

WAYPOINT

CORE RULEBOOK

A complete solo roleplaying game for one player.

No game master required. Just you, the dice, and the story.

First Edition | Rules Revision 1.2 | waypoint-rpg.com

Release 1.3 | Layout revision 2026-09-17 | English (US) | Game design and text © 2026 Matthew David. All rights reserved.

What is WAYPOINT?

WAYPOINT is a solo roleplaying game. You play one character through a complete adventure; no game master, no other players required. You make decisions, roll dice when outcomes matter, and discover a story that is partly written and partly yours.

If you've played Dungeons & Dragons or any other tabletop RPG, the vocabulary will feel familiar. Characters have attributes, skills, and special abilities. They face dangerous Struggles, manage limited resources, and push toward goals that cost something to reach. The difference is structural: WAYPOINT adventures are written for a single player, giving you everything you need to play tonight, alone, with nothing more than this book, two six-sided dice, and a pencil.

If this is your first solo RPG, welcome. Solo play is not a consolation prize for when you can't find a group. It is a different experience; intimate, personal, and available any time you have an hour and a quiet room.

What you need to play

- Two six-sided dice (2d6)
- A pencil
- A character sheet (blank sheet in Section 8.6, or download free at waypoint-rpg.com)
- A WAYPOINT adventure module

What WAYPOINT is not

WAYPOINT does not replace group play. It doesn't try to simulate a game master or generate an infinite sandbox. Each WAYPOINT adventure is a crafted experience; authored story nodes combined with procedural exploration; designed to give you the feel of a D&D session you ran entirely yourself.

Compatible with Oracle Decks

WAYPOINT works as a standalone system, but it's also designed to play alongside any oracle or prompt deck you already own. If you want more open-ended freeplay beyond the authored adventures, Chapter 7 covers how to combine WAYPOINT's mechanics with oracle tools for sessions without a module.

How to Use This Book

This rulebook is organized so you can start playing as fast as possible and learn more as you want to.

IF YOU WANT TO...	GO TO
Start playing immediately: right now	Chapter 1: Quick-Start (this section)
Build your own character from scratch	Chapter 3: Character Creation
Understand how the dice work fully	Chapter 2: Core Mechanics
Read about all six character archetypes	Chapter 4: Archetypes
Learn how combat and conflict work	Chapter 5: Struggles
Understand exploration and clocks	Chapter 6: Exploration & Clocks
Use oracle tools or play without a module	Chapter 7: Oracle & Freeplay
Look something up quickly	Chapter 8: Reference & Character Sheet

First time playing a solo RPG?

Read Chapter 1 (Quick-Start) now. It will teach you the core roll, the four tracks, and how a session flows; in about ten minutes. You can start playing after that and learn the rest as it comes up.

Throughout this book, you'll see three types of special text:

This is a rules reminder or important note.

It highlights something easy to miss or a rule that comes up often.

This is a designer note.

It explains why a rule works the way it does. Skip these on first read; they're for when you want to understand the design, not just use it.

This is an example of play.

It shows how a rule works in practice. If a rule is unclear, find its example.

One more thing: WAYPOINT uses second-person pronouns throughout ("you," "your character"). This is intentional; it's your story.

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CHAPTER 1

Quick-Start

This chapter teaches you everything you need to play your first session of WAYPOINT. Read it once, make a quick character, open an adventure module to Section 001, and begin. The rest of the rules can wait.

Your First Roll

Almost everything in WAYPOINT comes down to one roll. When you attempt something with an uncertain outcome, you roll two six-sided dice, add a relevant attribute modifier, and read the result.

2d6 + Attribute Modifier (+ Skill Bonus if applicable)

That's the whole core. Three possible results, based on your total:

STRONG HIT Total 10+	You succeed cleanly. The module or adventure tells you what good looks like; often a resource gain, progress toward a goal, or the situation improving.
WEAK HIT Total 7–9	You succeed, but with a cost or complication. You get what you wanted, but something else goes wrong, or you pay a price to get there.
MISS Total 6 or less	Something goes wrong. The module advances a clock, you take HARM or STRESS, or the situation worsens. Misses create tension and drive the story forward; they're not dead ends.

Designer Note

Why only three outcomes? Two dice create a natural probability curve: Strong Hits are achievable but not automatic, Weak Hits are common at low bonuses, and Misses are real but recede as you build your character. Your total bonus is Attribute + Skill + Difficulty. At +0 total you Strong Hit about 17% of the time (Weak 42%, Miss 42%). A competent character; a relevant +2 attribute at Standard difficulty, i.e. +2 total; Strong Hits about 42% (Weak 42%, Miss 17%); add a relevant skill (+3 total) and it climbs to about 58%. The curve rewards building your character rather than defaulting to luck.

Modifiers

Your modifier comes from one of your four attributes:

ATTRIBUTE	COVERS	RATING
MIGHT	Strength, endurance, melee combat, intimidation	+2 to -1
AGILITY	Speed, stealth, ranged combat, precision, reflexes	+2 to -1
WITS	Perception, knowledge, investigation, tactics	+2 to -1
SPIRIT	Willpower, persuasion, deception, resisting fear	+2 to -1

When you have a relevant skill; a specific area of training that clearly applies; add +1 to the roll. Skills never stack; one skill, one +1.

Which attribute do I use?

The adventure module tells you. When a roll is called for, the module specifies which attribute to use and sets the difficulty. You don't choose; the situation chooses. When playing freeplay without a module, use whichever attribute most naturally fits the action.

Difficulty

Some rolls are harder or easier than the default. The module marks these explicitly:

DIFFICULTY	MODIFIER EFFECT	WHAT IT REPRESENTS
Standard	None: roll as normal	A real challenge with a real chance of success
Favorable	+1 to your total	Conditions help you; you have an edge
Perilous	−1 to your total	Conditions work against you; extra stakes
Desperate	−2 to your total	Everything is wrong; you're barely functioning

Advantage and Disadvantage

Occasionally your situation is unusually good or bad. The module will say when:

- Advantage: Roll 3d6 and drop the lowest die. Then add your modifier.
- Disadvantage: Roll 3d6 and drop the highest die. Then add your modifier.

You can only have one Advantage or one Disadvantage on a roll; they don't stack with themselves, and they cancel each other out if both apply.

The Four Tracks

Your character has four tracks that measure their current state. Each track is a number you keep on your character sheet. They change constantly as you play.

HARM <i>Physical injury</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Physical damage from combat, hazards, and the world's cruelty. At HARM 6, you're incapacitated; you can't act until you rest and reduce it.

STRESS <i>Mental strain</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Psychological pressure from fear, grief, moral weight, and relentless tension. At STRESS 6, you break; you must take the path of least resistance until you recover.

SUPPLY <i>Resources</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Everything useful you carry; food, gear, money, goodwill. SUPPLY is spent to help yourself or your companions. At SUPPLY 0, you're desperate, and some options close off.

MOMENTUM <i>Forward drive</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5
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Tactical advantage, adrenaline, momentum in the fictional sense. You gain it on Strong Hits and certain choices. You can spend 3 MOMENTUM to convert a Miss into a Weak Hit; this is your most powerful tool and should be saved for moments that matter.

Starting Values

When you begin a new adventure with a fresh character: HARM 0, STRESS 0, SUPPLY 3, MOMENTUM 3. When you resume an ongoing adventure, keep the exact track values you recorded.

Track values are written on your character sheet as you play. Pencil is strongly recommended.

Your Drive and Your Fear

Your character has two personal traits that create mechanical moments during play:

DRIVE

What pushes you forward. Once per chapter, when you act directly on your Drive, gain +1 MOMENTUM.

FEAR

What threatens to unravel you. When confronted with your Fear, choose: face it (take +1 STRESS, gain +1 MOMENTUM) or avoid it (no cost, but something is lost).

Both Drive and Fear reset each chapter. You can only gain the Drive bonus once per chapter; you can only trigger the Fear choice once per chapter.

How a Session Flows

A WAYPOINT session follows a simple rhythm. Here's the shape of most sessions:

1. Open your adventure module to Section 001. Read it. Make the choices it presents.
2. When a choice leads to a test (a roll), identify which attribute applies and check the difficulty.
3. Roll 2d6, add your modifier (and +1 for a relevant skill), apply difficulty, read the result.
4. Follow the module's instructions for your result; Strong Hit, Weak Hit, or Miss. Adjust your tracks.
5. Continue to the next section the result directs you to.
6. In Exploration Zones, you'll roll on tables (Area, Event, Feature, Navigation) instead of following fixed section numbers. The module explains when you're in a Zone.
7. Rest when the module permits it; short rests recover STRESS, long rests recover both HARM and STRESS but cost SUPPLY and advance the zone clock.
8. The session ends when you reach an ending section, or when you decide to stop and mark your position for next time.

What's a clock?

Clocks are countdowns that represent threats advancing toward you. Each module has one or more clocks; The Pale closing in, a fort's alert level rising, a timer on a rescue. Clocks advance on Misses and certain choices. When a clock fills, something bad happens. Chapter 6 covers clocks fully.

Between Sessions

WAYPOINT is designed for both single-session play (one adventure, one sitting) and multi-session campaigns. If you stop mid-adventure:

- Note your current section number.
- Write down all current track values (HARM, STRESS, SUPPLY, MOMENTUM).
- Write down any tags you've earned (the module will tell you when you earn one).
- Note the state of each active clock.

Next session, open to your saved section and resume. Your character is exactly where you left them.

Example of Play

The following example follows WHISPER, a Shadow archetype, through two rolls in the opening of a heist module. WHISPER has AGILITY +2, Stealth skill (+1), and MOMENTUM 3.

First Roll: Slipping Past the Guard Post

The module reads: "The guard post is lit. Two soldiers, bored, facing the gate. You need to reach the service entrance on the far side without being seen. Roll AGILITY at Standard difficulty."

WHISPER's roll: AGILITY +2, Stealth applies (+1), Standard difficulty (no modifier). Total modifier: +3.

Dice result: 3 and 4 = 7. Plus +3 = 10. That's a Strong Hit.

The module's Strong Hit text: *"You move like smoke. The guards never look your way. Gain +1 MOMENTUM."*

WHISPER marks MOMENTUM 4 on her sheet and turns to the service entrance section.

Second Roll: The Dog

The next section reads: "The service courtyard. There's a dog; big, half-asleep by the fountain. Getting to the far door means crossing twenty feet of open ground past it. Roll AGILITY at Perilous difficulty." (Perilous means -1 to the roll.)

WHISPER's roll: AGILITY +2, Stealth (+1), Perilous (-1). Total modifier: +2.

Dice result: 2 and 3 = 5. Plus +2 = 7. A Weak Hit.

The module's Weak Hit text: *"You're across, but the dog raises its head and holds a long look toward the shadow where you vanished. It doesn't bark. Advance the ALERT clock by 1." (The ALERT clock is currently at 1/5.)*

WHISPER marks ALERT clock at 2/5. This matters; if the clock fills, the manor goes to full lockdown. She's burning through it faster than planned.

She'd love to undo the clock tick, but Defy Fate only rescues a Miss, and this was a Weak Hit. There's nothing to convert. She accepts the tick and keeps her MOMENTUM in reserve for a Miss later, when it can actually save her.

That's the core loop. Roll. Read the result. Adjust your tracks. Make decisions. Continue.

That's enough to start playing

Open an adventure module to Section 001. The module will tell you when to roll and what to roll. The rules above handle everything else.

Read the remaining chapters when you want to understand the full system; character creation, the complete combat rules, how Exploration Zones work, and how to play without a module. But you can start now.

Quick-Start Reference

Keep this reference open while you play your first session.

THE ROLL		2D6 + ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER (+ SKILL +1 IF APPLICABLE)	
Strong Hit (10+)		Success. Follow Strong Hit instructions.	
Weak Hit (7–9)		Success with cost. Follow Weak Hit instructions.	
Miss (6 or less)		Something goes wrong. Follow Miss instructions.	
DIFFICULTY		MODIFIER	
Favorable		+1 to roll	
Standard		No change	
Perilous		–1 to roll	
Desperate		–2 to roll	
TRACK	RANGE	AT MAXIMUM	RECOVER WITH
HARM	0–6	Incapacitated	Long Rest (or the Warden's Field Medicine)
STRESS	0–6	Broken	Long Rest (or the Warden's Field Medicine)
SUPPLY	0–6	Desperate (no options)	Finding resources in play
MOMENTUM	0–5	-	Strong Hits, Drive, some choices
KEY SPEND	COST	EFFECT	
Defy Fate	3 MOMENTUM	Convert a Miss into a Weak Hit	
Short Rest	Free	Reduce STRESS by 2 (if permitted)	
Long Rest	1 SUPPLY at 3-6; 2 at 2; unavailable at 0-1	Reduce HARM by 2, STRESS by 3 (if permitted; advances clock)	
Drive bonus	Once/chapter	Gain +1 MOMENTUM when acting on your Drive	
Face Fear	Once/chapter	+1 STRESS, gain +1 MOMENTUM	

Next Steps

If you want to build your own character: go to Chapter 3 (Character Creation).

If you want to use a pre-built character and start playing now: go to Chapter 4 (Archetypes) and choose one of the six pre-built characters distributed throughout that chapter.

If you want to understand all the mechanics before playing: continue to Chapter 2 (Core Mechanics).

CHAPTER 2

Core Mechanics

Chapter 1 gave you the basics. This chapter is the full engine; every mechanical rule, edge case, and probability note you need to run or design WAYPOINT sessions confidently. Read it straight through when you want to understand how everything works, or use it as a reference when specific situations come up.

2.1 The Roll

When your character attempts something where both success and failure are interesting, you make a roll. If there's no interesting consequence to failure, or no realistic chance of it; don't roll. Save the dice for moments that matter.

2d6

+ Attribute Modifier + Skill Bonus (if applicable) + Difficulty Modifier

The Three Results

STRONG HIT Total 10+	Full success. You achieve your goal. The module or Oracle describes the best version of what you were trying to do. Gain +1 MOMENTUM.
WEAK HIT Total 7–9	Partial success with a complication or cost. You get what you wanted, but something else goes wrong; you take HARM or STRESS, a clock advances, or you pay with SUPPLY. The module specifies the cost.
MISS Total 6 or less	Something goes wrong. The module advances a clock, you take damage, the situation worsens, or an opportunity closes. Misses are the engine of tension; they are not dead ends, they are complications.

Momentum on Strong Hits

Every Strong Hit gives you +1 MOMENTUM automatically. This is built into the result; you don't need to spend it or declare it. Just mark it. MOMENTUM is your primary tactical resource and Strong Hits are how you build it.

When Not to Roll

The rule is simple: only roll when both success and failure produce interesting outcomes and the character's ability level is genuinely uncertain. Don't roll for:

- Tasks that are trivially easy for someone with the character's skills and attributes
- Tasks where failure has no meaningful consequence
- Purely informational requests; if the module has information for the player, give it without a roll
- Actions you've already established as completed in the fiction

Designer Note

Rolling too often dilutes the weight of each roll. Players should feel that every test matters. If you're in freeplay and unsure whether to call for a roll, ask: 'Is both winning and losing here interesting?' If no, don't roll.

2.2 Attributes

Your character has four attributes, each rated from -1 to $+2$. These ratings are your modifiers; they add directly to your roll total.

ATTRIBUTE	WHAT IT COVERS	TYPICAL ACTIONS
MIGHT	Physical power, toughness, forceful presence	Melee combat, forcing doors, lifting, endurance, intimidation
AGILITY	Speed, coordination, precision	Stealth, ranged attacks, acrobatics, reflexes, escaping, pickpocketing
WITS	Perception, intelligence, tactical thinking	Investigation, spotting danger, navigation, crafting, recalling lore
SPIRIT	Force of will, social power, emotional resilience	Persuasion, deception, resisting fear, calming others, inspiring trust

Attribute Ratings

Attributes are distributed at character creation using a fixed array: $+2$, $+1$, $+0$, -1 . You assign one value to each attribute. Your archetype bonus adds $+1$ to a specified attribute, with a maximum of $+2$ at creation.

RATING	WHAT IT REPRESENTS	ROUGH REAL-WORLD EQUIVALENT
$+2$	Exceptional: a defining strength of your character	Top 5% of the general population in this area
$+1$	Above average: noticeably capable	Trained professional or natural talent
$+0$	Average: neither a strength nor a weakness	Competent adult with ordinary capability
-1	Below average: a genuine weakness	Out of your depth; you struggle here

The cap matters

The maximum attribute at character creation is $+2$. The maximum at any point during play is $+3$ (through advancement in campaign play). The system is balanced around $+3$ being the ceiling; modifiers above that trivialize most challenges and should not exist in standard play.

Which Attribute?

The adventure module names the default attribute for each test. You may propose a different attribute when your described approach clearly changes how you meet the obstacle. Use the alternative only when the fiction supports it; the module may attach a different difficulty, cost, or consequence. In freeplay, choose the attribute that most honestly fits the action:

Attribute choice examples

Climbing a cliff face: MIGHT: it's a test of physical endurance and grip strength.

Picking a lock: AGILITY: fine motor control and dexterity.

Talking your way past a guard: SPIRIT: social pressure and persuasion.

Remembering the weakness of a specific monster: WITS: knowledge and recall.

2.3 Skills

Skills represent specific areas of training or experience. When a skill clearly and directly applies to a roll, add $+1$ to your total. Each character has three skills chosen at creation.

The Skill Bonus Rules

- The bonus is exactly $+1$. Always. Skills don't have levels or ratings.
- Skills never stack with each other, even if two skills could plausibly apply, the bonus is $+1$.
- The skill must clearly apply. When in doubt, it doesn't.

- Custom skills are permitted. If you want a skill not on the standard list, define it clearly (what it covers, what it doesn't) and write it on your sheet.

SKILL	WHAT IT APPLIES TO
Athletics	Climbing, swimming, jumping, running, feats of sustained endurance
Stealth	Moving unseen or unheard, hiding, tailing targets, setting ambushes
Investigation	Searching for clues, examining evidence, research and analysis
Medicine	Treating injuries, diagnosing conditions, understanding poisons and disease
Survival	Tracking, foraging, wilderness navigation, identifying environmental hazards
Deception	Lying convincingly, disguise, misdirection, forgery
Persuasion	Negotiation, diplomacy, inspiring trust, making reasonable requests compelling
Lore	History, legend, arcane knowledge, cultural customs, religious traditions
Craft	Building, repairing, jury-rigging, technical construction and repair
Intimidation	Threats, coercion, projecting menace, breaking morale
Navigation	Pathfinding, cartography, reading terrain, dead reckoning
Performance	Acting, music, public speaking, oratory, entertainment
Arcana	Magical theory, supernatural phenomena, identifying rituals and spells
Streetwise	Urban survival, criminal contacts, reading dangerous social situations

Designer Note

Skills are deliberately broad. 'Athletics' covers everything from swimming to scaling walls because the +1 bonus is modest; it nudges probability without dominating it. Narrow skills create arguments about edge cases. Broad skills create confident players.

2.4 Difficulty

Every roll has a difficulty set by the module (or by the GM/Oracle in freeplay). Difficulty modifies your roll total, not the target number. The target numbers (7, 10) never change.

DIFFICULTY	MODIFIER	USE WHEN...
Favorable	+1	Conditions help you: you have tools, time, or a clear advantage
Standard	+0	Normal challenge: the baseline for most rolls
Perilous	−1	Conditions work against you: rushed, injured, or outmatched
Desperate	−2	Everything is wrong: you're barely functional or severely compromised

Who Sets Difficulty?

In module play, the module sets difficulty explicitly for every test. In freeplay, you set it yourself honestly; the goal is interesting outcomes, not easy wins. Standard is the default. Apply Perilous when the fiction genuinely warrants it. Apply Favorable only when the fiction genuinely supports it.

The Honest Difficulty Rule

In solo play, no one is watching whether you set difficulty fairly. The game works only if you are honest with yourself. A Favorable modifier when the situation doesn't warrant it is not a win; it's a shorter story.

2.5 Advantage & Disadvantage

Advantage and Disadvantage apply in exceptional circumstances, when your situation is dramatically better or worse than a simple difficulty modifier can capture.

ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
Roll 3d6. Drop the lowest die. Add the remaining two dice together. Then add your modifier. <i>Use when a circumstance is so favorable it fundamentally changes the odds, not just a small edge.</i>	Roll 3d6. Drop the highest die. Add the remaining two dice together. Then add your modifier. <i>Use when a circumstance is so dire it fundamentally undermines your attempt, not just a small setback.</i>

Stacking Rules

- Multiple sources of Advantage don't stack. You have Advantage or you don't.
- Multiple sources of Disadvantage don't stack. You have Disadvantage or you don't.
- If both Advantage and Disadvantage apply simultaneously, they cancel out. Roll 2d6 normally.
- Advantage and Disadvantage can both apply alongside a Difficulty modifier (which still applies normally).

Advantage + Difficulty together

A Scholar rolls Investigation (WITS +2, Investigation skill +1) on a Perilous test, but has found a relevant ancient text that grants Advantage.

Process: Roll 3d6, drop lowest. Say the dice show 3, 4, 5; drop the 3. Result is 4+5 = 9. Add WITS +2 = 11. Add skill +1 = 12. Apply Perilous -1 = 11. Final result: 11; Strong Hit.

2.6 Probability at a Glance

Understanding the probability distribution helps you make informed decisions about when to spend MOMENTUM, when to rest, and how risky a given action is. The table below shows the chance of each result at every modifier level. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Total modifier	Strong Hit 10+	Weak Hit 7–9	Miss 6 or less
Total -2 (e.g. Desperate, no bonus)	3%	25%	72%
Total -1 (e.g. Perilous, no bonus)	8%	33%	58%
Total +0 (Standard, no bonus)	17%	42%	42%
Total +1 (Standard, +1 attribute)	28%	44%	28%
Total +2 (+2 attribute, or +1 attr +1 skill)	42%	42%	17%
Total +3 (+2 attribute, +1 skill)	58%	33%	8%

What the numbers mean

At Standard difficulty with no bonus (+0 total), you Strong Hit about 17% of the time; the dice alone are stingy. A competent character (a relevant +2 attribute) at Standard difficulty rolls at +2 total and Strong Hits about 42%, or roughly two rolls in five. Add a relevant skill (+3 total) and you Strong Hit over half the time. This is why building the right character for a task matters: each +1 shifts the curve meaningfully.

Desperate difficulty is genuinely dangerous. At -2 total you Miss about 72% of the time and Strong Hit only 3%. Don't roll Desperate unless the fiction forces it.

2.7 The Momentum Economy

MOMENTUM is your most active resource. It rises and falls constantly during play, and the decision of when to spend it is one of the most interesting tactical choices WAYPOINT offers.

Gaining Momentum

SOURCE	AMOUNT	WHEN
Strong Hit (any roll)	+1	Automatic: no declaration needed
Drive (once per chapter)	+1	When you act directly and meaningfully on your Drive
Face your Fear (once per chapter)	+1	When you choose to face your Fear: costs +1 STRESS
Module-specified gains	Varies	Some sections, choices, or scene outcomes grant MOMENTUM explicitly
Archetype Edges	Varies	Some archetype edges generate MOMENTUM as part of their effect

Spending Momentum

SPEND	COST	EFFECT
Defy Fate	3 MOMENTUM	Convert a Miss into a Weak Hit (see Section 2.8)
Burning Advantage	2 MOMENTUM	Gain Advantage on your next single roll (declared before rolling)
Press the Attack	1 MOMENTUM	In a Struggle, add +1 Progress on your next Hit. A Miss does not consume it; it expires when the Struggle ends
Steady the Line	1 MOMENTUM	Reduce incoming HARM or STRESS by 1 (declared when damage is applied)
Module spends	Varies	Some adventure sections offer MOMENTUM spends for specific outcomes

Momentum Cap and Floor

MOMENTUM has a maximum of 5 and a minimum of 0. You cannot gain MOMENTUM above 5; excess is lost. MOMENTUM never goes below 0; you can't be penalized into negative MOMENTUM.

MOMENTUM 3 begins a new adventure

A new adventure begins at MOMENTUM 3. A resumed session keeps the exact MOMENTUM recorded at the previous pause. This gives a fresh character one emergency Defy Fate without erasing the consequences of play between sessions.

Designer Note

The MOMENTUM economy is WAYPOINT's primary strategic layer. Players who treat MOMENTUM as a savings account; spending it only in absolute emergencies; play too conservatively. Players who spend it freely lose critical options at key moments. The intended play pattern: spend freely in exploration and low-stakes tests; conserve before Struggles and clocks approaching maximum.

2.8 Defy Fate

Defy Fate is your emergency option. At any point after rolling a Miss, you may spend 3 MOMENTUM to convert that Miss into a Weak Hit. This is the most important MOMENTUM spend in the game.

Check the cost before spending

Defy Fate is optional, and it does not erase a Weak Hit's costs. Before spending 3 MOMENTUM, compare the written Miss consequence with the Weak Hit consequence. In a Struggle, a harmless Miss can be safer than a Weak Hit that inflicts Danger HARM. State both outcomes before you decide.

DEFY FATE

Cost: 3 MOMENTUM

Effect: A Miss becomes a Weak Hit. Take the Weak Hit result instead.

If the Miss would have advanced a clock: The clock advance is prevented. You didn't Miss, so the trigger didn't occur.

Key Rules for Defy Fate

- You must declare Defy Fate immediately after the Miss; before reading or applying the Miss result.
- You cannot Defy Fate if you have fewer than 3 MOMENTUM. You must have exactly 3 or more.
- Defy Fate converts to a Weak Hit, not a Strong Hit. You still pay a cost.
- Clock advances that were triggered by the Miss are cancelled. The Miss never happened.
- You can Defy Fate on any roll, including Struggle rolls and navigation rolls.

Defy Fate in action

MOTHER STONE rolls MIGHT for a combat Struggle. Dice show 1 and 3 = 4. Plus MIGHT +2 = 6. A Miss. The Miss result would advance the Pale Clock from 3/5 to 4/5; one tick from catastrophe.

She has MOMENTUM 4. She spends 3, dropping to MOMENTUM 1, and Defies Fate. The roll is now treated as a Weak Hit: she takes damage but the clock doesn't advance. She marks HARM +1 and MOMENTUM 1.

MOMENTUM 1 is uncomfortable; she's used her safety net. The Pale Clock holds at 3/5. That was the right spend.

2.9 Tags

Tags are words or short phrases that mark something true about your character, the world, or your situation. They're the primary way WAYPOINT tracks what you've done, earned, or lost, and they're what determines which choices and endings are available to you.

Tags don't have numerical values. They are either present or absent. When a module checks for a tag ("if you have [TAG] Found the Crown of Flames, go to Section 086"), you either have it or you don't.

The Four Tag Types

Persistent Tag <i>Permanent until cleared</i>	EFFECT Remains active for the entire adventure. Unlocks sections, gates endings, or changes scene text. Most story-significant tags are Persistent. CLEARs <i>Only cleared when the module explicitly says so, or in some cases when the story's arc resolves them.</i>
One-Shot Tag <i>Spend once, then gone</i>	EFFECT Provides a single-use benefit; Advantage on a specific roll, a free success on a specific task, or access to a specific option. Once used, cross it off. CLEARs <i>Automatically clears on use. The module will specify when the tag can be spent.</i>
Condition Tag <i>Active penalty while held</i>	EFFECT Applies an ongoing penalty; a -1 to specific rolls, a restricted action, or a changed interaction with an NPC. Condition tags are the most immediately impactful. CLEARs <i>Cleared by rest, treatment, story resolution, or specific module events. The module specifies clearing conditions.</i>
Legacy Tag <i>Carries between adventures</i>	EFFECT A tag earned in one adventure that can be brought into a subsequent adventure using the Campaign Chaining Protocol. Usually one per completed adventure. CLEARs <i>Carried intentionally by the player into the next adventure. See the Campaign Chaining supplement for full rules.</i>

Tracking Tags

Record tags on your character sheet in the Tags section. The module will identify which tags are Core Tags; the roughly twelve per adventure that matter mechanically. Everything else is story flavor; you don't need to track it unless you want to.

Three-Tier Tags (Module Reference)

The Module Guidelines organize Core Tags into three tiers: Path-Unlocking (required for specific endings), Outcome-Affecting (change how scenes play out), and Conditions (active penalties). This organization is for module writers; as a player, you just track what you have and check when the module asks.

Tag Disambiguation

Some tags sound similar but are mechanically distinct. The module will flag these when they matter. The most common example:

[NAME] TRUSTS YOU	ALLIED WITH [NAME]
They believe in you. They will answer questions honestly and speak well of you to others. Does NOT grant Alliance.	They will act alongside you at critical moments; in the finale, they are available as an active ally. <i>Requires Trust as a prerequisite, usually plus a further action.</i>

When a module awards a Trust tag, it will include an explicit note clarifying whether it grants Alliance or not. Never assume. Check the tag award text.

2.10 The Four Tracks

Chapter 1 introduced the tracks. This section gives you the complete rules, including the consequences of maxing each track and the full rest system.

HARM: Physical Damage

HARM LEVEL	STATE	WHAT CHANGES
0–2	Minor injuries	No mechanical penalty
3–4	Significant injury	–1 to MIGHT and AGILITY rolls
5	Severe injury	–1 to all rolls
6	Incapacitated	You cannot act. You must rest or receive aid before taking any action. If in a Struggle, you lose immediately.

STRESS: Psychological Damage

STRESS LEVEL	STATE	WHAT CHANGES
0–2	Tense	No mechanical penalty
3–4	Rattled	–1 to SPIRIT and WITS rolls
5	Breaking	–1 to all rolls; Fear triggers are more costly (+2 STRESS instead of +1)
6	Broken	You lose agency. You must take the path of least resistance; no risky choices, no heroic actions; until you rest and reduce STRESS below 6.

SUPPLY: Resources

SUPPLY LEVEL	STATE	WHAT CHANGES
3–6	Provisioned	No restriction; Long Rest costs 1 SUPPLY normally
1–2	Low	At SUPPLY 2, a Long Rest costs 2. At SUPPLY 1, you cannot pay the full cost and cannot take a Long Rest.
0	Desperate	Cannot take Long Rests. Some module options that cost SUPPLY close off. Emergency Supplies rule unavailable.

MOMENTUM: Forward Drive

MOMENTUM LEVEL	STATE	WHAT IT MEANS
4–5	Strong	Defy Fate available with Momentum to spare; every spend comfortable
3	Moderate	Defy Fate available, but it empties you to 0: exposed
1–2	Low	Not enough for Defy Fate (needs 3). Only Burning Advantage (2, at Momentum 2), Press the Attack (1), and Steady the Line (1) remain
0	Spent	No MOMENTUM spends of any kind available. Build it back with Strong Hits.

2.11 Rest

Rest is how you recover HARM and STRESS. It is also a resource; resting costs time (clock ticks) and SUPPLY, and is not always available. The module specifies when rest is permitted.

REST TYPE	HARM RECOVERY	STRESS RECOVERY	COST
Short Rest	<i>None</i>	Reduce by 2	Free, but see permission rules
Long Rest	Reduce by 2	Reduce by 3	1 SUPPLY at 3-6; 2 SUPPLY at 2; unavailable at 0-1. Default: advance the active zone's primary Clock once.

Rest Permission

You cannot rest whenever you feel like it. The module governs when rest is available through the Rest Permission Ladder. The general rules:

- Short Rest: permitted between areas when no immediate threat is active; never mid-encounter; never immediately after a clock-advancing Miss.
- Long Rest: only in explicitly marked [SAFE REST] locations, or between areas when the module permits it. By default, a Long Rest advances the active zone's primary Clock once. It costs 1 SUPPLY at SUPPLY 3-6 or 2 SUPPLY at SUPPLY 2. At SUPPLY 0-1, you cannot pay and cannot take the rest. A module may explicitly waive or replace the default Clock tick; silence means the default applies.
- Short Rests NEVER advance clocks. If a Short Rest is permitted, taking it is safe in terms of time pressure.

The Rest Permission Ladder

Each module includes a Rest Permission Ladder; a table that tells you exactly when each rest type is available for that specific adventure. Always check the module's ladder before resting. The general rules above are defaults. A module can restrict or expand rest permission and can explicitly waive or replace the Long Rest Clock tick.

2.12 Core Mechanics Summary

The following table is a complete reference for all core mechanical rules. Keep it open during your first few sessions.

RULE	SUMMARY
The Roll	2d6 + Attribute Modifier + Skill (+1) + Difficulty Modifier
Strong Hit	Total 10+. Succeed. Gain +1 MOMENTUM.
Weak Hit	Total 7–9. Succeed with cost. No MOMENTUM.
Miss	Total 6 or less. Something goes wrong.
Difficulty: Favorable	+1 to total
Difficulty: Standard	No modifier
Difficulty: Perilous	–1 to total
Difficulty: Desperate	–2 to total
Advantage	Roll 3d6, drop lowest, add modifier
Disadvantage	Roll 3d6, drop highest, add modifier
Advantage + Disadvantage	They cancel. Roll 2d6 normally.
Skill bonus	+1 when skill clearly applies. Never stacks.
Defy Fate	Spend 3 MOMENTUM to convert a Miss into a Weak Hit
HARM max	6 = Incapacitated; –1 to MIGHT/AGILITY at 3+
STRESS max	6 = Broken (must take safe path); –1 to SPIRIT/WITS at 3+
SUPPLY 0	No Long Rests; some options unavailable
MOMENTUM max/min	Max 5, min 0. Excess lost; never goes negative.
Short Rest	Reduces STRESS by 2. Free. Never advances clock.
Long Rest	Reduces HARM by 2 and STRESS by 3. Costs 1 SUPPLY at 3-6 or 2 SUPPLY at 2; unavailable at 0-1. Advances the active primary Clock once by default.
Drive bonus	+1 MOMENTUM once per chapter when acting on Drive
Face Fear	Take +1 STRESS, gain +1 MOMENTUM. Once per chapter.
Avoid Fear	No STRESS, but pay the module-specified cost instead

CHAPTER 3

Character Creation

This chapter walks you through building a WAYPOINT character from scratch. The process has seven steps and takes about fifteen minutes on your first attempt and five minutes once you know the system. Each step is self-contained; complete it, write the result on your sheet, then move to the next.

Using a pre-built character?

Chapter 4 (Archetypes) includes a fully completed character sheet for each of the six archetypes. If you want to start playing immediately, skip this chapter and choose one of those. Come back here when you want to build your own.

The Seven Steps at a Glance

STEP	WHAT YOU DO	TIME
1	Choose your Archetype; the broad template that defines your character's role and abilities	2 min
2	Assign Attributes: distribute +2, +1, +0, -1 across MIGHT, AGILITY, WITS, and SPIRIT	2 min
3	Apply your Archetype Bonus: add +1 to a specified attribute (maximum +2)	30 sec
4	Choose three Skills: pick from the standard skill list or write your own	2 min
5	Choose your Archetype Edge: one of two special abilities unique to your archetype	1 min
6	Write your Drive and your Fear: one or two sentences each	5 min
7	Set Starting Tracks and name your character: HARM 0, STRESS 0, SUPPLY 3, MOMENTUM 3	1 min

The most important step is Step 6. Your attributes, skills, and archetype define what your character can do. Your Drive and Fear define why they do it and what it costs them. Most players spend more time on Step 6 than all the other steps combined. That time is well spent.

Step 1: Choose Your Archetype

Your archetype is your character's core identity; the lens through which all their abilities are defined. WAYPOINT has six archetypes. Each one excels at different things, has a different attribute bonus, and offers two different special abilities to choose from in Step 5.

ARCHETYPE	ROLE	ATTRIBUTE BONUS	EXCELS AT
Blade	Warrior, enforcer	+1 MIGHT (max +2)	Combat, intimidation, endurance. Ends Struggles fast.
Shadow	Thief, spy, assassin	+1 AGILITY (max +2)	Stealth, infiltration, precision. Avoids being seen.
Warden	Guardian, protector	+1 MIGHT or SPIRIT	Defense, first aid, protecting others. Absorbs damage.
Drifter	Wanderer, scavenger, survivor	+1 AGILITY or WITS	Exploration, foraging, adaptation. Makes do with less.
Envoy	Diplomat, face, manipulator	+1 SPIRIT (max +2)	Social challenges, persuasion, faction politics.
Scholar	Sage, analyst, arcane specialist	+1 WITS (max +2)	Investigation, lore, identifying weaknesses.

Your archetype is not a class in the D&D sense; it doesn't lock you into a single play style. A Blade can investigate and a Scholar can fight. The archetype sets your starting shape; the attributes and skills you choose in the next steps sharpen that shape in the direction you want.

Warden and Drifter attribute flexibility

Warden and Drifter both have a choice of which attribute gets the +1 bonus. Make this choice based on the character concept you have in mind. Warden +MIGHT suggests a physically protective guardian; Warden +SPIRIT suggests a spiritual or emotional anchor. Both are equally valid.

Step 2: Assign Attributes

WAYPOINT uses a fixed array for attribute assignment. Take the values +2, +1, +0, and -1 and assign one to each of the four attributes. You cannot change these assignments after Step 3 (the archetype bonus).

The Fixed Array

+2 +1 +0 -1

Assign one value to each attribute: MIGHT, AGILITY, WITS, SPIRIT

Why Fixed Arrays?

Fixed arrays prevent "dump stats"; attributes so low they create frustrating dead zones, and ensure that every character is meaningfully capable in at least two areas. The -1 creates a genuine weakness, which is important: weaknesses create tension, and tension creates story.

Assigning Based on Concept

Your attribute assignment is the most direct expression of your character concept. Think about your character first, then assign the values to match:

Three example assignments for a Blade archetype

Combat-first fighter: MIGHT +2, AGILITY +1, WITS +0, SPIRIT -1. Hits hard, moves well, thinks slowly, rattles easily. Classic warrior template.

Veteran survivor: MIGHT +2, WITS +1, SPIRIT +0, AGILITY -1. Hard-won experience, tactical mind, reliable under pressure, but not fast.

Reluctant soldier: SPIRIT +2, MIGHT +1, AGILITY +0, WITS -1. Fights from conviction, carries moral weight well, physically capable, but tactically improvised.

The Four Attributes: Full Reference

ATTRIBUTE	WHAT IT COVERS	HIGH RATING MEANS...	LOW RATING MEANS...
MIGHT	Physical power, toughness, brute force, close-quarters combat, intimidation by presence	You hit hard, take punishment, and rarely back down from physical challenges	You tire quickly, struggle in sustained physical conflicts, and are hard to intimidate physically
AGILITY	Speed, coordination, stealth, ranged precision, reflexes, fine motor control	You move first, strike with precision, and are hard to pin down or detect	You are slow to react, clumsy in tight spaces, and easier to spot or catch
WITS	Perception, intelligence, tactics, lore, investigation, reading situations	You notice things others miss, solve problems efficiently, and understand what you're dealing with	You miss details, are slow to grasp new situations, and struggle with anything that requires study
SPIRIT	Force of will, emotional resilience, persuasion, deception, inspiring others	You hold together under pressure, move people with words, and resist fear and manipulation	You unravel under sustained pressure, struggle in social situations, and are vulnerable to fear

Step 3: Apply Your Archetype Bonus

Each archetype grants +1 to a specified attribute. Apply this bonus after your base assignment. The maximum any attribute can be at character creation is +2. If your archetype bonus would push an attribute above +2, you must reassign your base values first.

Example: Applying the Bonus**Shadow archetype: Archetype Bonus +1 AGILITY**

Base assignment: MIGHT +0, AGILITY +1, WITS +2, SPIRIT -1

After archetype bonus: MIGHT +0, AGILITY +2, WITS +2, SPIRIT -1

This is legal: AGILITY moved from +1 to +2, which is the maximum.

What if AGILITY had been +2 at base? The bonus can't push it above +2, so the player would need to reassign base values; e.g. start with AGILITY +1, then the bonus brings it to +2.

Final Attribute Block: Sample Completed Character

Here's how a completed attribute block looks. This is what you'll fill in on your character sheet after Steps 2 and 3:

MIGHT	AGILITY	WITS	SPIRIT
+0	+2	+2	-1
Average	Exceptional	Exceptional	Weakness

This is WHISPER, the Shadow archetype from Chapter 1's examples. Two exceptional attributes, one average, one genuine weakness. The weakness in SPIRIT means she is vulnerable to fear effects and struggles in social pressure situations, which creates interesting moments in play.

Step 4: Choose Three Skills

Choose three skills from the list below, or invent your own (see Custom Skills at the end of this section). Skills grant a +1 bonus when they clearly and directly apply to a roll. They do not stack.

Standard Skill List

SKILL	WHEN THE +1 APPLIES
Athletics	Climbing, swimming, jumping, sprinting, sustained endurance challenges
Stealth	Moving unseen or unheard, hiding, shadowing targets, setting concealed ambushes
Investigation	Examining evidence, searching spaces for clues, research, pattern recognition
Medicine	Treating injuries, stabilizing critical conditions, identifying poisons and illness
Survival	Wilderness navigation, tracking, foraging, identifying environmental hazards
Deception	Lying convincingly, maintaining cover identities, misdirection, forgery
Persuasion	Negotiation, appeals to reason or emotion, building rapport, diplomacy
Lore	History, legend, arcane theory, cultural customs, religious knowledge
Craft	Repairing equipment, building improvised tools, jury-rigging, technical work
Intimidation	Direct threats, coercion, projecting menace, breaking enemy morale
Navigation	Pathfinding in wilderness or urban spaces, reading terrain, cartography
Performance	Acting, music, oratory, impersonation, public speaking
Arcana	Identifying magical effects, supernatural phenomena, ritual theory
Streetwise	Urban survival, criminal networks, reading dangerous social spaces
Command	Directing NPCs under stress, maintaining group discipline, issuing tactical orders
Empathy	Reading emotional states, detecting lies, understanding motivations, emotional support

Choosing Well

The most effective skill choices reinforce your attribute strengths and cover specific situations your character will plausibly face. A Shadow with AGILITY +2 who takes Stealth and Athletics will almost never fail at movement challenges. But consider taking one skill that creates interesting moments rather than just reinforcing strengths:

- A Blade who takes Empathy creates moments of unexpected insight, and occasional surprise when they read a room better than anyone expected.
- An Envoy who takes Survival creates a fascinating backstory tension; this diplomat knows how to stay alive in the wilderness.
- A Scholar who takes Intimidation generates great scenes where academic confidence crosses into genuine menace.

Designer Note

The +1 bonus is intentionally modest. Skills are not meant to replace attribute scores; they're meant to add texture. A character with WITS –1 and Investigation skill is still bad at investigation, just slightly less bad. The fiction of "I know how to do this" matters more than the mechanical weight of the bonus.

Custom Skills

If no standard skill fits the specific expertise your character concept demands, write your own. Custom skills must follow two rules:

- Be specific enough that it clearly applies in some situations and clearly doesn't apply in others. "Combat" is too broad; it describes half the game. "Dueling" is specific enough.
- Be written on your sheet with a short clarification of what it covers. "Siege Engineering: building and analysing defensive fortifications, not general Craft tasks."

Custom skill examples

Sailing: Navigation on water, weather reading at sea, managing a ship under stress. Does not apply on land.

Dragon Lore: Knowledge of dragon biology, history, and psychology. Applies to WITS rolls about dragons and related phenomena. Does not apply to general arcane questions.

Herbalism: Identifying plants, brewing remedies and poisons from natural materials. Overlaps with Medicine for plant-based treatments only.

Step 5: Choose Your Archetype Edge

Each archetype has two Edges; special abilities that define how that archetype plays differently from a generic character. Choose one. The other is permanently unavailable for this character (Edges cannot be unlocked through advancement).

All Six Archetypes: Edges

BLADE

Brutal Momentum

When you achieve a Strong Hit in a Struggle, gain +1 MOMENTUM in addition to the normal Strong Hit bonus.

This stacks with the standard +1 MOMENTUM for Strong Hits, giving you +2 MOMENTUM total on a combat Strong Hit.

Best for: Players who want to build and spend MOMENTUM aggressively during Struggles.

Iron Threshold

The penalty threshold for HARM is raised by 1. You suffer no roll penalty until HARM 4 (instead of HARM 3).

At HARM 5 and 6, the normal penalties still apply. You simply last longer before they kick in.

Best for: Players who want to absorb punishment and keep fighting at full effectiveness longer.

SHADOW

Ghost Step

Once per scene, when you would take HARM from a source you did not detect in advance, you may roll AGILITY at Standard difficulty.

Strong Hit: avoid the HARM entirely. Weak Hit: halve it (round up). Miss: take it normally.

Best for: Players who want to feel slippery and hard to pin down even when caught off-guard.

Shadow Cache

At the start of each chapter, you may declare that you prepared a hidden cache before the adventure began.

Spend 1 SUPPLY to recover a specific piece of useful equipment (the module must make this plausible). Once per chapter.

Best for: Players who want narrative flexibility: always having just the right tool.

WARDEN

Absorb

Once per scene, when an ally NPC or companion would take HARM, you may take that HARM instead.

The companion takes no damage. You take it at -1 (reduced by 1, minimum 1). Declare before damage is resolved.

Best for: Players who want to feel like a shield; protective choices with mechanical teeth.

Field Medicine

Short Rests you initiate also reduce HARM by 1 (in addition to reducing STRESS by 2).

You are the only archetype for whom Short Rests restore HARM. This dramatically changes your recovery economy.

Best for: Players who want to manage the party's long-term sustainability through rest efficiency.

DRIFTER

Scrounger

When a permitted Long Rest payment would reduce SUPPLY to 0 (normally from SUPPLY 2), roll AGILITY or WITS at Standard difficulty before paying.

Strong Hit: complete the rest and set SUPPLY to 1 after payment. Weak Hit: do the same, then advance the active primary Clock by 1 additional tick. Miss: pay normally and SUPPLY becomes 0. If you cannot pay the full rest cost, you cannot trigger Scrounger or take the rest.

Best for: Players who want to press into resource-lean situations other characters would retreat from.

Wanderer's Eye

When entering a new Exploration Zone for the first time, roll WITS at Standard difficulty before the Zone Turn begins.

Strong Hit: learn one piece of useful advance information (an exit location, a hazard, a resource). Weak Hit: vague impression only. Miss: no benefit.

Best for: Players who want to feel experienced; someone who's been in enough places to read a new one.

ENVOY

Silver Tongue

Once per chapter, you may reroll a failed SPIRIT test involving social interaction (persuasion, deception, negotiation).

You must take the second result. This reroll does not cost MOMENTUM: it is free.

Best for: Players who want reliable social effectiveness; the safety net that makes bold social plays feel worth attempting.

Read the Room

At the start of any social encounter, before any rolls are made, you may ask the module or Oracle one question about an NPC's true motivation.

The answer must be honest. Limit: once per encounter, once per chapter.

Best for: Players who enjoy playing characters who see through people, and building strategies around that insight.

SCHOLAR

Keen Insight

Once per chapter, before making a WITS roll, you may declare Keen Insight. If the roll succeeds (any hit), you learn one additional piece of information beyond the standard result.

This additional information is always true and always relevant, not just "more detail" but something actionably useful.

Best for: Players who want investigation to feel rewarding; more information per successful roll.

Study the Weakness

When you spend at least one full zone turn observing a creature or NPC before engaging in a Struggle, reduce their Danger rating by 1 for the duration of that Struggle.

Requires a full zone turn of observation; you cannot engage and then apply this retroactively.

Best for: Players who enjoy planning and preparation; rewarding patience before conflict.

Designer Note

Two Edges rather than a progression tree is a deliberate design choice. It keeps characters immediately distinctive from one another, prevents ability-score optimisation paralysis, and ensures that the Edge feels personally chosen rather than mechanically optimal.

Step 6: Write Your Drive and Fear

This is the most important step. Take your time.

Your Drive is what pushes your character forward through hardship. Your Fear is what threatens to unravel them. Together, they define the emotional shape of your character; the tension between what drives them and what they're afraid of becoming or losing.

DRIVE

A Drive is a specific commitment; something your character is working toward, protecting, or honoring.

When you act directly and meaningfully on your Drive, gain +1 MOMENTUM. Once per chapter.

A Drive should be active, not passive. Not "I care about justice" but "I will see the people who destroyed my family brought to account."

Mechanical trigger: The bonus applies when your action directly serves the Drive in a way that costs you something or matters narratively.

FEAR

A Fear is something specific that threatens your character's sense of self, their loved ones, or their fundamental values.

When confronted with your Fear, choose: face it (+1 STRESS, gain +1 MOMENTUM) or avoid it (no STRESS, but pay the module's specified cost).

A Fear should be about loss, not about spiders. Not "I am afraid of the dark" but "I am afraid I will become the thing I spent my life fighting against."

Mechanical trigger: The choice activates when the Fear is genuinely confronted in the fiction, not just mentioned or nearby.

Writing Good Drives

The best Drives are specific enough to trigger clearly, personal enough to feel meaningful, and forward-looking enough to survive multiple sessions. Test your Drive against these questions:

- Can you point to a specific moment in the adventure where this Drive is directly served? Good.
- Is the action you're taking in service of the Drive costing you something? Good.

- Would a neutral observer agree this action serves this Drive? Good.

WEAK DRIVE	WHY IT FAILS	STRONGER VERSION
"I want to be a hero."	Vague: "heroic" actions are most actions. Triggers constantly or never.	"I will protect my brother, who is somewhere in this city, from the people who are hunting him."
"I seek adventure."	Self-fulfilling: every session counts. No meaningful moment.	"I am looking for evidence that my captain was framed for the crime that destroyed our company."
"I love my companions."	Too broad, which companions? In what way? What does serving this look like?	"I will make sure Corra survives this expedition, even if it costs me the Heartforge itself."
"I believe in justice."	Abstract principle: justice for whom? When does an action "serve justice" clearly?	"I will make sure Lord Dren faces consequences for what he did, by law if possible, by any means if not."

Writing Good Fears

Fears are most mechanically interesting when they arise naturally from the adventure you're playing and create genuine choices; moments when avoiding the Fear would be understandable but facing it would be meaningful.

WEAK FEAR	WHY IT FAILS	STRONGER VERSION
"I am afraid of spiders."	Physical phobia: purely reactive, no moral weight.	"I am afraid of becoming like my father; cold, efficient, and no longer able to feel what I've done."
"I fear death."	Universal: everyone fears death. No distinctive tension.	"I fear outliving everyone I have ever protected. I fear being the only one left."
"I fear failure."	Too abstract: failure at what? In what context? When does this trigger?	"I fear that the people who trust me will discover that my confidence has always been performance."
"I am afraid of the dark."	Purely environmental: doesn't connect to character identity or values.	"I am afraid that what I saw in the dark of the Heartforge Shrine will eventually make me unable to act at all."

The Relationship Between Drive and Fear

The most interesting characters have Drives and Fears that are in tension with each other, where pursuing the Drive risks triggering the Fear, or where the Fear is a dark reflection of what the Drive might cost.

Drive and Fear in tension: three examples

Example 1: Drive: "I will expose the Glass Conspiracy and name the killer publicly." Fear: "I fear that when I know the full truth, I will not be able to share it, because it will implicate someone I cannot afford to lose."

Example 2: Drive: "I will protect Ashveil from the Hollow Host." Fear: "I am afraid that General Keld's ghost and I are the same kind of thing; still fighting for people who no longer need us."

Example 3: Drive: "I will find my sister in Dunmere, wherever she has been taken." Fear: "I am afraid that when I find her, she will have become something I don't recognize, and I'll have to decide what to do about that."

Writing in first person

Write your Drive and Fear in the first person and in the present tense. Not "Aldric wants to fix his mistake" but "I will undo what I did to this world, even if it kills me." The first-person present tense keeps the character's motivation immediate and personal; it reads as intention, not backstory.

Step 7: Set Starting Tracks and Name Your Character

The last step is the easiest. Set your four tracks to their starting values and write your character's name.

TRACK	STARTING VALUE	NOTE
HARM	0	You begin uninjured.
STRESS	0	You begin psychologically fresh.
SUPPLY	3	You begin provisioned. Mid-range: enough to Long Rest once if needed, but not abundant.
MOMENTUM	3	You begin with enough to Defy Fate once immediately if your first roll goes badly.

Naming Your Character

Your character's name is yours to decide. A few suggestions for the Sundered Realms setting:

- Single given names are common (Aldric, Corra, Brennan, Veldrin).
- Titles replace or precede names for some characters (Ser, General, the Archivist).
- Some characters have only epithets; names given by others (Mother Stone, Ghost-Who-Walks, the Pale Rider).
- If you're playing the Ashen Roads setting, see that setting's guide for naming conventions.

Your character does not need a surname. They do not need an elaborate backstory. They need a Drive, a Fear, and a name you'll still like after six sessions. Start there.

Completed Character: WHISPER

Here is the completed character introduced in Chapter 1's examples, filled out using all seven steps. Use this as a reference when completing your own sheet.

CHARACTER NAME		ARCHETYPE	EDGE	
WHISPER		Shadow	Ghost Step	
MIGHT	AGILITY	WITS	SPIRIT	
+0	+2	+2	-1	
Average	Exceptional	Exceptional	Weakness	
SKILLS Stealth (+1 to relevant AGILITY rolls) Investigation (+1 to relevant WITS rolls) Streetwise (+1 to relevant WITS/SPIRIT rolls)			TRACKS HARM 0 / 6 STRESS 0 / 6 SUPPLY 3 / 6 MOMENTUM 3 / 5	
DRIVE "I will reach the Heartforge before the Pale does, not because anyone asked me to, but because I was the last person to see it lit and I can't stand the thought of that being a memory instead of a fact."			FEAR "I am afraid that I am good at this; at moving through darkness, at being unseen, because I have been practicing for the wrong reasons for too long, and I no longer know what the right reasons feel like."	

Character Creation Quick Reference

STEP	ACTION	RESULT ON SHEET
1	Choose Archetype from the six options	Archetype name
2	Assign +2, +1, +0, –1 to MIGHT, AGILITY, WITS, SPIRIT	Four attribute ratings
3	Add +1 from archetype bonus (max +2 per attribute)	Adjusted attribute ratings
4	Choose three skills from the list (or custom)	Three skill names
5	Choose one of two Archetype Edges	Edge name and effect
6	Write Drive and Fear in first person, present tense	Two sentences or short paragraphs
7	Set HARM 0, STRESS 0, SUPPLY 3, MOMENTUM 3. Write character name.	Track starting values + name

CHAPTER 4

Archetypes

WAYPOINT has six archetypes. Each one defines a character's core identity; how they approach problems, what they are exceptionally good at, and what two special abilities they can choose between. This chapter covers every archetype in detail and includes a fully completed pre-built character for each one.

If you completed Chapter 3 and built your own character, use this chapter as a reference for your archetype's abilities. If you want to start playing immediately, find the archetype that appeals to you, choose the pre-built character at the end of that section, and open an adventure module.

Archetype Overview

ARCHETYPE	CORE IDENTITY	ATTRIBUTE BONUS	BEST AT
Blade	The weapon at the heart of any conflict	+1 MIGHT (max +2)	Ending Struggles fast; surviving punishment
Shadow	The unseen hand that moves things	+1 AGILITY (max +2)	Moving undetected; striking with precision
Warden	The one who stands between others and harm	+1 MIGHT or SPIRIT	Protecting companions; recovery and resilience
Drifter	The wanderer who has learned to survive anywhere	+1 AGILITY or WITS	Exploration; making do; reading environments
Envoy	The voice that moves people	+1 SPIRIT (max +2)	Social challenges; faction navigation; persuasion
Scholar	The mind that solves what force cannot	+1 WITS (max +2)	Investigation; preparation; knowing what you're facing

Pre-built characters in this chapter

Each archetype section includes a fully playable pre-built character. These characters have names, complete attribute arrays, chosen skills, one Edge, and written Drive and Fear. They are immediately ready to play.

The pre-built characters are also deliberately designed as interesting starting points, not optimal builds. Their weaknesses are intentional. Their Drives and Fears are meant to create tension in play.

BLADE

The weapon at the heart of any conflict.

The Blade is defined by physical confrontation, not necessarily violence, but the credible threat of it. A Blade can end a negotiation by being the kind of person who makes the other side reconsider. In a Struggle, no archetype closes faster or lasts longer.

The tension that makes Blades interesting: being effective at force is not the same as knowing when to use it. The best Blade characters have a clear sense of what they're willing to do and what they won't, and play is most compelling when those lines are tested.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS	TYPICAL SKILLS	SHINES WHEN...
+1 MIGHT (maximum +2)	Athletics, Intimidation, Survival	Combat and Struggle scenes; any situation where physical presence changes the dynamic; endurance and overland challenges

Blade Edges

Brutal Momentum When you achieve a Strong Hit in a Struggle, gain +2 MOMENTUM total instead of the standard +1. This bonus stacks: you gain the normal +1 for Strong Hits plus one additional MOMENTUM. Over a sustained Struggle, this lets you build a resource pool faster than any other archetype.	Iron Threshold Your HARM penalty threshold is raised by 1. The standard -1 penalty to MIGHT and AGILITY rolls begins at HARM 4 instead of HARM 3. At HARM 5 and 6, normal penalties apply. You simply stay fully effective longer into a fight.
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Pre-Built Blade: MOTHER STONE

A veteran border soldier who survived the Shattering War's aftermath by being too stubborn to break. She joined this expedition because the alternative was watching from a fort as the Pale approached.

CHARACTER NAME MOTHER STONE		ARCHETYPE Blade	EDGE CHOSEN Iron Threshold
MIGHT +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	AGILITY +0 <i>Average</i>	WITS +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	SPIRIT -1 <i>Weakness</i>
HARM 0 / 6	STRESS 0 / 6	SUPPLY 3 / 6	MOMENTUM 3 / 5

SKILLS

- Athletics (+1 to MIGHT or AGILITY rolls involving physical endurance, climbing, sustained exertion)
- Intimidation (+1 to SPIRIT rolls when using direct threat or projecting controlled menace)
- Survival (+1 to WITS rolls for wilderness navigation, hazard identification, foraging)

DRIVE "I will make sure the people I brought into this survive it. Not some of them. All of them. I have buried enough soldiers whose names I knew."	FEAR "I am afraid that I have stopped being able to tell the difference between protecting people and controlling them, and that the people around me have noticed before I have."
--	--

PLAYING THIS CHARACTER

Mother Stone is built for sustained Struggle play. Iron Threshold delays her HARM penalty, and MIGHT +2 makes her the most reliable physical attacker in the pre-built roster. Her physical presence makes coercion difficult, but SPIRIT -1 leaves her vulnerable to fear and emotional manipulation through her loyalty to others. Play her as someone who speaks precisely and rarely, whose silences carry weight, and who is slightly more afraid of her own judgment than she is of anything the adventure throws at her.

SHADOW

The unseen hand that moves things.

The Shadow is defined by absence; the ability to be where they need to be without being seen, to take what needs taking without being caught, to gather what others hide. They are not simply stealthy. A Shadow is someone who understands that information is the most powerful resource in any situation.

The tension that makes Shadows interesting: the skills that make them effective also make them solitary by nature. A Shadow who is never seen is also a Shadow who never connects. The best Shadow characters have something specific they're trying to protect or expose; a reason to be visible when the moment calls for it.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS	TYPICAL SKILLS	SHINES WHEN...
+1 AGILITY (maximum +2)	Stealth, Investigation, Streetwise	Infiltration and extraction; finding things others have hidden; scenes where being seen is failure

Shadow Edges

Ghost Step

Once per scene, when you would take HARM from a source you did not detect in advance, roll AGILITY at Standard difficulty. Strong Hit: avoid the HARM entirely. Weak Hit: take half the HARM (round up). Miss: take it normally. This is a reaction; declare it immediately when surprise damage is announced.

Shadow Cache

At the start of each chapter, you may declare that you prepared a hidden cache before this stage of the adventure. Once per chapter, spend 1 SUPPLY to produce a specific piece of useful equipment that the current situation makes plausible. Lockpicks when you need to pick a lock; a grappling hook when you need to climb. The module must make the item plausible.

Pre-Built Shadow: VELDRIN

A former guild informant who became inconvenient to the guild. Veldrin took the expedition commission because it was a long way from Porthmere and because the pay was enough to matter. She is not a hero. She is trying to become someone the guild can't find.

CHARACTER NAME VELDRIN		ARCHETYPE Shadow	EDGE CHOSEN Ghost Step
MIGHT +0 <i>Average</i>	AGILITY +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	WITS +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	SPIRIT -1 <i>Weakness</i>
HARM 0 / 6	STRESS 0 / 6	SUPPLY 3 / 6	MOMENTUM 3 / 5

SKILLS

- Stealth (+1 to AGILITY rolls moving unseen or unheard, hiding, shadowing)
- Investigation (+1 to WITS rolls examining evidence, searching spaces, identifying patterns)
- Deception (+1 to SPIRIT rolls lying, maintaining cover, misdirection)

DRIVE

"I will find the person who sold my name to the guild, not to kill them, but because I need to understand what I was worth to someone who knew me."

FEAR

"I am afraid that the reason I am good at disappearing is not skill; it is that I have spent so long not being fully present in my own life that absence is simply where I live now."

PLAYING THIS CHARACTER

Veldrin excels in investigation and infiltration and is fragile in direct conflict; MIGHT +0 and no combat skills means Struggles are her worst situation. Ghost Step partially compensates by letting her avoid surprise damage, but she should be played as someone who avoids fights by not being where they happen. Her Deception skill combined with SPIRIT -1 creates an interesting tension: she is skilled at lying but emotionally brittle. Play her as precise and observational, someone who watches a room before entering it, who has a prepared exit from every conversation.

WARDEN

The one who stands between others and harm.

The Warden is defined by protection; physical, emotional, or both, depending on which attribute bonus they choose. A MIGHT Warden interposes themselves bodily between danger and the people they guard. A SPIRIT Warden holds a group together through crisis, providing the emotional scaffolding that allows others to keep functioning.

The tension that makes Wardens interesting: protection is a form of control. The Warden decides what constitutes a threat, decides when to step in, decides who needs guarding. The best Warden characters have a clear answer to "who do I protect and why", and a Fear that emerges from what happens when that answer becomes complicated.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS	TYPICAL SKILLS	SHINES WHEN...
+1 MIGHT or SPIRIT (your choice)	Medicine, Athletics, Empathy or Command	Any situation involving injury or distress; scenes where someone needs to hold the group together; recovery management

Warden Edges

Absorb

Once per scene, when an NPC companion or ally would take HARM, you may take that HARM instead, reduced by 1 (minimum 1). Declare before damage is resolved. The companion takes no HARM. You take it at one less than the stated amount. This is a choice, not a reaction; you must have established you are physically present.

Field Medicine

Short Rests you initiate (when rest is permitted by the module) restore HARM 1 as well as the standard STRESS 2. You are the only archetype for whom Short Rests recover HARM. This changes your resource management significantly: you can recover from minor physical damage without committing to a full Long Rest.

Pre-Built Warden: BRENNAN

A mountain guide who has climbed the Ashen Slopes seven times and survived things he cannot fully explain. He knows the route. He knows how bodies fail at altitude and cold. He is here because he was asked and because he has not yet found a reason good enough to stop saying yes.

CHARACTER NAME BRENNAN		ARCHETYPE Warden	EDGE CHOSEN Field Medicine
MIGHT +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	AGILITY +0 <i>Average</i>	WITS +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	SPIRIT -1 <i>Weakness</i>
HARM 0 / 6	STRESS 0 / 6	SUPPLY 3 / 6	MOMENTUM 3 / 5

SKILLS

- Medicine (+1 to WITS rolls treating injuries, stabilizing critical conditions, identifying illness)
- Survival (+1 to WITS rolls for wilderness navigation, foraging, hazard identification)
- Navigation (+1 to WITS rolls for pathfinding, terrain reading, route planning in wilderness)

DRIVE

"I will get everyone through this. Not most of them. Everyone. I have never lost a client on the Slopes and I am not starting now."

FEAR

"I am afraid that I keep saying yes to expeditions like this one because I am more comfortable watching other people risk their lives than I am building something of my own, and that the guide is what I became instead of who I am."

PLAYING THIS CHARACTER

Brennan is built around WITS rather than MIGHT, making him unusual for a Warden; more experienced outdoorsman than physical protector. Field Medicine combined with Medicine skill and WITS +2 makes him the most effective healer in the pre-built roster. His SPIRIT -1 means he is the person who keeps everyone's body working while struggling with his own emotional clarity. Play him as someone whose competence is total and whose interiority is something he rarely accesses; laconic about himself, precise about everything else.

DRIFTER

The wanderer who has learned to survive anywhere.

The Drifter is defined by adaptability; the ability to read a new environment quickly, to find resources others miss, to navigate situations without a plan by constructing one from whatever is available. They are not heroes in the classical sense. They are people who have been in enough difficult places to have become quietly excellent at staying alive.

The tension that makes Drifters interesting: the skills that make them effective anywhere make it hard for them to be fully present anywhere. A Drifter's habit of always knowing where the exits are, always calculating the next move, is hard to turn off. The best Drifter characters have something specific they're drifting toward, not just away from.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS	TYPICAL SKILLS	SHINES WHEN...
+1 AGILITY or WITS (your choice)	Survival, Navigation, Streetwise or Craft	Exploration zones; resource-lean situations; any scene that rewards environmental awareness and improvisation

Drifter Edges

Scrounger

When you take a Long Rest and your SUPPLY would drop to 0, roll AGILITY or WITS at Standard difficulty. Strong Hit: complete the rest and set SUPPLY to 1 after payment. Weak Hit: do the same, then advance the active primary Clock by 1 additional tick. Miss: pay normally and SUPPLY becomes 0. If you cannot pay the full cost, the rest and this Edge are unavailable.

Wanderer's Eye

When entering an Exploration Zone for the first time, roll WITS at Standard difficulty before the Zone Turn begins. Strong Hit: learn one specific and useful piece of information; an exit location, a resource, a hazard placement. Weak Hit: a vague impression only (you sense something useful is here). Miss: no benefit. This roll happens once per Zone, on first entry only.

Pre-Built Drifter: THE CARTOGRAPHER

Three expeditions have failed to map the Ashen Slopes properly. The Cartographer has studied their notes, their failures, and their survivors. She came here to succeed where they didn't. She has opinions about why they failed. She is not wrong about this.

CHARACTER NAME THE CARTOGRAPHER		ARCHETYPE Drifter	EDGE CHOSEN Wanderer's Eye
MIGHT -1 <i>Weakness</i>	AGILITY +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	WITS +2 <i>Exceptional</i>	SPIRIT +0 <i>Average</i>
HARM 0 / 6	STRESS 0 / 6	SUPPLY 3 / 6	MOMENTUM 3 / 5

SKILLS

- Navigation (+1 to WITS rolls for pathfinding, terrain reading, cartography)
- Survival (+1 to WITS rolls for foraging, hazard identification, wilderness tracking)
- Investigation (+1 to WITS rolls examining evidence, identifying patterns, research)

DRIVE

"I will produce a complete and accurate map of the Ashen Slopes; one that future expeditions can use. Not for glory. Because three groups of people died without one and that should not keep happening."

FEAR

"I am afraid that my certainty about the previous expeditions' failures is arrogance dressed as analysis, and that I am going to make the same mistake they did while being absolutely sure I won't."

PLAYING THIS CHARACTER

The Cartographer is WITS-dominant and physically fragile; MIGHT -1 means she loses Struggles badly. Wanderer's Eye combined with Navigation, Survival, and Investigation means she is the most exploration-effective character in the roster: she learns each new zone faster and reads it more thoroughly than anyone else. Play her as someone who has strong opinions, is usually right about objective facts, and has a blind spot around her own assumptions. She is excellent at the terrain and challenging in the interpersonal.

ENVOY

The voice that moves people.

The Envoy is defined by social effectiveness; the ability to understand what people want, to be believable, to negotiate from a position of genuine insight into the person across the table. An Envoy does not simply talk. They listen, they read, they position, and then they speak at exactly the right moment.

The tension that makes Envoys interesting: the same skills that make them effective at moving people make it hard to know when someone is moving them. The best Envoy characters are not manipulators who can't be manipulated; they are people who are good at understanding others while remaining genuinely uncertain about their own motivations.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS	TYPICAL SKILLS	SHINES WHEN...
+1 SPIRIT (maximum +2)	Persuasion, Deception, Empathy or Performance	Faction encounters; NPC negotiations; any scene where the outcome depends on what someone believes

Envoy Edges

Silver Tongue

Once per chapter, when you fail a SPIRIT roll involving social interaction (persuasion, negotiation, deception), you may immediately reroll it. You must take the second result. This reroll is free; it costs no MOMENTUM. The reroll applies only to failed social rolls, not to combat or other SPIRIT uses.

Read the Room

Once per scene (and once per chapter maximum), at the start of a social encounter before any rolls are made, you may ask one question about an NPC's true motivation. The module or Oracle must answer honestly. This gives you actionable intelligence before the encounter begins. You cannot use this retroactively after an encounter has started.

Pre-Built Envoy: ALDRIC VARREN

A former Compact diplomatic observer who was present at the Porthmere negotiations that failed three years ago. He has been waiting since then to find out whether the failure was his fault. He took this commission because the answer might be somewhere in the Ashen Slopes, and because motion is easier than stillness when you're carrying something this heavy.

CHARACTER NAME ALDRIC VARREN		ARCHETYPE Envoy	EDGE CHOSEN Read the Room
MIGHT -1 Weakness	AGILITY +0 Average	WITS +2 Exceptional	SPIRIT +2 Exceptional
HARM 0 / 6	STRESS 0 / 6	SUPPLY 3 / 6	MOMENTUM 3 / 5

SKILLS

- Persuasion (+1 to SPIRIT rolls in negotiation, diplomacy, appeals to reason or shared interest)
- Empathy (+1 to WITS or SPIRIT rolls reading emotional states, detecting lies, understanding motivation)
- Lore (+1 to WITS rolls on Compact history, political structures, cultural customs)

DRIVE

"I will find out what actually happened at the Porthmere negotiations, not the official account, not what I remember, but what actually happened, and then I will do something useful with that knowledge."

FEAR

"I am afraid that I already know what happened at Porthmere and have been avoiding confirming it for three years because the answer requires me to act in a way I do not know if I am capable of."

PLAYING THIS CHARACTER

Aldric is the most effective character in the roster at social encounters and the least effective in physical ones. MIGHT -1 makes physical Struggles risky, while social Struggles can use his SPIRIT. Read the Room gives him advance intelligence before one significant NPC encounter per chapter; used well, this transforms social scenes from uncertainty into positioning. His WITS +2 with Empathy and Lore means he is also a competent investigator. Play him as someone whose social skill is genuine rather than manipulative; he understands people because he pays attention to them, not because he has a system.

SCHOLAR

The mind that solves what force cannot.

The Scholar is defined by knowledge; specifically, by the ability to turn knowledge into advantage. A Scholar who has studied something is not just better informed than other characters. They are functionally better at dealing with it, because they have prepared, because they know what they're looking for, and because they understand the difference between what's visible and what's true.

The tension that makes Scholars interesting: knowledge is not the same as understanding, and understanding is not the same as wisdom. The best Scholar characters are genuinely intelligent in ways that create problems; they see patterns others miss but sometimes mistake pattern for causation, and their confidence in their own analysis can be a vulnerability.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS	TYPICAL SKILLS	SHINES WHEN...
+1 WITS (maximum +2)	Investigation, Lore, Arcana or Medicine	Any scene that rewards preparation, pattern recognition, or prior knowledge; identifying enemy weaknesses; deciphering hidden information

Scholar Edges

Keen Insight Once per chapter, before making a WITS roll, declare Keen Insight. If the roll succeeds (any hit result), you learn one additional piece of information beyond the module's standard result. This additional information is always true, always relevant, and always actionable, not just more detail, but something you can use. Keen Insight cannot be used on a Miss.	Study the Weakness When you spend at least one full Zone Turn observing a creature, NPC, or obstacle before engaging with it in a Struggle, reduce its effective Danger rating by 1 for the duration of that Struggle. You must observe without engaging; you cannot initiate a Struggle and apply this retroactively. The reduction reflects understanding the target's patterns, vulnerabilities, and tells.
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Pre-Built Scholar: PROFESSOR ESKA LUND

An archivist from the Valdris Academy who was pulled out of a twenty-year project on dragon thermodynamics when Pyrethion died and the Heartforge went cold. She has opinions about what caused it. She has opinions about most things. She is not always wrong.

CHARACTER NAME PROFESSOR ESKA LUND			ARCHETYPE Scholar	EDGE CHOSEN Keen Insight
MIGHT -1 Weakness	AGILITY +0 Average	WITS +2 Exceptional	SPIRIT +2 Exceptional	
HARM 0 / 6	STRESS 0 / 6	SUPPLY 3 / 6	MOMENTUM 3 / 5	

SKILLS

- Arcana (+1 to WITS rolls identifying magical effects, supernatural phenomena, ritual theory)
- Investigation (+1 to WITS rolls examining evidence, research, identifying patterns)
- Lore (+1 to WITS rolls on dragon history, Compact political history, academic knowledge)

DRIVE <i>"I will determine exactly what happened to Pyrethion, not the mythology, not the political account, the actual thermal and magical causation, and I will record it completely and correctly before the evidence is gone."</i>	FEAR <i>"I am afraid that I have spent my career studying dragons from a distance because caring about them from up close felt unprofessional, and that I am going to reach the Heartforge and feel nothing, which would mean I have optimised myself out of the capacity for wonder."</i>
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PLAYING THIS CHARACTER

Professor Lund is the highest WITS character in the pre-built roster (WITS +2 with three WITS skills), making her unmatched at investigation, lore, and arcane identification. Keen Insight combined with her skills means once per chapter, a successful WITS roll can produce a second useful and actionable piece of information. Her physical frailty (MIGHT -1) is significant; she needs protection in Struggles. SPIRIT +2 makes her more socially competent than the Scholar stereotype. Play her as someone with genuinely unusual intellectual confidence who occasionally has to consciously translate her conclusions into language other people can act on.

Archetype Quick Reference

Use this table as a session reference when checking archetype-specific rules.

ARCHETYPE	ATTRIBUTE BONUS	EDGE OPTION 1	EDGE OPTION 2
Blade	+1 MIGHT	Brutal Momentum: +2 MOMENTUM total on Struggle Strong Hits	Iron Threshold: HARM penalty starts at HARM 4 instead of 3
Shadow	+1 AGILITY	Ghost Step: Dodge surprise HARM with AGILITY roll once/scene	Shadow Cache: Produce a useful item once/chapter (costs 1 SUPPLY)
Warden	+1 MIGHT or SPIRIT	Absorb: Take companion HARM –1 instead of companion once/scene	Field Medicine: Short Rests also recover HARM 1
Drifter	+1 AGILITY or WITS	Scrounger: Prevent SUPPLY → 0 on Long Rest with AGILITY/WITS roll	Wanderer's Eye: Scout new Exploration Zone with WITS roll on entry
Envoy	+1 SPIRIT	Silver Tongue: Free reroll on a failed social SPIRIT roll once/chapter	Read the Room: Ask one NPC motivation question before social encounter
Scholar	+1 WITS	Keen Insight: Gain bonus information on any WITS hit once/chapter	Study the Weakness: –1 Danger rating after one Zone Turn observation

Designer Note

The pre-built characters in this chapter are intentionally flawed. Every one of them has a genuine attribute weakness and a Fear that cuts against their Drive. That tension is what makes them interesting to play. A pre-built character with no weaknesses and a comfortable Drive is a stat block, not a character.

CHAPTER 5

Struggles

A Struggle is any extended conflict where you cannot resolve the situation with a single roll. Combat is the most common Struggle, but a Struggle can also be a tense negotiation, a chase through a burning building, a survival ordeal against a blizzard, or a race to finish a ritual before something breaks through the door.

What defines a Struggle is its structure: it uses a Progress track, applies a Danger rating, and ends when you either fill the Progress track or are defeated. Single rolls remain the default for most situations. Use the Struggle system only when the conflict warrants it.

When to use a Struggle vs. a single roll

Single roll: The outcome is immediate and complete. You either pick the lock or you don't. You either spot the ambush or you don't.

Struggle: The conflict has duration and stakes on both sides. The enemy can hurt you while you hurt them. The situation can worsen over multiple rounds. The module will always specify which applies.

5.1 Struggle Structure

Every Struggle follows the same four-part structure. Memorise it and it will never feel confusing, regardless of what you're fighting or overcoming.

1	ESTABLISH THE STRUGGLE The module establishes the Danger rating of what you're facing, what attribute you'll roll, and the size of the Progress track (4, 6, or 8 boxes). Set up the Progress track on your sheet. Both sides are now engaged.
2	TAKE YOUR TURN Roll the specified attribute at the difficulty the module sets. Apply the result using the Struggle Outcome rules in Section 5.3. Mark Progress on a Strong or Weak Hit; take HARM based on the Danger rating; advance relevant clocks on a Miss.
3	CHECK FOR END CONDITIONS After each roll, check: is the Progress track full? If yes, declare the Finish Move (Section 5.5). Is your HARM at 6? If yes, you are Incapacitated; the Struggle ends in your defeat. Otherwise, take your next turn.
4	RESOLVE THE FINISH OR DEFEAT Fill the track: make the Finish Move roll. The result determines how cleanly you win. Reach HARM 6: take the defeat result the module specifies. Both outcomes advance the story; Struggles don't dead-end.

5.2 Danger Ratings

The Danger rating measures how threatening an adversary or obstacle is. It determines how much HARM you take on a Weak Hit; the cost of succeeding with a complication. Every Struggle has exactly one Danger rating, set by the module.

DANGER 1 Minor	HARM on Weak Hit: Take HARM 1 Examples: <i>Untrained guards, frightened animals, minor obstacles, a locked door with no one on the other side</i>
DANGER 2 Moderate	HARM on Weak Hit: Take HARM 2 Examples: <i>Trained soldiers, a large dangerous creature, a collapsing structure actively threatening you, a skilled duellist</i>
DANGER 3 Serious	HARM on Weak Hit: Take HARM 3 Examples: <i>Elite warriors, apex predators, an organized ambush by multiple adversaries, major environmental threats</i>
DANGER 4 Deadly	HARM on Weak Hit: Take HARM 4 Examples: <i>The most dangerous individual opponents in the setting, catastrophic environmental conditions, legendary creatures</i>

Danger on Misses

On a Miss, the module specifies what happens; usually a clock advance, a tactical complication, or a positioning penalty. Danger ratings only govern HARM on Weak Hits. Miss results are always described in the module's Miss text for that encounter.

Danger and the Defender

Danger ratings represent the threat level of what you're facing; they are not attached to you. If you are helping protect someone else in a Struggle (Warden's Absorb Edge, for example), the Danger rating of the encounter determines the HARM that would be transferred.

Danger ratings can shift during a Struggle if the fiction changes. A Danger 3 creature that has been significantly wounded might drop to Danger 2. The module will specify if this happens; don't reduce Danger on your own unless the module says so.

5.3 Struggle Outcomes

On each turn of a Struggle, you roll the designated attribute and apply one of three results. The Progress track and your HARM track are the two numbers that change most during a Struggle.

STRONG HIT Total 10+	PROGRESS: Mark 2 boxes. Gain +1 MOMENTUM (standard Strong Hit bonus). HARM: None: your action succeeded without cost.
WEAK HIT Total 7–9	PROGRESS: Mark 1 box. HARM: Take HARM equal to the Danger rating.
MISS Total 6 or less	PROGRESS: No Progress marked. HARM: Apply the module's Miss result (usually a clock advance, a status penalty, or a positional setback).

Progress Track Sizes

The size of the Progress track determines how long a Struggle lasts. The module sets this based on how dangerous and sustained the conflict should be.

TRACK SIZE	MINIMUM TURNS TO WIN	FEEL	USE FOR
4 boxes	2 (two Strong Hits)	Fast and decisive	Minor threats; encounters that should resolve quickly
6 boxes	3 (three Strong Hits)	Standard Struggle	Most combat encounters; significant obstacles
8 boxes	4 (four Strong Hits)	Extended ordeal	Boss encounters; catastrophic situations; endurance conflicts

Danger and Progress Calibration

Danger and Progress must be chosen together. For a fresh character making +0 rolls on a 6-box track with no MOMENTUM spends or Edges, and before applying any HARM penalty to the roll, the exact chance of reaching HARM 6 before the Finish Move is about 13% at Danger 1, 68% at Danger 2, and 93% at Danger 3 or 4. For MIGHT or AGILITY Struggles, the HARM penalty raises those risks further.

A character rolling at +2 before HARM penalties fares much better, but the same 6-box track still defeats them before the Finish Move about 2% of the time at Danger 1, 31% at Danger 2, and 69% at Danger 3 or 4. Use the +0 line as the accessibility check and the +2 line as the competent-character check.

- Danger 1: use 4, 6, or 8 Progress for minor threats and teaching encounters.
- Danger 2: use 4 Progress for a broadly accessible standard Struggle. A 6-box track is severe for a +0 character and needs visible mitigation, retreat, or a forgiving defeat route.
- Danger 3: prefer 4 Progress. A 6-box track needs clear mitigation, escape, or authored defeat routes; avoid 8-box tracks by default.
- Danger 4: reserve for signposted climaxes with a short track, a way to reduce incoming HARM, and an explicit fail-forward defeat route.

Visualising the Progress Track

Example: A 6-box Struggle after two turns; one Strong Hit (2 Progress) and one Weak Hit (1 Progress):

Progress (3/6)	●	●	●	○	○	○
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Example: An 8-box Struggle at 6 Progress; two more marks needed to trigger the Finish Move:

Progress (6/8)	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
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Progress marks carry over

If a roll result would mark more Progress than remains (e.g., a Strong Hit +2 when only 1 box remains), the extra Progress is lost, but the track is now full. Immediately trigger the Finish Move.

5.4 Momentum in Struggles

MOMENTUM is more valuable in Struggles than anywhere else. Strong Hits generate it. Specific spends can change the shape of a Struggle significantly.

SPEND	COST	EFFECT IN A STRUGGLE
Defy Fate	3 MOMENTUM	Convert a Miss into a Weak Hit. Apply every Weak Hit cost, including HARM. Compare both outcomes before spending; a Weak Hit can be more dangerous than the original Miss.
Press the Attack	1 MOMENTUM	Add +1 Progress on your next Hit (Strong or Weak). Declare before rolling. A Miss does not consume the effect; it expires when the Struggle ends.
Steady the Line	1 MOMENTUM	Reduce incoming HARM or STRESS by 1 when damage is applied. This can reduce damage from any result, including a Weak Hit.
Burning Advantage	2 MOMENTUM	Gain Advantage on your next single roll. Declared before rolling.

Press the Attack in action

Mother Stone is fighting a Pale-touched soldier (Danger 2, 6-box track, Progress at 3/6). She spends 1 MOMENTUM to Press the Attack before rolling.

She rolls MIGHT +2. Dice show 4+5 = 9. Weak Hit. Normally: mark 1 Progress, take HARM 2. With Press the Attack: mark 2 Progress, take HARM 2. Progress is now 5/6; one more hit ends this.

The MOMENTUM spend accelerated the Struggle by a full turn. At HARM already at 3, that's a meaningful trade.

5.5 The Finish Move

When the Progress track is full, you do not automatically win. You make a Finish Move roll; a final, decisive action that determines how cleanly the Struggle ends. This is the most important roll in any Struggle.

THE FINISH MOVE

When Progress is full: describe the decisive action and roll the same attribute used throughout the Struggle at Standard difficulty. Add a Skill only if it applied to the Struggle and clearly applies to this final action.

Strong Hit (10+): You end the Struggle cleanly and on your terms. Take the module's Strong Finish result.

Weak Hit (7–9): You end the Struggle but at a cost; take HARM 1 or face a complication the module specifies.

Miss (6–): Something goes wrong at the critical moment. Take HARM 2. Progress remains full. Unless the module ends or redirects the Struggle, make another Finish Move on your next turn.

What the Finish Move Represents

Filling the Progress track means you've gained the upper hand. The Finish Move is the moment you press that advantage into a conclusion. A Strong Hit Finish is a clean victory. A Weak Hit Finish is a victory with consequences. A Miss Finish means you had the advantage and fumbled it. Progress remains full while the module applies a setback. If the Struggle continues, your next consequential roll is another Finish Move unless the module explicitly offers a setup action or alternate route.

Finish Move Misses occur about 42% of the time at Standard difficulty with no modifier but they are not dead ends. The module will always give you a path forward from a Miss Finish; it just won't be the clean one.

Can I use Defy Fate on a Finish Move Miss?

Yes. If you have 3 MOMENTUM, you can Defy Fate on a Finish Move Miss just like any other Miss. This converts it to a Weak Hit Finish; you end the Struggle with a cost, but you end it.

5.6 Defeat

You are defeated in a Struggle when your HARM reaches 6. At that point you are Incapacitated; you cannot act. The Struggle ends and the module takes over. The authored defeat route ends the scene, names where you wake or withdraw, changes the situation, and sets HARM to 5 before play resumes unless immediate aid reduces it further.

Defeat is not the end of the adventure

WAYPOINT modules are designed with defeat as a possible outcome at every Struggle. Defeat routes are authored; they lead somewhere. A defeated character wakes captured, is dragged to safety by an NPC, or regains consciousness with the situation changed. Every route states the destination, the changed situation, and how play resumes. Defeat creates story. It does not close the adventure.

Defeat Consequences

The module specifies what happens on defeat, but some consequences are always true:

- After the authored defeat route ends the scene, set HARM to 5 before play resumes unless the route provides immediate aid that reduces it further. HARM never remains at 6 when player agency resumes.
- Any clocks that were active when you were defeated continue at their current level.
- Tags you've earned are not lost on defeat. Condition tags may be added by the defeat result.
- MOMENTUM does not reset on defeat. You keep what you had.

Defeat and the Story

Defeat should feel like a story development, not a punishment. The most memorable moments in any adventure often come from the moments where things went badly, where you had to reckon with the consequences and find a path forward from a worse position. Design your relationship with defeat around that idea rather than around avoiding it.

Designer Note

The progression of consequences; Minor HARM (1–2), Significant penalty (3–4), Severe (5), Incapacitation (6); means defeat is usually visible before it happens. At HARM 4 with a Danger 3 opponent, you know you're one bad roll from the end. That tension is intentional. The decision to push on or accept the cost of a more cautious approach is a core WAYPOINT choice.

5.7 Extended Conflicts: Beyond Combat

The Struggle system is designed to handle any extended conflict, not just combat. Any situation with duration, escalating stakes, and consequences on both sides can be framed as a Struggle.

CONFLICT TYPE	ATTRIBUTE USED	WHAT PROGRESS REPRESENTS	WHAT DANGER REPRESENTS
Combat (melee)	MIGHT	Wounds landed, ground taken, opponent's effectiveness broken	Hits that land against you during the fight
Combat (ranged)	AGILITY	Shots that connect, suppression achieved, target's options narrowed	Return fire, flanking, loss of cover
Chase (on foot)	AGILITY	Distance closed or opened; position gained	Obstacles hit, ground lost, exhaustion building
Social confrontation	SPIRIT	Ground given by the other party; position established	Damage to your standing, credibility, or composure
Survival ordeal	MIGHT	Hours or distance covered; vital tasks completed	Physical toll: exposure, exhaustion, injury
Research under time	WITS	Critical information located; sources verified	Wrong leads, lost time, key information destroyed
Ritual completion	WITS	Ritual stages completed; focus maintained	Disruptions, interference, magical backlash

Framing a Non-Combat Struggle

The module handles this for you in authored adventures; it will specify what kind of Struggle it is and what all the numbers mean. In freeplay with an oracle, you frame the Struggle yourself. The three questions to answer:

1. What does filling the Progress track represent? What does winning this conflict mean, in concrete fictional terms?
2. What does the Danger rating represent? What is the cost of a Weak Hit; what wears you down as this conflict continues?
3. What attribute drives this? Which of MIGHT, AGILITY, WITS, and SPIRIT is the primary engine of this kind of conflict?

Framing a social confrontation as a Struggle

The Compact ambassador needs to be convinced to grant your group access to the sealed archive. She is hostile. She has reasons. A single persuasion roll feels insufficient; this needs to be a conversation with stakes on both sides.

Progress track: 6 boxes. Filling it represents the ambassador moving from hostile refusal to reluctant agreement.

Danger rating: 2 (Moderate). A Weak Hit means she raises a damaging counter-argument; take STRESS 2 (not HARM; framed as psychological pressure rather than physical harm).

Attribute: SPIRIT. The ambassador is moved by conviction, not logic. An Envoy with SPIRIT +2 and Persuasion skill rolls at +3; this should be achievable but not guaranteed.

Note: The module or freeplay Oracle may substitute STRESS for HARM in social Struggles. Check the module's framing; it will specify whether the Danger rating inflicts HARM, STRESS, or SUPPLY loss.

HARM, STRESS, and SUPPLY as Danger Costs

In authored modules, the Danger cost is always specified. In freeplay, choose based on what the conflict actually threatens:

- Physical conflicts (combat, escapes, ordeals): Danger inflicts HARM
- Social or psychological conflicts (confrontations, interrogations, fear): Danger inflicts STRESS
- Resource conflicts (negotiations over payment, extended supply-consuming journeys): Danger inflicts SUPPLY

Mixed conflicts, where both physical and psychological pressure builds; can split the cost. "Take HARM 1 and STRESS 1 on a Weak Hit." The module will specify this explicitly when it applies.

5.8 Struggle Quick Reference

Keep this section open during your first Struggle. It covers everything you need without reading the full chapter.

RULE	SUMMARY
Start a Struggle	Note Danger rating, Progress track size (4/6/8), and attribute to roll
Strong Hit (10+)	Mark 2 Progress. Gain +1 MOMENTUM. No HARM.
Weak Hit (7–9)	Mark 1 Progress. Take HARM = Danger rating.
Miss (6–)	No Progress. Apply module's Miss result. Take no HARM from the roll itself.
Press the Attack	Spend 1 MOMENTUM before rolling: +1 Progress on the next Hit; persists through Misses, expires when the Struggle ends
Steady the Line	Spend 1 MOMENTUM when HARM or STRESS is applied: reduce it by 1
Track full → Finish Move	Roll same attribute at Standard difficulty. See results below.
Finish: Strong Hit	Clean victory. Take module's Strong Finish result.
Finish: Weak Hit	Victory with a cost: HARM 1 or a specific complication.
Finish: Miss	Take HARM 2. Progress stays full; roll another Finish Move next turn unless the module redirects the scene.
HARM 6	Incapacitated. Struggle ends in defeat. Module takes over.
Danger 1	HARM 1 per Weak Hit: Minor threat
Danger 2	HARM 2 per Weak Hit: Moderate threat
Danger 3	HARM 3 per Weak Hit: Serious threat
Danger 4	HARM 4 per Weak Hit: Deadly threat

5.9 Worked Example: Full Struggle

The following is a complete Struggle from start to finish, using Mother Stone (Blade, Iron Threshold Edge, MIGHT +2, Athletics skill) against a Pale Warden; a Danger 3, 6-box Struggle.

Setup

The module reads: "A Pale Warden blocks the only exit; a tall, frost-limned figure that moves like cold water. Danger 3, 6-box Progress track, roll MIGHT."

Mother Stone: MIGHT +2, Athletics skill (+1 when climbing, endurance, sustained physical effort; the module notes this applies to sustained combat). No difficulty modifier listed; Standard. Starting HARM 2 (from earlier in the session). MOMENTUM 3.

Turn 1

Roll: $2d6 + \text{MIGHT } +2 + \text{Athletics } +1 = +3$. Dice: $3+4 = 7$. Total: 10. Strong Hit.

Result: Mark 2 Progress. Gain +1 MOMENTUM. No HARM.

HARM: 2/6. MOMENTUM: 4.

Turn 2

Roll: Dice: $2+2 = 4$. Total with +3 modifier: 7. Weak Hit.

Result: Mark 1 Progress. Take HARM 3 (Danger 3). HARM rises from 2 to 5. Iron Threshold delayed the first penalty until HARM 4, but HARM 5 still imposes -1 to every roll.

HARM: 5/6. MOMENTUM: 4. The -1 all-rolls penalty is active, and one more damaging result will Incapacitate her.

Turn 3: Defy Fate safety check

Roll: Dice: $1+3 = 4$. Total with +3 modifier (-1 for HARM 5 penalty) = +2: 6. Miss.

Decision: The Miss result is "The Warden strikes: take HARM 2 and advance the Pale Clock." HARM is capped at 6, so this would Incapacitate her. She has MOMENTUM 4, but first compares the Weak Hit: Danger 3 would also take her to HARM 6.

Decision: Defy Fate would not save her, and Steady the Line would still leave her at HARM 6. She declines both spends and keeps her MOMENTUM.

Outcome: Apply the Miss once. HARM rises from 5 to its cap of 6, the Pale Clock advances by 1, and Mother Stone is Incapacitated. Track values never exceed their printed maximum.

Defeat and the path forward

Mother Stone is Incapacitated at HARM 6. The Struggle ends in defeat. The module's defeat text: "The Warden stands over you. You are not dead; it has other purposes for you. You are dragged into the frost chamber." Condition tag applied: [Prisoner of the Warden]. Progress at 3/6 is lost; the fight is over.

This is not a dead end. It is a new situation. The frost chamber is a location. The Prisoner tag may have mechanical effects later. The adventure continues from here.

Struggles are designed to be close. The worked example shows both the system working as intended and what happens when it doesn't go your way; both outcomes produce story.

CHAPTER 6

Exploration & Clocks

Two systems define how WAYPOINT adventures unfold between Struggles: Exploration Zones structure the places you move through, and Clocks track the pressures that accumulate while you do. Understanding both turns the space between encounters into something that matters mechanically, not just description, but choices with consequences.

6.1 Clocks

A Clock is a countdown. It represents any threat, process, or pressure that builds incrementally through your actions and inactions. When a Clock fills, something happens, and the adventure changes.

Clocks are the primary mechanism for time pressure in WAYPOINT. They make the cost of resting, investigating slowly, or taking indirect paths concrete rather than abstract. A filled Clock is not a penalty; it is a story event.

Clock Sizes

Clocks come in three sizes. The module sets the size based on how urgently the threat escalates.

Fast Clock <i>4 segments: fills in 2–4 events</i>					■	■	□	□
Standard Clock <i>6 segments: fills in 3–6 events</i>				■	■	■	□	□
Slow Clock <i>8 segments: fills in 4–8 events</i>	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	□

What Fills a Clock

Clocks advance when their listed triggers occur. At the end of a Zone Turn, check each active Clock once. One or more ordinary triggers produce one tick total for that Clock; only text that explicitly says additional can stack another tick. Common triggers include:

- A Miss on a roll during that Clock's active zone or scene
- Taking a Long Rest (one default tick to the active zone's primary Clock, not an extra tick if another ordinary trigger already advanced it this turn)
- Specific module choices: entering certain areas, using certain options, failing to act
- Time passing; some Clocks list every Zone Turn as a trigger regardless of your action

You set the pace

Clocks advance only through listed triggers, checked once per turn. Cautious play can slow Clock advancement significantly. This is intentional; the tension between moving carefully (fewer Misses, fewer zone turns) and moving quickly (reaching objectives before the Clock fills) is a core decision in every WAYPOINT adventure.

What Happens When a Clock Fills

Every Clock has a Resolution Event; a specific consequence authored into the module that occurs when the Clock reaches its maximum. Resolution Events are permanent story changes. They cannot be undone.

- A filling Pale Clock might mean the Pale breach reaches the settlement, closing off the route you planned to use.
- A filling Alert Clock might mean the compound goes into lockdown, changing every encounter in the remaining zones.
- A filling Collapse Clock might mean the structure becomes unstable, adding an environmental hazard to all further navigation.

Clocks and Endings

Some Clocks are directly tied to which endings are available. A filled Clock may close off a specific resolution, trigger a new one, or change the conditions under which a good ending can be reached. Module writers are required to ensure that no Clock fill makes the adventure unwinnable; only differently winnable.

Multiple Clocks

Adventures regularly have two or more active Clocks simultaneously. The module will label each Clock and specify which triggers advance which. Track each Clock separately on your character sheet. The interplay between Clocks; advancing one while trying to prevent another; creates the primary tension in most mid-adventure sequences.

Two Clocks in tension

The module has two active Clocks: PALE ADVANCE (4-segment Fast Clock) and ALERT (6-segment Standard Clock).

PALE ADVANCE: Advances on every Miss and every Long Rest. At 4/4, the Pale reaches the inner vault and closes the route to the secondary ending.

ALERT: Advances when you're spotted, on certain loud actions, and on two specific choice points. At 6/6, the compound locks down and all NPCs become hostile.

Moving fast to prevent PALE ADVANCE risks triggering ALERT. Moving carefully to avoid ALERT gives PALE ADVANCE more opportunities to fill. Neither Clock can be fully ignored; you manage the trade-off.

Clock Rules Summary

RULE	DETAIL
Sizes	4 segments (Fast), 6 segments (Standard), 8 segments (Slow)
What fills them	Module-specified triggers: Misses, Long Rests, choices, time
Can they unfill?	Not normally. Some modules allow specific actions to reduce a Clock; this will be explicitly stated.
When full	Resolution Event occurs immediately. Permanent story change.
Multiple Clocks	Track each separately. Triggers are Clock-specific.
Long Rest cost	Always advances the active zone's primary Clock by 1 (unless the module states otherwise).

6.2 Exploration Zones

An Exploration Zone is a discrete area within an adventure location; a room, a courtyard, a stretch of corridor, a hillside, a chamber. Zones are the unit of movement through a WAYPOINT adventure. You move from Zone to Zone, taking a Zone Turn in each one.

Zones are different from scripted encounter scenes. A scripted scene happens at a specific section number with authored text. A Zone is a space you explore using tables; a semi-procedural environment where your actions determine what you find, what you face, and how long you spend.

Zone vs. Scene: Quick Distinction

ZONE	SCENE
Explored using tables in the Zone Turn structure Content is semi-procedural: varies between playthroughs Duration determined by how many Zone Turns you spend Triggered by moving into a Zone area, not a section number	Authored text at a specific section number Content is fixed: same every playthrough Duration is determined by your choices in the text Triggered by reaching that section number

Hostility

Every Exploration Zone has a HOSTILITY tier. HOSTILITY does not modify the 2d6 roll. It tells you how aggressively the Zone's table and authored consequences respond to risk. The module states the tier when you enter or when it changes.

Calm: threats are unusual; a Miss creates a soft complication unless the table says otherwise.

Tense: a Miss applies the listed complication; Weak Hits usually carry time, position, or resource costs.

Hostile: Weak Hits and Misses apply the table's full costs; Long Rests require [SAFE REST].

Lethal: every encounter can escalate to HARM or a Struggle; resting is unavailable except at an explicit [SAFE REST] location.

The Zone Turn

When you enter a Zone, you take Zone Turns until you decide to move on or until the Zone's content is exhausted. Each Zone Turn consists of four steps:

1	ROLL ON THE ENCOUNTER TABLE Roll d6 (or 2d6 for richer tables) on the Zone's Encounter Table. The result is what is immediately present or happening in this part of the Zone; a threat, an opportunity, an obstacle, or empty space.
2	RESOLVE THE RESULT Follow the instructions for the encounter result. This may mean making a roll, engaging in a Struggle, finding a resource, or simply reading description. Some results are immediate; others require you to choose how to respond.
3	TAKE A ZONE ACTION (OPTIONAL) After resolving the encounter, choose one deliberate Zone Action: Search, Scout Exits, Rest (if permitted), Interact, or Move On. The action is part of this Zone Turn; it does not create a second turn.
4	CHECK CLOCK TRIGGERS; STAY OR MOVE At the end of the turn, check every active Clock once. For each Clock, one or more ordinary triggers in this turn produce one tick total. Only a trigger that explicitly says additional can stack. If you chose Move On, resolve the current Zone's triggers and enter the new Zone; otherwise stay or begin another turn.

Zone Actions

Zone Actions are the deliberate choices you make during exploration; what you do beyond simply reacting to the encounter table. The available Zone Actions vary by Zone, but the standard set is available in every Zone unless the module restricts them:

ZONE ACTION	WHAT IT DOES	CLOCK COST
Search	Roll WITS at Standard difficulty. Strong Hit: find a hidden resource or useful item the module specifies. Weak Hit: find something minor (information, a small supply). Miss: nothing found, or you disturb something.	1 turn
Scout Exits	Roll WITS or AGILITY at Standard difficulty. Strong Hit: learn the contents of an adjacent zone before entering (the module tells you the Encounter Table result for Zone Turn 1). Weak Hit: vague sense of what's there. Miss: no information.	1 turn
Short Rest	Reduce STRESS by 2. Only permitted when no immediate threat is active (after a clear encounter roll, never mid-Struggle).	Uses the turn; no Clock advance
Long Rest	Reduce HARM by 2, STRESS by 3. Costs 1 SUPPLY at 3-6 or 2 SUPPLY at 2; unavailable at 0-1. Only at [SAFE REST] locations or when explicitly permitted.	Uses the turn; one default primary-Clock tick
Interact	Engage with a specific Zone feature, NPC, or object the module or encounter table has established. Triggers the relevant section or roll.	Varies

ZONE ACTION	WHAT IT DOES	CLOCK COST
Move On	Leave this Zone and enter an adjacent one. The new Zone begins its Zone Turn immediately.	Uses the turn; check old-Zone triggers once

Designer Note

Each Zone Turn contains at most one Zone Action and one Clock-trigger check. The choice between "search this zone thoroughly" and "move quickly toward the objective" is the central exploration tension in every WAYPOINT adventure. Ordinary triggers do not double-charge the same Clock; only text that says additional creates another tick. The best action depends on which Clock is most threatening and on your SUPPLY and HARM.

6.3 Encounter Tables

Each Zone has its own Encounter Table; a d6 or 2d6 table that generates what you find each Zone Turn. Encounter Tables create the semi-procedural texture of exploration: the same Zone may feel different across playthroughs based on what the dice generate.

Standard Encounter Table Structure (d6)

Module writers use a consistent distribution. Understanding the pattern helps you interpret results correctly:

ROLL (D6)	CATEGORY	WHAT IT GENERATES
1–2	Threat	An encounter that requires a roll or a Struggle; an adversary, a hazard, an obstacle. The most costly result.
3–4	Opportunity	A resource, useful information, a useful item, or an NPC interaction that may help you. Often requires a roll to exploit.
5	Detail	Environmental description or lore; no mechanical effect, but may be relevant to module choices or tags.
6	Clear	Nothing of immediate note. The space is empty. You may take a Zone Action freely without a prior encounter to resolve.

Extended Table (2d6)

More complex Zones use a 2d6 table with eleven distinct results, giving finer-grained control over encounter frequency and variety. The principle is the same: results cluster in the middle (the most common outcomes) and spread to rare extremes at 2 and 12.

When a module specifies a 2d6 table, the result distribution ensures threats appear roughly 28% of the time and clear results appear roughly 14% of the time; the Zone feels active but not relentlessly hostile.

Reading an Encounter Table Result

Every result on every table is a prompt, not a prescription. The module gives you text like:

Example encounter result

"3–4: A Pale Runner pauses near the collapsed archway; it hasn't detected you. Roll AGILITY at Standard difficulty: Strong Hit: slip past unseen. Weak Hit: slip past but dislodge debris; advance ALERT Clock 1. Miss: it hears you. Struggle begins (Danger 1, 4-box track)."

The result gives you a situation and a choice point. In this case, you can attempt stealth (rolling AGILITY) or initiate the Struggle directly without rolling. The fiction you've established; whether you're moving carefully, what equipment you have, what tags you carry; may affect which options are available and at what difficulty.

6.4 Zone Navigation

Moving through an adventure's Zone map is straightforward: you always know what exits are available from your current Zone, and entering a new Zone immediately begins its Zone Turn structure.

Zone Entry

When you enter a Zone for the first time, it is unexplored. On your first Zone Turn, roll on the Encounter Table and take the result. When you re-enter a Zone you have already partially explored, the module specifies whether to re-roll the Encounter Table (for dynamic zones where content refreshes) or to use the established state (for static zones where what you found or cleared stays found or cleared).

Zone Maps

The adventure module provides a Zone Map; a simple diagram showing which Zones are connected. Zone Maps in WAYPOINT adventures are not grid maps. They show connectivity: Zone A connects to Zones B and D; Zone B connects to Zones A, C, and E. Distances are abstracted. Moving between connected Zones costs one turn regardless of fictional distance.

Locked and Gated Zones

Some Zones require specific conditions to enter. The module marks these on the Zone Map with their conditions:

- [LOCKED]: Requires a specific item tag or a successful roll (usually Craft or a module-specific skill) to open.
- [GATED]: Requires a specific narrative condition; a tag, a relationship, a completed event elsewhere in the adventure.
- [SAFE REST]: This Zone permits Long Rests. Noted explicitly because Long Rest zones are rare and important.
- [ONE-WAY]: You can enter but not return through this exit. Noted because this changes your planning.

6.5 The Exploration Loop

Zones and Clocks work together as a single system. Understanding the loop they create makes the whole chapter click:

ENTER ZONE
↓ Zone Turn 1: Roll Encounter Table → Resolve → Take one Zone Action or Move On
↓ If staying: Zone Turn 2 → Encounter Table again → Another Zone Action option
↓ <i>Check each Clock's listed triggers once; no listed trigger means no tick</i>
↓ If Move On was the Zone Action, check triggers once, then enter the new Zone
REPEAT until Clock fills, objective reached, or Struggle defeats you

The key insight: every turn creates one trigger check. A Clock advances only if one of its listed triggers occurred, and it advances once unless a rule explicitly adds another tick. Every Zone Action, including resting, uses that turn. Moving quickly means fewer Encounter Table rolls (fewer threats, but also fewer opportunities to find resources and information). Moving slowly means more Encounter Table rolls, more chances to find useful things, and more opportunities for listed Clock triggers to occur.

Neither pace is correct. The right pace depends on your current HARM, SUPPLY, MOMENTUM, and how close the active Clocks are to filling.

6.6 Supply During Exploration

SUPPLY is the resource that exploration consumes. Long Rests cost 1 SUPPLY at SUPPLY 3-6 or 2 SUPPLY at SUPPLY 2. At SUPPLY 0-1, the full cost cannot be paid. Some Encounter Table results cost SUPPLY directly. Running out of SUPPLY closes off Long Rests, which means HARM can no longer be recovered in the field.

Replenishing Supply in Zones

The Search Zone Action is the primary way to find SUPPLY during exploration. Strong Hit Search results in most adventure modules will include the option to find SUPPLY +1 or +2. Some encounter results also provide SUPPLY as part of their opportunity text. The Drifter's Scrounger Edge is specifically designed for SUPPLY-critical moments.

SUPPLY LEVEL	EFFECT ON EXPLORATION
6 (Full)	Comfortable. Long Rests cost 1 SUPPLY as normal. Can afford to rest when permitted.
3–5	Normal play range. Long Rests cost 1 SUPPLY. Watch for opportunities to replenish.
1–2 (Low)	At SUPPLY 2, a Long Rest costs 2. At SUPPLY 1, a Long Rest is unavailable because the full cost cannot be paid.
0 (Empty)	Critical. Cannot take Long Rests. HARM cannot be recovered. Survival is the priority. Drifter's Scrounger can prevent this outcome.

SUPPLY and the adventure timer

Think of SUPPLY as the adventure's internal timer. Most adventures are designed around a SUPPLY budget; if you're careful, you can complete the adventure with some SUPPLY remaining. If you take too many Long Rests or lose too much SUPPLY to encounter results, the final sections become significantly harder. Tracking SUPPLY carefully is not bookkeeping; it's resource management that creates meaningful decisions.

6.7 Worked Example: Two Zone Turns

The Cartographer (Drifter, Wanderer's Eye Edge, WITS +2, MIGHT –1) enters the Ashen Approach; a 6-segment Standard Clock zone with a d6 Encounter Table.

Zone Entry: Wanderer's Eye fires

On entering the Ashen Approach for the first time, the Cartographer's Wanderer's Eye Edge triggers. She rolls WITS at Standard difficulty.

Dice: 5+4 = 9. WITS +2 = 11. Strong Hit. The module tells her: "You clock the patrol route before entering; the Pale Runner circles every three turns. A loose slate pile on the eastern wall marks a concealed passage to Zone 4."

She marks the patrol note and the concealed passage. MOMENTUM: 3 → 4 (Strong Hit bonus).

Zone Turn 1: Encounter and Scout

Roll d6: 4. Result: "Opportunity; a satchel partially buried under ash contains a field kit. SUPPLY +1 or a Medic's Compress [One-Shot Tag]."

She takes SUPPLY +1 (SUPPLY 3 to 4). She then uses her one Zone Action to Scout Exits. A WITS roll of 8 is a Weak Hit, so she learns that the passage is clear of immediate threats but not where it leads.

The module lists every Zone Turn as an Approach Clock trigger. Turn 1 ends, so the Clock advances once to 1/6.

Zone Turn 2: Clear result and Move On

She rolls 6 on the Encounter Table: Clear. She chooses Move On as this turn's Zone Action and enters the concealed passage.

The Approach Clock lists every Zone Turn as a trigger, so Turn 2 advances it once to 2/6 before she enters Zone 4.

Move On does not create a third turn or a second generic tick. The new Zone begins with its own Zone Turn.

Trigger stacking check

Turn 1 included an Opportunity, a Scout action, and a Weak Hit. They did not produce three Clock ticks. The Approach Clock advanced once because its every-Zone-Turn trigger occurred.

Turn 2 included a Clear result and Move On. The same every-Zone-Turn trigger advanced the Approach Clock once to 2/6. No rule said additional, so nothing stacked.

Two Zone Turns spent. The Clock is at 2/6. She found SUPPLY, learned a patrol route, and identified a shortcut without triggering a Struggle. The Wanderer's Eye Edge delivered exactly what it was designed to.

6.8 Exploration & Clocks Quick Reference

CONCEPT	SUMMARY
Clock sizes	4 (Fast) / 6 (Standard) / 8 (Slow) segments
Clock advances	Check listed triggers once per turn. One or more ordinary triggers give one tick; only explicit additional ticks stack.
Clock fills	Resolution Event fires immediately: permanent story change
Zone Turn steps	1) Encounter Table; 2) Resolve; 3) Take one Zone Action or Move On; 4) Check Clock triggers once, then stay or enter the new Zone
Zone Actions	Search, Scout Exits, Short Rest, Long Rest, Interact, Move On
Short Rest clock cost	None: Short Rests do not advance Clocks
Long Rest clock cost	One default tick to the active primary Clock; costs 1 SUPPLY at 3-6 or 2 at 2. Explicit module exceptions override.
Move On cost	Uses the current Zone Turn's action. Check the old Zone's Clock triggers once, then enter the new Zone.
Encounter Table d6	1–2 Threat / 3–4 Opportunity / 5 Detail / 6 Clear
Zone entry	First entry: roll Encounter Table fresh. Re-entry: check if zone is dynamic or static
SUPPLY 0	Cannot Long Rest. HARM cannot be recovered in field.
SUPPLY Low (1–2)	At SUPPLY 2, Long Rests cost 2; at SUPPLY 1, they are unavailable

CHAPTER 7

Oracle & Freeplay

This chapter covers playing WAYPOINT without an authored module; using the Oracle system to generate answers, situations, and story beats on the fly. Freeplay is a full creative mode, not a lesser one. It uses different muscles: asking good questions, interpreting ambiguous answers, and building scenes from fragments.

Co-op Play with One Shared Protagonist

For two or more players, use one shared protagonist and one shared character sheet; this keeps modules and Struggles at their intended scale. Rotate the scene lead after each consequential roll or at each scene boundary. The lead describes the protagonist's action and rolls; another player reads or interprets the Oracle, portrays NPCs, and records Tracks, Tags, and Clocks. The group must agree on the final interpretation before play continues. All mechanical resources remain on the one shared sheet.

The Oracle is not a game master replacement. It is a resolution tool; a way to get answers to questions you cannot answer yourself without feeling like you're deciding what happens. The Oracle introduces genuine uncertainty into solo and co-op play.

7.1 What the Oracle Does

The Oracle answers yes/no questions about the world. It generates a result on a 2d6 table; a spectrum from "No, and it gets worse" through to "Yes, and something extra." That result is an interpretation prompt: you take the answer and build the scene from it.

The Oracle does not tell you what happens. It tells you whether the thing you were hoping for or fearing is true; then you decide what that means in the fiction.

A Good Oracle Question

A good Oracle question has three properties:

- It is a yes/no question, or can be interpreted as one. "Is the guard still at his post?" not "What is the guard doing?"
- It has genuine uncertainty. If you already know the answer, don't ask. If both yes and no would lead to interesting situations, the question is right.
- It matters to the current scene. The Oracle is for questions where the answer changes what you do next.

The Oracle Table

2D6 ROLL	ORACLE ANSWER	WHAT IT MEANS
2–4	NO, AND...	No, and something else goes wrong. A complication emerges on top of the refusal.
5–6	NO	A clear no. The thing you hoped for is not true or does not happen.
7	YES, BUT...	Yes, but with a complication, cost, or caveat that changes the situation.
8–9	YES	A clear yes. The thing you hoped for is true or happens.
10–11	YES, AND...	Yes, and an unexpected bonus or opened option on top.
12	TWIST	The question becomes irrelevant; something unexpected reframes the situation. Roll d6 on the Twist table.

Likelihood Modifiers

Before rolling, assess how likely a yes answer is given what you know. Apply the modifier and roll 2d6 + modifier.

LIKELIHOOD	MODIFIER	TYPICAL USE
Almost Certain	+2	Something that would happen unless actively prevented
Likely	+1	Something with a realistic chance of being true
Fifty-Fifty	+0	Genuinely uncertain: no strong lean either way
Unlikely	-1	Something plausible but probably not true
Almost Impossible	-2	Something that would require unusual circumstances

Oracle bounds and Twist timing

Roll 2d6. A natural total of 12 triggers a Twist before any likelihood modifier is applied. Otherwise apply the modifier and clamp the final total to the 2-11 range before reading the Oracle table. A modified result below 2 counts as 2; a modified result above 11 counts as 11. Other doubles have no separate effect.

Oracle in action: three questions

Q1: "Is there a guard at the eastern gate?" (Likely, +1). Roll $9+1 = 10$. YES, AND. The guard is present, and you add one useful advantage: he is distracted by a delivery. You decide his alertness, the light, his position.

Q2: "Does the guard know Veldrin by sight?" (Unlikely, -1). Roll $9-1 = 8$. YES. Unexpected; this complicates everything. The Oracle just made the situation more interesting.

Q3: "Can she approach from the north without crossing his sightline?" (Fifty-Fifty, +0). Roll 4. NO, AND; the north approach is visible, and there's a second guard she hadn't seen.

7.2 Interpreting Oracle Answers

The hardest part of Oracle play is not rolling; it's building something useful from the result. Each answer type has a different interpretive lens.

'No, and...': The Complication

Something didn't just fail; something else went wrong. Ask: what is the worst plausible additional complication that fits the established fiction? Not the worst imaginable; the worst plausible. Then commit to it.

Interpretation principle

"No, and..." does not mean catastrophe. It means the situation is specifically worse in a concrete way. The complication should emerge from established fiction, not be imported from nowhere.

'Yes, but...': The Caveat

"Yes, but..." is the most narratively generative result. The thing you hoped for is true, and there's a cost, complication, or constraint attached. The "but" should create a new decision point, not simply reduce the benefit of the yes.

"Yes, but..." examples

"Is the archive unlocked?" → YES, BUT the archivist is inside working late. You can enter, but not without risk of being seen.

"Does the NPC trust us?" → YES, BUT her trust comes with expectation; she assumes you'll return the favor.

"Is there a safe path around the patrol?" → YES, BUT it goes through the flooded lower corridor; costs 1 SUPPLY.

'Yes, and...': The Bonus

Something went better than expected. The "and" should be a genuine bonus; something that opens a new option or eases a subsequent challenge. If the Oracle said yes and more, give the scene more. Resist making it small.

TWIST: Reframing the Question

A Twist means the question has become irrelevant because the situation has changed. The twist should make the original question moot and open at least one new decision point. It must come from the fiction; something that could plausibly have happened.

D6	TWIST TYPE	INTERPRETATION PROMPT
1	An NPC acts	Someone already present makes a move; arrives, departs, reveals something, or changes their position.
2	Environment shifts	Something physical changes: a door opens, a fire starts, light fails, a sound is heard.
3	New information	Something you thought you knew turns out to be wrong, or something important is revealed that reframes the situation.
4	Resource appears	Something useful becomes available: an unexpected ally, a found item, an open path.
5	Threat escalates	Something dangerous becomes more dangerous, or something stable turns out not to be.
6	Choice collapses	One of your available options disappears; a path closes, an alliance cracks, an item is lost.

7.3 Scene Framing in Freeplay

Without a module providing section text, you build scenes yourself. The Oracle answers questions within scenes, but you still need to establish the scene before rolling. Scene framing is the foundation skill of freeplay.

The Four Scene Elements

Establish these before asking Oracle questions or making rolls:

LOCATION	Where are you? Be specific enough to matter, not "in the city" but "in the Merchant Quarter, near the Saltfish Market, mid-afternoon." Specificity generates better Oracle questions.
OBJECTIVE	What are you trying to accomplish in this scene? One clear statement. "Reach the Archivist's office unseen." "Convince Maret to reveal her employer." "Find a crossing."
COMPLICATION	What stands between you and the objective? Every scene needs at least one. "A guard who knows my face." "The records were moved." "The bridge is partially intact but dangerous."
CLOCK (optional)	Is time a factor? Set a Clock before starting; define what fills it and what the Resolution Event is. 4-segment if urgent, 6 if standard.

Scene Types

SCENE TYPE	WHEN TO USE IT	PRIMARY MECHANICS
Action	Immediate physical stakes: moving through danger, timed escape, diversion	Action rolls; Struggles if conflict extends; Clocks if time pressure
Investigation	Gathering information: searching, observing, questioning, researching	Oracle questions for what is found; WITS rolls; Discovery Tags
Social	Navigating a relationship, negotiation, or NPC confrontation	Oracle for NPC disposition; SPIRIT rolls; Social Struggles if extended
Rest & Recovery	Safe or semi-safe space between active challenges	Track recovery; SUPPLY expenditure; Drive/Fear reflection

Designer Note

Freeplay scenes tend to be shorter than module scenes; three to five Oracle questions per scene is typical. More than that and you're asking questions that could be answered by your own imagination without adding uncertainty. Over-querying is the most common freeplay error.

7.4 NPC Generation

Freeplay requires generating NPCs on the fly. A WAYPOINT NPC needs three things: a motivation, a current disposition toward your character, and one thing they want from this scene.

Quick NPC Generation (d6 × 3)

d6	MOTIVATION	DISPOSITION	WHAT THEY WANT RIGHT NOW
1	Survival: staying alive and secure	Hostile	To remove you as a threat or complication
2	Loyalty: protecting someone or something	Suspicious	To assess whether you're dangerous to what they protect
3	Profit: acquiring resources or advantage	Cautious	To find out what you're worth to them
4	Revenge: settling a specific grievance	Neutral	Information that helps their agenda
5	Belief: serving a cause or principle	Curious	To understand who you are and why you're here
6	Connection: belonging, being known, being needed	Friendly	To find common ground or make an alliance

When you make an Oracle question about an NPC; "Does she believe me?" "Will he help?"; interpret the result through their motivation and disposition. A "Yes, but..." from a Suspicious NPC driven by Loyalty is different from the same result from a Friendly NPC driven by Connection. The Oracle gives you the shape; the NPC profile fills it in.

NPC generation and Oracle in practice

Aldric needs to find the courier who was supposed to deliver a message three days ago. He asks at a dockside tavern.

NPC: Barkeep. Roll: Motivation 3 (Profit), Disposition 3 (Cautious), Want: to find out what Aldric is worth. He'll share information; for a price.

Oracle: "Does he know where the courier went?" (Likely, +1). Roll 8+1 = 9. YES. He knows. Now Aldric finds out what the information costs.

Roll: SPIRIT + Persuasion at Standard. Total 10. Strong Hit. The barkeep gives the information and volunteers something extra; the courier didn't leave alone.

7.5 Freeplay Clocks and Stakes

In freeplay, you set your own Clocks. This is the hardest part of running Oracle sessions, not asking questions, but establishing what matters and what the consequences of failure are before you start playing. A freeplay session without Clocks feels formless.

Setting a Freeplay Clock: Three Questions

- What is the threat building toward? (The Resolution Event; concrete, specific, story-changing.)
- What advances it? (A trigger list: Misses, specific choices, Long Rests, time passing.)
- How urgent is it? (Size: 4 for fast, 6 for standard, 8 for slow.)

Setting a freeplay Clock

Veldrin is extracting information from the Merchant Guild archive before the morning shift begins.

Resolution Event: "The morning clerk arrives: extraction becomes impossible."

Triggers: Any Miss on stealth or investigation; each Long Rest; Zone Actions that make noise.

Size: 6 segments (Standard). She has time, but not unlimited time.

Freeplay Defeat Fallback

Freeplay has no authored defeat route, so use this fallback whenever a terminal Track would otherwise stop play. Defeat changes the situation; it never ends the campaign by default.

Incapacitated (HARM 6): end the scene. Move to the nearest plausible safe or controlled location, set HARM to 5, lose 1 SUPPLY to a minimum of 0, and gain a relevant Condition Tag. Ask the Oracle who helped, captured, or found you and what changed while you were unconscious.

Broken (STRESS 6): withdraw, surrender, freeze, or collapse as the fiction demands. End the scene, set STRESS to 5 after reaching safety, and gain a relevant Condition Tag. Frame the next scene around recovery or the cost of escape.

Desperate (SUPPLY 0): Long Rests remain unavailable. If the fiction offers no path forward, relocate to the nearest plausible source of help, take a debt or obligation Tag, and ask the Oracle what the aid costs.

7.6 The Freeplay Session Loop

1. ESTABLISH THE SITUATION

Where are you? What do you want to accomplish this session? What's the most pressing Clock? Write it down before rolling anything.

2. FRAME A SCENE

Location, Objective, Complication. Set a scene Clock if time pressure applies. Ask your first Oracle question.

3. PLAY THE SCENE

Ask Oracle questions, make action rolls, run Struggles if conflict escalates. Close the scene when it reaches a natural end or the Clock fills.

4. ADVANCE THE SESSION

What did you learn? What changed? Update Tracks, Tags, and Clocks. Ask: what is the next most pressing thing? Frame the next scene from there.

5. END OR CONTINUE

A session ends when a major Clock fills, a Drive resolves or changes fundamentally, or you reach a natural pause. Write a one-sentence summary of where things stand.

7.7 Oracle Quick Reference

RULE	SUMMARY
Question must be	Yes/no; genuinely uncertain; changes what you do next
Roll	Natural 12 = Twist; otherwise 2d6 + likelihood modifier, clamped to 2-11
Almost Certain	+2 to roll
Likely	+1 to roll
Fifty-Fifty	+0
Unlikely	-1 to roll
Almost Impossible	-2 to roll
2-4: No, and...	No + additional complication emerging from the fiction
5-6: No	Clear no
7: Yes, but...	Yes + cost, caveat, or new decision point
8-9: Yes	Clear yes
10-11: Yes, and...	Yes + unexpected bonus or opened option
12: Twist	Question irrelevant: roll d6 on Twist table
Questions per scene	3-5 typically; more means over-querying
NPC minimum	Motivation + Disposition + What They Want Right Now
Freeplay Clock	Resolution Event + Trigger list + Size: set before playing

CHAPTER 8

Reference & Character Sheet

This chapter contains every reference table and rule summary from the preceding chapters collected in one place, followed by the glossary and the one-page character sheet template. Use it during play as a quick lookup; everything here points back to the chapter where the full rule lives.

8.1 Master Rules Reference

Every core rule in one table. Chapter references given for full context.

CORE ROLL MECHANICS: CHAPTER 2

RULE	SUMMARY
The Roll	2d6 + Attribute + Skill + Difficulty modifier
Strong Hit	Total 10+. Success. Gain +1 MOMENTUM.
Weak Hit	Total 7–9. Success with cost or complication.
Miss	Total 6 or less. Complication. Apply module Miss result.
Never roll	Trivially easy tasks; no meaningful failure consequence; purely informational
Advantage	Roll 3d6 drop lowest. Sources do not stack.
Disadvantage	Roll 3d6 drop highest. Cancels Advantage.
Defy Fate	Spend 3 MOMENTUM: convert Miss to Weak Hit immediately after rolling
Burning Advantage	Spend 2 MOMENTUM: gain Advantage on next single roll
Press the Attack	Spend 1 MOMENTUM: +1 Progress on the next Struggle Hit; persists through Misses until the Struggle ends
Steady the Line	Spend 1 MOMENTUM: reduce incoming HARM or STRESS by 1 when applied
Drive bonus	+1 MOMENTUM when you act directly on your Drive (once per chapter)
Face Fear	+1 MOMENTUM, take +1 STRESS when you face your Fear (once per chapter)

ATTRIBUTES: CHAPTER 2

ATTRIBUTE	COVERS	RATINGS
MIGHT	Physical power, toughness, close combat, intimidation by presence	+2 Exceptional / +1 Capable / +0 Average / –1 Weakness
AGILITY	Speed, stealth, ranged precision, reflexes	+2 Exceptional / +1 Capable / +0 Average / –1 Weakness
WITS	Perception, investigation, tactics, lore	+2 Exceptional / +1 Capable / +0 Average / –1 Weakness
SPIRIT	Willpower, persuasion, emotional resilience, deception	+2 Exceptional / +1 Capable / +0 Average / –1 Weakness

DIFFICULTY: CHAPTER 2

DIFFICULTY	MODIFIER	USE WHEN
Favorable	+1	Conditions actively help: cover, assistance, preparation
Standard	+0	Default. Normal conditions with no special advantage or hindrance
Perilous	–1	Conditions hinder: darkness, injury, time pressure, opposition
Desperate	–2	Near-impossible conditions: wounded, surrounded, no tools, extreme danger

TRACKS: CHAPTER 2

TRACK	RANGE	KEY THRESHOLDS
HARM	0–6	3–4: –1 MIGHT/AGILITY; 5: –1 all rolls; 6: Incapacitated
STRESS	0–6	3–4: –1 SPIRIT/WITS; 5: –1 all rolls + Fear costs +2 STRESS; 6: Broken (must take safe path)
SUPPLY	0–6	1–2: At 2: Long Rest costs 2 SUPPLY; at 0-1: Cannot Long Rest
MOMENTUM	0–5	Cap 5. Spend on Defy Fate (3), Burning Advantage (2), Press the Attack (1), Steady the Line (1)

REST: CHAPTER 2

REST TYPE	RECOVERS	COSTS	CLOCK EFFECT
Short Rest	STRESS –2	Nothing	No clock advance
Long Rest	HARM –2, STRESS –3	1 SUPPLY	+1 active zone clock
Long Rest (SUPPLY 2)	HARM –2, STRESS –3	2 SUPPLY	Same

STRUGGLES: CHAPTER 5

RULE	SUMMARY
Struggle structure	Establish (Danger + track size + attribute) → Roll → Check end conditions → Repeat
Progress track sizes	4 boxes (fast) / 6 boxes (standard) / 8 boxes (extended)
Strong Hit in Struggle	Mark 2 Progress. Gain +1 MOMENTUM. No HARM.
Weak Hit in Struggle	Mark 1 Progress. Take HARM = Danger rating.
Miss in Struggle	No Progress. Apply module Miss result. No HARM from the roll itself.
Danger 1	HARM 1 per Weak Hit: Minor
Danger 2	HARM 2 per Weak Hit: Moderate
Danger 3	HARM 3 per Weak Hit: Serious
Danger 4	HARM 4 per Weak Hit: Deadly
Finish Move	When track full: roll same attribute at Standard. Strong Hit = clean win; Weak Hit = win with cost; Miss = complication
Defeat	HARM 6: Incapacitated. Struggle ends. Follow the authored defeat route, then set HARM to 5 before play resumes.

EXPLORATION & CLOCKS: CHAPTER 6

RULE	SUMMARY
Clock sizes	4 (Fast) / 6 (Standard) / 8 (Slow) segments
Clock fills on	Listed triggers checked once per turn: Misses, Long Rests, specific actions, or time
Clock resolution	When full: Resolution Event fires. Permanent story change.
Zone Turn steps	1) Roll Encounter Table; 2) Resolve; 3) Take one Zone Action or Move On; 4) Check Clock triggers once, then stay or enter the new Zone
Search action	WITS roll: Strong = hidden resource; Weak = minor find; Miss = nothing or disturbance
Scout Exits action	WITS/AGILITY roll: Strong = know next zone's first encounter; Weak = vague sense; Miss = nothing

RULE	SUMMARY
Short Rest (zone)	STRESS –2. No clock advance. Requires clear encounter result.
Long Rest (zone)	HARM –2, STRESS –3. Costs 1 SUPPLY at 3-6 or 2 at 2; unavailable at 0-1. One default primary-Clock tick. Only at [SAFE REST] or when permitted.
Move On	Use the current turn's action; check the old Zone's listed triggers once, then enter the new Zone
Encounter table d6	1–2 Threat / 3–4 Opportunity / 5 Detail / 6 Clear
SUPPLY 0	Cannot Long Rest. HARM cannot be recovered in the field.

ORACLE & FREEPLAY: CHAPTER 7

RULE	SUMMARY
Oracle question	Yes/no; genuinely uncertain; changes what you do next
Roll	Natural 12 = Twist; otherwise 2d6 + likelihood modifier, clamped to 2-11
Almost Certain / Likely / Fifty-Fifty / Unlikely / Almost Impossible	+2 / +1 / +0 / –1 / –2
2–4: No, and...	No + additional complication from the fiction
5–6: No	Clear no
7: Yes, but...	Yes + cost, caveat, or new decision point
8–9: Yes	Clear yes
10–11: Yes, and...	Yes + unexpected bonus or opened option
12: Twist	Question irrelevant: roll d6 on Twist table
Scene elements	Location + Objective + Complication + optional Clock
NPC minimum	Motivation + Disposition + What They Want Right Now

8.2 Skills Reference

Complete standard skill list with trigger conditions. Skills grant +1 when they clearly and directly apply. They do not stack.

SKILL	WHEN THE +1 APPLIES
Athletics	Climbing, swimming, jumping, sprinting, sustained physical endurance
Stealth	Moving unseen or unheard, hiding, shadowing, concealed ambush
Investigation	Examining evidence, searching for clues, research, pattern recognition
Medicine	Treating injuries, stabilizing critical conditions, identifying illness or poison
Survival	Wilderness navigation, tracking, foraging, environmental hazard identification
Deception	Lying convincingly, maintaining cover, misdirection, forgery
Persuasion	Negotiation, diplomacy, appeals to shared interest or reason
Lore	History, legend, arcane theory, cultural customs, religious knowledge
Craft	Repairing equipment, building tools, jury-rigging, technical work
Intimidation	Direct threats, coercion, projecting menace, breaking morale
Navigation	Pathfinding in wilderness or urban spaces, terrain reading, cartography

SKILL	WHEN THE +1 APPLIES
Performance	Acting, music, oratory, impersonation, public speaking
Arcana	Identifying magical effects, supernatural phenomena, ritual theory
Streetwise	Urban survival, criminal networks, reading dangerous social spaces
Command	Directing NPCs under stress, maintaining group discipline, issuing tactical orders
Empathy	Reading emotional states, detecting lies, understanding motivations

8.3 Archetype Reference

ARCHETYPE	BONUS	EDGE A	EDGE B
Blade	+1 MIGHT	Brutal Momentum: +2 MOMENTUM on Struggle Strong Hit	Iron Threshold: HARM penalty starts at HARM 4 not 3
Shadow	+1 AGILITY	Ghost Step: Dodge surprise HARM with AGILITY roll once/scene	Shadow Cache: Produce useful item once/chapter (1 SUPPLY)
Warden	+1 MIGHT or SPIRIT	Absorb: Take ally HARM –1 instead of ally once/scene	Field Medicine: Short Rests also recover HARM 1
Drifter	+1 AGILITY or WITS	Scrounger: Prevent SUPPLY → 0 on Long Rest with roll	Wanderer's Eye: Scout new zone with WITS on first entry
Envoy	+1 SPIRIT	Silver Tongue: Free reroll on failed social SPIRIT roll once/chapter	Read the Room: One NPC motivation question before social encounter
Scholar	+1 WITS	Keen Insight: Bonus info on any WITS hit once/chapter	Study the Weakness: –1 enemy Danger after one zone turn observation

8.4 Tag Reference

Tags are binary narrative facts; present or absent. They have no numerical value. They shape what options are available to you.

TAG TYPE	BEHAVIOUR	EXAMPLE
Persistent	Permanent until a specific event or roll clears it	[Scar from the Warden]: present until explicitly removed by narrative event
One-Shot	Spend once for specified effect, then removed from sheet	[Medic's Compress]: spend to reduce HARM 2 outside a rest
Condition	Active penalty: specifies its mechanical effect while present	[Broken Arm]: –1 to MIGHT rolls while present
Legacy	Carries between adventures: survives session boundaries	[Known to the Pale Court]: relevant in future adventures in this setting

8.5 Glossary

Definitions of all terms used in the WAYPOINT rulebook. Terms that appear in bold within definitions are themselves glossary entries.

TERM	DEFINITION
Archetype	The broad identity template chosen at character creation. Defines attribute bonus, two Edges to choose between, and the role the character fills. See Chapter 4.
Attribute	One of four core ratings (MIGHT, AGILITY, WITS, SPIRIT) ranging from –1 to +2. Added to every relevant roll. See Chapter 2.
Clock	A countdown tracking a building threat. Fills through specific triggers. When full, a Resolution Event fires permanently. See Chapter 6.
Danger Rating	A number (1–4) assigned to a Struggle adversary or obstacle. Determines HARM taken on a Weak Hit. See Chapter 5.
Defy Fate	A MOMENTUM spend (cost: 3) that converts a Miss to a Weak Hit immediately after rolling. See Chapter 2.
Difficulty	A modifier applied to a roll's total: Favorable (+1), Standard (+0), Perilous (–1), Desperate (–2). Set by the module. See Chapter 2.
Drive	A personal commitment that earns +1 MOMENTUM when acted on directly and meaningfully, once per chapter. See Chapter 3.
Edge	A special ability unique to an Archetype. One of two options chosen at character creation; the other is permanently unavailable. See Chapter 4.
Encounter Table	A d6 or 2d6 table generating what is present in a Zone each Zone Turn. See Chapter 6.
Exploration Zone	A discrete area in an adventure location explored using the Zone Turn structure. See Chapter 6.
Fear	A personal vulnerability. Confronting it costs +1 STRESS but earns +1 MOMENTUM (once per chapter). Avoiding it carries a module-specified cost. See Chapter 3.
Finish Move	The final decisive roll when a Progress track is full. Determines how cleanly a Struggle ends. See Chapter 5.
HARM	The physical damage track (0–6). Imposes penalties at 3–4, severe penalty at 5, Incapacitation at 6. See Chapter 2.
Incapacitated	The state at HARM 6. Cannot act. The Struggle ends in defeat. The module specifies what happens next. See Chapter 5.

Glossary continued

TERM	DEFINITION
Legacy Tag	A Tag that persists between adventures. See Tag.
MOMENTUM	A resource track (0–5) earned through Strong Hits and Drive/Fear use. Spent on special abilities. See Chapter 2.
Miss	A roll total of 6 or less. No progress. Apply the module's Miss result. See Chapter 2.
Oracle	A 2d6 yes/no resolution table used in freeplay to generate answers to genuine uncertainty. See Chapter 7.
Progress Track	A box track (4, 6, or 8 segments) representing advancement through a Struggle. When full, trigger the Finish Move. See Chapter 5.
Resolution Event	The permanent story change that occurs when a Clock fills. Authored into every Clock by the module writer. See Chapter 6.
Skill	A specific area of expertise granting +1 when clearly and directly applicable. Chosen from the standard list or written custom. See Chapter 3.
STRESS	The psychological damage track (0–6). Imposes penalties at 3–4, severe penalty at 5, Broken state at 6. See Chapter 2.
Strong Hit	A roll total of 10 or more. Full success. Gain +1 MOMENTUM. See Chapter 2.
Struggle	An extended conflict using a Progress track and Danger rating. Ends when Progress fills (Finish Move) or HARM reaches 6 (defeat). See Chapter 5.
SUPPLY	The resource track (0-6). Long Rests cost 1 at SUPPLY 3-6 or 2 at SUPPLY 2. At SUPPLY 0-1, Long Rests are unavailable. See Chapter 2.
Tag	A binary narrative fact; present or absent. No numerical value. Four types: Persistent, One-Shot, Condition, Legacy. See Chapter 2.
Weak Hit	A roll total of 7–9. Partial success with cost or complication. See Chapter 2.
Zone Turn	One round of activity in an Exploration Zone: roll the Encounter Table, resolve it, take one Zone Action or Move On, then check Clock triggers once. See Chapter 6.

8.6 Character Sheet

Photocopy or print this one-page sheet. One sheet per character. It provides twelve Tag slots, Struggle Progress and two Clocks.

CHARACTER NAME	ARCHETYPE	EDGE CHOSEN
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ATTRIBUTES — write one rating from -1 to +2 in each box

MIGHT	AGILITY	WITS	SPIRIT
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SKILLS — choose 3; each grants +1 when clearly applicable

1. Skill	2. Skill	3. Skill
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TRACKS — circle the current value

HARM 0 1 2 3 4 5 6	STRESS 0 1 2 3 4 5 6	SUPPLY 0 1 2 3 4 5 6	MOMENTUM 0 1 2 3 4 5
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DRIVE AND FEAR

DRIVE +1 MOMENTUM when acted on directly, once/chapter	FEAR +1 MOMENTUM and +1 STRESS to face / cost to avoid, once/chapter
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TAGS — Persistent / One-Shot / Condition / Legacy

Tag	Type	Tag	Type

STRUGGLE PROGRESS

Track size: 4 / 6 / 8	Attribute: _____	Danger: _____
Progress: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○		

CLOCKS

Name: _____ Size: 4 / 6 / 8	Name: _____ Size: 4 / 6 / 8
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

NOTES

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