

Microsoft®



Asheron's Call™



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Starting Asheron's Call

The Story of Asheron's Call

The legendary magician Asheron has summoned many to Dereth; only the bravest have answered the call. Here, warriors will battle creatures of awesome might, magicians will discover magical items and create new spells, and treasure hunters will seek out precious relics. Quests will impel adventurers to uncover the wealth and lore of legend. Adventurers will form allegiances and fellowships, for often many can accomplish what one alone cannot.

What Came Before

In ancient times a powerful race—the Empyrean—flourished across the island of Dereth. Their empire fell into ruin when the Empyrean magician Asheron accidentally opened a portal to another world, ushering in hordes of vicious monsters known as Olthoi. Asheron sent the Empyrean into hiding in a dimension between worlds, and stayed behind to try to find a way to defeat the Olthoi.

The Empyrean's flight opened more portals that summoned other creatures to Dereth, among them humans from the world of Ispar. Asheron quickly saw the humans' potential as allies, and concentrated on summoning more to Dereth. For many years the humans lived as Olthoi slaves, but a band of rebels—led by the noblewoman Elysa Strathelar and the warrior Thorsten Cragstone—chose to fight. Aided by Asheron's magic, they slew the Olthoi queen and won freedom, though the fight cost Thorsten his life. Now, ten years later, Elysa has vanished and Asheron's whereabouts are unknown.

Ispar: The World That Was

Ispar is home to many different cultures, including the warlike Aluvians, the scholarly Gharu'ndim, and the disciplined Sho. Recently, portals began to appear there. They seemed to exert a mystical pull upon those who saw them, almost as though someone were beckoning from the other side.

The most adventurous answered the call and were transported to Dereth with no way to return. At first the portals appeared only in the land of Aluvia, but in recent years they have spread to the Gharu'n and Sho realms. Their spread may well continue into other lands.

Where Did Portals Come From?

The portals found on Dereth are a remnant of the Empyrean civilization. Asheron himself created the first one, and soon after their use spread across Dereth, allowing instantaneous travel all over the island—and to the catacombs beneath it—through the flow of portal space.

Asheron also experimented with portals for travel to and from other worlds until one experiment unleashed the Olthoi upon Dereth. When the Empyrean fled the world through portals Asheron created to save them, their departure produced a disruption in portal space. This caused many new portals to appear in Dereth from other worlds—including Ispar, the human homeworld.



Dereth: The World That Is

When humans first arrived in Dereth, it was a world in ruins, overrun with ferocious creatures. Faced with the prospect that they might never return to Ispaar, humans have made the island their new home. They have built towns and carved out small pockets of safety in a perilous world.

Though the Empyrean have vanished, some of what they wrought remains: magic flows through the land; mystical portals carry travelers many miles in a heartbeat; enchanted Lifestones bind the spirits of those who use them, allowing the dead to be resurrected. Those who

come back to life find that some of their life force has been drained away—some say to power Asheron's magic. Even more ancient secrets may lie amid the crumbled remnants of Empyrean society.

The World That Could Be

Many challenges await newcomers to Dereth. Exploring the island is both dangerous and rewarding: monsters lurk everywhere, especially in the hostile Direlands, and wondrous sights, both natural and crafted by the Empyrean, await the adventurous. Scores of dungeons—some built by the Empyrean for arcane purposes, others dug by the Olthoi or other creatures as lairs—riddle the earth. Somewhere among these is the stronghold of Asheron himself, its location lost with Elysa Strathelar and waiting to be found again.



The island of Dereth is strange, beautiful, and perilous. Power and riches are here for the taking. Many mysteries wait to be explored and solved, not the least of which is the whereabouts of the lost Empyrean race. And, it is said, there is a deep and ancient darkness at the heart of things, striving to reawaken. These quests are not for the faint of heart—brave adventurers are needed to explore the dangerous wilds, probe the deepest catacombs, and rise as rulers in this new world.

Installation Overview

To play Asheron's Call, you'll need to complete the following procedures:

- Install software for the MSN Gaming Zone (if you have not already installed it).
- Install software for Asheron's Call.
- Create a Zone ID to play Asheron's Call on the Zone (if you do not already have a Zone ID).
- Get a subscription to play Asheron's Call on the Zone. A free 30-day subscription is included with your purchase of the Asheron's Call retail box.

Installing Software for the MSN Gaming Zone

If you already have the Zone software installed, skip to "Installing Software for Asheron's Call."

- 1 Start Microsoft® Windows® 95 or later.
- 2 Insert the Microsoft Asheron's Call CD into the CD-ROM drive.
If you have not already installed software for the Zone, you will be prompted to install it.
- 3 Follow the instructions to complete installation of the Zone software.

Installing Software for Asheron's Call

The following procedure assumes that you have installed software for the MSN Gaming Zone on your computer.

- 1 On the Asheron's Call console, click **Install** to install Asheron's Call.
- 2 Follow the instructions to complete the installation.
After you complete the installation, you'll return to the Asheron's Call console.
- 3 To begin playing Asheron's Call on the Zone, click Play.

Creating a Zone ID to Play on the Zone

The following procedure assumes that you have installed software for the Zone and for Asheron's Call. A Zone ID is required to play Asheron's Call. If you already have a Zone ID, skip to "Subscribing to Asheron's Call."

- 1 On the Zone welcome page for Asheron's Call, click **Free Sign Up**.
This will take you to a Web page where you will create a Zone ID.
- 2 Follow the instructions to create a Zone ID.

Subscribing to Asheron's Call

The following procedure assumes that you have installed software for the Zone and for Asheron's Call, and that you have created a Zone ID.

- 1 In the retail box is a coupon number that you must enter for your free 30-day subscription. Make sure you have this number handy.
- 2 On the Zone welcome page for Asheron's Call, click **Subscribe**.
This will take you to a Web page where you will enter your coupon number for a free 30-day subscription.
- 3 Follow the instructions to subscribe.

You will need a valid credit card number to activate your free trial subscription, and to pay for your subscription renewal when the free trial is over. When it's time to renew your subscription, you will see a prompt when you log on to the Zone.

Playing Asheron's Call on the MSN Gaming Zone

The following procedure assumes that you have installed software for Asheron's Call and for the Zone, you have created a Zone ID, and you have subscribed to play Asheron's Call on the Zone.

- 1 Double-click the **Asheron's Call** shortcut that was installed on your desktop.
If you chose not to install a shortcut, on the **Start** menu, point to **Programs**, then to **Microsoft Games**, then to **Asheron's Call**, and then click **Asheron's Call**.
- 2 On the Asheron's Call console, click **Play** to go to the Asheron's Call Play page on the MSN Gaming Zone.
- 3 On the Asheron's Call Play page, click the name of the game world you want to enter.
- 4 Choose a chat room from which to launch the game.

3D Setup

When you first play Asheron's Call, you'll see a dialog box asking you if you want to enable your 3D card's settings. To keep the dialog box from reappearing, select the **Don't show this dialog again** check box.

The MSN Gaming Zone

The MSN Gaming Zone is an online gaming service that allows you to play fun, exciting, and challenging games on the Internet. At the Zone, you can compete against some of the world's best players or just meet new people over a casual game. Get the latest game tips and news about Asheron's Call and other Zone Premium Games. You can also play in free Zone game rooms, such as Hearts, Spades, and Backgammon.

To change 3D settings after initial setup

- 1 On the **Start** menu, point to **Programs**, then to **Microsoft Games**, and then to **Asheron's Call**.
- 2 Click **Settings**.

Exiting Asheron's Call

- 1 To exit Asheron's Call, click the **Exit** button in the upper-right corner of the game screen, or click the **Options** button, and then on the **Options** tab click **Leave World**.
- 2 Click **Exit** on the main menu.

Uninstalling Asheron's Call

- 1 On the **Start** menu, point to **Settings**, and then click **Control Panel**.
- 2 Double-click **Add/Remove Programs**.
- 3 Click **Microsoft Asheron's Call** in the list of programs, and then click **Add/Remove**. This will bring up the Asheron's Call console.
- 4 In the console, click **Remove**, and then click **Continue** at the bottom of the console.

You will see a message telling you that Asheron's Call has been successfully removed.

Troubleshooting Installation

CD

AutoPlay should start shortly after you insert your Asheron's Call CD, displaying the Asheron's Call console. If this does not happen, double-click **My Computer** on your desktop, double-click your CD drive icon, and then double-click the file **Setup.exe**. Refer to the Readme file for known issues affecting installation.

Zone

- 1 On the Zone home page (<http://www.zone.com>), click **Help**.
- 2 Under **Technical Help**, click **Zone FAQ**.
- 3 Read "Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on Connecting to the Zone."

Setting Game Options

You can change options for the game, your character, sound, and graphics. You can modify keyboard settings and screen resolution, for example.

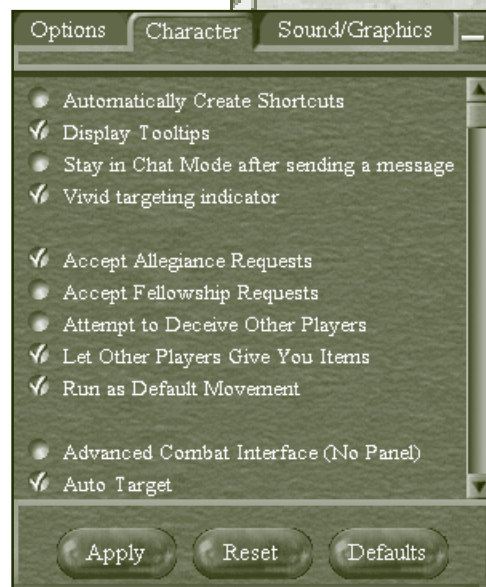
- 1 Click the **Options** button, and then click the tab with the settings you want to change.
- 2 To apply character, sound, or graphic settings, click **Apply**.

Getting Help

Finding In-Game Help

- Click the question mark button to see the in-game Help file.

You might also be able to find an advocate on duty in one of the advocate towers. Player advocates are player characters who are there to help you and answer questions. They wield glowing shields in the game. Advocate towers are the buildings with four tall spires near the portals to the training halls in the starting outpost locations.



Finding Asheron's Call Gaming Tips on the Zone

The Asheron's Call Handbook contains articles on many aspects of gameplay, including allegiance, fellowship, magic, and combat.

- 1 On the Zone home page (<http://www.zone.com/>), under **Premium Games**, click **Asheron's Call**.
- 2 On the Asheron's Call start page, click **Handbook** or **Game Help**.

Finding Help About the Zone

On the Zone home page, you can also find links to topics concerning Zone rules, Zone FAQs, ZoneFriends, terms of service, technical support, billing, and items of interest to new Zone users.

- 1 On the Zone home page (<http://www.zone.com/>), click **Help**.
- 2 If you can't find the help you want on this page, under **Welcome to Help!** click **Technical Support** or **Sysop Chat Room**.

Zone sysops and technical representatives will be staffing these areas during the posted support hours.

Your Player Character

Each Asheron's Call character is a unique combination of heritage group, appearance, profession, attributes, and skills. If you spend the time to create a carefully constructed character, you will increase both that character's survival potential and your own enjoyment of the game.

The Heritage Groups of Dereth

There are three major heritage groups currently inhabiting the world of Dereth:

The Aluvians

Aluvians are known to be warlike, but they are also loyal to their own people. Their towns, such as Holtburg and Rithwic, are found in the northeast regions of Osteth, the eastern landmass of Dereth. They follow the Code of Pwyll, which teaches that they must protect the weak, and that true justice is above mere laws. Aluvian characters are automatically trained in Assess Person and Dagger.

The Gharu'ndim

The Gharu'ndim are desert-dwelling traders who believe that a sharp mind is preferable to a sharp sword, but they are skilled fighters when necessary. Their towns, such as Yaraq and Samsur, are found in the central and western regions of Osteth. Their national hero is the revered poet Yasif ibn Salayyar. Gharu'ndim characters are automatically trained in Appraise Item and Staff.

The Sho

The Sho are a highly disciplined and reserved people who regard fighting, particularly unarmed combat, as an art form. Their towns, such as Shoushi and Yanshi, are found in the southeastern regions of Osteth. Their guiding principles were handed down to them by the prophet Jojii. Sho characters are automatically trained in Unarmed Combat.



Aluvian Names

Aluvian names resemble Old and Middle English names. Most take one of three forms: first name only, first name plus a title like “the Fair” or “the Wild”, or a first name and a surname ending with “son” (for men) or “mad” (for women). Example names include:

Men	Women
Brethym	Girdulla
Cyndal Farson	Adelia Brathmad
Ostan the Quick	Ceranne the Golden
Seltor	Feristal
Trothard Litson	Megurtha Dermad
Wodrith the Bear	Lanida the True

Gharu’ndim Names

Gharu’ndim names are Middle Eastern in flavor. Most take one of three forms: first name only, first name and a surname, separated by “al-”, or a first name and a surname, separated by “ibn” (for men) or “bint” (for women). Example names include:

Men	Women
Isuftris	Biyafah
Akkah al-Munib	Yahida al-Qa’nif
Hanril ibn Tadwas	Fathna bint Baljid
Jamraj	Nayiza
Qumud al-Riyf	Mara al-Luq
Zur ibn Atri	Djusala bint Sida

Sho Names

Sho names resemble both Japanese and Chinese names. Most include a first name and a surname, both of which can be hyphenated. Sho surnames come before the given name. Example names include:

Men	Women
Jhong Mi	Zai Nozhen
Hei Shikken	Den Lu-ki
Kou-long Shui	Guroku Soben
Lun Zen	Ka-yen Ha
Ryuchao Xao	Chun Yao
Eng Lun-ji	Ai Rashoku

Your Character’s Profession

If you choose a profession for your character, his or her attributes and skills are typical for a character in that profession. If you want, you can adjust attributes and skills in the **Attributes** and **Skills** screens during character creation. You can also spend experience points to raise attributes and skills during gameplay, and train your character in other skills as you gain character levels.

If skills are adjusted too far from the profession template during character creation, the character’s profession will be changed to adventurer. If you click **Custom Character** rather than a profession, that character will also be known as an adventurer.

For more information on spending experience points and skill points to raise and train skills during gameplay, see “Improving Your Character by Applying Experience Points” in Chapter Five, “Combat and Experience.”

Professions

Automatically trained skills will vary depending on the heritage group of your character. Starting equipment may vary depending on heritage and skills.

Archers

Archers are expert with bows. An archer begins the game with a practice bow, arrows, and spear. An archer’s attributes are weighted toward Coordination and Quickness. Archers have specialized



skills in Bow, Missile Defense, and Fletching. They are trained in Appraise Weapon, Assess Person, Jump, Magic Defense, Run, and Spear.

Blademasters

Blademasters are expert with swords and knives. A blademaster begins the game with a practice sword, practice throwing weapons, and a practice knife. A blademaster's attributes are weighted toward Strength, Coordination, and Quickness. Blademasters have specialized skills in Melee Defense and Sword. They are trained in Appraise Weapon, Dagger, Jump, Magic Defense, Run, and Thrown Weapons.

Enchanters

Enchanters use spells that affect the abilities of creatures and the properties of items. An enchanter begins the game with a magic wand, three Item Enchantment spells, three Creature Enchantment spells, and the magical components to cast them. An enchanter's attributes are weighted toward Focus and Self. Enchanters have specialized skills in Appraise Magic Item, Creature Enchantment, and Item Enchantment. They are trained in Arcane Lore, Jump, Magic Defense, Mana Conversion, and Run.

Life Mages

Life mages specialize in healing and protective magic, and rendering medical aid. A life mage begins the game with two healing kits, a magic wand, three Life Magic spells, and the magical components to cast them. A life mage's attributes are weighted toward Coordination, Focus, and Self. Life mages are specialized in Life Magic. They are trained in Alchemy, Arcane Lore, Assess Person, Healing, Jump, Magic Defense, Mana Conversion, and Run.

Sorcerers

Sorcerers are magic users specializing in combat magic and manipulating magical energy (mana). A sorcerer begins the game with a magic wand, three War Magic spells, and the magical components to cast them. A sorcerer's attributes are weighted toward Focus and Self. Sorcerers have specialized skills in Arcane Lore, Mana Conversion, and War Magic. They are trained in Appraise Magic Item, Jump, Magic Defense, and Run.

Vagabonds

Vagabonds specialize in picking locks, appraisal, and deception. A vagabond begins the game with a practice dagger and practice lockpicks. A vagabond's attributes are weighted toward Coordination, Quickness, and Focus. Vagabonds have specialized skills in Appraise Item, Appraise Magic Item, Deception, and Lockpick. They are trained in Cooking, Dagger, Jump, Magic Defense, Missile Defense, Run, and Thrown Weapons.



Warriors

Warriors specialize in combat with a variety of weapons. A warrior begins the game with a practice sword, a practice crossbow, 30 crossbow quarrels, and a practice axe. A warrior's attributes are weighted toward Strength, Endurance, and Coordination. Warriors are not specialized in any skill, but are trained in Appraise Armor, Appraise Weapon, Assess Creature, Axe, Crossbow, Jump, Magic Defense, Melee Defense, Missile Defense, Run, and Sword.

Custom Character or Adventurer

If you click **Custom Character** rather than a profession, you will begin with all attributes preset to a value of 10. You can then assign attribute credits and train skills however you wish. Your character will be known as an adventurer.

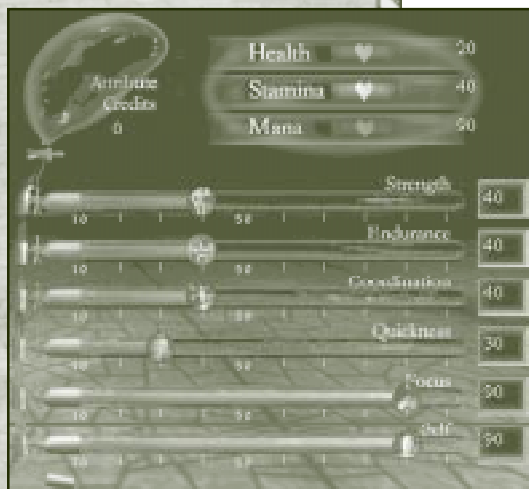
Your Attributes and Skills

Your character begins the game with certain levels of primary and secondary attributes, which depend on choices you make during character creation. As your character gains experience during gameplay, you earn experience points that you can assign to raise attributes or skills.

How well your character will use his or her skills during gameplay depends in part on the attributes assigned during character creation. For more information on how attributes are related to skills, see "Skills" later in this chapter.

Primary Attributes

Primary attributes are your character's basic qualities: Strength, Endurance, Coordination, Quickness, Focus, and Self.



Strength

Strength represents your character's raw physical force. A character with greater Strength can do more damage during combat, and carry heavier loads.

Strength is particularly valuable for blademasters and warriors, and for custom characters who will be wielding melee weapons, such as axes, maces, and swords.

Endurance

Endurance relates to how much damage your character can take, and how much energy he or she has. Assigning more points to Endurance, either during character creation or during gameplay, will raise your character's Health and Stamina.

Endurance is valuable for all characters, but particularly for blademasters, enchanters, life mages, sorcerers, and warriors.

Coordination

Coordination is your character's ability to perform physical actions successfully and skillfully. Along with Quickness, it is important to the ability to defend yourself against opponents' attacks. The higher your Coordination, the less likely you are to be hit by your opponent. Higher Coordination relates directly to higher accuracy in wielding missile weapons, such as bows and crossbows, to performing trade skills such as Alchemy and Fletching, and to skill in picking locks.

Coordination is particularly valuable for archers, blademasters, life mages, vagabonds, and warriors.

Quickness

Quickness represents the speed with which your character can perform actions such as attacking and evading attack. Along with Coordination, it is important to the ability to defend yourself. The higher your Quickness, the less likely you are to be hit by your opponent.

Quickness is valuable for all characters, but particularly for archers, blademasters, vagabonds, and warriors.

Focus

Focus represents the amount of concentrated mental energy your character can devote to a task. It is important to any activity that requires mental effort, such as appraising items and assessing characters and creatures. It relates directly to the abilities to cast magic spells, use healing kits, perform trade skills, and pick locks.

Focus is particularly valuable for enchanters, life mages, sorcerers, and vagabonds.

Self

Self represents the level of your character's willpower, and the level of magical ability in a spellcaster. As willpower, it determines the starting level of the skills Leadership and Loyalty. The higher the Self attribute in a patron, the more experience points he or she will receive from vassals. The higher the Self in a vassal, the more experience points will be passed up to a patron.

Assigning more points to Self during character creation or gameplay will raise your character's Mana.

Self is particularly valuable for enchanters, life mages, and sorcerers.

Secondary Attributes

In the upper-right area of the **Attributes** screen are three bars indicating present levels of the secondary attributes, Health,



Health	♥	20
Stamina	♥	40
Mana	♥	50



Stamina, and Mana. Health and Stamina are based on the primary attribute Endurance, and Mana is based on Self. Secondary attributes cannot be raised directly, but changes will occur in them as you raise and lower the values of these primary attributes.

Health

Health represents the amount of damage your character can take without dying. When your character's Health falls to zero during gameplay, death occurs.

To restore Health, have your character sit or lie down, use a healing kit, or drink a health draught or healing potion. Health will restore itself gradually even if you are walking or running, but resting speeds the process. There are also magic spells that can restore Health.

Stamina

Stamina represents the amount of energy your character can expend without becoming exhausted. When a character's Stamina falls to zero, the character will be unable to run quickly, jump, or use power attacks in combat. Your ability to evade attacks will also be reduced. Sitting or lying increases the rate at which you regain Stamina.

Even with a Stamina level of zero, the character will still be able to walk, attack at minimum power, and perform minor game actions such as picking up items and chatting.

Attacking and evading attacks both use Stamina, as does running when your character is burdened. The best ways to restore Stamina are to rest your character, eat food, drink, or use a Stamina potion. If your character is losing Stamina because he or she is carrying too much, lightening the load will reduce the rate at which the character burns Stamina.

Mana

Mana represents the amount of magical energy available to your character for casting spells. When a character's Mana falls to zero, he or she will no longer be able to cast spells. Your character will regain spent Mana over time. Mana potions and draughts are also available to restore spent Mana.

Raising Attributes

During Character Creation

If you click **Custom Character** on the **Professions** screen, you'll be raising all your character's attributes from scratch in the **Attributes** screen. If you choose a profession for your character, you can still adjust attributes in this screen.

To adjust the level of an attribute during character creation

- In the **Attributes** screen, drag the slider for the attribute you want to adjust.

You will see the numbers change to reflect the change in that attribute.

In the upper-left area of the screen is a reservoir of total **Attribute Credits** remaining to be assigned. The level of the reservoir and the number of unassigned **Attribute Credits** will rise and fall as you adjust the attribute levels. If you have unused credits when you click **Next**, you will be prompted to spend them, or continue and lose the credits.

During Gameplay

While you're playing the game, you can see your character's present attribute levels, and assign available experience points to raise attributes.

To assign experience points to raise attributes

- 1 Click the **Skills and Attributes** button on the **Player** panel, and then click the **Attributes** tab.
- 2 Click the attribute that you want to raise.
If you have enough unassigned experience points to raise the attribute, you will see an upward-pointing green triangle at the bottom right of the panel.
- 3 Click the triangle to raise the attribute.

If you do not have enough points to raise the attribute you click, you will see "Need to earn [N] more XP" in the space below the panel.

Skills

The skills your character begins the game with are determined by several factors:

- The profession you choose in the **Profession** screen
- Adjustments you make to starting attributes in the **Attributes** screen
- Adjustments you make directly to starting skills in the **Skills** screen

During character creation, you can see in the **Skills** screen the formula for how starting attributes affect starting skill levels by clicking a skill and looking in the area below the list. The information shows how each skill is used in the game, and how attributes are used to determine skill levels. For example, when

Training Credits

Training credits are available only during character creation. You can spend training credits to raise character skills from untrained to trained, or from trained to specialized. Available credits are deducted from your total when a skill is raised in status, and added to your total when a skill is lowered.

Experience Points

Your character earns experience points by engaging in combat and other skills (Alchemy, Cooking, and Fletching). You can spend these points to raise attributes and skills during gameplay.

Trade Skills

Experience points can also be earned by using trade skills to create useful items. Your character performs these skills by using the appropriate materials to create the finished item. There are presently three trade skills:

Alchemy uses gemstones and other materials to make spell components, potions, and alchemical oils for use in Cooking and Fletching. Life mages are automatically created with Alchemy as a trained skill.



Example: to make powdered azurite, double-click your mortar and pestle in inventory, and then click an azurite gem in inventory.

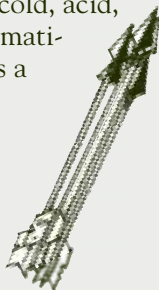


Cooking uses ingredients to produce food items. Alchemical oils created by characters with Alchemy as a trained skill can also be added to foods to alter the items' effects. Vagabonds are automatically created with Cooking as a trained skill.

Example: to make dough, double-click a bag of flour in inventory, and then click a flask of water in inventory.

Fletching uses shafts and arrowheads to make arrows and crossbow quarrels. Alchemical oils also can be added to the arrowheads to make them do specific kinds of damage, such as fire, cold, acid, or electrical. Archers are automatically created with Fletching as a specialized skill.

Example: to make an arrow, double-click your arrowheads in inventory, and then click the arrow shafts in inventory.



you click the skill Alchemy, you will see that this skill lets you prepare gemstone components, potions, and oils, and that your skill level is based upon the formula: $\text{Alchemy} = (\text{Coordination} + \text{Focus}) / 3$.

When you create a custom character your skill levels will be set to the minimum for your character's heritage group, and you will receive training credits that you can use to raise any skills you want.

Skills are divided into four advancement classes:

Specialized Skills are those that a character has developed to a high level of proficiency. Using a specialized skill or applying experience points during gameplay will raise a character's ability in that skill more quickly than using a trained skill. You can raise a skill to specialized only during character creation.

Trained Skills are those for which a character has training, but not to the extent of specialization. Using a trained skill or applying experience points during gameplay will raise a character's ability in that skill, but not as quickly as using a specialized skill.

Untrained Skills are those in which your character has not been trained. Your character may attempt to use these skills, but using them will not raise the skill level. You cannot spend experience points to raise the value of an untrained skill. You can raise an untrained skill to trained by assigning skill credits.

Unusable Skills are those a character cannot use at all until he or she raises them to trained. You can raise an unusable skill directly to trained by assigning skill credits to it.

Raising Skills

During Character Creation

If you are creating a custom character, you will have training credits available to spend on raising skills when you enter the **Skills** screen. If you have chosen a profession for your character, you will not have any credits available.

To make training credits available, lower the level of trained or specialized skills.

To lower the level of a skill

- Click a downward-pointing triangle to lower the skill.

The number on the triangle will now be available to use in raising other skills.

Some skills are automatically trained in members of certain professions or heritage groups. These skills cannot be lowered.

To raise the level of a skill

- Click an upward-pointing green triangle to raise a skill.

If you have fewer credits than the value on the triangle, the skill cannot be raised.

Make sure you use all your training credits. If you have unused training credits when you click **Next**, you will be prompted to spend them, or lose them if you choose to continue.

During Gameplay

As your character's level increases during gameplay, he or she will earn skill credits. These can be used to raise untrained and unusable skills to trained skills during gameplay.

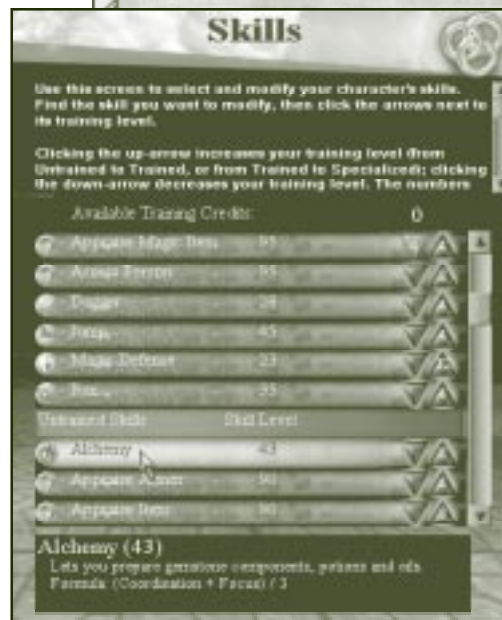
Trained and specialized skills increase as your character uses them. In addition, you may assign available experience points at any time to improve skills that are trained or specialized.

While you're playing the game, you can see your character's present skill levels, and you can assign available experience points to raise skills.

To assign experience points to raise skills

- 1 Click the **Skills and Attributes** button at the bottom of the **Player** panel, and then click the **Skills** tab.
- 2 Click the trained or specialized skill that you want to raise.
If there are enough unassigned experience points or skill credits to raise the skill, you will see an upward-pointing green triangle at the bottom right of the panel.
- 3 Click the triangle to raise the skill.

If you do not have enough experience points or skill credits to raise the skill you click, you will see "Need to earn [N] more XP (or skill credits)" in the space below the panel.



Character Levels

Character levels are a measure of the game experience your character gains. Your character begins the game at Level 1 and gains levels based on the number of experience points earned. At the top of the **Skills** tab you will see the number of experience points required to attain the next level.

Skill Credits

As your character gains character levels during gameplay, he or she is awarded skill credits. These can be used to raise untrained or unusable skills to trained.

Chapter Three

Nine Dereth Towns - A Guide for Newcomers



The A'mun Desert is a hostile place, reminiscent of the trackless Naqut on Ispar. The dunes stretch beneath the sweltering sun for mile upon mile, with little water or hope of shelter. Even within such harsh lands, however, there are rare islands of succor: oases where fresh water miraculously bubbles forth, creating motes of greenery amid the wastes. Such a place is Al-Arqas (literally, "The Haven"), which sprang into being only recently, when Gharu'ndim desert-walkers discovered a hitherto unknown spring in the A'mun's southern expanses. Though less than half a year old, the town is already flourishing, as it provides a convenient halfway-point for travelers moving between Yaraq and southern towns like Uziz and Khayyaban.

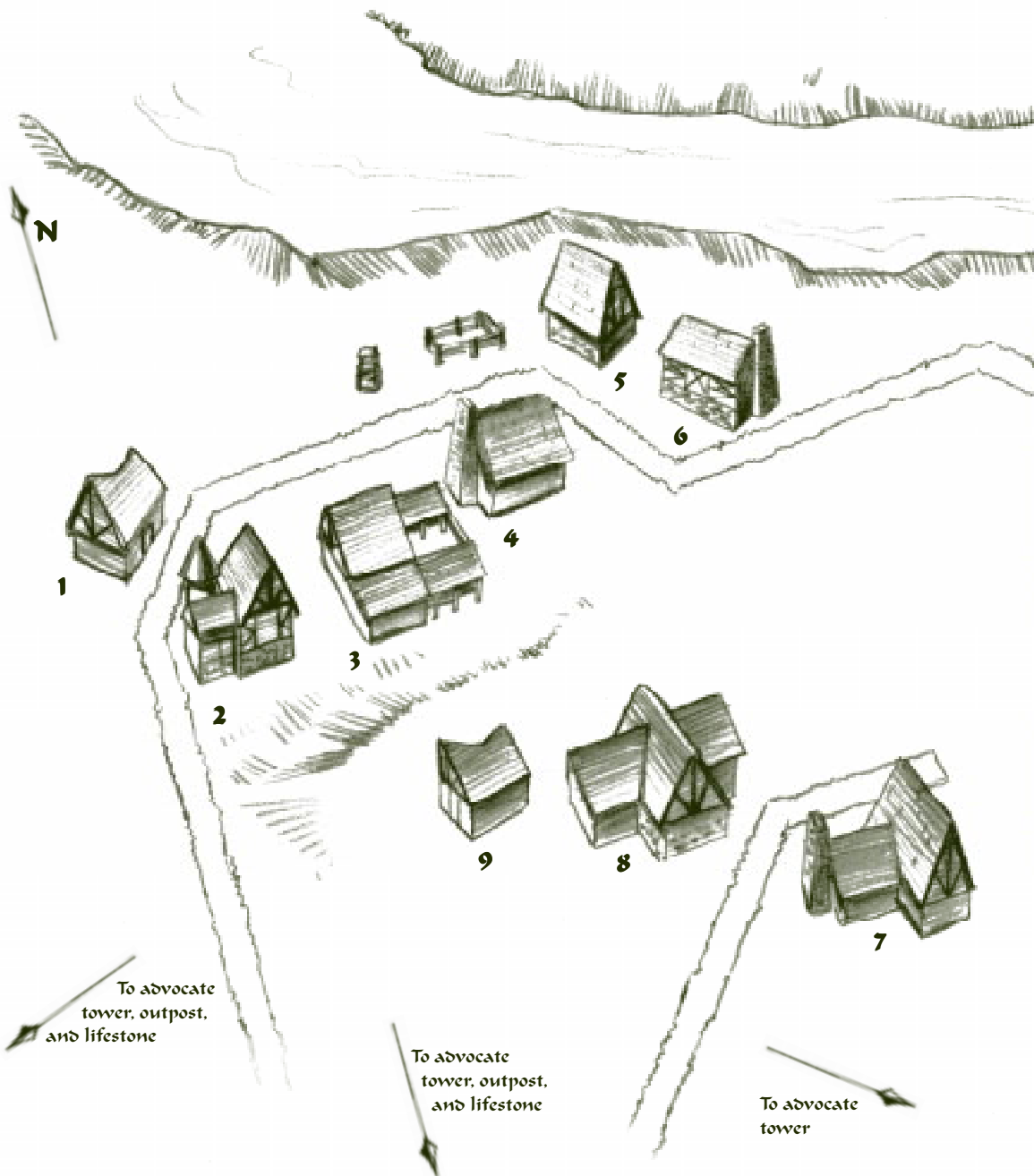
Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Armaments of Truth	Smith Dah bint Nas	Weapons, Armor, Shields, Helmets
	Bowyer Muta al-Mai	Bows, Arrows, Fletching Supplies
2 Sidzika's Supplies	Sidzika the Grocer	Food, Cooking Supplies
	Bashkiya the Scribe	Parchment, Books
	Tailor Najsun	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
	Archmage Jiz ibn Ijfai	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
3 Empty Tent		
4 Tavern at Al-Arqas	Itir ibn Ativ the Barkeep	Drinks, Food, Rumors
	Qufar ibn Ijtalwa	Miscellaneous Gear
5 House of Treasure	Hinnabqiq the Jeweler	Gems, Jewelry
6 House of Peace	Healer Sunwi	Healing Supplies and Services

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Djubar Amitri**, a pool of fresh, surprisingly cool water, forms the heart of the oasis where Al-Arqas has arisen. Though it is small, the spring that feeds it keeps it filled, even during the dry season. Less than a year ago, the pool began to emit clouds of cold mist. The reason for this is unknown, though doomsayers claim it heralds a coming disaster.
- In the dunes east of the oasis, a portal leads to an old compound once used by the Emyprean to train their young in the arts of war. The portal was buried beneath the sands until shortly after the Gharu'ndim first arrived in Dereth, when a storm uncovered it. For a time, bandits dwelt within, but they were driven out when the desert folk settled Al-Arqas. Now, Drudges prowl its empty vaults.



HOLTBURG

circa 70 P.V.

Standing on a hill overlooking the River Prosper as it runs from the heights of Mount Esper into the lowlands, the town of Holtburg was one of the first Aluvian villages. Settlers erected it in 2 P.Y. (Portal Year, time dating from the year humans overthrew Olthoi rule), having struck out into the wilderness from the safety of nearby Cragstone to log the vast Tiofor Wood to the west. The town has since become a major waypoint for travelers, as it stands between the villages surrounding Lake Blessed and Glenden Wood, with the Gharu'ndim settlements beyond.

Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Thelnoth's Remedies	Thelnoth Cort	Healing Supplies and Services
2 Ecutha's Raiments	Ecutha	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
3 Blacksmith	Sedor Wystan	Weapons, Armor, Shields, Helmets
4 The Taut String	Sontella Dagroff	Bows, Crossbows, Arrows, Quarrels, Fletching Supplies
5 Barn		
6 Monyra's Jewels	Monyra	Gems, Jewelry
	Cindrue	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
7 Supplies	Renald the Elder	Miscellaneous Gear
	Renald the Younger	Parchment, Books
8 Helm and Shield	Wilomine	Drinks, Food, Rumors
9 Fispur's Foodstuffs	Fispur Ansel	Food, Cooking Supplies

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Menhir** are rings of standing stones, left behind by a long-forgotten Emphyrean civilization. Sages believe them to have magical significance, but have not yet determined how they work.
- Rumors speak of centuries-old Emphyrean libraries—long since fallen into ruin—sunken beneath the marshes. A large clan of Drudges has purportedly taken up residence within.

Aluvian Towns

Other Aluvian towns can be found in the northeast part of Dereth:

Arwic is a mining village surrounded by Emphyrean ruins.

Cragstone, named after the hero Thorsten Cragstone, overlooks Lake Blessed.

Dryreach is a beleaguered fortress town.

Eastham is a peaceful village near the coast.

Glenden Wood stands within a secluded forest.



One of Dereth's newest towns, until a few months ago Lytelthorpe was nothing but an abandoned Emyrean fortress overrun by Banderlings, led by a human warmonger name Wardiel the Mighty. Recently, however, a band of brave warriors and wizards slew Wardiel, drove out the infestation and claimed the keep as their own. Since then, shops and homes have arisen in the fortress's shadow. Wilder and younger than nearby Rithwic, Lytelthorpe has yet to establish itself. Surrounded as it is by rich farmland, however, it promises to come into its own with the passage of time.

Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Sarthagg's Jewels and Gems The Magic of Iiwah	Sarthagg the Jeweler Archmage Den Ou	Gems, Jewelry Magic and Alchemical Supplies
2 Dafrida the Tailor Lone Tree Bows	Dafrida the Tailor Taryla the Bowyer	Clothes, Hats, Footwear Bows, Crossbows, Arrows, Quarrels, Fletching Supplies
3 The Humble Healer	Healer Beysta	Healing Supplies and Services
4 Sitrath's Smithy	Sitrath the Smith Smith Baltiff	Weapons Armor, Shields, Helmets
5 The Scholar's Study Cortarn's Provisions	Gylfolma the Scribe Grocer Cortarn	Parchment, Books Food, Cooking Supplies
6 Cemcera's General Supplies	Cemcera the Shopkeeper	Miscellaneous Gear
7 The Roasted Shreth	Selflora the Barkeep	Drinks, Food, Rumors
8 Lytelthorpe Keep		

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- **Lytelthorpe Keep** was built long ago by the Emyrean. At present, little is known of its history—not even its original name. Until recently, it was overrun by a clan of Banderlings, and had fallen into disrepair. It has been restored and is now claimed by Lord Aleval, one of the town's liberators.
- An unusual subterranean complex lies beneath the rolling, fertile hills south of town. It appears to be an ancient distillery, constructed by the Emyrean to brew exotic liquors. What drink remains, after the passage of centuries, would be of great value to connoisseurs. In order to retrieve it, however, delvers will have to brave the Drudges and other beasts who now stalk the halls.

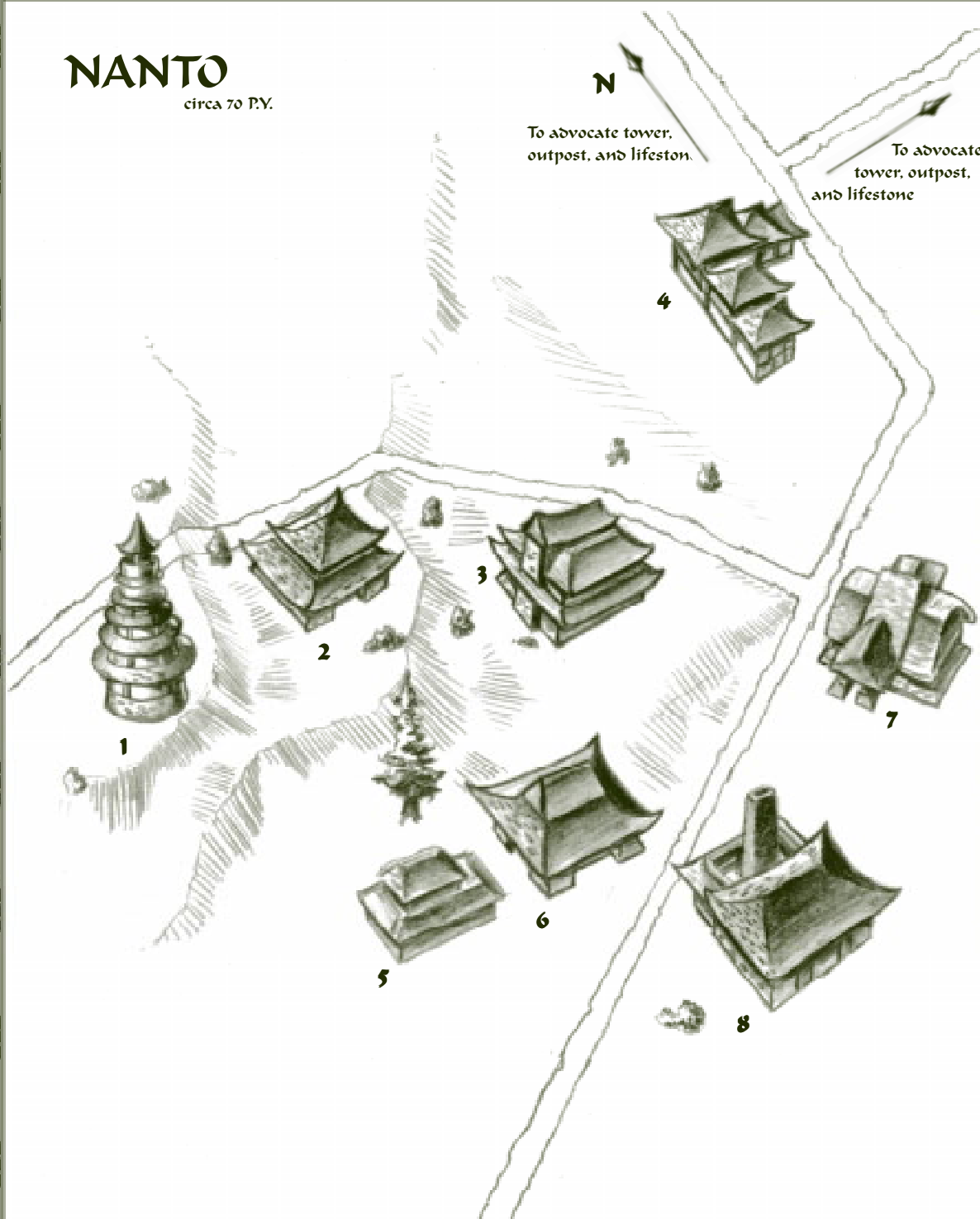
NANTO

circa 70 P.Y.

N

To advocate tower,
outpost, and lifeston.

To advocate
tower, outpost,
and lifestone



When the Sho realm was first founded in Dereth, it was not as expansive as it is today: in the past few years, its frontiers have pushed outward to encompass much of south-eastern Osteth. In the process, however, some towns that once flourished from being on the realm's outskirts have found themselves well within its boundaries, their prosperity fading. Nanto, once a flourishing town on the realm's southern border, has lost much of its vibrancy as towns such as Mayoi and Lin sprang up farther afield. Its merchants have since grown accustomed to the slower pace of life in the interior, and are more than happy with their location on the road between Hebian-To and the new frontier—especially since the danger of attack from ornery Lugians has faded as well.

Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 The Oak Talisman	Archmage Jo Ji-Shen	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
2 The Touch of Healing	Le Ben the Healer	Healing Supplies and Services
The Nanto Scribe	Scribe Lashi Oi	Parchment, Books
3 Southern End Tavern	Wah Chon the Barkeep	Drinks, Food, Rumors
4 The Full Net	Jo Gau the Grocer	Food, Cooking Supplies
5 South Town Supplies	Wuo Ha the Provisioner	Miscellaneous Gear
6 Tailor Yajyi	Yajyi San	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
Jewels of the South	Nun Hong the Jeweler	Gems, Jewelry
7 Southern Town Bows	Ye Te the Bowyer	Bows, Crossbows, Arrows, Quarrels, Fletching Supplies
8 Ton Wing's Smithy	Ton Wing	Weapons

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Blue Ghost Falls** lie to the west of Nanto, appearing to spring from the earth like blood from a wound. Here, the wizard Kushina Naidu slew a Gigas Lugian warlord, then perished of his wounds. Some locals claim to have seen Kushina's spirit standing on the shores of the pool beneath the falls.
- When the Sho first settled Nanto, they found the gateway to a disused underground outpost in the hills to the south. The Empyrean evidently used it as a dungeon for housing prisoners, though it is not known who might have been incarcerated there. For a time, while Nanto was a frontier village, the Sho also imprisoned miscreants there. They have since abandoned it, and it is now infested with Drudges.

Sho Towns

Sho towns can be found in the southeast part of Dereth:

Baishi is a town surrounded by woodland.

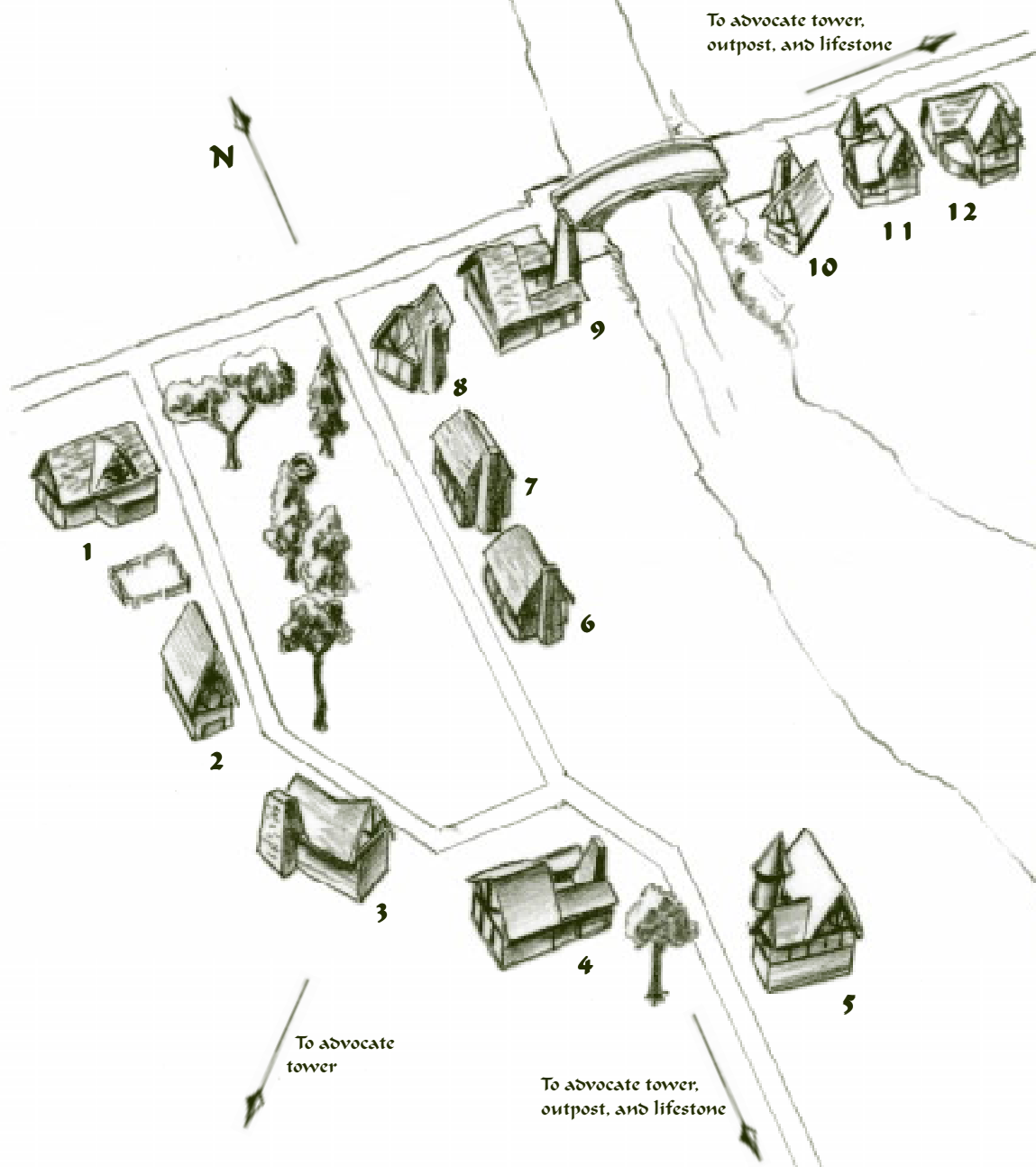
Hebian-To is a young city at the mouth of the River Prosper.

Mayoi is nestled in the base of the Tou Peninsula.

Sawato is a village built within the Blackmire Swamp.

RITHWIC

circa 70 P.Y.



First settled in 7 P.Y., Rithwic is one of the youngest Aluvian towns. Originally a small stonemasons' hamlet built near a ford of the River Prosper, just downstream from Lake Blessed, it has grown quickly into a thriving boomtown, as it is the gateway to the Sho communities to the south. It once stood on the edge of the Aluvian lands, but the frontier has since moved south to Dryreach, leaving Rithwic more or less unmolested by the Tumerok raiders that harry the hinterlands. In the past year, a second settlement, dubbed East Rithwic, has arisen on the river's other side.

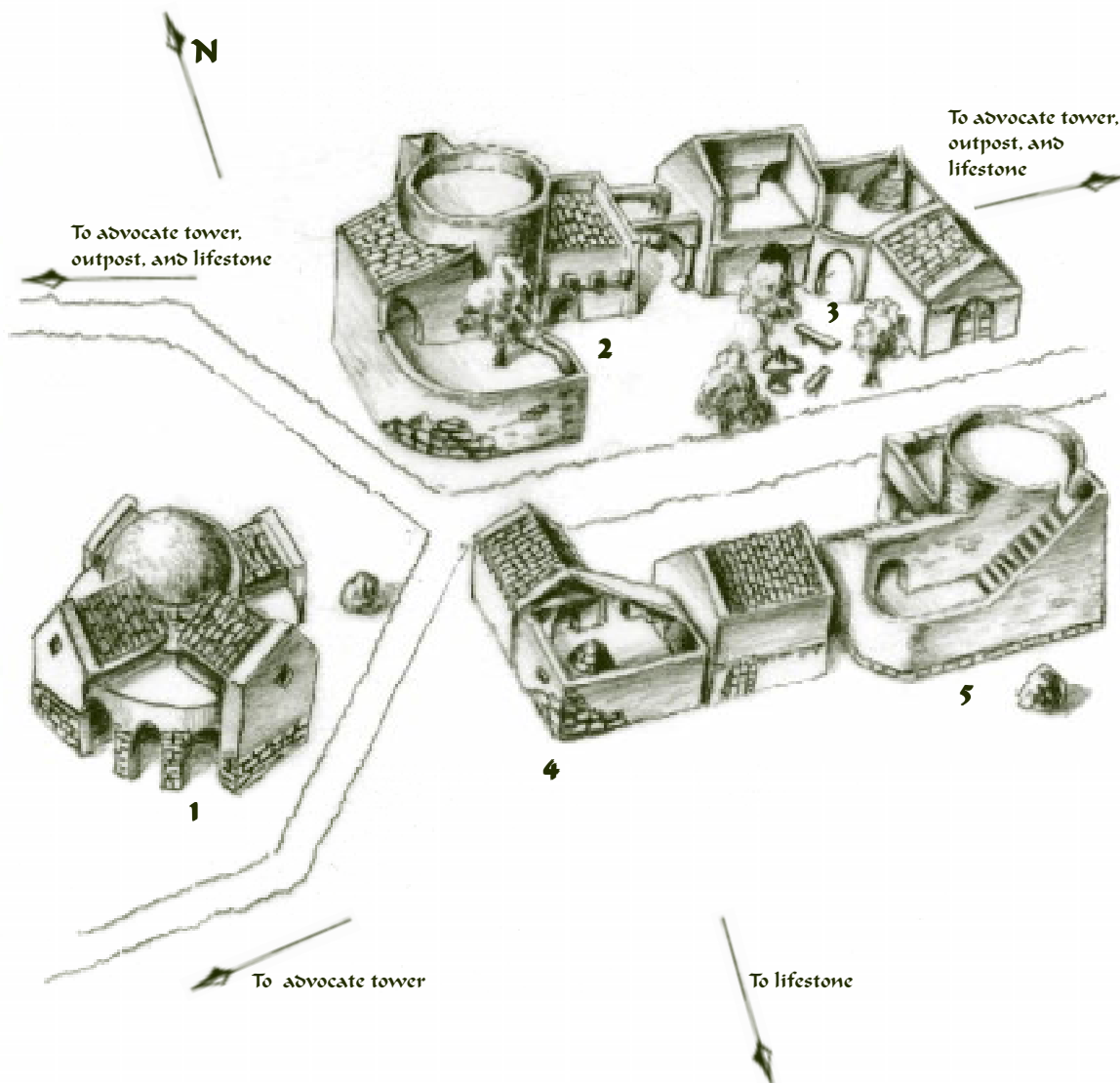
Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 The Royal Firkin	Ricetha	Drinks, Food, Rumors
2 Barn		
3 Tailor	Dortold the Tailor	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
4 Lady of Blades	Baizai En	Weapons
5 Grocer	Ynarre the Grocer	Food, Cooking Supplies
6 Fletcher	Trothyd Fletcher	Bows, Crossbows, Arrows, Quarrels, Fletching Supplies
7 The Gilded Tome	Urnolt the Jeweler	Gems, Jewelry
	Wylreda the Scribe	Parchment, Books
8 Healer	Brisin the Healer	Healing Supplies and Services
9 Smithy	Luthin the Smith	Armor, Shields, Helmets
10 Tenxien's Garments	Ji Tenxien	Sho Clothes, Hats, Footwear
11 Adornments	Soldona Wotmad	Gems, Jewelry
	Nulsymer	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
12 Skull and Flagons	Erludd the Cur	Drinks, Food, Rumors

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Prosper Span** is a sturdy bridge traversing the river between Rithwic proper and East Rithwic. It was built out of the stones that in more dangerous times made up the town's fortifications.
- An abandoned, dusty crypt lies somewhere north of the town. Those who have braved its depths report that its tombs hold many sarcophagi and that Shreth and Phyntos Wasps prowl its halls. Some whisper that the ancient dead also lurk within.



SAMSVR

circa 70 P.V.

The Gharu'ndim began to appear in Dereth soon after Elysa and Thorsten freed their people from enslavement by the Olthoi. One of the first of their number was Musansayn, a minor noble who became the effective leader of his countrymen in this new land. He made peace with the Aluvians, arranging for his folk to settle the lands west of the Falamar Hills. Samsur was the first permanent town built under his rule on the Yushad Ridge. It now lies at the heart of the Gharu'ndim lands, with roads leading both north and south and into the sandy reaches of the A'mun Desert.

Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Bazaar	Ushad al-Fasam	Food, Cooking Supplies
	Sutaiya bint Yil	Parchment, Books, Directions
	Nasruya al-Khanjan	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
	Da'hir ibn Khayzur	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
2 House of Fathlan	Fathlan ibn Nuril	Gems, Jewelry
	Burah bint Fathlan	Healing Supplies and Services
3 The Golden Vine	Mishiya al-Abdi	Drinks, Food, Rumors
4 Bellows' Breath	Talam ibn Tarish	Armor, Shields, Helmets
	Ayiz ibn Khayt	Weapons
5 Bows and Goods	Julsama bint Sakim	Miscellaneous Gear
	Thawasa al-La'ud	Bows, Arrows, Fletching Supplies

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Fountain of Musansayn** was crafted in the midst of Samsur five years ago, after the great leader wandered into the desert and vanished. Some say he died there, while others claim he will return one day and reveal himself to his people in time of need.
- A majestic dungeon of serpentine stone lies beneath one of the mesas just beyond town. Once a rich Empyrean manor house, its splendor has faded with the passage of time and the depredations of the Drudges and Shreth who have made it their lair.

Gharu'ndim Towns

Gharu'ndim towns can be found in and around the deserts east of the Inner Sea:

Qalaba'r is a stronghold on the threshold of the Direlands.

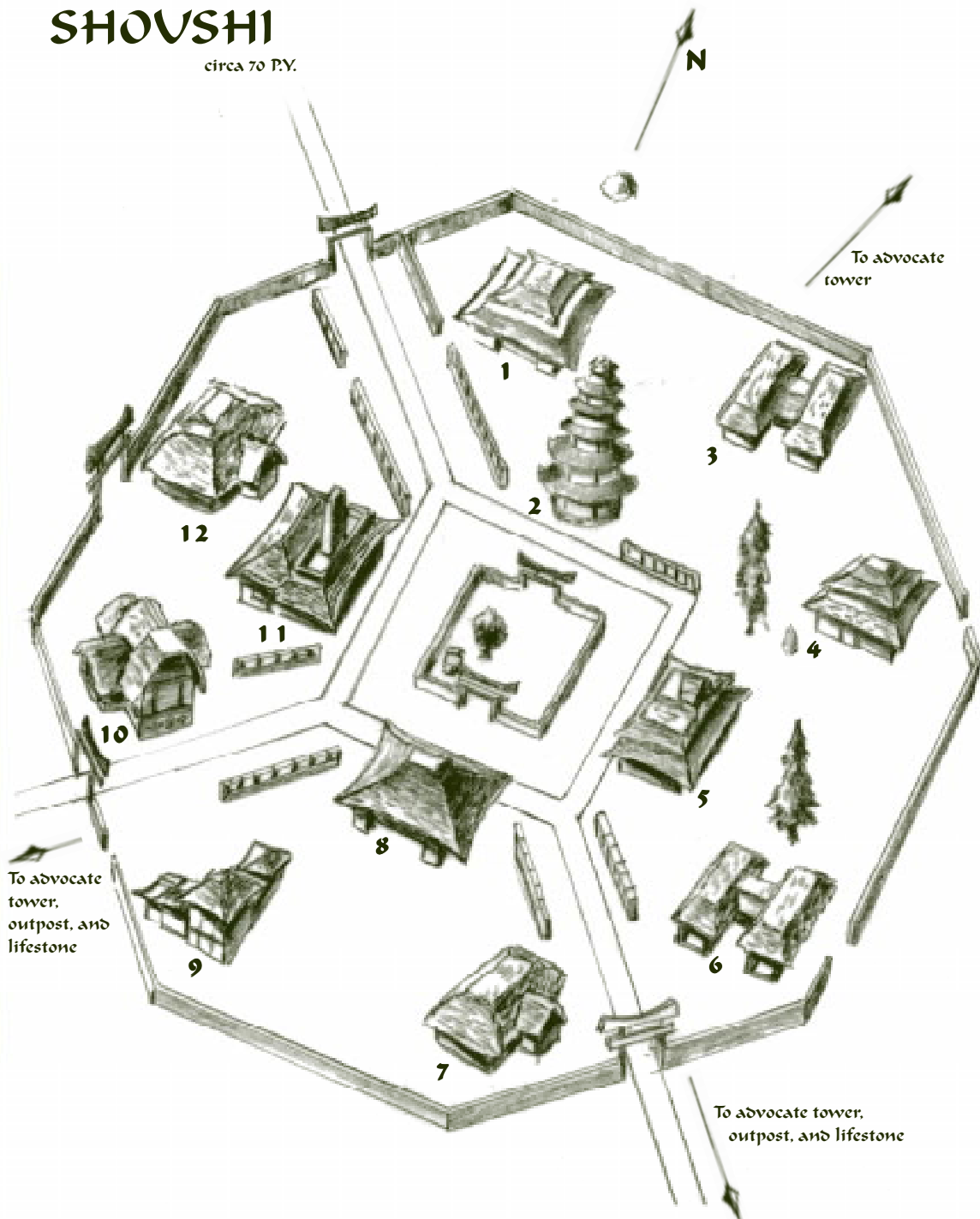
Tufa is a tent village surrounding a desert oasis.

Uziz is a town built among the mesas of the Yushad Ridge.

Zaikhal is a small hilltop village.

SHOVSHI

circa 70 P.V.



Last of the three heritage groups to arrive in Dereth, the Sho made their home south of the Blackmire Swamp, where Mosswart raiders had thwarted settlement by the Aluvians to the north. To provide protection from these and other creatures for the fledgling village of Hebian-To, the warlord Ijiku Tambai built a fortress nearby called Yaosai. In time, once the Sho had successfully pushed back the Mosswarts, the need for a fortress disappeared. Parts of Yaosai's walls were torn down and used to build huts. The new town, mockingly called Shoushi or "small place," has since outgrown that moniker and is thriving as a waypoint between Hebian-To and the western Sho holdings.

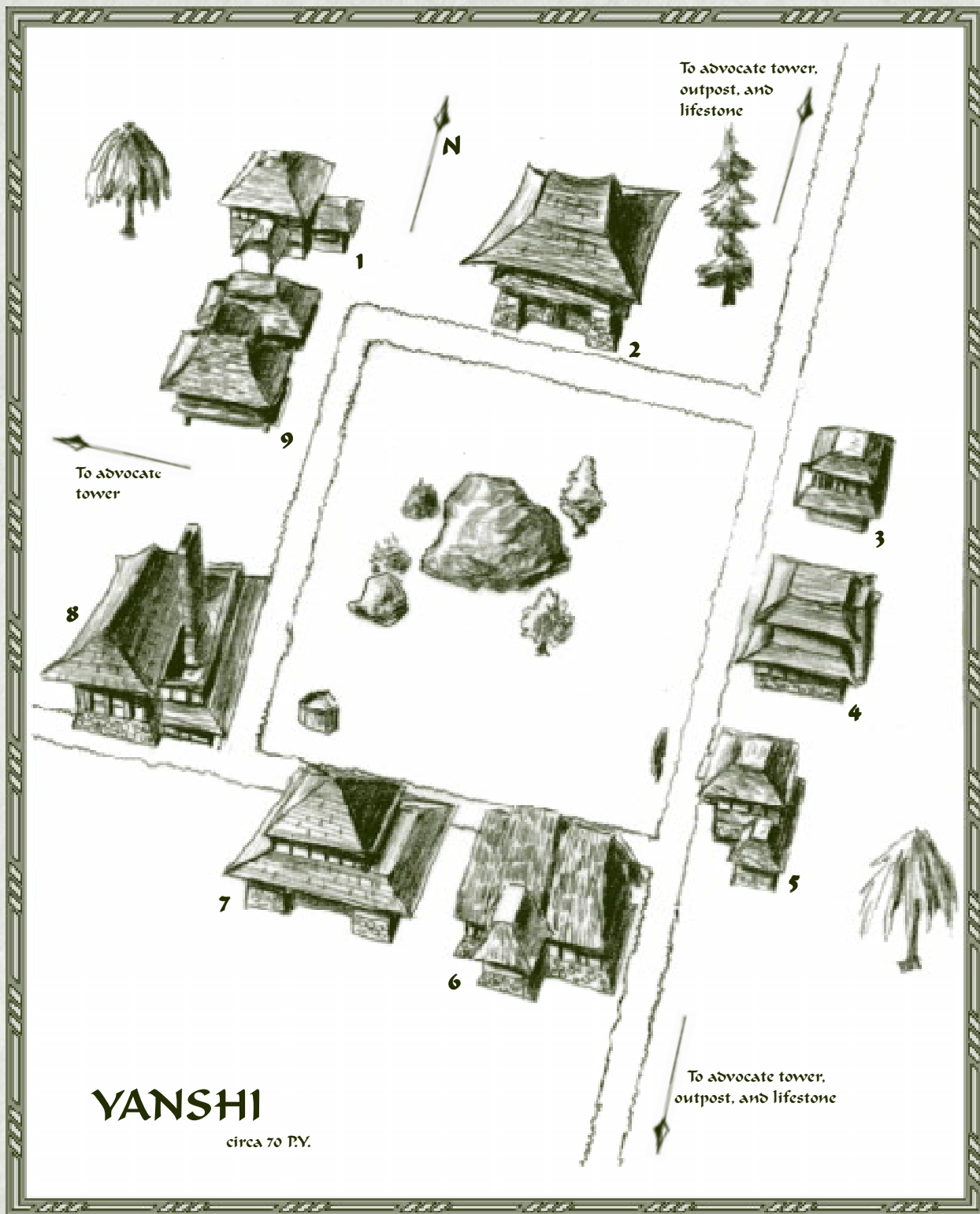
Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Konaji's Jewels	Ai Konaji	Gems, Jewelry
2 Spire of Serenity		
3 Tailor Ma	Ma Shih	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
4 Grocery	Hau Ji Tan	Food, Cooking Supplies
5 Three Swords Hall	Nin Hong	Drinks, Food, Rumors
6 Brush and Stone	Brother Gonun	Parchment, Books
7 The Gentle Hand	Yaohan Tong	Healing Supplies
8 Gonjoku's Goods	Gonjoku Ryumi	Miscellaneous Gear
9 Chen Wah-Ji	Chen Wah-Ji	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
10 Black Swan Inn	Jaikite Sanzen	Drinks, Food
11 Metalworker	Ven Ounan	Weapons, Armor, Shields, Helmets
12 Bowyer Zhofon	Zhofon No	Bows, Crossbows, Arrows, Quarrels, Fletching Supplies

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Yard of Three Elders**, once the center of Yaosai, is now a place of peace and reflection. Both it and the Spire of Serenity to the north are havens for Sho men and women who wish to meditate on their relationship with the celestial Dragon, Kirin, and Firebird.
- Adventurers, while spelunking a complex of natural caves in the wilds to the south, accidentally broke through into a set of ruined catacombs. The survivors of the expedition have reported this dungeon to be aswarm with Drudges and Shreth.



During the Sho's first days on Dereth, the land just northwest of the Blackmire Swamp was rife with Tumeroks, and many defenseless folk fell beneath their blades. In that time, a master swordsman named Ben Ten roamed the land, giving aid to those who needed it. Ben Ten vanished into legend soon after the Tumerok menace was thwarted. The last place he was seen was standing atop a large stone near the edge of the swamp, and some of his followers settled there, considering the stone to have been blessed by his presence. The village that arose on that spot—called Yanshi or “town of the boulder”—has grown in the past several years into a trading center, with roads leading into both the Gharu'ndim and Aluvian lands as well as deeper into the Sho realm.

Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Sennei's Bows	Ribusha Sennei	Bows, Crossbows, Arrows, Quarrels, Fletching Supplies
2 Apparel	Zan Wa-Shabu	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
3 Shin's Provisions	Shin Ou-Ye	Miscellaneous Gear
4 Shining Amethyst	Bai Yao Feng	Drinks, Food, Rumors
5 The Brimful Jar	Nan-Yu-Yenbuto	Food, Cooking Supplies
6 Master Sonji	Master Sonji Pan	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
7 Opal House	Ryuhan Wu	Gems, Jewelry
	Xao Wu	Gems, Jewelry
8 Smith Wah	Wah Fo-Za	Armor, Shields, Helmets
	Nu Sha	Weapons
9 The Sisters Kai	Kai Tonweh	Healing Supplies and Services
	Kai Go-Sou	Parchment, Books

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Sacred Stone**, found in the midst of Yanshi, is the last known place where the swordsman Ben Ten was seen. Some folk, however, claim to have sighted him since.
- In the time before Ben Ten came, many of those who would one day settle in Yanshi tried to hide from the Tumerok scourge in a subterranean dungeon complex. The dungeon, however, was rife with monsters that slew many of those seeking shelter. The survivors claim the creatures that drove them out remain in those catacombs.

YARAQ

circa 70 P.V.

To advocate tower,
outpost, and
lifestone

N

1

2

3

To advocate tower (near)
To advocate tower,
outpost, and lifestone
(far)

4

Some of the Gharu'ndim who first came to Dereth were lifelong desert-dwellers, and chafed at the idea of building their homes on the Yushad Ridge. Their leader, a wizard named Raqur al-Hayra, led them on a trek across the A'mun Desert to a cove along the coast of the Inner Sea. There they found an oasis, an island of green amid the sands. Raqur thrust his staff into the ground, bringing forth fresh water, and declared that all the desert folk would be welcome in this place. Sadly, Raqur was slain in a magic duel with a Mu-miyah archmage before the town, called Yaraq, was completed. Yaraq has since remained apart from much of the rest of Dereth, separated from the rest of the island by the desert, although portals and paths do lead to lands beyond the dunes.

Guide to Shops

Name	Shopkeeper	Wares
1 Nuya's Necessities	Nuya bint Mulud	Food, Cooking Supplies
	Arlad ibn Mulud	Clothes, Hats, Footwear
	Mulud al-Iyar	Healing Supplies and Services
2 The Eagle's Blade	Buray ibn Tamsa	Weapons, Armor, Shields, Helmets
	Ladim al-Faji	Bows, Arrows, Fletching Supplies
3 Yaraq Market	Rahira bint Hisan	Miscellaneous Gear
	Wasifa al-Kani	Parchment, Books
	Tariqana bint Hin	Gems, Jewelry
	Inyamkaya bint Ruz	Magic and Alchemical Supplies
4 The Cerulean Cove	Jubal al-Baljad	Drinks, Food, Rumors

You may see other vendors and items in addition to the ones shown here.

Points of Interest

- The **Desert Way** is the only sure path across the trackless A'mun, whose sands would quickly bury any ordinary road. Its markers, upright hoops hung with cloth, lead from the end of Yaraq's north road to the village of Tufa, and beyond to the towns of the Yushad Ridge.
- A series of rocky buttes rise from the peninsula on the southern edge of Yaraq Cove. A colony of Drudges and other monsters have dug their warrens in the soft stone of one of these mesas. Some who have braved these tunnels claim they have seen evidence that some of them were once inhabited by the Emphyrean.



Chapter Four

Finding Your Way Around

Entering the World of Dereth

After you create a character, you'll be returned to the Asheron's Call main menu. To enter the world of Dereth, click your character's name, and then click **Enter Game**. Your character will appear in the game world in the starting town outpost that you selected for your character.

Game Screen Elements

See the back cover.

The Training Hall

When you enter the world for the first time, the first structure you'll see is a building with four tall spires—the advocates' tower. You will usually find a player advocate on duty here. Nearby is a swirling energy vortex—a portal—that will take you to the training hall. The training hall teaches a beginning player the basics of Asheron's Call gameplay. Here you can learn how to use a weapon, cast spells, loot vanquished opponents, buy and sell items, and interact with the game environment.

To learn more about player advocates, see "Characters You'll Meet," later in this chapter.

To enter the training hall, walk into the portal. Once you're inside the training hall, double-click the signs to read gameplay instructions, receive valuable tips, and experience combat and magic firsthand. After you've played through the training hall you'll be ready to go out and get some real game experience. Find the portal to the surface, and get ready for adventure!

Getting From Place to Place

Using Your Map

Your map of the world of Dereth is located on the **Map** panel, which can be accessed by clicking the **Map** button, the compass rose in the lower-right portion of the screen. This map shows all the major geographical features of the world, including mountains, plains, deserts, swamps, and the surrounding ocean. Towns

are represented by small houses in three different styles, one for each of the three heritage groups of Dereth. Aluvian towns are in the northeast, Gharu'ndim towns are in and around the deserts east of the Inner Sea, and Sho towns are in the southeast. The current time and date in game time are at the top of the map.

When you are above ground, your location is represented by a green circle on the map. When your character is underground or inside a structure, the green circle is absent.

Using Map Coordinates to Find Places You've Been

At the bottom of the map are coordinates showing your location by latitude and longitude. Use these coordinates to find your present position in the world. Record the coordinates of towns, portals, and other places of interest so you'll be able to return to them or tell other player characters where to find them. These coordinates will not be visible if your character is underground or inside a structure.

Using Your Compass

Your Compass is the circular area in the upper-right portion of your game screen. The four cardinal directions are shown by the letters N, E, S, and W. The Compass represents the range of all your long-range senses—sight, hearing, even smell. Your approximate range of vision is shown by the gray V-shaped area at the top of the Compass. The green cross hairs in the center show your location.

Blips representing other game characters, monsters, portals, and Lifestones appear in your Compass.

White = Player character

Green = Member of your fellowship

Yellow = Friendly nonplayer character (NPC)

Orange = Monster (Most monsters can be seen only while they are moving.)

Red = Player killer (PKs cannot harm or be harmed by nonplayer killers.)

Pink = Player advocate

Blue = Lifestone

Cyan = Game administrator or sentinel

Purple = Portal

Blips will often appear in your Compass before you can see the characters or items they represent. Click a blip to see its name in the **Selected Item** box in the lower portion of your **Player** panel.

If the blip represents a portal, click the blip to see the name of the portal's destination. Click the **Examine** button, the magnifying glass, to see any level restrictions on the use of the portal. Double-click the blip to enter the portal.



Camera Keys Using the Numeric Keypad

To	Press
Move camera using mouse	/
Move camera back	+
Move camera forward	-
Raise camera	8
Lower camera	2
Spin camera left	4
Spin camera right	5
Toggle look down	5
Toggle map view	Enter
Set 3 rd person view	Period
Set 1 st person view	0
Capture screen shot	*



Movement

To	Press
Move Forward	Up Arrow
Move Back	Down Arrow
Turn	Left/Right Arrows
Auto-Run	Q
Sit Down	G
Lie Down	B
Stand	Y
Crouch	H

If the blip represents a character or monster, click the **Examine** button to assess it. Clicking the monster's blip also targets the monster for combat or magic. If it's something you're not experienced enough to fight, your best course may be to run away before it notices you.

Towns, Roads, and Portals

The towns of Dereth are, for the most part, widely scattered. Many are connected by roads. Sometimes it's possible to shorten the distance of an overland journey by leaving the road and taking a more direct route, but occasionally you will encounter impassable mountains and you may find it necessary to return to the road for ease of travel. Roads are not entirely safe, since monsters are likely to be lurking anywhere, but they're usually safer than the surrounding countryside. By using the auto-run key, you can run without keeping the walk or run key pressed down. Pressing Q toggles auto-run off and on.

Magical portals exist in many places on the island of Dereth. They appear as swirling energy vortices on the landscape or in dungeons. When you enter a portal you are transported through portal space to that portal's destination, which may be a distant town or a dungeon right beneath your feet. Many towns have portals linking them to other towns, and you'll soon learn the routes to follow to get from place to place via portal teleportation.

Characters You'll Meet

There are several types of game characters in Asheron's Call: each type of character appears in your Compass as a different colored blip. See "Using Your Compass," earlier in this chapter.

Player Characters

A player character is any game character representing a player in the game world. All player characters in Asheron's Call are humans from one of the three heritage groups, and are nonplayer killers by default. Player characters can't harm or be harmed by other player characters unless both are player killers. See "Player Killers" later in this section.

Nonplayer Characters

A nonplayer character (NPC) is a game character who is controlled by the game. The character does not represent a player. Peddlers, collectors, and vendors—the characters who buy and sell items—are NPCs.

Monsters

A monster is any nonhuman character that can engage in combat with you. Monsters can harm and be harmed in return. Monsters range from Rabbits,

which are easily dispatched by even beginning characters, to dreaded creatures like Olthoi Workers, who can slaughter an entire party of ill-equipped adventurers in a matter of seconds.

Monsters sometimes carry treasure that you can take when you have defeated them. To learn how to fight monsters and get treasure from them, see Chapter Five, “Combat and Experience.”

Player Killers

A player killer (PK) is any player character who has undergone initiation at the Altar of Bael' Zharon. PKs can cause damage only to monsters and other PKs, and other PKs are the only player characters who can harm them.

To learn more about PKs, see Chapter Five, “Combat and Experience.”

Player Advocates

A player advocate is a player character who has completed the Advocates' Quest and received a glowing shield of office, the Aegis. Player advocates help players by answering questions and offering assistance.

Talking with Other Players

Talking with other player characters is an important and enjoyable part of the role-playing experience. In Asheron's Call you can use your **Chat** menu to speak to players nearby or across the game world. You can also use it to seek help from a patron or stay in touch with fellowship members in different parts of a dungeon. You can find the options for communication in the **Chat** menu at the bottom of the **View Window**.

To talk to everyone within your Compass range

- 1 Click in the **Chat** box and type what you want to say.
- 2 Press ENTER to send your message to all players within your Compass range.

To repeat a previously sent message

- 1 Click in the **Chat** box, and use the arrow keys to scroll up and down through the messages you've sent.
- 2 Find the message you want to resend, and then press ENTER.

If you are in another chat mode, click **Chat to All** on the **Chat** menu to return to that mode.

To talk privately with a character within your Compass range

- 1 Click the character, and then click next to **Tell to** [character's name] in the **Chat** menu.
- 2 Type your message, and then press ENTER.

Player Advocates

To see if an advocate is currently watching over the town you are in, type **@list** [town name] in the **Chat** box. To contact the advocate, use the **@tell** command described later in “Talking with Other Players.”

Assessing Characters

By using the Assess Person skill, which is based on your Focus attribute, you can see details about player characters and nonplayer characters, such as their character level, sex, heritage group, profession, primary and secondary attributes, and fellowship and allegiance information. You can also assess monsters, using the Assess Creature skill. You do not have to be trained in an assessment skill to assess others, but if you are trained, the skill will improve with practice.

To assess a player character, NPC, or monster, select the character, and then click the **Examine** button. Information about the character will appear in an assessment panel.

To talk to a character who is not in your Compass range

- 1 Type: @tell [character's name],
- 2 Type your message after the comma, and then press ENTER.

Allegiance and Fellowship Chat

If you are a member of an allegiance or fellowship, there are special chat options for talking to your groups. For more information about these chat options, see "Allegiance Chat" and "Fellowship Chat" in Chapter Eight, "Social Systems."

Ignoring Messages from a Specific Character

If you want, you can set your chat options to ignore a character so you don't receive any messages from him or her.

To ignore messages from a specific player character

- 1 Click the character you want to ignore.
- 2 Click the **Chat** menu, and then click **Ignore** [character name].
Click **Ignore** again to stop ignoring that character.

To ignore a character who is not nearby

- Type @squelch and then type the character's name.
Type @unsquelch to stop ignoring that character.

Chat Poses

Your player character can perform a number of automatic actions, such as bowing or kneeling, known as chat poses.

To perform a chat pose

- 1 In the **Chat** box, type text enclosed in asterisks or angle braces, such as *bow*, *laugh*, or <kneel>.
- 2 Press ENTER to perform the action.

For a complete list of chat poses, refer to your quick reference card.

You can make hot keys for your favorite chat poses by customizing your keyboard.

To customize your keyboard

- 1 Click the **Options** button (check marks) in the lower portion of the **Player** panel.
- 2 On the **Options** tab, click **Configure Keyboard**.
- 3 Click **Yes** when asked if you want to leave the game world.
- 4 In the **Keyboard Configuration** screen, click a chat pose.
You will see a dialog box telling you whether that chat pose is currently mapped to a key.
- 5 If you want to replace the current key, type the new key.

If that key is already mapped to another command, you'll see a dialog box asking whether you want to replace it. Click **Yes** to replace the key or **No** to return to the previous dialog box.

- 6 Click **Save As** and type a name for the new keyboard scheme.
- 7 Click **Exit** to return to the game.

Finding and Using Items

Most items in the Asheron's Call game world can be picked up, taken from a vanquished opponent, put down, bought, sold, or given away. Some items have other uses according to their types. Food, for instance, is eaten, and clothing is worn. Chests and doors are opened and closed, but cannot be picked up. If the item can be used, your mouse pointer will appear highlighted.

To	Do This
Select an item	Click the item.
Use an item that can't be picked up	Double-click the item.
Use an item in inventory	Double-click the item.
Pick up an item	Drag the item to the Backpack button.
Put down an item	Drag the item from inventory to the View Window .
Give an item to another character	Drag the item onto a character in the View Window .
Find out if an item can be picked up	Point to the item, and then see the ToolTip in the View Window .

Appraising Items

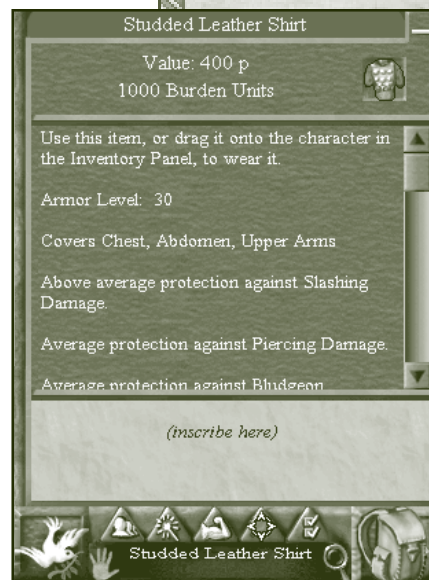
Appraising an item is the best way to find out what it does, how heavy it is, and what it's worth. Other information depends on the type of item. Successfully appraising a weapon, for example, will tell you its speed, the type and amount of damage it does, the skill required to use it, and any bonuses it gives to your combat skills. Appraising a piece of armor will tell you its armor level and what body parts it protects.

Characters who are trained or specialized in one of the appraisal skills will have a higher percentage of successful appraisals, depending on the skill trained and the item being appraised. Skill at appraisal is related to the Focus attribute.

To appraise an item, click the item to select it, and then click the **Examine** button in the lower-right portion of your **Player** panel. If your appraisal is successful, you'll see detailed information about the item. Even if your appraisal is not successful, you'll still see some information.

Charged Items

Some items, such as keys, lockpicks, healing kits, and certain magic items, have a limited number of uses. When all these uses have been consumed, the item is destroyed, and disappears from your inventory. To see the number of charges remaining in a charged item, appraise the item.



Writable Items

Books, tomes, and parchment can be inscribed by double-clicking the item to bring up a writable area, and then clicking inside the writable area and typing. You can also copy and paste text from other programs. Items that are not writable can often be inscribed by examining them, and then clicking and typing in the area marked “(inscribe here).”

Targeted Items

Some items, such as healing kits, mana stones, keys, and lockpicks, must be used with a specific target. When you use a targeted item, your mouse pointer will change into a targeting pointer. Click the pointer on your target to use the item.

To learn how to use weapons, armor, ammunition, and shields, see Chapter Five, “Combat and Experience.”

To learn how to use magic items, see Chapter Seven, “Magic in Asheron’s Call.”

To learn how to buy and sell items, see “Doing Business” later in this chapter.

Food, Drink, Draughts, and Potions

Your character can use the food and drink items you find or buy. Food and drink commonly restore Stamina, and a few food items restore Health or Mana. Draughts and potions that increase Health, Stamina, and Mana can also be bought or found in the game world. To see what secondary attribute a food item restores, and how much, appraise the item.

To eat or drink

- Double-click the food or drink item in your inventory.

Clothing and Jewelry

You will choose clothing when you create your character, but it’s possible to buy or find other clothing items.

To	Do This
Wear clothing	Drag the item onto your Character Image .
Remove clothing	Drag the item from your Character Image to an Inventory slot.
Wear jewelry	Drag the jewelry into one of the Jewelry slots to the left or right of the Character Image . There are separate slots for rings, bracelets, and necklaces.
Remove jewelry	Drag the item from the Jewelry slot to an Inventory slot.



You can wear a piece of armor over a piece of clothing, but you cannot wear clothing over another piece of clothing or armor. Remove clothing or armor from that body part before putting on the new item.

To learn more about armor, see “Wearing Armor” and “The Way of Steel” in Chapter Five, “Combat and Experience.”

Containers

Containers, such as sacks, baskets, and packs, hold a certain number of items within your inventory, making it easier to sort items by type. You will enter the world with one container, and you can buy others from vendors. Containers have weight of their own, and items placed in them add to your character's burden.

Container slots are located along the right side of the **Inventory** panel. To see the contents of a container, click the container. The bar to the right of the container indicates how full it is.

Managing Inventory



Anything in the game world that can be picked up can be put into your inventory. Your inventory will hold a great many items, and knowing how to arrange, combine, and otherwise deal with them will help make your gameplaying experience more enjoyable.

To place an item into your Inventory

- Drag the item to the **Backpack** button or into an **Inventory** slot.

To remove an item from your Inventory

- Click the item and drag it to the **View Window**.

Items in inventory can be moved from one **Inventory** slot to another. If you move an item to a slot already occupied by another item, that item will be inserted before the other, unless it is a merged item.

Keyboard shortcuts for handling items in inventory can be found on your quick reference card.

Merged Items

Many inventory items can be merged into stacks to take up less room in the inventory. Ammunition, throwing weapons, pyreals (coins), food, and magic components are a few of the categories of items that can be merged.

To merge items into a stack, drag one item onto the other. You can continue adding items to the stack until the stack limit is reached. This limit varies with the item. A stack of eggs, for instance, can contain up to 12 eggs, and a stack of throwing daggers can contain up to 20 throwing daggers.

When you click a stack of items, the total appears in the **Selected Item** box in the lower portion of your **Player** panel; for example "2 Hunks of Cheese," "3 Healing Potions," or "200 Pyreals."

When you pick up an item by clicking and dragging it to the **Backpack** button, stackable items will be automatically merged into stacks.

To split a stack of items, click the stack, and then move the slider bar under the number of items. The number will change as you move the slider (for example, "2 of 4 Loaves of Bread"). You can also click the box beside the slider and type in the number you want to split off the stack. When the number in the number field matches the number of items you want to split off, click the stack in inventory and drag it to another **Inventory** slot or to the **View Window**.



Inventory Shortcuts

At the bottom of your **Inventory** panel are nine **Shortcut** slots numbered 1–9. When you place an inventory item in one of these slots, it will be instantly wielded, readied, worn, or used, depending on the type of item, when you press the corresponding number key on your keyboard. For instance, if the item in slot 1 is a sword, your character will wield the sword when you press 1. Pressing the number of a wielded, readied, or worn item will cause that item to be unwielded, unreadied, or taken off.

You can drag your character to the shortcut bar to make it easier to target yourself, for example, for spells or healing.

Determining How Much Your Character Can Carry

Your character's Strength attribute determines the amount of weight (burden) he or she can carry. The Burden indicator displays three colors:

Green Character can carry the weight.

Yellow Character should lighten load to minimize depletion of Stamina.

Red Character is overburdened and should sell, give away, or put down items.

Pyreals are usually lighter than the items you sell for pyreals, and trade notes are lighter still, so these are items you should keep.



Rumors and Lockpicks

Although most barkeepers will sell assorted rumors and legends, they are far from the only shopkeepers to do so. Many others, from scholars such as scribes and archmages to mundane craftsmen like tailors and grocers, may have gossip or tales to tell. Be sure to check shopkeepers for such stories—you never know who will discover the path to an ancient ruin or treasure.

Also, nearly every town in Dereth has a shopkeeper who sells lockpicks for those who practice the arts of thievery. As many folk tend to frown upon merchants who deal in such shady wares, however, those shopkeepers don't advertise that fact. The enterprising thief must shop around to find out who sells lockpicks in which town.

Doing Business

Money

The basic unit of currency in Dereth is the pyreal (p). Money is available in two forms: pyreals and trade notes, which can be exchanged for pyreals. Trade notes are available in denominations from 100p to 100,000p. The price of these notes is 10 percent higher than the face value—a fee to the vendor for exchanging pyreals for notes.

Pyreals are worth their face value everywhere in the world, but the value of a trade note depends on where you buy it and where you try to sell it. If you sell a trade note to the same vendor from whom you bought it, you will receive the full face value of the note. If you sell it to a different vendor, you will receive 20 percent less.

Shops and Businesses

In many of the buildings in Dereth towns, you will find vendors, nonplayer characters who sell food, clothing, weapons, armor, magic supplies, information, and many other necessities of game life. Prices for buying and selling items vary a great deal from vendor to vendor, so it pays to

become familiar with which vendors in which towns offer the best price for items bought and sold.

Not all vendors offer the same selection of items. Some items are more common in certain parts of the world, for instance, and some vendors have very limited inventories, while others have an extensive selection of wares.

Most items sold to vendors by player characters become available for sale to other player characters. If not bought, these items remain in the vendor's inventory for only a limited time. Some items are never made available for repurchase.

To buy an item from a vendor

- 1 Double-click the vendor.
- 2 Click the **Items** tab to see the categories of items for sale, and then click the category's name to see the individual items under that category.
- 3 Click the item you want to buy, and then click **Buy Item**.



To buy several items at the same time

- 1 Double-click the vendor.
- 2 Click the **Items** tab to see the categories of items for sale, and then click the category's name to see the individual items under that category.
- 3 Click each item, and then click **Add to List**.
- 4 Click the **Buying** tab to see your list, and then click **Buy All**.
If you change your mind about an item, click the item, and then click **Clear Item** or **Clear All** (to clear all items from the list).

The amount of your purchase will be subtracted from the total pyreals in your Inventory. If you don't have enough pyreals for the transaction, you'll see a message that says, "You don't have enough money."

To sell an item

- 1 Double-click the vendor.
- 2 Click the **Selling** tab, drag the item from your **Inventory** to a slot on the **Selling** tab, and then click **Sell Item**.
You can also drag several items to the tab and sell them by clicking **Sell All**.
The amount of your sale will be added to your **Inventory** as pyreals.

To see the price you will receive for an item

- Drag it to a **Sell** slot and point to the slot. You'll see a ToolTip in the **View Window**.

Trophies taken from defeated opponents, such as rats' tails, drudge charms, and wasp wings, can be sold to vendors, but will bring a much better price if given to collectors. Not all collectors want the same types of trophies. They will take but not pay you for items they don't collect, so listen to them to find out what trophies they'll pay for, or double-click a collector to see what he or she buys.



Chapter Five

Combat and Experience

Experience in Asheron's Call is earned, in part, through combat with opponents, using either weapons or magic spells. This chapter will deal with combat, using weapons, and raising attributes and skills by applying the experience points you earn. To learn how to fight opponents using magic, see Chapter Seven, "Magic in Acheron's Call," and "On Thaumaturgy" at the end of that chapter. To learn about the finer points of combat, weapons, and armor, read "The Way of Steel" at the end of this chapter.

Wielding Weapons

The principal types of weapons available to a player character are axes, bows, crossbows, daggers, maces, spears, staves, swords, thrown weapons, and punching weapons. To wield a weapon effectively, you should

have training in the appropriate weapon skill. If you want to excel as a blademaster, for example, you would want a high number for your Sword skill. The only exceptions are punching weapons, which use the Unarmed Combat skill. A new player character enters the world either with practice weapons pertinent to the weapons skills chosen during character creation, or with training in Unarmed Combat. A character who specializes in Unarmed Combat begins the game with a punching weapon (a katar, nekode, or cestus).

The practice weapon does less damage and has a slower speed than weapons you can buy from vendors. It is, however, bonded to you and will not be lost if you die. Depending on your particular weapon skill, your character probably won't begin the game with enough money to buy a better weapon, so the first thing you'll want to do is learn how to fight. Much of the treasure you'll encounter will be taken from the corpses of vanquished opponents, so you'll need to learn how to attack targets and loot corpses before you can begin saving for your first real sword, axe, or other weapon. The easiest place to practice combat is the training hall that will be directly in front of you when you first enter the game world. Go through the spinning purple portal near the building with the four tall spires and follow the instruction signs until

you're ready to leave and gain real combat experience in the world outside.

Your character can fight with many different weapons, but may wield only one weapon at a time. To wield a weapon, drag it to the **Weapon** slot at the lower right of your **Character Image** on the **Inventory** panel. Your character will automatically use the weapon that is wielded when he or she attacks. If no weapon is wielded, your character will attempt to use unarmed combat.

Melee Weapons vs. Missile Weapons

Melee weapons such as swords, daggers, axes, and maces, are for close-quarters fighting. Missile weapons are effective at longer ranges. These include bows and crossbows, and thrown weapons such as throwing daggers, javelins, and shoukens.

Bows and crossbows require ammunition; arrows for bows and quarrels for crossbows. Some of this ammunition can be recovered after combat, but the rest is consumed and must be replaced.

The range of missile weapons varies. To learn the range of the weapon, appraise it.

If you are wielding a bow or crossbow, you will also need to ready ammunition. To ready ammunition, drag it to the **Ammunition** slot next to the **Weapon** slot. When your character attacks, he or she will automatically prepare arrows or quarrels when attacking.

Wearing Armor

The purpose of armor is to protect your character from damage caused by opponents' attacks. Each piece of armor has an armor level that determines how effectively it absorbs damage.

In general, the lighter the armor is, the lower the armor level. Leather armor is very light compared to plate mail, but does not have a very high armor level. Plate mail affords much better protection against opponents' attacks, but its weight may make it impractical for a character who does not have great physical strength.

To wear a piece of armor, drag it to your **Character Image**. You will not be able to wear armor that covers an area that is already covered by another piece of armor. To remove armor, drag it from your **Character Image** to your **Inventory**.

Appraising Weapons and Armor

By appraising a weapon or armor, it is possible to find out important information. For a weapon, for example, you'll see the amount of damage it does, the type of weapon skill it uses, the type of damage it does (such as slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning), its weight, its speed, and its range if it is a missile weapon such as a bow. For armor you'll see the item's value, armor level, weight and types of damage it protects from. Knowing this information will help you decide which weapon or armor is best for your character against specific opponents.

To appraise a weapon or armor, click the item, and then click the **Examine** button.

If your appraisal is successful, you'll see detailed information about the weapon or armor in an **Examine** panel. Characters who are trained or specialized in Appraise Weapon or Appraise Armor will have a higher percentage of successful appraisals on these types of items, respectively. Even if your appraisal is unsuccessful, you'll see some information on the weapon or armor.

Player killers (PKs) are player characters who have undergone conversion at the Altar of Bael'Zharon so that they can kill and be killed by other player killers. They appear as red blips on your Compass.

When a player killer dies, the character may lose more items and pyreals than would a comparable nonplayer killer.

To become a player killer, find the Altar of Bael'Zharon in the game and double-click it. To convert a player killer back into a nonplayer killer, the character must find and double-click the Altar of Asheron. For the conversion to be successful, the character must not have killed another for a certain period of game time.

Using Shields

Shields also protect a character from damage. Each shield has a shield level, which works like an armor level, but protects the entire character from frontal attacks. Shields provide no benefit against attacks from the rear. In general, larger shields have higher shield levels, but they are also heavier.

Fighting with a shield can be tiring: attacking while wielding a weapon and a shield drains more Stamina than attacking with the same weapon alone. The heavier a shield, the greater the Stamina drain.

Some weapons, such as bows and crossbows, require two hands to use; a character cannot use a shield while wielding them.

To wield a shield, drag it to the **Shield** slot at the lower left of your **Character Image** on the **Inventory** panel. The shield will appear in the character's left hand.

Finding Opponents

The world of Dereth is full of opponents on which to practice your combat and magic skills. Keep your eye on your Compass as you travel, watching for the orange blips that signify monsters.

Ask other players for the best places to find something to fight, or buy rumors from the local barkeep or other vendors about the locations of nearby dungeons or ruins.

Attacking

Your character must be in combat mode in order to attack an opponent. To enter combat mode, click the button with the dove located below the **Inventory** panel. The button will change to show an axe and shield if you are wielding a melee weapon or no weapon, or to a bow and arrow if you are wielding a missile weapon. A **Combat Bar** will appear at the bottom of the **View Window**. You can use this to control your attack.

To attack

- 1 Wield a weapon by dragging it to the **Weapon** slot, and if necessary ready ammunition by dragging it to the **Ammunition** slot.
- 2 Click the button with the dove to enter combat mode.
- 3 Click to select the opponent you want to attack, and then on the **Combat Bar** click **High**, **Medium**, or **Low** to choose an attack height.

To automatically repeat your previous attack against the same opponent, select the **Repeat Attacks** check box. To automatically target opponents, select the **Auto Target** check box. Click another attack button as soon as an opponent is selected.

When you have defeated that opponent, the nearest remaining opponent will be targeted automatically.

Power vs. Speed

The horizontal bar with the slider is the **Attack Power Bar**. Drag the slider to the left for more speed or to the right for more power. Attacking with more speed means your character delivers more blows, but each does less damage. Attacking with more power means your character delivers fewer, but more damaging blows. The more power in an attack, the more Stamina it requires. When attacking at full power, watch your character's Stamina carefully.

In missile combat, you choose between speed and accuracy rather than speed and power.

Defending

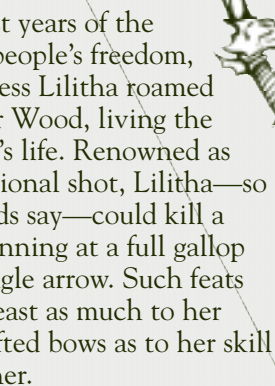
You automatically defend yourself during combat, attempting to evade your opponent's attacks. Training and attributes determine how well your character defends against attack. A character trained or specialized in Melee Defense or Missile Defense skills will more easily avoid the blows or missiles of opponents. These skills are based on your character's Coordination and Quickness attributes, as well as training.

Knowing Your Opponents

Before you fight an opponent, it's important to know what chance you stand of surviving the encounter. When you select your target, its name will appear in the **Selected Item** box, along with a "health indicator" that shows the present state of that target's health. To assess an opponent in order to see even more detail, click the opponent or its blip on the Compass, and then click the **Examine** button. If your assessment is successful, you will see detailed information about the opponent's level, attributes, and current Health, Stamina, and Mana. Even if your assessment is not successful, you'll see the opponent's level and current health percentage. Characters who are trained or specialized in Assess Creature will have a higher chance of successful creature assessments.

While in combat, watch the health indicator below the **Player** panel to see how much effect your attacks are having on your opponent. If your opponent is causing you more damage than you are causing it, it may be time to run rather than fight on, or to retreat out of range long enough to regain lost Health and Stamina.

Lilitha's Bow



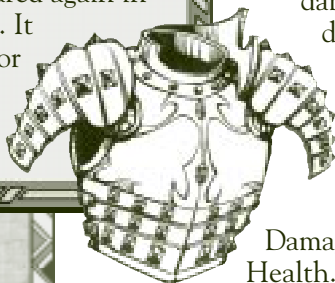
In the first years of the Aluvian people's freedom, the huntress Lilitha roamed the Tiofor Wood, living the vagabond's life. Renowned as an exceptional shot, Lilitha—so the legends say—could kill a Shreth running at a full gallop with a single arrow. Such feats owed at least as much to her finely crafted bows as to her skill as an archer.

Lilitha was capricious by nature, however, and seldom held on to a bow for long. She would no sooner finish making one before starting to carve another, better weapon; when she finished making a new bow that satisfied her exacting needs, she would leave the old one behind. It is said that some of her earlier bows, which are both quicker to draw and stronger of pull than those to be found in common bowyers' shops, can still be found in the wood.

Cuirass of the Green Mire Warrior

The Green Mire Warrior was a mysterious Sho spearman who was known for his bravery. He would fight powerful foes with reckless abandon, and would often laugh while doing so, even when his wounds were grievous and death seemed certain. He is a central figure in many Sho stories and songs, but even so, he remains an enigmatic figure, clad in armor the color of polished jade, wielding his yari with a master's skill.

The Green Mire Warrior perished—in battle, of course—some years ago in the swamps north of Shoushi. He was buried with his armor and spear, but robbers have since looted his grave. Much of his regalia has not been seen since, but some pieces have been found. One such item, a cuirass of yoroi armor said to be as light as leather and enchanted to protect the wearer from acid, passed from one vagabond or warrior to another for years, but has disappeared again in the Blackmire Swamp. It would be a fine prize for the adventurer who recovered it.



Looting Vanquished Opponents

Many of your opponents will be carrying pyreals or other treasure that you can take when you defeat them. To see what a vanquished opponent was carrying, double-click the corpse to display the corpse's inventory at the bottom of your **View Window**. To take an item, double-click it. After a time, the corpse will vanish, leaving behind everything not already taken.

If more than one character fought the same opponent, the corpse will be protected for a short period of time, giving the character who did the most damage the first opportunity to loot the corpse. After the protection time is up, or after that character closes the corpse's inventory, other characters can take any treasure that remains.

Trophies

Some opponents have trophy items such as tails, wings, charms, or spines, which can be sold to collectors. These items are relatively rare and valuable. If you give these items to collectors, you may receive gold for some and potions for others. Still others can be made into weapons or armor by certain special collectors. Not all collectors are interested in the same items, and not all will pay for all items, though they will accept them as gifts. You'll want to become familiar with a number of collectors, what they buy, and what they pay.

Damage

When in combat, both you and your opponent do damage to one another. The type of damage done depends on the type of weapon(s) being used.

Spears, for example, do piercing damage, while maces do bludgeoning damage. Some opponents are more susceptible to certain kinds of damage. To see what kind of damage a weapon does, appraise the weapon.

Damage taken in combat takes points from your current Health. When your Health reaches zero for any reason, your character dies.

Death, Resurrection, and Lifestones

When a player character dies, he or she is immediately resurrected, either at the last Lifestone used or at the place the character first entered the game if no Lifestone has been used. Using a Lifestone expends half your character's present Stamina.

A Lifestone is a large blue crystal to which a player character attunes his or her spirit in order to be resurrected at that spot. There are Lifestones near towns and outposts, and others can be found in remote areas. To attune your character's spirit to a Lifestone, double-click the Lifestone.

Vitae Penalty

When your character dies and is resurrected, your Vitae, or life force, is temporarily drained. This reduces your secondary attributes (Health, Stamina, and Mana) and skills. Each subsequent death reduces your Vitae down to a limit determined by your character level. The higher your character level, the more your Vitae can be reduced. As you earn experience through adventuring, your Vitae will gradually be restored. While your Vitae is reduced, you will see a yellow and red starburst in the upper-right portion of the game screen. Click the starburst to see your current Vitae..

Recovering Health

Health can be recovered most easily by resting your character. Health points are regained fastest if your character is sitting or lying down, but are also regained, although at a slower rate, when standing, walking, or running. Some food and drink will also restore Health, as will some spells and potions.

Healing Kits

If your character has trained or specialized in the Healing skill, you can use a healing kit to restore Health lost due to combat or other injury. These kits can be bought from vendors or found in the game world, and can be used on your character or other characters in the game. If your character is trained in the Healing skill, he or she will begin the game with one or more healing kits. Characters with high Healing skills are more likely to be successful at healing attempts.

Healing kits come in five grades, from crude to peerless. Higher-grade kits are more likely to restore higher numbers of Health points when healing attempts are successful, but they cost considerably more. As with all other items, prices of healing kits vary from vendor to vendor.

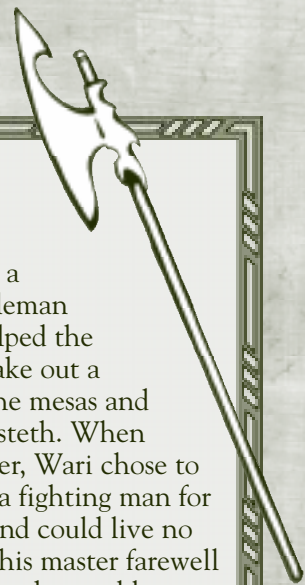
To use a healing kit

- Double-click the kit in your **Inventory**, and then click the character you want to heal.

Silifi of Crimson Stars

Wari al-Sha'im was a follower of the nobleman Musansayn, and helped the renowned leader stake out a homeland among the mesas and dunes of western Osteth. When peace came, however, Wari chose to leave: he had been a fighting man for nearly forty years, and could live no other life. He bade his master farewell and struck out across the trackless sands of the A'mun Desert. He took only a few possessions with him: his scale armor, his shield, and the Silifi of Crimson Stars.

The Silifi was an ancient artifact from the Gharu'ndim homeland, having once belonged to the Malika Ladriya bint Daum. Known by its scarlet markings, it was swift and sharp, and it crackled with the electricity of a slumbering storm. Wari won it from a renegade Shayk in his youth, and carried it with him all his life. He is said to have lost the weapon at last in a dungeon deep beneath the sands, where he finally met his doom. The Silifi surely remains in those depths, awaiting a new wielder with the courage to bring it back to sunlit lands.



You will see a message in the **Chat and Events** log telling you if your healing attempt was successful and how many Health points were restored.

Improving Your Character by Applying Experience Points

Experience in Asheron's Call is earned, in part, through combat, whether with weapons or magic. The more difficult an opponent is to defeat, the greater number of experience points your character gains for defeating it. Experience points can be spent to raise the levels of your attributes, trained skills, and specialized skills. After character creation, attributes can be raised only by spending experience points. Most skills that are trained and specialized, however, can also be raised just by using them. In general, the more you use a trained or specialized skill, the higher that skill will become. If you want a skill to rise faster than it will from practice alone, you can spend experience points to raise it.

How you apply your experience points to skills and attributes is important to your character's success in the game world. Each attribute governs a different area of your character's interaction with the game, and which ones you will want to develop depends upon your character's profession or area of specialization. Strength and Endurance, along with weapon skills, for example, are most important for warriors and blademasters. Quickness and Coordination, along with Bow or Crossbow skills are most important for archers, and Focus and Self, along with Arcane Lore, Mana Conversion, and the appropriate spellcasting skills, are vital for spellcasters. You will also want to raise your Health, Stamina, and—if your character is a spellcaster—Mana.

To learn more about attributes and skills, and how to raise them during character creation and gameplay, see “Your Attributes and Skills” in Chapter Two.

To raise an attribute or trained skill

- 1 Click the **Skills and Attributes** button on the **Player** panel, and then click the **Attributes** tab or the **Skills** tab.
- 2 Click the attribute or skill that you want to raise.

If you have enough unassigned experience points, you will see an upward-pointing green triangle at the bottom right of the panel.

- 3 Click the triangle to raise the attribute or skill.



Branith's Blazing Staff

The mage Branith was a sorcerer who fought, for a time, alongside Thorsten Cragstone himself. His chosen magic was pyromancy, the way of fire: his foes often met their ends in raging infernos that left nothing but ash in their wake. It was only right, then, that the staff he wielded would evoke flames as well.

The Blazing Staff, an Empyrean artifact shaped of sunstone, became famous among wizards across Dereth. Though not the mightiest such item, the eminence of its wielder would make it a grand addition to any mage's arsenal. Unfortunately, its location is not known. Branith has since given up adventuring to live a life of quiet seclusion in the mountains, but he no longer owns the staff: it, and several other items of power, were stolen from his home by mites. Perhaps one day, some intrepid soul will find it again.

The Way of Steel

excerpted from *The Eagle's Road*,
by Ummaz ibn Baqani

The path of the warrior is, by nature, fraught with peril. Those who travel it will seldom live to see their old age. Many will perish while they are still young. Yet the rewards for the skilled fighter can be great: power, glory, wealth, and the respect of friend and foe alike. Still, the novice warrior should learn something about his blade before he draws it for the first time.

WEAPONS

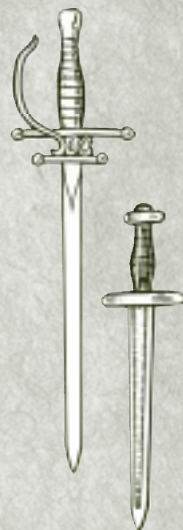
There's much to think about when it comes to selecting the right weapon. A spear is very different from an axe, for instance. Which one is better depends on your own abilities, your foe, and the weapon itself. Before you go to the blacksmith's—before you even choose which kinds of weapons to train with—learn what they can do.

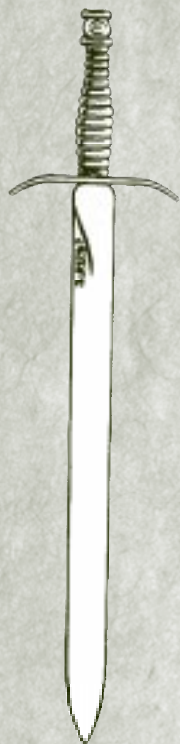


Axes and Hammers are heavy and slow, but they do grievous damage when they cleave a foe's flesh or smash his skull. They are suited for warriors who are strong and have plenty of stamina.

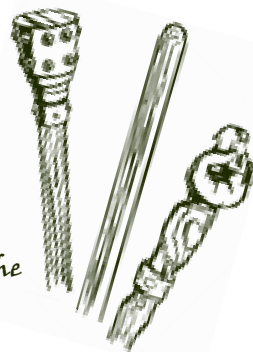
Daggers and Knives are light and quick, but don't do much damage compared with other arms. They are also among the easiest weapons to learn. If your specialty lies somewhere other than combat, such as magic or lockpicking, the dagger is a fine choice when you must wade into battle.

Maces, Clubs, and Morning Stars are perfect for the warrior who cares little for subtlety, and wants to start breaking bones. Heavy bludgeons are especially handy against certain monsters, such as Skeletons and Olthoi.





Spears are simple and have a long reach. If a creature is particularly vulnerable to piercing damage, they're the best choice. Because their heads are smaller than most other weapons' blades, however, the wounds they inflict are sometimes less severe.



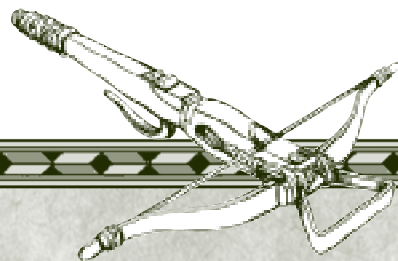
Staffs, like daggers, are simple weapons, best suited to sorcerers and vagabonds—although some staff-fighters, especially among the Sho, are among the most skilled warriors alive. They are light and quick, with a longer reach than a mace, but they also do less damage.

Swords are, according to many fighters, the finest of all weapons. They are quicker and lighter than axes, do more damage than daggers, and can both slash and stab. They are more difficult to learn than other weapons, however, and are more likely to inflict minor grazes and nicks than, say, a battle axe or morning star.

Punching Weapons, such as the katar, nekode, and cestus, add damage to punching attacks. Unarmed combat differs from other melee fighting, as the more skilled a warrior becomes, the more damage he can inflict. The novice is at a disadvantage beside a fighter with a sword, but masters of unarmed combat can cause as much harm with their hands and feet as the mightiest weapons—and usually with greater speed.

Bows are the standard for missile combat. Archery is hard to learn, but a trained Bowman can kill an animal or minor monster with a single, well-aimed arrow. Longbows, generally, are slower than shortbows, but are more powerful, so they do more damage.

Crossbows are both easier to use and mightier than bows, doing tremendous damage with each quarrel. They are very slow to reload, though, making it harder to keep up steady fire. They are best suited for ambushes and surprise attacks, and can cause incredible mayhem when used in groups.



Thrown Weapons include anything that can be hurled by hand—darts, javelins, throwing axes, shouken, and many others. They don't fly as far as arrows or quarrels, but a strong warrior can hurl them long distances and inflict terrible damage with them.

As you slay monsters and grow in power, you will find weapons of quality and magical weapons. These can be faster, more accurate, or more damaging than normal weapons. They can also improve your skill at deflecting attacks and cast spells to improve your abilities. Keep watch, especially, for weapons that spout flames, frost, lightning, or acid. Not only are they spectacular in battle, but some monsters are extremely vulnerable to them—you can vanquish a Mu-miyah much faster, for instance, with a flaming sword than with one of plain steel.

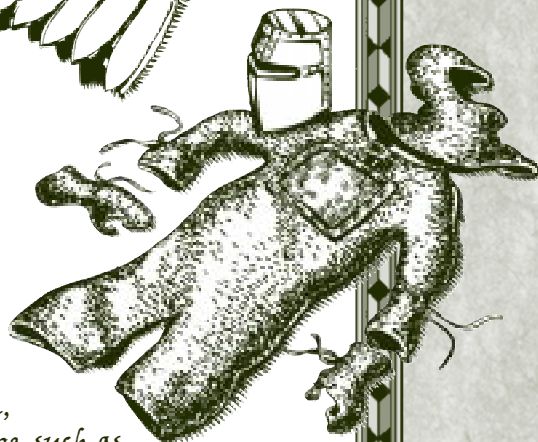
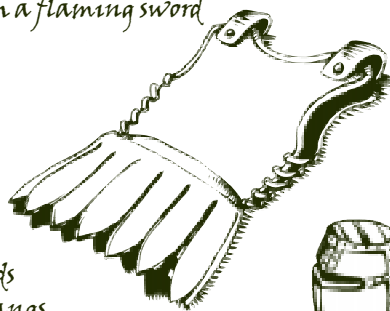
ARMOR

As vital as your weapon is, it is not your only important choice in combat. If you want to live past your first fight, you should think carefully about armor. It is, after all, what stands between you and your foes' blades, cudgels, and fangs.

It isn't as simple as bedecking yourself in a full suit of plate mail before wading into battle, though. Each kind of armor has its own strengths and weaknesses, and choosing the wrong kind can leave you exhausted or dead.

Leather Armor is made of cuir bouilli: leather hardened by boiling it in oil. It provides the least overall protection, but against some types of damage, such as fire, lightning, and frost, it is superior to metal armor. It is also light and inexpensive, so it is ideal for novices and those who prefer speed to strength.

Studded Leather Armor is made of soft leather fitted with metal studs. It is a favorite of common soldiers, as it provides greater protection than leather armor, and is only slightly heavier and more expensive.



Chain Mail, a flexible mesh of metal links, is one of the most popular kinds of armor. It protects well, but is not as heavy as other forms of mail. Unlike plate, scale, and yoroi, it provides fair protection against fire, frost and lightning.

Scale Mail is made of overlapping metal scales. It is the sturdiest armor crafted by the Gharu'ndim. While not as strong as Aluvian plate mail, it is lighter, exchanging protection for speed.

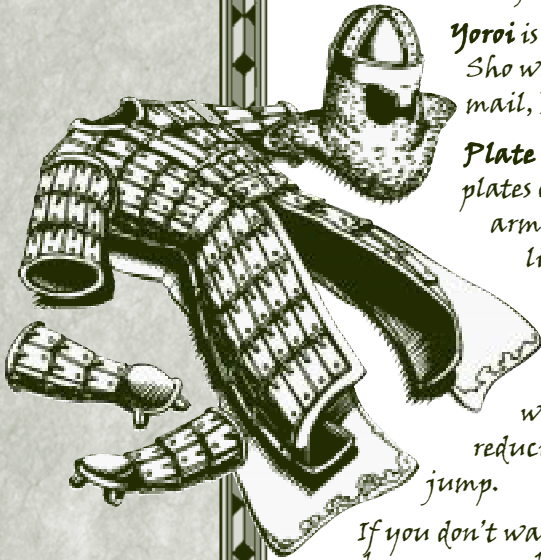
Yoroi is armor of laminated metal plates worn by the most powerful Sho warriors. It is slightly heavier and more protective than scale mail, but not as strong or cumbersome as plate mail.

Plate Mail, popular among Aluvian knights, is made of metal plates over padding. It is the most protective of all nonmagical armor, but is heavy, expensive, and vulnerable to fire, frost, and lightning.

The most important thing to remember about armor, aside from how much protection it provides, is how cumbersome it is. Heavy armor, such as scale, yoroi, and especially plate, will hamper all but the strongest warriors—tiring them, reducing their ability to fight, and making it hard to run and jump.

If you don't want to be constantly fatigued, don't wear so much armor that you become encumbered. There are two ways to do this. First, of course, you can wear lighter armor. Second, you can wear piecemeal armor to protect only certain parts of your body. Cover your most vulnerable spots first—your head, chest, forearms, and lower legs—by wearing helmets, breastplates, bracers, and greaves, while leaving other parts unprotected. You can also combine these two tactics, wearing heavy armor on vulnerable points, and lighter armor on the rest of your body. For instance, if plate mail sleeves are too burdensome, wear plate vambraces on your forearms and studded leather pauldrons on your upper arms.

As with weapons, magical armor and armor of quality are worth watching for. They can provide better overall protection or higher protection against specific types of damage, and can cast spells that improve your abilities.





SHIELDS

Shields can be a boon in battle, but they don't come without cost. They help you absorb attacks—the larger the shield, the better it will protect you—but fighting with them is fatiguing. You'll tire faster with a shield than you would with a weapon alone. Wielding a tower shield, the sturdiest of all, will soon wear out all but the most robust warriors. Also, shields protect you only from frontal attacks: if a foe gets behind you, even the largest shield will be useless.

STRATEGY

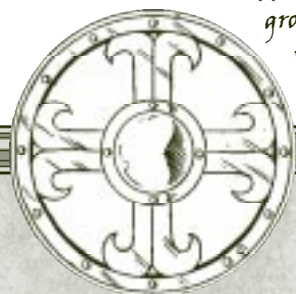
Even the legendary Thorsten Cragstone started out not knowing which end of a sword has the point. He learned quickly, however, or he would have met his death much sooner, and we might all still be thralls of the Olthoi.

While you can fight, and maybe even survive a while, without much knowledge of battle tactics, you'll get farther if you understand some basic combat strategy. Heed this advice, and someday your name may be remembered as well as Thorsten's.

Stamina. *One of the most common mistakes a warrior can make is to care only about his health. If your stamina runs out, your fighting skills will suffer. If you get tired too quickly, don't strain yourself so much. Use a lighter weapon: don't wield a massive morning star if a club is enough to slay your foes. Switch to a smaller shield or none at all. And remember your armor and all the treasure you're carrying will weigh you down too.*

Multiple Opponents. *Even the feeblest Drudges can be deadly if they attack an inexperienced fighter en masse. When fighting against groups, try to put your back to a wall, so they can't flank you and attack from the rear. Corners work even better, as does fighting back-to-back with another warrior.*

When faced with a group of opponents there is more than one way to increase your chances of victory. One method is to circle the outside of the group at a safe distance, assessing your foes. Target a foe who is likely to chase you (you will learn their ways with experience) and approach close enough to attract its attention. Allow that one to chase you far enough from the others that they will not interfere, and defeat it before going back to lure out another. When the odds are more in your favor take out the opponent in the group who is likely to do the most damage, then fight your way through the weaker ones.



Power and Speed. If you can kill an opponent with a single mighty swing, use as powerful an attack as possible. But if it isn't necessary to summon all your strength for one crushing blow, attack quickly and try to finish your foe before it can attack you again.

Damage Type. Some creatures are particularly vulnerable to some kinds of damage, but are little harmed by others. For instance, piercing weapons like spears are ineffective against Skeletons, but bludgeoning maces can shatter their bones. Choose your weapons to suit your foes.

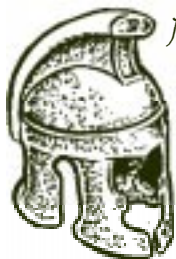
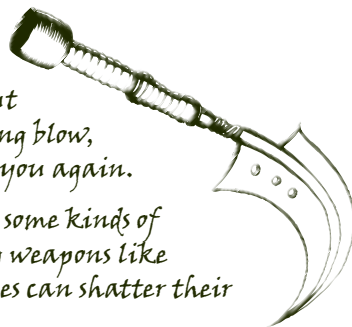
Enemy Weaknesses. Some creatures and characters have body parts that are poorly protected. Choose the height of your attack to aim for these weak spots. If you're fighting a warrior who isn't wearing a helmet, for instance, swing high to aim for his head. Monsters' weak spots are less obvious, but if you discover one, use it.

using Missile Weapons. If you have a missile weapon, ready it before battle is joined. Most of the delay in using a bow or crossbow comes from loading, not firing. Don't waste shots by firing at targets from too far away. Only the most skilled archers can shoot well from long distances. And, above all, watch your ammunition: there's nothing worse than reaching for that vital arrow, only to discover your quiver is empty.

Support from Spellcasters. While some fighters disdain wizardry, a friendly magic-user can be a tremendous asset. Sorcerers' war magic can be as effective a weapon as any sword. An enchanter can improve your abilities and equipment, or weaken a foe so you can deal the death blow. And a life mage's spell can save you from an early death.

Fleeing. At some point, even the mightiest warrior gets into a fight he can't win. If you find yourself outmatched, it's often best to turn and run. Many monsters will chase you, but they'll give up eventually—if they don't kill you first. Don't stay in a hopeless fight until your health is almost gone, or you won't get away. And again, watch your stamina: if you're exhausted when you try to flee, you'll never outpace your foes.

This is only the beginning of combat strategy. As you adventure and gain experience, not only will your skills improve, but you'll also learn more about how to fight effectively. Don't be afraid to ask more accomplished warriors for advice: many will gladly teach you how best to fight in exchange for tithes or allegiance. And, if you live long enough to become a veteran, be sure to pass your knowledge on to the new generations of warriors, so that they might one day perform deeds as mighty as yours.



A Dereth Bestiary



The Armoredillo

is a strange creature, covered in a hard shell bristling with bony, foot-long blades. They are solitary hunters, ranging in size from three to six feet long.

Different breeds dwell in deserts, plains, mountains, and shallow water. They attack with beaked jaws and spine blades: their spinning attack is particularly devastating. It is rumored that skilled artisans can shape Armoredillo blades into wicked weapons.

Dangerous to Deadly, depending on breed

Banderlings

are the larger cousins of Drudges, Mosswarts, and Tumeroks. They are even less intelligent than other humanoids, but make up for this with sheer brutality. They prefer to fight in small packs, using heavy weapons or their sharp claws. On average, they stand seven feet tall, though their chiefs are even larger. Forest-dwellers by nature, they can also be found in Tumerok strongholds and dungeons near the Aluvian lands.

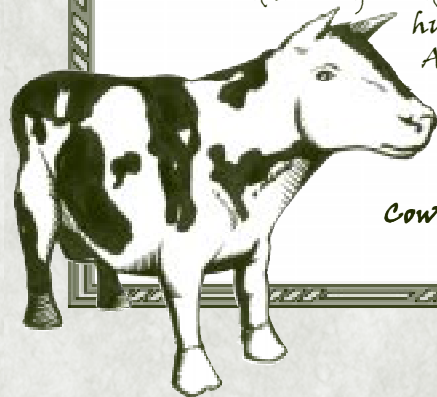
Dangerous (leaders: Deadly)

Cattle

in Dereth come in two varieties: the common domesticated **Cow** and the large wild **Auroch**. Cows tend to be found near human habitation and are nonaggressive.

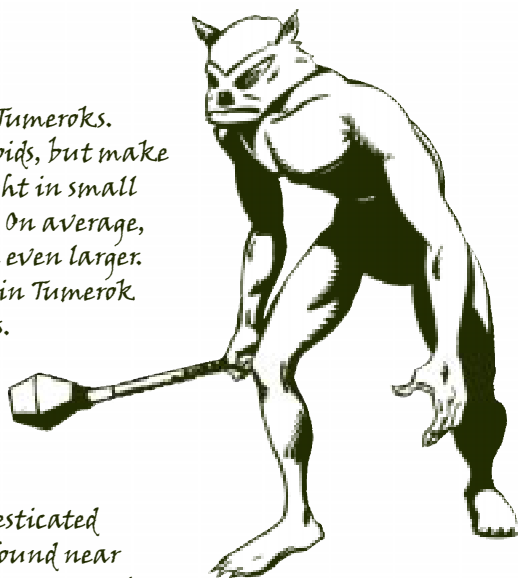
Aurochs, recognizable by their shaggy coats and long horns, roam the grasslands; they do not attack on sight, but will defend their herd if it is threatened. Tales speak of even deadlier types of Auroch who dwell on the plains north of the Gharu'ndim lands.

Cows: Weak; Aurochs: Dangerous



This bestiary catalogues the known monsters in Dereth. For the reader's convenience, each monster's description is accompanied by a relative measurement of how great a threat the monster poses.

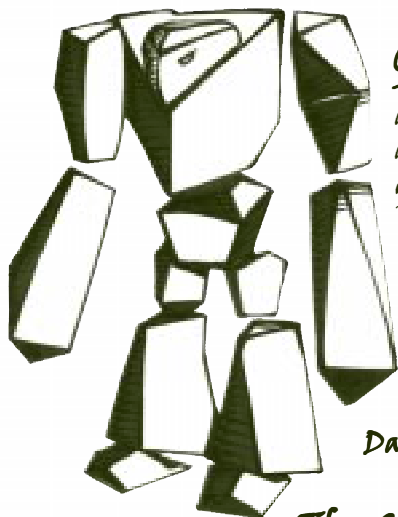
Be warned that this volume is almost certainly incomplete. New monsters are constantly being drawn to Dereth through portals from other worlds, and other creatures from Empyrean history



Drudges

are for the most part the weakest of the humanoid races, and are often kept by their stronger cousins as slaves or grunt warriors. They often scavenge on the fringes of human lands, preying on the weak and defenseless, and also skulk in shallow dungeons. Most stand about four feet tall, and fight with their claws; some employ crude weapons like knives and clubs. In combat, they attack in packs, and with little discipline. Be warned: there are a few varieties of Drudges that are more dangerous than the norm.

Feeble to Weak, with the exceptions noted



Golems

are said to be remnants of Empyrean magic, left behind as guardians for their strongholds, both above and below ground. Now that the Empyrean have vanished, however, they have become mindless automatons, attacking anything that comes near. They stand seven to eight feet tall, and are made of many materials, including earth, wood, water, ice, stone, and metal. They bash with their club-like limbs, and some also attack with magic.

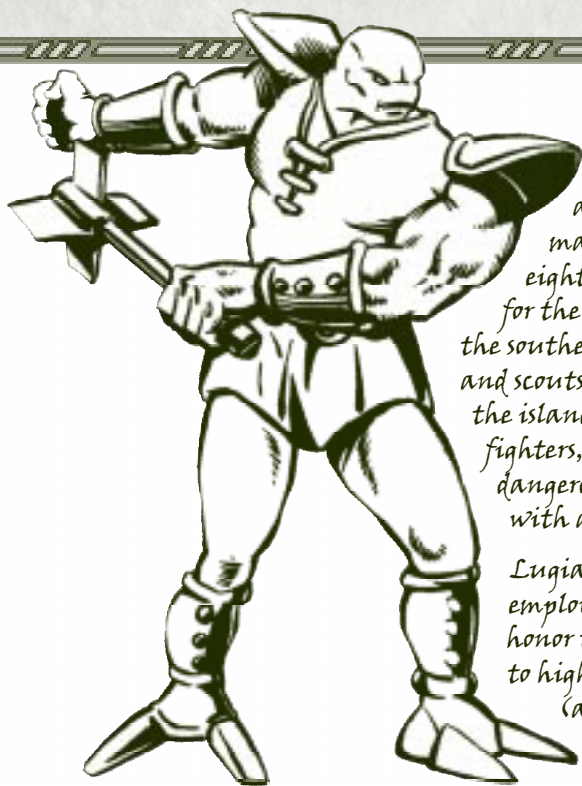
Dangerous to Lethal, depending on material

The Gromnie

is a ferocious, dragon-like predator. Breeds of different colors dwell in deserts, mountains, forests, glaciers, and swamps, and some have also found their way underground. They stand from three to five feet tall at the shoulder. They are extremely aggressive and vicious, ravaging their victims with tooth and claw. In addition, they are known to employ various breath weapons—fire, ice, lightning, or acid, depending on their breed.

Dangerous to Deadly, depending on breed





Lugians,

a race of gray giants, were among the first arrivals on Dereth. They are incredibly massive and strong—the average Lugian is eight feet tall and weighs half a ton. They live, for the most part, in the Linvak Mountains in the southernmost reaches of Dereth, though rogues and scouts have been sighted in dungeons elsewhere on the island. They are determined, single-minded fighters, and their iron-hard fists and even more dangerous weapons can crush a common human with a single blow.

Lugian society is clannish and structured, employing a rigid caste system and a strict code of honor to enforce order. Their five castes, from lowest to highest, are Laigus (commoner), Amplotth (artisan), Obeloth (warrior), Lithos (champion), and Gigas (ruler). Ascending from one caste to the next is achieved through

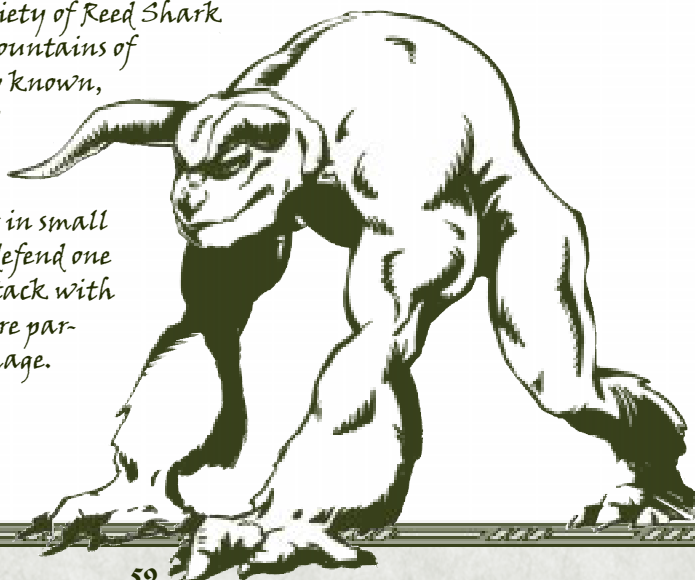
a bloody battle to the death. Lugians are severe isolationists: intruders in their territory are slain swiftly and without mercy.

Dangerous to Lethal, depending on caste

Mattekars

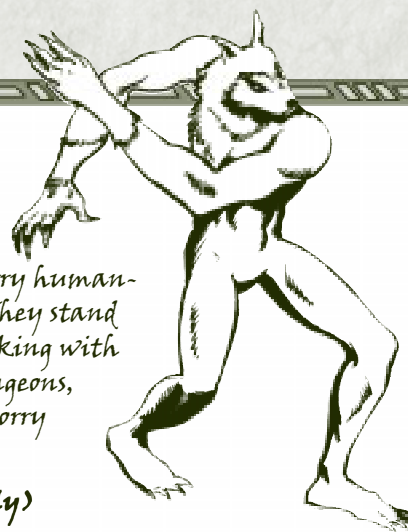
are a strange, fur-bearing variety of Reed Shark found in the snowfields and mountains of northern Dereth. They are also known, among common folk, as “snow sharks.” They are huge—six feet or taller at the shoulder—and are found as lone rogues or in small family units: the latter will defend one another to the death. They attack with claws, horns, and teeth, and are particularly resistant to cold damage.

Dangerous to Deadly, depending on breed



Mites

are among the more recent arrivals to Dereth, having appeared 20 years after the first humans. These small, furry humanoids have since become a growing nuisance on the island. They stand four to five feet tall, and are very quick, clawing and kicking with startling speed. Having made their lairs in forests and dungeons, they are reportedly breeding at an alarming rate. Sages worry that unchecked, they could soon run rampant.



Weak to Dangerous (leaders: Deadly)

Monouga

The three-eyed Monouga are highland dwellers who have also taken to living in derelict dungeons. They are aggressive warriors who fight with crude weapons and have a totemistic fascination with fire. Five to six feet tall at adulthood, they continue to grow as they age. Once some reach a certain size, however, their muscles can no longer support their weight. These frail "giants" are cast out into the wild, easy prey for other creatures. Recently, Monougas of tremendous size and strength threatened towns all over Dereth before bands of warriors and sorcerers slew them. It is not known how they grew to such a size while retaining such incredible strength.

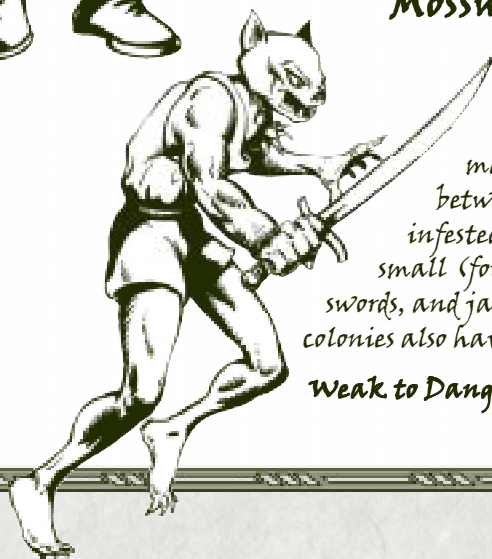
Dangerous to Deadly (outcasts: Weak, tremendous: Deadly)



Mosswarts

are humanoids from the same world as Drudges, Tumeroks, and Banderlings. In Dereth, they live in various swamps and marshes, particularly in the Blackmire Swamp between the Sho and Aluvian lands. They have also infested many ruins and damp catacombs. They are small (four to five feet tall), fight with claws, spears, swords, and javelins, and are fearless when cornered. Some colonies also have magic-using shamans.

Weak to Dangerous (leaders: Deadly)



Olthoi

are a scourge upon the land: insectoid engines of death standing from seven to eight feet tall. They are responsible for the Empyrean's flight from the world, and until recently ran rampant across Dereth. Their numbers have diminished since Elysa Strathelar and Thorsten Cragstone overthrew them, but they can still be found deep in their dark underground hives.

Olthoi are fast, vicious fighters, impaling victims with their huge digging claws and eviscerating them with their smaller, razor-sharp talons. Once they choose a foe they continue to attack until that foe is dead. To them, anything that is not an Olthoi is either prey or a potential slave.

Like ants and bees, Olthoi come in different forms, each suited to a particular role in their society:

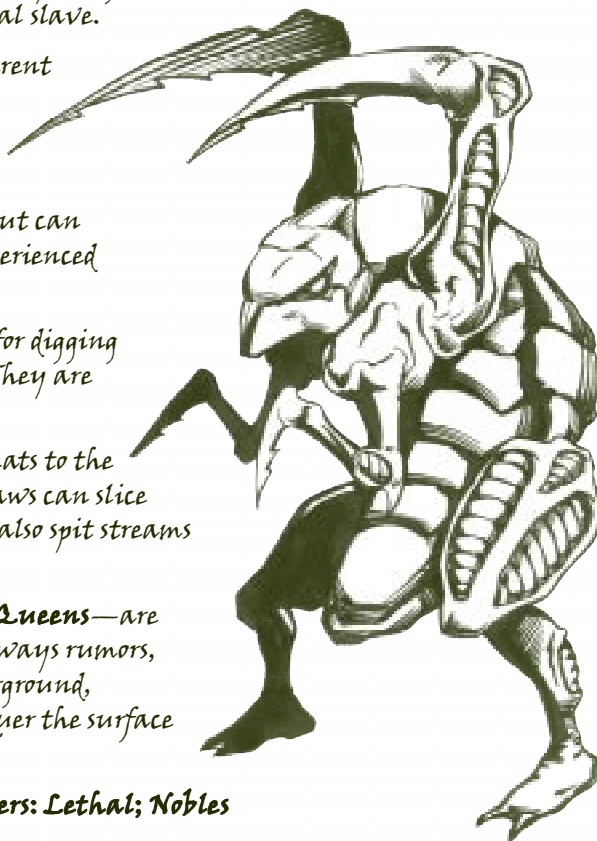
Nymphs are immature Olthoi. They are relatively weak and easy to kill, but can still slaughter an entire party of inexperienced adventurers.

Workers are sterile drones, responsible for digging new tunnels and other menial tasks. They are the most common form of Olthoi.

Soldiers have one purpose: to find threats to the hive and destroy them. Their barbed claws can slice through the strongest armor. They can also spit streams of acid.

Two other forms of Olthoi—**Nobles** and **Queens**—are now believed to be extinct. There are always rumors, though, that more still dwell far underground, waiting until the time is right to conquer the surface once again.

Nymphs: Deadly; Workers and Soldiers: Lethal; Nobles and Queens: Unknown





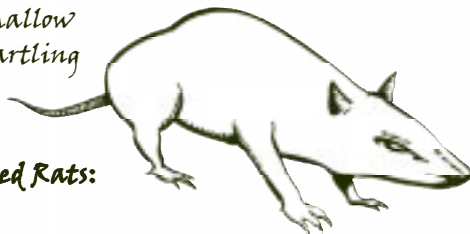
Phytos Wasps

may be brightly colored and beautiful to look at, but they are also a dreadful pestilence. These flying insects are huge, with wingspans of three to four feet, and are unafraid to attack vastly superior foes with their cruel stingers. There are several different colors of wasp, each of which can use a different magical attack. Varieties can be found in different environments, from deserts to forests to swamps, and their buzzing can be heard from a great distance.

Weak to Dangerous, depending on color

Rats

are as much a fact of life on Dereth as they were on Ispah. The rodents in this world are of unusual size, however, being two or more feet from nose to tail. While most are easy to kill, they can still be daunting when they attack in swarms, and the more dangerous Black and Red Rats can be formidable. They dwell on the fringes of human habitation, and have also overrun many shallow dungeons. They attack with startling speed, leaping to sink their teeth into their victims.

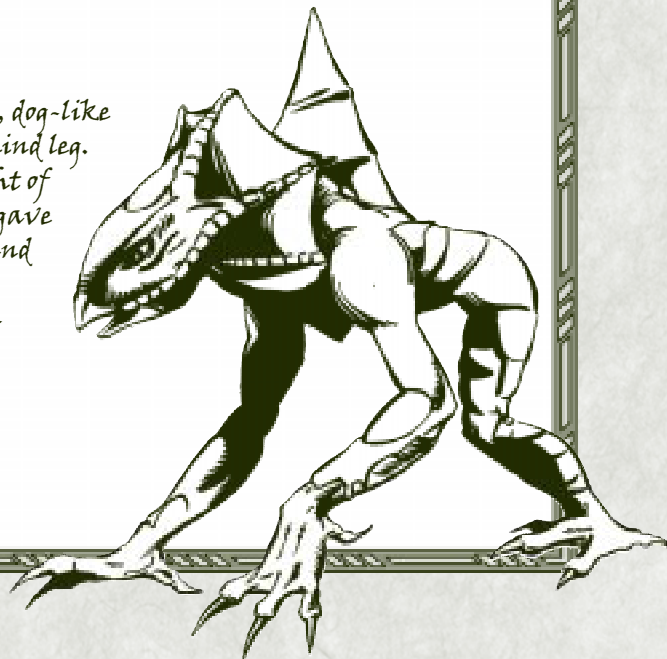


Feeble to Weak (Black and Red Rats: Dangerous)

The Reed Shark

is a peculiar carnivore, a six-foot-long, hairless, dog-like creature with two forelegs and a single, strong hind leg. It also sports a fin-like crest on its back: the sight of these fins moving through the swamps is what gave this creature its name. They attack in packs, and fight with claw and fang. They can be found nearly anywhere except mountains and waterways. Tumeroks are known to keep them as "guard dogs."

Dangerous



The Sclavus

is not a natural monster, but rather a magical crossbreed of serpent and humanoid. It is rumored that they were created ages ago by a degenerate Empyrean cult, in a failed attempt to construct a servant race. Four different subraces exist, ranging in size from four to seven feet tall. Sclavi fight viciously with swords and spears, and are powerful spellcasters. Swamps, ruins, and deep dungeons are their homes.

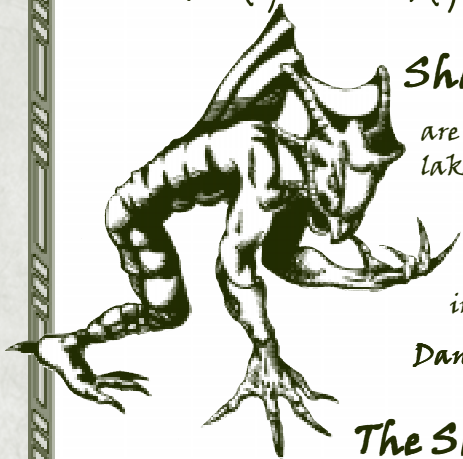
Deadly to Lethal, depending on subrace



Shallows Sharks

are a mutant breed of Reed Shark found along the shores of lakes and rivers. They look similar to their land-dwelling cousins, but are smaller and even more savage. They often lurk in shallow water, hiding until prey comes near. They do not like to share their territory with other creatures, including land-dwelling Reed Sharks.

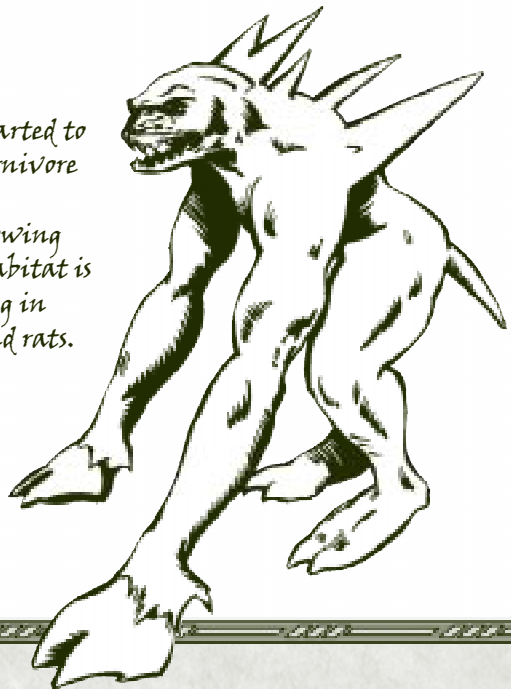
Dangerous to Deadly



The Shreth

is a relatively new arrival to Dereth, having started to appear only in the past year or two. A squat carnivore with bony spikes jutting from its back, it passes through several growth spurts during its life, growing larger and stronger at every stage. Its natural habitat is not yet known, but some have taken to dwelling in dungeons, where they like to feast on carrion and rats. The Shreth attacks with its spikes, hooves, and savage teeth.

Weak to Deadly, depending on growth stage





Tumeroks

are a race of warlike humanoids, related to Drudges, Mosswarts, and Banderlings. Though they aren't the largest of their kin, standing six feet tall on average, they are by far the most dangerous, as they are the only ones to have developed near-human intelligence.

Tribal warmongers by nature, Tumeroks were rejected as slaves by the Olthoi for being too brutish. They fight with weapons, including bows and crossbows, and many can use sorcery. Their priestly caste is particularly adept at wielding magic. Their overlords are a match for the greatest human warriors.

As a race, Tumeroks prefer to dwell in dry, rocky regions, and they have made the Direlands their home. They have dug their own dungeons and built several fortresses, surrounded by wooden palisades. They often use lesser humanoids as

slaves and foot soldiers. Being natural conquerors, they sometimes encroach on human settlements, engaging in both quick raids and longer sieges, using numbers to ensure victory. If they ever organized under one leader, they would be a terrible threat to any who stood against them.

Dangerous (leaders: Deadly to Lethal)

Tuskers

are a race of eight-foot-tall, apelike brutes, named for the large tusks that jut from their lower jaws. They prefer to dwell in forests, although some have been found in the Direlands and elsewhere, as thralls of the mysterious Virindi. They tend to gather in small clans, dominated by a "crimsonback" female and a "goldenback" male. They fight in groups, bashing with their massive fists and kicking with their strong legs.

Dangerous (crimsonback and goldenback: Deadly)



The Undead

Though death is seldom permanent for humans in Dereth, there is nonetheless a growing number of undead—mostly the risen forms of those who died before discovering the Lifestones. Some evil magic, its source unknown, is touching the slain and raising them to wreak vengeance upon the living.

The notion of the undead as slow and stupid is only partly true. While the weaker forms cleave to this archetype, their more powerful fellows are often as quick and intelligent as the living—and far more malicious.

The undead are commonly found in wastelands forsaken by the living, such as barren deserts and fetid swamps, and also in old tombs, ruins, and dungeons.

There are many different kinds of undead, including the following:

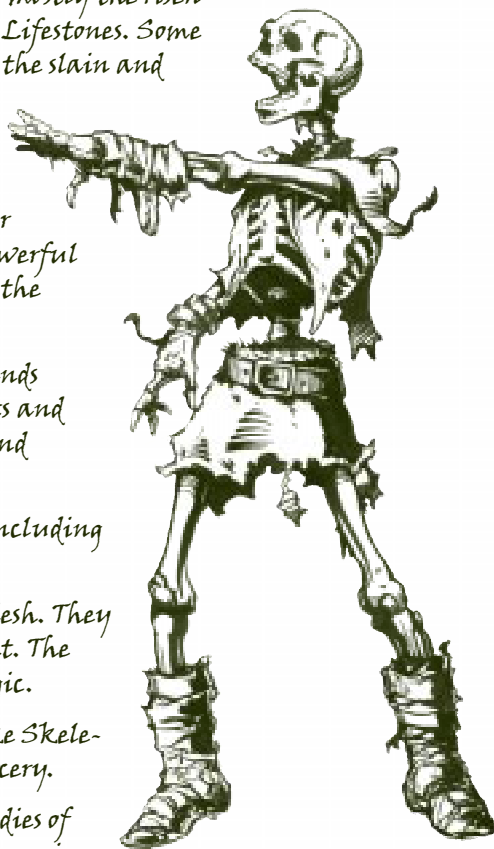
Skeletons are bare bones, stripped of their flesh. They attack with weapons, or with hands and feet. The most powerful Skeleton Lords also wield magic.

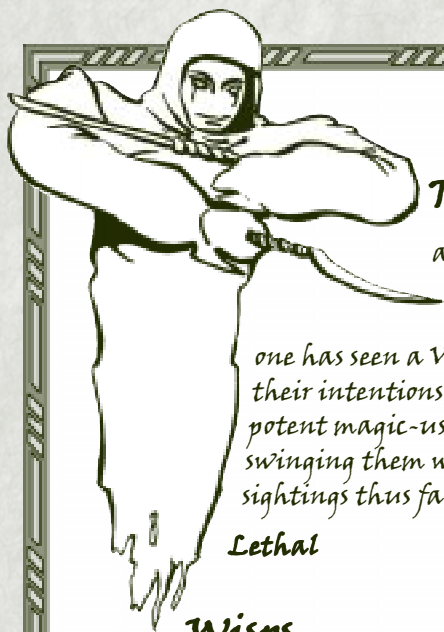
Zombies are walking corpses. They fight like Skeletons, but are stronger and more apt to use sorcery.

Liches and Revenants are the animated bodies of wizards. They are among the most powerful magic-users of all the undead.

Mu-miyahs resemble zombies, but their bodies have been preserved, either by art or accident, and do not rot. All of them can use magic.

Skeletons: Weak (leaders: Dangerous to Lethal); Zombies: Dangerous; Liches and Revenants: Deadly to Lethal; Mu-miyahs: Dangerous to Lethal





The Virindi

are a mysterious race of levitating beings shrouded by dark, heavy cloaks. Their faces—if they have faces at all—are concealed by grotesque white masks. No one has seen a Virindi without its cloak or mask. Little is known of their intentions, but they are very powerful and capricious, and are potent magic-users. They also wield fearsome sickles, swinging them with unnatural speed. Most reported sightings thus far have been in the Direlands.

Lethal

Wisps

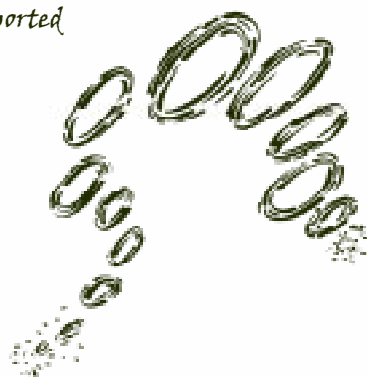
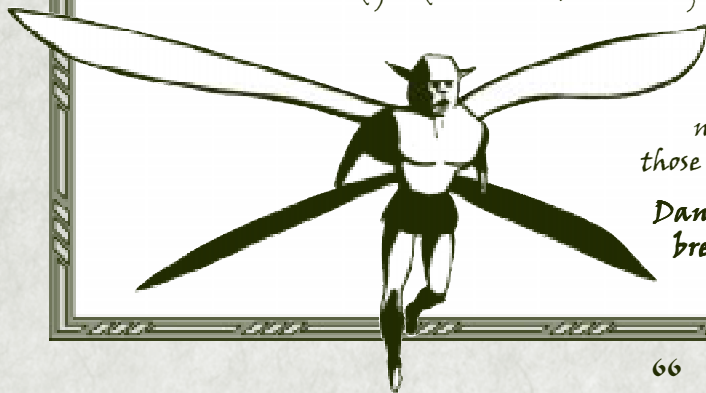
are strange, magical creatures that resemble dancing balls of light. Their origins are unknown: some scholars speculate that they are tied to the vanished Empyrean, or to the forces of magic. They are unpredictable in battle, often relying on magic to harm or hinder opponents, but sometimes darting at a target to inflict electric damage. Weaker Wisps tend to be blue in hue, while stronger ones are green or red.

Weak to Deadly, depending on color

Zefir

are small, winged humanoids that dwell within ruins and subterranean caverns. Unlike the benevolent faerie folk of legend, the Zefir are mean-spirited and destructive, and have no love for humans. They attack in swarms to defend their lairs, scratching with their sharp claws, and can also draw upon a large arsenal of harmful spells. They are particularly fond of fire and lightning, and are resistant to damage of those sorts.

Dangerous to Deadly, depending on breed



Magic in Asheron's Call

The world of Dereth is steeped in magic. Magicians are nearly as plentiful as warriors, and enchanted items wait to be found by the adventurous. It is perhaps a more difficult choice to begin a career as a spellcaster than it is to begin as a warrior, but the potential rewards are also greater. High-level spellcasters are powerful characters whose magical expertise is as important to gameplay as skill with axe or bow, and as much in demand as the deadliest flaming sword.

Getting Started as a Spellcaster

Be sure to give your beginning spellcaster plenty of practice in the training hall before you send him or her out into the world—a thorough knowledge of spellcasting from the very beginning will serve you well as you face the challenges of life in Dereth.

Spell formulae are like a language, with each component having a different meaning within the context of the spell. As you learn more spells you will be able to discern some of these meanings for yourself, and this will make your magical research more fruitful. Even a beginning spellcaster can be of help to a group of adventurers in a fellowship, but if you prefer to go it alone while you strengthen your skills, stick close to one of the starting towns until you're experienced enough to venture into more dangerous lands. You can also find a patron to take you into an allegiance and help finance your researches, or even share spell formulae with you. To learn more about fellowships and allegiances, see Chapter Eight, "Social Systems."

Spellcraft Skills and Schools of Magic

The three basic types of spellcasters in Asheron's Call are enchanters, life mages, and sorcerers. Each uses different spellcraft skills to cast spells.

Any spellcraft skill can be raised from untrained to trained or trained to specialized during character creation by spending training credits. You can also raise a spellcraft skill from untrained to trained during gameplay by spending skill credits.



To learn more about raising skills with training credits and skill credits, see “Skills” in Chapter Two, “Your Player Character.”

There are seven magic skills in Asheron's Call. The first four, the spellcraft skills, are associated with the four schools of magic.



Creature Enchantment is associated with the School of the Left Hand. This skill is used for spells that affect the attributes of opponents or other characters, such as raising the Quickness of a player character or lowering the Endurance of an opponent. Spells belonging to this school are used by enchanters, and also by adventurers who have Creature Enchantment as a trained or specialized skill.



Item Enchantment is associated with the School of the Right Hand. This skill is used for spells that affect the attributes of items, such as raising the armor level of a piece of armor, or lowering the damage caused by an opponent's sword. Like the spells belonging to the School of the Left Hand, these spells are used by enchanters, and also by adventurers who have Item Enchantment as a trained or specialized skill.



Life Magic is used by the School of the Heart. This skill is used for spells that heal or harm living things, such as spells that raise or lower a character's Health or other secondary attributes. Life Magic can also be used to protect characters from damage of various types. These spells are used by life mages, and also by adventurers who have Life Magic as a trained or specialized skill.

A life mage's craft is twofold, and healing can be accomplished either with the aid of magic or without it. Healing spells can be cast either on the spellcaster or on another character. Healing kits, which are not magical but depend on the Healing skill, can also be used on yourself or other characters.

To learn more about healing kits and how to use them, see “Healing Kits” in Chapter Five, “Combat and Experience.”



War Magic is used by the School of the Arm. This skill is used for spells that are used like weapons against opponents, such as spells that hurl missiles of fire, force, ice, electricity, or acid. Spells of this school are used by sorcerers, and also by adventurers who have War Magic as a trained or specialized skill.

Other Magic Skills

Arcane Lore is used when a character attempts to learn a new spell formula or use a magic item.



Magic Defense is used to resist spells cast upon a character.



Mana Conversion reduces the amount of Mana necessary to cast a spell or use a magic item.



Mana

Mana is magical energy. Your character's starting Mana is based on the primary attribute Self; the higher the Self attribute, the higher the starting Mana. A high starting Mana is the most important attribute for a spellcaster. The higher the character's Mana, the more magical energy the character can use for casting a spell. Every time a spellcaster casts a spell, he or she spends Mana. The higher the level of the spell, the more Mana it costs to cast it. If the character does not have enough Mana available to cast a spell, that spell fails.

The Mana depleted by spellcasting is regained over time from the Mana of the land until it reaches the character's current maximum. During gameplay your character's maximum Mana can be increased by spending experience points.

Mana is not a measure of the character's spellcasting ability, but an indicator of the amount of raw magical power the character has. Spellcasting ability is determined by the level of the spellcraft skill being used. The higher the spellcasting skill, the more likely a spell is to succeed when cast. For this reason, a character with low Mana can still cast spells skillfully while there is Mana available to cast them, while one with high Mana for casting spells might still have low magical ability as determined by their spellcraft skill level, and would be less likely to cast successfully. Spellcasters are advised to train and build both spellcraft skills and Mana for maximum spellcasting effectiveness.

Your character's Mana is shown by the blue bar at the upper right of your game screen. Click the bar to see the Mana value expressed in numbers.

Mana Conversion and Mana Stones

A spellcaster who has Mana Conversion as a trained or specialized skill uses it to reduce the amount of Mana he or she expends when casting spells. Whenever the character casts a spell, he or she makes an automatic skill check: if the check succeeds, the Mana is reduced. The higher a character's Mana Conversion skill, the greater the proportion of Mana he or she will be able to conserve, allowing him or her to cast more spells with the same amount of Mana. This skill also comes into play when using magic items, allowing the character to conserve an item's Mana when he or she uses its powers.

Mana can also be transfused from one character to another, or from one item to another. Mana transfusion from one character to another is accomplished with magic spells. Mana transfusion from one item to another is accomplished with Mana stones. Mana stones come in several grades, from "lesser" to "greater"; the higher the grade of stone, the less Mana is lost during transfusion.

To take Mana from an item and store it in a Mana stone

- 1 Double-click the Mana stone that will store the Mana.
A stone must have no stored Mana for it to drain an item's Mana.
- 2 Click the item from which you want to drain Mana.
Some of the Mana from the item will be stored in the stone. The transfer will destroy the item.

To transfuse Mana from a Mana stone to another item

- 1 Double-click the Mana stone.
A stone must have stored Mana in order to transfuse it to another item.
- 2 Click an item in your inventory.
Mana will be transfused to the item, and the transfer may destroy the Mana stone.

Skills and Learning Spells

Not every spell can be learned by every spellcaster. In order to learn a spell, your character must have sufficient training in the Arcane Lore skill, and in the appropriate spellcraft skill: Creature Enchantment, Item Enchantment, Life Magic, or War Magic. If the character's spellcraft skill is significantly less than the difficulty level of the spell, that character will not be able to cast the spell.

Spell Potency and Magical Economy

The magic inherent in spells is limited. The less often a spell is cast within a given period anywhere in the game world, the more power that spell will have. Spells that are used less often will have more range, duration, and potency.

Also, as a spellcaster uses the same spell over and over, that spell's charge will grow weaker, as shown in the **Charge** indicator in the magic bar. The weaker the charge, the weaker that spell's effects will be. A spell's charge will replenish itself over time, provided the character doesn't cast it.

Because of these factors, spellcasters will want to develop a wide variety of spells and to be very careful whom they share spells with. Both diversity and secrecy will prove important to the effectiveness of magic within the game.

Practicing Magic

Your Spellbook

Every spellcaster has a spellbook, containing all the spells the character knows how to cast.

To display the spells in your spellbook

- 1 Click the **Magic** button (magic wand) below the **Player** panel.
- 2 Click the **Spellbook** tab.

You will see the names of spells your character can cast. Below the list is space where information about spells is displayed. When you click a spell's name, you will see the school, **Mana** cost, duration (if any), and range (if any) of that spell.

Each time you learn a new spell, that spell will automatically appear in your spellbook.

Examining Spells

You can also see additional details about a spell in your spell list by examining it.



To display detailed information about a spell

- 1 Click the **Magic** button, and then click the **Spellbook** tab.
- 2 Click the spell's name, and then click the **Examine** button.

When you examine a spell, the **Examine Spell** panel will appear. This panel shows the same information you see on the **Spellbook** tab as well as a more complete description of the spell's effects, its components, and its formula. Any components for the spell that are not currently in your inventory will appear grayed out.

Your Spell Components

Spell components cannot be used from the components list.

Components are arcane materials used to cast spells. Each spell has a formula made up of a sequence of components in a particular order, which determines the words and gestures that make up the spell. Components are physical objects that can be found, traded, bought, or sold.

The components necessary to formulate spells are kept in your character's inventory, but a list of your components is displayed in the **Components** tab of your **Magic** panel. Click the **Components** tab to see the list of components and the number of each component in inventory. Click a component, and then click the **Examine** button to see more detailed information about the component.

To cast a spell, you will need one of each of the following:

Alchemical Substances are vials of liquids and powders with magical properties.

Herbs are the leaves, roots, and/or flowers of plants, or substances derived from them.

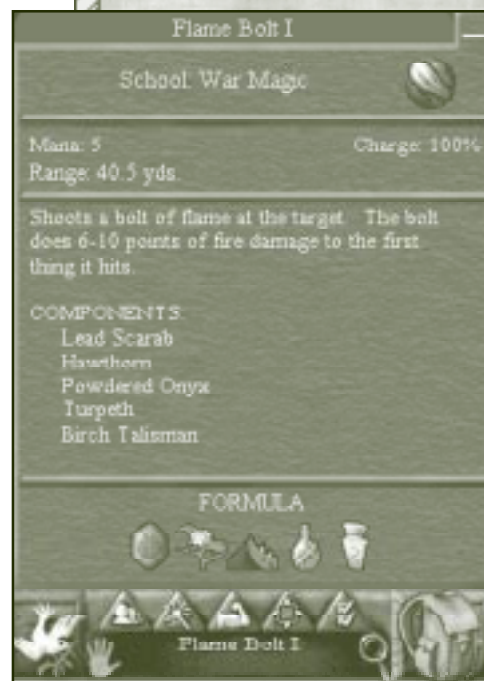
Powdered Gemstones are vials of colored powder that have been ground from gemstones.

Scarabs are made of various metals, each of which has a different level of magical power.

Talismans are pieces of carved and colored wood imbued with magic.

In addition, higher-level spells will require tapers—mystical colored candles—to harness their magic.

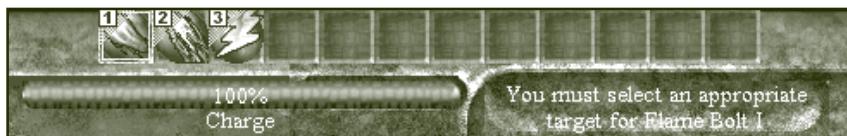
To learn more about spell components and what they do, see “On Thaumaturgy” at the end of this chapter.



Casting spells may sometimes use up spell components. Components must be replaced regularly if you want to be able to continue casting spells.

Casting Spells

When you've learned a spell, it automatically goes into your spellbook.



To cast a spell

- 1 Wield your magic staff, scepter, orb, or wand by dragging it to the **Weapon** slot.
- 2 Click the button with a dove on it to enter magic mode.
The image of the dove will change to a hand casting a spell, and the **Magic Bar** will appear at the bottom of your **View Window**, showing buttons representing your favorite spells.
- 3 Click the button for the spell you want to cast.
- 4 Click a target for the spell, and then click the **Cast** button on the **Magic Bar**.

To exit magic mode, click the button again.

Using Magic Shortcuts to Cast Spells

You can use the shortcuts on the **Magic Bar** to organize your favorite spells for easy casting.

- To move a spell within the list, drag it from one slot to another on the Magic Bar.
- To remove a spell from the list, drag its icon off the Magic Bar.

To create shortcuts for your favorite spells

- 1 Click the **Magic** button, and then click the **Spellbook** tab.
- 2 Drag the icon of your favorite spell to the shortcut bar on the **Magic Bar**.
You'll now be able to cast the spell by pressing the number of the shortcut.

While in Magic mode you will still be able to use your regular shortcut slots by pressing Ctrl+shortcut number.

Spell Range

Every targeted spell has a range of effectiveness. The game will not prevent you from casting a spell outside the spell range, but the spell will not reach the target if the target is not in range. When you cast a



spell at a target that is outside the spell's range you will see a transient message in the **View Window**: "Target out of range."

Spell Duration

There are two types of spell duration in Asheron's Call: instantaneous and timed spells.

Instantaneous spells have either a momentary effect, such as a spell that fires a bolt of force at a target, or a permanent effect, such as a spell that increases the target's Health points, or one that decreases the target's Mana.

Timed spells last for a specific period, such as a spell that increases an attribute for a limited amount of time. Due to the variable nature of magic, it is not possible to know exactly how long a timed spell will last.

When a spell expires, any changes made by the spell end. If the spell effect was to increase the recipient's Quickness, the recipient's Quickness will no longer be affected by the spell.

If you log off while a spell is affecting you or any of your items, that spell is suspended. When you log on again, it will resume for the remainder of its duration.

When a character dies, all spells affecting the character and the character's items are canceled. When that character resurrects, no spell effects will remain.

Your Starting Spells

Every spellcaster character begins the game with a magic wand and the spells he or she already knows how to cast. The number and type of starting spells varies with the spellcraft skill(s) chosen, and the level of training. You will find these spells in your spellbook when you enter the game for the first time. For more information on your spellbook, see "Practicing Magic" earlier in this chapter. Starting spells already have spell shortcuts assigned to them.

Creating Spells

Spells are created from spell components arranged in a specific order to create a formula. You will discover the proper order by experimenting with your spell components and testing the results.

To create a spell from components

- 1 Click the **Magic** button, and then click the **Create Spell** tab.

You will see all the components your character has in inventory in the **Components** slots. Above these is a row of eight **Formula** slots.



- 2 Drag components from the **Components** slots to the **Formula** slots. For low-level spells, it will not be necessary to have a component in each slot.
- 3 When you have the components in the order you want them, enter Magic mode by clicking the button with the dove, and then click **Test**.

Your character will attempt to cast the spell. If the casting is successful, and you have duplicated the formula of an existing spell, you will see a message saying, "You already know that spell."

If the casting is successful, and you have created a spell not previously in your spellbook, you will see a message saying, "You can now cast [name of spell]." That spell will now be added to your spellbook."

Click **Clear** to clear the **Formula** slots and return all components to the **Components** slots.

Your character's Arcane Lore skill does not come into play during spell experimentation.

Spell Scrolls

During the course of the game, it is possible to find or otherwise acquire spell scrolls. Each spell scroll has one spell written on it.

To read a scroll, double-click it. If your character has sufficient skill at Arcane Lore, and is trained in the appropriate spellcraft skill to cast the spell, you will learn the spell. You will see a message: "You learn [spell name] spell." The name of the spell will be added to your character's spellbook, and the scroll will be destroyed.

If your character is not trained or the appropriate spellcraft skill level is too low, you will see the following message: "You are not skilled enough in [spellcraft skill] to learn this spell." The scroll will be returned to your inventory.

Appraising Magic Items

Throughout the world of Dereth, you'll find weapons, armor, jewelry, gems, and other magical items. Not all characters will be able to use all magic items. Each item has a number of attributes that limit who can use it effectively. To find out whether you can use a magic item, you can appraise it by clicking the item and then clicking the **Examine** button. If your appraisal is successful you'll see details about the item's magical and nonmagical attributes. Following is some of the information that you may see:

Spellcraft is a measure of how much spellcasting ability is required to cast the item's spell.

Mana is the amount of magical power contained in the item, which is used to power its spell.

Difficulty Limitation limits who can use an item. If the difficulty limitation is above zero, the character's appropriate Arcane Lore skill must be equal to or greater than the difficulty in order for the character to use the item.

Allegiance Limitation limits who can use an item. If there is an allegiance limitation on the item, the character's allegiance rank must be equal to or greater than the allegiance limitation in order for the character to use the item.

Heritage Limitation limits who can use an item. If there is a heritage limitation on the item, the character must be of a particular heritage group to use the item.

Skill Limitation limits who can use an item. The character's level in the specified skill must be equal to or greater than the limitation in order for the character to use the item.

To learn more about magic items, see "On Thaumaturgy" at the end of this chapter.

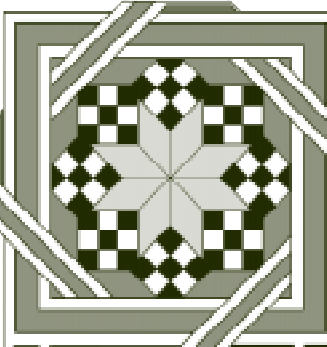
Spells Cast on You

Player characters and monsters can cast spells on you. Enchanter characters can temporarily increase skills and primary attributes, or increase the attack of a weapon or the armor level of a piece of armor. Life mages can heal damage or protect from harm. Spells cast by monsters will be harmful, such as missile spells that cause damage, or spells to lower your attributes or skills.

A high Magic Defense skill is your best weapon against harmful spells. The higher your magic defense, the less often your opponents' spells will be successful against you. Running away may put you out of range of a spell, letting you avoid its damage.

When another spellcaster or spellcasting monster has cast a spell on your character, a **Spells in Effect** button (blue starburst) will appear in the upper-right portion of the game screen. To see the names of all spells affecting you, click the **Spells in Effect** button.





On Thaumaturgy

*A Neophyte's Primer on the Arcane Arts
by Kimizu Jii-wen of Hebian-to*

Of all the paths one may take, the way of sorcery is the most challenging and the most rewarding. It takes countless hours of work and sacrifice to become a master spellcaster, but the power one earns in return is beyond equal.

It has been many years since I completed my studies in sorcery, but I still remember the first thrill of true magic singing within my veins. I also remember how difficult and dangerous those first months were, when I had only a handful of simple incantations in my spellbook, instead of the hundreds that fill that grimoire today. I have set my writing-brush to these pages in the hopes that my counsel will aid future initiates into the ways of wizardry, and spare them some of the hardship I endured.

It will take powerful magic—stronger, most likely, than any I shall ever wield—to uncover the deepest secrets of the Empyrean, and perhaps find our way home to Ispâr. Perhaps, celestial spirits willing, one of those who reads these words will someday do just that.

Mana

As the fuel that drives magic, Mana is precious to all spellcasters. It is limited, however, and slow to replenish, so you must take great care to conserve what you have. Begin your sorcerous pursuits with as much Mana as you can muster, and increase it as you learn more powerful spells. Be careful, too, when experimenting with magic: even when you fail to cast a spell, it will drain you. If you practice in a dangerous area, you may find your Mana depleted when you need it most.

The prospective mage would also do well to learn how to draw more Mana from the world around her, by training in Mana Conversion. This ability will let you cast more spells with the Mana you have.

Among the treasures you will find are potions and other magic items that can bestow Mana upon you. Remember, too, that all living beings have Mana, but many—such as your warrior companions—never use it. There are spells and artifacts in the world that will let you draw Mana from others and use it to replenish your own.

Components

Next to Mana, magic components are the most vital elements in spellcasting. They take many different forms, and each has its own importance in a spell's formula. For the sake of protecting the secrets of specific spells, and thus preserving their potency, I will not divulge the precise meanings of individual components, but I will outline the roles different types of components play in making spells work.

Scarabs are the keystones of spell formulae, invoking the power the wizard wishes to harness. Depending on the scarab in its formula, a fire spell can summon anything from a minor flame to a vast conflagration. Example components: Lead Scarab, Iron Scarab, Copper Scarab.

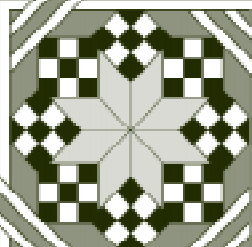
Herbs take the power unleashed by the scarab and channel it, giving it a purpose. Each sort of herb funnels power in a different manner. Example components: Amaranth, Hawthorn, Vervain.

Powdered Gemstones provide substance to the spell, beginning the shaping of the channeled energy. Different gemstones alter the energy in different ways. Example components: Powdered Bloodstone, Powdered Malachite, Powdered Turquoise.

Alchemical Substances complete the energy shaping begun by the gemstone component, giving the spell structure. Naturally, each substance provides a different shape. Example components: Cobalt, Quicksilver, Vitriol.

Talismans provide an outlet for the summoned energy, letting it work upon the spell's intended target. Each talisman is made of a different sort of wood, each of which directs the magic in a unique way. Example components: Cedar Talisman, Ebony Talisman, Oak Talisman.

Tapers have a subtler relationship to spell formulae than other components. They temper and embellish the magic's energy as it takes form. The more powerful the spell, the more of these adjustments are needed. Tapers differ by color—red, green, white, and so forth—but while there are patterns to how tapers affect magic, the meanings of the colors vary from spell to spell and sometimes from one spellcaster to the next.



Spell use

In Dereth, the forces of magic are often fickle and dangerous. The spellcaster who does not understand this will soon find herself at the mercy of the very powers she seeks to control—possibly at the risk of her own life. If one follows a few simple principles, however, this danger will be much less.

Keep a diverse spellbook. Since overusing a spell will reduce its potency, it is best not to rely on any one enchantment to the exclusion of others. Use spells of different powers, or with similar effects, to keep them from being crippled.

Use different means to the same end. There is often more than one way to achieve a particular goal using magic. If you want to turn a foe into a poor swordsman, for instance, you can cast a spell to reduce his skill with a sword, or you can use other spells to hamper his strength or coordination. To help a friend do more damage in battle, you can increase the damage his axe does, or make him stronger, or make his opponent more vulnerable to slashing damage. You can also use all these spells together to magnify the effect.

Use counterspells. Except for the War Magic school, most spells have a corresponding counterspell that will reverse their effects. For instance, for every spell that decreases one's quickness, there is a counterspell to increase it by a similar amount. Keep these spells on hand, so if an enemy casts an enchantment to hinder you or your friends, you can counter it with your own magic.

Protect your secrets. Magic is precious. Every time someone in Dereth casts a spell, its power is slightly depleted. For that reason, most wise mages don't reveal their secrets readily. Share your formulae only with friends and followers you trust.

Watch other spellcasters. You can learn much about magic by watching others perform it. The gestures a wizard makes, and the incantations he recites, will reveal much to the careful observer. Try to associate meanings with words and motions, and use those to reconstruct the spell's formula.

Beware while experimenting. Not only does wantonly testing spell formulae tax your Mana, it can also have dire consequences for the unwary. While experimenting, you will sometimes stumble across spells that harm or hinder you. To explain this, some scholars have formulated a theory of Arcane Symmetry, which states that if a spell exists, its counterspell must also exist, whether that counterspell is beneficial or harmful. It is also possible that the Empyrean seeded the magical continuum with these malicious spells in an attempt to discourage dilettantes and dabblers, and to teach their own wizards to be responsible in their research.



Magic Items

Magic is not solely the province of those who have studied the Art, of course. There are many enchanted items in Dereth, from simple gems and elixirs to the mightiest weapons and staffs of ancient lore. The secrets of bestowing permanent enchantments upon common objects have yet to be revealed: perhaps, one day, some archmage will discover the proper spells for creating artifacts of his own. Until then, however, we must rely on what relics the Empyrean left behind when they quit the world.

What follows is a compendium of different sorts of magic items known to exist in Dereth.

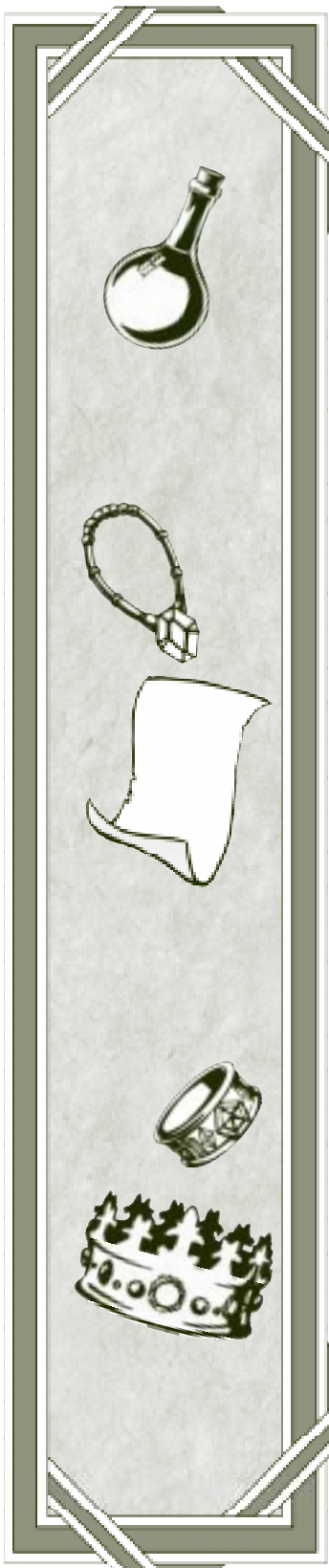
Potions are life-giving tinctures. Anyone, regardless of their knowledge of arcane lore, can use them. Imbibing a potion replenishes the drinker's energy in one of three ways: red potions heal wounds, yellow potions relieve fatigue, and blue potions—coveted above all others by spellcasters—help regain lost Mana. Of course, once consumed, a potion is destroyed forever.

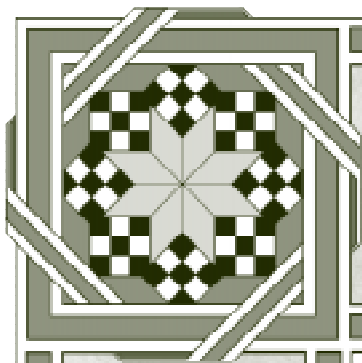
Gems are among the simplest of magic items, and can be used by even the most ignorant sword-swinging. The Empyrean imbued many simple crystals and stones with enchantments of various types. Some improve the user's raw abilities, making him stronger, faster, more focused, and so forth. Others increase the rate at which the user heals, recovers from exhaustion, or replenishes Mana, and still others protect the user from damage. Gems have only enough energy to be used once, after which they are destroyed by the magic forces they release.

Scrolls are prized by mages, as each contains the formula for a spell, allowing the reader to add that spell to her repertoire without having to research it. Once the reader learns the spell, however, the scroll is destroyed.

Jewelry and Clothing are endowed with spells that affect whomever wears them, until they are removed or their Mana runs out. In most cases, a degree of Arcane Lore is necessary to make use of the item's magic. In addition, many of these items will only work for nobles of certain ranks, and some clothing will only work for those from a specific heritage group. Certain kinds of jewelry or clothing often have spells that suit their function—a crown might make its wearer a more effective leader, for instance, or a pair of magical boots might help the wearer run faster.

Armor and Shields are similar to magical clothing in many ways, but their spells tend to relate more to combat—increasing strength, improving swordsmanship, defensive skills, and so forth. In addition, magical armor and shields also cast enchantments on





themselves to improve their own abilities, making them sturdier or more protective against certain forms of damage, such as fire and lightning.

Weapons also work like clothing and armor, but their spells take effect while they are wielded. As they are meant to be used by warriors, many magical weapons require little knowledge of Arcane Lore. Instead, however, a warrior must have a certain degree of expertise in their use. Their spells tend to affect the wielder's raw combat attributes (Strength, Coordination, and so forth), and they also cast enchantments on themselves to land deadlier blows, attack more quickly, or parry more effectively. Some magic weapons also spout flame, frost, lightning, or acid.

Orbs are used to cast spells on others. These spells tend to be helpful, improving the recipient's base attributes, healing damage, or helping them recover from injury or fatigue more quickly. Many orbs can be used only by those of noble rank, often to aid their followers.

Wands, Scepters, and Staffs also cast spells on others, but their magic is harmful instead of beneficial. When waved, they launch magical projectiles at their targets—gouts of flame, bolts of lightning, spinning magical blades, and other dangerous missiles. Wands tend to be less powerful than scepters, but they can cast their spells more times before they run out of Mana; similarly, scepters are usually less powerful, but can cast more often, than staffs. In addition, scepters—as a symbol of royalty—almost always require the user to be of noble rank to wield their magic.

Mana Stones are precious to anyone who wants to use a magic item more than a handful of times, as they are the only way to replenish an item's power after it runs out. They do this by draining the Mana from one magic item, then giving that Mana to another item. In this way, lesser magic items can be used to fuel more powerful ones. Great care must be taken when using Mana Stones, however, as they destroy whatever items they draw Mana from. All Mana Stones lose some Mana during the transferal: the amount that “bleeds” away depends on the type of stone being used. As a rule, Mana Stones that “bleed” less are more likely to be destroyed after transferring their Mana to another item.



Social Systems

The social systems of Asheron's Call are designed to grow and evolve as the game progresses and players discover new ways of shaping their game world. There are two basic forms of social interaction defined by the game: allegiance and fellowship.

Allegiance

For as long as there have been societies, there has been some form of allegiance, with followers serving leaders, and those in power protecting their vassals. The allegiance system in Asheron's Call is somewhat similar to those of feudal societies. Characters swear allegiance to other characters of equal or greater level, promising their loyalty in return for considerations agreed upon by both parties. Some players are content with a verbal agreement for swearing allegiance, while others are more comfortable with a written contract outlining both parties' expectations.

Unlike members of a fellowship, players who belong to the same allegiance do not necessarily adventure together, though they may decide to do so from time to time. Also unlike a fellowship, a bond of allegiance lasts indefinitely, until either the patron or the vassal breaks it. To learn more about fellowships, see "Fellowships," later in this chapter.

Although it is possible to play Asheron's Call without becoming involved in the allegiance system, swearing allegiance to a more powerful character can provide a valuable head start for one who is new to Dereth. Patrons frequently provide gifts to help their vassals get started in the world, and may also be sources of game advice. To learn more about patrons, see "The Patron's Role," later in this chapter.

A character who so desires can swear allegiance to any other character of equal or higher level. The character swearing allegiance becomes the vassal of the character to whom he or she swears. The character to whom allegiance is sworn becomes the patron. The patron can, in turn, swear allegiance to another patron, and the vassal may acquire vassals of his or her own. All of a patron's vassals, and their vassals, and so on, are known collectively as that patron's followers. As vassals become patrons, they in turn rise in allegiance rank. To learn more about allegiance rank, see "Allegiance Rank and its Benefits," later in this chapter.



Loyalty and Leadership

Vassals automatically pass experience points up to their patrons. These experience points are not taken from the vassal's earned total, but are extra points generated especially for the patron. Each patron passes points up to his or her patron in turn, on up to the monarch (the highest-ranking character in the allegiance). How much experience a patron receives from each vassal depends upon the patron's Leadership skill and the Vassal's Loyalty skill. The higher these skills are, the more experience is gained by the patron. For this reason, player characters with high Loyalty are highly prized as potential vassals. Loyalty and Leadership are both dependent upon the character's Self attribute. The number of experience points passed up from vassal to patron also increases with the amount of time the vassal has been in the allegiance.

The longer a vassal and patron are joined in allegiance, the more experience points are passed up to the patron.

The Patron's Role

There are no rules regarding how a patron must reward vassals, and each patron will develop his or her own system for rewards, but it is wise for patrons to remember that a good leader takes care of his or her followers. If you don't respect your vassals' allegiance, they will give it someone else who will. Patrons may choose monetary rewards, or to save the choicest weapons, armor, or magic items they find in their adventures for their most loyal followers. Patrons might reward vassals for acquiring vassals of their own, for gaining allegiance rank, for going

up character levels, or for completing quests. Each monarch or patron must decide on the best methods for keeping his or her allegiance group strong and growing.

Swearing Allegiance

Any player character can swear allegiance to any other player character with a higher character level who is not already in that character's allegiance group. Swearing allegiance is free the first time, but costs your character experience points when, after breaking that allegiance, you want to swear to another patron. For this reason it pays to be wise in your choice of a patron, and not to make or break allegiance casually.

To swear allegiance to another player

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Allegiance** tab.
- 2 Click a player character, and then click **Swear Allegiance** to swear allegiance to that character.



When you have sworn allegiance, that character's name will appear on your **Allegiance** panel as your patron. If your patron is the highest-ranking person in his or her allegiance pyramid, his or her name will also appear as your allegiance monarch; otherwise, your monarch's name will also be displayed.

The **Allegiance** panel tells a patron how many experience points have been passed up from each of his or her vassals. It also tells vassals how many points they have passed up to their patron.

To display the number of experience points passed up

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Allegiance** tab.
- 2 Click **Show XP**.

Note that when you click **Show XP**, the button name changes to **Show Title**. If you click **Show Title**, you will display that character's allegiance title.

Breaking Allegiance

Although a bond of allegiance should not be taken lightly by either the vassal or the patron, it sometimes becomes necessary for one party or the other to end that bond. If a vassal feels that a patron is not responsive to his or her requests, he or she may decide to break allegiance and either go it alone for a while, or swear to another patron. Since a patron is limited in the number of vassals he or she can have, it may sometimes be desirable to break allegiance with vassals who haven't been contributing experience. There are as many reasons for breaking a bond of allegiance as for forming one.

Either a patron or a vassal may break the bond of allegiance at any time.

To break an allegiance

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Allegiance** tab.
- 2 Click the patron's or vassal's name, and then click **Break Allegiance**.

Accepting or Ignoring Allegiance Requests

When your character begins the game, he or she automatically accepts allegiance requests. This is an option that is on by default. If you don't want your character to accept allegiance requests, you can turn this option off.

To change the setting to accept or ignore allegiance requests

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Allegiance** tab.
- 2 Clear or select the check box **Accept Allegiance Requests**.

Allegiance Rank and its Benefits

As you recruit vassals to your allegiance, and as they recruit vassals of their own, you go up in rank. When you first enter into an allegiance, either as a vassal or a patron, you will begin with an allegiance rank of one. When you have two followers you will gain one allegiance rank, and when each of those followers has two followers, you will gain another rank, and so forth, forming a pyramid of allegiance. Every time your two highest-ranking followers attain a higher allegiance rank, your rank will also increase by one.

Your Title

Within an allegiance, player characters gain titles in accordance with their allegiance rank. These titles vary depending on the heritage group to which the character belongs. As you gain allegiance rank, your rank will appear when other characters examine you. Player characters may choose to use your rank title when addressing you. Examples: “Well met, Thane Aylwyn,” or “Greetings, Shayka Ra’qel.” These titles are not part of your character’s name, and you do not need to use titles when sending an “@tell” message in the **Chat** box.

Rank	Aluvian	Gharu’ndim	Sho
1	Yeoman	Sayyid/Sayyida	Jinin
2	Baronet	Shayk/Shayka	Jo-chueh
3	Baron/Baroness	Maulan/Maulana	Nan-chueh
4	Reeve	Mu’allim/Mu’allima	Shi-chueh
5	Thane	Naqib/Naqiba	Ta-chueh
6	Ealdor	Qadi/Qadiya	Kun-chueh
7	Duke/Duchess	Mushir/Mushira	Kou
8	Aetheling	Amir/Amira	Taikou
9	King/Queen	Malik/Malika	Ou/Jo-ou
10	High King/High Queen	Sultan/Sultana	Koutei

The highest-ranking person in an allegiance is that allegiance’s monarch, regardless of his or her allegiance title.

Ranked Items

Some items in Asheron’s Call can be used only by characters of a certain allegiance rank. When you appraise such an item you will see a notation in the **Appraisal** panel that says: “Must be allegiance rank [N] or greater to use this item.”

Allegiance Chat

One of the primary benefits of belonging to an allegiance is the ease of communicating with others in your allegiance group. As a patron, you can chat directly with all your vassals, regardless of where they are. As a vassal, you can chat directly with your patron or monarch, regardless of where he or she is.

To chat with your vassals

- 1 In the **Chat** menu, click next to **Tell to Vassals**.
- 2 Type your message in the **Chat** box, and then click **Send** or press ENTER.

Chats sent while **Tell to Vassals** is selected will be sent to all vassals shown on your character's **Allegiance** tab.



To chat with your patron or monarch

- 1 In the **Chat** menu, click next to **Tell to Patron** or **Tell to Monarch**.
- 2 Type your message in the **Chat** box, and then click **Send** or press ENTER.

Fellowships

Although it's possible to accomplish much on your own in Dereth, joining together with other players in fellowships has several advantages over solo adventuring. Because fellowships can include characters of many different professions and with many different areas of expertise, a fellowship takes advantage of its members' strengths and compensates for their weaknesses. Higher-level monsters can be fought with a greater chance of success if players band together and use their various skills wisely.

Unlike an allegiance, a fellowship is a temporary group—often lasting no longer than the time it takes to explore a single dungeon—for the purpose of sharing experience and communicating easily with one another for a limited period of time. A fellowship can be disbanded at any time by the fellowship leader, and is disbanded automatically when its leader exits the game.

Players in a fellowship can also communicate through **Tell to Fellows** in the **Chat** menu, staying in touch even while in remote



areas of a dungeon. They can view one another's Health, Stamina, and Mana, enabling them to assist fellows in danger or give healing or protective spells where they're needed most.

With cooperation and coordination, characters with different skills can work together efficiently. In a fellowship, everyone shares in the experience earned proportional to their character level, no matter what form his or her participation takes. Blademasters can fight up close, with archers covering them from a distance. Sorcerers can cast combat spells, while enchanters cast spells to strengthen companions and weaken opponents. Life mages can repair combat damage while warriors fight monsters. Vagabonds can open locked doors and chests that would be impossible for other characters to open.

Ignoring or Accepting Fellowship Requests

When a new character begins the game, he or she will automatically ignore fellowship requests. If you want, you can change this default behavior.

To accept fellowship requests

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Fellowship** tab.
- 2 Click next to **Accept Fellowship Requests**.

You now have the option of being recruited into fellowships.

Forming a Fellowship

The person who forms a fellowship becomes that fellowship's leader. A fellowship can contain a maximum of nine members, including the leader, all of whom must be within 10 character levels of the leader, either higher or lower.

To form a fellowship

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Fellowship** tab.
- 2 Type a name in the **Fellowship Name** box, and then click **Create Fellowship**.

Adding or Removing Fellowship Members

You can add or remove members from a fellowship that you have created.

To add a member to, or remove a member from, a fellowship

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Fellowship** tab.
- 2 Click a player character.

- 3 To add a player to your fellowship, click **Recruit**, or to remove a player, click **Dismiss**.

Fellowship Chat

You can quickly communicate with the members of your fellowship, regardless of where they are.

To chat with your fellows

- 1 In the **Chat** menu, click next to **Tell to Fellows**.
- 2 Type your message in the **Chat** box, and then click **Send** or press ENTER.

Quitting a Fellowship

Membership in a fellowship is strictly voluntary. A member of a fellowship, other than its leader, can choose to leave that fellowship at any time. There is no penalty for leaving a fellowship, or for joining a new one afterward.

To quit a fellowship

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Fellowship** tab.
- 2 Click **Quit Fellowship**.

Ending a Fellowship

When you are ready to end a fellowship you have created, you can end it in two ways. If you exit the game, the fellowship will be disbanded automatically. You can also follow this procedure.

To end a fellowship

- 1 Click the **Social Systems** button, and then click the **Fellowship** tab.
- 2 Click **Disband**.

Glossary of Game-Specific Terms

Alchemy A skill that enables your character to combine components for use in magical spells.

Admin A game administrator who can intervene in in-game problems. Characters have “Admin” in front of their names.

Advocate Player character who can answer questions and give minor assistance in the game. Advocates wield glowing shields.

Appraise Skills Appraise Armor, Appraise Item, Appraise Magic Item, and Appraise Weapon enable your character to find out detailed information about armor, items, magic items, and weapons.

Arcane Lore A skill that enables your character to learn new magic spells from scrolls or through experimentation.

Assess Skills Assess Creature and Assess Person enable your character to find out detailed information about creatures and people.

Attribute Credits Credits used to raise levels of attributes during character creation.

Attributes Your character’s basic characteristics, such as Strength, Endurance, and Coordination. Beginning attribute levels determine beginning skill levels.

Asheron A powerful magician of the Empyrean race who created the portals now found on Dereth.

Burden The load your character is carrying. A character has a limit to the amount he or she can comfortably carry. When that burden is exceeded, the character is encumbered.

Character Level Level of experience gained by a character. Each level requires a character to gain a predetermined number of experience points in order to achieve it.

Chat Pose (Chat Emote) An action you can make your character perform onscreen by typing a command in the **Chat** box.

Dereth The island on which players now find themselves, having answered the call of Asheron.

Direlands Dangerous territories to the west of Osteth.

Empyrean A vanished race of magical beings who once occupied Dereth.

Experience Points Points your character earns as he or she gains experience using skills in the game. These points can be used to improve attributes and skills.

Fletching A skill that enables your character to make arrows.

Lifestone A large blue crystal found at outposts, near towns, and sometimes in the wilderness. When you double-click a Lifestone, your character will be resurrected there after death.

Mana The energy that powers magic spells.

Mana Conversion A skill than enables your character to use spells related to converting Health and Stamina to Mana.

Melee Defense A skill that enables your character to evade opponents' melee attacks.

Missile Defense A skill that enables your character to evade opponents' missile attacks.

Nonplayer Character (NPC) Characters that are controlled by the game and that do not represent players.

Nonplayer Killer (NPK) Player characters who do not have the ability to harm or kill other player characters.

Osteth The eastern land mass of Dereth.

Player Killer (PK) Player characters who have the ability to harm or kill other player characters.

Portal A swirling energy vortex that magically transports characters from one place to another.

Portal Storm A disturbance of portal magic caused by too many people in the same area. In a portal storm, some people will be teleported to random locations outside the area.

Pyreal The basic unit of currency in Dereth.

Sentinel A low-level game administrator (see Admin). Sentinels have "Sentinel" in front of their name.

Skills Your character's ability to perform certain actions successfully, such as running, jumping, and wielding weapons.

Skill Credits Credits earned by going up in character level that can be used to raise untrained or unusable skills to trained during gameplay.

Training Credits Credits used to raise the training level of skills during character creation from untrained to trained, and from trained to specialized.

Trophies Items sometimes found on the corpses of defeated opponents, which can be sold to collectors for money and other items.

Vitae Your character's life energies. When your character dies, there is a Vitae penalty that temporarily reduces his or her skills and secondary attributes.

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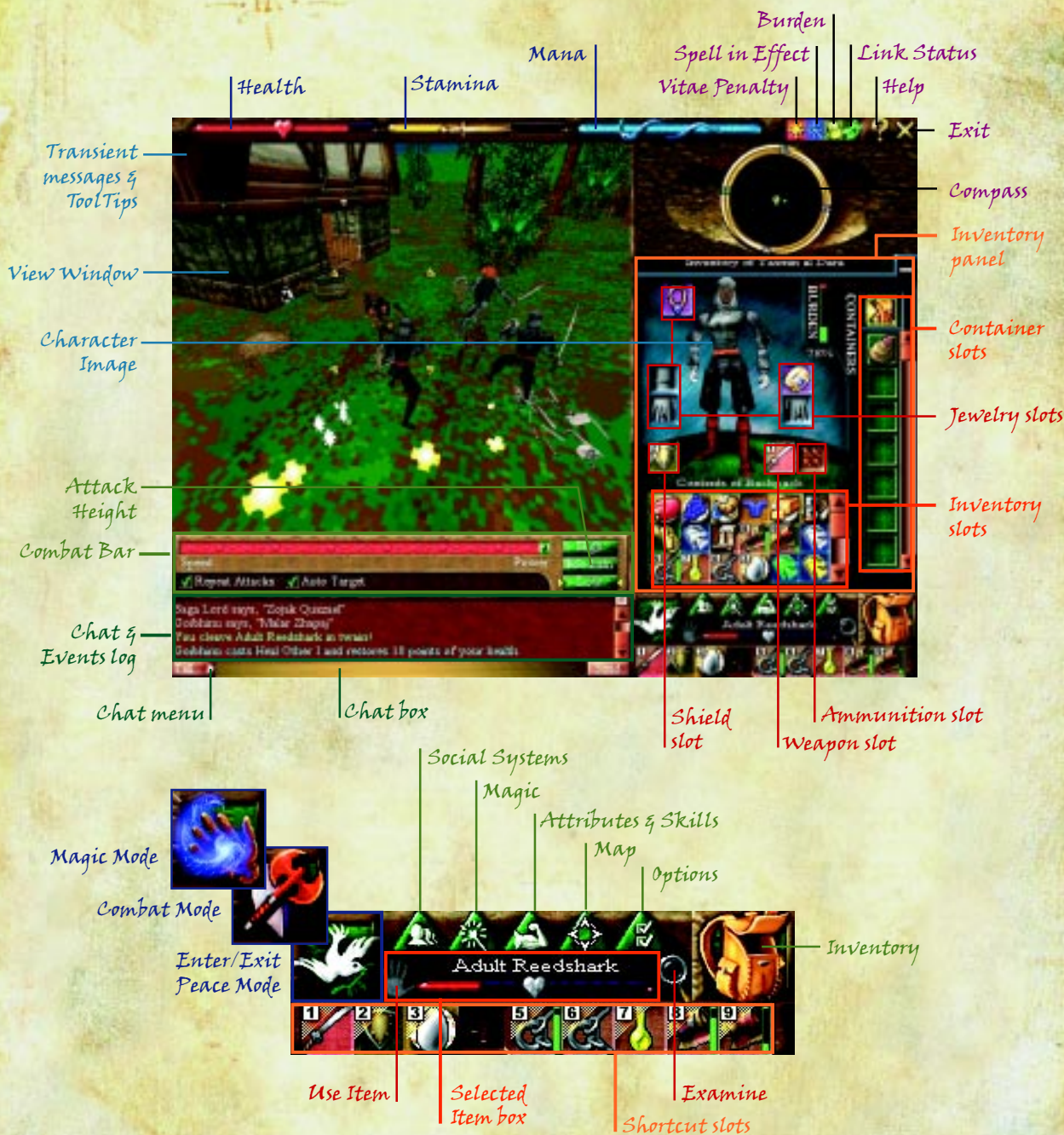
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