

Fall





Hell

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Names and traits from Cairn by Yochai Gal.

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Introduction

The Fell is a seemingly endless highland expanse covered in fallow fields, twisted woods, and putrid moors, with a dormant volcano rising from its heart. Cairns and barrows dot the frigid landscape—memorials to heroes long dead and a time forgotten. Seldom trodden paths snake and shift through the Fell, connecting silent villages and desolate towns, and leading down into the lands beyond—into the misty expanse and towards the smoking mountains on the distant horizon.

You're no hero. At best, you're a knave, wretch, or scoundrel who, along with a few untrustworthy companions, seeks fortune in this corrupted land filled with danger.

Chances are high that none of you will survive the winter.

Fell is a tabletop roleplaying game in the new old-school tradition for two or more players, inspired by *Into the Odd* by Chris McDowall, *Knave* by Ben Milton, *Cairn* by Yochai Gal, and *Trophy* by Jesse Ross, among many other games.

One player is the referee, playing the world and its inhabitants. They adjudicate the rules, make rulings, and describe the situations the protagonist characters find themselves in.

The rest are protagonist characters (PCs), fortune seekers in a corrupted land filled with danger. They ask questions and interact with the environment.

The referee tells the PCs what happens and when to roll dice.

To play, you will need these rules, at least one set of polyhedral dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), paper, and pencils.

Principles of Play

Rulings over rules

Fiction over mechanics

Information, choice, consequence

Danger is obvious

Fighting is deadly

Keep it weird



Creating a Character

Roll for your **name**.

Roll for a **background** (on opposite page) and gain the associated **skill** and **equipment**.

You have four **attributes**:

STR: constitution, grit, strength

DEX: aim, dexterity, speed

INT: cunning, intellect, smarts

WIL: leadership, magical potential, willpower

Roll d8 for each **attribute** in order to assign dice.

1-2: d4

3-6: d6

7-8: d8

Roll DEX to determine your starting **hit protection (HP)**, a representation of your ability to avoid critical harm.

If your WIL is d8, roll for one **spell**. (*Use the spells from Cairn or your other favorite level-less spell list.*)

In addition to the equipment from your background, you start with a **pack** containing **one days' rations**, **three torches** (1 hour each), and **3d6 coin (C)**.

Roll $2d20+10$ for your **age**.

Roll for your **drive** and your **traits**.

Instead of rolling, you may start with any name, any background or a custom background (including a name, a skill, and equipment worth 40 C), d6 in each attribute (optionally lowering one or more one step to raise others the same number of steps), 3 HP (or 4 if DEX is d8, 5 if d10, or 6 if d12), a spell of your choice if your WIL is d8 or higher, additional equipment worth 20 C, any age, a chosen alignment, and any drive and traits.

1. **Alchemist:** *lore*, firebomb (d6 blast), bottle, fire oil
2. **Bard:** *performance*, dagger (d4), musical instrument, face paint
3. **Blacksmith:** *repair*, hammer (d4), brigandine (1 armor), bellows
4. **Burglar:** *skulduggery*, crowbar (d4), lockpicks, rope (50ft)
5. **Butcher:** *speechcraft*, cleaver (d4), salt, meat hook
6. **Carpenter:** *skulduggery*, chisel (d4), nails, hand drill
7. **Farmer:** *athletics*, pitchfork (d4, bulky), cookpot, pouch of seed
8. **Gambler:** *discernment*, firebomb (d6 blast), cards, dice
9. **Gravedigger:** *lore*, shovel (d4, bulky), lantern, cross necklace
10. **Herbalist:** *survival*, sheers (d4), mortar & pestle, herbs
11. **Hunter:** *survival*, sling (d4), knife (d4), rodent trap
12. **Magician:** *skulduggery*, staff (d4, bulky), hourglass, goat
13. **Mercenary:** *athletics*, club (d4, bulky), shield (+1 armor), lucky charm
14. **Merchant:** *speechcraft*, ornamental sword (d6), ledger, cart
15. **Miner:** *survival*, pick (d4, bulky), lantern, canary
16. **Noble:** *speechcraft*, family sword (d6), book of genealogy, mirror
17. **Outlaw:** *survival*, shortsword (d6), shortbow (d4), arrows
18. **Priest:** *performance*, censer (d4), holy water, incense
19. **Servant:** *discernment*, stolen dagger (d4), soap, incriminating letters
20. **Scholar:** *lore*, letter opener (d4), book, quill & ink



Playing the Game

Tasks

A **task** is any action you attempt to do. If you have plenty of time, appropriate skills, and there is no threat of danger, you simply say what you do and find out what happens.

Tests

Whenever you attempt a task where the outcome is uncertain and potentially dangerous, learn what could go wrong, then roll a **test**.

Roll your relevant attribute die. Compare the result to the **difficulty number** (DN), which is usually 4.

If you meet or exceed the difficulty number, the test passes. Otherwise, the test fails. You might still succeed at the task, but there will be trouble.

Help

When someone else attempts a task and it makes sense for you to do so, you may **help** if you have a relevant skill, granting them advantage on their test. If they fail, trouble is coming for you as well.

Contests

When you attempt a task and someone else opposes you, it's a **contest**. You each roll as normal. Whoever has the highest result wins. In a tie, a die higher up the ladder beats a lower one.

Advantage and Disadvantage

Rolls can have **advantage (ADV)** or **disadvantage (DIS)**. With advantage, roll an additional die and keep the higher result. With disadvantage, roll an additional die and keep the lower result.

Impaired and Enhanced

Rolls can be **impaired (IMP)** or **enhanced (ENH)**. Impaired rolls use lower dice. Enhanced rolls use higher dice.

Dice Ladder

When a rule or the referee instructs you to raise or lower your dice a number of steps higher or lower, move up or down the rungs of the **dice ladder**:

d4 → d6 → d8 → d10 → d12

If a die would be lowered below a d4, you cannot roll it. If it would be raised above a d12, gain advantage.

Skills

When you roll a test using your **skills**, your roll is enhanced by one step for each applicable skill.

Whenever you roll a test to attempt a task that someone with your background would reasonably be good at, you may add it as an additional skill.

You can know a number of skills equal to your INT.

Spells

When you spend several uninterrupted minutes in concentration, you may simply cast a **spell**. But to cast a spell in a hurry or when under threat, you must roll a WIL test.

If you fail the test, choose one:

The spell has an unintended side effect

The spell is lessened

Your WIL is impaired until dawn

You cannot cast the spell again until dawn

If a spell is aimed at an unwilling target, they may turn your test into a contest.

You can know a number of spells equal to your WIL.

Item Slots

You have twice your STR in **item slots**. When carrying more, you have disadvantage and your HP is zero. You can never carry more than double your slots. Smaller items can be bundled together. Every hundred coins-worth of treasure and coins fills one slot. **Bulky** items fill two slots and generally require two hands to carry or wield.

Detachments

Groups of similar NPCs acting together are treated as a single **detachment**. Their attacks have advantage against individuals and have blast. Attacks against them made by individuals have disadvantage unless they have blast.

Luck

When the way in which the world reacts to you is uncertain, the referee will roll a **luck die**—usually a d6. Higher is better. Lower is worse.

A luck die may be rolled...

When you stop to rest in a dangerous location

If you make a loud noise in a dungeon

At the start of each exploration and travel round

To see if a trap is triggered

Turns and Rounds

Time is tracked in **turns** and **rounds**. During a round, everyone takes a turn.

During an **encounter**, a round lasts long enough for everyone to perform a task and traverse a room—about ten seconds. PCs act first and as a group, taking their turns together. When surprised, roll a DEX contest to determine if you can act during the first round.

While **exploring**, a round lasts long enough for everyone to perform a few tasks and investigate an area, to cast a spell, or to rest—about ten minutes.

When **traveling**, a round lasts long enough to traverse three miles of easy terrain at a steady pace—about one hour.

Hirelings

Hirelings are non-protagonist characters (NPCs) you can employ to carry your burdens and assist you in your endeavors. Hirelings are created just like PCs. When performing a relevant task, your hirelings may help just as another PC would.

Hirelings take an equal share of any plunder, minus their upfront daily fee. If this fee is not paid in advance, you must roll a WIL contest whenever asking a hireling to do something dangerous.

You can employ a number of hirelings equal to your WIL.

Reactions

When you encounter an NPC whose disposition towards you is not obvious, roll your WIL on the table below to determine their **reaction**.

1-3:	Hostile
4-5:	Wary
6-7:	Indifferent
8-9:	Friendly
10-12:	Helpful

Leverage

If you have **leverage** and apply it, you may improve an NPC's reaction by winning a WIL contest.

Attacks

To **attack**, roll your weapon's damage die and subtract your opponents armor. Deal what's left as harm—first to HP, then to STR.

When more than one person attacks a single target or when attacking with multiple weapons, roll all dice and use the highest single die result. Then add one harm for each attacker beyond the first.

Armor

Armor (A) subtracts from harm to HP and can never be increased beyond 3.

Blast

Blast causes harm to multiple targets in close proximity, rolling separately for each. If unsure how many targets are affected, roll the weapon's die.

Morale

When you defeat the first enemy or an enemy leader, reduce their force by half, or reduce a lone enemies HP by half, roll a WIL contest. If you win, roll your WIL on the **morale** table to see what the surviving enemies do.

- 1-3: Hesitate
- 4-5: Retreat
- 6-7: Flee
- 8-9: Surrender Conditionally
- 10-12: Surrender Unconditionally

Deprivation and Fatigue

When you are **deprived** of a crucial need (such as food, water, warmth, or sleep), you cannot regain HP or restore attributes.

When you are deprived for longer than a day, you become **fatigued** and must make all tests with disadvantage. Each additional day you are deprived makes the disadvantage worse.

You may remove one level of fatigue for each night of comfortable rest on a full stomach.

Harm and Death

Harm subtracts from HP. Once out of HP, harm becomes **critical harm** and may lower a relevant attribute.

When you take critical harm, roll a test with the affected attribute. If you fail, lower the attribute one step—you're taken out of the fight and will die without treatment.

When an attribute would be lowered below d4 from critical harm, you are **dead**.

Healing and Rest

Healing recovers HP and restores attributes.

Whenever you take several minutes to **rest**, recover all your HP. After a full week of rest and appropriate care, raise a lowered attribute by one step.

Advancement

When you return to relative safety bearing significant plunder gained through deadly peril, it may be possible to **advance**. If your hoard is worth...

1,000 C, gain HP and raise one attribute (novice)

3,000 C, gain HP (professional)

6,000 C, raise one attribute (expert)

10,000 C, gain HP (veteran)

15,000 C, raise one attribute (master)

21,000 C, gain HP and raise one attribute; fulfill your drive and retire to safety—or keep seeking fortune at your own peril (legend)



Equipment

Tools (1 C)	Air bladder, animal trap, bellows, crowbar, flint & steel, glue, grappling hook, lantern & oil (4 hours), lockpicks, manacles, rope (25 feet), sack, saw, shovel, spikes, torch (1 hour), etc.
Luxuries (10 C)	Book, face paint, fire oil, glass bottle, holy water, hourglass, incense, jewelry, mirror, musical instrument, quill & ink, salt, spyglass, etc.
Rations (1 C/day)	Jerky, dried fruit, hardtack, nuts, etc.
Animals	Goat (15 C), horse (75 C), mule (30 C)
Vehicles	Carriage (350 C), cart (30 C), rowboat (100 C), wagon (200 C)
Services	Good meal (1 C), pint of ale (1 C), armor repair (10 C/armor), silvered weapon (20 C), warm bed (5 C/week)
Hirelings (per day)	Untrained (5 C), novice (15 C), professional (30 C), expert (60 C), veteran (120 C), master (240 C)

Crude Weapons (1 C, d4, bulky)	Bow, club, staff, pitchfork, etc.
Hand Weapons (5 C, d4)	Dagger, sling, hand axe, etc.
Simple Weapons (10 C, d6)	Javelin, lance, mace, shortsword, shortbow, etc.
Battle Weapons (20 C, d8, bulky)	Battle axe, crossbow, flail, longsword, longbow, warhammer, etc.
Pure Iron Weapons	Cost double, break if a 1 is rolled on their steel die.
Crude Armor (20 C, 1 armor, bulky)	Rough breastplate, brigandine, ceremonial, etc.
Great Armor (40 C, 2 armor, bulky)	Mail, plate, scale, etc.
Shield (10 C, +1 armor, bulky)	Heater, kite, targe, etc.

Tables

Names

Given Name (d20)

1. Agune
2. Arwel
3. Breagan
4. Boroth
5. Bronwyn
6. Breagle
7. Cannora
8. Canhoreal
9. Drelil
10. Emrys
11. Esme
12. Gringle
13. Gruwid
14. Henaine
15. Lisabeth
16. Mannog
17. Morgwen
18. Orthax
19. Sybil
20. Wenlan

Family Name (d20)

1. Abernathy
2. Addercap
3. Burl
4. Candlewick
5. Cormick
6. Crumwaller
7. Dunswallow
8. Getri
9. Glass
10. Harkness
11. Harper
12. Loomer
13. Malksmilk
14. Smythe
15. Sunderman
16. Swinney
17. Thatcher
18. Tolmen
19. Weaver
20. Wolder

Drives (d20)

I seek wealth...

1. to gain power and influence over others
2. to acquire prestige and status among my peers
3. to secure the safety and well-being of my family and loved ones
4. to gain access to luxuries and resources not available in my current circumstances
5. to fund a personal quests for knowledge, adventure, or revenge
6. to acquire magical items or abilities
7. to establish a stronghold to protect against enemies
8. to become independent from oppressive rulers or institutions
9. to gain access to forbidden or ancient knowledge
10. to create a legacy for future generations
11. to fund a rebellion or resistance against an unjust regime
12. to seek redemption for past wrongs
13. to become a leader or hero
14. to gain control over valuable resources such as gold mines, trade routes, or fertile land
15. to pay off debts or obligations
16. to gain leverage in political or social negotiations
17. to gain respect or admiration from others
18. to provide for future generations
19. to buy freedom (for myself or others)
20. to be able to help and support others in need

Traits

Physique (d10)

1. Athletic
2. Brawny
3. Flabby
4. Lanky
5. Rugged
6. Scrawny
7. Short
8. Statuesque
9. Stout
10. Towering

Skin (d10)

1. Birthmark
2. Dark
3. Elongated
4. Pockmarked
5. Rosy
6. Round
7. Soft
8. Tanned
9. Tattooed
10. Weathered

Hair (d10)

1. Bald
2. Braided
3. Curly
4. Filthy
5. Frizzy
6. Long
7. Luxurious
8. Oily
9. Wavy
10. Wispy

Face (d10)

1. Bony
2. Broken
3. Chiseled
4. Elongated
5. Pale
6. Perfect
7. Rat-like
8. Sharp
9. Square
10. Sunken

Speech (d10)

1. Blunt
2. Booming
3. Cryptic
4. Droning
5. Formal
6. Gravelly
7. Precise
8. Squeaky
9. Stuttering
10. Whispery

Clothing (d10)

1. Antique
2. Bloody
3. Elegant
4. Filthy
5. Foreign
6. Frayed
7. Frumpy
8. Livery
9. Rancid
10. Soiled

Virtue (d10)

1. Ambitious
2. Cautious
3. Courageous
4. Disciplined
5. Gregarious
6. Honorable
7. Humble
8. Merciful
9. Serene
10. Tolerant

Vice (d10)

1. Aggressive
2. Bitter
3. Craven
4. Deceitful
5. Greedy
6. Lazy
7. Nervous
8. Rude
9. Vain
10. Vengeful

Reputation (d10)

1. Ambitious
2. Boor
3. Dangerous
4. Entertainer
5. Honest
6. Loafer
7. Oddball
8. Repulsive
9. Respected
10. Wise

Misfortune (d10)

1. Abandoned
2. Addicted
3. Blackmailed
4. Condemned
5. Curse
6. Defrauded
7. Demoted
8. Discredited
9. Disowned
10. Exiled





