

## ***Cypher System Notes***

### ***Alternate Resolution***

You can use 2d6 for resolution if you don't want to use a d20.

Level X 2 is the target number.

A '2' is a GM Intrusion.

An '11' is a Minor Effect.

A '12' is a Major Effect.

There is no '17' or '18' equivalent for combat.

Even though a Level 1 creature has a target number of 2, you still have to roll, and if you get a '2' you get a GM Intrusion (which may be 'miss').

A +1 or +2 in the normal rules is really a +2/3 and a +4/3 (so both are +1). If you would get a +3, then you reduce the difficulty by one level.

### ***Raiding Other Games for Material to Use With Cypher System***

You can pull material from another game (completely) and make up a Cypher System game quickly. It relies on the concept I call "keying." Keying is simply the act of using one or more systems in another set of game rules with a more generic system. Conversion is a part of keying and conversion doesn't need to be total or one-for-one. The best type of conversion consists of a set of rules and guidelines so that conversion can be done on the fly.

Another aspect of keying involves porting the "feel" of the game into Cypher System. If you key off of Basic D&D, for instance, you'll use GM Intrusions to represent the vast variety of wandering monster encounter tables. You don't need to actually use the myriad wandering monster encounter tables when you run a Cypher System game based on Basic D&D, but you can refer to them if you want to. A GM Intrusion during a dungeon crawl can consist of a "wandering monster" encounter (e.g., A thief checks for traps in the hallway and the player rolls a '1'. Soon after, the party encounters monsters because they took too long looking for traps.).

When working with a generic ruleset, keying makes your job easier. Instead of having to create all content, you simply use another system for your monsters, treasures, sensibilities, typical adventure types, etc.

So how do you do this? Conversion rules are a good start. It's gets you thinking about how one system translates to the Cypher System. Let's take an easy example, Chris Gonnerman's Basic Fantasy, and figure out how we would use this game as our key for the Cypher System.

The first, easiest, thing to do would be to figure out how monsters translate. Cypher System monsters have a level from one to ten. Basic Fantasy monsters are rated by their hit dice. Thus, a simple "HD to Level" conversion rule would be useful. So, we know that the weakest creature have less than one hit die, but what about the strongest? Once we know the hit dice of the strongest creature, we can probably set up a

quick “HD to Level” rule. The strongest creature appearing in the rules is the Dragon Turtle with 30 hit dice. This is an extreme case. Even the strongest dragon (gold) only has 11 hit dice. If we divide all hit dice by three and use this as the level, then a gold dragon would only be Level 4. This doesn’t seem right. If we divide by two and rule that everything above Level 10 is simply Level 10, then a gold dragon would be Level 6. Ogres would be Level 2 (with four hit dice). What might be better is to make level equal hit dice up to six and then reserve the last four levels (7 through 10) for truly difficult creatures. In this case, we can make their level equal to  $6 + (\text{HD} / 6)$  dropping fractions. This would give us the following table:

Hit Dice	Level	Hit Dice	Level
1 or less	1	6	6
2	2	7 - 11	7
3	3	12 - 17	8
4	4	18 - 23	9
5	5	24 +	10

This keeps a distinction between low hit die monsters without having things fall apart for high hit die monsters. There are other ways to do this. You could also adopt an “increased banding” progression:

Hit Dice	Level	Target No.	Hit Dice	Level	Target No.
Less than 1	1	3	11 - 14	6	18
1 - 2	2	6	15 - 18	7	21
3 - 4	3	9	19 - 23	8	24
5 - 7	4	12	24 - 28	9	27
8 - 10	5	15	29 +	10	30

Every two levels, you increase the range of the hit dice by one. This one is probably more desirable and we’ll settle on this one.

Next, we figure out Health. Normally this is the creature’s Level times three. We can keep this default. Adjust a monster’s Health if you think it should have more.

Armor is the next statistic of importance (especially in a dungeon crawl game). We know that leather armor is AC 13, chain mail is AC 15, and plate mail is AC 17. These types just happen to map precisely to Light, Medium, and Heavy Armor in the Cypher System. Our basic formula can be  $(\text{AC} - 11) \div 2$  (drop fractions) when going from AC to Armor. Let’s see if the system gets broken anywhere. A gold dragon would have  $(22 - 11) \div 2 = 5.5$  Armor, which becomes 5. This isn’t bad. It’s two points higher than Heavy Armor and that seems fine for a powerful dragon. Stone and iron golems have an AC of 25, which would correspond to Armor 7. I still think this is okay. You’d have to use heavy weaponry and effort to take these out.

However, if you think a creature’s high AC is due to being able to avoid attacks particularly well, it’s better to give them a higher level on their Defense. For instance, the ghost is listed as having AC 20. I’m sure

that you don't want to give them Armor 4. Their Defense Levels are probably one level higher than their overall Level.

Damage is normally equal to a monster's level. This is fine. If an entry gives "or by weapon" you can use the appropriate weapon used. This prevents goblins from doing only 1 damage all of the time. Once again, if you think it should be more or less, you can adjust this on the fly.

Any special abilities the monster has will use a Level equal to the monster's overall Level. So, if a creature has a "Save or Die" poison, then its Poison Level will be equal to the Level of the creature. But it's really a "Defend or Move One Step Down on the Damage Track". Level drain can operate this way as well (which makes it particularly scary).

You don't have to convert every special ability, but if a creature has some sort of signature ability, like paralysis for ghouls, it should have some sort of presence in the game.

That's it for monsters, we have some good guidelines and thumb rules. Let's move on to treasure. Treasure will either be like Artifacts (if permanent magic items) or Cyphers (if they're like consumable magic items). This means the Potion and Scrolls will be our Cyphers and all other types of magical items will be Artifacts (in Cypher System terms).

A quick conversion for items with bonuses, is to consider the bonus in Cypher System terms. This means a +1 or +2 is an actual bonus to the d20 roll. A +3 counts as an asset. A +4 is an asset with an additional +1 on the roll and a +5 is an asset with another +2 on the roll. This counts for attack rolls (weapons) and defense rolls (shields). Because the magical plusses to armor only go up to +3 in Basic Fantasy, I'm inclined to break the normal progression (an AC bonus of +2 equals 1 Armor in Cypher). We'll just add the magical armor bonus directly to the Armor. So, plate mail +3 is Armor 6. Cursed weapons, shields, and armor act in the opposite way that you'd expect. Cursed plate mail -3 gives Armor 0.

Most magical items are going to need a Level in Cypher System terms. Levels can range from 1 to 10, like normal. I've seen most Artifacts and Cyphers have '1d6', '1d6+1', '1d6+2', '1d6+3', and '1d6+4' in rulebooks. An item with "plusses" must have a minimum Level equal to twice the number of plusses. Otherwise, just assign levels. As a guideline, an item has a minimum Level equal to half the caster level that would be required to get the effect (or more simply, the level of the spell). So a wand of fireballs would have to be a Level 3 item, at least.

Gold counts as gold and leads us to another important discovery. We can simply use the equipment tables and costs from the key game system, if we want.

So how would you incorporate traditional Basic Fantasy character abilities? Well, spells go up to 6th level and characters have six tiers, so there's a start. Fighters are well-represented by warriors, vectors, or glaives. Thieves are explorers, spinners, or jacks. Clerics are speakers, paradoxes, or nanos. Magic-users are adepts, paradoxes, or nanos. All of these characters already have various powers, esoterics,

tricks, and what have you. You could just stop here. But I want to find a way to use these spells. What about allowing characters to memorize spells using their Cypher “slots”? Instead of worrying about Cypher limits and justifying bad interactions for too many, we can just give everyone spells. They can work this way:

1. A character must find the spell before they can memorize it (even cleric spells).
  - a. If they find a cleric spell and learn it, they can always choose to pray for it later.
  - b. If they find a magic-user spell, they must transcribe it into their spellbook.
  - c. Characters can freely use both types.
2. A character can't cast a spell having a level higher than their tier.
3. Spells don't have a Might, Speed, or Intellect cost. They take up a Cypher slot and can be cast once.
4. A character can refill their slots after the longest Recovery.

In this way, every character can cast spells. Character types that get more Cypher slots will be able to memorize more spells. Characters can choose to never fill their Cypher slots in this manner and just keep/use Cyphers like normal. A fighter that casts spells is a ranger-type, paladin-type, or eldritch knight-type. A thief that casts spells is an arcane trickster-type. The level of the spell is its Level for all purposes (if you need to know a level).

Spells that do damage do their level in damage. Spells that heal will restore a number of points to any Pool equal to the spell level. This is how Cyphers work, so you have to keep it consistent. If a spell has effects based on character level, then increase the “level” of the spell up to the character's tier.

Okay, that was fun, but what about using the SRD as your key?

For monsters, you'd have to key their Level off of their Challenge Rating. You can use the same table as above, or make another one. Or you could just say  $CR \div 2 = \text{Level}$  and leave it at that.

For treasure, you can pretty much use what you wrote. You may want to halve the Armor bonus for magical armor though since the bonus can go up to +5.

You could run spells the same way.

Since you have DCs in this system, you just need to match them up. This table is close enough.

DC Range	Level	Target No.	DC Range	Level	Target No.
5 or less	1	3	22-23	6	18
6-9	2	6	25-29	7	21
10-14	3	9	30-39	8	24
15-19	4	12	40-49	9	27
20-21	5	15	50+	10	30

Or you could just subtract five from the SRD DC and use it as-is.

DC Range	Level	Target No.	DC Range	Level	Target No.
6-8	1	3	21-23	6	18
9-11	2	6	24-26	7	21
12-14	3	9	27-29	8	24
15-17	4	12	30-32	9	27
18-20	5	15	33-35	10	30

## ***Cypher System - Totally Freeform***

### I. Character Generation:

A. Use normal character generation rules or use the custom rules below.

If you use the rules below, you get the choice of taking a canon Descriptor or making your own. You must also define your Type (Flavor). This is your overall concept, analogous to a class. Also, you pick a starting Focus, or one Tier 1 custom Focus ability. You should name your custom focus. The whole idea is to use the "I am an adjective noun who verbs" to describe your character.

There are exploits in this system. You can choose Expert Cypher Use and then the Explorer ability to be Practiced in All Weapons. That's fine. Little things like this shouldn't matter a whole lot. Min-maxing can only get you so far in a narrativist game. Players should use this as an opportunity to play the kind of character they want, not try to rack up the most bonuses for combat.

To create a character, follow the numbered steps.

- 1.) Stat Pools: Start with 7 in each of the three stat pools (Might, Speed, Intellect). You get 13 points to distribute. Assign these points to Might, Speed, and Intellect.
- 2.) Effort: Your Effort is 1.
- 3.) Edge: Start with Edge 1 in either Might, Speed, or Intellect.
- 4.) Pick One:
  - A. Practiced with All Weapons and Cypher Use (2).
  - B. Expert Cypher Use (3).
  - C. Cypher Use (2) and one skill of the player's choice.
- 5.) Starting Equipment:
  1. Appropriate clothing
  2. (a) Two expensive items or (b) two weapons and one expensive item
  3. Two moderately priced items
  4. Up to four inexpensive items.
- 6.) Special Abilities: Choose four first-tier abilities from any Type or Flavor.
- 7.) Descriptor (pick one):
  - A. Choose a descriptor from those allowed by the GM.
  - B. Make up another descriptor for your character. Choose one of the numbered options below.
    - (1) Add +4 to one stat Pool (Might, Speed, or Intellect) and:

- (a) Choose two narrow skills and, if you desire, add one additional skill and take one inability.
  - (b) Choose one broad skill and, if you desire, add one additional skill and take one inability.
  - (2) Add +2 to one stat Pool (Might, Speed, or Intellect) and:
    - (a) Choose three narrow skills and, if you desire, add one additional skill and take one inability.
    - (b) Choose one narrow and one broad skill and, if you desire, add one additional skill and take one inability.
- 8.) Focus: Choose one focus and take the abilities for Tier 1. Alternatively, choose one Tier 1 custom ability.

#### Starting Experience Point Equivalents.

- 1.) Stat Pools suggest 34 XP.
- 2.) Effort costs 4 XP.
- 3.) Edge costs 4 XP.
- 4.) This step suggests 8 XP.
- 5.) Equipment is, at most, about 2 XP.
- 6.) Special Abilities suggest 16 XP.
- 7.) The Descriptor picks suggest 8 XP, with 1 XP per +1, 2 XP per narrow skill, and 4 XP per broad skill.
- 8.) The Focus pick suggests 4 XP, since most Foci get one ability.

Total XP for Character Generation should be about 80 XP or so, the cost to advance five Tiers. If desired, characters can start off less powerful and advance until they become Tier 1 characters.

#### B. Starting With Tier 0 Characters

The purpose of starting with Tier 0 characters will be campaign-dependent. Some genres emphasize zero-to-hero progressions. You may have a gaming group full of people who've never gamed before and you don't want to inundate them with the full character creation process right away. A Tier 0 character is really just a normal, non-heroic character who is advancing to become one. Thus, an apprentice just starting out his magical training or a squire working to become a knight are suitable concepts for a Tier 0 character.

But what can you do with a Tier 0 character? Well, you have Stat Pools, so you can take damage. You can attempt actions, but you have no training or specialization. You don't have powers and special moves yet. You can wear armor with penalties and wield weapons with penalties (light - no reduction in level, medium - increase difficulty by one level, heavy - increase difficulty by two levels).

It is recommended that XP come fast and furious during this stage. Boring months of training can be glossed over. If you have new players and you're using Tier 0 to get them up to speed on how to play a roleplaying game, let them earn enough experience in each session to handle a few new concepts each time (such as, "Y'all's Efforts are 1 now, this means you can spend 3 points from a Stat Pool to reduce the difficulty of a roll by one level.").

A Tier 0 Character starts with:

- 1.) Stat Pools: Start with 7 in each of the three stat pools (Might, Speed, Intellect). You get 9 points to distribute. Assign these points to Might, Speed, and Intellect. To make a completely average character, put 3 in each (each pool will be 10).
- 2.) Effort: Your Effort is 0. You cannot expend Effort.
- 3.) Edge: Start with Edge 0 in Might, Speed, and Intellect.
- 4.) Initiate Cypher Use (1). You can use one Cypher.
- 5.) Starting Equipment: You start with appropriate clothing and basic household items.
- 6.) Special Abilities: You start with no special abilities from Types or Flavors. You will earn them during play after reaching Tier 1.
- 7.) Descriptor: You have no Descriptor. You will earn one during play.
- 8.) Focus: You have no Focus. You will earn one during play after reaching Tier 1.

To become a Tier 1 character, you must purchase (in any order):

- 1.) Stat Pool: You gain four points with which to raise your Stat Pools. Cost: 4 XP.
- 2.) Effort: You gain Effort 1. Cost: 4 XP.
- 3.) Edge: You gain an Edge of 1 in either Might, Speed, or Intellect. Cost: 4 XP.
- 4.) Purchase one of the following. Cost: 8 XP.
  - A. Practiced with All Weapons and Cypher Use (2).
  - B. Expert Cypher Use (3).
  - C. Cypher Use (2) and one skill of the player's choice.
- 5.) Starting Equipment. Gain the following items in play or buy them into the story for 2 XP.
  1. Appropriate clothing
  2. (a) Two expensive items or (b) two weapons and one expensive item
  3. Two moderately priced items
  4. Up to four inexpensive items.
- 6.) Special Abilities: You must wait until you reach Tier 1 to purchase Type and Flavor special abilities. Each will cost 4 XP. (This step is not a requirement to reach Tier 1)



7.) Descriptor: You must purchase one Descriptor, preferably one that fits how you've been playing the character. Cost: 8 XP.

8.) Focus: You must wait until you reach Tier 1 to purchase your first Focus ability. Focus abilities cost 4 XP. (This step is not a requirement to reach Tier 1)

The total XP cost to reach Tier 1 is 28 to 30 XP. After reaching Tier 1, you may purchase Type, Flavor, and Focus abilities and powers. You'll need another 20 XP to get your full complement for Tier 1.

## II. Advancement:

The four 4 XP advances are: (a) raise your Stat Pools by four, (b) raise your Effort by one, (c) add one to one Edge (either Might, Speed, or Intellect), and (d) add one new skill or raise a trained skill to specialized. You can also take an alternative ability in lieu of any of these four. After you have purchased four of these advances (a through d), you advance one Tier.

Since this version of character advancement is so free-form, there are no automatic gains upon advancing to the next Tier. Use the rules for Lateral Advancement below, keeping in mind that Tier advancement simply opens up a higher Tier from which to purchase abilities and powers from Types, Flavors, and Foci. Power Shifts may also be available if the GM desires.

In fact, before beginning to raise your Tier again (by purchasing the four advances listed above), you must purchase Type (and/or Flavor) abilities and all of the abilities associated with one Tier of a Focus, according to the following rules:

### Option #1

1.) You must purchase at least 8 XP of Type and Flavor abilities while you are an even-numbered Tier and 12 XP while you are an odd-numbered Tier. Each Type and Flavor ability costs 4 XP, except for Adept abilities, which cost 8 XP each. Adept abilities related to cypher use (the number of cyphers you can use per day) cost 4 XP.

2.) You must purchase all of the abilities at a given Tier for one Focus. Each ability costs 4 XP.

3.) Once you've made these minimum purchases, you can begin to raise your Stat Pools, one Edge, Effort, and gain the fourth advance required to attain another Tier.

### Option #2

After advancing you get:

1.) When advancing to the next tier (after taking four 4 XP advances):

Second-Tier: Choose two Second-Tier abilities (or lower) from any type or flavor. You can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier (it doesn't need to be the same tier).

Third-Tier: Choose three Third-Tier abilities (or lower) from any type or flavor. You can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier (it doesn't need to be the same tier).

Fourth-Tier: Choose two Fourth-Tier abilities (or lower) from any type or flavor. You can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier (it doesn't need to be the same tier).

Fifth-Tier: Choose three Fifth-Tier abilities (or lower) from any type or flavor. You can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier (it doesn't need to be the same tier).

Sixth-Tier: Choose two Sixth-Tier abilities (or lower) from any type or flavor. You can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier (it doesn't need to be the same tier).

Adept abilities each count as two abilities for the purposes of this section (except for Adept abilities that deal with Cypher Use, those count as one ability, like normal).

2.) Choose one:

- A. Take the next highest Tier abilities for a Focus you have.
- B. Take the Tier 1 abilities for a new focus.
- C. Take one custom Tier ability for any Tier up to your new, current Tier.

3.) You may change your Descriptor if the GM approves upon reaching a new Tier.

4.) If the GM is granting Power Shifts, the character gains one Power Shift level. No area can have more than three Power Shifts.

### III. Lateral Advancement:

Instead of spending XP to meet Tier Advancement requirements, you can broaden your character. Some methods are given in the CSR (familiarity, home-base, artifacts, etc.). Here are a few more:

A. New Type or Flavor ability. Pick a Type or Flavor ability at your Tier or lower. Cost: 4 XP for each Type or Flavor ability.

B. New Focus ability. Pick a Focus ability at your Tier or lower. You should gain these abilities "in order." For example, if you decide to take the Focus abilities from Bears a Halo Fire, you should start with the Tier 1 ability, then progress to Tier 2, and so on. All abilities from lower Tiers should be taken before higher Tiers. Cost: 4 XP for each Focus Ability.

C. Change Descriptor. If the GM and story permit the character can change Descriptors at no cost.

D. If you have brought Power Shifts into the game, they can be raised up to three levels maximum in each area. The GM will determine how many total Power Shifts a character can have, based on the character's Tier. The default can be one Power Shift for each Tier above 1. Cost: 10 XP for each Power Shift.

Y. Additional Skill. Become trained in one skill of your choice, other than attacks and defense. If you're already trained in the skill, you become specialized. You shouldn't use this to become specialized in a skill you became trained in at your current Tier. Cost: 4 XP.

Z. New Alternative Ability. You can purchase another alternative ability with the GM's approval. Cost: 4 XP.

I'm all for "lateral advancement" in this game. You can conceive of your character as "I am an adjective noun who verbs, verbs, and verbs" as you expand your Foci. The noun is simply your Type and Flavor, which can evolve over time as well. The adjective is a Descriptor and you can only have one that is "capitalized." In other words, you might be clever or Clever. The first is simply a descriptor. The second is a Descriptor. You can, of course, emulate another Descriptor by adding points to the appropriate Pools, taking the right skills, accepting the inabilities (but you don't get XP for these), etc.

#### IV. Advancing Beyond Tier 6:

Once Tier 6 is reached, advancement can continue. You can continue to number the Tiers (such as Tier 7, Tier 8, etc.). The four 4 XP advances become:

- 1.) Raise an Edge (Might, Speed, or Intellect) by one. You cannot raise any Edge higher than 6.
- 2.) Instead of raising Effort (because Effort is capped at 6), gain one new skill (or make a trained skill specialized), one new Type or Flavor ability (of any Tier), or one new alternative ability (such as adding 2 to recovery, reducing the cost of wearing armor, etc.).
- 3.) Add four points to your Stat Pools.
- 4.) Gain a new skill (or make a trained skill specialized) or an alternative ability.

These four options each cost 4 XP and count as an "advance." Continue to use the rules for Lateral Advancement. There are no automatic gains in the free-form advancement system.

When the next Tier is reached (let's go ahead and call them Tier 7+), you gain:

- 1.) One new Type or Flavor ability of any Tier. Adept abilities count for one ability in this case (see above).
- 2.) Choose one:
  - A. Take the next highest Tier abilities for a Focus you have.

- B. Take the Tier 1 abilities for a new focus.
  - C. Take one custom Tier ability for any Tier up to your new, current Tier.
- 3.) One Power Shift, if the GM is allowing one per Tier.

## ***Observations and Expansion of 'Casts Spells'***

### Observations

Tier	Intellect Cost
1	1
2	2+
3	4+
4	4+ and 5
5	6 and 7+
6	5+ and 7+

You can probably safely go with Intellect Cost = Tier as a base for new spells.

Oh yeah, and all spells cost Intellect points. You can probably make any ability that costs Intellect into a spell.

I thought of this before, but older D&D goes up to 6th level for spells. These could correspond to Tiers.

You could construct a "spell list" by listing all Intellect-based abilities by Tier (from Type, Flavor, and Focus).

There are 325 instances of an ability that uses Intellect points in the CSR. I didn't check to see how many were duplicates. So you can figure that you have about 300 "spells" with this system (assuming all are usable as spells).

I think you can do just about anything with these powers. Check out the Tier 6 ability for Conducts Weird Science.

With the rules for modifying powers, a character can also do this to fill in the gaps with other types of spells.

You could use Hedge Magic, the rules for modifying powers, and an increased Intellect cost to "spontaneously" cast spells.

Don't forget cyphers. These can be used for one-time spell effects too.

Cyphers can be constructed just like rituals. In other words, if a character is using the construction rules to make a cypher, maybe he's really making a ritual, or a one-shot magical item, instead.

Vis can be a substitute for the costly components in the construction system (especially since vis is used as currency).

If you use your Lateral Advancement rules, then spellcasters can "master" spells by buying them for 4 XP. They would have abilities that they can use whenever and not have to swap out with the spellbook. The spellbook allows you to have a catalog of effects, but you can only have one per Tier prepared. I'd even let you use a higher Tier slot to prepare a lower Tier spell.

### ***Using D&D 4th Edition Monsters for Cypher System Fantasy***

Here are some notes for using D&D 4th Edition monsters for a Cypher System Fantasy game. These monster entries, although complicated, are surprisingly well-suited to use with Cypher. The monster levels go from 1 to 30, the same as the target numbers in the Cypher System.

#### Conversion: Easy Version

The monster's D&D level is the target number for that monster. Its Health is equal to this level. Its damage is equal to one-third of this level (rounded up).

#### Conversion: Detailed Version

The monster's D&D level is the default target number for that monster. Other values are found from the bonuses and scores in the monster stat block.

These bonuses provide the target numbers for the following Cypher System statistics:

<u>Cypher System</u>	<u>D&amp;D4E</u>
Initiative	Initiative
Health	Level + Con Modifier
Basic Damage	Level ÷ 3 (RU)
Special Damage	GM's discretion
Perception	Perception
Might TN	Fortitude - 10
Speed TN	Reflex - 10
Intellect TN	Will - 10
Armor	By armor worn or (AC - Dex Modifier - 10) ÷ 2 (RD)
PC Defense TN	Attack Bonus
Skills	Skill Bonus
Special Abilities	Convert as appropriate

### ***Using D&D 3rd Edition Monsters for Cypher System Fantasy***

If you want to use Third Edition, you can. Just don't mix and match with another edition.

<u>Cypher System</u>	<u>D&amp;D3E</u>
Initiative	HD
Health	HD + Con Modifier
Basic Damage	HD ÷ 3 (RU)
Special Damage	GM's discretion
Perception	Appropriate Skill Bonus
Might TN	Higher of Fortitude Bonus or HD
Speed TN	Higher of Reflex Bonus or HD
Intellect TN	Higher of Will Bonus or HD

Armor	By armor worn or $(AC - \text{Dex Modifier} - 10) \div 2$ (RD)
PC Defense TN	Higher of specific Attack Bonus or HD
Skills	Skill Bonus
Special Abilities	Convert as appropriate



## ***Cypher System - World of Greyhawk***

The purpose of using the World of Greyhawk to create a first Cypher System campaign is to take something very familiar and translate it into the Cypher System. I know Greyhawk very well, so it should be easy to translate, in theory.

Starting with an original setting would also require work on the setting. This isn't desirable as a first effort.

Likewise, starting with a new genre concept would make it impossible to rely on familiar genre tropes.

For these two reasons, the World of Greyhawk is ideal. It is a fully detailed setting in the fantasy genre. In this case, I'm just adding a new game system.

This first effort should be kept simple. Characters should be built according to the normal rules. I do have alternate rules for more free-form character generation and advancement, but the use of these rules would have to depend on the players in question. I suggest keeping the normal Descriptor, Type, and Focus during character creation. In addition to this, players are allowed to choose one Flavor that they can add to their Type's list of abilities (there doesn't need to be a one-for-one swap). They can hold off on choosing their Flavor and choose one later, if they desire. You can also eventually open up free-form character creation and advancement as the campaign progresses and players become familiar with the system.

### **Races**

I will need to make up some Descriptors for the fantasy races or perhaps it is simpler to list what Descriptors are available to each race. This might be easier. As a third option, race could have no bearing on game stats whatsoever. This might be the best way to go. So, to express race, you might:

- Pick an appropriate Flavor that gives you access to the right abilities. For example, the player of a dwarf could pick the Skills and Knowledge Flavor and then take two Knowledge Skills at Tier 1 to represent the dwarf's knowledge of the underground and other "dwarven" things.
- Pick an appropriate Descriptor (like Tough for a dwarf) or even a non-stereotypical descriptor to play against type (like Charming for a dwarf).
- Pick a Focus that feels right for the race (maybe Stand Like a Bastion for a dwarf).
- Finally, even the Type could be chosen based on race, like Warrior for a dwarf or Explorer for a halfling.

In other words, just because "race" means mechanical benefits in other games doesn't mean you have to have dedicated race Descriptors. You're really just cutting off options if every non-human character has to lose their Descriptor for their race. Let the player decide what they want to take to describe their character's racial abilities. This is where the fantasy tropes come in handy. You can also play non-

standard (for D&D) races. You could be a goblin, an orc, a minotaur, or anything else because there are no mechanical rules that describe race.

But you can, of course, make racial Descriptors. But a player doesn't have to take the racial Descriptor to play the race in question. Dwarf and Elf are already in the CSR. You'll have to make Halfling, Half-Elf, Gnome, and Half-Orc to complete the list. It should be easy enough with the guidelines for making Descriptors and by using the Dwarf and Elf as examples.

### Gnome

You gain the following characteristics:

Crafty: +2 to your Speed Pool or +2 to your Intellect Pool (but not both).

Skill: You can speak with small, burrowing mammals such as badgers, foxes, rabbits, and the like.

Skill: You are trained in Speed defense rolls.

Skill: Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point): You can perform small tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, clean a small area, mend a broken object, prepare (but not create) food, and so on. You can't use hedge magic to harm another creature or object. Action.

Small: You must use two hands to wield medium weapons and you cannot use heavy weapons at all.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. A rabbit informed you that the PCs were lost in your hilly, woodland home and you led them out.
2. You decided to join the PCs because they looked like they were up to mischief.
3. After the PCs aided your clan, you decided to travel with them to help others out of gratitude.
4. You want to see the wonders the world has to offer, so you joined others who share your wanderlust.

### Half-Orc

You gain the following characteristics:

Brute: +4 to your Might Pool.

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were dim light. Enabler.

Skill: You are trained in Might defense actions.

Skill: You are trained in all actions involving breaking inanimate objects.

Ugly: Other races find you unpleasant to look at. You look too much like an orc for humans, dwarves, and elves and too human for orcs, goblins, and giants. The difficulty of all tasks relating to pleasant social interaction is increased by one step.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. One of the PCs saved you from a misunderstanding that almost led to vigilante justice.
2. After the PCs destroyed an orcish raiding party you were a part of, they allowed you to join their group.
3. One of the PCs was captured by your tribe and you fled the tribe with them.
4. You were raised among humans, but never fit in. You were eager to join the PCs to leave your home.

### Halfling

You gain the following characteristics:

Lithe: +2 to your Might Pool or +2 to your Speed Pool (but not both).

Skill: You are trained in throwing weapons and objects in combat and for other purposes.

Skill: You are trained in stealth tasks. If you are wearing no armor or light armor, you are specialized in stealth tasks.

Skill: You are trained in all actions involved with resisting fear.

Skill: You are trained in Might defense rolls.

Small: You must use two hands to wield medium weapons and you cannot use heavy weapons at all.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Your family traveled all during your childhood. You met the PCs when they were younger and you are the common friend of all of them.
2. You hate adventures, but for some reason, you must continue to travel with the PCs.
3. You love adventures, and you're constantly instigating some new scheme to keep the PCs in trouble.
4. You left home after you hosted a dwarf party upon the recommendation of a wizard.

### Half-Elf

You gain the following characteristics:

Agile: +2 to your Speed Pool.

Skill: You are trained in tasks related to perception.

Skill: You are trained in all tasks related to pleasant social interaction.

Skill: You are trained in stealth tasks.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You were raised in human society and were always called upon to deal with outsiders. This is how you met the other PCs.
2. You were raised in elven society and were always called upon to deal with outsiders. This is how you met the other PCs.
3. You were not raised in either human or elven society but in the society of a different race. You were treated well and learned much about the culture you were raised in. One of the other PCs is from your home.
4. You were abandoned by your birth mother and you have no idea who your parents are. You survived by your wits, the kindness of a few, and the cruelty of many drove you rise above your beginnings. You travel with the PCs because they're the best friends you've ever had.

### Orc

You gain the following characteristics:

Dumb Brute: +4 to your Might Pool and -2 to your Intellect Pool (apply both of these).

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were dim light. Enabler.

Skill: You are trained in using the tools required to shape and mine stone.

Skill: You are trained in stealth actions related to ambushes.

Quick to Fight: You are trained in initiative.

Light Sensitivity: In daylight, the difficulty of all attack actions and perception tasks is increased by one step.

Additional Equipment: You have a wicked-looking curved sword.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. If you're playing an orc, then just think of something.

### Goblin

You gain the following characteristics:

Sneaky: +2 to your Speed Pool.

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were dim light. Enabler.

Skill: You are trained in stealth tasks.

Skill: You are trained in tasks related to riding animals.

Skill: You are trained in all actions when behaving cowardly.

Small: You must use two hands to wield medium weapons and you cannot use heavy weapons at all.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. As orc.

### Hobgoblin

You gain the following characteristics:

Buff: +2 to your Might Pool.

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were dim light. Enabler.

Skill: You are trained in stealth tasks.

Skill: You are trained in tasks relating to large battles.

Additional Equipment: You have a suit of Light Armor.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. As orc.

### Bugbear

You gain the following characteristics:

Monstrous: +6 to your Might Pool

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were dim light. Enabler.

Skill: You are trained in stealth tasks.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. As orc.

### Kobold

You gain the following characteristics:

Fragile but Quick: -2 to your Might Pool and +2 to your Speed Pool.

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were dim light. Enabler.

Natural Sorcerer: The cost to use any Intellect-based ability or power is reduced by one.

Scaly: You have +1 Armor.

Skill: You are specialized in tasks related to trapmaking.

Skill: You are trained in using the tools required to shape and mine stone.

Small: You must use two hands to wield medium weapons and you cannot use heavy weapons at all.

Light Sensitivity: In daylight, the difficulty of all attack actions and perception tasks is increased by one step.

From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. As orc.

## Classes

Although it would be simple to rigidly determine classes for Greyhawk and custom-make Types to represent every class, why bother? I'm letting the players choose a Type and even a Flavor. That should be enough. Normal fantasy tropes kick in. Players will make classic characters or will make strange things. It's fine.

That being said, it's perfectly alright to make a list of Foci that are available in this campaign and exclude others. Let's go ahead and list everything.

Types - Warrior, Adept, Explorer, and Speaker. All Types are allowed. These roughly correspond to Fighter, Wizard, Rogue, and Cleric.

Flavors - Stealth, Magic, Combat, and Skills and Knowledge. Technology is not allowed.

Descriptors - all are allowed save Mechanical.

Foci - all save Battles Robots, Builds Robots, Conducts Weird Science, Fuses Flesh and Steel, Fuses Mind and Machine (unless you downplay the technological aspects of this), Grows to Towering Heights (doesn't feel right), Is Idolized by Millions, Is Licensed to Carry, Pilots Starcraft, Talks to Machines, Works the System. All of these (except as noted) don't belong because they're too modern or futuristic.

## Monsters

You can use your D&D4E to Cypher conversion for D&D monsters if you like. If you want to pull from other editions, you'll need some new conversion notes.

## Magic and Spells

The most basic Foci to represent clerics and wizards would be Channels Divine Blessings and Casts Spells. However, any Foci with supernatural powers could be either arcane, divine, or psionic. Some seem better suited to one of these three (you'll know which go with which).

Other good fits are:

Assassin	Infiltrates, Murders, Operates Undercover
Barbarian	Rages, Never Says Die, Performs Feats of Strength, Lives in the Wilderness
Bard	Awakens Dreams, Entertains, Leads, Wields Two Weapons at Once, and really just about any others
Cavalier	any sort of martial or social oriented feats; cavaliers are better defined by a Descriptor (Noble, Honorable, Virtuous, Wealthy)
Cleric	Channels Divine Blessings, Consorts With the Dead, Shepherds Spirits, Works Miracles, Quells Undead (from Worlds Numberless)
Druid	Controls Beasts, Lives in the Wilderness, Masters the Swarm, Speaks for the Land
Fighter	Carries a Quiver, Fights Dirty, Fights With Panache, Masters Defense, Masters Weaponry, Never Says Die, Performs Feats of Strength, Throws With Deadly Accuracy, Wields Two Weapons at Once
Illusionist	Crafts Illusions and other Foci that use control or soft powers
Monk	Needs No Weapon, Masters Foot and Fist, Haunts the Rooftops, Follows the Code of Bushido (last three from from Worlds Numberless)
Paladin	Channels Divine Blessings, Defends the Weak, Leads, Metes Out Justice, Interprets the Law, Slays Monsters
Psion	Commands Mental Powers, Exists Partially Out of Phase, Exists in Two Places at Once, Focuses Mind Over Matter, Separates Mind from Body, Travels Through Time
Ranger	Carries a Quiver, Controls Beasts, Hunts Nonhumans, Hunts Outcasts, Hunts with Great Skill, Lives in the Wilderness, Slays Monsters, Wields Two Weapons at Once
Rogue	Explores Dark Places, Fights Dirty, Fights With Panache, Infiltrates, Moves Like a Cat, Murders, Works the Back Alleys
Sorcerer	any Focus that grants supernatural powers, especially if based on traditional magic
Warlock	any Focus that grants supernatural powers, especially if sinister and mysterious
Wizard	Casts Spells, Bears a Halo of Fire, Rides the Lightning, Wears a Sheen of Ice, Consorts with the Dead, and any others dealing with traditional magic.

And of course I'm sure that there are other Foci that can fit these character classes. This is just a smattering. As far as Types go, heavy martial classes would normally be Warriors, roguish classes would be Explorers, divine classes could be Speakers or Warriors, magic-using classes would be Adepts, and leader and bard-like classes would be Speakers. Classes that dabble in another area would take an appropriate Flavor.

In addition to this, I would add another category of Cyphers that relate to each character's relationship to his patron deity. Players can decide how to roleplay this, but the GM can treat Cyphers as "spells" that are directly implanted in the character's mind, to be held until expended (just like "slot spells"). Some can be overt spells (like Detonation) while other are simply inner reserves that can be tapped into (Cyphers that restore pools, help with skills, grant bonuses to types of actions, etc.). You don't have to make all Cyphers into potions and scrolls (though these exist too). Cyphers are very "meta" so you kind of have to step

outside the game world to make sense of them.

The way this would be handled in play is that the GM can ask each player what they're doing to gain their patron's favor and if they're asking for anything in particular (such as "Moradin, give me the power to smite my enemies today." or "Pelor, allow me to bring your light into the world today."). Depending on their actions, what they want, and the needs of the story, the GM can hand out Cyphers to each player. Gods are mysterious, so characters may not always get what they want. If you want a random chance, then assume characters get each power they want based on their Tier. It's a level 7 roll (TN 21) with a reduction in level by one for each Tier. So, a Tier 1 character needs an 18 or better to get exactly what they want, while a Tier 6 character needs a 3. Of course, the GM might decide to give the player what he wants regardless of the roll.

Cyphers can be these sorts of divine blessings and also potions, scrolls, and other one-shot magic items. In addition, they can be story interrupts, if appropriate, such as a fire Detonation that comes from a wandering evoker who just happens by as the players are battling bugbears. These coincidences should be used sparingly, but they do allow for some variety in Cypher use.

Anyway, that's all for Magic and Spells right now.

## Magic Items

Items with plusses can add those plusses directly to related rolls (swords to attack rolls, shields to defense rolls, etc.). Armor is a little different because armor reduces damage in this game. I recommend armor be handled in this way:

Armor Plus	Effect
+1	+1 to Armor
+2	+1 to Armor, -1 to Speed Effort Additional Cost
+3	+2 to Armor, -1 to Speed Effort Additional Cost
+4	+2 to Armor, -2 to Speed Effort Additional Cost
+5	+3 to Armor, -2 to Speed Effort Additional Cost
+6	+3 to Armor, -3 to Speed Effort Additional Cost

Apply these to whatever the armor type is.

For other types of magic items, use your best judgment. Make each one a Cypher or an Artifact. Each magic item needs a level, which can be its D&D level (on a 20-level scale) divided by two, rounded up. This can also be the highest level of spell contained in the item (1st through 9th). Most numerical effects of artifacts are based on its Cypher System level (healing, damage, duration, etc.). Get the spirit of the magic item right.

### Converting D&D3E DCs to Levels

Divide the D&D DC by five, this is your Cypher System level for making rolls. So DC 5 = Level 1, DC 20 = Level 4, and DC 40 = Level 8. Round up to the next higher level. DC 16 to 20 = Level 4.

### Converting Percentage Chances to Target Numbers

A percentage chance (roll under) translates to  $(105 - \text{Chance}) / 5 \text{ (RU)} = \text{TN on d20}$ . So a 30% to avoid a trap is a TN of 15.

A percentage chance (roll over) translates to  $\text{Chance} / 5 \text{ (RU)} + 1 = \text{TN on d20}$ .