

The Basics

WHAT IS BROKEN SHORES?

Broken Shores is a Role-Playing Game (RPG) that uses the percentile roll as its core mechanic, although the full set of polyhedral dice is required in order to play, as well as pen and paper. In *Broken Shores*, players take the role of Drifters, survivors from an ancient cataclysm that ravaged their world, turning it into a watery hellscape. Players will explore a randomly generated ocean, scavenging what they can from the myriad of derelicts and tiny islands that are only now starting to appear. This is a dark and brutal world where fresh water is worth more than blood, and magic is both unpredictable and the key to ultimate power.

HOW DOES BROKEN SHORES PLAY?

Broken Shores is best played with a Game Master (GM) and a single Player Character (PC). There is nothing stopping you from playing it with a group of friends, but the game thrives when it's "me versus

the world", and this is best achieved when there's a single PC. For this same reason we have included solo rules and tools, for those wanting to venture into the watery world of Zephrouis without the guidance of a GM.

Whenever a PC tries to do something and the result isn't evident, or there is something at stake, the GM will inform the player to perform a **check**. This is done by rolling D100, and comparing the result to the corresponding skill on the character's sheet. If the result is equal or lower than the skill's score, the check is a success. This process is described in detail in chapter 3.

BROKEN SHORES'S MAIN FEATURES

- ▶ Dark fantasy set in the post-apocalyptic world of **Zephrouis**. The gods are dead, and humanity faces a cruel, inhospitable world.
- ▶ Magic is dangerous and as such, often forbidden and frowned upon.





▶ Players play as **Drifters**, people who travel the One Sea in search of small islands to scavenge.

▶ **Godshards** are the most desirable item to be found, crucial in the use of sorcery and coveted by the different cults. The old world left many a relic as well, if you're brave enough to venture into the ancient ruins...

▶ **Ocean hexcrawl** with a focus on exploration and scavenging. Explore ancient ruins, lush islands, floating derelicts. The world is ancient, but ripe for discovery and profit.

▶ **Customized** gameplay that allows for solo or traditional, GM-led campaigns.



Characters



Before you can set off and explore the One Sea, you need to create a Player Character (PC). This will be your avatar in the world of Zephorus, and through it you will explore its vast, dangerous ocean. By following the next few steps you'll have a new PC ready to explore this harsh world in no time. Besides the numbers generated

through the following steps, your character exists entirely in your mind. As such, you may decide on a name, gender, appearance, and background for them if you wish, but by the end of this character creation process you should already have a clear vision of who your character is.

New characters are referred to as **Drifters**, and they start their career with little else but the clothes on their back. All new characters are assumed to have just escaped from one of the many cults that have appeared in recent years. As such, your character has managed to grab a handful of rations, a weapon, and little else after their escape.





ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are the foundation your character is built upon. They determine your innate capabilities, and define the core of your abilities. They also determine the initial score of many skills, as you will soon learn. Higher numbers indicate a better capability; a person with a WIL of 12 will always be more powerful than one with a WIL of 10, for example. All characters have the following Attributes:

- **Strength (STR):** This determines how strong your character is, and how capable they are of performing feats of physical might such as lifting something heavy or breaking an object. It also influences how much gear you can carry without being encumbered.

- **Dexterity (DEX):** This describes how good you are at doing things that require you to be nimble or good with your hands, such as dodging and lock picking.

- **Constitution (CON):** This measures how resistant your character is to damage, and how well they fare against harmful effects such as poisons or diseases. If a character's CON score is ever reduced to zero, they die.

- **Will (WIL):** This defines your mental strength and ego. As such, it is a key attribute for anyone dealing with powerful magics, or simply to avoid being convinced of something. It allows you to stand your ground and increases your chances of getting your way.

- **Intelligence (INT):** This shows how cunning and capable you are at mental tasks. You will use it when you need to think things through before acting, or to solve a puzzle or riddle.

- **Charisma (CHA):** This tells you how likable you are. You will use your charisma to get information, and gain advantages with NPCs.

The initial attribute scores are determined by rolling 3D6 six times (once per character attribute) and then assigning each result to one of the attributes. When you're done, your character will have a score in each of their attributes ranging from 3 to 18. An attribute's score can never go above 20 by natural means.

Each attribute has an associated Attribute Roll that is equal to that attribute x5. This value is used when a situation calls for a check that is not covered by any skill, or that directly challenges one of the attributes. Attribute Rolls are always called for by the Game Master (GM), or by very specific circumstances, such as triggering a trap, being poisoned, or having your character attempt to remember something.

- **Strength Roll - Brawn:** For situations when a character must solve a problem or get out of a situation via pure brute force, a Brawn check is required. This can be anything from breaking free from bondage, to lifting a heavy rock. It can also be used as an opposed check against another character or creature, during an arm wrestling match, for example.

- **Dexterity Roll - Coordination:** When a character needs to determine if their reflexes are quick enough to avoid a trap or catch an item thrown at them, among other things, we use the Dexterity roll.

- **Constitution Roll - Vitality:** Use a Constitution roll whenever



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physical or intestinal fortitude is in question. To list a few examples, a Constitution roll might determine whether or not your character can stay awake all night, or endure seasickness, ill-prepared food, strong drink, or even poison, with no ill effects.

- **Will Roll - Tenacity:** Any situation that challenges a character's determination or control over themselves or their power can call for a Tenacity check. This is usually necessary when attempting to resist the effects of a spell, for example. Tenacity is also crucial to spellcasters, as described in chapter 5.

- **Intelligence Roll - Intellect:** This roll represents a character's ability to make a correct guess or a canny decision, or it can show awareness: for instance, does the character understand the meaning of the repeating glyphs they saw, or are they capable of finding a way out of their current situation? An Intellect check can be used to actively seek for clues, acquiring information, experimenting, and conducting study. It's important to avoid using the Intelligence Roll as an easy solution to puzzles and problems though, those are best left for the players to solve.

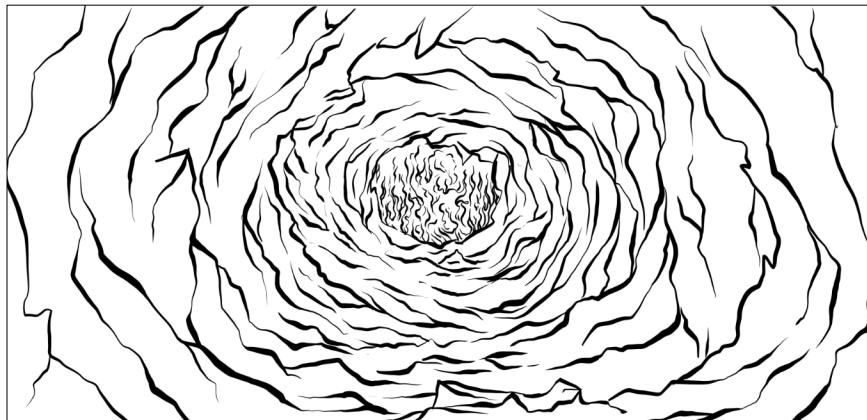
- **Charisma Roll - Charm:** A character can make a Charm check to make a good first impression, sway another character without words, or even to determine who other characters turn naturally when decisions must be made. Charm checks cover all those circumstances when words are not used yet still a character manages to be the focus of attention or get what they want.

SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES

- **Health Points (HP):** Health Points are a measure of how much damage a character can take before they die. A character's HP are equal to their CONx2. An average human recovers 3 HP per each day of full rest.

- **Power Points (PP):** Power Points are a representation of a character's spiritual and psychic power, and are used to cast spells. A character's PP are equal to their WIL, and are recovered after a full night's rest.

- **Speed:** In a single round (10 seconds), a character can walk and swim at a speed equal to their DEXx2 in feet, and run at a speed equal to DEXx4 in feet.





SKILLS

Now that we know your character's innate capabilities, it's time we see how their experiences have shaped them and what they learned in their past. Skills represent a character's prowess in a variety of fields. This value can go from 0 (complete incompetence) to 100 (total mastery). These are percentual values, so if a character has a score of 40 in the Literacy skill, they have a 40% chance of being successful when attempting to read something. Whenever you are asked to perform a skill check, roll a D100. If the result is below your skill's value, the check is successful.

Each skill has an initial score determined by the attribute associated with it. A character with a DEX of 16 will have a starting score of 16 in Crafting, Dodge, and any other skill associated with it. This initial score is added to the total of points assigned to it, if any.

After applying the base scores, add the following skill allotments to your skills:

- ◆+60 to one skill.
- ◆+40 to three skills.
- ◆+20 to five skills. You can choose to learn one spell and allot +20 to four skills instead, or learn two spells and allot +20 to three skills.
- ◆+10 to two skills.

- **Acrobatics (DEX):** A character can roll beneath a closing gate, swing across a chasm on a rope, or hold their balance on a precarious ledge by passing an Acrobatics check.

- **Animal Handling (CHA):** When a character wants to attempt to calm down a domesticated animal, intuit an animal's intentions, or even to control their mount when

attempting a risky maneuver, this is the skill they must use.

- **Athletics (STR):** To undertake difficult feats of swimming, sprinting, climbing, or jumping, a character must make an Athletics check.

- **Command (CHA):** This skill allows a character to take control of a group of soldiers and lead them into battle, or to arrange and organize an efficient group task, such as a ship's crew. It determines how good a character is at commanding other characters that are under their orders.

- **Crafting (DEX):** With this skill a character is able to fix or create small objects, like mending some leather boots, fixing a broken hilt, and any other task that doesn't require a very specialized knowledge. This general skill covers any sort of leather-working, bone-crafting, and carpentry.

- **Dodge (DEX):** A character's ability to get out of the way, either during combat or out of it. This skill is also used when a character attempts to disengage from a melee fight.

- **Insight (WIL):** A creature's objectives or motives can be deduced via an Insight check.

- **Literacy (INT):** The ability to read, understand, and reproduce the written word. This skill is a must for anyone interested in learning the secrets of magic contained in grimoires and glyphs. "Written word" in Zephorus might very well mean delicate notches on a bone, actual letters and pictograms written on vellum, or even the complex knot language of the Atharri.



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- **Manipulation (CHA):** With this skill a character can influence an NPC's opinion or actions, either via a well-placed threat, lies or sheer flattery.

- **Martial Weapons (STR):** This skill allows a character to wield weapons such as the battelaxe, flail, glaive, greataxe, greatsword, lance, longsword, maul, morningstar, scimitar, shortsword, trident, war pick, warhammer, and wip.

- **Medicine (INT):** In order to stabilize a dying person, treat or diagnose a sickness or poison, heal wounds, or establish the cause of death, a character must make a Medicine check.

- **Nature (INT):** The character's understanding of natural terrains, monsters, plants, and threats is measured by the Nature skill. Unlike Survival, this skill does not involve practical experience with the natural world.

- **Perception (WIL):** Perception refers to a character's ability to see, hear, or sense things.

- **Performance (CHA):** With a Performance check, a character can sing, act, or otherwise amuse an audience.

- **Ranged Weapons (DEX):** The ability to wield ranged weapons in combat, such as any type of bow, throwing daggers, darts, and even throwing nets.

- **Sailing (DEX):** A character's ability to properly tend to and navigate boats and vessels of any size.

- **Siege Weapons (DEX):** This skill determines a character's ability to wield the large weapons sometimes used by fortifications and larger vessels, such as ballistae or catapults.

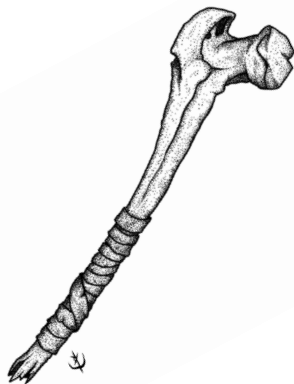
- **Simple Melee Weapons (STR):** This skill measures a character's ability to wield the following weapons: Club, dagger, greatclub, handaxe, javelin, mace, quarterstaff, and spear.

- **Sleight of Hand (DEX):** To conduct legerdemain, pickpocket, hide an object on another person, make a secret hand signal, or otherwise trick the eyes with feats of dexterity, a character makes a Sleight of Hand check.

- **Stealth (DEX):** Stealth is used to hide or avoid notice. A character's Stealth check is usually opposed by a potential observer's Perception check.

- **Survival (INT):** This skill helps a character to undertake tasks like fishing, tracking, avoiding natural hazards, and traveling without becoming lost in the One Sea.

- **Unarmed Combat (STR):** Unarmed Combat includes improvised, dirty fighting, elegant martial arts mastery, and anything in between. This skill comes in handy in all those situations when you don't have a weapon at hand. An unarmed character deals D4 damage.





TALENTS

New characters begin the game with two Talents, chosen from the following list.

- **Aim:** For your next attack, add +30 to your Ranged Weapons skill and +1 damage if you spend a whole round aiming.

- **Ancient Soul:** Increase your PP by +5 permanently.

- **Archery Expert:** Attacks made with ranged weapons ignore 2 points of armor.

- **Backstab:** Double your attack damage when attacking an unsuspecting target with a one-handed melee weapon.

- **Brace:** When you receive a critical hit, perform a successful Vitality check to avoid rolling on the Critical Hit table. You still receive double the damage as usual though.

- **Brawler:** Your unarmed attacks deal D6 damage.

- **Camouflage:** You automatically pass all Stealth checks when attempting to hide in natural terrain.

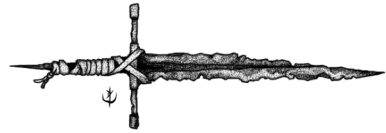
- **Controlled Breathing:** You can hold your breath for CONx2 rounds.

- **Break Armor:** Perform a standard attack. If it hits, reduce the target's armor by 1.

- **Charger:** +10 to your attack roll and +D4 damage when you charge into combat.

- **Dauntless:** You are immune to Fear.

- **Dual Wielder:** You no longer suffer any penalty from wielding



two one-handed weapons during combat.

- **Duelist:** +20 to your attack skill when wielding a one-handed weapon.

- **Elusive:** Your Dodge skill is reduced by -20 after each dodge attempted in the same round, instead of by -30.

- **Exploit Weak Spot:** Your attacks ignore 1 point of armor.

- **Fast Swimmer:** Your swimming speed is DEXx3 ft./round.

- **Frugal:** You only require one ration each two days.

- **Gifted - Charisma:** You may re-roll any failed skill up rolls for skills associated with CHA.

- **Gifted - Dexterity:** You may re-roll any failed skill up rolls for skills associated with DEX.

- **Gifted - Intelligence:** You may re-roll any failed skill up rolls for skills associated with INT.

- **Gifted - Strength:** You may re-roll any failed skill up rolls for skills associated with STR.

- **Gifted - Will:** You may re-roll any failed skill up rolls for skills associated with WIL.

- **Graceful Fighter:** DEX becomes your base attribute for Simple and Martial Weapons, instead of STR.



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- **Haggler:** You will never receive less than the standard price when selling your loot.

- **Healer:** While tending to the wounds of others with the Medicine skill, triple their healing rate.

- **Inspiring Chant:** Once per combat, perform a Performance check. If you succeed, you and your allies receive +5 temporary Health Points. These extra HP dissipate at the end of combat.

- **Lead the Fight:** Once per combat, perform a Command check. If successful, your allies receive +10 to their attack rolls until the end of combat.

- **Marksman:** +20 to your attack skill when using a ranged weapon.

- **Mind Fortress:** You're immune to all types of mind control or charm.

- **Moon-Touched:** +20 when rolling on the Spell Effect table.

- **Multiple Attacks:** You can split your attack skill in two and perform a different attack with each resulting score in the same turn. For example, a character with a Martial Weapons skill of 56 can choose to assign his first attack a score of 30 and the second one the remaining 26. In order to successfully hit, the character would have to perform a skill check as usual, once for each separate score.

- **Mystical Strike:** You can spend up to 5 PP to deal the same amount of extra damage when performing an attack.

- **Powerful:** Reduce a target's Tenacity score by -20 when attempting to resist one of your spells.

- **Quick-Handed:** +30 to your Sleight of Hand skill when performing a check.

- **Quick Healer:** You recover 5 HP per day of rest, instead of the usual 3.

- **Resilient:** When receiving a Major Wound, perform a Vitality check. If successful, you can ignore the wound's effects.

- **Silent:** +30 to your Stealth skill when performing a check.

- **Slippery:** You can automatically disengage from combat without having to perform a Dodge check.

- **Slayer:** +20 to your attack skill when wielding a two-handed weapon.

- **Snakeblood:** Increase your Vitality score by +30 when attempting to resist the effects of poison or venom.

- **Sorcerer:** Start the game knowing an extra spell of your choice. Only new characters may pick this Talent.

- **Taunt:** Add +20 to your Manipulation skill and make a check. If successful, all human opponents within hearing range are forced to attack you on their next turn.

- **Terrifying Voice:** Add +20 to your Manipulation skill and make a check. If successful, your target must pass a Tenacity check or suffer the effects of Fear for D4 rounds.

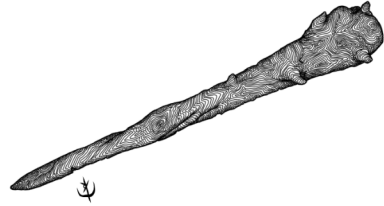
- **Unencumbered Speed:** While wearing no armor your speed is increased by 10 ft/round, and all incoming damage is reduced by 1.



- **Unstoppable:** After reducing an opponent to 0 HP, you can immediately perform a free attack against the nearest opponent.

- **Vigorous:** Increase your HP by +5 permanently.

- **Watchful:** +5 Initiative, you cannot be surprised.



CAPTURED

You start your story not as a fresh Drifter ready to explore the One Sea, but as one more of the many prisoners aboard a temple ship belonging to a cult. Who you were and what you did means little in the face of your recent ordeal; as a matter of fact, you can barely even remember your own name. You've

been beaten, humiliated, starved, and cruelly punished. But your spirit never broke and one night, when a particularly fierce storm hit the ship, you finally managed to escape.

Roll on the following tables to learn what happened.

D10 WHICH CULT CAPTURED YOU?

- 1 The Thousand Tears, a particularly violent group of Aphion worshippers
- 2 Nirena's Emissaries, a congregation that worships the Goddess of Death
- 3 The Hallowed Creed, zealots working to bring back Phenir, God of Justice
- 4 The Golden Oracle, fanatics hoping to resurrect Qhanas, God of Magic
- 5 The Red Sky, a doomsday cult that endlessly sacrifices victims to Uara, Goddess of the Sky
- 6 The Faded, fanatics that consider humanity should have been exterminated
- 7 The Silent Gathering, a strange organization that worships Mantris, Goddess of the Night
- 8 The Bronze Children, their skin covered in sunburns and tumors, worshippers of Irus, God of the Sun
- 9 The Broken, followers of Ulies, God of Wind, attempting to bring him back
- 10 The Last Order, lost souls trying to interpret the last words of Kothe, Goddess of Duty



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D6 WHY WERE YOU CAPTURED?

- 1 You're a filthy heretic
- 2 Our cause requires blood
- 3 Someone needs to man the galleys
- 4 You must know something!
- 5 You had something of value
- 6 Who knows why these bastards choose to do anything?

D10 HOW LONG WERE YOU CAPTURED?

- 1-2 A week
- 3-4 A month
- 5-6 Three months
- 7-8 Six months
- 9-10 A year

D8 HOW DID YOU ESCAPE?

- 1 I seduced a member of the crew (+5 Manipulation)
- 2 I killed my way out (+5 Unarmed Combat)
- 3 I saw an opportunity and I took it (+5 Perception)
- 4 I carefully crafted a plan and executed it (+5 Insight)
- 5 I snuck out; nobody even realized I was gone (+5 Stealth)
- 6 I played dead and they forgot about me (+5 Performance)
- 7 I used my skills and made a way out (+5 Crafting)
- 8 I started a revolt (+5 Command)





Before you left captivity, you had the chance to do something stupid: rob the cult of something of value. Did you do it? If the answer is yes,

roll on the following table. You must be ready to pay the price though!

D6 WHAT DID YOU STEAL? - OPTIONAL

- 1 3D10 shards. You lost a finger in the fight though (-1 DEX)

- 2 An enchanted weapon (roll on the random weapon table) that deals an extra D4 damage. You received a wound that doesn't really heal (-1 CON)

- 3 A moonstone that can store up to 10 PP. You suffered a terrible blow to the head (-1 INT)

- 4 A *Ring of Waterlungs* (can cast the *Waterlungs* spell 1/day). Your face was slashed (-1 CHA)

- 5 A *Bracelet of Flaming Hand* (can cast the *Flaming Hand* spell 1/day). You are now **Hunted** by the cult

- 6 A *Ring of Healing* (can cast the *Stitch Wound* spell 1/day). You were pretty wounded, start the game having lost 5 HP

During your escape, you had the chance to free others, did you take it?

♦If you did, you gain one **Ally**, but start with -20Ç and 1 less Ration. Allies can potentially appear in the future to help you, either introduced randomly or by the GM.

On your way out, you also managed to grab a few things that should help you in your journey ahead:

♦One random weapon, roll on the Random Weapon table (page 112). If it's a bow, you also grabbed a quiver with UD6 arrows.

♦D4+6 Rations.

♦5D20 coins (Ç).

♦A random item from the Random Starting Gear table.

D10 RANDOM STARTING GEAR

- 1 Backpack

- 2 Knife

- 3 Torches (UD4)

- 4 D4 candles

- 5 D4 empty flasks

- 6 Fishing rod

- 7 Rope (40 ft)

- 8 Tinderbox

- 9 Bandages (UD4)

- 10 D10 Crafting supplies

FINISHING TOUCHES

The only thing left now is to determine some basic personality traits and other similar elements that will help you better role-play your character. Choose a name and overall appearance, gender, age, and anything else you want to add, and your new character is ready to go!

IMPROVING YOUR CHARACTER



If you roll below the skill's associated attribute when performing a skill check, your character has the chance to increase said skill's score. At the end of the session, all skills marked for a skill increase (known as *skill up*) must be tested: roll D100, and if the result is HIGHER than the skill's score, increase it by 1%.

Example: *Arothe must make a Perception check in order to find out where the hidden level that will allow him to exit the room he is currently trapped in is. His Perception score is 45, and his WIL (the attribute associated to Perception) is 12. He performs the check and rolls a 03, which is not only enough to spot the hidden level, but also to mark Perception for a potential skill up check. Later on, at the end of the game session Arothe's player performs a skill up check for his Perception. He takes a D100 and rolls a 50, which is higher than Arothe's Perception score of 45! Arothe's Perception has now increased to 46.*

RAISING ATTRIBUTES

Each time you increase a skill's score via a successful skill up check, mark the advancement progression track associated with the attribute used. Only one attribute can be marked this way per session. Once the attribute's advancement progression track is full, erase all progress made and increase the attribute by +1. Attributes cannot increase their score above 20. Remember to update all the scores associated with the attribute in question: skills, HP, or PP.

LEARNING NEW TALENTS

Each time a character increases one of their attributes they can also choose a new Talent from all the available ones.

