

Chapter Seven

Combat

Combat

Safety is NERO's main concern. These rules are designed to give players the feel of medieval combat without the pain and suffering of the real thing.

The Hold Rule

This is the single most important rule in this entire book. Read it and take it to heart.

Anyone can call a hold in a fight if they see an unsafe situation happening or about to happen. "Hold!" should be yelled so that everyone in battle can hear it—otherwise, it may be followed by another flurry of swings. When a Hold is called, stay exactly where you are, drop to one knee, and *Do Not Move*. Do not look around you or talk to people about anything not connected with the Hold.

You can use this time to update your tags and remove any spells that you have cast. You can also pick up spell packets from the ground or from your pouch as long as you return to your original spot before the game is resumed.

This is not a time to study someone and see if they are an NPC or a PC, nor is it a chance to look behind you and see if anyone is sneaking up on you. Please play fair and try not to gather information while the Hold is being sorted out.

When the reason the Hold was called is resolved, then the person calling the hold should call a Lay-on. First, insure that everyone is ready to resume play, then call, in a loud, clear voice "3. . .2. . .1. . .Lay-on!"

Hold can also be called for excessive zeal on the part of an opponent. The infraction should be reported to a marshal. Repeated complaints will get a player removed from combat.

Hold can also be called if anyone's eyeglasses or contacts make the Incredible Journey, if there is a dispute about the effects of a spell, or if you are unsure about a rule that has an immediate effect on the battle.

Understand that the game rules have been written in such a way to try to prevent Holds from being necessary except in rare out-of-game situations. Do not abuse this rule.

You cannot call a Hold to collect spell packets even though they are out-of-game. You may pick up packets during a Hold that has been called for another reason.

Collecting treasure is not a legitimate reason for calling a Hold.

Anyone who ignores a Hold called for any reason will face severe disciplinary action and possible expulsion. This is usually used for emergencies and not to be treated lightly. Stop what you are doing *immediately* and find out why a Hold was called, then do what you can to help. You must return to your original spot before the Lay-on is called.

If you see a crowd of people kneeling down, then they are probably in a Hold. Do not approach the group until the Hold is over.

If you are in the middle of a battle and everyone starts dropping to one knee, then a Hold has probably been called and you did not hear it.

Body Contact

The only contact allowed during battle is by weapon. Any other type of fighting contact such as grabbing someone, hitting, or kicking is strictly forbidden. Violation of this rule is the shortest path to disciplinary action.

Note that because of this rule, everyone striking an opponent needs to have a weapon, although the weapon may only be there to represent a monster's claws. People playing monsters usually use claws even though the monster is not using a weapon. Note that a *Disarm* spell will have no effect on this type of monster. In some chapters, the monster's claws will be red to differentiate them.

Similarly, a shield may not be used to strike an opponent. Only weapons may be used to strike an opponent.

Pinning Weapons

Although pinning weapons is a mainstay of many swashbuckling movies, many of the moves used to free yourself from a weapon pinning are dangerous and as such not allowed in NERO combat. As a result, the following restrictions have been placed on pinning or trapping weapons:

Any weapon shaped in such a way as to trap weapons (whether accidentally, or by design) is expressly forbidden. "Trapping" occurs when one weapon is used to hold another weapon so that it becomes useless. A weapon with multiple tines for instance can be used to grab and twist the opponent's blade, thus "trapping" it.

Any weapon that is reported as trapping weapons will not be allowed in game. A marshal has the right to reject any weapon for this reason.

"Pinning" occurs when one weapon is used to apply force on an opponent's weapon, capturing the weapon by holding it against a wall or a tree or other stationary object.

Pinning of weapons can only be done with another weapon, and only outdoors. Indoors, the limitations of the situation lead to an unnecessary chance of injury. If your weapon is pinned, you may pull the weapon straight back to free it. If the weapon is shaped in such a way that it is not possible to pull it out, then you're stuck—the weapon is pinned and there's nothing you can do about it. You can back up to try to free yourself and your weapon, but shoving your opponent or charging are not allowed.

Charging

During NERO combat you must never come into physical contact with your opponent. It is the responsibility of all parties involved in combat to ensure that there is always a safe distance between combatants. If you are crowding your opponent so much that she or he must step back to avoid body contact with you, you are Charging. No combatant should be able to touch the torso of an opponent in combat. If you can reach out and touch the torso of an opponent, then you are too close. Any combatant who has moved too close must increase the distance to be greater than his or her arm length, though at no time may someone shove away an opponent or otherwise initiate physical

contact. In the case of extreme differences in arm length, the combatant with the shorter arm length is allowed to approach close enough to strike their opponent so long as they cannot touch the opponent's torso with their own hand.

Legal Targets

Legal targets include the entire body *except* the head, neck, face, throat, hands from the wrist out, and the groin. A player observed to be hitting restricted areas repeatedly is subject to disciplinary action.

You may not intentionally block a hit with an illegal target.

For example: Logan the mage is suddenly jumped by Gork the goblin. Gork swings at the weaponless Logan who blocks the swing with the palm of his hand. Logan can't claim that the hit had no effect because it hit an illegal target (his hand); he has to take the damage from the swing.

Blocked and deflected shots do not count. This is admittedly a judgment call. If the block was good, then the weapon just grazed an arm or leg and the shot does not count. If the block was weak and the swing hit with about half or more normal force then the hit should count. Here is where we start getting into judgment calls by the players on themselves: Was that hit on the neck or the shoulder? Did I really get hit? (You often can't feel hits at all if you have good armor.)

If you do not have the skill to use a weapon you are carrying, or if you are presently unable to use a weapon in which you are skilled, you must either immediately drop the weapon or take any damage that hits your weapon as if you had been hit.

Example one: Logan Disarms Gork's weapon and grabs it. Just then, Margo the goblin jumps up and strikes at Logan. Logan holds up Gork's weapon to block. Margo hits the weapon for three points and Logan must subtract those points in the usual way.

Example two: Dame Winsom has the skill Weapon Master. She fights against a spectre and is Drained. According to the rules for Drain, she can no longer use her skills. The spectre strikes at her many times and hits both her weapon and her shield. She must take all of the damage called by the spectre.

Example three: Dame Winsom is carrying her two handed sword when she hears "I summon a force to wither your right arm!" She drops her arm to her side and holds her weapon with one hand. Any strikes against the weapon will affect her, as you cannot use a two handed weapon with one hand.

The key to the NERO combat system working is to fight with out-of-game honor, even if your character has no honor in-game. If you don't count hits on yourself, soon your opponent will stop counting his or her own hits as well. It's a self-correcting system. Give your opponent his or her due and die gracefully.

One thing you must remember: you are only trying to make contact, not hit a home run. Do not reach back, wind up, and take a huge swing at your opponent. On the other hand, you can't just tap the person a hundred times a second like a hummingbird wing in flight; you have to give some swing to your strikes.

A general rule is that a swing should progress between a 45 to 90 degree arc at the elbow. The swings must be controlled and must not hit too hard. If you are swinging so fast that you cannot announce the damage fast enough to keep up with the swings, then you are "Drum Rolling" or "Machine Gunning" and your opponent should count all of that as one or maybe two hits.

It is usually not necessary to hit hard at all. When fighting an unarmored and unarmed opponent, an easy tap will do. You only need to apply enough pressure to make sure your opponent is aware of the attack.

For example, hitting an armored opponent from behind by surprise might require more vigor than a standard tap. And if it seems that your opponent is not taking his or her hits, it might be because the hits are not being felt under all that armor. You should mention to your opponent when you think you got a hit in, and all players should call hits whenever possible (see below).

“Turtling” or hiding behind an impenetrable shield (with little more than your head showing) is not allowed! Anyone using a shield in such a manner could be subject to warnings from the marshals and if necessary, loss of the shield skill. Shields in our game are not all that realistic, and as such you are artificially limited in what you can do with them. In real life you could overbear someone who was hiding behind a shield, but such contact is not allowed in our game.

Spell Packet Attacks

All packet-delivered attacks are effective on contact with the target or any of the target’s immediate possessions, such as a shield or cloak.

Packet attacks include spells, gas globes, and certain monster abilities. Note that unlike the weapon rules, a packet attack will count if it hits “non-legal targets” such as the head or groin— but that’s not to say you should aim at these illegal targets.

Calling Damage

Whenever you swing a weapon in NERO, you must call out the amount of damage you do with that weapon, followed by the attributes your attack may have. When in combat with the same opponent, there is no need to continue calling your damage beyond the first or second swing, unless your damage calls change.

Although Normal weapons can hurt most monsters, there are some creatures that can only be hurt by special weapons such as Silver or Magic. There are also some monsters which are only affected by Normal. It is very important that you announce your damage clearly so that everyone around you can hear.

If you have no special attributes on your attack, then you must call “Normal.” If you are using a *Flame Blade* spell, you could call out “Flame.” If you have a silvered weapon, then you must call “Silver.” If you have a magic sword, you must call out “Magic.” Please note however that if your sword is both silvered and magical, you need not call out both silver and magic. Any creature that can be hit by silver weapons can also be hit by magic, and so only the magic needs to be called. If using a *Flame Blade*, you may choose to call “Flame” instead of “Magic” or “Silver” if you know that the monster you are attacking will take more damage from the flame than from the magic.

If you use a spell or *Vorpal Coating* that adds damage to a weapon, then the spell is used up regardless of whether the blow was successful or not. You add the amount the spell would add to the damage. You do not have to announce the spell or coating.

For example, if you have a longsword doing 2 points of damage, you must call out “2 Normal!” with every hit. If you’re using a magical sword or an *Enchanted Blade* spell, you will say “Magic.”

Even if under the effects of a *Silence* spell, you must still call out any damage you deliver so your opponent knows what damage to take. If under the effects of a *Gypsy Curse* that require you to stutter or otherwise speak differently, you must still call out your damage normally. Remember: the damage being called is all out-of-game.

If you are using *Florentine* or *Two Weapon* skills, then you must call out the damage of each weapon individually when using both of them to fight.

Conversational Combat

All non-ranged attacks must be delivered in a clear, conversational tone of voice (i.e., no yelling). Further, once you have announced your damage to your opponent, there is no need to continue announcing it until another opponent appears. This is in addition to existing rules for damage, and does not supersede them in any way.

Blocking

You may block a physical attack with a shield or weapon. If you are using a two-handed weapon, and block with it while only using one hand, then you take the damage as if it hit your body. If you hold a weapon and do not have the skill to wield that weapon, then you also may not block with that weapon. You will take the damage from that weapon hit.

Calling Hits

Calling hits against yourself is strongly encouraged by acting out the injury. If you are hit in combat, grimace in pain, grunt, stagger for a second. If someone burns you with a *Flame Bolt*, act like it. Add some flavor and drama to the combat you are engaged in.

Acknowledging which hits you are accepting and which ones you feel you blocked will help curb anger from your opponent. In large melees this is not always possible, as there are too many swings coming at you and too much confusion, but in any case, this should always be attempted to assure fair playing by all.

Killing Blows

There are many ways in our game to render an opponent completely helpless. These include *Web* spells, *Paralyze* spells, tying them up physically (thus making them immobile from the neck down), or just hitting them until they drop unconscious.

Once a person has been incapacitated, it is not too difficult to kill them. This is represented by a *Killing Blow*.

If the character is being actively guarded by companions, however, it is another matter entirely! When you have leisure to do so, it is easy to find a chink in the armor or slip a dagger under the helmet and deliver a *Killing Blow*. It is considerably more difficult to do so if someone is trying to prevent you from accomplishing that very feat. Therefore, there are a few restrictions as to its use.

To give a *Killing Blow*, you must stand over the victim, placing your weapon on or your hand near their torso, and remain that way while you recite “Killing blow one; Killing blow two; Killing blow three.”

If anyone strikes you during the count or knocks your weapon away, or announces “Interrupt” while close enough they could touch you, then the *Killing Blow* is interrupted and fails to kill the person. Please note that even though there is a three-count for *Killing Blows*, the *Killing Blow* only counts as one strike.

A *Killing Blow* must be struck on the torso of the victim—an arm, leg, or shoulder is not enough. Likewise, the blow cannot be struck on a moving target. If you have *Waylaid* someone, you must wait for the body to come to rest before you can deliver the *Killing Blow*.

A *Killing Blow* can be delivered by anyone, whether they have a weapon or not.

Some creatures are immune to normal weapons. To be effective, the *Killing Blow* must be applied with a weapon that can damage the creature. For example, if a creature is affected by silvered or magical weapons but not normal weapons, the *Killing Blow* must be applied with a silvered or magical weapon. In such a case, using a hand to perform the *Killing Blow* would not work.

Once a *Killing Blow* has been given to you, you are dead and should begin your death count.

Armor

The type of armor you are wearing determines your base Armor Points. These points can vary depending on the type and condition of the materials of which your armor is made.

Note that these numbers are not cumulative, but in the marshal’s discretion in rare circumstances, extra points may be considered.

In most cases, thickness and weight of the armor can add extra points to the base armor value. These bonus points are described below. You will receive the highest appropriate bonus for each class of bonus point.

Full armor value is awarded only for a suit of armor that covers shoulder, groin/hips, and back and must cover most of the torso. Thickness/gauge bonuses apply only if at least 75% of the torso armor is of the appropriate thickness. Incomplete coverage will subtract armor points.

Armor cannot be taped together. It must have integral fastenings. Any metal plates must have round-filed edges or the edges must be covered to avoid injury. Avoid jutting edges on sheet metal armor.

Armor Values

The base armor points are as follows:

Costume = 2

Leather armor = 4

Chain mail armor = 7

Plate metal armor = 8

Costume

Costume is any sort of period costume. It has no bonuses or penalties for thickness or coverage. It is otherwise the same as other armor types regarding tags.

Leather Armor

Leather armor is made of naugahide, suede, doeskin, vinyl, or leather. Heavy canvas can also count as leather armor, as does armor made of leather scales, or thick fur. Extra points can be awarded for thickness of materials and for additions such as studs, rings, scales, or metal plates.

Any additions must cover at least 75% of the armor to gain a bonus. Spacing between studs is measured from center to center. Spacing between rings is measured from edge to edge. Measurement of plate additions is based on total percentage of surface area covered.

Rings must be a minimum of 14 gauge and metal plates must be at least 20 gauge to count for a bonus. Studs must be a minimum of 1/4 inch wide, and cannot exceed 3/4 of an inch. Larger studs are considered as metal additions.

Armor Thickness

+1 for leather from 4 oz. to 6 oz.

+2 for leather 8 oz. or over

+1 for leather scale armor that overlaps at least 33% of scale below

Additions

+1 for metal studs no more than 1.5" to 2" apart

+1 for metal rings of at least 2" inner diameter space no more than 1.5" to 2" apart

+1 for metal additions covering 25-33% of the surface

+1 for non-metal plates covering over 33% of the surface

+2 for metal studs spaced up to 1" apart

+2 for metal rings (at least 1.5" i.d.) spaced up to 1" apart

+2 for metal additions covering 34-50%

+3 for metal studs spaced less than 1" apart

+3 for metal rings (at least 1" inner diameter) spaced less than 1" apart

+3 for metal additions covering 51-67%

Chain Mail

Chain mail is defined as metal with interlocking links. There are bonus points for type of metal, tightness of the links, and gauge of the wire.

In some chapters, substitutions for real metal may be used for chain mail (such as heavy plastic), but such armor will probably not receive as many points as a real suit of metal armor, no matter how nice it looks.

Tight links are defined as any links where a standard #2 pencil cannot be pushed between the links (for 16 gauge wire, this is at least 5/16" inner diameter; for 14 gauge, 3/8" i.d.; for 12 gauge., 7/16" i.d.; for 10 gauge, 1/2" i.d.). Maximum link diameter is 1" (outer diameter).

Links

+1 for tightly linked armor

+2 for links with inner diameter 1/16" less than standard tight link

Gauge of Metal

+1 for 14 gauge light metal

+2 for 12 gauge light or 14 gauge heavy metal

- +3 for 10 gauge light or 12 gauge heavy metal
- +4 for 10 gauge heavy metal

Plate mail

Plate mail can be made of any material that has the appearance of being metal. This includes fiberglass, wood, and metal; however, you will not receive as many points for non-metal materials as you will for full metal. Metal scale armor is also considered plate mail. Bonus points are awarded based on materials and thickness.

Metal Type

- +1 for light metal from 20 gauge to 18 gauge
- +2 for heavy metal (20 to 18 gauge) or light metal up to 16 gauge
- +3 for heavy metal up to 16 gauge or light metal up to 14 gauge
- +4 for heavy metal up to 14 gauge

Bonuses

Arm Guards

- +1 for leather arm guards
- +2 for metal arm guards

Leg Guards

- +1 for leather leg guards
- +2 for metal leg guards

Thigh Guards

- +1 for leather thigh guards
- +2 for metal thigh guards

Head Protection

- +1 for non-metal head protection
- +2 for metal head protection

Eye Protection

- +1 for Eye Protection (such as athletic or badger goggles; not chemical safety goggles)

Authenticity

A further +1 armor point can be added if the entire costume looks in period (no sneakers or jeans, etc.). It should also be well made and appear to be made of period materials.

In addition, you may also receive an additional +1 armor point for “Master Crafted” armor—that is, armor that is visually impressive as well as being well made.

Penalties

Missing Coverage (Cumulative)

- 1 if the shoulders are unprotected
- 1 if the groin/thighs are unprotected
- 1 if the back is unprotected

Coverage

-1 if chain mail/plate mail only makes up 3/4 to 2/3 of the armor covering the torso

-2 if chain mail/plate mail only makes up 2/3 to 1/2 of the armor covering the torso

Definitions

Minimum Materials: Extra leather protection must be at least 4 oz. real leather or must have additions equal to the +3 bonus category. Extra metal protection must be at least 20 gauge real metal.

Shoulder Protection: Armor protecting the area from the collarbone to 1/3 of the top of the upper arm.

Groin/Hip Protection: Armor protecting the area from the waist to just below the groin. This includes the hips and buttocks.

Arm Guards: Armor protecting a minimum of 3/4 of the area from the wrist to the elbow.

Leg Guards: Armor protecting a minimum of 3/4 of the area from the ankle to the knee.

Thigh Guards: Armor protecting a minimum of 3/4 of the area from the hip joint to the top of the knee.

Head Protection: Armor protecting the skull and covering the back of the neck. Any head protection must be padded to prevent injury while being worn. NERO recommends that any combatant wear some form of real head protection if they are going to participate in NERO combat.

Light metals: Aluminum or its alloys.

Heavy metals: Steel or copper.

Class Limitations

All classes are limited in how many armor points they can have. These maximum armor points are as follows:

Scholars are limited to 10 points.

Rogues are limited to 12 points.

Templars are limited to 14 points.

Fighters are limited to 20 points.

The skill *Wear Extra Armor* allows these classes to wear armor above their maximums.

Armor Points

If you remove the armor at any time during the game, you should keep track of how many Armor Points you have.

If you lose all your Armor Points, then you must remove your helmet, as it is now destroyed and can no longer protect you from a Waylay.

Armor may be damaged during a battle. If the armor was not breached—that is, if it was not reduced to zero—it goes back to full value after readjusting.

If it was breached, its total value is reduced by one point, which must be marked off the armor tag. Breached armor must be repaired in game at a crafting juncture.

“Refitting” a suit of armor takes a complete uninterrupted minute during which you can perform no other skill and cannot walk around. The player must kneel or crouch and adjust their armor to represent the act of refitting. If someone else is refitting your armor, both players will have to kneel. This should be roleplayed out, perhaps by pulling out a small bag of tools and accessories.

For example: Arnaud and Karla each have suits worth 15 Armor Points. They are attacked by an ogre and each take 12 points of damage before the ogre is defeated. Arnaud kneels over, gets out his repair kit, and spends a minute refitting his armor while Karla stands guard. When he is done, he spends another minute refitting her armor. When the two minutes are done, both have suits that are good as new and worth 15 Armor Points again.

“Refitting” cannot be used to add Armor Points back to a suit that has been breached. A suit that has been breached can only be refit up to 1 Point less than its pre-breached state.

For example, Arnaud has just taken 15 points of damage in a battle. His 15 Point suit has been “breached” down to zero. He gets out his tools and begins working on his armor but is only able to refit it up to 14 Points. If he takes at least 14 Points of armor damage in the next battle, he will only be able to refit the suit up to 13 Points.

Shields

Shields can be very useful in the NERO game. A blow that lands on a shield will not count (but packet delivered attacks or boulders will). Shields can be made of almost any strong material such as plastic, wood, and aluminum.

Safety is the prime consideration when constructing a shield. All edges of the shield must be padded with at least 5/8 inch thick pipe insulation. Bolts or protuberances are not allowed.

The longest dimension of a shield cannot exceed 36 inches. The maximum area of a shield is 531 square inches (a 26 inch diameter circle). This will be enforced! When calculating the area of a shield, recesses, voids, holes and concavities in the shield silhouette are counted towards the total area of a shield as if the recess, void, hole or concavity did not exist. Wrapping a taunt string along the edge of the shield and calculating the area of the figure that the string now defines allows the measurement of the shield according to this rule.

Shields cannot be used as offensive weapons. Shields are strictly for defense.

Shield Bashing is the intentional use of a shield to gain physical out-of-game advantage over an opponent. Shield Bashing is as serious a violation of NERO safety rules—it is similar to Charging. The potential for injury is great. Excessive use of Shield Bashing will result in warnings and possible loss of the Shield skill.

Shields cannot be used with two handed weapons. You may not wield a weapon with the hand or arm holding the shield.

“Turtling” or hiding behind an impenetrable shield (with little more than your head showing) is not allowed. The moves used to neutralize a “Turtle” are mostly against NERO rules, so Turtling is also banned.

Shields do not protect the owner from any kind of trap other than a mechanical trap, which uses a weapon blade or missile weapon to deliver its damage.

A “buckler” shield (a small shield that is strapped onto the arm) must still follow all shield rules—in other words, you cannot have a buckler on your left arm and still hold anything in your left hand. There is really no advantage in the NERO game for a buckler, so it is advised that regular shields be used instead.

The best shield for a reasonable price can be made with 1/4 inch to 3/8 inch plywood. Thicker plywood can be used, but tends to be too heavy. Aluminum is great but expensive. Sheet metal is also fairly good but to make it thick enough to not flex under attack, the cost and weight will rise.

Weapons

Weapon combat is a large part of the NERO game. Because of NERO’s reliance on weapons, proper weapon construction is necessary to insure safe yet semi-realistic combat.

Before every NERO event, all weapons *must* be approved at check-in by the weapons marshal. Since the requirements for the construction of weapons are fairly strict, it is not unusual for a weapon to be disqualified at check-in. Even a weapon which qualified at a previous event may be disqualified (Weapons *do* wear out).

NERO reserves the right to fail any weapon that is deemed unsafe or hazardous.

Any experimental weapon using unusual materials can fail safety check at any time. Bring a couple of standard weapons with you as a backup in case yours fails inspection. Often the deficiency can be corrected with the addition of a little open cell foam or tape, so it is good to bring these extra supplies with you in case your weapon is not allowed so you can fix it.

If you are having trouble with weapon construction, then bring what you have so far to a NERO event, and you can show it to the marshals who will give you a hand when they can.

The old saying “practice makes perfect” is especially true with both weapon making and use.

Weapon Tags

Every weapon must have two tags attached. The first is the Weapon Safety Tag. This tag proves that your weapon has gone through safety check and is approved to be used for that event.

The second tag is the Weapon Tag. This is the tag that shows that the weapon is in-game. When you purchase a weapon from a weaponsmith, you will be buying this tag to place on your own weapon. In most chapters, if you steal a weapon, you will take the weapon to the weaponsmith or other designated out-of-game area where you will be given this tag.

Weapon Guidelines

The parts on a weapon are the grip, cross-guard, blade (head), waylay tip, and thrusting tip. All weapons must be within the minimum and maximum length, grip and blade requirements. Blade heads are required on all axes, clubs, hammers, maces and polearms. The head extends from the blade, must be a minimum of 6 inches in length

along the blade and must be “visibly larger” – that is, padded to a greater extent than the 5/8 inch wall closed cell foam of a normal sword blade. Finally, for all weapons, from the top tip of the blade (farthest from the grip) to the cross-guard or the place where your hand grips the weapon must be padded with at least 5/8 inch wall closed cell foam, regardless of blade size. As always, a local weapon safety marshal may fail any weapon deemed unsafe.

Two handed weapons must be used with both hands at all times. If you lose the use of one arm (as from a *Wither Limb* spell), then you cannot wield the weapon at all. If the weapon is approved using a stronger inner material than CPVC piping, then the weapon should have double padding by having a layer of pipe insulation covered by open cell foam.

Hammers, axes, and maces must have a thrusting tip that is padded to an even greater extent than a sword. At least 18 inches below the head must be padded with the pipe foam insulation. The heads of the weapon must be made of open cell foam. It must be noticeably thicker than the pipe insulation and should squash easily. If a blunt weapon does not have a head of some kind on it, then it will do one point less damage.

Staffs must be handled with both hands in the middle 3 feet (no sweeping swings). The center portions of all staves must have padding strongly attached to their core. The padding on the central section should be at least 3/8" thickness. The outer 18" of a staff 's ends must have full 5/8" foam and thrusting tips. Characters may slide their hands up and down the center section. A character with a staff can attack with either end, but only hits with the outer 18" do damage. Staves can be used to thrust.

Javelins are made from 3 feet of foam tubing (no pipe) and must have thrusting tips. They may be weighted with some birdseed but should not be heavy or tightly packed.

Thrown Weapons must be soft sculptured. They can be dagger shaped, star shaped, or any other shape. They must be between 3 and 4 inches in length, and all other dimensions must be no less than 2 inches. Rocks to be used as thrown weapons must be at least 4 inches in diameter and must be made of open-cell foam, not pipe foam. There cannot be any stiff corners or small protrusions on the weapon, especially where tape tends to make corners. Because they can be odd sizes and shapes, they must be approved on a case-by-case basis. Thrown weapons can never be used as a melee weapon in a fight; they must be thrown. Thrown weapons cannot be white in color, in order to distinguish them from arrows and bolts.

The following weapons may be used only after express permission has been granted by the marshals:

Monstrous hammers or **maces** go by the two-handed blunt weapons rules. **Monstrous Axes** fall under polearm rules. You should also be a large person in order to use these weapons.

Polearms must have a padded “blade” head at least 18 inches long. The pole must be padded at least 20 inches below the head. A polearm is considered a “two handed weapon” for racial restrictions and for *Wither Limb* rules.

One handed spears can only be used to perform thrusting attacks, and can never be thrown. A character hit by a spear by any part other than the 8 inch head takes no damage. Core material for spears or polearms must be at least 3/4 inch PVC tubing.

Hafted weapons such as **Spears, Polearms, and Axes** may have a crossguard. All such crossguards may have a maximum length of 18 inches across.

There are a number of other weapons not mentioned here. NERO allows creativity in developing new weapons but all must be approved before use. It is required to gain approval (with a working model if possible) before the beginning of an event. The weapon marshal will determine if the weapon can be used, what skills are needed, and how much damage the weapon will do.

Remember that in weapon design, safety is always the first consideration.

Ultralight Weapon Construction

Ultralight weapons are, in essence, crafted in the same manner as normal PVC weapons. There are some specific differences related to using different materials and some special steps to be taken to make the weapon as safe as one crafted of PVC. These instructions assume that the reader is already familiar with the core NERO weapon construction rules and will focus on those aspects of weapon construction that are specific to working with ultralight weapons. If you are not familiar with these guidelines, [click here](#) to get more information.

Materials

Ultralight Core

The heart of the ultralight weapon, this core is typically some sort of fiberglass, with kite spars being the most common source of this material. An excellent example of this material is a fiberglass/graphite composite kite spar available from Into the Wind, a kite company in Colorado. The ultralight material is 54.5" long, with a diameter of .505". You can contact Into the Wind at (800) 541-0314. Ask for part number 4409, the .505" x 54.5" fiberglass tubes. You can buy them individually, but the price is cheaper if you buy them by the dozen, which costs about \$50.

NOTE: Whatever ultralight material you use for a core, you must keep the following safety considerations in mind. The outer diameter of the material must be no smaller than half an inch, otherwise the cross-section of the weapon will be too small to be considered safe. The material must be somewhat flexible; weapon core that does not flex results in weapons that sting and leave bruises. The material must not taper, as this tends to result in extra space between the core and the blade foam that will cause the weapon to break down quickly.

Hilt Material

One good material for an ultralight hilt is ½" schedule 40 (600 PSI) PVC. With a little help, this material fits snugly over the ultralight core, helps balance the weapon and gives the weapon a larger hilt which is generally more comfortable to hold.

NOTE: This hilt material is optional, and you can build a perfectly functional weapon without this, using tape or leather over the ultralight core. It's a matter of personal taste.

Duct Tape

Tape can quickly add a lot of weight to a weapon, so it is important to find thin tape with which to make your weapon, with thickness in the range of five mil to seven mil being best (and commercially available). Thicker tape will still work, but the weight advantage of using an ultralight core will be somewhat reduced by the weight of the tape. Some players prefer to use cloth tape for the sake of artistic value (the tape takes paint very well), but this tape is similarly heavy.

Blade Foam

The blade foam for the weapon should be closed-cell pipe foam for ½" pipes, and must have a wall that is 5/8" thick. This is generally available at Ace Hardware stores (though you might have to order it in advance), and comes in both tan and green colors. The green foam tends to be of higher quality than the tan stuff, as the cells are smaller, which makes the foam stand up to the rigors of combat much better.

Crafting the Weapon

NOTE: Where these instructions are generally the same as the core NERO weapon creation guidelines, I have briefly summarized them. Please see those guidelines for more information, if necessary.

Cut the Core

Cut the ultralight core as required for the desired length of the weapon. The core should be 4 inches shorter than the intended final length.

Assemble the Hilt

If using the PVC hilt option, cut the schedule 40 PVC to the length required for the desired length of the hilt. This length of PVC should be two inches longer than the intended length of exposed hilt (the extra length supports the crossguard and the pommel).

Cut three or four lengths of duct tape that are 11 - 12 inches long, which will be used to build up the space between the ultralight core and the PVC hilt. Attach one length of tape to the bottom of the ultralight core, with the length of the tape perpendicular to the length of the core. Carefully roll the tape around the core to create a thick ring of tape around the core pipe. Check the thickness of this gap-filler by sliding the PVC hilt over the tape-wrapped core. It should fit snugly and take a little bit of effort to get the PVC over the tape. If the PVC won't fit, peel a short length of tape away and cut it off, then check again. If the hilt is too loose, cut a short length of tape and add it to the gap-filler. Once you've got it right, wrap another length of tape around the core where the top end of the hilt will be. Depending on the overall length of the hilt, wrap one or two more lengths of tape around the core between the first two.

Slide the tape-wrapped end of the core into the PVC hilt until the bottom end of the core and the bottom end of the hilt are flush. This should take a little bit of effort, as the hilt should fit snugly. (With four gap-fillers, you might need to tap the hilt onto the core with a hammer.)

Anchor the hilt to the blade core. Cut eight short, narrow pieces of duct tape (two inches long by half an inch wide). Tape these pieces across the boundary between PVC and ultralight core, with the long dimension of the tape parallel with the length of the weapon, taping all the way around the cylinder. Cut two more lengths of tape and tape these around the cylinder of the weapon perpendicular to the other anchoring pieces. Put one piece around the PVC and one piece around the ultralight core.

Add the Crossguard

Cut a short length of closed-cell foam to serve as the crossguard. Run the core of the blade perpendicularly through the center of the foam until the lower half of the crossguard foam overlaps the PVC hilt. Using duct tape, anchor the crossguard to both the PVC hilt and the ultralight core. Using short lengths of tape, cover the exposed edges of the pipe at both ends of the weapon.

Add the Blade

Cut a length of blade foam so that the bottom end of the foam is flush with the top of the crossguard and the top end hangs half an inch over the end of the ultralight core. Split the blade foam along the existing crease. Using a very sharp blade, cut a slit of foam out of the length of the blade. This foam should be approximately half an inch wide. After cutting out this slice of foam, slide a length of the core into the foam and then close the gap in the foam. If the foam is snug against the core, then you've cut out just the right amount of foam.

Cut four lengths of tape about two inches long. Fold a length of tape on itself with the adhesive side outward to create a length of two-sided tape. Put this tape around the core near the base of the blade. Repeat this process with the other pieces of tape, putting one around the core at the end of the blade and the other two evenly spaced along the length of the blade.

Snap the core into the gap of the blade foam (you won't be able to slide the core into the foam because of the tape). Close the foam around the core and the tape anchors. The anchors won't hold the foam closed at this point, they're there to provide extra hold for the blade foam.

Cut about 15 lengths of tape that are two inches long by one inch wide. These will be used to close the gap in the foam and hold the length of the blade together. Hold the blade foam closed and use one length of tape to hold it closed, with the length of the tape perpendicular to the length of the blade. Working from the bottom of the blade to the top, tape the gap in the blade closed using the short lengths of tape with the long dimension of the tape parallel with the length of the blade. You'll have to hold the blade foam closed to do this. At the top of the blade foam, use another piece similar to the one at the base to hold the foam closed. Anchor the blade to the crossguard. Tape the length of the blade with duct tape in the desired color.

Add the Pommel

Cut a short length of blade foam and slide it over the base of the weapon's hilt. If you're using a piece of ½" foam, you might need to cut the foam open along the crease and insert a thin sliver of foam to fill in the gap.

Anchor the pommel to the PVC hilt.

Add Thrusting Tips

Using open-cell foam, add a two inch long thrusting tip to the end of the blade. After taping the foam to the end of the blade foam, use a length of duct tape around the circumference of the blade foam to anchor the tape holding on the thrusting tip. Using open-cell foam, add a one inch long "waylay" tip to the pommel. After taping the foam to the end of the pommel, use a length of duct tape around the circumference of the pommel foam to anchor the tape holding on the "waylay" tip. Use a push pin to punch a number of air holes into the thrusting and "waylay" tips. When you crush either of these tips, the foam should spring back quickly, and without any sound of sucking air.

Add Final Decorations

You'll want to tape the remaining exposed portions of the crossguard and pommel in colors of your choosing. Tennis racket grip tape makes a good wrapping for the hilt, but leather or duct tape will also work. Some sort of decoration near the base of the blade could be good, too.

Final Notes

When the weapon is complete, you should be able to shake the weapon back and forth without hearing it rattle. The balance of the weapon should be somewhere slightly forward of the crossguard. If you strike yourself with the weapon, you should not feel any sort of sting.

The foam along the striking area of an ultralight blade tends to wear down relatively quickly, and generally needs to be replaced every few events. You should have no difficulty replacing the end of your weapon, following the directions listed above. To create a weapon other than a sword, you'll have to craft appropriate additions that look like a hammer or mace head and add them to the end of the weapon. This has an alarming tendency to destroy the balance of the weapon, but that's what happens when working with hammers and maces. Good luck with your new ultralight weapon. Remember that fighting with an ultralight requires extra care and responsibility.

Archery

The **NERO bow** (referred to hereafter as Bow) must be curved and formed in the shape of a bow. Overall length in a straight line from tip to tip must be between 34 and 58 inches. Thrusting tips must be on both ends. All sections beside the grip must be padded with 5/8" foam. Bows may not have actual strings for safety reasons. Bows may not be black.

The **NERO crossbow** (referred to hereafter as Bow) must be a T-shape, with a stock length of 12 to 24 inches. The cross piece must be at least half the stock length and may not exceed 24 inches. Thrusting tips must be on all ends. All sections beside the grip must be padded with 5/8" foam. Bows may not have actual strings for safety reasons. . Bows may not be black.

Neither bows nor crossbows may be used for Waylay attacks.

You can use the bow in combat for blocking, but you may not attack with it. Once it blocks an attack, the bowstring is considered cut or unstrung by combat. The PC cannot fire arrows from it until he restrings the Bow (see below). For safety reasons, no physical

bowstrings are allowed. There is an in game skill called Bow Defense that allows the use of a bow to block without this restringing requirement.

An archer's Critical parry skill may only be used in hand to hand range. No ranged parry exists.

Restringing involves roleplaying restringing (i.e., recovering a new bowstring, setting yourself, and restringing the bow). Restringing takes approximately 3 seconds. No physical representations for extra bow strings are needed.

Arrows/Bolts (referred to hereafter as arrows) are represented by a thrown weapon phys-reps. Arrows must be between 3" and 4" long, and may be weighted with birdseed for weight, as long as the weight is not excessive and the seed is packed loosely. They must be taped with white duct tape.

Arrows are recoverable in combat. An arrow, once fired, is recoverable for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, the arrow is considered lost, and is now only a phys-rep. Recovered arrows may be immediately reused.

An archer needs a **Quiver** in which they must carry their arrows. A quiver holds up to 24 arrows. The archer may carry as many quivers as he wants, as long as he has a physical representation for each. Quivers are not a tagged item, though arrows within it are.

The Bow must be held in front of the archer at arm's length and must be aimed at the target when the packet is thrown. The archer must take the arrow out of the quiver, touch the arrow to the hand holding the bow, then bring the arrow to the shoulder before throwing. The arrow must be thrown in the normal flight path of an arrow fired from the bow. It cannot be thrown overhead or around corners. It cannot be "flicked." The damage call must be completed before throwing the arrow.

The hand throwing the arrow is the hand that concerns Proficiencies. Master Proficiencies carry over to archery.

All *Vorpals*, *Poisons*, *Enchanted Blade*, and *Flame Blade* spells work normally. Vorpals should be attached to the bow, not the arrow.

Real bows and arrows are not permitted.

Weapon Construction

All weapon construction is viewed with the idea of safety foremost. Note however that even the safest weapon could cause injury if improperly used. Therefore, in addition to weapon construction, practice in the use of the weapon is needed to allow optimal enjoyment for all players.

Weapon construction does take some practice, and it is highly likely that your first few attempts will be rejected by the marshals at check-in. Although NERO endeavors to have weapons available for loan, we cannot guarantee that any will be available at the event. Generally loaned weapons are available for your first event only. The NERO Intl Office (914-628-9497) can sell you a weapon or a shield at a reasonable price. It will be shipped to you within 14 days, as well.

There are a number of types of weapons that can be made to simulate weapons available in medieval and fantasy situations. NERO allows experimentation with weapon types as long as they conform to the basic standards of safety. However, you should check with the Marshals before and during construction so that you do not end up wasting time and materials on a weapon that will not be allowed in the game.

All tips must be rendered safe with tape and padding. In a melee, it is possible to accidentally hit someone with the pommel or crossguard—so even these parts must be protected.

All weapon tips and crossguards high up on the weapon must have a *Thrusting Tip*. A “Waylay Tip” (the tip closest to the handle) is considered a Thrusting tip for the purposes of Weapon Construction, whether or not the player wielding the weapon actually has the Waylay skill.

A Thrusting Tip consists of at least two inches of open cell foam padding beyond the end of the pipe insulation. If the foam tip is too small, opponents could get hurt with a stiff thrust. If the tip is too large, it could easily break off or fold over, making it useless. However, crossguards that do not contain a core do not need the 2 inches of open cell foam. All thrusting tips do, in fact, count towards the weapon’s overall length. This is a matter of safety and is not negotiable by any means. All NERO chapters are instructed to fail all weapons that do not comply with these guidelines.

No thrusting tip should be longer than its diameter. The tip must collapse about 50% of its length when pressure is applied. The tip should also be at least 2 inches across.

All blade areas or areas of the weapon that may come in contact with another player must be protected with at least 5/8 pipe insulation. This includes the shaft areas of weapons such as axes, hammers, maces, etc.

All weapons must be fairly rigid so as not to act as a whip when swung quickly. Because of this rule, ½ inch CPVC tends to be unacceptable for weapons over 32 inches long in total length. Consult the table for more information on recommended piping materials for various weapon sizes.

Under most circumstances, a weapon tip should not bend more than 6 inches from true when a moderate weight is applied to the tip and the grip is held level.

To increase a weapon’s rigidity, first try using fiberglass reinforced strapping tape applied lengthwise along the pipe. If this does not reduce the whippiness, a larger pipe may be needed.

Conversely, all weapons must also have some give to them when contact is made. The pipe should flex somewhat. To insure this, you should make the weapon out of the appropriate materials. If the pipe does not flex, then you may be required either to use a smaller diameter pipe or add more open cell foam padding to insure that the weapon is safe.

Metal pipes—even lightweight aluminum and copper pipes—are usually not allowed. If you bring a weapon to an event that has been made with materials other than those listed under construction materials, be prepared to have the weapon fail if you have not first received permission. Wood is also not allowed as a core.

If the pipe insulation on the shaft or blade is always compressed, the weapon will hit harder than desired and will fail a weapons check. One common mistake leading to this problem is to use foam of a smaller diameter than the pipe being used, forcing the foam over the pipe. Another common mistake is to wrap the duct tape around the foam too tightly, or even in a spiral pattern up the blade. This tends to make the insulation too stiff and gives unwanted weight.

The pipe insulation can be split lengthwise and a section of insulation added if necessary to insure the foam will fit. The insulation should slide easily over the pipe, but fit snugly so that the weapon will not rattle if the pipe is shaken.

The foam should be taped lengthwise, using 2 inch wide duct tape and overlapping about ¼ inch. This will use the least amount of tape, keeping the weapon lighter and safer than if the weapon is spiral wrapped in tape or taped with electrical tape. Vinyl electrical tape is thicker and has less give than duct tape; however, it is acceptable for use on non-contacting areas of the weapon as decoration.

Any additions to the striking surface of a weapon must be made with open-cell foam. Please note that local safety marshals may deem any weapon with additions to the striking surface unsafe, and decide not to pass it.

In addition, you may want to cover your weapon with cloth after it is completed. You should keep in mind that it is a weapon and not use paisley prints or other silly colors. The cloth should be sewn very tightly.

All blade lengths are measured from the front of the main crossguard to the end of the thrusting tip. Note that if a sword is to have a weighted pommel, that pommel must be thickly padded since it could potentially do more damage than a normal weapon blade.

Every weapon will have attached to it a safety tag and a tag which shows the valid event dates. Any player found to be using an unchecked weapon will be given a warning. Depending on the severity of the infraction, a player may be removed from game.

A player who notices another player without the proper tag should report the infraction to a marshal and should not accept any damage from the weapon if it is used. (In fact, for your own safety, you should call a “Hold” immediately and not even let the unchecked weapon come near you.)

Take this point very seriously! If you do not have your weapon checked and you hit someone and your weapon breaks and hurts them, it will be your responsibility. The legal release you sign does not cover you if you do not follow our safety rules.

Using the guidelines on the next page is a good way to make your first weapon.

How to Make a Weapon

Materials needed for creating a NERO-safe one handed weapon:

¾ inch CPVC pipe (off-white in color) or PVC (white in color) (for two handed weapons only!)

5/8 inch thick pipe insulating foam (green in color)

Open cell foam

Grey or colored duct tape (but not foil metal tape)

Electrical tape

Hacksaw

Scissors

Razor blade

Ruler or yardstick

1. Using the hacksaw, cut the pipe into the desired weapon length.
2. Using the scissors, cut the pipe foam into the desired blade length.
3. With duct tape, cover the ends of the pipe so that there are no open ends.
4. Slide the pipe foam over the pipe so that one inch of foam hangs over one end of the pipe.
5. Measure a section of pipe foam for the crossguard. Cut a hole in the middle of the crossguard and slide it onto the end of the pipe. Secure the crossguard to the blade using two strips of duct tape.

6. Stuff the ends of the crossguard with open cell foam to strengthen the crossguard. Close off the ends of the crossguard with duct tape.

7. Cut off one inch from the pipe foam and cut it into two equal halves. Compress one of the halves and stuff it into the end of the blade end. Using the duct tape, cover the blade end.

8. Cut three inches to be used as the butt end (the “Waylay tip”). Place the butt end over the end of the weapon so that the foam hangs one inch over pipe. As with the blade tip, place a half circle compressed into the end of the butt end and cover it with duct tape. Secure the butt end to the pipe with duct tape.

9. Cut a three inch thick section of open cell foam to cover the thickness of the pipe foam. Secure the open cell foam to the pipe foam with a few layers of duct tape (but not too many layers, as the tip will become too stiff and unpassable).

10. Repeat this process for the butt end.

11. Poke a few holes into the tips to allow air to flow more freely.

12. Place the duct tape lengthwise to cover the blade, butt end and crossguard.

13. Wrap electrical tape in a spiral around the hand grip.

Your weapon is now complete! Check it for safety. (Is it too stiff? Too whippy? Is the pipe protruding? etc.)

Latex Weapons and Armor

Wildlands West is currently allowing the use of Latex boffer weapon and armor phys reps by players. Latex items are available online at many different websites. These are far more realistic looking than the CPVC and duct tape weapons but also require more caution in their use.

If a player brings a latex phys rep to game it must be approved by the CC. Inspection of these phys reps is VERY thorough so if you are intending to purchase latex weapons or armor you may want to contact us with a link to the website before spending money on an item that we will not approve.

Using latex weapons is a privilege in Wildlands West. If we receive complaints from other players that the weapon is being used in an unsafe manner the privilege of using latex weapons may taken away from the player. So please use extra caution when using these items.

Latex boffer weapons may not be used for thrusting. Since they do not have a “waylay” tip on the hilt, they may also not be used to make waylay attacks. Latex armor still must be approved by the CC, but poses fewer safety issues than the weapon phys reps.

Berserk and Enraged

There are a number of races that become enraged under certain conditions, including korred, hobgoblins, orc-kin, and renders. There are also other effects that will cause characters to go berserk, such as the alchemical Berserk Gas. Both Enraged and Berserk have many effects, and the player should try to roleplay them as closely as possible. Berserking does NOT give a character an excuse to fight or act in a fashion that is dangerous to himself or other players. Berserk characters cannot charge, swing harder, or engage in physical contact.

Characters who become enraged because of racial disadvantages generally direct their rage at a specific enemy. Hobgoblins become enraged when a caster hits them with a Light spell. Orc-kin become enraged against any active foe when injured. Renders and Korred chase down the character who injured them. Enraged characters can move and fight normally and can even give ground. Such characters, however, do not willingly break line of sight with their targets. Berserk characters on the other hand, will attack whoever is closest to them until they are no longer under the effect or until they are rendered unconscious. Berserk characters are still able to use spells, alchemical substances, etc. They do not give ground to their opponents, they move from one to the next until the effect wears off or they are rendered unconscious. Berserk characters will attack known allies and friends as easily as anyone else.

In the special case of a character that intentionally uses Necromancy and suffers from the Body Point of damage from casting it, normal Enraged rules apply. In other words, if an in game effect (such as Resist Necromancy) is used to negate the damage, then no Enraged effect is observed. If the point of damage affects the character, then normal Enraged rules apply. The character sees as his target the person the spell was cast at, even if the intent was to help.

Example 1: Morak is a Render. He casts “Cause Wounds 10” at an enemy and takes the point of Body Damage form casting Necromancy. He is now enraged at that enemy by normal rules.

Example 2: Morak is a Render. He comes across his Cursed One friend Dora, lying on the ground wounded. Intending to help, he casts “Cause Light Wounds 5” at Dora to revive his friend. He suffers from the damage, and becomes Enraged. He immediately tries to fight Dora until either he or Dora is unconscious. Of course, if he had purchased the skill “Inner Calm” he could immediately negate that specific Enraged, once per day per time bought.

That means that Enraged-prone races do not make good Necromancer-healers.

Claws

Many creatures and some characters can use claws. To use claws, a character must purchase the Claws skill. Claw phys reps are made like swords without cross guards, using the following length guidelines:

Blade		Total Claw	
Min	Max	Min	Max
8"	24"	12"	32"

Characters can extract and retract their claws. Extracting takes as much time as the player needs to ready the phys reps. Players may not call holds to take out claws, but they may take them out during holds called for other reasons. Claws can be used to parry like any other weapon. Character claws do a base of one damage, but monster claws may do more. A character with Claws does not need the skill Florentine to fight with both claws simultaneously. However, one common fighting style when using two weapons is to hold one up in a striking position and one down in a blocking position. Characters fighting with claws may not fight with either claw “held down.” Instead, they must hold both claws in an “up” position (i.e. the butt end of the claw phys-rep is at the bottom of the player’s fist, below his pinky finger) when fighting with their claws. Clawed

characters who also have the Florentine skill have superior training and control of the ways they may hold their claws, and may hold one or both claws “down” (i.e. the butt end of the claw phys-rep is at the top of the player’s fist, above his thumb and index finger) in a defensive position. When “open hand” fighting skills become available, characters using open-hand phys-reps will be subject to the same limitations as clawed characters.

NOTE: The limitation applies only to the way a player holds his claw phys-reps in his hands, not the actual orientation of the claws. It is possible, within this limitation, actually to hold a claw downward in a defensive position. Due to the restriction on how a player may hold the claw phys-rep, however, such a fighting position requires turning one’s wrist downward to hold the phys-rep at the appropriate angle.

Characters who wish to learn proficiencies with claws must find the appropriate teachers. Proficiencies in other types of weapons do not add to a character’s claw damage. Master Weapon Proficiencies do not increase a character’s claw damage. While claws are capable of doing damage and are “weapons” in that respect, master proficiencies involve training with actual, physical weapons (e.g. swords, axes, hammers and the like), and thus do not include claws. Claw phys-reps must be entirely red in color, and may not have just a red stripe. Open-hand phys-reps must be yellow in color, to distinguish them from claws. As such weapon reps which are neither claws nor open-hand may not be more than half red or half yellow.

Defensive Effects

A player whose character is protected by a defensive effect must call out a specific phrase when his defense foils an attack. It is very important that all players call out the proper response to attacks that hit them, as detailed below.

When struck, a player should call out her defense as soon as possible. A grace period of about two seconds is granted to allow a player to finish the damage or spell she was calling. The player may not launch further attacks until she calls the defense. If the defender is unaware of the attack, she should call the defense as soon as she is made aware that the attack hit. Players may not be creative when calling defenses. “Flash” is not an acceptable call for a Shield Magic, nor can a player call “No Effect” if a Magic Armor spell protects him from a weapon hit. The following tables list the proper phrases and the situations in which players must use them.

Against packet, spell strike, or gaze delivered attacks:

Absorb

The first attack of the specified type was negated.

Bane

The chosen attack of the specified type was reflected upon the attacker.

Cloak

The chosen attack of the specified type was negated by a magical effect.

Reflect

A Reflect Magic spell reflected the first spell back upon the caster. This defense is used before Absorb or Resist.

Resist

The chosen attack of the specified type was negated.

Shadowcloak

The character is currently under the effect of a Shadowcloak defense, and as long as the Shadowcloak is active, that attack and any others will have no effect.

Shadowrack

The chosen Light spell was negated and the pattern was erased from the mind of the attacker.

Shield Magic

A Shield Magic spell negated the first spell hit. This defense is used before Absorb or Resist.

Against weapon hits:

Bladebreak

This defense breaks the first weapon that hits the protected creature. The weapon is affected by a Shatter spell and the blow has no effect. Shield Magic does not protect the weapon, but Resist Shatter does. Unshatterable weapons are not affected, but this ability still negates the blow. Magic Armor is used up before this power.

Bladeturn

This defense allows a creature to resist the first weapon hit it receives, much like a Magic Armor. Magic Armor is used up before this power.

Desecrate

The attack was negated by a Desecrate spell.

Magic Armor

A Magic Armor spell negated the first weapon hit, even if the weapon would not normally affect the target. This defense is used before Bladebreak or Bladeturn.

Parry

The chosen weapon hit was negated by the Parry skill.

Shadowcloak

The character is currently under the effect of a Shadowcloak defense, and as long as the Shadowcloak is active, that attack and any others will have no effect.

Shadowrack

The chosen Light spell was negated and the pattern was erased from the mind of the attacker.

Sanctuary

The attack was negated by a Sanctuary spell.

Threshold

The weapon hit was not powerful enough to overcome the target's threshold.

Against any attack:

Dodge

One chosen weapon or packet hit was negated by the Dodge skill.

Gaseous

The attack had no effect because the defender is in gaseous form.

Imprison

The attack had no effect because the defender is in an Imprison spell.

No Effect

The weapon or packet hit had no effect, nor can it ever have an effect.

Phase

One chosen weapon or packet hit was negated by a special power.

Stonelink

The attack was negated by a Stonelink.

Time Stop

The attack took effect, but had no immediate effect because the defender is under the effect of a Time Stop spell.

Creature Abilities

“I’m sure you’ve heard a lot of legends about vampires charming people to do their bidding and trolls laughing off sword blows. I’m not here to tell you what’s true and what’s not, because the smartest thing I can tell you is to assume that everything you see in these lands is more dangerous than you’ve heard. Staying alive can be a pretty useful ability in and of itself. You may be a fine hand with a sword, or have the magics of the heavens neatly held in your hand, but someday when you find yourself face to face with a banshee, you learn just how much you have to fear, and how handy a fast pair of feet can be.”

Rimain

Special Abilities

There are many creatures in the Wildlands world that have special abilities or powers. The effects of these are described below. This list is not necessarily complete, and new abilities will be added as needed. Documentation for any ability is always required.

Rarely, creatures are made of multiple NPCs. These are either organisms that can divide into many segments, or are larger than man sized. In some cases, these creatures will be affected differently by battle magic spells. The spell may only affect one of the creature’s segments. A spell such as *Pin* may only affect the segment it hits, allowing the creature to pivot around the affected part.

Occasionally, a creature’s abilities may change from event to event or even during an event! This can be the result of many things, from mutation to strange magics to a new tribe moving into the area.

Special Attacks

The following powers are used mainly in combat, and most of them require that the creature do body damage in order to affect you. The few that do not are labeled as such in their description. Some, such as *Superhuman Strength*, modify the monster instead of the monster’s chosen prey.

The people playing the monsters will call most special attacks every time they hit you, even if the power may not affect you on that particular swing.

Special Attacks that require body damage do not work unless the damage they do is applied to your Body Points. In other words, the monster must get through your armor and touch your skin with their “claws.” (*Bless* and *Greater Bless* spells do not count as “Body” Points for this purpose.) If you are incapacitated or unconscious, then they merely have to touch you for the attack to affect you.

“Arcane”, “Magic”, and “Elemental” effects that are identical to spells have exactly the same qualities as the spell, including duration, effect removal, etc. “Physical” effects are not affected by *Dispel Magic*. “Physical” cannot be applied to other effects besides Pin/Bind/Web/Confine. “Poison” effects that duplicate alchemical effects have exactly the same qualities as the Alchemical Substances, including duration, effect removal, etc. “Carrier” effects that duplicate spells are treated like “Arcane”. “Carrier” effects that duplicate alchemical substances are treated like “Poison”. All “Carrier” effects that are ambiguous are treated as “Arcane”. “Mixed” effects, like “Magic Feeblemind” should rarely be seen, and can all be removed by either *Dispel Magic* or the appropriate counter spell. Also note that the <Damage> portion of “Elemental” is optional, since not all “Elemental” effects include damage.

Packet Attacks: Some creatures can generate ranged attacks using spittle, magic, elemental power, or some other method. The creature throws a packet and must hit another character. If the attack is poisonous (cured by a *Purify Blood*), the packet must be orange. If the attack is not poisonous, then orange packets may not be used. The effects depend on what is thrown.

Magic attacks are blocked by a *Shield Magic* or reflected by a *Reflect Magic*. The creature calls out “Magic <effect name>.”

Poison attacks are blocked by a *Poison Shield*. The creature calls out “<type> Poison.”

Elemental attacks are blocked by an *Elemental Shield*. The creature calls out “<damage> Elemental <Effect>.”

Physical attacks have no standard spell defense. The creature calls out “Physical <spell name or effect>.” Magic Armor does not stop these attacks, nor is used up by the attack.

Arcane attacks have no standard spell defense. The creature calls out “Arcane <spell name or effect>.”

Packet delivered special attacks must hit you or your immediate possessions in order to be effective.

Carrier Attacks: Some creatures can generate unusual damage by using body weaponry or claws which will affect a victim if the attack does body damage. The effect is called with the weapon strike instead of the usual “normal” verbal. The creature will call out the carrier attack with every swing, even if the power may not affect you on that particular swing. These attacks do not work unless the damage they do is applied to your Body Points. In other words, the monster must get through all of your Armor Points and all of your defensive spells and damage your Body Points with their claws. (*Bless* and *Greater Bless* spells do not count as “Body” Points for this purpose.) If you are incapacitated or unconscious, then they merely have to touch you for the attack to affect you.

Carrier attacks can never “heal” creatures. For example, a creature healed by fire cannot be healed by a creature swinging “12 Elemental Fire.” Some creatures can use their magical carrier attacks through weapons.

Whenever any defense is used against a carrier attack (or any other attack for that matter), the defense affects the carrier portion of the attack. For example, if a weapon call of “10 Sleep” is used upon an Elf, they might choose to call “Resist”. In this case, the sleep effect is negated – however the character still suffers from the 10 damage. The same goes for defenses like *Cloak* and **Bane**. If a **Bane** is used, the carrier portion is sent back, and applied to, the attacker.

Effects

Base Claws/Body Weaponry: Monsters with this ability can strike with large claws or fists. The phys reps will always be covered in red duct tape; however, you cannot tell the difference between claws and real weapons unless you can actually see the red tape. The claws cannot be *Disarmed*, *Shattered*, or *Destroyed*. The NPC cannot call a Hold to pull out claws. Consider the claws retractable.

Control Greater Undead: Some undead creatures can control other less powerful undead in the area, making them do whatever they want. This effect is stronger than *Charm*, *Shun*, *Dominate* or *Fear*. The most recent *Control Undead*, *Vampire Charm* or *Enslavement* effect will take precedent if there is a conflict.

Deadly Spittle: Some monsters have a toxic spittle that they can shoot at characters. This attack will be represented by the NPC throwing a spell packet at the player and calling out the attack type (either “Poison” or “Acid” or whatever). If the packet hits you, then you will take the damage of the attack. If the verbal contains the word “poison,” then the *Poison Shield* spell defense will block it, as will the racial ability *Resist Poison*.

Disease: This attack acts exactly like the spell *Cause Disease*.

Drain: This attack acts as the spell *Taint Blood* but without the loss of Body Points. *Drain* will last for ten minutes or it can be removed with a *Purify Blood* spell. This effect is not affected by a *Dispel Magic*.

Drain Life: This attack is the same as *Drain* but lasts until the victim resurrects. It cannot be removed by a *Dispel Magic*.

Elemental Damage: The attacker will call a type of damage followed by a number. This type of attack is an elemental attack. “10 Elemental Fire” does 10 points of damage to any creature affected by fire.

Engulf: Some monsters have the ability to engulf or absorb an unconscious character in preparation of digesting them. In some cases the creature’s digestion is very rapid, and the body is dissolved quickly. In other cases the character’s body is taken into the monster and carried along with it. The creature will have to be slain in order to recover the body so that it may be given a healing spell. If you are engulfed by such a monster, you must walk around with the creature until your body dissipates.

Fear: Some creatures have the ability to invoke a magical fear. The racial ability *Resist Charm* can be used as a defense against this ability and an *Awaken* spell will free someone who is *Feared*. The feared victim must attempt to break Line of Sight and cannot attack the creature they fear in any way. If breaking Line of Sight is impossible, the victim will stay as far from the attacker as possible. Even if Line of Sight is broken,

the effect lasts ten minutes or until the creature is dead. *For example, Drina gets Feared by a vampire. She runs screaming around a corner and ten seconds later (as per the "Line of Sight" rule), she feels calm again. If the vampire then appears around the corner, Drina must run screaming again, as the ten minutes are not up.* The victim cannot cast an *Awaken* spell on himself or herself until out of Line of Sight.

Nausea: Some creatures generate a noxious odor with which they can affect their foes. The effect is the same as a *Taint Blood* spell except that the effect only lasts for 10 minutes and no Body Points are lost. A *Purify Blood* cast before that time will free the character from the effects of the *Nausea*.

Physical Pin/Bind/Web/Confine: Some monsters can shoot a substance that uses a physical means to trap victims (such as giant sticky strands of silk). The physical effect is not stopped by any spell protections as it is not magical. The effect lasts for 10 minutes. An *Oil of Slipperiness* applied to the Body less than an hour beforehand will protect against one such attack. A *Release* spell or an *Alchemical Solvent* will free the victim. The victim can be cut by someone using an edged weapon with a three count ("Cutting free one, cutting free two, cutting free three").

Poison: Some creatures can shoot poison which will cause damage. The monster will call out the poison name followed by "Poison" to indicate that anyone struck is affected. The packet thrown must be orange. Any poison is rendered inert quickly after removal from the monster's body or the death of the creature and thus is not available for use by characters. Anyone struck by a poison attack is affected by the poison as if they had ingested the poison. *Poison Shield* and *Resist Poison* blocks this.

Spell Strike: A few powerful magical creatures and magical items have the ability to generate spell effects in their weapons. The spell effects are just as the spell, except that they are delivered with a weapon strike instead of a spell packet. As with any weapon strike, all weapon safety rules must be followed. The spells are still subject to spell defenses as a normal spell, but parrying the weapon indicates that you have been affected by the spell. This ability does not require Body contact. When this power is used, the player will call "Spell Strike <spell name>" and will deliver a NERO-safe hit. The skill can still be used even when silenced. This call is out-of-game but in-game, the effect is recognizable to all who hear it.

The spell portion of a *Spellstrike* is only stopped by defenses that would stop the attack if it were delivered by packet. Therefore, *Magic Armor*, although it stops "the next single strike by a NERO-Safe weapon", does not stop a *Spellstrike*. Since a *Spellstrike* is weapon-delivered, the user must have the in-game skill to wield the weapon in order to use the *Spellstrike*. For example, if the user is under a game effect that prohibits the use of in-game skills, then they cannot use a *Spellstrike*. Also, if the *Spellstrike* is in a non-ranged weapon, then the attack might not affect creatures under the effects of a *Sanctuary* and *Desecrate*, as per the spells' description. Spellstrikes of any other type are not recognized; "*Arcane-strike*", "*Elemental-Strike*", "*Poison-Strike*", and weapon-delivered "Physical" attacks cannot be used, even by variant.

Vampire Charm: Vampires can charm a person if they can maintain eye contact for 10 seconds. This power does not require body contact. If you are charmed by a Vampire, then you must obey all commands the Vampire gives you. These commands are absolute and are much more powerful than a *Charm* spell; if a vampire tells you to commit suicide, you will do so unquestioningly. Spell defenses will not stop a *Vampire Charm*;

however, the racial skill *Resist Charm* will protect the character from this effect. Unless stated differently on the monster card, the effect lasts ten minutes. This effect is stronger than *Charm*, *Shun*, *Dominate* or *Fear*. The most recent *Control Undead*, *Vampire Charm* or *Enslavement* effect will take precedent if there is a conflict.

Special Defenses and Vulnerabilities

Some creatures have special defenses that protect the creature from attacks, or make it more vulnerable to certain effects.

Acidic Skin/Acidic Blood: Some monsters are covered with a corrosive material that will slowly eat away at any material that comes in contact with the creature. After the battle is over, the NPC will take all weapons tags from anyone who struck it with a weapon, as the acid has destroyed them. Unshatterable items are not affected by this attack.

Damage Cap: This ability allows the creature to take a maximum amount of damage from weapon attacks that would otherwise affect it. Damage Caps can affect all damage based weapon attacks that affect the creature, or it may be limited to a certain category of attacks. Damage Cap is never applied to spells. In all cases, other attributes of the attack will still apply even if only partial damage was taken. The call for a Damage Cap is “Cap x”, where “x” is the amount of damage the creature is taking. Please note that this ability is not the same as “Reduced Damage” or “Threshold”. For example, Jeff the NPC leaves monster camp with a monster card which says “Damage Cap 6”. Jeff faces off with two PCs, one who swings “4 Normal” and another who swings “8 Normal”. When hit with “4 Normal”, Jeff will simply take the damage, responding with a roleplaying “ouch!” if possible. When hit with “8 Normal”, Jeff will respond “Cap 6” – meaning he’s only taking 6 points from all attacks 6 or higher. If Jeff were hit by a *Dragon’s Breath*, he would simply take the spell, since *Damage Cap* never affects spells. If Jeff were hit with a “7 *Waylay*”, and his creature wasn’t immune to the *Waylay* skill, he would fall down (and still call “Cap 6”).

Double from <damage type or effect>: Some creatures take double damage from certain effects or spells. All damage of that type that would normally affect the creature is doubled.

<Effect> Shield: This monster ability acts just like *Resist* except that it must be used on the first applicable attack that would affect the creature. This means they can only be used after Spell Defenses like *Shield Magic* and *Reflect Magic*. This is a “dumb resist” in that the monster cannot choose when to use it. *For example, a creature with a Magic Shield must resist the first spell that would affect it; a creature with Lightning Shield must resist the first lightning based attack that would affect it.*

Escape Pin/Bind/Web/Confine: Some creatures can rip free from binding spells. Ripping free of a binding spell will still hurt the creature. Ripping free from a *Pin* spell will cause 2 points of body damage to the creature. Ripping from a *Bind* will cause 4, from a *Web* 8, and from a *Confine* 16 Body Points. This is a three-count action with the phrase “One I rip free, two I rip free, three I rip free.” Damage is taken at the beginning of the three-count, so that if the creature is forced to start over, they will take the damage again. While the creature is doing the three-count, it is vulnerable to attack. While ripping free, the creature may not use any skill requiring movement, such as *Dodge*. This ability

has nothing to do with *Superhuman Strength*. A creature with the skill *Escape Pin/Bind/Web/Confine* can only use this skill upon itself, never upon others.

Gaseous Form: Creatures that are forced into gaseous form when they are killed, drop their possessions. Creatures which can turn into gaseous form while still “alive”, whether a certain number of times per day or “at will”, can bring their possessions with them. Creatures that turn gaseous will drop any other creatures being carried at that time. While they are in this form they are immune to all attacks except *Solidify*. They may move at a normal walking rate. They cannot fly, nor can they move objects they aren’t already carrying. Gaseous creatures can be seen but cannot be communicated with in any way whatsoever.

Immune to/from <damage type or effect>: Many creatures have immunities to some spells or effects. Creatures must call “No effect” when using this ability.

Immune to <Type> Weapons: Several types of creatures require special weapons (for example, silver or magic) to hit them. Normal weapons will do no damage, but the special weapon (or better) will do full damage. These creatures will tell you “no effect” if your damage is not affecting them.

Natural Armor: Some monsters have a skin that acts like armor. It can be refit in sixty seconds but cannot be breached. It cannot be *Shattered* or *Destroyed* in any way nor can it be salvaged after the creature is killed. Creatures with natural armor can never wear physical armor.

No Metabolism: Some monsters have an alien or complete lack of metabolism. For those with an alien metabolism, all immunities, defenses, etc., must be listed on the monster’s card. (The card cannot simply state “Alien Metabolism”, since there is no standard definition for this.) However, the statement “*No Metabolism*” on a monster’s card now has a standard definition, as follows: “*Immune to Death, Disease, Drain, Drain Life, First Aid, Life, Nausea, Paralyze, Poisons, Sleep, Taint Blood, Waylay, Wither Limb. May cast spells while taking body damage.*”

Non-Corporeal Form: Some monsters are non-corporeal, having no physical form but made mainly made of magic or energy. While they are in this form they are immune to normal weapons, and cannot be affected by most binding magics. They may move at a normal walking rate, and may pass through objects if the object is not living matter (wooden walls are fine, but trees are living and cannot be passed through). While walking through an object, they may not change directions. They cannot walk through walls at an angle, nor stop inside a wall or walk backwards through a wall. They cannot fly or move up through an object; they may only move down. They cannot carry or move objects they aren’t already carrying.

Phase: Some creatures can become non-corporeal for an instant, avoiding an attack as the *Dodge* skill, and announcing “Phase.” Unlike *Dodge*, *Phase* can be used even if the creature is completely immobilized, such as if in a *Confine*, *Physical Web* or a *Paralysis*.

Reduced Damage: Some monsters take less than full damage from physical weapons or types of eldritch damage. Some monsters can even take a maximum amount of damage (a “damage cap”) from every blow. The NPC must call “reduced” when using this ability.

Regeneration: Some creatures can regenerate Body Points by spending time to regenerate, much like refitting armor. The time it takes to regenerate is most often one minute but this may vary from creature to creature. If the regeneration time is interrupted

by a weapon blow or a spell that affects the creature, the process must begin again. If the process is completed, then the creature regains all lost Body Points.

Renew skills: This ability allows a creature to renew one or more abilities or skills that have limited uses by fulfilling some condition defined by that creature's abilities. The most common condition is to take a minute to reset the ability in a manner similar to resetting armor, where any interruption prevents the abilities from returning. Some creatures may also renew skills when entering an area or even if they use another power like *Revive*.

Resist: This ability is similar to an Immunity except that it is for a limited number of times per day. Unlike an *<Effect> Shield*, the creature with this skill can decide when to use it.

Rift: Some creatures can open a rift to another plane or time to allow for entrance or exit. This is a three counted action.

Solidify: This skill forces a gaseous form to become immediately solid. It is packet delivered with the verbal "solidify." Note that the creature may still turn gaseous again.

Suicide Ability: Some creatures have the ability to destroy themselves if they are captured. This ability is the equivalent of a *Killing Blow*. In some cases, it can be triggered by a Group Mind even if the creature itself is incapacitated.

Threshold: This allows the creature to take no damage from any blow equal to or below its *Threshold*. If you can exceed the limit of the hide, then the creature will take full damage from your blow. A *Killing Blow* can always go through a *Threshold*. Spell Defenses and suits of armor are affected by all blows, even if the creature wouldn't normally be affected. *For example: Fred the troll has a Threshold of 4, a suit of armor worth 10, and a Shield spell and a Bless spell active. He is attacked by Mirse the Merciless Mercenary who is calling "two normal." The first hit from Mirse will remove Fred's Shield spell, the next five will breach Fred's armor, and the next hit will remove his Bless spell. After those points are lost, Fred will begin saying "no effect" to the rest of Mirse's blows*

The creatures of the Wildlands have a vast array of abilities which can make them formidable opponents for intrepid adventurers. The following are some abilities players are likely to encounter.

Arcane Attack

This ability is a packet-delivered magical effect that requires no spellcasting and is not stopped by a Shield Magic. The player calls out "Arcane" followed by a spell effect (e.g. "Arcane Flame Bolt") and throws a packet. A Shield Magic does not protect a struck target, but other resists and absorbs may still stop the attack.

Eldritch Attack

With this ability, a creature can throw eldritch damage without casting spells. Shield Magic does not stop this eldritch damage. The creature calls out "Eldritch" followed by the type and amount of damage. For example, a fire newt might call out "Eldritch Fire, 8!"

Gaseous Form

This ability allows a creature to become gaseous once per day, remaining so until it chooses to become solid. The creature remains recognizable and humanoid-shaped, and it can move as quickly as the NPC playing it. While in gaseous form, the creature can pass through vents, cracks and other small openings. The character is immune to all attacks except the Solidify spell, which forces the creature into its normal form.

Mesmerize

This ability allows the creature to entrance a character. This ability is usually packet-delivered. If the packet strikes, the struck character becomes mesmerized; she must turn to look at the creature's eyes, if possible, and can take no action. The effect lasts until either the character is struck with a weapon or packet. This is a charm effect and can be resisted as per a Charm spell.

Physical Pin

This packet-delivered attack has the same effect as a Pin spell, but Shield Magic does not protect a struck character. One dose of properly-applied Oil of Slipperiness makes a character immune to physical bindings as long as the oil is effective. An Endow allows a character to rip free from a Physical Pin (taking two Body Points damage in the process), and a Release spell frees her. Another character can cut the victim free with a three count, if he has an edged weapon regardless of whether he has skill to call damage with it.

Physical Bind

This packet-delivered attack has the same effect as a Bind spell, but Shield Magic does not protect a struck character. One dose of properly-applied Oil of Slipperiness makes a character immune to physical bindings as long as the oil is effective. Another character can cut the victim free with a three count, if she has an edged weapon regardless of whether she has skill to call damage with it.

Physical Web

This packet-delivered attack has the same effect as a Web spell, but Shield Magic does not protect a struck character. One dose of properly-applied Oil of Slipperiness makes a character immune to physical bindings as long as the oil is effective. Another character can cut the victim free with a three count, if he has an edged weapon regardless of whether he has skill to call damage with it.

Pounce

Creatures with this ability initially do extra damage when attacking a character. Pounce damage is active until a creature is hit, either by a weapon or a spell, after which the creature calls its standard damage. For example, a creature with Claws (base 3 damage) and Pounce (+3 damage) attacks a party. It calls "6 Normal" until it is hit, after

which it calls “3 Normal.” Pounce is negated even if the hit doesn’t normally affect the creature. This ability is reset like armor.

Stabilize

This ability allows a creature to stop a character or another creature from bleeding to death. This ability acts exactly as the skill First Aid, only it generally can be done substantially faster.

Shunt (Astral/Ethereal)

This ability allows a creature to return a character to the physical realm from either the astral or ethereal realm. Delivered by packet or weapon strike, the creature will call out either “Ethereal Shunt” or “Astral Shunt.” If the packet or weapon strikes the character or any of his possessions, she should remove her white headband and her armband, and return these to the creature or to a marshal.

Strike (Astral/Ethereal)

This ability allows a creature to send a character to either the astral or ethereal realm. Delivered by packet or weapon strike, the creature will call out either “Ethereal Strike” or “Astral Strike.” If the pact or weapon strikes the character or any of his possessions, he should immediately place a white headband on his head and an orange armband on his left arm. Headbands and armbands will be supplied by the creature. Until such time as the character leaves the ethereal/astral realm, he may not directly interact with anything save those things upon the same realm. He may, however, speak with anyone who possesses either Ethereal or Astral Perception, as appropriate.

Swing for Elemental Damage

This ability allows a creature to cause elemental damage with claws or manifested weapons. The weapon or claw can be parried normally, but a hit causes elemental damage. Magic Armor stops one hit, and appropriate resists or absorbs can be used to negate one blow. For example, if a fire elemental calls “6 Fire” with a claw, both Magic Armor and Resist Fire can protect a struck character from the blow. Creatures immune to normal weapons suffer damage from elemental attacks.

Swing for Lethal Damage

A creature with this ability calls “Lethal” instead of “Normal” when attacking with claws or weapons. The creature’s blows are so deadly that any creature reduced to 0 body or less suffers the effect of a Killing Blow. A creature that swings for another type of damage calls that in addition to “Lethal” when calling weapon damage. For example, a creature might call “6 Lethal” or “8 Magic Lethal.”

Vampire Charm

This ability allows a creature to both charm and enslave others to its will. Despite its name, vampires are not the only creatures to possess this ability. A character must make eye contact with the creature for ten seconds in order for this ability to work, in which case the creature will call “Arcane Vampire Charm.” Any character under the effects of a Mesmerize cannot help but make eye contact with originator of the Mesmerize. Any character who is Vampire Charmed will be both charmed to the creature, as per the effects of the spell Charm, and will also be subject to obey any and all commands issued by the creature, up to and including “Kill yourself.” Vampire Charm is a charm effect, and may be resisted by characters with Resist Charm. This effect lasts for ten minutes.

Walk (Astral/Ethereal)

This ability allows a creature to walk upon either the astral or the ethereal realm, as appropriate. While upon other realms, the creature will wear a white headband plus either an orange/red (ethereal) or blue/purple (astral) armband to indicate the realm. A character not upon that realm may not interact with the creature in any way, but the character will be aware that there is a creature upon another realm somewhere close by. Characters with ethereal perception or astral perception, as appropriate, may look at the creature. They may also attempt to speak to it, but be warned that some creatures, like banshees, may become enraged when viewed this way.

Matters of Life and Death

Hit Points

Your character’s health and the quality of his or her armor are represented by the use of Hit Points. They are distributed at check-in according to your class, level and the type of armor worn. Hit Points represent the amount of damage you can actually sustain before dying.

There are two types of Hit Points: Armor Points and Body Points.

Armor Points represent the additional protection that is gained from armor. These points are always lost first. The defensive spells *Shield* and *Greater Shield* provide additional armor points.

Body Points represent how strong and healthy your body is at that moment. The defensive spells *Bless* and *Greater Bless* provide additional Body Points.

When in a battle, Armor Points take damage first and then Body Points. There are exceptions. Some spells and skills state that only body or only armor is affected.

You will be given tag representations of armor of any armor that you purchase in-game. It is the responsibility of every player to keep track of their current Hit Point total. Body Points do not regenerate from day to day but you will receive your full amount of Body Points at the start of each new NERO event.

Damaged Armor tags must be adjusted at the end of the battle, marking off a number of boxed equal to the number of times the armor was breached during the battle. Armor

tags may not exceed the physical representation worn. You cannot use a tag representing 14 points of armor while your phys rep will only support 6 points.

Life and Death

Knowing the rules in this section can literally make the difference between life and death. Some of this will be confusing upon a first reading, as this section makes references to rules that have not yet been covered. If this is your first reading of the Wildlands rulebook, get the general idea of this section and then come back after you've read more.

Unconscious: If you are reduced to exactly zero Body Points, then you are unconscious. You will regain consciousness (at one Body Point only) after five minutes. (This is a recent local chapter change to the NERO rules, and is different than the standard 10 minute count that previously existed)

You can make no sounds at all while unconscious or dying. If your party doesn't notice you lying there, you can't moan or say "Well, it looks like I'm unconscious."

If you wish, your character may opt to stop struggling to regain consciousness and die. Upon being reduced to zero Body Points, you can declare that you are "choosing to die" (This is an out-of-game statement). At that point your Body Point total drops to -1 and you will begin dying. This option is to allow you to "choose to die" rather than be captured by an enemy.

Carrying the Incapacitated: To carry another character or creature who is incapacitated, you must place a hand near the torso and tell the other player "I am carrying you". The recipient must get up and stand in front of you. Then, hold both hands over their shoulders to indicate you are carrying them. You must walk at a normal pace. You may walk forward or 'drag' them by walking with them backwards. If you have Superhuman Strength or you use an Endow or Delayed Endow, both of you may run together for 10 seconds, without keeping your hands over their shoulders. Whether walking or running you must wait for the person playing the body to get up and follow you. You cannot "tag" them and sprint, claiming that you have the body. The person must move with you. You cannot carry bodies when in combat. If a packet, weapon, or other game effect strikes you, or the body being carried, you must drop the body (if still able to drop it) that you are carrying until the attacker has moved on, or has been otherwise disabled. The effect is applied to whomever it hit, following all normal NERO rules. Likewise, all of the same rules apply if you use a game effect upon yourself, including Imprison, healing spells, or gaseous form. (If you cast Imprison upon yourself or go gaseous, the carried body must be dropped and hence cannot be included in the effect.) Any items that were in the hands of the person being dragged are left behind. You may not carry both items and a body at the same time. You may however place weapons in their sheaths or within the player's belt and then drag the body.

Dying: Any time you are reduced below zero Body Points, you drop to -1 and no further, even if the last blow on you did 48 points of damage. Once you are reduced to -1, then your character is dying, or bleeding out. You will die unless given *First Aid* or curing within one minute. This one minute is referred to as your "death countdown."

First Aid takes a complete uninterrupted minute to be successful. Once *First Aid* has begun, the one minute death countdown freezes. After 10 uninterrupted seconds, your death countdown starts over again at zero. To properly give First Aid, the person

roleplays the actions of giving First Aid, followed by a soft statement to the target “Beginning First Aid”. The person giving First Aid then counts in their head a full ten count, and then announces quietly to the target “Reset bleed out count”. He then continues counting in his head to a full 60 seconds count, and then quietly states to the target “Stabilize”. (This is a recent local chapter rules change, and different than the NERO rule.) If you receive another hit at any time while in this condition, then the aid is considered to be interrupted and you will continue the death countdown from where it was interrupted by the *First Aid*.

If the *First Aid* is completed, then you will be at zero Body Points (unconscious) and will wake in five minutes with 1 Body Point. *First Aid* is not required if you are at 0. Curing that brings you to at least 1 Body Point will immediately bring you to consciousness without the minute needed for *First Aid*.

If you are at -1, then for all healing, it only takes 1 point to reach zero. So, for example, after a *Cure Light Wounds* spell, you would have 4 Body Points. After a *Cure Wounds* spell, you would have 9 Body Points (if you can handle that many!).

Dead: If you are reduced to -1 and you are not given either *First Aid* or some sort of healing within the one minute period, then you are dead. If you are given a *Killing Blow* at any time, you are dead. All of your active spells, alchemical substances, and other effects will immediately disappear. The only things that will remain are *Gypsy Curse*, *Vampire Charm*, *Forget-it-Well*, *Forget-me-Not*, *Enslavement*, *Curse of Transformation*, *Euphoria*, *Love*, *Paste of Stickiness*, and *Physical Pin/Bind/Web/Confine*.

The only thing that can save you now is a *Life* spell delivered within five minutes. Even if a *Life* spell is given to you, all your active spells, alchemical substances and other effects (except those listed above) are lost. If the five minutes pass without a *Life* spell, then you must immediately become a spirit and can only be brought back by a resurrection. *Life* spells are extraordinarily rare in Wildlands, and most characters will never witness the casting of one, much less benefit from one.

Example one: Dreyfus has a total of 14 points counting his Armor Points, Body Points and all protective spells. He is in a fierce battle and takes exactly 14 points of damage. He falls to the ground unconscious. Nobody gives him any curing, so he awakens in ten minutes with only one Body Point.

Example two: Dreyfus takes 20 points of damage in the battle and falls to the ground. He is now dying. He begins counting down in his head the minute before his death. Before he gets to “60” he is reached by Chelsea the healer who gives him First Aid. After a complete minute of receiving First Aid, he will no longer be “dying” and will now merely be “unconscious.” In five minutes, he will awaken at one Body Point.

Example three: Dreyfus takes 20 points and falls to the ground. He begins the death countdown but almost immediately is hit with a Cure Light Wounds spell (worth 5 Body Points) from Chelsea. He jumps back up and runs back into battle. He now has 4 Body Points.

Example four: Dreyfus takes 20 points of damage and begins the death countdown. A minute goes by and no one gets to him with First Aid or any curing. He now begins a five minute countdown in hopes that someone happens by with a Life spell. If no Life spell arrives within the five minutes, he is dead and must be resurrected.

Example five: Darius the fighter is bleeding out and 35 seconds into his count. Elias the healer comes over and starts first aid. After 10 seconds Elias says “reset your bleed

out count.” Elias then leaves Darius, thus stopping first aid. Darius begins his count again at zero. Elias jumps over to Atropos who is bleeding out and 40 seconds into his count. 5 seconds into the first aid an enemy hits Elias which drops Elias to 0 body points. The first aid is interrupted and Atropos resumes his count at 41.

Note that in even though there was no mention of reducing armor tags, it is imperative that all armor tags be adjusted after a battle.

Spirits

When your character dies (after the point at which a *Life* spell will no longer work, and your body dissipates), you must become a spirit. You must put on a white headband and head immediately and directly to a resurrection juncture to register your death. If you are unsure as to where to go, ask a marshal.

The spirit is completely invisible to the world around it and may not interact in any manner with other characters (no noises, no charades. . .nothing!). Spirits travel only as fast as the player walks—no running to the resurrection juncture.

The five minute time period for a *Life* spell continues to elapse even if you are raised as an undead after being given a *Killing Blow*. If you are raised, you cannot then “choose to die.” If during the five minute period you are “killed” as the undead and then given a *Life* spell, you will reawaken alive but with no knowledge of your time spent as an undead. If the five minute period expires and you are still an undead, you will remain an undead until destroyed, at which point your spirit will immediately head to the resurrection juncture.

For example: Poor Dreyfus falls fighting against a necromancer and his undead abominations. He is at -1 Body Points. He lies there for a minute but no one comes to him with First Aid. (Dreyfus is keeping track of the time.) At the end of the minute, he is now dead and all of his Spell Protectives gone. The necromancer sees Dreyfus and then casts a Create Undead spell on him. Dreyfus rises as a zombie. He attacks his party, and the battle lasts more than two minutes. During this period, they throw Life spells at him, but they have no effect because he is a zombie. Finally, they knock him back down to zero body points. He is no longer a zombie and is merely a dead body. Since the five minutes since the time of his death are not up, a Life spell will still save Dreyfus, but since the one minute period for First Aid has expired, he can no longer be saved by First Aid or a curing spell. The countdown did not stop when Dreyfus became a zombie.

Resurrections

Upon entering the resurrection juncture, the spirit remains unable to interact with characters other than the juncture spirit, who will handle the details of their resurrection and then announce to any other players present the name of the character waiting to be resurrected.

When you show up at the resurrection juncture, the juncture spirit will update your Death Total and then will ask you to choose from the Bag of Chance.

If you pick a Death Stone, then your character has permanently died. At this point, your character’s body reforms exactly where it dissipated. The body will remain there until someone finds it, takes it and disposes of it by burial, burning, etc.

If you pick a Stone that is acceptable for resurrection, the spirit there will allow you to proceed to resurrect. Once your draw is complete and your character sheet has been updated, your spirit then awaits resurrection by another character. Any living character may attempt to call a spirit back from death. They must concentrate and call out to the dead spirit. The individual spirit can require as much coaxing as they desire to return to life. The dead character's spirit can see and hear the person calling them and may choose not to return to life if they do not trust the person calling them. The resurrecting spirit may not communicate with the living in any fashion. They may simple choose to resurrect or wait for someone else to call them.

When the spirit appears at the resurrection juncture, it appears intact and whole, even if the body had been hacked to bits and separated. All body parts remaining will disappear when the resurrection is completed.

It is impossible to tell how someone died from looking at their spirit. Once the resurrection begins, though, there is only a spirit, and all of this evidence is no longer discernible. Determining the method of death at that point is no longer possible.

The spirit will normally go to the closest resurrection juncture (that your character has previously visited) to resurrect. A spirit can choose to go to a different juncture than the closest one if the closest juncture is hostile, but the character, once resurrected, will not be aware of this decision.

If your character decides to go to another juncture other than the designated in-game juncture during a weekend event, you must go to the resurrection point out-of-game to record the death and let them know what you are planning. You may be required to stay out-of-game for a period of time to represent the amount of time it would take for your spirit to travel to the next closest juncture and for your body to then travel back. This may preclude you from playing in the rest of that current event.

A newly resurrected character has his or her maximum Body Points and will awake from resurrection without any game possessions at all (unless, of course, the character's friends have brought the character's possessions). All remaining spells and elixirs that were present on the character will be gone, including *Gypsy Curse*, *Vampire Charm*, *Enslavement*, *Euphoria*, *Paste of Stickiness*, *Physical Pin/Bind/Web/Confine*. Note that the lost memories from *Forget-it* poisons are not restored by resurrection. No other game effect is active after death.

Each time your character dies, he or she adds another Death to their Death Total. The more deaths a character takes, the more likely it is that they will not return from death. Some resurrection junctures are stronger than others, and characters have a greater chance of surviving death when resurrecting through them. Unfortunately, characters have no way to measure the power of individual resurrection junctures.