



MONTE COOK'S ARCANA UNEARTHED

Quick Reference Guide



What is *Arcana Unearthed*?

It is a "variant player's handbook," meaning it contains all materials needed to game in complete compatibility with D&D. This isn't just a re-presentation of rules. *Arcana Unearthed* contains fresh material in the form of all-new classes and races, with skills, new feats and hundreds of new spells. The core of the game remains the same, but all the modular pieces are entirely new. AU is balanced to work with Open Game Content, but it can also stand alone. Whether you want to add some interesting flavor to an existing game world or create something entirely different, *Arcana Unearthed* gives you bold, new tools to make and keep your game exciting. For more information on *Arcana Unearthed* and related products like *The Diamond Throne*, a new setting and sourcebook for use with AU, please visit www.montecook.com.

Races

There are nine all new races, plus humans. Many have special racial levels that you can take like classes to gain unique abilities. All provide enhanced role-playing opportunities apart from the ability benefits listed below.

Loresong Faen Quickling Spryte	"Faen" is a catch-all term for at least three different kinds of diminutive people. <i>Loresong faen</i> are innately attuned to magic. They prize it above all else—it is not just a fascination, but an actual compulsion. <i>Quickling faen</i> , the most frivolous, are the bravest and noblest as well. As their name implies, they are often extremely nimble and fast. A <i>faen spryte</i> is borne when a faen character reaches 3 rd level and decides to undergo a metamorphosis to begin taking racial levels. This changes them into a smaller, winged creature (or <i>spryte</i>) with Dexterity stat increases, innate magical abilities and flight.
Giants	Wisdom and Strength are the hallmarks of this large species. Often considered stewards, they make formidable warriors and have tremendous potential as noble architects of the land. Giant racial levels increase their size, Strength, Wisdom and Constitution.
Litorians	Litorians are bestial, honor-bound hunters, most comfortable among their own nomadic kind. Strong, confident and at home in the wilderness, they are a race of sublime hunters. The members of this leonine species have access to three racial levels that bestow an increase in speed, stat increases in Strength, Dexterity and Constitution, as well as other racially specific advantages.
Mojh	Mojh intentionally give up being human to transform themselves, physically and mentally, into new semi-draconic creatures. They are fanatic, driven individuals. Despite their history, few mojh wish to return to their evil heritage. They adore craving and hoarding magic and its power. They have a particular affinity for writing, including runes, symbols, and similar pictographs. In addition to innate magical abilities, mojh gain both a breath weapon and a natural AC enhancement as racial level bonuses.
Runechildren	Runechildren give up their original race when they are called into altruistic service. This race is essentially a racial level set that is as a snap-on template to any character. Special innate magical powers and stat increases make this option an exciting addition to any character, providing the deserving with a reward for their service to others and the world at large.
Sibeccai	Strong and hardy, sibeccai are excellent warriors and fierce opponents. Recognized as something akin to jackal-people by many non-sibeccai, this race respect a strong leader and recognize a need for rules to keep order. They enjoy stat increases to Constitution, Strength and Dexterity as well as a Bite feat as part of their racial level benefits.
Verrik	Verrik are incredibly wise and intelligent beings. All verrik possess innate mental abilities giving them rudimentary telepathy and telekinesis. They pride themselves on "contextual thinking," which they believe allows them to see the world from a larger perspective. They despise rash or impulsive actions. Verrik can gain up to three racial levels that include additional innate/mental abilities and stat increases to Intelligence or Wisdom.

Classes

There are eleven brand-new core classes. They are balanced to work together and created to be complete, covering all the traditional "roles" you enjoy in a fantasy game, but in a very different way.

Akashic	Masters of memory, these expert, skill-focused characters can draw upon the collective knowledge of all beings to gain information, improve their skills, or perform tasks for which they were never actually trained.
Champion	Seizing upon a cause they feel called to defend, champions are driven warriors who do whatever they must to further or defend their cause.
Greenbond	Masters of animism, greenbonds are spellcasters that can call upon the power of life itself. As such, they have an affinity for nature and nature spirits.
Mage Blade	While some follow the path of the sword and others the way of the staff and spell, the mage blade walks the thin line between. Mage blades not only dabble in spellcasting, but use rituals to enhance their weapons, which they wield with skill.
Magister	Consummate spellcasters, magisters focus their power through their magical staves. No one has mastery over more spells than the magister.
Oathsworn	These warriors are fidelity and devotion given life. When an oathsworn commits to a goal, this dedication grants the character unbelievable power to accomplish it.
Runethane	Although runethanes cast spells, their real focus lies in the study and creation of magical runes. Their runes store magical effects, create potent wards, and grant powerful abilities to items and people.
Totem Warrior	Often more at home in the wilderness than in a city, totem warriors bond themselves to an animal spirit that grants them amazing abilities, physical qualities and even companions.
Unfettered	Wild yet skillful, the unfettered is a master of derring-do and a blur of precision in combat. Their strengths are speed and prowess rather than heavy armor and brute force.
Warmain	The unfettered's equal but opposite force, warmains gird themselves in the heaviest armor and wield massive weapons with a combination of strength and skill. Their might knows no bounds.
Witch	As casters who focus on the magical nature within themselves as well as in spells, witches possess power that manifests itself in varied ways, making every individual unique and mysterious.

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New Core Concepts

There are a number of new, core concepts that set *Arcana Unearthed* apart and make it a robust and exciting new alternative to other rules sets. This guide gives you basic information about some of those key concepts to help orient yourself to this new material.

Magic & Spell Flexibility	Spells in <i>Arcana Unearthed</i> are not just set, unchangeable programs, but flexible, customizable options for players. A spellcaster can change the nature of a spell and its effects. Magic is fluid and subject to the whims of the individual caster, thus it remains always mysterious and fascinating. See the table below for more specific information.
Talents & Ceremonial Feats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Talents</i> are special feats a character can take only at 1st level. They represent not training, but inborn gifts. Since most people have only one talent (Unbound characters could have two), they can really distinguish a character from the outset. A <i>ceremonial feat</i> is gained by participating in a ritual of power. Most characters get a ceremonial feat for free at 1st level as part of their naming ceremony, a ritual usually held during a character's adolescence. A character can choose a ceremonial feat whenever a new feat is gained and all prerequisites are met.
Racial Levels	These allow a character to focus on advancing within the nature of her race and racial abilities, rather than taking levels in a class. Racial levels provide access to innate magical abilities and/or stat increases not seen in regular class progressions. This provides rich role-playing development and more customization for each character.
Hero Points	<p>Hero points can be used at the player's discretion to perform amazing—often otherwise impossible—actions. A character can use a Hero Point to make something work in a way the rules may not normally allow. Examples of Hero Point usage would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firing an arrow (or throwing one's sword) to cut the bonds of a bound ally in the middle of a fight. Using a "called shot" on an enemy to stun it or render a limb useless that might be grasping a dying comrade
"Death's Door" Rules	<p>Guidelines in <i>Arcana Unearthed</i> govern how long an injured character can stand before he drops, allowing the system to simulate tough characters who are "wounded, but still fighting."</p> <p>In the descriptions below, M equals the character's Constitution modifier (if above 0, otherwise it is 0) and S equals his Constitution score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As long as a character still has at least 1 hit point, he can act normally. Between 0 to -M hit points, a character is disabled. Between -M to -S hit points, a character is dying. At lower than -S, a character is dead.
Choice v. Destiny Alignment	There are no alignments in <i>Arcana Unearthed</i> . Characters should decide for themselves what is good and what is evil, the way real people do. There are no spells that reveal whether a character is evil or good—his actions and the perspectives of those around him determine that. No (or at least very few) characters think of themselves as evil.
True Names	Most characters have a truename. Your truename is the name of your soul. Truenames are often kept secret, for they can grant someone power over you—particularly a spellcaster. They can also be used to expedite the casting of some beneficial spells, such as those having to do with revivification. Characters usually go through a ceremony, called a naming ceremony, in which they learn their own truename.

Magic & Spell Flexibility

There are a number of magic-related terms and concepts that make *Arcana Unearthed* unique. The items listed below cover some basic concepts. There are additional means for augmenting spells in AU not covered here, including the addition of spell templates (eldritch, blessed, fire, unraveling, war, etc) and spell catalysts that can be used to heighten the power of many spells.

Simple Spells* Complex Spells** Exotic Spells***	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Simple spells</i> are the easiest and most common. They require the least understanding of the nature of magic and the simplest words and gestures (if components are required). Teachers and masters most commonly teach their students or apprentices these spells. * All spellcasters have access to simple spells. <i>Complex spells</i> require a real understanding of the fundamental underpinnings of magic. They require a more focused state of mind and complex words and gestures. ** A special feat is required to cast complex spells at each level. <i>Exotic spells</i> are the most complicated and rarest spells. Often, these are new spells, recently conceived by an individual, and the knowledge hasn't yet had time to spread. Rarely do two spellcasters know the same exotic spells. Many become "signature" spells that a particular caster is known for. *** A special feat is required to cast each individual exotic spell.
Diminished Spells	A spell cast using a spell slot one level lower than normal is called a diminished spell. Diminished spells have special effects explained in the spell's description. Please refer to the back side of your character sheet for any specific diminished spell effects.
Heightened Spells	A spell cast using a spell slot one level higher than normal is called a heightened spell. Heightened spells have special effects explained in the spell's description. Please refer to the back side of your character sheet for any specific heightened spell effects.
Laden Spells*	<p>Laden spells are spells cast using two slots rather than one, granting the spell significantly more power than it normally would have. The two slots are always of the same level, so casting a 3rd-level laden spell requires two 3rd-level slots. The Modify Spell feat lets you laden a spell to lengthen its duration, or to increase its range or the damage it inflicts. With the Quicken Spell feat, you can laden a spell to allow you to cast it as a free action. Some spell templates can be applied only to laden spells.</p> <p>* Without a feat or special ability to take advantage of a laden spell, there is no benefit from casting a spell this way.</p>
Weaving Spell Slots	<p>Lower-level spell slots can be woven together to power a higher-level spell, if the caster can cast spells of the higher level. A caster can combine three slots of one level to cast one spell of the next higher level. For example, a 7th-level witch, able to cast 2nd-level spells, can use three 1st-level slots to power one 2nd-level spell. He could even take three 0-level slots, convert them into a single 1st-level slot, and use that, along with two other 1st-level slots to power the 2nd-level spell. Higher-level slots can be used to power lower-level spells as well. One slot of a given spell level can be used to power two spells of the next lower level. Thus, the 7th-level witch could use one 2nd-level slot to power two 1st-level spells. NOTE: lower-level spell slots gained from converting higher level slots cannot be used to power even lower level spells. You cannot convert a 6th level slot to gain 5th level slots and then use those slots to power multiple 4th level spells.</p>

Introduction

The Setting

The campaign will use the Arcana Unearthed variant Player's Handbook, and will use the Diamond Throne campaign setting beginning in the common year 1757. Both Arcana Unearthed and the Diamond Throne are available at local game stores or through www.montecook.com. Players will probably need to own a copy of Arcana Unearthed, but will not need a copy of The Diamond Throne. Arcana Unearthed explains the alternative races that populate the land, as well as some of the history of the noble giants who ousted the oppressive dramojh from the realm of the Diamond Throne over 300 years ago.

The Diamond Throne

The Diamond Throne is a hereditary seat of power that represents a giantish king or queen. The giants actually call their land Dor-Erthenos, which means in their own tongue, "land to the west." This presents a somewhat ironic situation, because while the giants (and the sibeccai, whom they brought with them) hail from the east, this land is actually the farthest eastern land known to most people of the realm.

Each kind or queen, also called the Lord or Lady Protector, is approved by a council called the Observance. If the Observance does not approve of an heir apparent, or sometimes even of a currently reigning monarch, they pass the position on to another relative, or even another giantish noble family.

The current monarch, Lady Protector Ia-Thordani, has been in power only about a year. The single reservation the Observance had regarding her ascension to the Diamond Throne was her unmarried state. She is currently accepting suitors.

The Observance exists only to watch over the monarch and provide advice and counsel. This body has no other direct power. Of late, some residents wish to see members of other races allowed into the Observance, but currently its membership is entirely giant.

Under the Lady Protector are two giants known as the High Stewards of the Land. They act as generals, advisors, and administrators, one watching over the North, and one watching over the South.

Beneath the High Stewards are the local magistrates, called Stewards. These are regional governors, each based out of a major city. The Lands of the Diamond Throne hold 16 different Stewardships.

Members of nongiant races can become speakers, representing the causes and concerns of their race or area. The speakers work with the Stewards and help govern the people in a region. Ancestral aristocratic titles, in place since ancient times among humans, still

remain and carry some weight—at least among humans. Likewise, litorian tribes continue to follow their own chieftains, as they have for millennia, and faen communities in the Harrowdeep (northern forest) retain their own leaders as well. The verrik follow the rule of their Queen, Uxmul, in the desert city of Xalavat. The giants recognize these positions as influential and important, but not as part of their own government. In the eyes of giantish law, a human noble or litorian chief is no more or less than any other individual under their rule.

Under the Diamond Throne, the cities have become connected with well-maintained, paved roads wide enough even for the passage of large giantish wagons pulled by radonts. Aqueducts transport water to soak the crops and to provide communities with adequate safe water. Giant patrols protect against attacks by bandits, dangerous beasts (left over from the reign of the dramojh, which ended 350 years ago) and other enemies, such as the chorrim (another race of militaristic giant creatures). However, conditions for the majority of the people in the countryside remain poor and the realm is not as utopian as it might first appear.

Hail to the Queen

Lady Protector Ia-Thordani controls the central treasury from which the army and the Stewardships are paid. From there, the wealth trickles down through a time-honored system of cronyism, nepotism and elitism. The only practical way to gain wealth and status is to impress the local Stewards or commanders, and through them the Queen. Although it was possible in the past to plunder the forgotten ruins of ancient civilizations for treasure, such ruins are very difficult to find these days. Those with the right talent become merchants or army officers, hoping that they will be rewarded upon their retirement with a grant of land and perhaps a position in the government.

After hundreds of years of maintaining the growth of the army, the bureaucracy and the great giantish cities, the giants have depleted many of their local, natural resources. While the Dramojh oppressors of old were relatively frugal in their torture and depredation of the realm, the giants have adopted a standard of living that is increasingly difficult to finance. Ia-Thordani must be selective in disbursing the treasury, providing less for the Stewards and commanders who do not contribute to the wealth of the realm. Consequently, the merchants who are tied to these local leaders for a majority of their business must cope with increasing instability. This situation has aggravated the rivalries between the merchants, commanders and Stewards of the realm. Every year each faction must struggle harder to impress the Queen and maintain their status and position. The developments associated with the Sky Galleys of Thayn exemplify these struggles.

The Sky Galleys of Thayn

Thayn, a northern city heavily populated by Faen, holds a reputation for producing fine craftwork, particularly in wood and precious stones. Thayn is also known as a port city, but a port of a different kind—it produces floating sky ships carried aloft by rigid, gas-filled bags and propelled by magical motors. Until recently, it was generally impractical

to transport large numbers of people or shipments of goods in these craft, and they were used mostly for rapid transport, exploration or scouting. However, a recent partnership between a wealthy merchant prince and a master shipwright has lead to the development of the Sky Galley. Over four times the length of typical Sky Ships, the Sky Galleys are far superior to the overland merchant caravans, being faster and less vulnerable to banditry than horse-drawn wagons. Because of the great expense of building these ships, only six have been built so far. However the Queen has shown personal interest in the Sky Galleys, and she has rewarded the merchants of Thayn with land grants and prestigious positions in the bureaucracy. Naturally there has been an uproar among the other powers of the realm.

In the ten years since the first Sky Galley was built, rivalries between the sky merchants of Thayn and jealous merchants and leaders of the realm have lead to open conflict in the cities of Khorl and Jerad. "Sky Pirates" have struck on more than one occasion and one of the galleys was nearly destroyed by a pride of winged lions. Nonetheless, the Sky Merchants of Thayn continue to build more galleys and enjoy considerable profits.

The *Metamorphosis* was one of the Sky Galleys that traveled back and forth along the aerial trade route between Thayn and the Giant capital of De-Shamod. Three years ago it was outfitted with weaponry and soldiers to search for the Sky Pirates that attacked its sister ship, *Juasthon*. It tracked the pirates to their hidden camp on the isle of Noll and forced them to surrender after a pitched battle. The pirates turned out to be in the service of a rogue military commander of the realm, who was subsequently tried and executed for high treason. Subsequently the *Metamorphosis* returned to its regular trade route, but continued to retain a detachment of soldiers. Its venerable owner, Traiphon Nettleseed, who was over 350 years old, passed away two years ago, leaving the ship to his inept younger brother, Ruon. Exhilarated with his newfound wealth, Ruon soon wasted most of the family fortune on high living and poor investments. He lost the *Metamorphosis* to Io-Jannal, the Steward of Xavel, in a game of "Witch Stones" and it consequently became part of the army of the Diamond Throne. Many of the crew left in disgust, but others stayed because they did not feel at home anywhere else. The captain has made it clear that he intends to eventually acquire the ship for himself and his crew

The player characters begin as junior officers of the crew on board the *Metamorphosis*. They may have joined the initial crew 4 years ago, or at some time since then. The *Metamorphosis* supplies remote outposts and patrols the lands of Dor-Erthenos for bandits and dangerous beasts. Routinely it travels between Thayn, De-Shamod and Xavel. Most of the adventures will center on these cities.

Tales of Three Cities

Thayn

Thayn is home for many of the crew and always a welcome sight. It boasts the second largest magic academy in the realm: Brightborn School, founded by the Council of Magisters in Common Year 1570. The Steward, Ei-Kestrin, is herself a magister of great

power. This is the current home of other powerful magi, such as Faevor Grayportal, who is currently attempting to reform the Council of Magisters. The academy is said to lie on the site of a battle between a famous mage and a powerful dragon, and the mages there can still harness the battle's residual magic.

With about 10,000 people, Thayn is slightly larger than its sister city, Navael. Almost half of the population is faen, while the city also has a large number of giant and human residents, along with a fair number of sibeccai.

Around the city, mostly to the west, indentured servants till crops of wheat and barley under the watchful eyes of local overseers. To the east, in the mountains, a number of dwindling silver and copper mines still produce some commodities that ship through the city.

Faevor Grayportal (loresong faen magister, old, astute) lives in the Brightborn School of Magic, designed the Metamorphosis, and usually visits the crew when they are in port. He knows many things about magic and history and has a thinly veiled grudge against the giants. He also deals regularly with the sky merchants of Thayn (colleagues of your ship's former owner).

Kaimra Daychord (spryte greenbond/sculptor, sullen, tough) lives in a shack in the run-down borough of Miner's Camp. She hears many rumors about the lowlife in town, but only remembers them when people buy one of her quaint wooden sculptures with "unknown magical powers."

Mi-Thora (giant magister, artistic, inquisitive), is a cousin of the ship's owner Io-Jannal, and lives in the Steward's villa. She seems to know what is going on in the political arena and checks on the ship once in a while on behalf of her cousin.

De-Shamod

De-Shamod is the capital of Dor-Erthenos, home of the Diamond Throne, and the most fabulous of the cities of the giants. A marvel of engineering, the city is built atop a pair of vast artificial mounds, one on each side of the Ghostwash River. The steep, sheer sides of the mounds are paved and carved with elaborate murals in relief. The side of these rise about 70 feet above the plains around them, with wide ramps providing access into the city and down into the docks along the banks of the Ghostwash. Massive walls mark the perimeter of each section of the city, around the top edges of both mounds.

Tall statues line De-Shamod's broad, stone-paved streets. Its buildings stretch both high and wide with seamless stonework. Trees and flowering plants blend into the city's layout, making each street seem more like a verdant canyon. Banners of red and green drape from rooftop to rooftop and run down the smooth stone walls surrounding the city.

The grandest city on the continent, De-Shamod boasts a population of 50,000. About a third of the population are giants, another third humans, and the rest a mixture of other

racers. De-Shamod boasts the greatest schools and universities in the realm, including Se-Heton, the largest and most prestigious academy devoted to the study of magic, founded by the (now disbanded) Council of Magisters.

The monarch of the Diamond Throne personally appoints the Steward of the city, currently a particularly massive giant named Dro-Kareth. A speaker of every major race other than mojhs—human, faen, litorian, sibeccai, and verrik—works with Dro-Kareth and his staff of advisors.

De-Shamod is a center for commerce and trade, with extensive dockyards on both sides of the river. The city itself sprawls across to cover both river banks. The two sides are joined by so many mammoth span bridges, it seems as though the city itself were built upon the river.

North of the city, along the banks of the Ghostwash, lies a moderately sized dramojh structure that remains intact despite the best efforts of giant and human. The metal coating of the outer layer of this spherical building keeps it sealed and unharmed from even the most powerful attacks and spells. No one knows what lies inside. The giants have posted a guard nearby in case something ever comes out or an unauthorized person tries to get in.

Neverin (mojh akashic, driven, gregarious) leads the akashic guild of De-Shamod. He seems to know anything, for a price. He is probably the most respected mojhs in the Lands of the Diamond Throne.

Xialn (verrik merchant, trustworthy, droll) sells stuffed and mounted monsters, and buys monstrous carcasses from hunters. He seems to know where to find many rumors about the city's notorious nightlife.

Fistan Degern (human runethane, academic, outspoken) maintains a shop where he creates magical clocks, locks and other devices both intricate and powerful. He maintains the ship when it is in port and is grateful to supply information about his clients (mostly upper class) in exchange for your patronage.

Xavel

Xavel, a mostly Verrik town at the edge of the Southern Wastes, serves as the last stop before travelers headed south plunge into the dry Southern Wastes. A well-travelled caravan route follows the western edge of the Elder Mountains to Yrterot, home of Queen Uxmuf of Zalavat. Xavel has a population of just over 4,000 people, about 3,000 of whom are verrik. The rest are human and sibeccai. Its giant Steward, Io-Jannal, spends so much of her time away, the town is really ruled by the verrik speaker Tikalaq. It is a thinly hidden secret that the speaker is tied into local criminal syndicates fairly closely, making Xavel a fairly lawless place.

Cattleherds and goatherds are common around the city, as are merchants of less reputable trades. Within its walls, many people make their living working the granite and limestone hauled from quarries to the east.

Since before recorded time, a levitating stone has stood at the site of Xavel—even before the city actually existed. It floats only 3 feet off the ground, but it is a 300-ton rock, so this is an impressive sight. This stone, known as the Rock of Xavel, is said to possess good luck, and locals make a point to rub it when they need some good fortune. Defacing the stone is a crime punishable by death—although an angry mob likely would kill the transgressors long before they faced trial.

Tiqalaq (verrik speaker, sophisticated, ruthless) lives in the Steward's palace and can tell you some things about the upper classes of the city. Naturally he has nothing to say about any criminal activities that may take place in the city, or the locked cargo boxes that you routinely load onto the ship.

Dossa (sibeccai speaker, cunning, antagonistic) lives in a modest villa within the city walls. Dossa seems to know what Tiqalaq's affiliated crime syndicates are up to, although is not always at liberty to discuss such matters.

Urquay (verrik iron witch, dour, motherly) maintains a shop in Xavel where customers can purchase all manner of magical devices. She is knowledgeable about local legends and is the first choice for any difficult repairs the ship might need.

What to Expect

Most adventures will be city-based and will involve information gathering and perilous encounters with villains both monstrous and civilized. As the characters become more experienced there will be more aerial adventures in and around the Sky Galley itself.

Villains

Based on this structure and on the campaign setting, certain types of villains will be more common than others. These are listed below to help in the selection of such things as classes, skills, spells and feats. Also, the characters themselves will be familiar with this information as well.

Very Rare

Aberrations, outer planar creatures (demons, devils), dragons, oozes, undead masterminds (vampires, mummies)

Occasional

Constructs, elementals, fey, monstrous humanoids, vermin

Common

Animals, beasts, giants, magical beasts, NPCs (any class from Arcana Unearthed) undead minions (zombies, skeletons)

Plot Structure

The following shows the structure that will be used for most adventures in the campaign, and should help players recognize the hints that the GM drops.

Thesis

The thesis is the adventure as the characters first understand it. The PCs may have to complete a task, investigate a problem, or defeat a foe. Whatever it is the PCs have to do, the job seems to be straightforward. The surprises come later.

Example: Known criminals have been reported lurking near a series of public disturbances. The characters must expose them and stop their activities.

Antithesis

The antithesis is an unexpected complication, a plot twist, a surprise that forces the characters to change their original plans. An antithesis does not so much block the characters' original plans as to make them difficult or unattractive. A good antithesis rewards developing a new approach instead of forcing characters into a particular set of actions.

Example: After tracking down the criminals, the character discover that the criminals were hired by same Speaker who hired the characters. Did the Speaker set up the criminals? The characters? Both? Why?

Synthesis

The synthesis reconciles thesis and antithesis to resolve the plot. The characters must adjust to eh curveball the antithesis throws at them, and they must still accomplish their original objective as stated in the thesis. The synthesis is never fixed, because it's in the hands of the characters. However, the characters may find clues that point towards one or more possible resolutions.

Example: The Speaker plans to use the unrest caused by the criminals to increase his influence over the security of the realm while using the PCs to eliminate the criminals. The criminals are annoyed by the Speaker's duplicity, but causing civil disturbances fits their own agenda, so they'd prefer to eliminate the PCs and exact revenge on the Speaker later. The PCs can save themselves by convincing some of the criminals to change their minds.

Character Creation

Abilities are determined using the standard point-based system. All abilities start at 8, and may be raised using character points. Player characters start with 32 character points. Each Ability may be raised up to 14 at a cost of one character point per ability point. Raising an Ability to 15 or 16 costs 2 character points per ability point. Raising an ability to 17 or 18 costs 3 character points per ability point. Racial bonuses or penalties are added after the character points are spent.

All characters will begin at 1st level, with average starting equipment (125 gp).

Additional Notes

The campaign will use "Hero Points" as described in *Arcana Unearthed*.

If a player decides to play a new character (i.e. a character dies or the player wants a change of pace), the new character will begin at the same level as the lowest level character currently in the campaign. The player may equip the new character with the standard value of equipment that an NPC of that level would have, as shown in the DMG. However, no single item may be worth more than half of this value.

The adventures will generally provide standard amounts of treasure and magic items, as shown in the DMG. Most types of equipment will be available for purchase through the characters' connections, including exotic items and magic items. Through these connections, used equipment or magic items may be exchanged for their full value in equipment or magic items.

After gaining a new level, characters will gain hit points equal to the average roll of their hit die type, rounded up. This replaces the random roll for hit points upon gaining a level.

Any ambiguities or errors in the *Arcana Unearthed* handbook will be resolved by the GM as they come up, usually by referring to the official website and message boards. If the GM's decision is contrary to what a player thought it would be, the player may change their character appropriately.

Generally, experience points will be awarded for completing adventures, not for individual encounters. Adventure-based awards will be based on the average difficulty that the PCs are likely to have if they find some clues or gain some kind of advantage before confronting the main antagonist. Some groups will tend to find fewer clues and fight tougher, more frequent battles while characters with more finesse will tend to find more clues and advantages that allow them to overcome conflicts more easily or bypass them entirely. Either way, the experience award for the adventure would be the same if the same goals are accomplished.