

## SIZE TABLE

Use the examples below to estimate the Size of creatures not included in the Bestiary. Mass is usually enough to determine its Size and Toughness bonus, but account for overall dimensions as makes sense.

Tiny creatures have a Strength score of 1. They can't make a Strength roll (and therefore can't Ace or get bonus damage). They can damage creatures with a Toughness of 1, but can only harm Small or larger beings if they swarm together (see **Swarms**, page 189).

SIZE / TOUGHNESS BONUS	TYPICAL STRENGTH RANGE	SCALE MODIFIER	TYPICAL HEIGHT / LENGTH UP TO...	MASS UP TO...	EXAMPLE CREATURES
<b>TINY</b>					
-4	1	-6	6"	<4 lbs	Crow, mouse
<b>VERY SMALL</b>					
-3	d4-3	-4	18"	16 lbs	House cat, small dogs
<b>SMALL</b>					
-2	d4-1	-2	3'	32 lbs	Coyote, bobcat, porcupine
<b>NORMAL</b>					
-1	d4 to d6	—	4'	125 lbs	Child, wolf, half-folk, goblin
0	d6 to d12	—	6'	250 lbs	Human, Great Dane, dire wolf
1	d8 to d12+1	—	8'	500 lbs	Large human, gorilla, lion, orc
2	d10 to d12+2	—	9'	1000 lbs	Grizzly, horse, ogre, tiger shark
3	d12 to d12+3	—	12'	2000 lbs	Bull, war horse
<b>LARGE (+1 WOUND &amp; REACH +1)</b>					
4	d12+1 to d12+4	+2	15'	2 tons	Hippo, great white shark
5	d12+2 to d12+5	+2	18'	4 tons	White rhino, beluga whale
6	d12+3 to d12+6	+2	24'	8 tons	African elephant, drake, orca
7	d12+4 to d12+7	+2	30'	16 tons	T-Rex, triceratops
<b>HUGE (+2 WOUNDS &amp; REACH +2)</b>					
8	d12+5 to d12+8	+4	36'	32 tons	Dragon, sperm whale
9	d12+6 to d12+9	+4	50'	64 tons	Humpback whale
10	d12+7 to d12+10	+4	63'	125 tons	Bowhead whale
11	d12+8 to d12+11	+4	75'	250 tons	Blue whale
<b>GARGANTUAN (+3 WOUNDS &amp; REACH +3)</b>					
12	d12+9 to d12+12	+6	100'	500 tons	Kaiju or giant monsters
13	d12+10 to d12+13	+6	125'	1K tons	
14	d12+11 to d12+14	+6	150'	2K tons	
15	d12+12 to d12+15	+6	200'	4K tons	
16	d12+13 to d12+16	+6	250'	8K tons	
17	d12+14 to d12+17	+6	300'	16K tons	
18	d12+15 to d12+18	+6	400'	32K tons	
19	d12+16 to d12+19	+6	500'	64K tons	
20	d12+17 to d12+20	+6	600'	125K tons	

## BESTIARY

This section contains animals and monsters common to many Savage Settings. Note that for some creatures, Smarts is listed relative to the animal world, and is thus followed by an (A) to remind you that this is animal intelligence, not human intelligence, so don't expect a dog to drive a car just because it's a relatively smart animal.

### ALLIGATOR/CROCODILE

Alligators and crocodiles are staples of most pulp-genre adventure games. The statistics here represent an average specimen of either species. Much larger versions are often found in more remote areas.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 3; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (2)

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +2:** Thick skin.
- **Aquatic:** Pace 5.
- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Rollover:** Gators and crocs grasp prey in their vice-like jaws and roll with them. If one of these large reptiles hits with a raise, its bonus damage is a d10 instead of a d6.
- **Size 2:** Common gators are about 12' long, thick, heavy, and weigh around 500 lbs.

### BEAR

This entry covers the larger ursines, such as grizzlies, Kodiaks, and polar bears. A favored tactic of all these bears is to grapple and bite with their fierce fangs.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

**Edges:** Brute

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Size 2:** These creatures can stand up to 8' tall and weigh over 1,000 pounds.

### BULL

Bulls are usually only aggressive toward humans when enraged. Of course, if you're looking up the statistics here, it's probably already seeing red.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d4, Notice d6

**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 11

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Horns:** Str+d6.
- **Size 3:** Most bulls weigh just under a ton.



## GAT, SMALL

This is an ordinary house cat, the sort that might be a familiar for a spellcaster, a Beast Master's animal friend, or an alternate form for the *shape change* power.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d4-3, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 2

**Edges:** Acrobat

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite/Claws:** Str.
- **Low Light Vision:** Cats ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Size -3 (Very Small):** Cats are typically less than a foot high.

## DIRE WOLF

Dire wolves are very large and feral canines often used by orcs as attack dogs. They may also be found roaming in packs in the deepest, darkest woods.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

**Edges:** Alertness

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Speed:** d10 running die.

## DOG/WOLF

The stats below are for large attack dogs, such as Rottweilers and Doberman Pinschers, as well as wolves, hyenas, and the like.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8


**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

**Edges:** Alertness

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Size -1:** The heads of these canines come to an average human's waist, and they weigh about 60 pounds.
- **Speed:** d10 running die.

## WILD CARD MONSTERS

Creatures noted with this symbol are usually Wild Cards: . They roll a Wild Die with their Trait checks and can take three Wounds.

Some creatures should almost always be Wild Cards, like dragons or liches. They have unique names, backgrounds, and stories, and are often the "boss monsters" of the adventure.

The GM can always change that if the beings are common in a setting, but this should be a fairly rare occurrence. It might make sense in a world full of dragons, for example, or a coven of vampires.

## DRAGON

Dragons are fire-breathing monsters that bring doom and despair to the villages they ravage. Such creatures should not be fought lightly as they are more than a match for even a party of experienced adventurers. These beasts are quite intelligent as well, and use all of their advantages when confronted by would-be dragon-slayers.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+8, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d10, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d12, Persuasion d10, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 20 (4)

**Edges:** Frenzy (Imp), Level Headed

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +4:** Scaly hide.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Fear (-2):** Anyone who sees a mighty dragon must make a Fear check at -2.
- **Fiery Breath:** Dragons breathe fire for 3d6 damage (see **Breath Weapons**, page 175).
- **Flight:** Dragons have a Flying Pace of 24".
- **Hardy:** The creature does not suffer a Wound from being Shaken twice.
- **Size 8 (Huge):** Dragons are massive creatures, over 40' long from nose to tail and weighing over 30,000 pounds.
- **Swat:** Dragons ignore up to 4 points of Scale penalties when attacking with their claws.
- **Tail Lash:** Str+d4. The creature may make a free attack against up to two foes to its side or rear at no penalty.

## DRAKE

Drakes are non-flying dragons with animal intelligence (rather than the more human-like sentience of true dragons). They are much more aggressive in direct combat than their distant cousins, however.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 18 (4)

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +4:** Scaly hide.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Fear:** Drakes are frightening creatures to behold.
- **Fiery Breath:** Drakes breathe fire for 3d6 damage (see **Breath Weapons**, page 175).
- **Resilient:** Drakes can take one Wound before they're Incapacitated.
- **Size 6 (Large):** Drakes are over 20' long from snout to tail.
- **Tail Lash:** Str. The creature may make a free attack against up to two foes to its side or rear at no penalty.

## ELEMENTALS

Elementals are living spirits of earth, fire, water, or air. Below are lesser versions of such creatures, but many more powerful varieties exist.

### AIR ELEMENTAL

Air elementals manifest as sentient whirlwinds.

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d10

**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Elemental:** No additional damage from Called Shots, ignores 1 point of Wound penalties, doesn't breathe, immune to disease and poison.
- **Gaseous Form:** Can maneuver through any non-solid surface, pass through cracks in doors or windows, bubble through water, etc.



- **Flight:** Air elementals fly at Pace 12.
- **Invulnerability:** Immune to non-magical attacks.
- **Wind Blast:** Air elementals can send directed blasts of air to knock their foes away. They may choose one target or a Cone Template, and use their Shooting skill for the roll. Those affected make a Strength roll (at -2 if the elemental gets a raise) or are hurled 2d6". Anyone who strikes a hard object (such as a wall) takes 2d4 non-lethal damage.

## EARTH ELEMENTAL

Earth elementals manifest as five-foot-tall, vaguely man-shaped collections of earth and stone. Though strong, they are also quite slow and ponderous.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (4)

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +4:** Rocky hide.
- **Bash:** Str+d6.
- **Burrow (10''):** Earth elementals can meld into and out of the ground.
- **Elemental:** No additional damage from Called Shots, ignores 1 point of Wound penalties, doesn't breathe, immune to disease and poison.
- **Immunity:** Immune to earth-based attacks (including thrown stones or powers with earth, mud, stone, or sand Trappings).
- **Resilient:** Earth elementals can take one Wound before they're Incapacitated.

## FIRE ELEMENTAL

Fire elementals appear as man-shaped flame.

**Attributes:** Agility d12+1, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Elemental:** No additional damage from Called Shots, ignores 1 point of Wound penalties, doesn't breathe, immune to disease and poison.

- **Fiery Touch:** Str+d6, chance of catching Fire (see page 127).

- **Flame Strike:** Can project a searing blast of flame using the Cone Template and their Shooting skill. Characters within take 3d6 and may catch Fire (see page 127). May be Evaded.

- **Immunity:** Fire elementals are immune to fire and heat-based attacks.

## WATER ELEMENTAL

These spirits are frothing, man-shaped beings of water.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Aquatic:** Pace 12.
- **Elemental:** No additional damage from Called Shots, ignores 1 point of Wound penalties, doesn't breathe, immune to disease and poison.
- **Immunity:** Immune to water-based attacks.
- **Seep:** Can squeeze through any porous gap as if it were Difficult Ground.
- **Slam:** Str+d6, nonlethal damage.
- **Waterspout:** Can project a torrent of water using the Cone Template and their Shooting skill. Those within take 2d6 nonlethal damage. This may be Evaded.

## GHOST

Specters, shades, and phantoms sometimes return from death to haunt the living or fulfill some unfinished business.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d6, Intimidation d12, Notice d12, Stealth d12, Taunt d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Thrown objects (Str+d4).

**Special Abilities:**

- **Ethereal:** Ghosts can become invisible and immaterial at will and can only be harmed by magical attacks.
- **Fear (-2):** Ghosts cause Fear checks at -2 when they let themselves be seen.

## GIANT WORM

Massive worms tunneling beneath the earth to gobble up unsuspecting adventurers are sometimes found in lonesome flatlands. The things sense vibrations through the earth, hearing a walking person at about 200 yards. The stats below are for a monster some 50 feet long.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+9, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 21 (4)

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +4:** Scaly hide.
- **Bite:** Str+d8.
- **Burrow (20''):** Giant worms tunnel through the ground, blocked only by solid bedrock.
- **Hardy:** The creature does not suffer a Wound from being Shaken twice.
- **Size 9 (Huge):** Giant worms are usually over 50' long and 10' or more in diameter.

- **Slam:** Giant worms crush prey beneath their massive bodies. Lay three Small Blast Templates adjacent to one another and in a straight line to represent the portion of the creature's body used to crush. Everything within must beat the worm in an opposed Athletics versus Agility roll or take its Str as damage. Ignore Scale modifiers when making a slam attack.

## GOBLIN

Goblins of myth and legend are far more sinister creatures than some games and fiction portray. In the original tales, they were terrifying creatures that stole into homes in the middle of the night to steal and eat unruly children. The statistics here work for both dark "fairy tale" goblins as well as those found alongside orcs in contemporary roleplaying games.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d10, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d6

**Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Major)

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Short spears (Str+d4), bows (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6).

**Special Abilities:**

- **Infravision:** Halve penalties for Illumination when attacking warm targets.
- **Size -1:** Goblins stand 3-4' tall.

## HORSE

Riding horses compromise speed with carrying capacity.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d4, Notice d6

**Pace:** 12; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

**Edges:** Fleet-Footed.

**Special Abilities:**

- **Kick:** Str+d4, to the front or rear as desired.
- **Size 2:** Typical quarter horse of about 1,000 lbs.



## HORSE, WAR

War horses are large beasts trained for aggression. They are trained to fight with both hooves, either to their front or their rear.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

**Edges:** Fleet-Footed.

**Special Abilities:**

- **Kick:** Str+d4, to the front or rear as desired.
- **Size 3:** Warhorses are large creatures bred for their power and stature.

## LICH

Perhaps the most diabolical creature in any fantasy land is the lich — a necromancer so consumed with the black arts that he eventually becomes undead himself.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d12, Notice d10, Occult d12+2, Persuasion d8, Spellcasting d12

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 15 (6)

**Edges:** Concentration, Level Headed (Imp), Wizard

**Gear:** Magical armor (+6), other magical items.

**Special Abilities:**

- **Death Touch:** Liches drain the lives of those around them with a touch. Instead of a normal attack, a lich may make a **Touch Attack** (page 108). Every raise on its Fighting roll automatically inflicts one Wound to its target.
- **Spells:** Liches have 50 Power Points and know most every spell available.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Zombie:** Liches are necromancers first and foremost. The undead they raise through the *zombie* spell are permanent, and they may raise skeletons just like zombies as they choose. Some liches have built up entire armies of the undead at their disposal.

## LION

The kings of the jungle are fierce predators, particularly in open grassland where their prey cannot seek refuge.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** Frenzy (Imp)

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Low Light Vision:** Lions ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Pounce:** Lions pounce on their prey to best bring their mass and claws to bear. If a lion makes a Wild Attack, it adds +4 to its damage instead of +2.
- **Size 1:** Typical males are about 400 pounds.

## MECH

These stats are for a 12-foot-tall mechanized sentinel, as found in a hard scifi campaign. This is a light patrol-style platform with reasonable intelligence, a sensor package, and high maneuverability. Larger mechs outfitted for battle have substantially more armor, are larger, and have more specialized weaponry.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12+4, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10, Shooting d8

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

**Edges:** Alertness (Sensors).

**Gear:** Typically a machine gun or flame-thrower.

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +4**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** Mechs are immune to Fear and Intimidation, but may be smart enough to react to fear-causing situations aptly.
- **Night Vision:** Sensor packages ignore penalties for Illumination.
- **Size 4 (Large):** The mech stands 15' tall.

## MINOTAUR

Minotaurs stand over seven feet tall and have massive, bull-like heads and horns. In many fantasy worlds, they are used as guardians of labyrinths. In others, they are simply another race of creatures occupying a fantastically savage land. In all cases, they are fierce beasts eager for battle and the taste of their opponents' flesh.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d10, Persuasion d4, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7 or 8 (spear); **Toughness:** 12 (1)

**Edges:** Fleet-Footed

**Gear:** Leather armor (+1), spear (Str+d6, Reach 1, Parry+1).

**Special Abilities:**

- **Horns:** Str+d4.
- **Resilient:** Minotaurs can take one Wound before they're Incapacitated.
- **Size 3:** Minotaurs stand over 7' tall and have the mass of bulls.

## MULE

Mules are a cross between a donkey and a horse, and are usually used to haul heavy goods or pull wagons.

Like any good pet, the GM should give the mule a little personality. The expression "stubborn as a mule" certainly comes to mind.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Athletics d4, Notice d4

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 8

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Kick:** Str.
- **Ornery:** Mules are contrary creatures. Characters must subtract 1 from their Riding rolls when riding them.
- **Size 2:** Mules are stocky creatures usually weighing under 1000 pounds.

## OGRE

Ogres are kin to orcs and lesser giants. They are often taken in by orc clans, who respect the dumb brutes for their savagery and strength. Orcs often pit their "pet" ogres in savage combats against their rivals'.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Persuasion d4

**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (1)

**Edges:** Brute, Sweep

**Gear:** Thick hides (+1), massive club (Str+d8).

**Special Abilities:**

- **Resilient:** Ogres can take one Wound before they're Incapacitated.
- **Size 2:** Most ogres are over 8' tall with potbellies and massive arms and legs.

## ORC

Orcs are savage, green-skinned humanoids with pig-like features, including snouts and sometimes even tusks. They have foul temperaments and rarely take prisoners.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

**Edges:** Brute.

**Gear:** Leather armor (+1), scimitar (Str+d8).

**Special Abilities:**

- **Infravision:** Halve penalties for Illumination when attacking warm targets.
- **Size 1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.

## ORC, CHIEFTAIN

The leader of a small orc clan is always the most deadly brute in the bunch. Orc chieftains generally have a magical item or two in settings where such things are relatively common (most "swords & sorcery" worlds).

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8 (7 with great axe); **Toughness:** 12 (4)

**Gear:** Plate corselet (+4), chain arms and legs (+3), great axe (Str+d10).

**Edges:** Brute, Sweep

**Special Abilities:**

- **Infravision:** Halve penalties for Illumination when attacking warm targets.
- **Size 1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.

## RAPTOR (BIRDS OF PREY)

Eagles, hawks, and similar large birds of prey are collectively termed “raptors” (not to be confused with the dinosaur variety).

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4-2, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 3; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 2

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Flight:** Raptors fly at a Pace of 48”.
- **Size -3 (Very Small):** Raptors are lightweight and about two feet tall.

## SHARK

These statistics cover bull sharks and white tips.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8 (d10 for bull shark), Vigor d8

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d12, Stealth d8

**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Size 1:** Sharks up to 500 pounds.

## SHARK, GREAT WHITE

These statistics cover great whites, 18 to 25 feet long.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Notice d12, Stealth d12

**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- **Bite:** Str+d8.
- **Hardy:** The creature does not suffer a Wound from being Shaken twice.
- **Size 4 (Large):** Great whites can grow up to 25’ in length.

## SKELETON

The skin has already rotted from these risen dead, leaving them slightly quicker than their flesh-laden zombie counterparts. They are often found swarming in vile necromancers’ legions.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

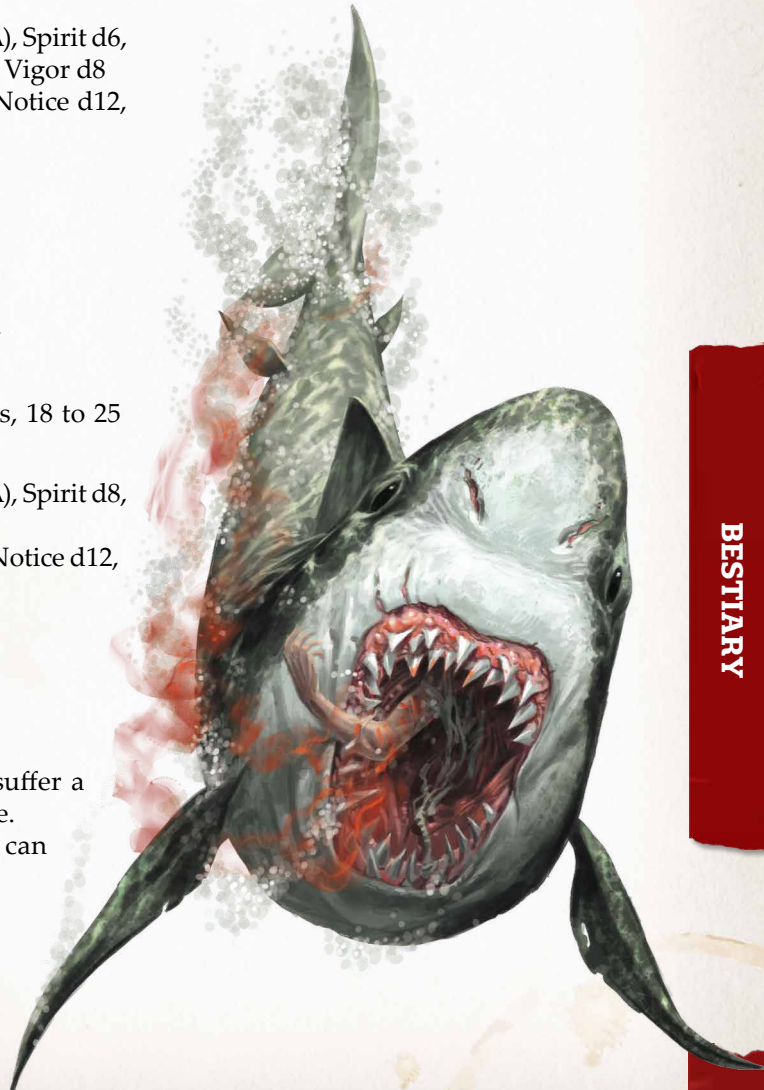
**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Varies.

**Special Abilities:**

- **Claws:** Str+d4.



- **Fearless:** Skeletons are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.

## SNAKE

Snakes in the real world are rarely aggressive unless cornered or frightened. They're a staple of adventure fiction, however, so here are two of the most common.

### CONSTRUCTORS

Pythons, boa constrictors, and other snakes over 15' long are rarely deadly to man in the real world because they aren't particularly aggressive. In games, however, such snakes might be provoked, drugged, or just plain mean.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite:** Str.
- **Constrict:** +2 to Athletics and Strength rolls made to grapple.

### VENOMOUS

Here are the stats for Taipans (Australian brown snakes), cobras, and similar medium-sized snakes with extremely deadly poison.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4-2, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d12, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 2

**Edges:** Quick

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite:** Str+2.
- **Poison:** The GM chooses what kind of poison the viper injects (see **Poison**, page 129).
- **Size -3 (Very Small):** Most venomous snakes are 4-6' in length, but only a few inches thick.

## SOLDIER

Goons, grunts, soldiers, or others with basic training serve as foot soldiers for more powerful characters. They should be customized and outfitted to fit their particular role.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** Soldier

## SPIDER, GIANT

Giant spiders are about the size of large dogs and live in nests of 1d6+2 arachnids. They frequently go hunting in packs when prey is scarce in their home lair.

Their dens are littered with the bones and treasures of their victims, often providing ripe pickings for those brave enough to venture within.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Poison (-4):** Usually Mild or Lethal. See page 129.
- **Size -1:** These spiders are dog-sized.



- **Wall Walker:** The creatures move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings! Creepy!
- **Webbing:** The spiders can cast webs from their thorax that are the size of Small Blast Templates. This is a Shooting roll with a Range of 6". A hit means the victim is Entangled, or Bound with a raise (see **Bound & Entangled**, page 98).

## SWARM

Sometimes the most deadly foes come in the smallest packages. The swarm described here can be of most anything – from biting ants to stinging wasps to filthy rats. They cover an area equal to a Large, Medium, or Small Blast Template and attack everyone within it every round. When a swarm is Incapacitated it's effectively dispersed.

Swarms aren't intelligent enough to do anything but move and bite and shouldn't take Multi-Actions, make Tests, etc.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** —

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite or Sting:** Swarms inflict hundreds of tiny bites or stings every round, hitting automatically (unless Shaken) and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template at the end of their turn. Damage is applied to the least armored location (those in completely sealed suits are immune).
- **Split:** Some swarms split into two smaller swarms when Wounded (GM's call). Reduce the Blast Template one size after a Wound; Small swarms are destroyed.
- **Swarm:** +2 to recover from being Shaken, Parry +2. Swarms are composed of many small creatures, so cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area effect attacks work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round. Some swarms (bees, hornets, birds) may be foiled by total immersion in water.

## TROLL

Trolls in myths and legends are horrid, flesh-eating creatures who live in deep woods, beneath bridges, or in hidden mountain caves. In modern games and fiction, trolls

are monsters with the ability to regenerate damage other than that caused by fire. These statistics reflect both backgrounds.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Stealth d4

**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

**Gear:** Spiked club (Str+d8).

**Edges:** Brute, Sweep (Imp)

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +1:** Rubbery hide.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Trolls may attempt a natural healing roll every round, even if Incapacitated, unless their Wounds were caused by fire or flame or they're put to the torch afterward.
- **Resilient:** Trolls can take one Wound before they're Incapacitated.
- **Size 1:** Trolls are 8' tall, lanky creatures.

## VAMPIRE

Blood-drinkers of lore are common in many fantasy games. This is a relatively young vampire minion. For weaker vampires, ignore the Invulnerability Special Ability.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

**Edges:** Frenzy, Level Headed

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Invulnerability:** Vampires can only be slain by sunlight or a stake through the heart (see those Weaknesses, below). They may be Shaken by other attacks, but never Wounded.
- **Sire:** Anyone slain by a vampire has a 50% chance of rising as a vampire in 1d4 days.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** A character with a holy symbol may keep a vampire at bay by displaying a holy symbol. A vampire

who wants to directly attack the victim must beat her in an opposed Spirit roll.

- **Weakness (Holy Water):** A vampire sprinkled with holy water is Fatigued. If immersed, he combusts as if it were direct sunlight (see below).
- **Weakness (Invitation Only):** Vampires cannot enter a private dwelling without being invited. They may enter public domains as they please.
- **Weakness (Stake Through the Heart):** A vampire hit with a Called Shot to the heart (-4) must make a Vigor roll versus the damage. If successful, it takes damage normally. If it fails, it disintegrates to dust.
- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Vampires burn in sunlight. They take 2d4 damage per round until they are ash. Armor protects normally.

### ANCIENT VAMPIRE

These statistics are for a vampire somewhat below the legendary Dracula, but far above those bloodsuckers fresh from the grave. The abilities listed here are standard — the GM may want to add other Edges as befit the vampire's previous lifestyle.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d10, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d12, Shooting d8, Stealth d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

**Edges:** Frenzy (Imp), Level Headed

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Change Form:** As an action, a vampire can change into a wolf or bat with a Smarts roll at -2. Changing back into humanoid form requires a Smarts roll.
- **Charm:** Vampires can use the *puppet* power on those attracted to them (GM's call) using their Smarts as their arcane skill. They can cast and maintain the power indefinitely, but may only affect one target at a time.
- **Children of the Night:** Ancient vampires have the ability to summon and control wolves or rats. This requires an action and a Smarts roll at -2. If successful, 1d6 wolves or 1d6 swarms of rats (see **Swarm** on page 189) come from the surrounding wilds in 1d6+2 rounds.
- **Invulnerability:** Vampires can only be slain by sunlight or a stake through the heart (see

those **Weaknesses**, below). They may be Shaken by other attacks, but never Wounded.

- **Mist:** Ancient vampires have the ability to turn into mist. Doing so (or returning to human form) requires an action and a Smarts roll at -2.
- **Sire:** Anyone slain by a vampire has a 50% chance of rising as a vampire in 1d4 days.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** A character may keep a vampire at bay by displaying a holy symbol. A vampire who wants to directly attack the victim must beat her in an opposed Spirit roll.
- **Weakness (Holy Water):** A vampire sprinkled with holy water is Fatigued. If immersed, he combusts as if it were direct sunlight (see below).
- **Weakness (Invitation Only):** Vampires cannot enter a private dwelling without being invited. They may enter public domains as they please.
- **Weakness (Stake Through the Heart):** A vampire hit with a Called Shot to the heart (-4) must make a Vigor roll versus the damage total. If successful, it takes damage normally. If it fails, it disintegrates to dust.
- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Vampires burn in sunlight. They take 2d4 damage per round until they are ash. Armor protects normally.

### WEREWOLF

When a full moon emerges, humans infected with lycanthropy lose control and become snarling creatures bent on murder. Some embrace their cursed state and revel in the destruction they cause.

Customize the Special Abilities that make sense for your particular flesh-ripper. Older or "pure-blood" lycanthropes may be Invulnerable to all but silver or magic, for example.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d12+2, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Stealth d10, Survival d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 8

**Edges:** —

### Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Werewolves may attempt a natural healing roll every round unless the Wounds were caused by silvered objects.
- **Fear (-2):** Werewolves chill the blood of all who see them.
- **Infection:** Anyone slain by a werewolf has a 50% chance of rising as a werewolf themselves. The character involuntarily transforms every full moon. He gains control of his lycanthropy only after 1d6 years as a werewolf.
- **Infravision:** Halve penalties for Illumination when attacking warm targets.
- **Size 1:** Werewolves are stout creatures.



## ZOMBIE

These walking dead are typical groaning fiends looking for fresh meat.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** —

### Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Str.
- **Fearless:** Zombies are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Weakness (Head):** Called Shots to a zombie's head do the usual +4 damage.





## CHAPTER SEVEN

# GAME MASTERING

A group of heroes embarks upon an epic quest. Terrible monsters and bitter rivals oppose them. The elements are against them. Mysteries must be solved, artifacts found, innocents saved.

It's your privilege as Game Master to bring all these fantastic elements to life, challenging your players with adventure beyond their wildest imaginations and providing a framework to find out if they succeed or fail in their ultimate goal.

This is the fun of being a Game Master — creating, managing, and presenting an entire world of excitement and adventure to your friends and peers. It can be one of the most satisfying entertainment experiences in existence and *Savage Worlds* is designed to help you ruthlessly wring every tension-filled moment and gut-busting laugh from it.

So now you've read the rules and probably have more ideas for a new campaign than you know what to do with, but before you dive in, let's take a moment to talk about the art of being a good Game Master, leading your group, creating worlds, and putting together memorable and exciting adventures.

### LEARNING THE RULES

Don't be intimidated by all the rules in *Savage Worlds*. They're meant to handle most everything under the sun, but all you need to start is how to resolve Trait rolls and basic combat.

Everything else in this book, from all those Chase maneuvers to Interludes and Situational Rules can be ignored until you need them.

A great way to learn the core rules is to run a simple fight on your own first. Put a Wild Card fighter and three skeletons on the table in front of you and have at it. Your only goal is to get a feel for rolling the dice, figuring totals from Aces and modifiers, rolling and applying damage, and Soaking Wounds.

Once you've got the hang of that, you're ready to run your first game. Don't worry if you and your friends have to look a few things up the first time. And don't be afraid *not* to look things up and just wing it if you're in the middle of a good story and want to move on. The vast majority of the experience is just you and your friends talking and making some skill rolls. All those extra rules are there when you want or need them to help make a decision.

### YOUR GAME

You might think the first step in starting a new game is finding a group of people to play with. That is important, but don't do that yet. First get *yourself* excited. Figure out what you want to run and start jotting down ideas. Do that and you'll likely get all your friends excited as well.

Once you've figured out what kind of setting you want to run, ask yourself what types of characters your friends might play.

What might a typical adventure be like? Write down what makes your game cool, who the bad guys are, what kinds of magic or other supernatural aspects are present, and what your basic storyline is. If you have these elements, you likely have enough information to get your friends excited and ready to play.

## GAME NIGHTS

Now it's time to recruit some players. You have a great campaign idea and enough information about it to explain it to your friends. The next step is to find out who wants to play and when they can get together.

It might be best to tell everyone when *you'd* like to run your game. You're the one person who *must* be there every session so the timing needs to work for you. You can alter it based on your friends' schedules, of course, but if you just ask when everyone is free you're going to spend a lot of time trying to manage a lot of often vague or conflicting preferences.

Most groups meet once a week, or every other week, depending on how busy everyone is. More important is that once you set a regular date you try and stick to it. If you rely on a fluctuating schedule people tend to forget or schedule conflicting events. People have busy lives, and as much as everyone involved might want to play, they still have to study for classes, take care of their children, work, manage personal events, and otherwise live their lives. If you have a set night every week, it's much easier for your friends to schedule most of their activities around it. It also helps you know when you have to be ready to run.

Don't rule out playing on weeknights. Friday and Saturday are great if you're single or in college but difficult for players who need to focus the weekends on their families. If you start at 6 p.m., your players have time to get off work, grab some food (or share the traditional pizza with the group!), and get deep into the game by 7 or so.

Most sessions should wrap things up by 11 p.m. or so. Most people tend to get a little tired by then and you don't want game night to be a stressful experience. Talk it over with your friends and see what works for them. Setting some basic rules helps everyone schedule their time and show up week after week.

You might want to end each game session with a cliffhanger, question, or quest. Hearing your players talk about what's going to happen next is one of the best rewards you can hope for when running a game!

## CHARACTER TYPES

Once you have a game night and a few friends set to attend, give them some basic information on the setting and find out what kind of characters they want to play.

You don't need everyone to make characters at this point — character creation in *Savage Worlds* is fast enough they can do it at your first session if you want. But if some of your friends have neat ideas as to their background or basic type (fighter, investigator, etc.), you can start doing more detail work on your story.

If you're going to run *Deadlands*, for example, and all your friends make combat



types you know they're looking for a high-action game. You can still mix in lots of other elements — exploration, investigation, horror, deep roleplaying — but every now and then set up a big bloody shootout as well.

## **GETTING THE PARTY TOGETHER**

Now that you have the *players* together, you have to figure out why their *characters* are together. There are two common ways to handle this.

### **THE MISSION**

One way to build a party is for a nonplayer character to offer a reward for adventurers to complete some task. Perhaps they answer a want ad, are hired in a smoky tavern, or are called on by connections or friends. Thrown together by fate and circumstance, the heroes must then learn to work as a team.

There's a problem that sometimes arises from this approach. Say you're running a fantasy campaign and the mission is to deliver a message to a distant city. But one of the characters in your group is a witch hunter. His player is all excited about making such a unique character, but you need him (and the others) to be a courier for now and accept the assignment to kick off your campaign.

Fortunately, there's an easy fix: let the *player* figure it out. Be honest and tell him this is what you need to get things started. Maybe the witch hunter is simply between jobs. Or maybe he's working under cover to root out some evil sorceress, or needs to earn gold to buy better arms and equipment for his true quest. Or maybe the employer or the recipient is an old friend (or enemy).

This approach not only helps get things moving but empowers the player and might give your campaign a new and interesting subplot!

### **FORMER ACQUAINTANCES**

You can also start a campaign with all the characters already knowing each other. This works great for getting the game moving, and is very appropriate for certain campaign types. In *Weird Wars* settings, for example, the player characters have often served together for weeks, months, or even years. They know the basic faults and vices of their

companions. This is also a great way to kick off a convention game where your group only has a few hours to play.

### **STAYING TOGETHER**

After the first adventure, the players may wonder why their characters stay together. That's easy if they're employed by a common benefactor, or if similar groups are common to the setting (adventuring crews, military teams, and so on).

Staying together might be more difficult if the campaign goal isn't very clear though, or if some of the characters don't get along that well. How to fix this depends a lot on the type of game you're running. If there's a clear, overall objective or over-arching storyline, the party might stay together to defeat the greater evil, even if they aren't the best of friends.

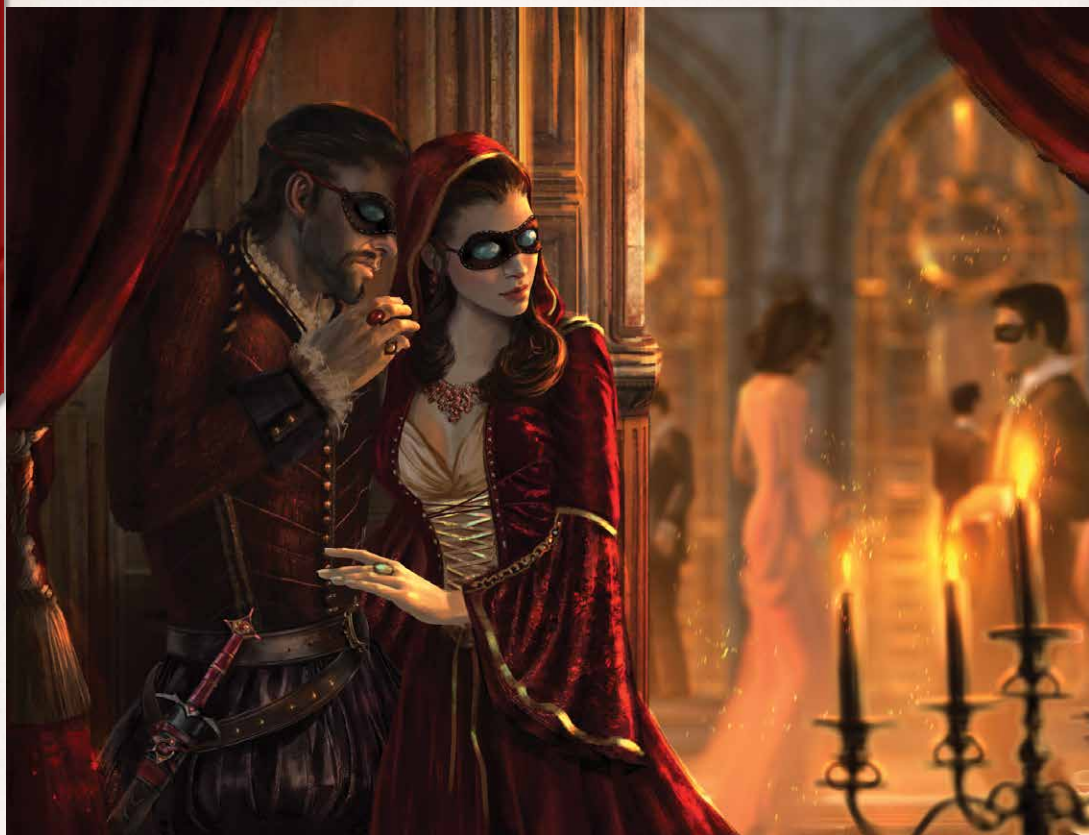
If the campaign goal is more ambiguous, the best answer may be *not* to force the heroes to stay together. Consider a modern horror game. The players are thrust together in a haunted mansion for a weekend. Terrible things occur, but eventually at least some of the investigators survive and stagger back into daylight. Why would they then go out hunting vampires or searching for zombies the following week just because they had one incredible encounter together?

Maybe they don't. Maybe they all go home and try to forget what happened just like normal folks. Let a few days or weeks pass where nothing happens (narratively, of course). Later on, one of the characters gets involved in another creepy encounter. Now he knows a few others who might believe his wild tale so he calls for help.

### **FRICTION**

So what happens if your group doesn't get along? That depends on whether it's the players or the characters who are arguing.

We won't give you advice on how to handle conflicts with your friends. You know them best and will have to figure out if there are certain individuals who just don't fit in this campaign. Remember though that friends are more important than games — even this one. If you and the rest of the group can't talk out your differences, find something else to do for a while that doesn't cause such friction.



Maybe you can come back to the game once you've worked things out.

Friction between characters, on the other hand, is not only fine, it's actually encouraged to some degree. Any interesting group of personalities squabble and argue on occasion. As long as this is done in character it adds to the roleplaying experience and the depth of your campaign. Quiet fights between the heroes can often take on a life of their own, encouraging players to take you, the Game Master, aside or write you private notes about actions their heroes perform away from the prying eyes of others. Intrigue and betrayal are integral to good dramatic stories. Just make sure the group talks things out and keeps the conflict to their *characters*; not real life.

## CAMPAIGN TYPES

Different groups like different types of games. Some like lots of combat, others want to explore the world, and some are into deep roleplaying and storytelling. Most people like a good mix. Here are some pointers on each.

### HACK AND SLASH

A hack and slash game features lots of combat. With *Savage Worlds*, you can do more than pit your five player characters against a couple of orcs and an ogre. You can throw a *whole horde* at your heroes and give them a few staunch allies or henchmen to help as well!

The best part is that players who just want to wade into the forces of darkness with two blades slashing can do that too. More tactically-minded players can load up on Leadership Edges and direct the actions of hirelings and allies.

Players who like to think on their feet can use the Support and Test rules to defeat foes without ever making a single attack!

Some disparage hack and slash campaigns these days, but there's nothing wrong with enjoying a good tactical combat either — and there can be epic roleplaying even in the middle of massive fights.

### EXPLORATION

Wandering through lost cities, finding forgotten treasures, or reclaiming fallen civilizations is exciting for explorer-types.

The Great Unknown lurks behind every pile of toppled columns, and incredible treasures await those brave enough to take them from their mysterious guardians.

The trouble with exploration games is that they're often difficult for you, the Game Master, to create. All those incredible surprises, fearsome beasts, and awesome treasures have to be created, of course. Fortunately, *Savage Worlds* makes it easy to quickly create just about any creature, magic item, or other surprise you can dream up.

One important tip here. The players don't have access to your creatures' statistics unless you show them. If you describe mysterious creatures of different shapes and sizes, they won't know they're all basically the same stats with just cosmetic or descriptive differences.

It's hard to describe wonders in a game and keep them exciting. Ancient vases, strange pictograms, and archaeological sites set a great tone for exploration-style games but unless they convey meaning or occasionally provide some sort of game effect players can get bored quickly. It's hard for most to stay excited about detailed descriptions of Etruscan urns. Give them an occasional urn with a hidden bag of gold coins, or better yet an ancient wine that miraculously relieves Fatigue, and they'll be much more interested in sifting through the ruins.

## ROLEPLAYING

Perhaps the trickiest type of campaign to run is one that involves deep roleplaying. It's easy to handle rules-wise — there likely won't be much die rolling. The tricky part is knowing when to push the team into a new situation or event and when to just let them talk to each other or your nonplayer characters.

Being able to create characters and creatures on the fly helps tremendously here. You can jot down a few notes about a character's most important Edges, Hindrances, or skills and move on. That way you can concentrate on giving your Extras more personality and worry less about calculating their Parry or Toughness — at least until they get into a fight!

Another thing to be careful about when running a game that's heavy on roleplaying is making sure there are at least a few events scheduled to give the group something to

talk about. If the majority of your adventure is a bunch of people standing in a room, you're likely in for a slow night. If they're in a room trying to find out which one of them is a murderer, the action will likely be quite exciting. And if the lights occasionally go out and another victim turns up dead, the interaction between characters can easily get as exciting as the most knock-down, drag-out dungeon crawl.

## HORROR

Most every game has an element of horror to it. New Game Masters often ask how to handle horror in their games. They have visions in their heads of their friends sitting around shivering in utter terror as gruesome fiends stalk their underpowered investigators.

In our experience, that's not very likely. There may certainly be moments like that, but more often your group will be sitting around eating nachos and making bad jokes to each other. The worst thing you can do is try and stop them. Remember they're there to have a good time and socialize while exercising their own imaginations. Let them enjoy themselves and don't try to be overly oppressive with the spooky stuff.

When the time comes and the weirdness begins, subtly change the tone a bit. Smile and dim the lights, then turn on some creepy music — just loud enough for them to hear it without being intrusive. If what you're running is genuinely creepy, your group will be relaxed and willing to go with the flow and let the heebie-jeebies take over. Try and *force* them and it will almost certainly backfire.

Whatever you do, when the group finally encounters some horrid monster, make sure to describe it rather than refer to it by name. A "large, lanky, green-skinned creature with drool dripping from its fangs and beady black eyes" is much more frightening than "a troll."

"REMINDER. THROWING PROP  
SPIDERS AT GABE & EMILY  
IS A REALLY BAD IDEA..."

-THE GM

## RUNNING THE GAME

*Savage Worlds* has been designed from the ground up to make the job of the Game Master as easy as possible. The designers want you to concentrate on making incredible and exciting memories with your friends. We aren't interested in spending hours before the game creating statistics for Karlos the Innkeeper.

That means you can concentrate on creating intricate plots, tricky puzzles, and interesting characters. You don't have to do complex math to make your nonplayer characters and monsters, and you certainly don't need to spend more than a minute or two to make up bandits for a quick ambush.

Your job is kept easy during the game as well since there's very little bookkeeping. You might have to track a few Wild Card villains' Wounds, but other than that, the foes are up and acting normally, Shaken, or removed from play. You can focus on describing the action instead of trying to record "2 hit points of damage on the skeleton figure with the chipped paint on his sword."

Take advantage of these things to give yourself a break and run a game like you never have before. If you *want* to spend a lot of time on your campaign, make some cool props, work on your plots and subplots, and give your monsters a few memorable Special Abilities (and maybe even playtest them all by yourself to make sure they work how you want).

## INTRODUCING NEW PLAYERS

Getting your friends to try a new game, especially if they're used to one system and don't like to try many others, can be pretty difficult. We recommend printing the free Test Drive rules from our website and giving them to each of your friends. This will show them what *Savage Worlds* is all about and encourage them to try it at least once. If you run one of the free adventures from our site with pregenerated characters from one of our settings it should be very easy for everyone to jump in, play a short session, and figure out if it's for them. We hope it is of course.

If so, you can then try one of our more involved settings, like *Deadlands*, *Necessary Evil*, *Rippers*, one of our excellent licensees' worlds, or even one of your own creation. You can also convert your favorite game world into the *Savage Worlds* rules.

## BALANCE

Some games have very strict rules for how to balance encounters so that every fight is "fair." The battle might be a tough one, but it's still expected the heroes can win if they play smart and have decent luck.

In *Savage Worlds*, most set piece encounters should be reasonably balanced for the expected power level of the group, but this isn't always the case. Sometimes it's just as interesting for the players to evaluate a situation and realize they probably can't win — at least not by charging in guns blazing. This is desirable on occasion as it encourages the group to think, talk, plan, and come up with clever solutions to the most challenging situations.

Game Masters should never be afraid to let the opposition flex their muscles. These are *savage* worlds, after all, and triumphing against these foes should be a major accomplishment — not a given.

That brings us to failure. If a monster or villain defeats the party, take a moment to talk to the group and remind them that the greatest heroes often experience such setbacks. How they pick themselves up and carry on after is what truly defines them.

Failure is also often more *interesting* than success. Say a young lord challenges a barbarian to a one-on-one fight to bring peace to their lands. The young lord loses and the player characters assigned to protect him decide to violate the rules of the truce. They step in and kill the barbarian champion! The noble is now disgraced but must somehow continue to lead those who sacrificed their own honor to save him.

## GRAFTING A CHALLENGE

Once you've played *Savage Worlds* for a while you should have a good feel for how many foes to throw at your adventurers. Here's some general advice, but make sure to think about additional advantages either side



might have (traps, support, powerful magic items, or favorable terrain).

- A Novice Wild Card hero with at least some combat ability should be able to take on three average foes (those with mostly d6s in everything and normal arms and armor), or two foes with better skills, arms, or armor.
- As the party's Rank increases, the number or quality of foes should increase as well.
- A good fight for a party of heroes is two Extras per hero plus an enemy Wild Card leader with roughly the same number of combat Edges (or other advantages).

Experiment with these compositions until you have a feel for the game. Then you can try more powerful opponents or increased numbers of less powerful foes.

If a fight is going poorly, you don't have to "fudge" the rivals' dice rolls or put them down when the situation didn't really deserve it. That feels cheap and undeserved to the players. Instead, reward the heroes with Bennies when you have the chance. That will help them succeed when they need to and Soak Wounds.

But also...**don't be afraid to let them fail.** It doesn't have to be a TPK (Total Party Kill). Maybe they wake up in their enemy's dungeons or are bound and on a train to some distant locale. Both are just excuses for new adventures and obstacles to overcome — not the end of the campaign.

## EXPERIENCE

In general, player characters at the start of *Savage Worlds* campaigns are of Novice Rank. They have a little training and talent but haven't had many adventures on their own yet.

This bears repeating: Novice characters *are* "novices." They have a little more skill and ability than most but are only just beginning their careers. They aren't expected to take on dragons or arch villains — they're expected to *earn* their way to those penultimate confrontations.

Of course, that's a typical campaign. You may also want to start with more experienced characters. That's encouraged for really difficult worlds or for shorter campaigns where the heroes need to get to the heart of the action a little quicker. A commando raid in *Weird War Two*, an assault on a lich's lair, or super spies infiltrating a diabolical villain's base are not adventures for the untrained.

If you do start with experienced heroes, make sure players create their characters as Novices and *then* Advance them normally. That ensures Edges, ability points, and powers are purchased correctly so that characters retain the balance built into each of those systems.

Start experienced characters as Seasoned, or very rarely, Veterans, when first trying this out. Once you have a good feel for it, you can go as high as you want. A tournament of Legendary characters is an amazing spectacle!

## BENNIES

Bennies are the true economy of *Savage Worlds*. They allow you to reward creative players for their actions, entertaining the group, and playing in character.

New *Savage Worlds* Game Masters often forget to award them or are afraid Bennies will make things too easy for the party. They won't. When players have lots of Bennies, they tend to spend them on what's important to their character rather than just hoarding them to stay alive. If Bennies are scarce, they'll definitely do the latter, *and*, the game's balance is built around their constant flow. Remember that the rerolls they grant guarantee *nothing*. A player might spend five Bennies on a simple Notice roll and *still* fail. It's not likely, but it's definitely possible.

So when do you award them? Anytime a player does something clever, finds an important clue, or roleplays his character, particularly if it involves their Hindrances or background. If a Loyal character jeopardizes his life to save his comrade, he definitely deserves a Benny for his efforts. If a Slow hero tells the others to go on while he stays back to fight the pack of wolves at their heels because he knows he's slowing down the rest of the group, reward him for it!

It also never hurts to reward a player for a great line, side-splitting in-game joke; or even better when she pulls off a serious and dramatic moment.

Once a player has been rewarded for something, you can stop or slow down rewarding the same behavior. A running joke shouldn't grant a Benny every time it's mentioned, for example. Risking real danger for the Heroic Hindrance, however, should almost always result in a reward.

Bennies usually flow at the start of the adventure as players roleplay and get used to the game. They slow down later once those traits have been rewarded a few times already. By the climax, Bennies might be fairly scarce, both in the players' stacks and as rewards.

Then they have to rely on Jokers or those really big moments for rewards — jumping on the dragon's back, leaping through a stained glass window, a particularly good Taunt against the villain, and so on.

## INTERPRET THE DIE ROLLS

*Savage Worlds* frequently features wild and unpredictable die rolls. When this happens, go with it! If a hero has to jump from a wrecked car as it careens out of control and makes an amazing Athletics roll, describe how he leaps into the air, tucks and rolls on the ground, and comes up on his feet with perfect balance. Similarly, don't be afraid to throw some bad luck at him when he gets a really poor roll. Maybe while using the Chase rules a player skis down a mountain to escape a rampaging yeti and rolls snake eyes! Describe how he tumbles, rolling and tumbling through the cold, wet snow as the beast bounds after his fallen prey.

Your players will love the extra embellishment. They'll feel powerful and cool when the dice are nice, and danger and excitement when the dice betray them, especially if you take a moment to make the setback interesting. That's what makes a Critical Failure on a Fighting attack, for example, go from feeling like a lost turn to a memorable part of the story.

## PACING

A good Game Master must pay attention to the pace of the game. Sometimes your friends will want to take their time roleplaying their characters, interacting with the world, or even just joking out of character and enjoying the social aspect of the game. If this goes on too long, however, they may need a little prodding.

This can be especially true in open adventures such as a murder mystery that requires the players to figure out where their characters go and what they should do (as opposed to a dungeon crawl or similar adventure where they really only need to decide if they're pressing forward or not).

If most or all of the group is roleplaying, smiling, and having a good time — leave them alone. Let them set the tempo. If you notice



some of your players are left out or looking a little bored, prod the group to see what they want to next. If they seem lost as to what to do next, ask one of the group to recount the clues or situation as they understand it. This is often enough to spark an idea or lead they want to follow up on. You might also introduce new information via a call or visit from a nonplayer character.

Finally, don't be afraid to contrive an encounter that gives the group a new path to follow. Maybe the team is attacked by their rivals and in the aftermath are able to gather a new clue from the survivors.

## COMBAT PACING

Just as important as keeping the plot moving forward is making sure combats are fast and furious. As you count down the Action Cards, make each player tell you what his character is doing fairly quickly. If he needs a moment, put his character on Hold and move on to the next player.

If you feel the scene should be particularly dramatic and a player doesn't announce his character's intentions quickly enough, start counting down... "What do you do? 5, 4, 3...!" That will get all the players' blood pumping and reinforce the notion that their characters are in a dangerous situation that requires quick decisions and big heroics. Most of the time, rush things along. Make them feel the urgency of combat. Make them a little nervous. Make them realize things are

desperate and that the next die roll better be a good one.

That's not to say there aren't times when you want to give a player a moment to think — particularly if they have a big plan or need to look up something really important, like the details of a power or a special rule.

You might also occasionally give the entire group a moment. If a terrible foe shows up after a few rounds of combat, a quick bathroom break gives everyone a moment to soak in the fact that things just got more challenging.

Feel the moment and play up the drama befitting your scenario, the environment, and the party's mood, and let them plan and strategize a bit if it makes sense or will benefit the game.

*"I READ ONCE THAT EXTRAS CAN USUALLY ONLY TAKE ONE WOUND SO THEY'RE 'UP, DOWN, OR OFF THE TABLE!' THAT KEEPS THINGS FAST, FURIOUS, AND FUN AND IS KINDA THE CORE OF HOW COMBAT WORKS FOR THE BADDIES."*

*-THE GM*

## EXTRAS

The backbone of any good game is the world that surrounds the player characters, and nonplayer characters are a big part of that. This section shows you how to breathe life into the supporting cast of your world.

### CREATING EXTRAS

Consider this Game Master's Rule #1 when it comes to Extras: **Don't "build" them!**

Don't create your Extras with the character creation rules. Just give them what you think they ought to have in their various skills and attributes and move on. The game is supposed to be easy for you to set up, run, and play. Don't sit around adding up skill points for Extras when you could be designing fiendish traps and thinking up nasty Special Abilities for your monsters!

### PERSONALITY

Far more important than most nonplayer character's statistics are their personalities. Jot down a note or two about any Extras the party is likely to come across so you'll have some idea how to run them. Some Game Masters find it useful to identify prominent Extras with actors or characters from film, television, books, or comics.

Knowing that the Captain of the City Guard is "played by Sam Elliot," for instance, gives you a good handle on how to handle interactions with him. He's likely to be gruff, to the point, and have a deep, throaty voice.

Adding these additional touches to the characters can really make them stand out and be remembered. The grizzled sergeant of the city watch becomes a memorable character they may call on in the future rather than just a momentary encounter they forget by the next scene. Not every Extra needs this kind of depth, of course, but those that do add a level of realism, continuity, and most importantly immersion to your game.

### ALLIES

Though it's rarely written, most games assume the Game Master controls the nonplayer characters, both when they're being talked to and when they fight alongside the player characters in combat. The latter is a burden for the GM, who often simply forgets about the additional characters during a fight, or shoves them off to the side and narratively describes what happens to them. This goes for hirelings as well as animal companions, sidekicks, or love interests. The simple fact is that in most games, allies are a cumbersome complication.

*Savage Worlds* takes a very different approach—we turn control of allies over to the player characters. The GM acts out these allies when they're spoken to, of course, but should very rarely, if ever, take them over in combat.

If you allow your heroes to have allies, you can include all the minions your villains should have as well. Picture an ancient lich in his unholy tomb. Would he be sitting there alone? No, he'd be surrounded by scores of ghoulish undead. These lesser minions make great complications for your battles and your players will have fun bashing through them with the Extras while their heroes battle the lich and his named lieutenants.

This takes a little getting used to if you've been Game Mastering other games for a long time. We suggest you try it for a bit and see how it works out. You can always change if it doesn't make sense for your group.

### ARTIFICIAL INFLATION

When running *Savage Worlds*, a lot of Game Masters become extremely enamored with the ally aspect of the game. Sometimes that leads to very large parties of player characters and their followers, which then demands very large parties of opponents.

It's okay if you do this—the system can handle it—but be warned that a combat with 50+ combatants will take a bit, even with a fast and furious system like this one!

"NATE AND EMILY HATE IT WHEN I DO THE CACKLER'S CRAZY LAUGH. I HAVE TO MAKE SURE TO DO IT MORE OFTEN!"

—THE GM

# STATE SUMMARIES

## DISTRACTED & VULNERABLE

- **DISTRACTED:** The character suffers -2 to all Trait rolls until the end of his next turn.
- **VULNERABLE:** Actions and attacks against the target are made at +2 until the end of his next turn. This doesn't stack with **The Drop** (page 100) — use only the highest.

## ENTANGLED & BOUND

- **ENTANGLED:** The victim can't move and is Vulnerable as long as he remains Entangled.
- **BOUND:** The victim may not move, is Distracted and Vulnerable as long as he remains Bound, and cannot make physical actions other than trying to break free.

## FATIGUED

- **FATIGUED:** The victim subtracts 1 from all Trait rolls. If he takes another level of Fatigue, he's Exhausted.
- **EXHAUSTED:** The victim subtracts 2 from all Trait rolls. If he takes another level of Fatigue, he's Incapacitated.
- **RECOVERY:** Unless otherwise specified by the source, Fatigue and Exhaustion improve one level per hour.

## INJURIES

- **INCAPACITATION:** Characters may not perform actions but are still dealt Action Cards to track power effects or in case they recover.
- **SHAKEN:** Shaken characters may only move and take free actions. At the start of their turn, characters automatically make a Spirit roll to recover from being Shaken as a free action.
- **STUNNED:** A Stunned character is Distracted (until end of next turn), Vulnerable (until recovery), and doesn't count for Gang Up. He also falls prone, can't take actions, or move. At the start of each of his turns, he makes a Vigor roll as a free action to revive. Success means he is no longer Stunned but remains Vulnerable until the end of his next turn; a raise means he stops being Vulnerable at the end of this turn.
- **WOUNDS:** The hero has been injured in a way that makes her actions more difficult. Each Wound reduces her Pace by 1 (to a minimum of 1") and inflicts a -1 penalty to all Trait rolls (to a maximum of -3). Wounds beyond the character's limit Incapacitate her.



**STREAM**

**LARGE  
BLAST  
TEMPLATE**

**SMALL  
BLAST  
TEMPLATE**

**SMALL  
BLAST  
TEMPLATE**

**TEMPLATE**

**GONE  
TEMPLATE**

**MEDIUM  
BLAST  
TEMPLATE**

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