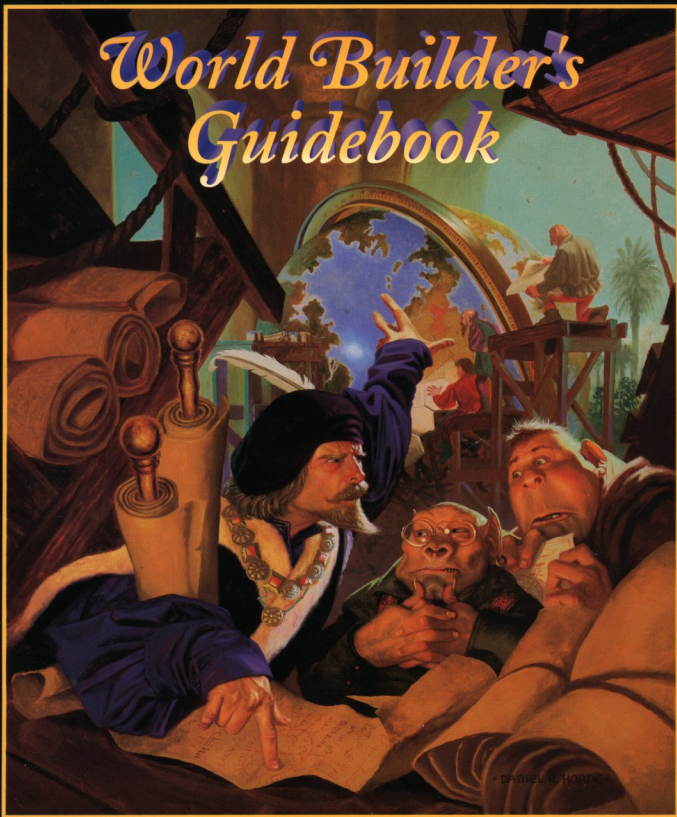




Advanced  
**Dungeons & Dragons®**  
Accessory

# World Builder's Guidebook



by *Richard Baker*



# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Rules Supplement

## World Builder's Guidebook

by  
*Richard Baker*

### Credits

**Editing:** David Eckelberry

**Creative Director:** Steve Winter

**Cover Illustration:** Daniel Horne

**Interior Illustrations:** Glen Michael Angus

**Graphic Design:** Eileen Mecha

**Cartography:** Diesel

**Typography:** Gaye O'Keefe

**Art Director:** S. Daniele

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TSR, Inc.  
201 Sheridan Springs Rd.  
Lake Geneva  
WI 53147  
U.S.A.



9532XXX1501

TSR Ltd.  
120 Church End  
Cherry Hinton  
Cambridge CB1 3LB  
United Kingdom





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# Introduction

Sooner or later, every Dungeon Master dares to build his or her own world from scratch. It's the ultimate exercise in creativity, one that can take years of planning and plotting. Town by town, character by character, kingdom by kingdom, an entire world takes shape. Thirty or forty years ago, the only people who attempted projects of this magnitude and audacity were a handful of science fiction writers and movie-makers. Today, role-playing games have created an immense demand for new and creative fantasy settings. *Thousands* of game masters and players, many of whom will never publish a word, devise new and fantastic worlds just because they enjoy the process of imagination. And each of those worlds is a unique construction, a blend of favorite novels, personal experience, and plain old inventiveness that stands out as a creative experiment of immense scope and ambition.

Given that designing a world is an intensely creative and personal experience, you might wonder why a *World Builder's Guidebook* is necessary. After all, if you have ever sat down to start building your own world, you've already taken the most important step in designing your unique campaign setting. This accessory is not meant to replace the creative process of world-building; instead it is a tool you may find useful during that process. Charts and tables are included, not to limit design, but to act as a springboard for the reader. If you don't have any idea of what the continent on the far side of your campaign world is like, a few rolls or a quick scan of some of the options available may spark your imagination.

Above all, remember that you're the master architect. If a chart gives you a result that you don't like, throw the book out the window and make your own choices!

## What's in a World?

So, what defines a world? What are the components of a campaign setting? Take a moment to consider everything you would have to do in order to record our own planet as a campaign setting. There are seven major continents to fill, each with its own range of climates, landforms, cultures, resources, history, and beliefs. At least six to seven thousand years of human history have been recorded, and there are indications of organized societies and settlements several times older than that. An uncounted variety of animals and plants populate the Earth's surface; new species are discovered almost every day. Next consider the near-infinite web of human interests, contact, and interaction. By the standards of science fiction and fantasy, the Earth is an incredibly rich and diverse world. In fact, no one has ever successfully portrayed a fantasy world even one-tenth as complex as our own.

At a minimum, a campaign world has four basic components: people, places, monsters, and adventures. Who are the NPCs of the setting? Are there major champions of good or evil who interact with the party? Do the heroes work for or take orders from someone? Where do they live when they're not stomping through a dungeon? What kinds of monsters are nearby, and why are they bothering the PCs? What kinds

of adventure opportunities can be found? Are there long-term plots or crusades to involve the PCs? You, as the DM, need to answer these questions in order to build a basic campaign.

This may seem like a lot of hard work, but don't get discouraged. A campaign world is nothing more than a shared imaginary setting between you and the players, and you will find the work you put into it well worth your effort. Include as much or as little detail as you find necessary to make your world usable for role-playing. If you're happy with a dungeon-delving, hack and slash campaign (and there's nothing wrong with that), all you need is a town and a place of evil—a dungeon, ruin, or some other lair of the foul. The dungeon needs a map, a key, and a few notes of what's where, and the town needs even less than that.

On the other hand, if you want to create a campaign in which the PCs bounce from kingdom to kingdom, engaging in swindles, politics, and intrigues across an entire continent, your campaign world will require a bit more work. You may need to map a sizable piece of a continent, devise new and interesting cultures and political situations, and create a host of NPCs with different aims and resources.

Use the preconceptions and assumptions of your players to color the world with a word or two. If you want a straight medieval setting, *tell* your players that's the society their characters live in. Your players will begin to fill in the details—peasants, knights, feudal lords, and kings—for themselves. A few phrases such as 'desert planet', 'Ice Age', 'jungles and dinosaurs', and other tag lines can go a long way towards helping your players to envision the world you're trying to show them. By conjuring up a universal, visual image that they're familiar with, you will supply both your players and yourself with the means to relate to another world.

## What You Need

*World Builder's Guidebook* assumes that you are familiar with the *DUNGEON MASTER® GUIDE* and the *PLAYER'S HANDBOOK*. You'll find a copy of the *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* or the earlier *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Appendixes* to be necessary for populating your campaign with an interesting array of creatures both malevolent and benign. You'll also want a good supply of scratch paper, pencils, pens (preferably colored), and several photocopies of the forms included in the pad that came with this booklet.

In addition to the basic supplies, you may find it useful to gather reference materials you wish to use. The various leatherette books of the PHBR and DMGR series may come in handy, especially if you wish to set up a campaign emphasizing one particular class, race, or situation. The Historical References (HR) can help you create fantasy versions of real-world cultures. Of course, if times and places from your favorite fantasy novels interest you, incorporate them into your world design.





### The DM's Notebook

As you enter the process of creating your own campaign world from scratch, you will want to assemble a DM's notebook. Get a sturdy folder, binder, or some other kind of easily-transported organizer to keep all your notes about your world. Your DM's notebook should include:

- Maps of the world, continent, kingdom, city, or adventure region, as required.
- Character sheets for all major NPCs.
- A log or short form for minor NPCs.
- A record of adventures, including treasure found, character developments, and foes overcome.
- Up-to-date copies of the character record sheets for all the player characters in your campaign.
- A collection of special notes, rules changes, new items and spells, and similar "customized" touches for your campaign setting.
- Photocopies of stat sheets for any unusual monsters picked up from other sources or designed for your campaign.
- Notes on the calendar or passage of time, if you track time in your game.
- A tickler file or wish list for the PCs, noting the motivations and long-range goals of each PC (very useful for designing adventures your players will want to take part in).
- Notes on the places and sites of interest in your setting, including major NPCs, adventure opportunities, local customs or societies, and anything else you might find necessary to describe a region.

Obviously, you don't *need* a DM's notebook with all of these components...but a well-organized campaign book can be a very useful tool for a Dungeon Master, especially in campaigns that emphasize travel and role-playing.

### How to Use This Book

The heart of the *World Builder's Guidebook* is Chapters Two through Five, which describe the creation of worlds, continents, kingdoms, local settings, and finally adventure sites. You can read this book straight through, or you may choose to jump around from topic to topic. Start with Chapter One, **Approaches**, where you will find descriptions of several common world-building methods and the logical steps you'll want to take with each method.

A pad of 32 sheets (several copies each of nine different forms) is included for use in building your world, drawing maps, and preparing notes for adventure sites and cultural details. Make sure you photocopy the different forms before you use them all up!



# Approaches

The first decision you face in creating a campaign world is where to begin. Start with a focus which can carve out a foundation for your design. Campaigns can be built around characters, societies, dungeons, histories and artifacts, or any number of special situations or developments you can imagine. Many campaigns feature several key points with interlocked effects or problems. For example, the DARK SUN® campaign setting is a desert world where the ecology has been ruined by uncontrolled sorcery, giving rise to mutated versions of character races and monsters. It is also a world where psionics are extremely common, and ultra-powerful sorcerer-kings rule over isolated city-states. These four characteristics define the basic structure of Athas, the world of the DARK SUN setting.

In this chapter, we'll explore several basic approaches to building a world. These include the *microscopic*, *macroscopic*, *sociological*, *character-based*, *situation-based*, *literary*, and *historical* approaches. Each of these uses a different chapter of this booklet as a starting point for the design process. For instance, the macroscopic—or “planet-in” approach—follows the chapters in order, but the microscopic (dungeon-out) design approach reverses the chapter order, since you begin by designing material covered in Chapter Five and then “zoom out” by working backwards through the chapters.

## Which Approach Is Best For Me?

For the sake of organization, this book assumes that you are beginning your design work by creating a planet and then zooming in to detail smaller and smaller regions. However, this may not work best for you. If you have decided that you want to build a campaign emphasizing politics and intrigue in a standard medieval setting, there's little reason to deal with landforms and climate bands—the most important thing for your campaign will be building up political situations and NPCs with interesting motives. Because politics and characters are the main thrust of your campaign, you should concentrate your efforts on setting up the situations and kingmakers that the PCs will end up dealing with. After you have the conflicts and tensions you want for your world, you can go back and fill in the details of climate and physical geography. Other campaign styles will naturally require different design approaches.

Ask yourself what the “hook” for your world will be. What makes it special? What's the game about? Is it a climate-driven campaign, such as a desert or forest world? Is it a culture-driven campaign, with an Arabian or Oriental flavor? Or is there a particular monster or character type that you wish to showcase? By picking out a salient characteristic or situation, you narrow the focus of your world-building task and make sure that the “hook” for the campaign is its strongest feature. The right design approach is the one which starts with the design feature you consider most important to your world.

## The Macroscopic Approach

This approach begins with only the broadest generalizations, since you will begin by creating the gross physical features of the planet and zoom in step by step to greater levels of detail. To use this approach, simply follow *World Builder's Guidebook* chapter by chapter.

The macroscopic approach is good for building a world when you have no particular plan in mind, and want to see what you come up with. Continents and climates can be determined with random rolls; as you begin to look more carefully at specific areas, you may find that the basic characteristics of the world are beginning to suggest interesting cultures or situations.

This approach is also good for creating worlds with a climatic theme, such as the previously mentioned desert world or forest world. Selecting the global conditions first might give you a better idea of how and why these specialized settings came about.

A great portion of the BIRTHRIGHT® campaign setting was created from the top down, although a number of considerations influenced its design.

## The Microscopic Approach

In many respects, this is the opposite of the macroscopic method. In this approach, the DM starts with a dungeon, town, or similar focused setting, and works his way outward. For example, if you have a great idea for a dungeon set in a volcanic mountain, your next step in zooming out would be to create a kingdom or region with a volcanic mountain in it, followed by the continent that surrounds the kingdom, and so on. Many campaigns are built by happenstance as fledgling DMs begin to place adventures farther and farther from the PCs' base of operations. This approach runs *backwards* through the book; you'll start with Chapter Five, and then move to Four, then Three, then Two as you fill in the details about the world around your microscopic setting.

This method for world-building applies when you have a fragment of a world—a small province, town, or dungeon—already prepared, and you're trying to flesh out this one-dimensional construct into a living, breathing campaign world. Starting small and working up is a natural progression as the PCs grow more powerful and begin to exert their influence over a wider and wider area. It's also good for DMs who want to watch the PCs explore the world a little bit at a time—in this system, discovering what lies on the other side of the hill is an important part of world growth and campaign advancement.

The RAVENLOFT®, FORGOTTEN REALMS®, and GREYHAWK® campaign settings are examples of campaign worlds that grew in this fashion.

## The Sociological Approach

If you have an interesting idea for a society or culture, you may want to start here. Building an Oriental or Arabian campaign, or one based around nomadic horsemen, seafar-



## Approaches

ing traders, or some other strong culture group, is a popular method for world-building. Mapping out the entire world and detailing particular sites or dungeons aren't your concerns at first; you want to create a living society for your player characters to interact in. After you have the society described to your satisfaction, you can go on to describe the world it lives in, or the adventure sites you expect your player characters to visit.

For this approach, refer to Chapter Four (**Kingdoms and Societies**), and build up the cultural setting for the campaign. Then proceed to Chapter Five and detail specific sites in the kingdom, and Chapter Six for mythology and history. After you've detailed the society and the kingdom it occupies, you can take a step back and handle the material in Chapters Two and Three.

The AL-QADIM® and PLANESCAPE™ settings are strongly influenced by sociological considerations, although PLANESCAPE stretches the definition of the phrase 'campaign world' (unless you are one of many who consider Sigil to be a self-contained campaign world in and of itself).

### The Character-based Approach

Sometimes, you may have one or two characters—PCs or NPCs—who are so riveting and strong that they deserve to have an entire world built around them. Take a long look at the prime movers of your campaign, and what kinds of societies, backgrounds, or situations that might have made them the way they are. In most cases, this will suggest either a society (Chapter Four) or a particular setting (Chapter Five) as a starting point. From there, you can build the kingdom or continent surrounding the home of the character of interest, working backwards through the chapters. Optionally, you may bounce forward to Chapter Six (**History and Mythology**) in order to explain how this one character may have an impact on the whole campaign. What's happening that makes this one person so important?

Here's an example of how a single character might drive the building of a world: Imagine a young, nobleman mage (one of the PCs) who has just inherited the castle and lands of his father. The DM will want to craft a setting and society to surround this character and his castle. Is this a society where the traditional roles of land ownership and feudal service are held by wizards, instead of knights? Or what if this setting is one in which wizard-lords feud and scheme against each other, and the brand-new PC is suddenly confronted with the shaky alliances and implacable enemies his father left behind? As you can see, from this one character and his situation, a whole world could take shape.

The DRAGONLANCE® campaign and novel series was strongly influenced by the original Heroes of the Lance and their principal enemies, although forces of history and mythology had their own role to play in fleshing out the world of Krynn as a campaign setting.

### The Situation-based Approach

For lack of a better term, this situational approach covers a wide range of special hooks or developments that could drive the creation of a campaign setting. Is there an unusual conflict or situation between several kingdoms or societies? Is there a particular type or group of monsters or villains that have achieved an unusual position? Does magic work in a strange or unusual way? Examples of situation-based designs could include such things as: a world in which the PCs are savages in a world of dinosaurs or elder horrors; a guerilla campaign in a world in which the standard races of high fantasy have fallen before the might of a dark lord; a world in which the PCs are the rulers of vast kingdoms; a shadowy campaign in which the PCs play vampire, witch, or ghost hunters of one kind or another; or just about anything else you could imagine.

The first step in creating a campaign world based around a situation is to describe the situation itself, and think about how it might have affected (or been caused by) the world at large. What might a world dominated by elementals be like? Once you have defined the problem or hook, you can then go to work on building the world to suit the situation. You will probably start with Chapters Four or Five (kingdoms or local sites), and then refer to Chapter Six to build the history of the problem before filling in the rest of the planet.

The DARK SUN and BIRTHRIGHT campaign settings feature prominent situations that strongly affect the entire campaign. The basic "hooks" for these worlds give players a chance to experience AD&D® game settings unlike any other.

### The Historical Approach

This course is related to the situation-based approach, but more specific in scope. A world built around this method features a sweep of events that shape the rest of the campaign, just as rivers and streams can shape and weather landforms. The first step here is to think up the great event or events that shaped the world, and decide how they relate to the lives and perceptions of the adventurers. Was there a great war in which two highly magical races destroyed each other, leaving behind ruins full of potent magic? Was the war more recent, a civil war that tore a kingdom apart only a generation ago? Is there some immense migration of barbarian tribes overrunning an older, more civilized race? Or was there a particular artifact or magical event that forever changed the world?

Begin with Chapter Six (**History and Mythology**), and then skip back to **Kingdoms and Sociology**. Once you've described the event and the land where it took place, you can either fill out the rest of the world, or you can zoom in to start work on specific sites inside the kingdom.

Most of the campaign settings published by TSR Inc. have included significant historical influences, but the world of Krynn—home of the DRAGONLANCE setting—is probably the best example of a world design driven by history.





### The Literary Approach

A great number of DMs are also fans of the literary genres of fantasy and science fiction. It's inevitable that the best-loved worlds created by a favorite author will find some reflection in a DM's world-building efforts. There's nothing wrong with this—as long as you don't try to sell it or publish it, it's not plagiarism or copyright infringement, and if your players love the novel or series as much as you do, they may jump at the chance to stomp around in Middle-Earth, Narnia, Malloreia, or the Young Kingdoms.

If you've decided that you want to make use of a world that someone else has built, you'll find that many of the design decisions have been taken out of your hands. Most of your work will be interpreting an author's vision into an AD&D campaign. For example, what role do wizards play in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-Earth? Or priests? In Middle-Earth, only *five* true wizards exist, and they're immortal spirits who veil their true forms in mortal shapes. Your initial response as a DM might be, "Fine, we'll just say that PCs can't be wizards in this setting," but changes like that can have some serious repercussions in an AD&D game—especially if one of your players just *loves* wizards and can't stand the thought of not playing one.

Another problem that you'll have to overcome is the role of the author's stories and events in your world. In most cases, the whole point of a novel (or a series) is to tell the best story in that particular world, and to wrap things up one way or another at the end. That works fine for literature, but it makes it difficult for the DM to explain to the players why their characters are every bit as important as the original characters, who may still be running around in the campaign. After all, any player who read *The Lord of the Rings* knows who Elrond is, but the DM may not want to let the PCs run off to Rivendell for help every time they get in trouble. Separating the characters and events of the source material from the adventures of your own PC party can be a significant challenge.

If you're still interested in paying homage to your favorite author by setting your campaign in the world he or she created (and there's no reason why you can't, as long as you understand the challenges in this approach), you'll want to use the *World Builder's Guidebook* to help you decide what you need to record or describe about the world in question. You may be playing in Middle-Earth, but it's still helpful to put together a map of Bree, create a few barrow-mounds and troll-caves to explore, and put your own mark on the world in which you play.



## World Hooks

Choosing a hook for your campaign world is the most important decision you'll make in the design process. Since the hook should govern all later decisions, you should make sure you pick one that you like, that your players will like, and that lies within your ability to describe and play. If you know that your strong point as a DM lies in running exciting combats, you'll probably want to find a hook that allows you to throw your PCs into plenty of fights.

Because the hook is so central to your entire design effort, you should make every effort to come up with an idea you feel enthusiastic about and follow it through. However, if you find that a good idea is not presenting itself to you, or you just want to throw some dice and see what comes up, you can roll on Table 1 for a bare-bones world hook. If you don't like the result you get, feel free to roll again.

Optionally, roll two or three times and look for an interesting mix or juxtaposition of hooks of different themes. For example, if your first roll gives you a Desert World, a second roll of Chivalry may help you to envision a society of noble desert warriors and riders. Sometimes, hooks that seem to clash may spark an unusual idea.

### Climate or Landform

**Aerial:** Some aspect of landform or weather leads to the development of aerial habitats. Mountain-top kingdoms, airships, flying cloud castles, or cliff-side cities are all possible. Avian PC races or characters skilled in operating air vehicles could be prominent.

**Archipelago:** No large continents exist, only countless islands. (Ursula K. Leguin's *Earthsea* is a good example.) Kingdoms could be limited to one island apiece, or multi-island trade empires could be prevalent.

**Arctic:** A great portion of the campaign world is arctic or sub-arctic. Most cultures will have to rely heavily on animal husbandry, nomadic hunting, whaling and sealing, or fishing as the primary source of food. Overland journeys are difficult, and many regions may be periodically isolated by glaciation or winter storms.

**Desert:** The world is unusually arid, with vast reaches of waterless waste. Agriculture and civilization is concentrated in fertile belts near sources of water. Water could be the measure of wealth.

**Forest:** Virgin woodland is the predominant terrain. Agriculture is difficult, and hunter/gatherer societies are likely to dominate. Sylvan creatures could enjoy an unusual advantage of position.

**Inland sea/lake:** A vast landlocked body of water is one of the principal features of the campaign setting.

**Jungle:** Hot, humid, year-round conditions encourage dense tropical forests over much of the world. Jungle soils are poor for agriculture, and slash-and-burn techniques are

Table 1: World Hooks

d%	Characteristic
01-24	Climate or landform (d161)
	1. Aerial
	2. Archipelago
	3. Arctic
	4. Desert
	5. Forest
	6. Inland sea/lake
	7. Jungle
	8. Mountain
	9. Oceanic
	10. Plains/steppes
	11. Subterranean
	12. Swamp
	13. Uninhabitable
	14. Unstable/formless
	15. Volcanic
	16. Weather
25-34	Sites of Interest (d8)
	1. Caverns
	2. Cities
	3. Dungeons
	4. Extraplanar
	5. Fortresses/strongholds
	6. Ruins
	7. Shrines
	8. Wilderness
35-60	Cultures (d12)
	1. African
	2. Ancient
	3. Arabian
	4. Barbarian
	5. Feudal
	6. Mercantile
	7. Native American
	8. Oriental
	9. Renaissance
	10. Post-Renaissance
	11. Savage/tribal
	12. Seafaring
61-85	Situation (d161)
	1. Class dominance
	2. Court
	3. Chivalry
	4. Deity
	5. Dying world
	6. Enemies
	7. Exploration
	8. Frontier
	9. Magical
	10. New world
	11. Psionics
	12. Race dominance
	13. Religious
	14. Slavery
	15. Technology
	16. Warfare
86-00	Historical (d8)
	1. Ancient warfare
	2. Artifact
	3. Balkanization
	4. Civil war
	5. Crusade
	6. Insurrection
	7. Migration
	8. Post-apocalyptic

<sup>1</sup>In order to generate a d16 roll, roll a d6 and a d8 simultaneously. If the d6 comes up as a 1-3, read the d8 without modification; if the d6 comes up 4-6, read the d8 as d8+8. This generates a random number between 1 and 16.





## Approaches

inefficient. Savages or hunter/gatherers are common.

**Mountain:** The world is unusually mountainous, with few stretches of level terrain. Travel is very difficult, and arable land is hard to find.

**Oceanic:** Almost no free land exists. Aquatic races and cultures may predominate. Floating islands of specialized plants or seaweeds may support terrestrial ecologies. C.S. Lewis's *Perelandra* is a good example of an oceanic world.

**Plains/steppes:** The world tends to be flat and somewhat arid, with endless reaches of savannah, plains, or steppe. Civilization tends to cluster around water sources, but nomadic cultures are likely to be dominant.

**Subterranean:** The focus of the campaign is a subterranean world. This can be an inner-earth setting that more closely resembles a terrestrial campaign (Burroughs' *Pellucidar* is one of these), or a true, lightless Underdark peopled by subterranean creatures.

**Swamp:** Large portions of the world are inundated lowlands. Arable land is a precious commodity, and hunters or gatherers are more likely than sessile agrarian cultures.

**Uninhabitable:** For some reason, large portions of the world are simply uninhabitable. For example, the deep valleys of a mountainous world may be under too much atmospheric pressure, so humankind is forced to live on the mountainsides. An arctic or desert world may have regions that are simply too cold or too hot for any normal lifeform. Adventures in these inhospitable regions could be a significant part of the campaign.

**Unstable/formless:** The world features regions that are somehow mutable or changing. Physical laws may change in regions of faerie, or perhaps in zones where technology works and magic fails. Imagine a world in which gods or elementals continually alter the regions under their control.

**Volcanic:** Major portions of the world are marked by volcanic activity. Earthquakes, lava flows, and ash falls render large portions of the world inhospitable to life. Seismically inactive regions are havens against the planet's destructive power.

**Weather:** An unusual weather condition or hazard governs the development of society. An example of this would be the Threadfall from Anne McCaffrey's *Pern*. A world shrouded in fog, pounded by violent storms, or subject to regular eclipses would fall into this category, too.

### Sites of Interest

**Caverns:** The principal adventure sites for the campaign are natural caverns. Mineral wealth or monster lairs may be the chief interest of the heroes.

**Cities:** The campaign is urban in nature, focusing on events and personalities of one or two major cities.

**Dungeons:** Classic underground delving is the main thrust of the game, although populations may dwell above ground.

**Extraplanar:** Forays into neighboring planes, or the attacks of extraplanar creatures, drive the campaign.

**Fortresses/strongholds:** The PCs spend the majority of their time investigating or raiding enemy fortresses, or defending outposts of their own. For example, in a world threatened by orcish hordes, the PCs might spend most of their time striking at the orc-held border forts and slave villages.

**Ruins:** An ancient culture left behind ruins with fantastic wealth, magic, and hidden danger. Locating unknown ruins to plunder and piecing together the lost knowledge of the ancient race is the major challenge of the campaign.

**Shrines:** Lonely sites scattered across the land concentrate some kind of unusual power or quality. By visiting the shrines, the PCs prevent some horrible event from occurring, or gather the power necessary to unseat a despotic tyrant or warlord.

**Wilderness:** Exploring vast reaches of pristine wilderness is the focus of the campaign. The PCs may be trying to blaze the trail for a new trade route, or they may be hopelessly lost and simply trying to find their way home.

### Cultures

**African:** The principal cultures of the campaign are African in nature. The advanced kingdoms of the medieval Ivory Coast would be a good model.

**Ancient:** The campaign's major cultures are Egyptian, Sumerian, Babylonian, Greek, or Roman in flavor. *The Glory of Rome* and *Age of Heroes* describe the ancient world for the AD&D game.

**Arabian:** The campaign has a distinct Arabian flavor to it; Zakhara, the setting of the *AL-QADIM* campaign, would be an excellent source of information on a world composed of fantastic Arabian cultures.

**Barbarian:** The most important societies of the world are fantastic barbarians, like the Cimmerians of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories. Fantasy Vikings can be thrown in with this group. The historical references *Vikings* or *Celts* may prove useful for a barbarian campaign.

**Feudal:** The primary cultures of the campaign are based on the feudal societies of medieval Europe. *Charlemagne's Paladins* or *The Crusades* may be useful references.

**Mercantile:** Trade and commerce play a key part in the dominant society of the campaign. Historical Venice and the Hanseatic League are excellent examples.

**Native American:** The campaign is built around a culture or society with a Native American feel. This can cover anything from the Incas or Aztecs to the Inuit, or Eskimo, peoples.

**Oriental:** The principal cultures of the campaign are Oriental or fantastic Oriental in flavor. Medieval Japan, China, or India are all good examples of societies that could be recreated in this world setting.

**Renaissance:** The major nations of the world have reached a Renaissance-level technology and advancement in art, literature, and society. Player characters tend to be swashbucklers and rakes.



## Approaches

**Post-Renaissance:** Gunpowder weapons and new tactical systems have ended the dominance of the armored knight. The campaign centers on nations that have reached a technology and cultural advancement equivalent to Europe in the 16th or 17th century. See the historical reference *A Mighty Fortress* for more information.

**Savage/tribal:** The principal cultures are still tribal in nature, in the fantastic tradition. Generally, they will be found in worlds or regions with a Lost World feel, including dinosaurs or Pleistocene mammals such as cave bears and sabre-tooth tigers.

**Seafaring:** The culture is reliant on seafaring for trade, communication, fishing, and general survival. Usually, this characteristic is paired with another to create ancient seafarers, Arabian seafarers, and so on.

### Situation

**Class dominance:** One type of character plays an unusual role in the campaign; for example, bards may rule the government with ability for song determining one's position, or thieves' guilds may actually run most communities.

**Court:** The campaign centers around the politics, intrigues, and rivalries of a kingdom's court. Some or all of the PCs may hold important posts or titles.

**Chivalry:** The ideals of chivalry are the emphasis of the campaign, and some or all of the PCs are part of the group (knighthoods, nobility, etc.) that embraces these tenets. Arthurian legends could be useful resources.

**Deity:** A power or demi-power plays an unusually active role in the day-to-day affairs of the world. An evil god's avatar may reign and wield power as a great lord of darkness, threatening the entire world, or a good-aligned deity may choose the PCs as his or her favorite tools to accomplish some end. J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-Earth and David Edding's Belgariad are good examples.

**Dying world:** After aeons of history and uncounted civilizations, the world approaches the end of its existence. The PCs may be able to stave off the inevitable through a continuing quest, or they may live in a world stricken by mortal lassitude. Jack Vance's Dying Earth stories are the definitive model of this kind of setting.

**Enemies:** The world is plagued by a particular enemy or enemy species, such as vampires, werewolves, extraplanar fiends, or some similar horror. The enemy does not necessarily wish to rule or dominate the PCs' world, and may not even bother with concerted action.

**Exploration:** Great tracts of the world are unknown, and the PCs will spend much of their time and effort in mapping or traversing terra incognita.

**Frontier:** Civilization stops at a certain point, after which lies vast stretches of monster-infested wilderness. Settlers and fortune-seekers flood into the region while the native creatures or societies that are threatened by the growth of civilization may strike back.

**Magical:** An unusual condition or consequence alters the working of magic. For example, wizard magic may be segregated into intolerant schools or guilds, magic may have unforeseeable side effects such as wild surges or defiling, or priestly magic may be changed in some way. Alternatively, this could describe a pervasive magical curse or condition that affects the entire setting. Robert Jordan's *Wheel of Time* series is one example among many.

**New world:** The world is very young, and the various races and monsters are beginning to people it for the first time. Magic and technology may not be very advanced, and large stretches of virgin wilderness separate settled or civilized areas.

**Psionics:** Mental powers play an important role in the campaign setting. Psionics may be recognized as a viable discipline equal to or superior over magic, or the entire population may witness an increased incidence of wild talents.

**Race dominance:** One particular race, either monstrous or demihuman, has come to rule the world. Humans or demihumans may create a cultural empire that suppresses the less fortunate demihumans around them; monsters build evil empires that enslave the survivors of the demihuman peoples. If this is combined with a supernatural enemy, the campaign becomes a grim war of survival in a world dominated by fiendish warlords.

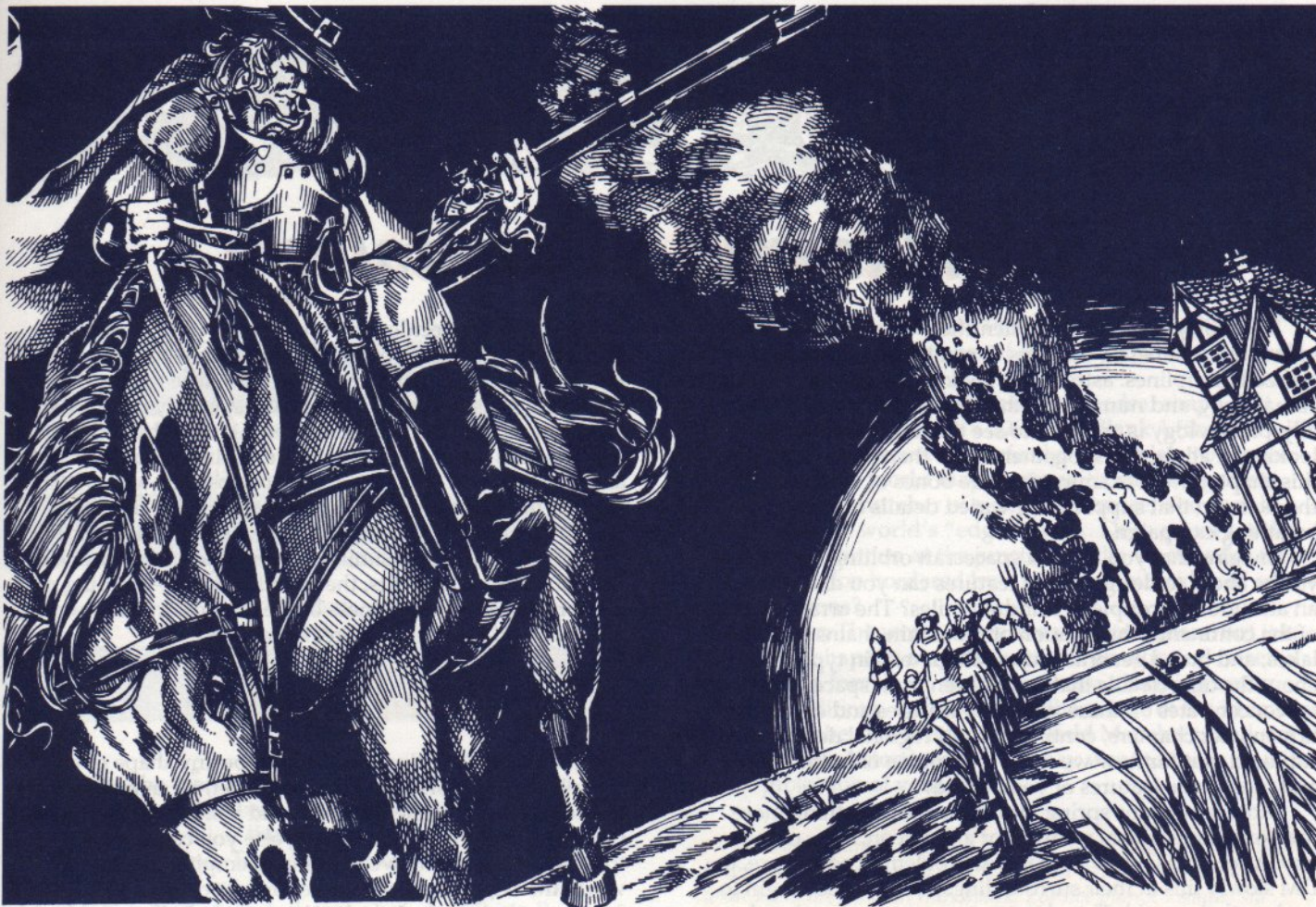
**Religious:** An unusual religious situation exists. Perhaps priests venerate the elements instead of anthropomorphic deities (Athas, the world of the DARK SUN setting, is a good example of this), or there may be a faith or religion that is so powerful that it dominates a region or the entire world.

**Slavery:** The dominant culture relies extensively on slave labor. If the heroes try to oppose slavery, they may find themselves in opposition to an entire culture.

**Technology:** The campaign is distinguished by an unusual level of technology, either lower or higher than that found in most AD&D games. Optionally, technology may exist, but resources are scarce—on a metal-poor world, a suit of mail or plate armor would be worth a king's ransom. In a low-resource world, many pieces of equipment may have the value of magic items.

**Warfare:** The primary culture of the campaign is locked in a cycle of warfare. The conflict may be either internal or external. Military expeditions, espionage, and sabotage are a principle source of adventures for the heroes.





## Historical

**Ancient desolation:** A war or catastrophe of epic proportions, civilization annihilated in the distant past, leaving scattered ruins and dangerous or corrupted patches of landscape in its wake.

**Artifact:** A powerful artifact played a crucial role in shaping the world as it is today. The possession of this artifact is a constant source of contention and adventure for the player characters, or the artifact has created a condition that requires the PCs' attention.

**Balkanization:** No powerful empire has ever united the central culture of the campaign, leaving a world littered with hundreds of counties, baronies, estates, principalities, and city-states. Shifting alliances and strife between rivals and neighbors creates many adventure opportunities.

**Civil war:** The primary culture has been divided by an explosive issue, such as religion or succession. Most of the NPCs of the campaign have come down on one side or the other, and the PCs may have to pick sides, too.

**Crusade:** A great military expedition has besieged a foreign land. Crusades can be brought about by religious differences, a desire for wealth or resources controlled by the other culture, or any other reason the DM deems appropriate. The crusade may have lasted centuries, with different stages and alliances. It can be an ongoing event or a force that shaped history decades ago.

**Insurrection:** The heroes stand against an oppressive government or conqueror, seeking the overthrow of the offensive person or persons. This can be a light-hearted Robin Hood campaign, or a deadly serious and grim battle for survival against overwhelmingly powerful opposition.

**Migration:** The national borders are changing (or changed recently) with the arrival or departure of an entire culture. The tribal migrations of the Germanic peoples brought them into contact—and conflict—with Rome in the real world; similar pressures may create tension between a sessile, agrarian civilization and a more mobile, barbaric people who are trickling into the area.

**Post-apocalyptic:** The world was recently shaken by a cataclysm of unimaginable power. Only the smallest shreds of society and civilization survive in a world gone mad. The apocalypse may have been an onslaught of evil, a climatic event, or even the conflict of powerful deities. The PCs must survive in a world where the rules have changed and try to put things back together.



# Worlds and Planetology

Planetology is a pseudo-scientific word for the study of planets and planetary features. It combines a number of specialized disciplines: astronomy, geology, geography, ecology, climatology, and numerous other fields of learning. Generally, planetology is an effort to see the forest for a forest by looking at all the trees together rather than one at a time. In this chapter, we'll examine the bare bones of world-building: the skeleton that supports the varied details of a living, breathing campaign.

Imagine that you are in a spacecraft orbiting the world you're about to design. What features can you discern from an altitude of a couple of hundred miles? The arrangement of the continents, the location of mountain chains and major lakes, and broad generalizations about terrain types are about the only details that can be seen from space. This chapter concentrates on these planetary features and characteristics. In later chapters, continental and regional details will be explored, but for now we want to examine only the largest and most basic features of your world.

Most campaigns spring into existence as nothing more than one-dimensional settings for a dungeon, ruin, or mystery. After the PCs solve the initial problem or adventure, the DM slowly fills in their surroundings as the heroes begin to explore their world. This chapter presents a reversal of that time-honored tradition by starting big and then working down to the level of detail desired. This is a good place to start if you don't know what kind of adventures you would like to run for your players, or if you find the grand scope of continents and seas to be the logical first step for your design.

## First Things First

Depending on your approach, you may have already designed significant portions of your world. If this is the case, *don't let this chapter screw up your work*. Feel free to simply select the conditions or characteristics you want in order to make sure that the campaign you've already built has a suitable setting. For example, if you've built up a swashbuckling campaign centered on pirates and sea trade, you should make sure that no matter what kinds of rolls you get that there's at least one region with substantial coastlines or seas.

If you've already created a regional map for your setting, transfer its coasts and large features such as mountain chains and major lakes to one of the world display map blanks. You'll notice that your full-page map shrinks to only an inch or so across when you place it on the world display. This is now an anchor point, which you can use to help you make decisions about the characteristics of the planet as a whole in the following sections.

## The Real-World Model

Much of the material in this chapter assumes that you are interested in building a fairly realistic world, with few fantastic features at the planetary scale. In other words, unless

you consciously decide otherwise, your world is probably going to take the form of an Earth-like planet existing in a universe where the physical laws come close to our own. Obviously, this is a significant slant, especially if you wish to create an exceptionally fantastic setting. So, when scientific explanations are used to explain things like mountains, seas, and weather, you should feel free to substitute any system (or lack thereof) that you wish to explain these features. Some explanations you might use include the direct activity or conflict of gods and similar powers; the existence of elemental and nature spirits; the effects of magic-wielding mortals; or the general weirdness of the cosmos. In other words, give yourself the magic to break the rules.

## Shape and Size

In a fantastic setting, a world can be any shape or size you please. It doesn't have to be a planet; it can be a self-contained cosmos or dimension, a world inside a world, a flat plane of infinite size, or anything else you can think up. For the sake of argument, we're going to emphasize the real-world model; planets tend to be round, weather and land-forms are derived from realistic causes and effects, and in most places a person transported from Earth to your planet wouldn't be able to tell the difference between the two worlds until a dragon came along to gobble him up.

This is a pretty substantial assumption on our part, since there is no good reason why you can't create the most fantastic or bizarre world you want to. But before you force your player characters to live in a world composed of sentient, mountain-sized asteroids engaged in a perpetual rugby match, consider that your players have an easier time imagining places that resemble places of their own experience. Everyone knows what forests, hills, and mountains look like. Everyone knows why being caught in a driving rainstorm with no shelter isn't fun. By giving your players the chance to concentrate on their characters and the adventure, you eliminate the potential for your weird world and terrain to steal the scene. Of course, if you *want* the players to be slack-jawed and glassy-eyed with the effort of imagining the Stomping Mountains of Bzash, then feel free to introduce the fantastic wherever you think it's appropriate.

## Shape

Most celestial bodies in the real world are spherical, due to the influence of gravity. Asymmetrical bodies are usually the result of collision or similar catastrophes. Your planet, of course, can be any shape you desire. (Again, remember that it doesn't even have to be a planet!) Some options for planet shape appear on Table 2, below:





## Worlds and Planetology

**Table 2: World Shape and Form**

d%	Shape
01-60	Sphere
61-70	Inner surface
71-80	Plane
81-85	Cylinder
86-90	Self-contained dimension
91-97	Polyhedron (roll d6)
	1) pyramid
	2) cube
	3) eight-sided
	4) ten-sided
	5) twelve-sided
	6) twenty-sided
98-00	Irregular

**Sphere:** The world is generally spherical, like most celestial bodies. The world is most likely set in a universe in which some or all of the normal laws of physics and gravity can be found. The Map Blanks provided on the accompanying pad are designed to represent spherical bodies; take a look at the following box describing Fantastic Cartography for ideas on how you can map your spherical world.

**Inner surface:** The world exists on the inner surface of a sphere, ring, or polyhedron. An excellent example is the Pelucidar of Edgar Rice Burroughs. Note that the horizon *climbs* in this world, so it may be possible to see terrain features at extraordinary distances. The Map Blanks work equally well for inner surface worlds.

**Plane:** The world is a plane of either finite or infinite dimensions. If the plane is finite, you can consider it to be a table-top, with a defined "edge" that the world's denizens dare not cross. "Beyond this point, there be dragons." If it is infinite, it has no edge but continues in all directions without end. A simple piece of blank hex or graph paper (Map Blank 5 would be perfect) represents the world as it actually lies. There is no distortion inherent in this approach; the world is just as flat as your sheet of paper (but probably thicker!).

**Cylinder:** The world is a cylinder. The campaign is presumably set on the curving outer (or inner) surface, and the flat ends are ignored or inaccessible. A mariner could sail around a cylindrical world, but an aviator couldn't use a transpolar flight route! Because the world only curves through two dimensions, you can use a flat piece of paper to map out the setting without distortion—simply define two opposing edges to "wrap" from one side to the other, and the other two sides are naturally impassable.

**Self-contained Dimension:** The world is the entirety of the cosmos, and nothing exists beyond it. Within this cosmos, it can take the shape of the inner surface of a sphere, a finite flat plane, or anything else imaginable. You can ignore the World Mapsheets and go straight to the Continent/

Regional maps, if you wish. Philip Jose Farmer's *World of Tiers* series depicts a number of self-contained dimensional worlds.

**Polyhedron:** The world has a polyhedral shape. If it happens to be shaped like a d20, Map Blank 1 (the one with the triangles) represents it perfectly; otherwise, you must create your own world mapsheets, with an arrangement that reflects the number of sides you choose. You should decide how the world's "edges" work. Does gravity suddenly alter direction at the juncture of the world's flat faces, or is each region bordered by a mountainous ridge of colossal proportions?

**Irregular:** The world exists as a planetary mass, but it is irregular in shape. It may be shaped in an elliptical or semi-regular solid form, or it may be mutable, changing under various conditions. Depending on the nature of the irregularity, you may be able to adapt the World Mapsheets and simply ignore the distortions, or you may want to come up with a map projection of your own.

*Example: Kim is creating a setting for her next AD&D campaign, and she decides to let the dice fall where they may to see what ideas the random rolls spark. For her planet's shape, she rolls a 35, which gives her a sphere. It's not innately fantastic, but she decides that a round world is fine for now and keeps the result.*

### World Size

After you decide what the shape of your world will be, you should determine an appropriate size. Don't worry about issues such as mass, gravity, or density—it's a fairly safe assumption that the natives of your world are perfectly accustomed to the gravity, and they have no adjustments to their movement rates or ability scores due to unusually heavy or light gravity. A more important issue from a world-builder's standpoint is the amount of surface area provided by a world of a given size.

As a model you may want to follow, the Earth is about 8,000 miles in diameter, with a circumference of nearly 25,000 miles. An adventurer attempting a circumnavigation of the globe on foot would walk for almost five years to complete his journey, if he could average fifteen miles a day and if he never had to turn aside to avoid oceans, mountains, or other forms of impassable terrain. And, at the end of that time, he would have explored a belt of terrain only as wide as his field of vision, only viewing an infinitesimal portion of the Earth's surface despite his years of travel. He could repeat the trip a hundred times and still have seen less than 1 or 2 percent of the world. An imaginary world that is only a fraction of the Earth's size is still quite sufficient for your adventurers.



**Table 3: World Size**

d% roll	Planetary Diameter <sup>1</sup>	Hex Size, World Map	Hex Size Region Map
01-02	800 miles	50 miles	10 miles
03-08	1,600 mi.	100 miles	20 miles
09-15	2,400 mi.	150 miles	30 miles
16-28	4,000 mi.	250 miles	50 miles
29-52	4,800 mi.	300 miles	60 miles
53-80	8,000 mi.	500 miles	100 miles
81-91	10,000 mi.	625 miles	125 miles
92-97	12,000 mi.	750 miles	150 miles
98-00	16,000 mi.	1,000 miles	200 miles

<sup>1</sup> This is the approximate diameter for spherical worlds. Non-spherical worlds are better described by the number and size of hexes on the World Map.

**Size of Non-Spherical Worlds:** Unusual world shapes may require you to exercise a little judgment of your own to determine size. The best way to set a size for non-spherical planets is to determine the size and number of hexes on the World Map (regardless of the form that ends up taking). Take a look at Map Blank 1, the Polyhedral Display—there are about 700 hexes scattered on the twenty faces. Assuming that you want about the same number of hexes for your world map, you can use this as a measuring stick for the size of your planet.

Flat or cylindrical worlds would be about 20 hexes north to south and 35 hexes east to west in order to provide a surface area roughly equal to a spherical world of the same number of hexes. For example, if you rolled a 57 on the World Size Table (500 miles per hex) your planet would be 10,000 miles north to south and 17,500 miles east to west, with a total area of 175 million square miles to explore.

Polyhedral worlds such as cubes or tetrahedrons simply split the available number of hexes between their faces. For example, a cubical world would divide 700 hexes between six faces, for 116 hexes per face. Rounding up a touch, each face shows eleven rows of eleven hexes each; if your roll indicated a world hex size of 300 miles, each face would be 3,300 miles by 3,300 miles (which is one big cube!).

*Example: Kim rolls for planetary size, and comes up with a 26, or a planetary diameter of 4,000 miles. This means that the hexes on her regional maps will be 50 miles across, which is a good mapping size. Kim knows a little about astronomy, and she realizes that this is about the size of Mars. Despite the planet's small size (compared to Earth's), it will still have a vast land surface area, especially if its hydrography (or surface water distribution) is relatively low. She is also reminded of the Barsoom books of Edgar Rice Burroughs, and begins to think about a dying or desert world setting.*





## Worlds and Planetology

After you've determined the gross physical dimensions of your campaign setting, move on to **Hydrography** to start creating continents and oceans.

### The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars

You may want to take a moment to consider the relation of your world to other heavenly bodies. When the peoples of your world gaze into the heavens, what do they see? First of all, is your world a planet as we define them, a body surrounded by the void of space or wildspace? Does it have a sun, or is light provided by a god who drives a fiery chariot across the sky each day? Is there a moon? Or dozen moons? What color are they? How large? How does the world's astronomy affect the day-to-day life of its inhabitants?

For now, we'll assume that your world is a planet orbiting a sun, with a fairly normal moon system. However, if you want to explore other options, you can refer to **Cosmology** (Chapter Six) for ideas on determining your world's place in the cosmos.

## Hydrography

Hydrography refers to the distribution and mapping of bodies of water. In this step, you'll determine how much of your world is covered with water. Obviously, some world hooks will force this decision for you; if you want a desert world, you'll deliberately select a very low hydrographic percentage, while for a seafaring campaign you'll want to make sure that some sizable seas or oceans exist. If you don't know or don't care how much of your world is covered with water, simply roll on Table 4 for your world's hydrographic percentage. This is the amount of the world's surface that is covered with bodies of water. As an example, the Earth's hydrographic percentage is about 70%.

**Table 4: World Hydrography**

d%	Hydrographic Percentage
01-10	20%
11-35	40%
36-75	60%
66-90	80%
91-00	100%

Once you have determined how much of your world consists of seas, lakes, and oceans, your next step is to sketch out the continents, inland seas, and major islands. Map Blanks 1 and 2 (the world displays) are the most useful scale and size for this. The actual distribution of land and water over the surface of your world depends on the planet's hydrographic percentage and your own personal whim.

If you don't know where to begin with sketching your continents and seas, refer to the chart below. It lists water and land distributions per region for the two different world displays. Naturally, you do not have to follow this exactly. To use the

chart, find the column at the top of the chart that matches your world hydrographic percentage and the style of map you prefer to use; then read down to find the number of regions (big triangles on the Polyhedral Display, or truncated squares on the Polar Display) that possess the listed mix of water and land.

**Table 5: Regional Land and Water Distribution Chart**

Region Type	Polyhedral					Polar Display				
	20	40	60	80	100	20	40	60	80	100
Water	0	0	2	8	18	0	0	3	10	23
Water/Minor Is.	0	1	4	6	2	0	1	5	8	3
Water/Major Is.	0	4	5	4	0	0	6	7	5	0
Water/Land	2	4	4	2	0	3	6	5	3	0
Ld./major seas	6	3	3	0	0	8	5	3	0	0
Ld./minor lakes	4	3	2	0	0	5	5	3	0	0
Land	8	5	0	0	0	10	3	0	0	0

**Water:** A large ocean or sea with no appreciable islands. Broad stretches of the South Atlantic, North Atlantic, or Pacific Oceans would fall in this category.

**Water with Minor Islands:** Most of the region is water, with only a few small, scattered islands. The Central Pacific and the Caribbean Sea are good examples.

**Water with Major Islands:** At least 75% of the region is water, but very dense archipelagoes or a number of large islands are notable features. The islands of Indonesia are an outstanding example of this kind of distribution. This can also represent a small peninsula or portion of coastline connecting to a larger land mass in an adjacent region.

**Water and Land:** The region is about half land and half water. This could be a portion of continental coastline that splits the region into a single mass of land and a single body of water, both connecting to adjacent regions; a large island continent; or possibly a large inland sea in the center of a landlocked region. Europe and the Mediterranean Sea might be a good example.

**Land with Major Seas:** About three-quarters of the region is land. This could be a continent that fills most of a region, or it could be a major lake or inland sea in a larger land mass. Canada (including its Great Lakes shores) is an example of this type of region.

**Land with Minor Lakes or Seas:** Most of the region is land, with scattered small lakes, a small portion of a coastline, or significant river networks. The continental United States falls in this category.

**Land:** Only small lakes and minor rivers are found in the region. Central Asia or northern Africa are probably the closest parallels to be found on Earth.

*Example: Continuing with her world generation, Kim rolls an 18, yielding a hydrographic percentage of 40%. Although this planet is smaller than Earth, it actually has more land surface. Kim has already decided to use the Polyhedral World Dis-*





## Worlds and Planetology

play (Map Blank 1), so out of the planet's 20 regions, 5 are land; 3 are land with minor bodies of water; 3 are land with major bodies of water; 4 are split between land and water; 4 are seas with major islands; and 1 is water with minor islands.

### Continents, Islands, and Coastlines

The next step in the world creation process is sketching out the actual shapes of the continents and major islands on your world display map. The regional distribution of land and water may suggest a pattern to you; for example, you may choose to group all the land regions into one super-continent, or you may decide to divide them into a number of small island-continents.

### Drawing Continents

Sketching out the coastlines of an imaginary continent is a very creative process. The following table can help you to ballpark how large your continents or seas should be, but it would take up too much space to present random systems for generating exact coastlines. It's much better for you to use the land and water distribution as a guide and let your pencil wander as it will. Take a look at an atlas or globe for some examples of how coasts can curve, wind, or buckle into peninsulas and archipelagoes.

You can determine the number and location of continents or seas by using random rolls to determine the size and placement of the non-dominant terrain. In other words, on water-dominated worlds (hydrographic profiles of 60%, 80%, or 100%) you will randomly place continents and islands; on land-dominated worlds (hydrographic percentages of 20% or 40%) you will randomly place seas, lakes, and oceans. Count up the number of regions that include at least 50% of the feature you're placing; for land-dominant worlds count regions of water, water with minor islands, water with major islands, and water and land—note that the number of regions varies, depending on which display you prefer. Then refer to the chart below:

**Table 6: Land and Water Masses**

# of Regions	Number of Seas/Continents	Size of Seas/Continents
2	1d2	1-2 regions
3	1d3	1-3 regions
9	1d6	1-8 regions
11	2d4	1-10 regions
13	2d6	1-12 regions

The number of seas or continents will tell you how the relevant regions should be grouped or divided. For example, if you have 9 land regions on a water-dominated world, a roll of 1d6 indicates 1 to 6 separate continents. Remember, this doesn't include small bodies or masses that appear in

the extreme regions; even a region of nothing but open seas can still have a few tiny atolls or islets.

After you've determined the number of bodies of water or land masses, you'll determine the size of each one. Start with the first sea or continent and roll its size, as indicated on the above chart. Continue for each additional sea or continent until you've accounted for the indicated number of seas. If you "run out" of regions (the first bodies you roll use up all the land or water), the remaining seas or continents are 1 region each. Similarly, if you have leftover regions because your seas or continents are too small, the last one gets all the leftover land or water.

*Example: Kim's world is dominated by land (it has a hydrographic profile of only 40%), so she wants to place seas. The land and water distribution includes 4 regions of half-land, half water; 4 regions of water with major islands; and 1 region of water with minor islands, for a total of 9 regions' worth of seas to be placed. After looking at Table 6, she rolls 1d6 and comes up with 2, so her world's major bodies of water are divided into 2 seas. Each sea is 1d8 regions in extent; the first is 7 regions, which means that the second must be 2 regions in size. Kim's world has one ocean of considerable size, and a smaller, secondary body of water.*

You can arbitrarily decide how the various types of regions at your disposal (water with major islands, water with minor islands, and so on) are split between the seas or the continents of your world. If you have no preference, you can always assign regions to the various seas or land masses by random rolls.

### Placing Continents or Seas

Now that you know roughly how large your land masses or seas are, it's time to figure out where they are on the world. This is easy—all you have to do is assign each region a number (the Map Blanks are already labelled with numbers) and roll randomly to see which region forms the center-point of your land mass or sea. For a polyhedral display, a simple d20 roll will do; for the polar display, roll 1d6—on a 1 or 2, the body or mass is centered in regions 1-10 (d10); on a 3 or 4, it's centered in regions 11-18 (d8+10); on a 5 or 6, it's in regions 19-26 (d8+18). This isn't a truly random distribution, but it's close enough.

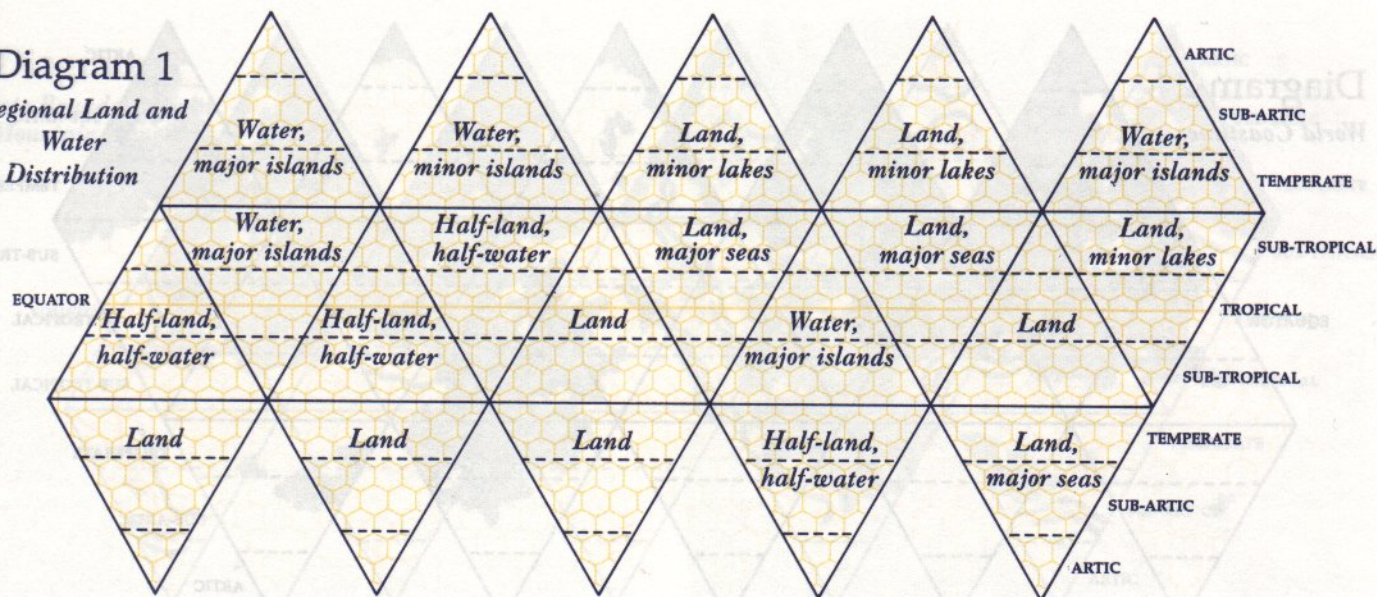
*Example: Kim has two seas to place on her polyhedral display. Her first roll for the large 7-region sea is a 2, so the big ocean will be centered high in the northern hemisphere. A second roll of 9 indicates that the 2-region sea will be centered in the center of the middle latitudes. Take a look at the figure below:*

**Coastlines:** At this stage, you're concerned with marking where the land stops and the water begins. Coastlines come



**Diagram 1**

*Regional Land and Water Distribution*



in three basic forms—mountainous, hilly, or flat. Mountainous coastlines tend to create numerous islets, jagged fjords, and deep, narrow passages. Arms of the sea flood the valleys between the peaks, creating numerous inlets and waterways. The Alaskan panhandle and the coast of Norway are good examples of mountainous coasts.

Hilly coastlines tend to produce prominent capes and peninsulas, but are not as extreme as the fjord systems found in mountainous areas. The coasts of New England or southern California are generally hilly.

Flat coastlines often feature broad stretches of wetlands or salt marsh along the coast. Sandy barrier islands may shelter the wetlands from direct contact with the ocean. River deltas may create large wetlands, too. Visit Florida.

For the most “realistic” appearance, your continents and seas should feature some remote capes and headlands, chains of islands, and stretches of even coastline. Again, take a look at a map or globe for examples of how coastlines are formed. Don’t forget that you may have minor land masses or bodies of water in the regions you didn’t place in the previous steps.

*Example: Now that Kim has placed her seas, she’s ready to put aside the book and draw coastlines. Here on Diagram 2 is how she translates the regional land-water distributions into the two seas of her campaign world.*

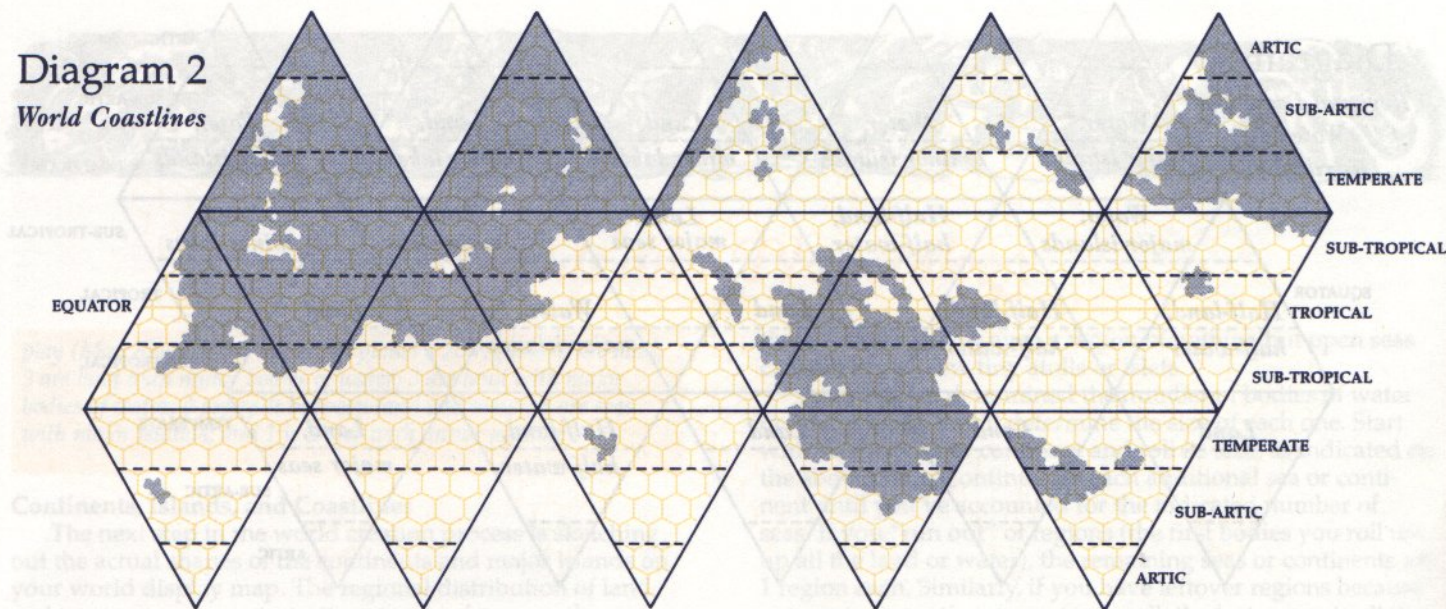
## Seismology and Tectonics

In our own world, the continents and seas are not static. The great land masses and seas ride on crustal plates, floating on the softer and hotter material of the planet’s mantle. The movement of these plates is nearly imperceptible by human standards; in the entirety of recorded history, the Atlantic Ocean has widened by a matter of a hundred-odd feet. Despite the incredible slowness of geological motion, friction and collision between moving plates are responsible for earthquakes, volcanic activity, and formation of earth’s mountain ranges.

In a fantastic world, of course, everything we know about seismology may be nothing more than smoke and mirrors. The world may feature no plates or tectonic features at all—mountains might be carved by the hands of the gods in the world’s youth, volcanoes may be great portals to the Elemental Plane of Fire, and earthquakes may be the wrath of vengeful deities or the manifestation of restless earth spirits. For that matter, mountains may be living creatures that grow and shift slowly in a scale beyond the perception of humankind. You can invent any explanation you wish for the workings of your planet’s geology.



**Diagram 2**  
*World Coastlines*



### Plate Tectonics

The solid portion of the Earth's crust is not one homogeneous unit; instead, it is divided into a number of plates. Continents and oceans rest on these huge slabs of material. The areas of greatest seismic activity are found at the edges of these plates. The famous Ring of Fire around the Pacific Ocean marks the boundary of the Pacific plate with the adjoining North American and Eurasian plates. The volcanoes of Italy—Vesuvius and Etna—are the result of friction between the Eurasian and African plates.

A typical Earth-sized world consists of 4d4 plates, each spanning 1d6 regions on the world display map. If you run out of regions, simply count the balance as single-region plates. If you run out of plates, the last plate receives the rest of the unallocated regions. Take a look at the continents and oceans of your world; in most cases, each continent and ocean basin should consist of one to three plates. Generally, large islands are part of the ocean plate or a nearby continental plate instead of acting as plates of their own.

*Example: Kim decides to keep going with the realistic world design approach she's used so far, and decides to note plate boundaries on her world display map. Rolling 4d4, she comes up with 12 separate plates. Using 1d6 for the size of each in regions of her map, she comes up with 6, 1, 6, and Kim realizes the bal-*

*ance must be plates of about 1 region each. This ends up as 6, 6, and eight 1-region plates (she discarded two to keep her world at 20 regions). She decides that her large ocean is clearly one plate, and a plate of similar size forms a great continental shield on the other hemisphere. In between a number of minor plates are jammed between the two major ones. Kim realizes that with this many minor plates, her world may be extremely active seismically. Lots of volcanoes and mountains sounds interesting to her, so she sketches in the plate boundaries as shown on Diagram 3:*

*Kim's world display map also includes the plate movement and boundary characteristics, from Mountain Chains and Rifts, the next section of this chapter.*

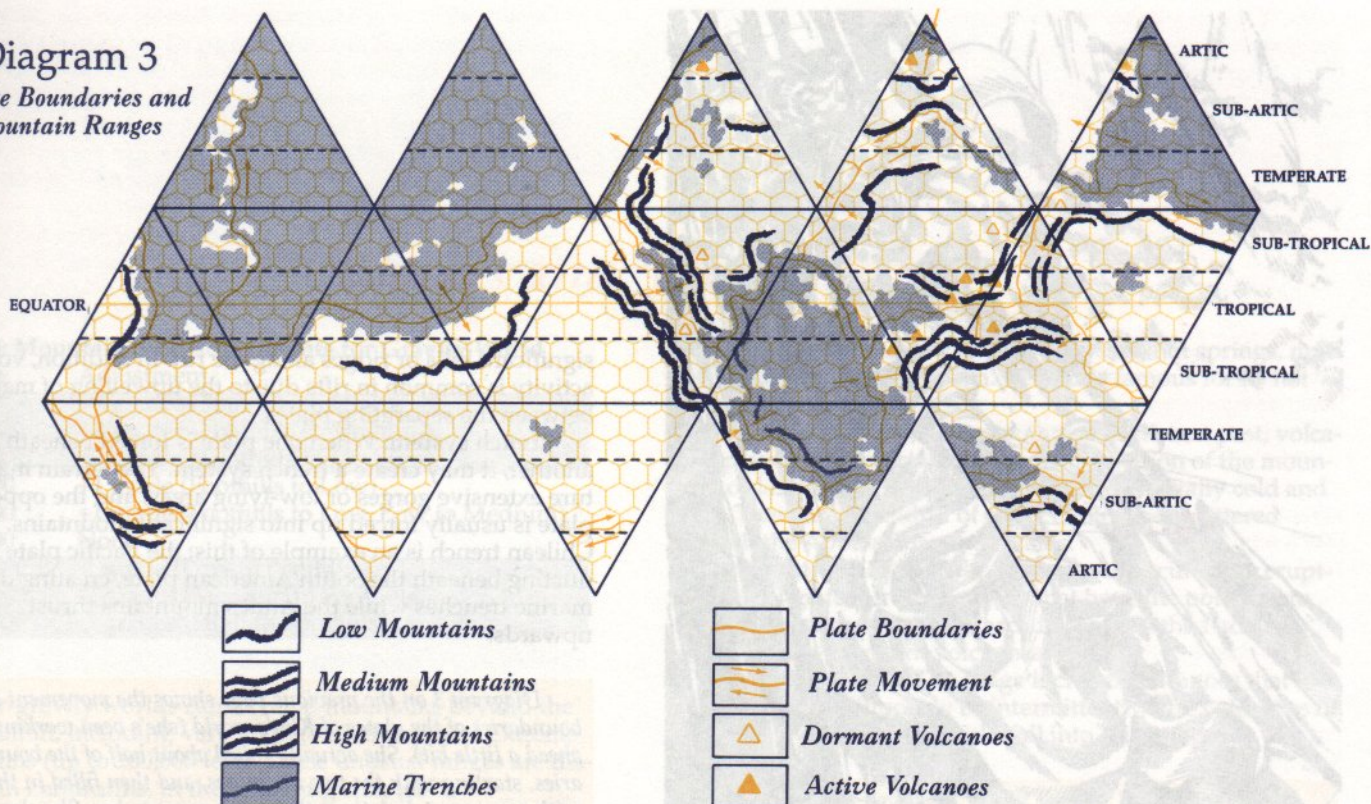
### Mountain Chains and Rifts

Plate boundaries are the best place to find mountains. As two plates collide, the border areas tend to be forced up or down in a process known as subduction. In addition, the stress may induce folding or crumpling of the plates. The Andes Mountains of South America are a perfect example of this; the Pacific plate dives under the South American plate, raising a sheer mountain range on the western edge of the continent.

The reverse of this collision process causes rifts, or valley systems, where plates are moving apart. The Great Rift Valley of Africa is growing where the eastern tip of the continent is



**Diagram 3**  
*Plate Boundaries and Mountain Ranges*



moving away from the rest of Africa. In a few million years (a mere tick of the geological clock) Africa will be pulled apart into two separate continents. Another example of this phenomena can be found in the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the longest chain of mountains on Earth. As the Atlantic Ocean widens, magma swelling up in the growing space between the plates has created a huge, submerged system of volcanic mountains.

In this step of world building, you'll examine your plate boundaries in and around the continents and determine if

**Table 7: Plate Movement**

d%	Plate movement and characteristics
01-05	Away from bordering plate, no mountains
06-21	Away from bordering plate, low mountains
22-33	Away from bordering plate, rift system <sup>1</sup>
34-39	Alongside bordering plate, no mountains <sup>2</sup>
40-56	Alongside bordering plate, low mountains <sup>2</sup>
57-66	Alongside bordering plate, medium mountains <sup>1,2</sup>
67-79	Towards bordering plate, trench system
80-94	Towards bordering plate, medium mountains <sup>1</sup>
95-00	Towards bordering plate, high mountains <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These characteristics are conducive to volcanic activity; see the next section.

<sup>2</sup> These characteristics cause seismic (earthquake) activity; see the next section.

they support rift systems or mountain systems. Then, you'll mark the major mountain chains of your world on the world

display map. Choose one plate and consult Table 7, comparing it to one other adjacent plate. Repeat this process for the rest of the plate boundaries, or at least the ones surrounding the continent you're primarily interested in. Disregard results that don't make sense, like a plate that is moving towards another plate that's moving away from the first.

**No mountains:** The landforms along this boundary are primarily plains or possibly low hills.

**Low mountains:** A range of old, weathered mountains from collisions in the distant past still marks the boundary of the continental plate. The Appalachians are a good example of low mountains.

**Medium mountains:** A new range formed in the collision, or an older range that has experienced a small degree of weathering, exists along the plate boundary. The Rockies or Alps are examples of medium mountains.

**High mountains:** A young mountain range has reached its maximum height in a violent plate collision. The Himalayas (or possibly the Andes) are examples of high mountains.

**Rift system:** In places where a continent is pulling apart, a rift system may develop. This creates extensive valleys, low-lying areas, or escarpments that can run for thousands of miles. The stress of the motion may cause buckling and





significant hills or ridges along the rift. In addition, volcanic activity is common in rifts due to the upwelling of magma between the separating plates.

**Trench system:** When one plate is forced beneath another, it may create a trench system. The terrain may feature extensive gorges or low-lying areas, and the opposing plate is usually forced up into significant mountains. The Chilean trench is an example of this; the Pacific plate is subducting beneath the South American plate, creating deep marine trenches while the Andes mountains thrust upwards.

*Diagram 3 on the previous page shows the movement and boundaries of the plates of Kim's world (she's been working ahead a little bit). She actually rolled about half of the boundaries, starting with the two big plates, and then filled in the rest with movement directions that made sense to her. She also decided on a whim to include some High Mountains along one boundary, despite the fact that she didn't roll any on the table. This is perfectly acceptable—it's her world, and she can have High Mountains if she wants.*

Mountains tend to form chains or ranges, instead of big clumps. If you glance at a globe, you'll see several good examples. That's because mountain ranges created by plate collisions are not a string of individual peaks, but a system of ridge after ridge. Subsidiary ranges often parallel the main system at a range of a few dozen to a couple of hundred miles. Volcanic mountains are an exception to this guideline—since volcanoes grow up from ground level, they often form large bulges or bumps on the surface.

Worlds of higher or lower gravity will form smaller or larger mountains, respectively. While the player characters may not receive any bonuses or penalties to their Strength scores (after all, they're quite accustomed to the world they live in), a light-gravity world can feature mountains two or three times the size of equivalent peaks on Earth. For example, the highest known peak in our Solar System is Mons Olympus, on the planet Mars. It reaches a height of almost 80,000 feet, dwarfing Mount Everest's 30,000 or so. On a world of heavier gravity, it will take more violent circumstances to raise a mountain as high as those found on smaller worlds.

Generally, you can disregard the effects of gravity and assume that your world, regardless of its size, possesses gravity equal to Earth's. (In effect, this is the explanation used in the SPELLJAMMER® campaign setting.) But, if you want to set your world at a higher or lower gravity rating than normal, simply increase or decrease mountain ranges to suit, as shown below:



temperate. As one moved into the dark side of the planet conditions would rapidly grow too cold for human habitation. And not for cold-based monsters, either, or ice elephants. In short, the information about world climates suggests that your campaign setting is a planet that orbits a sun in much the same fashion as Earth—if this isn't true for your setting, then anything goes.

## Mean Planetary Temperature

If the Earth orbited the sun at 100 million miles, the planet would be extremely cold. If it orbited at 10 million miles, the planet would be extremely hot.

**Table 8: Mountain Size Adjustments for Gravity World**

Size	Adjustment
800	+3 grades (Foothills to High)
1,600	+2 grades (Foothills to Medium)
2,400	+2 grades (Foothills to Medium)
4,000	+1 grade (Foothills to Low)
4,800	+1 grade (Foothills to Low, Low to Medium)
8,000	None
10,000	-1 grade (Low to Foothills)
12,000	-2 grades (Medium to Foothills)
16,000	-3 grades (High to Foothills)

Low-gravity worlds can develop mountains beyond the normal limit, including Very High (50,000 feet) and Extreme Mountains (up to 100,000 feet). These unusual ranges are discussed in Landforms, in the following chapter.

Despite her world's small size (it's only 4,000 miles in diameter, you may recall), Kim decides that gravity is Earth-normal, and her mountains remain at their normal size. If she had elected to create a world with gravity appropriate for its size, her mountain ranges would be one category taller than they would be on an Earth-model.

## Volcanic Activity

How much volcanic activity can be found on your world? The answer depends on the seismic stress and heat of the planet (or on the will of the gods and the fury of the fire elementals, if you prefer a fantastic explanation). Planetary stress develops from the gravitational influence of other nearby bodies; if your world has six big moons all closer than the Earth's moon is to Earth, you can expect extreme seismic stress, and a great deal of volcanism as a result.

Table 7, Plate Boundary Characteristics, noted what types of plate alignments are likely to create volcanic activity. For each location in your world that matches the profile given in that table, roll on Table 9 below:

**Table 9: Types of Volcanic Activity**

d%	Activity
01-25	None
26-33	Geysers/Hot Springs
34-49	Extinct Volcanoes, sparse
50-59	Extinct Volcanoes, numerous
60-74	Dormant Volcanoes, sparse
75-84	Dormant Volcanoes, numerous
86-95	Active Volcanoes, sparse
96-00	Active Volcanoes, numerous

**None:** The mountain range or area in question did not develop volcanic activity, despite the situation that may have otherwise encouraged vulcanism.

**Geysers/Hot Springs:** The area is characterized by

intense geological heat, with many geysers, hot springs, mud pots, and similar phenomena. Iceland is famous for its hot spring activity.

**Extinct Volcanoes:** At one point in the distant past, volcanoes played an important role in the formation of the mountains or landforms, but the volcanoes are generally cold and dead. There are a handful of extinct volcanoes scattered through the Appalachian mountains.

**Dormant Volcanoes:** Although none are currently erupting, the range features volcanoes that have the potential to erupt. Several peaks of the Cascade range in the Pacific Northwest are dormant volcanoes.

**Active Volcanoes:** The range includes volcanoes that erupt, either continuously or intermittently. The volcanoes of Iceland, Hawaii, or Italy could fall into this category.

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Refer back to Diagram 3. You'll see that Kim already rolled for volcanic activity along the plate boundaries with the likely characteristics. In one region, the boundary just east of the smaller sea, she actually came up with a 00 for vulcanism! Clearly, that's an unusual part of the world. She's already thinking about lost-world settings, jungles, and dinosaurs in that area.

Earthquakes are another form of seismic activity. While they are often related to volcanic events, many earthquakes occur in regions where plates are slipping past each other. Southern California is an example of an area with frequent earthquakes but no active volcanoes. If a region is subject to earthquakes (see Table 7), you can roll for the frequency and violence of earthquakes on the table below:

**Table 10: Earthquake Activity**

d%	Strength	Frequency
01-29	Mild	Rare
30-39	Mild	Uncommon
40-49	Mild	Common
50-65	Moderate	Rare
66-74	Moderate	Uncommon
75-84	Moderate	Common
85-94	Strong	Rare
95-98	Strong	Uncommon
99-00	Strong	Common

**Strength** reflects the power and extent of a significant earthquake. Mild earthquakes can damage wooden buildings and cause minor changes to landforms; moderate earthquakes can level wooden buildings and damage stone buildings, causing significant changes to landforms; strong earthquakes can destroy any structure and cause extreme changes to landforms, sinking land beneath the sea or raising up new islands.

**Frequency** reflects how often significant quakes occur. Areas with rare seismic activity see few earthquakes, and



## Worlds and Planetology

experience major shocks once every two to three centuries. Uncommon seismic activity creates two to four major shocks per century. Common seismic activity means that significant earthquakes occur once every five to twenty years.

It's not crucial when building a campaign to know how often earthquakes strike a given region; after all, no matter what the seismic tendencies are, earthquakes occur at the DM's whim. This is only a guideline for characterizing a large region and how earthquakes may have affected its development. Also, be aware that coastal regions subjected to earthquakes may experience devastating tsunamis in addition to tremors.

### Meteoric Impacts

In the course of recorded human history, there have been very few meteoric impacts of any significance. The most violent of these in 1908, when a meteorite weighing an estimated 1 million tons smashed into the Tunguska region of Siberia. Another meteorite twice that size struck what is now Arizona about 20,000 years ago. It left a crater almost a mile wide and 750 feet deep. In the grand scheme of things, these are actually minor impacts. A larger impact is thought to have been responsible for the mass extinctions that ended the age of the dinosaurs.

While the record of meteoric bombardments is clear on Earth, other planets and moons in the Solar System display the scars of even more catastrophic impacts. In building a fantastic world, an ancient meteor impact gives you an excuse to punch a hole straight through the middle of a continent and create an inland sea or vast depression, ringed by waves of shock ridges the size of mountains. Naturally, you can also come up with an interesting reason for the cosmic collision. Angry gods or the efforts of space monsters to destroy a planet could be responsible for bombarding your world with falling mountains.

Most craters should be no more than a few miles across, and so are probably best placed on a regional or area map instead of the world display. However, if you want to show a place or two where *really* big impacts happened, arbitrarily pick 1d6 spots and draw craters 1d6 hexes in diameter. Recent impacts may still feature hot lava in the center, while older impacts have probably cooled and filled with water.

### Geological Activity on Fantastic Worlds

The last and best rule of thumb about setting up your campaign is simple: Be arbitrary, capricious, and un-realistic. Find some places to create phenomena or terrains that completely violate the guidelines presented so far. After all, this is a fantastic world, not a scientific one. Do crustal plates even exist on a flat world, or a polyhedral world? If they don't, then where do mountains and volcanoes come from? The gods? The elementals?

If you don't wish to use plate tectonics as an explanation for the formation of your mountain ranges, here's an alter-

nate system of random mountain location. Simply check each region (the triangles of the Polyhedral World Display or the curved blocks of the Polar Display) for the existence of significant mountain chains or ranges, as shown below on Table 11.

**Table 11: Optional Regional Mountain Placement**

d%	Regional Mountains
01-24	No mountains
25-38	Foothills
39-65	Low mountains
66-84	Medium mountains
85-94	High mountains
95-99	Very high mountains
00	Extreme mountains

**Table 12: Fantastic Mountain Properties**

d%	Characteristics
01-60	No unusual properties
61-74	Volcanic mountains
75-90	Icebound or glaciated mountains
91-92	Mountains sink or rise
93-97	Mountains are gates to elemental planes
98-99	Mountains are sleeping titans/giants
00	Mountains are home of gods and goddesses

## Climatology

The last step of world design that affects the entire planet is the creation of a world climate. For purposes of an AD&D campaign, a region's climate falls into one of five different categories: arctic, sub-arctic, temperate, sub-tropical, and tropical. You may have noticed that these climatic zones are marked on the World Display map blanks for your convenience. These zones form a total of nine distinct climate bands on the World Display.

Within each band, there can be significant local variations. One of the principal sources of a shift in a local climate is altitude; even at the Earth's equator, high mountains remain snow-capped year round, and highland regions may enjoy a much cooler climate than the lower altitudes surrounding them. Other local variations may be induced by unusual weather patterns, cold or warm water currents, significant geothermal activity (a favorite for lost jungle valleys in Antarctica), the will of the gods, or the presence of a powerful artifact, spell, or relic.

Remember, you don't have to justify everything with a scientific explanation; for example, if your world has two suns, one above each pole, it could be that the poles are the tropics while the equator is the coldest region of the planet. Or, for another case, imagine that your world is permanently locked with one pole facing its sun. The sunward pole would be super-tropical, the middle latitudes tropical, the equator



temperate. As one moved into the dark side of the planet conditions would rapidly grow too cold for human habitation...but not for cold-based monsters, undead, or ice elementals. In short, the information about world climates assumes that your campaign setting is a planet that orbits a sun in much the same fashion as Earth—if this isn't true for your setting, then anything goes.

#### Mean Planetary Temperature

If the Earth orbited the sun at the distance that Mars does, the planet would be extremely cold. On Mars, daytime temperatures rarely approach the freezing point of water. The Earth would be in somewhat better shape due to its thicker blanket of atmosphere and increased ability to trap heat, but even equatorial regions would be sub-arctic, at best. You can create an unusually warm or cold campaign world, and adjust the climatic bands to match.

Table 13: Planetary Temperature

d%	Category
01-15	Inferno
16-30	Hot
31-70	Normal
71-85	Cold
86-00	Frozen

**Inferno:** All climate bands are two steps warmer than normal. In other words, arctic regions are temperate, sub-arctic regions are sub-tropical, temperate regions are tropical, sub-tropical regions become *super-tropical*, and the tropical band is *uninhabitable*.

**Hot:** All climate bands are one step warmer than normal; the tropical zone is *super-tropical*.

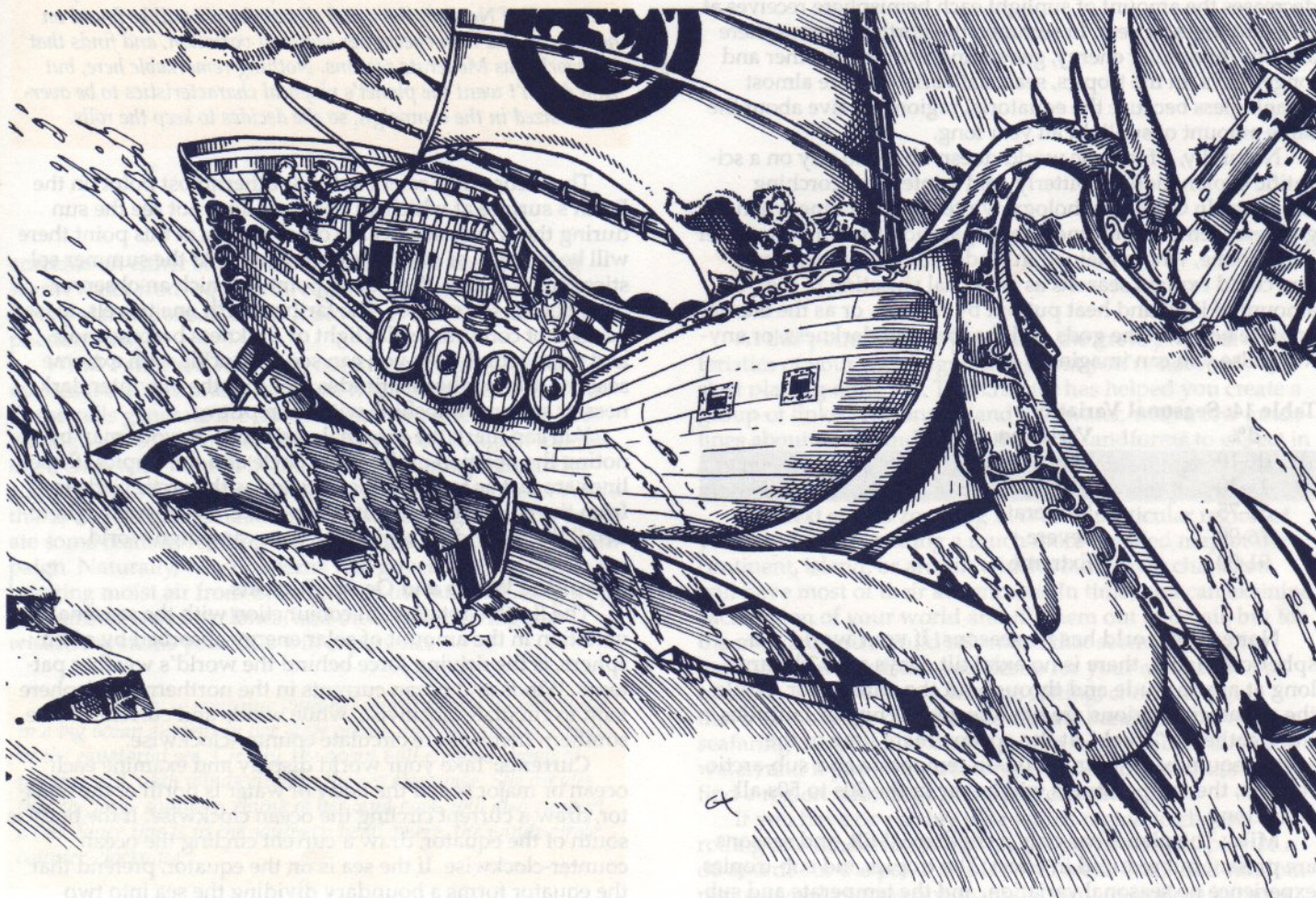
**Normal:** The climate bands remain unchanged.

**Cold:** All climate bands are one step colder than usual. The poles are *super-arctic*.

**Freezing:** All climate bands are two steps colder than normal; the poles are *uninhabitable*.

*Super-tropical* regions are warmer than humans can comfortably tolerate, but an unprotected human can survive in such areas, at least temporarily. The average temperature is well over 100° Fahrenheit, usually in the 110° to 140° range. Human societies in such conditions may become nocturnal or do their best to avoid the heat of the middle of the day. Portions of the Earth fall into this category, but only on a seasonal basis. At certain times of the year, a region in this climate band may become uninhabitable for humans.

*Super-arctic* regions are extraordinarily cold, usually hovering at -50° Fahrenheit at their best and plunging down to -150° F or lower in the right conditions. Humans cannot survive these conditions without extensive preparation and equipment, and even then the temperatures at the lower end







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of this scale will force PCs to rely on magical protection or perish. The Antarctic plateau in the middle of winter can be considered super-arctic.

**Uninhabitable:** The conditions are simply too hot or too cold for unprotected humans to survive. Areas that are too hot may range from 150° F to 200° F or more, while areas that are too cold rarely climb above -150° F. The Earth does not possess truly uninhabitable terrain, but large portions of Mars could be considered uninhabitably cold.

### Seasonal Variations

Earth's seasons are created by a slight axial tilt to its rotation. From March 21st to June 21st, the north pole is actually closer to the sun than the south pole because the Earth is tilted in that direction. As the Earth's orbit carries it around the sun, it still leans the same way; in wintertime, when the Earth is on the opposite side of the sun, the north pole is farther from the sun than the South Pole. This increases or decreases the amount of sunlight each hemisphere receives at different times of year. In summer, the northern hemisphere absorbs more solar energy, generating warmer weather and longer days. In the tropics, seasonal variations are almost meaningless because the equatorial regions receive about the same amount of sunlight all year long.

Naturally, a fantastic world doesn't have to rely on a scientific explanation for bitterly cold winters or scorching droughts. In Greek mythology, winter was the time when the goddess Demeter mourned her separation from her daughter Persephone, who remained in Hades for part of each year. You could explain seasons as an actual variation in the amount of light and heat put out by the sun, or as the eternal warfare between the gods and the forces of darkness, or anything else you can imagine.

**Table 14: Seasonal Variations**

d%	Variation
01-10	None
11-30	Mild
31-75	Moderate
76-90	Severe
91-00	Extreme

**None:** The world has no seasons. If your world is a spherical planet, there is no axial tilt. Days are 12 hours long at any latitude and throughout the entire year. While the equatorial regions are not affected, at higher latitudes the weather is "stuck" at the approximate time of the spring equinox, or March 21st. In temperate and sub-arctic regions, the temperatures will hover in the 30s to 50s all year along.

**Mild:** The planet has only a slight axial tilt, and seasons are present but reduced in effect. The tropics and sub-tropics experience no seasonal variation, and the temperate and sub-arctic regions tend to have warmer winters and colder sum-

mers than normal (for Earth). The arctic circles are located well within the borders of the arctic climate band, about 5' to 10' from the poles.

**Moderate:** The seasons have a variation similar to Earth's. The arctic circle is located at the border of the arctic and sub-arctic climate bands (about 23° from the pole).

**Severe:** The world's axial tilt exceeds that of Earth, creating strong seasonal variations. The summers will be hotter and the winters colder than those experienced at similar latitudes on Earth. The arctic circle is located well within the sub-arctic climate band, about 30° to 35° from the pole.

**Extreme:** The world has an axial tilt of 45° or more, creating strong seasonal variations even in the sub-tropics. Regions in the middle latitudes experience unbearably hot summers and bitterly cold winters. The arctic circle is located at the northern edge of the temperate band.

*Kim checks her world's mean temperature and comes up with a roll of Normal; the usual climate bands will be found on her world. She then checks her seasonal variation, and finds that her world has Moderate seasons. Nothing remarkable here, but Kim doesn't want the planet's physical characteristics to be over-emphasized in the campaign, so she decides to keep the rolls.*

The arctic circle refers to the southernmost point on the Earth's surface at which an observer does not see the sun during the winter solstice. In other words, at this point there will be one day of darkness each winter. At the summer solstice, this is the southernmost point at which an observer does not see the sun set. The farther north one travels, these periods of continuous daylight or darkness become more and more lengthy. As you can see, in worlds with extreme seasons, the northern latitudes face months of winter darkness or summer sunshine without reprieve.

You can mark the seasonal variations on your map by noting the position of the arctic circle and the tropics (these lines are just as far from the Equator as the arctic circle is from the pole). You may find this useful when you begin to detail the individual regions of your campaign world.

### Prevailing Winds and Ocean Currents

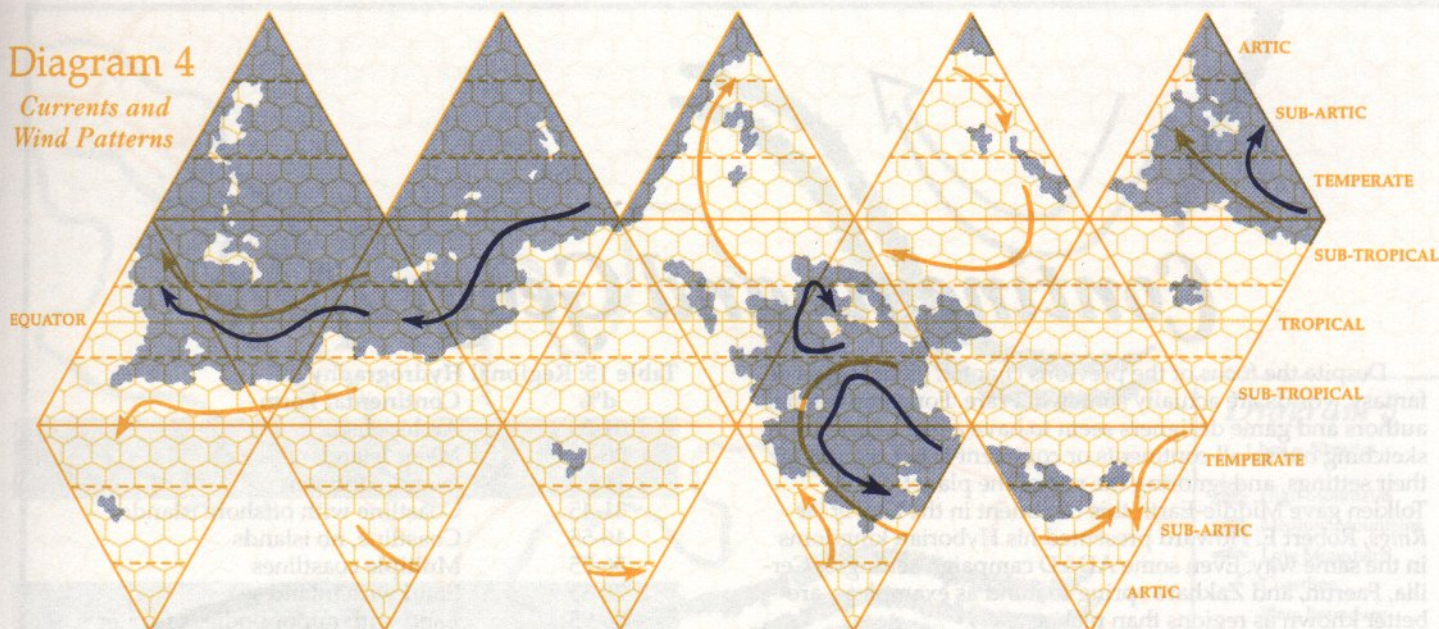
The Earth's rotation, in conjunction with the seasonal variation in the amount of solar energy absorbed by a hemisphere, is the driving force behind the world's weather patterns. Winds and ocean currents in the northern hemisphere tend to circulate clockwise, while winds and currents in the southern hemisphere circulate counter-clockwise.

**Currents:** Take your world display and examine each ocean or major sea. If the body of water is north of the equator, draw a current circling the ocean clockwise. If the body is south of the equator, draw a current circling the ocean counter-clockwise. If the sea is on the equator, pretend that the equator forms a boundary dividing the sea into two parts, and draw north-hemisphere and south-hemisphere



## Diagram 4

### Currents and Wind Patterns



Ocean Currents



Prevailing Winds

currents on either side of the line. Currents tend to bring warm water from equatorial regions, and return cold water from polar regions. (The Gulf Stream is an example of this phenomena.)

**Wind Patterns:** Generally, oceans and very large land masses (such as Eurasia) support huge pressure cells of air. These cells generate the Earth's weather patterns. The prevailing winds spin out of these pressure cells, again following a clockwise motion in the northern hemisphere and a counterclockwise motion in the southern hemisphere. While this is a gross generalization, it's good enough for you to create some realistic-looking wind patterns for your world campaign. Naturally, wind patterns will govern local weather by bringing moist air from the seas over the land, creating tropical monsoons and cyclones, and otherwise driving the weather systems your PCs will experience.

*Kim decides to continue with her world design by sketching in a big ocean current in her large ocean, and two small currents in the equatorial sea. Clearly, the ocean will create a standard weather cell, with winds circling the sea clockwise. She decides that the large southern chunk of her land mass will also support a cell. Since this is in the southern hemisphere, the winds circle counter-clockwise.*

## What's Next?

At this point, you've generated the gross physical characteristics of your campaign setting, but you're not ready to start playing quite yet. This chapter has helped you create a group of linked regions of land and water, with a few guidelines about what kind of weather and landforms to expect in any given region. You will need to examine a region in much more detail before you can start to build a campaign.

The next step is zooming in on one particular region of your world and creating a much more detailed map of the continent, island, or area in which your player characters will have most of their adventures. In time, you can examine each region of your world and fill them out in detail, but for the moment you should select one that seems like it may have the characteristics you desire for your campaign. For example, if you want an Ice Age setting, choose a region that's in the arctic or subarctic climate bands; if you want a seafaring campaign, choose a region with a mix of land and water; and if you want a setting with lots of mountaineering, find a region with large mountain chains.

If you have no earthly idea which region to choose, try rolling one randomly (a d20 for the polyhedral display or a d6 and d8 for the polar display will work fine). Roll random regions until you see one that you want to explore in more detail.



# Continents and Geography

Despite the focus of the previous chapter, global maps of fantasy worlds are actually somewhat rare. For some reason, authors and game designers seem to have a real knack for sketching out small continents or continent-sized regions for their settings, and ignoring the rest of the planet. J.R.R. Tolkien gave Middle-Earth this treatment in the *Lord of the Rings*, Robert E. Howard presented his Hyborian kingdoms in the same way. Even some AD&D campaign settings—Cerilia, Faerun, and Zakhara spring to mind as examples—are better known as regions than planets.

Why is this so? In the first place, this level of detail allows a world-builder to show significant terrain features and political boundaries without becoming bogged down in marking every single settlement or wooded hill that a planet features. It's also good for seeing the strategic relations of various kingdoms and powers—this kingdom is sandwiched between the Screaming Skull goblins and the Bloody Hill trolls, while that kingdom controls the major seaports of the region, and so on. To a modern reader, the discourse and relationships of a group of nations create natural tensions and scenarios for stories, and therefore adventures.

Secondly, while a particular region is only one-twentieth of a planet (if you are using the polyhedral mapping system), a region is still a *vast* area, with plenty to keep even the most active explorers busy. On a world roughly the size of Earth, each triangular region of the polyhedral display includes 8,000,000 square miles. This is almost as large as the entire U.S.S.R. once was, or more than twice the size of the United States today. For characters relying on horses and sailing ships, this is easily the extent of their known world. Authors and designers tend to think big and give themselves plenty of elbow room for different cultures and situations.

In this chapter, we'll take a look at building a continent for a campaign. We want to examine the landforms, terrain, and weather; these characteristics will determine what types of culture groups and monsters are likely to develop in any given area. Again, if you have already decided on some prominent features of your campaign, you should ignore the random rolls and simply select the results that will guide the region in the direction you want it to develop.

## World Size, Coastlines, and Seas

If you have already determined the size of the world and created a set of rough coastlines in Chapter Two, you can skip this step of continent-building; you already have a good idea of what the region's coastlines should look like. However, you may be coming to this chapter from the other direction, building outward from a kingdom or smaller area. If you are, then the first part of continent-building is coming up with a rough outline of what's land and what's water. See the table below:

Table 15: Regional Hydrography

d%	Continental Form
01-05	Archipelago
06-15	Major Islands
16-30	Island-continent
31-45	Coastline with offshore islands
46-55	Coastline, no islands
56-75	Multiple coastlines
76-85	Land with inland sea
86-95	Land with minor bodies of water
96-00	Land, no significant water

**Archipelago:** The region is mostly water, with chains of islands of fairly small size.

**Major Islands:** The region is mostly water, with several major islands (possibly hundreds of miles in extent) and numerous minor island chains.

**Island-continent:** The region includes one continental mass, surrounded by an ocean. Smaller offshore islands may be near the main land mass.

**Coastline with offshore islands:** One coastline cuts across the region, possibly marked by inlets, peninsulas and offshore islands.

**Coastline, no islands:** As above, but there are no significant islands off the coast.

**Multiple coastlines:** The region borders on two or more oceans, but at least part of it forms a land border with an adjacent region. The United States is an example of a region with multiple coastlines.

**Land with inland sea:** Most of the region is land, with a large inland sea, or several small ones nearby. The inland seas may include archipelagoes or major islands.

**Land with minor bodies of water:** No bodies of water larger than two or three hexes (200 to 400 miles) exist in the region. A large lake may qualify as a minor body of water.

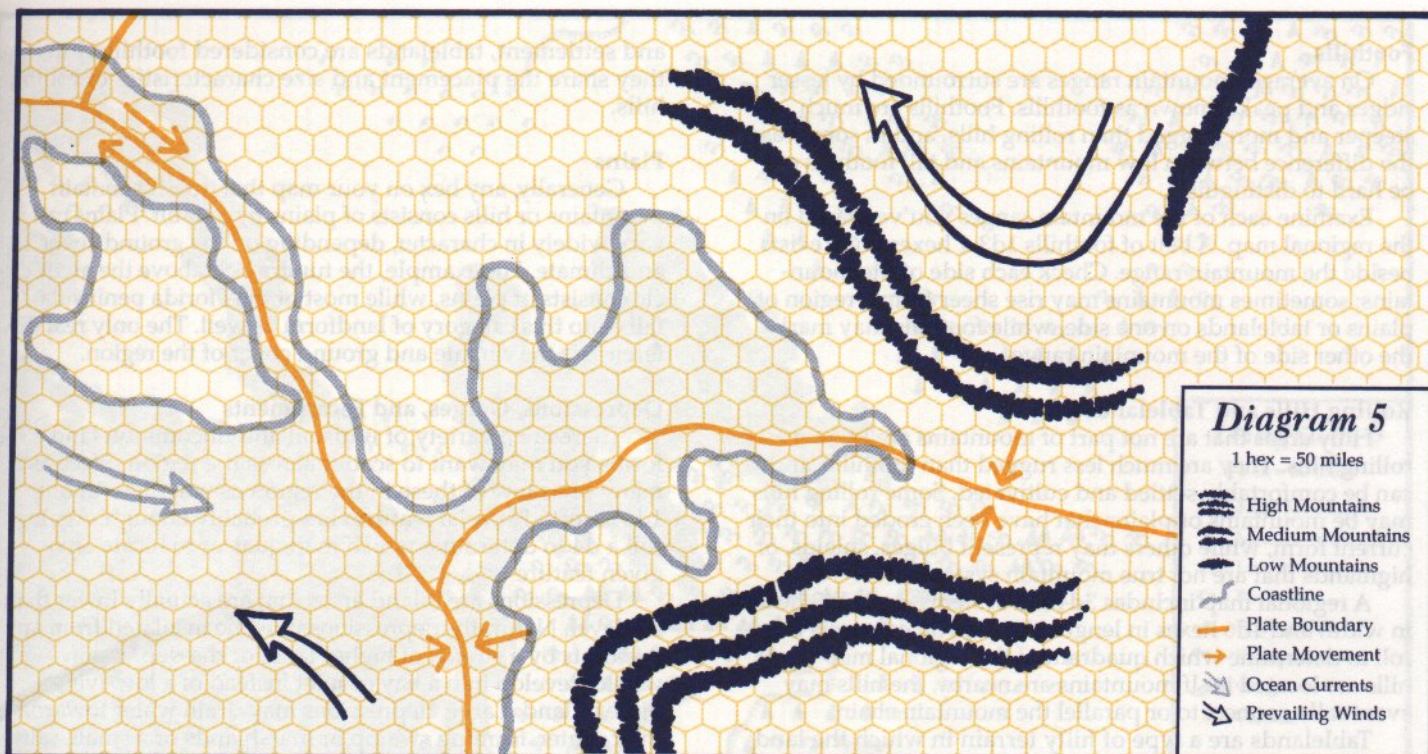
**Land, no significant water:** There are no coastlines, lakes, or seas of note in the region.

These categories correspond with the hydrographic distributions of land and water described in Chapter One. When you enter the planet-building process in Chapter One, remember to set aside an appropriate region to represent the area you develop here. In Diagram 5, you can see an example of how one region from the global map of the previous chapter was transferred to a regional map blank.

## Landforms

Mountains, hills, ridges, canyons, and plains are all landforms. Landforms are one of the most distinctive features of a campaign; mountain ranges and uplands form political and cultural barriers between kingdoms, govern the flow of rivers and the pattern of settlement in an area, and serve as





obstacles to challenge adventurers.

In this section, we'll begin with creating the mountain ranges of your continent or region, and then continue with regions of hills, tablelands, and other landforms.

### Mountain Ranges

The most prominent type of landform are the different classes of mountains and mountain systems. Mountains are usually skirted by foothills and terrain of increasing ruggedness. Mountains are formed through two principal means—through the folding or crumpling of the Earth's crust along the boundaries of the great continental or ocean plates, and through the expulsion of material in volcanic events. Huge meteoric impacts can also create mountain systems by throwing up a "splash" in the planetary crust.

As a crude guideline, mountains tend to parallel sea coasts, since coastlines often mark the boundary between continental and ocean plates. The mountains may be several hundred miles inland. In some cases, continental plates moving together may create mountain systems in the center of a land mass. Volcanic mountain systems are likely to form where continents are drifting apart.

You may have a good idea of where your mountain systems belong from the previous chapter. However, if you don't know, or you wish to place mountain chains arbitrarily, you can follow the guidelines below:

- A region includes  $1d4+1$  mountain systems. Roll  $1d4$  to determine the approximate location of each system: in the northwest (1), northeast (2), southeast (3), or southwest (4) quadrant of the region.
- Each mountain system is  $4d8$  hexes in length and varies between 1 and 4 hexes in width. Roll a  $d12$  to determine the direction the mountains run on the clock-face. For example, if you roll a 3, the mountains run towards 3 o'clock, or due east. As mentioned earlier, mountains may often parallel nearby coastlines.
- Mountain ranges are flanked by  $1d4-1$  lesser systems, each  $2d4$  hexes in length and  $1d4$  hexes away from the main mass of the range.

Mountain systems formed through volcanic activity alone tend to look more like clumps or bulges. In this case, roll the approximate location as noted above, and assume that the rough diameter of the mountainous area is  $1d4+1$  hexes.

**Mountain Characteristics:** Mountain chains vary in height and volcanic activity. For each of your mountain ranges, roll on Table 11 and Table 12 to determine the size and the characteristics of the chain. Remember, you should feel free to indulge in any whims of design or capriciousness you like—if you think Extreme mountains fit your concept, then go ahead and place Extreme mountains wherever you like.



### Foothills

On average, mountain ranges are surrounded by lesser ridges and peaks known as foothills. Foothills are much steeper and more rugged than rolling hills, and in some cases the difference between low mountains and tall foothills can be hard to distinguish.

Examine each of the mountain ranges you've placed on the regional map. A belt of foothills 1d3-1 hexes wide exists beside the mountain range. Check each side of the mountains; sometimes mountains may rise sheer from a region of plains or tablelands on one side, while foothills may mark the other side of the mountain range.

### Rolling Hills and Tablelands

Hilly areas that are not part of mountains are known as rolling hills. They are much less rugged than foothills, and can be comfortably settled and cultivated. Some rolling hills may be mountains or plains that have been eroded into their current form, while others may represent bulges, shields, or highlands that are not true mountain systems.

A regional map includes 3d4 hill systems, each 1d3 hexes in width and 1d6 hexes in length. Again, you can use a d4 roll to determine which quadrant of the regional map the hills are located in. If mountains are nearby, the hills may eventually connect to or parallel the mountain chain.

Tablelands are a type of hilly terrain in which the land has been eroded away, leaving steep-sided towers or mesas of harder stone over the landscape. For purposes of travel

and settlement, tablelands are considered foothills, but they share the placement and size characteristics of rolling hills.

### Plains

Generally, any hex on your map that doesn't contain mountains or hills consists of plains by default. Plains can vary widely in character, depending on the ground cover and climate. For example, the tundra belt above the arctic circle consists of plains, while most of the Florida peninsula falls into this category of landform as well. The only real difference is the climate and ground cover of the region.

### Depressions, Gorges, and Escarpments

There are a variety of unusual and uncommon landforms you may want to scatter across the region. Place as many or as few of these in the region as you like—about 1d6 assorted special features are probably enough. Again, roll a d4 to determine which map quarter to locate any given feature.

Depressions are inland areas that are actually lower than sea level. Naturally, depressions must be insulated from any seacoasts by a stretch of higher land, or the depression would develop into a bay or inlet instead of a low-lying piece of land. Large depressions may drain water towards their center, forming swamp or marshlands or a small, salty lake or sea. Depressions in hot, arid regions may instead support seasonal or vanishing lakes, or even salt flats if the lake







**Diagram 6**

1 hex = 50 miles

- ▲ High Mountains
- ▲ Medium Mountains
- ▲ Low Mountains
- ⌒ Foothills
- ⌒ Rolling Hills
- ⌒ Escarpment
- ⌒ Gorge
- ▲ Volcano

is not renewed fast enough to make up for the rate of evaporation. Depressions are 1d6 hexes in diameter.

Gorges are usually found in hilly or mountainous terrain. Assume that any region of mountains includes a number of steep passes, deep valleys, and river-carved canyons, but in rare cases gorges or rifts might be found in otherwise flat terrain. Gorges are 1d4 hexes in length.

Escarpments mark sudden changes in elevation, and may mark the edge of a plateau or a simple crease in the face of a continent. Escarpments run for 2d8 hexes; if you decide to draw the escarpment as a circular plateau, the elevated region is about 1d4+1 hexes in diameter. Escarpments can represent long, unbroken grades, or sheer cliffs cutting across the face of the land.

*Example: You may recall the world Kim was working on in the previous chapter. The diagram shows one of the regions expanded to fit the regional map. Because her world was relatively small, each hex on this scale is 50 miles across. This is still a very large area, encompassing thousands of miles. Since Kim already generated the rough location of her mountain chains in the previous chapter, she simply transfers them to the map. Referring to the section on mountains in this chapter, she fills in several secondary chains and foothills. Then she places areas of rolling hills using the random guidelines. Finally, she rolls 3 special features and marks a gorge and plateau in the*

*upper portion of the map, and a long, shallow escarpment across the southern plains. This is a fairly crowded region, with numerous mountains and hills, but Kim thinks that the mountains could be interesting for her setting.*

## Climate and Weather

What kind of weather does the region experience? Does it straddle the tropics, or is it near one of the poles? Does the world enjoy the same temperature patterns (cold arctic, hot equator) that the Earth does, or is it unusually warm or cold? What about the prevailing winds—is there an ocean nearby to moderate temperatures and provide a source of wind-carried precipitation, or is the region devoid of open water? In this step, you'll address these questions and characterize the general conditions of the region.

### Regional Climate

The AD&D system divides climate into five basic categories: arctic, sub-arctic, temperate, sub-tropical, and tropical. On the Polyhedral Region Map (Map Blank 3), a region includes three climate bands; on the Polar Region Map (Map Blank 4), a region includes two climate bands. (You'll see the dotted lines indicating the rough boundaries of climate bands.)





## Continents and Geography

**Table 16: Regional Climate**  
**Polyhedral (Triangular) Region**

d8	Region Climate Bands
1-2	Arctic/sub-arctic/temperate (northern)
3-6	Sub-tropical/tropical/subtropical
7-8	Temperate/sub-arctic/arctic (southern)

**Polar Display (Square) Region**

d20	Region Climate Bands
1	Arctic (north)
2-5	Sub-arctic/temperate (north)
6-10	Sub-tropical/tropical (north)
11-15	Tropical/sub-tropical (south)
16-19	Temperate/sub-arctic (south)
20	Arctic (south)

As you can see, most regions include two or three climate bands. In all cases, the order of the climate bands reads from north to south; if you roll a 7 for a region you're mapping with the Polyhedral system, the northernmost climate band is the south-hemisphere temperate zone, then the sub-arctic, and finally the arctic (or more properly, the antarctic) climate band.

You can mark the regional climate bands by sketching a dotted line to divide the region into two (for polar) or three (for polyhedral) climatic zones. While these bands refer to an Earth-like world, your continent may possess unusually warm or cold climate due to an unusually hot or cool sun, geothermal activity, magic, or the will of the gods. Refer to Table 13, Planetary Temperature, on page 23. If you have already completed a basic world design in Chapter One, you can simply assign appropriate climate bands to the region.

**Altitude and Climate:** High elevations are significantly colder than their surroundings. Equatorial highlands are often cool and temperate, while nearby lowlands are steaming jungles or sun-baked deserts. To reflect this, mark the dividing line where highlands actually "drop" by one climate band, and then a second dividing line where the mountain peaks themselves cool off by two or three climate bands. Usually, a mountain range and its foothills will fall in the first category, while only the peaks are two categories colder. Refer to Diagram 7 for an example of marking off unusual elevations for climate and weather.

### Weather Patterns

One of the most important components of a region's weather is the prevailing wind, or the direction from which weather systems generally approach the area. On Earth, the prevailing winds are generated by the existence of high-pressure or low-pressure cells over large bodies of water (the oceans) and, to a lesser degree, large land masses (the continents). The prevailing winds tend to spiral out or spiral in from these weather cells; in the northern hemisphere, the cells rotate clockwise, and in the southern hemisphere they rotate counter-clockwise.

The upshot of all this is that a real-world weather pattern is quite complex and changes from season to season. However, you can simplify things a lot. Examine your region and see if there are any large bodies of water—anything that takes up about half the region qualifies. Remember, an ocean that exists only as a fringe of water along one map-edge will affect the weather, too! Mark a circular wind pattern around the ocean's perimeter, following the clockwise/counter-clockwise rule depending on which hemisphere the region is located in. (For an equatorial region, divide the region in half and do this twice: one rotation north of the equator, and one rotation south.) Now, take a look for any large land masses (again, something about half the size of the map would qualify) and mark the wind directions as a rotation around the continent's edge. These general wind directions should help you to determine the prevailing winds for any particular area on the continent.

If this strikes you as too much work, here's an easier way to create the prevailing wind patterns: Divide the region into quadrants, as described in the previous section, and roll a random wind direction for each quadrant on Table 17.

**Table 17: Prevailing Winds**

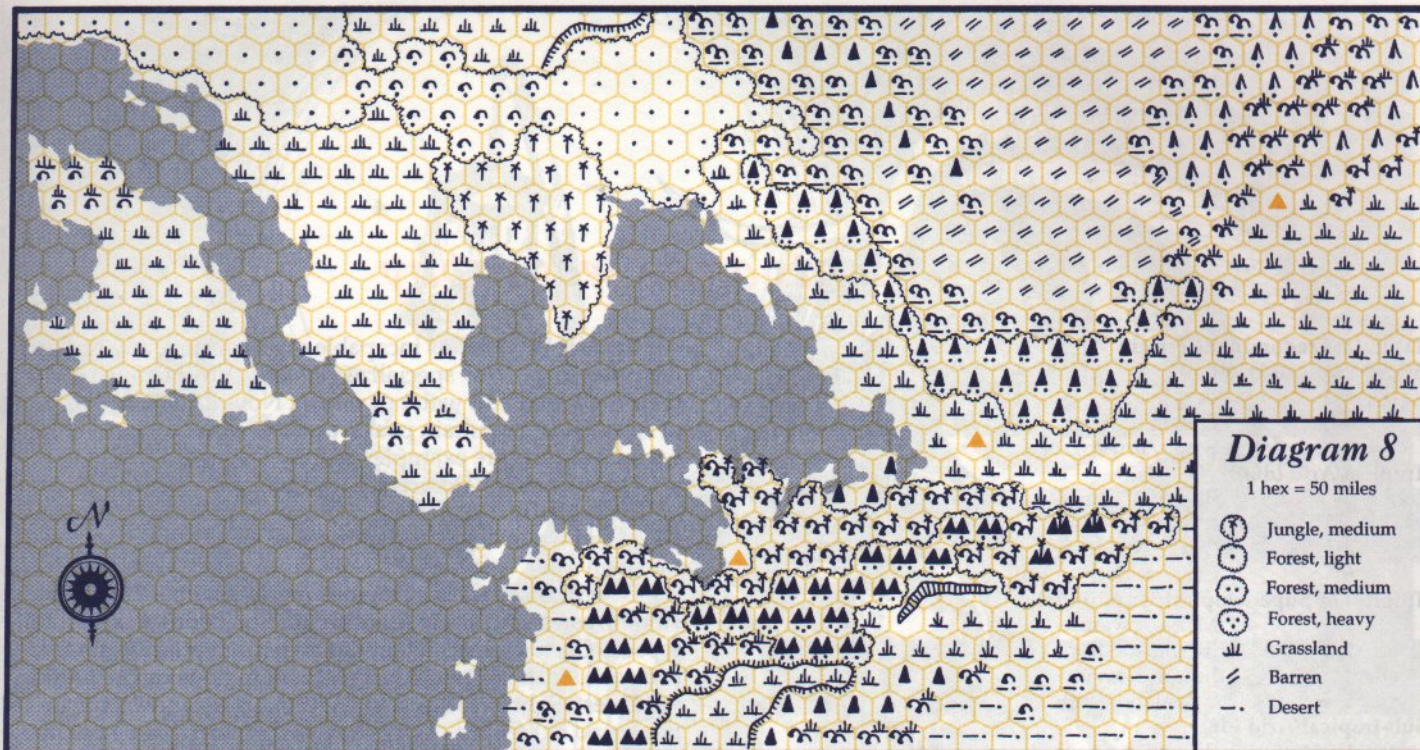
d8	Wind Direction
1	North
2	Northeast
3	East
4	Southeast
5	South
6	Southwest
7	West
8	Northwest

Wind direction always refers to the direction the wind is coming from. Winds might be caused by magical phenomena such as portals to the Elemental Plane of Air, unusual geological events (for example, a sea of molten lava will superheat the air above it, creating a high-pressure cell and hot, dry winds sweeping outward from the magma), or the actions of deities or monsters—the North Wind may come from the icy palace of the god of darkness, streaming over the land in an endless, bitter winter.

**Humid Winds and Arid Winds:** Winds that blow across extensive bodies of water pick up moisture and carry it inland when they reach coastlines. Humid winds such as these are responsible for the heavy rainfall of the Pacific Northwest and northern Europe. On the other hand, winds that cross large stretches of land tend to lose moisture and become arid. Taken together with the basic climate band of an area, the wind patterns and humidity will have a great effect on the particular terrain or ground cover found in a particular place.

Winds that encounter Medium or High mountain ranges are not diverted from their course, but continue to blow over the range. However, as the winds rise in altitude, they grow





**Diagram 8**

1 hex = 50 miles

- Jungle, medium
- Forest, light
- Forest, medium
- Forest, heavy
- Grassland
- Barren
- Desert

colder, and lose the ability to carry moisture. In other words, humid winds are often transformed into arid winds by crossing Medium or High mountains. This may cause a *rain shadow* on the far side of the mountains, where there is little precipitation.

Very High or Extreme mountain ranges actually change the course of wind patterns, channelling the prevailing wind along the range. These mountains are so tall that weather systems are deflected around them instead of over them.

## Terrain Types

The combination of climate bands and prevailing weather patterns creates an immense variety of ground cover and vegetation. In turn, the combination of ground cover and landform describes most of the types of terrain you'll need to accurately describe your campaign region. For the sake of convenience, we'll stick to standard terrain types described in the *DMG*. Terrain serves two main purposes in the AD&D game. First of all, it governs overland movement. Secondly, terrain influences the types of monsters a party of adventurers may encounter. Later in this chapter, we'll discuss how terrain may affect the development of cultures and societies found in a region.

### Placing Terrain

The best way to place terrain is to simply glance at the regional map and then start drawing, using the prevailing winds and the climate bands as rough guidelines of what should go where. Generally, terrain features extend to the nearest natural boundary that alters the basic conditions. For example, if you decide to mark a desert on your map, it will probably run until it hits a mountain chain, an elevation change, the sea, or a new prevailing wind pattern.

If you don't feel comfortable placing terrain "freehand", divide the region into quadrants. Each quadrant will feature 3d4 different terrain areas. Each terrain area is 2d6 hexes wide and 2d10 hexes in length. Try to position these terrain areas to match the natural contours of the land, using coastlines and mountain ranges as borders wherever possible. Then, roll for each terrain area on Table 18 to determine what the predominant terrain type of the area. The terrain's base climate band and the type of winds (humid or arid) give you the entry row on the table, but remember that elevated regions may actually belong to different climate bands than the rest of the region.



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Table 18: Predominant Terrain

<b>Super-tropical/Arid (d6)</b>	
1-3	Barren
4-5	Desert
6	Scrub/brush
<b>Tropical/Arid (d6)</b>	
1	Barren
2-3	Desert
4-5	Scrub/brush
6	Grassland
<b>Tropical or Super-tropical/Humid (d6)</b>	
1	Marsh/swamp
2-3	Jungle, medium
4	Jungle, heavy
5-6	Grassland
<b>Sub-tropical/Arid (d6)</b>	
1	Barren
2-3	Desert
4-5	Scrub/brush
6	Grassland
<b>Sub-tropical/Humid (d6)</b>	
1	Marsh/swamp
2-3	Forest, medium
4-5	Forest, light
6	Jungle, medium
<b>Temperate/Arid (d8)</b>	
1	Barren
2-4	Desert
5-6	Prairie
7	Steppe
8	Scrub/brush
<b>Temperate/Humid (d6)</b>	
1	Marsh/swamp
2-3	Forest, heavy
4-5	Forest, medium
6	Moor
<b>Sub-arctic/Arid (d8)</b>	
1	Barren
2-3	Desert, rocky
4-5	Steppes
6-7	Prairie
8	Forest, light
<b>Sub-arctic/Humid (d8)</b>	
1-3	Marsh/swamp
4-5	Forest, light
6	Forest, medium
7	Moor
8	Glacier
<b>Arctic or Super-arctic/Arid (d4)</b>	
1-2	Barren
3-4	Glacier
<b>Arctic/Humid (d4)</b>	
1-2	Tundra
3-4	Glacier
<b>Super-arctic/Humid (d6)</b>	
1	Tundra
2-3	Barren
4-6	Glacier

**Barren:** Wastelands incapable of supporting any type of life other than a few specialized species. Visitors must bring their own food and water or perish. Non-glaciated portions of Antarctica, mountain peaks, and the worst regions of the world's deserts are examples of this category.

**Desert, sandy:** Desert regions marked by broad expanses of sand and dune systems. The region is marked by scattered oases and wells. A few rare grasses or shrubs may survive in the open sand.

**Desert, rocky:** Desert regions marked by boulder fields, stony wastes, and stretches of weathered bedrock with little topsoil. Cactus forests or similar desert-adapted plants are common. Scattered wells and verdant regions can be found.

**Forest, light:** Needleleaf evergreens are the most common tree found in light forest. There are two distinct types: taiga, the northern spruce and hemlock forests, found in the sub-arctic regions of the world; and sub-tropical pine forests, found in warm regions where the soil is unsuitable for heavier forestation.

**Forest, heavy:** Dense, deciduous forests with heavy undergrowth, usually found in temperate regions that enjoy lots of rainfall.

**Forest, medium:** Mixed forest, ranging from broadleaf evergreens found in tropical highlands to temperate and sub-arctic woodlands. If you don't know what kind of forest to select for a particular region, this is a good default.

**Glacier:** In order for glaciers to form, the ambient temperature must be below freezing for most of the year. Naturally, this requires either high altitudes or extreme latitudes. Glaciers can exist in the temperate climate belt, but only in Medium or higher mountains. Generally, glaciers don't dominate the terrain outside of the arctic climate bands, since they're limited to the high-altitude areas of warmer climate bands.

**Grassland:** This covers a variety of terrain types, ranging from tropical grasslands to dry northern steppes and prairie. Warm, humid grasslands may consist of tall elephant grass or regions too steep or high to support forestation. Warm, dry grasslands tend to form savannahs or veldts—the Serengeti Plain of Africa is an example of this. Temperate and sub-arctic grasslands are steppe or prairie.

**Jungle, heavy:** On Earth, heavy jungle only occurs in a few equatorial regions, including the Amazon, Central Africa, and parts of Indonesia and Indochina. This is jungle with heavy undergrowth and a nearly impenetrable forest canopy. In some cases, heavy jungle is nothing more than the combination of medium jungle with rough terrain; hillsides and slopes create room for heavy underbrush to thrive.

**Jungle, medium:** Unlike heavy jungle, this type of terrain lacks the undergrowth of the forest floor. Tropical and sub-tropical rain forest falls into this category. Medium jungle is actually fairly open and easy to travel, although a heavy canopy and frequent rainfall may make navigation difficult.

**Marsh, swamp:** Large expanses of marsh or swamp only form in low-lying regions with poor drainage, although smaller bogs and fens might occur almost anywhere. Marshes tend to include large reed seas and expanses of semi-open









## Continents and Geography

water; the Florida Everglades is an excellent example of this type of marsh. Salt marshes along low-lying coastlines are also common. Swamps, on the other hand, include large tracts of drowning forest, with trees such as cypresses or mangroves adapted for life in standing water. The Louisiana bayou is an example of swamp.

**Moor:** Moors are elevated regions with poor drainage, covered with extensive heath and scattered bogs. Moors are usually found in hills, foothills, or low mountains, although the valleys of higher mountain systems often fall into this category.

**Scrub/brushland:** Extensive low-lying shrubs, dwarf trees, cacti, brambles, or thickets characterize the area. Some brushland can be extremely arid, and may experience desert-like conditions on a seasonal basis. Portions of the American West or the Kalahari Desert of Africa would fall under this category, as well as the chaparral of California's coastal mountains.

**Tundra:** Tundra is low-lying, boggy terrain that does not completely thaw each year, leaving a layer of permafrost several feet below the surface. High alpine valleys may include localized tundra-like terrain.

### Ground Cover and Landforms

The overland movement rules presented in the DMG imply that a particular region has hills, forest, grassland, or whatever, but never a combination of terrains. In truth, ground cover and landform are two separate components of the area's overall terrain. Hills are frequently covered with grassland, prairie, or forest. Here are a few guidelines for combinations that don't occur in the real world:

- **High, Very High, and Extreme Mountains** are all treated as Arctic/Arid climates, and always have Barren or Glacier terrain types.
- **Medium Mountains** are treated as Sub-Arctic regions in the Tropical, Sub-Tropical, or Temperate climate bands, and as Arctic in the Sub-Arctic climate band. Marsh/swamp results are ignored in Medium mountains.
- **Low Mountains** can have any kind of ground cover except for Marsh/swamp.
- **Glaciers** in the Sub-Arctic climate band can only be found in mountains.
- **Marsh/swamp** terrain only occurs in flatland.

*Example: Referring to the climate bands and the elevation of the region she is working on, Kim divides the region into a number of terrain areas. Each area marks a piece of land where conditions (temperature, altitude, and humidity) are fairly similar. Then, she uses Table 18 to roll for the dominant terrain in each terrain area, finishing with the map shown in Diagram 8.*

*Note that she ended up with some fairly extensive deserts and scrubland in the eastern half of her region, which suffers from arid continental winds. Meanwhile the humid western half of her map is characterized by vast forests. Kim plans to mix things up some when she fine-tunes the regional map, but for now this is an excellent place to start.*

### Transitional Terrain

In real life, the boundaries between different terrain areas are not as clearly marked as they appear to be on your map. As the taiga (or pine forest) of northern Canada gives way to tundra, there is a region in which the worsening conditions force smaller and sparser tree growth. As the forest pushes to the extremes of its climatic belt, it thins out and the individual trees have a harder time surviving. Over a range of dozens or hundreds of miles, the forest finally gives out entirely. Similarly, in warmer latitudes forests usually fade out to grassland or steppe before the grasslands give way to true, open desert.

An easy way to reflect this on the map is to simply include a one-hex or two-hex belt of intermediate terrain between contrasting climates. For example, if your random rolls or placement create a desert next to a forest, leave a little space for grassland or scrubland between the two major terrain features. Transitional terrains include grassland, scrubland, light forest, moors, and (in the case of barren areas) rocky desert or tundra. Of course, the mysteries of a fantastic world may inspire you to leave out such moderating terrains.

## Rivers, Lakes, and Seas

Every single hex of the regional map (with the exception of deserts and barren regions) contains hundreds of creeks, streams, lakes, and rivers that are simply too small to be noted on a map covering this much area. However, major lakes, inland seas, and river systems are large enough to deserve some attention at the regional scale. If you created your world hydrography in Chapter Two and already know whether or not you have any major seas or bodies of water in the region you're detailing now, you can skip ahead to **Rivers**, at the end of this section. Otherwise, you should take a moment to place major lakes and seas.

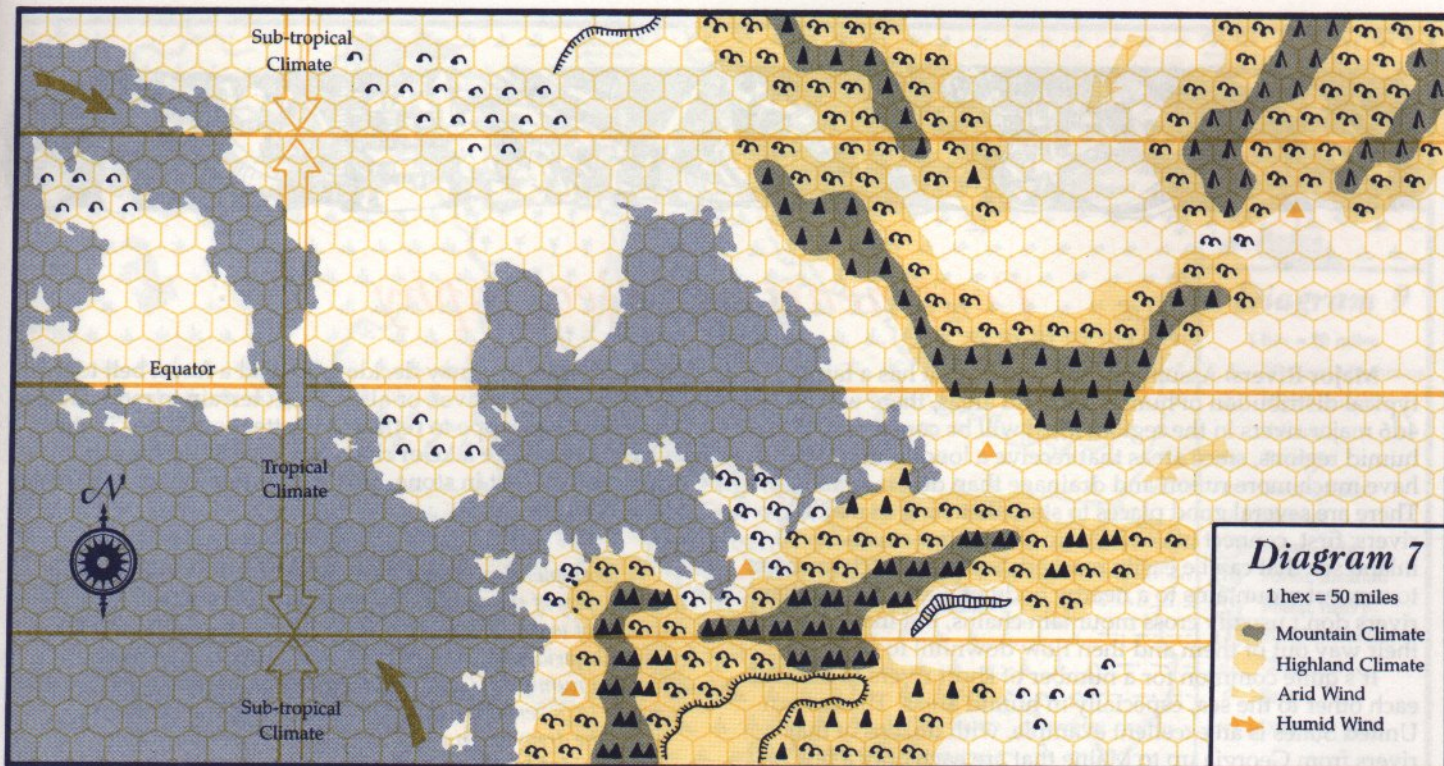
### Inland Seas

Inland seas tend to be located in areas of low elevation, where water can flow in but can't find an outlet. Ring-shaped mountain ranges or elevated regions and major depressions or rifts can accommodate inland seas. Inland seas are usually salty, since the circumstances of their creation mean that water flows in but only escapes through evaporation, leaving salts and minerals behind. Inland seas are never found very far above sea level, and most are significantly lower.

Inland seas are equally likely in both humid and arid environments. Eventually, inland seas that are constantly filled by rainfall rise to their topographical limits and find an outlet, becoming a lake instead of a true inland sea. Thus, on Earth most inland seas are found in warm, arid areas, where the water flowing into the sea is balanced by the rate of evaporation.

Examine the regional map you have developed so far, especially the arid regions. Is there an extensive arid region that might function as a drainage basin for a moderate





amount of water, or a humid region that must drain through the arid area? Are there any natural basins or bowls that water could be trapped in? If so, an inland sea is likely to exist there. Generally, a region will support 0 to 3 (d6-3) major inland seas, each one 2d8 hexes in size. As noted above, seas are most likely to appear in Tropical or Sub-Tropical arid climates.

### Lakes

Lakes can be located anywhere, even in the heart of Medium or High mountains. However, lakes are not very common in hot and arid environments, since a lack of source water prevents the formation of large bodies of water. Unlike inland seas, most major lakes feature both inlets (rivers that feed them) and outlets (rivers that flow from them). Lakes without outlets may become salty inland seas over time as evaporation concentrates brine in their waters.

Large lakes are formed in several ways. First, rivers often broaden out into extensive lake systems when the slope of the ground lessens, slowing the flow rate. Second, extensive glaciation or other land scarring in the past may leave behind highland depressions or gouges, which then fill with water. The vast lake systems of North America are examples of this type of major lake. Finally, lakes may form along highland rift systems where continents are spreading apart. The huge lakes of eastern Africa and central Asia owe their existence to this phenomenon.

Typically, a region will have 2d6 major lakes, each one 2d6-2 hexes in size. (Results of 0 or less mean that the lake only occupies part of a hex.) The lakes will be concentrated in humid areas, along faults, or in regions that were once glaciated (i.e., the sub-arctic or arctic climate bands). Unusually arid regions (or worlds) may have a smaller number of lakes or lakes generally smaller in size, while regions that are unusually conducive to lake formation may have a greater number of larger lakes.

### Rivers

Rivers are born in and around major lakes and mountains or uplands, where rainfall, snowmelts, and deep springs feed streams. Since water flows downhill, the streams gradually combine into greater and greater rivers as they join together on their way to the sea. Usually, rivers follow the path of least resistance, losing elevation wherever possible. Mountain ranges and regions of highlands create *divides*; rivers on one side flow to one body of water, and rivers on the other side flow into a different body of water. For example, the Ohio and Susquehanna rivers have tributaries born within a few miles of each other, but the Appalachians turn the Susquehanna towards Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, while the Ohio instead flows to the Mississippi and then down to the Gulf of Mexico.





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**Major Rivers:** Assuming that your region has a fairly typical distribution of humid and arid areas, there will be 4d6 major rivers in the region. Most will be concentrated in humid regions, since areas that receive a lot of rainfall will have much more runoff and drainage than desert areas. There are several good places to start sketching in major rivers: first, connect major lakes to the nearest ocean or inland sea that can be easily reached. Second, sketch in rivers to connect mountains to a nearby body of water. Remember, rivers don't usually cross mountain chains, but instead wind their way out of them and then flow downhill to sea level.

It's quite common for a number of short rivers to parallel each other to the sea, especially in humid areas. The eastern United States is an excellent example, with dozens of major rivers from Georgia up to Maine that are each only a few hundred miles long. In more arid regions, or in interior basins with few outlets, it's common for a lesser number of very long rivers to drain an area.

**Tributaries:** Rivers start small and grow larger as they move away from their source, since other streams and smaller rivers tend to join their course. A typical river system resembles a tree; the mouth is the base of the trunk, and, as a traveller heads upstream towards the river's source, he is confronted by a number of branches or confluences. A tributary can itself be a major river, and be fed by many other smaller rivers or lakes.

**Canyons and Gorges:** Rivers can last for many millions of years; the slope of the land and the basic drainage patterns are only altered through drastic geological upheaval. In that time, rivers can change course, sometimes quite dramatically. As an example, the Amazon river system once emptied into the Pacific Ocean, before the Andes rose on the western edge of the continent and forced the Amazon to reverse its drainage to the east. Over time, rivers can create spectacular gorges and canyons by "sinking" through soft rock. Gorges are most often found in mountains, while canyons are more common in regions of foothills or tablelands. Rivers tend to circumvent these highland areas, unless there's nowhere else for the river to flow, so canyons and gorges are most often found near the river's headwaters. A typical gorge or canyon system is 2d4 hexes in length.

**Waterfalls:** When the land undergoes a sudden change in elevation, water draining from a high area (mountains or hills) may be forced over an escarpment or bluff in a cascade. Serious waterfalls only occur in hilly or mountainous terrain, but a single river could have several along its length. Feel free to scatter a few waterfalls around the river systems of the region. Waterfalls may consist of cataracts or rapids extending for 1d3 hexes, or one single spectacular drop-off can produce a waterfall hundreds or thousands of feet in height.

### Finishing Touches

The placement of lakes, rivers, and other bodies of water may influence the location and shape of map features by suggesting more realistic boundaries between terrain areas.

For example, you may decide to extend a forest belt to the edge of a nearby river, or alter desert terrain to more arable grassland or steppe to reflect the better conditions in the vicinity of a large lake or river. Remember, nothing you have done so far is set in stone, so don't be afraid to change material as you see fit.

*Example: Kim places the finishing touches on the physical geography of the region she's been developing by placing several bodies of water. She rolled one inland sea, and arbitrarily placed it in the arid northern stretches of her map. Her rolls also indicated a number of lakes, and used random quadrant rolls and whim to govern their placement. After creating her lakes and seas, she drew in a number of rivers in reasonable places. She also decided to throw in some more marshlands around the large lakes. Her final terrain map is shown in Diagram 9.*

## Human Geography

Physical geography is only one small part of the world. Even the most spectacular mountains and forests are dead and static without people and monsters to bring them to life. In this last chapter, you will create some broad guidelines and boundaries for the realms and monsters of your setting. The details of each kingdom are addressed in the next chapter; for now, a thumbnail sketch of the major nations and divisions is all you're after. Begin thinking of two- or three-word hooks for each kingdom or group of kingdoms, such as "feudal Europe," "druidic elves," or "orc-held wastes."

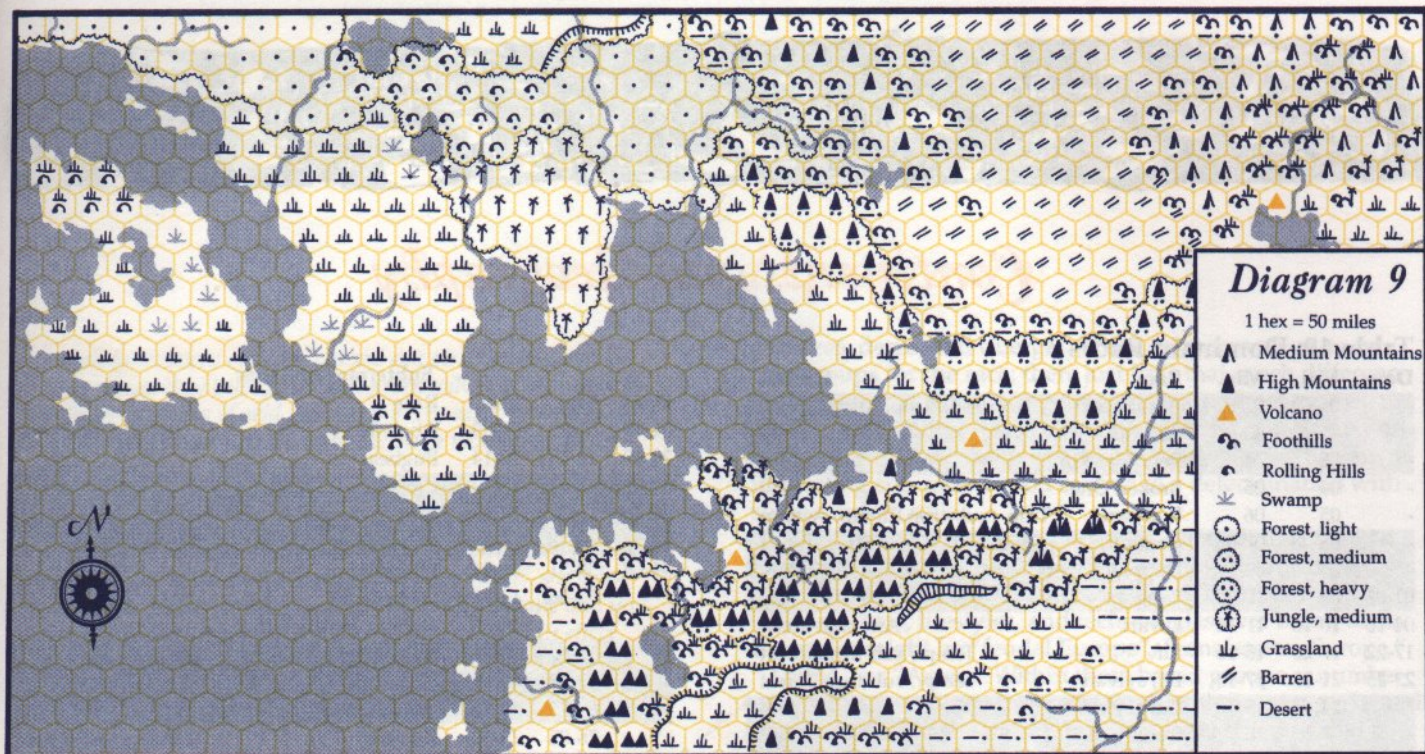
Naturally, if you have already described a kingdom in detail, the first thing you should do is find a good place for it, ignoring the random rolls of this section. In fact, if you know that you have a well-developed forest kingdom and very little forest came up in the previous sections, feel free to alter the map and terrain in any fashion necessary to make room for the work you've already done. Human geography (or demi-human, humanoid, or monstrous geography, for that matter) includes several basic components: race, culture, kingdoms and states, and finally monsters and ecosystems.

### Races

Which player character and monstrous races are important in the region, and where are their realms located? Does any one race dominate the others? Are some of the standard AD&D character or monstrous races missing from the region for some reason? Are there any new races or monsters with strong influence? Answering these questions goes a long way towards distinguishing your campaign world as a unique setting.

In this section, we are primarily interested in identifying the kingdom-building races of the region. Solitary monsters, non-intelligent creatures, and creatures who don't organize into political or tribal boundaries are generally excluded from this discussion—instead they fall under Monsters and Ecol-





**Diagram 9**

1 hex = 50 miles

- ▲ Medium Mountains
- ▲ High Mountains
- ▲ Volcano
- ▲ Foothills
- ▲ Rolling Hills
- ▲ Swamp
- Forest, light
- Forest, medium
- Forest, heavy
- Jungle, medium
- ▲ Grassland
- ▲ Barren
- Desert

ogy, described below. Kingdom-building sentients fall into four categories or roles: Dominant, Major, Minor, and Unique.

**Dominant** races account for one-fourth or more of the sentient population of the area. A similar number of the realms and kingdoms belong to folk of this race. In most instances, there will be several kingdoms or empires of the dominant race, but it's possible for one great empire to account for all the dominant culture.

**Major** races account for about one-twentieth to one-fifth of the total population each. A single major race may have several different small states in the region, or a single larger state or nation. In some areas, members of a major race may be quite rare or unwelcome.

**Minor** races account for less than one-twentieth of the population. Kingdoms and realms of the race may include several small city-states or a single modest kingdom. In many places, creatures of a minor race are simply unknown or regarded as curiosities.

Unless you have a reason to decide otherwise, the region includes 0 to 2 (d3-1) dominant races, 1d4+2 major races, and 4d4 minor races. Refer to Table 19, on the next page; it lists most of the races from the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome that can reasonably achieve control of an area through building city-states, kingdoms, or extensive tribal organizations. Naturally, there are dozens of creatures specific to the various AD&D game worlds, such as the draconians of Krynn or the awnshegh of Cerilia, that could also build kingdoms.

To use the table, first roll for the dominant races of the region, using the leftmost set of percentages. After you've rolled up the dominant race or races, roll for the major races. If you come up with a race that is already dominant, ignore the result and reroll until you get a valid result. (Or, at your option, consider the second appearance of the same race to be a secondary or variant group, such as psionic orcs or winged elves.) Finally, after you've rolled the dominant and major races, roll for the region's minor races. If there is no terrain suitable for the race in the region you are developing, you can always discard the result and roll again. Table 19 includes some subterranean and marine races.

Some races such as dragons or beholders could dominate an area or kingdom in a parasitic fashion, ruling as satraps or conquerors over a subject population. In this case, you may want to make a second roll to find out whom the slaveholder race is ruling.

*Example: Now that she's done with the physical part of world-building, Kim wants to start creating the races and cultures that will populate her world. She rolls 0 dominant races, 6 major races, and 9 minor races. Then, consulting Table 19, she determines which major races are present as land powers, and rolls up humans, dwarves, taer, thri-kreen, gnomes, and beholder-kin; since she actually rolled humans twice, she decides that the beholder-kin dominate a subjugated human land. This strikes her*





## Continents and Geography

Table 19: Dominant Races

Dom.	Maj.	Min.	Race	Habitat
-	01-02	01-02	Aarakocra	Trop./sub-trop./temp. mnts.
-	-	03	Arcane <sup>1</sup>	Any
-	03	04	Beholder-kin <sup>1</sup>	Any
-	04	05	Broken One	Any
-	05	06	Bullywug	Trop./sub-trop./temp. swamp
-	06-08	07-08	Centaur	Temp. forest
-	-	09	Doppleganger <sup>1</sup>	Any
01-03	09	10	Dragon <sup>1,2</sup>	Any
04-16	10-16	11-14	Dwarf	Any non-arctic
17-22	17-20	15-16	Elf	Temp./sub-trop. forest
23-25	21-23	17-18	Elf, sylvan	Temp./sub-trop. forest
-	24	19	Gargoyle	Any
-	-	20	Genie, jann	Any
26-31	25-28	21-23	Giant <sup>2</sup>	Any
-	29	24	Gibberling	Temp. forest
-	30	25	Giff	Any
-	31	26	Gith	Any arid hill/mnts.
32-36	32-33	27	Gnoll	Any trop./sub-trop. non-desert
-	34-35	28-29	Gnome	Any hill/forest
-	36	30	Gnome, Tinker	Any mountain
-	-	31	Gnome, spriggan	Any
37-46	37-42	32-36	Goblin	Any non-arctic
-	43	37	Grell	Any
-	44	38	Grimlock	Any mountain
-	-	39	Grippli	Tropical swamp/jungle
-	45-47	40-41	Halfling	Any
-	48	42	Harpy	Any temp./trop.
47-49	49-50	43	Hobgoblin	Any non-arctic
50-78	51-65	44-61	Human	Any
-	-	62	Kenku	Any
79-81	66-68	63-64	Kobold	Any
-	69	65	Kobold, urd	Temp./Trop. hill/mnts.
-	70-72	66-68	Lizard Man	Trop./sub-trop./temp. swamp
-	-	69	Mammal, hsing-sing	Any forest
-	73	70	Mammal, taer	Sub-arc./arc. mnts.
-	74	71	Manscorpion	Trop./sub-trop. desert
-	75-76	72-73	Minotaur	Any temp./sub-trop.
-	77	74	Mold man	Trop./sub-trop. forest/jungle
-	78	75	Mongrelman	Any
-	79	76	Neogi <sup>1</sup>	Any
82-86	80-82	77-78	Ogre	Any
-	-	79	Ogre mage	Any
87-95	83-88	80-86	Orc	Any
96	89	87	Orog	Any
-	90	88	Rakshasa <sup>1</sup>	Trop./sub-trop. for/jun/swamp
-	91-92	89	Sylvan folk <sup>3</sup>	Any forest or jungle
-	93	90	Tabaxi	Trop./sub-trop. jungle
-	94	91	Tasloi	Any jungle
97-00	95-96	92-95	Thri-kreen	Trop./sub-trop. arid
-	97	96	Troll	Any
-	98	97	Wemic	Temp./sub-trop. plains
-	-	98	Yeti	Any arctic or mountains
-	99-00	99-00	Yuan-ti <sup>1</sup>	Any jungle

Subterranean Races

Dom.	Maj.	Min.	Race	Habitat
01-19	01-12	01-09	Aboleth <sup>1</sup>	Underground seas
20-29	13-18	10-14	Bugbear	
-	-	15-17	Cloaker	
30-38	19-24	18-22	Dwarf, derro	
39-53	25-38	23-33	Dwarf, duergar	
54-68	39-51	34-42	Elf, drow	
-	52-56	43-47	Gibberling	
-	-	48-57	Gnome, Svirfneblin	
-	57-62	58-61	Gremlin, jermilaine	
-	63-68	62-66	Grimlock	
-	69-75	76-72	Hook Horror	
-	76-82	73-80	Kuo-toa	Underground seas
-	-	81-83	Manscorpion	
69-88	83-93	84-92	Mind flayer <sup>1</sup>	
-	-	93-95	Myconid	
-	94-95	96	Quaggoth	
89-00	96-00	97-00	Troglodyte	

Marine Races

Dom.	Maj.	Min.	Race	Habitat
-	01-04	01-02	Crabman	Temp./sub-trop./trop. coast
-	-	03-04	Dragon <sup>1,2</sup>	Any sea
-	-	05-09	Dolphin	Any sea
-	05-16	10-17	Elf, aquatic	Temp./sub-trop. coast
-	-	18-19	Gargoyle, kapoacanth	Any sea
-	17-24	20-23	Giant <sup>2</sup>	Any coast
-	-	24-27	Hobgoblin, koalanth	Any coast
01-18	25-41	28-37	Ixitxachitl	Tropical sea or coast
-	-	39-42	Kraken <sup>1</sup>	Temp./sub-arc./arc. sea or coast
19-31	42-49	43-48	Locathah	Trop./sub-trop. sea or coast
32-54	50-66	49-62	Merman	Temp. sea or coast
-	67-71	63-69	Ogre, merrow	Any coast
55-89	72-90	70-89	Sahuagin	Temp./sub-trop. sea or coast
-	91-94	90-93	Tako	Trop./sub-trop./temp. coast
90-00	95-99	94-99	Triton	Any sea
-	00	00	Troll, scrag	Any coast

<sup>1</sup> Slaveholders; a small number of powerful individuals may dominate a subjugated race.

<sup>2</sup> Composed of many sub-species, some of which may be unsuitable in particular terrains.

<sup>3</sup> Includes several rare races often found together, including brownies, leprechauns, dryads, sprites, and satyrs.





## Continents and Geography

as an odd assortment of races, but she can already see places on her map where they belong: the thri-kreen will fit quite nicely in those huge expanses of arid grassland in the eastern portion of her map, and the taer could live in the High mountains in the southern portion of the region.

Now, she goes on to roll up her minor races, coming up with sylvan elves, goblins, lizard men, dopplegangers, orcs, giants (she doesn't know what type yet), broken ones, bullywugs, and humans again. Instead of discarding this last result, she arbitrarily decides that some humans are naturally psionic and non-magical, and feature a great number of wild talents. In effect, they're another race. Looking at the rest of her assortment, she throws out the broken ones on a whim and rolls again, this time getting rakshasa—a much more interesting result!

**Marine and Subterranean Races:** If the region contains any sizable bodies of water, select dominant, major, and minor marine races. Generally, there are d2-1 dominant races, d3 major races, and d4 minor marine races in the seas and waters of a region. Similarly, there may be extensive, organized subterranean empires beneath the land. Here, one finds d2-1 dominant subterranean races, d4 major races, and d6 minor races. You can decide whether or not these races have active interactions with the surface nations, or generally mind their own business in their own specialized environment.

**Player Character Races:** Depending on which creatures appear as dominant, major, and minor races, you may decide to alter the selection of races available to your player characters. The *Complete Book of Humanoids* or *Player's Option: Skills and Powers* are excellent references for alternate PCs races. In addition, the *Complete Book of Dwarves*, *Complete Book of Elves*, or *Complete Book of Gnomes and Halflings* may provide some interesting variants on the tried-and-true AD&D standards. Naturally, you can allow players to run characters of any race you like, but you may have to develop the unusual ones a bit. In the example above, a good selection of PC races might include humans, psionic humans, several types of dwarf and gnome, sylvan elves, goblins, thri-kreen, and lizard men.

### Cultures and Sub-Races

Now that you've identified the races that will make up the political map of the region, you may want to divide them into sub-races or culture groups and assign them to broad areas of the map. (The actual components of a culture are examined in detail in the following chapter.) As a rough guideline, a Dominant race includes 1d4+1 separate cultures or sub-races; a Major race includes 1d3 cultures or sub-races; even a Minor race includes 1d2 cultures or sub-races. Geographical features such as mountains or seas often define the borders between different cultural groups.

**Sub-races:** Many of the creatures appearing on Table 19 feature a variety of sub-races. For example, dwarves include hill dwarves, mountain dwarves, deep dwarves, sundered

dwarves, derro, and duergar. These sub-races serve as culture groups for the race; there just isn't that much difference between mountain dwarves in one place and mountain dwarves in another place, although their circumstances and prosperity can vary widely. You can select an appropriate or interesting sub-race, or you can make a determination with some random rolls.

**Cultures:** If a race features no sub-races, it may instead have cultural variations. Humans are the outstanding example of this type of organization. Cultures represent common belief systems, lifestyles, and technologies over broad areas. Examples might be "feudal Europe", "renaissance Europe", "Arabic," or "Aztec." Within these broad groups, a number of separate kingdoms may exist, each with its own perks and peculiarities. For the most part, the people share related languages, trade, and means of subsistence.

**Settlement Patterns:** Races or cultures tend to have a common geographical factor that links their various kingdoms and states together. For example, everyone knows that elves favor forests, so it's reasonable to assume that the various kingdoms of the elves may be found in the region's forests, no matter how widely scattered they may be. Similarly, dwarves like hills and mountains and settle those regions wherever they may be. Refer to Table 20 for a hook or common factor for each race's settlement pattern.

Table 20: Race/Culture Settlement Patterns

d%	Pattern
<b>Hydrographical Grouping</b>	
01-05	Coastal/seafaring
06-09	Inland/nomadic
10-13	Riverine
<b>Favored Terrain</b>	
14-18	Grasslands
19-23	Forests
24-27	Jungles
28-29	Marshes/swamps
30-31	Scrublands/deserts
32-36	Hills/highlands
37-38	Mountains
<b>Favored Climate</b>	
39-43	Tropical
44-47	Sub-tropical
48-53	Temperate
54-58	Sub-arctic
59-60	Arctic
<b>Geographical Grouping</b>	
61-70	Northeast quadrant
71-80	Southeast quadrant
81-90	Southwest quadrant
91-00	Northwest quadrant

**Hydrographical Groupings:** The various realms of that sub-race or culture favor inland regions, coastal regions, or





## Continents and Geography

rivers for some reason. The cities and kingdoms will be scattered across the region in the hydrographical situation they prefer. For example, in your campaign, high elves may be seafarers who have explored and colonized many far-flung shores.

**Favored Terrain:** The race or culture naturally prefers a particular type of terrain. The kingdoms of this group will be scattered all over the map, but will concentrate in the specified terrain. Dwarves and elves are commonly found in mountains and forests, respectively, with little consideration for whether or not they are in contact with others of their kind.

**Favored Climate:** The race or culture enjoys all the terrain types available in one particular climate band. Creatures that are associated with extremes of temperature—frost or fire giants, for example—may follow this settlement pattern, pushing to the limits of the temperatures they consider tolerable.

**Geographical Grouping:** The kingdoms and states of the culture are found in one specific area, regardless of climate or terrain. Human settlement tends to follow this pattern, since humans adapt to various conditions quite well and are more likely to expand into neighboring areas than other races.

*Example: Kim wants to know where the important races of her campaign are going to be on the map. She starts with the first human race and rolls a 71; they're located in the southeast quadrant of her map. Next, she finds out that the dwarves are there, too; the taer are in the southwest (that's fine; she has High mountains there for them); the thri-kreen inhabit grassland belts (since Kim decided this earlier, she doesn't need to roll); the gnomes are in the southwest; and on a whim she decides that the beholder-kin favor hot weather and concentrate in the tropics. This gives her an idea of where to start placing her major races; she'll also take the time to roll settlement patterns for her minor races before she starts drawing kingdom borders.*

### Kingdoms, Tribes, and City-states

Where is each culture or sub-race located? How many separate states exist in each one? What resources do they control, and how will they survive and prosper? In this step, you will create the rough boundaries of each kingdom or area, building a political map of the region. For now, all you want to do is get an idea of the distribution of kingdoms and realms across the area—in the next chapter, you'll describe and detail these realms on an individual basis.

First, sketch out the kingdoms or areas belonging to the dominant cultures or sub-races; then, sketch in kingdoms or areas belonging to major races. Finally, minor races must fill in whatever space has been left empty. The bullet points below sum up guidelines for kingdom size and placement.

- Dominant races include 1d4+1 separate cultures or sub-races; Major races include 1d3 cultures or sub-races; and Minor races include 1d2 cultures or sub-races. Each culture or sub-race includes 1-5 (d8-3, treating 0 or less as

1) kingdoms, states, or tribal federations.

- Assuming an Earth-sized planet, realms of dominant races are each 6d6 hexes in size; realms of major races are 4d6 hexes each; realms of minor races are 1d8 hexes each. (See the box **World Size and Kingdom Size** on page 52 for larger or smaller planets.)
- Kingdoms and tribal groups extend out to some natural boundary, usually a river, the borders of a forest, or a range of mountains. Realms are more likely to follow terrain areas or geographical features than to occupy solid blocks with arbitrary boundaries.
- If you have already developed a kingdom or local adventure setting, make certain that you place it on your regional map first, and then work around it as you sketch out the neighboring realms.

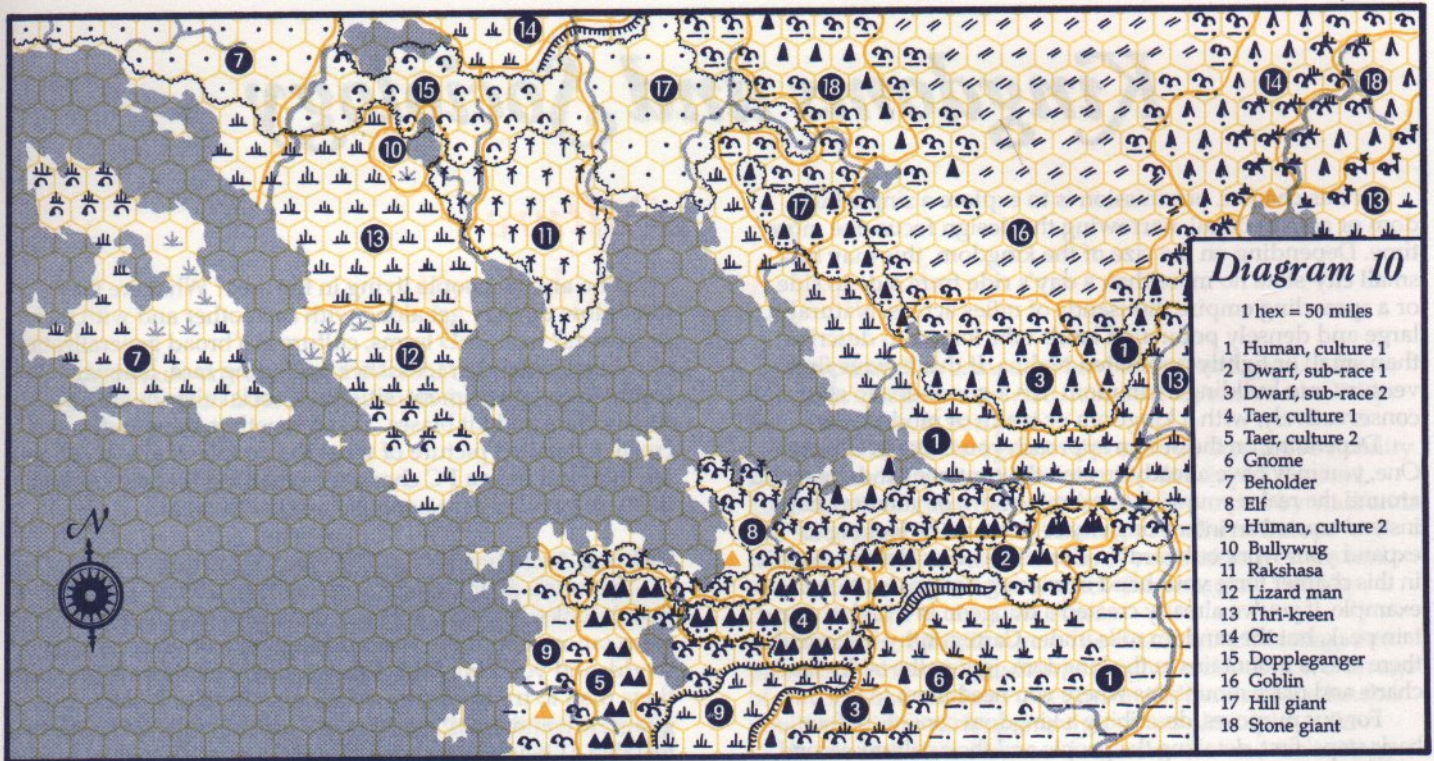
As you sketch out the political and racial boundaries of the region, keep an eye open for particularly interesting areas that you think deserve special development. Is there a great old empire surrounded by fierce monster-dominated lands? Or a balkanized area of several rival states, all crowded together? In the next chapter, you'll select one kingdom (or a group of small kingdoms) to again narrow the focus of your design work.

Realms fall into three broad types or categories: kingdoms or nations, city-states, and tribes or tribal federations. Kingdoms are realms as modern readers tend to imagine them, consisting of a group of cities and heavily-populated rural townlands and farmlands in between (although kingdoms can also include extensive tracts of wilderness or sparsely-settled frontier land). Kingdoms require favorable terrain that encourages the population to spread out and bring more land under cultivation.

City-states are political units based around a single powerful city and a lightly-settled hinterland. Generally, city-states are found in places where the terrain tends to discourage a dispersal of the population. Because the terrain is only hospitable in the vicinity of the city, most of the population gathers there and maintains an intensive agriculture of the immediate region. The desert crescent from Morocco to Pakistan is an example of a large, arid area conducive to city-states. City-states also develop in cases of extreme balkanization. Sometimes the terrain could support a kingdom, but no one ruler or family has grown powerful enough to do so. Ancient Greece and medieval Italy or Germany are examples of this type of organization. On occasion, city-states are known to conquer other city-states or join with their neighbors to create a league or federation.

Tribal regions describe most other forms of organization (or lack thereof). Cultures that do not build large cities could be described as tribal, even if they live in densely-settled areas. The individual tribes may be organized into one large tribal federation, or they may exist as independent clans and villages. Tribal regions are not necessarily savage or primitive, although this category includes such societies; they may enjoy a technology and agriculture just as advanced as the





**Diagram 10**

1 hex = 50 miles

- 1 Human, culture 1
- 2 Dwarf, sub-race 1
- 3 Dwarf, sub-race 2
- 4 Taer, culture 1
- 5 Taer, culture 2
- 6 Gnome
- 7 Beholder
- 8 Elf
- 9 Human, culture 2
- 10 Bullywug
- 11 Rakshasa
- 12 Lizard man
- 13 Thri-kreen
- 14 Orc
- 15 Doppelganger
- 16 Goblin
- 17 Hill giant
- 18 Stone giant

kingdoms or city-states in your world, without sharing their formal organization and government. Nomadic peoples are often organized along tribal lines.

*Example: Kim finishes sketching out the borders of the kingdoms in the region. As shown, each kingdom is keyed to a different race or culture type. Only a small portion of the final map is shown—Kim ended up with eighteen distinct races and cultures in the region, and several of those have several different kingdoms or countries.*

## The Next Step

Depending on the size of your campaign world, the Region Map probably encompasses an area at least the size of the United States, and in many cases an even vaster expanse of land. While this is a good “big-picture” map for showing mountain ranges, climate bands, and the rough outlines of cultural or racial bastions, it’s still not enough information for running adventures off the cuff. There are dozens of smaller details for you to fill in, and the next chapter—**Kingdoms and Sociology**—continues to “zoom in” on an even smaller portion of your world.

### The Home Area

Before you proceed to the next chapter, one question remains for you to resolve. Which of these realms will make a good campaign setting? Where’s the best place to focus your

design efforts? Consider what kind of campaign you would like to run and choose a kingdom with the climate, setting, and neighbors that look most interesting to you. If nothing in particular stands out, try a random die roll among the human and demi-human states. As a general guideline, kingdoms or states in inhospitable terrain tend to be more savage, primitive, or nomadic than kingdoms located in gentle climes.

### The Evil Empire

Even if you have no idea what kind of campaign you want to run, it’s not a bad idea to identify a few kingdoms, realms, or areas that are home to evil races or cultures. Are there many such areas, leaving the good kingdoms and city-states as isolated fortresses in a dark and dangerous world? Or are the lands of humankind safely insulated from the reserves of dangerous monsters? You don’t need to create every evil warlock or petty tyrant of the campaign at this time, but if there is one driving threat or focus that you want to employ in this campaign, give some thought as to where the source of this threat and how it affects or interacts with the kingdom or area you intend to develop in more detail.

For example, if Kim has decided to concentrate her campaign in the forests and mountains of the southern coasts of the region she’s developed, she may make a mental note to reserve the beholder-enslaved human empires of the tropics as the major threat of her immediate campaign setting. Similarly, the thri-kreen hordes across the mountains and the taer of the high plateaus could seriously jeopardize any coastal civilizations.



# Kingdoms and Sociology

In this chapter, our mission is to explore a single kingdom or area in detail, narrowing the design focus one more time. Depending on the size of the kingdom, this may be a small city-state no more than a day's ride from side to side, or a sprawling empire thousands of miles across. Naturally, large and densely populated lands take longer to describe than small or lightly populated realms. If this is your first venture into building a kingdom, it's a good idea to start conservatively, with a kingdom or realm of modest size.

Depending on the design approach you chose in Chapter One, you may have already created the continent and the world around the realm you wish to examine now, or you may have instead created an interesting city or ruin and be looking to expand your work outward. In either case, don't let the material in this chapter force your hand in making design decisions. For example, if you've already created a dungeon in a high mountain peak, but the random rolls under **Cartography** indicate that there are no mountains in the kingdom, ignore the tables and charts and place mountains where you need them to be.

For our purposes, describing a kingdom consists of four basic steps: first, detailing the people and their culture; second, charting the physical boundaries and terrain of the kingdom; third, describing how the people live in the terrain and where they have changed it to suit them by building cities and farmlands; and last, populating the region with monsters, fantastic ecologies, and adventure opportunities for your players to enjoy.

## Culture

Who are the people living in the area? What are they like? How do they get along with each other and with their neighbors? In AD&D terms, culture is a broad generalization of several gross characteristics, including race, language, technology, government, situation, social alignment, and finally class and kit biases. Taken together, these indicators create a detailed picture of what the people of any given area are like, and how a PC character exploring that region is likely to get along (or not get along) with them.

### Cultural Archetypes

Inventing an imaginary culture from thin air is harder than it looks. Most players will construct a set of images or expectations about the various kingdoms of your campaign world, and you may find it easier to rely on these preconceptions than to try to convey a nation's worth of history, language, art, and architecture in the course of the game. Refer to Table 21 below: a number of good historical and fantastic cultures are listed for your convenience. You can roll randomly for the kingdom you're developing, choose one that you find appropriate, or even skip this step entirely and develop your own culture and setting. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of cultures that are appropriate for the





## Kingdoms and Sociology

AD&D game; use any cultural model that you think is appropriate (or even interesting models that might not be wholly appropriate).

Table 21: Cultural Characteristics

d%	Culture Archetype
01-03	Aboriginal
04-09	African
10-18	Arabic
19-20	Aztec/Incan
21-24	Barbarian
25-29	Central Asian
30-33	Egyptian
34-44	European, Renaissance
45-59	European, Middle Ages
60-74	European, Dark Ages
75-78	Indian
79-87	Oriental
88-89	Persian
90-93	Roman
94-96	Savage
97-00	Viking

**Aboriginal:** Tribes or clans of hunter-gatherers inhabit the land, with few fixed settlements and very little agriculture. Technology is typically Stone Age or equivalent. Some campaigns with a Native American flavor may fall into this category. Aboriginal peoples are likely to have highly developed oral traditions and value systems.

**African:** The realm is modelled after one of the tribelands or kingdoms of pre-colonial Africa. The ivory kingdoms of the Middle Ages, ancient Ethiopia or Zimbabwe, or the more recent Zulu empire represent good examples.

**Arabic:** The campaign has a fantastic Arabian feel, modelled after *A Thousand and One Nights* or the stories of Sinbad. The AL-QADIM game setting is an excellent resource for campaigns of this type.

**Aztec/Incan:** The kingdom is a fantastic Aztec, Mayan, Toltec, or Incan empire. The FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign expansion for Maztica has good reference material.

**Barbarian:** The realm is a tribal group or kingdom of people considered barbarians by their neighbors. These can be historical barbarians such as the Celts, Picts, or ancient Germans, or you may prefer to mold your kingdom after fantastic barbarians such as Robert E. Howard's Cimmeria. The *Complete Barbarian's Handbook* may be a good resource for your campaign.

**Central Asian:** The kingdom is modelled after the horsemen and conquerors of the Central Asian steppes, including the Mongols, Tartars, Uighurs, and other such groups. They are likely to be nomadic herdsman with a strong central organization; by the late Middle Ages, some of these conquerors settled down in the lands their forefathers had conquered. The FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign expansion *The Horde* proves useful here.

**Egyptian:** The campaign has an ancient Egyptian flavor to it. This category may also include the Sumerian or Babylonian empires, if you prefer.

**European, Dark Ages:** In this setting, the landed nobility and the feudal system have not fully developed. Instead, kings are little more than chieftains surrounded by warbands and bodyguards. Parts of Eastern or Northern Europe remained at this level hundreds of years after western and southern Europe had developed. *Charlemagne's Paladins* depicts Europe in the Dark Ages.

**European, Middle Ages:** The classic AD&D setting, this presents a fantastic kingdom of knights and ladies. It is an age of chivalry and castles. Power lies in the hands of the landed nobility and the various churches or temples of the realm.

**European, Renaissance:** Art, literature, and technology all flower in this setting. A wealthy merchant class has risen to contest the landed nobility's hold on power. In many places, the increasing strength of towns and cities leads to a new age of mercantile city-states.

**Indian:** The campaign is modeled after medieval India. India's social structure was feudal in nature, with an amazing number of independent rajahs, moguls, and princes each governing over one of hundreds of small kingdoms.

**Oriental:** The kingdom resembles medieval Japan or China, with samurai and warlords ruling through a feudal land-holding system. *Oriental Adventures* and *Kara-Tur* may be useful references for building an oriental campaign.

**Persian:** Resembling the Persian Empire, satraps wield power in scattered city-states. Persia's culture and flavor fell somewhere between Arabic, Indian, and Central Asian culture.

**Roman:** The major kingdom of the campaign is patterned after the Roman Empire. Naturally, the historical accessory *The Glory of Rome* is the best resource for setting an AD&D game in this realm.

**Savage:** For our purposes, the chief difference between a savage culture and a barbaric culture is the degree of organization. Generally, savage peoples do not recognize any king or over-chieftain, while barbaric peoples often build tribal federations or crude kingdoms. Savages probably have a lower technology than barbaric peoples, but may equal or exceed them in social development.

**Viking:** While the Vikings of northern Europe could probably be considered barbarians, the modern player's strong recognition of their culture merits their inclusion. HR 1, the *Vikings Campaign Sourcebook*, is useful for creating Viking realms.

*Example: Kim decides to see what general direction her campaign is going to take by rolling up a cultural archetype for Therria. She comes up with a 17, indicating an Arabic flavor. Since she doesn't know much about the kingdom yet, she sets the information aside and continues.*





## Kingdoms and Sociology

### Race

In a fantastic universe, kingdoms and realms can be built by any number of demihuman, humanoid, or monstrous races; humans don't have a monopoly on civilization. Of course, if you intend for the kingdom in question to be a homeland for some of the player characters in the campaign, you should ensure that at least one viable PC race is present in the domain. Other than that, you can populate the realm with any type of creatures that appeal to you. In fact, there may be a number of different races cohabitating in the kingdom, either sharing in a common culture or maintaining separate communities and roles in the governing of the land.

**Number of Races:** Even in kingdoms dominated by one particular race, there may be secondary races present in significant numbers. Meanwhile, travelers or traders from other lands could be of any race imaginable. However, to keep things reasonably simple, we'll use the following basic assumptions:

- Small kingdoms have 1d2 primary races and 1d4+1 secondary races.
- Moderate kingdoms have 1d2 primary races and 1d6+1 secondary races.
- Large kingdoms have 1d3 primary races and 1d8+1 secondary races.
- Empires have 1d4 primary races and 3d4 secondary races.

Primary races each comprise about 25 to 50 percent of the total population in the realm, while secondary races account for anywhere from 1 to 10 percent of the population. The exact relationship between primary and secondary races can vary wildly from kingdom to kingdom; for example, in one land a small caste of elven overlords may rule over a vast population of humans. Even though the elves are a secondary race by percentage, they enjoy a prestige and position far exceeding their actual strength.

To determine which races are present in the realm, consult Table 19 in the previous chapter (page 38). Use the Major Races column while rolling each primary race, and the Minor Races column for secondary races. Of course, if you already know which races should be present in the realm, ignore Table 19 and fill them in as desired.

**Sub-races:** Demihuman and humanoid sub-races can be substituted for different races—it's possible that a kingdom dominated by sylvan elves may include a smaller population of grey elves, or that a human kingdom to include people of different ethnic derivations. Relations between the sub-races may be completely harmonious or racked by strife and bloodshed.

*Example: Kim continues to work on the world she developed in Chapters Two and Three. She decides to concentrate on a human kingdom near the center of her map. She already knows that a fairly standard human race is the dominant in the area, but she decides that this is a large kingdom, with 4 secondary races.*

*Referring to Table 19 in the previous chapter, she rolls orcs, a second group of humans, aarakocra, and gnolls. Orcs work well, since they're present in her world in great numbers, and the second human group could easily be the psionic humans she rolled earlier. Aarakocra and gnolls haven't appeared yet in Kim's design; she keeps the aarakocra and discards the gnolls, substituting another one of the races she already knows is present on the continent—in this case, gnomes.*

**Race Status and Position:** How do the races get along? Are their communities actually co-mingled, with no identifiable neighborhoods or districts? Or do they live in completely separate areas? Consider the mix of races that form your kingdom and think about how they might get along. Or, if you prefer to let the dice determine things, consult Table 22 below:

Table 22: Race Position

d%	Situation
01-15	Completely intermixed
16-25	Common communities, separate districts; one race is dominant over the others
26-40	Common communities, separate districts; one race is dominant but secondary races considered equal
41-65	Separate communities; one race is dominant
66-85	Separate communities; one race is dominant but secondary races considered equal
86-00	One race enslaves the other

**Good vs. Evil Races:** Normally, good races find it easier to cooperate with each other and share a realm, while evil races seldom run together, usually only when commanded by a more sinister power. For example, good human kingdoms that include elves in the forests and dwarves in the mountains are fairly typical in fantasy role-playing, while the tyrannical realms of evil warlords might include a variety of humanoid races bound together by the will of the overlord. But what happens when two or three races that clearly don't get along happen to occupy the same kingdom or realm? Don't despair—this is a situation that can spark your creativity.

First, it's possible that one or the other of the opposing races seized the land from their rivals. The conquerors hold the kingdom, and the conquered folk are held down by military might. Second, the kingdom might be a battleground in which the war of conquest remains undecided; in other words, the same town or strip of land may be claimed by both a goblin and a human kingdom, and the rival powers are squabbling over who owns it. Another alternative might be an unexpected turn of alignment or attitude for one of the races to bring them in line for the rest of the kingdom—what if in your world orcs weren't necessarily evil, just crass and ill-tempered? Or if the elves in question were actually drow? Last, but not least, in a truly cosmopolitan society the races





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may be so intermingled that those orcs and elves may not have separate communities or strongholds of their own.

*Example: Kim decides that humans are far and away the pre-dominant race of the kingdom. The aarakocra live in the high mountains of the west, generally keeping their distance from the other races. The gnomes live alongside the humans, dwelling in gnomish neighborhoods within human towns and settlements. She also chooses to portray the orcs in her world as fierce nomadic warriors who live as herdsmen and raiders. They are not evil by definition, but they are proud and prone to violence. The orcish clans are scattered throughout the eastern grasslands. They resent human dominance of their land and frequently rebel, but the orcs are too disorganized and too few in number to constitute a serious threat to the human kingdom.*

### Language

The language of a region or kingdom is an important marker of cultural boundaries. How many languages are spoken in the kingdom? As a rough guideline, in AD&D presents each separate race, sub-race, or ethnic group with its own language, but in some cases several sub-races may share a common language—for example, all dwarves regardless of type may speak a common Dwarven language, or several closely related human groups may share a tongue.

### What's in a Name?

While there's no need to create a language or vocabulary out of thin air, it can be very helpful to define a scheme for naming characters and places. Names that look and sound like they belong together in a common language are an excellent tool for adding detail and flavor to the campaign. For example, if you're planning on running a swashbuckling campaign, you might choose to make use of names that resemble French or Italian. Similarly, using Arabic names for a desert setting or Japanese names for the samurai kingdom in the campaign can help you to present a more complete experience for your players.

You can find thousands of excellent names in any world atlas. Just scan over a few large-scale maps of various countries and jot down names of small towns, villages, mountains, or rivers that your players are not likely to have heard of. Baby name books provide excellent lists of good character names for your NPCs.

While you shouldn't pick out a character's name for a player, you can show the players your name lists and ask them to come up with something of the same flavor. This will reduce the number of uninspired appellations such as 'Joe the Samurai' or unintelligible ones such as Dvxdlq Greenleaf if you're tired of seeing them in your campaigns.

**Language as Social Distinction:** In kingdoms where one race has subjugated another, language often develops into a

mark of distinction between the rulers and the subjects. Medieval England is an excellent example. The Normans conquered Saxon England in 1066; for hundreds of years, French was the language of England's lords, while Old English remained the tongue of the conquered Saxons. It took many generations for this elitism to fade.

**The Common Tongue:** Most AD&D games feature a universal language known as Common or the Common Tongue. If you wish, you can describe Common as the language of the dominant racial group in the region. This means that Common may change from kingdom to kingdom, depending on which races and cultures are prevalent.

**Literacy:** Possession of a written language is a key characteristic of a culture. A single kingdom may feature a mix of written and oral traditions, possibly within the same language if some portion of the population is uneducated. For example, reading and writing may be guarded as the province of the nobility, wizards, the priesthood, or a class of storytellers and scholars. In the absence of a written language, a strong oral tradition of memorized epics may serve as an alternative to recorded tales and legends.

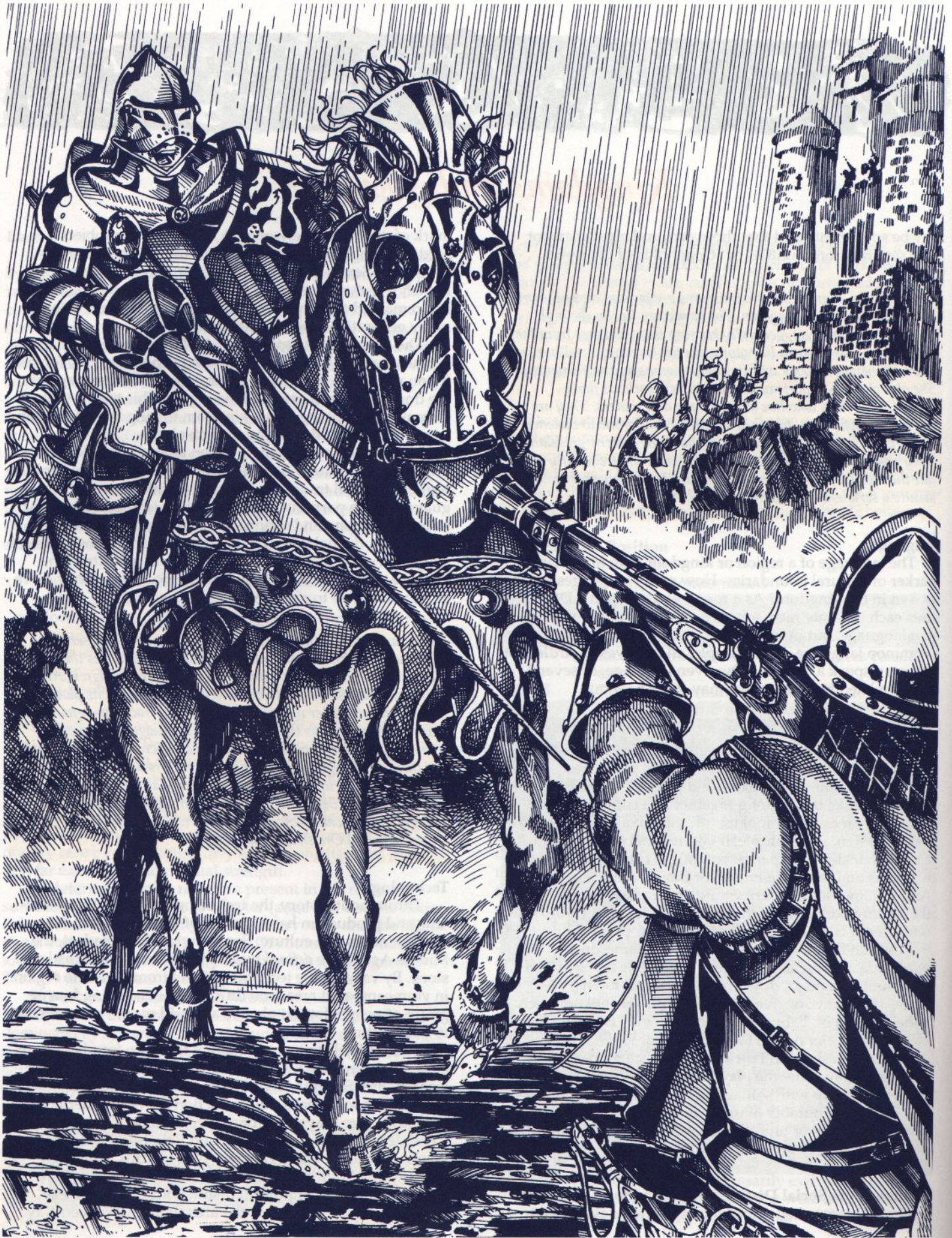
*Example: In Kim's kingdom, the human language serves as Common. Arbitrarily, she names it Alseric, and names the kingdom itself Seria. Because Kim knows that her campaign is Arabic in flavor, she resolves that Seric resembles Arabic in its place names and character names. As for the other races, the gnomes have adopted Seric as their day-to-day language but preserve Gnomish as a ceremonial tongue; the aarakocra and orcs both prefer their own languages but player characters and well-traveled NPCs may pick up a smattering of heavily accented Seric. Kim determines that Seric and Gnomish both include written languages, freely available to anyone who wishes to learn, but Aarakocra and Orcish lack alphabets.*

### Technology

Throughout history, the technology of agriculture, warfare, and production has been one of the most distinctive characteristics of a culture. For many modern readers, the Middle Ages were defined by knights in armor and castles of stone. By varying the technology level from region to region in your campaign area, you differentiate each kingdom or group of people for the players and add more verisimilitude to your setting.

In the AD&D game, technology falls into four basic categories: Ancient, Dark Ages, Middle Ages, and Renaissance (see Chapter Six of the DMG). The *Player's Option: Combat and Tactics* book breaks the distinction down another level, into Stone Age/Savage, Bronze Age, Roman, Dark Ages, Crusades, Hundred Years' War, and Renaissance technology levels, with an optional category for Firearms. Although agricultural, building, and transportation technology are probably the most important distinctions between these ages, military technology is the area that most players pay







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the most attention to, since it governs the type of equipment their characters can obtain.

If you don't know the technology level of the kingdom, you can roll on Table 23 below:

**Table 23: Kingdom Technology Level**

d%	DMG Level	d%	Player's Option Level
01-15	Ancient	01-05	Stone Age
16-45	Dark Ages	06-15	Savage
46-80	Middle Ages	16-25	Bronze Age
81-00	Renaissance <sup>1</sup>	26-32	Roman
		33-51	Dark Ages
		52-69	Crusades
		70-89	100 Years' War <sup>1</sup>
		90-00	Renaissance <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>May include appropriate firearms, at the DM's discretion

Since the armor and weapons available in any given time period are described in detail elsewhere (see the *DMG* or *PLAYER'S OPTION™: Combat and Tactics*) similar lists have been omitted from this book.

**Stone Age:** While most readers think of cave men when they see this phrase, the Stone Age was not anywhere near as primitive as the man on the street believes. In Europe, late Stone Age cultures invented agriculture, domesticated animals, learned how to raise stone walls and buildings, and made significant advances in military and tool technology. Early Stone Age cultures (or cultures in inhospitable environments) are more likely to be hunter-gatherers, without any permanent settlements. Weapons are usually fashioned from flint, obsidian, or other flaking stones. Stone Age cultures may enjoy highly developed societies and values despite their lack of tools and technology, and in some regions can exist alongside more advanced civilizations.

**Savage:** Savage cultures form tribal regions or barbaric kingdoms (don't confuse a savage level of technology with the description of a savage culture, above). Like Stone Age cultures, savage peoples make use of rudimentary agriculture and maintain semi-permanent camps or settlements. Several villages or clans may be united under a single high chieftain or king, but a large savage region is more likely to be divided into rival groups of tribes. Savage cultures average in with Bronze Age or Ancient technology, although Stone Age or Dark Ages technology is possible depending on the amount of contact the savages have with more advanced societies.

**Bronze Age (Ancient):** This is the lowest technology level that can support true empires or nations. Intensive, organized agriculture allows a much higher population density and the building of cities, while food storage (granaries, etc.) makes the society more resistant to times of famine and want. Industrial technology is still low, as most items are manufactured by individual craftsmen. Military organization and tactics begin to appear. This is the age of the chariot as a

weapon of war. It is not until late in this period that real cavalry replaces chariots. Simple galleys and sailing vessels make coastal or riverine travel safe and practical. Organized priesthoods, nobility, and bureaucracy may appear.

**Roman:** This is more accurately viewed as a specialized category of the Bronze Age or Ancient settings, although the Romans came to power hundreds of years after the end of the Bronze Age. Military organization and tactics continue to advance, along with the first real applications of military engineering and siegecraft.

**Dark Ages:** In many respects, the Dark Ages are a step backwards from the Roman age. The organization of a central government is replaced by a renewed tribal loyalty or fealty to warlords. Intensive agriculture is found only in a few suitable areas, and animal husbandry becomes a much more important part of daily sustenance. The study of tactics and maneuver in warfare fade as crude warbands and fyrds or levies become the standard military units. This technology level can describe backwards or barbaric areas in a standard Middle Ages-type campaign.

**Crusades (Early Middle Ages):** The system of personal loyalty that evolved in the Dark Ages becomes stratified into the feudal model of king, vassal, knight, and peasantry. Improvements in shipbuilding allow longer voyages and increase the potential for trade between different peoples, leading to the appearance of a minor merchant class and specialized craftsmen to produce goods for trade.

**Hundred Years' War (Late Middle Ages):** The technology of muscle-powered weapons and heavy armor reaches its height. The feudal system of lord and vassal begins to break down as the merchant class grows in importance. Guilds and leagues of craftsmen who practice a trade appear, allowing increased production and advancements, while concentrating wealth and power in towns instead of the noble estates. As towns grow in size, more land is brought under cultivation to support the increasing population.

Primitive firearms such as the handgunne or arquebus may be available at this level of technology.

**Renaissance:** With the appearance of firearms, heavy armor becomes less and less prominent, and weapons grow lighter again. The feudal system is badly broken by this point, and a new class of nobility whose wealth is derived from trade and mercantile interests becomes prominent. In some lands, rights of serfs and the peasantry are recognized, and the influx of people into towns and cities continues. Excellent sailing vessels permit ocean crossings and long-range trade and exploration. Devices such as the printing press and water wheel drastically increase craftsman productivity as the first steps towards pre-steam industrialization take place.

Advanced firearms may be available at your discretion.

**Other Technologies:** The examples above follow the European model of social and technological development, but there are other types of technology available. For example, while most of Europe was mired in the Dark Ages, the Arabic





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world enjoyed a renaissance of learning, art, and craftsmanship. Thus, an Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, or African culture might stretch the definitions of the categories described above.

### Government

Who runs the kingdom? How do the PCs relate to the ruling class? In a fantasy world, there are hundreds of possible government systems for nations and tribes. Defining who holds the power and the means by which they secure rulership is a key element of bringing a campaign setting to life. You can examine the choices below and pick one that seems appropriate, roll randomly on Table 24, or invent your own system for the campaign.

Table 24: Government Form

d%	Form
01-08	Autocracy
09-13	Bureaucracy
14-19	Confederacy
20-22	Democracy
23-27	Dictatorship
28-42	Feudalism
43-44	Geriatocracy
45-47	Gynarchy
48-56	Hierarchy
57-59	Magocracy
60-63	Matriarchy
64-69	Militocracy
70-79	Monarchy
80-83	Oligarchy
84	Pedocracy
85	Plutocracy
86-92	Republic
93-94	Satrapy
95	Syndicracy
96-00	Theocracy

**Autocracy:** One hereditary ruler wields unlimited, absolute power. The autocrat may be supported by a well-developed bureaucracy or military, or he may be the only authority in an otherwise anarchic society. Immortal or undead god-kings could also appear as dynastic rulers.

**Bureaucracy:** Various departments and bureaus together compose the government, each responsible for some aspect of rule. The department heads, ministers, or secretaries may answer to a figurehead autocrat or council.

**Confederacy:** Each individual city or town governs itself, but each contributes to a league or federation that has as its theoretical purpose the promotion of the common good of all member states. Conditions and attitudes towards the central government may vary from place to place within the confederacy.

**Democracy:** Government by the people, either directly or through elected representatives. A skeletal bureaucracy or militocracy may actually do the day-to-day work of government, with positions filled through open elections.

**Dictatorship:** One supreme ruler holds absolute authority, but is not necessarily dynastic. In other respects this resembles an autocracy.

**Feudalism:** The typical government of Europe in the Middle Ages, a feudalistic society consists of layers of lords and vassals. The vassals provide soldiers or scutage to the lords, who in turn promise protection to their vassals.

**Geriatocracy:** Government reserved to the old or very old. In some cases, long-lived races such as elves or dragons may be entrusted with the leadership of the land.

**Gynarchy:** Government reserved to females only. Usually paired with another system, such as a democracy, monarchy, or militocracy.

**Hierarchy:** A feudal or bureaucratic system which proceeds through different levels of a religious institution.

**Magocracy:** Government by wizards. The sorcerer-kings of Athas in the DARK SUN campaign setting are a good example of a magocracy. The wizards may rule directly as oligarchs or feudal lords, or they may participate in a democracy or bureaucracy.

**Matriarchy:** Government reserved for eldest or most important females. In many cases, this is an extended council of women, or a feudal system based on the alliances of female-led noble houses.

**Militocracy:** Military leaders run the nation under martial law, using the organization or apparatus of the army and the other armed forces. A militocracy might be based around an elite group of soldiers, such as dragon riders or war-wizards.

**Monarchy:** Government by a single hereditary sovereign. Unlike the autocrat, the monarch's powers are limited by law, and he serves as the head of a different governmental form such as a militocracy or democracy.

**Oligarchy:** A small number of absolute rulers share power, possibly dividing the land into districts or provinces beneath their control, or jointly the kingdom together. A group of adventurers who take control of a nation have formed an oligarchy.

**Pedocracy:** Government by the learned, sages, or scholars. Usually associated with some form of bureaucracy.

**Plutocracy:** Government by the wealthy. The elite may form a ruling council, they may purchase representation at the court of a figurehead monarch, or the realm may be in such a state that money is the only power.

**Republic:** Government by representatives of an established electorate who rule in behalf of the electors. A democracy in which only landowners or certain classes could vote could be considered a republic.

**Satrapy:** Conquerors and representatives of another government wield power over the region, ruling it as part of a larger empire. The satraps themselves might be bureaucrats and military officers, or they may be unusual charac-





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ters or monsters of some kind, such as dragons, beholders, or vampires.

**Syndicracy:** Government by representatives or leaders of various syndicates or guilds. A kingdom run by thieves' guilds would fall into this category.

**Theocracy:** A direct representative or collection of agents of a power rules as an dictator.

*Example: Kim checks the technology level and government of Seria. On Table 23 she rolls a 94, indicating Renaissance-level technology. She decides that muskets and scimitars sound like an interesting change of pace from the usual plate-mailed PC party, and grants that advanced firearms are allowed in her campaign. For Seria's government, she rolls an 07, or autocracy. Kim arbitrarily chooses that Seria's sultan will be unusually strong, since the noble landowners were crushed in a rebellion thirty or forty years ago. A Mameluke-like class of slave-soldiers and bureaucrats are the sultan's muscle in Seria; the highly-placed officers serve as the courtiers and governors of the land beneath the all-powerful sultan.*

### Social Alignment

Just like an individual character, a city or kingdom can be assigned a social alignment to describe the way people get things done. Of course, some members of the society do not subscribe to the social alignment, and diametrically opposed individuals find their homeland to be riddled with serious (to them) problems and dissension. Social alignment has a great effect on the laws of the land and the unwritten code of what's considered acceptable and what is unacceptable for getting along in society. Refer to Chapter Four of the DMG; society and area alignments are discussed in detail.

If you don't know what kind of kingdom or background the PCs will be adventuring in, consult Table 25.

Table 25: Social Alignment

d%	Alignment
01-16	Lawful good
17-28	Lawful neutral
29-44	Lawful evil
45-56	Neutral evil
57-60	True neutral
61-70	Neutral good
71-82	Chaotic good
83-88	Chaotic neutral
89-00	Chaotic evil

**Lawful good:** The citizens are generally honest, law-abiding, and helpful. The laws favor society over the individual, and broad social programs to address specific ills or situations are common. Strong monarchies, autocracies, or republics guided by a benevolent and compassionate central authority are lawful good lands.

**Lawful neutral:** The people seem obsessed with laws and government organization. Sweeping social programs are conceived to address problems confronting the realm, but they lack compassion and tend to treat everyone the same regardless of circumstances. Complicated bureaucracies and regulations often dominate government. Other than bureaucracy, a dictator may rule lawful neutral lands.

**Lawful evil:** The government is draconian, with severe laws and harsh punishments for transgressions regardless of guilt or innocence. Laws generally maintain the status quo instead of serving justice. Social class or caste may stifle personal advancement; bribery and graft spring up in response. Dictatorial, autocratic, or oligarchic governments may fall into this category.

**Neutral evil:** The people of the land are out to get ahead by any means possible. A nation in which mercantile wealth is pursued at the cost of other values might be described as neutral evil. Such lands tend to support whichever government that provides the most gain to the most powerful social classes.

**True neutral:** When the social alignment so intermixed that no clear trends can be discerned, a neutral kingdom or land results. Various power blocs or classes within the state may struggle to bring about the conditions they prefer, but the net effect is a national apathy, or a land plagued by inconclusive infighting. The whole range of government types can be found in neutral states.

**Neutral good:** Societies of this alignment believe that both the rule of law and the rule of individual liberty must be secondary to the general well-being of people and nation. In essence, both rules and individuals must bow to the weal of all. Constitutional monarchies, republics, and enlightened autocracies are commonly neutral good.

**Chaotic good:** The people of the land are distrustful of big government and restrictive laws. Although there may be a strong central authority or monarch, most communities prefer to manage their own affairs, and may take the law into their own hands in times of danger. Furthermore, the existing laws tend to protect the rights of the individual over the social contract. Democracies, republics, and weak monarchies or oligarchies may be chaotic good.

**Chaotic neutral:** This is a region without any kind of central authority. Small clans, tribes, or guilds may form alliances or wage war with each other as they see fit. There is no law enforcement, although there may be accepted standards of behavior or vendetta justice. Countries in the process of disintegration through invasion, civil war, or catastrophe could be called chaotic neutral.

**Chaotic evil:** These people are ruled by the adage that "might makes right." Local government amounts to nothing more than a series of strongman bosses who obey the central government out of fear. Any degree of treachery or violence is accepted as a form of advancement. A feudal system gone bad or a despotic dictatorship or autocracy could be described as chaotic evil.





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Based on what she knows about Seria, Kim does not roll for a social alignment but instead selects Lawful Evil. Under the rule of the autocratic Sultan and his fanatical slave-soldiers, Seria is an oppressed land. Kim expects that the PCs in her campaign will be freedom fighters and noble crusaders, with a long-term goal of replacing the bad sultan or bringing down the whole rotten system.

### Situation

This is a catch-all for any kind of scenario or fantastic element you wish to introduce into the immediate campaign area. For example, is the kingdom torn by a civil war or a powerful lord's rebellion? Does a particular magical or technological innovation play an unusual role in the campaign? What about race, language, or religion? Or (perhaps the favorite situation) are there monsters of one kind or another that threaten the integrity of the kingdom or realm? Since this is really an exercise in creativity, we'll just give you some suggestions for situations that you could incorporate or modify for your campaign.

- **Disorder:** The land suffers under some kind of major unrest. Possibilities include civil war, a local peasant uprising, the rebellion of a city or powerful lord against the kingdom, a class revolution by peasants or laborers, a succession struggle for the throne, or a widespread outbreak of contagious insanity.
- **Unusual Organization:** Some kind of organization plays an unusually prominent role in the kingdom. This might include knightly orders and chivalric brotherhoods, secret assassin societies, ancient cults, legalized or prevalent thieves' guilds, popular adventurer companies, a powerful wizard's guild, or semi-feudal temples that control large parts of the kingdom.
- **Unusual Laws:** For some reason, society is concerned with laws designed to limit or restrict certain classes, races, or practices. Examples might include laws restricting or banning magic use; laws that ostracize or disenfranchise demihumans or humanoids (no orc may own property in Thar, etc); laws that forbid the possession of weapons inside city limits; laws that restrict reading to the privileged; or anything else you might be able to imagine.
- **Nature of Magic:** Priestly or wizardly magic works in some unusual way. *PLAYER'S OPTION:* *Spells and Magic* presents a number of magical variants. Examples might include wild magic from the *Tome of Magic* or defiling and preserving, from the *DARK SUN* campaign setting. Optionally, magical items may be affected in some way, or may be nonexistent in the kingdom.
- **Persecution:** A particular group or type of people is persecuted mercilessly. This may be completely unjustified, or the persecution may be a reasonable and necessary step to purge the kingdom of evil influences such as dopplegangers or necromancers. In the case of hunting down

evil, the quest to purge a perceived threat may rise to the point of paranoia. PCs may fall into the persecuted group or may be responsible for locating and attacking the creatures to be persecuted.

- **Planewalking:** The people of the kingdom or city are aware of the potential of planewalking and maintain communications with extraplanar civilizations. The knowledge or ability may be restricted to a certain level or group within the society. Or, at the DM's option, extraplanar foes appear in the kingdom to cause mischief and reek havoc.
- **Spelljamming:** People within the kingdom are aware of the existence of spelljamming and the possibilities of extraplanetary travel and trade. (See the *SPELLJAMMER* boxed set for more information.) On the other hand, the kingdom is threatened by hostile spelljammers.
- **Raiders:** Powerful forces of marauders and brigands endanger the kingdom. These may be internal bandits and highwaymen, humanoid hordes from neighboring lands, bloodthirsty pirates, or possibly small numbers of dangerous monsters such as giants or dragons.
- **Unusual Racial Role:** Creatures of a particular species play an unusual part in the kingdom's daily existence. Non-intelligent creatures such as giant lizards or dinosaurs may be domesticated by the people of the kingdom. Intelligent demihumans or humanoids may be treated in a special way by law. For example, dwarves may be the only legal money-changers, elves the only legal wizards, or halflings the only licensed thieves. Rarer creatures may also occupy an unusual role; the king's guard may be composed of grimlocks or trolls. At the extreme end, monsters such as beholders or mind flayers could rule over a subject populace.
- **Unusual Social System:** The society of the kingdom is organized in an unusual way. Extensive slave labor, a system of virtual slavery for spellcasters, special legal and social privileges for merchants, priests, or craftsmen, or strange customs or practices may all be included in this category.
- **Technological or Magical Advance:** A special technology or advance characterizes the kingdom. For example, firearms or siege equipment may be particularly advanced, magical airships or steam engines may be in common use in the land, or widespread substitution of magic for manual labor may be a common practice. Note that a *lack* of critical technology such as armor or spells of a certain type can also characterize a kingdom.
- **Warfare:** The kingdom is engaged in warfare with a neighboring land. This could range from low-scale guerilla and raiding operations to a holy crusade or jihad against the infidels. Optionally, the kingdom may be losing badly, with large portions of the country in enemy hands or threatened by enemy action. The PCs may be conscripted to aid the war effort.

### Classes, Races, and Kits

Once the kingdom's culture, alignment, and situation have been established, examine the design work so far and determine if there are any special character generation con-





## Kingdoms and Sociology

siderations the players should be aware of. For example, you may decide that there are no oriental cultures anywhere near the campaign kingdom, so ninja and samurai characters must be travellers from distant lands (if you even allow them at all). Similarly, if only one human kingdom in the world knows the secrets of magic, then human mages should probably be from that area.

Another way to look at this is to examine the various races, classes, and kits available to see which could reasonably be represented as native to the kingdom in question. After all, almost any kind of character could be a visitor or traveller from afar, but amazons or elven bladesingers probably can't claim to be natives of a kingdom modeled after historical England.

*Example: Kim happens to be a fan of the various PLAYER'S OPTION books, so she uses the kit system from Skills and Powers. She already knows that humans, orcs, gnomes, and aarakocra are the primary races of Seria, and she doesn't intend to restrict character classes in any way. Now, however, she wants to know what kind of characters Seria produces. Reading through Skills and Powers, she decides that a list of available kits for native PCs includes: acrobats, assassin, beggar, diplomat, explorer, mariner, merchant, mystic, noble, outlaw, pirate, rider, scholar, sharpshooter, soldier, smuggler, swashbuckler, and the ever-popular thug. The players don't have to choose one of these kits, but if their characters are native to Seria, these are the professions that Kim thinks they should choose from.*

## Physical Cartography

While you can get by without a map of the world or even the continent, you will probably find that a sketch of the campaign kingdom's major features to be a necessary part of your DM notebook. Player character parties journey into the wilderness, travel from city to city, visit outlying estates and manors, and search through old ruins or other sites of interest all the time. Even if your campaign is entirely self-contained within a single city or a town-and-dungeon system, knowing what else is out there is a useful tool for creating NPC backgrounds and current events for the PCs to keep abreast of.

Depending on whether or not you have already sketched out a continent in the previous chapters, you may have an excellent idea of the kingdom's location and terrain, or you may not have developed anything at all. In this section we'll discuss the creation of a kingdom map, appropriate terrain and ground cover, and location of cities and sites of interest for the PCs' homeland. As always, if you have already developed this information, you should not let anything in this section screw up your design work.

### Mapping Kingdoms

In the pad of forms included with *World Builder's Guidebook*, you'll find a general blank hex grid on Map Blank 5. This is intended for use in mapping any region smaller than a continent. For mapping kingdoms, try using a hex scale of 5 to 1. In other words, each hex on the Regional Map (Map Blank 3 or 4) equals 5 hexes on Map Blank 5. Using a photocopier, it is easy to enlarge the portion of the region you wish to focus on and then trace it onto a piece of hex paper, or you can translate it freehand.

The exact size of a hex on Map Blank 5 depends on the size of the world. (Refer to **World Size and Kingdom Size**, on page 52.) Each hex is one-fifth the size of a Region Map hex. In our running example, Kim determined that her world was 4,000 miles in diameter, and each hex on her Region Map was 50 miles across. In her kingdom map, each hex is 10 miles. If you haven't yet created the prevalent terrain of the campaign kingdom, you can simply sketch out any coastlines, mountains, forests, cities, or other features that seem appropriate. Or, if you're not comfortable making it up as you go along, use the various charts and tables that follow in this section to guide you as you map the campaign kingdom.

### Kingdom Size

If you generated the borders of the kingdom in the previous chapter, you already know how much area you are dealing with. However, in the event that you have not yet worked through the material in Chapter Three, consult the table below to determine the size of the kingdom:

**Table 26: Random Kingdom Size**

d%	Type	Regional Map Dimensions <sup>1</sup>	Approximate Diameter
01-20	City-state	1d8 hexes	10d10 miles
21-35	Small kingdom	3d6 hexes	10d10 x 5 miles
36-65	Medium kingdom	4d6 hexes	10d10 x 8 miles
66-85	Large kingdom	6d6 hexes	10d10 x 10 miles
86-00	Empire	8d8 hexes	10d10 x 20 miles

<sup>1</sup> The dimensions assume a planet near Earth's size, in which regional map hexes are about 100 miles across.

**City-State:** City-states are usually dominated by a single powerful town or city, surrounded by client villages and protected farmlands. This is a good scenario for urban campaigns, since it naturally concentrates attention on the city and not the countryside around it.

**Kingdom:** Most AD&D campaigns are set in fairly typical kingdoms, with several large cities, a number of moderately-sized towns, and villages and hamlets scattered over the countryside in between. The PCs may use a small village or town as a base of operations, and never come in contact with the "big city." Tribal areas are considered kingdoms, although there are no cities and very few large towns in a barbaric or nomadic setting.



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**Empire:** Empires are powerful states that have conquered or absorbed foreign kingdoms and city-states. In effect, the empire is a group of kingdoms. The PCs may be based in the imperial homeland, or they may be natives of one of the subjugated domains.

**Regional Map Dimensions** refers to the continental map in Chapter Three. Note that the hex size on the regional maps (Map Blanks 3 and 4) varies with the size of the world; see the box below. The number of hexes refers to the kingdom's area, not its length or width; a circular kingdom of 7 hexes would be 3 hexes, or about 300 miles, from one border to the other.

**Approximate Diameter** is a rough yardstick of the kingdom's size in the event that you don't want to use the scales from Map Blanks 3 or 4. Realms aren't usually circular, since winding rivers, jagged mountain ranges, and other aspects of terrain usually form the borders between kingdoms.

### World Size and Kingdom Size

Unlike the modern nation-state, medieval kingdoms are severely limited in their maximum size by the lack of efficient overland communications and reliable sea transport. The great continental nations of our own world—the United States and Canada, Russia, Brazil, and Australia—only grew to their great size after the invention of steam power and rail transport. Without these technologies, medieval kingdoms rarely exceed five hundred to eight hundred miles in extent. Pre-industrial realms that were larger than this formed empires that required unusually efficient governments in order to remain viable states. In a world of fantasy, you can deem that magic, with its talents for teleportation, may make this guideline irrelevant.

The effect for a world-builder is that no matter how much land area a world has, kingdoms generally remain about the same size. If the world is unusually large or has a great deal of land area, kingdoms will increase in number before they increase in size. You can use the conversions below to scale the Regional and Kingdom maps based on planetary size—see Chapter Two.

Planet Size	Region Hex	Kingdom Hex	Medium Kingdom #Hexes, Regional Map
800 mi.	10 mi.	2 mi.	About 20% to 40% <sup>1</sup>
1,600 mi.	20 mi.	4 mi.	About 10% to 20% <sup>1</sup>
2,400 mi.	30 mi.	6 mi.	15d6+100 hexes
4,000 mi.	50 mi.	10 mi.	15d6 hexes
4,800 mi.	60 mi.	12 mi.	10d6 hexes
8000 mi.	100 mi.	20 mi.	4d6 hexes
10,000 mi.	125 mi.	25 mi.	3d6 hexes
12,000 mi.	150 mi.	30 mi.	2d6 hexes
16,000 mi.	200 mi.	40 mi.	2d3 hexes <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On very small worlds, there will only be about 3 to 10 kingdoms in any given region. It's easier to simply guess the amount of the regional map occupied by any given power. On very large worlds, there can be hundreds of kingdoms in single continent or region.

Use the conversions given above as a guideline to kingdom sizes if your world is smaller or larger than Earth. This may affect the creation of kingdoms and tribal lands in the previous chapter, so if you are using a microscopic design approach make sure you remember that your kingdoms may be unusually large or small on the map.

### Coasts, Seas, and Lakes

The first step to mapping a kingdom or country is to sketch out the coastlines and any major bodies of water within its borders. If you have already created the continent that the kingdom resides on, you can skip this step and simply copy or trace the coastlines to your kingdom map. Otherwise, consult the table below to determine the relation of land and water in the kingdom's vicinity.

Table 27: Kingdom Coastlines, Lakes, and Seas

d%	Bodies of Water
01-14	Archipelago
15-29	Large Island
30-42	Coastal with offshore islands
43-57	Coastal, no islands
58-68	Multiple coastlines
69-79	Landlocked with inland sea
80-91	Landlocked with major lakes
92-00	Landlocked, no significant water

**Archipelago:** The kingdom is scattered across a number of small islands. Most islands are within a day's sail (25 to 50 miles) of the next in the chain.

**Large Island:** The kingdom occupies most of one or two large islands, but is bordered by the sea on all sides. The British Isles are an example of a country of this type.

**Coastal with offshore islands:** A major portion of the kingdom's border is a coastline, with small islands or archipelagoes also under the kingdom's control. Greece and its Aegean islands is a good example.

**Coastal, no islands:** A major portion of the kingdom's border runs along a coastline, but no significant islands can be found offshore. The northern California coastline is a good example of this kind of seacoast.

**Multiple coastlines:** The kingdom borders two or three major bodies of water, with coastlines on several sides. Optionally, the kingdom may be a peninsula of some kind. France, Spain, or Italy are examples of countries with this kind of seacoast.

**Landlocked with inland sea:** The kingdom has no exterior seacoasts but includes a major body of water, either completely surrounding it or sharing it with another nation. The



borders are probably formed by mountains, rivers, or other prominent terrain features. The inland sea is 6d8 hexes in extent on the kingdom map.

**Landlocked with major lakes:** As above, but the kingdom features 1d4 major lakes, each 4d6 hexes in size.

**Landlocked, no significant water:** No major bodies of water exist in the kingdom, although minor lakes (1 hex or less) and rivers may still be common.

### Mountains, Hills, and Topography

Just like coastlines, major mountain ranges help form the borders or frontiers between states. Only the largest kingdoms can completely surround an entire mountain range, but isolated ridges, uplands, or hills can easily be contained within the borders of the typical kingdom. Landforms govern the amount of arable land available in the kingdom, the likelihood of mineral wealth, and the climate and ground cover that may be encountered in the region. They also create drainage basins that guide rivers to the sea. You can add mountains or hills to your kingdom in any place that seems appropriate to you, but here are some general guidelines you may want to keep in mind:

- **Mountain Ranges:** The blank kingdom map contains 0-3 (1d4-1) mountain systems. Each system consists of 1 to 6 ridges or lines of peaks, and is 4d6 hexes in length. Mountain chains often parallel coastlines and may curve or wind along their length. On the scale of a kingdom map, valleys or gaps

several hexes in length or width form between the actual mountains. Refer to Table 11 on page 22 for mountain height.

- **Foothills:** Subsidiary ranges of foothills are frequently found near mountains. A typical mountain system is flanked on either side by a belt of foothills 1d4 hexes in width. In the case of very old mountains, the actual peaks have worn down to foothill-height, and rolling hills might flank these.

- **Rolling Hills and Tablelands:** In addition to hills created by the mountain systems, broad patches of gentle hills and uplands may dot the kingdom. There are 1d6 hill systems in a typical kingdom, and each hill system is 2d4 hexes in width and 3d6 hexes in length. Unlike mountains, hills can easily form in clumps or patches without the long, straight ridge lines of true montane systems. Similarly, tablelands consist of rugged, isolated mesas. They are often found in arid regions and are generally less hospitable.

- **Depressions and Gorges:** Depressions, escarpments, gorges, and other unusual landforms can be scattered on the map as you see fit. A typical kingdom has 0 to 2 (d3-1) of these features. Depressions are about 2d6 hexes in diameter; gorges or escarpments are about 4d6 hexes in length.







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- **Plains and Plateaus:** After you have placed the other types of topographic features, anything left over is considered to be plains or plateaus—large stretches of flatland broken only by an occasional hill or vale.

If mapping is not your strong suit, you may consider tracing a map of a real region or state and inverting or modifying it in some manner. Be creative and improvise whenever you like.

### Climate

The next step in describing or mapping a kingdom is its climate and prevailing weather. Extreme climates may suggest particular campaign styles or themes for adventures, while more moderate climates tend to fade into the background and leave the people and towns as the prominent features in the players' minds. Climate is characterized as arctic, sub-arctic, temperate, sub-tropical, or tropical. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that an arctic kingdom is located at the north pole. High mountains, unusual cosmology (for example, a world that is generally colder than Earth), or any number of magical conditions (ancient curse, wrath of the gods, etc) might create unexpected climatic conditions for the kingdom in question. If you have no idea what kind of climate prevails in your kingdom, roll on Table 28 below:

**Table 28: Kingdom Climate**

d%	Climate Band and Latitude
01	Super-arctic
02-06	Arctic
07-25	Sub-arctic
26-60	Temperate
61-80	Sub-tropical
81-97	Tropical
98-00	Super-tropical

Refer to **Climatology** in Chapter Two for details on each of these climatic conditions. You may also include seasonal variations at this point if you like; see Table 14 in Chapter Two. Remember, elevated areas usually have colder climates than ones normally encountered at their latitude.

After you roll the basic climate band, you can roll again on the table to find out at what latitude the kingdom happens to be located. If you roll a tropical climate but then come up with an arctic latitude, you should think of a reason why jungles and rain forests exist at the pole. Perhaps the sun orbits the poles of your world, or gigantic volcanoes keep the north pole warm, or an ancient fire god is imprisoned somewhere in the land. Of course, you can ignore any results you don't like. On a nonmagical, Earth-type planet, arctic latitudes run from 90° to 70°; sub-arctic latitudes run from 70° to 50°; temperate latitudes run from 50° to 30°; sub-tropical latitudes run from 30° to 10°; and tropical latitudes run 10° north and south of the planet's equator.

**Prevailing Winds and Humidity:** While overall temperature and seasons are important, a region's prevailing winds can make it seem much cooler or hotter than normal. See

Table 17, in Chapter Three, and roll a prevailing wind for the kingdom. If the wind crosses a major body of water before reaching the kingdom—for example, a wind direction that brings the wind over a coastline to the kingdom—it's a humid wind; if not, it's an arid wind. Also, humid winds that cross Medium or higher mountains are turned into arid winds in the process, so a kingdom divided by a mountain range could have a lush forest on one side of the mountains and barren desert on the other side.

### Terrain and Ground Cover

The combination of terrain and ground cover results in a terrain type. In the mix nature produces jungle-covered hills, barren plains, or high moorlands. Take a look at your kingdom map as it now stands; you've already marked the landforms and the climate band; elevations and prevailing wind may already paint a picture of what terrain types may be prevalent in which parts of the kingdom. Refer to Table 18 in Chapter Three for possible terrain types. Specific terrain areas tend to run to the extent of the topographical or climatic boundaries. In other words, coastlines, changes of elevation, and rain shadows tend to break up the otherwise dominant terrain of an area. Radically different terrain types are separated by belts of transitional terrain such as scrubland or light forest.

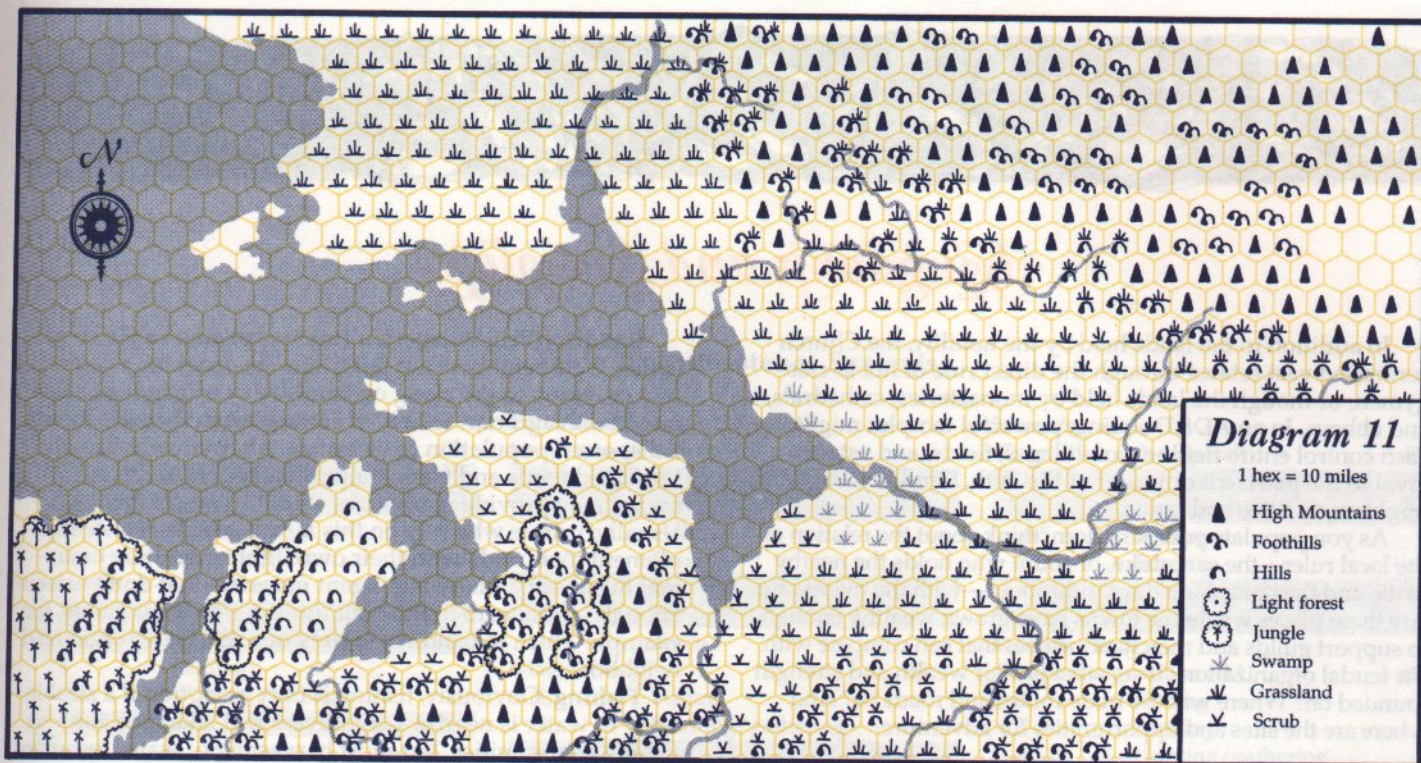
If you don't feel comfortable drawing in terrain freehand, try this system instead: each kingdom or similarly sized region has 2d3 different terrain belts, randomly determined by rolling on Table 18. Each patch of terrain is randomly placed in one quadrant of the kingdom (a d4 or d8 roll will work just fine). Within each of these belts, there are occasional patches of other appropriate terrain types, roughly 1d8 hexes in size. For example, on open grassland, there may be stretches of rocky desert, light forest, scrubland, or marsh.

### Rivers and Drainage

The last step in creating the physical geography of a region is charting out the courses of any rivers that flow through the land and determining if there are places where the drainage may lend itself to the formation of marshes or swamps. Rivers are born in mountains or inland areas that see a lot of rainfall, and wind down to the nearest major body of water that doesn't require the river to cross over regions of high elevation. Tributaries join rivers as they grow larger and move towards the sea or lake into which they empty; refer to **Rivers** in Chapter Three.

*Example: Since Kim has already created the continent surrounding Seria and knows approximately where the kingdom is located, she refers to her Region Map and transfers Seria to new kingdom map (Map Blank 5). She sketches the coastlines, mountains, and hills, using the Region Map as a guide. Then, she adds a few details that are too small to appear in the larger Region Map, including additional rivers, woodlands, and marshes. Her initial kingdom map is shown in Diagram 11:*





**Diagram 11**

1 hex = 10 miles

- ▲ High Mountains
- ⌒ Foothills
- Hills
- ⊙ Light forest
- ⊗ Jungle
- ⋈ Swamp
- ▮ Grassland
- Y Scrub

## Population and Resources

Where are the cities of the kingdom? Where are the lonely, monster-haunted wastelands braved only by the most courageous adventurers? Are there distinct provinces or districts in which customs and politics are different from the rest of the country? And, most importantly, what do people in the kingdom do for a living? Knowing where towns and settlements are likely to be located, and how people in these centers of civilization get by from day to day, can help you to paint a realistic and believable picture of your fantasy campaign setting.

The AD&D game system assumes a medieval European setting for most campaigns. (Of course, this may or may not be true of your own particular game.) While the boundaries and borders of many lands and regions were already agreed upon as long as a thousand years ago, the overall population of Europe was only a fraction of what it is today. In the age of the Crusades, huge tracts of Europe were still covered by virgin woodlands and impenetrable forest. Very few roads existed, and most of these were relics of the Roman Empire. Overland communications were tenuous and easily broken by bad weather or banditry. Industries that we regard as indispensable did not exist, or were pursued in a haphazard and inefficient fashion. For example, only the most accessible minerals were mined, and only the most fertile soils were brought under cultivation.

Just as the settlement patterns left broad stretches of open land between towns and villages, the economics of Europe were driven by subsistence agriculture. People had to ensure that they wouldn't starve during wintertime before they could give thought to improving their standard of living by producing trade goods. Throughout the Middle Ages, the increase in the amount of land under cultivation allowed an increase in the urban populations and a corresponding rise in cottage industry, art, and trade. The number of people who worked for an employer and drew a salary of some kind was surprisingly small; most "businessmen" were minor merchants, teamsters, or craftsmen who did their own work with their own hands.

The exception, of course, was the nobility. In exchange for their service to the kings and rulers of the land, minor lords were granted estates or plantations, complete with any villages or serfs who happened to live there and work the land. The lord claimed a portion of the crop, herd, or other goods produced on his land, and from this portion he then paid tribute to the monarch. While it may seem that the feudal lord belonged to a leisured class that grew wealthy at the expense of those less fortunate than himself, the lord had his own duties and obligations. Early in the Middle Ages, the lords, their relations, and their retainers served as the military organization of the kingdom. In times of war, the vassal was expected to raise as many soldiers as he could, equip them, and employ them in campaigns as directed by the king.





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In addition to the lands held by the nobility, the Church controlled vast estates through the direct rule of noble-clergymen, or though the lands held by monasteries, cathedrals, and abbeys. In an AD&D setting, powerful temples might each control entire fiefdoms of villages, fields, and estates loyal to the patriarch or leader of the faith. Similarly, wizards might enjoy titles and lands.

As you populate your kingdom, think about the relation of the local ruler—the earl, duke, or count who holds the nearby castle and the lands for a days' ride about—with the over-king. Are there places where the towns have grown wealthy enough to support guilds and merchant-princes that can compete with the feudal organization? If so, what is their wealth and strength founded on? Where will the trade routes and roads be? And where are the sites and opportunities for adventure?

### Subsistence Systems

Throughout history, human settlement patterns have been governed by one unalienable fact: people need to eat. In the rare instances where colonies or outposts have been founded in inhospitable regions, the parent country must supply or support them in some way. For most modern readers, famines are a thing of the distant past (although famines can and do occur even today in some parts of the world), but starvation and general depopulation of entire regions occurred regularly in the Middle Ages.

You don't need to know how many bushels of corn are produced per acre in the campaign kingdom or how much a family of five needs to survive for a year. After all, as DM you will choose when famines and natural disasters occur. On the other hand, you may find it very useful to know how the local population survives and thrives. Naturally, different parts of the same country or kingdom may get along with different subsistence systems. Changes in terrain, elevation, or soil fertility usually mark the borders where subsistence systems change. As a general rule of thumb, anywhere from 1 to 10 subsistence zones should be sufficient for any kingdom. The exact nature of any particular region is governed by the overall climate and terrain of the countryside; see Table 29.

**Agriculture, heavy:** Intensive cultivation of grain, rice, and similar staples allows a high population density. Some of the richest grassland was simply too difficult to farm with medieval technology, so farming of this type is often limited to river floodplains and other clear areas. Towns and cities can be quite large if the country has a large territory under heavy agriculture.

**Agriculture, light:** Some form of basic agriculture is possible in almost any climate. Examples of light agriculture include slash-and-burn agriculture in the tropics, orchards, marginal regions supported through heavy irrigation, or special measures, or low-yield grain harvests in the short growing season. Small cities can be supported through light agriculture, if a strong social organization exists. Otherwise, light agriculture can only support small towns or villages.

**Banditry/Brigandage:** Cultures subsisting solely on pillaging their neighbors are fairly rare. In order for a community or region to get along on banditry or brigandage, there must be an agrarian society of some kind in the vicinity and a dispersed population to victimize. Alternatively, heavily-trafficked roads and trade routes that pass through the region may provide marauders with a source of income. Usually, people who rely on this means of subsistence supplement their raids with their own light agriculture or animal husbandry. Many intelligent monsters that don't exist in enough numbers to build communities—trolls or giants, for example—turn to banditry to prey on their better-organized neighbors.

**Fishing:** Obviously, fishing is only an option if a sizable body of water is nearby. Large rivers and lakes can support fishing communities, but most harvesting of water resources can be found near the ocean, especially in very cold or very hot regions that are difficult to cultivate. Fishing alone can support small towns in rich waters, but fishing communities often supplement their catch by keeping herds of livestock, whaling and sealing, or turning to raiding in lean times.

**Forestry:** Logging, trapping, and hunting are the three main practices associated with forestry. Forestry by itself cannot support towns of any size unless the towns can supplement their food supply through fishing or whaling. However, communities that trade forest products in exchange for food can grow into large towns or small cities. Elves are known to be able to bring large areas of forest under light cultivation without disturbing the natural beauty of the woodlands, and can build much larger kingdoms based on forestry.

**Grazing/Herding:** Along with light agriculture, animal husbandry is the most common means of subsistence. It is especially prevalent in cold, arid, or infertile areas such as the tropics where agriculture is impractical. Grazing can support large populations, but also requires several times the amount of land that agriculture does. As a result, villages and towns tend to be much farther apart in areas devoted to the keeping of livestock. Sheep, cattle, goats, horses, and swine are the most common domestic animals.

**Hunting/Gathering:** In game-rich areas, hunting and gathering can support surprisingly advanced societies, but the communities are by necessity small and dispersed. Mobile—hunter-gatherers are not city-builders. At best, a large village or camp could survive on hunting and gathering alone. A number of monsters prefer this form of existence, although they may resort to raiding or banditry in civilized areas.

**Industry:** Manufacturing or craftsmanship of some kind is a principal occupation of the area. For example, the manufacture of cloth from cotton, wool, and silk were vital industries in medieval Europe and China. Other industries include glassmaking, papermaking, pottery, tanning and leatherworking, weapon and armor manufacture, shipbuilding, smelting, woodworking, stonemasonry, and all kinds of





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Table 29: Subsistence Systems

<b>Barren (Tropical, sub-tropical, temperate)</b> d8		<b>Forest, medium (Sub-tropical, temperate, or sub-arctic)</b>		<b>Marsh/swamp (Tropical or sub-tropical)</b> d8	
1	Hunting/gathering	1-3	Agriculture, light	1-2	Agriculture, light
2-3	Mining	4	Banditry/brigandage	3	Banditry/Brigandage
4-5	Raiding	5	Fishing	4-5	Fishing
6-8	Non-sufficient	6-7	Forestry	6	Forestry
<b>Barren (Sub-arctic or arctic)</b> d8		8	Hunting/gathering	7	Hunting/gathering
1-2	Fishing	9	Industry	8	Raiding
3	Hunting/gathering	10	Trade	<b>Marsh/swamp (Temperate or sub-arctic)</b> d8	
4	Raiding	<b>Glacier (Any)</b> d6		1	Fishing
5-6	Whaling/sealing	1	Fishing	2-3	Forestry
7-8	Non-sufficient	2	Hunting/gathering	4	Hunting/gathering
<b>Desert (Tropical, sub-tropical, temperate)</b> d12		3	Raiding	5-6	Industry
1-2	Agriculture, light	4	Whaling/sealing	7	Mining
3-4	Grazing/herding	5-6	Non-sufficient	8	Raiding
5	Hunting/gathering	<b>Grassland (Tropical or sub-tropical)</b> d12		<b>Moor (any)</b> d8	
6	Industry	1-4	Agriculture, light	1	Banditry/brigandage
7	Mining	5	Banditry/brigandage	2	Grazing/herding
8	Raiding	6-8	Grazing/herding	3-4	Industry
9	Trade	9-10	Hunting/gathering	5-7	Mining
10-12	Non-sufficient	11	Mining	8	Non-sufficient
<b>Desert (sub-arctic)</b> d8		12	Trade	<b>Scrub/brush (Tropical or sub-tropical)</b> d10	
1-3	Grazing/herding	<b>Grassland (Temperate or sub-arctic)</b> d12		1-3	Agriculture, light
4	Hunting/gathering	1-2	Agriculture, heavy	4	Banditry/brigandage
5	Mining	3-5	Agriculture, light	5-6	Grazing/herding
6	Raiding	6	Banditry/Brigandage	7	Hunting/gathering
7-8	Non-sufficient	7-8	Grazing/herding	8	Mining
<b>Forest, heavy (Temperate)</b> d8		9	Hunting/gathering	9	Raiding
1	Banditry/brigandage	10	Industry	10	Trade
2-5	Forestry	11	Mining	<b>Scrub/brush (Temperate)</b> d10	
6-7	Hunting/gathering	12	Trade	1-2	Agriculture, light
8	Raiding	<b>Jungle, heavy (Tropical)</b> d6		3	Banditry/brigandage
<b>Forest, light (Sub-tropical)</b> d8		1	Fishing	4-5	Grazing/herding
1-3	Agriculture, light	2	Forestry	6	Hunting/gathering
4	Banditry/brigandage	3-4	Hunting/gathering	7	Industry
5-6	Forestry	5	Raiding	8	Mining
7	Hunting/gathering	6	Non-sufficient	9	Raiding
8	Raiding	<b>Jungle, medium (Tropical or sub-tropical)</b> d10		10	Trade
<b>Forest, light (Sub-arctic)</b> d10		1-3	Agriculture, light	<b>Tundra (any)</b> d8	
1-2	Fishing	4	Fishing	1-2	Fishing
3-5	Forestry	5	Forestry	3	Grazing/herding
6	Hunting/gathering	6-7	Hunting/gathering	4	Hunting/gathering
7	Mining	8	Mining	5-6	Whaling/sealing
8	Raiding	9	Raiding	7-8	Non-sufficient
9	Trade	10	Trade		
10	Non-sufficient				

**Low Mountains** are treated as the surrounding terrain, with an additional 50% chance that Mining exists in the area regardless of the roll on Table 28.  
**Medium Mountains** are treated as Moor, Barren, Desert, or Light Forest, at the DM's discretion.  
**High Mountains** are treated as Barren or Glacier.





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artistic endeavors. Industry requires a large town or a city, and therefore is most often found in places where the local food supply allows a concentration of the population. In other words, an area with a lot of industry probably has agriculture or herding as a secondary means of subsistence.

**Mining:** A specialized form of industry, mining in the medieval times included the excavation of coal, copper, iron, peat, salt, silver, and tin from the earth. The technology permitted only easily accessible ores to be reached. Various types and grades of stone were quarried for use in castles and cathedrals. Rare and precious materials such as gemstones and gold were almost always found by luck or circumstance. Mining communities are located at the site of the mineral in question, and may often be completely reliant on trade to supply food in exchange for raw ore. Dwarves, gnomes, and humanoids such as goblins are extremely efficient miners and can actually support mining camps or towns with very little agriculture, fishing, or herding.

**Non-sufficient:** The area in question cannot support any sizable communities at all, as no source of food is anywhere nearby. Small bands may be able to eke out an existence through hunting and gathering, but starvation is a constant danger.

**Raiding:** Usually, raiders maintain a marginal subsistence of their own at home—light agriculture, herding, or fishing are common methods. However, they supplement this by frequent and well-organized expeditions to different regions in order to pillage and plunder (bandits and brigands tend to prey on people in the immediate vicinity, instead of traveling abroad for their activities). Naturally, the area that is subject to the raids must be at least marginally sufficient, or there isn't much point in raiding it.

**Trade:** The community stands at an important crossroads, portage, or port of call and supports a number of merchants. Secondary callings such as teamsters, long-shoremen, sailors, or caravaneers survive by carrying the trade goods from one point to another. Trade tends to take existing communities and make them larger than they would normally be; for example, a large town based on light agriculture might grow into a small city through trade.

**Whaling/sealing:** A good portion of the people spend much of their time on long whaling or sealing expeditions that can last for many months. Unlike fishing, whaling and sealing tends to be more sporadic, bringing in large quantities of food and trade goods at less frequent intervals. Whaling and sealing is almost exclusively a cold-water trade. In other respects, whaling and sealing resembles fishing as a means of subsistence.

### Population Density

The most significant factor governing population density is the amount of arable land in a region. As a rule of thumb, areas with a high proportion of arable land can support a denser population than less hospitable ones. Since

less land is required to produce the same amount of food, a community in a favorable area needs less land to support it than a similarly-sized community in a rougher climate. Therefore, communities can be found closer together, or they can grow to greater sizes. While the term 'arable' usually refers to land that can be brought under cultivation, for our purposes community size is governed by the availability of any food source, not just croplands.

The amount of arable land to be found in an area depends on several factors. First of all, the region's climate plays a huge role. Vast tracts of barren land can't support many people at all. Areas in the tropics enjoy year-round warm weather, but tropical soils are often nutrient-poor and aren't very fertile. Sub-arctic regions have shorter growing seasons and only produce crops in the summertime. Temperate and sub-tropical regions are much more hospitable, and traditionally support the densest populations to be found in pre-Industrial worlds.

A second factor is the topography of the land. Steep hills and mountains drastically reduce the amount of land that can be brought under cultivation or even used as efficient pastureland. Therefore, mountainous areas are usually less populous than flatland areas, simply because mountaineers have a hard time finding level ground to put crops in.

Surprisingly, technology also plays a role in the amount of arable land available. As farming methods become more sophisticated and better tools are developed, more land can be leveled, irrigated, or improved for agriculture. Terracing hillsides, crop rotation, and the construction of canals and water systems can all increase the amount of arable land available to a community. Until heavy plows became available, extremely fertile grasslands—such as the Great Plains of the United States—were considered un-farmable due to the sheer difficulty of breaking the ground.

While the efficiency of cultivation plays a major role in determining population density, there are many other factors at work. Do realistic plagues and epidemics sweep through your campaign kingdom? What about wars, invasions, and raids? Does the temperament of the local races and cultures lend itself to dense population, or are they more comfortable keeping their distance from their neighbors? Perhaps most importantly, the way in which people are used to living (in other words, their subsistence system) plays a large role in determining how many people a kingdom or region can comfortably support. Consult the chart below, reading from the top down; add the number noted to come up with a final Population Level for the kingdom or district.





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**Table 30: Population Level**  
**Subsistence System (Base Value)**

Heavy Agriculture:	3
Light Agriculture:	2
Grazing:	2
Fishing:	1
Whaling/sealing:	1
All Others:	0

**Climate and Topography Modifiers**

Sub-tropical or Temperate:	+1
Plains or Rolling Hills:	+1
Arctic:	-1
Medium or High Mountains:	-1

**Technology Modifiers**

Stone Age/Savage:	-1
Dark Ages/Barbarian:	-1
Renaissance/Oriental:	+1

**Other Factors**

Fertile region:	+1
Area has Industry:	+1
Area has Trade:	+1
Efficient/Highly Organized Society:	+1
Area suffers from Raids/Warfare:	-1
Monster/race described as Rare:	-1
Monster/race described as Very Rare:	-2

*Example: Kim wants to know what the population level of Seria's human-dominated plains is like. First, she rolls on Table 28 for the local subsistence system, and comes up with Light Agriculture: the area is somewhat arid, and crops require a lot of care and irrigation. She decides that Fishing and Trade supplement the agriculture. Light agriculture gives her a base population value of 2. Central Seria is on a fertile river plain, so she adds 1 for plains, 1 for Renaissance-level technology, 1 for the region's fertility, and 1 for trade. This gives her a total Population Level of 6. Other parts of Seria, particularly the orc-held scrublands and aarakocra mountain-holds, may have much smaller populations.*

Population Level is nothing more than a crude yardstick for comparing the number of people that live in one region against the number of people that live in another. It doesn't necessarily represent or imply a specific number of people, although it is used in the following section (Settlement Patterns) to determine how far villages and towns are from each other. The higher the population level, the more densely populated the region in question is.

**Non-inhabited (-2 or less):** For most purposes, the area can be considered depopulated or empty. No communities exist, although families of settlers or small bands of hunter/gatherers may live in the area.

**Sparse (-1 or 0):** Few people inhabit the region, and set-

tlements are widely scattered. There are no cities or towns, but villages are scattered about at about twenty to forty miles apart. Broad stretches of wilderness and unclaimed land separate the settlements. Much of the American West remains sparsely populated even today.

**Low (1 or 2):** Large portions of a medieval world have low population levels. Cities do not occur, but small to medium-sized towns can be found at forty- to eighty-mile intervals, and villages at ten- to twenty-mile intervals. There may be extensive patches of wilderness in rugged or unfavorable terrain, as people claim the best land first and don't settle the more difficult areas until they have to.

**Average (3 or 4):** Small cities occur about forty to eighty miles apart; towns are found about twenty to forty miles apart; and villages about ten to twenty miles apart. Small forests, marshes, and patches of wilderness still exist between communities, harboring monsters and bandits.

**High (5 or 6):** This was fairly unusual in pre-Industrial times; portions of China, India, and the most prosperous parts of Europe would fall into this category. Villages are scattered at five- to ten-mile intervals, towns are found about ten to forty miles apart, small cities anywhere from forty to eighty miles from each other, and large cities from eighty to two hundred miles apart. Most wilderness has been cleared and settled, and only the least desirable areas remain unclaimed.

**Very High (7 or more):** Before the 19th century, only a handful of locations ever boasted a Very High population. The countryside is almost continuously settled, with the farmlands and pastures of one village actually coming into contact with the farmlands of the next village. Almost no undeveloped land can be found over the region. Villages may be only three to eight miles apart, towns only ten to fifteen, and small cities as close as twenty to forty miles from each other. Only the most favorable conditions can support a population this dense.

### Settlement Patterns

Where do the cities and towns exist, and why? Are there parts of the kingdom that are left unsettled or is the population evenly distributed throughout the land? Naturally, population density will affect the pattern of settlement and cultivation through the land; in dangerous or inhospitable regions, people gather in the safest areas for mutual defense and survival, while gentle and rich lands encourage people to strike out on their own.

The first consideration of an agrarian society is the location of arable land. Fertile farmland is a priceless commodity in most pre-Industrial societies, and in areas where agriculture is the primary form of subsistence the communities will be clustered around the best land available. River valleys and old volcanic plains are the most fertile lands. After that, any region of plains or rolling hills with moderate weather conditions contains arable land and fosters agricultural settlements.

If an area is not well-suited for agriculture, grazing and herding is the next most common subsistence system. Since





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agriculture is often preferred over raising herds, less fertile areas are used for pasture land. In moderate climates, pasture land is found in foothills and low mountains (although sparse populations of herdsman in higher elevations are not uncommon). Plains and gentle hills that are located in non-favorable climates—the tropics or the sub-arctic—may make good pastureland if agriculture cannot be supported.

People may choose to settle near valuable resources, even if there isn't a very good food source nearby. Several subsistence systems rely on local resources. Mining communities are most often found in rugged mountains and foothills, where veins of ore have been broken up and are closer to the surface. Foresters obviously need to be located near a forest of some kind. Some industries may also be forced to locate in particular regions, or on roads or routes that lead to their supply of raw material. For example, a center for leather-curing and leatherworking may be located near a large region devoted to pastureland, while a textile center must be somewhere near its sources of wool, cotton, or silk. Naturally, fishers and whalers must be near the sea.

Trade and transportation are another factor in settlement patterns. Until the advent of rail travel, the seas and rivers of the world represented the only efficient system of transportation available to humankind. Most villages or towns are located on or near a stream or river, especially in sparsely settled areas where wilderness stands between settlements. Large towns and cities are almost always located on a major river, lake, or the sea-coast—even today, exceptions to this rule are surprisingly rare.

Roads, trails, or caravan routes first tend to link places that can't be easily reached by water, and then begin to parallel streams or coastlines to join up the communities that lie along the river banks or seacoasts. Built to link inland resources to a population center, roads make resources available to waterborne transport. Unlike the modern interstate system, medieval roads tended to wander from town to town, detouring around rough terrain and linking villages and settlements along the way; they didn't build spurs and business bypasses in feudal Europe.

Roads also serve a military purpose, in permitting the rapid and safe transport of troops. Roads are often driven out to border castles and frontier settlements in order to provide the strong forces of the kingdom's heartland with the ability to respond to trouble on the marches. Of course, roads also represent vulnerable points by which an invader can reach the exposed heart of the kingdom.

In places where roads or trade routes are regularly and heavily traveled, crossroads communities may grow up at important junctions or intersections. Many of these communities are started by the building of fortifications or castles to watch over these key points, and then grow into important towns in their own right.

Wild and uncleared lands were surprisingly common in most medieval kingdoms; the Europe of six or seven centuries ago still had extensive wildernesses, with large stretches of empty lands separating the towns and cities from

each other. Forests dozens of miles across, fens and bogs, extremely rugged highlands, and desolate or monster-haunted areas are usually bypassed in the settlement of a land. If there's no reason to live in a swamp or to eke out a living clinging to the side of a mountain, people will find better places to live. In low-population areas, this is only common sense. As the DM, this leaves you plenty of places to throw monster lairs and ruined towers into the heart of an otherwise peaceful and prosperous kingdom.

**Random Settlement Patterns:** If you don't have any particular preferences about how the land is settled, refer to Table 31 below for a random settlement pattern. Feel free to modify or ignore the table results in order to remain consistent with work you have already done—for example, if you know that this is a kingdom devoted largely to fishing, don't let the table force you to concentrate the population in the land's desert corner.

Table 31: Kingdom Settlement Patterns

d%	Pattern
01-25	Coastal
26-40	Riverine
41-45	Wells/Oases
46-60	Grasslands/Arable Land
61-75	Hills/Grazing Land
76-85	Best Climate
86-92	Best Topography
93-94	Northeast Quadrant
95-96	Southeast Quadrant
97-98	Southwest Quadrant
99-00	Northwest Quadrant

**Coastal:** Regions within 2 to 8 hexes of the coast are more densely populated. Add one population category to these regions, and subtract one from all other parts of the kingdom. For example, a kingdom with Low overall population would have an Average population on the coasts and a Sparse population inland.

**Riverine:** The population depends on rivers for transport and communication. Areas within 1 to 3 hexes of major rivers gain a population level, while other regions lose one as described above.

**Wells/Oases:** A handful of oases (d4+4 in number) are scattered throughout region's the interior. Regions within 2 to 4 hexes of these oases gain one population level, and all other regions lose a population level.

**Grasslands/Arable Lands:** The best farming country is most densely settled. Generally, the area that is closest to Temperate Grasslands in plains will make the best farmland. This area gains a population level, while other parts of the kingdom lose a level.

**Hills/Grazing Lands:** The people depend on livestock and settle the best ranching land. These are usually arid plains or hills, ranging from Sub-arctic to Sub-tropical. Add





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one population level in this area, and subtract one from the rest of the kingdom.

**Best Climate:** The people settle the most comfortable climate available. In order of preference, these are: Temperate, Sub-tropical, Sub-arctic, Tropical, Arctic. Humid areas are preferred in colder temperatures. If some part of the kingdom enjoys better climate than the rest, the population is concentrated here as described above.

**Best Topography:** The most favorable topography attracts settlement. In order of preference, this is Plains, Rolling Hills, Foothills, Low Mountains, Tablelands, Medium Mountains, then finally High Mountains.

**Quadrant:** For some reason, a portion of the kingdom is more heavily settled. This may have been the original area colonized, so it is therefore older and more developed than the rest of the kingdom, or there may be some unusual resource or condition that encourages people to settle there. For example, if savage orc raids sweep the western lands of a kingdom, people will tend to stay in the east, and only the bravest and most stubborn settlers will put up with the raids and warfare.

### Cities, Towns, and Other Settlements

The most prominent features of a populated area are the cities and towns. From a player character viewpoint, a good assortment of cities and towns represents a string of adventure opportunities. In truth, they are bases for dungeon and wilderness exploration, so players tend to remember where the towns in a kingdom are and what's unusual about them. As the DM, you want to present a fairly believable scattering of cities, towns, and villages across the kingdom for your PCs to travel to and investigate.

Naturally, densely settled regions have a number of cities and towns, while sparsely populated areas may have only a few tiny villages. This was described in some detail under the discussion of the various population levels in the previous chapter, but here is a summary of how close together different settlements are in the various population levels:

Table 32: Town and City Distribution

Pop. Level	Villages	Towns	Cities	Other <sup>1</sup>
Sparse	4d12 mi.	10d20 mi.	—	25%
Low	4d6 mi.	10d8 mi.	10d20 mi.	40%
Average	3d6 mi.	4d12 mi.	10d10 mi.	60%
High	4d3 mi.	4d8 mi.	8d8 mi.	80%
V. High	2d4 mi.	4d6 mi.	5d12 mi.	95%

<sup>1</sup> This is the percentage chance that another feature such as a castle, estate, or temple might be located near a village or town. Cities always include these additional features.

The range given in Table 32 is the distance between communities of that size in the area. For example, in an area of Average population, villages tend to be located about 3d6 miles from each other. This is a two-dimensional model, so from any given

village there are probably three to five neighbors in the specified range at different points of the compass. When you actually place towns and villages on the kingdom map, look for features that would encourage people to build a community at that point: a source of water, proximity to the means of subsistence, or sheltered or easily-defended approaches.

**Cities:** Ranging in size from 5,000 people on up to 50,000 or more, a single strong city can be powerful enough to be considered a realm in its own right. Areas of low or average population tend to raise cities at the smaller end of the scale. A city requires a belt of surrounding farmland or grazing land about 5 to 30 miles wide, depending on the number of people who live there and the type of subsistence available. Cities almost always include castles, temples, monasteries, and other specialized communities; refer to the category of **Other**, described below.

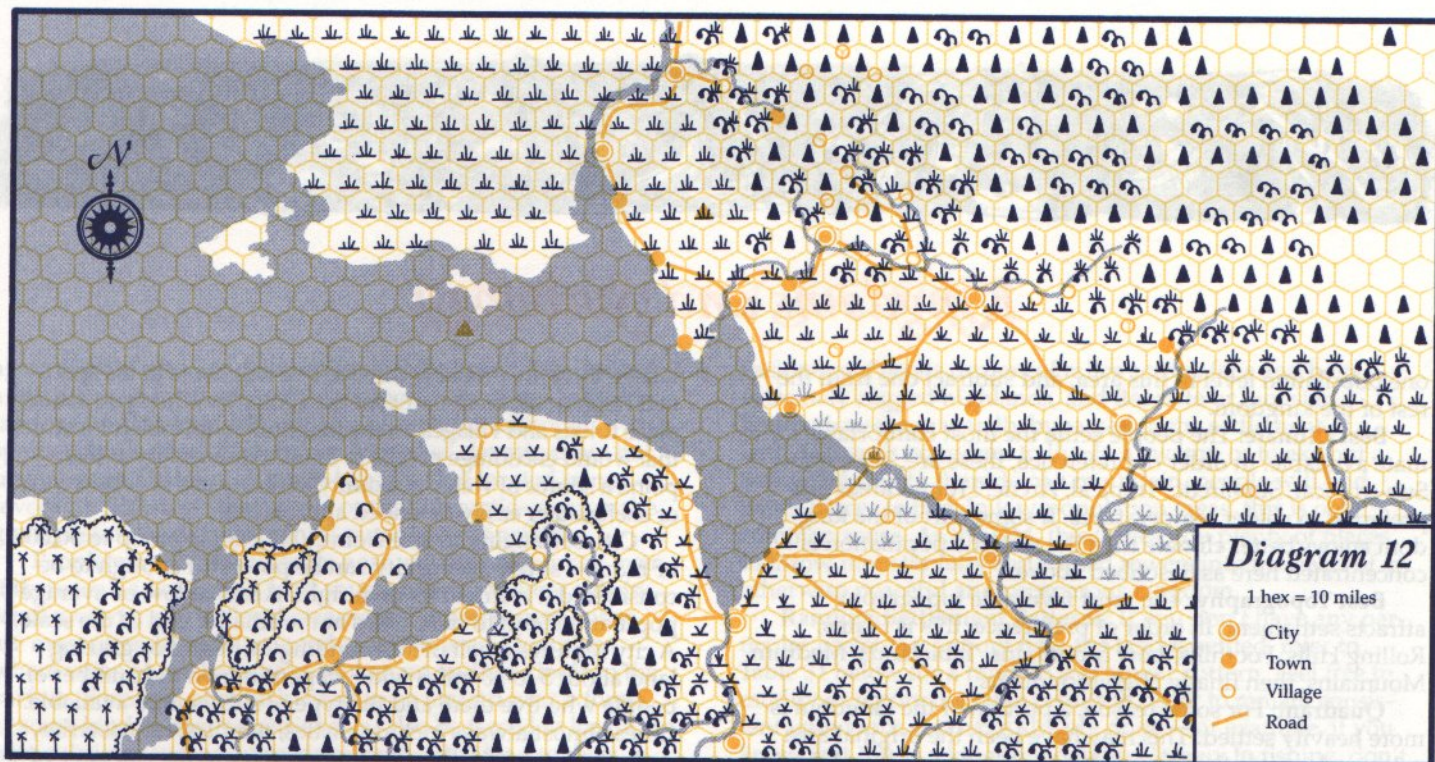
**Towns:** Towns are considered to be anywhere from about 500 to 5,000 people, although the difference between a large town and a small city may be hard to perceive. Towns require a belt of farmland or grazing land about 2 to 10 miles in radius, depending on the nature of the food supply, climate, and other factors. Towns can support a substantial population of workers devoted to production or industry instead of food collection and represent the smallest reasonable centers of production or industry. Towns often include a castle, temple, or some other structure as a centerpiece or feature of note.

**Villages:** At the low end, a village may include only a few dozen people living together on what amounts to a single, community-owned farm. These holds or freesteads are especially common in regions of sparse or low population. At the higher end, a large village may number as many as 500 people and include a number of craftsmen, innkeepers, and other specialized businesses that survive by catering to their neighbors. A village requires a belt of fields and pastures at least 2 to 5 miles in extent.

**Other:** Castles, towers, temples, or monasteries may be found in or near many villages, towns, and cities. Each represents a small, insulated community in and of itself, with its own special purpose and means of support. A castle, for instance, serves as the home of the local lord or knight, a fortification, the barracks and headquarters of the local militia and constabulary, and (in some cases) the capital or court of an entire district. Hundreds of soldiers, courtiers, servants, knights, and squires may inhabit a good-sized castle. Table 31 lists a percentage chance that a community of the listed size boasts a castle, temple, or similar structure in addition to its normal population.

In some rare instances, a castle or monastery may stand in an isolated region, without a nearby community. Usually, this is for defensive purposes—fortifying a strategic pass, guarding a border, and so on. You can choose to replace a town or village with a free-standing castle or similar fortification at any place it seems appropriate to you.





*Example:* As noted previously, Kim determined that the kingdom of *Seria* possessed an overall population level of *High*. In order to see where the cities and towns might be concentrated, she rolled on Table 30 and came up with an 89—the people settled in the best topography, preferring the plains to the steep hills and mountains nearby. She knows that the orcs of *Seria* are herdsman, so she decides that they inhabit the rugged, dry hills of the south-east, in the shadow of the great mountains. The aarakocra are hunters and gatherers, and Kim decides that they are naturally inclined to settle in the more humid mountains of the western coasts. She places the gnomes in the northern mountains, near the lakeshore. Since she sees these nonhuman citizens of *Seria* as few in number, she leaves these areas at an *Average* population level.

Now, Kim starts marking the large cities of the realm. She knows that in the human lands, the big cities are only about 40 to 100 miles apart. She starts by placing a major city at the mouth of the big river, figuring that this is probably a major port. She then spaces other cities across the plains at intervals of 5 or so hexes (about 50 miles apart). Since the area is arid, Kim decides that most communities will be near the rivers, and places cities, towns, and villages accordingly.

When she finishes with towns, cities, and villages, Kim begins to draw a network of major roads and trails linking the big cities together. *Seria* is mostly dependent on water transport, but the Sultan has been conscripting construction brigades and building up the road network for years.

## What's Next?

At this point, you should have an excellent idea of what the campaign kingdom, or home territory, of player characters is like. If you are using a macroscopic design approach and working on smaller and smaller areas, you should proceed to Chapter Five, *Provinces and Cities*, in order to select a local campaign area, a home base or town, and a few sites of interest to begin building your campaign around. If you are using a microscopic design approach and working on larger and larger areas, you'll move on to Chapter Three in order to develop the continent or region that the kingdom itself lies in.

If you want to detail your kingdom even further, you have several options available to you. First, you can start building a roster of important NPCs in the land—the king, his advisors, local heroes, and dastardly villains. Second, now you can work on developing unique monsters or situations for players to confront. When a good idea for an adventure strikes you, jot it down and start keeping notes on adventure hooks that deserve further attention. You could go to the library and check out books about the time period, culture, or geographical area that you want your campaign to emulate. Borrowing from books about the Crusades, the Holy Roman Empire, or life in medieval Europe is a great way to add flavor and detail to your campaign setting.



# Cities and Provinces

Most AD&D campaigns begin with the simplest of settings—a dungeon to adventure in, a town to return to for rest and training, and in between, a little bit of wilderness to travel through. When the AD&D game was first invented, this was all that most players considered necessary. And while the game has evolved over the years into a much more complete and character-driven web of adventure, intrigues, plots, and villainy for the heroes to confront, the minimal setting of dungeon and town still remains one of the easiest and most common campaign scenarios in play.

In this chapter, we'll examine the development of a good local adventure environment based on this model. As the DM, you will need to borrow or invent a lot of material about the home base of your PCs, the neighboring towns and villages, and the actual site of interest that the PCs are involved in exploring. While the art of adventure-building deserves a whole book to itself, we'll show you how to build a strong framework from which a number of adventures can be launched.

## The Local Campaign Area

The local campaign area is the province, barony, county, or district in which the campaign is set. You may have already developed the culture, climate, means of subsistence, and rough location of towns and roads within the area by building the campaign kingdom in the previous chapter, or you may be starting with this chapter and developing the local area first.

If you have already developed the campaign kingdom, all you need to do is choose a suitable region for the local campaign area. An area about 40 to 50 miles across will be more than sufficient. Make sure that you select an area that includes at least one town for a home base and some interesting terrain features such as forests, swamps, or mountains for the PCs to explore. You can then copy and enlarge this region from your kingdom map or simply transfer the features freehand from the kingdom map to the local map—see Local Cartography, later in this section.

You should select a region that will lend itself to the style of campaign you want to run. If you like swashbuckling adventures built around court intrigue and romantic rogues, you'll need a good-sized city for the setting. On the other hand, borderlands and frontiers work well for a campaign of wilderness exploration and monster-clearing. An old-fashioned dungeoneering campaign requires an area where forgotten ruins or labyrinths could reasonably be found.

On the other hand, you may be using this chapter as the starting point for your world-building project. If this is the case, you should consider what kind of campaign you want to run, and then select an appropriate culture, climate, terrain, and other details to suit you. If you're not at all sure what kind of campaign you're trying to put together, refer to **Table 1: World Hooks**, on page 8. This may give you some ideas for types of campaigns you can create.

Once you have an idea of what type of campaign you're after, you can begin to create some of the basics of the setting and the culture in the local area. In this section, you need to determine the physical geography of the region (location and size of bodies of water, the local topography, climate, weather, and prevalent terrain types) the social geography of the region (race, cultural archetype, technology, government, alignment, and situation), and finally the location of towns, cities, and the means of subsistence or survival in the region.

### Coasts, Lakes, and Rivers

Is the local campaign area near a sea or major lake? Does it include coastlines or major rivers? Or is it an arid inland area? Obviously, if you want to have a maritime element in your campaign, you should make sure that the local campaign area includes a port or two. If you don't have a preference, refer to Table 33 below:

Table 33: Seas and Rivers in the Local Area

d%	Type
01-10	Island
11-19	Coastal or Peninsula
20-29	Major Lake
30-45	Major River
46-70	Minor Lakes and Rivers
71-00	No significant water

**Island:** The local campaign area consists of a single good-sized island about 20 to 40 miles across. Most or all of the island's coasts will appear on the map of the local area. The isle may feature minor lakes, streams, and other bodies of water.

**Coastal or Peninsula:** The local campaign is near the seashore or the shore of a major inland body of water. At least one map edge is water, and a peninsular area may be surrounded by water on three sides. Again, minor rivers or lakes may appear in the area.

**Major Lake:** One or more major lakes are scattered throughout the area, each one about 11 to 20 miles in length and 2 to 12 miles in width. The lakes may be arranged in a line, joined by a major river, or they may have no connection to each other. A fair number of minor lakes and streams will usually be found near major lakes.

**Major River:** At least one major river winds through the campaign area. It is navigable to most vessels for its entire length and serves as an excellent transportation route. It may be joined by large tributaries. Most human settlements in the region will be near the river.

**Minor Lakes and Rivers:** About 2d6 lakes are scattered throughout the local campaign area, each one no more than three or four miles across. A dozen or so minor rivers and streams cross the area, many originating or terminating at one of the minor lakes. A chain of lakes linked by a common stream is also possible. This is the default for humid or temperate areas.



## Cities and Provinces

**No Significant Bodies of Water:** A few ponds, wells, watering holes, or creeks may be found in the local area, but no navigable rivers or lakes exist here. This is the normal condition for arid areas.

### Mountains and Hills

Since a local campaign area is about forty miles square, only a portion of a mountain range or chain of hills would normally appear in this local map. With the exception of some volcanic peaks, mountains are not perfect cones with 45° slopes; instead, a mountain is usually a long, knife-edged ridge that extends anywhere from five to twenty miles in length and about two to five miles in width. Valleys of similar size usually separate ridges of a mountain range. There may be high saddles, subsidiary ridges, or upland valleys that change this basic form, but for the most part PCs in the local campaign probably won't encounter more than half a dozen distinct peaks in the limited area.

Mountains are usually surrounded by a belt of foothills, which are smaller ridges paralleling or splitting off from the main mass. A typical foothill would be about one to four miles in length and about half a mile to a mile in width. Foothills can be every bit as steep and treacherous as mountains proper.

In addition to the topography dictated by the nearby mountain ranges, regions of rolling hills or uplands are fairly common. These hills tend to be smaller and closer together, without long, distinct ridgelines. Small hills may only be a couple of hundred yards in diameter, while larger ones can be a mile or two in length and half a mile or so in width.

Tablelands are another type of landform encountered in arid regions. These consist of flat-topped, steep-sided mesas or buttes, each about half a mile to three or four miles in diameter at the base, and somewhat smaller at the top.

Any part of the local campaign area that features no mountains, hills, or tablelands is considered to be plains by default. If you don't know whether or not there are any unusual landforms in the campaign area, consult Table 34:

**Table 34: Local Mountains, Hills, and Tablelands**

d%	Topography
01-08	Very Mountainous
09-22	Mountainous
23-37	Rugged Hills
38-69	Gentle Hills
70-76	Tablelands
77-00	Plains

**Very Mountainous:** Several major mountains can be found in the local campaign area. These extensive uplands and their foothills take up about 75% of the available space. Very large or deep valleys form between the ridges, along with smaller hanging valleys or gorges deeper in the mountains. Medium or High mountains (described in previous chapters) create Very Mountainous terrain.

**Mountainous:** One or two major mountains exist in the local campaign area, or a number of smaller ridges equivalent to foothills. These features account for about 25% to 50% of the local area. Low Mountains or Foothills fall into this category.

**Rugged Hills:** Much of the local area features rugged hill ranges. These may be old and weathered mountains, highlands, badlands, or general rough terrain. Rugged hills may take the form of a number of long, low ridges or may be clumped together in disorganized uplands. Rugged hills are usually surrounded by belts of gentle hills, which act as "foothills to the foothills," if you can follow that reasoning. About 50% to 75% of the local area is occupied by these hill systems.

**Gentle Hills:** Isolated ranges (or one long, widespread range) of rolling hills appear in several places throughout the local area. About 25% to 50% of the area is actually covered in gentle hills, and the rest consists of plains. Nearby mountain systems and similar uplands tend to elevate the land, so the hills may be spurs of mountains just off the map, or outlying montane systems that have been weathered down to nothing.

**Tablelands:** Significant portions of the local area are covered with mesa-lands or similar rough terrain. Mesas tend to appear in clumps, but isolated buttes can be found many miles from their nearest neighbors. About 25% to 50% of the area is covered with mesas.

**Plains:** The area is predominantly flat, although small ranges of rolling hills and outcroppings of rock may create minor hill systems covering about 10% or so of the local area. Plains may also feature depressions, canyons, or similar features, at the DM's discretion.

### Climate and Weather

For our purposes, climate refers to the general temperature of an area. On Earth-like worlds, areas that lie in the tropics are considerably warmer than more northerly or southerly regions. The climate band governs the type of weather that the local campaign area receives, the degree of seasonal variation, and the type of vegetation or ground cover prevalent in the area. Obviously, a campaign area set in the cold and rocky fjords of a northern island presents a much different array of monsters and physical obstacles than a campaign set in the arid wastelands of an equatorial desert. Several factors, including *climate band* or latitude, *seasonal variations*, *prevailing winds*, and *humidity*, determine a region's weather and vegetation.

**Climate Band:** A climate band is nothing more than a belt around the world in which similar temperatures and seasons can be expected. Each climate band is about 20 degrees of latitude in width. On a normal Earth-like world, there are nine climate bands, ranging from arctic to tropical (the four non-tropical bands are replicated on both hemispheres). However, a fantasy world may have even more extreme climates available. The climate band is one of the



major determining factors of a region's mix of terrain and ground cover. From coldest to warmest, the climate bands are: *super-arctic*, *arctic*, *sub-arctic*, *temperate*, *sub-tropical*, *tropical*, and *super-tropical*. Refer to Table 28 (page 54) for a random determination of climate if you don't wish to choose one.

Areas of significant elevation are usually colder than their latitude might otherwise indicate. For example, the Hawaiian Islands are near the Equator, but the highest mountain peaks on Maui and Hawaii remain snow-capped.

**Seasonal Variations:** The Earth experiences moderate seasons due to its axial tilt, but your fantasy campaign world may have more extreme seasons, or no seasons at all. On Earth, each hemisphere receives extended or reduced hours of daylight in the summer or winter, producing seasons. In a fantasy world seasons can be created by the will of the gods, an actual variation in the energy output of the sun, or anything else you can imagine. Consult Table 14 in Chapter Two for more information about the local campaign area's seasons.

**Prevailing Winds:** A number of factors account for the direction of the prevailing winds in an area, but for local meteorology all you need to do is roll a die for a random wind direction. The prevailing wind may be useful in showing places in the local area that are particularly exposed or sheltered from the weather, rain shadows of mountains, and the general trend of weather systems. Naturally, the wind doesn't blow from that direction all the time, or even most of the time—but major weather systems usually approach from that direction. Table 17 on page 30 provides a simple way to randomly determine the area's prevailing winds.

**Humid and Arid Climates:** Areas subjected to prevailing winds that cross nothing but dry land for thousands of miles are arid climates. Dense forests, swamps, and jungles don't normally occur in arid regions. On the other hand, areas with prevailing winds that cross oceans or other large bodies of water are humid climates, with lush forests, numerous rivers, and frequent rainfalls. Since a local campaign area is too small for you to form an educated guess about how much ocean or land is nearby, simply flip a coin (or make a decision) to determine if the local area is arid or humid.

## Terrain

The combination of ground cover with landform creates the overall terrain of the local campaign area. Terrain ranges from barren mountain peaks to lush forests and dismal swamps. The terrain is one of the first things the player characters notice about a setting, since it's one of the few aspects of a fantasy world that everyone can imagine instantly and accurately. After all, most people have seen forests and mountains with their own eyes, so it's not real hard to conjure up the images of these places when you're trying to put yourself in your character's position. In the local campaign area, there should be one or two predominant terrains, with a few patches of less common terrain just for variety.







## Cities and Provinces

Take a look at Table 18, on page 32. This breaks the possible terrain types into categories by climate band and humidity. For example, you'll see that a desert just won't normally occur in a temperate, humid environment. Similarly, glaciers and tundra won't be found in tropical areas. Refer to the climate band and condition that matches the local campaign area, and roll for 1 or 2 predominant terrain types. The scattered patches of different terrains can be drawn from other appropriate terrains on the same sub-table, or you can choose anything that pleases you—as long as you come up with some kind of explanation. Maybe that band of jungle in the icy fjords is created by an ancient artifact or a number of hot, steaming volcanoes.

### Culture

Even the wildest and most desolate adventure setting needs some kind of base camp for the heroes to return to. In many campaigns, humans are the chief inhabitants of the area by default, but you can populate the area with any kind of race or social structure that you like. Details of culture and society are discussed at length in Chapter Four, but if you are starting small and working your way up, you'll need to develop some information at this point. Culture is composed of a number of different components, including *race*, *cultural archetype*, *race status*, *language*, *technology*, *government*, *social alignment*, and finally *situation*.

**Race:** What race is predominant in the area? What species controls the kingdom or land to which the local campaign area belongs? There's no reason that the PCs need to be based in a human or even demi-human kingdom; imagine a kingdom of orcish conquerors, in which the PCs are brigands and resistance fighters, or a kingdom ruled by powerful dragons whose agents exact tribute from the villages and towns of the area. Refer to Table 19 on page 38 for a list of possible dominant races. Normally, a local campaign area will feature one dominant race and 1d6 major or minor races. These lesser races will hold only one or two small communities within the lands of the dominant race. For example, if your rolls indicate that the land is primarily human, there may be a remote hill fort under orcish control or a small elfen settlement in the nearby forests.

If you're not sure how the races may coexist or get along, you can refer to Table 22 (page 44) for an idea of how the dominant race relates to the less numerous peoples. Remember, besides referring to different species, race may be used to indicate to humans of different cultures or ethnic origins—the well-known Robin Hood stories revolve around the conflict of England's Saxon lower class against the kingdom's Norman rulers.

**Cultural Archetype:** Generally, what kind of people do you see inhabiting the local area? Are they barbarians, living in squalor and savagery? Or is there a beautiful Renaissance city, supporting art and learning? The default for the AD&D game tends to be a standard Middle Ages countryside, with a handful of towns and villages, numerous farms and graz-

ing lands, and a few castles here and there. The range of possibilities (especially when combined with alternative races and technology levels) is virtually endless. If you don't know what the people of the area are like, roll on Table 21, Cultural Archetypes. It appears on page 43 of Chapter Four. Note that each race or ethnic group may enjoy its own culture, distinct from the culture of the dominant race.

Language is an important part of the basic culture. You should decide what passes for Common in the local area and whether or not the population is literate. If there are towns within a few miles of each other that don't share a common language, a natural degree of tension and distrust in the area will develop.

**Technology:** What would the Roman Empire have been like if firearms had been invented a few hundred years early? Could the explosion of trade, learning, and art that categorized the Italian Renaissance have taken place under the right conditions in the Bronze Age? The technology available to a culture can play a huge role in characterizing the lifestyle and appearance of the culture. Players are especially observant of military technology, since the availability (or lack) of certain types of armor and weapons may make an immediate impact on their character's combat ability and firepower. Technology is discussed at length in Chapter Four; refer to Table 23 on page 46.

**Government and Social Alignment:** The organization of the various towns, villages, and free farms into something resembling a local government form a backbone of the design. In parts of Europe, independent bandit chieftains and minor nobles retained control of their lands well into the late Middle Ages. In other parts of the world national governments did not develop until colonial administrations created the framework for native government. Again, forms of government are fully discussed in Chapter Four; see Table 24 on page 48 and the explanations that follow.

Social alignment describes the general alignment tendency of people in that area. What are the accepted ways of conducting business and getting ahead? How do the government and the people get along with each other? A chaotic evil area probably consists of poorly organized warlords and petty rulers who use force of arms to resolve their disputes.

**Situation:** This is a catch-all description for any unusual elements or characteristics you want to insert into the local area. Perhaps the use of magic is outlawed, and PC wizards must be very careful of revealing their magical powers. Refer to **Situation**, in Chapter Four.

### Population

The number of people in an area can certainly influence the style of campaign you wish to play. A complex setting of intrigue, noble feuds, and politics is hard to support in an area composed of nothing but dirt-poor villages. Similarly, if you want to build a campaign of wilderness exploration and monster-clearing, it's hard to find something for the PCs to





## Cities and Provinces

do if they live in a densely settled, secure region of large towns and strong cities.

The total population level of an area is influenced by many factors. First and foremost, there just may not be that many people around. Even in the most fertile regions of Mesopotamia and southern Europe, periodic plagues, droughts, or extended warfare or invasion could quickly depopulate a region. Carthage was one of the great cities of the ancient world, but the Romans tore it down stone from stone and salted the earth, turning Carthage into a wasteland that has never recovered its former population. Other population factors include the climate, the food supply, the organization of the government, and the level of technology available.

**Subsistence Systems:** What do the people of the local area do for a living? Are they farmers, herdsmen, fishermen, or do they exploit a natural resource such as a forest or a mineral deposit? Obviously, organized and intensive agriculture can support a much greater number of people than keeping herds or hunting and gathering. The subsistence system also helps you, as the DM, to determine where people are likely to settle and what type of land or terrain they view as valuable. For example, an area in which many people are employed as miners will include towns and camps clustered around the richest deposits in the hills and mountains, while an agricultural area will attract people to the most fertile land.

Refer to Table 28 in Chapter Four for more information about the types of subsistence systems available, and choose one that suits the setting (or roll randomly, if you don't have a preference).

**Population Level:** Once you know the terrain, climate, society, and lifestyle of the region's inhabitants, you can make a good guess about the overall population level. Population falls into one of six rough categories: None, Sparse, Low, Average, High, and Very High. Obviously, the higher the population, the more towns, villages, and cities there are in the local area.

*Sparsely populated* local campaign areas include about three to eight villages, with a total population of 1,000 to 2,000 people.

Areas of *low population* may include a town, with about five to ten villages and a total population of about 5,000 or so people.

Regions with *average populations* include one to three towns and a dozen or more villages, totalling about 10,000 inhabitants.

*Highly populated* areas may include a small city and have three to six towns and about fifteen to twenty villages. The total number of people living there is around 20,000.

Areas of *very high* populations typically include at least one city, about five to ten towns, and twenty or more villages. The total number of people ranges from about 30,000 or so on up to as many as 100,000 in the densely populated lands around a major city. This is about the heaviest population a

medieval province or county could reasonably support.

Remember, these population levels refer to the major or dominant race of the area (or their slaves and subjects, if the dominant race is a race of conquerors). The minor races of the local area may hold the equivalent of a town or several villages of their own. For example, there may be several dwarf villages and settlements in the deep mountains of the local area.

**Communities:** The last step in preparing the local campaign area is placing the cities, towns, and villages in appropriate locations. Naturally, the principal means of subsistence in the local campaign area will have a huge influence on the location of various communities. Agricultural settlements need arable land, mining towns need mountains or hills, and fishing or trading towns should be located on rivers or coasts.

While you are placing the towns and villages of the area, keep an eye open for places where castles, monasteries, fortified temples, wizard towers, and other unusual communities may be located. Fortifications often guard crucial towns, hostile frontiers, roads, river crossings, or passes. Some priestly orders may desire seclusion and deliberately build their retreat in the most inaccessible area they can find.

When you finish placing the towns and villages, you're pretty much done with the creation of the local campaign area. You know what the weather and terrain are like, how many people live there and what kind of society they live in, and how they get along in the world. The next step will be creating a map of the local campaign area and moving on to describing the individual towns and cities, the various sites of interest, and stocking the region with monsters in a fantastic ecosystem.

*Example: You may have already read about Kim and her work on creating a kingdom she calls Seria in the previous chapters. For the moment, let's look at another example. Doug has decided to begin his design work by starting small and working up. All he knows is that he has an area about forty or so miles wide to place at least one town or settlement, a few adventure sites, and later on some monsters for the PCs to battle.*

*First, Doug decides to see if an interesting world hook jumps out at him, so he flips back to Chapter One and rolls on Table 1. He comes up with Archipelago as the world hook. Clearly, his local campaign is located on one island in a chain of some kind. This means that his next decision about seas and rivers in the local area is easy—he doesn't even roll on Table 33, and instead he chooses Island.*

*Next, he decides to see how mountainous the island is, and consults Table 34. A roll of 59 indicates Gentle Hills, so a large portion of the island is covered with rolling hills. Doug decides he'll throw a patch of rugged hills in the center of the island to represent the central spine. Moving on to Climate and Weather, he is referred to Table 28; a roll of 96 indicates a Tropical climate. Doug considers for a moment, and concludes that*



the island really is located in the tropics, with no weird factors at work. He also decides to ignore seasonal variations, since the tropics by definition see little or no change season to season. Because this is an island, he decides that the campaign area is humid. To determine the prevailing wind, he checks on Table 17 and discovers that the wind generally comes from the east. Note that at any step in this process Doug can pause to start sketching out the island's outline and its major terrain features—this will be discussed in **Local Cartography**.

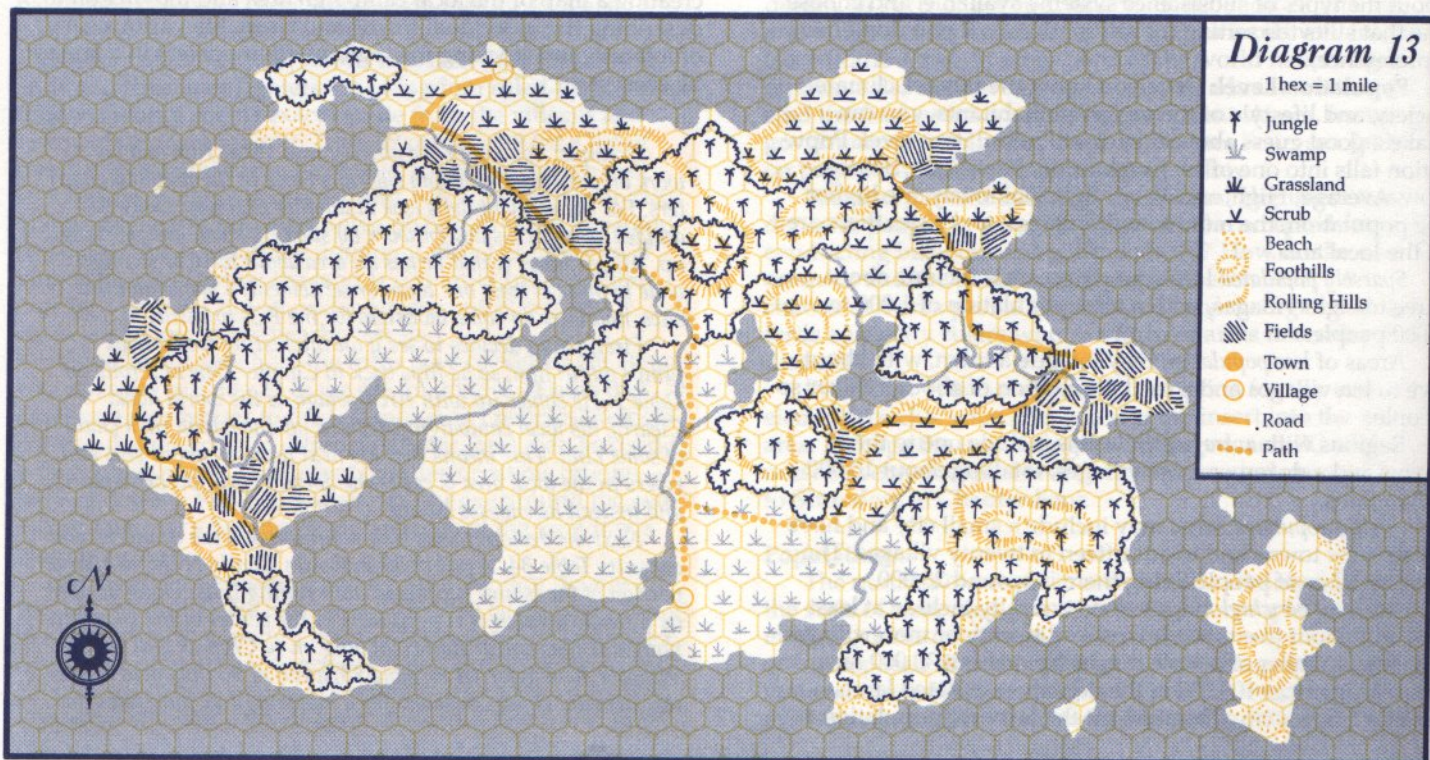
Now Doug is ready to create the terrain of the island. He knows that the area is tropical and humid, so he refers to the appropriate portion of Table 18 and rolls a 1: marsh or swamp. Obviously, if most of the island is covered by hills, swamp isn't appropriate. Doug imagines that a large peninsula or section of the island is low and swampy, and rolls again for the rest of the island. This time, he comes up with medium jungle. He takes note of the other appropriate terrains—grassland and heavy jungle—since small patches of these may be found in the right places, such as the rugged central hills of the island.

This wraps up the physical geography of the island, but now Doug needs to determine who lives there. Referring to Table 19, he rolls a 17 for the dominant race and discovers that elves are dominant. Other major races include goblins, lizard men, tabaxi, kenku, and humans. He decides that the goblins hold the rugged inner hills, the lizard men hold the swamps, the humans, tabaxi, and kenku share the jungles, while the elves are seafarers with a couple of small towns on the coasts. He

returns to the elves, since they are the dominant race. Doug wants to know how the elves get along with everyone else, so he consults Table 22. Again, he chooses not to roll, choosing the second to last option: the various races inhabit different communities, but the elves are recognized as the isle's rulers.

Continuing to develop the elves, Doug refers to Table 21 for Cultural Archetypes and comes up with European Renaissance—that's unusual! Clearly, these aren't simple forest dwellers. Mulling it over, Doug starts to conceive of a swash-buckling, pirate campaign. He skips a roll on Table 23, the Kingdom Technology Level, and decides that Renaissance-level technology is available to the elves, including firearms. Next he rolls for the government system and social alignment, and comes up with a Neutral Evil syndicracy. This is getting quite interesting: swashbuckling elves, ruled by avaricious pirate guilds.

Finally, Doug decides to take a look at the islanders' food supply and population. On Table 29, he rolls a 1, indicating light agriculture. For the total population level, he works through Table 30 and comes up with a 3, which is Average. Doug decides that the elves have several harbors and pirate-den towns scattered around the island. There's a number of interesting hooks available for adventures and intrigue, so he's ready to move on to developing one of these pirate towns as the PC base of operations. A map of Doug's pirate island appears below:





## Local Cartography

The local campaign area is the smallest outdoors region that we will discuss in this book. If you wish, you can create a local map to show the exact positions of nearby villages and towns, individual monster lairs, lords' manors, shrines, and similar sites of interest. If the world you have created is unusually small, you can skip the creation of a local map, since the kingdom map itself is probably about the largest scale (and smallest size) that you will find practical. A good scale for any local map is about 1 mile to a hex or square.

If you are zooming in on a kingdom map you've already developed, all you need to do is pick an area about 40 miles by 40 miles, however many hexes that may be. Pick a major town or terrain feature and center the local map around it. Remember, you don't need to be perfectly precise; as long as the local map and the kingdom map show things in roughly the same relative positions, that's good enough.

Map Blank 5, the plain hex sheet is ideal for mapping the local campaign area, with a scale of about 1 mile to a hex. You could also use Map Blank 6, the plain gridded sheet, with a scale of 1 mile to a square.

**Landforms:** At this scale, you have two options for showing landforms: the same symbology you've used for the larger maps, or contour lines. A contour line is an imaginary












line that runs along all the points of equal elevation on a hillside or a valley. An example of mapping with contour lines is shown below, in Diagram 14. Regions of gentle slopes have contour lines spaced far apart, since it takes a significant horizontal distance before the land's elevation increases an appreciable amount. Steep or mountainous regions compress contour lines together, since elevation changes very rapidly. Another method is to draw ridge-lines, marking the locations of the hills with a top-down realistic symbology. You can see an example of this in Diagram 13.

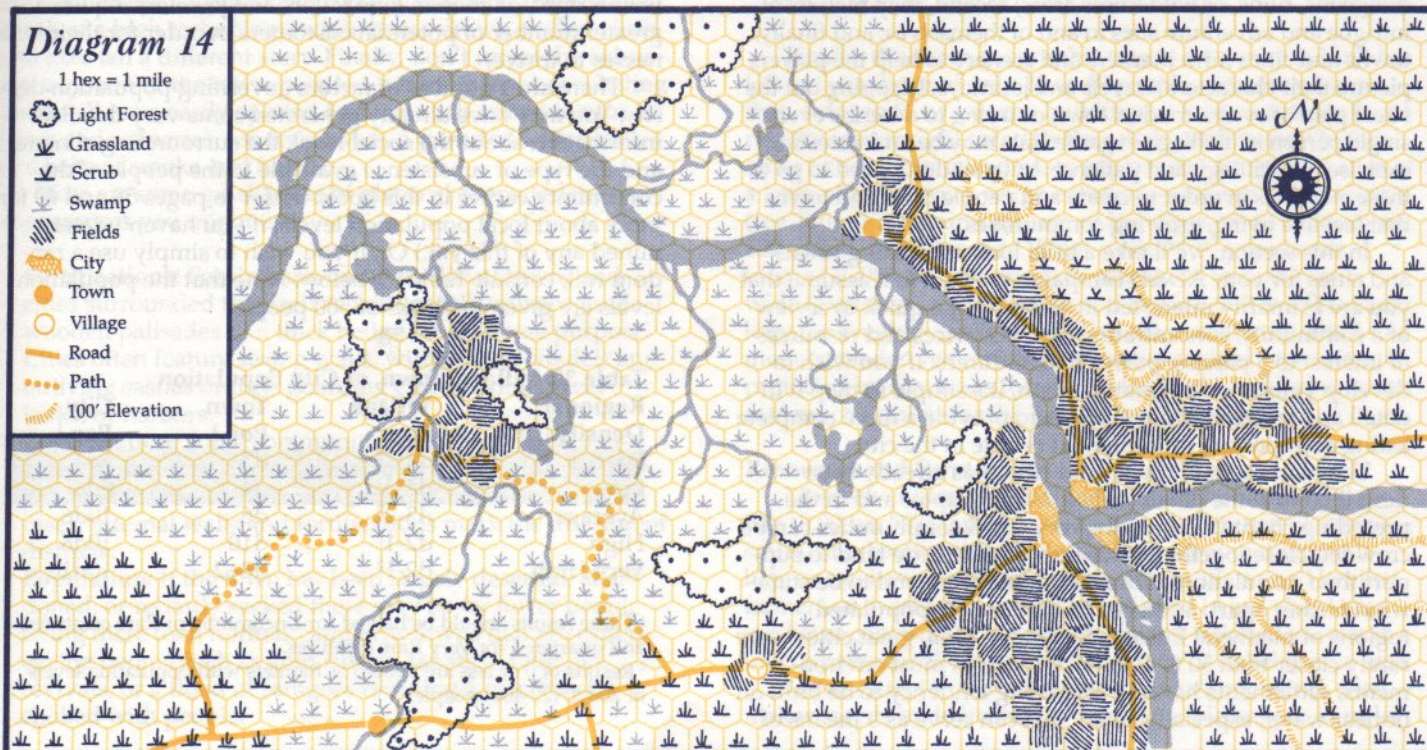
**Terrain:** The ground cover of the local area tends to include broad stretches of the predominant terrain, broken only by a few clearings, copses, woodlands, and other isolated terrain types. Make sure you give your players a march of cold and lonely hills, a dark and tangled forest, or a stinking bog or two to explore, even in the middle of otherwise cleared and settled territory.

**Cities and Towns:** In the local map, it will prove helpful to indicate the extent of the cleared farmland that surrounds a city or town. Even small villages farm most of the arable land within a mile or two of the village. On your local campaign map, this will show as a belt of several hexes surrounding each town or hamlet.

**Diagram 14**

1 hex = 1 mile

-  Light Forest
-  Grassland
-  Scrub
-  Swamp
-  Fields
-  City
-  Town
-  Village
-  Road
-  Path
-  100' Elevation







## Cities and Provinces

Blocks of population provide a basis for determining the number of inns, smiths, armorers, etc., that are likely to be encountered in a given settlement, which is the most significant game effect of high or low populations in the towns that the PCs visit. These are described in more detail under **Resources**, below.

Note that fantastic cities of great size (more than 50,000 people) should be very rare. These titans are “off the chart”, and should only occur in an area through a deliberate design decision on your part. There’s nothing wrong with a Lankhmar or Waterdeep in your campaign...as long as you realize that a city of this size and splendor should be the focus of the campaign, and not the launching pad for common wilderness or dungeon adventures.

### Physical Description

While you as the DM will find it easier to categorize cities and towns by their population levels, most players prefer to imagine cities as they appear to their characters. Think of a general description you might give to a party of PCs first arriving on the scene. Is the city walled? Are the gates guarded or standing open? Are there any castles or fortifications ringing the city? What are the major public buildings or monuments? Is there a district of docks or wharves for trade and commerce?

Remember, cultural and racial cues are some of the easiest for PCs to notice. If it’s a village of neolithic (Stone Age) wood elves, tell the players! Technological advancement is also easy to spot—gilded carriages, waistcoats, and rapiers speak of a high technology, while horse-drawn sledges, furs, and axes tell a different story. Finally, don’t forget the subsistence system of the townspeople—a mining town or whaling town will have easily spotted features such as reeking furnaces and refineries, rendering vats, a crowded waterfront, or a haze of smoke and fumes.

Here are some quick ideas of physical characteristics or appearances you might use:

- **Fortifications:** For defense, many medieval towns and cities surrounded themselves with a wall; villages used wooden palisades or a thick hedge for the same purpose. Cities often feature strong walls, with several citadels and outlying castles or forts guarding critical points, overlooks, or harbors.
- **Organization:** Some communities may be strictly organized by the class of resident, so a city might feature a distinct Noble Quarter, a Trade Quarter, and so on. In some cases, internal walls and fortifications mark the division of districts.
- **Population:** If the town has been largely deserted, abandoned, or recently sacked there may be far fewer people living there than normal. Similarly, towns that are experiencing booms such as gold rushes, fanatical religious revivals, or a flood of refugees escaping a war may be choked with people.

- **Wealth or Poverty:** Prosperous towns feature buildings in good repair, stronger fortifications, and busy commerce districts. Impoverished towns lack the funds necessary to maintain good appearances, and many will be unemployed or beggars.
- **Unusual Building Style:** A lack of wood or stone for building materials or a preference for a particular kind of building may change the entire appearance of a town. For example, elves might live in a town built of living trees. More common human examples of alternative construction include sod, dried mud, brick, adobe, stone of various types, rough-hewn logs, sawed timber, paper, or even semi-permanent tents or huts. A typical medieval structure is framed with wood, wattled or chinked with mud, and then roofed with thatch.
- **Unusual Buildings:** Very prominent public buildings such as armories, magazines, palaces, temples, wizard towers, and libraries stand out to the casual visitor. Naturally, only towns and cities of considerable size will have a number of big public buildings.
- **Public Attitude:** How do the people feel about their town and life in general? Are they morose or apathetic? Are they exuberant and inquisitive? Are they proud of their homes or have they fallen into despair over their wretched conditions? Social alignment may play a significant role in describing the public attitude—a town steeped in corruption or lawlessness is easy to remember, especially if the PCs are accustomed to dealing with more honest villages and hamlets.

Finally, the sheer geographic size of a town shouldn’t be left out. A village of only 30 or 40 people includes no more than a dozen to two dozen buildings; a five-minute walk carries the visitor right through the whole settlement. On the other hand, it can take days to explore the streets and sites of a large city. At a very rough estimate, one population block (see Table 35) requires an area of buildings and streets about 100 to 200 yards to a side. Thus, a city of 50 population blocks (25,000 people) might be about 500 to 1,000 yards wide (a quarter to a half mile) and about 1,000 to 2,000 yards long (or roughly a mile) long. This may seem very small to a modern reader; remember that medieval cities were often protected by city walls that limited growth, and living space was much smaller for the lower-class people.

### Resources and Services Available

Most adventurers couldn’t care less if the city they visit has 10,000 or 50,000 people, as long as an armorer, weapon-smith, or whatever it is they’re looking for at that moment happens to have a place of business there. It’s a good bet that farmers or livestock-keepers can be found in just about any medieval community, but running across a skilled jeweler in a tiny crossroads village would be a stroke of unbelievable luck.

Let’s assume that a craftsman such as a cobbler (a shoe-maker) needs to do business with 10 people a week in order



**Table 36: Resources/Services Available**  
Resource or Service

# per Pop. Block

**Food, Drink, and Lodging**

Almshouse	1d10-9 (10%)
Baker	1d3-2 (33%)
Boarding House	1d4-3 (25%)
Brewer	1d3-2 (33%)
Butcher	1d4-3 (25%)
Cheesemaker	1d6-5 (16%)
Grocer	1d4-2 (50%)
in agricultural area	1d10-9 (10%)
Hostel	1d6-5 (16%)
Inn	1d3-1 (66%)
Provisioner	1d4-3 (25%)
Tavern	1d3 (100%)
Vintner	1d10-9 (10%)
in wine country	1d4-2 (50%)

**Common Crafts and Trades**

Blacksmith	1d3 (100%)
Trader/merchant	1d4 (100%)
Cobbler	1d2 (100%)
Cooper	1d3-1 (66%)
Leatherworker <sup>1</sup>	1d3-1 (66%)
in grazing/herding area	1d4 (100%)
Mason <sup>1</sup>	1d4-2 (50%)
in hills/mountains	1d4 (100%)
Miller	1d2-1 (50%)
Potter	1d4-3 (25%)
Tanner <sup>1</sup>	1d3-2 (33%)
in grazing/herding area	1d3 (100%)
Weaver <sup>1</sup>	1d4-3 (25%)
Woodworker	1d2 (100%)

**Rare Crafts and Trades**

Apothecary	1d12-11 (8%)
Armorer <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Bookbinder	1d10-9 (10%)
Bowyer/Fletcher	1d3-2 (33%)
in forest/woodlands	1d2-1 (50%)
Clockmaker	1d20-19 (5%)
Chandler	1d6-5 (16%)
Dyer <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Fine Clothier	1d10-9 (10%)
Furrier <sup>1</sup>	1d10-9 (10%)
Glassblower/Glazier	1d10-9 (10%)
Herbalist	1d20-19 (5%)
Jeweler	1d12-11 (8%)
Locksmith	1d12-11 (8%)
Seamstress/Tailor	1d3-2 (33%)
Specialty Smith <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Tilemaker <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Weaponsmith <sup>1</sup>	1d4-3 (25%)

**Transportation**

Boat for hire	1d2-1 (50%)
Carter/Teamster	1d2 (100%)
Cartwright	1d3-2 (33%)
Porter	1d3-2 (33%)
Saddler	1d6-5 (16%)
Shipwright	1d6-5 (16%)
Stable	1d2-1 (50%)

**NPC Services**

Alchemist	1d20-19 (5%)
Assassin/Bounty Hunter	1d10-8 (20%)
Astrologer	1d12-11 (8%)
Barber	1d3-1 (66%)
Barrister	1d12-11 (8%)
Burglar	1d10-9 (10%)
Dragoman	1d8-5 (37%)
Engineer	1d12-11 (8%)
Fence	1d4-2 (50%)
Healer	1d3-2 (33%)
Interpreter	1d10-8 (20%)
Laborer	1d4+1 (100%)
Leech/Physician	1d6-5 (16%)
Linkboy	1d4-3 (25%)
Minstrel/entertainer	1d4-2 (50%)
Navigator (ports only)	1d4-3 (25%)
Priest	1d3-1 (66%)
Sage	1d12-11 (8%)
Scribe/Clerk	1d10-9 (10%)
Wizard	1d4-3 (25%)

<sup>1</sup> May be a major industry in town.

to maintain himself with his skill. If only 50 people live in his home village, he'll need to sell each person a new pair of shoes once every five weeks in order to keep himself afloat. Unless his shoes are truly exceptional (or absolutely terrible), that's unlikely. However, in a town of 500, he only needs to sell each person a new pair of shoes once per year, which is much more reasonable. Finally, in a town of 5,000, he's confronted with the problem of shoeing each individual person once per 500 weeks (almost 10 years!) if he can only make 10 pairs of shoes a week. In this situation, you can bet that another cobbler or two will set up shop in order to serve the population's demand for a supply of shoes. The point of all this is simple—just as farmers need to cultivate a certain amount of land in order to make it worth their while, businessmen must have a sufficient customer base to support their trade.

Population blocks consisting of 500 people each, as described earlier, are the basic measure for determining what kind of customer base exists for specialized trades, stores, and crafts. Some crafts are far more common than others—blacksmiths, coopers, and cartwrights are needed almost everywhere, but a professional armorer needs to be located near a steady source of business, such as a castle or a big city. Consult Table 36 for the types of services or resources available in any given village, town, or city. Note that a number of services are unlikely to occur in small communities—for example, a business with a frequency of 1d4-3 per block only has a 25% chance of occurring in a given group of 500 people. However, over 20 population blocks (10,000 people), there should be 4 to 6 of these specialized businesses.

Occupations relating to the subsistence of the town do not appear in the table. For example, in a village that employs heavy agriculture, it's not difficult to find a farmer. Coastal villages can be assumed to have a fair number of sailors, fishermen, and some whalers and sealers. Forest towns naturally are home to hunters, loggers, and trappers. This table is only intended to give you a rough idea of how many persons or stores in the city in question might be engaged in the trade the PCs have need of.

Remember, to use the chart you should roll once for each population block. For example, if a town supports 5 population blocks (about 2,500 people), there would be 5d3 blacksmiths. Meanwhile, each group of 500 includes a shipwright (1d6-5 per block) only on a roll of 6 on a d6. Make sure you don't count negative numbers against the total—we're only trying to see if any particular block happens to have a shipwright.

At your option, you can instead add the percentages for multiple blocks to see what the chance is that a group of blocks has one of the desired trades or resources. For example, since there's a 16% chance that a block of 500 includes a shipwright, there would be a 96% chance that six blocks (3,000 people) include at least one shipwright. (The percentages do *not* indicate the percentage of the populace engaged



**Table 36: Resources/Services Available**  
Resource or Service

# per Pop. Block

**Food, Drink, and Lodging**

Almshouse	1d10-9 (10%)
Baker	1d3-2 (33%)
Boarding House	1d4-3 (25%)
Brewer	1d3-2 (33%)
Butcher	1d4-3 (25%)
Cheesemaker	1d6-5 (16%)
Grocer	1d4-2 (50%)
in agricultural area	1d10-9 (10%)
Hostel	1d6-5 (16%)
Inn	1d3-1 (66%)
Provisioner	1d4-3 (25%)
Tavern	1d3 (100%)
Vintner	1d10-9 (10%)
in wine country	1d4-2 (50%)

**Common Crafts and Trades**

Blacksmith	1d3 (100%)
Trader/merchant	1d4 (100%)
Cobbler	1d2 (100%)
Cooper	1d3-1 (66%)
Leatherworker <sup>1</sup>	1d3-1 (66%)
in grazing/herding area	1d4 (100%)
Mason <sup>1</sup>	1d4-2 (50%)
in hills/mountains	1d4 (100%)
Miller	1d2-1 (50%)
Potter	1d4-3 (25%)
Tanner <sup>1</sup>	1d3-2 (33%)
in grazing/herding area	1d3 (100%)
Weaver <sup>1</sup>	1d4-3 (25%)
Woodworker	1d2 (100%)

**Rare Crafts and Trades**

Apothecary	1d12-11 (8%)
Armorer <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Bookbinder	1d10-9 (10%)
Bowyer/Fletcher	1d3-2 (33%)
in forest/woodlands	1d2-1 (50%)
Clockmaker	1d20-19 (5%)
Chandler	1d6-5 (16%)
Dyer <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Fine Clothier	1d10-9 (10%)
Furrier <sup>1</sup>	1d10-9 (10%)
Glassblower/Glazier	1d10-9 (10%)
Herbalist	1d20-19 (5%)
Jeweler	1d12-11 (8%)
Locksmith	1d12-11 (8%)
Seamstress/Tailor	1d3-2 (33%)
Specialty Smith <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Tilemaker <sup>1</sup>	1d6-5 (16%)
Weaponsmith <sup>1</sup>	1d4-3 (25%)

**Transportation**

Boat for hire	1d2-1 (50%)
Carter/Teamster	1d2 (100%)
Cartwright	1d3-2 (33%)
Porter	1d3-2 (33%)
Saddler	1d6-5 (16%)
Shipwright	1d6-5 (16%)
Stable	1d2-1 (50%)

**NPC Services**

Alchemist	1d20-19 (5%)
Assassin/Bounty Hunter	1d10-8 (20%)
Astrologer	1d12-11 (8%)
Barber	1d3-1 (66%)
Barrister	1d12-11 (8%)
Burglar	1d10-9 (10%)
Dragoman	1d8-5 (37%)
Engineer	1d12-11 (8%)
Fence	1d4-2 (50%)
Healer	1d3-2 (33%)
Interpreter	1d10-8 (20%)
Laborer	1d4+1 (100%)
Leech/Physician	1d6-5 (16%)
Linkboy	1d4-3 (25%)
Minstrel/entertainer	1d4-2 (50%)
Navigator (ports only)	1d4-3 (25%)
Priest	1d3-1 (66%)
Sage	1d12-11 (8%)
Scribe/Clerk	1d10-9 (10%)
Wizard	1d4-3 (25%)

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to maintain himself with his skill. If only 50 people live in his home village, he'll need to sell each person a new pair of shoes once every five weeks in order to keep himself afloat. Unless his shoes are truly exceptional (or absolutely terrible), that's unlikely. However, in a town of 500, he only needs to sell each person a new pair of shoes once per year, which is much more reasonable. Finally, in a town of 5,000, he's confronted with the problem of shoeing each individual person once per 500 weeks (almost 10 years!) if he can only make 10 pairs of shoes a week. In this situation, you can bet that another cobbler or two will set up shop in order to serve the population's demand for a supply of shoes. The point of all this is simple—just as farmers need to cultivate a certain amount of land in order to make it worth their while, businessmen must have a sufficient customer base to support their trade.

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in that trade!) In a city of 30 population blocks, you can assume that there are 5 or 6 shipwrights. Once the total exceeds 100%, you can assume that at least one person with the required skills can be found in the city.

The idea behind this system is that, with little preparation, you can answer the question of whether or not a master tailor can be found in a town when the PCs are suddenly invited to the lord mayor's banquet. The routine matters—buying supplies, basic equipment, and common tools or simple weapons—should not be resolved with this system, unless there are unusual factors at work. Don't forget to apply the law of supply and demand when appropriate; if the PCs are desperate to find a coppersmith and absolutely require his services, they're likely to pay through the nose for his work, especially if there's only one coppersmith to be found in the whole city.

**Villages of less than 1 Population Block:** In lightly settled areas, most communities consist of considerably less than 500 people. In these small hamlets, reduce the chance of finding a particular resource or type of business by 25% to 75%, depending on just how small the town really is. For example, there is normally a 100% chance of encountering a blacksmith in a population block of 500 people, so in a town of about 250, it's reasonable to lower that chance to about 50%.

A brief description of each trade or service follows:

**Alchemist:** A person who investigates the properties of different substances and reagents. Alchemists can provide potion ingredients and, in some cases, poisons, acids, or pyrotechnical substances useful to adventurers.

**Almshouse:** Well-off towns or cities in good societies may include an almshouse, often administered by a local temple. Food and lodging are provided for the truly destitute at no charge. Most almshouses limit how long an individual can remain in their care.

**Apothecary:** A trader in oils, medicinal salves and powders, and more questionable substances. Useful for acquiring spell components, poisons, soporifics, and snake-oil cures.

**Armorer:** A craftsman specializing in armor's production, maintenance, and repair. In places where there is a high demand, an armorer's shop may be a small industry employing forty or fifty smiths and apprentices. Only a few master armorers are capable of making field plate or full plate armor.

**Assassin/Bounty Hunter:** The mechanics of hiring an assassin or bounty hunter to kill or capture a particular person, and the success of the effort, are left to the DM to adjudicate. It may take several days of looking to find a NPC of this sort.

**Astrologer:** A fortune teller who specializes in the casting of horoscopes. Many astrologers are fakes, but in a fantasy environment some may be quite powerful and accurate.

**Baker:** An individual who bakes and sells bread of different types. Adventurers may find dense hardtacks or waybread to be useful as provisions.







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**Barber:** In addition to trimming hair and beards, barbers often serve as good sources of gossip and as crude physicians. On rare occasions, one might actually have Healing as a non-weapon proficiency.

**Barrister:** A lawyer. In some legal systems, defendants are barred from representing themselves and *must* retain the services of a barrister to defend them in court.

**Blacksmith:** Blacksmiths specialize in iron-work. Nails, tools, fittings such as bands or hinges, and horseshoes are the mainstay of the blacksmith's shop. Some skilled blacksmiths may also be capable of repairing arms and armor.

**Boarding House:** Generally, boarding houses aren't found until towns begin to surpass castles and estates in importance and trade and industry become important. This category also includes rooms or houses for rent.

**Boat for hire:** Buying passage on ships headed to distant ports falls into this category. Naturally, the town or city must be a port of some kind, on a river or sea.

**Bookbinder:** A person who specializes in the preparation and binding of books. In medieval towns, this is a rare and highly skilled craft, as each book must be hand-made. Even basic printing presses still require a bookbinder to finish each separate printing.

**Bowyer/Fletcher:** A maker of bows and arrows. In certain settings or cultures, bowyers may be very common.

**Brewer:** Beer, ale, and similar beverages are a mainstay of the medieval town. The region must have some agriculture in order to support breweries.

**Burgler:** Hiring a burgler for a specific job may take several days, depending on how the PCs go about it.

**Butcher:** Butchers are usually found in or near large towns or cities, where many people buy their food instead of growing it. Some butchers may prepare meat by smoking, drying, or salting it for use as travel provisions.

**Carter/Teamster:** A person who makes his living by carrying goods from one place to another. Organized transport is unusual in medieval settings, but a fair amount of traffic can be found in and around industrial or trade centers. Carters and teamsters may sell or trade wagons or draft animals.

**Cartwright:** A character who builds wagons, carts, wheelbarrows, and similar conveyances. In big cities, cartwrights might even specialize as exotic carriage-builders for the wealthy.

**Chandler:** A candle-maker. In rural areas, most farmers and villagers make their own crude candles, but a chandler's work is much finer and may be decorated or scented. Chandlers may deal in oil lamps and lanterns.

**Cheesemaker:** Usually found in regions where at least some grazing or herding of dairy animals supplements agriculture. A well-preserved cheese is an excellent travelling food, since it packs a lot of nutritional value into a convenient size and weight.

**Clockmaker:** Generally reserved for Renaissance settings, clockmakers can make any kind of small mechanical

devices. Some medieval clocks featured very detailed clockwork figures.

**Cobbler:** A shoemaker. In rural areas, peasants usually go without shoes, wrap their feet in cloth, or use sandals instead.

**Cooper:** A barrel-maker. Brewers, vintners, and merchants need barrels to ship their goods in.

**Dragoman:** Typically a native of the area, this is a person who works as a guide, interpreter, and assistant to people visiting the city. Honest dragomen help negotiate prices, keep their charges away from swindlers and bad neighborhoods, and generally make themselves indispensable.

**Dyer:** A craftsman who dyes cloth for a living. In towns built around textile trade, dyers perform a vital industry.

**Engineer:** An NPC skilled in the theory of construction and design of machines and buildings. Military engineers study siege warfare and castle construction.

**Fence:** Adventurers who come by ill-gotten booty may find that a fence is the only way to dispose of their wealth. Fences usually give a very poor return on the item's value, but there is nowhere else for the PCs to sell things that clearly belong to someone else.

**Fine Clothier:** A number of related trades fall into this category, including hatters, glovers, hosiers, haberdashers, embroiderers, and similar specialized characters. A PC who wishes to display his wealth or nobility (or make a pretense of these characteristics) must frequent a fine clothier in order to keep a fashionable wardrobe.

**Furrier:** A merchant and craftsman who buys cured furs from trappers and turns them into fine fur garments, blankets, rugs, or coats. Adventurers wishing to sell exotic pelts will want to find a furrier.

**Glassblower/Glazier:** These are actually two separate trades, but for our purposes they can be discussed together. A glazier is a character who manufactures and cuts plates of glass, usually for windows or industrial use. Glassblowers specialize in creating glassware, such as drinking vessels, plates, and other such things.

**Grocer:** In rural areas, grocers are very rare—most people grow their own food and have no need of the grocer's goods. However, in towns and cities, grocers are much more common. Grocers buy food from the countryside and bring it to the town. Adventurers can usually equip themselves with routine rations from a grocer, although specialized provisions and iron rations are not usually available.

**Healer:** A character who knows something about the healing arts (in other words, the Healing non-weapon proficiency). Rural healers tend to be wise women or hedge wizards, but larger towns may support more skilled healers.

**Herbalist:** In many cases, healers are herbalists, and vice versa. Herbalists collect medicinal herbs of various properties. Some practitioners may be completely ineffective, but others may be able to create healing salves or poison antidotes at the DM's discretion.

**Hostel:** Hostels are stopping places for travelers on diffi-





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cult stretches of highly trafficked roads. Usually, a charitable institution such as a monastery or a temple keeps the hostel open for wayfarers in need. Hostels provide lodging for the night and a simple meal for nothing more than a small donation.

**Inn:** The quality of inns varies widely, from crude barracks to sumptuous resorts. Even if an inn is nowhere to be found, it's usually possible for adventurers to find short-term lodging in a barn or hayloft in almost any town.

**Interpreter:** Naturally, the rarer the language, the more unlikely it is that the PCs will be able to find a qualified interpreter. Centers of trade and border towns are the best places to look for interpreters.

**Jeweler:** This includes the related trades of gemcutters, goldsmiths, silversmiths, and dealers in rare objects of art. Adventurers often find jewelers to be an excellent place to exchange small, precious items for more convenient cash or turn coin into an easily carried gemstone.

**Laborer:** With the right amount of money or persuasion, a force of laborers can be temporarily raised from almost any community. This refers to people who practice a variety of menial work, often in the employ of the city or town. Hiring the laborers to work outside of their home town is usually more difficult than offering work near their homes.

**Leatherworker:** Especially common in regions where the raising of livestock is a major industry, leatherworkers create a number of valuable and useful goods from cowhide. Tack and harness, leather clothing, belts and packs, boots, clasps, covers, and rawhide ropes are all made by leatherworkers. Note that leather armor and forms of armor using leather are usually made by armorers.

**Leech/Physician:** Depending on how common and accepted priests are, common people may prefer to call a physician before they call a cleric. Physicians and leeches often have the Healing non-weapon proficiency, and may have some skill with herbs and medicines.

**Linkboy:** Hiring torch- or lantern-bearers is usually easy in any sizable town, but finding linkboys who are willing to risk life and limb in horrible dungeons is a little harder.

**Locksmith:** True locks don't appear until the Renaissance, but at the DM's option crude and poorly made locks may be available in societies with Crusades-era technology. Refer to the optional rule in the *DMG* about varying lock quality—usually, a locksmith will charge more money for his best work.

**Mason:** Almost all medieval villages or towns include buildings or structures of uncut fieldstone chinked with mud or crude mortar, but a building made of cut and dressed stone is a different matter. Masons grow more common in areas where sophisticated stone buildings dominate, especially in technology levels or situations where large public buildings and castles are prevalent. Specialized masons may be sculptors of remarkable skill, or masters of one particular type of stone or construction.

**Miller:** Mills are necessary to grind grain into flour or

meal, a far more versatile and long-lasting foodstuff than unprocessed grain alone. Mills can be found in almost every village in areas of heavy agriculture; light agriculture often concentrates on non-grain crops such as fruit.

**Minstrel/entertainer:** Hiring performers of some kind is fairly easy in any good-sized town. Musicians, singers, actors, jugglers, acrobats, and buffoons can all be found in medieval settings.

**Navigator:** Usually encountered in towns or cities with seafaring interests, a navigator usually signs on for one or two voyages at a time, unless the PCs actually own their own vessel and want to draft a permanent crew.

**Porter:** There are two places where porters are common: in cities where freight needs to be carried only a block or two through crowded streets, and in remote areas where caravans or expeditions need to carry extra supplies through particularly difficult terrain. Adventurers can easily hire porters in any village or town for short jobs. Gathering a band of bearers for a long expedition is somewhat harder.

**Potter:** Potters make various types of vessels, urns, and clayware, which is generally of little interest to the typical heroic adventurer.

**Priest:** While most villages and towns include at least one or two non-spellcasting parsons or ministers, the presence of a priest of 1st level or higher is somewhat unusual. Village priests are usually 1st-6th level; town priests are usually 2nd-8th level and may be attended by a handful of junior priests; and city priests are usually 3rd-12th level, with a significant retinue of acolytes and itinerant adventuring priests in their care. Depending on the campaign and situation, NPC priests may be willing to cure adventurers or cast other spells for them in exchange for significant donations, a service or quest of some kind, or even a sincere and long-lasting conversion to the faith.

**Provisioner:** The adventurer's best friend, a provisioner is a grocer and merchant who specializes in the sale of traveling rations and exploration equipment. Packs, sacks, rations, rope, tools, and other useful gear can usually be found in a provisioner's store.

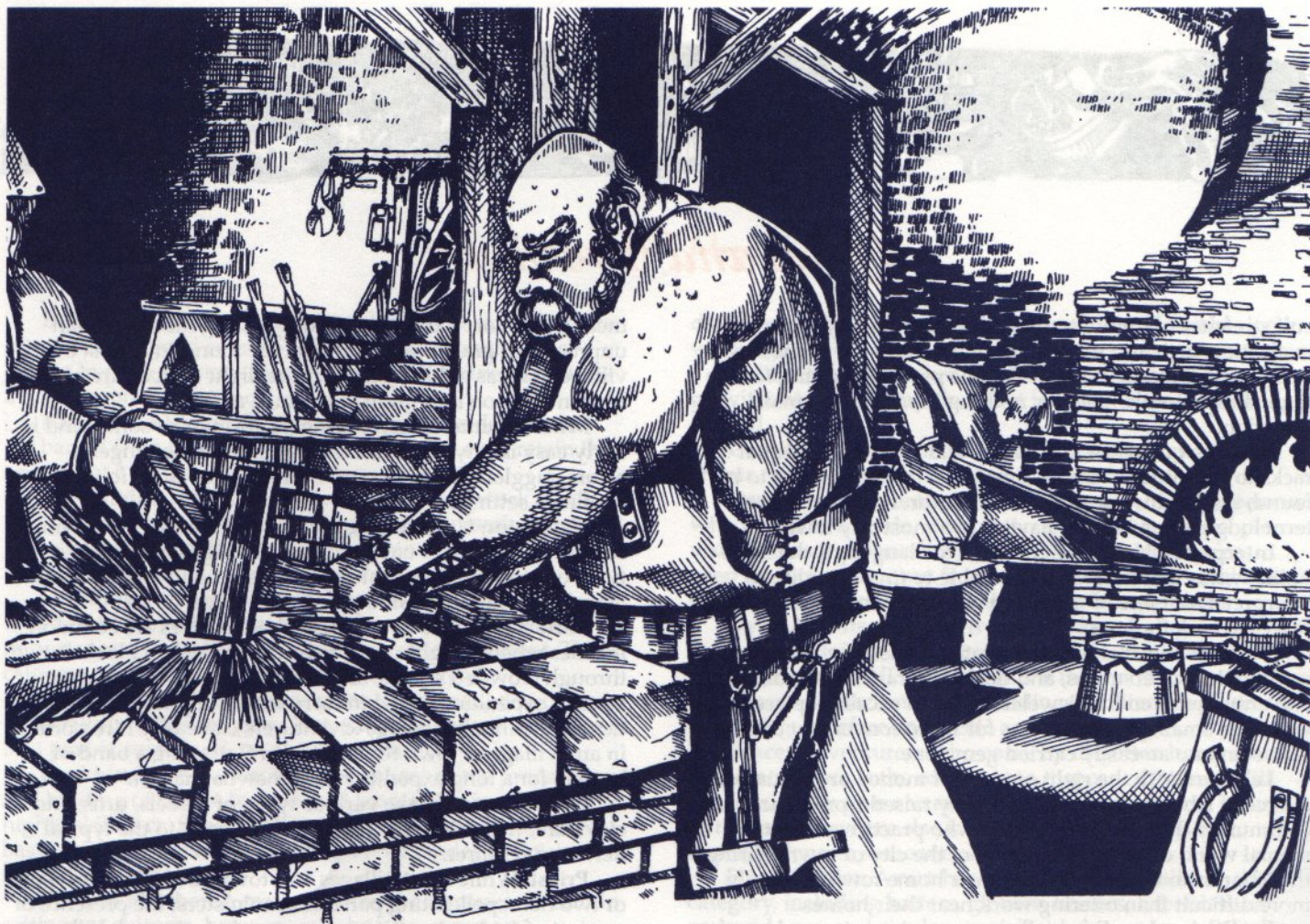
**Saddler:** A saddler is a leatherworker who specializes in the making of saddles, tack and harness, stirrups, and other accoutrements for horses. Military saddles suitable for mounted combat must be bought from a saddler.

**Sage:** These NPCs are described in detail in the *DMG*. Table 36 refers to the chances of encountering a sage of any type in the community—finding a sage specialized in a particular field of learning may be much more difficult.

**Scribe/Clerk:** Trusted with recording legal agreements, contracts, deeds, leases, and other such records, scribes and clerks are normally only found in places where a fair portion of the population is literate. Adventurers agreeing to undertake a task or quest may need to find a scribe (and possibly a barrister) to draft the contract.

**Seamstress/Tailor:** Most commoners can make their own clothes from rough homespun material, wool, and leather. A





seamstress or tailor can create garments suitable for the middle and upper classes. Note that it takes the services of a fine clothier to *really* impress someone; a tailor can simply fashion good-looking, well-fitting clothes.

**Shipwright:** Shipwrights and boatwrights operate in towns or cities with maritime interests. Many coastal villages may include a skilled boatwright, but only the largest towns and cities can support the work of a shipwright. Shipwrights rarely have extra ships just lying around for sale; usually a character has to order one built and pay a fair sum in advance in order to put the shipyard to work.

**Specialty Smith:** There are a great number of specializations open to smiths, including goldsmiths, tinsmiths, silver-smiths, pewterers, wiresmiths, and so on. Usually, these specialists are only found in large towns or cities, since their work tends to be decorative instead of functional.

**Stable:** Horse traders are especially easy to find in regions known for horse-raising, and in centers of trade. Adventurers might be able to convince almost anyone to part with the horse they own, but if they want to see a selection and haggle over the price, they'll have to find a stable.

**Tanner:** Tanners take rawhide and turn it into finished leather by tanning it. This is a lengthy and tedious process involving some truly odoriferous substances, so tanners are usually found at the downwind edge of a town or city.

**Tavern:** Alehouses of one kind or another can be found in almost any community, even the smallest. Like inns, taverns vary in quality and clientele.

**Tilemaker:** Tilemakers create decorative tiles or sturdier building tiles. Usually, they're found in warm regions.

**Trader/merchant:** Each individual trader is a specialist of a sort, concentrating in the purchase and resale of some commodity or good. For example, drapers are merchants who trade in cloths. Almost every community has at least one trader or merchant.

**Vintner:** A vintner is a winemaker. Usually, vintners are found in the countryside, near the villages and towns where their fields are located. In places where winemaking is an important industry, vintners may be especially important, accounting for most of the fields and labor of a particular village or town.

**Weaponsmith:** Usually located near a source of steady work, weaponsmiths may specialize in one particular type of work. Armsmiths forge arrowheads, gunsmiths make firearms, and swordsmiths (naturally) work on swords. A large weaponsmith's shop might include dozens of skilled smiths and apprentices.

**Weaver:** Weavers take raw material such as wool or cotton and weave it into usable cloth. While most commoners can do this at a basic level, the work of a weaver is usually finer and more durable.

**Wizard:** Depending on the nature of the campaign, wizards may be extraordinarily scarce, or they can be common as any other type of skilled craftsmen. Generally, most towns include at least one or two characters who know at least a smattering of spells, even if no true wizard resides there. Vil-



## Cities and Provinces

large wizards range from 1st-4th level; town wizards are usually 2nd-7th level; and city wizards are 4th-16th level. If wizards are especially common in the campaign, they may be organized in wizard's guilds, with a number of minor spellcasters, sages, and apprentices in attendance.

**Woodworker:** Many commoners are capable of creating rough furniture or framing a simple structure, but a woodworker can create ornate furniture, tools, and sturdy, well-made houses. Many woodworkers specialize as cabinet-makers or in related fields.

### Demographics

One last topic deserving discussion in this section is the subject of game demographics. How many adventurers actually live in the local campaign area? How many of the NPCs in a particular town or city actually have a class and level? How many nobles, knights, priests, and wizards can a given area support?

Human organizations and societies tend to be pyramid-shaped, with a few elite people at the top, a larger grouping in the middle, and an even more numerous assortment of have-nots at the bottom. This was especially true in feudal societies. At least half of the entire population is composed of poor farmers, peasants, herdsmen, and fishermen. Their primary concern is growing, raising, or catching enough food to get by. All other occupations—aborers, craftsmen, merchants, teamsters, soldiers, etc.—take up about another 20 to 40 percent of the population. The landholding nobles, knights, priests, major merchants, and other elite persons make up the smallest portion of the populace, accounting for no more than about 5 percent of the total population.

In a feudal setting, the standing armies of a kingdom are composed of and supported by the high nobility. Nobles and the fittest members of their families are the primary knight-hood of a kingdom. Their personal guards, retinues, and retainers are also armed, mounted, and equipped at the lord's expense as a defender of the land. In addition, most feudal lords maintain small private armies of low-class soldiery. There isn't a national, unified army led by an officer class; a hodgepodge of lords, knights, and king's marshals each gather up and field the best force they can and then show up for the battle. In European history, medieval commanders could spend years just deciding who was in charge of the whole mess! Powerful temples, monasteries, and special knightly orders may field their own private armies in the kingdom's defense.

While it's good to know how many haves and have-nots you can find in a typical feudal setting, most DMs and players are more interested in the demographics of adventurers. Here's a good rule of thumb: Assume that between 5 and 10 percent of the total population (about 1 in 10 to 1 in 20 people) actually have a class and level. Half of these characters are 1st level; out of the rest, half are 2nd; out of the remainder, half are 3rd; and so on.

For example, let's take a look at a village of 100 people.

The DM decides that these are hardy frontier folk, so he bumps up the occurrence of classed characters to 16 out of the 100. Of these special 16, 8 are 1st level; 4 are 2nd level; 2 are 3rd level; 1 is 4th level; and 1 is 5th level. Obviously, the DM can throw in exceptions to this rule anytime he likes. Just because a character has a class and level, he is not necessarily an adventurer. In fact, true wandering adventurers probably account for less than half of all classed NPCs.

In most settings, fighters and thieves are by far the most common type of characters encountered, making up about 70% of the total classed NPCs. Roughly 20% of NPCs with classes are priests and bards, and only 10% are wizards. In our example above, 12 of the 16 NPCs are fighters and thieves, 3 are priests or bards, and only 1 is a wizard. The level distribution usually reflects the discrepancy in the character classes, so about three-quarters of the 8 1st-level characters are fighters or thieves, and three-quarters of the 4 2nd level characters are fighters or thieves.

You can throw the assumed demographics out of the window any time you like, but there are some good reasons for them in game play. First of all, it serves to remind the players of just how special and unique their characters are, especially characters who survive to higher levels. Second, it's a good way to keep track of just how far the PCs have to go in order to find a high-level character of a given class. Finding a wizard who can use *stone to flesh* to restore a petrified character can be quite difficult in areas of sparse or low population. As a 12th level character of a rare class, a wizard of this power appears about once for every million people. A party of adventurers may have to search an entire kingdom in order to find help for their friend.

### Non-Player Characters

A stable of distinctive, believable NPCs is the hallmark of a well-developed campaign. Each NPC adds as much flavor and detail to the campaign as a host of monsters or a dozen small towns, especially when these NPCs act with solid motivations. Not all NPCs need to have classes and levels; a 0-level barkeep who hears all the good gossip in the town, or a smith or provisioner who keeps the player characters equipped with the weapons and supplies they need can be important supporting characters for the campaign.

While it's quite impossible to describe every person living in a town or settlement, most players are content to keep a short list of four or five good contacts or acquaintances per town. Here are some ideas for NPCs that may be useful to the PC party while providing color for the town:

- The landlord or innkeeper who gives the PCs a place to stay in town;
- The barkeep, barmaids, or stable boys of a busy tavern may hear lots of rumors and keep up with events in the town and area;
- Superiors and commanders for PCs who belong to organizations in the town—the high priest of the PC cleric's tem-



ple, the guildmaster the PC thief owes allegiance to, or the lord who gives the PCs some of their quests or tasks;

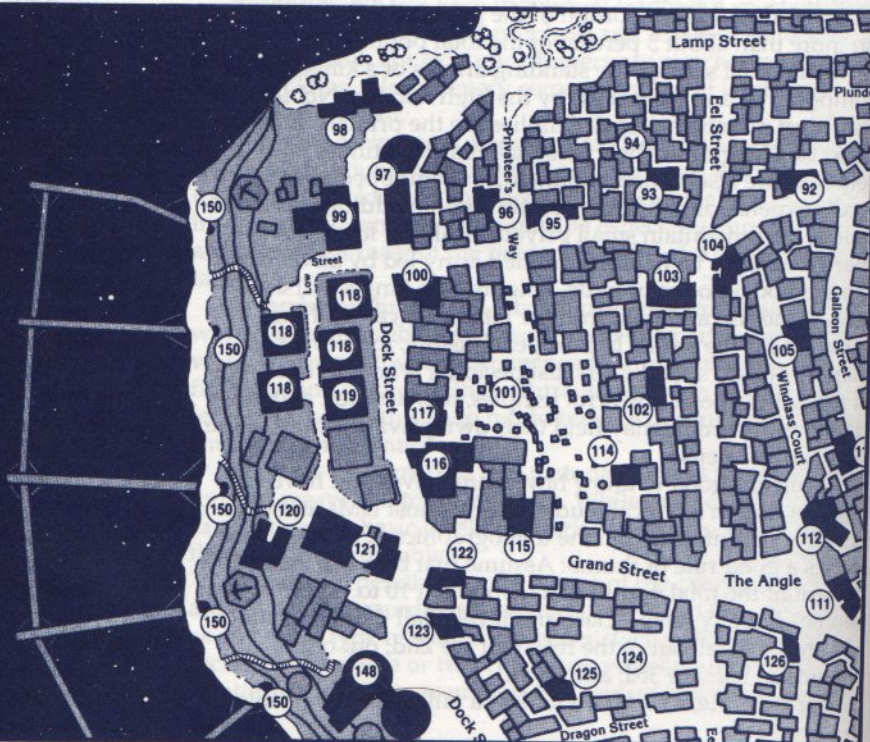
- The sheriff, constable, or officer of the guard who deals with troublemakers—including, from time to time, some of the player characters;
- A sage, healer, seer, or similar advisor for the PCs;
- Rivals who have a reason to compete with the PCs—for example, an important priest who serves a different deity than the PC cleric, a duelist who resents the PC fighter's reputation, or an independent burglar who refuses to join the PC thief's guild;
- Enemies or villains who have it in for the PCs for any of a number of reasons—foreign spies or agents, cultists, enemy guilds, mad wizards, or even an upstanding member of the community who believes himself wronged by PCs;
- Spellcasters who may be willing to cast spells on the party's behalf;
- Specialized craftsmen or artisans who supply PCs with unusual equipment or spell components;
- Fences or underworld contacts;
- Traders who deal in used arms and equipment;
- Beggars or street urchins who can act as spies and look-outs for the PCs;
- Characters who could be potential hirelings or henchmen to the PCs.

For most NPCs, you don't need to know much more than a class and level, alignment, intelligence, and any personality tendencies or quirks you wish to portray with that character. However, if you expect that the PCs may try to enter a combat of arms with that NPC sooner or later (or vice versa), you should give the character a complete character sheet. Include ability scores, equipment and belongings, and proficiencies if appropriate. Remember, a single NPC can usually be taken down by the concerted action of a party of adventurers, regardless of how powerful he or she is...but even a weak NPC in an influential position, or with the forces of law and order on his side, can be almost impossible to defeat.

### Mapping Cities and Towns

Unlike most dungeons or ruins, cities and towns are rarely subjected to foot-by-foot searches and explorations by parties of intrepid adventurers. You do not have to draw a map so detailed that it shows the location of each and every building in the town, with a keyed description for each structure. This is especially true if the town merely serves as a base of operations, and the players don't pay much attention to it. If a visit to the town consists of nothing more than the statement, "We go back to Blackfort, rest a week and relearn spells, and then come back to the dungeon," creating a detailed map of the town is obviously not worth your time and effort.

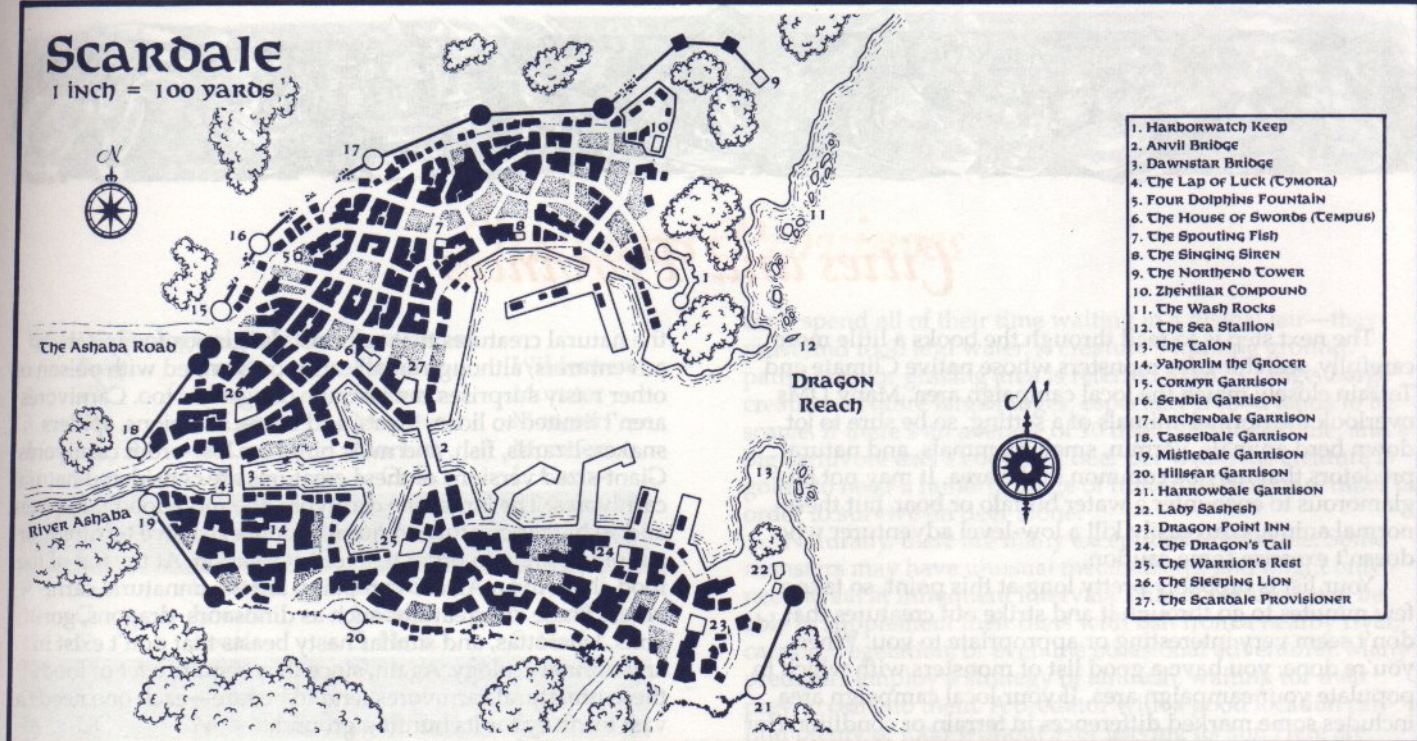
- 102 The Red House
- 103 The Green Galley
- 104 Marshall's Smithy
- 105 Strombard's Carvings
- 106 Turwait's Armors
- 107 The Black Bull
- 108 Cap'n Gyudd's Nautical Goods
- 109 Holy Keep of Bane
- 110 Chardra's Grocery
- 111 The Drunken Octopus
- 112 Council of the City
- 113 The War Drakes
- 114 The Rampant Lion
- 115 Temple of Odin
- 116 Daxault Warehouses
- 117 Arcane Warehouse
- 118 Kullek Warehouses
- 119 Mouhe Warehouses
- 120 Erenfezt Warehouse





# Scardale

1 inch = 100 yards



1. Harborwatch Keep
2. Anvil Bridge
3. Dawnstar Bridge
4. The Lap of Luck (Cymora)
5. Four Dolphins Fountain
6. The House of Swords (Tempus)
7. The Spouting Fish
8. The Singing Siren
9. The Northend Tower
10. Zhenlilar Compound
11. The Wash Rocks
12. The Sea Stallion
13. The Talon
14. Yaborkim the Grocer
15. Cormyr Garrison
16. Sembia Garrison
17. Archendale Garrison
18. Casselbale Garrison
19. Mistlebale Garrison
20. Hillsfar Garrison
21. Harrowbale Garrison
22. Lady Sashesh
23. Dragon Point Inn
24. The Dragon's Tail
25. The Warrion's Rest
26. The Sleeping Lion
27. The Scardale Provisioner

On the other hand, even a small town or castle can support a number of urban adventures involving troubles with thieves, murder mysteries, intrigues, tournaments, special festivals, and hunts for monsters masquerading as humans. If you intend to run adventures of this kind, you may find it to be very useful to take a small neighborhood, district, or a complete village and describe it in great detail. This can be an excellent setting for all kinds of adventures.

One of the easiest and most efficient ways to create a good city or town map is to engage in a little cartographical plagiarism. Hundreds of medieval towns have been mapped out in a variety of AD&D game products and in history texts—find one you like, change the name and a few of the more prominent features, and use it for your own. The players will never know the difference.

If you like to map out your own towns and cities, there are several methods you can use. You can outline the individual buildings, showing how they fit into a block; see Diagram 15, which shows a portion of a map from the *Rock of Bral*. Note that locations of special interest are called out and numbered. Another method of doing the same thing is shown in Diagram 16, from *The Dalelands*. In this example, the outlines of the blocks themselves are shown, without individual buildings.

Remember to incorporate lots of blind alleys, winding streets, and cluttered squares in the map. Medieval towns didn't have to deal with automobile traffic, so broad, open

thoroughfares should not be very common. City walls and fortifications are optional, depending on the size and importance of the town.

## Monsters and Ecology

What's an AD&D campaign without hordes of horrible monsters waiting for the PCs the moment they leave the safety of the town? Every local campaign area needs a good selection of natural and unnatural denizens to stalk and terrorize the heroic adventurers. Given the fact that the AD&D game system includes literally thousands of monsters, creating a population of interesting creatures for an area can be a challenging task.

The first step in populating a region with monsters is to create a short list of creatures that appear in the area. The *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome and any *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM* appendices that apply to your game world are the first resources you'll want to make use of. Scan through the books and jot down monsters that you know you want the PCs to encounter. Pick out your favorites to begin with, and then throw in any creatures that seem like naturals for the area. Don't forget to include any sentient races that may be present in the area—if you rolled up dominant and secondary races for the area, make sure that they're at the top of the list.





## Cities and Provinces

The next step is to read through the books a little more carefully, searching for monsters whose native Climate and Terrain closely match the local campaign area. Many DMs overlook the normal animals of a setting, so be sure to jot down herd animals, vermin, small mammals, and natural predators that may be common in the area. It may not be glamorous to encounter a water buffalo or boar, but these normal animals can easily kill a low-level adventurer who doesn't exercise some caution.

Your list is probably pretty long at this point, so take a few minutes to go through it and strike out creatures that don't seem very interesting or appropriate to you. When you're done, you have a good list of monsters with which to populate your campaign area. If your local campaign area includes some marked differences in terrain or condition (for example, a large swamp in one corner, or a dense belt of forest), you may want to create secondary lists for these particular terrains. In general, you shouldn't need more than three or four separate lists for the local campaign.

### Ecology

Creating a living, believable ecology out of a dry list of monsters is the next step of populating the local campaign area with monstrous and natural menaces. You don't need to apply a great measure of real-world ecological principles to your own campaign, but you may find it helpful to follow a couple of basic guidelines in order to increase the believability of the campaign. For example, if a forest is populated by more carnivores than herbivores, the herbivores are going to be decimated in pretty short order... after which, the hungry carnivores will soon starve themselves to death.

The basic building block of an ecological system is the region's plant life. Without vegetation, animal life cannot exist. Plants convert inorganic compounds—water, soil, and sunlight—into organic substances. Areas that lack plant cover cannot support an animal population. Deserts, glaciers, and barren badlands are the most desolate habitats on Earth, although a small number of specially adapted creatures can survive in even these environments.

Herbivores of various types are the next step on the food chain. By far, insects represent the most numerous herbivores. Small mammals such as rabbits, groundhogs, and squirrels are common. Larger herbivores tend to be grazers or foragers, such as wild pigs, deer, cattle, and waders like hippopotami. Herbivores are usually specialized: grazers like grasses, waders like aquatic vegetation, and foragers exist on roots, tubers, and shoots of particular plants. In the animal kingdom, herbivores outnumber carnivores by about ten to one.

Carnivores are animals that feed on other animals. Small carnivores are generally far more common than large carnivores; the lowest-order carnivores eat insects and worms, medium-sized carnivores survive on small animals, and large carnivores eat large herbivores. Naturally, large carnivores are

the natural creatures that are most dangerous to typical adventurers, although small carnivores armed with poison or other nasty surprises can be quite dangerous too. Carnivores aren't limited to lions, tigers, and bears; scorpions, spiders, snakes, lizards, fish, and most birds are low-order carnivores. Giant-sized versions of these creatures are considered natural carnivores. The larger the carnivore, the more food it requires, and so bigger creatures require a more extensive territory (or supply of prey) in order to avoid starvation. At the top of the food chain in an AD&D campaign are the unnatural carnivores. These are creatures such as dinosaurs, dragons, gorgons, leucrottas, and similar nasty beasts that don't exist in any normal ecology. Again, since they require a *lot* of food, these unnatural carnivores tend to be rare—each one needs a vast territory for its hunting ground.

In addition to these categories, there are several other ecological roles. Omnivores are creatures that feed on both plants and animals, depending on the availability of food. Scavengers are specialized carnivores that feed on carrion. Finally, intelligent beings create artificial ecologies by herding livestock, growing crops, and hunting or trapping local wildlife.

You don't need to diagram an exact food chain for the local campaign area, but it's not a bad idea to think about what a monster eats (and what eats it) before you drop it into the middle of the campaign.

### Building Encounter Tables

While your players may eventually meet every creature on your monster list, some creatures should be far more common than others. These monsters might even show up in an adventure that has nothing whatsoever to do with them, because the PCs happen to blunder into their territory. A random encounter table is a handy tool for providing the players with an illustration of what creatures are common or uncommon in a given area. The *DMG* describes the use of random encounters and the building of random encounter tables in great detail, but here's a way to build the table to reflect the ecology and food chain you've created for the local campaign area.

First, decide if the region is rural, frontier or borderland, or wilderness. Rural areas have a population of Average or higher; frontierlands have Low or Sparse populations; and wildernesses are basically uninhabited by sentient races. Now, divide the monsters on your list into the following categories: Small Herbivores; Large Herbivores; Small Carnivores; Medium Carnivores; Large Carnivores; Monstrous Carnivores; Local People; and Non-Local People. Note that raiders who plague an area, traders who are passing through on a busy road, or patrols from a nearby town should be considered Non-Locals. From these lists, you can fill in a random encounter table using the guidelines below:





## Cities and Provinces

Table 37: Ecological Role and Encounters

	Freq.	Rural	Frontier	Wilderness
2	VR	Monster	Monster	Monster
3	VR	L. Carn.	Monster	Monster
4	VR/R	M. Carn.	Monster	Monster
5	R	S. Carn.	L. Carn.	L. Carn.
6	R	S. Carn.	M. Carn.	M. Carn.
7	UC	L. Herb.	S. Carn.	Non-local
8	UC	S. Herb. <sup>1</sup>	Non-local	Locals
9	C	S. Herb. <sup>2</sup>	Locals	S. Herb. <sup>2</sup>
10	C	Locals	Locals	S. Herb. <sup>1</sup>
11	C	Locals	S. Herb. <sup>2</sup>	S. Herb. <sup>1</sup>
12	C	Locals	S. Herb. <sup>1</sup>	L. Herb.
13	C	Non-local	S. Herb. <sup>1</sup>	L. Herb.
14	UC	Non-local	L. Herb.	S. Carn.
15	UC	S. Herb. <sup>1</sup>	L. Herb.	S. Carn.
16	R	S. Carn.	S. Carn.	M. Carn.
17	R	M. Carn.	M. Carn.	L. Carn.
18	VR/R	L. Carn.	L. Carn.	Monster
19	VR	Monster	Monster	Monster
20	VR	Monster	Monster	Monster

<sup>1</sup> Consider as Large Herbivore if you don't want to include Small Herbivores on the table.

<sup>2</sup> Consider as Locals if you don't want to include Small Herbivores on the table.

As the DM, you should feel free to ignore these guidelines in order to present an interesting range of possible encounters. Realistically, there's little to be gained in an encounter with a small herbivore (except lunch), so it's reasonable to either treat these as "No Encounter" or to substitute an entry with more appeal to the typical adventurer. Note that you can also substitute Common, Uncommon, or Rare monsters for the more mundane creatures in the encounter table wherever you think it appropriate, especially if the monsters in question qualify for the ecological role you have in mind. For example, if a frontier area is plagued by bugbear raids (an Uncommon monster), there's no reason that 'Bugbear' couldn't be pencilled in to the Non-Local entry.

### Lairs and Ranges

Not all monsters need to be randomly encountered or built into a realistic ecology. The AD&D game is filled with dragon's lairs, monster-haunted ruins, and dungeons stocked with horrible perversions of nature. The local campaign area may include a number of deliberately placed monsters with specific lairs. Since you're not trying to justify them in a reasonable food chain, simply place these individual creatures wherever it seems appropriate to you.

If you prefer to place individual monsters, you may want to think about how much territory these creatures normally require. Monsters that depend on normal food and drink

can't spend all of their time waiting in a dismal lair—they must find food and water. A creature's hunting ground, patrol area, or grazing area is referred to as its range. Large creatures require large ranges, especially if food tends to be scarce. If there's an average of 10 deer per square mile, and a big carnivore eats a couple of deer per week, the creature is going to need a hunting range of hundreds of square miles in order to survive on deer alone.

Naturally, there are many exceptions to this rule. Some monsters may have unusual metabolisms, and might only need to eat at infrequent intervals. Other creatures may be able to supplement their diets with fish from a nearby river, carrion, vegetation, or even the occasional adventurer. Many predators employ a strategy of ambush, waiting for their prey to come to them. A predator with a good location can find plenty of food without ever leaving its lair. Here are some rough guidelines for how much territory a predator requires in order to support itself:

Creature Size	Hunting Range, Good Conditions	Hunting Range, Poor Conditions
Small	1 sq. mile	3 sq. miles
Medium	5 sq. miles	15 sq. miles
Large	100 sq. miles	300 sq. miles
Huge	500 sq. miles	1,500 sq. miles
Gargantuan	2,500 sq. miles	7,500 sq. miles

**Good Conditions** include tropical through sub-arctic frontier or wilderness regions, with the exception of deserts, high mountains, and other desolate terrain types. Areas with abundant game are considered good hunting ranges.

**Poor Conditions** include barren terrain, or terrain that has been extensively cleared and planted. Note that creatures that make humans (or domestic animals) a staple of their diet are quite at home in rural areas and treat these townlands as good conditions. Until your heroes arrive, of course.

Cooperative or intelligent hunters (wolves or trolls are examples of each) may be able to hunt a given area more efficiently, and can therefore exist with a smaller than normal range. Remember, predators that exist on the same type of prey are competitors, and despite species differences must still respect each others' territory. In other words, the chart above doesn't list the distribution of predators of a single species; it lists the distribution of predators of all species. The point of all this is simple: Gargantuan predators of any species should be extremely scarce. At an estimate, a single dragon in an area 50 miles by 50 miles is fairly reasonable.



## Cities and Provinces

### Sites of Interest

The finishing touch to a local campaign is a scattering of sites of interest. These are the places that you, as the DM, expect the PCs to investigate and explore. There's no hard and fast rule for determining how many sites of interest are in the area, or what exactly they are. It's reasonable to throw about half a dozen into the area surrounding the PC's home town or base of operations.

Refer to the attached pad of forms included in this product. You'll find a Site of Interest summary form, which you can use to create a thumbnail sketch of the site, its major denizens, and any unusual features or conditions. When you're ready to, you can expand one of these sites into a fully detailed dungeon, ruin, or adventure, but for now the single-sheet format will be a handy way for you to note what's where and what might happen if the PCs suddenly decided to go there.

#### Castles and Strongholds

To guard their lands, most societies build strong points or defenses of some kind. Castles and strongholds provide the local population with a place to flee to in times of trouble. They give the soldiers of the king a barracks, supply center, and base for attacking invaders, and often function as military or provincial capitals.

Castles are generally built for one of three purposes. First of all, they're built to defend important towns. Most cities are flanked by fortifications or towers of some kind. Secondly, castles are built to control strategic passes, fords, roads, or other features that could be used by an enemy in war. Finally, castles are built for the purpose of controlling a hostile countryside in a conquered land. By providing the overlords with a stronghold and armory, a castle multiplies the strength of the occupying forces.

Usually, castles are held by individual noblemen such as the local baron, count, or duke. The noble may have built his stronghold with his own money, or he may simply hold the castle in the name of the king. Sometimes, castles are purely military in nature, and are garrisoned by royal soldiers answering to no one but the king. Priestly or knightly orders may construct castles, fortified abbeys, or similar constructions.

The number of castles or strongholds in the local campaign area depends on the technology level of the dominant society, the population level, the strategic importance or vulnerability of the region, and finally the wealth of the land. In a local campaign area of average technology and conditions, it's not unreasonable to assume that there are one to three true castles, plus a handful of small watchtowers, magazines, or fortified outposts.

#### Ruins

Forgotten towers, ancient temples, razed castles, and abandoned cities swallowed by the forests and swamps are wonderful sites for adventures. Ruins can be especially interesting if the players get a chance to appreciate the mysterious history surrounding these places; after all, a monster-infested dungeon built by a mad wizard doesn't hold earth-shaking revelations about the history of the area, but exploring the ruins of the ancient Tower of the Elven Lords is almost a scholarly pursuit.

Usually, ruins are fairly rare, unless the local campaign area happens to be located in the heart of a fallen empire. Even then, only two or three distinct sites are necessary in a local campaign area. Not all ruins have to hold terrifying threats to life and limb; something as innocuous as an old weathered wall running across the countryside, or a jumble of toppled standing stones, is a fine touch of scenery. Refer to **History and Mythology**, in the following chapter, for some ideas of how you can layer in lost civilizations and forgotten empires in your campaign.

Sometimes ruins may be part of an existing town or city. Hidden buildings or crypts predating the current construction may lurk right under the streets of the PCs' own home town.

#### Dungeons and Caverns

Naturally, PCs spend lots of time investigating the most unpleasant sort of places. Many campaigns run for years based around nothing more than a town and a nearby dungeon. Dungeons are a fairly illogical assumption of the role-playing game, so don't lose too much sleep over whether or not it makes sense for a seething pit of evil and despair to be located within the local campaign area—if you prefer the dungeoneering side of the game, just place a few of your personal favorites wherever it pleases you.

Caverns are a little more common than true dungeon complexes; in some parts of the world, extensive cavern systems honeycomb the land, linking caves dozens or even hundreds of miles apart. You may decide whether the local campaign area has a connection to the world's underdark, or some similar sunless world miles below the surface. Rival civilizations and unspeakable horrors can lie beneath the daylight world, waiting for the intrepid party of explorers.

#### Monster Lairs

As noted in the previous sections, monster lairs can be considered sites of interest—especially if the monsters in question are unusually tough, intelligent, or occupy an area the PCs would like to investigate. Run-of-the-mill creatures such as natural predators and non-intelligent creatures probably don't deserve mention in this category, but a bandit hideout, a medusa's lair, or a barrow-field haunted by wights and wraiths could all be described as a site of interest. When you need to run a diversionary encounter or a short sidetrek



adventure, a handful of prepared monster lairs can be an extremely useful tool.

Not all monsters need to be adversaries or threats to the nearby communities. A treant's grove, a druid's circle, or a hermit's cave are monster lairs. Even creatures normally considered dangerous, such as ogres or trolls, can strike bargains and stick to them under the right circumstances. A family of stone giants might have an agreement to trade high-quality stone from their quarry for food, worked wood, or woven cloth from a nearby human village.

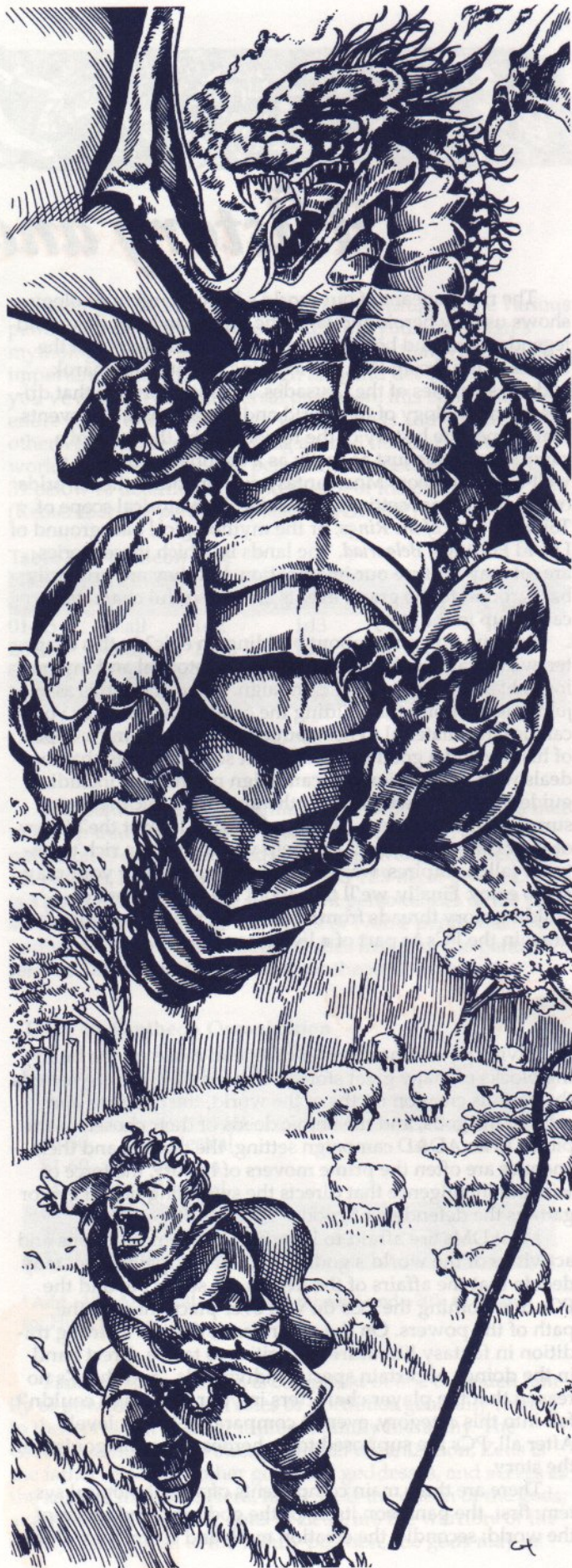
### Unusual Phenomena

Finally, you may want to include a strange situation or unusual occurrence in the local campaign area. Is there a region of wild magic, or a patch of blasted earth where magic is dead? An unusual monument or construction of some kind? A mystical waterfall or sylvan glade? A geyser or hot spring? A place with unusual weather, such as a hill crowned by lightning on summer nights, or a bog that is shrouded in perpetual fog? An ancient tree in which the faerie folk imprisoned a mighty wizard or evil spirit? An oracle of some kind? As you can see, you can let your imagination run wild and create sites ranging from a simple lookout point or echoing cliff to a manifestation of powerful and deadly magic. Remember, the stranger and more spectacular you make a site like these, the more likely the PCs are to notice and investigate.

## What's Next?

We've examined the local campaign area in a lot of detail in this chapter. If you were using a macroscopic design approach, congratulations—you've completed most of the mapping and physical design work of your world-building task. The final step of your world design is in the next chapter, **History and Mythology**.

If you prefer to start small and work outward, you've got a solid base for building up a stable of towns, villages, and dungeons. You can expand your focus by working through this chapter several times to widen the local area, or you can move on to Chapter Four, **Kingdoms and Sociology**, to create a campaign kingdom around your local area. In either case, you'll probably want to start accumulating a roster of NPCs, a list of monsters, and notes about each of the towns or sites found in the area.





# History and Mythology

The rich pageant of our world's history and mythology shows us how heroic and fantastic sagas can be built around legends, tales, and beliefs. Most of us are familiar with the stories of the Trojan War, the looming threat of Ragnarok, and the struggles of the Crusades. An epic storyline that drives the mythology of the world and a great thread of events that shapes the history of the region can be the basis of a campaign setting just as easily as a continental map or a well-built dungeon. Most fantasy authors build their worlds out of stories, not settings. Consider the historical scope of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, or the mythological background of David Eddings' *Belgariad*. The lands in which these stories are set may capture our imagination, but they are primarily background to the grand events and powerful characters caught up in the story.

So, how do you go about building an epic? In this chapter, we'll examine the art of creating a historical and mythological landscape for your campaign. You can use this as a jumping-off point for building the campaign world, or you can use this material to flesh out a world by adding a depth of history and a good story. The first section of this chapter deals with the creation of a campaign mythology, including guidelines for assembling pantheons and heroic myths to surround these powers. Next, we'll take a look at the history of your campaign world and help you to create a rich tapestry of fallen empires, warfare, and exploration for your players to enjoy. Finally, we'll talk about the actual work of building story threads from history and mythology that can draw in the PCs as part of a living saga.

## Mythology

Divine powers and heroes of legend make up the building blocks of many great stories. Our oldest literature records the various creation myths of the world, the relations and roles of the gods, and the heroic deeds of their chosen champions. In an AD&D campaign setting, the powers and their enemies are often the prime movers of history, the force of will and intelligence that directs the swarming tide of evil or gathers the defenders of good.

Most DMs are afraid to incorporate the motivations and activities of the world's gods into their campaign. You may decide that the affairs of the deities are so far beyond the PCs that nothing the PCs do will ever place them in the path of the powers. On the other hand, there is a strong tradition in fantasy literature for deities to take a direct hand in the doings of certain special individuals...and there's no reason that the player characters in your campaign couldn't fall into this category, even at comparatively low level. After all, PCs are supposed to be heroes, the protagonists of the story.

There are three main components of a mythological system: first, the pantheon itself, or the gods and goddesses of the world; secondly, the creation myth and cosmology of the

setting, or the world's place in the universe; and finally the legends and sagas of the mythos.

### Pantheons

A pantheon is a group of gods and goddesses recognized and worshipped in a certain area. In some worlds, pantheons may be virtually non-existent to each other. For example, one nation may venerate the Greek deities, while another worships the Norse deities, and no one tries to explain why there are *two* gods of war—Ares and Tyr—or whether or not Ares and Tyr are even aware of each other. In other settings, both Ares and Tyr may belong to one super-pantheon that embraces all deities worshipped every in the campaign. This is the approach used by most of the TSR worlds, notably the FORGOTTEN REALMS and DRAGONLANCE game settings.

Pantheons usually exhibit a strong tie to the elemental forces of nature. In our history, gods filled our need to explain the capriciousness of the seas or the weather, the beauty of the forests, or the grandeur of the mountains. In fact, a number of mythological figures can be closely associated with the classic elements of earth, air, fire, and water. In the Greek mythological system, the brothers Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades represent the elements of air, water, and earth, respectively. Secondary figures associated with these elements may represent particular moods or aspects of the element; for example, Thor is the Norse god of storms and thunder, the son of the sky-god Odin.

In addition to the elements, other prominent features in the natural world are usually assigned a god or guardian. The sun, moon, bright planets and stars, seasons, forests, animals, and unusual sites or special locations are examples of features that may be worthy of a deity's protection. Apollo and Artemis are good examples; Apollo was the Greek god of the sun while his sister Artemis was the goddess of the moon.

A second type of organization revolves around basic human emotions and situations, such as war, love, greed, honor, and so on. Ares and Aphrodite are good examples of mythological figures of this type. Note that many deities performed double-duty, by representing both a natural phenomena and a human emotion. Apollo was the god of the sun, but he was also a musician, archer, and healer. Thor served as an admirable god of battle in addition to looking after thunderstorms, and Hades was the caretaker of the dead in addition to being the master of the underworld.

As you can see, a mythological system for a campaign can be quite complex, especially if each nation or society possesses its own pantheon and traditions. Consider the question of whether or not the various non-human races have their own deities to worship, and how these non-human pantheons relate to their human counterparts. Suddenly, the celestial realms are becoming quite crowded! Even creatures viewed as the most loathsome of monsters may have deities to whom they pay homage.





## History and Mythology

Fortunately, you don't have to name and describe each and every deity that may be present in your campaign. To get started, a small pantheon of three or four powers with interests in the local campaign area is more than sufficient. As the PCs expand out of their immediate home base and begin to encounter people in distant lands, the number of deities (and pantheons, for that matter) in the campaign can slowly grow. For example, assume that the PCs spend the early levels of their adventuring careers exploring Kingdom A, in which three deities—Adir, Ashir, and Axan—are worshipped. Then, they happen to embark on an epic trek that brings them across the continent to Kingdom B. Obviously, the folks in Kingdom B have never even heard of Adir and company; they worship Bizirga the Great.

**Table 38: Campaign World Pantheons**

d%	Pantheon Type
01-40	One universal pantheon
41-70	One pantheon per major culture, overlapping deities
71-90	One pantheon per major culture, in contact
91-00	One pantheon per major culture, no contact

**Universal Pantheon:** All deities in the campaign belong to a single pantheon, regardless of racial or social divisions. Several gods may share responsibilities (or squabble over) important portfolios, such as war, leadership, or love. The FORGOTTEN REALMS pantheon is a universal pantheon.

**Overlapping Deities:** Each major power has its own distinct pantheon, but there is only one god in the entire campaign for any particular portfolio—if two pantheons include a god of war, for instance, the deity is the same individual who is simply known by different names in different cultures. The pantheon of Cerilia, from the BIRTHRIGHT campaign setting, is of this type.

**Contact:** Each culture has its own distinct pantheon, and its own individual deities which belong to that pantheon and no other. However, both pantheons still fit into the same cosmology. The typical AD&D campaign is of this type; for example, one area may revere the Greek pantheon, while another country worships the Norse pantheon. Both pantheons exist in the Outer Planes—the Greek deities in Olympus, and the Norse deities in Ysgard. Odin and Zeus know of each other's existence in this set-up.

**No Contact:** Each culture has its own pantheon and deities, but the pantheons are completely transparent to each other. For these powers (and their worshippers), huge portions of the Outer Planes are non-existent. In this scenario, Zeus considers the universe to be composed of Olympus, the Earth, Hades, Elysium, and Tarterus (or Carceri, as it's more commonly known). Places like Mechanus or Arcadia are beyond his ken.

After you determine what the relationships of the various pantheons are, the next step in building your campaign's mythology is to select the single pantheon that will be most important to the local campaign area and develop it. If you've decided on a universal pantheon, this is actually the entire roster of the campaign world's gods and goddesses; otherwise, you're only creating a small number of the world's powers. First, roll percentile dice and consult Table 39 below to determine the rough size of the pantheon. (Remember, big pantheons take more work!)

**Table 39: Pantheon Size**

Number of Powers					
d% <sup>1</sup>	Size	Great	Intermed.	Lesser	Demi-
01-25	Small	1d2	1d3	1d4+1	1d4
26-60	Medium	1d3	1d4	1d6+1	1d6
61-85	Large	1d4	1d6	2d4+1	1d8
86-00	Huge	2d3	2d4	2d6+1	1d10

<sup>1</sup> Add +25% to the roll for universal pantheons.

The pantheon size determines the number of powers that make up that mythological system. For example, a Large pantheon is composed of 1d4 greater powers, 1d6 intermediate powers, 2d4+1 lesser powers, and 1d8 demi-powers. This is a good ballpark for the significant personalities of the classic mythologies, such as the Greek or Norse pantheons. Once you've determined how many deities make up the pantheon, refer to Table 40 to see how the pantheon is organized:

**Table 40: Pantheon Organization**

d% <sup>1</sup>	Organization/Type
01-15	Family
16-25	Racial
26-35	Elemental
36-50	Celestial
51-60	Heroes
61-65	Natural
66-75	Stewards
76-80	Bureaucracy
81-00	Mixed

<sup>1</sup> Add +10% to the roll for Large pantheons, and +20% to the roll for Huge pantheons.

**Family:** The pantheon is composed of one extended family of powers, each with roles or portfolios generally related to their position in the traditional family hierarchy. The Greek pantheon has a strong familial organization; Zeus is the father of several other gods and goddesses, and serves as the ruler of the gods; Hera, his wife, is the queen of the gods; and Ares and Heracles, sons of Zeus, are the warriors of the family. In addition to the family position, the gods may be





associated with particular virtues, emotions, or situations—Apollo was a musician, his sister Artemis the goddess of the moon and the hunt, and so on.

**Racial:** Each deity represents one race or culture. The highest virtues of that race are embodied by the power, so the god of a warlike people will be a warrior, the goddess of the elves will be a graceful enchantress and archer, and so on. The people of these nations almost always reserve their worship for their patron deity—cases of a dwarf revering a human deity, for instance, would be extremely rare. Humans might be represented by one power for each major culture or ethnicity.

**Elemental:** Each power has a strong association with one particular element, para-element, or quasi-element, such as earth, fire, ice, and lightning. Sometimes human virtues or vices are added to these portfolios, so the god of fire might also be revered as a god of creativity or a god of war, while the lord of the air might be associated with rulership or kingship. The first generation of the Olympian gods—Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades—are all examples of an elemental mythology with elemental associations.

**Celestial:** The powers are each associated with particular heavenly bodies. The pantheon of the *DRAGONLANCE* campaign setting is an example of this type of mythology. Usually, the deities acquire some kind of human emotion or situation as their secondary concerns, so the god associated with a frequently-eclipsed moon of sinister aspect may

become the god of evil, while the god of the sun reigns as a ruler or central figure in the pantheon.

**Heroes:** The members of the pantheon were once mortals who acquired their divinity due to great deeds or epic events. The gods of the *BIRTHRIGHT* campaign setting are of this type and a number of the current *FORGOTTEN REALMS* powers rose to their positions as a result of the Time of Troubles. Not all deities were necessarily former adventurers; the heroes and leaders of a supernatural race of heroes—such as the powers of the Celtic mythology—might also fall into this category.

**Natural:** Major aspects of nature are represented by the gods and goddesses of this type of pantheon. Portfolios found in this type of pantheon organization might include animals, plants, mountains, seasons, weather, seas, dawn or sunset, wind, or even particular species (a bear-god, a wolf-god, etc.).

**Stewards:** The gods are themselves creations or appointees of a higher power, assigned the task of watching over their portfolios. The Valar of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Middle Earth* represent a fine example of a pantheon of stewards. Steward pantheons may be in perfect coordination with each other, or they may be deliberately assigned conflicting roles. Usually, a steward pantheon will feature elements of another organization system for dividing up the portfolios of the various powers.



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**Bureaucracy:** The pantheon is organized as a bureaucracy of some kind, with each deity working as a department head of sorts. The Chinese mythology is an example of a bureaucratic pantheon.

**Mixed:** Features of several organizations are included in a single pantheon. Since people tend to revere different things for different reasons, most pantheons tend to grow by happenstance and illogical leaps. As an example, the oldest gods of the Greek pantheon have an elemental basis, but this is transformed into a familial pantheon with their children, and finally a heroic one as a few mortals join the ranks of the Olympians.

Mythologies vary greatly in the amount of involvement or the role they play in the campaign. As an example, the Greek myths portray a very meddlesome pantheon that frequently takes sides even in fairly minor mortal struggles. On the other hand, the Norse myths are much more concerned with how the gods deal with each other (and their enemies, the giants) instead of how the gods deal with mortals. Even a group of low-level adventurers might merit the attention or patronage of a deity in a world where the gods pay close attention to mortals, but if the powers are absorbed in their own epic struggles, it will take a formidable mortal indeed to get their attention.

Table 41: Pantheon Involvement

d%	Level of Involvement
01-15	Oblivious
16-40	Aloof
41-70	Moderate
71-95	Meddlesome
96-00	Direct

**Oblivious:** The gods are completely unconcerned with mortal affairs. Priest characters may be seriously penalized in spell ability or level advancement, at the DM's option. This can represent a pantheon whose primary role simply doesn't involve the stewardship of the world around them—for example, they may be engaged in a perpetual war against powerful lower-planar forces, or they may be concerned with the endless dance of the celestial bodies or a similar esoteric study unfathomable to mortals.

**Aloof:** The deities of the campaign have better things to do with their time, or perhaps they must obey a set of rules and restrictions about taking a more active role in the mortal world. Priests function normally, but the powers rarely offer direct guidance or directions even to their most important followers. Powers manifest avatars only in the most dire of circumstances, and sometimes not even then.

**Moderate:** The powers have an average level of involvement, spending some of their time engaged in their own celestial affairs and some of their time looking after their worshippers. Very important followers receive advice and guidance as needed, and the deity takes interest in and aids

major causes or crusades. While avatars are very rare, in times of unusual danger or opportunity most deities won't hesitate to take a hand in events.

**Meddlesome:** The powers take interest in even the fairly minor events or situations concerning their followers, and the manipulation of their temples' fortunes is the primary means of discourse (and field of rivalry) of the deities. Moderately important followers receive advice and guidance, and the highest-ranking followers are in frequent communication with their patron. Deities create avatars at will order to interact with their followers or meddle with mortal affairs.

**Direct:** Each power maintains a near-constant presence in the mortal world by means of powerful and prominent avatars. The deities directly command the forces of their temples and the kingdoms loyal to them. For most campaigns, this is probably too much mythology—many PCs may feel like they're not doing anything important, not when Thor's here to handle important matters.

The final step in building a pantheon is to determine which specific portfolios are represented by the deities involved, and the alignment of each particular deity. By combining a portfolio with an alignment, you can create an excellent picture of a power. For instance, love might seem like a naturally good portfolio...but imagine a chaotic evil power of love might be a goddess of jealousy or debauchery, while a lawful good goddess of love is probably concerned with marriage, the home, or even chaste love. However, feel free to discard combinations that don't make sense to you.

Unfortunately, space doesn't permit the discussion of each portfolio or possible combination. If you wish to examine the creation of pantheons and powers in more detail, refer to the *Complete Priest's Handbook*.

*Example: As she adds the finishing touches to her campaign in Seria, Kim wants to know what kind of deities the locals (and the PC priests) revere. Starting on Table 38, she determines that there is one pantheon per major culture, with no contact or relations between pantheons. She skips Table 39, deciding that she wants a Small pantheon in order to make her job easier. She ends up with 1 greater power, 2 intermediate powers, 3 lesser powers, and 3 demi-powers. She then refers to Table 40 to determine what type of pantheon it is, and determines that the pantheon is Celestial in nature. The gods are associated with stars, planets, or other heavenly bodies. Proceeding to Table 41, Kim rolls for the level of involvement, and comes up with an 01—the gods are oblivious to the affairs of mortals.*

*Now that she knows what the pantheon's like, Kim starts to roll up portfolios and select alignments for the powers. A roll of 37 indicates that the single greater power in the mythos is the god of the sun; on reflection, Kim realizes that she should have*





## History and Mythology

chosen that anyway, given the pantheon's celestial orientation. The greater power also possesses the portfolios of music and time, so Kim decides that the deity has a strong connection to the concept of the music of the spheres, the keeping of the celestial motions, and the solar calendar. One of the intermediate gods is concerned with plants and nature, so Kim decides that there must be a prominent green moon or planet visible in Seria's skies, and the other intermediate deity is concerned with fate. The rest of the pantheon includes deities of the moon (again, an obvious choice), death, weather, agriculture (possibly linked to the seasons, a suitable spouse for the solar ruler), war, and, surprisingly, an evil god of wisdom. This last power intrigues Kim; she decides that he must be a god of secrets and hoarded knowledge.

### Cosmology

The place of the world in the universe is an important part of a culture's belief system. What lies beyond the sky, or beneath the earth? What are the stars? Which of the outer planes do followers of this pantheon believe in, and what do they know of the realms of their deities? Is there a realm or race that opposes their gods, such as the giants of Norse mythology or the rakshasa of Indian myth?

### The Solar System

The first component of cosmology is the physical one. A campaign world may exist in a universe very similar to ours (with the exception of magic and monsters, or course), consisting of stars and planets separated by the hard vacuum of space. Or it might be completely fanciful, with an aethereal radiance allowing easy passage to the worlds and stars in the skies.

The default assumption for the AD&D game goes back to the SPELLJAMMER product line. In this type of universe, each solar system is surrounded by an immense crystal sphere. The stars are burning brands or great lamps on the inner surface of the sphere, while the planets and their moons orbit inside it. Planets are elemental bodies, including earth and water worlds (terran), air worlds (gas giant), or fire worlds (suns and other radiant bodies). All celestial objects, including ships, have a gravity equal to Earth's. Hence a ship captures an atmosphere of air that allows characters to sail the stars on the open decks of magical galleons. As you can see, this is a fanciful assumption indeed!

In addition to the rules of physical space, the number of planets and moons in the system is a consideration. What do the characters see when they look up in the sky, and why? Is the sun a great ball of gas millions of miles away, or is it a flaming chariot driven by a god? How many suns are there, for that matter? If you don't have any particular idea of what the world's cosmology is like, refer to Table 43 and roll one up randomly.

Table 42: Deity Portfolios

d% <sup>1</sup>	Sphere of Interest	Alignment
01-04	Agriculture	Any lawful
05-08	Animals*	Any
09-12	Earth*	Any
13	Everything	Any
14	Evil	Any evil
15	Good	any good
16-18	Nature	Any non-evil
19-23	Oceans	Any
24-25	Rulership	Any
26-27	Seasons*	Any
28-32	Sky	Any non-lawful
33-38	Sun	Any
39-40	Plants*	Any neutral
41-45	War	Any
46	Darkness	Any
47-50	Death	Any
51	Fate	Any
52	Fertility	Any
53-56	Fire	Any non-lawful
57	Fortune	Any non-lawful
58	Hunting	Any
59	Light	Any non-evil
60-62	Love	Any except lawful evil
63-66	Magic	Any
67	Metalwork	Any
68-69	Mischief	Any chaotic
70-72	Moon	Any
73	Music	Any non-evil
74	Prosperity	Any
75	Redemption	Any good
76-77	Weather	Any
78-79	Thunder	Any
80	Trade	Any
81-82	Wind	Any
83	Wisdom	Any
84	Arts*	Any non-evil
85	Children	Any non-evil
86	Competition	Any
87	Crafts	Any non-evil
88	Dawn	Any non-evil
89	Disease	Any non-good
90	Guardianship	Any
91	Healing	Any non-evil
92	Justice	Any lawful
93	Lightning	Any
94	Poetry	Any non-evil
95	Marriage	Any non-evil
96	Messengers	Any
97	Peace	Any good
98	Prophecy	Any
99	Strength	Any
00	Time	Any lawful

<sup>1</sup> Greater and intermediate powers have 1d3 portfolios; lesser powers have 1d2 portfolios; demi-powers have only a single portfolio.

\* May refer to specialties, such as one particular animal, season, etc.





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**Table 43: World Cosmology**

**Astronomy (d8)**

1-2	Real physics
3-5	Wildspace, with spheres
6	Wildspace, with stars
7	Aethereal space
8	Non-astronomical

**System Organization (d8)**

1-3	Heliocentric, 1 sun
4	Heliocentric, multiple suns
5	Ptolemaic, 1 sun
6	Ptolemaic, multiple suns
7	Flat earth
8	Non-solar world

**Number of Planets (d12)**

**Number of Moons, per planet (d8-3<sup>1</sup>)**

<sup>1</sup> on a natural 8, roll an additional d8-3 and add

**Planet or Moon Type (d8)**

1-2	Air
3-5	Earth
6	Fire
7	Water
8	Other

**Planet or Moon Size (d8)**

1-3	Tiny
3-6	Terrestrial
7	Huge
8	Enormous

**Astronomy:** This refers to the laws of physics that govern the separation of worlds from the void. In real-world physics, characters find physical travel between the worlds or ventures to the stars to be impossible, even with the aid of powerful magic. Wildspace refers to the assumptions of the SPELLJAMMER boxed set; in that world-view, each solar system is a self-contained universe enclosed by a crystal sphere bobbing in the phlogiston, or the raw matter of creation. The rules of Wildspace may still work in a universe that resembles our own. The aethereal void assumes that the space between the worlds is filled with light and air, and that the sky—such as it is—simply goes on forever. One need only fly high enough to reach another planet or star.

**System Organization:** In a heliocentric system, the sun (or suns) is at the center of the system, and the planets revolve about it. In a ptolemaic system, the primary world (usually the one PCs live on) is at the center of the system, and all other heavenly bodies revolve around it. The flat earth may be a frisbee-shaped planet in a heliocentric universe, or it may be an infinite plane above which the heavenly bod-

ies revolve. Or, if you don't like these choices, feel free to invent a system organization that dispenses with the sun altogether.

**Number of Planets:** This is a straight roll of a d12. If you would like a universe with few planets, feel free to reduce that to a d8 or even a d4.

**Number of Moons:** Each planet may or may not be surrounded by a number of moons. For each planet, roll a d8 and subtract 3 to determine the number of moons in orbit. If you roll a natural 8, count it as 5 moons and repeat the d8-3 roll again.

**Planet or Moon Type:** Again, this refers to the general AD&D view that worlds fall into the category of elemental bodies. Other worlds might include para-elemental or quasi-elemental worlds, such as an ash world, a magma world, or an ice world. Other options might include a world-tree, a world composed of the living body of a great beast or deity, or anything else you might imagine.

**Planet or Moon Size:** Tiny worlds have a planetary diameter of 800 miles or less. Terrestrial worlds range in size from 800 miles to 16,000 miles, and are assumed to be the usual size of campaign worlds; see Table 3, back in Chapter One. Huge worlds go up to about 32,000 miles—in our own solar system, Neptune or Uranus would fall into this category. Finally, Enormous worlds can be up to 80,000 to 100,000 miles in diameter. In real physics, planets this large would normally be gas giants (Air worlds, in Wildspace terms), but your campaign doesn't have to reflect this.

### Planes

The second aspect of cosmology is the relation of the campaign world to the outer planes. Is it possible for evil sorcerers to summon horrible fiends from the pits of the Abyss or Baator? Are such places unknown to the world? Can adventurers one day step beyond the bounds of their world to venture into the astral or ethereal planes? What demiplanes are known in the campaign world?

The AD&D planar cosmology is amazingly complex, since it is designed to embrace every divine and diabolical realm known in any AD&D universe. You don't have to accept this as the cosmology of your campaign world—there's no reason you can't condense the outer planes into three or four distinct locations that are significant to the pantheon. Of course, you can get away without changing a thing, especially if the PCs are not interested in plane-hopping. If the PCs ever find themselves in the heavens of their pantheon (or, even more interestingly, the infernal realms appropriate to the mythos), you may want to create a picture that emphasizes the planes the PCs would naturally be curious about. Finally, if the PCs are strongly interested in plane-hopping, consider picking up the PLANESCAPE campaign setting for information on the various celestial realms and the elemental planes.



# History and Mythology

## Myths and Legends

Now that you know what kind of powers and planes compose the world's mythology, it's time to devote some thought to the myths surrounding these beings. You don't need to craft an accurate timeline of each and every encounter or discussion between the divinities of the world, but creating a handful of core myths is a good idea. Moreover, it should suggest a number of adventure hooks for the world.

**The Creation Myth:** Almost every culture has at least one central myth describing the appearance of the world, the gods, and mortals. These are the basic questions that most mythologies seek to answer. The creation myth is not necessarily accurate, truthful, or complete—different races often have very different explanations for how the world was made and their rightful place in the scheme of things. Here are a few suggestions:

- The world is the corpse of some great monster or being, and the first generation of gods were spontaneously born of its substance.
- A mysterious higher power created the world and the gods themselves, appointing them its stewards.
- The gods and a race of enemies (fiends, giants, etc.) emerged from nothingness of pre-creation; the world was built by one side or the other as a prize or a weapon for the conflict.
- The world itself emerged from chaos or oblivion, and in an act of conscious will peopled itself with mortals, who then imagined the gods into existence.

Don't spend a lot of time and energy on building a creation myth if it is never going to come to the attention of the players. Yugg the Barbarian probably doesn't care how the world was made when he's more interested in splitting an orcish skull or two. However, creation myths may be more immediate to the players if they lead to epic storylines or conflicts that the PCs can take part in, or at least experience or explore as their world's history.

**Divine Myths:** After the creation myth come a number of stories about the interactions and deeds of the gods themselves, with their special foes or with each other. For example, the Norse myths include a number of tales about the wars of the gods and the giants, the building of Asgard, and the duties and personalities of the Asgardians. Take a look at the pantheon you've created and see if there are any deities that might be rivals, allies, or even enemies. A god of war and a god of strength in the same pantheon may have met in battle at one point in time. Another deity may have fought a heroic battle against a monster of epic proportions, such as the Midgard Serpent or Echidna. Zeus and the rest of the Olympian gods actually fought a war to win their position, deposing the titans and imprisoning most of them in Tartarus.

The interaction of mortals and deities is another good

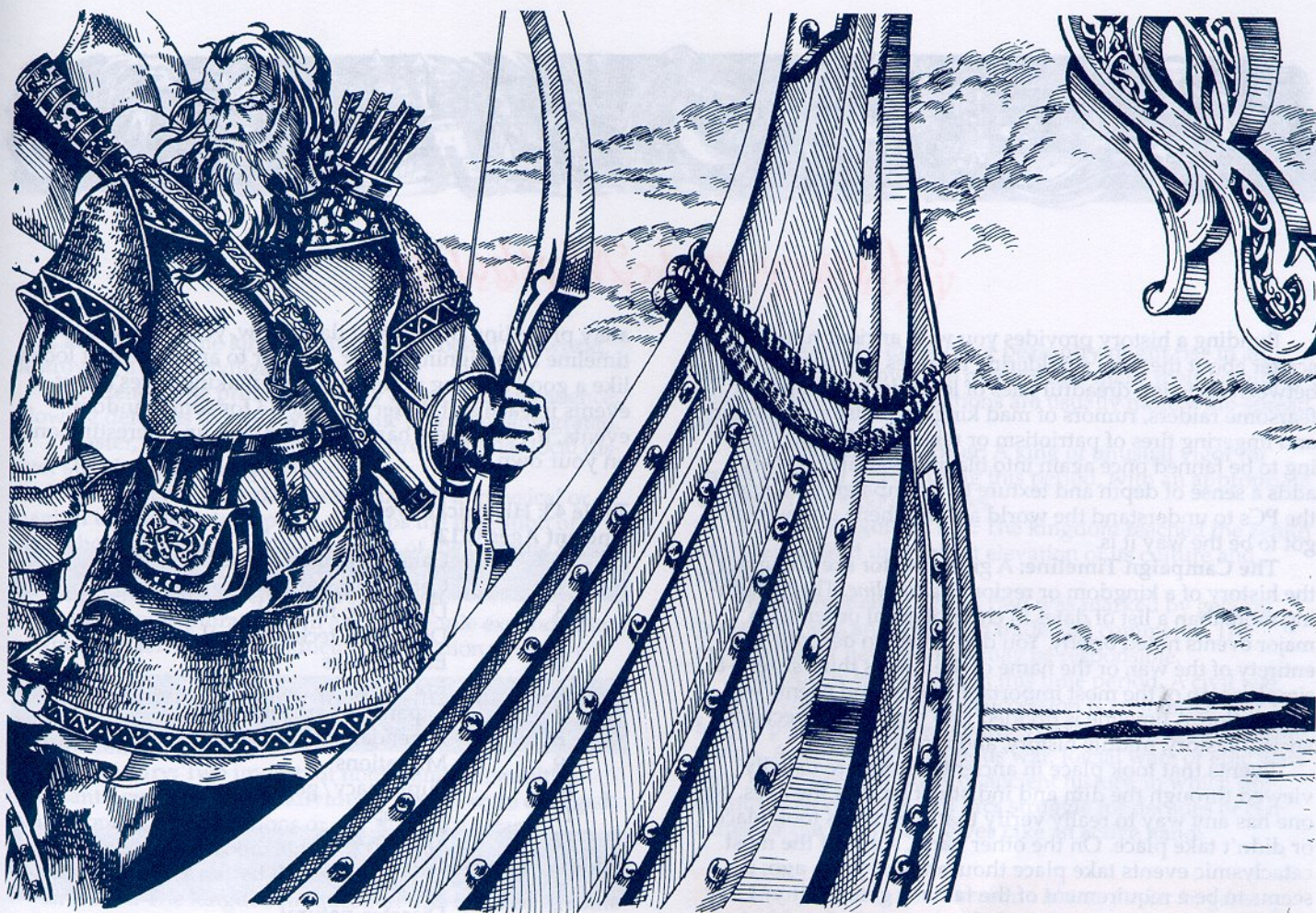
topic for divine myths. Many of these serve as parables or explanations for the way things are. For example, the weaver Arachne was transformed into the first spider by the gods, due to her pride and arrogance. In J.R.R. Tolkien's *Silmarillion*, the hunter Tilion—the driver of the Moon—falls in love with the fiery spirit of the Sun, brings the Moon too close to her, and accidentally scorches the Moon. This is a divine myth that includes no mortals, but explains why the moon has a scarred and pitted aspect and seems to tarry or wander in its appearances. Here are some additional ideas for divine myths:

- A war fought between the current pantheon and a race of enemies, monsters, or even a rival pantheon;
- A rebellion against the head of the pantheon by one god, and the eventual punishment;
- The creation of a second generation of gods through the courtships or relations of the older deities, possibly with special mortals who pleased them;
- The origins of plants, animals, or activities such as song, dance, art, or particular crafts;
- Explanations for the alliances or hatreds of certain races, such as the origins of the unending war between the elven and orcish powers;
- Explanations for unusual natural phenomena, such as seasons or weather (the story of Demeter and Persephone is a good example of a myth describing the origin of the seasons).

Again, you don't need many of these divine myths, although they can be excellent for creating sites of adventure (a city ruined by the wrath of the gods, a god of evil entombed inside a mountain, etc.) or for creating story seeds for more extensive legends. Feel free to borrow any fascinating stories or interesting characters you find, changing the names and the context to fit your campaign world. For example, imagine a Romeo and Juliet storyline built around two divinities from rival pantheons, or hostile factions of the same pantheon.

**Sagas:** Sagas refer to the tales of mortal heroes who attract the patronage or enmity of the gods themselves. Sometimes, the line between a divine myth and a saga can get pretty blurry, but the key aspect of a saga is that it tells the story of a mortal, not a god. A good example of a saga is the quest of Jason and the Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece, or the Celtic myth of the Cattle Raid of Cooley. From the point of view of the PCs, this is the most immediate and tangible part of a mythology, especially if the events of the saga have repercussions that are still in effect around in the world around them. If you want to build an epic campaign adventure for the PCs, involve them in a sequel to a saga—perhaps one of the PCs happens to find a small, innocuous ring of invisibility while exploring some goblin caves...and winds up playing a role similar to that of Frodo in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. Here are some suggestions for saga storylines:





- A great war takes place between two powerful nations, each with mortal heroes patronized by the gods. The Trojan War is the archetypal example of this tale.
- The gods become embroiled in a quarrel over a particularly powerful or significant artifact. Mortal champions are chosen to compete for the item.
- Rumors of a great treasure (the Golden Fleece, the Rhine-gold, etc.) cause a great hero to undertake a quest in search of the item or hoard.
- A monster of legendary stature appears, and the gods aid a mortal hero in confronting the beast by directing him to the location of magical devices or allies who can help him.
- A mortal hero undertakes a journey of exploration to lands previously unknown.
- A mortal hero ventures to the home of the deities or the home of the great enemies of the pantheon—giants, fiends, rakshasa, or whatever.
- One of the gods takes a direct hand in influencing mortal affairs, helping a loyal follower, offering temptation to mortals, or laying down a challenge or contest of some kind with a great prize as the reward.

Remember, a great saga means nothing if the players in your campaign don't get a chance to learn the story as their characters unearth the tale or hear the epic sung. Look for opportunities to tie a saga into the everyday adventuring careers of the PCs. The next time they go off in quest of a

magical sword, come up with an epic background. Maybe the sword was the weapon of the hero of a saga, or (if this seems a little over-the-top) one of his friends or allies.

## History

Even without the direct interference or support of the powers, great events and upheavals can create lasting effects on the world the PCs live in. The Civil War ended more than 130 years ago, but many people in Georgia have not forgotten Sherman's march to the sea. Consider the tremendous cataclysms of this century alone—the fall of the ancient monarchies of Europe, the rise of Communism, the earth-shaking convulsions of two World Wars, all in the middle of a technological explosion. Granted, the 20th century has been busier than most from a historical point of view, but can you imagine what one century of history must be like in a world of magic, meddlesome powers, and rampant hordes of adventurers?

Sketching out a brief history of the significant events in the immediate campaign area is an excellent exercise in creating adventure hooks. Was the land once held by a tyrannical wizard or evil priest? Have barbarians ever migrated through the area, or launched raids into the region? Did an enlightened empire (now vanished) ever control the area? Were there bad kings, or civil war, or bloody revolts? What about supernatural events?





## History and Mythology

Building a history provides you with ancient ruins to scatter about the area, smoldering rivalries and hatreds between societies, dreadful tales of legendary monsters or fearsome raiders, rumors of mad kings or sinister counselors, and lingering fires of patriotism or rebelliousness just waiting to be fanned once again into blazing warfare. History adds a sense of depth and texture to a campaign that helps the PCs to understand the world around them, and why it got to be the way it is.

**The Campaign Timeline:** A great tool for sketching out the history of a kingdom or region is a *timeline*. This is nothing more than a list of dates in chronological order, with major events noted briefly. You don't need to describe the entirety of the war, or the name of the King's third sister—a simple recap of the most important figures and events will do just fine. A timeline is divided into three rough sections: ancient history, middle history, and recent events.

Events that took place in ancient history are usually viewed through the dim and indistinct haze of the ages. No one has any way to really verify that the events took place or didn't take place. On the other hand, some of the most cataclysmic events take place thousands of years ago; it seems to be a requirement of the fantasy genre. Why? Only such monument events can survive in memory and song for so long. Continents wrecked by apocalyptic spells, the physical incarnation of evil and good avatars, civilizations lost in natural disasters or man-made catastrophes...these are the makings of ancient history, especially when elements of the catastrophe can still be encountered by today's adventurers.

Middle history generally goes back as far as the oldest reliable source or institution—the continuous existence of a kingdom, a temple, or a group devoted to chronicling history. Middle history deals with the birth and dealings of the current civilization and the nations that now exist in the campaign. Events in middle history tend to be less exaggerated and dramatic than the great sagas and epic struggles of the ancients. Unlike ancient history, many elements or institutions of middle history may still be alive—knightly orders, monarchies, and even long-lived creatures such as elves or dragons may date back hundreds of years.

Recent history can be considered to start within the lifetimes of the PCs—say, the last twenty to forty years. Events in recent history may still be taking place as the PCs begin their adventuring careers. For example, an ongoing war with a neighboring land, an unresolved succession struggle, or the periodic depredations of a powerful dragon may be occurrences of national importance that could affect the characters, or even be resolved by their actions.

A good timeline uses a sliding scale to represent the increasingly accurate and detailed knowledge of events that are not far removed in time. Generally, a timeline consists of 2d6 ancient ages of 500-1,000 years (d6+4, x 100); 4d4 middle periods of 50-100 years each; and finally, about 2d6 events of note, each 1d6 years apart, in the years immedi-

ately preceding the current date. Now, you can build a timeline by assigning a year number to anyplace that looks like a good starting point, and then making notes about events in each slot. Refer to Table 43 for some random events, if you have a hard time thinking up interesting ones on your own.

**Table 43: Historical Events**

### Ancient Ages (d12)

1	Cataclysm, man-made
2	Cataclysm, natural
3	Discovery, magical
4	Discovery, technological
5	Empire rises
6	Empire falls
7	Expansion/exploration
8	Legendary character
9	Migrations
10	Supremacy/golden age
11	War, epic
12	War, racial

### Middle Periods (d20)

1	Decadence
2	Disaster, natural
3	Discovery, magical
4	Discovery, technological
5	Exploration/colonization
6	Intrigue/scandal
7	Invasion/Raids
8	Kingdom, growth/expansion
9	Kingdom decline/fall
10	Legendary character
11	Plague
12	Rebellion
13	Religion, cult activity
14	Religion, temple supremacy
15	Revolution
16	Strong ruler/weak ruler
17	Trade/prosperity
18	War, conquest
19	War, crusade
20	War, succession

### Recent Events (d10)

1	Feud/rivalry
2	Intrigue/scandal
3	Invasion
4	Monster incursion
5	Natural disaster/plague
6	Raids/brigandage
7	Rebellion
8	Strong ruler/weak ruler
9	War, foreign
10	War, internal





## History and Mythology

**Cataclysm:** Some kind of catastrophe rocked the world, destroying a great civilization.

**Decadence:** The principal society lapsed into decadence, allowing defenses to grow weak while morals disintegrated.

**Disaster, natural:** A storm, flood, fire or similar local disaster struck the area in question.

**Discovery:** An important breakthrough in physical or magical technology took place, perhaps the invention of a new school of magic, the development of the printing press, or the introduction of a new weapon of warfare.

**Empire:** An ancient empire arose or fell.

**Expansion/exploration:** An ancient people expanded into neighboring territory or conducted exploration of nearby lands.

**Exploration/colonization:** Travelers from the principal region discovered new lands and possibly created small outposts or colonies there.

**Feud/rivalry:** Two important noble families, wealthy merchant houses, or even individuals of note were engaged in a serious of confrontations or clandestine warfare.

**Intrigue/scandal:** Some kind of far-flung conspiracy or shocking behavior rattled the leaders of the area.

**Invasion:** The kingdom in question was invaded at some point, and possibly conquered. The people may have eventually integrated their conquerors, or fought back and threw them out.

**Kingdom:** The local kingdom enjoyed a period of growth or importance, gaining new territories and playing a large role in local affairs. Alternatively, the kingdom went into decline and fell from a pre-eminent position.

**Legendary character:** A particularly famous or noteworthy person such as a Leonardo da Vinci, Joan of Arc, Robin Hood, or Julius Caesar lived during this time.

**Migrations:** An ancient race or culture passed through, settled, or departed the kingdom in question.

**Monster incursion:** A particularly dangerous or pervasive incursion of monsters took place in the area. Usually, this refers to non-civilized creatures; an incursion of monsters with intelligence and a strong social organization would be more properly termed an invasion or raid.

**Plague:** Disease swept the region, decimating the population.

**Raids/brigandage:** The kingdom was looted and pillaged frequently during the period by foreign raiders or by large and well-organized bands of outlaws.

**Rebellion:** A major uprising took place in the time period. The rebellion may have been a revolt of a powerful lord against the king's authority, or a general rising of the peasantry or townsfolk against the lords of the land.

**Religion:** An unusually strong temple arose in the time period and came to dominate affairs in the kingdom. Alternately, the kingdom was racked by religious strife or the insidious influence of an evil cult.

**Revolution:** Unlike a rebellion, a revolution seeks to overturn the entire social order and replace it with another

one. For example, the serfs or peasantry might rise in an attempt to drag down the nobility and make their kingdom into a democracy. Revolutions are usually more wide-spread than rebellions.

**Strong ruler/weak ruler:** A king of unusual vigor (or incompetence) ruled during this period, with an appropriate change in the land's fortunes.

**Supremacy/golden age:** The kingdom reached the zenith of its power and the highest elevation of its culture and standing.

**Trade/prosperity:** The period was marked by general prosperity and an increase in trade and commerce. The exploration of new markets may be responsible.

**War:** A war was fought in this time period. A civil war, failed revolution, or war of succession is an internal war, fought primarily between parties or regions within the same nation. A crusade is a religious war. Racial wars or epic wars refer to the great conflicts of ancient history, in which (for example) all dwarves and orcs struggle for decades or centuries, or the gods themselves take an active hand.

*Example: Kim wants to create a history for her kingdom of Seria. She rolls 4 ancient ages, 7 middle periods, and 7 recent events. For her own reference, she decides that the Serian calendar starts at Year 0, and randomly determines the length of each event or period. Then she uses Table 43 to fill in some events in the timeline, which looks like this when she finishes:*

Year	Event
0	Man-made cataclysm
700	Natural cataclysm
1700	Technological discovery
2500	Legendary character
2590	Strong ruler
2660	Intrigue
2730	Plague
2800	Invasion
2850	Trade
2950	Plague
3050	Temple supremacy
3051	Invasion
3054	Scandal
3060	Rebellion
3062	Rebellion
3064	Civil war
3067	Monster incursion
3068	Feud

*Interpreting these events, Kim decides that the great bay bordering Seria was once a highly civilized land which destroyed itself through uncontrolled magic. This touched off a series of natural disasters (volcanic activity that raised the mountains nearby) and reduced the locals to near-savagery. Finally, the people recovered their lost technology in an age of*





## History and Mythology

*reconstruction. This ended in the rule of Seria's first great king, who unified the kingdom. This king's immediate descendants ruled well for many years.*

*Over Seria's Middle Ages, several wars were fought against the wild orcs and taer of the mountains. Internally, the most significant event was the rise to prominence of one particular temple (probably the single Greater Power in Seria's pantheon) as the priests came to power. Kim decides that the 3051 invaders were a thri-kreen horde that conquered vast lands, somewhat like the Mongols; the reigning sultan was heavily engaged in continuous warfare along the borders until 3054, when he died under mysterious circumstances and his cousin took the throne. The cousin (the evil sultan now in power) has fought off two major rebellions and one nasty civil war but remains in power.*

**Arcanology:** A special category of campaign history is arcanology, or the history of magic in the world. Where do the campaign's artifacts and relics come from? Are there certain magic items—a *staff of the magi*, for instance—that were only made in particular time and place, and now cannot be duplicated? How were the schools of magic invented or expanded by the mages of old? Are there ancient spellbooks with powerful, forgotten spells for the PCs to find and make use of?

**Current Events:** The final component of the world's history is history in the making—the events, machinations, and maneuverings that are taking place today, all around the PCs. Take a look at your timeline and see if there are events that cry out for more detail or a resolution the player characters can take part in. Some events may distract the PCs by appearing to be more important than they are...but in some cases, minor events might be extremely significant when the PCs get a glimpse at how the current doings are related to the past.

It's not a bad idea to create a small file or folder of interesting current events for the campaign, which you can then reveal to the players once every two or three sessions. These might turn into adventure hooks, or you can use them to set the stage for a surprising development (a revolt, a palace coup) later on.

## Building a Heroic Saga

History and mythology are interesting, and can go a long way towards adding texture and color to a campaign world, but in order for your players to appreciate your work, you need to find a way to involve the characters in the story. It can be easy for a DM to forget that the player characters are the stars of the show, especially when he's done a lot of work to create a living, breathing world around them. But, when it comes down to it, the PCs should be the heroes who get to throw the One Ring into the fires of Mount Doom, or the

unknown adventurers who blunder across the Eye of Vecna. No one wants to play the part of a spectator or victim who just happens to be a witness to the heroic deeds of the DM's favorite NPCs.

A good place to start crafting a heroic tale for the player characters is at the time of character creation. Ask the players to think about why their characters are adventuring, what they want to accomplish in their careers, and what type of adventures would be interesting or appropriate for the newly-created character. Encourage them to think up one powerful enemy and one unusual ally for their PC. You can even ask the player to make up an interesting story, legend, or situation that their character may be at least tangentially involved in. For example, Grodd the Barbarian may have left his native hills because an evil sorcerer commanded dragons to destroy his tribe. This gives the DM the opportunity to provide the player with a chance to get even—once his character has gained a level or two—or to even start crafting an epic confrontation based on this brief character history.

Throughout the course of the campaign, prepare in advance for a real earth-shaking adventure. Let's say that you want the PCs to eventually confront a powerful lord of evil in a neighboring land. Instead of waiting for them to reach 9th or 10th level and then springing this quest upon the players, try to build up to the climactic adventure. Use short adventures or side treks early in their careers to present the evil lord as a major problem in the characters' lives. For example, when the PCs decide to wipe out a goblin fort, they find that several of the lord's minions or lieutenants were backing the goblins. A little later on, when they're in search of a legendary magical item, they find themselves competing with another band of adventurers in the service of the dark lord. Finally, as captains and marshals of the kingdom, they find themselves confronted with the problem of defeating a massive invasion and preserving their homeland. *Now* they're ready to take the fight to the great enemy and break his power forever, an epic saga of a struggle against darkness.

Be careful not to overwhelm the players early on with the weight of their ultimate destiny; a 1st-level PC who truly believes that it's his job to bring down Sauron of Mordor is not going to be around for long. Let the players gradually broaden their view of the world and expand their ambitions as their characters grow in power and prestige. Unlike the writer of a fantasy novel, you have the luxury of inserting as many diversions, sidetracks, and intermediate goals as you wish—you can string out the story as long as you like.

Finally, not every campaign has to culminate in the final war of light and darkness. A heroic saga can be something much more personal in scale, such as one character's quest to avenge his father's death, find enlightenment, or discover the secret of his origins. When you are building your campaign world, look for opportunities to provide these story goals and role-playing motivations to your players.





## History and Mythology

### Customizing Your World

Building a world is an exercise in creativity, so why stop with details of story and geography? Consider what else you can do to make your campaign unique and memorable. Perhaps your players are used to one style of play, such as a hack-and-slash dungeon crawl or freewheeling role-playing with very little combat—maybe this is the campaign in which you present them with problems that require them to expand their style of play. Similarly, a sweeping change in venue can also make a memorable series of adventures. Players who are accustomed to running grizzled dungeon-delving adventurers in the frontierlands of the kingdom can be surprised and challenged by a campaign set around thievery and scandal in an imperial capital. However, you should be careful that the players are at least interested in switching game styles, even if it's only temporary. If you simply force them to play a game that they don't want to play, you're asking for a lot of trouble.

While the style of play is important, another excellent method for introducing a new campaign (and getting the players enthused about it) is to tinker with the rules of the game system. Players notice rules, especially when the rules allow them to run characters of races or classes they've never been able to play before. As long as you don't make any game-busting characters available to the players, almost anything can work. Remember, the definition of game-busting will vary from campaign to campaign; at first glance, a player character frost giant or copper dragon may seem ludicrous, but if the campaign is built around intrigue and mystery-solving in an urban setting, those monstrous characters don't have any significant advantages over a low-level thief or wizard.

#### Races

Humans, elves, dwarves, gnomes, and halflings are tried and true character races for the AD&D game, but you can offer the players an unusual race or two in addition to (or in replacement of) these standard choices. The *Complete Book of Humanoids* is an invaluable reference for dozens of optional character races. The *Complete Spacefarer's Guide* from the SPELLJAMMER product line is another good resource with a number of unusual PC races. Naturally, you can also adapt almost any intelligent creature of reasonable size and strength out of the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome. Imagine a doppelganger, grell, or even a werewolf PC! These unusual characters don't have to be representative of an entire society or realm of similar creatures; in fantasy and science fiction, there are plenty of heroes who are one-of-a-kind characters.

Another option open to you is to modify or alter the standard character races and their roles. They may be physically altered—elves with wings, or halflings who have spell-like druidical powers—or they may be altered in outlook,

alignment, or role. Imagine, for instance, that elves are all coldly neutral and fiercely defend their homelands against all intrusion—they simply aren't available as a PC race. The DARK SUN and BIRTHRIGHT campaign settings use this method to add flavor and distinctiveness to their respective worlds.

Last but not least, you can simply invent new races or sub-races for your campaign. Be careful that you don't overpower the campaign by making your new PC races better than everything

#### Classes and Kits

Just as you can manipulate the available PC races in order to customize your campaign, you can also alter the basic selection of classes or even add new classes of your own to the standard mix. If you're a fan of the original AD&D game, you might want to make assassins or monks available as PC classes. The kensai or sohei from the Oriental Adventures book would also be interesting choices to add to a campaign. *Dragon* magazine has featured dozens of optional classes, ranging from the anti-paladin to the witch. Or, you can use the optional class design rules in the DMG to build your own.

Another option available to you is to modify existing classes in some way. For example, in your campaign you may decide that rangers do not get the ability to fight with a weapon in each hand, but instead are allowed to specialize in a missile weapon. Perhaps wizards are allowed an extra spell or two, or roll a d6 for hit points in your game.

The various kits presented in recent years can also be used to provide a distinct flavor to a campaign. Take some time to assemble a list of kits that you consider valid and appropriate to the campaign. If fighters have to choose from cavalier, swashbuckler, myrmidon, or noble warrior, this presents a much different style of play than a campaign in which fighters must choose between barbarian, beast rider, or savage. Kits can easily be tied in to certain cultures or geographic regions to reinforce the differences between lands and societies; for example, if a fighter chooses the barbarian kit, it's clear that he must come from a barbaric land, so you can add some detail to your world-picture by listing the lands that barbarians may call home.

#### Equipment

Players pay special attention to the type of equipment their characters are allowed to use. A metal-poor world might necessitate the use of wood and stone weapons; a highly advanced world may allow firearms or sophisticated airships. While some of this is covered in the technology of the central setting, this is a good opportunity for you to create some unusual opportunities or limitations for the PCs.





## History and Mythology

### Magic

Another area in which you can distinguish your campaign from the typical AD&D game is magic. Are there certain spells that are off-limits to the PCs? What about high-level spells that are available at unusually low level, but only at a price? Are there schools or spheres of magic that work in an unusual fashion? Specialty spells available only in this campaign? Strange magical items? One of the basic decisions you have to make about your game is the relative frequency of magic-using creatures and magical items.

First of all, take a look at the spellcasting classes and decide if you want to limit or enhance their power. Simply slowing down or speeding up the spell progression tables for a wizard or priest is a good start. What if all wizards face a spell failure chance of some kind, or if all priests are granted spells on a case-by-case basis? You may outlaw the generalist mage and cleric, requiring players to choose a specialist wizard or a specialty priest in order to create a strong flavor or association for the spellcasting characters.

Many of the AD&D campaign settings include modifications of some kind to the magic system. For instance, wizards of Krynn (the world of the *Dragonlance* campaign) must choose to belong to the white, red, or black orders; their spells are tied to the configuration of Krynn's moons. In the *DARK SUN* setting, many wizards are defilers, who gain magical power by despoiling the land around them.

### Monsters

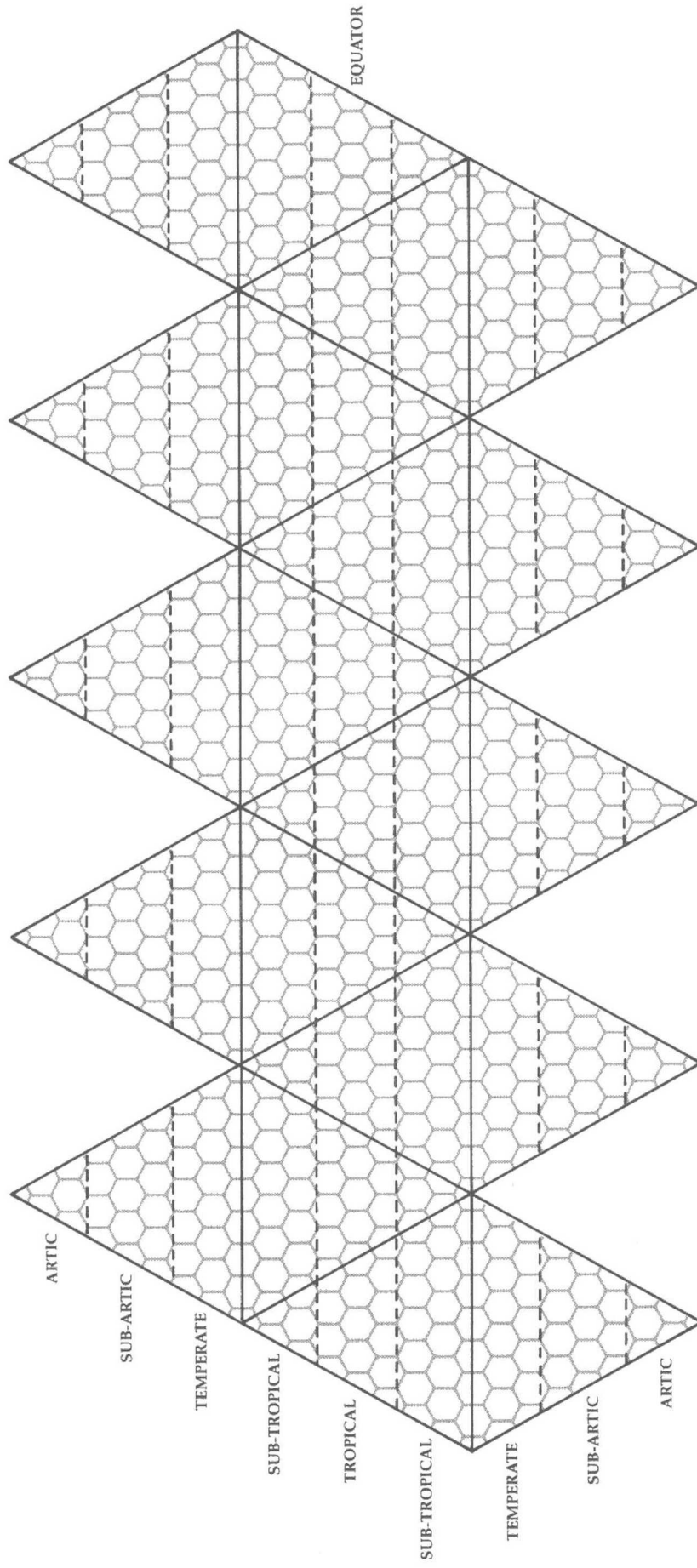
The one aspect of a campaign players are most likely to notice and remember is the selection of foes and villains they must face. Think about what you can do to create an interesting assortment of deadly creatures, and how you might tinker with the monster's stats and powers in order to show the players something they don't expect. What if frost and fire giants command powerful spells related to their preferred elements? What if orcs regenerate like trolls, or fight with berserk fury? Is there an unusual race that you can make into the low-level cannon fodder of the campaign, such as a weak variety of gargoyle or a campaign-specific creature such as the draconians of Krynn?

### Conclusion

A good campaign world is not static. It grows and changes as the PCs develop and the storylines of the campaign begin to take form. This book may have been useful in creating a snapshot of a world, but in order to get the most benefit from *World Builder's Guidebook*, you will have to constantly examine your handiwork with a critical eye, refining and improving your work. The best worlds aren't built on the pads and forms provided with this product—they're built in your imagination, and then tempered in months or years of play. Good luck, and keep an open mind.

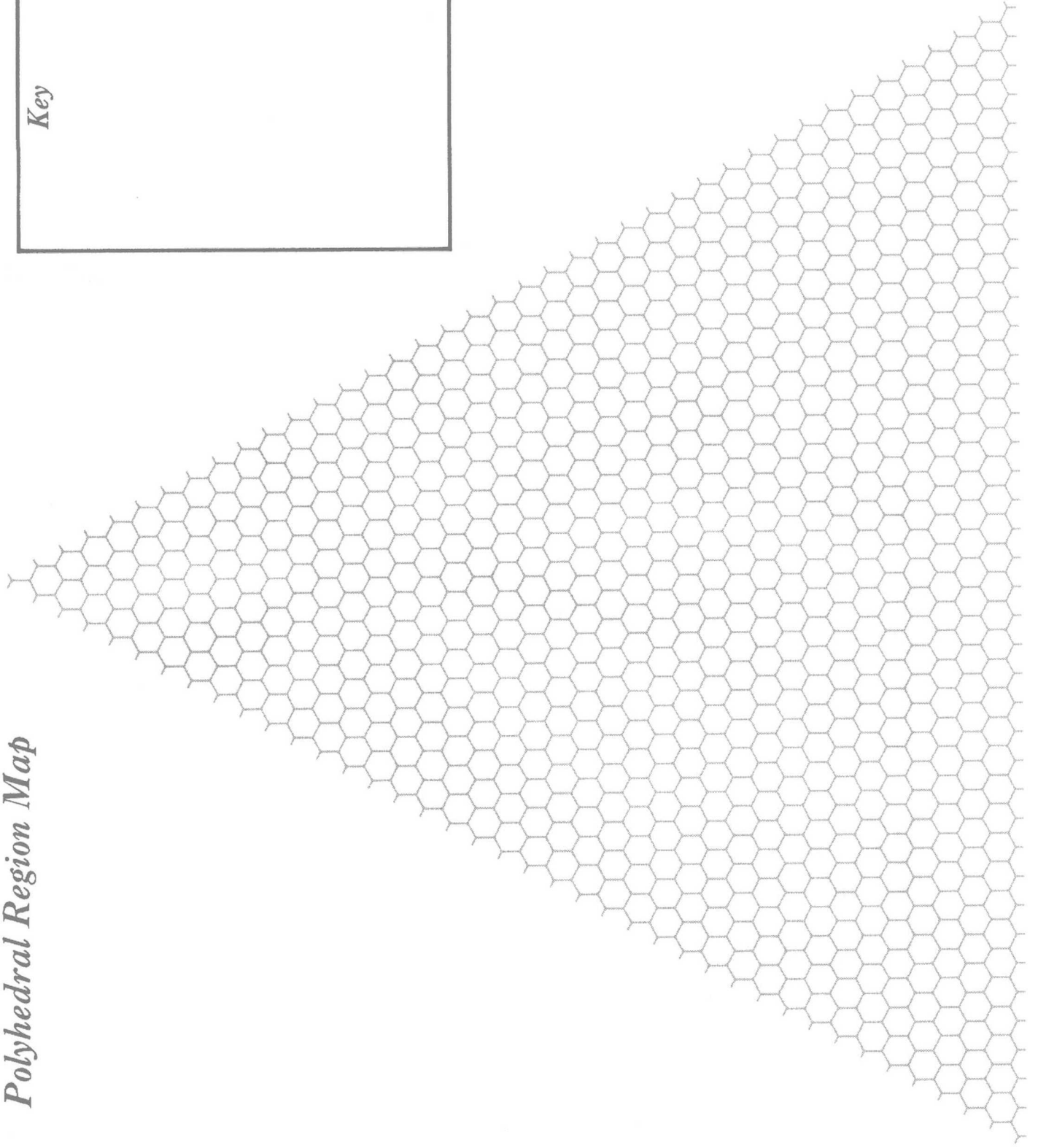
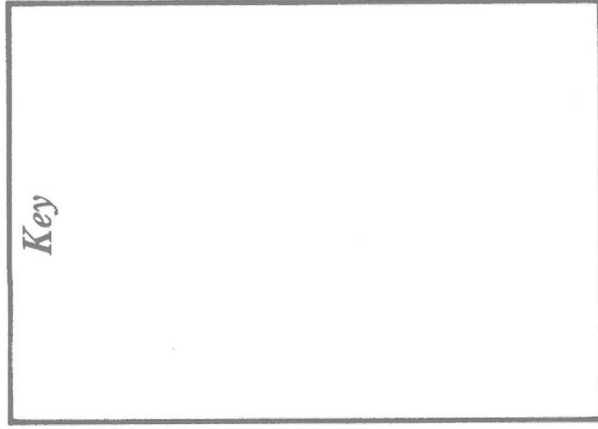


# *Polyhedral World Map*



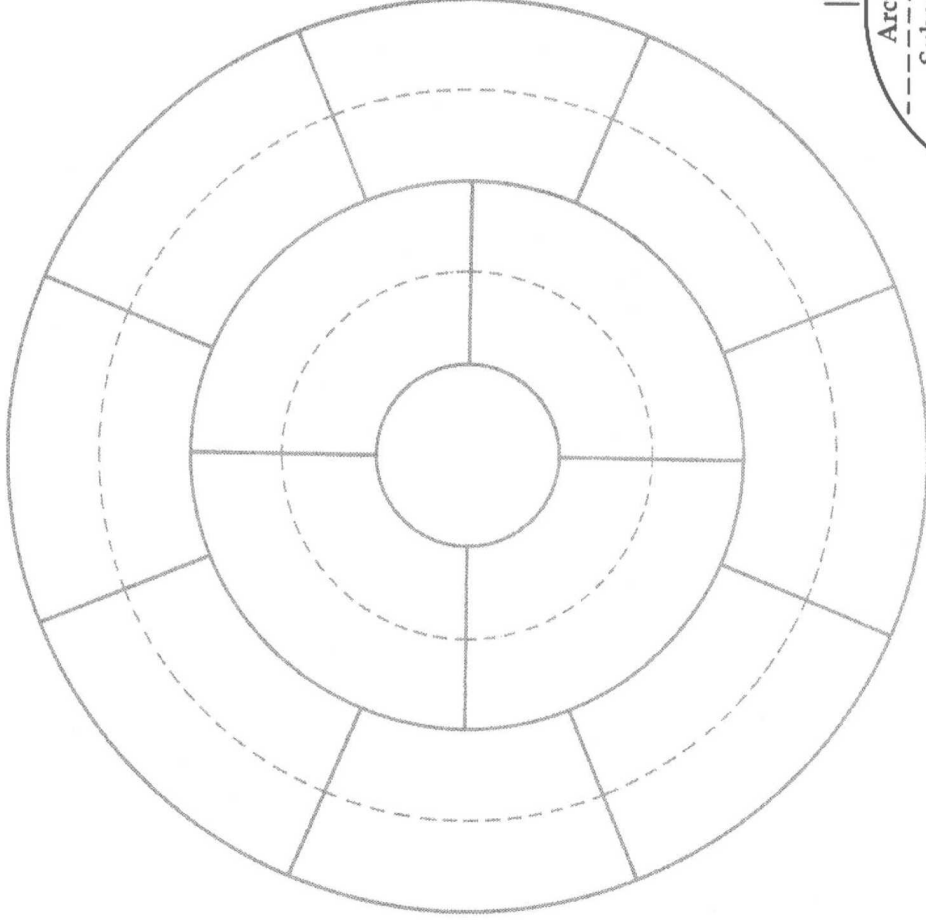


# *Polyhedral Region Map*

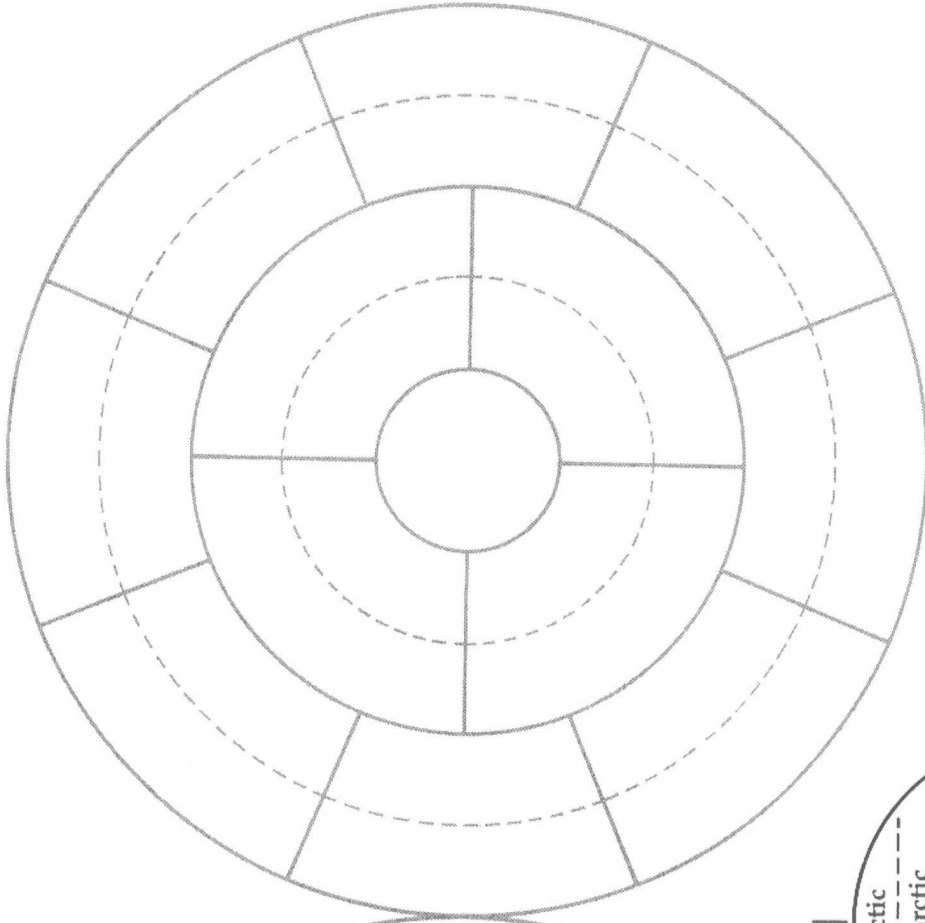




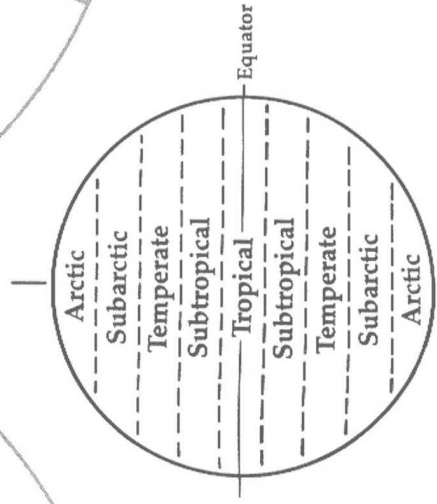
# *Polar Display World Map*



*North Hemisphere*



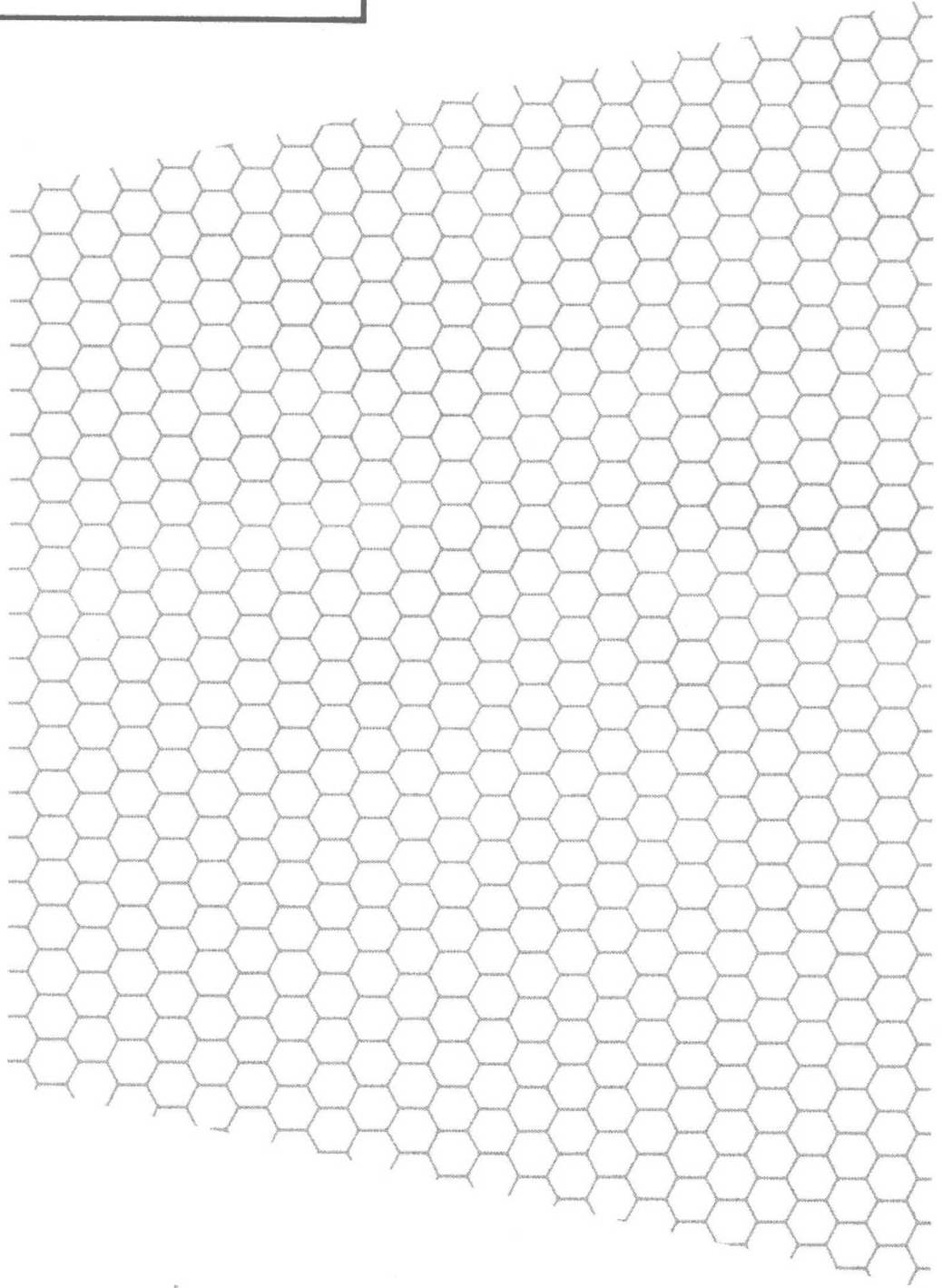
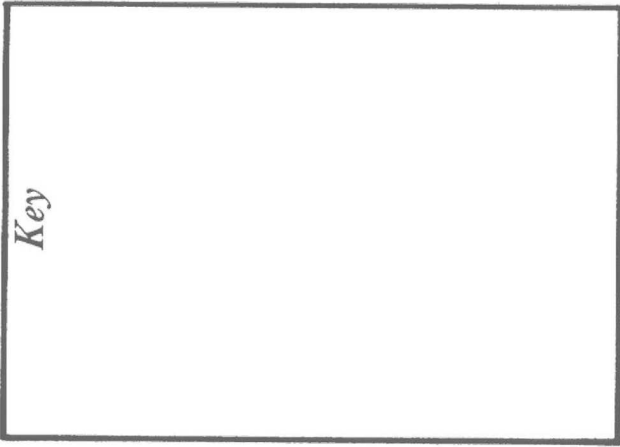
*South Hemisphere*



*Climate Bands  
(Side View)*



# *Polar Display Region Map*





*Key*







### *Area Name:*

Kingdom/Region:

Climate:

Terrain:

Seasons:

Races:

Cultures:

Technology:

Government Type:

Social Alignment:

Population Level:

Subsistence System:

Resources/Trade:

### *Important NPCs/Contacts:*

Name	Position	Level/Race/Class	Notes
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### *Local Encounter Table*

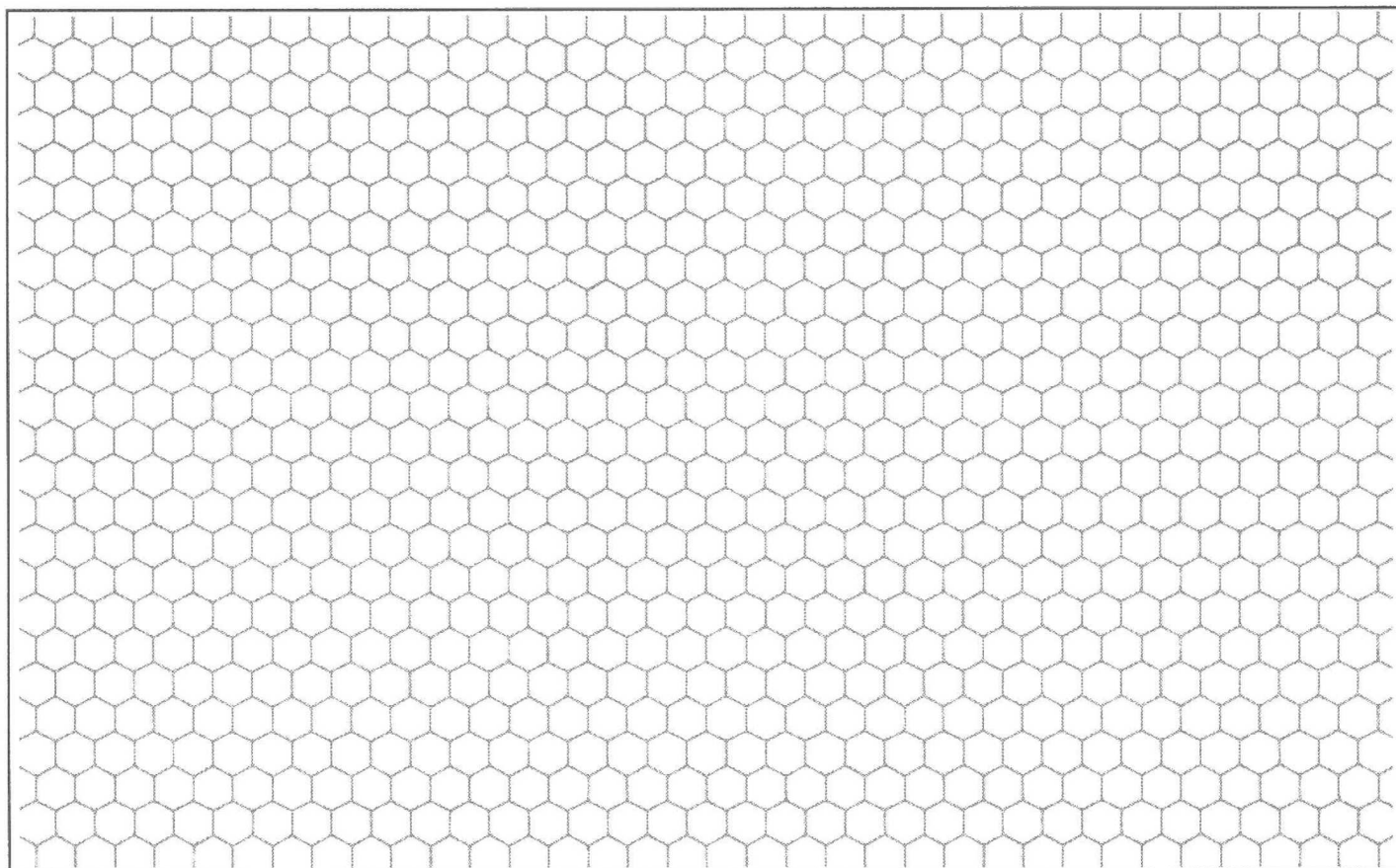
Roll	Encounter	Roll	Encounter
2		12	
3		13	
4		14	
5		15	
6		16	
7		17	
8		18	
9		19	
10		20	
11			

### *Cities, Towns, and Villages*

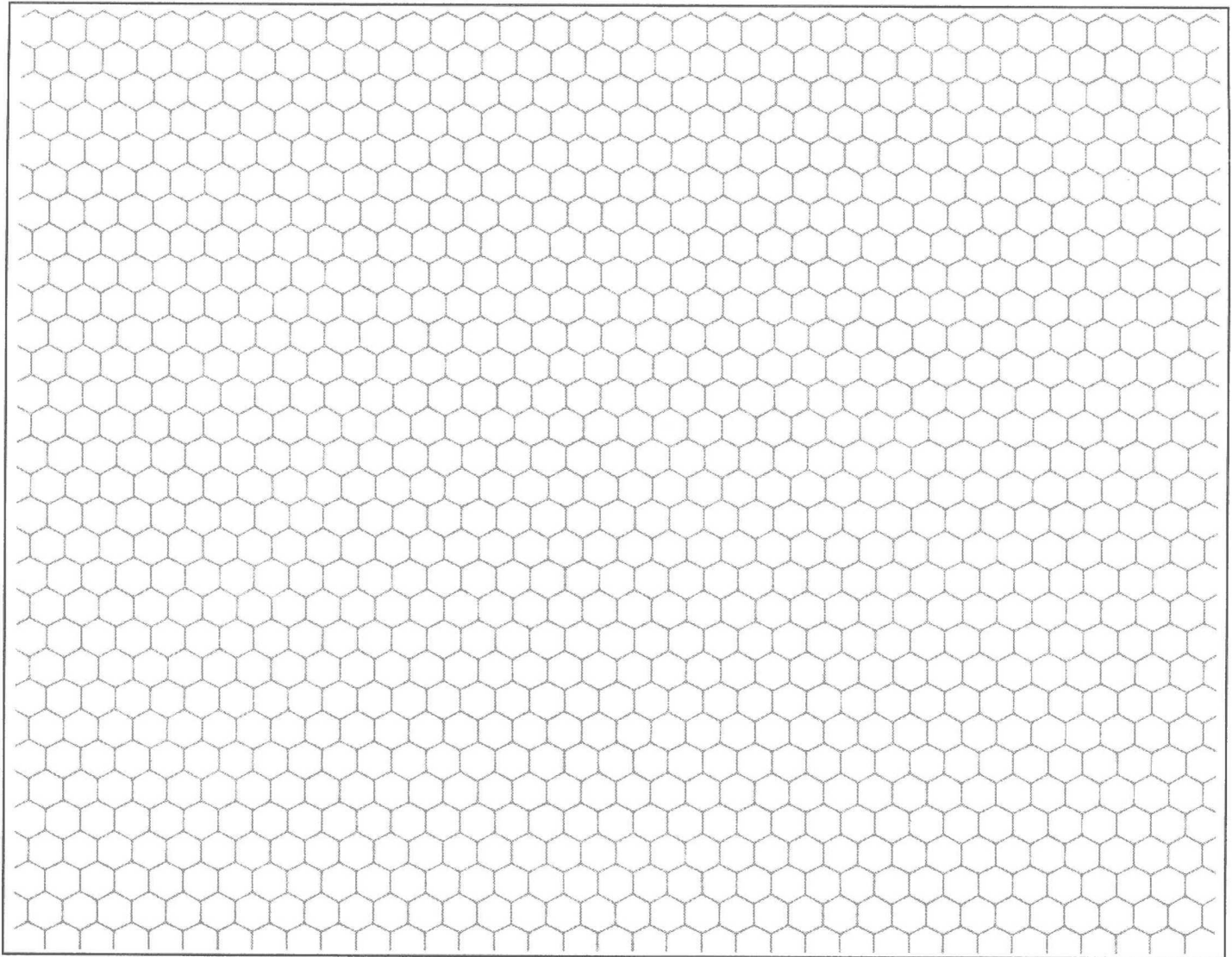
Name	Pop. Blocks	Notes
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### *Lairs and Sites of Interest*

Description	Notes
-------------	-------





### *City/Town Name:*

Size (population blocks):

Primary Race:

Secondary Races:

Cultural Archetype:

Social Alignment:

Ruler/Leader:

Physical Description:

### *Important NPCs/Contacts:*

Name	Position	Level/Race/Class	Notes

### *Guilds, Organizations, and Power Groups*

Description	Notes

### *Resources and Services Available*

Establishment	Notes
Food, Drink, and Lodging	
Common Crafts and Trades	
Other Crafts and Services	



## *Kingdom Name:*

Cultural Archetype/Flavor:

Primary Races:

Secondary Races:

Race Position/Situation:

Languages:

Literacy:

Technology Level:

Industries/Trades:

Arms/Equipment:

Government System:

Ruler(s):

Came to Power by:

Military System:

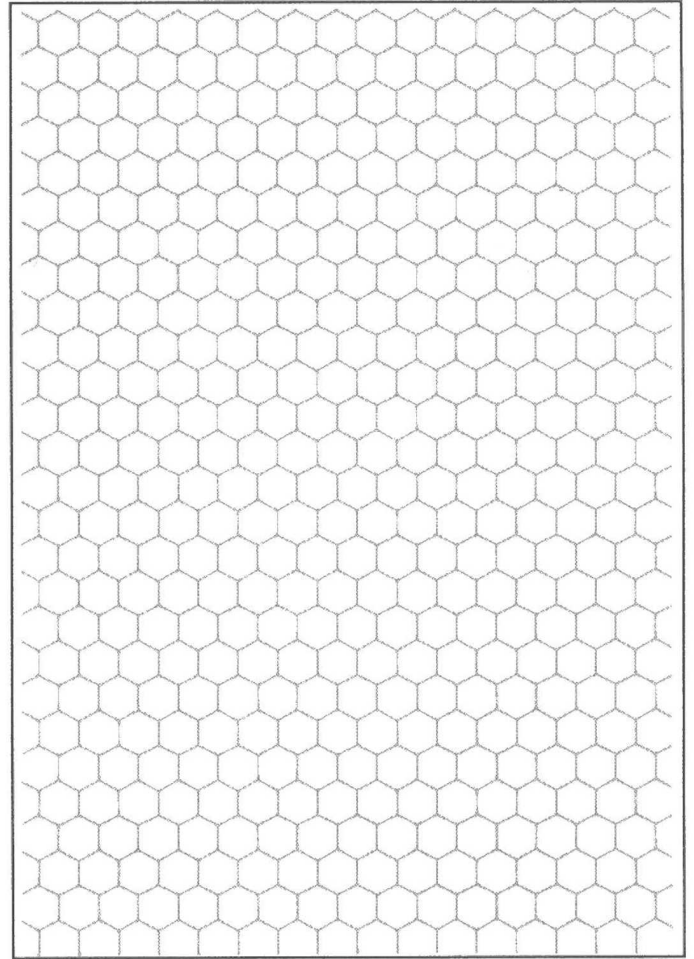
Military Strength:

Social Alignment:

Rebelliousness:

Brigandage:

Situation/Notes:



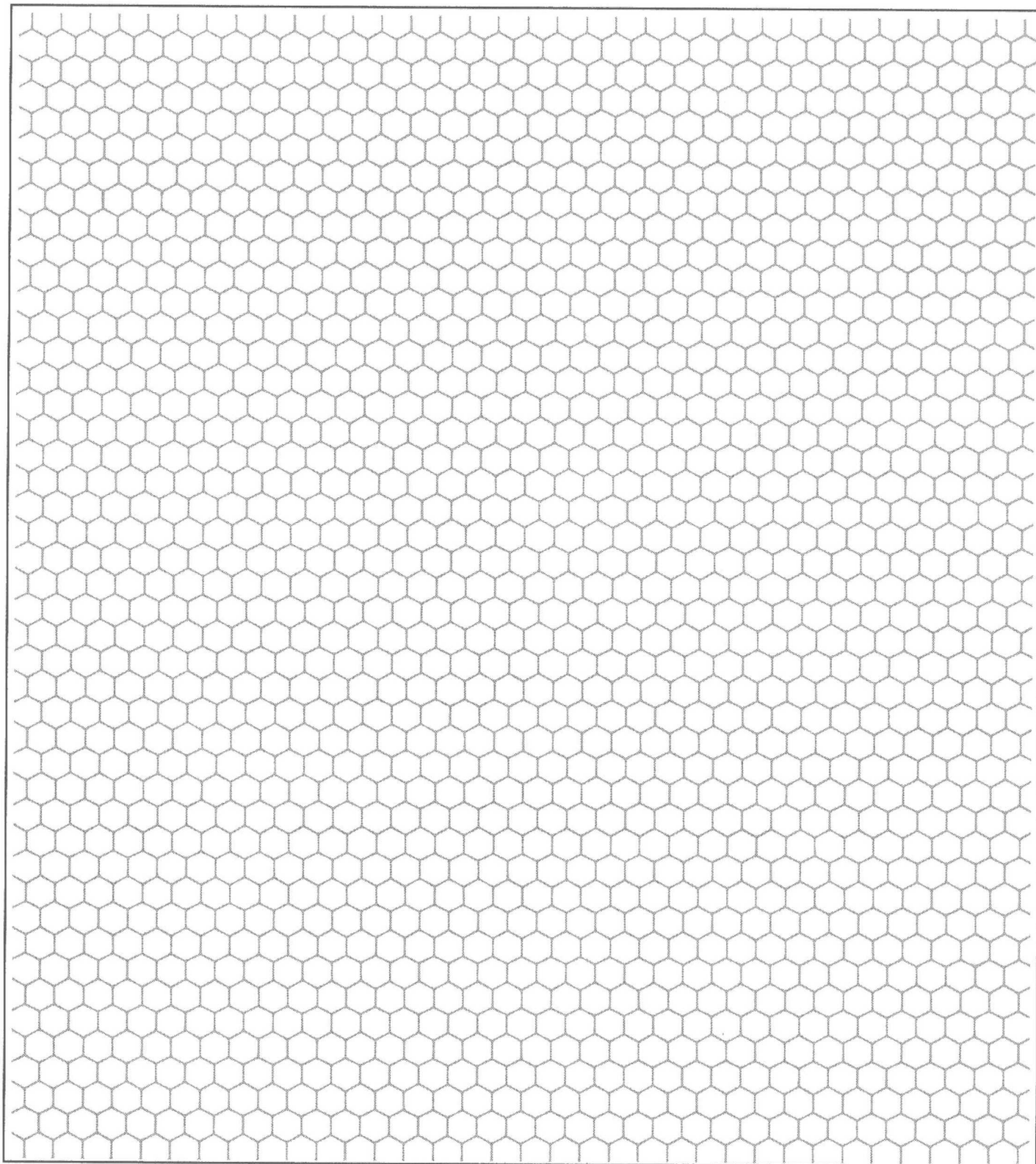
## *Regions or Provinces*

Name	Terrain	Subsistence System	Population	Principal Cities	Other Notes

























## *NPCs or Contacts of Note*

Name	Position	Race/Class/Level	Relation to PCs	Other Notes





### Map Symbolology

 River	 Mountains, Low	 Village	 Swamp
 Lake	 Mountains, Medium	 Town	 Desert
 Waterfall	 Mountains, High	 City	 Barren
 Foothills	 Forest, light	 Castle	 Tundra
 Rolling Hills	 Forest, medium	 Ruin/Site of Interest	 Moor
	 Forest, heavy	 Road	 Jungle, medium
			 Jungle, heavy



*Site:*

Surrounding Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Rumors/Stories: \_\_\_\_\_

Exterior Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

*Random Encounters at Site*

Roll	Encounter	Roll	Encounter
2	_____	12	_____
3	_____	13	_____
4	_____	14	_____
5	_____	15	_____
6	_____	16	_____
7	_____	17	_____
8	_____	18	_____
9	_____	19	_____
10	_____	20	_____
11	_____		

*Defenses, Patrols, and Sentries*

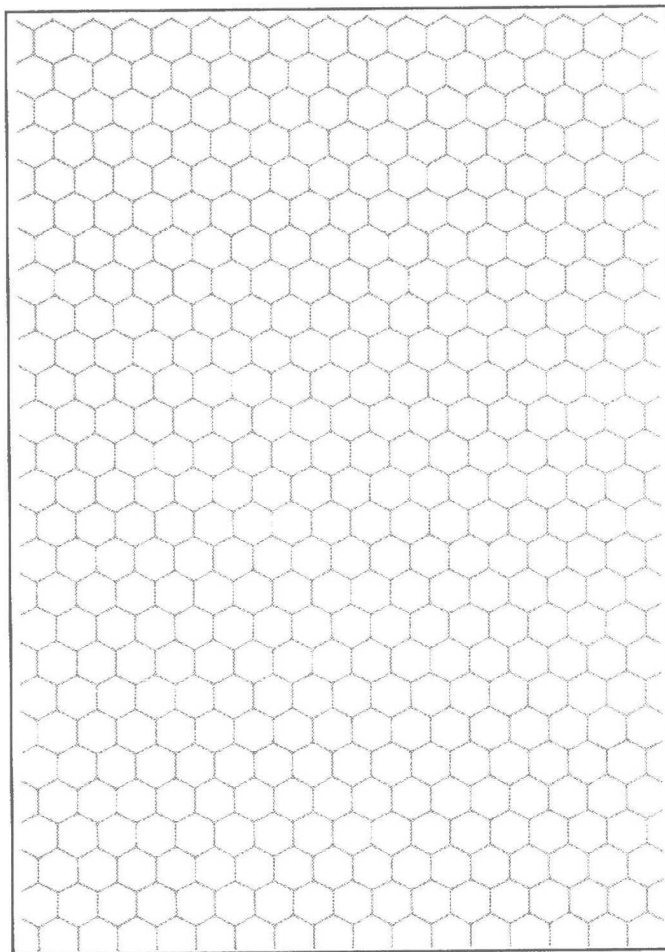
Type      Description

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

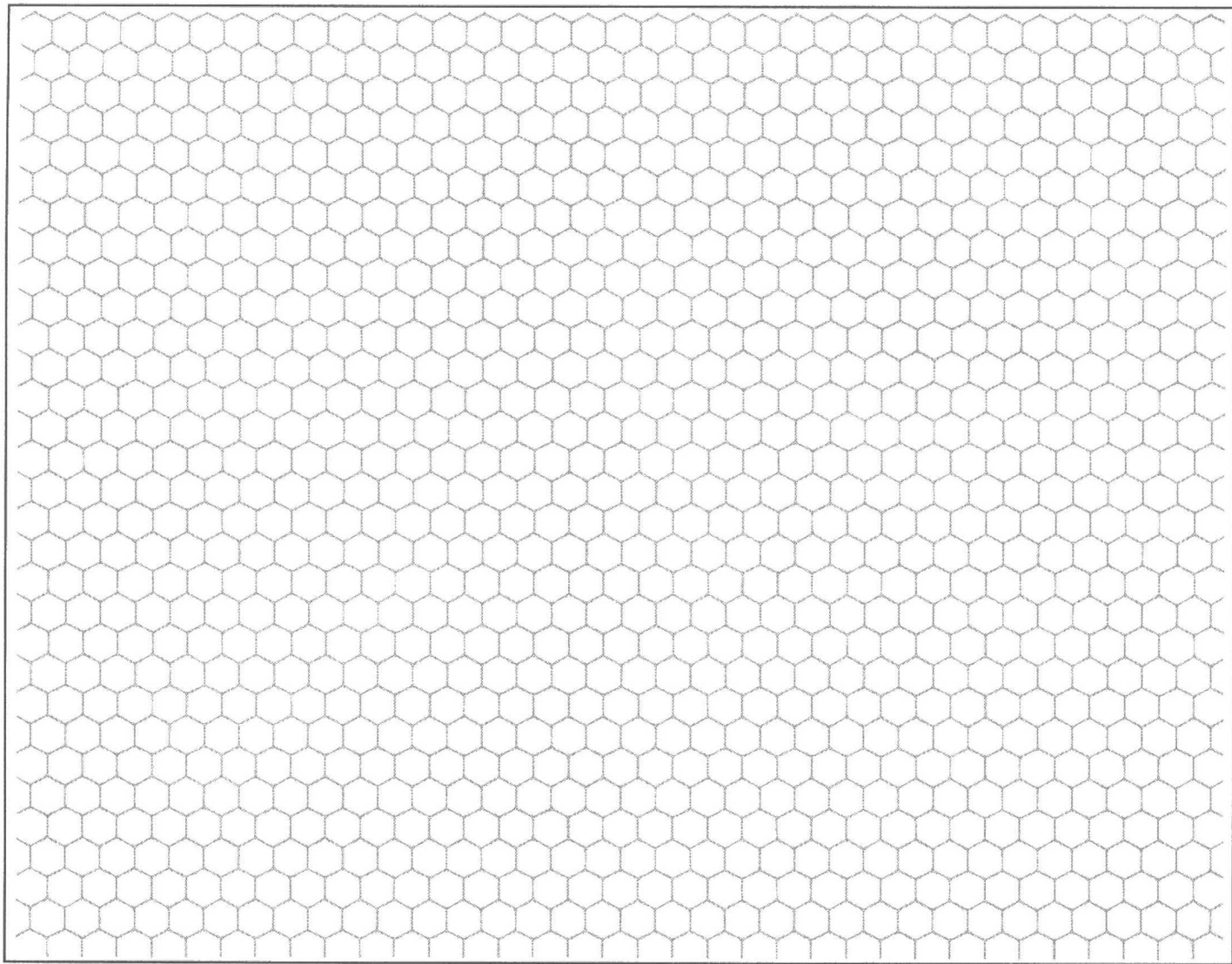
*Important NPCs or Monsters*

Name	Type/Class	HD	AC	Int	MV	THAC0	#AT	Dmg	Special	Motive/Behavior
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____







Interior Appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

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### *Defenses, Patrols, and Sentries*

Type	Description
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Situation and Goal of Inhabitants: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Key/Description of Map*

Area	Notes
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[illegible]



# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Accessory

## World Builder's Guidebook

by Richard Baker

*Admit it . . . you've always wanted to design your own fantasy world. But the job was just too big and complicated, so you either quit in frustration or didn't start at all.*

*Get out your pencils and markers, because it's time to make that dream come true! From the first steps of picking a campaign hook to the final details of crafting a kingdom or city, World Builder's Guidebook leads you stage by stage through the process of creating your own, unique campaign world. Build a world modeled after your favorite movies or books, detail a portion of an existing world, or create your own fantasy world from scratch!*

*Some of the features you'll find in the World Builder's Guidebook include:*

- *An introduction to the art of world building;*
- *Guidelines and random tables for creating continents, kingdoms, societies, local areas, towns and cities, ecologies, pantheons, histories, and sites of interest;*
- *A pad of 32 copyable forms, mapping paper, and hex sheets—an indispensable set of tools for your world-building efforts!*

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