

ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF

# HYPHERBOREA™



*A Role-Playing Game of Swords, Sorcery, and Weird Fantasy*







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A COMPLETE REFERENCE BOOK  
PRESENTED IN SIX VOLUMES

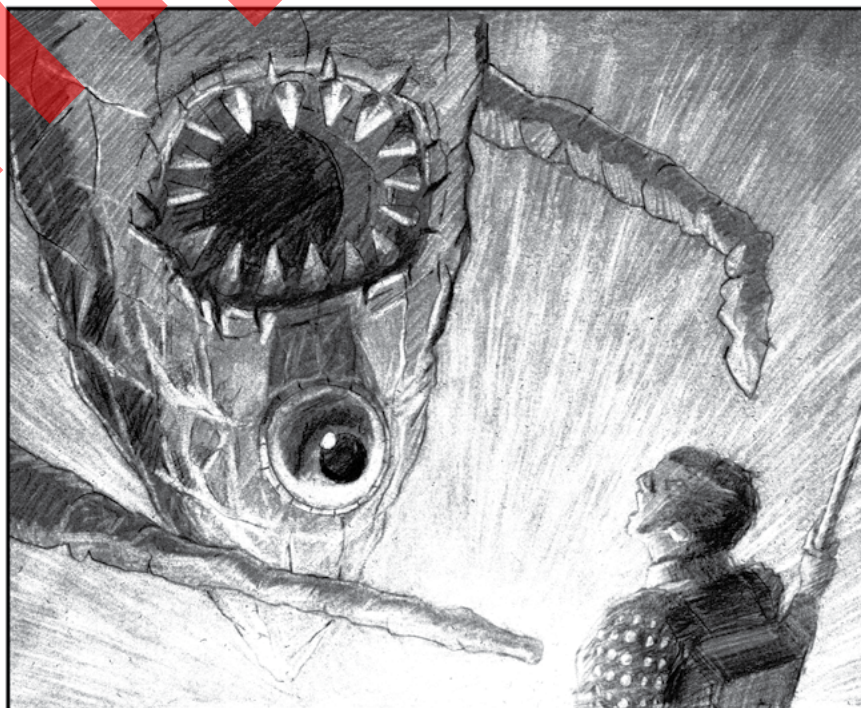
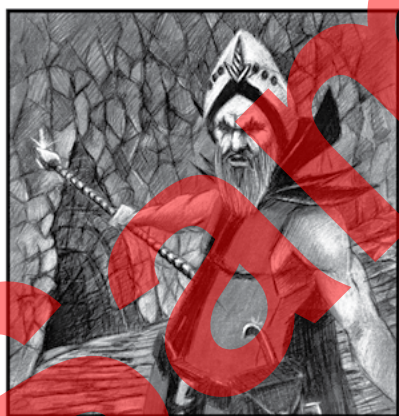
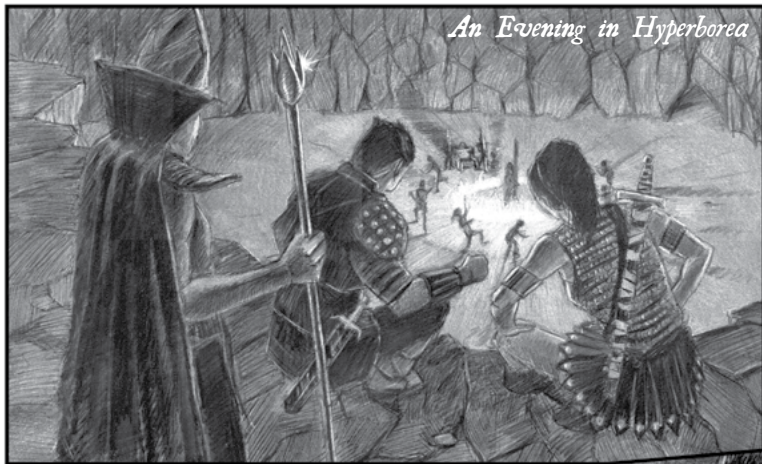
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[www.hyperborea.tv](http://www.hyperborea.tv)



*An Evening in Hyperborea*



# SECOND EDITION FOREWORD

Welcome to *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea* Second Edition! What you're holding is as distinctive an entryway into a pulp fantasy gaming world as has yet been imagined. Inspired by pulp era authors as diverse and innovative as Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, and Clark Ashton Smith, this is a game system that combines the pioneering brilliance of the original fantasy role-playing game with the gritty, dark, and realistic fantasy elements that are the hallmark of the very best pulp adventures.

I've been a fan of the pulps—specifically the wonderful stories written by the aforementioned masters—since the early 1980s. In that time, I have marveled at the breadth and scope of their personal artistic visions: the dreamy and luxuriant prose of Smith, the elaborate and ornate phrasings of Lovecraft, and the genre-splicing brilliance of Howard's defiant heroes. Each of these writers was more than a mere storyteller; they were creators of dauntless and enduring heroes, manufacturers of lost ages, and exceptional world-builders who brought an originality to their work that has stood the test of time.

I've been trying to re-create the sense of awe and wonder I felt each time I read one of their stories ever since. Sadly, I've come up short more often than not. That's not to say I haven't enjoyed reading new authors or appreciated new gaming systems; it's just that they were always lacking the weird element I enjoyed so much and seemed able only to find in old reprints of the pulp magazines.

You might be asking, "What is this pulp you speak of and what does it have to do with this game?" Glad you asked! While the term *pulp fiction* covers an extensive province of genre-spanning literature to include—well, just about everything—what most modern readers understand to be "classic pulp" stories are those that emphasize realistic adventure, action, and heroism set within worlds of surreal horror and beauty. What we're talking about here is weird fiction, that unusual concoction of setting and atmosphere that relies on the eerie and bizarre to add color to stories that might otherwise be recognizable as (but are easily distinguished from) straight horror, action, or the supernatural. Prime examples of this kind of story would be Robert E. Howard's "Worms of the Earth", H.P. Lovecraft's "The Call of Cthulhu", or Clark Ashton Smith's "The Maze of Maal Dweb".

It is generally accepted that this type of story was first printed within the pages of a now-legendary magazine called *Weird Tales*. I say legendary because during its heyday in the 1920s and '30s, *Weird Tales* was responsible for publishing some of the most innovative and enduring fantasy work ever written. I say legendary also because it possessed the intuition to publish what is now widely regarded as the first recognized example

of the modern sword-and-sorcery tale, "The Shadow Kingdom", written by Robert E. Howard. Finally, I say legendary because it spawned or directly inspired countless movies, books, comics, and RPGs, of which *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea* is the latest adaptation—and a superb one at that. What I'm trying to say here is that without *Weird Tales* there'd be no *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea*, or at least it would look and feel profoundly different, and from where I sit as a gamer deeply invested in his own AS&SH campaign, that's a dreadful thing to consider.

But don't take my word for it! In his wonderful foreword to the original edition of this game, Stuart Marshall noted that *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea* could easily have been called, "Weird Tales: The Roleplaying Game", and that is as spot on an assessment of this game as any I could produce. Understanding the influence *Weird Tales* and its roster of amazing authors had on this project is important for two reasons: It helped inspire the mood, setting, and tone of the world in which your adventurers will be forging their destinies, while also paying homage to the unique character archetypes that helped inspire tabletop role-playing games in the first place. Try to recall your first experience reading about heroes like Conan the Barbarian, Kull, Elric of Melniboné, Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser, Jirel of Joiry, Eibon the sage, and the many other characters featured in the pages of *Weird Tales*, and you've got an idea of the kind of adventurer needed to survive the otherworldly horrors of Talanian's imagined land of Hyperborea.

And what a world! Whenever I enter Talanian's expression of Hyperborea, whether as referee or player, I am reminded of Clark Ashton Smith's wonderfully decadent description of the planet Xiccarph in his prose poem, "To the Daemon: An Invocation":

*"Tell me of the vaster blossoms within whose cradling chalices a woman could sleep; of the seas of fire that beat on strands of ever-during ice; of perfumes that can give eternal slumber in a breath; of eyeless titans that dwell in Uranus, and beings that wander in the green light of the twin suns of azure and orange."*

Talanian conjures a similar, if much bleaker, world in his creation called Hyperborea. Described as a “flat-earth realm”, Hyperborea is essentially a mysterious chunk of icy rock spinning in the void of space around a bloated and dying sun. It seems to exist as an echo of its own past, a prisoner of both time and place, watching helplessly as its oceans spill over the rims of its horizons and into the surrounding cosmos, there to be swept away by the mysterious and mystical *boreas*. Like Smith’s Xiccarph, Hyperborea contains both beauty and danger. Alien horrors abound on this dying “planet”, and the gods that remain seem twisted and spiteful, indifferent to the plight of the surviving humans who make this inhospitable world their home. And that right there is why I love playing this game. It’s so damn *pulpy*!

When game creator Jeff Talanian asked me to pen this foreword, I was a bit reluctant. Sure, my pulp scholar credentials are solid. I’ve had the good fortune to have had a hand in publishing volumes dedicated to preserving the work of Robert E. Howard and authored many introductions that have supported that goal. I’ve been a caretaker of sorts, relishing as I do my role in introducing new readers to his work through vehicles like The Robert E. Howard Foundation and an academic journal dedicated to Howard called *The Dark Man*. I’ve rubbed elbows with some of the leading pulp scholars in the world and even started a magazine with two of them called *Skelos*, which aims to revive the weird storytelling tradition. But I didn’t possess the same professional pedigree on the gaming side of this equation, and I worried that being “just a player” might dampen the message.

However, while I don’t fancy myself an expert in the field of gaming, I do feel I’ve paid my dues—enough to express an opinion that matters to other gamers. I’ve been playing tabletop role-playing games since the early 1980s, and in that time my characters have crawled the stygian blackness of countless dungeons, looted the wealth of castles guarded by legions of the undead, and bravely faced all manner of creatures, demons, and gods. Some of those heroes survived, but most did not. As a GM, I’ve run simple adventures that have lasted as little as a few hours and engineered a few epic campaigns that have spanned years. Without question the one thing I had was fun. Now that I think about it, I had fun thrilling to the adventures of those pulp heroes I mentioned above, too.

And ultimately that’s why I decided to write this foreword; I had *fun* playing this game. It’s as if Jeff called me up on the phone and asked me what kind of RPG I *really* wanted to play. Pulp feel? Check. Weird fantasy? Check. Original Gygax/Arneson ruleset and mechanics? Check. This game is the perfect marriage of those things I like to do and the stories I like to read.

Whether facing a horde of snake-men with naked steel in hand or casting a spell that summons an elemental to do my bidding, I can finally be the type of hero I wanted to be while growing up. (Queue up the *Conan the Barbarian* soundtrack composed by Basil Poledouris...)

Gone are the elves, dwarves, pixies, and halflings that dominate other systems. Now don’t get me wrong, I enjoy games that revolve around that kind of high-fantasy milieu, but in Hyperborea humans are the sole character race—and with good reason. That’s because Hyperborea is an antediluvian nightmare world that provides your hero with an atavistic glimpse of our universe as it was before mankind crawled from the primordial slime to challenge the unheeding and uncaring gods for cosmic supremacy. Magic in this world isn’t a preordained birthright or a romanticized tool of human-based morality; it’s an artifact of antiquity, a holdover legacy of alien origin that perverts and twists the human soul because it was never meant to be wielded by beings whose grip on mortality is tenuous at best. Humans, possessed with little more than defiant will, exist in spite of the indifference of the gods and with an insolence that resists the limitations under which they have been placed. Not surprisingly, this kind of human insignificance in the face of unfathomable forces is a shared theme that runs through much of the work of Howard, Lovecraft, and Smith. Jeff gets it, and Hyperborea reflects it.

So, there you have it. The innovative professionals over at North Wind Adventures have built upon the bones of its wildly popular antecedent and given gamers like me more of what they already enjoy in the original edition: more artwork, more beasties, and a gazetteer chock-a-block full of detailed descriptions that provide Hyperborea a contextual underpinning familiar to pulp fans and yet original enough to stand alone as a primary setting. Best of all, their “Same Game, Same Rules, More Content!” mantra means you won’t need to start over from scratch. It’s completely compatible with the original edition.

But don’t be fooled by the gaming tools, the familiar atmosphere, or the customary heroes and wizards that make up what might be termed a traditional fantasy role-playing game; this isn’t a mere simulacrum of some other game system, and neither is it the creative reflection that defines even the best literary pastiche. In *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea*, game creator Jeff Talanian has constructed the perfect compromise between tradition and twist and in doing so has created the best damn pulp game in the world. Play it and I promise you’ll have a ton of fun!

—Chris Gruber (2017)





## ORIGINAL EDITION FOREWORD



A few years ago, I had the immense pleasure and privilege of editing a volume called *OSRIC*<sup>™</sup>. It met with a certain success, and since then, my important contributions to the hobby of old-school pen-and-paper fantasy role-playing games have all been in the field of forewords. I am not a modest man, so I always find it gratifying to be asked to write a foreword; but it's also an important duty that I take seriously. This is my chance to give you, reader, a quick pen portrait of this game. Of the various forewords I have written, this is one of those that gave me the most satisfaction, because in these paragraphs I have the chance to introduce you to something quite special.

In Chicago, in May 1923, a man called Jacob C. Henneberger set up a magazine called *Weird Tales*. It ran until September 1954 (and was revived a few times since). During its golden age in the 1930s, *Weird Tales* published fiction by H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, and Robert E. Howard, among many others. It created the genre of weird fiction almost singlehandedly, and it inspired a legion of writers such as August Derleth, Frank Belknap Long, Robert Bloch, E. Hoffman Price, and Fritz Leiber, all of whom went on to write for *Weird Tales* themselves. These people in turn were among the key influences on a young man called E. Gary Gygax, who in his later life worked with a young writer called Jeff Talanian.

This game is, of course, called *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea*, but one might equally think of it as “Weird Tales: The Roleplaying Game”. It is a return to some of the literary roots of the hobby, to the thrill and the wonder of weird fiction. You will find the pages that follow are overflowing with references to that golden age of *Weird Tales*: the Picts and the Atlanteans, the Amazons and the barbarians, of Howard; the Colour out of Space and the Plateau of Leng, from Lovecraft; and Hyperborea itself is, of course, a name familiar from Smith, though he did not invent it.

So the game that you are about to read represents the union of the hobby's most time-honoured ruleset (expressed in Jeff Talanian's admirably clear and workmanlike prose) with some of its vintage literary antecedents. The ruleset does contain certain innovations, mostly better to represent the literary sources, but I suspect that the game's target audience

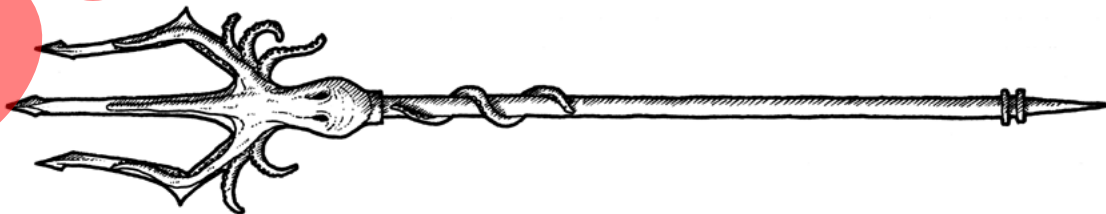
will tend to find large parts of rules that follow quite familiar. What is new (to games, if not to fiction) is the flavour of Jeff Talanian's Hyperborea, in which he synthesises his vision of the rich atmosphere, the heady wonders, of the golden age of *Weird Tales*. The occasional touch of forgotten Atlantean technology, the odd Fungus from Yuggoth, contrasted with the decadent dusky beauties and the clean-limbed blond Vikings of the world's youth, all serve to differentiate Hyperborea from more conventional fantasy worlds.

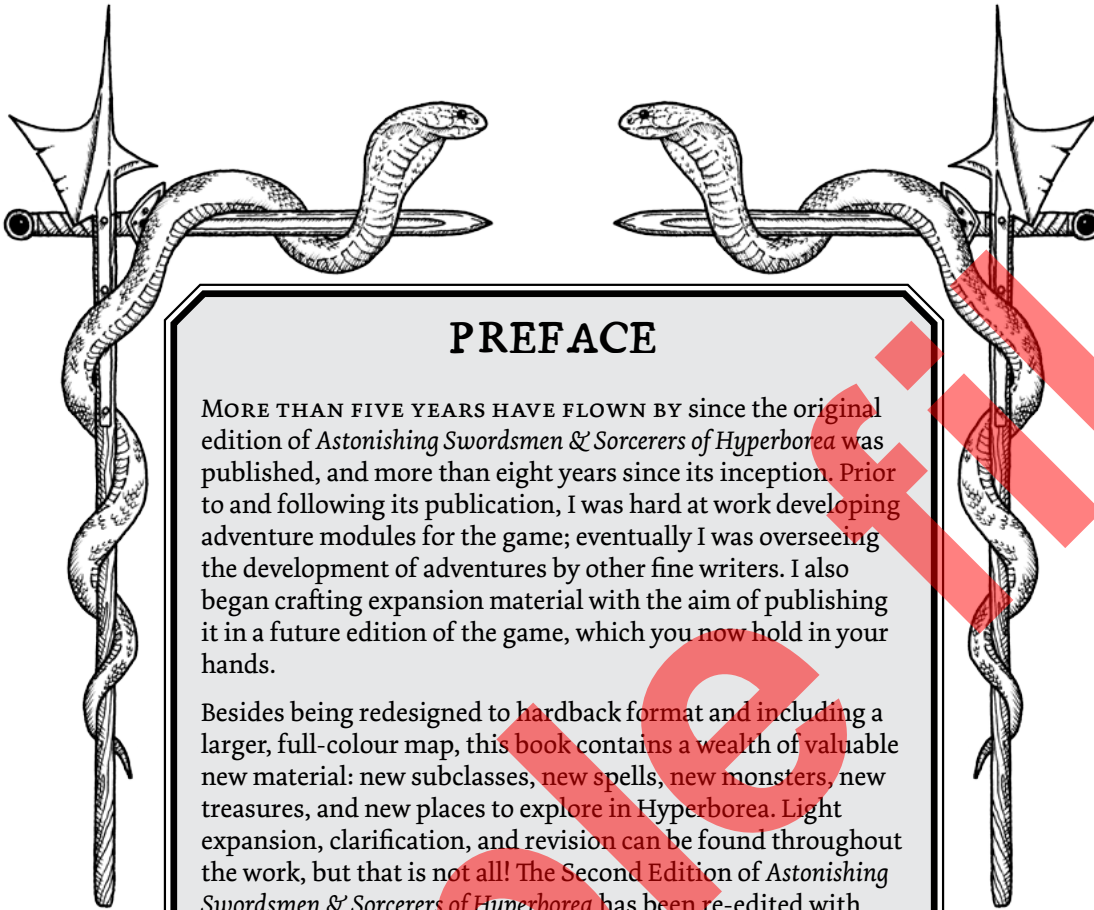
I've seen far too many of these cookie-cutter fantasy worlds now. They all seem to have the Sandy Desert and the Green Forest and the Black Mountains, arranged in a plain rectangular shape with white space at the edges; and they all seem to have a Halfling County and an Elf Wood for the non-human characters to come from. Not so in Hyperborea. There are dwarfs, but they're not suitable to be player characters at all. In this world, player characters are human. There are no dragons here either. This game is “Dungeons & Elder Things”.

If you are anything like me, you will find that it has a strong appeal. This is no world of epic, heroic fantasy. Weird fiction was always on a smaller and more personal scale. In heroic fantasy, you're trying to save the world. In weird fiction, you're mostly just trying to prize the gem out of the statue of the spider-god's eye socket. Success is survival with increased wealth.

Play in this strange dimension is going to be spectacularly good fun, but be careful. Don't travel Hyperborea too recklessly. Speak softly and carry a Vorpall Sword, because here be Shoggoths.

—Stuart Marshall (2012)





## PREFACE

MORE THAN FIVE YEARS HAVE FLOWN BY since the original edition of *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea* was published, and more than eight years since its inception. Prior to and following its publication, I was hard at work developing adventure modules for the game; eventually I was overseeing the development of adventures by other fine writers. I also began crafting expansion material with the aim of publishing it in a future edition of the game, which you now hold in your hands.

Besides being redesigned to hardback format and including a larger, full-colour map, this book contains a wealth of valuable new material: new subclasses, new spells, new monsters, new treasures, and new places to explore in Hyperborea. Light expansion, clarification, and revision can be found throughout the work, but that is not all! The Second Edition of *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea* has been re-edited with superb meticulousness. Furthermore, besides retaining its original interior art, the Second Edition of ASESH includes the brilliant work of several additional artists.

Throughout the modest growth of ASESH, I have benefited from meeting numerous gaming enthusiasts, including several who were willing to share their creative ideas. Some of those ideas have made it into this book. Too, ASESH has been run at multiple gaming conventions by a variety of supporters. Personally, I've had great fun rolling dice with fellow gamers from around the globe, and they never have failed to surprize me with their imaginative play. But for me, the greatest enjoyment always has been derived from playing the game with my home group of the past 25 years, the "Knights of Next Tuesday", whose rashness and foolhardiness never cease to amaze me. "Roll for initiative, gentlemen!"

—Jeffrey P. Talanian (2017)



# ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF HYPERBOREA

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VOLUME I



# ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN & SORCERERS OF HYPERBOREA™



**VOLUME I: SWORDSMEN & SORCERERS**



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## INTRODUCTION

*Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea (ASESH)* is a role-playing game of adventure played with paper, pencil, dice, and imagination. Participants include one referee and one or more players. The referee prepares and presents the adventure material, including the circumstances, challenges, quests, and mysteries faced, and the players create player characters (PCs), including *fighters*, *magicians*, *clerics*, and *thieves*. The heroes of an ASES game delve dungeons filled with horrifying monsters, lethal traps, and bewildering puzzles; they explore savage wilderness frontiers and hostile borderlands; they probe ancient ruins and investigate cursed tombs; they match steel against sorcery and sorcery against steel; and they plunder for gold, gems, and magical treasure.

Hyperborea is the default campaign setting for *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea*. This “flat earth” realm is hemmed in by the mystical *boreas* (“North Wind”), and under the scarlet light of a bloated, dying sun, its roiling seas spill eternal over the world’s rim. Hyperborea is in a perpetual state of decay, populated by disharmonious men, hostile monsters, and weird, alien beings. Hyperborea is an adaptable campaign setting that can be used independently or in conjunction with other milieux, published or home-brewed; indeed, Hyperborea might be just beyond the North Wind of any campaign setting.

### Required Materials:

- \* Dice: 4-sided (d4), 6-sided (d6), 8-sided (d8), 10-sided (d10), 12-sided (d12), and 20-sided (d20)
- \* Pencil: standard or mechanical
- \* Paper: lined and graph (4 or 5 squares per inch)

### Optional Materials:

- \* Miniature figures (metal or plastic)
- \* Grid mat (paper or vinyl, 1-inch squares or hexagons)

### HOW TO PLAY A ROLE-PLAYING GAME:

A role-playing game is a collaborative and interactive experience shared amongst two or more persons.

Traditionally, the game’s participants are proximate to one another (seated at a dinner table or the like), but modern communications technology allows individuals to game together even if separated by vast distances. A gaming session may last two or more hours and can continue into subsequent sessions of play, not unlike the episodic flow of a television series. The referee presents the adventure scenario, including any pertinent background information, intelligence, and rumours that may be learnt by the player characters. The game progresses as a sort of dialogue betwixt the referee and the players. The referee describes the places explored: an ancient tower, a ruined city, a dungeon complex, or perhaps a hoary wilderness. Also encountered are men and monsters—friendly and hostile alike.

The players react to the referee’s descriptions by explaining how their characters (individually or as a team) respond to each development, which reactions may involve combat, ability use, diplomacy, problem solving, trickery, and/or evasion. The referee considers and judges the results of all such activities by using a combination of the rules and no small amount of logic, reason, and fairness. Collaboration, cooperation, and creativity in the face of adversity are hallmarks of an enjoyable role-playing game experience.

## DICE CONVENTIONS

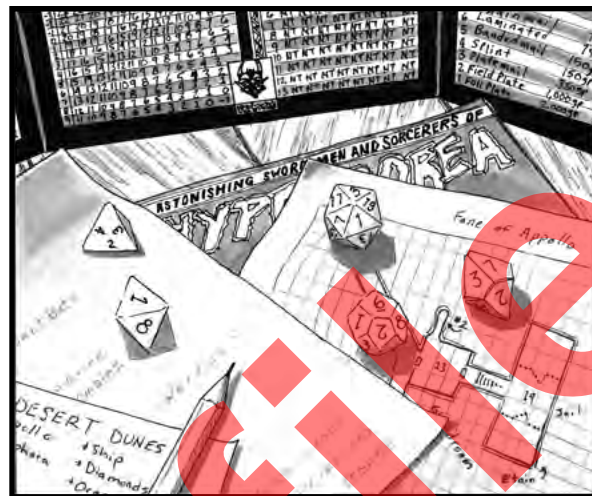
*Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea* employs dice to resolve many in-game situations. The six basic die types (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20) cover a variety of distribution ranges used during game play, but they do not account for every possibility. The following conventions resolve other distribution ranges:

- \* *To determine a range of 1–2:* Try a 6-sided die (d6), for which results of 1–3 = 1 and 4–6 = 2.
- \* *To determine a range of 1–3:* Try a 6-sided die (d6), for which results of 1–2 = 1, 3–4 = 2, and 5–6 = 3.
- \* *To determine a percentile (d%):* Roll a 10-sided die twice (2d10), or use two of different colours. One die represents the tens; the other represents the ones. So, if the first roll is a 2 and the second is a 4, then the result is 24.
- \* *To determine a per mille (d‰):* Roll a 10-sided die thrice (3d10), or use three of different colours. The

first die represents the hundreds; the second, the tens; and the third, the ones. So, if the first roll is a 0, the second roll is a 1, and the third roll is a 9, then the result is 19.

Other cases will occur in which a number range is modified; e.g., a *magic missile* spell that inflicts 2–5 hit points of damage. To resolve this range, roll a d4, and add 1 to the result (1d4+1). The most obvious situations occur when a single die type is rolled multiple times; e.g., a *fireball* that causes 6–36 hit points of damage is simply a 6d6 roll.

**“NATURAL” DIE ROLLS:** References are made throughout this text to “natural” die rolls (e.g., a “natural 1” or a “natural 20”). These citations oft refer to special effects realized when a given number is rolled, sans modifiers. For example, if a player rolls 15 on a d20, and his character enjoys a net +5 bonus (due to attributes, sorcery, and/or circumstantial adjustments), he has effectively scored a 20; however, it is not a “natural 20” and thus would not qualify for any special effect that requires such a roll.



## CHARACTER CREATION

The first thing a player must do is generate or “roll up” a character. Use a character sheet (available at [WWW.HYPERBOREA.TV](http://WWW.HYPERBOREA.TV)) or a leaf of lined paper to record your character. The following 10 steps provide a guideline for character creation. These steps follow the order of the chapters in the first two volumes of this work. Novice players are encouraged to turn back to this section to confirm each step of the process has been observed.

1. **ATTRIBUTES:** Generate your character’s physical attributes (*strength, dexterity, constitution*) and mental attributes (*intelligence, wisdom, charisma*).
2. **CLASS:** Review available classes (and subclasses), and then select one. Note and record all class abilities.
3. **RACE:** Review available races, and then select one.
4. **PHYSIQUE:** Determine gender, age, height, weight, and appearance.
5. **ALIGNMENT:** Select *character alignment* or “ethos”. Before selecting an alignment, refer to your class (or subclass) entry to see which alignments are allowed.
6. **BACKGROUND:** Determine character name, personality, language(s), religion, and secondary skill(s).
7. **WEAPON SKILL:** Review *weapon skill* rules, including *favoured weapons* listed at your character’s class (or subclass) entry. For fighters and fighter subclasses, select *mastered weapons*; however, if you elect to use a *quick-start equipage pack* (see p. 128: EQUIPAGE, *quick-start equipage packs*), you would be wise to select a weapon from the pre-generated pack.
8. **COINAGE AND EQUIPAGE:** Roll for initial funds; purchase armour, weapons, and gear. Note that armour directly impacts *armour class* and *movement*.
9. **OTHER STATISTICS:** Review the definitions of *armour class, casting ability, fighting ability, hit dice, hit points, movement, saving throw, and turning ability*.
  - \* *Armour class (AC)* is determined by armour worn (see STEP 8), but it is modified by *dexterity (DX)*; too, some character classes have abilities that modify AC.
  - \* *Casting ability (CA)* applies strictly to spell-casting character classes; refer to your class entry.
  - \* *Fighting ability (FA)* applies to all characters; refer to your class entry and note your character’s starting FA.
  - \* *Hit dice (HD)* and *hit points (hp)* apply to all characters; refer to your class entry for your character’s HD type, and then roll your starting hp.
  - \* *Movement (MV)* is determined by armour worn (see STEP 8); though, some classes have abilities that modify MV.
  - \* *Saving throw (SV)* applies to all characters; note your character’s starting SV. Each class also has unique *saving throw modifiers* that must be noted; refer to your class entry.
  - \* *Turning ability (TA)* applies to clerics and some subclasses; refer to your class entry.
10. **SPELLS:** Determine starting spells for spell-casting characters. Refer to the class entry’s *sorcery* ability, and then consult your referee. Also, some spell-casting subclasses (the legerdemainist, shaman, and warlock) must select the school(s) of magic they cast. This election is detailed in each subclass’s respective *sorcery* ability.

The preceding 10 steps should ease the challenge of creating a new ASESH character—but it does not end there! If your character is fortunate enough to survive the rigours of adventure and combat, and he becomes eligible to gain a level of experience, adjustments must be made (see VOL. III, p. 267: EXPERIENCE POINTS, *gaining levels of experience*).



**STRENGTH (ST):** An evaluation of muscularity, power, and force. Strength also represents how well the character can make use of physical might. Strength is the *prime attribute* of fighters (see p. 10: CLASSES, *class terms and definitions*).

**Table 1: Strength**

Strength Score	Attack Modifier (Melee)	Damage Adjustment (Melee / Hurling)	Test of Strength	Extraordinary Feat of Strength
3	-2	-2	1:6	0%
4-6	-1	-1	1:6	1%
7-8	±0	-1	2:6	2%
9-12	±0	±0	2:6	4%
13-14	±0	+1	3:6	8%
15-16	+1	+1	3:6	16%
17	+1	+2	4:6	24%
18	+2	+3	5:6	32%

**Strength Table Defined:**

*Attack Modifier (Melee):* A bonus or penalty applied to melee or “hand-to-hand” combat attack rolls.

*Damage Adjustment (Melee / Hurling):* A bonus or penalty applied to damage inflicted with melee and hurled weapons (including slings). It also can apply to some bows (long and composite long) if the draw weight is adjusted to meet the archer’s strength. *N.B.:* Unless *damage reduction* mitigates results (see p. 114: EQUIPAGE, *armour*), any hit causes at least 1 hit point of damage, regardless of a *damage adjustment* penalty.

*Test of Strength:* The chance-in-six to force open a stuck or locked door, move a rusted lever, or perform similar tasks that require muscle power. If the situation is appropriate, multiple attempts may be made. The referee may adjust *tests of strength* by ±1 based on circumstance, character ability, or other factors.

*Extraordinary Feat of Strength:* The probability of success for strength feats of heroic stamp, such as bending the bars of a jail cell, breaking manacles, lifting a portcullis, or powering a massive boulder off a pinned comrade. *N.B.:* If strength is a prime attribute, the character gains a +8% bonus. This advantage applies to fighters, barbarians, berserkers, cataphracts, huntsmen, paladins, rangers, runegravers, and warlocks.

**DEXTERITY (DX):** An evaluation of elusiveness, speed, agility, balance, and the ability to physically react to hazardous conditions. Dexterity also covers manual manipulation of mechanical (and sometimes magical) devices. Dexterity is the prime attribute of thieves.

**Table 2: Dexterity**

Dexterity Score	Attack Modifier (Missile)	Defence Adjustment	Test of Dexterity	Extraordinary Feat of Dexterity
3	-2	-2	1:6	0%
4-6	-1	-1	1:6	1%
7-8	-1	±0	2:6	2%
9-12	±0	±0	2:6	4%
13-14	+1	±0	3:6	8%
15-16	+1	+1	3:6	16%
17	+2	+1	4:6	24%
18	+3	+2	5:6	32%

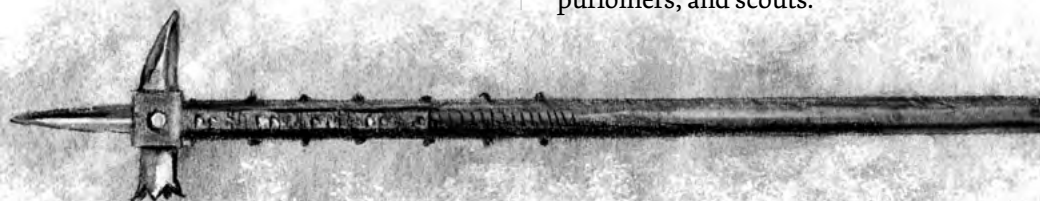
**Dexterity Table Defined:**

*Attack Modifier (Missile):* A bonus or penalty applied to missile attacks (propelled or hurled).

*Defence Adjustment:* Agility and elusiveness can modify armour class: High dexterity can lower (improve) AC, whereas low dexterity can raise (worsen) AC; notwithstanding, no penalty can raise AC above 9 (see p. 130: OTHER STATISTICS, *armour class*). This bonus or penalty also applies to all *avoidance* saving throws (e.g., breath weapons, ray guns, some traps) and saving throws versus any spell or spell effect that involves dodging (*entangle*, *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, etc.).

*Test of Dexterity:* The chance-in-six to jump a 10-foot pit, snag a grappling hook on a building ledge, hastily tie a bowline, or perform similar tasks that require agility or finesse. The referee may adjust *tests of dexterity* by ±1 based on circumstance, character ability, or other factors.

*Extraordinary Feat of Dexterity:* The probability of success for dexterity feats of heroic stamp, such as escaping bonds, turning a somersault in the midst of combat, or walking a tightrope. *N.B.:* If dexterity is a prime attribute, the character gains a +8% bonus. This advantage applies to thieves, assassins, barbarians, bards, illusionists, legerdemainists, monks, purloiners, and scouts.



**CONSTITUTION (CN):** An evaluation of energy, fitness, health, stamina, and vitality. Constitution also represents the body's ability to withstand trauma.

**Table 3: Constitution**

Constitution Score	Hit Point Adjustment	Poison Adjustment	Trauma Survival	Test of Constitution	Extraordinary Feat of Constitution
3	-1	-2	45%	1:6	0%
4-6	-1	-1	55%	1:6	1%
7-8	±0	±0	65%	2:6	2%
9-12	±0	±0	75%	2:6	4%
13-14	+1	±0	80%	3:6	8%
15-16	+1	+1	85%	3:6	16%
17	+2	+1	90%	4:6	24%
18	+3	+2	95%	5:6	32%

**Constitution Table Defined:**

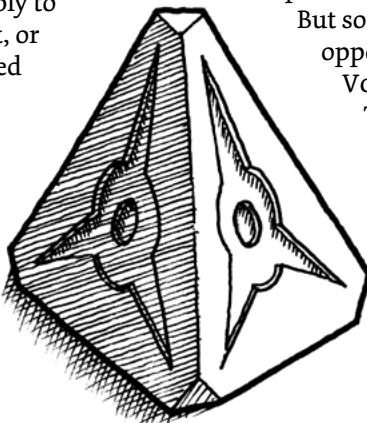
**Hit Point Adjustment:** A bonus or penalty applied to the number of hit points a character receives per hit die rolled. Regardless of modifiers, a character always obtains at least 1 hp per roll. This modifier also impacts daily healing (see VOL. III, p. 261: DAMAGE, healing).

**Poison Adjustment:** A bonus or penalty applied to saving throws versus poison and radiation, though not other death saving throws.

**Trauma Survival:** The likelihood of surviving a system transformation of shocking degree, such as paralysis or petrification. It also represents the chance one has to be successfully resurrected from death.

**Test of Constitution:** The chance-in-six to sprint more than 40 yards, toil in bitter cold, swim for an hour, or perform similar tasks that require endurance and fitness. The referee may adjust tests of constitution by ±1 based on circumstance, character ability, or other factors.

**Extraordinary Feat of Constitution:** The probability of success for constitution feats of heroic stamp, such as climbing, rowing, running, or swimming for several hours. This chance might also apply to performance in spite of malnourishment, or remaining alert and awake for an extended period. *N.B.:* If constitution is a prime attribute (berserkers only), the character gains a +8% bonus.



**INTELLIGENCE (IN):** An evaluation of knowledge, linguistics, literacy, problem-solving ability, and reasoning. Intelligence also represents the capacity to understand and manipulate mechanical (and sometimes magical) devices. Intelligence is the prime attribute of magicians.

**Table 4: Intelligence**

Intelligence Score	Languages	Magician's Bonus Spells Cast per Day	Magician's Chance to Learn New Spell
3	Illiterate	N/A	N/A
4-6	Illiterate	N/A	N/A
7-8	±0	N/A	N/A
9-12	±0	—	50%
13-14	+1	One level 1	65%
15-16	+1	One level 2	75%
17	+2	One level 3	85%
18	+3	One level 4	95%

**Intelligence Table Defined:**

**Languages:** Most player characters begin play knowing how to speak, read, and write the Common tongue and, if applicable, their native or vulgate tongue.

Characters of low (3-6) intelligence are illiterate, and characters of above average (13-18) intelligence begin play with additional languages that they can speak, read, and write. For language options, see p. 106: BACKGROUND, language.

**Magician's Bonus Spells Cast per Day:** Magicians (and some subclasses) of high intelligence can cast bonus spells each day, in addition to their normal allotments. Bonus spells are subject to the magician's spell level ability. For example, a 1<sup>st</sup>-level magician of 16 intelligence can cast an extra level 1 spell per day, but he does not gain his bonus level 2 spell until he attains 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

**Magician's Chance to Learn New Spell:** When a magician (or a member of certain subclasses) gains a level of experience, he automatically acquires a new spell.

But sometimes, outside of level gains, the opportunity to learn a new spell arises (see VOL. II, p. 136: SPELLS, acquiring new spells). This percentage roll is made to determine the success of such acquisitions.

**WISDOM (WS):** An evaluation of common sense, insight, judiciousness, perception, prudence, and understanding. Wisdom also represents one's emotional, intellectual, psychological, and spiritual willpower. Wisdom is the prime attribute of clerics.

**Table 5: Wisdom**

Wisdom Score	Willpower Adjustment	Cleric's Bonus Spells Cast per Day	Cleric's Chance to Learn New Spell
3	-2	N/A	N/A
4-6	-1	N/A	N/A
7-8	±0	N/A	N/A
9-12	±0	—	50%
13-14	±0	One level 1	65%
15-16	+1	One level 2	75%
17	+1	One level 3	85%
18	+2	One level 4	95%

**Wisdom Table Defined:**

*Willpower Adjustment:* A bonus or penalty applied to saving throws associated with mind control, including *charm person, fear, hold person, illusions, possession, and suggestion*; i.e., any spell or effect that would compel the character to see or do something he otherwise would not.

*Cleric's Bonus Spells Cast per Day:* Clerics (and some subclasses) of exceptional wisdom can cast additional spells per day. The cleric does not gain bonus spells of a level he is not yet able to cast; e.g., a 4<sup>th</sup>-level cleric of 18 wisdom does not gain his bonus level 3 spell until he attains 5<sup>th</sup> level, but he can cast his bonus level 1 and 2 spells each day.

*Cleric's Chance to Learn New Spell:* When a cleric (or a member of certain subclasses) gains a level of experience, he automatically acquires three new spells. But sometimes, outside of level gains, the opportunity to learn a new spell arises (see VOL. II, p. 136: SPELLS, *acquiring new spells*). This percentage roll is made to determine the success of such acquisitions.

**CHARISMA (CH):** An evaluation of outward appearance, leadership, personality, persuasiveness, and social graces. Charisma affects how others view the character and how potentially hostile men and monsters might react to him.

**Table 6: Charisma**

Charisma Score	Reaction / Loyalty Adjustment	Maximum Number of Henchmen	Undead Turning Adjustment
3	-3	1	-1
4-6	-2	2	-1
7-8	-1	3	±0
9-12	±0	4	±0
13-14	+1	6	±0
15-16	+1	8	+1
17	+2	10	+1
18	+3	12	+1

**Charisma Table Defined:**

*Reaction / Loyalty Adjustment:* Despite the player's ability to role-play conversations or parley with otherwise neutral or unfamiliar parties, his character may exude body language and mannerisms that will help or hinder his ability to negotiate or gain favour. If the referee requires a reaction roll, the player character's reaction / loyalty adjustment is applied as a bonus or penalty (see VOL. III, p. 240: THE ENCOUNTER, *reaction*). This modifier likewise affects *loyalty checks*, when the fidelity of a *hireling* is tested (see VOL. III, p. 229: ADVENTURE, *loyalty and morale of henchmen and hirelings*). Finally, the reaction / loyalty adjustment impacts leadership in warfare (see VOL. III, p. 282: WARFARE AND SIEGE).

*Maximum Number of Henchmen:* The number of henchmen a player character can attract and maintain under his direct authority; hirelings are not included. Henchmen are classed individuals typically devoted or apprenticed to player characters of 6<sup>th</sup> level or greater (see VOL. III, p. 229: ADVENTURE, *henchmen*).

*Undead Turning Adjustment:* A modifier applied to turn undead attempts made by clerics and certain subclasses. When making a d12 roll to determine success or failure, apply the listed bonus or penalty (see VOL. III, p. 252: COMBAT ACTIONS, *magic*).

