

# MULRAH: Microlite20 with Utilities Leveraging Role-playing Advancements Heuristically

MULRAH is a role-playing game that plugs indie-style rules (boxed text) into a modified Microlite20 (unboxed text), fully compatible with the Primary Fantasy SRD rules (see license).

## Core Rules

**Core Mechanic:** Whenever the outcome of an action is uncertain, a player will roll a 20-sided die (d20) against a Difficulty Class (DC) or an opponent also rolling a d20. If the roll exceeds the DC or the opponent's roll, then the character's action succeeds.

**Player Characters** (PCs) start at **Level 1** with **3 Stats**, a **Skill Expertise**, a **Trait**, and **2 Keys**.

**Setting-Steeped Character Creation** has players build their Characters as the GM describes the recent history of the setting. During each historical period the GM demarcates, players describe what their character was doing and pick one of 4 aspects (Skill Expertise, Trait, 2 Keys) their Character gained as a result of their activities.

**Stats** include Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX) and Mind (MIND). To determine, roll 2d4-4, assign to a Stat, and then repeat. (To convert from the Primary Fantasy SRD rules, use the relevant Ability Score's bonus. From older versions, Stat = (Relevant Ability Score - 10)/2.) Secondary Stats are Hit Points (HP = 10 + (STR + 3) x Level) and Armor Class (AC = 10 + DEX + Armor Bonus).

**Skills** are the basis for non-combat rolls and include Physical, Subterfuge, Knowledge, Communication, and Survival. Each PC starts with Expertise in one Skill, providing a +4 bonus.

- **Skill Rank** = 4 if Expert + Bonus from Leveling (see below)
- **Skill Roll** = d20 + Skill Rank + applicable Stat + situation mods
- **Saving Throws:** Skill Rolls replace "saving throws." Use Physical + STR or DEX for Fortitude and Reflex saves. Saving against magic (Will) is usually MIND + Level.

**Setting Stakes** has the GM and the player agree on possible outcomes *before* making any Skill Roll. Usually, the successful outcome is simply whatever the player is trying to do, but failure will require a little more thought and should always be interesting. For example, failing a roll to climb a wall could mean the Character takes damage from falling or loses her grappling hook, but still makes it to the top.

**Traits** include various bonuses and abilities. Characters each get a Trait.

- **Brute Force:** +1 to hit and damage; add +1 to either every other Level. Can use heavy armor. (Optional: Mark an opponent, who is at -1 to attacks against other foes.)
- **Sneak Attack** adds your Character's Subterfuge Skill Rank to the damage of her first attack, if she successfully Sneaks up on a foe (usually sub+DEX, but depends on situation). Impossible if wearing a shield or medium/heavy armor.
- **Dextrous Shot:** +1 to hit and damage with ranged weapons; only -1 using multiple weapons.

**Keys** are goals for which characters gain Experience Points (XP) when they accomplish them. Each Character has two Keys and may (optionally) change one every 5th Level. Three Keys inspired by various editions of the Primary Fantasy SRD are below. See Sweet20 for more.

- **The Key of Glittering Gold** gives 1 XP for every 100 gp the Character gains, divided by his Level.

- **The Key of Bloodlust** garners 1 XP for every battle won and 2 XP for defeating someone of higher Level or Hit Dice (HD).
- **Keys of Alignment** (Law vs. Chaos, Good vs. Evil) act like the Key of Bloodlust but earn double the XP for defeating foes of the opposite Alignment and none for those of the same Alignment.

**Level Advancement** occurs when the XP equals 20. Reset XP to 0 after advancing. With a new Level, gain (STR+3) HP. Every 3 Levels, a Character gains a Leveling Bonus, which allows them to add +1 to all Skills, +1 to a Stat, *or* gain Expertise (+4) in one Skill.

**Optional Leveling Bonuses** (Starting at 6th Level)

- **Rerolls:** Reroll up to three times per game session.
- **Heroic Surge:** Once per encounter, a Character can add his Level to any roll; once per day, he can add twice his Level.

## Combat

For each round, each Character takes one action (move, attack, cast a spell, etc.) when it is her turn. Attack Bonus determines Initiative.

- **Melee** Attack Bonus = STR + Level; vs opponent's AC
- **Missile** Attack Bonus = DEX + Level; vs opponent's AC
- **Magic** Attack Bonus = MIND + Level; vs opponent's Will or AC

**Multiple Attacks:** If the total bonus is +6 or more a second attack can be made with a -5 penalty. If the total bonus is +11 or more a third attack can be made at -10. For example, if the total bonus is +12, three attacks can be made at +12/+7/+2.

**Light Weapons:** When unarmed or using light weapons, you may use DEX instead of STR and attack with 2 weapons (or unarmed) in a round with -2 penalty on all attack rolls. Rapiers are light weapons, but you cannot wield two at once.

**Damage:** Add STR to Melee damage, x2 for 2-handed weapons. Natural 20 on an Attack Roll does double damage. If HP reach 0, unconscious and near death. -(10 + STRx2) HP = death.

**Healing:** All characters recover HP lost due to wounds at a rate equal to 1/2 their level (round up) per night of rest.

**Final Stand** kicks in at the player's request when her Character reaches 0 HP. Upon regaining consciousness, her Character remains at 1 HP until a final, climactic encounter that the player chooses as her Character's "final stand." During this encounter, the Character instantly regains all HP and doubles all roll bonuses. At the end of the encounter, the player must retire the Character in whatever manner she sees fit.

## Balancing Combat & Non-Combat

Optional rules for Skill Challenges and Simple Combat add complexity to non-combat situations and simplify combat, respectively.

**Skill Challenges** are used when the whole party works toward a common goal. Success requires that players accumulate (2 + 2 x Complexity) successful Skill Rolls before 3 failed rolls. GM selects Complexity (1 to 5). DC = EL + Base (5 - Easy, 10 - Medium, 15 - Hard). **The Key of Challenge** provides 1/2 XP per Complexity (round up).

**Simple Combat:** Players announce their Character's goals for the entire combat. By default their opponents will try to incapacitate the PCs, unless weakened to 1/4 HP (or total HD for groups), at which point they will surrender or flee. Then, each individual Character and group of

similar opponents make one Attack Roll (d20) that is extrapolated across the entire combat with bonuses based on the type of attack (see below). Damage in Simple Combat equals 1/2 the maximum die roll (rounded down) plus any bonuses. The GM describes the extrapolated outcome, which stands unless the players opt for the full, turn-based combat described previously. XP from Simple Combat is halved.

## Base Fantasy Setting Module

The rules below provide a baseline for a fantasy game and are common to both the default Microlite20 setting and the World Beyond.

**Magical Traits** allow Characters to use magic and may be selected instead of a Combat Trait in magical settings. The DC for undoing or resisting any spell is 10 + Caster Level + MIND. *Doubling the duration of a spell costs an additional 2 HP, adding 50% to its damage costs another 4 HP, and doubling its area of effect costs 6 HP.*

**Divine Magics (Trait)** provide access to Divine Spells of 1/2 the caster's Level and Turning Undead. Each spell costs HP = 1 + 2 x the Spell's Level, a loss that is healed completely **only** after 8 hours rest. A player-chosen "signature spell" for each Spell Level above 0th costs 1 less HP. Turn Undead requires a successful Magic Attack and can be used (2 + Level + MIND) times per day. DC is the current HPs of the Undead, destroyed if DC exceeded by 10. Casters cannot use two weapons at once.

**Classes** are pre-determined combinations of Traits, Skill Expertises, and 30 gp of Equipment.

- **Fighter:** Brute Force, Physical; Vial of Holy Water, 5 gp
- **Rogue:** Sneak Attack, Subterfuge; Thieves Tools
- **Ranger:** Dextrous Shot, Survival; Healer's Kit, -20 gp
- **Cleric:** Divine Spells, Communication; Silver Holy Symbol, 5 gp

**Equipment** is selected by picking a Fast Pack Card and additional items from the Equipment list with 1d4 x 25 gold pieces. Characters can wear light/medium armor and use a shield. Armor bonuses: Light (Leather) +2 AC, Medium (Chain) +4 AC, Heavy (Plate) +6 AC, Shield +1 AC.

## Fantasy Setting Module 1: The World Beyond

All PCs in the World Beyond must select a Race, Religion, and Nationality. Any combination is possible, but some are more common than others. Races besides Humans and Goblins are rare and at -1 to Skills.

- **Humans** have spread their religion through out most of Ytarria. Three Christian nations (Megalos, Caithness, Cardiel, and Araterre) and two Muslim nations--al-Wazif (Sunni) and al-Haz (Shi'ite)--exist. Judaism is the third most common religion, but Jews are spread among the six kingdoms. The Megalan Empire's closest rival is al-Wazif, with Cardiel being a much-disputed realm with a diverse, relatively egalitarian society. Caithness is a sparsely populated frontier with weak mana (and thus no magical characters) to the West, and Araterre is an island nation of seafarers to the South.
- **Goblins** (-2 STR, +1 DEX, +1 MIND, +1 Skills) are the second most populous Race on Yrth and comprise a substantial portion of the mercantile class in most cities, particularly in southern Megalos (Yibyorak and Sho'joor). Most have assimilated to the prevailing religion of the surrounding Humans (Christianity, Islam, Judaism), but a rare few follow cult deities of their former world.
- **Twadyn/"Gnomes"** and **Halflings** (+1 DEX) are surface-dwelling herders or farmers. They live peacefully alongside Humans and Goblins, usually in rural areas. Many have difficulty distinguishing

between the Elder Race of Gnomes and Halfling newcomers. The former tends to live near their Dwarven cousins in Zarak and worship the ancient elemental deities Hubabeh (Air) and Hsaragg (Water), while the latter hail from the slightly warmer, weed-growing climates of Megalos, where Christianity is prevalent.

- **Reptile-Men** (+2 STR, -1 MIND) are most prevalent in the Steppes of Arachine but can be found in any plain or swamp area. Little is known of the religious ways of most Reptile Men. Descendants of those who assimilated with Human nomads in the early days of Islam live alongside Humans in the Muslim nations.

**4x4 Magic** is based on an alternative magic system from the Microlite20 website. All spells are cast by combining two Words of Power, one from the Four Actions and one from the Four Realms, and making a successful Magic Attack (Level+MIND) against a DC of the opponent's Will (Level+MIND) or AC + 5 per Spell Level. A willing target, the caster himself, and human-sized inanimate objects have a DC of 10, which can vary by size, mass, or other factor.

A spell's Level determines the extent of its effect and its impact on the caster. A 1st Level Spell has 1d6 (HP, 10', etc.) extent of impact, which doubles for every additional Spell Level. Making an effect permanent adds 25 to the DC. A spell causes (1 + 2 x Spell Level) HP damage to the caster, which is recovered only through 8 hours of rest.

### The Four Actions

- **Enhance:** Strengthen, Heal, Enlarge, Repair, Sharpen, etc.
- **Diminish:** Weaken, Damage, Injure, Reduce, Break, etc.
- **Communicate with:** Sense, Read, Seek, Understand, etc.
- **Control:** Shape, Hold, Command, Form, Direct, Dictate, etc. All other Actions are pre-requisites for Control.

### The Four Realms (Deity)

- **Life** (Hsaragg): Living body of humanoids, animals, plants; water.
- **Mind** (Hu-Babeh): That which normally inhabits/animates a body
- **Energy** (Mulrah): Fire, magic, (electricity, etc.), time.
- **Matter** (Dyn-Diyn): Solid material with no mind - stone, metal, wood, leather, paper, (plastic, etc.)

**Pagan/Dark Magics (Trait)** provide access to the 4x4 magic system, but cannot be used while wearing armor. Pagan priests are tolerated but looked down upon in most regions. They know their deity's Word of Power and one Action word at 1st Level. They can learn an additional Action word or gain a +5 bonus to a Word they already know at 3rd, 6th, and 10th Levels, at which point their progress stops, unless they become a Wizard of Grimshire. Practitioners of Dark Magic may learn a new Realm instead of a new Action, but are shunned or persecuted in nearly every society.

**Alchemy (Trait)** is a Goblin method of accessing Arcane Spells. With a successful roll of d20+Level+MIND vs a DC of 10 + 5 x Spell Level, an Alchemist can create potions for spells of a Spell Level up to 1/2 the Alchemist's Level. These potions can be used up to 24 hours after their creation; creating a potion with no expiration adds 20 to the DC. Each subsequent potion created in a day adds +2 to the DC.

**Classes** are optional in the World Beyond. Players may select a Class below or pick a different combination of a Trait, a Skill Expertise, and 30 gp of Equipment.

- **Alchemist:** Alchemy, Knowledge; Alchemist's Ingredients
- **Pagan Priest:** Pagan Magics, Communication; Holy Symbol, 5 gp
- **Witch/Warlock:** Dark Magics, Knowledge; Wand, staff, or similar.

## Fantasy Setting Module 2: Microlite20 Expert

The default Microlite20 setting provides rules for Mages who use Arcane Magic and uses four Races (Humans, Dwarves, Elves, Halflings). The rules below include these options as well as those from the Expert Rules.

### Magical Traits

- **Arcane Magic** works the same as Divine Magics but provides access to Arcane Spells and cannot be used while wearing armor.
- **Illusionist Magic** works the same as Arcane Magic, except for Illusionist Spells.
- **Druid Magic** provides use of Druid Spells but armor cannot have metal. Instead of the Turn Undead ability, Druid Magic provides its users with immunity to woodland fey, the ability to Pass Without Trace at 3rd Level, and shapeshifting to a small/medium animal up to 3 times per day at 7th Level. When shapeshifting back to original form, the user can heal 2 HP per level.
- **Bardic Song** provides use of Druid/Illusionist Spells to a Character reaching the 6th Level as if she were 1st Level. It also counters sound-based effects within a 30 ft. radius and Charm Person or Remove Fear 3 times per day.
- **Blessed Warrior:** Immunity to disease, +1 to all Saving Throws per 5 Levels, Detect Evil within 60 ft., heal 2 HP per Level per day.

**Races:** -1 Skill Rank in all Skills for Non-Humans, Elves +1 MIND, Dwarves +1 STR, Halflings +1 DEX; Gnomes +1 DEX or MIND; Half-Orcs +2 STR and -1 MIND; Half-Elves +1 DEX or +1 Skills; Lizard-Men +1 STR, +1 DEX, -1 MIND.

**Classes** are required in standard Microlite20.

- **Mage:** Arcane Magic, Knowledge
- **Paladin:** Blessed Warrior, Communication
- **Illusionist:** Illusionist Magic, Communication
- **Druid:** Druid Magic, Survival
- **Bard:** Bardic Song, Communication and Subterfuge/Knowledge

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