

## What's O.L.D. is N.E.W. Starter Kit

This starter kit introduces you to the *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* game system, which is a set of game rules which powers the roleplaying games *O.L.D.* (a game of medieval fantasy), *N.E.W.* (a game of futuristic science fiction), and *N.O.W.* (a game of explosive contemporary action). These three games are all fully compatible, and are designed to be played either as standalone roleplaying games or mixed and matched to create different combinations.

For the purposes of this starter kit, it is assumed that you know what a roleplaying game is.

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## Dramatis Personae

This starter kit contains six player characters – two of the iconic characters from each of the three games. These characters are pregenerated for you; each game contains rules for character creation, but this starter kit focuses on using these iconic characters. The characters are:

- *Gorrat, an illiterate Ogron star marine.* This enormous Ogron star marine is nearly 7-feet tall, and clad in a heavy, somewhat battered battlesuit with exposed circuitry and jury-rigged patches, and carrying his favorite laser rifle. Gorrat is always spoiling for a fight. He is slow on the uptake, never learned to read, and relies on the others to do most of his thinking for him. Gorrat is fundamentally good-natured, and has a big heart.
- *Dr. TikTok, an erudite android medic.* Not much use in a fight, TikTok is a qualified doctor, and well-educated. TikTok has a cold nature and tendency to lecture. TikTok is young, and very naive.
- *Mandallan, an inspiring knight.* Wearing chainmail, and shield, tabard and longsword, Mandallan is the quintessential knight in shining armor, honorable to a fault and fearless in battle.
- *Selena, a brilliant human firemage.* A fire wizard adept at creating and controlling flame, Selena is a dangerous opponent who can be subtle and quick to anger.
- *Alejandra, a nimble cyborg burglar.* Alejandra is a technical genius, as shown by her futuristic glasses and her robotic hand. This hispanic woman is fiercely intelligent and able to manipulate almost any technology.
- *Ben Madjos, a suave human spy.* Ben is a gentleman superspy. Dressed in an immaculate tuxedo, with perfectly groomed hair and an expensive silver watch, he is a master of stealth, subterfuge, and charm.

These iconic characters represent a broad spectrum of skills, and should be able to handle most situations, whether through force, charm, or subterfuge. In each of the three core roleplaying games, you will find six iconic characters, making 18 in total. Of course, each of the games contains extensive rules for creating your own player characters.

## Alejandra Vanistos, tech wizard

a nimble cyborg burglar who \_\_\_\_\_

### Attributes

STR	AGI	END	INT	LOG	WIL	CHA	LUC
2d6	3d6	2d6	2d6	3d6	2d6	2d6	1d6

### Skills

Computers	Hacking	Perception	Running	Climbing	Dodging
2d6	2d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6

### Movement

SPEED	CLIMB	JUMP	CARRY	INITIATIVE
8	8	16'/3'	70 lb	2d6

### Attacks

<i>Dagger shoe</i> 3d6 (2d6 piercing damage)
<i>Pistol</i> 3d6 (2d6 ballistic damage; range 20)

### Defenses

**DEFENSE** 14 (dodging)

**MENTAL DEFENSE** 11

**KEVLAR VEST** (SOAK 5)

**HEALTH** 16

### Exploits & Traits

***Analytics.*** Study an opponent for two actions to gain +1d6 to next attack.

***Input jacks.*** Cybernetic input jacks in hand give +1d6 to computer operation checks.

***Aim.*** +1d6 to subsequent ranged attack made in the same turn.

***Street thug.*** +1d6 to spot a police officer or authority figure.

***Erudite.*** Once per day use LOGIC in place of CHARISMA.

***Exploding initiative.*** Initiative dice explode on a roll of 6.

### Equipment

Cellphone, dagger shoe, kevlar vest, pistol, cybernetic hand with input jacks, lockpicks.

## Ben Madjos, international superspy

a suave human spy who \_\_\_\_\_

### Attributes

STR	AGI	END	INT	LOG	WIL	CHA	LUC
2d6	2d6	2d6	3d6	2d6	2d6	3d6	4d6

### Skills

Escape Artist	Pistols	Martial Arts	Running	Stealth	Tactics	Thievery	Dodging
1d6	2d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6

### Movement

SPEED	CLIMB	JUMP	CARRY	INITIATIVE
6	3	6'4'	80 lb	4d6

### Attacks

<i>Martial arts</i> 3d6 (1d6 blunt damage)
<i>Silenced pistol</i> 4d6 (2d6 ballistic damage; range 20)

### Defenses

**DEFENSE** 11 vs. ranged (dodging); 18 using LUC instead of AGI

or 11 vs. melee (martial arts); 18 using LUC instead of AGI

**MENTAL DEFENSE** 11

**BULLETPROOF TUXEDO** (SOAK 4)

**HEALTH** 16

### Exploits & Traits

*Spy.* Create false identity within 2 days.

*Drop off the grid.* No tracking checks can find you unless you want them to.

*Aim.* +1d6 to subsequent ranged attack made in the same turn.

*Deadly strike.* One attack dice exchanges for damage at a 1:1 ratio instead of 2:1.

*Shoot from cover.* Make a single attack even when line-of-sight is blocked, and return to cover, as long as a single move would enable you to reach an attacking position.

*Suave.* Once per day a CHA vs. MENTAL DEFENSE attack can be used to stun a target until they shake off the effect.

### Equipment

Bulletproof tuxedo, silenced pistol, lockpicks.

## Gorrat, Ogron star marine

an illiterate Ogron star marine who \_\_\_\_\_

### Attributes

STR	AGI	END	INT	LOG	WIL	CHA	LUC
3d6	2d6	3d6	2d6	2d6	2d6	2d6	2d6

### Skills

Cooking	Sports	Intimidate	Hardy	Carrying	Brawling	Rifles	Pistols	Carousing
1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6

### Movement

SPEED	CLIMB	JUMP	CARRY	INITIATIVE
6	3	8'4'	160 lb	2d6

### Attacks

<i>Brawling</i> 4d6 (2d6 blunt damage)
<i>Laser rifle</i> 3d6 (3d6 heat damage; range 20)

### Defenses

**DEFENSE** 0 vs. ranged (heavy armor)  
or 6 vs. melee (brawling, heavy armor)

**MENTAL DEFENSE** 7

**BATTLESUIT** (SOAK 10)

**HEALTH** 22

### Exploits & Traits

*Bad odor.* -1d6 to attempts to hide.

*Rugged.* Once per day spent two actions to recover half HEALTH (11).

*Aim.* +1d6 to subsequent ranged attack made in the same turn.

*Knockdown.* Exchange one attack dice to knock opponent down with a melee attack.

*Illiterate.* +1d6 when attempting to recall visual information.

### Equipment

Laser rifle, basic battlesuit.

## Mandallan, human knight

an inspiring knight who \_\_\_\_\_

### Attributes

STR	AGI	END	INT	LOG	WIL	CHA	LUC
2d6	2d6	3d6	1d6	2d6	2d6	3d6	3d6

### Skills

Swords	Religion	Heraldry	Riding	Lance
2d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6

### Movement

SPEED	CLIMB	JUMP	CARRY	INITIATIVE
5	3	8'/5'	80 lb	1d6

### Attacks

<i>Brawling</i> 2d6 (1d6 blunt damage)
<i>Longsword</i> 4d6 (3d6 slashing damage)

### Defenses

**DEFENSE** 16 vs. melee (swords, high quality armor, medium armor); 20 with shield  
or 9 vs. ranged; 13 with shield

**MENTAL DEFENSE** 11

**CHAINMAIL** (SOAK 5)

**HEALTH** 12

### Exploits & Traits

*Feint* +1d6 to subsequent melee attack made in the same turn.

*Maintain armor.* A suit of armor becomes high quality (+1d6) if maintained each day.

*Mount.* Mount or dismount a horse as a free action.

*Mounted charge.* Charge full SPEED on horse with lance, get +2d6 attack and damage.

*Inspiring.* Spend two actions to grant allies within 30' +1d6 die bonus.

*Deadly strike.* One attack dice exchanges for damage at a 1:1 ratio instead of 2:1.

### Equipment

Longsword, chainmail, medium steel shield.

## Selena, firemage

A brilliant human firemage who \_\_\_\_\_

### Attributes

STR	AGI	END	INT	LOG	WIL	CHA	LUC	MAG
2d6	2d6	2d6	2d6	3d6	2d6	2d6	2d6	3d6

### Skills

History	Alchemy	Concentration	Bluffing	Perception	Dice Games	Linguistics
1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6

### Movement

SPEED	CLIMB	JUMP	CARRY	INITIATIVE
5	3	8'/2'	40 lb	2d6

### Attacks

<i>Dagger</i> 2d6 (1d6 piercing damage)
<i>Fiery touch</i> 2d6 (1d6 fire damage)

### Defenses

**DEFENSE** 7

**MENTAL DEFENSE** 14 (concentration)

**FIREMAGE** (SOAK 5 fire; vulnerable 1d6 cold)

**HEALTH** 12

### Exploits & Traits

*Brilliant.* Once per day, use LOGIC in place of any other attribute check.

*Recharge.* Once per day spend five minutes to recover 2d6 magic points.

*Aim.* +1d6 to subsequent ranged attack made in the same turn.

*Prestidigitate.* Perform minor, on-combat magical tricks and effects at will.

*Detect magic.* Detect magic within 30'.

*Fire affinity.* +1d6 to attribute checks dealing with fire.

*Spell-paths.* You know the *Path of Fire* and the *Path of Illusion* up to rank 6. You have 18 magic points.

### Equipment

Dagger.

## Dr. Tiktok, android medic

an erudite android medic who \_\_\_\_\_

### Attributes

STR	AGI	END	INT	LOG	WIL	CHA	LUC
2d6	2d6	3d6	2d6	3d6	2d6	1d6	-

### Skills

Chess	Religion	Computers	Medicine	Engineering	Running
1d6	1d6	1d6	2d6	1d6	1d6

### Movement

SPEED	CLIMB	JUMP	CARRY	INITIATIVE
5	3	4'/3'	70 lb	1d6

### Attacks

*Phaser rifle* 1d6 (4d6 heat damage; range 25; stun setting)

### Defenses

**DEFENSE** 7

**MENTAL DEFENSE** immune

**HEALTH** 20

**VULNERABLE** 1d6 (electricity), 2d6 (ion)

### Exploits & Traits

*Automaton.* No need to eat, sleep, or breathe.

*Access ports.* +1d6 die bonus by plugging into a computer.

*Medic.* Spend 2 actions to heal 1d6 HEALTH on adjacent ally using medikit.

*Aim.* +1d6 to subsequent ranged attack made in the same turn.

*Erudite.* Once per day use LOGIC in place of CHARISMA.

*Achilles Heel.* Spend two attack dice to bypass SOAK once per target.

### Equipment

Phaser rifle, medkit, scanner.



## Playing the Game

As mentioned earlier, it is assumed that you are familiar with the way a roleplaying game works. What follows is a very basic primer which covers the core rules of the system. Each game contains many more rules, dealing with a variety of different situations – *N.E.W.* has rules for building starships, and starship combat, for example, while *O.L.D.* has rules for building strongholds. All of these rules are designed to work together, but this starter kit only introduces you to the basics.

### Taking Actions

Every action in *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* is an attribute check. An attribute check requires you to roll a pool of dice (the game only uses d6s) and achieve a target number called a benchmark. For example, Gorrat, being a mighty Ogron, rolls 3d6 when making a STRENGTH check, whereas Dr. TikTok the android medic only rolls 2d6. For example, if Gorrat were to try to break down a door, the GM would call for a STR check. He would roll 3d6 and attempt to beat a benchmark. In this case, the benchmark is *Difficult* [16].

### Benchmarks

Benchmarks simply describe how difficult a task is, whether it be lifting a log, climbing a wall, picking a lock, or jumping a ravine. Each has a descriptive name and an attached target number, making it easy for the GM to assign an appropriate benchmark to a task. Common benchmarks are as follows:

Benchmark	Target Number
Routine	10
Difficult	16
Strenuous	25
Herculean	33
Impossible	40

A benchmark is described using both portions; for example, landing a starship might be *Routine* [10]. The full rules contain more benchmarks, but those above are the only ones used in this starter kit.

### Dice Pools

When making an attribute check, you can use more than just your attribute. You can also add dice from skills and, sometimes, from higher quality equipment. For example, Ben Madjos wants to sneak past a guard. Normally, this would be an AGILITY check. However, Ben has *stealth* as a skill, so he gets to add that to his dice pool. He gets 2d6 from his AGILITY attribute, and an additional 1d6 from his *stealth* skill, making a total of 3d6.

There is a limit on how many dice you can add to a dice pool, which is defined by the total number of career or tradition grades a character has taken. Career and tradition grades are discussed in the full rules; for the purposes of this starter kit, all of the iconic characters have taken five career or tradition grades, and can therefore only roll a dice pool of up to 5d6.

## DICE POOL

### ATTRIBUTE + SKILL + EQUIPMENT

Basic equipment doesn't add to the dice pool; it merely allows you to perform the action. For example, a musket allows you to shoot somebody, a lockpick allows you to pick a lock, a medical kit allows you to perform emergency medical aid.

To gain an equipment bonus, you need high quality equipment. A high quality longsword gives you +1d6 to your attack roll, a high quality lockpick gives you +1d6 to your lockpicking attempt, and so on.

For example, Ben Madjos has a lockpick noted on his character sheet. This allows him to pick locks, but doesn't give him a bonus. In the sample adventure at the end of this starter kit, a set of high quality thieves tools can be found in the spider web on the patio; this grants a +1d6 bonus to lockpicking attempts.

This same rule applies in combat. When trying to attack somebody, the character rolls a dice pool made up of an attribute, a skill, and sometimes equipment bonuses. When Mandallan swings his longsword at an opponent, he rolls 3d6 for his STRENGTH, 1d6 for his skill in *swords*, and an additional 1d6 because it is a high quality longsword, making his dice pool 5d6 in total.

Remember that the pregenerated characters in this starter set cannot form dice pools larger than 5d6. Advancement rules found in the full rulebooks explain how to progress to higher levels of competence.

## Opposed Rolls

Sometimes a target number is not a static benchmark, but an opposed attribute check. For example, if two characters are arm-wrestling, they would both roll STRENGTH checks, and the character who rolled higher would win.

This applies at any time an attribute check is made in opposition to the action of another character or creature. The two attributes do not need to be the same – if Ben Madjos, international superspy, is sneaking past a guard, he would roll AGILITY (plus his skill at *stealth*) vs. the guard's INTUITION. Similarly, an attempt to bluff a cop might require a CHARISMA vs. INTUITION check.

Some examples of opposed rolls are shown below.

Picking a pocket	AGI vs. INT
Bluffing a cop	CHA vs. INT
Sneaking past a guard	AGI vs. INT
Arm wrestling	STR vs. STR
Darts contest	AGI vs. AGI
Chess game	LOG vs. LOG

## ***The Role of Luck***

Some characters have high LUCK attributes. The characters can use their LUCK attribute in place of another attribute once per day. Ben Madjos is a lucky man, for example; he rolls 4d6 for LUCK. If playing a game of backgammon against a villain, he would normally roll LOG vs. LOG, giving him only 2d6. However, he uses LUCK instead, and rolls 4d6, handily winning the game!

One use of LUCK might be to replace a DEFENSE attribute for one attack. For example, Ben's LUC of 4d6 is much better than his AGI of 2d6. He could effectively increase his DEFENSE to 18. The bullet hits his cigar case, or the villain slips on an oil patch.

Non-player characters and monsters do not have LUCK attributes.

## Fighting

Combat breaks out frequently in most roleplaying games, and *What's O.L.D. Is N.E.W.* is no exception. Combat is no different in principle to any other task – you form a dice pool as normal, and you roll to achieve a target number. However, the target numbers are derived slightly differently.

There are two target numbers in combat. DEFENSE is used when making a physical attack, and MENTAL DEFENSE is used when making a mental attack. Each character, and every monster or opponent in the game, has its DEFENSE and MENTAL DEFENSE noted, ready for use in combat.

When attacking a foe, simply form a dice pool as normal, and attempt to reach the target's DEFENSE or MENTAL DEFENSE score.

If you roll high enough, you have scored a hit. You may then roll damage, which is another value noted on each character.

Both DEFENSE and MENTAL DEFENSE are really just opposed attribute checks which have their values pre-calculated to speed up play. For example, DEFENSE is basically STR or AGI vs. STR or AGI.

You could actually roll these defenses every time you are attacked, and doing so can be dramatic, but it does slow play down a bit. For that reason, we work out the average roll and use that as a static target number instead.

## Who Goes First?

At the start of a fight, each combatant should roll their INITIATIVE. The dice they need to roll is shown on their character sheet (or in the stat block of an enemy). For example, Alejandra rolls 2d6, while Ben rolls 4d6.

Note the INITIATIVE rolls from highest to lowest. This is the order in which characters take their turns. When you reach the bottom of the list, simply move back up to the top and continue.

## Moving & Actions

In combat, everyone gets two actions on their turn. They can use these actions however they wish – they can move, attack, or perform some other action. They can use them in any combination – two moves, two attacks, a move and then an attack, two actions, and so on. Each turn represents a short, but unspecified amount of time. Here are some examples of actions:

Move your SPEED	1 action
Fire a weapon or make a melee attack	1 action
Perform emergency healing	2 actions
Aim or feint	1 action
Cast a spell	2 actions

Pick a lock or hack a terminal	2 actions
Draw or stow a weapon	Free
Drop to prone or crouch	Free

**Moving.** Every character has a SPEED noted. If you use your action to move, you can move a number of squares equal to your speed. Each square is 5' in size.

**Climbing.** You can climb at half your SPEED. This requires an AGILITY check with a benchmark set by the GM, although only one check per turn is needed however far you climb.

**Jumping.** You can jump horizontally a distance equal in feet to your AGILITY attribute, and vertically a distance equal to half your STRENGTH attribute, assuming you have at least 10' to run up. If you do not, these distances are halved.

## Important Combat Actions

There are three important combat actions other than moving and attacking.

**Aiming/feinting.** Aiming (for ranged attacks) or feinting (for melee attacks), both of which are universal exploits cost one action, and grant +1d6 bonus to an attack roll taken in the same turn. The attack action must come immediately after the aiming or feinting action. All characters get either *aim* or *feint* for free.

**Overwatch.** Overwatch is a special type of action. When you choose to overwatch, you wait ready with your weapon to fire on any targets which make themselves available. Usually this means targets which break cover and enter your line of sight.

You may only fire on a given target once during a turn when on overwatch, and may only fire when the target has zero cover. Your shot interrupts his turn at the earliest point possible.

The maximum number of targets you can fire upon during a turn when in overwatch is equal to your INTUITION attribute. Each subsequent target beyond the first causes you a cumulative -1d6 penalty to hit.

**Suppressive fire.** Suppressive fire is the antidote to overwatch. It allows you to lay down fire in a particular area in order to “cover” an ally's exposed movement or action which would normally attract overwatch attacks.

Unlike most attack types, suppressive fire is not target-dependent. It depends on your ally. You designate a specific ally as the beneficiary of your suppressive fire; this benefit last until your ally's next turn has ended. During that turn, you ally's actions gain the benefit of COVER (see below), even when he or she is exposed.

This means that your ally will automatically be immune to overwatch, and gains some protection from regular fire. Some weapons, noted as “auto” in the equipment lists, are especially efficient at suppressive fire. These weapons gain your ally an additional 1d6 of cover.

## Damage

Every character, object, creature, and monster has a HEALTH score. This score shows you how healthy the character or object is. Any time a creature is hit by an attack, the attacker rolls some damage dice and the target's HEALTH is reduced by that number. If HEALTH reaches zero, the target is defeated (in the case of an enemy, they are now unconscious and dying; in the case of an object, it is destroyed).

For the purposes of this starter kit, a character reduced to zero HEALTH is unconscious. If she receives healing from an ally, which is a *Difficult [16]* LOGIC check (the *healing* skill and medical equipment add to this dice pool), she is stabilized and is restored to 1 HEALTH. The full rules contain slightly more detailed information on how to handle dying characters.

Dr. TikTok, the android medic, is an excellent physician. He rolls 3d6 for his LOGIC attribute, an additional 2d6 for his *medicine* skill, and even gets an additional 1d6 from his medical kit – this comes to 6d6, although he cannot roll more than 5d6 in a dice pool.

Every attack has a basic damage value noted next to it. Gorrat's laser rifle does 3d6 heat damage, Ben's silent pistol does 2d6 ballistic damage, and Mandallen's longsword does 3d6 slashing damage. When an attack is made, this tells you how much damage to roll.

However, it's a little more complex than that. To do more damage to your target, you need to exchange attack dice for damage dice. In essence, you make the attack a little more difficult in order to make it a little more accurate or effective. You make this exchange at a ratio of 2:1 dice.

For example, Gorrat normally rolls 3d6 when firing his laser rifle (2d6 from his AGILITY and 1d6 from his skill in *rifles*) and the rifle normally does 3d6 heat damage. That's not an enormous amount of damage, and you'll find that basic attack damage in *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* never amounts to an awful lot, even when being dealt out by a mighty tyrannosaurus rex or a highly explosive bomb. To do more damage, Gorrat needs to exchange some of his attack dice for damage dice. He pays 2d6, getting an additional 1d6 damage; so now he rolls 1d6 to attack, and 4d6 for damage.

Of course, 1d6 isn't likely to hit much, but Gorrat can do things like aim, or get a better position, to earn himself some more attack dice.

## Recovering HEALTH

Once per day, a character may spend one hour to recover HEALTH. Roll an ENDURANCE dice pool and regain that many HEALTH points.

Some characters (such as Dr. TikTok) have the ability to restore HEALTH in allies. Additionally, some items may be able to perform similar effects.

## SOAK

Damage is reduced by a target's SOAK score. Some mighty creatures, such as dragons, have a natural SOAK scores, while others wear armor to gain SOAK. Gorrat's battlesuit, for example, give him a SOAK of 10, meaning that whenever he takes damage it is

reduced by 10 points. Ben Madjos' bulletproof tuxedo gives him a SOAK of 4, while Mandallen's chainmail gives him a SOAK of 4. Generally speaking, those with lots of SOAK tend to have much lower DEFENSE – they're easier to hit, but harder to damage.

## **Attack Modifiers**

There are a number of things characters can do to increase their chances of hitting an enemy, and a number of things they can do to reduce the chances of getting hit. For example, every character has the ability to either *aim* or *feint*, which gives them +1d6 to their attack roll. This is noted on character sheets and creature stat blocks.

Combat in *What's O.L.D. Is N.E.W.* is a highly tactical affair in which combatants are encouraged to move about and attempt to gain superior positions. The five important positional effects are *range*, *higher ground*, *cover*, *getting pinned down*, and *crossfires*.

**Range.** In ranged combat, every weapon has a range increment. Any ranged attack which exceeds that range increment suffers a -1d6 die penalty for each range increment beyond the first. Unless otherwise noted, weapons can only fire out to five range increments.

**Higher ground.** Combatants on higher ground than their targets gain a +1d6 bonus to attack them. Higher ground is defined as at least 5' for melee attacks or at least 10' for ranged attacks.

**Cover.** Cover is very important. If you are attacking a target in cover, you suffer a -2d6 die penalty to your attack. Note that cover does not mean that line of sight is blocked; in the latter case, neither combatant can shoot at the other.

**Pinned down.** It's never advisable to stay in one place too long when other people are shooting at you. If you remain in one spot too long, you become easier to hit. Your cover starts to be chipped away, while your enemies make tiny corrections to their aim. For every turn that you remain in the same square, opponents gain an additional die to ranged attacks against you. When you move, this gets reset back to zero again. However, you must move to a location at least 10' away from your original location, and returning to that location does not count as a "move" when determining whether you are pinned down. Some careers, such as the sniper, are harder to pin down, but you'll read more about that in the full game rules.

**Crossfire.** In an exchange of ranged gunfire, every soldier dreads being caught in a crossfire. Avoiding gunfire from multiple directions is extremely difficult. A crossfire is also known as interlocking fire, as each shooter's arcs of fire mutually support one another. A crossfire exists if two ranged attackers are positioned at greater than 90-degree angles to each other with respect to the target. Each of the attackers beyond the first grants a cumulative +1d6 bonus to ranged attacks against that target (making a maximum bonus of +3d6 for four attackers).

**Other modifiers.** Other things can affect an attack roll.

- It is harder to shoot someone engaged in melee combat without endangering your ally. Such attacks take a -2d6 die penalty, although some exploits can

reduce this.

- Similarly, in darkness or under cover of obscuring smoke, a -2d6 penalty is inflicted.
- A prone target is harder to hit at range (a penalty of -1d6) but easier to hit in melee (+2d6).



## Magic

One of the iconic characters, Selena, is a fire mage. She is able to use magic. Selena is the only character in this starter set with a MAGIC attribute.

When using magic, a character selects a spell that they know and “spends” magic points to cast it. When a character's magic points reach zero, she is unable to cast another spell until she has recovered some of her magic points. Selena calls magic points *mana*.

Selena's MAGIC attribute lets her roll 3d6, and she has 18 magic points.

Most spells take place automatically. However, if a spell targets another creature, a MAGIC attack vs either DEFENSE or MENTAL DEFENSE is required; otherwise the spell fails.

Magic is divided into thematic spell-paths. Selena knows the *Path of Fire* and the *Path of Illusion*, which are listed below. *O.L.D.* has many more spell-paths, along with rules on how to acquire and learn them, but for this starter set you will only need the two that Selena already knows. The spell-paths actually continue far beyond the 6MP spells shown below, but Selena can only cast spells up to 6MP. The full rulebook shows the spells beyond that point.

### Path of Fire

Mastery of the elements is a common part of a magic-user's arsenal, and none so much as the element of fire. The path of fire is simple in nature, with few complex effects, and easy to learn, familiar to almost every spellcaster. Note that the caster is immune to spells centered on herself.

1 – SPARK. A small spark of fire strikes a nearby target within 10'. This is enough to set flammable items alight, and does 1 point of fire damage to creatures and objects.

2 – CAMPFIRE. The caster creates a campfire within 10' which burns for 10 minutes. After the 30 minutes is up, the fire can be tended to continue for longer, although it is no longer magically sustained.

3 – DESERT CLOAK. All creatures within 10' of the caster gain SOAK 2 (fire) for one day, enough to survive intense climates without discomfort.

4 – FIREWORK. The caster can create a small object made of fire which persists for up to 1 minute. This might be a decorative firework, or a symbol in the air. The object is not dangerous (it causes 1 point of fire damage to anybody who touches it) and does not move from its location.

5 – FIREBOLT. A bolt of fire streaks from the caster's outstretched hand to strike the target, inflicting 3d6 fire damage.

6 – ENDURING FLAME. The caster sets a target within 100' alight; the target burns for 1 minute (10 rounds), taking 1d6 fire damage per round. The fire cannot be extinguished until the duration expires.

## **Path of Illusion**

Illusions use light and sound to deceive their targets. Simple illusions are often stationary or easy to spot; more complex ones may move or they might be more realistic.

1 – MINOR ILLUSION. You create one minor, adjacent effect which lasts while you concentrate. The effect is simple and imprecise, and only relates to one of sound, images, smell, or taste. Examples include a pattern of tiles on a wall, a growl or laughter (but nothing articulate), or the smell of rotting flesh, or baking bread.

2 – HIDE PORTAL. You can hide a door, window, or other portal to make it appear like part of the wall.

3 – DISTRACTION. You combine simple visual and audible illusory effects to create a distraction. The distraction is size medium or smaller, and is a simple visual, and the sound is no louder than four men talking and is not articulate in any way.

4 – EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES. You alter your clothing for 10 minutes; the clothing choice is fairly simple, and can mimic a general style ("military", "farmer", etc.) but not a specific outfit or uniform.

5 – UNSEEN. You become entirely invisible for as long as you concentrate. Concentration requires an action each round.

6 – ILLUSORY WALL. You create up to a 10' by 10' illusory wall within 30'. The wall lasts for 10 minutes and blends in with a corridor, hallway, or other surrounding structure.

*Example. Selena spots a guard blocking her escape. She decides to create an illusory distraction in order to lure the guard away. Using the Path of Illusion, she casts the distraction spell, which costs her 3 of her 18 magic points, taking her down to 15 MP. She creates the sound of a group of intruders down a side-corridor, and the guard rushes to investigate. Selena slips on past.*

## **Recovering Magic Points**

Once per day, a character may spend one hour to recover all of her magic points. This may involve praying, meditating, studying books, or some other form of focused, non-stressful action.

## Starter Adventure: A New Life

This short adventure is designed to introduce you and your players to *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* It will walk you through the basic rules found in this starter kit and tell you what to do at each step of the way. By the end of it, you will be ready to run your own adventures!

In this adventure, the iconic characters from earlier in this book have all died. They awake confused, in a strange location, and must try to find their way back home to their own worlds and lives.

To start the adventure, ask your players to each choose one of the iconic characters. You should have them printed out, so that they can take one each and refer to it in play. Also ensure that the players have access to a pool of six-sided dice; they should be able to grab at least five dice.



## ***The Descriptor***

Before you start, the players need to do one last thing to prepare their characters for play. They need to personalise their character by completing the **descriptor**.

The descriptor is the top line of a character sheet. For example, Gorrat's reads as follows:

*an illiterate Ogron star marine who* \_\_\_\_\_

Every character has a descriptor, which summarizes the character in an easy, snappy line. That descriptor helps guide the player when roleplaying, and is an easy, quick way to describe a character to somebody else.

Have each player complete their character's descriptor by filling out the blank line. It can be anything, but it's designed to round out the character with personality, interests, or hobbies. For example, a player might choose "...who enjoys hard liquor" or "... has a taste for romance" or even "...who collects insects as a hobby".

The descriptor works as a broad skill. Any time you make an attribute check, you can use the descriptor to gain a +1d6 bonus, but *only if you are not using a skill already*. The GM should be generous in allowing this; the descriptor should provide a frequent reminder of a character's background.

What you can't do with the descriptor is gain a combat bonus to attack or damage. Descriptors like "...who enjoys target shooting" or "... who likes boxing" can sometimes be slipped in by players as sneaky combat bonuses, but sadly they do not work like that. The boxing descriptor might help recall a past champion or identify a winner's belt, but it won't assist a character in throwing a punch.

Have each player read their descriptor to the rest of the group.

## ***The Patio***

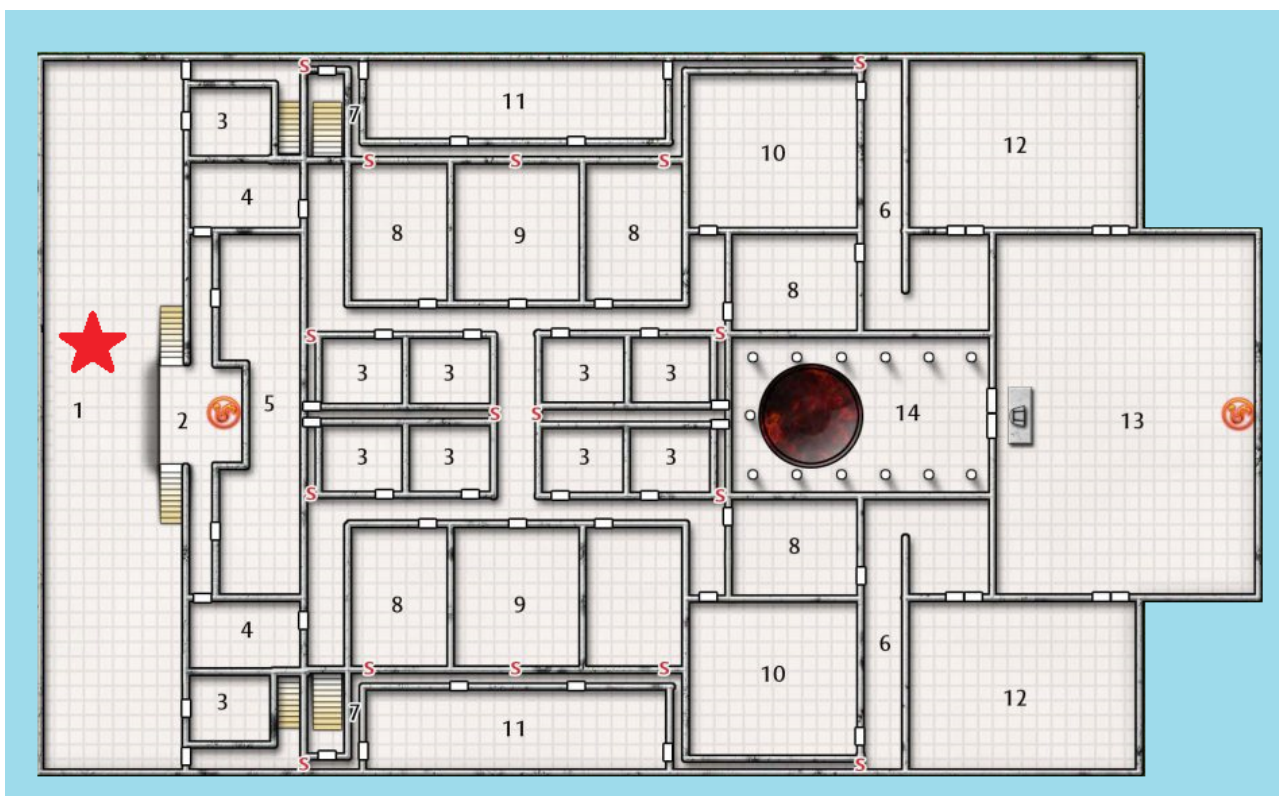
Once you're ready, and the players have all selected their characters, read or paraphrase the following text:

You died.

One minute you were adventuring as normal. But you were killed in action, and now you're dead. At least, you think you are – except for the fact that you're now waking up with a group of strangers in a strange location, lying on the cold stone tiles of a what appears to be a patio below a strange temple floating in the sky. Looking around, you can see – off in the distance – countless similar groups of people waking up on similar patios below similar temples.

Now ask each player to describe how his or her character died. Encourage them to describe their final moments, whether that be in action or otherwise.

This is an eclectic group of characters from different time periods and different places. Some are from the future, and some are from the past. They should find each other confusing at first, although they have no trouble understanding each others' speech.



The patio is marked on the temple map by a red star. This is where the characters wake up. From there, they will need to explore the temple and find a way out.

Looking over the edge of the patio reveals nothing but a seemingly bottomless drop, punctuated by other temples. There is no solid ground anywhere in sight.

## ***The Spider***

Unbeknownst to the characters, an **attercop** (which is a giant spider) has a web beneath the patio. It lies in wait for new arrivals, and then attempts to ambush them, paralyze them with its poison, and drag them off to its web for later consumption. This will be your first combat with these rules, and so a step-by-step walk-through is provided.

The spider's statistics are below.

### **Attercop** (medium insect)

**STR** 3d6; **AGI** 4d6; **END** 2d6; **INT** 3d6; **LOG** 1d6; **WIL** 1d6; **CHA** 1d6

**INITIATIVE** 2d6; **SPEED** 15 (CLIMB 15); **JUMP** 20'/20'

**HEALTH** 12; **DEFENSE** 14 (SOAK 5); **MENTAL DEFENSE** 11

**Bite** 4d6 (1d6 piercing damage plus paralysis until shaken off)

**Charge** 2d6 (2d6 piercing damage plus paralysis until shaken off; move up to 15 in a straight line)

**Skills** *stealth*

**1. Ambush!** The attercop is attempting to ambush the party. Give them a couple of minutes to look around, and then have the attercop make an AGILITY check. It rolls 4d6, plus an additional 1d6 from its skill in *stealth*, making 5d6 in total. Now ask the players to make INTUITION checks to hear or spot the creature before it attacks them. If anybody is playing **Alejandra** or **Selina**, they get an additional 1d6 because of their *perception* skills.

Any characters which equal or beat the attercop's AGILITY check get to act in the ambush turn before the fight begins. Any characters who failed to match its AGILITY check do not get to act in the ambush turn. If everybody beats its check, the attercop does not get to act in the ambush turn.

The ambush turn is a single round of actions. Each character who is able to act may take one action (a move, an attack, or an action). These all occur simultaneous, so it does not matter which order you resolve them in.

**2. Initiative!** Once these actions have been resolved, it's time to roll INITIATIVE. The attercop rolls 2d6, and each character rolls the dice shown on their character sheet. Make a list of these INITIATIVE checks in order, from highest to lowest. This is the order in which each character or enemy takes its turn.

**3. Action!** You will need to resolve each character's actions in turn. On each character's turn, he or she (or it!) can take two actions. These can be any two actions – a move, an attack, or something else. They can even do the same thing twice – two moves, or two attacks.

As the first character what they are doing. If they move, have them move their miniature a number of squares on the battlemap up to their SPEED score. If they take an action, resolve it using an attribute check (unless it is easy enough that one is not needed). If they attack, follow the instructions below which walk you through your first attack!

### Resolving An Attack

It's very easy to resolve an attack. Ask the player what they are doing; typically they will be firing a gun, or swinging a sword. The player's miniature must be in a position on the battlemap where they would be able to accomplish such an action; they cannot swing a sword at a creature 5 squares away.

The player must now make an attack roll. This is listed on the character sheet. As an example, we will use Gorrat's laser rifle, which is listed as follows:

**Laser rifle** 3d6 (3d6 heat damage; range 20)

The first number tells us what Gorrat **rolls to attack**. He takes 3d6 and rolls them, and compares the result to his target's DEFENSE score. Looking at the attercop's stat block, we can see that its DEFENSE score is 14. Gorrat rolls 15, which is enough to hit the critter!

Now that we've established that Gorrat has successfully hit the attercop with his laser rifle, we now **roll damage**. The line above tells us that his laser rifle does 3d6 heat damage. He rolls 3d6, getting a total of 10 heat damage.

However, there is a problem. The attercop, as you can see from its statblock, as a SOAK score of 5 because of its chitinous hide. So we must deduct 5 points from Gorrat's damage, meaning that in total he only does 5 points of heat damage to the creature.

The attercop has 12 HEALTH. The GM deducts the 5 damage, leaving it with 7

HEALTH. It lives to fight back!

This was a very simple attack. We didn't worry about range, Gorrat didn't take time to aim (which would have allowed him to roll an extra 1d6 on his attack roll), and we didn't factor in any positional effects such as higher ground, cover, and so on. All of these things could have increased or decreased Gorrat's dice pool, making it either more or less likely that he would have hit.

Finally, Gorrat did not choose to exchange any attack dice for damage dice. He could have reduced his attack pool by 2d6 and added an extra 1d6 heat damage to his weapon. However, it wasn't an easy shot, so he didn't do that.

Once every character, including the attercop, has taken their turn, return to the top of the list and start again until the fight ends. Hopefully, this will be when the attercop is reduced to zero HEALTH and dies.

When the attercop gets its turn, there are a couple of things in the stat block to be aware of:

- 1) The attercop can charge its full SPEED of 15 and attack at the end of it as a single action.
- 2) The attercop is able to move on walls and ceilings as easily as the ground.
- 3) If the attercop hits with a bite, it doesn't do much damage (only 1d6) but its bite is poisonous. You will need to immediately make a second attack roll using its END attribute of 2d6; make a note of the roll if it succeeds. Its unfortunate victim is paralyzed until they shake the effect off. Shaking it off is an action, and will require an END check which beats the attercop's END check (which you made a note of, remember?)

## Looking Around

The players will likely want a moment to regroup, tend any wounds they might have gotten, and perhaps check out the attercop's web. The web is below the patio, and requires a character to climb down to it. To do that, a character must make a Difficult [16] AGILITY check. **Alejandra** is the best option; she rolls 3d6 AGILITY, plus 1d6 for her *climbing* skill, for a total of 4d6. It's still not easy for her, but if she makes the check she can get to the attercop's web which contains the dessicated remains of a previous group of people, along with their equipment. Still serviceable is:

A **healing potion**, which restores 2d6 HEALTH to anybody who drinks it. It's easy to tell what a potion does – just take a sip.

A set of **high quality thieves tools** which grant a +1d6 bonus to attempts to pick mechanical locks.

A wallet containing **2,000 Russian Rubles** (worth about \$30).

Nothing else untoward will happen to the characters while on the patio. They can rest, if they wish, and take their time. They might use the healing potion, or save it for later.

**Selina** might need to recharge her magic points if she used any, or wait until she's used a few more.

Eventually, they'll check out the rest of the patio. Read (or, better, describe yourself in your own words) the following:

Two sets of stairs lead up to an upper landing. On that landing stands a metal statue of a multi-legged figure bearing a different weapon in each of its four arms – a sword, a club, a whip, and a longbow. The figure stares out over the patio into space.

There are four doors up here; two to the left and two to the right. All of them are made of what looks like oak, and all four are closed.

Allow the players to ask questions. Attribute checks can grant them extra information.

A *Routine* [10] LOGIC check reveals that the statue is of the ancient god-figure of the underworld, Carnissus. If someone manages a *Difficult* [16] check, tell them that they recall legends of Carnissus gathering the souls of the dead and testing them, allowing those who succeed a second chance at life. **Dr. TikTok** and **Mandallan** both have the *religion* skill, so they gain a +1d6 bonus to this LOGIC check.

**Selina** can also detect magic innately. She is able to sense that the statue is highly magical.

A *Routine* [10] INTUITION check shows that the doors are all locked, and a *Difficult* [16] INTUITION check reveals that they are trapped with mechanical devices. Both *perception* (**Selina**) and *thievery* (**Ben**) provide +1d6 bonuses with that.

Unlocking any of the doors requires that somebody pick the locks. The thieves tools possibly found earlier in the spider's web grant a +1d6 bonus to the *Difficult* [16] AGILITY check, as does **Ben's** *thievery* skill. Ben's AGILITY is 2d6, plus 1d6 for his skill, and 1d6 for the tools, making a total of 4d6. **Alejandra**, also, would be adept at this; she is not trained in thievery, but her AGILITY is a bit higher than Ben's. Using the tools, she also rolls 4d6.

If the doors cannot be unlocked, somebody can try to batter them down. This is a *Difficult* [16] STRENGTH check. **Gorrat** would be best at this; he rolls 3d6 for his STR attribute. It's still not easy, but he has four chances – one for each door!

### Failing Forward

Being unable to get past the first doors in the adventure would pretty much ruin the game for everybody. That's where *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* uses a "fail forward" mechanic. This assumes that the characters will achieve their goal, but if they don't manage the attribute checks something bad happens. The GM says something along the lines of "You manage to get the door open, but....."

So what happens? In this particular case, the trap goes off. Each door has a different trap (just to make things more interesting). Each of these traps rolls 3d6 vs. the character's DEFENSE, and if it hits it does 2d6 damage of an appropriate type.



1. A blade slashes at a character's hand (slashing damage).
2. A flagstone topples from overhead (blunt damage).
3. A small explosion caused by black powder (fire damage).
4. Boiling oil pours from a vent (heat damage).

Failing forward happens frequently in *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* After all, the drama lies in what's at the next star system, or behind the locked door, not in the navigational or lockpicking checks needed to get there. That's not to say that characters cannot fail – if the check isn't plot critical (for example, the check needed to climb down to the attercop's web, earlier) then it's fine for characters to fail. The GM should ask “Will this stop or drastically slow down the game with stuff that isn't much fun to play?”

## The Full Games

This starter kit is just a taster of what you can expect in *O.L.D.*, *N.E.W.*, and *N.O.W.* Each of those games includes detailed rules, worldbuilding tools, character creation rules, monsters and villains, and more. Every rule, no matter which of the three games you find it in, is fully compatible with the whole *What's O.L.D. is N.E.W.* game system. You can play each independently, or mix and match to your hearts' content.

### ***O.L.D.***

*O.L.D.* is a game of medieval fantasy. It contains six character races, and dozens of traditions which include knights, barbarians, druids, mages, burglars, clerics, assassins, pirates, and many, many more. *O.L.D.* also contains rules for wilderness travel and stronghold building, along with a bestiary of fantasy monsters. And, of course, *O.L.D.* contains extensive rules on magic, including many spell-paths and guidelines for designing your own spell-paths.

### ***N.O.W.***

*N.O.W.* is a game of explosive 80s action, supercars, and martial arts. If you're a fan of 80s action TV shows and movies, you'll love this game. It contains a number of character heritages, dozens of careers which include spies, ninjas, gangsters, cops, snipers, pilots, scientists, vigilantes, and many, many more. *N.O.W.* also contains extensive rules for martial arts, designing super-vehicles, piles of gadgets, a host of enemies including assassins, thugs, soldiers, mutants, animals, and more, and rules for evil organizations. There's also a tiny appendix on A.C.M.E. characters if you want to get a little silly!

### ***N.E.W.***

*N.E.W.* is a game of science fiction. It features starships and lasers and psionics, and is perfect for running games which range from space opera to hard sci-fi. It contains six character species from different worlds, careers including space jockeys, engineers, smugglers, starship officers, star knights, psi-cops and more. *N.E.W.* also contains detailed rules for building starships, starship combat, futuristic weapons and equipment, creating worlds and star systems, and body-enhancing cybernetics.

*Build a starship. Brew a potion. Explore a dungeon. Create a universe. Give your wizard a spaceship.*