2.3 Combat Rules

As said in the game rules section, time is run in rounds and cycles. For combat, we run the game in rounds since it's fast paced. This section goes over, step by step, how combat works. Since this is an open role playing game characters aren't restricted in what they can do (as long as it's physically possible). In the middle of combat a person could shove their enemy into a pit trap or light explosives. However, it is far more common to simply make an attack or cast a spell. Thus, that's what we'll focus on here.

When starting combat, the first step is to determine initiative. This means the order that characters take their turns each round. To do this, all participants simply roll their agility and add the distance they need to be from their enemy to take their first action (in inches). Characters go in the order of the result (starting with the highest). So, to attack with a weapon a character would add their weapon's length. Thus, spell casters and missile weapon users tend to go first (with the exception of being at an extremely close range). Polearm users usually go before those using other melee weapons, while brawlers and small weapon users tend to go last.

What about ambushes? If characters are simply caught off guard (but still ready for a fight) then they go at the end of the round, ordered by their agility rolls. If they're flat footed (unready) then they also don't take any actions the first round, having their first turn at the end of the following round. For this time they are busy getting a sense of what's going on, where the enemies are, and drawing their weapons.

Characters may choose to wait during their turn. If so, they fall back in the round, taking their turn at a later point of their choosing. Between the turns of other participants they simply need to interrupt, and stat that they now want to take their action. This can be useful if whatever they're going to do depends on someone else (such as if their ally is going to cast a beneficial spell on them).

Rate

When attacking the player rolls their associated subskill (melee, missile weapons, or brawling). If they don't have the associated weapon proficiency discipline, then they use their combat base skill. This roll is used for two purposes: the character's rate of their attack and accuracy.

All weapons have a rate associated with them. The roll divided by the weapon's rate (round down) plus one is the number of attacks the character can make that round. For an example, if the roll is 41 and the weapon's rate is 25, then the character makes two attacks.

Attacks may either be directed at one target, or multiple enemies that the attacker can reach that round (recall that agility (speed) is used for movement rate). If against multiple enemies, apply the character's accuracy to each to see if they hit.

Often heavier weapons take more than a single round to make an attack. This is stated down in the weapon's description by saying things like “strike 1/2” or “fire 1/3” (“strike” is associated with melee weapons while missile weapons use “fire”). In these examples the melee weapon attacker would need to take a round after every attack to regain their balance and composition for the next attack. In the missile weapon's case it would take two rounds after firing to reload and be ready to fire again.

Even weapons with this low fire rate may have a rate associated with them, though it works slightly differently. Instead of increasing the number of times the character fires in a single round it lowers the time it takes to reload or regain their balance. For an example, say a weapon with the rate of 30 and “fire 1/2”. If the rate roll is 32 then instead of firing twice, the fire 1/2 is canceled so they can reload and be ready to fire again the next round. If, however, the bow made the rate roll of 79 then the fire 1/2 would be canceled and it would fire a second time that round.

Accuracy

The other use for the weapon subskill roll is to determine if the attack hits or not. The base accuracy needed to hit an enemy is five times the target's combat base. If they're flat footed or unable to avoid the attack then the required roll to be hit is zero. This is often modified by the game master to reflect difficulties in attacking (especially with missile weapons), such as:

- The target is far off, making the attacker lob their shot. Add one to the required roll for each five yards beyond the range of fifty yards.
- The defender is moving very quickly, making them difficult to hit (such as a diving griffin or a sprinting horse).
- The character has difficulty seeing the enemy due to darkness, fog, smoke, etc.
- Obstacles like pillars, walls, desks, or other such things prevent the character from getting a straight, clean shot. This mostly effects ranged attacks.

Damage

The next step is to figure out how much damage is dealt, which is simply the sum of the damage of the blows. This is listed under the weapon, like “str+15” (meaning the strength base plus fifteen) or “2d10+5” (meaning roll two d10s and add five).

Occasionally attacks are especially effective, striking a vital location or making an especially solid connection. These are termed critical blows. All weapons have a critical range and effect. For each attack roll a d20. Any roll that's at at most as

large as the critical range has the critical effect. Critical effects come in two varieties. They either add to the damage of that blow (like “+5 Damage”) or they multiply it (like “Damage x 2”).

For an example, say that three blows are landed with the following situation:
Character's Strength: 3 Weapon's Damage: Str+22
Critical Range: 3 Critical Effect: Damage x 2

1. Find how many are critical blows. To do this, roll 3d20 (since there are three attacks). Say that they roll a 2, 3, and 10. This means that there are two critical blows.
2. Find the damage, which in this case is case its 3d4+22. Lets say that this turns out to be 30.
3. Find the total, which is (30 x 2) + (30 x 2) + 30 = 150 (a very good hit!)

Defense

Regardless of your level, a hundred and fifty damage would hurt a great deal (if not kill a character instantly). However, if they're wearing armor then the damage is decreased a great deal. Armor provides two types of protection: defense and damage reduction. Damage reduction is a percentage reduction to the damage, while defense is a flat amount plus the character's strength. Even if a character's not wearing armor, they still have a defense equal to their strength.

Dealing with these is very simple. Just take the total damage dealt, multiply it by one minus the damage reduction (as a decimal), then subtract the defense. For an example, take the following situation:
Character's Strength: 2 Damage Reduction: 25% Defense: 30
The damage reduction would reduce the damage from 150 to 113 (150 x (1 - .25)).
Then the defense would reduce it by 30+2d4 (lets say this is 34), so the final damage would be 79.

Avoiding Damage

Even with a fair defense from armor, this sort of damage could quickly wipe a character out. Also, what about archers and magicians? Are they doomed since they don't have the strength requirements to use heavy armor? Not quite. There are three ways to avoid damage: use a shield, dodge the attack, or parry with your weapon. A character may only attempt one method for each attack. Characters can't use these if they're caught flat footed.

Shield- All shields have a percentage chance of blocking attacks. If the block is successful, then the shield takes the damage rather than the defender.
Dodge- This is granted though a discipline. A character uses their agility to increase the required roll for them to be hit, thus making it more likely that they'll avoid being hurt.
Parry- Certain weapons are able to knock attacks aside, given that the character has certain disciplines. The specifics of how this works depends on the discipline used.

Targeted Attacks

When fighting, an attacker generally goes for the most opportune location on their enemy. However, a player may specify a specific target, such as their head, neck, arms, etc. Depending on the circumstances this may be a good idea, such as if their enemy's head is unarmored, or you're trying to disable but not kill them.

Targeted attacks hold some advantage in terms of dealing damage. Not only does it limit the armor that's protecting them, but it may also decrease the defense contribution from their strength. However, there is also an added difficulty to hitting a specific location. With missile weapons this is because it reduces the target's size. For melee weapons the location may not be a very opportune target (there isn't any added difficulty if they're caught off guard). Regardless, targeted attacks don't have a chance of being a critical blow.

The game master will need to interpret special effects of the blow. For an example, joints are generally less armored, a head or neck would would bleed profusely,

Attacks against joints have **armor penetration (25%)**. Strikes against the head have a percentage chance of ruining the character's concentration equal to the damage minus their willpower. The game master may need to interpret the effects of blows against other parts of the body. Hits against non-vital areas like limbs can't be lethal.

Location:	Chest	Limb	Joints	Head	Neck	Eyes, ears, etc.
Required Accuracy:	+3	+5	+7	+10	+15	+25
Strength Defense Reduction:	0%	25%	35%	50%	75%	100%

Mounted

Being mounted on horses or other large animals have certain advantages and disadvantages. On the up side, melee weapon attacks against the rider rather than their mount deal half their normal damage after defense has been applied. On the other side, the rider's missile weapon attacks have half their normal accuracy and the character can't do anything requiring concentration. This can be improved through disciplines. Also, some weapons aren't usable since they couldn't reach an enemy (like most small weapons). The difficulty and time to get on a mount depends on the character's agility, if the animal's tamed or not, what sort of animal it is (horse, pegasus, wyvern, etc), and so on.

The same is true for combat and though the character can do anything they can think of, their are only a few common actions. These actions are to attack with a weapon, cast a spell, or use an ability. While the character might light explosives to collapse a cave or shove an enemy into a pit trap in a combat round, these actions aren't nearly as common as simply striking with a weapon or casting a spell. This section explains how combat works, specifically physical attacks. See the spell mechanics section to figure out how magic works and abilities are fully explained under the ability's description.

Their are several steps in attacking with weapons. There is determining if an attack hits or misses, how many times the character attacks, the damage, and the character's defense. This section will take you step by step through how attacks work. Before starting the combat, though, the game master will need to determine the order in which the players take their turns. This can have a fair deal of importance for it is advantageous to go first. To determine who goes first their are several levels of priority. If their are multiple characters on the same level they roll their agility. Place the characters in order by how high the roll is and that is who goes first among these characters. The order in which characters go are:

1. If any characters have a missile weapon ready (such as a bow with an arrow already drawn) and their enemies are at least twenty feet away they get the highest priority. If the character doesn't have the weapon already prepared then they only get the initiative if the enemy is at least forty feet away.
2. Characters who are going to be performing a non-combat related action as their first turn are placed here. This includes abilities, spells (as long as they're used at least thirty feet away from the enemies), running away, etc.
3. Some other weapons (usually polearms) say they carry initiative. If so, they take placed at this level of priority.
4. Most other weapons go here. This includes all melee and missile weapons that haven't already gone. More than likely the majority of the characters will be placed at this level of priority.
5. Characters who are brawling, using short weapons, and spells cast within thirty feet of their enemies also are placed here.
6. Ambushed characters always go last. They are at this level if they are unaware of the attackers when the attack is made (this is much more common with ranged weapons). In addition to going last the character can't take any action the first round of combat since they are just getting a sense of what is going, where the enemies are, and preparing to fight back. In other words the ambushing characters get two actions in a row: one in which their enemies are caught off guard and a second when the defending character goes last in the general combat. If the defender is flat footed (unprepared for a fight) they can't use any of their methods of defense (parry, shield, or dodge) against the initial attack. If their are multiple characters on this level, rather than rolling their agility use the other priority levels to determine who goes first from among them.

Characters may wait, not taking any action during their turn. If they do so they can take their action at any point they wish after

this. This is useful if the character's actions would depend on what someone else does (for an example if their ally is going to cast a beneficial spell on them).

Step 2: Attacking multiple times

Step 4: Dealing Damage

This is where the character places any resistances they have to magic. Resistances are given in percent immunity to a type of magic and can either effect all magic, a certain magic subskill (like nature magic), or a specific type of magic. Whenever a spell or ability based on this type of magic effects the character they may reduce the amount by the percentage amount. The character has a choice of what spells this effects so it doesn't weaken beneficial spells. For an example, a fire resistance of 25% would lower a fireball's damage from 28 to 21. This also effects the damage dealt by summoned creatures or anything else. In the case of techs (instances where more than one type of magic is used) add the resistances the character has to all the different types of magic, then divide by the number of different types of magic. For an example against a triple tech where the character has the resistance of 20% to one type, 10% to another, and no resistance to the third, the character would have the ending resistance of 10%. Magic resistance can be negative, adding to the magic's effect rather than subtracting from it.

Multiple Damages in a Turn

Many times characters are dealt damage multiple times in a single turn. Usually these all come form the same source (such as striking multiple times with a weapon) though sometimes it's from separate sources (like characters using the coordinated attack discipline). When multiple damages are being dealt take the largest plus half of all the others (round up). For an example, if 7d6+4, 4d6+6, and 2d6+1 damage is being dealt to a character in a single turn then the damage would be 7d6+4 plus half of all the rest. In this case it would be (7d6+4) + (2d6+3) + (1d6+1) which would be 10d6+8.

State effects of multiple attacks under coordinate attack and ambidextrius!!!

Dodge- Dodge is a discipline provided by the character's agility subskill. It allows the character to subtract part or all of their agility roll from the attacker's accuracy. This is an attempt to avoid the attack entirely rather than blocking it. The character can use the dodge discipline in either of two ways: they can either throw themselves out of the attack quickly, taking a turn to regain their balance or they can try to sidestep the attack. In terms of stats this means that the character can either use their full agility roll and lose their next turn or take only half the roll and still have their next turn. Armor weighs characters down and decreases their ability to dodge by lowering their agility (this is explained in the items section (2.X)) as does large amounts of heavy equipment. This can't be used if the character has a difficulty moving.

Damage

The third step in making an attack is dealing damage. There are two parts to this: the base damage and the multiplier. As the name suggests, the total damage is simply the base times the multiplier. The base damage is listed under the weapon, like

“str+15” (meaning the strength base plus fifteen) or “2d10+5” (meaning roll two d10s and add five). The multiplier, however, is a bit more complicated.

Each blow against an adversary has a submultiplier, which are by default one. The attack's multiplier is simply the highest submultiplier plus half of all the rest. For an example, lets say you hit someone with three default attacks. This would have the multiplier of two (1 + ½ + ½ = 2).

Occasionally attacks is especially effective, striking a vital location or making an especially solid connection. These are termed critical blows. All weapons have a critical range and effect. For each attack roll a d20. Any roll that's at least as large as the critical range has the critical effect. Critical effects come in two varieties. They either add to the base damage (like “+5 Damage”) or they give that blow a submultiplier (like “Damage x 2”).

For an example, say that three blows are landed with the following situation:
Character's Strength: 3 Weapon's Damage: Str+22
Critical Range: 17 Critical Effect: Damage x 2

1. Find how many are critical blows. To do this, roll 3d20 (since there are three attacks). Say that they roll a 6, 17, and 19. This means that there are two critical blows. Since the effect is “Damage x 2” this effects the multiplier.
2. Find the base damage, which in this case is case its 3d4+22. Lets say that this turns out to be 30.
3. Find the multiplier. In this case we have two critical blows which set two submultipliers to two, and one is still one. Thus the total multiplier is 2 + 1 + ½ = 3½.

So, the total damage is 30 x 3½ = 105 (a very good hit!)