

# CULTS

Cults are an important part of *RuneQuest*. As formal organisations, both large and small, they serve to support their members in many ways. A cult can provide a character a place to hide from his enemies, assistance against other cults he may have inadvertently or intentionally agitated or supply hard to find items. Some cults provide political power or great wealth, while others provide access to the mighty or fanatical followers. Most importantly, a cult can provide a character with magical secrets allowing him to cast spells that cannot be learnt anywhere else.

In Glorantha, cults are usually sects or religions based around the worship of gods. However, in other settings the same rules provided in this chapter can be used to create guilds, schools of wizardry, organised religions or even universities of great learning.

## Joining a Cult

Characters can choose to join one or more cults during their time adventuring, though as they gain more power in some cults they may find it difficult to stay as members of others. There are several ranks within a cult that a character can rise through, gaining greater support and authority at each step. Cults have the following ranks.

### Lay Members

The first step in joining a cult and rising through its ranks is to become a lay member. A character can belong to several cults as a lay member, so long as they are not diametrically opposed. The vast majority of members of a cult are lay members, casual worshippers who follow the basic doctrine of the cult and attend regular ceremonies.

*Requirements:* Candidate must have at least a basic understanding of the beliefs of the cult and make a small donation of between one and ten silvers.

*Duties:* There are very few duties required by lay members – they will be expected to attend celebrations on special Holy Days but unless they are aiming to rise in the ranks of the cult, they will not even be expected to attend regular ceremonies.

*Benefits:* The character will automatically be able to find tutors for any skills the cult teaches. They must still pay the normal rates for these services.

Lay Member of the Cult of the Storm King



## Vision

Normally, a character's vision will be unimpeded by anything other than darkness or physical objects. However, once night falls or the character enters a cavern, illumination become important. Consult the Illumination & Darkness table to see how these conditions can affect characters.

### Dark Sight

Allows the character to treat pitch black conditions as dark. Normally possessed by subterranean creatures and trolls.

### Night Sight

Allows the character to treat partial darkness as illuminated and darkness as partial darkness. Normally possessed by nocturnal creatures.

### Illuminating Items

Example	Radius
Candle or embers	1m
Flaming brand or lantern	3m
Campfire	5m
Bonfire	10m
Light spell	10m, but unlike natural light sources, the Light spell only illuminates a 10m radius and does not provide partial darkness or darkness to areas beyond this radius.

### Illumination & Darkness

Environment is...	Example	Effects
Brightly Illuminated	Blazing summer day, shrine holding a rune of Light.	+10% to Perception tests to spot hidden characters or items
Illuminated	Heavily candlelit room, overcast day, within radius of illuminating item.	None.
Partial Darkness	Cavern mouth, misty day, within 3 x radius of illuminating item.	-20% to vision-based Perception tests.
Dark	Large cavern illuminated only by embers, foggy day, within 5 x radius of illuminating item.	-40% to vision-based Perception tests. Movement penalised by -1m.
Pitch Black	Sealed room with stone walls, cavern many miles underground, mountaintop whiteout, shrine holding a rune of Darkness.	Perception tests reliant on vision impossible, as are ranged attacks. -60% to close combat attacks. Movement halved.

## Fatigue

Adventurers are usually hardy individuals, but even the best of them are still just people, with limits to what they can physically achieve. The greatest warrior in the world may have phenomenal endurance, but even he will not be able to run ten miles to a besieged village and then fight for three hours non-stop. As characters engage in strenuous physical activity, they risk becoming Fatigued.

Physical activity is divided into three categories; light, medium and heavy. The length of time a character can engage in physical activity without running the risk of becoming Exhausted is determined by his CON, as detailed under each category of physical activity. Once this time has elapsed, a character must begin to make skill tests in order to resist the effects of exhaustion.

*Light Activity:* Includes travelling or swimming at a reasonable pace, casting spells or carrying light loads. Characters never risk Fatigue while engaging in light activity.

*Medium Activity:* Includes running, fighting in combat, climbing or swimming at a rapid rate. A character can engage in medium activity for a number of minutes equal to his CON before risking Fatigue. Once this time has elapsed, the character must immediately make a Simple (+20%) Athletics test or begin suffering the effects of Fatigue. So long as the activity continues, he must make another Simple (+20%) Athletics test every time a number of minutes equal to the character's CON elapse.

## Fatigue Levels

Level of Fatigue	Effects
Fresh	None.
Winded	All skill tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -10% penalty.
Tired	All skill tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -20% penalty. Movement suffers a -1m penalty.
Wearied	All skill tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -30% penalty. Movement suffers a -1m penalty. Strike Rank suffers a -2 penalty.
Exhausted	All skill tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -40% penalty. Movement is halved. Strike Rank suffers a -4 penalty. DEX is considered 5 points lower for the purposes of determining Combat Actions.
Debilitated	Character must make a Persistence test every minute or fall unconscious for 1D3x2 hours
	All skill tests (including further tests to resist Fatigue) suffer a -50% penalty. Movement is halved. Strike Rank suffers a -6 penalty. DEX is considered 10 points lower for the purposes of determining Combat Actions.
Debilitated	Character must make a Difficult Persistence test every Combat Round or fall unconscious for 1D6x2 hours.

**Heavy Activity:** Includes back-breaking manual labour, sprinting and climbing at a rapid rate. A character can engage in heavy activity for a number of Combat Actions equal to his CON score before risking Fatigue. Once this time has elapsed, the character must immediately make a Normal (+0%) Athletics test or begin suffering the effects of Fatigue. So long as the activity continues, he must make another Normal (+0%) Athletics test every time a number of Combat Actions equal to the character's CON elapse.

Note that some versions of medium or heavy activity may not require Athletics tests. The Games Master may decide that in order for a character to escape Fatigue after a long night in the Great Library searching for clues, a Persistence test is required instead, as the mental exertion counts as medium activity.

## Effects of Fatigue

If a character fails a test while engaged in medium or heavy activity, he will begin to show Fatigue. Every time a Fatigue test is failed, the character will drop down one level of Fatigue, as shown on the Fatigue Levels table.

## Time and Fatigue

Characters, regardless of activity, will naturally tire. Once a character has been awake for 10+CON hours, they

must make a Persistence test or drop one Fatigue level. This test must be repeated for every hour the character remains awake.

## Recovering from Fatigue

A character will move up one level of Fatigue for every two hours of complete rest or four hours of light activity. A successful First Aid or Healing test can raise a character by one level of Fatigue once per day, but cannot raise a character above Winded.

## Exposure, Starvation and Thirst

Freezing cold wastes or crippling hot deserts can take a terrible toll on characters, as can hunger and thirst.

Exposure occurs when a character is insufficiently prepared against a hostile environment, normally because of a failed Survival test. A character can normally survive for a number of hours equal to his CON before suffering from exposure.

A character can survive for a number of days equal to his CON before becoming starved, though after three days they will begin to suffer a -10% penalty to Fatigue tests. A character can survive for a number of hours equal to his CON x 4 before becoming chronically thirsty, though particularly arid environments may reduce this to CON x 3 or even CON x 2.

rather rare. Most characters who come in search of such abilities are too powerful to be trifled with lightly and deal harshly with those who have wasted so much of their time.

## Battle Fury

**Requirements:** CON 15 or higher, any close combat Weapon skill at 90% or higher.

**Hero Points:** 12

You are a terrible foe on the battlefield, effortlessly crushing your enemies beneath your blade. You can enter a Battle Fury as a Combat Action. While in a Battle Fury, the following effects take place:

- D Your STR and CON are both considered to be 5 points higher, but only for the purposes of determining your Damage Modifier.
- D All your close combat Weapon skill tests, including Unarmed and Martial Arts, receive a +50% bonus.
- D All your Persistence and Resilience skill tests receive a +50% bonus.
- D You may not parry, dodge or dive for cover.

You may remain in Battle Fury for a number of rounds equal to your CON. Upon leaving Battle Fury, you automatically gain three levels of Fatigue.

## Born to the Saddle

**Requirements:** POW 15 or higher, Riding 90% or higher.

**Hero Points:** 8

Sitting in the saddle is more natural to you than walking. While riding, the following effects take place:

- D Any penalty to your Riding skill is reduced by -40%. For instance, if the driving rains and slippery ground would normally apply a -40% penalty to your Riding test, the penalty is reduced to -20%.
- D You may use 2H Weapon skills, Polearms and Staffs.
- D You may treat all animals you ride as trained for combat.

- D You may use your Riding skill instead of your Dodge skill when dodging.

## Dead Eye

**Requirements:** DEX 15 or higher, any ranged Weapon skill at 90% or higher.

**Hero Points:** 10

Your accuracy at range with your chosen weapon is the stuff of legends. Pick any single ranged weapon (with which you must have at least 90% skill). While using this weapon, the following effects take place:

- D Increase the weapon's Range by 50%.
- D Increase the weapon's damage by +2 (only to targets within Range).
- D Precise attacks with the weapon only suffer a -20% penalty.

## Decapitating Swing

**Requirements:** STR 15 or higher, either 2H Sword or 2H Axe skill at 90% or higher.

**Hero Points:** 12

