

STRONGHOLD BASICS



Your stronghold may be a castle, a tower, a temple, a mansion, a farm, a thieves guild – anything you like!

Why have a stronghold?

You character works hard for his money – plundering tombs,

killing things and taking their stuff, accomplishing dangerous feats of derring-do. So why would he spend his money on a building rather than on a shiny new suit of armor or a magical sword?

A stronghold gives you benefits which are designed to be equal to or superior to the equivalent expenditure in arms and equipment. These benefits grant you resources, bonuses, powers, and abilities which directly affect you, and which make your tomb-raiding easier.

Your Basic Stronghold

The first thing you need to do when designing your stronghold is to work out your budget and draw a map, paying for each square on the map. Each 5' square of stone costs 100gp, each 5' square of wood costs 25gp, and so on. The various materials are listed below. The more expensive materials (metals) are generally reserved for very small high security parts of the stronghold – perhaps a steel cell for containing dangerous creatures.

Grounds/Outdoors	5
Water (moat, lake) or Pit	10*
Wood	25
Stone	100
Steel/Iron	500
Admantine	5000
Very Unusual (lava, etc.)	1,000*

*Per 25' depth

Using your budget, map out your stronghold. It can be any shape, as long as you can pay for each square. This initial stronghold will have no contents – no furniture, traps, altars, or anything else. Wooden doors are free; otherwise doors cost as follows:

Wooden Door	Free
Stone Door	50
Steel/Iron Door	250
Admantine Door	500

Doors come with basic locks. Superior locks can be purchased along with other features, below.

Now you have a stronghold. It is mapped clearly, and you have spent gold on its construction. You can alter this at any time – adding new areas is as simple as simply spending the required money. Removing areas can be done at a cost of half the price of adding them – so if you wished to remove 4 squares of stone, it would cost 200gp. You would then be free to build in the cleared area.

Why use different materials?

Your enemies are able to attack individual squares in your stronghold, and each material has different resistances, vulnerabilities and hit points (for example. Wood is vulnerable to fire). See the chart at the end of this article.

Furnishings & Staff

Features include furnishings, security elements (traps, enchantments, etc.), and so on. Furnishings are easy to do – you simply decide how much you wish to spend from the following chart (the cost is per square). The Diplomacy bonus applies to your Diplomacy checks when made in a room or area which has all its squares furnished accordingly (i.e. you can't just create a single Decadent square to stand in when talking to visitors).

Frugal/Bare	0gp	1 staff per 1,000 squares
Average	5gp	1 staff per 500 squares, Diplomacy +1
Comfortable	25gp	1 staff per 100 squares, Diplomacy +2
Luxurious	100gp	1 staff per 25 squares, Diplomacy +3
Decadant	500gp	1 staff per 10 squares, Diplomacy +4

This decorates your stronghold accordingly. You cannot proceed to simply sell off individual items – it's all part of a general cost, but if in desperate need of money you can downgrade a square (or squares) and recover half the money you spent. For example, if you decided to downgrade your luxurious 10x10 square ballroom, you could recover 1250gp. It would then be frugal – pretty much empty.

Staff come with the territory. Simply count up the squares of each type, and the staff is included. If you add more areas, or downgrade areas, your staff levels increase or decrease accordingly. Staff includes all household staff and workers.

Specific Features

Now you can purchase specific features. These aren't furnishings – you already have your beds, tables, lanterns, doors, altars, and so on. These are special items. Mark them on your map.

Trap	Cost of magic item of that level
Elite Trap	2 x Cost of magic item of that level
Solo Trap	5 x Cost of magic item of that level

You can also buy the specific rooms and features – moats, prisons, chapels, labs, libraries, superior locks, arrow slits, etc. Rooms and structures can grant you bonuses, resources, or even powers.

Many structures can be “upgraded” to increase their effectiveness; this process often increases their size. As noted in the room descriptions below, a structure is upgraded by adding an adjacent area of the same type – for example, a basic library is a 3x3 area, and can be upgraded by adding additional 3x3 areas. Typically, the cost of each additional area increases – so the first section may cost the same as a Level 5 magic item (Heroic), the second the same cost as a Level 15 magic item (Paragon), the third the same as a Level 25 magic item (Epic) and so on.

Also see *Adventurer's Vault* 2 pages 79-83 for 34 Wondrous Lair items which can be purchased, such as a Diplomat's Table, Magic Drawbridge, or Teleportation Disk.

Storeroom

3x3

Level 1	360gp	Level 11	9,000gp	Level 21	225,000gp
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The storeroom is arguably the most important part of your stronghold. It is this room which stores raw materials, food, and basic equipment.

Usually, unwanted magic items are traded in for one-fifth of their market value. However, if you have a storeroom, you can trade directly with local merchants and craftsmen and get better prices in exchange for building materials. As long as you spend the money on your stronghold, you can exchange goods for 40% instead of 20% of their market value,

A paragon tier upgrade allows you to exchange good for 60% of their market value, and an epic tier upgrade increases the rate to 80%. Each upgrade requires 9 squares of additional space.

In addition, if you possess a storeroom, you are assumed to be superbly equipped in the field. You are always assumed to be carrying whichever item of equipment is needed from the following list: backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, rations, hempen rope, sunrods, waterskin, candle, chain, climber's kit, everburning torch, flask, journeybread, lantern, silk rope, tent, thieves' tools, torch.

Library

3x3

Level 3 680gp **Level 13** 17,000gp **Level 23** 425,000gp

A library consists of one or more “sections”. Each section contains books and references on a single subject – that subject can be any skill (for example, a section on Arcana; or a thieves guild might have a section on Thievery).

Each section is a 3x3 square area. A heroic tier section grants a +1 bonus to skill checks made in the library; an added paragon tier section increases that to +3, and an added epic tier section increases it to +5.

For any given subject (skill), the first section costs the same as a Level 3 magic item, the second the same as a Level 13 magic item, the third the same as a Level 23 magic item. This is because increasingly rare and specialized books are needed to expand the knowledge contained in the library.

Monster's Weakness

Stronghold Utility 3

Pulling a well-used tome from your backpack, you thumb through its pages and identify the monster's achilles heel.

Daily**Minor Action**

Close Burst 10

Target: One creature

Effect: One of the creature's known resistances is reduced by 5 points.

Special: As a Level 13 power, this reduces the resistance by 10 points; as a Level 23 power, it reduces the resistance by 15 points.

Temple

5x4

Level 5 1,000gp **Level 15** 25,000gp **Level 25** 625,000gp

A temple grants a bonus to Religion and Healing checks. The larger the temple, the larger the bonus. In addition, the presence of a temple means that any fallen (dead) soldier can make a saving throw; if the soldier makes the saving throw, he can return to duty after an extended rest. If he fails the saving throw, he dies as normal.

A basic heroic tier temple is a 5x4 area; this grants a +1 bonus to Religion and Healing checks made within the temple. For another 20 squares of temple, the temple is upgraded to paragon tier (with a +3 bonus to Religion and Healing checks) and a further 20 squares makes it epic tier (with a +5 bonus).

The heroic section of 5x3 squares costs the same as a Level 5 magic item, the paragon the same as a Level 15 magic item, and the epic the same as a Level 25 magic item.

Potion Brewer

Stronghold Utility 5

Your temple ensures that you always have a spare healing potion in your backpack.

Daily**Free Action**

Personal

Effect: You pull a potion of healing from your backpack.

Special: As a Level 15 power, the potion is a potion of vitality; as a Level 25 power, it is a potion of recovery.

Laboratory

4x4

Level 6 1,800gp **Level 16** 45,000gp **Level 26** 1,125,000gp**Requirement:** Arcane power source

A laboratory contains magical and alchemical equipment, ideally suited to research and experimentation. It grants a +1 bonus to Arcana checks, and reduces the cost of rituals cast within it by 25%.

A basic laboratory is a 4x4 area and costs the same as a Level 6 magical item. For every additional 16 squares (which subsequently cost the same as a Level 16, and Level 26, the Arcana bonus increases to +3 and +5 respectively.

Prepared Ritual

Stronghold Utility 6

You quickly complete the finishing section of a ritual you prepared earlier in your laboratory.

Daily**Standard Action**

Personal

Effect: You may use a Heroic Tier Ritual to which you have access as a standard action.

Special: As a Level 16 power, you may use a Paragon Tier Ritual; as a Level 26 power, you may use an Epic Tier Ritual.

Sacred Grove

5x5

Level 5 1,000gp **Level 15** 25,000gp **Level 25** 625,000gp**Requirement:** Primal power source

A sacred grove is an example of a structure designed for a specific class or race – in this case the druid. While this article

deals with many of the “basics”, you’ll see many more such structures in *Strongholds II*, which will include Dwarven Forges, Elven Archery Ranges, Halfling Taprooms, Rogues' Game Rooms, Monk Dojos, and more.

The sacred grove must be an outdoor area of at least 5x5 squares. A heroic tier section grants a +1 bonus to Nature and Religion checks made in the grove; an added paragon tier section increases that to +3, and an added epic tier section increases it to +5.

Training Grounds

10x10

Level 5 1,000gp **Level 15** 25,000gp **Level 25** 625,000gp

Training grounds contain a drill square, combat dummies, racks of wooden training weapons, and other equipment designed to improve the combat abilities of soldiers and warriors.

Training grounds take up 10x10 squares. They can be placed inside a building, but are more typically located outside. Training grounds cost the same as Level 5 magic item. They can be upgraded to Paragon Tier grounds (an additional 100 squares) with more advanced equipment for the cost of a Level 15 magic item, and to Epic Tier (another 100 squares) for the cost of a level 25 magic item.

Training grounds are important if you wish to recruit soldiers or guards. Without a training ground, you can only recruit minions; a heroic tier training ground allows you to recruit standard creatures, a paragon tier ground gives you access to elite creatures, and an epic ground enables you to hire solo creatures.

Regular Practice Stronghold Utility 5

Regular training in combat techniques at your stronghold holds you in good stead out in the field.

Daily

Free Action Personal

Effect: You are able to spend a second action point in this encounter.

Other Features

These structures do not grant powers or abilities, but affect your stronghold in other ways.

Dungeons & Strongrooms Any Size

You might need somewhere to lock away your prisoners or valuables.

A dungeon doesn't have to be underground; it can be any type of secure room or row of cells. The capacity of your dungeon uses the same rules as your barracks (2 squares per medium creature, 1 square for small or smaller, or 4 squares for large creatures).

A strongroom has no size requirements.

You don't *need* a dungeon or strongroom – any designated area in your stronghold with suitable locks will suffice. But if you want extra security, you can have an area purpose-built. Each square costs the same as a Level 1 magical item (in addition to the basic material cost of the area), and the DC to escape or to break in is equal to the locks DC of your stronghold (see below) plus 5. You are advised to station guards outside. The area's walls, whatever

material they are, are automatically considered *reinforced* (see Material Properties at the end of this article).

Superior Locks

Doors come with basic locks for free (DC 15). You can upgrade your locks with a single expenditure. This upgrade affects *all* locks in your stronghold. Simply select the level of the lock you wish to upgrade to (the free ones are effectively “Level 0”, so a Level 1 lock is an upgrade) and pay the value of a magic item of that level. The level is added to the base DC of 15. So, if you buy Level 5 locks for 1,000gp, the DC of the locks in your stronghold is 20.

Moats & Gates

A moat is constructed simply by purchasing the appropriate squares of water. If you build a moat, it comes with a free drawbridge. You can buy nasty critters from the MM to put in it.

Walls need gates. Again, a wooden gate is free, and can be up to two squares wide. You can choose to purchase a superior gate. Simply purchase **four doors** of the material you wish (remember, wood is free, so you don't need to purchase a wood gate), and this will form your main gate. Your main gate is assumed to be a bit better than the other doors in your stronghold, and gets a free +3 bonus to its lock's DC.

Your main gate is a great place to put a trap.

Maintenance

Nobody wants to play *Dungeons & Accountants*, and we're certainly not going to ask you to here. But maintaining a castle isn't free – staff have to be paid, walls maintained, and so on. However, most strongholds have some manner of income generation, whether it's a thieves' guild taking it's annual dues, or a farm selling at market. You should specify one method of revenue generation, which is assumed to match maintenance expenditure. Examples include:

- Farming
- Trading
- Scribing
- Crafting
- Illegal Activities
- Entertainment
- Gambling
- Lodging

Your stronghold will be known for the revenue generating activity you choose, so choose wisely. However, you are not required to track money or micromanage a business; you have staff for that.

The Wacky Stuff

This is where you apply large multipliers to your stronghold cost in order to make it do cool things. You can have it completely

underwater, or you can have it flying in the air.

You can also use Rituals on your stronghold to make it more secure. The following Rituals may be useful: *Arcane Lock*, *Eye of Alarm*, *Eye of Warning*, *Forbiddance*, *Magic Circle*.

Underwater/Island	x5
Underground/Mountaintop	x2
Floating in the Air	x10
Pocket Dimension	x100

Defence

So you have staff, but now you want guards, eh? Archers on the walls, patrols in the grounds, and so on? That's gonna cost you!

You can choose guards you want from the *Monster Manual*. There's just a one-off payment; your general income is assumed to handle their wages. In game terms, you just need to worry about “buying” each soldier once. If they die, you need to buy new ones. A guard costs the same as a magic item of that level.

Place your guards on your map. This is where they'll typically be stationed should an issue arise. 50% of your guards will be active at one time; the other 50% should be placed in barracks, quarters, or the like.

Make sure you review the “Training Ground” structure before hiring soldiers. This structure is required to recruit anything other than minions.

- Minions are one-fifth cost
- Non-natural (aberrant, shadow, magical, etc.) are double cost
- Elite are double cost
- Solo are five times the normal cost.

Some common examples might include: Human Guard (Level 3, 680gp, Human Mage (Level 4, 840gp), Dragonborn Soldier (Level 5, 1000 gp), Elf Archer (Level 2, Fey, 1040gp), Halfling Slinger (Level 1, 360gp),

Soldiers must be housed, typically in a barracks or similar. A soldier requires two squares per size category, to a minimum of 1 square – so a medium sized soldier such as a human requires two squares, a large soldier requires 4 squares, and small (or smaller) soldiers require only 1 square. You must designate enough space in your stronghold to serve as housing for your soldiers.

Defensive Structures

Walls and towers give bonuses to your soldiers. Soldiers on walls gain cover, and soldiers in towers gain cover plus a bonus to their Perception checks. This bonus is +2 for a two-storey tower, and an additional +1 for each storey thereafter to a maximum bonus of +5. You can build the walls and towers from whatever material you choose.

Ballistae and Catapults

A ballista or catapult requires a 2x2 area on a wall or tower. It comes with a crew. Some DMs may also allow the use of cannons.

Ballistae & Catapults				
Ballista	500gp	Range 5/10	+15 vs. AC	3d10 damage
Catapult	500gp	Range 10/20	+13 vs. AC	5d10 damage
+1 Flameshot Ballista	Level 10; 5,000 gp	Range 5/10	+16 vs. AC	3d10 + 5 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends)
+2 Thundershot Ballista	Level 15; 25,000 gp	Range 5/10	+17 vs. AC	3d10 + 10 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends)
+1 Shrapnel Catapult	Level 10; 5,000 gp	Range 10/20	+14 vs. AC	5d10 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends)
+2 Splintershot Catapult	Level 15; 25,000 gp	Range 10/20	+15 vs. AC	5d10 + 10 damage. Miss: half damage
Cannon	2000gp	Range 10/20	+16 vs. AC	6d10 damage; Brutal
+1 Thundering Cannon	Level 10; 5,000 gp	Range 10/20	+17 vs. AC	6d10 damage and ongoing 5 Thunder damage (save ends); Brutal
+2 Demolisher Cannon	Level 15; 25,000 gp	Range 10/20	+18 vs. AC	6d10 damage; ignores resistances of structures

Master Tables

These tables are used frequently during the construction process.

This table tells you the cost of levelled items – from soldiers to traps to locks.

Cost of trap, item, or creature by level

1	360gp	16	45,000gp
2	520gp	17	65,000gp
3	680gp	18	85,000gp
4	840gp	19	105,000gp
5	1,000gp	20	125,000gp
6	1,800gp	21	225,000gp
7	2,600gp	22	325,000gp
8	3,400gp	23	425,000gp
9	4,200gp	24	525,000gp
10	5,000gp	25	625,000gp
11	9,000gp	26	1,125,000gp
12	13,000gp	27	1,625,000gp
13	17,000gp	28	2,125,000gp
14	21,000gp	29	2,625,000gp
15	25,000gp	30	3,125,000gp

Material Properties

Your enemies can attack your stronghold. Each square has hit points, resistances and vulnerabilities – just like a creature. Once the square has been reduced to zero hit points, it is destroyed.

A door or gate is treated in the same way as a single square of the material in question.

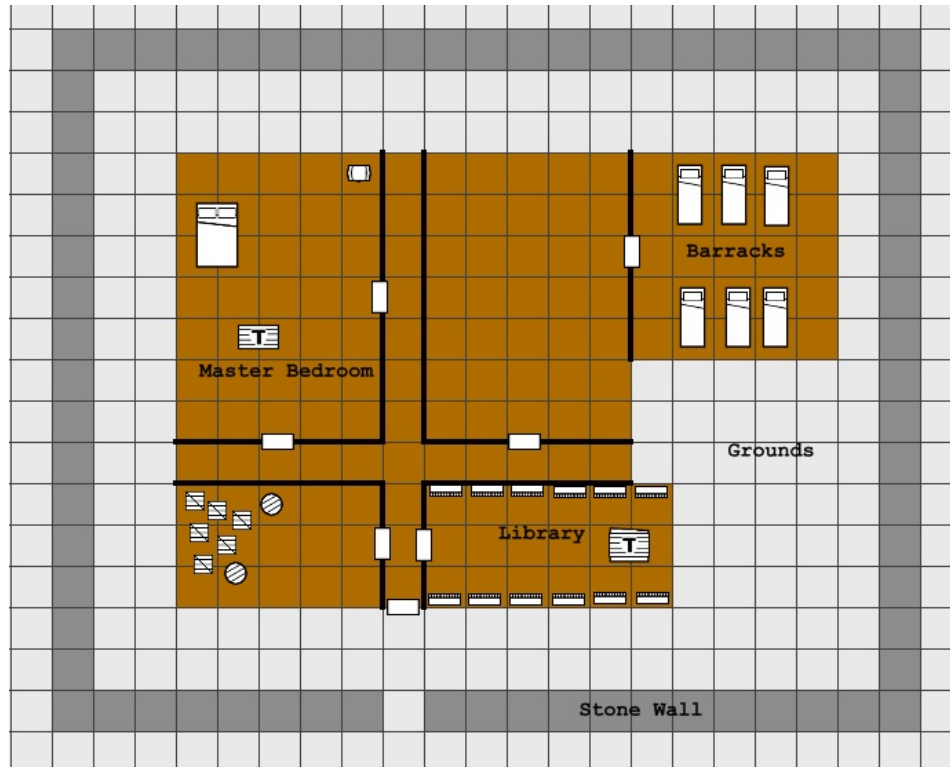
Reinforced

Spend the same money again on the same square to reinforce it. This adds 50% more hit points, and increases the resistance by 2 points. You can only do this once per square. This is best suited to dungeons, strongrooms, and defensive walls.

Material Properties Per Square

Wood	50hp	-	Vulnerable 5 Fire
Stone	250hp	Resist 5 All	-
Steel/Iron	500hp	Resist 10 All	-
Adamantine	1,000hp	Resist 20 All	-

Sample Stronghold: Wilverley Hall



Archibald the Retired, an aging adventurer, has decided to build for himself a safe place to live out his remaining years. He has always dreamed of building Wilverley Hall, named after his mother.

Wilverley Hall is a fairly simple stronghold. It is a one-story wooden building surrounded by a stone wall. With limited funds,

the whole stronghold is frugally decorated – Archibald was never a very successful adventurer.

The building contains two library sections and barracks which can accommodate 10 medium sized soldiers.

The cost of the building itself is shown in the table below: 11,580gp. Not particularly expensive as strongholds go, but then it is a frugal wooden building with a stone wall.

Squares	Number	Cost
Stone	72	7200
Wood	149	3725
Grounds	131	655

The library contains two sections, one on Nature and one on Dungeoneering. Because each subject only has one section, the library only costs the same as two Level 1 magic items – 360gp each or 720gp total. Nature or Dungeoneering checks made in this library get a +1 bonus.

Finally, Archibald hires 10 human guards (Level 3) at 680gp each.

Total Cost

The total cost to build Wilverley Hall is 19,100gp. It is currently frugally decorated, and not an inviting place for visitors.

Future Plans

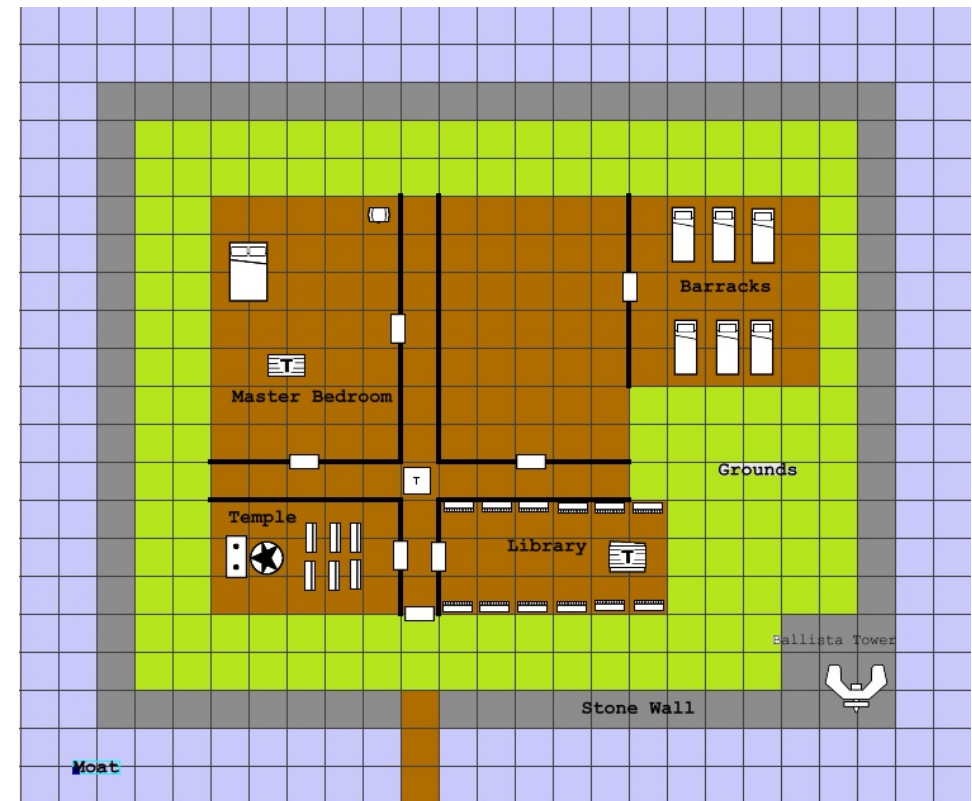
Archibald wishes to upgrade the wooden building itself to Average quality furnishings, and wants to impress visitors with

Comfortable grounds, as soon as he has the money.

Upgrading the building to Average furnishings will cost him 5gp per square, or 745gp. Planting his gardens and placing his statues to make the grounds Comfortable will cost him 25gp per square, or 3275gp.

Before he does that, though, he plans to spend 840gp on a Pendulum Scythes trap in the main hallway (DMG pg. 88) and a very basic temple where he can pray for his deceased mother (360gp). He also plans to build a two-story tower (8 squares total, or 800gp) and mount a ballista (500gp) on it. Finally, his dream stronghold includes a 10' wide moat. This will cost him 1680gp. One day he hopes to purchase a shark to keep in it, but not yet.

When he is finished, he will have spent another 8,200gp, and will have a stronghold to be proud of – it will look like this:



Credits

Map drawn using Dungeonographer (Free Version).

http://www.dungeonographer.com/free_dungeonographer.shtml

Article by Russell Morrissey.

Balista & Catapults by Chris Perkins.

http://community.wizards.com/wiki/Dnd:Iomandra/Variant_Ship_Rules

See Strongholds II for more stronghold features! Including:

Stronghold Rituals!

New rooms, structures, and additions!

Race and Class features!

Revenue generating structures!

STRONGHOLD CONSTRUCTION WORKSHEET

MATERIAL	# SQUARES	COST	TOTAL
Grounds		@5/sq	
Wood		@24/sq	
Stone		@100/sq	
Steel/Iron		@500/sq	
Adamantine		@5000/sq	
Water/Pit		@10/sq	
Other		@1000/sq	

FURNISHING	# SQUARES	COST	TOTAL
Frugal		@0/sq	
Average		@5/sq	
Comfortable		@25/sq	
Luxurious		@100/sq	
Decadant		@500/sq	

DOORS	#	COST	TOTAL
Wood		0 each	
Stone		50 each	
Steel/Iron		250 each	
Adamantine		500 each	

SOLDIERS	#	@ LEVEL	@COST	TOTAL

FEATURES	Tier/#	COST	TOTAL
Storeroom		360/9,000/225,000	
Library		608/17,000/425,000	
Temple		1,000/25,000/625,000	
Laboratory		1,800/45,000/1,125,000	
Training Grounds		1,000/25,000/625,000	
Sacred Grove		1,000/25,000/625,000	
Ballistae/Catapults/Cannons			
Traps			
Superior Locks			

GRAND TOTAL: _____