect all targets adjacent to the target. The spell must cost at least 1 focus. Even if the cost of the spell is reduced, you cannot cast a spell with a cost that exceeds your maximum focus.

Adventuring

Whether exploring a tomb, traveling through uncharted territory, or climbing an unscalable mountain, sometimes the characters will have to face the environment like an enemy. For this we have adventuring rules.

Injury and Healing

Injury Effects

The following effects may be applied to characters as a result of injuries sustained in combat and while adventuring.

Bleeding
You lose 1 health every time you perform a card challenge.

Concussed
Your Intellect is cut in half until you are cured. This affects maximum focus. If a concussion would cause your Intellect to drop below your Personality, you should instead use Personality to calculate maximum focus.

Exhausted
When your deck runs out you become exhausted. You shuffle your deck. Before drawing to your max stamina, take the top 10 cards of your deck and remove them from play until you have a chance to sleep. The number of cards discarded is reduced by ½ Vitality. A player can repeat this process until they cannot draw to their maximum stamina, at which time they pass out and cannot be revived until they get at least 8 hours of sleep.

Hobbled
Your Agility is cut in half until you are cured.

Poisoned
Your Vitality is cut in half until you are cured.

Sickened
Your Strength is cut in half until you are cured.

Vulnerable
If you have no cards in your hand, the Dealer can immediately perform a major effect on you for no threat cost.

Unconscious
When your health is at 2 or lower you are rendered unconscious. You have no means of defending yourself. If you gain at least one health, you return to consciousness.

Falling damage

Characters can fall 10ft before taking damage.
- A fall of 10ft or less results in a minor Dealer effect, excluding deal damage.
- For every 5 ft a character falls after 10 they take 2 damage
- If a character falls more than 80 feet, all falling damage is doubled
- Falling damage can be reduced by half with an Athletics check. The difficulty is equal to half the amount of damage the character will take.

  Example: A fall of 30 feet will result in 8 damage. This damage can be reduced to 4 by making a difficulty 4 AGI+Athletics check.

Resting and Recovery

Characters may take a short or long rest to recover and can heal faster when aided by someone with ranks in Biology.

Short rest

Taking a short rest allows you to shuffle your discarded cards equal to your Vitality back into your deck and your character regenerates up to one half of their focus. You can take one short rest per day. A short rest is 1 uninterrupted hour.

Long Rest

When a character rests for 8 hours they restore missing focus equal to their Psyche +1 and 1 health, and players shuffle their discard pile back into their deck.

Healing

A character with ranks in Biology can assist a wounded character's recovery with a successful Biology check. This increases healing to 2 health every 8 hours if the character abstains from strenuous activity. If the attending character has medical supplies this is increased to 3.

If a character is suffering from a status effect, they will need a successful Biology check or medicine to remove it. They can also rest under the care of another character with ranks in Biology or Chemistry for 1 week to remove the condition.

First aid

In combat you can use Biology with medical supplies to restore 2 health to another character. This can only be done once per day per target.

Traveling Time

Time spent traveling is largely based on the world of your campaign. Speeds of various animals and vehicles will vary based on the type of world they inhabit. Here are some basic parameters for travel speeds.

Walking

On foot	Burn the top card of your deck every hour Travel 3 Miles per hour
On horseback	Travel 4 Miles per hour

Marching

On foot	Burn the top 2 cards of your deck every hour Travel 6 Miles per hour
On horseback	Horse takes 2 damage every 5 hours Travel 12 Miles per hour

Forced March

On foot	Burn the top 6 cards of your deck every hour Take 2 damage every 3 hours Travel 8 Miles per hour
On horseback	Horse takes 2 damage every hour Travel 30 Miles per hour

Income

Every character has an income based on their work and background. Income can be improved with traits and down-time activities.
A character's income decides how they live, what kind of house they have and what kind of food they can afford, etc. Each income step describes the lifestyle that character is able to live.

Characters also have access to cash. If a character receives cash during play they can keep it on hand or put it toward their income for the month.

You can *cash out* for a month by taking the pay rate on the table below, and then reduce your income level 2 steps for 1 month.

Income Step	Cash Out
Destitute	0
Impoverished	25
Poor	50
Struggling	150
Stable	600
Comfortable	3,000
Rich	6,000
Wealthy	18,000
Influential	72,000
Extravagant	360,000

Items and Equipment

Armor

Armor is protective gear that adds soak. Soak from armor is temporary and is rendered useless after a character takes damage. For example, if a character is wearing a piece of armor with a value of 3 and they take 2 damage the armor is unaffected and its soak remains. However. if the character takes 3 or more damage the armor is destroyed and must be repaired by a smith or character with the engineering skill. Any protective gear is considered to be armor.

Example Armor

Armor	Armor Value	Load	Qualities
Thick or padded clothing	1	1	Light Discrete Concealed
Heavy leather	3	2	Discrete Stealthy Medium
Combat armor, breast plate	5	4	Heavy Durable
Full plate, modern combat armor	7	6	Very Heavy Durable Gaudy
Shield	2	1	Heavy Durable Held

Weapons

Weapons provide a damage bonus that varies depending on the type of weapon. Weapons also carry quality tags that describe how the weapon affects its target and environment.

Example

Greatsword

+4 Damage
The weapon deals 4 damage on top of the amount dealt by successes in combat.

Heavy
Requires 6 or more strength to use effectively.

Close Range
You must be in the same room as the target to strike.

Two-Handed
This weapon occupies both hands.

Messy
Damage done by this weapon cannot be hidden, corpses made by this weapon have clearly been maimed.

Weapon and Armor Qualities

Basic Qualities

Ammo
Requires ammunition to operate. When ammo runs out you must discard a card at random to reload. Longbows, shortbows, and slingshots do not need to be reloaded.

Balanced
Weapon can be used with Strength or Agility.

Bracing
Bracing weapons gain both Penetrating and Defensive if the user remains still.

Concealed
(weapon) Can be hidden on the body to avoid a search.
(armor) Can be worn under clothes.

Clumsy
On perfect failure you cannot dodge or block, and your natural soak is reduced to 0 until you draw again.

Crushing
Can be used as a tool to pulverize things or break down stone structures.
Weapons with crushing ruin durable armor.

Defensive
Provides +1 soak when wielded.

Discrete
Is not considered odd to be carried or worn and will not draw suspicion.

Durable
(armor only) When armor is destroyed it still provides half of its soak.

Gaudy
Draws attention, unwanted or not.

Hand-and-a-Half
Can be used in one or two hands. Two-handing increases damage by +1.

Held
(armor only) Takes up the use of one hand.

Magic
(armor) Defends against armor penetration. Armor cannot be destroyed.
(weapon) Negates armor's magical benefits.
Messy
Damage done by this weapon cannot be hidden, corpses made by this weapon have clearly been maimed.

Mounted
When using this weapon while on a mount deal +2 extra damage and gain One-Handed.

Mechanical
Made of complex machinery. Can be difficult to replace or repair if it is damaged or lost.

One Handed
Only requires the use of one hand to use effectively.

One Use
(weapon and artifact only) This weapon can only be used once before it needs time to recharge, be repaired, or reloaded.

Penetrating
Ignores soak from armor.

Simple
(weapons only) Made of simple machinery and easy to replace or repair if damaged or lost.

Split
Damage can be split between multiple targets within range.

Smashing
Can be used to break through wooden walls or cut down trees with no damage to the

weapon. Weapons with smashing ruin even durable shields.

Stealthy

(armor only) Reduce difficulty of Espionage checks to avoid detection by 1.

Range Qualities

Very Close	Within hands' reach
Close	In the same room
Medium	In the same building or across a small field
Long	Half a football field
Very Long	More than a football field

Weight Qualities

Weight	*Strength*	*Load*
Light	No requirement	1
Medium	3+	3
Heavy	5+	5
Very Heavy	7+	7
Extremely Heavy	9+	8

Sample Weapons

Bladed Weapons

Dagger

Damage	+1
Weight	Light
Range	Very Close Close (throwing)
Qualities	Balanced, Concealable, Discrete, One-Handed, Penetrating

Shortsword

Damage	+2
Weight	Light
Range	Very Close
Qualities	Balanced, Discrete, One-Handed, Defensive

Longsword

Damage	+2/+3
Weight	Medium
Range	Close
Qualities	Hand-and-a-Half, Balanced, Defensive

Greatsword

Damage	+4
Weight	Heavy
Range	Close
Qualities	Two-Handed, Messy, Defensive

Polearms

Javelin

Damage	+2
Weight	Medium
Range	Medium Medium (throwing)
Qualities	Simple, Bracing, One-Handed, Balanced

Spear

Damage	+2/+3
Weight	Medium
Range	Medium Medium (throwing)
Qualities	Hand-and-a-Half, Balanced, Simple, Bracing

Lance

Damage	+3/+5
Weight	Heavy
Range	Medium
Qualities	Two-Handed, Messy, Mounted, Penetrating

Axes

Hatchet

Damage	+2
Weight	Medium
Range	Close Close (throwing)
Qualities	Smashing

Battle Axe

Damage	+3/+4
Weight	Heavy
Range	Close
Qualities	Hand-and-a-Half, Messy, Smashing

Great Axe

Damage	+5
Weight	Heavy
Range	Close
Qualities	Messy, Smashing

Maces/Hammers

Mace/Morningstar

Damage	+2
Weight	Medium
Range	Close
Qualities	Crushing, Penetrating

Flail

Damage	+3
Weight	Medium
Range	Close
Qualities	Crushing, Clumsy

War Hammer

Damage	+3/+4
Weight	Heavy
Range	Close
Qualities	Crushing, Messy

Maul

Damage	+6
Weight	Very Heavy
Range	Close
Qualities	Crushing, Messy, Clumsy

Bows

Shortbow

Damage	+1
Weight	Light
Range	Long
Qualities	Ammo, Simple, Two-Handed

Longbow

Damage	+2
Weight	Medium
Range	Very Long
Qualities	Ammo, Simple, Two-Handed

Crossbows

Crossbow

Damage	+2
Weight	Light
Range	Long
Qualities	Mechanical, Two-Handed

Arbalest

Damage	+3
Weight	Heavy
Range	Very Long
Qualities	Mechanical, Two-Handed

Early Guns

Holdout

Damage	+2
Weight	Light
Range	Close
Qualities	Concealable, Mechanical, One-Use, One-Handed

Dueling Pistol

Damage	+3
Weight	Light
Range	Close
Qualities	Concealable, Mechanical, One-Handed

Musket

Damage	+4
Weight	Medium
Range	Long
Qualities	Mechanical, Two-Handed

Blunderbuss

Damage	+5
Weight	Medium
Range	Very Close
Qualities	Mechanical, Split

Rifled weapons

Holdout Pistol

Damage	+3
Weight	Very Light
Range	Close
Qualities	Ammo (2), One-Handed

Revolver

Damage	+6
Weight	Light
Range	Close
Qualities	Ammo (6), Loud, One-Handed

Lever-Action Rifle

Damage	+7
Weight	Medium
Range	Medium
Qualities	Ammo (16), Two-Handed

Bolt-Action Rifle/Rolling Block

Damage	+9
Weight	Medium
Range	Long
Qualities	Ammo (1), Two-Handed

Repeater

Damage	+5
Weight	Light
Range	Close
Qualities	Ammo (10), Concealed, Loud, One-Handed

Shotguns

Lever-Action

Damage	+7
Weight	Medium
Range	Close
Qualities	Ammo (6), Split, Messy, Loud, Two-Handed

Pump-Action

Damage	+10
Weight	Medium
Range	Close
Qualities	Ammo (5), Split, Messy, Loud, Two-Handed

♣ ULTIMO

○○○○○○
MORALE

CHARACTER NAME **BACKGROUND** **PLAYER NAME**

ATTRIBUTES

●○○○○○○○○○ ●○○○○○○○○○ ●○○○○○○○○○ ●○○○○○○○○○ ●○○○○○○○○○
STRENGTH **AGILITY** **VITALITY** **INTELLECT** **PERSONALITY**

ATHLETICS

AWARENESS

BIOLOGY

BRAWLING

CHEMISTRY

CULTURE

EMPATHY

ENGINEERING

ESPIONAGE

HUSBANDRY

INVESTIGATION

LEADERSHIP

MANIPULATION

NAVIGATION

OCCULT

PILOTING

PSYCHE

RESEARCH

RITUAL

THEATRICS

TOUGHNESS

SHOOTING

SURVIVAL

HEALTH	STAMINA	FOCUS
SOAK	♣	LOAD
ATTN	EXP	BONDS

ATTACK POWER	
MELEE	
RANGED	

ATTACKS	
WEAPON	RANGE
DAMAGE	WEIGHT
QUALITIES	

WEAPON	RANGE
DAMAGE	WEIGHT
QUALITIES	

WEAPON	RANGE
DAMAGE	WEIGHT
QUALITIES	

CONCEPT

TRAITS

	BONUS	LOAD
ARMOR		
SHIELD		

EQUIPMENT AND ITEMS

INCOME

CASH

LANGUAGES

ATTUNEMENT

MAGIC ITEMS

Spell Name	
Focus Cost	
Casting Power	
Description	
Effects	

Spell Name	
Focus Cost	
Casting Power	
Description	
Effects	

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Focus Cost	
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Description	
Effects	

Spell Name	
Focus Cost	
Casting Power	
Description	
Effects	

♣ ULTIMO

CHARACTER NAME

AGE

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

EYES

SKIN

HAIR

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

ALLIES & ORGANIZATIONS

CHARACTER BACKSTORY

NOTES