

1.0 Introduction

Like many gamers I often see/buy/paint a figure because I think it would just be so cool to play it in a game. Then, because of the games I play, or the campaign I'm in, I never really get the chance to do that.

So let us, for a moment, imagine we could turn the paradigm of designing a character upside down. Well, welcome to WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get), as far as I know, the first miniatures-first roleplaying game.

Note: The design philosophies that underpin these rules are:

- a. KISS (Keep It Short & Simple), and
- b. Use common sense.

I chose to publish this first WYSIWYG set of rules based in the well-known Heroic fantasy genre as it is the one I am most comfortable in.

2.0 How to design a WYSIWYG character

1. You pick a figure to be your adventurer.
2. You examine the figure carefully and then write down what it is equipped with.
3. Then you select six abilities for the adventurer, some of which are mandatory depending on what the figure is equipped with (i.e. armour & shield).

2.1 Abilities

This rolls all those annoying attributes, traits, talents, skills and what-not into a simple package. Your adventurer begins with six abilities but can later improve these or buy more (see 6.0 Hero Points).

It is assumed that as an adventurer your character is moderately fit, strong, skilled and agile. It is also assumed they know how to perform the regular tasks that an ordinary person of their background and culture would know. Thus, in this heroic fantasy genre, they know how to saddle and ride a horse, how to haggle in the marketplace, how to set and start a campfire, and who to ask to get an audience with the local lord etc. All figures can speak Common and their racial tongue (if there is one).

What the list below represents is the above average, and even extraordinary, abilities these adventurers have that sets them apart from the common man or woman.

The list below is not exhaustive. As a GM you can increase this list to represent your own setting, or remove ones that don't fit.

Note: Any adventurer can select one or more of the three magic abilities (arcane, divine & wild). This will give them a few spells to cast. However, if you choose one of the three spellcasting professions (see 2.1.3 Professional Abilities) you not only get the Magic ability but also a bonus to casting spells.

2.1.1 General abilities

Ability	Description/effects
Agile	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Arcane Magic	Select three arcane spells from the list (see 4.1 Arcane Magic).
Armour	This must be taken if figure is wearing armour (see 3.1.3).
Clever	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Dextrous	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Divine Magic	Select three divine spells from the list (see 4.2 Divine Magic).
Fast	The adventurer gets +3 to movement speed and initiative rolls.
Fortitude	The adventurer can take four wounds before becoming incapacitated, and the last wound does not reduce his number of actions.
Hawkeye	The adventurer ignores modifiers for cover when shooting at a foe.

The WYSIWYG RPG system v0.1

Horseman	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Literate	The adventurer can read and write any language they can speak.
Lore	The adventurer gets +3 to know stuff in a specific field. Choose from: Arcane, City, Divine, Dungeon, Fauna, Flora, Legal, Marine, Mercantile, Military, Noble, Rural or Woodland (others may be available, talk to your GM).
Perceptive	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Persuasive	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Profession	Select a single profession based on the figure and receive the benefits associated with it (see 2.1.3 Professional Abilities).
Race	Select a single race based on the figure and receive the benefits associated with it (see 2.1.2 Racial Abilities).
Shield	This must be taken if the figure has a shield.
Steady	The adventurer is unaffected by unstable ground or earth tremors.
Stealthy	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Strong	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Survivor	The adventurer gets +3 when making task checks related to this ability.
Tough	The adventurer gets +3 when making wounding task checks.
Weapon training	Select a weapon the figure has. The figure gets +3 when using that weapon. Note that you do not have to have this ability to wield a weapon.
Wild Magic	Select three wild spells form the list (see 4.3 Wild Magic).

Note: Any ability that gives a +3 bonus to task checks can be improved through training and experience (see 6.0 Hero Points). This is called Mastery and gives a +5 bonus to task checks.

2.1.2 Racial Abilities

This is not a mandatory choice. You can have an adventurer that chose not to follow its race's normal path. However, you do get two abilities for the price of one.

If you want your adventurer to have a racial ability you must do this when the character is first created.

Race	Abilities
Human	Strong, City Lore
Dwarf	Steady, Dungeon Lore
Elf	Hawkeye, Woodland Lore
Gnome	Dextrous, Woodland Lore
Half-Orc	Tough, Wilderness Lore
Halfling	Agile, Rural Lore

2.1.3 Professional Abilities

This is not a mandatory choice. You can have an adventurer who is a bit of a maverick, a jack-of-all-trades so to speak. However, you do get two abilities for the price of one.

If you want your adventurer to have a professional ability you must do this when the character is first created.

Profession	Abilities
Barbarian	Fortitude, +3 to attacks with any type of axe or spear
Cleric	Divine Magic, +3 to task checks to cast divine magic spells
Druid	Wild Magic, +3 to task checks to cast wild magic spells
Fighter	Armour, +3 to attacks with any type of weapons
Monk	Agile, +3 to attacks with blunt weapons and bare handed attacks
Ranger	Survivor, +3 to attacks with ranged weapons
Rogue	Stealthy, +3 to attempts to find traps
Wizard	Arcane Magic, +3 to task checks to cast arcane magic spells

3.0 Equipment

3.1 Weapons & Armour

Remember that the choices below are based almost entirely on what you can see on your chosen figure. If you chose a figure with no armour or shield this disadvantage is balanced by the fact that you don't then have to choose the Armour and Shield abilities and thus have up to two more slots free to choose more interesting ones.

3.1.1 Weapon bonuses

Instead of a list of up to a hundred different weapons (figure sculptors are very creative people) I have chosen to instead list weapon types and allow you to decide where the weapons on your figure fit in.

Bonus	Weapon types
-1	Bare hands
+0	Improvised and/or blunt, one-handed weapons, or thrown rocks and slingstones (i.e. club, chair leg, bottle, knife, spade, rake, hoe, belaying pin)
+1	Short, bladed or pointed, one-handed weapons, or light arrows and light quarrels/bolts (i.e. shortsword, dagger, hatchet, dart, javelin, hunting bow, light or hand crossbow)
+1	Long, blunt, one-handed weapons, heavy slingstones (i.e. rod, mace, warhammer, staff sling, flail, morning star)
+2	Long, bladed or pointed, one-handed weapons, or heavy arrows and heavy quarrels/bolts (i.e. longsword, broadsword, spear, battle axe, longbow, war bow, heavy crossbow)
+2	Blunt, two-handed weapons (i.e. quarterstaff, heavy flail, maul, Lucerne hammer)
+3	Bladed or pointed, two-handed weapons, or catapult/ballista (i.e. greatsword, greataxe, halberd and other polearms, pike)

Massive weapons, wielded by huge creatures, will have bigger bonuses.

3.1.2 Weapon ranges

Type	Distance	Example weapons
Close	Up to 5 squares/inches	Light throwing weapons (i.e. knives, darts, rocks, shuriken)
Short	Up to 15 squares/inches	Heavy throwing weapons (i.e. javelins, spears), small projectile weapons (i.e. hand crossbows)
Medium	Up to 25 squares/inches	Medium projectile weapons (i.e. hunting bows, light crossbows, slings)
Long	Up to 50 squares/inches	Heavy projectile weapons (i.e. war/long bows, heavy crossbows, staff slings)

3.1.3 Armour & Shield bonuses

As with weapons, I have defined armour by type. Note that if a figure has armour and a shield the bonuses are cumulative.

Bonus	Armour types/examples
+0	Naked or ordinary clothes
+1	Light armour (i.e. leather or padded jerkin)
+2	Medium armour (i.e. mail or scale shirt, brigandine)
+3	Heavy armour (i.e. mail or scale coat, breastplate)
+4	Very heavy armour (i.e. plate & mail)
+1	Small shield or buckler
+2	Medium shield (i.e. round or kite shield)
+3	Heavy shield (i.e. Tower shield, Pavise)

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3.2 General equipment

Although a character is based on a WYSIWYG view of a figure it is not unreasonable to allow the characters to also have a backpack, sack or saddlebags that can carry additional kit. Having the right kit for the job can elicit bonuses to the task roll from the GM.

If any of this equipment is already shown on the figure they get it for free.

All characters begin with 25 coins (ducats, gold pieces, silver shillings etc.) to buy such kit.

Here is a list of general equipment they may like to buy.

General Equipment:	Cost	General Equipment:	Cost
Backpack	7	Oilcloth (10' square)	2
Bedroll	5	Oilstone	3
Belt pouch	4	Pick	10
Blanket	2	Pole (stout – 8')	1
Burglar's Toolkit	50	Potion of Healing	20
Candles (per dozen)	3	Rations (for 1 day)	1
Chisel (masonry)	10	Rope (Hemp – per 10')	1
Cord (hemp – per 50')	1	Sack, large	1
Cord (silk – per 10')	1	Sack, small x3	1
Crowbar	5	Scroll case	2
Fish-hooks & line	1	Spade	5
Flint & Steel	1	Spikes (Iron per 6)	1
Grapnel	5	Tent (3 man)	25
Hammer (masonry)	5	Toolkit	25
Ladder (10')	5	Torch, Pitch x5	1
Lamp oil (2 pint flask)	1	Trivet	1
Lantern	5	Water-flask (2 pints)	1
Mirror	25	Wineskin (1 gallon)	1
Nails (per dozen)	1	Writing set	5

Note: There are no rules for encumbrance. I expect the GM and players to use common sense when loading up the adventurers like pack mules.

4.0 Magic

When an adventurer takes a magic ability they can choose three spells from the associated list below.

An adventurer may cast only one spell each turn, but can continue to cast any spell they know every turn. However, if they roll a natural one on the die then that spell becomes unavailable to them until the dawn of the next day. Note: you cannot use a Hero Point to reroll this (see 6.0 Hero Points).

All Spells require successful task checks to perform. If they roll a natural twenty on the die the victim cannot make a task check against it (see below).

Any figure targeted by a spell may attempt to resist its effects. They must make a task check to which they get a +3 bonus if they have the Clever ability and/or are able to cast spells themselves.

4.1 Arcane Magic

The elemental magic of those who regard magic as a science. Such spells are learned, often in colleges of magic.

Spell	Description/effects
Earth Tremors	The ground in a twenty foot radius bucks and heaves throwing everyone to the ground, except the caster and any figure with the Steady ability. This is an instantaneous effect.
Levitate	The caster, or one figure he touches, may ascend or descend safely up to thirty foot through the air as a single move action. If the figure touched is unwilling they may save against the spell. This is an instantaneous effect.
Fire Bolt	This is a shooting attack with a thirty foot range that always hits. Figures do not add armour or shield to their Wounding Task Check roll. If it hits an inflammable object, that object will burst into flame. Undead and Plant creatures take two wounds from it not one. This is an instantaneous effect.
Walk on Water	The caster, or one figure he touches, may move at full speed over the surface of any body of water. This lasts for three turns.
Circle of Light	This is cast on an object which then sheds clear blue-sh light in a 20' radius. This lasts for one hour.
Cloak of Shadows	The caster is obscured by a cloak of shadows and cannot be targeted by ranged attacks. This lasts for three turns.

4.2 Divine Magic

The magic of those who have dedicated their lives or souls to a deity or holy cause. These spells are most often gifted to people as a reward for their piety.

Spell	Description/effects
Circle of Protection	No undead or evil spirits may enter a circle of protection and any that are within it when it is cast are pushed out. This lasts for three turns or until the caster moves from his current position, whichever is the shortest period.
Cure Disease	Halt the progress of a disease or infection and reverse its effects. This is an instantaneous effect.
Heal Wound	Reduce the number of wounds affecting a figure by one. This includes healing an incapacitated figure back up to three wounds. This is an instantaneous effect.
Holy Fire	The caster's weapon is bathed in holy fire.

The WYSIWYG RPG system v0.1

	Any evil creature or spirit hit by this weapon takes two wounds, not just one. This lasts for three turns.
Neutralise Poison	Halt the progress of a poison or venom and reverse its effects. This is an instantaneous effect.
Remove Curse	Break the curse affecting a creature or object. This is an instantaneous effect.

4.3 Wild Magic

The magic of the untamed wilderness. Casters of this sort of magic draw upon their connection to the earth and their ancestor or totem spirits. These spells are gifted to the caster by their ancestral or tribal totem spirits.

Spell	Description/effects
Banish Spirit	This is an attack on a spirit that, if successful, sends them away for a year and a day. This is an instantaneous effect.
Curse Foe	The victim of a Curse has a -6 modifier to all task rolls until the curse is broken or the next sunset.
Speak to an Animal	Caster may ask three, yes or no, questions of a natural animal. These shall be answered to the best of the animal's knowledge taking into account their level of intelligence.
Speak to the Dead	The caster may ask three, yes or no, questions of a dead body (note, not an undead one). These shall be answered to the best of the dead person's knowledge up until the time of their death.
Summon Guardian Spirit	This spirit shall watch over the caster as they rest or sleep and warn them if any enemies approach. This lasts for eight hours or until the caster leaves the area, whichever is the shortest period.
Summon Imp	This small, magical, flying creature can scout for the caster, allowing him to see and hear everything the imp does. If the Imp is sent more than sixty feet away it vanishes. The imp appears on the caster's shoulder and lasts for seven turns.

5.0 Playing the game

Because of the simplicity of these rules there are not abilities for every situation. It is intended that the GM allows the players to actually roleplay through many situations and tasks without ever needing to make a die roll.

5.1 Task checks

Like many of my games this one is based on a single, very simple task resolution mechanic:

- You roll 1d20 and try to score 15 or more.
- You can add suitable bonuses from abilities and equipment to the roll.
- The GM may also add positive or negative modifiers dependent upon the situation and the enemies the character may be facing.
- A natural roll of 1 is always a failure and a natural roll of 20 is always a success.

5.2 Action Turns

When things become hazardous, and especially if an enemy get actively involved, then play is organised into action turns during which all the figures get an opportunity to act (if they survive that long).

5.2.1 Initiative

At the beginning of an encounter we need to determine who goes when and in what order.

- Each figure rolls 1d20 (and adds +3 if they have the Fast ability).
- Action proceeds from highest to lowest [reroll any ties against each other].
- The initiative order stays the same until the end of the current engagement.
- A figure can choose to hold their action to a point lower in the initiative order. If they then act this becomes their new place in the order. If they do not act at all then their place remains where it is was for subsequent turns.

5.2.3 Actions

Upon their turn each figure can take up to two actions from the list below and use them in any order:

- Move. Ordinary figures may move 5 squares (or inches if you are not using a gridded surface) +3 if they have the Fast ability.
- Hit someone [a figure in an adjacent square or base contact].
- Shoot at someone [in range and line of sight].
- Cast a spell.
- Use a non-combat ability.
- Draw or change weapon.
- Reload a shooting weapon.
- Take a potion or activate a magic device.

A figure can speak a short sentence for free. If they choose to give long-winded information, or detailed tactical advice, the GM may decide this takes an action to achieve.

A figure that has taken its last wound before incapacitation gets only a single action.

5.2.4 Attacks & Damage

Attacking another figure requires the appropriate task check modified by their weapon of choice and any appropriate abilities.

To engage someone in close combat the figures must be in base contact.

To shoot at someone they must be in range and there must be a clear line of sight to the target. A target figure may benefit from poor visibility or cover. The GM shall determine how this affects the shooter's task check.

The WYSIWYG RPG system v0.1

If a figure is hit they make a Wound Task Check modified by their armour & shield bonus (and add +3 if they have the Tough ability).

If they fail they take a wound. Most figures can only take three wounds and on the fourth they become incapacitated. Note that some figures, especially monsters, have more wounds than this.

Each wound applies a cumulative -2 modifier to all future task rolls. So an adventurer that has taken three wounds is at -6.

Upon receiving their third wound the figure is reduced to a single action per turn.

An incapacitated figure falls to the ground, drops anything they are holding and can no longer carry out any actions.

A wound can be healed by a successful Heal Wounds spell, a Healing Potion or three days' rest & recuperation.

5.2.5 Optional hit location chart

This is an optional system that adds a layer of complexity to the game, but which some people may like.

D20	Location	Effect per wound
1-4	Left leg	Reduces speed by 1
5-8	Right leg	Reduces speed by 1
9-11	Abdomen	-2 to agility-related task checks
12	Chest	-2 to combat attack task checks
13-15	Left arm	Cannot use weapon or shield on that arm
16-18	Right arm	Cannot use weapon or shield on that arm
19-20	Head	-3 to all task checks

5.3 Organising games

I recommend following the structure of a long running TV series. In this a series is called a campaign. The campaign is broken into a series of episodes, each of which is composed of a number of scenes or encounters. In an evenings' play you may get through part or all of an episode.

6.0 Hero Points

All adventurers begin with a single Hero Point. As they progress through an adventure the GM may give them additional hero points for achieving objectives, being suitably heroic, the imaginative solution of problems or just for making everyone laugh.

An player can spend a hero point to reroll one of their adventurer's own task checks. They can never reroll a task check more than once. They must abide by the result of the second roll, even if it is worse than the first.

An adventurer can also save up these hero points to spend on improvements. For the expenditure of ten points they can:

- buy a new ability,
- master an ability he already has or
- buy a new spell if he is able to use divine, arcane or spirit magic.

Mastery of an ability increases the bonus the ability confers from +3 to +5.

On average an adventurer needs to spend three days practicing the improvement they have bought.

Note: Once spent a hero point is gone and can only be replenished through more heroic deeds.
