

COPYRIGHT © 2013 DIGIPEN (USA) CORPORATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# SHŌTEN

---

## HANDBOOK & RULESET

A Pen & Paper Role-Playing Game designed by Chris Morris

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. GAME OVERVIEW
  - a. SUMMARY
2. CHARACTER CREATION
  - a. DISCIPLINES
  - b. ATTRIBUTES
  - c. STEP-BY-STEP CREATION
  - d. SWITCHING DISCIPLINES
  - e. EXAMPLE CHARACTER
3. SKILLS
  - a. COMBAT
  - b. NON-COMBAT
4. PROGRESSION
  - a. EXPERIENCE
  - b. LEVELING & RANKING UP
5. EQUIPMENT & ITEMS
  - a. WEAPONS
  - b. ARMOR
  - c. TOOLS
  - d. CONSUMABLES
  - e. MATERIALS
6. COMBAT
  - a. ENGAGEMENT
  - b. RESOLUTION
  - c. DEATH
7. CRAFTING
  - a. ACQUISITION
  - b. PROCESSING
8. STOCK ENEMY LIST
9. ASCENSION
  - a. OVERVIEW
10. SETTING & SCENARIOS

# GAME OVERVIEW

## SUMMARY

**SHŌTEN** is a fantasy role-playing game about a group of modern day individuals from different walks of life who are inexplicably, but unwittingly transported to an entirely different plane of existence. Some have found renewed hope and purpose, acquiring strength and knowledge beyond their wildest imagination. Others struggle with the new reality they are faced with, constantly searching for a way back home or fighting to adapt. The world of SHŌTEN questions the meaning of reality and what it means to ascend higher than the sometimes limited potential we perceive for ourselves.

The game world is inspired by an East meets West philosophy, incorporating high-fantasy and technology while bringing together environments, creatures, and gameplay that utilize many of the strengths of both settings.

Players can take on or more unique disciplines, each defined by its skills and characteristics. Want to play as a dual-wielding Swordsman or heavily-armored Berserker? With the ability to learn and share skills between the multiple disciplines, customizing your character to suit your preferences becomes both easy and fun.

Combat is designed to be fast-paced and streamlined. No poring over detailed spell lists and ability descriptions, complicated calculations, or lengthy, drawn-out encounters with packs of minions. Jump in and go wild, most importantly – have fun!

A simple, yet robust crafting system allows for further exploration and character customization outside of slaying monsters. Characters that choose to learn and master crafting skills are sure to become an invaluable and permanent fixture in any adventuring party.

When your character reaches the pinnacle of power or you simply want to carry it into a brand new game world, there is no need for that progress to go to waste. Players can utilize the Ascension system to take your character even further!

Finally, remember to find a friend who is willing to take on the role of Game Master! It's important to find someone who is willing to be challenging, but fair. When it comes to rule interpretations, focus on the fun of the experience, rather than meticulously debating the small details. This is where a good GM will come into play, facilitating the narrative, combat, and obscuring all of the details that are unimportant to keeping the overall player experience streamlined and fun.

For the GM: It's challenging, but rewarding! All you have to do is guide the players through an excellent experience. Craft the story, pick out the locations, enemies, item drops, and facilitate combat behind the scenes. That's it!



# CHARACTER CREATION

## DISCIPLINES

### COMBAT

#### FENCER

The Fencer specializes in quick, precise strikes and is focused on taking down their opponent as quickly and cleanly as possible. Targeting vital organs is a priority for the Fencer, who will carefully attempt to probe and exploit any weaknesses in their opponent's defenses. The Fencer takes care to stay light and agile. Light or no armor is preferable, so that the Fencer may fully utilize their speed and dexterity to minimize their own defensive openings.

There are whispers of a group of Fencers for hire, such that can only be afforded by Kings. It has been reported that this group of "Shadow Dancers" as they have been named, are seemingly able to traverse distances instantaneously. There are no confirmed sightings of any Shadow Dancers, only the spontaneous collapse of a suspected target.

#### BERSERKER

The Berserker concerns himself only with the means and pursuit of physical superiority and overwhelming dominance in combat. On the battlefield, the Berserker is rarely difficult to spot. He can usually be seen cutting a swatch of destruction through enemy ranks, enemies who are more often than not, falling over each other in an attempt to escape his wrath. The Berserker typically favors large, two-handed weapons and light or no armor.

Some legends still speak, however, of the monstrous Tyrants from the crumbled Barbaros Empire, dual-wielding gigantic serrated blades and covered in blackened, thorn armor. This is the peak of perfection that nearly every Berserker aspires to attain.

## DEFENDER

The Defender is the stalwart protector of any group, often seen charging from the front lines. The Defender concerns himself only with the safety of his allies, taking any and all measures necessary to protect the group to the best of his abilities. The Defender is not careless or brash, as a dead Defender is one who is no longer able to fulfill his duties. However, while the Defender values his own life nearly as much as anyone else's, he will never choose his own life over the life of a comrade. Better to die in honor than disgrace. The Defender can be seen wearing medium to heavy armor and typically carries a one-handed weapon and shield into every battle.

The most prolific of all Defenders are the small contingents that are typically seen accompanying the First Scholar. Adorned from head to toe in shining white and red armor emblazoned with giant feathered wings, they are known as The Immovable. Unconfirmed reports claim that members of The Immovable have been seen restoring grievous wounds and freeing mortally wounded soldiers from, "the very clutches of Death himself."

## RŌNIN

Rōnin are kenjutsu practitioners, renowned for their skill with the blade, utilizing their weapon as if it were merely an extension of their will. They can be seen roaming the land, dressed in plain robes and carrying little more than their nihontō of choice. After the Age of War, most Rōnin found themselves lacking employment, forcing them to find other ways to make a

living with their skills. They can be found in a wide variety of employment where their unique talents can be put to use, including, but not limited to: guards, bandits, and mercenaries.

During the Age of War, kenjutsu masters were typically referred to as Samurai. Unlike their modern counterparts, they were both highly skilled and highly paid. They were typically found under the employ of emperors or kings and were primarily used to wage war against neighboring clans. The most well-known tale is of two Samurai Lords, Masamune and Muramasa, who were rumored to be the most powerful kenjutsu masters of all time.

The legend describes the unique properties of their blades, which were rumored to be possessed by different yōkai. Each spirit embodied the very essence of good and evil, respectively. The legend continues that these spirits sought out the Lords, entering into an agreement. The spirits granted them supernatural strength in return for providing a vessel for carrying out their will. Perhaps, unbeknownst to the two Samurai, the blades were also slowly drawing them closer to each other. On the day of their fateful meeting, the two men were compelled to engage each other in battle. The fight inevitably destroyed both of them, leveling the entire forest around them. Many years later, a temple was constructed at the epicenter of the destruction and decorated murals and statues depicting the battle.

## CRAFTING

### SMITH

The Smith is a craftsman that excels in working with all manners of metals and various exotic materials which lend themselves well to being fashioned into various types of armor and weapons. A Smith is an invaluable part of any adventuring party, helping with everything from minor repairs and upgrades up to full-scale crafting on-the-fly. Smiths are also adept at spotting and harvesting raw materials that the party may come across during adventures, further increasing their value as a member of the group.

Grand Master Smiths have been known to achieve mastery over some of the toughest and rarest materials, including dragon scales and elemental ores. Even after a lifetime of practice, only a small number of Smiths have been able to achieve this level of expertise. Out of all legendary adventuring parties throughout history, each one has had a Grand Master Smith as a permanent fixture in the group.

### ALCHEMIST

Alchemists are known for their ability to work with a wide variety of raw materials, distilling and combining their essences to create an array of potions and poultices. Many Alchemists choose to create concoctions with the ability to restore wounds, reinvigorate health, and bolster abilities. However, not all Alchemists are strictly benevolent, with others choosing to use their talents to create weapons such as blinding powders, acids, firebombs, and poisons. Like Blacksmiths, Alchemists have a knack for



spotting and harvesting raw materials as well as identifying potential uses. A good Alchemist can be a valuable ally for any adventuring party.

Rumors speak of “Wizards” with the ability to transmute more exotic materials, including gold, ethereal, and elemental materials. The most famous of which was reported to have transmuted stone and clay into living constructs to do his bidding.

## **SCHOLAR**

Scholars are relentless in their pursuit of knowledge and information, seeking to unlock the many mysteries of the world around them. Because of their keen intellect and powers of observation and analysis, a wide variety of previously unknown information can become available to them. Scholars are an excellent resource for analyzing items, monsters, abilities, maps, tactics, and the list goes on. They have a variety of combat and non-combat knowledge and expertise, such as the ability to find weaknesses in enemy armor or attack patterns or to identify and analyze artifacts and ancient scrolls.

Perhaps the most well-known among the scholars is the First Scholar, a title which is bestowed upon the keeper of the First College of Erudithia, a vast library and educational institution situated within the “City of Knowledge.” The First Scholar is chosen once every fifty years at birth and is uniquely suited to contain all of the Forbidden Knowledge, information which must not be lost, but must not be allowed to fall into the hands of the malevolent.

# ATTRIBUTES

## BASE ATTRIBUTES

**STRENGTH:** Strength is the measure of a character's physical power, including their ability to inflict damage in combat and how much weight they are able to carry into battle.

**ENDURANCE:** Endurance is the measure of a character's fortitude, including their overall health and defensive capabilities.

**AGILITY:** Agility is the measure of a character's speed and dexterity, including their rate of attack and ability to dodge attacks..

**INTELLIGENCE:** Intelligence is the measure of a character's mental prowess, including their ability to interpret complex information and perform specialized tasks. It also determines the amount of unique Disciplines a character can learn and understand.

**CHARISMA:** Charisma is the measure of a character's ability to influence other people, inspire comrades in battle, and even persuade others to their will.

## SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES

**LEVEL:** The combined value of all Rank Levels determines a character's overall Experience Level.

**RANK:** The current Rank Level of a given discipline, this determines what skills are available to the character for that discipline.

**EXPERIENCE:** The amount of experience points possessed and needed to gain the next Rank Level toward a discipline.

**ASCENSION LEVEL:** A measure of a character's current level of Ascension.

## **DERIVED ATTRIBUTES**

**HIT POINTS:** The amount of health a character possesses, this determines the amount of physical damage a character can receive before falling in battle. This is combination of Level and Endurance.

**DEFENSE:** The amount of physical damage a character can mitigate before taking Hit Point damage. This is combination of Endurance and the currently equipped armor.

**DAMAGE:** The amount of physical damage a character can inflict on an opponent. This is a combination of Strength and the currently equipped weapon.

**ATTACK SPEED:** The number of strikes a character can make in a single attack. This is a combination of Agility and the currently equipped weapon.

**DODGE:** The maximum number of incoming attacks that a character is able to avoid during a round of combat. This is determined by Agility. This attribute cannot go below zero.

**ATTRIBUTE TABLE**

ATTRIBUTE	CALCULATION (Rounded Up)
<b>HIT POINTS</b>	$(\text{ENDURANCE} * 2) + (\text{LEVEL} * 2)$
<b>DEFENSE</b>	$(\text{ENDURANCE} / 4) + \text{ARMOR DEFENSE}$
<b>DAMAGE</b>	$(\text{STRENGTH} / 4) + \text{WEAPON DAMAGE}$
<b>ATTACK SPEED</b>	$(\text{AGILITY} / 8) + \text{WEAPON SPEED}$
<b>DODGE</b>	$(\text{AGILITY} / 8) + \text{ARMOR MODIFIER}$
<b>DISCIPLINE CAP</b>	$(\text{INTELLIGENCE} / 6)$



## STEP-BY-STEP CREATION

1. Pick your Starting Discipline
2. You have 5 Base Attributes, listed above. Each of these Attributes starts with a score of zero.
3. You have 50 points to distribute among these Base Attributes, choose wisely, but remember that you will grow stronger over time, use the table below to determine how to spend your points properly.
4. Determine your Derived Stats using the Attribute Table above.
5. Equip yourself with the appropriate Rusty Weapon and Armor from the Equipment Lists and apply your bonuses.
6. Fill in any additional information in your character sheet, such as Character Level, Disciplines, Discipline Rank, Current/Max Experience, and Ascension Level. Make sure you've got everything filled out!
7. Familiarize yourself with your Skills.
8. Familiarize yourself with Combat rules.
9. Have Fun!

ATTRIBUTE VALUE	UPGRADE COST (AP)
1 - 10	1
11-18	2
18-24	4
25-30	5
31-35	6
36-40	7
41+	8

## SWITCHING DISCIPLINES


While characters are created with a starting Discipline, they are not locked into this choice. In fact, learning and mastering multiple Disciplines is not only encouraged, it's exciting! Not only do these allow a character to grow stronger all-around, but also provide the ability to mix and match Skills between Disciplines.

Characters can get started in new Disciplines either by being Instructed in them by a Rank 20 Scholar, but also from various NPC Masters scattered across the world. While a character can only focus on and earn experience toward one Discipline at a time, once a character has learned a new one, they are able to change it at the beginning of various points within their game. At GM discretion, suggested points include the start of a new Quest, Adventure (Quests/Story Arc), Session, or Campaign (Complete Adventure Arc).

When a player decides to switch the focused Discipline for their character, they still retain access to any skills they have learned from their other Disciplines. Rank 20 Skills are the exception to this, which can only be utilized by the current Discipline. For example, a Rank 20 Berserker (Focus)/20 Fencer will have access to both Berserking and Dual Wield, but not Fatal Strike.

Skill crossover rules do not apply to Non-Combat Disciplines, allowing for full use of all Skills that have been obtained from these Disciplines. A 20 Alchemist (focus) / 20 Smith / 20 Berserker can use Advanced Armor and Elixirs, but not Berserking. If the Berserker is the focus, however, all Rank 20 Skills can be utilized.

# EXAMPLE CHARACTER

SHŌTEN				CHARACTER SHEET																								
NAME: <u>Chris the Destroyer</u>		AGE: <u>14</u>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">PORTRAIT</div> 																								
		SEX: <u>M</u>																										
CHARACTER LEVEL: <u>21</u>		ASCENSION LEVEL: <u>1</u>																										
HIT POINTS: <u>150</u> / <u>150</u>																												
EXPERIENCE: <u>5</u> / <u>1000</u>				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">KNOWN DISCIPLINES</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 2px;">Smith (1)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div>																								
<u>Berserker</u>		<u>1</u> / 20																										
CURRENT DISCIPLINE		RANK																										
STRENGTH: <u>28</u>		<u>40</u> BASE + WPN DMG																										
ENDURANCE: <u>30</u>																												
AGILITY: <u>12</u>		<u>44</u> BASE + ARM DEF																										
INTELLIGENCE: <u>8</u>																												
CHARISMA: <u>1</u>		<u>2</u> BASE + WPN SPD																										
UNSPENT POINTS: <u>0</u>		<u>2</u> BASE + ARM MOD																										
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">WEAPON:</td> <td style="width: 20%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">NAME</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DMG</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DEF</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">SPEED</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WEAPON:</td> <td><u>Ethereal Heavy Blade</u></td> <td>NAME</td> <td></td> <td>DMG</td> <td><u>30</u></td> <td>DEF</td> <td></td> <td>SPEED</td> <td><u>2</u></td> </tr> </table>						WEAPON:		NAME		DMG		DEF		SPEED	WEAPON:	<u>Ethereal Heavy Blade</u>	NAME		DMG	<u>30</u>	DEF		SPEED	<u>2</u>				
WEAPON:		NAME		DMG		DEF		SPEED																				
WEAPON:	<u>Ethereal Heavy Blade</u>	NAME		DMG	<u>30</u>	DEF		SPEED	<u>2</u>																			
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">ARMOR:</td> <td style="width: 20%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">NAME</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DEF</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DODGE</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DMG</td> <td style="width: 10%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">STR REQ</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ARMOR:</td> <td><u>Ethereal Heavy Armor</u></td> <td>NAME</td> <td></td> <td>DEF</td> <td><u>38</u></td> <td>DODGE</td> <td><u>1</u></td> <td>DMG</td> <td></td> <td>STR REQ</td> <td><u>28</u></td> </tr> </table>						ARMOR:		NAME		DEF		DODGE		DMG		STR REQ	ARMOR:	<u>Ethereal Heavy Armor</u>	NAME		DEF	<u>38</u>	DODGE	<u>1</u>	DMG		STR REQ	<u>28</u>
ARMOR:		NAME		DEF		DODGE		DMG		STR REQ																		
ARMOR:	<u>Ethereal Heavy Armor</u>	NAME		DEF	<u>38</u>	DODGE	<u>1</u>	DMG		STR REQ	<u>28</u>																	
TOOLS			ITEMS																									
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 2px;"><u>Steel Hammer &amp; Pick</u></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 2px;"><u>Gold (50), Basic Potion (5), Iron Ore (2)</u></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>																									

# SKILLS

## OVERVIEW

Most Combat skills are Passive and as such, are applied automatically to the character. However, some skills are Optional and can be used during a player's turn and/or at appropriate moments during a battle (ie. Attacking or Defending). For each of these Optional skills, specific rules or limitations are described below. Non-Combat skills can only be used outside of combat, an Alchemist, for example, cannot create potions in the heat of battle. He is free to use any combat skills that he has previously learned, however.

## COMBAT

### FENCER

#### **Rank 1:** Light Blade (Passive)

May equip and use all weapons which are classified as Light Blade.

#### **Rank 5:** Quick Strike (Passive)

Quick Strike provides one additional point to Attack Speed, plus one per Ascension Level.

#### **Rank 10:** Parry (Passive)

Parry adds two additional points to Defense, plus two per Ascension Level.

#### **Rank 15:** Dual Wield (Passive)

Dual Wield allows the ability to equip a weapon in each hand. This additional weapon can be used at half Damage and Attack Speed.

### **Rank 20: Soft Spot (Passive)**

Soft Spot gives the Fencer maximum Damage and Attack Speed with their off-hand weapon.

## **BERSERKER**

### **Rank 1: Heavy Blade (Passive)**

May equip and use all weapons which are classified as Heavy Blade.

### **Rank 5: Cleave Strike (Optional)**

Cleave Strike allows the character to split their total Attack Damage (rounded up) equally over two enemies when attacking.

### **Rank 10: Battle Cry (Passive)**

Battle Cry provides two additional points of Defense, plus two per Ascension Level.

### **Rank 15: Overpower (Passive)**

Overpower provides four additional points of Damage, plus four per Ascension Level.

### **Rank 20: Berserking (Optional)**

Berserking allows the Berserker to split their total Attack Damage equally (rounded up) over all enemies when attacking.

## **DEFENDER**

### **Rank 1: Blade & Shield (Passive)**

May equip and use all weapons which are classified as Blade & Shield.



**Rank 5: Shield Bash (Passive)**

Shield Bash provides two additional points of Damage, plus two per Ascension Level.

**Rank 10: Shield Block (Passive)**

Shield Block provides four additional points of Defense, plus four per Ascension Level.

**Rank 15: Taunt (Optional)**

Taunt can be used to take Damage in place of another character once per combat round.

**Rank 20: Stand Down (Optional)**

The Defender can intimidate one non-Boss enemy per battle, causing them to flee the fight.

**RŌNIN**

**Rank 1: Long Blade (Passive)**

May equip and use all weapons which are classified as Long Blade.

**Rank 5: Quick Draw (Passive)**

Adds one point to Attack Speed, plus one per Ascension Level.

**Rank 10: Scabbard Style (Passive)**

Adds two points to Defense, plus two per Ascension Level.

**Rank 15: Meditation (Passive)**

Adds one point to Dodge, plus one per Ascension Level.

### **Rank 20: Blossoming Blade (Optional)**

The Ronin can use Blossoming Blade once per battle, striking all enemies on the field for full damage.

## **NON-COMBAT**

### **SMITH**

#### **Rank 1: Basic Weapons**

This allows for the creation of weapons which are constructed from Basic Level materials.

#### **Rank 5: Basic Armor**

This allows for the creation of armor which is constructed from Basic Level materials.

#### **Rank 10: Improved Tools**

This allows for the use of Advanced Level tools, this add a +1 Damage/Defense bonus, plus one per Ascension Level, to Basic Weapons and Armor. Improved Tools is a requirement for crafting Advanced Level equipment.

#### **Rank 15: Advanced Weapons**

This allows for the creation of weapons which are constructed from Advanced Level materials.

#### **Rank 20: Advanced Armor**

This allows for the creation of armor which are constructed from Advanced Level materials.



## **ALCHEMIST**

### **Rank 1: Potions**

Allows for the creation of Potions which utilize Basic Level materials.

### **Rank 5: Elixir**

Allows for the creation of Elixirs which utilize from Basic Level materials.

### **Rank 10: Improved Tools**

This allows for the use of Advanced Level tools, allowing one additional basic Potion or Elixir to be crafted from a single set of materials, per Ascension Level. Improved Tools is a requirement for Advanced Potions and Elixirs.

### **Rank 15: Advanced Potions**

Allows for the creation of Potions which utilize Advanced Level materials.

### **Rank 20: Advanced Elixirs**

Allows for the creation of Elixirs which utilize Advanced Level materials.

## **SCHOLAR**

### **Rank 1: Identify**

Can identify the special properties of any magical item.

### **Rank 5: Interpret**

Can interpret text, language, and complex symbols.

**Rank 10: Cartography**

Can create and understand maps, as well as identify points of interest and shortcuts.

**Rank 15: Analyze**

Can analyze evidence and formulate hypothesis from observation. This is useful for understanding enemy abilities and attack patterns or finding weak spots in defenses.

**Rank 20: Instruct**

For the duration of one Adventure/Session, the Scholar can teach all other characters the ability to use any one skill that he knows. This can be a different skill per character Instructed. There are no limitations applied to the use of this skill. For example, a 20 Scholar/Berserker can teach Berserking to a 20 Fencer, allowing him to utilize Soft Spot and Berserking simultaneously. This effect only lasts for the duration of the current Adventure or Play Session, whichever is concluded first, and cannot be changed for another skill during this time. Any Ascension Level bonuses still apply for the receiving player, based on their own current Ascension Level and not the Scholar's.

Each time the Scholar uses a Skill, roll a 20-Sided Die to determine whether it was successful. The roll result is modified by (Intelligence/4) for Rank 1-10 Skills or (Intelligence/6) for Rank 15-20 Skills. This value is always rounded up. Ultimate success chance is determined by the GM based on difficulty of the task.

# PROGRESSION

## EXPERIENCE

### EXPERIENCE GAIN

Experience is gained after every complete battle. Enemies provide Experience Points, which is determined by their Level modified by their Experience Rate. For example, a Level 12 Bandit with an Experience Rate of 10 will provide 120 Experience Points to each party member upon its defeat. Because Experience is cumulative, each enemy defeated during a single battle will provide a combined total of Experience Points.

At the end of each battle, the points earned are applied directly to the Discipline that the character is currently focusing on. For example, a Rank 10 Defender/Rank 5 Alchemist can only apply the points to whichever Discipline they are using for the current Quest, Adventure, Session, or Campaign (this is subject to final DM discretion).

If the current Experience Points exceed the maximum amount needed to complete the current Rank, the character will move up to the next Rank.

Finally, if a Discipline completes Rank 20, see the Ascension section at the end of this handbook for additional information.

# LEVELING & RANKING UP

EXPERIENCE TABLE

CURRENT RANK	EXPERIENCE NEEDED
1	100
2	250
3	400
4	550
5	700
6	850
7	1000
8	1150
9	1300
10	1450
11	1600
12	1750
13	1900
14	2150
15	2300
16	2450
17	2600
18	2750
19	2900
20	3050

Note that these values are modified by your Ascension Level. Once you obtain your first Ascension Level, to calculate the Experience Needed for the next Rank, the formula is:  $(1 + \text{Ascension Level}) * \text{Experience Needed} = \text{New Experience Needed}$ .

## DISCIPLINE RANKS

Discipline Ranks define a character's relative strength with any given Discipline that they are currently practicing. Every five Ranks, a new Skill becomes available for use, each of which provides a new and unique benefit.

When a character reaches the maximum amount of experience needed for their current Discipline Rank, as defined by the Experience Table, they will also gain a Character Level.

## CHARACTER LEVELS

Character Levels define a character's relative strength to the rest of the world. These levels establish a statistics, such as a character's Attributes and Hit Points. A very high level character has typically trained in multiple Disciplines and/or obtained multiple levels of Ascension.

Upon gaining a Character Level, the character gains a single Attribute Point which the player may distribute freely among their Attributes. The amount of Attribute Points (AP) required to improve an attribute changes as the value becomes higher. Additionally, the character's Hit Points will change according to the Hit Point formula  $\{(ENDURANCE * 2) + (LEVEL * 2)\}$  listed in the Attribute Table.

ATTRIBUTE VALUE	UPGRADE COST (AP)
1 - 10	1
11-18	2
18-24	4
25-30	5
31-35	6
36-40	7
41+	8

# EQUIPMENT

## WEAPONS

LIGHT BLADES (D4)	DAMAGE	ATTACK SPEED	RATING
RUSTED	1	1	BASIC
COPPER	1	2	BASIC
IRON	2	2	BASIC
BRONZE	3	2	BASIC
STEEL	4	2	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	5	3	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	7	3	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	9	3	ADVANCED
METEORIC	11	4	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	13	5	ADVANCED
HEAVY BLADES (D6)	DAMAGE	ATTACK SPEED	RATING
RUSTED	3	1	BASIC
COPPER	5	1	BASIC
IRON	7	1	BASIC
BRONZE	9	1	BASIC
STEEL	12	1	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	15	1	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	18	1	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	21	1	ADVANCED
METEORIC	24	1	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	30	2	ADVANCED



SWORD & SHIELD (D4)	DAMAGE	DEFENSE	ATTACK SPEED	RATING
RUSTED	1	1	1	BASIC
COPPER	3	2	1	BASIC
IRON	5	3	1	BASIC
BRONZE	7	4	1	BASIC
STEEL	9	6	1	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	12	7	1	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	14	8	1	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	16	9	1	ADVANCED
METEORIC	18	11	2	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	21	13	2	ADVANCED

LONG BLADES (D6)	DAMAGE	ATTACK SPEED	RATING
RUSTED	2	1	BASIC
COPPER	4	1	BASIC
IRON	6	1	BASIC
BRONZE	8	1	BASIC
STEEL	10	2	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	13	2	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	16	2	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	19	2	ADVANCED
METEORIC	22	3	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	26	3	ADVANCED



## ARMOR

LIGHT ARMOR	DEFENSE	DODGE BONUS	STR REQUIREMENT	RATING
RUSTED	1	0	0	BASIC
COPPER	2	0	0	BASIC
IRON	3	0	0	BASIC
BRONZE	4	0	0	BASIC
STEEL	6	1	0	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	7	1	6	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	8	2	6	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	9	2	6	ADVANCED
METEORIC	10	2	6	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	12	3	6	ADVANCED
MEDIUM ARMOR	DEFENSE	DODGE BONUS	STR REQUIREMENT	RATING
RUSTED	2	-1	10	BASIC
COPPER	4	-1	10	BASIC
IRON	6	-1	10	BASIC
BRONZE	8	0	10	BASIC
STEEL	10	0	10	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	12	0	16	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	14	1	16	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	16	1	16	ADVANCED
METEORIC	18	1	16	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	20	2	16	ADVANCED

HEAVY ARMOR	DEFENSE	DODGE BONUS	DAMAGE BONUS	STR REQUIREMENT	RATING
RUSTED	4	-2	0	16	BASIC
COPPER	6	-2	0	16	BASIC
IRON	8	-2	0	16	BASIC
BRONZE	10	-2	0	18	BASIC
STEEL	12	-2	0	18	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	17	-1	0	24	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	23	-1	0	24	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	28	-1	0	26	ADVANCED
METEORIC	32	0	0	26	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	38	1	0	28	ADVANCED
MASSIVE ARMOR	DEFENSE	DODGE BONUS	DAMAGE BONUS	STR REQUIREMENT	RATING
RUSTED	30	-3	1	28	BASIC
COPPER	32	-3	1	28	BASIC
IRON	34	-3	1	28	BASIC
BRONZE	36	-3	1	30	BASIC
STEEL	38	-2	2	30	BASIC
OBSIDIAN	40	-2	2	30	ADVANCED
MYTHRIL	42	-2	2	32	ADVANCED
ADAMANTITE	44	-1	2	36	ADVANCED
METEORIC	48	-1	3	38	ADVANCED
ETHEREAL	52	-1	3	42	ADVANCED

## TOOLS

TOOL NAME	DISCIPLINE
STEEL HAMMER & PICK	BASIC SMITH
ETHEREAL HAMMER & PICK	ADVANCED SMITH
GLASS ENSEMBLE	BASIC ALCHEMIST
ETHEREAL ENSEMBLE	ADVANCED ALCHEMIST
VELLUM GRIMOIRE	BASIC SCHOLAR
ETHEREAL GRIMOIRE	ADVANCED SCHOLAR

## CONSUMABLES

NAME	EFFECT	TYPE
BASIC POTION	RESTORE 1/10 HP	BASIC POTION
GREAT POTION	RESTORE 1/5 HP	BASIC POTION
SUPERIOR POTION	RESTORE ¼ HP	BASIC POTION
MASTER POTION	RESTORE ½ HP	ADVANCED POTION
PERFECT POTION	RESTORE 100% HP	ADVANCED POTION
BASIC ELIXIR	+1 DAMAGE	BASIC ELIXIR
GREAT ELIXIR	+2 DAMAGE	BASIC ELIXIR
SUPERIOR ELIXIR	+3 DAMAGE	BASIC ELIXIR
MASTER ELIXIR	+1 DMG, +1 ATK SPD	ADVANCED ELIXIR
PERFECT ELIXIR	+2 DMG, +1 ATK SPD	ADVANCED ELIXIR
ADVENTURING PACK	Safe wilderness camping	Contains bed roll and supplies.
RATION	Long-lasting food for a day.	

## MATERIALS

NAME	USED FOR
<b>ALCHEMY</b>	
GREEN HERB	BASIC POTION
EVERGREEN HERB	GREAT POTION
RED HERB	SUPERIOR POTION
BLUE HERB	MASTER POTION
GHOST HERB	PERFECT POTION
BROWN MUSHROOM	BASIC ELIXIR
WHITE MUSHROOM	GREAT ELIXIR
RED MUSHROOM	SUPERIOR ELIXIR
BLUE MUSHROOM	MASTER ELIXIR
GHOST MUSHROOM	PERFECT ELIXIR
<b>SMITHING</b>	
COPPER ORE	COPPER EQUIPMENT
IRON ORE	IRON EQUIPMENT
BRONZE ORE	BRONZE EQUIPMENT
STEEL ORE	STEEL EQUIPMENT
OBSIDIAN ORE	OBSIDIAN EQUIPMENT
MYTHRIL ORE	MYTHRIL EQUIPMENT
ADAMANTIUM ORE	ADAMANTITE EQUIPMENT
METEORITE ORE	METEORIC EQUIPMENT
ETHEREAL ORE	ETHEREAL EQUIPMENT

# COMBAT

## ENGAGEMENT

1. When Combat is first initiated with a group of enemies, each participant uses their Agility score to determine their turn order. In the event of a tie, the Attack Speed is used as a tie breaker. Finally, the GM can set turn order if further issues arise.
2. All participants have three primary options during their turn: Attack, Use Item, or Pass. If Attacking, see Step 3. Otherwise, you may use a Potion or Elixir at this time, then conclude your turn and progress to the next entity in order. If you choose to Pass, you can take your turn immediately after the next entity has concluded theirs, but you cannot Pass twice in a row.
3. The current entity selects their target(s) and deals damage as follows:  
The amount of damage dealt is determined by the character's Damage multiplied by their Attack Speed.  $[(\text{Damage Modifier} + \text{Character Damage}) * \text{Attack Speed}] = \text{Outgoing Damage}$ 
  - a. If you currently Attacking, this is typically an opportune time to determine whether you can or want to engage an Optional Skill to bolster your damage output or defenses.
4. When attacking, roll a 20-sided Die to determine whether the attack hits or misses. Any roll above a 10 is successful hit. If a hit succeeds, roll one additional die, based on the weapon type (either a D4 or D6) to determine the variable Damage Modifier.
5. When someone is struck by an attack in combat, damage passes through Dodge and Armor modifiers to determine the amount of damage passed through to the receiver's Hit Points.  $[(\text{Outgoing$

Damage/Dodge) - Defense = Hit Point Damage] If the receiving entity has a Dodge value of zero, simply subtract Damage from Defense to determine Hit Point Damage. [(Outgoing Damage - Defense = Hit Point Damage)]

- a. If you are Defending from an Attack, this is an opportune time to determine whether you can or want to engage an Optional Skill to bolster your defenses (or, in the case of the Defender - rush to the aid of another.)
6. Combat continues with each player and enemy taking their turn in order (**Attack/Use Item/Pass, Defend, Repeat**) until all of the forces on a single side are routed or felled.
7. If Combat has concluded in Victory, see the Resolution section to determine how spoils are distributed.
8. Finally, if any player character deaths were incurred, see the Death section for more information on the proper process.



## RESOLUTION

Upon combat resolution, it's time to split up the spoils! Enemies typically provide a variety of rewards, including valuable Experience Points, various currencies, and sometimes even equipment and materials.

To determine the amount of Experience Points earned:

1. Take the level of each enemy defeated and multiply it by its XP Rate. Keep a tally of the total amount of Experience Points earned for all enemies defeated and distribute the full amount to each player character. Remember, if you exceed your maximum Experience for your current Rank; be sure to follow the steps for Leveling Up!
2. Next, the GM distributes any gold or gems that were found – split these up evenly! (GM, you can do this with a dice roll or determine an amount that feels correct for your game.)
3. If any equipment dropped, determine amongst yourselves who would be best suited for it. Is it an upgrade for your Fencer? He probably wants it! (GM, again this is up to your discretion – it's best to base drops off the current player character levels, classes, and attributes. If they put up a good fight, make sure to reward them!)
4. After all of the players have completed dealing with any level ups, looking over their skills, and handling the spoils, move on to the next encounter!

## DEATH

If a player character dies, it's not the end of the world. Fortunately, your soul can't depart your body – you aren't actually dead. Even the most grievous wounds will heal once combat has concluded; unfortunately you are out for the duration.

Additionally, you must give up half of your experience points, or revert to zero progress for your current Rank, whichever is greater.

Don't let this scare you though! First, it is important to keep in mind that everyone must work together. Your Defender should keep a close eye on your Fencer, while he and the Berserker attempt to mow down foes. The Ronin can be powerful on his own, helping to flank enemies or take down dangerous foes. Each Discipline has strengths and weakness, high damage output probably means a poor ability to receive damage. Keep this in mind and use your abilities to the advantage of the entire group!

Finally, keep an eye on your Hit Points and those of your party members. If your friend needs healing, don't feel like it's a wasted turn to slap a Potion or Elixir on him. He will be more apt to return the favor the next time you are in trouble.

Everyone can deal damage and fell enemies, but not if you are dead! Enemies will always have greater numbers and most of the time, greater firepower. Working together is critical to overcome challenging situations.

# CRAFTING

## ACQUISITION

Acquisition of materials is a simple process, and can be done in a number of different ways.

1. **Harvesting:** The Smith and the Alchemist are able to search for materials in the wild. It is important to ask the GM for details about the setting. Is there an herb patch or damp wood nearby, perhaps you are scaling a rocky divide and think there might be an ore vein ahead? Ask. You never know what you might find. If you are outside of combat and discover a harvesting location, ask the GM what and how much of it you have found.
2. **Spoils:** Some enemies will drop materials when they are slain. The GM will let you know if you have found anything. It is unlikely that you will find any materials if there isn't anyone in the party with a Discipline that can utilize them. A Berserker with no Smithing experience isn't likely to realize that is Adamantite Ore staring you in the face.
3. If you are in town, ask around. There might be a merchant who is willing to sell you materials. Chances are likely that they will be asking a high price though, especially if they have any of the good stuff. It's probably pretty limited too, Meteoric Ore doesn't just fall from the sky... er, actually it does. Anyway, the stuff goes quick and you might not always be the one to snatch it up first! Consider that Charisma can always help you when dealing with NPC's like this.

## PROCESSING

Processing is also straight forward, but can be risky depending on the current Rank of the crafter. It's not a perfect process, materials aren't always top quality or something goes wrong while working them. Don't despair; it's not the end of the world.

1. Determine what you want to craft and choose your material. Smiths have ten distinct levels of ore, which can be turned into a piece of armor or a weapon. Alchemists have two types of materials over five distinct levels each; they can create potions and elixirs. Check the Consumables and Materials lists for more information.
  - a. For Smithing, you gain access to Copper at Rank One and Obsidian at 15. Every two levels you master new material, meaning your success chance is 100%. At Rank 1, you can process Copper with a 50%, chance of success, but cannot process Iron yet. At Rank 20, Ethereal becomes a 100% success rate. When you decide to stretch outside of your comfort zone, flip a coin. If it lands heads, your craft succeeds – otherwise, it fails and the material is lost.
  - b. For Alchemy, the same mastery process applies that is described above, however, mastery of and access to new materials is gained every four levels. This starts with Green Herbs and Brown Mushrooms at Rank 1.
2. Finally, if your material processing succeeds and you create an item – apply any bonuses you may have from Skills to determine the amount and overall quality of the item produced.

# STOCK ENEMY LIST

NAME	LEVEL	HP	DMG	ATK SPD	DEF	XP RATE
Green Ooze	1	15	2	1	1	2
Red Ooze	2	25	3	1	1	2
Boar	3	30	4	1	1	2
Goblin	4	35	5	1	1	2
Giant Rat	5	40	6	1	1	2
Bugbear	6	45	7	1	1	2
Gnoll	7	50	8	1	1	2
Orc	8	55	9	1	1	2
Fire Beetle	9	60	10	1	1	2
Wisp	10	65	2	2	3	3
Zombie	11	70	3	2	3	3
Ghoul	12	75	4	2	3	3
Mummy	13	85	5	2	3	3
Ghost	14	95	6	2	3	3
Shadow	15	100	7	2	3	3
Raptor	16	110	8	2	3	3
Fire Elemental	17	125	9	2	3	3
Frost Elemental	18	130	10	2	3	3
Earth Elemental	19	135	3	3	5	4
Air Elemental	20	140	4	3	5	4
Water Elemental	21	145	5	3	5	4
Troll	22	160	6	3	5	4
Ogre	23	175	7	3	5	4
Bandit	24	200	8	3	5	4
Assassin	25	225	9	3	5	4
Vengeful Spirit	26	275	10	3	5	4
Fairy	28	325	4	4	7	5
Brownie	28	400	5	4	7	5
Pixie	29	450	6	4	7	5
Sprite	30	500	7	4	7	5
Imp	31	600	8	4	7	5
Lesser Demon	32	700	9	4	7	5



Angel	33	900	10	5	10	6
Greater Demon	34	1100	5	5	10	6
Horned Demon	35	1200	6	5	10	6
Arch Devil	36	1500	7	5	10	6
Arch Angel	36	1500	8	5	10	6
Amalgamation	37	2000	9	5	10	6
Necromancer	38	2250	10	5	10	6
Lich	39	2450	6	6	15	7
Sorcerer	40	2750	7	6	15	7
Amazon	41	3000	8	6	15	7
Hunter	42	3250	9	6	15	7
Green Dragon	43	3750	10	6	15	7
Bronze Dragon	44	4000	7	7	20	8
Red Dragon	45	4500	8	7	20	8
White Dragon	46	5000	9	7	20	8
Black Dragon	47	5750	10	7	20	8
Undead Dragon	48	6250	8	8	25	9
Lesser Deity	49	7000	9	8	25	9
Greater Deity	50	8000	10	8	25	9
Ascended Being	51	10000	9	9	30	10
Lord of Thunder	52	12500	10	9	30	10
Lord of Fire	53	15000	11	10	40	11
Lord of Death	54	17500	12	10	40	11
Lord of Water	55	20000	13	10	40	11
Lord of Sky	56	25000	14	10	40	11
Lord of Below	57	27500	15	10	40	11
Celestial Being	58	32500	16	10	40	11
Interdimensional Construct	59	50000	17	10	40	11
Fear	75	100000	18	10	50	12
Anger	85	125000	19	10	50	12
War	95	150000	20	10	50	12
Destruction	105	200000	21	11	50	12
Life	150	300000	25	12	75	15
Ascended Oni	200	500000	30	13	100	20



# ASCENSION

## OVERVIEW

So, you have completed maxed out your Experience Points in Rank 20 of your current Discipline and you've also hit Character Level twenty, so what do you do next? The answer is: Ascension!

Once you decide to Ascend a Discipline, it's Rank is reset to one, but you retain your Character Level and Attributes. You lose any skills that you had for that Discipline, but your Ascension Level is incremented by 1.

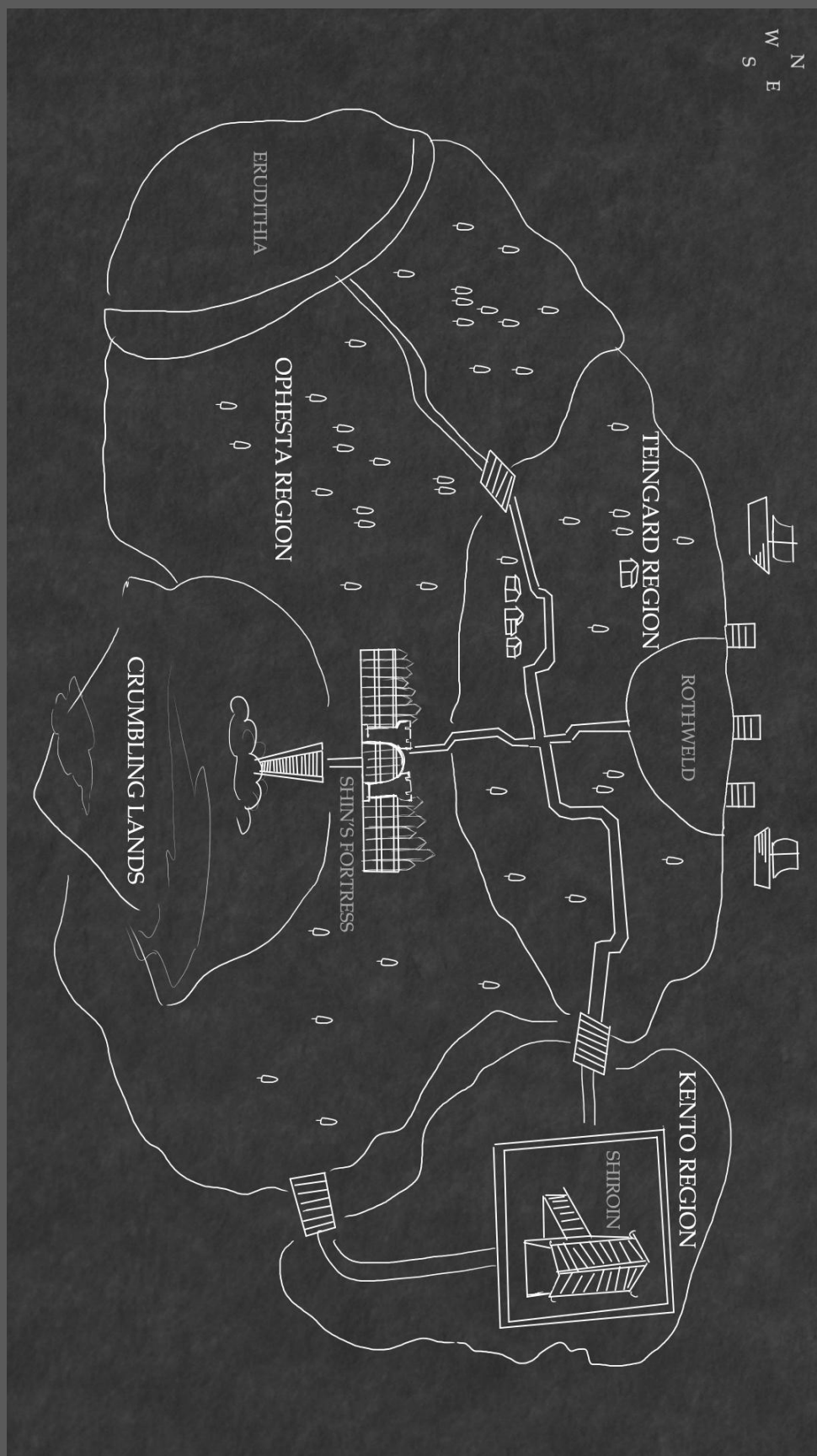
You finally get to take advantage of any bonuses that are granted by Skills with Ascension Level modifiers and you get to continue growing your character even further. It's impossible to progress to some of extremely challenging enemy encounters without at least having a few Ascension levels under your belt.

You will keep earning new Attribute Points to spend as normal every time you level up, but Ranking Up and gaining Attribute Points will also become more challenging. Each time you gain a new Ascension Level, the amount of Experience Needed is multiplied. See the table in Leveling & Ranking Up for more information.

As your characters grow extremely powerful, you may have to start generating your own content. Using the rules as an outline, it should be easy to develop new and interesting items, equipment, and enemies. Or, if you are so inclined, you can always start a brand new character.

The choice is up to you!

# SETTING & SCENARIOS



## SETTING

**SHŌTEN** is set on the continent of Amoria, which is composed of three primary regions: Ophesta to the west, Teingard to the north, and Kento to the east. Each of these regions is home to a unique capital city.

Ophesta houses Erudithia, the City of Knowledge – an intellectual gathering center featuring The First College among numerous other schools and libraries. Many of the world's great Scholars, Alchemists, and Defenders typically hail from Ophesta, many of which call the sprawling capital of Erudithia their home. The city is overseen by the First Scholar, guarded by his personal escort of Defenders, The Immovable. In addition to the vast Forbidden Knowledge held by the First Scholar, the Heads of the various Colleges around the city are constantly working to discover, organize, and protect new and old knowledge alike. While Erudithia wants to learn and compile everything there is to know, they also work tirelessly and remain vigilant so that powerful and dangerous knowledge does not fall into more unscrupulous hands.

Teingard is home to Rothweld, built on top of the Throne of the World. While it is not nearly as large as Erudithia, it has more than twice the population density. Rothweld is home to a major port, with the vast majority of sea traffic from abroad. It serves as a major trading hub between foreign continents and has brought in an exceptional amount of wealth for some of a great number of merchants and traders. Some of the finest Blacksmiths in the entire world take up residence in Rothweld, some even supplying entire armies and finding nearly as much fame and fortune as kings and emperors.



While many see the Rothweld that exists above ground, most speak in hushed whispers of the real city beneath the city. Honest merchants are not the only ones profiting, as beneath the streets is the booming Undermarket, specializing in contraband goods and services. Those who are in the know even suspect that the Undermarket brings in nearly twice as much money as the more “legitimate” business in the city. As a direct result of the thriving, but secretive underbelly of the city, a new type of “guard” arose. Fencers, the guards of the Undermarket, have come to be associated with professionalism and discreetness that is unmatched by any. Fencers are known to offer “services” that range from protecting merchandise and merchants to highly-paid assassinations of high-profile targets.

Kento, off the eastern coast of Amoria, contains the city of Shiroyin. Shiroyin is well-known for its unique architecture and layout. Built out around a giant, towering fortress, the city is a constant reminder of a time when the world was embroiled in constant war. Perhaps the most interesting of all the major cities in Amoria, Shiroyin is still ruled over by a military figurehead. While Shiroyin no longer engages in warfare, it still follows many military traditions and practices. Every citizen is encouraged to learn a martial discipline from an early age, continuing to hone it over their lifetime along whichever other trades they may choose to pursue. The citizens of Shiroyin in particular believe it is important to maintain discipline, tradition, and honor and that these principles help to strengthen their culture and prevent any unnecessary future warfare. The Kento region and Shiroyin in general are perhaps most well-known for producing the fearsome Samurai warriors, many of which now roam Amoria, offering their services as Rōnin.

Finally, to the South, beyond the Shadowed Mountains, are the Crumbling Lands. The Crumbling Lands are surrounded on all four sides by towering mountain peaks, blackened by volcanic ash and smoke. They are inaccessible save for a single tunnel leading through the mountain. Near the end of the Age of War, Shin's Fortress was constructed around the passageway. Shin's Fortress was a joint effort between all three regions, designed not only to keep people from entering, but also to keep anything from leaving the Crumbling Lands. The fortress is guarded night and day by men from all three regions, ensuring that nothing comes through Obsidian Passage.

The Crumbling Lands are rumored to be home to all manners of monstrosities, but they are merely rumors. Nothing has been seen or heard from since the end of the Age of War. The horrors of the Crumbling Lands are merely stories told in books and poems. Tales of giant beasts who could easily crush men under their feet, humongous fire breathing lizards, walking corpses, and horned demons, and the Tyrants of the Barbaros Empire, have all long since been regarded as merely stories to frighten children. However, there must be a reason why the passage is still guarded with such vigilance.



# MAIN SCENARIO

## PART 1

The group of unwitting adventurers, having been mysteriously torn from their reality and placed on Amoria must now struggle to survive and adjust to their new situation and surroundings.

They find themselves together in a room at the Tremere Inn within the city of Rothweld, slightly dazed and entirely confused. It's immediately apparent that they are not dreaming, nor is this an illusion. Everything is just as real as it seems. Merely a moment ago, they were sitting at work, playing a game, or preparing something for dinner. For whatever reason, these complete strangers are now sitting in a room together that is undoubtedly not of modern or even standard construction.

A vase of exotic looking flowers sits on a dresser against the western wall, a burning fireplace against the eastern wall, and a couple wooden beds with lumpy feather mattresses against the northern wall. Before anyone has had an opportunity to get their bearings, there is a loud knock at the door.

"Are you alright? What is all of that noise?"

## PART 2

After dealing with the stranger at the door, the individuals must decide to do next. They should probably leave the inn, take a look outside, and figure out where they are. At this point, it is obvious they have been transported somewhere, but no one has any concept of what "where" actually is, what the time period is. It's not quite obvious that they are no longer part of their previous reality and everything that entails.

Upon stepping outside and taking stock of the surrounding city, it is starting to become apparent that it is very foreign and slightly alien. While not modern, the construction appears to be a blend of western industrial revolution and old English architecture. Metal, steam and to a lesser extent electricity is nearly as prevalent as wood and stone in all of the buildings. They are no towering skyscraper or sleek buildings constructed from steel and glass, but it is far from mud and straw construction.

As soon as the group of people steps outside and starts to get their bearings, a short, stubby man runs up. He stops, gasping for breath, before turn and shouting, "Come on! We've been waiting, what ARE you doing!? Let's go, right now! Don't worry about your stuff; it's already waiting for you at the meeting." He looks at the group, expecting them to follow.

### **PART 3**

After quite a walk, the group arrives at what appears to be an old warehouse near the city docks. The stubby man raps on a side door, with a slit opening just above his head. "Password?" says the dark opening in the door. "Obsidian," your escort responds. Multiple locks and hinges can be heard unlatching from behind the door, as it slowly creaks open. "Quickly, go in before anyone sees us." As the group moves through the door into the pitch black room, the door quickly closes and latches behind them, shutting out any remaining light.

A flash of light can be seen a few feet away, a match igniting and lighting a candle. "Come closer, we didn't think you were going to accept the offer. We need to sort out the details before it's too late," says a deep, gruff voice, coming from the direction of the light. As the group slowly moves forward, everyone can barely make out the features of the man who is talking to

them. He is a large, grizzled man with a barrel chest and a massive scar on the left side of his face, from forehead to chin. "Are you ready to listen to what you have to do? The importance of carrying this out quickly and discreetly is of utmost importance. I asked you here because I've been told you are the best for the job, have I been misinformed?"

#### **PART 4**

"Alright, so we need you to break into Shin's Fortress and get through the Obsidian Passage. We know that the Ophesta is up to something, we need to know what they are planning and why now. This all stems from information given to us from our network. Apparently, a small group of heavily armed and armored men, bearing the crest of The Immovable have been seen going in and out of the fortress on a regular basis. We are not exactly sure when this started, but we do know that the frequency of these visits has been increasing as of late. We have also seen large crates being moved in and out along with the soldiers, we have no idea what is being taken in ... or worse, being brought back out. Furthermore, if there is some sort of cooperation going on with the guards at the fortress, this could be much more dangerous than we initially anticipated. I need you to leave town tonight. Head for Erudithia first and meet with our primary informant, he will locate you when you arrive. Do you have any questions?"

#### **PART 5**

"Okay, good. If that's all, your gear is waiting for you in the back. We've acquired equipment specific to each of your requests, in addition to a half dozen basic healing potions, and a month's supply of rations for each of you."



“Please, speak of this meeting to nobody and meet with your contact in Erudithia as soon as possible. You can head out through the back once you are done getting dressed and packing your bags.”

(At this point, allow the group to create their characters if they have not already done so. If they have already decided on a Discipline, this is the point where they can equip themselves with the armor and weapons that are appropriate. Finally, make sure that they have added the extra items to their inventory: 5 Potions and 30 Rations. Once the character creation and equipping process has been completed, move on to the next part.)

## **PART 6**

As the group moves out through the back of the warehouse, the stubby, short man approaches from the side. “So, what are you going to do next?”

(Allow the group to respond, chat amongst themselves, or ask additional questions here. If they don’t proceed appropriately, feel free to push them toward leaving the city and heading out in the wilderness. It’s time to get the adventure started!)

As the group is leaving the city, being careful to move through the back alleyways, they are attacked by a group of armed men dressed completely in black. (Note: If the group defeats or scares off the group of assassins quickly enough, you can reward them with a crumpled note that has the words University Inn scrawled on it.)

(This is a good opportunity to try combat for the first time, if necessary create a basic, low-level Bandit character using the Stock Enemy List as a reference for power and attributes. Make sure the encounter is not difficult, but challenging and lengthy enough to give everyone an introduction to

fighting and working together as a group. Once the group has taken a moment to collect the spoils, record their experience points and finish up the battle, move on to the next part.)

## **PART 7**

As the group regains their bearings, following the fight, it seems like the wisest course of action right now would be escaping the cramped alleyways and getting out of the city entirely.

(Pause here if the group needs to discuss a plan or next course of action.)

After deciding to leave the city, the group finds themselves travelling along the road toward the region of Ophesta.

(At this point, encourage the group to stop and take stock of what has happened. After the whirlwind of events, being mistaken for a different group, and being attacked by assassins because of it, it might be time to figure out what is actually happening. As the GM, you may choose to diverge from the straight path toward Erudithia at this point. You may want to try creating a few homebrew side quests to send the group on before they reach Erudithia, so that they can gain additional gear and experience before arriving at the next plot point. Some examples could be: Spotting and helping a merchant who has been attacked by bandits, stopping off in small towns and helping with nearby pest infestations, or simply exploring off of the beaten path a little bit to see what else there could be to find. Caverns, abandoned hideouts, nests, and mines are useful ideas for quick, throwaway dungeon crawl encounters.)

(Once you group has completed any additional encounters that they would like, you can have them reach the Ophesta-Teingard Border Crossing



station and talk to the guards. The guards will ask for their papers, at which point the only “papers” they will have should be the crumpled note from the assassins in Rothweld. After arguing with the guard, if this note is presented, he will leave and a different guard will return. This guard will allow them to pass, but tell them to shut up and quickly move on, returning the note to them. This should be slightly mysterious and confusing for the players, who are obviously being mistaken for someone else. If you prefer, you can skip this entire encounter completely and have them simply pass through unimpeded.)

## **PART 8**

By now, the group has reached Erudithia with a few additional battles under their belts. They have had time to get to know each other a little bit better and accept the new reality that they are faced with, even if they still don’t completely understand what they have been swept up in. Dusk has already fallen upon reaching the city and one of the group members discovers a crumpled note mentioning the University Inn inside the city center. (Note: If you had the group visit the border crossing between Teingard and Ophesta, it is likely that they already discovered the note on the assassins in Rothweld. Simply asking for a list of inns from the guard at the city gate will provide the name and directions to University Inn). It would be a good idea to stop and rest here, before attempting to determine who the informant is.

Upon reaching the University Inn, the group finds out that the room has already been paid for. (If further inquiry is placed, the innkeeper should act slightly confused, saying that the room was paid for by one of them. Of course, who else would it have been? It was booked days in advance and debited from one of their accounts.)

(When the group arrives at the Inn and rents a room, allow them to rest momentarily. In the middle of the night, the informant will enter the room through the window and wake everyone for an impromptu meeting.)

"Hello gentlemen (and ladies), I was informed that you recently entered the city. I have the information that you are looking for, but first, I am going to have to ask you to perform a favor for me. I understand that you just got here, but now it is time for you to leave. You are going to head to Shiroyin and meet with my colleague; he will be waiting for you at the Setsu Shrine once you arrive. He will have a package for you and it's imperative that you bring this package straight back to me. What do you say?"

(Allow the group to respond to the informant's request, ask questions, or even scoff at the request. Try to steer the conversation toward accepting the task. The informant will refuse to help if the group refuses to carry out the task.)

"It's imperative that you do not open this package, do not even think about opening the package. Well, if you do... I can't exactly be held responsible for any, well... significant misfortune that could possibly, maybe, probably befall you immediately afterwards. Well, I'm off now, things to do, people to see, you know how it is. Cheers!"

(Allow the informant to hint to the group that they should probably check out the bank nearby)

The informant leaps out of the window and on to the adjacent roof, sprinting off into the night.

The group finishes out the night at the inn, preparing to depart in the morning.

(Allow the group to briefly explore the city, purchase supplies or equipment, learn new disciplines, and make proper preparations for the long road ahead. If the group decides to head to the bank, which should be encouraged – as they likely do not have any money at this point, you can inform them how much they currently have in holdings. It's a good idea to not give too much, enough for some minor gear upgrades and supplies. To add a bit more to the mystery surrounding their appearance in Amoria, the bank will check their identity by the teller drawing blood from their hand using an automated machine. Stress or hint at this by repeating the process with each group member that check their account. It is also a good idea to make sure that they each grab an Adventuring Pack at this point, which is helpful for safely camping in the wilderness and along the roads.)

Once the group has finished exploring Erudithia, they decide to depart for the Kento region. It will be a long journey, practically on the opposite side of the continent.

## **PART 9**

At this stage, the party has quite a long distance to travel to make it to the Kento region. It's possible for the party to embark on a variety of different quests on the way to Shiroyin. It is best to seek out random work at small towns and villages along the way in order to earn some extra money and experience. The party should gain a few levels and experiment with trying to gain a few additional skills from multiple disciplines.

Ensure that the party is constantly moving toward its destination during this process, so that focus is not lost on the primary adventure. Eventually, they should reach Shiroyin and make contact with the informant's colleague. After putting the group through a series of tests to verify that they are who

they claim to be, he will release the package. From here, the story can diverge into two separate paths. If the package remains unopened and is returned to the informant, he will offer a large reward and help the party gain access to Shin's Fortress and the Obsidian Passage. However, if the party decides to open the package and remove the contents, the informant will no longer be willing to share information or help the party out. They will find more gold and gems in the package than if they were to return it to the informant, but will have to find a different means of accessing Shin's Fortress.

It's important to not hint at either outcome, but instead, to simply overemphasize how valuable the package and its contents are. Leave it up to the group to decide which approach they would like to take for progressing to the next stage of the quest.

## **PART 10**

The group should start readying themselves for the trip to Shin's Fortress. This means maximizes Ranks and Skills if possible, and upgrading equipment to its best possible state. It is likely to be a perilous journey fraught with peril, a journey from which there is no turning back.



# CREDITS

## SHŌTEN

PRESIDENT: CLAUDE COMAIR

INSTRUCTOR: SCOTT DODSON

DESIGNER: CHRIS MORRIS (GAT 212 S13-A)

2/17/2013

COPYRIGHT © 2013 DIGIPEN (USA) CORPORATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.