

PART THREE: MOVES

MAKING MOVES

Moves help you decide what happens when you do something risky or uncertain, and they resolve various fictional and mechanical situations. There is a move for most common actions and scenes you will portray in Ironsworn. When you do something or encounter a situation within the scope of a move, refer to the move and follow its instructions to see what happens.

When a move is referenced within this rulebook or within another move, the move's name will be italicized. When you see italicized text, it's your prompt to make that move.

MOVE OUTCOMES

Most moves use an action roll to resolve the outcome. Roll your action die and challenge dice, add the relevant stat to your action die along with any adds provided by the move or your assets, and check the result.

- ♦ Strong hit: When your action score is greater than both of the challenge dice, you succeed at what you are trying to do. Take any benefits as defined by the move. You are in control. Envision what you do next.
- ♦ Weak hit: When your action score is greater than only one of the challenge dice, it's a mixed result. You've probably succeeded, but with a lesser effect or a cost. The move will describe the outcome or choice you need to make. Control of the situation is slipping away. What happens next?
- ♦ Miss: When your action score isn't greater than either of the challenge dice, you failed. Things get worse, or you need to make some serious concessions. The move will give you a specific result, or tell you to Pay the Price. You've lost control of the situation. What happens next?

A progress roll is variation of the action roll used to resolve an extended challenge. When you make a progress move, you won't roll your action die. Instead, roll the challenge dice and compare to your progress track. Then, check the result for a strong hit, weak hit, or miss.

Other moves leverage an oracle roll to help guide the fiction. You'll roll two ten-sided dice to generate a number between 1 and 100, and check your result against a table.

Some moves don't use dice at all; don't roll unless the move tells you to.

BEST PRACTICES FOR MOVES

Fiction first, then move

What are you trying to do? How are you doing it? What complications might you face? Envision it. If you're playing co-op or guided, talk it out. If—after thinking through the fiction—you decide you are doing something or encountering a situation that falls under a move, make the move.

Depending on the scale of the current action, you might be visualizing a montage of days (a journey, for example) or the passing of a mere second (an intense fight). Always think from the standpoint of the fiction—even if it's obvious what move you'll make. Then, translate the fiction into the mechanics of a move, and back to the fiction again as you play out the result.

Not everything is a move

Don't let your session jump from move to move without any roleplay, worldbuilding, or storytelling. If you're doing something safe and certain, it's probably not a move. If you'd rather gloss over something, do it.

Many moves offer a potential benefit and cost, and it's ultimately your decision whether to risk the move to gain the reward. If you happen across a community in your travels, and decide to roleplay some low-key interactions with the locals, that's not necessarily a move. However, if you are wounded and low on supplies, Sojourn gives you an opportunity to recover.

Moves are also used as a pacing mechanism. Moves leading immediately to other moves make the situation feel more intense and dangerous.

Make Moves Matter

Let your moves flow organically out of the narrative. Don't make moves purely for a mechanical benefit without some support in the fiction. Don't repeat a move trying to get your desired outcome. A move, hit or miss, should always result in a change to the current situation.

For example, you are trying to Compel a clan leader to agree to an alliance. You roleplay how you attempt to reason with him. Then, you make the roll, and fail. He refused. Why? What else do you learn or what does he do to make your situation more complex or dangerous? Whatever happens, something happens. You shouldn't try to Compel him again unless you bring a new approach or leverage to bear.

However, there will be times when you make a move multiple times in sequence. In combat, you'll often Strike or Clash with consecutive rolls. When you Undertake a Journey, you may make the roll several times to gain progress. That's fine as long as the rolls don't get too mechanical. Break up the flow of play with other actions, narrative beats, and events that cause you to rethink your approach. When in doubt, follow this guideline: If you've made the same move three times in a row, switch things up. Make something happen.

MAKING GROUP MOVES

When you are adventuring with allies (other player characters), you will often make moves to resolve a challenge for the group. This represents your character taking the lead in a particular scene. You might serve as the spokesperson as you Compel an enemy to negotiate a surrender. Or, you might guide your party through a dense wood as you Undertake a Journey. Unless a move specifically offers benefits for your allies, any mechanical bonus you gain from a hit is applied only to the character making the move. For example, if you represent your group as you Swear an Iron Vow and score a strong hit, you take the mechanical reward (per the move, "take +2 momentum"). Everyone else benefits from the narrative success.

The exception are moves such as Make Camp and Sojourn, which provide specific options for your allies to improve their status tracks or clear debilities. Also, your supply track is shared when you travel together, and any change (positive or negative) affects everyone in the group.

Allies can contribute to your action by making the Aid Your Ally move. On a hit, you gain a bonus you can leverage to improve your chance of success. If more than one ally makes this move, bonuses can be stacked.

When you make a move for your group and face a negative outcome, you should apply mechanical and narrative costs as appropriate to the current situation.

MAKING PROGRESS MOVES

There are four progress moves: Reach Your Destination, End the Fight, Fulfill Your Vow and Write Your Epilogue. These moves represent your attempt to act decisively and resolve a challenge or complete a narrative arc. When you make these moves, you won't roll your action die and add a stat. Instead, you tally your progress score by adding +1 for each fully filled progress box. Then, roll your challenge dice, compare to your progress score, and resolve the move as directed. You cannot burn momentum when making a progress move, and you are not affected by negative momentum.

EQUIPMENT AND MOVES

Equipment and items can contribute to the fiction of how you make or avoid a move. What you wear or the items you carry might also affect how you envision your character. Otherwise, equipment is not especially important.

Weapons and Armor

In combat, the weapons you wield and armor you wear mainly provide narrative detail for the scene. When you envision how you fight, take your equipment into account.

Weapons have implied characteristics. Light axes, knives, or spears can be thrown. A bow can be fired. A sword is a fine weapon balanced for attack and defense. When you wield a spear, you leverage its reach to hold your opponent at bay or attack with speed and precision. When you fight with a knife, you move inside your opponent's guard and slash and cut. When you hold a shield, you deflect blows, bash or shove your foe, or even block arrows at range.

Similarly, you can envision yourself relying on armor as you like. Do you wear crudely stitched hides for protection? Perhaps a fine shirt of mail handed down from your kin? Do you hide your face within a visored iron helm? How does your armor affect your combat stance and tactics?

You can lose a weapon, run out of ammo, or see your armor damaged as a result of a failed move. This can be represented mechanically through a loss of momentum. Or, you might Endure Stress if an item of sentimental value is destroyed. Losing access to a weapon also limits your ability to inflict harm (1 harm instead of 2). Always start with the fiction. What moves does this item allow you to make or avoid? What happens when you no longer have it?

If you have a combat talent asset, your weapon and armor may provide additional benefit through abilities. As long as you carry the item, you may use those abilities.

INITIATIVE

Initiative is a special mechanic in combat. It reflects who is in control. When you have initiative, you make proactive moves and have more options. When your foe has initiative against you, they are forcing you to react. Initiative shifts between you and your foes depending on the result of your moves. Some moves are inherently proactive or offensive and can only be made when you have initiative. Others are reactive or defensive and are made when your foe has initiative.

Combat moves usually specify when you make the move (with or without initiative) and whether you take or lose initiative as part of the outcome. However, you will make moves which aren't specifically combat moves to take action or avoid dangers in a fight. To determine whether you have initiative, follow these guidelines (unless a move tells you otherwise):

- ♦ When you score a strong hit, you take or retain initiative.
 - ♦ When you score a weak hit or miss, you lose initiative.
-

The ability to take initiative on a strong hit applies even to suffer moves. For example, if you score a miss when you Clash and your foe inflicts harm, you can still take back initiative with a strong hit on Endure Harm. This is your character shrugging off the hit and roaring back into the fight.

NPCs do not make moves. When an NPC has initiative, they take actions in the fiction of the scene which force you to react. When you have initiative, you are in control and taking proactive actions to achieve your objectives.

Initiative and Allies

When you are playing with allies (other player characters), you each track your own initiative based on the outcome of your moves. You can shift the focus between characters and make moves as appropriate to the situation. A character with initiative makes proactive moves to inflict harm or setup an advantage. A character without initiative defends against attacks or tries to get back into the fight.

Keep in mind that initiative doesn't represent who goes next. Talk out what happens as if moving a virtual camera around your imagined scene. Bring the chaos of a melee to life. Use a dramatic moment to jump to a different character and leave everyone in suspense. Keep things moving to give everyone a chance in the spotlight.

MOVE GLOSSARY

There are several common phrases, terms, and prompts you'll see as part of moves and assets. They are summarized here (in alphabetical order).

"Add +X"

Add this number to your action die. This is in addition to any other bonuses you otherwise receive, such as your stat. Your action die + your stat + adds is your final action score.

"Allies / Ally"

An ally is a character controlled by another player.

"Ask the Oracle"

When you seek inspiration to decide the outcome of a move, resolve what happens next, or get details about your world, you can Ask the Oracle. This move lets you ask questions to get a yes/no result or use random prompts for brainstorming. When you are playing with a GM, they are the oracle. Ask them what happens, or talk it out.

"Companion"

A companion is an NPC asset.

“Choose”

The move will provide a list of options and the number you may select. You may not select a single option more than once.

“Endure Harm (X Harm)”

Make the Endure Harm move reducing your health track by the indicated amount of harm.

“Endure Stress (X Stress)”

Make the Endure Stress move, reducing your spirit track by the indicated amount of stress.

“In Exchange for”

Adjust the appropriate tracks by the amount indicated in the move. Typically, you will trade +1 in one track for -1 in another.

“Inflict your Harm”

When you inflict your harm, you mark progress against your foe. If you are armed with a deadly weapon (such as a sword, axe, spear, or bow), you inflict 2 harm. If you are unarmed or using an improvised or simple weapon (such as a shield, stick, club, staff, or rock), you inflict 1 harm.

Each point of harm you inflict is marked as progress on your foe's progress track, as appropriate to their rank. For example, each point of harm equals 2 ticks when fighting an extreme enemy, or 2 full progress boxes when fighting a dangerous enemy.

“Inflict +X Harm”

“Inflict +1 Harm” tells you to add 1 harm to your current attack. Some assets increase your harm in particular circumstances, or a move might give you an option to increase your harm. You must inflict harm as a result of your move to gain the bonus. Always add your harm and any bonus harm together, then apply it to your foe's progress track.

“On a Hit” / “If You Score a Hit”

Act on these instructions if you score a weak or strong hit on a move (your move score beats one or both of the challenge dice).

“On a Weak Hit” / “If You Score a Weak Hit”

Act on these instructions if your move score is greater than one challenge die, but less than or equal to the other.

“On a Strong Hit” / “If You Score a Strong Hit”

Act on these instructions if your move score is greater than both challenge dice.

“On a Miss” / “If You Score a Miss”

Act on these instructions if your move score does not beat either of the challenge dice.

“Pay the Price”

When you roll a miss on a move, you’ll usually see a prompt to Pay the Price. This move helps you resolve the outcome of failure. If you’re playing without a GM, you make the most obvious or interesting bad outcome happen based on the current circumstances, roll on the Pay the Price table to see what happens, or Ask the Oracle. If you’re playing with a GM, they can decide what happens, ask you to roll on the table, or talk it with the group.

“Progress Move”

This is a special type of move to resolve the outcome of a goal or challenge. When you make a progress move, tally the number of filled boxes on your bonds progress track as your progress score. Only add fully filled boxes (those with four ticks). Then, roll your challenge dice, compare to your progress score, and resolve a strong hit, weak hit, or miss as normal. You may not burn momentum on this roll, and you are not affected by negative momentum.

“Reroll Any Dice”

After you roll your move, you may pick up and reroll your choice of any dice, including either or both of the challenge dice and your action die. Set aside the dice you intend to keep. You may only reroll once, using a single throw for all dice you choose to reroll. Choose carefully, because the new result for all dice must stand.

“Roll +[Stat]”

Add the value of the indicated stat to your action die. This is the basic action roll. Most moves indicate the stat you should use, such as “roll +iron”. If it doesn’t, or gives you a choice, use the most appropriate stat.

“Suffer -X”

Subtract this number from the indicated track. For example, “Suffer -1 supply” tells you to subtract 1 from your supply track. If a specific amount is open to interpretation, reduce the track as appropriate to the challenge faced.

RANK	AMOUNT
Troublesome	-1
Dangerous	-2
Formidable	-3
Extreme	-4
Epic	-5

When you are fighting a foe, they inflict harm and stress based on their rank. For example, a formidable foe inflicts 3 harm or stress.

When in doubt about the amount you suffer, just assume it is a dangerous result and adjust the associated track by -2.

“Take +X”

Add this number to the indicated track. For example, “Take +2 momentum” tells you to add 2 to your current momentum track.

Some assets may offer additional bonuses. Unless stated otherwise, this bonus is added to anything else you gain as a result of your move. If you take +2 momentum as part of a move, and you are using an asset which gives you +1 momentum on the same move, you take +3 momentum total.

“When You...”

This is the move trigger. When you do this thing, or encounter this situation, make the move. Only you, the character, makes moves. You or the GM don’t use moves for non-player characters or creatures. If you’re just checking to see if something happens or how someone acts, you can Ask the Oracle.

ADVENTURE MOVES

Adventure moves are used as you travel across perilous, investigate situations, and deal with threats.

FACE DANGER: ADVENTURE MOVE

When you attempt something risky or react to an imminent threat, envision your action and roll. If you act...

- ♦ With speed, agility, or precision: Roll +edge.
- ♦ With charm, loyalty, or courage: Roll +heart.
- ♦ With aggressive action, forceful defense, strength, or endurance: Roll +iron.
- ♦ With deception, stealth, or trickery: Roll +shadow.
- ♦ With expertise, insight, or observation: Roll +wits.

On a strong hit, you are successful. Take +1 momentum.

On a weak hit, you succeed, but face a troublesome cost. Choose one.

- ♦ You are delayed, lose advantage, or face a new danger: Suffer -1 momentum.
- ♦ You are tired or hurt: Endure Harm (1 harm).
- ♦ You are dispirited or afraid: Endure Stress (1 stress).
- ♦ You sacrifice resources: Suffer -1 supply.

On a miss, you fail, or your progress is undermined by a dramatic and costly turn of events. Pay the Price.

The Face Danger move is a catch-all for risky, dramatic, or complex actions not covered by another move. If you’re trying to overcome an obstacle or resist a threat, make this move to see what happens. You select which stat to roll based on how you address the challenge.

A strong hit means you succeed. You are in control. What do you do next?

A weak hit means you overcome the obstacle or avoid the threat, but not without cost. Choose an option and envision what happens next. You don't have complete control. Consider how the situation might escalate, perhaps forcing you to react with another move.

A miss means you are thwarted in your action, fail to oppose the threat, or make some progress but at great cost. You must Pay the Price.

SECURE AN ADVANTAGE : ADVENTURE MOVE

When you assess a situation, make preparations, or attempt to gain leverage, envision your action and roll. If you act...

- ♦ With speed, agility, or precision: Roll +edge.
- ♦ With charm, loyalty, or courage: Roll +heart.
- ♦ With aggressive action, forceful defense, strength, or endurance: Roll +iron.
- ♦ With deception, stealth, or trickery: Roll +shadow.
- ♦ With expertise, insight, or observation: Roll +wits.

On a strong hit, you gain advantage. Choose one.

- ♦ Take control: Make another move now (not a progress move); when you do, add +1.
- ♦ Prepare to act: Take +2 momentum.

On a weak hit, your advantage is short-lived. Take +1 momentum.

On a miss, you fail or your assumptions betray you. Pay the Price.

The structure of Secure an Advantage is similar to Face Danger. You envision your action and roll + your most relevant stat. This move, however, is proactive rather than reactive. You're evaluating the situation or strengthening your position.

This move gives you an opportunity to build your momentum or improve your chance of success on a subsequent move. It's a good move to make if you want to take a moment to size up the situation, or if you're acting to gain control. It will often encompass a moment in time—such as shoving your foe with your shield to setup an attack. Or, it can represent preparation or evaluation spanning minutes, hours, or even days, depending on the narrative circumstances.

A strong hit means you've identified an opportunity or gained the upper hand. You knocked your enemy down. You moved into position for an arrow shot. You built your trap. You scouted the best path through the mountains. Now it's time to build on your success.

A weak hit means your action has helped, but your advantage is fleeting or a new danger or complication is revealed. You pushed, and the world pushes back. What happens next?

A miss means your attempt to gain advantage has backfired. You acted too slowly, presumed too much, or were outwitted or outmatched. Pay the Price.

GATHER INFORMATION

When you search an area, ask questions, conduct an investigation, or follow a track, roll +wits. If you act within a community or ask questions of a person with whom you share a bond, add +1.

On a strong hit, you discover something helpful and specific. The path you must follow or action you must take to make progress is made clear. Envision what you learn (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and take +2 momentum.

On a weak hit, the information complicates your quest or introduces a new danger. Envision what you discover (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and take +1 momentum.

On a miss, your investigation unearths a dire threat or reveals an unwelcome truth that undermines your quest. Pay the Price.

Use this move when you're not sure of your next steps, when the trail has gone cold, when you make a careful search, or when you do fact-finding.

There's some overlap with other moves using +wits and involving knowledge, but each has their purpose. When you're forced to react with awareness or insight to deal with an immediate threat, that's Face Danger. When you size up your options or leverage your expertise and prepare to make a move, that's Secure an Advantage. When you're spending time searching, investigating, asking questions—especially related to a quest—that's when you Gather Information. Use whichever move is most appropriate to the circumstances and your intent.

A strong hit means you gain valuable new information. You know what you need to do next. Envision what you learn, or Ask the Oracle.

A weak hit means what you learned is unsettling or ambiguous. To move forward, you need to overcome new obstacles and see where the clues leads.

On a miss, some event or person acts against you, a dangerous new threat is revealed, or you learn of something which contradicts previous information or severely complicates your quest.

HEAL

When you treat an injury or ailment, roll +wits. If you are mending your own wounds, roll +wits or +iron, whichever is lower.

On a strong hit, your care is helpful. If you (or the ally under your care) have the wounded condition, you may clear it. Then, take or give up to +2 health.

On a weak hit, as above, but you must suffer -1 supply or -1 momentum (your choice).

On a miss, your aid is ineffective. Pay the Price.

When you tend to physical damage or sickness—for yourself, an ally, or an NPC—make this move. Healing might be represented by staunching bleeding, binding wounds, applying salves, or using herbs to brew a tonic.

Healing takes time. A few minutes for a quick treatment to get someone on their feet. Hours or perhaps days for more severe injuries. Use what seems appropriate to the circumstances, and consider how this downtime affects your quests and other things going on in your world.

A miss can mean you've caused harm rather than helping, or some perilous event interrupts your care.

NPCs who are not companions do not have a health track. When you attempt to Heal them, make this move and apply the result through the fiction. They will improve, or not, as appropriate to the move's outcome.

RESUPPLY

When you hunt, forage, or scavenge, roll +wits.

On a strong hit, you bolster your resources. Take +2 supply.

On a weak hit, take up to +2 supply, but suffer -1 momentum for each.

On a miss, you find nothing helpful. Pay the Price.

When you're in the field and need to bolster your supply track, make this move. Fictionally, this represents hunting and gathering. You might also search an area where supplies might be found, such as an abandoned camp or field of battle.

If you're adventuring with allies, you share the same supply value. When one of you makes this move, each of you adjust your supply track.

If you have the unprepared condition marked, you can't resupply. Instead, you need to find help in a community when you Sojourn.

MAKE CAMP

When you rest and recover for several hours in the wild, roll +supply.

On a strong hit, you and your allies may each choose two. On a weak hit, choose one.

- ♦ Recuperate: Take +1 health for you and any companions.
- ♦ Partake: Suffer -1 supply and take +1 health for you and any companions.
- ♦ Relax: Take +1 spirit.
- ♦ Focus: Take +1 momentum.
- ♦ Prepare: When you break camp, add +1 if you Undertake a Journey.

On a miss, you take no comfort. Pay the Price.

Making camp can be a purely narrative activity and can be abstracted or roleplayed as you like. However, if you need to recover from the struggle of your adventures while traveling through the wilds, make this move.

Unlike most moves, you will not roll + a stat. Instead, you roll +supply. This represents your access to provisions and gear. Huddling in your cloak on the cold ground is a different experience than a warm fire, good food, and a dry tent.

On a strong hit, choose two from the list. You may not select a single option more than once. On a weak hit, choose one. If you recuperate or partake, you can also apply those benefits to your companions (NPC assets).

If you are traveling with allies, only one of you makes this roll for the group. Each of you may then choose your own benefits on a strong or weak hit.

On a miss, you gain no benefits of your downtime. Perhaps you suffered troubling dreams (Endure Stress). Poor weather may have left you weary and cold (Endure Harm). Or, you were attacked. If in doubt, roll on the Pay the Price table or Ask the Oracle for inspiration. Depending on what you envision, you can play to see what happens, or jump to the next day as you continue on your journey the worse for wear.

UNDERTAKE A JOURNEY

When you travel across hazardous or unfamiliar lands, first set the rank of your journey.

- ♦ Troublesome journey: 3 progress per waypoint.
- ♦ Dangerous journey: 2 progress per waypoint.
- ♦ Formidable journey: 1 progress per waypoint.
- ♦ Extreme journey: 2 ticks per waypoint.
- ♦ Epic journey: 1 tick per waypoint.

Then, for each segment of your journey, roll +wits. If you are setting off from a community with which you share a bond, add +1 to your initial roll.

On a strong hit, you reach a waypoint. If the waypoint is unknown to you, envision it (Ask the Oracle if unsure). Then, choose one.

- ♦ You make good use of your resources: Mark progress.
- ♦ You move at speed: Mark progress and take +1 momentum, but suffer -1 supply.

On a weak hit, you reach a waypoint and mark progress, but suffer -1 supply.

On a miss, you are waylaid by a perilous event. Pay the Price.

This is Ironsworn's travel move. When you set off or push on toward a destination, make this move.

First, give your journey a rank. Decide how far—and how hazardous—it is based on the established fiction. If you're unsure, Ask the Oracle. Most of your journeys should be troublesome or dangerous. Formidable or extreme journeys might require weeks within your narrative, with appropriate stops, side quests, and adventures along the way. An epic journey is one of months, or even years. It is the journey of a lifetime.

If the journey is mundane—a relatively short distance through safe territory, —don't make this move. Just narrate the trip and jump to what happens or what you do when you arrive.

Along for the Ride?

If you are part of a caravan or party of NPCs, and aren't an active participant in the planning or execution of the journey, you won't make this move or track progress. The journey will be resolved in the fiction. You can Ask the Oracle to determine what happens en route or when you arrive.

Allies and Journeys

If you are traveling with allies, one of you makes the Undertake a Journey roll for each segment, and you share a progress track. The responsibility for leading the journey can switch from segment to segment as you like.

Your fellow travelers can assist by making the Aid Your Ally move. Perhaps they are scouting ahead or sustaining you with a lively song. They can also Resupply to represent foraging or hunting for supplies en route. Everyone should offer narrative color for what they do and see on the journey, even if they are not making moves.

Only the character making the move takes the momentum bonus on a strong hit. But, because your supply track is shared, each of you mark -1 supply when the acting character makes that choice on a strong hit or when they suffer a weak hit.

Waypoints

If you score a strong or weak hit on this move, you reach a waypoint. A waypoint is a feature of the landscape, a settlement, or a point-of-interest. Depending on the information you have or whether you have traveled this area before, a specific waypoint may be known to you. If it isn't, envision what you find. If you need inspiration, Ask the Oracle.

Depending on the pace of your story and your current situation, you may choose to focus on this waypoint. A settlement can offer roleplay opportunities or provide a chance to recuperate and provision via the Sojourn move. In the wilds, you might make moves such as Make Camp, Resupply, or Secure an Advantage. Or, you can play out a scene not involving moves as you interact with your allies or the world. Mix it up. Some waypoints will pass as a cinematic montage (doubtlessly depicted in a soaring helicopter shot as you trudge over jagged hills). Other waypoints offer opportunities to zoom in, enriching your story and your world.

When you roll a match, take the opportunity to introduce something unexpected. This could be an encounter, a surprising or dramatic feature of the landscape, or a turn of events in your current quest.

Marking Progress

When you score a hit and reach a waypoint, you mark progress per the rank of the journey. For example, on a dangerous journey you mark 2 progress (filling two boxes on your progress track) for each waypoint. When you feel you have accumulated enough progress and are ready to make a final push towards your destination, make the Reach Your Destination move.

Travel Time

Travel time can largely be abstracted. The time between waypoints might be hours or days, depending on the terrain and the distance. If it's important, make a judgment call based on what you know of your journey, or Ask the Oracle.

Mounts and Transport

Horses, mules, and transport (such as boats) influence the fiction of your journey—the logistics of travel and how long it takes. They do not provide a mechanical benefit unless you have an asset which gives you a bonus (such as a Horse companion).

Managing Resources

You can intersperse Resupply or Make Camp moves during your journey to manage your health, spirit and supply, or to create new scenes as diversions. Don't be concerned with using the Make Camp move as an automatic capstone to a day of travel. You can be assumed to rest and camp as appropriate without making the move, and you can roleplay out those scenes or gloss over them as you like. When you want the mechanical benefit of the Make Camp move, or you're interested in playing the move out through the fiction, then do it.

On a Miss

You do not mark progress on a miss. Instead, you encounter a new danger. You might face hazards through the weather, the terrain, encounters with creatures or people, attacks from your enemies, strange discoveries, or supernatural events. Decide what happens based on your current circumstances and surroundings, roll on the Pay the Price table, or Ask the Oracle for inspiration. Depending on your desired narrative pace, you can then play out the event to see what happens, or summarize and apply the consequences immediately.

For example, you roll a miss and decide you encounter a broad, wild river which must be crossed to continue on your journey. If you want to focus on how you deal with the situation, play to see what happens by making moves. You might Secure an Advantage by exploring upriver for a ford and then Face Danger to cross. Or, if want to quickly push the story forward, you could fast-forward to a perilous outcome such as losing some provisions during the crossing (suffer - supply). Mix things up, especially on long journeys.

REACH YOUR DESTINATION

Progress Move

When your journey comes to an end, roll the challenge dice and compare to your progress. Momentum is ignored on this roll.

On a strong hit, the situation at your destination favors you. Choose one.

- ♦ Make another move now (not a progress move), and add +1.
 - ♦ Take +1 momentum.
-

On a weak hit, you arrive but face an unforeseen hazard or complication. Envision what you find (Ask the Oracle if unsure).

On a miss, you have gone hopelessly astray, your objective is lost to you, or you were misled about your destination. If your journey continues, clear all but one filled progress, and raise the journey's rank by one (if not already epic).

When you have made progress on your journey progress track and are ready to complete your expedition, make this move. Since this is a progress move, you tally the number of filled boxes on your progress track. This is your progress score. Only add fully filled boxes (those with four ticks). Then, roll your challenge dice, compare to your progress score, and resolve a strong hit, weak hit, or miss as normal. You may not burn momentum on this roll, and you are not affected by negative momentum.

When you score a strong hit, you arrive at your destination and are well-positioned for success. This should be reflected in the mechanical benefit offered by the move, but also in how you envision your arrival. If this has been a long, arduous journey, make this moment feel rewarding.

On a weak hit, something complicates your arrival or your next steps. Things are not what you expected, or a new danger reveals itself. Perhaps the village is occupied by a raiding party, or the mystic whose council you sought is initially hostile to you. Envision what you find and play to see what happens.

On a miss, something has gone horribly wrong. You realize you are off-course, you had bad information about your destination, or you face a turn of events undermining your purpose here. Depending on the circumstances, this might mean your journey ends in failure, or that you must push on while clearing all but one of your filled progress and raising the journey's rank.

If you are traveling with allies, one of you makes this move. Each of you benefit (or suffer) from the narrative outcome of the roll. Only the character making the move gets the mechanical benefit of a strong hit.

RELATIONSHIP MOVES

Relationship moves are made as you interact with others in the world, fight duels, form bonds, support your allies, and determine the ultimate fate of your character.

COMPEL : RELATIONSHIP MOVE

When you attempt to persuade someone to do something, envision your approach and roll. If you...

- ♦ Charm, pacify, barter, or convince: Roll +heart (add +1 if you share a bond).
- ♦ Threaten or incite: Roll +iron.
- ♦ Lie or swindle: Roll +shadow.

On a strong hit, they'll do what you want or share what they know. Take +1 momentum. If you use this exchange to Gather Information, make that move now and add +1.

On a weak hit, as above, but they ask something of you in return. Envision what they want (Ask the Oracle if unsure).

On a miss, they refuse or make a demand which costs you greatly. Pay the Price...

When you act to persuade someone to do as you ask, or give you something, make this move. It might be through bargaining, or intimidation, charm, diplomacy, or trickery. Use the appropriate stat based on your approach, and roll to see what happens.

This move doesn't give you free rein to control the actions of other characters in your world. Remember: Fiction first. Consider their motivations. What is your leverage over them? What do they stand to gain or avoid? Do you have an existing relationship? If your argument has no merit, or your threat or promise carries no weight, you can't make this move. You can't intimidate your way out of a situation where you are at a clear disadvantage. You can't barter when you have nothing of value to offer. If you are unsure, Ask the Oracle, "Would they consider this?" If the answer is yes, make the move.

On the other hand, if their positive response is all but guaranteed—you are acting obviously in their best interest or offering a trade of fair value—don't make this move. Just make it happen. Save the move for times when the situation is uncertain and dramatic.

On a weak hit, success is hinged on their counter-proposal. Again, look to the fiction. What would they want? What would satisfy their concerns or motivate them to comply? If you accept their offer, you gain ground. If not, you've encountered an obstacle in your quest and need to find another path forward.

If you promise them something as part of this move, but then fail to do as you promised, they should respond accordingly. Perhaps it means a rude welcome when next you return to this community. If they are powerful, they may even act against you. If you share a bond, you would most certainly Test Your Bond. Your actions, good or bad, should have ramifications for your story beyond the scope of the move.

On a miss, they are insulted, angered, inflexible, see through your lies, or demand something of you which costs you dearly. Their response should introduce new dangers or complications.

Compel may also be used to bring combat to a non-violent conclusion. Your approach dictates the stat you use—typically +iron when you threaten with further violence, +heart when you attempt to surrender or reason with them, and +shadow when you use trickery. Your foe must have a reason to be open to your approach. If unsure, Ask the Oracle.

SOJOURN

When you spend time in a community seeking assistance, roll +heart. If you share a bond, add +1.

On strong hit, you and your allies may each choose two from within the categories below. On a weak hit, choose one. If you share a bond, choose one more.

On a hit, you and your allies may each focus on one of your chosen recover actions and roll +heart again. If you share a bond, add +1. On a strong hit, take +2 more for that action. On a weak hit, take +1 more. On a miss, it goes badly and you lose all benefits for that action.

Clear a Condition

- ♦ Mend: Clear a wounded debility and take +1 health.
- ♦ Hearten: Clear a shaken debility and take +1 spirit.
- ♦ Equip: Clear an unprepared debility and take +1 supply.

Recover

- ♦ Recuperate: Take +2 health for yourself and any companions.
- ♦ Consort: Take +2 spirit.
- ♦ Provision: Take +2 supply.
- ♦ Plan: Take +2 momentum.

Provide Aid

- ♦ Take a quest: Envision what this community needs, or what trouble it is facing (Ask the Oracle if unsure). If you chose to help, Swear an Iron Vow and add +1.

On a miss, you find no help here. Pay the Price.

When you rest, replenish, and share fellowship within a community, make this move. Depending on your level of success, you can choose one or more debilities to clear or tracks to increase. If you share a bond with this community and score a hit, you may select one more.

You may select an option only once. If you recuperate, you can also apply those benefits to your companions (NPC assets). If you Sojourn with allies, only one of you makes this move, but all of you can make your own choices on a strong or weak hit.

Make this move once when visiting a community. Your Sojourn should require several hours or several days, depending on your current circumstances and level of aid and recovery required.

On a hit, this move also includes an option to roll again for one of your selected recover actions. The second roll either provides a bonus to that activity (on a hit), or causes you to lose all benefits for your recovery. For example, if you are suffering from low spirit, you might choose to focus on the consort action, representing time in the mead hall or intimacy with a lover. Roll +heart again, and take the bonus if you score a hit.

You should envision what makes this community and its people unique. Give every community at least one memorable characteristic. If you need inspiration, Ask the Oracle. You will find creative prompts, along with generators for community names and troubles in chapter 6.

Narratively, you can imagine much of the time in this community passing as a montage. If you choose to focus on a recovery action, zoom into that scene and envision what happens. You might be in the healer's house, at the market, dancing at a festival, or speaking with the clan leader and making plans. Envision how this scene begins, make your roll, and then narrate the conclusion of the scene—good or bad—based on the result of your focus roll.

You can also perform additional moves while in the community. If you need to Gather Information, Compel someone, or Draw the Circle to resolve a feud, zoom into those scenes and play to see what happens. Sojourn is an overarching move that sets the tone for your stay and defines the mechanics of your recovery. It is not the only move you can make.

On a miss, something goes wrong. You are not welcomed. The citizens are hostile to you. Your dark mood alienates you. A perilous event threatens you all. Envision what happens based on your current circumstances, or Ask the Oracle.

DRAW THE CIRCLE

When you challenge someone to a formal duel, or accept a challenge, roll +heart. If you share a bond with this community, add +1.

On a strong hit, take +1 momentum. You may also choose up to three boasts and take +1 momentum for each.

On a weak hit, you may choose one boast in exchange for +1 momentum.

- ♦ Grant first strike: Your foe has initiative.
- ♦ Bare yourself: Take no benefit of armor or shield; your foe's harm is +1.
- ♦ Hold no iron: Take no benefit of weapons; your harm is 1.
- ♦ Bloody yourself: Endure Harm (1 harm).
- ♦ To the death: One way or another, this fight must end with death.

On a miss, you begin the duel at a disadvantage. Your foe has initiative. Pay the Price.

Then, make moves to resolve the fight. If you are the victor, you may make a lawful demand, and your opponent must comply or forfeit their honor and standing. If you refuse the challenge, surrender, or are defeated, they make a demand of you.

When you challenge someone or accept a challenge, you each trace one-half of the outline of a circle into the ground with the point of an iron blade. Then, you face each other in the center of the circle and fight.

You setup your foe's progress track per the Enter the Fray move, but use this move instead of Enter the Fray to begin the fight. You have initiative at the start of combat unless you score a miss or choose the option to grant first strike.

Duels are usually stopped when one of the duelists surrenders or is clearly defeated. The victor may then make a demand which the loser must abide by. Not complying with this demand means ostracism and shame. If you lose a duel, envision what your opponent demands of you. If you're unsure, Ask the Oracle. Then, do it or face the narrative cost of your dishonor.

Duels may also be to the death. If one of the combatants declares their intent to fight to the death, the other must agree or forfeit.

FORGE A BOND

When you spend significant time with a person or community, stand together to face hardships, or make sacrifices for their cause, you can attempt to create a bond. When you do, roll +heart. If you make this move after you successfully Fulfill Your Vow to their benefit, you may reroll any dice.

On a strong hit, make note of the bond, mark a tick on your bond progress track, and choose one.

- ♦ Take +1 spirit.
 - ♦ Take +2 momentum.
-

On a weak hit, they ask something more of you first. Envision what it is (Ask the Oracle if unsure), do it (or Swear an Iron Vow), and mark the bond. If you decline or fail, Pay the Price.

On a miss, you are refused. Pay the Price.

Bonds provide a story benefit by enriching your interactions and creating connections with a recurring cast of characters and familiar places. They also provide mechanical benefits by giving you adds when you make moves such as Sojourn or Compel. And, perhaps most importantly, your bonds help determine your ultimate fate when you retire from adventuring and Write Your Epilogue.

Bonds can be created through narrative circumstances or through sworn vows. If you've established a strong relationship with a person or community, you may Forge a Bond to give it significance. If you make this move after you successfully Fulfill Your Vow in service to them, you have proven yourself worthy and may reroll any dice.

When you Forge a Bond and score a strong hit, mark a tick on your bond progress track and make note of your bond.

On a weak hit, they ask more of you. It might be a task, an item, a concession, or even a vow. Envision what they need, or Ask the Oracle. If you do it, or Swear an Iron Vow, you can mark the bond.

On a miss, they have refused you. Why? The answer should introduce new complications or dangers.

Bonds and the Fiction

In the fiction of your world, bonds can be ceremonial. If your bond is with a person, perhaps you trade gifts. When you form a bond with a community, they may honor you in their own way. Envision what these ceremonies look like to add color and texture to the setting.

Also, respect the narrative weight of a bond. Don't declare a bond with everyone in sight to add more ticks to your bond progress track. Your bonds represent true, deep connections.

Bonds And Allies

If you and your allies act together to Forge a Bond with an NPC or community, only one of you makes the move. Others can Aid Your Ally to provide support. If you are successful, each of you may mark a tick on your bond progress track. Only the character making the move takes the mechanical benefits of a strong hit (+1 spirit or +2 momentum).

Bonds can also be made between allies. One of you makes the move, and both of you may mark the bond on a hit. If you score a weak hit, your ally may decide what they ask of you. On a miss, something still stands between you. What is it? What must you do to form a deeper connection?

TEST YOUR BOND

When your bond is tested through conflict, betrayal, or circumstance, roll +heart.

On a strong hit, this test has strengthened your bond. Choose one.

- ♦ Take +1 spirit.
 - ♦ Take +2 momentum.
-

On a weak hit, your bond is fragile and you must prove your loyalty. Envision what they ask of you (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and do it (or Swear an Iron Vow). If you decline or fail, clear the bond and Pay the Price.

On a miss, or if you have no interest in maintaining this relationship, clear the bond and Pay the Price.

Bonds are not necessarily everlasting. Events in your story may cause your bond to be tested. How strong is your commitment? If you seek to maintain this bond, at what cost? When you are forced to act against a community or person you share a bond with, fail in a crucial task for them, or they break faith with you, make this move.

You should Test Your Bond within the community or in the company of the person with whom you share the bond. If an incident forces this test, but you aren't in a position to resolve it, make a note. Then, make this move when you next come in contact. If extended time passes without making the test (days, weeks, or months, depending on the circumstance), clear the bond and be done with it.

If you and your allies share a bond with an NPC or community, and you act together to Test Your Bond, only one of you makes this move.

AID YOUR ALLY

When you Secure an Advantage in direct support of an ally, and score a hit, they (instead of you) can take the benefits of the move. If you are in combat and score a strong hit, you and your ally have initiative.

When you take an action to aid an ally (another player's character) through the Secure an Advantage move, you can hand over the benefits of that move to your ally. This represents setting your ally up for success through a supporting action. You might be distracting a foe in combat, scouting ahead on a journey, or giving them encouragement as you stand against a dire threat.

If you score a strong hit when you Secure an Advantage, your ally makes the choice between +2 momentum or making an immediate move with a +1 add. If you have an asset which gives you any additional benefits on the outcome of a Secure an Advantage move, your ally also takes those benefits (instead of you).

In combat, this is a proactive move, made when you have initiative. If you score a strong hit, you and your ally both take or retain initiative.

On a weak hit when you Secure an Advantage, your ally takes +1 momentum. But, this advantage is fleeting or your situation becomes more complicated or dangerous. If you are in combat, you both lose initiative.

On a miss, one or both of you should Pay the Price as appropriate to the circumstances and your intent when making the move. If in doubt, Ask the Oracle. As with a weak hit, you both lose initiative when in combat.

If multiple characters make this move to contribute to an ally action, all Secure an Advantage bonuses will stack. As long as someone scores a strong hit, the target character can take or retain initiative.

Don't ping pong this move back and forth between two characters in an attempt to build momentum. Envision what you are doing to Aid Your Ally, make the Secure an Advantage move, resolve it, and hand the reins over to your ally as they leverage the advantage. Keep it moving. Make things happen

WRITE YOUR EPILOGUE

Progress Move

When you retire from your life as Ironsworn, envision two things: What you hope for, and what you fear. Then, roll the challenge dice and compare to your bonds. Momentum is ignored on this roll.

On a strong hit, things come to pass as you hoped.

On a weak hit, your life takes an unexpected turn, but not necessarily for the worse. You find yourself spending your days with someone or in a place you did not foresee. Envision it (Ask the Oracle if unsure).

On a miss, your fears are realized.

You make this move only once—when all your vows are fulfilled or forsaken and you choose to end your character's adventuring life. For better or worse, the bonds you've made will echo through your days. How have you left your mark? Where are you welcomed and where are you shunned? What remains of you when your quests are at an end?

This is a progress move. Tally the number of filled boxes on your bonds progress track as your progress score. Only add fully filled boxes (those with four ticks). Then, roll your challenge dice, compare to your progress score, and resolve a strong hit, weak hit, or miss as normal. You may not burn momentum on this roll, and you are not affected by negative momentum.

Based on the result of this move, envision how you spend the remainder of your days.

COMBAT MOVES

When there are no other options, when the sword slips free of its sheath, when the arrow is nocked, when the shield is brought to bear, make these moves.

ENTER THE FRAY

When you enter into combat, first set the rank of each of your foes.

- ♦ Troublesome foe: 3 progress per harm; inflicts 1 harm.
- ♦ Dangerous foe: 2 progress per harm; inflicts 2 harm.
- ♦ Formidable foe: 1 progress per harm; inflicts 3 harm.
- ♦ Extreme foe: 2 ticks per harm; inflicts 4 harm.
- ♦ Epic foe: 1 tick per harm; inflicts 5 harm.

Then, roll to determine who is in control. If you are...

- ♦ Facing off against your foe: Roll +heart.
- ♦ Moving into position against an unaware foe, or striking without warning: Roll +shadow.
- ♦ Ambushed: Roll +wits.

On a strong hit, take +2 momentum. You have initiative.

On a weak hit, choose one.

- ♦ Bolster your position: Take +2 momentum.
 - ♦ Prepare to act: Take initiative.
-

On a miss, combat begins with you at a disadvantage. Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Make this move when combat is joined. Set up your progress tracks for your foes and roll to see who is initially in control. Then, play to see what happens.

If you are fighting with allies, each of you make your own move to Enter the Fray. The outcome determines your initial positioning and readiness. You and the other players then envision the scene and make moves as appropriate. If you have initiative, you are positioned to make proactive moves. If not, you make moves to defend against attacks or get into position. If you and your allies are fighting against common enemies, you share progress tracks and mark the harm you each inflict.

If you are fighting a group of troublesome or dangerous foes, you can combine them into a single progress track. This is called a pack. Managing your progress against a pack is easier than tracking them as individuals, and will make combat go a bit faster. For a small pack (about 3 to 5), increase the rank by one. For a large pack (about 6 to 10) increase the rank by two. If you are facing more than 10 troublesome or dangerous foes, group them into smaller packs and associated progress tracks as appropriate.

STRIKE

When you have initiative and attack in close quarters, roll +iron When you have initiative and attack at range, roll +edge.

On a strong hit, inflict +1 harm. You retain initiative.

On a weak hit, inflict your harm and lose initiative.

On a miss, your attack fails and you must Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Make this move when you have initiative and act to inflict harm on your foe. Narratively, this move might represent a focused moment in time—a single sweep of your axe or the flight of an arrow. Or, it can depict a flurry of attacks as you put your opponent on the defensive.

On a strong hit, you strike true. By default you inflict 2 harm if you are armed with a deadly weapon (such as a sword, axe, spear, or bow), and 1 harm if not. A strong hit on this move gives you an additional +1 harm (so, 3 harm with a deadly weapon). You may also have additional bonuses provided by assets.

Each point of harm you inflict is marked as progress on your foe's progress track, as appropriate to their rank. For example, each point of harm equals 2 ticks when fighting an extreme enemy, or 2 full progress boxes when fighting a dangerous enemy.

Narratively, a strong hit represents wounding your enemy or wearing them down. You have initiative and can make your next move. If this attack was intended as a decisive blow, you can attempt to End the Fight.

On a weak hit, you've done some damage but have overextended or your foe counters. You mark your harm, and your foe has initiative. What do they do next?

On a miss, you must Pay the Price. Your opponent strikes back and you Endure Harm. You lose position or advantage and suffer -momentum. You face a new or intensified danger. A companion or ally is put in harm's way. Your weapon is dropped or broken. Let the outcome flow out of the fiction, or roll on the Pay the Price table to see what happens.

CLASH

When your foe has initiative and you fight with them in close quarters, roll +iron. When you exchange a volley at range, or shoot at an advancing foe, roll +edge.

On a strong hit, inflict your harm and choose one. You have the initiative.

- ♦ You bolster your position: Take +1 momentum.
 - ♦ You find an opening: Inflict +1 harm.
-

On a weak hit, inflict your harm, but then Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

On a miss, you are outmatched and must Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

When your foe has initiative and attacks, and you choose to fight back, make this move.

First, envision your action and the fiction of the exchange. Is this a focused, dramatic moment where you each seek an opening? Or is it a flurry of attacks and parries, advances and retreats? The outcome of the Clash determines if your foe presses their advantage, or if you take control of the fight.

On a strong hit, you inflict your harm and steal back initiative. On a weak hit, you manage to inflict harm, but your foe retains initiative and you must Pay the Price. The price might be that you Endure Harm as your foe counters. Or, you may face some other dramatic outcome as appropriate to the current situation and your foe's intent.

On a miss, you fail to inflict harm and must Pay the Price. This fight is turning against you.

As with the Strike move, each point of harm you inflict is marked on your foe's progress track, as appropriate to their rank.

If you aren't actively fighting back—you're just trying to avoid the attack or seeking cover—you should Face Danger instead of Clash. Using that move gives you more flexibility to bring a favored stat into play, and you suffer a relatively minor cost on a weak hit. Unfortunately, you also give up the opportunity to inflict harm on your foe.

If you ever respond to an attack by just taking the hit, that's not a move. The outcome isn't in much doubt. Pay the Price.

TURN THE TIDE

Once per fight, when you risk it all, you may steal initiative from your foe to make a move (not a progress move). When you do, add +1 and take +1 momentum on a hit.

If you fail to score a hit on that move, you must suffer a dire outcome. Pay the Price.

This move represents a last ditch effort to recover control of the fight. It is that moment when all seems lost, but the hero somehow rallies.

Turn the Tide lets you take initiative and make a move. The move can be whatever is appropriate under the circumstance—likely Strike or Secure an Advantage. Roll the move (add +1), and act on the results. If you've scored a hit, you may take an additional +1 momentum. Then, play to see what happens. Hopefully this bold action is a turning point for the fight.

Here's the catch: If you score a miss when you make your move, you should add extra severity to the consequences. You might face additional harm. Your weapon is broken. Your companion is grievously wounded. Consider the result of your failure and give it teeth. If in doubt, Ask the Oracle.

Narratively, this is a dramatic moment. Focus on it. Envision your character's action. You struggle to your feet and raise your sword, your eyes hardening with determination. You spur your mount into a desperate charge. You grab your opponent's blade in your bare hand. You pull the dagger from your boot and lunge. Or, perhaps you state your name, lament the killing of your father, and tell your foe to prepare for death.

END THE FIGHT

Progress Move

When you make a move to take decisive action, and score a strong hit, you may resolve the outcome of this fight. If you do, roll the challenge dice and compare to your progress. Momentum is ignored on this roll.

On a strong hit, this foe is no longer in the fight. They are killed, out of action, flee, or surrender as appropriate to the situation and your intent (Ask the Oracle if unsure).

On a weak hit, as above, but you must also choose one.

- ♦ It's worse than you thought: Endure Harm.
- ♦ You are overcome: Endure Stress.
- ♦ Your victory is short-lived: A new danger or foe appears, or an existing danger worsens.
- ♦ You suffer collateral damage: Something of value is lost or broken, or someone important must pay the cost.
- ♦ You'll pay for it: An objective falls out of reach.
- ♦ Others won't forget: You are marked for vengeance.

On a miss, you have lost this fight. Pay the Price.

End the Fight fulfills your previous moves and the progress you have made in this scene. This is the all-or-nothing moment where the fight is decided. Is your foe defeated? Is your victory a pyrrhic one, and tastes of ash? Does your foe suddenly turn your assumed advantage against you?

Since this is a progress move, you add the number of filled boxes on your progress track for this foe, whether it's a single enemy or a pack. This is your progress score. Only add fully filled boxes (those with four ticks). Then, roll your challenge dice, compare to your progress score, and resolve a strong hit, weak hit, or miss as normal. You may not burn momentum on this roll, and you are not affected by negative momentum.

You can End the Fight only after you score a strong hit on a preceding move. Your setup move can be any action, but should be framed as a decisive maneuver or response, intended to bring the fight to a close.

If you find yourself struggling against a tide of weak hits and misses, unable to make this move, consider building and then burning momentum to get back control. Use your favored stats and assets to improve your chances. However, keep in mind that End the Fight is not the only way to resolve a combat scene. You can flee. You can give up. You can negotiate or force a surrender. End the Fight represents the conclusion of a bloody, desperate combat, with both sides committed to see it through.

On a strong hit, envision how this foe is defeated. If you still face other foes (using separate progress tracks), you have initiative and the fight continues.

If you score a weak hit, your victory comes at a cost. Choose a listed outcome as appropriate to the circumstances. Then, consider the narrative implications of your choice and how it impacts what happens next.

On a miss, you should face a dramatic and dire consequence. Are you captured? Mortally wounded and left for dead? Is someone under your protection killed? Is an important objective or vow now lost to you? Make a choice as appropriate to the situation and the intent of your foe, or roll on the Pay the Price table and interpret the result as severe. Make it hurt.

When you and your allies are fighting against a common foe, you share a progress track. Any of you may attempt to End the Fight. If you then score a weak hit or miss, consider how your choice impacts the group and who suffers the cost as appropriate to the situation.

BATTLE

When you fight a battle, and it happens in a blur, envision your objective and roll. If you primarily...

- ♦ Fight at range, or using your speed and the terrain to your advantage: Roll +edge.
- ♦ Fight depending on your courage, allies, or companions: Roll +heart.
- ♦ Fight in close to overpower your opponents: Roll +iron.
- ♦ Fight using trickery to befuddle your opponents: Roll +shadow.
- ♦ Fight using careful tactics to outsmart your opponents: Roll +wits.

On a strong hit, you achieve your objective unconditionally. Take +2 momentum.

On a weak hit, you achieve your objective, but not without cost. Pay the Price.

On a miss, you are defeated and the objective is lost to you. Pay the Price.

This move is used as an alternative to a detailed combat scene. When you want to zoom out and resolve a fight in a single roll, make this move.

First, consider your objective. Are you trying to defeat your foes? Hold them off until reinforcements arrive? Defend a person or place? Reach a position? Envision the situation, your strategy, and what you intend to gain or avoid.

Then, roll and envision the outcome. A strong hit is unconditional success. Your foes are defeated, surrender, flee, or give up their objectives as appropriate to the situation and your goals for the fight.

A weak hit means you've achieved your overall objective, but at some cost. Since this is the resolution of an extended scene, the price you pay should be dramatic and meaningful. This can include suffering a significant amount of harm, failing to achieve a secondary goal, or encountering a new danger or complication. If in doubt, roll on the Pay the Price table, or you may pick from the weak hit options in the End the Fight move.

A miss on the Battle move should have dire ramifications on your character and your quest. This objective is lost to you. What does that mean? Are you captured? Gravely wounded? Have you failed to save a loved one? Is the settlement overrun by raiders? Must you Forsake Your Vow? Consider the situation and the intent of your foe, and Pay the Price. Make it hurt.

Use the Battle move as you like. If your story doesn't emphasize fighting, or you'd rather generally abstract combat encounters, you can use this move exclusively. You can also drop it into some portion of a larger scene. Perhaps you Battle to quickly deal with lesser foes, then handle the fight against their leader with standard combat moves. The mix of Battle moves and more detailed fight scenes can help you pace your gaming sessions and let you focus on what is interesting or important.

Battling Alongside Allies

When you and your allies fight together, only one of you makes the move. Others can make the Aid Your Ally move, using stats as detailed in Battle. Resolve those moves first, and then Battle.

On a strong hit, all of you benefit from the narrative success, but only the character making the move gains the momentum bonus. On a weak hit or miss, all of you suffer an outcome as appropriate to the situation. When in doubt, Ask the Oracle.

OTHER MOVES IN COMBAT

You won't rely solely on combat moves in a fight. Make other moves as appropriate to the situation, your intent, and the actions of your foes.

Face Danger : Combat Move

Make this move when you seek to avoid or overcome an obstacle in combat, or when you choose to focus on defense.

- ♦ You leap over a gully as you ride into battle. Face Danger +edge.

- ♦ The massive elder bear roars, spittle flying. Will you muster your courage against this terrifying beast? Face Danger +heart.

- ♦ You bring up your shield as the raider presses her attack, standing your ground against the withering axe blows. Face Danger +iron.

If this is a proactive move—you are overcoming an obstacle—make it when you have initiative. If this is a reactive move—you are trying to avoid an immediate threat—your foe likely has the initiative.

When would you Face Danger instead of Clash against an attack? If you are fighting back, that's probably Clash. If you focusing on defense, getting out of the way, ducking behind your shield, or taking cover, that's Face Danger. It's less risky, since you can leverage a favored stat and the penalty on a weak hit is relatively mild. Unlike Clash, you won't have an opportunity to inflict immediate harm on a hit, but a strong hit with Face Danger can put you in good position for a follow-up move.

You'll also likely Face Danger if your foe is trying to gain advantage through an action other than a direct attack. They move to the trees to get a shot at you from cover. Or they taunt you, trying to provoke you into a reckless response. Perhaps they shove at you, putting you off-balance for a follow-up attack. What do you do? Envision it, then make the move. If you fail to score a hit, you likely suffer a loss of momentum to represent this setback. Your foe has initiative and will try to press their advantage.

Face Danger might also be used to flee combat altogether. If you have a path and means to escape, make this move to see if you get away.

Finally, in cases where an enemy represents a minor obstacle, Face Danger can be used to avoid combat or as a means of resolving your action against a mundane foe. For example, you can Face Danger to sneak past an enemy or run away from a potential fight. If you are dealing with a minor foe from a position of clear advantage, such as firing an arrow from hiding, you can Face Danger to see what happens. In either case, a miss on this move might force you to Enter the Fray.

Secure an Advantage : Combat Move

This move is made in combat when you try to gain some leverage, improve your position, or setup another move. For example:

- ♦ You take careful aim before shooting. Secure an Advantage +wits.
- ♦ You perform a sly feint, trying to put your opponent off balance and create an opening. Secure an Advantage +shadow.
- ♦ You attempt to dishearten your foe with an intimidating roar as you charge. Secure an Advantage +iron.

Secure an Advantage can be used whenever you have initiative, or as a means of establishing a favorable position prior to the fight. Mechanically, it's a powerful move for building your momentum track toward a decisive action. Narratively, it's a great way to bring cinematic action into the scene.

When you want to Secure an Advantage, picture the situation. Consider the terrain, your weapons, your position, and your fighting style and approach. Consider your enemy, and their tactics and readiness. Where is there an opportunity? Envision your action, then make the move.

Compel : Combat Move

Compel can be used as a shortcut to ending a combat. You don't have to make the End the Fight move to surrender or negotiate a truce. End the Fight is the outcome of a desperate, probably bloody, skirmish. If you or your foe have other objectives, give Compel a try.

- ♦ You attempt to force your foe to surrender. Compel +iron.
- ♦ You try to surrender, reason or negotiate. Compel +heart.
- ♦ You trick your foe into giving up the fight. Compel +shadow.

Compel needs to be supported by the fiction. What is your foe's intent? How do they feel about you? Are you a hated enemy? A potential meal? What are they willing to risk to end you? Has the fight gone in their favor or against them? What leverage do you have? If there's no upside for them, you can't make this move. If you aren't sure, Ask the Oracle before you Compel.

Compel might be used proactively (when you have initiative) or reactively (when your foe has it) depending on the circumstances. Offering to surrender is a reactive response, and can be done when you don't have initiative. Attempting to Compel your foe to give up the fight is a proactive move made when you are in control.

Aid Your Ally : Combat Move

This move is an obvious choice when you want to bolster your ally's actions. Envision what you do to help them, make the Secure an Advantage move, and let them take the benefits of the outcome.

You should have initiative before you attempt to Aid Your Ally. On a strong hit, both of you then take or retain initiative. This is a huge advantage for your ally if they were having a difficult time making progress against their foe. On a weak hit or miss, you both lose initiative.

Suffer Moves : Combat Move

Make Suffer moves as appropriate when you face the outcome of your actions within a combat scene.

If you make a suffer move and score a strong hit, you may take or retain initiative—even if you scored a weak hit or miss on the preceding move. However, this opportunity does not overrule the fiction of the moment. If you are out of action and Face Death, you aren't likely to come springing back into the fight. If you do score a strong hit on a suffer move, consider what happens next and the moves you may make in the context of the situation.

Pay the Price : Combat Move

Being forced to make the Endure Harm move is the obvious result when you must Pay the Price in a fight, but there's much more that can happen in a dynamic combat situation. You lose your footing. You drop your weapon. Your shield is shattered. A goal is lost to you. A companion or ally is injured. You are put in a perilous position. A new threat reveals itself.

Mix it up. Make combat exciting and cinematic. Whatever happens, make the outcome one you wish you had avoided. If in doubt, roll on the Pay the Price table or Ask the Oracle.

Ask the Oracle : Combat Move

In solo and co-op play, you can Ask the Oracle about your foe's objectives, tactics, and specific actions. The oracle can also help determine the outcome of events or introduce new twists.

Use this move sparingly. For the most part, trust your instincts. Your actions trigger reactions. Who are you fighting? What do they want? What do they do next? Your first impulse is often the right one.

Chapter 6 includes the Combat Action oracle which you can use to prompt an NPC action or response in a fight. You can also leverage the description of your foe's tactics in chapter 5 to guide their behavior.

Be mindful of your surroundings and other characters. Ask questions. "Can I take cover here?", "Is the river shallow enough to cross?", "Do the villagers flee?" Consider your foe's actions and your opportunities in the context of the environment.

In guided play, the GM is your oracle. When you have questions about what happens next, look to them, or talk it out at the table. Your GM is free to use the Ask the Oracle move to answer questions.

SUFFER MOVES

These moves are made as a result of a perilous event or bad outcome on other moves. They represent what happens to you, and how you hold up against the trauma.

- ♦ When you face physical damage, make the Endure Harm move.
- ♦ When you score a miss on the Endure Harm move, and your health is at 0, you may need to Face Death.
- ♦ When your companion is exposed to harm, make the Companion Endure Harm move.
- ♦ When you are demoralized, afraid, or acting against your best intentions, make the Endure Stress move.
- ♦ When you score a miss on the Endure Stress move, and your spirit is at 0, you may need to Face Desolation.
- ♦ When your supply falls to 0, all characters make the Out of Supply move. If you are at 0 supply and suffer additional -supply, you each need to reduce your health, spirit, or momentum tracks by that amount.
- ♦ When your momentum track is at its minimum (-6), and you suffer additional -momentum, make the Face a Setback move.

Making a suffer move is not, however, the only possible outcome of a failure. You might face story complications or new dangers. You might lose an item. Your relationship with another character might be tested. Keep it fresh and interesting. When in doubt, Ask the Oracle.

ENDURE HARM

When you face physical damage, suffer -health equal to your foe's rank or as appropriate to the situation. If your health is 0, suffer -momentum equal to any remaining -health.

Then, roll +health or +iron, whichever is higher.

On a strong hit, choose one.

- ♦ Shake it off: If your health is greater than 0, suffer -1 momentum in exchange for +1 health.
- ♦ Embrace the pain: Take +1 momentum.

On a weak hit, you press on.

On a miss, also suffer -1 momentum. If you are at 0 health, you must mark wounded or maimed (if currently unmarked) or roll on the following table.

ROLL	RESULT
1-10	The harm is mortal. Face Death.
11-20	You are dying. You need to Heal within an hour or two, or Face Death.
21-35	You are unconscious and out of action. If left alone, you come back to your senses in an hour or two. If you are vulnerable to a foe not inclined to show mercy, Face Death.
36-50	You are reeling and fighting to stay conscious. If you engage in any vigorous activity (such as running or fighting) before taking a breather for a few minutes, roll on this table again (before resolving the other move).
51-00	You are battered but still standing.

If you fail to defend against an attack, suffer an injury, are stricken with disease or sickness, or bear the brunt of an arduous action, make this move.

When you are forced to Pay the Price, you should Endure Harm if physical damage is an obvious and dramatic outcome of the current situation. Also, some moves and assets will direct you to Endure Harm as a cost or concession, and may indicate a specific amount of harm to suffer.

If you face an attack by an NPC foe, you use their rank to determine the amount of harm dealt. If the amount of harm is not indicated or obvious, use the following guidelines.

- ♦ Troublesome (1 harm): An attack by a minor foe, a painful injury, or a tiring effort.
- ♦ Dangerous (2 harm): An attack by a skilled foe or deadly creature, a nasty injury, or a demanding effort.
- ♦ Formidable (3 harm): An attack by an exceptional foe or mighty creature, a serious injury, or an exhausting effort.
- ♦ Extreme (4 harm): An overwhelming attack by a monster or beast, a grievous injury, or a debilitating effort.
- ♦ Epic (5 harm): An attack by a legendary foe of mythic power, a horrific injury, or a consuming effort.

If in doubt, make it dangerous (2 harm).

Next, reduce your health track by the amount suffered. If your health is at 0, apply any remaining -health to your momentum track. Then, roll.

On a strong hit, you are undaunted. You can regain 1 health or take +1 momentum. On a weak hit, you are battered but manage to persevere.

When you score a miss, you need to make an important decision. Do you risk the potential for death by rolling on the oracle table, or mark a debility? The wounded debility is temporary and can be dealt with through the Heal or Sojourn moves, but becoming maimed is a permanent, life-altering event.

If you score a miss and your debilities are already marked, you have no choice. Roll the dice and hope for the best.

FACE DEATH

When you are brought to the brink of death, and glimpse the world beyond, roll +heart.

On a strong hit, death rejects you. You are cast back into the mortal world.

On a weak hit, choose one.

- ♦ You die, but not before making a noble sacrifice. Envision your final moments.

- ♦ Death desires something of you in exchange for your life. Envision what it wants (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and Swear an Iron Vow (formidable or extreme) to complete that quest. If you fail to score a hit when you Swear an Iron Vow, or refuse the quest, you are dead. Otherwise, you return to the mortal world and are now cursed. You may only clear the cursed debility by completing the quest.

On a miss, you are dead.

You make this move when forced to Face Death as a result of a miss on the Endure Harm move, or when you face a physical trauma so horrific that death is the only reasonable outcome. This move is (hopefully) rarely made and a chance for storytelling and for enriching your world and its myths. Make it dramatic and personal.

When you first make this move, you should envision how the afterlife is represented in your setting, or specifically to your character. What do you see and experience? Is it only blackness and void? Do you see iron gates parting before you? Does a ferryman guide you across a blood-red river? Do you hear the songs of your kin calling you to the feast hall? On a strong hit, you might only catch glimpses of what lay beyond. Does your experience support your beliefs or call them into question? If in doubt, Ask the Oracle.

There is also the personage of death to consider. Does death take form, or is it nameless and unknowable? Is it beautiful and welcoming? Sly and full of guile? As grim as the coldest night? On a weak hit, you may decide what death asks of you, which leads to a new quest and the cursed debility as you return to the mortal world.

On a miss, you are dead. Envision what awaits you. You may begin again with a new character, or explore your current world and storyline from a new perspective. Perhaps your kin will avenge you?

COMPANION ENDURE HARM

When your companion faces physical damage, they suffer -health equal to the amount of harm inflicted. If your companion's health is 0, exchange any leftover -health for -momentum.

Then, roll +heart or +your companion's health, whichever is higher.

On a strong hit, your companion rallies. Give them +1 health.

On a weak hit, your companion is battered. If their health is 0, they cannot assist you until they gain at least +1 health.

On a miss, also suffer -1 momentum. If your companion's health is 0, they are gravely wounded and out of action. Without aid, they die in an hour or two.

If you roll a miss with a 1 on your action die, and your companion's health is 0, they are now dead. Take 1 experience for each marked ability on your companion asset, and remove it.

A companion is an NPC asset which complements your abilities and can help support your actions. When you leverage a companion on a move, you are inherently putting them at risk. If you roll a 1 on your action die when using a companion ability, you should make the companion the focus of any negative outcome for that move. Depending on the fiction of the current situation, this might include harm.

Inflicting harm on your companion might also happen as a reasonable outcome of any move, or through a roll on the Pay the Price table.

Your companion asset has a health track which functions the same as your own. If they face physical damage, reduce the health track as appropriate to the circumstances or the rank of your foe, and take any leftover as -momentum. Then, roll this move.

When your companion's health is at 0 and you score a weak hit or miss, you cannot use their abilities until they gain at least +1 health. To aid your companion, make an appropriate move, such as Heal, Make Camp, or Sojourn.

If your companion is killed, give yourself 1 experience point for each marked ability. Then, remove the asset. If you acquire the same type of companion through the narrative of your quest and journeys, you are free to rebuy the asset at the normal cost.

You should also Endure Stress and suffer -spirit as appropriate to the fiction when your companion is wounded or dies.

ENDURE STRESS

When you face mental shock or despair, suffer -spirit equal to your foe's rank or as appropriate to the situation. If your spirit is 0, suffer -momentum equal to any remaining -spirit.

Then, roll +heart or +spirit, whichever is higher.

On a strong hit, choose one.

- ♦ Shake it off: If your spirit is greater than 0, suffer -1 momentum in exchange for +1 spirit
- ♦ Embrace the darkness: Take +1 momentum

On a weak hit, you press on.

On a miss, also suffer -1 momentum. If you are at 0 spirit, you must mark shaken or corrupted (if currently unmarked) or roll on the following table.

ROLL	RESULT
1-10	You are overwhelmed. <i>Face Desolation.</i>

11-25 | You give up. *Forsake Your Vow* (if possible, one relevant to your current crisis).

26-50 | You give in to a fear or compulsion, and act against your better instincts.

51-00 | You persevere.

Make this move when your courage fails you, when you are unnerved or disheartened, or when you act against your best intentions.

When you are forced to Pay the Price, you should Endure Stress if mental hardship is an obvious and dramatic outcome of the current situation. Also, some moves and assets will direct you to Endure Stress as a cost or concession, and may indicate a specific amount of stress to suffer.

If you are demoralized or frightened by an NPC foe, you can use their rank to determine amount of stress you must suffer. If the amount of stress is not provided or obvious, use the following guidelines.

- ♦ Troublesome (1 stress): An unsettling incident or a frustrating failure.
- ♦ Dangerous (2 stress): A distressing incident or an upsetting failure.
- ♦ Formidable (3 stress): A horrifying incident or a demoralizing failure.
- ♦ Extreme (4 stress): A heart-rending incident or traumatic failure.
- ♦ Epic (5 stress): A soul-shattering incident or the loss of all hope.

If in doubt, make it dangerous (2 stress).

Next, reduce your spirit track by the amount suffered. If your spirit is at 0, apply any remaining -spirit to your momentum track. Then, roll.

On a strong hit, you are unfazed. You can suffer 1 less spirit or take +1 momentum. On a weak hit, you are rattled but carry on.

As with the Endure Harm move, when you score a miss you need to make an important decision. Do you risk the potential for desolation by rolling on the oracle table, or mark a debility? The shaken debility is temporary and can be dealt with through the Heal or Sojourn moves, but becoming corrupted is a permanent, life-altering event.

If you've scored a miss and your debilities are both marked, you must roll on the table to determine your fate.

FACE DESOLATION

When you are brought to the brink of desolation, roll +heart.

On a strong hit, you resist and press on.

On a weak hit, choose one.

- ♦ Your spirit or sanity breaks, but not before you make a noble sacrifice. Envision your final moments.

You see a vision of a dreaded event coming to pass. Envision that dark future (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and Swear an Iron Vow (formidable or extreme) to prevent it. If you fail to score a hit when you Swear an Iron Vow, or refuse the

- ♦ quest, you are lost. Otherwise, you return to your senses and are now tormented. You may only clear the tormented debility by completing the quest.

On a miss, you succumb to despair or horror and are lost.

You make this move when forced to Face Desolation as a result of a miss on the Endure Stress move. This represents the potential breaking point for your character. Do you push on in spite of all you have seen, all you have done, or do you fall into darkness?

Choosing the option to become tormented on a weak hit creates interesting story possibilities. What is your greatest fear? Preventing that dire outcome can steer your story in a compelling new direction.

On a miss, you are broken. There is no recovery possible. This is the end of your character's story.

OUT OF SUPPLY

When your supply is exhausted (reduced to 0), mark unprepared. If you suffer additional -supply while unprepared, you must exchange each additional -supply for any combination of -health, -spirit or -momentum as appropriate to the circumstances.

When you and your allies reduce your supply to 0 (through a choice or result of another move), you each mark unprepared. The unprepared debility can be cleared when you score a hit on the Sojourn move and choose the equip option.

While you are unprepared, you cannot increase your supply track. If you suffer additional -supply while unprepared, you and your allies must exchange each -supply for some combination of -momentum, -health, or -spirit. Select an option appropriate to the situation. A lack of provisions can have an obvious impact on your fitness, morale, and readiness for challenges.

FACE A SETBACK

When your momentum is at its minimum (-6), and you suffer additional -momentum, choose one.

- ♦ Exchange each additional -momentum for any combination of -health, -spirit, or -supply as appropriate to the circumstances.
-
- Envision an event or discovery (Ask the Oracle if unsure) which undermines your progress in a current quest, journey, or fight. Then, for each additional -momentum, clear 1 unit of progress on that track per its rank
- ♦ (troublesome=clear 3 progress; dangerous=clear 2 progress; formidable=clear 1 progress; extreme=clear 2 ticks; epic=clear 1 tick).

When you suffer -momentum while your momentum track is already at its lowest possible point (-6), the leftover -momentum must be traded for an equal value in -health, -spirit or -supply, or it must be accounted for as lost progress in a relevant progress track. Make a choice appropriate to your character's status and the current situation. Don't just shift points around. Envision how your choice is reflected in the fiction.

If your health, spirit, and supply are all at 0, you have no choice. You must clear progress on a related progress track. You should use the quest, journey, or fight which is most relevant to the current situation.

QUEST MOVES

Making and fulfilling vows is central to your character's motivations. These oaths drive your story and give you the means to gain experience and acquire new abilities. When you embark upon a quest, manage your progress on a quest, seek to complete a quest, or gain the rewards of a quest, make these moves.

SWEAR AN IRON VOW

When you swear upon iron to complete a quest, write your vow and give the quest a rank. Then, roll +heart. If you make this vow to a person or community with whom you share a bond, add +1.

On a strong hit, you are emboldened and it is clear what you must do next (Ask the Oracle if unsure). Take +2 momentum.

On a weak hit, you are determined but begin your quest with more questions than answers. Take +1 momentum, and envision what you do to find a path forward.

On a miss, you face a significant obstacle before you can begin your quest. Envision what stands in your way (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and choose one.

- ♦ You press on: Suffer -2 momentum, and do what you must to overcome this obstacle.
-
- ♦ You give up: Forsake Your Vow.

When you encounter a wrong that must be made right, seek to fulfill a personal ambition, or give your word to serve someone, make this move.

Fictionally, an iron vow is ceremonial. You touch a piece of iron and speak your vow. Don't just make the move. Envision how your character enacts the ceremony. What do you do? What do you say? Is this a moment of grudging acceptance or one of fiery determination?

Set the rank of your quest based on what you know of the challenges you will face, or Ask the Oracle. Higher ranked quests require more effort (both in your narrative and through session-time and focus), but offer greater experience rewards. An epic quest could be the endeavor of a lifetime, while a troublesome quest might be resolved in a few scenes.

It is not necessary to resolve one vow before swearing another. In fact, the intent of these rules is for your character to run afoul of new situations and get side-tracked with new vows even while attempting to complete a separate quest. This is the life of the Ironsworn.

Based on the results of this move, your path may be clear (a strong hit), or more investigation may be required to identify your next steps (a weak hit).

On a miss, you face a serious obstacle at the very start which prevents you from undertaking this quest. It might be a sudden event, someone working against you or refusing your aid, or a personal conviction which must be overcome. When in doubt about what happens, Ask the Oracle. It should be significant and not easily dealt with. Also, when you resolve this obstacle, you won't *Reach a Milestone* for your quest. You aren't actually able to make progress on the vow until you overcome this initial challenge.

You also have the option, on a miss, to come to the realization that your vow was made impulsively or without support, and you may simply give up. If you do, Forsake Your Vow.

When allies join together to Swear an Iron Vow, one of you speaks for the group and makes the move. The others can commit to the cause with the Aid Your Ally move. If you score a hit and take +momentum, or score a miss and choose to suffer -momentum, only the character making the move adjusts their momentum track. Once your quest is underway, you share a progress track and mark progress together.

REACH A MILESTONE

When you make significant progress in your quest by overcoming a critical obstacle, completing a perilous journey, solving a complex mystery, defeating a powerful threat, gaining vital support, or acquiring a crucial item, you may mark progress.

- ♦ Troublesome quest: Mark 3 progress.
- ♦ Dangerous quest: Mark 2 progress.
- ♦ Formidable quest: Mark 1 progress.
- ♦ Extreme quest: Mark 2 ticks.
- ♦ Epic quest: Mark 1 tick.

You will face obstacles as you strive to complete quests. Some of these obstacles arise naturally out of the fiction of the situation. Overcoming one challenge leads naturally to the next. Others represent narrative twists introduced when you interpret the result of a move, or when you Ask the Oracle for inspiration. When you overcome one of these obstacles, and it was a notable challenge, make this move and mark progress on your quest.

Not every step on this path is worthy of a milestone. Did it put you in great danger? Did it cost you something significant? Did you unravel a complex web of clues and motivations? Was it dramatic and narratively interesting? Most importantly, was it directly related to your quest, and not a random or unconnected event?

How you define milestones determines the pace of your game. You need to overcome challenges to *Reach a Milestone* and mark progress. You can't (with confidence) Fulfill Your Vow unless you've marked progress. You don't gain experience unless you Fulfill Your Vow. You can't add new assets to your character unless you gain experience. That's the broad flow of how quests drive gameplay and character improvement, the tempo of which is determined by you and others at your table. If you come up against relatively simple obstacles and call them milestones, you'll mark progress and move quickly toward completing the quest. But, if you do, you'll miss out on storytelling opportunities and the satisfaction earned when you prevail against a worthy challenge.

Not sure if something is worthy as a milestone? If you're playing co-op or guided, talk it out at the table. If you're playing solo, trust your instincts and the type of play experience you want to create. In the end, it's your game.

FULFILL YOUR VOW

Progress Move

When you achieve what you believe to be the fulfillment of your vow, roll the challenge dice and compare to your progress. Momentum is ignored on this roll.

On a strong hit, your quest is complete. Mark experience (troublesome=1; dangerous=2; formidable=3; extreme=4; epic=5).

On a weak hit, there is more to be done or you realize the truth of your quest. Envision what you discover (Ask the Oracle if unsure). Then, mark experience (troublesome=0; dangerous=1; formidable=2; extreme=3; epic=4). You may Swear an Iron Vow to set things right. If you do, add +1.

On a miss, your quest is undone. Envision what happens (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and choose one.

- ♦ You recommit: Clear all but one filled progress, and raise the quest's rank by one (if not already epic).
 - ♦ You give up: Forsake Your Vow
-

Your path leads here. Your foe is defeated. The relic is found. Your training is complete. The village is saved. The beast is killed. The murder is avenged. Your family's honor is restored. You are triumphant.

Or are you? Make this move to find out.

Since this is a progress move, you tally the number of filled boxes on your progress track for this quest. This is your progress score. Only add fully filled boxes (those with four ticks). Then, roll your challenge dice, compare to your progress score, and resolve a strong hit, weak hit, or miss as normal. You may not burn momentum on this roll, and you are not affected by negative momentum.

When you and your allies are working to fulfill a common vow, you share a progress track. When it is time to see the vow done, one of you represents the group and make the Fulfill a Vow move. The outcome affects everyone involved.

On a strong hit, your vow is fulfilled. Mark your experience, clear the vow, and decide what you do next. Do other quests call you into the wilds? Or, do you Write Your Epilogue, never again to return to your life as Ironsworn?

On a weak hit, you discover or realize something which leaves your quest unfinished or undermines your success. Envision what you learn (or Ask the Oracle), make your choice, and play to see what happens. Whether you leave this behind or take on a new quest should be driven by the fiction and your choices as the character. Have you defeated your foe in a bloody fight, but they use their dying breath to say your true enemy still lives? You might Swear an Iron Vow to hunt them down. Have you helped return the clan chief to power, only to learn his promises were lies? You can Swear an Iron Vow to usurp this deceiver, or simply leave this place, promising never to return.

On a miss, a turn of events finds you defeated or your true goal is suddenly beyond reach. The band of raiders were a diversion, and a more dangerous force has stolen away with the winter stores. The crown of kings is found, but it is a forgery. You've hunted and defeated the wyvern, but discover it was only one of a large flock of beasts. If you choose to press on, the nature of your quest remains the same—protect the village, find the crown, stop the ravages of the wyverns—but most of your progress is undone through this dramatic realization.

FORSAKE YOUR VOW

When you renounce your quest, betray your promise, or the goal is lost to you, clear the vow and Endure Stress. You suffer -spirit equal to the rank of your quest (troublesome=1; dangerous=2; formidable=3; extreme=4; epic=5).

Make this move when you decide to abandon a quest, or if circumstances leave your goal seemingly unobtainable.

For an Ironsworn, realizing you must Forsake Your Vow is a dramatic and disheartening decision. Tradition says the item upon which you swore your vow—your sword, your armor, the iron coin—is discarded. Some clans even believe you must cast away all of your weapons and armor and bear no iron until you redeem yourself.

Mechanically, you Endure Stress, reducing your spirit track by an amount equal to the rank of your quest (troublesome=1; dangerous=2; formidable=3; extreme=4; epic=5). Narratively, you should consider how your failure affects your story and what you do to put yourself back on the proper path. Did you swear this vow in service to others? How does this impact your relationship with them? If your vow was a personal quest, how does this failure force you to rethink the path your life has taken? Where do you go from here?

If you have abandoned a quest which is central to your character's motivations, you may decide your life as an Ironsworn is done. If so, Write Your Epilogue to determine your fate.

ADVANCE

When you focus on your skills, receive training, find inspiration, earn a reward, or gain a companion, you may spend 3 experience to add a new asset, or 2 experience to upgrade an asset.

Make this move when you spend experience to add an asset or upgrade an existing asset.

Narratively, you should consider how your recent experiences and fulfilled vows have led to these new abilities. Was your horse a reward from the thankful chief of a highland clan? Did you train under a powerful mystic? Has your time spent trekking across the wilds made you adept at woodcraft or navigation? Let your choice of assets flow naturally from the fiction.

FATE MOVES

In solo and co-op play, the fate moves mediate the result of other moves or serve as inspirational prompts for your story. When you face the outcome of a move, want to know what happens next, or have a question about people, places and events external to your character, the fate moves help you discover an answer.

In guided mode, your GM represents the whims of fate. They can reference these moves as they like, but they can also decide the outcome or direct the question back to you.

There are three key aspects of using the fate moves:

- ♦ Instinct: If an answer to a question or the result of a situation is obvious, interesting and dramatic, make it happen.
- ♦ Randomness: You can roll on random tables to generate a result or answer a question.
- ♦ Inspiration: You can use creative prompts, such as those included in the oracles chapter to guide your story.

PAY THE PRICE

When you suffer the outcome of a move, choose one.

- ♦ Make the most obvious negative outcome happen.
- ♦ Envision two negative outcomes. Rate one as 'likely', and Ask the Oracle using the yes/no table. On a 'yes', make that outcome happen. Otherwise, make it the other.
- ♦ Roll on the following table. If you have difficulty interpreting the result to fit the current situation, roll again.

ROLL	RESULT
1-2	Roll again and apply that result but make it worse. If you roll this result yet again, think of something dreadful that changes the course of your quest (Ask the Oracle if unsure) and make it happen.
3-5	A person or community you trusted loses faith in you, or acts against you.
6-9	A person or community you care about is exposed to danger.
10-16	You are separated from something or someone.
17-23	Your action has an unintended effect.
24-32	Something of value is lost or destroyed.
33-41	The current situation worsens.
42-50	A new danger or foe is revealed.
51-59	It causes a delay or puts you at a disadvantage.
60-68	It is harmful.
69-77	It is stressful.
78-85	A surprising development complicates your quest.
86-90	It wastes resources.
91-94	It forces you to act against your best intentions.
95-98	A friend, companion, or ally is put in harm's way (or you are, if alone).
99-00	Roll twice more on this table. Both results occur. If they are the same result, make it worse.

This is one of the most common moves in Ironsworn. Make this move when directed to by the outcome of another move, or when the current situation naturally leads to a cost through your choices or actions.

First, choose an option as described in the move. You may determine the outcome yourself, Ask the Oracle to decide between two options, or roll on the table. In guided play, you look to your GM for a ruling. Whatever choice you make, always follow the fiction. If a dramatic outcome springs to mind immediately, go with it.

Next, envision the outcome. What happens? How does it impact the current situation and your character? Apply the outcome to the fiction of your scene before you determine any mechanical impact. Focusing on the narrative cost leads to deeper, more dramatic stories.

Finally, apply any appropriate mechanical penalty:

- ♦ If you face a physical hardship or injury, Endure Harm and suffer -health.
- ♦ If you are disheartened or frightened, Endure Stress and suffer -spirit.
- ♦ If you lose equipment or exhaust resources, suffer -supply.
- ♦ If you waste precious moments or are put in an unfavorable position, suffer -momentum.
- ♦ If an ally or companion is put in harm's way, apply the cost to them.

When in doubt, suffer -2 from the appropriate track.

Most situations can impact both the narrative situation and your mechanical status. But, a result might also be purely narrative without an immediate mechanical cost. An initial failure might introduce a complication or force a reactive move (such as Face Danger). A failure on a subsequent move can then introduce a mechanical penalty. In this way, failures build on each other, and the situation gets riskier and more intense.

The narrative and mechanical costs you endure should be appropriate to the circumstances and the move you are making. Scoring a miss on End the Fight implies a greater cost than if you fail to Clash within that scene. For dramatic moments and decisive moves, up the stakes.

Once you've resolved the outcome, envision what happens next and how you react. You are not in control. The situation is more complex and dangerous. You may need to respond with another move to restore your advantage and avoid further cost.

Rolling Matches

If you rolled a match on a move, and the outcome of that move tells you to Pay the Price, you can consider rolling on the table instead of just choosing an outcome. This fulfills the promise of the match by introducing a result you might otherwise not have considered. When in doubt about what a result on the table might represent (for example, "a new danger or foe is revealed"), you can Ask the Oracle. However, rolling a match on the Pay the Price table itself doesn't have any special significance.

ASK THE ORACLE

When you seek to resolve questions, discover details in the world, determine how other characters respond, or trigger encounters or events, you may...

- ♦ Draw a conclusion: Decide the answer based on the most interesting and obvious result.
- ♦ Ask a yes/no question: Decide the odds of a 'yes', and roll on the table below to check the answer.
- ♦ Pick two: Envision two options. Rate one as 'likely', and roll on the table below to see if it is true. If not, it is the other.
- ♦ Spark an idea: Brainstorm or use a random prompt.

ODDS	THE ANSWER IS 'YES' IF YOU ROLL...
Almost Certain	11 or greater
Likely	26 or greater
50/50	51 or greater
Unlikely	76 or greater
Small Chance	91 or greater

On a match, an extreme result or twist has occurred.

In solo or co-op play, use this move when you have a question or want to reveal details about your world. In guided play, the GM may use this move to answer their own questions or inspire the story of your game session.

Draw a Conclusion

The most basic use of this move is to simply decide the answer. Think it over for a moment (or talk it out with others at your table), and go with what seems most appropriate to the current situation and introduces the most potential for drama and excitement.

Your first instinct is often the right one. If it leapt to mind, it's probably a good fit for the current situation. But, if your initial impulse doesn't really excite or interest you, give it more thought. Wait for an "aha" moment.

If you're still not sure of the answer, or want to put things in the hand of fate, you have some other options...

Ask a Yes/NO question

- ♦ You can ask a binary yes/no question and leave the answer open to fate.

- ♦ "Is this steading inhabited?"

- ♦ "Do I drop my sword?"

- ♦ "Is there somewhere I can hide?"

- ♦ "Do I know the way?"

- ♦ "Would she consider this trade?"

Decide the likeliness of a 'yes' answer, and roll your oracle dice to get the result. For example, if you rate the chance of a 'yes' as 'unlikely', you must roll 76-100 for a yes. Otherwise, the answer is no.

Pick Two

The next option is to ask a question and pick two viable results.

- ♦ "Do I drop my sword or my shield?"
- ♦ "Is it in the forest or the hills?"
- ♦ "Does the elder bear try to pin me down, or does it bite?"
- ♦ "Am I attacked by a horror, or a beast?"
- ♦ "Is this a formidable foe, or a dangerous one?"

You rate one of those as 'likely', and roll on the table. If it's a 'yes', the answer is your likely pick. If not, it's the other. Use this approach when the answer is more open-ended, but you have a couple of options in mind.

Spark an Idea

The final option is to seek inspiration through an open-ended question.

- ♦ "What happens next?"
- ♦ "What does she want?"
- ♦ "What's this place look like?"
- ♦ "What do I find?"
- ♦ "Who or what attacks?"

If you're in a game with other players, you can talk it out. Brainstorming together will lead you to interesting answers you might not have thought of on your own.

You can also use random generators to help inspire an answer. See chapter 6 for creative prompts and random results. Or, use your preferred tools, such as an online generator for interesting names, or a set of tarot cards or rune stones for visual inspiration. When asking an open-ended question, use tools which offer a spark of inspiration instead of a definitive response. Your creative mind will lead you naturally from an abstract concept to a relevant answer, adding exciting and surprising dimension to your story.

Questions Upon Questions

You can come back to the yes/no table and ask a follow-up question to clarify or affirm a result. However, you should avoid leaning too heavily on asking questions (or this move in general). Don't let one question snowball into a series of more specific questions. Even when playing solo, oracles should be the spice of your game, not the main course. Ask a question or two, decide what it means, and move on. When in doubt, follow your gut. Your first instinct is probably the right one. Go with it.

Rolling A Match

A match on your oracle dice when rolling on the yes/no table should trigger an extreme result or narrative twist. This can mean an all-caps "HELL YES!" or "HELL NO!", or a yes or no but with an interesting or dramatic complication.

When you're unsure what a match might mean, you can roll on another oracle table for inspiration. If you're still left scratching your head, just move on. Resolving a match is not a requirement. It's just a way to introduce narrative turning points that lead you along unexpected paths. Head down the rabbit hole, but don't get stuck in it.

Oracles and Guided Play

In guided play, your GM is the oracle. You won't make this move unless you are talking things out and need a random result or a bit of inspiration. Your GM can use this move (or ask you to make it) to help guide the story.