

Chapter 3: Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages

Advantages are rare skills that people possess that seem almost magical in nature. These are not actually magic at all, but are instead intrinsic abilities that the character possesses. Any character of any race may take any Advantage or Disadvantage. Some Advantages and Disadvantages may only be taken at Character Creation without Plot intervention, or specifically stated in race or culture text.

Advantage Name	At-Creation Cost	Post-Creation Cost	Per Additional Level
Acute Senses	3	N/A	N/A
Animal Empathy	5	10	N/A
Fortune*	1/3/6/10	N/A	N/A
Increased Stamina	6	10	N/A
Increased Wealth*	1/2/3/4/5	N/A	N/A
Light Sleeper	4	10	N/A
Magic Sense	8	15	N/A
Medium**	6	15	N/A
Pain Resistance	5	15	N/A
Rapid Healing	8	20	N/A
Resist Disease	4	10	4
Strong Will	5	15	N/A
True Name**	10	25	N/A

* - Indicates the cost per level, not cumulative.

** - Indicates that the ability requires Plot approval to purchase after character creation

Acute Sense

Each Acute Sense must be bought separately. The effects listed are the specific in-game advantages the character gains from taking this Advantage. Acute Senses may not be taken after Character Creation.

Acute Senses can be difficult to roleplay at times and can lead to misuse. At times, a Guide may offer characters with Acute Senses additional information based on the senses outside of the rules described here. For example, a character with Acute Smell might be able to notice the stench of a group of Thrals in an adjoining room, or a character with Acute Sight might get a clearer description of a darkened cave. Generally, these incidents will be during adventures or under other special circumstances and are not considered normal occurrences.

Cost: Three (3) points per Sense

Hearing – A character with Acute Hearing may not be Blindsided, and always notices the attack and turns his head at the last moment. The characters suffer no damage from this attack, nor are protective spells affected. The attack misses the character as if they had Dodged the attack. A character that is unconscious or otherwise immobilized cannot use this Advantage to avoid a Blindside.

Note: This does not give the character the ability to overhear conversations on the other side of the room. In some circumstances a Guide might give descriptions of sounds that are otherwise unheard by others to a character with Acute Hearing.

Sight – The player can ask Out-of-Play for a full description of anyone she encounters, even in the darkest night. This is done by asking “Acute Sight – What do I see?” Players must be able to clearly see at least the outline of an individual or a group. The question should be stated loudly, and if possible a description of the location you are trying to see should be included. For example, “Acute Sight – Group at the far tree line, what do I see?” Characters obscured by physical objects, such as trees or brush, or under the effects of a spell such as Shadow Meld or Invisibility, cannot be asked for descriptions.

A character with Acute Sight can use spell scrolls normally even in full darkness. See Chapter 9: Inscription and Binding Contracts for more information on spell scrolls.

Note: Under normal circumstances the player cannot ask for a better description of a dark room or similar location. A Guide may suspend this during an adventure and offer a better description for the character with Acute Sight.

Smell – The character can detect poison in food or drink by spending ten (10) seconds sniffing the food or drink in question. This Advantage does not allow tracking by scent.

Taste – The character can determine whether a liquid was created by standard Brewing or Alchemy, as well as what properties it possesses, with just a small taste. This tasting takes ten (10) seconds to properly complete. Tasters may tell the Category and Sub-Category of the Brew or Formulation after tasting it. This taste does not diminish the potency of the Brew or Formulation, and usually has no effect on the taster. Some Brews or Formulations have a slight effect on the taster. *Dissolution Poison, Death*

Poison, and *Afflict Poison* are treated as a *Grim Poison* by the taster. Others will have a note to see a Guide.

Animal Empathy

The character has a strong connection to wild animals and can calm even the most savage of beasts.

Cost: 5

Rules: The player must place both hands outward, palms up and call out “Animal Empathy”. She cannot have any objects in either hand when attempting to use this ability. The animal will become calmed, and may even become friendly if the character spends at least five minutes coaxing and cajoling the beast or beasts. As long as the player maintains this gesture, the animal or animals will not attack her. However, if the animal or animals feel threatened by others, they may attack them, but never the one performing Animal Empathy. This skill may be used on any number of animals. Animal Empathy performs better on smaller groups of animals, and may cause a contest of wills if the group of animals has an alpha or leader. Not all animals may be calmed, and some animals do not act react well to this ability.

Fortune

Characters with this Advantage have a substantial amount of goods and/or money that represent a windfall. After the initial bonus money and/or goods, no additional resources are forthcoming as a result of this Advantage. Fortune may not be taken after Character Creation.

Cost: 1, 3, 6, and 10 Character Points for the four (4) levels of the skill. For example, for level three (3) Fortune, a character would only pay six (6) points. The costs are non-cumulative.

Rules: Characters who purchase the Fortune Advantage gain twenty (20) Crowns or Riyals of money per level purchased toward purchasing starting equipment. All goods are purchased at the historical average price of the Material Units. The following rules exist for use of the money when buying goods:

- Only items that the character can use.
- No items above Standard quality without prior Plot approval.
- No items requiring special ingredients to create.
- No items that require more than ten (10) Production Points to create.
- No more than ten (10) of any type of item.

No Fortune: Each character receives twenty (20) Crowns or Riyals worth of money to spend on starting equipment. All goods are purchased at their production cost. The rules for what may be purchased with this money are identical to those for Fortune. Note that any character may simply choose to keep any part of the initial allotment as actual money.

Level One: The character begins the event with forty (40) Crowns or Riyals worth of money and/or goods.

Level Two: The character begins the event with sixty (60) Crowns or Riyals worth of money and/or goods.

Level Three: The character begins the event with eighty (80) Crowns or Riyals worth of money and/or goods.

Level Four: The character begins the event with one hundred (100) Crowns or Riyals worth of money and/or goods.

Increased Stamina

Characters that possess this ability do not bleed to death as quickly as other people.

Cost: 6

Rules: This Advantage extends the time it takes a character to bleed to death by two minutes. A character that purchases Increased Stamina will bleed to death after seven minutes have passed, instead of the usual five minutes. This does not affect the time until a character goes unconscious, only the time until she dies. A character may not have both Increased Stamina and Fast Bleeder.

Increased Wealth

Characters with this Advantage typically come from a privileged background and begin the event with a greater degree of wealth than normal.

Costs: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 Character Points for the five (5) levels of the skill. For example, a character with level three (3) Increased Wealth pays three (3) points. These costs are non-cumulative.

No Increased Wealth: The character begins with only the starting funds dictated by his level of Fortune, and receives no allowance.

Level One: The character begins the game with an additional two (2) Crowns or Riyals and gets an allowance of one (1) Crown or Riyal per event.

Level Two: The character begins the game with an additional four (4) Crowns or Riyals and gets an allowance of two (2) Crowns or Riyals per event.

Level Three: The character begins the game with an additional six (6) Crowns or Riyals and gets an allowance of three (3) Crowns or Riyals per event.

Level Four: The character begins the game with an additional eight (8) Crowns or Riyals and gets an allowance of four (4) Crowns or Riyals per event.

Level Five: The character begins the game with an additional ten (10) Crowns or Riyals and gets an allowance of five (5) Crowns or Riyals per event.

Light Sleeper

Characters with this Advantage have a kind of danger sense that alerts them to danger in their sleep.

Cost: 4

Rules: Characters with this ability must note where they are sleeping on their cabin notes (bed location). Any time a character attempts to enter the cabin unbidden, a Guide will check the notes. If a character with Light Sleeper is sleeping here, the Guide will shake her and say “You sense danger.”

Magic Sense

By focusing on a person or item, the character may read the energies of a living being or item to determine what sort of magic is at work.

Cost: 8

Rules: This Advantage allows a character to immediately determine if a single object is magical, or if a person has any active magical effects on him, as long as the object or person is within five feet of the character. After delivering the tagline “Sense Magic,” the character must examine each individual object and person separately. The character may ask if an object in plain view on another character is magical, but she may not ask if a character is carrying anything magical without specifying the item she is inspecting. Each of the questions below requires five (5) seconds of study prior to asking, other than asking if an item is magical or if a person is under any magical effects. Character may not be able to detect items or effects if the target is otherwise obscured or hidden. Additional effects may be detected by going through each list of questions each time. Each use takes five (5) seconds after the initial detection. It is immediately obvious to any onlooker who hears the tagline that this ability is being used.

If an item is identified as being magical, the player may ask the following questions:

- Is the item under multiple effects? If so, how many?
- Is it magic of the Realms, Forms, or Other? (Other magic will NOT be specified in most cases.)
- Which specific Realms or Forms are involved?
- Is it Battle magic or an Enchantment?

If examining a person and active magic is detected, the player may ask the following questions:

- Is the person under multiple effects? If so, how many?
- Is it magic of the Realms, Forms, or Other? (Other magic will NOT be specified in most cases)
- Which specific Realms or Forms are involved?
- Is it Battle magic or an Enchantment?

- What is the general effect of the magic? (Shield, Ward, Resist, Skin, Triggered, other)

Notes: A player using this ability should roleplay its use in some fashion. Many characters exhibit a specific quirk when using this ability, such as having a mild headache come over them, barely being able to contain a sneeze, wriggling the eyebrows, or looking at the object or person in question with intense concentration. Some players may even decide that they must actually touch the item in question to determine that it is magical.

Medium

A medium has the ability to see and speak with the ghosts of the dead. This Advantage requires Plot approval for purchase after Character Creation. It can be expected that seeking to become a medium during the course of the game will require in-game actions as well as Character Point expenditure before obtaining the ability.

Cost: 6

Rules: A character possessing this Advantage can see and speak with a character wearing a Ghost Shroud. Dead characters must be wearing a Ghost Shroud, or a green glow necklace at night. Dead characters not wearing Ghost Shroud or green glow necklace are out-of-play until they obtain an appropriate shroud or necklace. The Medium and the dead character may talk to each other, but should do so privately, as only the Medium is capable of hearing the ghost. If privacy is not possible, the ghost should whisper to the Medium so that she cannot be overheard by others.

Ghosts may not speak to one another even if one or both of the ghosts are mediums.

Pain Resistance

The character is extremely resistant to pain and will not go unconscious due to multiple Wounds as easily as other characters. Note that this does not affect healing time or how long it takes to bleed to death.

Cost: 5

Rules: Characters possessing this Advantage are only rendered unconscious due to wounds after suffering four limb wounds or a torso wound. This in no way affects the length of time it takes to eventually bleed to death from wounds. A character with two limb wounds would not pass out from the wounds in ten (10) minutes as is standard, but would still die from blood loss in fifteen minutes. Likewise, the character would not pass out immediately from three (3) limb wounds, but would still die in five (5) minutes from blood loss. A character may not have both Pain Resistance and Pain Intolerance.

Rapid Healing

Characters that have this ability heal at a much faster pace than others. Properly tended Wounds mend in an hour.

Cost: 8

Rules: A character that has had her Wounds Stabilized fully heals all damage after one hour of rest. This does not allow the character to fight, cast spells, or use any other skills or powers while healing if she would be prevented from doing so normally, such as having a torso wound or two limb Wounds.

After five (5) minutes have passed since being healed, she may move at a slow walk unassisted. The only actions she may take during this time are walking, talking, and warding off a Killing Blow. Any other action causes the character's Wounds to rip open anew, and the character may fall unconscious, depending on the locations of the Wounds.

This ability in no way prevents a character from lapsing into unconsciousness or dying because of Wounds. A character suffering a Torso Wound or multiple Limb Wounds still bleeds to death if not tended with Healing Ways.

If *Chirurgery* or *Accelerate Healing* is used on a character with Rapid Healing, the character heals in only thirty (30) minutes. If both *Chirurgery* and *Accelerate Healing* are combined with Rapid Healing, the character heals in just fifteen (15) minutes. A character with Rapid Healing awakens as soon as Healing Ways is successfully administered.

If a character with Rapid Healing has untreated Limb Wounds, they will heal after at least six (6) hours of sleep.

Rapid Healing allows for all Toughness to recover without any additional treatment in one (1) hour.

A character may not have both Rapid Healing and Slow Healer.

Resist Disease

The character is highly resistant to most forms of disease.

Cost: 4 per level

Rules: The character must spend one (1) minute per level of this ability in meditation to activate his resists. The tagline for this ability's use is Natural Resist against Disease. After activation, any time the character is affected by a disease, the player may call out "Resist", which then expends his ability for the game day. Any additional diseases the character contracts affect him as usual. The character must resist the disease at the time of infection. If a disease is allowed to set in, either because the character allows it or because he cannot Resist it, it cannot be Resisted at a later time. This ability may be purchased multiple times, allowing multiple uses. This ability refreshes at sunset. Any resists that have not been used expire at this time, and must be brought back up.

A character may not have both Resist Disease and Sickly.

Strong Will

The character is less affected by all mind-affecting spells and effects.

Cost: 5

Rules: Mind-affecting spells and abilities have half their normal duration on a character that is Strong Willed. The character is no less affected by the spell or ability; only the duration is affected. A character may not have both Strong Will and Weak Will.

True Name

The character has a True Name that resonates with magical energy. Share this secret name only with those you trust, for knowledge of this name gives power to restore you, or ruin you. This Advantage requires Plot approval for purchase after Character Creation. It can be expected that seeking a True Name during the course of the game will require in-game actions as well as Character Point expenditure before being able to obtain the ability.

Cost: 10

Rules: The character will be unable to be targeted with certain rituals unless the caster uses her True Name at the time of casting. The character's True Name will be assigned to you by Plot; its syllables are in the language of magic, not the language of mortals.

Ritualists with True Names learn the bones that signify the syllables of their names. If they place these bones in any straight line of a ritual, those matches will be considered legal even if they otherwise would not.

No True Name: Characters without the True Name Advantage are considered to have no True Name, and effects that otherwise require a person's True Name to affect them would instead only require their given name.

True Name: Characters with the True Name Advantage are protected from many effects that would otherwise be able to target them. Unless the character's True Name is known, they are safe from a variety of effects.

Disadvantages

A character history must be turned in within thirty (30) days following a character's first event. Each Disadvantage must be explained in this history or as part of an attachment. All Disadvantages are subject to approval by the Plot committee and may be disallowed.

Disadvantage	Points Granted At Character Creation
Diminished Healing: Celestial and Totemic Light Magic	4
Diminished Healing: Celestial and Totemic Fire Magic	3
Diminished Healing: Healing Brews	4
Diminished Healing: Rituals	1
Fast Bleeder	3
Frail	3
Illiterate	2
Intolerance	1 to 8
Lame	2
Monstrous	1 to 3
Mute	4
Pain Intolerance	2
Sickly	2
Slow Healer	3
Tolerance: Curative Brews	3
Tolerance: Enhancement Brews	2
Weak Spirit	2 to 4
Weak Will	2

Diminished Healing

Points Granted: 4 for Celestial and Totemic Magic: Light, 3 for Celestial and Totemic Magic: Fire, 4 for Healing Brews, and 1 for Healing Rituals.

Rules: The character is resistant to healing from Celestial and Totemic Magic: Light, Celestial and Totemic Magic: Fire, Healing Brews, or Healing Rituals. A character may take all four of the Diminished Healing Disadvantages, but the Plot committee is in no way responsible for the player having to spend all of their time slowly healing. All healing effects, but not curative effects such as *Cure Disease* or *Purify Blood*, of the type which the character suffers diminished effects causes the healing to function as healing of one step lower than normal. *Stabilize* of the specified type does not work on the character (and the targeted player should respond with “No Effect,” *Accelerate Healing* becomes *Stabilize*, *Heal Minor Wounds* becomes an *Accelerate Healing*, *Heal Wounds* becomes a *Heal Minor Wounds*, *Heal Grievous Wounds* becomes a *Heal Wounds*, and a *Heal Mortal Wounds* becomes a *Heal Grievous Wounds*. Returned have Diminished Healing: Celestial and Totemic Magic: Light, and cannot take this Disadvantage to further compound their difficulty in receiving healing Light magic. Returned characters do not receive any Character Points for this, as it is native to their race.

All Rituals will be prefaced with the word “Activate,” while all Celestial Magic and Totemic Magic is preceded by a verbal, or with the word “Magic.” Even if a ritual prepares a Light or Fire healing spell, characters that suffer from Diminished Healing of that type are not subject to their Disadvantage if it stems from a ritual. For example, a character with Diminished Healing: Celestial and Totemic Magic: Fire receives a Fire Heal Wounds from a Celestial. She instead is affected by a Fire Heal Minor Wounds. In this case, it is clear it is not a ritual, and is subject to the Disadvantage. If she receives a Fire Heal Wounds from a ritual, made clear with the tagline “Activate Fire Heal Wounds,” she is not subject to her Diminished Healing: Celestial and Totemic Magic: Fire Disadvantage.

Fast Bleeder

Points Granted: 3

Rules: The character bleeds out more quickly than other characters. Characters with this Disadvantage bleed to death in two (2) minutes instead of the usual five (5) minutes. This ability has no effect on how long it takes a character to lose consciousness from multiple Limb Wounds, only the five (5) minute bleed out time is reduced. With two Limb Wounds, the character would die after twelve (12) minutes, instead of the usual fifteen (15) minutes. A character may not have both Fast Bleeder and Increased Stamina.

Frail

Points Granted: 3

Rules: A character who is Frail is especially vulnerable to all forms of Grim Poison. When Grim Poison enters the character's blood, it is treated as a Death effect from the same Source as the Grim Poison. Characters that have a way to prevent or avoid the Death effect may do so.

Illiterate

Points Granted: 2

Rules: A character that possesses this Disadvantage can never learn to read. This prevents the character from practicing Alchemy, Binding Contracts Brewing, Forge Magic, Inscription, Security, or Ritualism.

Intolerance

Points Granted: 1 to 8

Rules: The character cannot physically tolerate a certain substance. This takes the form of an extreme allergic reaction when in the presence of the substance. Intolerances may be a familial trait, the result of an unfortunate accident, the result of a powerful curse, or any other number of reasons that the player might think up. Players should not just take an Intolerance to gain more Character Points. There should always be a reason for the Intolerance. Intolerances that are permitted are listed below, along with point values.

It is possible to have other Intolerances, though the Dust to Dust Plot Committee requires at least thirty (30) days to review a newly proposed Intolerance, and there is no guarantee of approval.

It should be noted that Intolerances are always physical. Phobias, fears, and other psychological or mental issues fall under the realm of role-playing and cannot be taken as Disadvantages.

Characters that are in physical contact, codified as touching the skin, with the substance to which they are Intolerant are debilitated, and cannot run, cast spells, activate items or abilities, or use combat maneuvers. However, the character may still fight, walk, and defend herself. This effect lasts for fifteen (15) minutes after the character has broken contact with the substance. If the substance is drunk or otherwise ingested, the character is affected for one (1) hour. A Skin will not protect the wearer from any substance to which she might have an Intolerance.

The Celestial racial Disadvantage works differently from an actual Intolerance, in that Celestials are only under the effects of their Intolerance if they take a Wound from an effect of the listed source.

Note: Intolerance to Magic Items includes Glyphs, Scrolls, Contracts, items enchanted with Forge Magic, and the foci used by ritualists.

Severe Intolerance

This Disadvantage can be bought at double point value for an increased adverse reaction. A character who takes this double point is completely immobilized by contact with the substance with which she is

Intolerant. The character cannot cast spells, fight, move, or even talk, though she can speak at a low whisper and ward off a Killing Blow, however. Contact for over twenty-four (24) hours kills the character. Characters with a Severe Intolerance are affected for fifteen (15) minutes after breaking contact with the substance. Ingesting the substance causes the character to be affected for one (1) hour.

Substance	Points Granted
Gold	1
In-Game Materials (Ivory, Fire Coral, etc)	1
Gemstones	2
Iron	2
Leather	2
Moonlight	2
Salt	2
Silver	2
Brews and Alchemical Formulations	3
Living Plants (all)	3
Glyphs, Scrolls, and Contracts	3
Steel	3
Stone	3
Wood	3
Magic Items	4
Sunlight	4

Lame

Points Granted: 2

Rules: The character suffers from an old wound that never healed correctly or other infirmity. A character with this Disadvantage cannot run. Any character possessing this Disadvantage that runs for anything other than out-of-play safety reasons is struck dead on the spot. The Lame Disadvantage cannot be cured with healing spells.

Monstrous

Points Granted: 1 to 3

Rules: The character has a horrible physical deformity or is otherwise monstrous in appearance. Returned, Celestials, and Homunculi are not considered Monstrous, though they may take this Disadvantage if they wish to be Monstrous. Makeup must be worn to signify the deformity. Monstrous appearances should always be approved before being taken. The player must wear the appropriate makeup at every event. If the makeup cannot be worn the player must play a different character for that event. The Monstrous Disadvantage cannot be cured with healing spells.

- One (1) Point: The character has unusual skin pigmentation or other minor deformity, such as fangs or a horn. People from the Caliphate consider large birthmarks to be Monstrous.
- Two (2) Points: The character possesses at least a minor protrusion, such as a horn or fangs, in conjunction with unusual skin pigmentation.
- Three (3) Points: The character is truly horrific. Massive scar tissue or other afflictions cover at least two-thirds (2/3) of the character's features.

Mute

The decision to select Mute as a Disadvantage must be considered carefully. Mute should never be selected just to gain extra starting Character Points.

Points Granted: 4

Rules: The character cannot speak. The Mute Disadvantage cannot be cured by healing spells. Characters can make limited noises, such as grunts, growls, or sometimes even howling. However, the effort of making noises often pains them greatly. Mute characters may answer any out-of-game question by speaking, as this is out-of-play.

Pain Intolerance

Points Granted: 2

Rules: A character with this Disadvantage immediately lapses into unconsciousness upon receiving two (2) Limb Wounds, instead of the usual three (3). This Disadvantage does not affect how quickly a character bleeds to death. Upon receiving two (2) Limb Wounds, the character would immediately become unconscious, and bleed to death fifteen (15) minutes later. Characters with Pain Intolerance do not react any differently to three (3) or four (4) Limb Wounds, or a Torso Wound. Please see Chapter 16: General Rules for Play for more information. A character may not have both Pain Intolerance and Pain Resistance.

Sickly

Points Granted: 2

Rules: A character who is Sickly suffers from a diminished ability to fight off Disease. Disease turns into a Grim Poison within five (5) minutes, rather than one (1) hour. After those five (5) minutes, the character cannot be cured by a *Cure Disease* effect, and the character dies one (1) hour later if his blood is not purified. A character cannot have both the Resist Disease Advantage and the Sickly Disadvantage.

Slow Healer

Points Granted: 3

Rules: Once all factors have been taken into consideration, the time for healing any Wound is always doubled. Even magical healing takes additional time. Normal healing effects take two (2) full minutes to

heal the character, though once the delivery has been completed, the character stops bleeding, assuming the healing effect prevents this as well.

This Disadvantage does not slow down healing time at all in the cases of *Empathic Healing* or *Transfer Wounds*. Both spells act normally. A character may not have both Slow Healer and Rapid Healing.

Tolerance

Points Granted: 3 for Curative Brews, 2 for Enhancement Brews

Rules: A character with a tolerance to these brews is less affected by them than a normal character would be. The character requires two (2) brews to benefit from the effect of one (1) when receiving any of these brews. Consuming a single brew has no effect. The second brew must be ingested within one (1) minute of the first.

Weak Spirit

Points Granted: 2, 3, or 4

Rules: The character's spirit has been permanently weakened, either due to a previous death, a curse, or any other reason. The effect is as if the character has died previously, regardless of the specific cause of the Weak Spirit. The character may or may not be aware of this condition. Weak Spirit may be worth two (2), three (3), or four (4) points for one (1), two (2), or three (3) deaths, respectively. Some effects cause this Disadvantage to be gained by the character for a limited time, and any Weak Spirit effects added increase the current number of Weak Spirit by the stated number. This allows Weak Spirit to be higher than three (3) temporarily, in these specific cases.

Weak Will

Points Granted: 2

Rules: All mental spells and abilities have twice their normal duration on a character that is Weak Willed. The character is no more affected by the spell or effect; only the duration is affected. A character may not have both Weak Will and Strong Will.