



System Reference Document

Sample file
by

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Introduction

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The *Renaissance* system forms the rules bedrock of Cakebread & Walton's historical fantasy role-playing game, *Clockwork & Chivalry*, published by Cubicle 7 Entertainment and available from all good game stores.

What is a Role-playing Game?

Role-playing games are "Let's pretend" for grown-ups. Players take on the roles of characters in an imaginary world and play out adventures. To avoid the old children's arguments of "I shot you!", "No you didn't, I'm wearing bullet-proof armour!" there are rules, and dice are rolled to see whether (for instance) the shot hit, and whether the armour provided any protection. In overall charge of the game is the Games Master, who presents a story to the other players, adjudicates the rules, and keeps the game moving. You don't need to dress up and run

around, everything can be done around a table with a bunch of dice, some paper and a few pencils.

A role-playing game can last as little as two or three hours, but many games involve long plots that carry on from week to week like a TV series, the characters gaining experience and new skills, defeating old villains, meeting new ones and generally acting like heroes. If you've only ever played computer role-playing, you'll find this a whole new experience – you can say exactly what you want to say, attempt to do whatever you want to do, and the Games Master can tell you what happens – unrestrained by the limits of a computer game's programming. You're limited only by your imagination – and I don't know about you, but my imagination has the best special effects ever!

WHAT WILL I NEED TO PLAY?

So, what else will you need apart from this book, a bunch of friends and some imagination?

A SET OF POLYHEDRAL DICE

These are obtained from either online suppliers or your local game store. As well as the familiar six-sided dice that come with most board games, you will

need dice with four, eight, ten, twelve and twenty sides. Dice are referred to as Dx in the rules, where x is the number of sides of the dice. For example, D10 refers to a ten sided die.

The most commonly used dice are D100, not actually a hundred sided die but two D10s (usually of different colours) that are rolled together. Before the dice are thrown, it is decided which will be tens and which will be units. E.g., if you have a green D10 and a red D10, you might decide that the red one is the tens die. If you roll 7 on the red die, and 4 on the green die, you would read this as 74. If you get 00, this counts as 100, not zero.

Sometimes the rules will tell you to roll 2D6, or 1D8+4, or something similar. 2D6 means roll 2 six-sided dice and add the results of the dice together. 1D8+4 means roll 1 eight-sided die and add 4 to the result.

PAPER

You'll need paper for taking notes and drawing maps a, or other explanatory pictures and diagrams. Each player will also need a character sheet - either photocopied from the back of this book, or downloaded from www.cakebreadandwalton.com.

MINIATURES?

Some people use miniature figures (or buttons, bottle tops, small china penguins and the like) to help keep track of where characters are, particularly in combat. Some Games Masters create elaborate battle maps for their fight scenes. Other players totally ignore such game aids and everything goes on in the imaginations of the players. It's entirely up to you what suits you best!

GLOSSARY

This is a list of many of the technical terms used in the *Renaissance* rules.

Adventure: A single story in which the Adventurers have a part. Rather like a single episode of a TV series.

Adventurer: A character controlled by a player rather than the Games Master.

APs: Armour Points, the measure of the protection provided by armour. Represented by two numbers (e.g. 2/1), the first number representing protection against most weapons, the second against guns.

Attribute: Secondary attributes of your character, based on the character's Characteristics.

Campaign: A series of connected adventures involving the same Adventurers. Rather like an entire TV series.

CHA: Charisma (Characteristic), a measure of your character's attractiveness and leadership qualities.

Characteristic: A measure of your character's basic abilities: Strength, Constitution, Size, Intelligence, Power, Dexterity and Charisma.

Combat Action: An action taken in a combat round, which usually involves attacking another character.

Combat Round: A short period of about 5 seconds, during which a character in combat can perform a Combat Action, a Reaction and a Move Action.

CON: Constitution (Characteristic), a measure of your character's healthiness and ability to resist wounds, poisons, diseases and the like.

Critical Success: A roll of one tenth of a character's skill, which means that the task has been performed particularly well. A Critical Success during combat is called a Critical Hit and causes more damage than normal.

DEX: Dexterity (Characteristic), a measure of your character's agility, co-ordination and speed of action.

DM: Damage Modifier (Attribute), a die roll added to the damage caused by Close Combat weapons.

ENC: Encumbrance, an abstract measure of how difficult an item is to carry and lift.

Faction: The religious, political or social group that defines a character's beliefs and outlook on the world. Each character belongs to one Faction and may sympathize with additional Factions.

Fumble: A skill roll of 00, which means that the attempted task has been performed spectacularly badly.

Games Master: The player who comes up with ideas for adventures, runs the game, controls NPCs, adjudicates the rules, etc.

Hero Points: Points that are used to perform spectacular actions, save a character from death, and the like.

HPs: Hit Points (Attribute), the measure of how much damage a character can take before death.

INT: Intelligence (Characteristic), a measure of your character's ability to think, solve problems and learn.

Improvement Points: Points earned for taking part in adventures, which are spent to increase the skills and Characteristics of a character.

MAG: Magick (Attribute), a measure of the inherent magickal power of a practitioner of Witchcraft.

Major Wound: A wound that does significant damage on top of Hit Point loss. There are two types: Serious Wounds, which are temporary, and Grave Wounds, which are permanent and can be fatal.

Movement Action: An combat action that involves movement, such as walking, running, etc.

Movement Rate: (Attribute) The distance a character can move in a single combat round. For most characters, this is 15 metres.

MPs: Magick Points, a measure of how much magickal energy is stored in an Alchemist's Philosopher's Stone.

MWL: Major Wound Level (Attribute), a measure of how much damage a character can take before taking a Major Wound.

NPC: Non-Player Character, a character who is controlled by the Games Master rather than one of the players.

POW: Power (Characteristic), a measure of your character's strength of will.

Profession: A character's career before becoming an Adventurer, or current career if an NPC.

Reaction: An action in combat, usually reacting to another characters actions for the purposes of defence.

RPs: Righteousness Points, a measure of a character's strength of belief in his or her chosen Faction.

SIZ: Size (Characteristic), a measure of your character's height and bulk.

Skill: A focussed ability in a mental or physical discipline which can get better with practice. Common Skills are those every character possesses to some degree, Advanced Skills can only be used by those who have trained in them.

Social Class: The level of society into which a character was born and grew up.

STR: Strength (Characteristic), a measure of your character's brawn and brute force.

Sample file

Chapter 1: Character Creation

Before players can begin a game of *Renaissance*, they must each (apart from the Games Master) create a character for themselves. This should probably done as a group to make sure that a coherent adventuring party is generated, and that characters don't have irreconcilable differences that would prevent them working together. Creating a character involves a number of stages:

- **Characteristics:** Roll dice to determine the values of your character's main Characteristics – Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Size (SIZ), Intelligence (INT), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), and Charisma (CHA).
- **Attributes:** These are secondary attributes based on your Characteristics. They are Damage Modifier (DM), Hit Points (HP), Major Wound Level (MWL) and Movement Rate (Move).
- **Common Skills:** This is a list of skills that everyone can “have a go” at. They all start at a level based on your character's Characteristics, and can be raised later in the character generation process.
- **Previous Experience:** This is where your character really begins to take shape. First you must decide on your character's **Social Class**:

This will have an effect on what **Profession** he or she followed before taking to a life of adventure. Each of these choices will give your character new skills, as well as determining how much money the character has to spend on equipment before play begins. **Faction** determines your character's political/religious beliefs and how strongly he or she feels about them.

- **Free Skill Points:** You have 250 points to spend on increasing your character's existing skills and buying new skills.
- **Connections and Events:** Use the tables provided to create a background that links you to the other characters and important events which have shaped your character's past.
- **Finishing Touches:** Decide on a name, sort out your starting equipment, and give your character Hero Points.

Characteristics

These are the primary building blocks of your character. All characters and creatures have seven characteristics, which give the basic information about

the character's physical, mental and spiritual capabilities. As well as being useful indicators of how to role-play the character, they are the scores that skills are initially based upon.

The Characteristics are:

Strength (STR): Your character's brute force, Strength affects the amount of damage he deals, what weapons he can wield effectively, how much he can lift and so on.

Constitution (CON): A measure of your character's health, Constitution affects how much damage he can sustain in combat, as well as his general resistance to disease and other illnesses.

Dexterity (DEX): Your character's agility, co-ordination and speed of reaction, Dexterity aids him in many physical actions, including combat.

Size (SIZ): This is an indication of your character's mass and, like Strength and Constitution, can affect the amount of damage a character can deal and how well he can absorb damage.

Intelligence (INT): Your character's ability to think around problems, analyse information and memorise instructions.

Power (POW): Perhaps the most abstract Characteristic, Power is a measure of your character's life force and the strength of his willpower.

Charisma (CHA): This quantifies your character's attractiveness and leadership qualities.

GENERATING CHARACTERISTICS

Roll 3D6 five times, and assign the numbers to STR, CON, DEX, POW, CHA as you wish.

Roll 2D6+6 twice, and assign the numbers to INT and SIZ.

Attributes

Attributes are a set of secondary scores that define your character's potential to do and take physical damage. Attributes are determined from the character's Characteristic scores.

Damage Modifier (DM): The Damage Modifier applies whenever your character uses a melee or thrown weapon. It is calculated by adding the

character's STR and SIZ together, since bigger, stronger, characters deal out more damage than smaller, weaker characters. The Damage Modifier is calculated by consulting the following table.

STR + SIZ	Damage Modifier
1-10	-1D6
11-15	-1D4
16-25	+0
26-30	+1D4
31-45	+1D6
46-60	+2D6
61-75	+3D6
76-90	+4D6
Every additional +15	An additional +1D6

Hit Points (HP): These represent your character's general health and physical wellbeing. They determine how much damage your character can sustain before he begins taking Grave Wounds and possibly dying. Hit Points equal Size plus Constitution divided by 2, rounded up. (SIZ + CON)/2.

Major Wound Level: When your character takes this amount of damage or more in one blow, he or she suffers a Serious or Grave Wound (depending on whether current Hit Points remain above or fall below zero). Major Wound Level is equal to Total Hit Points divided by two, rounded up. HP/2.

Movement Rate: This is the distance in metres that a character can move in a five second Combat Round. All human characters have a Movement Rate of 15 metres.

Magick (MAG): Those who practice Witchcraft have an extra attribute, MAG, which begins at (INT+POW)/10 (rounded up).

Common Skills

Your character has a number of Common Skills that allow him or her to perform a variety of actions with varying degrees of expertise. Each Common Skill is set by totalling two Characteristics. These are listed on your character sheet and below. Work out your character's base values for each skill – you will be

COMMON SKILLS

Common Skill	Starting level
Athletics	DEX+STR
Close Combat	INT+STR
Culture (Own)	INT x2
Dance	DEX+CHA
Dodge	DEX x2
Drive	DEX+INT
Evaluate	INT+CHA
First Aid	DEX+INT
Gun Combat	INT+DEX
Influence	CHA x2
Insight	INT+POW
Lore (Regional)	INT x2
Perception	INT+POW
Persistence	POW x2
Ranged Combat	INT+DEX
Resilience	CON x2
Ride	DEX+POW
Sing	POW+CHA
Sleight	DEX+CHA
Stealth	DEX+INT
Unarmed Combat	STR+DEX

given the opportunity to increase these values later in the character creation process. Skills and their use are described in the Skills chapter.

Previous Experience

Previous experience determines the skills and beliefs your Adventurer has gained before the game begins. These consist of the Adventurer's Social Class, his Profession (how he made his living) and his Faction (what belief system he subscribed to). Once play begins, your Adventurer is no longer restricted by these beginnings; all skills are open for him to learn,

and if his political and/or religious beliefs change, he can move to another Faction. There are no restrictions on learning new skills within the mechanics of *Renaissance*. However, social pressures within the game world apply their own restrictions; a Peasant Vagabond is unlikely to gain a place at Oxford University to learn alchemy – or if he does, it's likely to be the focus of a whole series of adventures!

Determining previous experience is a three stage process:

- Firstly, determine what Social Class your Adventurer comes from.
- Secondly, determine your Adventurer's Profession, how he made his living.
- Finally, determine what Faction he belongs to, which will determine his religious and political beliefs.

It is worth noting that, while these Social Classes and Professions should cover most suitable Adventurers, if you want to play an Adventurer who doesn't fit the mould, it should be possible, with your Games Master's permission. For instance, if you want to play a Lord who has lost everything and fallen on hard times, you could create a Noble Vagabond, even though the rules do not permit it. They're your rules now, and you're allowed to break them!

SOCIAL CLASS

Social Class determines into what strata of society your Adventurer was born. In the *Renaissance* game society is in upheaval; the old certainties of the medieval feudal system have broken down, and a rising middle class is starting to overtake an increasingly impoverished upper class in terms of wealth. Towns are growing larger, and as the upper classes "improve" their land by throwing off many of the Peasants who have farmed it for generations, a new underclass of urban poor is growing, as dispossessed Peasants head for the towns looking for work.

Each Social Class gives the Adventurer a number of skill options; choose the skills you want from those available and add the bonuses to your existing skill

ROUNDING

Numbers in *Renaissance* are usually rounded up to the nearest whole number.

bases, determined in the previous section. The Social Class also lists which Professions are available to your Adventurer if you choose that class; Professions are described in Chapter 2. Finally, each Social Class lists Starting Wealth; roll to see how many shillings you have with which to buy equipment at the start of the game. This represents readily available cash – your character *may* have more wealth, but if so it is likely to be tied up in house, lands, a goat, etc.

PEASANT

Common Skill Bonuses: Athletics +10%, Culture (Own) +30%, Drive +10%, Evaluate +30%, First Aid +10%, Influence +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Ranged Combat +10%, Resilience +10%, Sing +10%, Unarmed Combat +10%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) +50%, Lore (any), Survival

Plus choose any three from Boating, Craft (any), Lore (any), Play Instrument, Ranged Combat (Bows)

Starting Cash: 1D6 x 10 shillings

Professions Available: Agitator, Camp Follower, Cottager, Craftsman, Cunning Man/Wise Woman, Entertainer, Farmer, Mercenary, Outlaw, Physician (Herbalist), Preacher, Rook, Sailor, Smuggler, Soldier, Spy, Vagabond, Witch/Warlock, Witch Finder, Woodsman

You grew up in the country. It is likely that your parents were tenant Farmers or Craftsmen living in a small village and working for the local Lord of the manor.

TOWNSMAN

Common Skill Bonuses: Culture (Own) +30%, Drive +10%, Evaluate +30%, First Aid +10%, Influence +30%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Resilience +10%

Plus choose one from Close Combat +10%, Gun Combat +10%, Ranged Combat +10%, Unarmed Combat +10%

Advanced Skills: Language (Native) +50%, Lore (any), Streetwise

Plus choose three from Commerce, Close Combat (Polearms), Craft (any), Gambling, Influence, Play Instrument

Starting Cash: 2D6 x 10 shillings

Professions Available: Agitator, Camp Follower, Clerk, Craftsman, Entertainer, Highwayman, Journalist, Mercenary, Outlaw, Physician (Paracelsan),

Preacher, Rook, Ruffian, Sailor, Smuggler, Soldier, Spy, Thief, Valet/Lady's Maid, Watchman, Witch/Warlock, Witch Finder

You grew up in the narrow, crowded streets of a rapidly growing town, among many others who have given up the rural life in the hope of making a living in an urban situation.

MIDDLE CLASS

Common Skill Bonuses: Culture (Own) +30%, Evaluate +30%, Influence +30%, Insight +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Persistence +10%, Ride +10%

Plus choose one from Close Combat +10%, Gun Combat +10%, Ranged Combat +10%, Unarmed Combat +10%

Advanced Skills: Art (any), Language (Native) +50%, Lore (any)

Plus choose three from Commerce, Courtesy, Craft (any), Gambling, Play Instrument, Streetwise

Starting Cash: 4D6 x 10 shillings

Professions Available: Agitator, Alchemist, Clerk, Craftsman, Entertainer, Highwayman, Journalist, Mercenary, Merchant, Physician (Galenic), Preacher, Rook, Scholar, Smuggler, Soldier, Spy, Witch/Warlock, Witch Finder

You are part of the growing class of people whose families have risen above their humble origins by dint of hard work and good fortune. With the breakdown of the old feudal order and the growth of commerce, it has become possible for people to be relatively well-off without being a member of the landed classes.

GENTRY

Common Skill Bonuses: Culture (Own) +30%, Evaluate +30%, Influence +30%, Insight +10%, Lore (Regional) +30%, Perception +10%, Persistence +10%, Ride +10%

Plus choose one from Close Combat +10%, Gun Combat +10%, Ranged Combat +10%, Unarmed Combat +10%

Advanced Skills: Art (any), Language (Native) +50%, Lore (any)

Plus choose three from Commerce, Courtesy, Craft (any), Oratory, Seduction

Starting Cash: 4D6 x 20 shillings

Professions Available: Alchemist, Cavalier, Clerk, Courtier, Farmer, Highwayman, Mercenary, Physician (Galenic), Preacher, Rook, Sailor, Scholar, Soldier, Spy, Witch/Warlock, Witch Finder