

CHAPTER FOURTEEN GAMEMASTERING



The Wheel of Time is a story. Think of this book as rules for telling a cooperative story, rather than playing a game. Each character plays her role in the story. There isn't a battle in every chapter of any of the Wheel of Time novels, and sometimes entire novels go without any major combat situations. The Wheel of Time series moves toward its grand ending.

This chapter presents Gamemaster options and advice, but the Gamemaster should always feel free to run her game in whichever way works best for her.

STORYTELLING GAME

Divide your story. Divide the grand epic story into books, and divide those books into chapters. Even if you never write out the adventure in book form, it gives it a more familiar feel comparable to the Wheel of Time series.



Chapters

Every chapter should include at least one interesting event that would grant experience points, though they may include several. More importantly, chapters should each have a beginning, content, and then an ending of sorts. They should each be treated like a miniature story, even if the chapter is a continuation of events from a previous chapter and an extension of what will continue in the following chapter.

Note that a game session does not necessarily equal a chapter. One chapter may take several sessions to complete, or if it is a long session, multiple chapters may fit into one session.

Books

Every book should begin with most of the problems from the previous book resolved. Of course, there may be grand destinies to fulfill that can take several books to complete, villains that harass the characters for multiple volumes, or personal challenges for the characters to overcome, but each book should have several smaller resolutions, and progress made by each character. A Gamemaster's responsibility is to make sure that stories resolve themselves as appropriate, and that characters get the proper experience points for their efforts. A player's responsibility is to ensure that he roleplays his character's progress as the game itself moves forward. A character that doesn't progress is not realistic.

Each book should have a beginning, and throughout the book, in the chapters, should present the character with the challenges typical to fantasy adventures. Finally, it should come to a resolution by the final chapter. One book should consist of roughly twenty to forty chapters. If desired, the Gamemaster may include a prologue and epilogue, but these should provide very few experience points (if any).

WHEEL OF TIME EXPERIENCE

While many characters live entire lives full of battles and bloodshed, there are several character types that should experience very little combat. *Tuatha'an* characters should actively avoid combat situations if they are following the Way of the Leaf. Ogier tend to avoid combat, as do many Aes Sedai.

Presented in this chapter are Skill Challenges, which can provide experience points to those who successfully perform them. In all cases, they can be done without combat, and therefore help a character gain experience.

Also presented below are rules for providing characters with bonus experience points at the end of chapters and books.

Chapter Experience Points

Each character should gain any experience points gained throughout the chapter at the end of the chapter. If the chapter included two fights, the experience for those fights should be granted at the resolution of the chapter, when the characters have been given a moment to reflect on what they learned.

In addition to regular experience earned through challenges and combat, each character is given a bonus supply of experience points at the end of each chapter. This amount equals 100 x their character's level. Therefore, a 4th-level character finishing a chapter would get 400 experience points at the end of each chapter in addition to any earned during the chapter.

Book Experience Points

As with chapter experience points, book experience points are granted at the end of each book. These experience points equal 100 x their character level x a number between one and three. The Gamemaster should grant multipliers based on the following ingredients.

A multiplier of one is always granted. A character gains at least one experience point just for playing and being a part of the story. The multiplier can be further increased by either dramatic heroism and/or wise problem-solving. If both of these factors apply, the multiplier is 3. If only one apply, the multiplier is 2. If neither apply, the multiplier is 1.

Dramatic heroism can be defined as the character coming through for the other characters or for the greater good as a whole. It means that the character did something exceptional and heroic, and possibly (though not necessarily) dangerous. Running back through an active battlefield to pull an injured ally against overwhelming odds, overchanneling at great personal risk to take on an entire hoard of trollocs while allies secure an escape route, and coming through on a negotiation that at first seemed impossibly difficult are all examples of dramatic heroism.

Wise problem-solving can be defined as an instance when a character finds alternate solutions that alleviate difficulty and danger to other characters. It means that the character did something particularly beneficial to the group that was unexpected or creative. Attacking an invading Seanchan army before they can gain secure footing, mediating a problem between two quarreling companions, and tracking down a nearby difficult-to-find *stedding* so that the party can rest are examples of wise problem-solving.

Experience points should never be based on favoritism, and every character, throughout each book, should be given plenty of opportunities to show heroism and wisdom.

SKILL CHALLENGES

Skill challenges present an alternate way for characters to gain experience without necessarily going through combat. They include one or more skills, and multiple checks that need to be met before a certain number of failures are made. A skill challenge with a complexity of 1 requires five successes before three failures. A skill challenge with a complexity of 2 requires eight successes before three failures occur. Finally, a skill



challenge with a complexity of 3 requires eleven successes be earned before three failures.

Skill challenges consist of skill checks that are done over the course of an entire scene. The roll results may increase or decrease your chances of overall success, depending on the types of challenges. After determining how long the skill challenge will take and the overall difficulty, it must be determined which skill checks can affect the overall outcome. There is always a primary skill, and a handful of secondary skills that can be used once each to affect the outcome.

Allies can work together in some skill challenges, and potentially aid another when the skill challenge uses one primary character.

Skill challenges should never replace roleplaying. Rather, they should be a guide to a character's success over the course of a scene. If the skill challenge is a diplomatic negotiation, for example, characters should still roleplay the scene out, if desired. Use the roll results to determine reactions and scene results.

Difficulties may vary, depending on elements presented by the Gamemaster.

CHALLENGE EFFECTS

Certain obstacles can modify the results or course toward success, as follows.

Catastrophic Failure: If the participant fails the check by 10 or more, he accrues two failures instead of one.

Close Call: The heroes accrue a failure only if they fail a skill check by 5 or more.

Degrees of Failure: The skill challenge ends when three failures are accrued or when the number of successes is met, but each failure brings certain negative things.

Degrees of Success: Each success or every two or three successes brings a certain benefit, even if the participant takes three failures before she gains the required number of successes.

Extreme Success: If a hero earns a success with a check result that is 10 or more points higher than the target DC, the hero earns two successes instead of one. This can only be done with the Primary Skill.

Individual Effort: Each hero must earn a number of individual successes equal to the challenge's complexity before the party accrues enough failures as a whole to fail the challenge.

Opposed DC: The DCs are determined by an opposed check or Defense.

Recovery: When a hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, she may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Retries: After failure, the heroes may immediately attempt to try again, but the difficulties of all checks increase.

Timed Challenge: Instead of accruing a number of successes before three failures, the characters must earn a number of successes within a certain timeframe.

EXAMPLE SKILL CHALLENGES

ACCEPTED TEST

In this challenge, the novice of the White Tower is put through the silver arches *ter'angreal* to prove her worthiness to become an Accepted of the White Tower. All women seeking to become Aes Sedai must be put through this test.

CL 4

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

FIRST ARCHWAY

Primary Skill: Focus (DC 20)

Secondary Skill: The following is a suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Channel [DC +5]: Though it is extremely dangerous to do so, the hero may attempt to channel within the silver arches. If she does, the DC to do so is five more than normally required to create the weave outside the *ter'angreal*. Whether she is successful or not, she is subsequently attacked against her Fortitude Defense (1d20+10). See Chapter Seven: Equipment for more details.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effect is in place for this challenge.

Recovery: When the hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, she may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The hero passes through the first archway successfully once she achieves three successes and may attempt to go through the second one.

Failure: The hero may find a way to reemerge from the archways, but even if she does, she is likely stilled. More likely, she misses her opportunity to come back out of the archways and is lost to the known world forever.

SECOND ARCHWAY

Primary Skill: Focus (DC 20)

Secondary Skill: The following is a suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Channel [DC +5]: Though it is extremely dangerous to do so, the hero may attempt to channel within the silver arches. If she does, the DC to do so is five more than normally required to create the weave outside the *ter'angreal*. Whether she is successful or not, she is subsequently attacked against her Fortitude Defense (1d20+10). See Chapter Seven: Equipment for more details.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effect is in place for this challenge.

Recovery: When the hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, she may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The hero passes through the second archway successfully once she accumulates seven successes and may attempt to go through the second one.

Failure: The hero may find a way to reemerge from the archways, but even if she does, she is likely stilled. More likely, she misses her opportunity to come back out of the archways and is lost to the known world forever.

THIRD ARCHWAY

Primary Skill: Focus (DC 20)

Secondary Skill: The following is a suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Channel [DC +5]: Though it is extremely dangerous to do so, the hero may attempt to channel within the silver arches. If she does, the DC to do so is five more than normally required to create the weave outside the *ter'angreal*. Whether she is successful or not, she is subsequently attacked against her Fortitude Defense (1d20+10). See Chapter Seven: Equipment for more details.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effect is in place for this challenge.

Recovery: When the hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, she may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The hero passes through the first archway successfully once she achieves eleven successes and may attempt to go through the second one.

Failure: The hero may find a way to reemerge from the archways, but even if she does, she is likely stilled. More likely, she misses her opportunity to come back out of the archways and is lost to the known world forever.

CLAN CHIEF TEST

In this challenge, a prospective Aiel male journeys through the glass columns in Rhuidean, witnessing the history of the Aiel people through the eyes of his ancestors.

CL 8

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Focus (DC 28)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Endurance [DC 29]: The hero overcomes fatigue and thirst during the test.

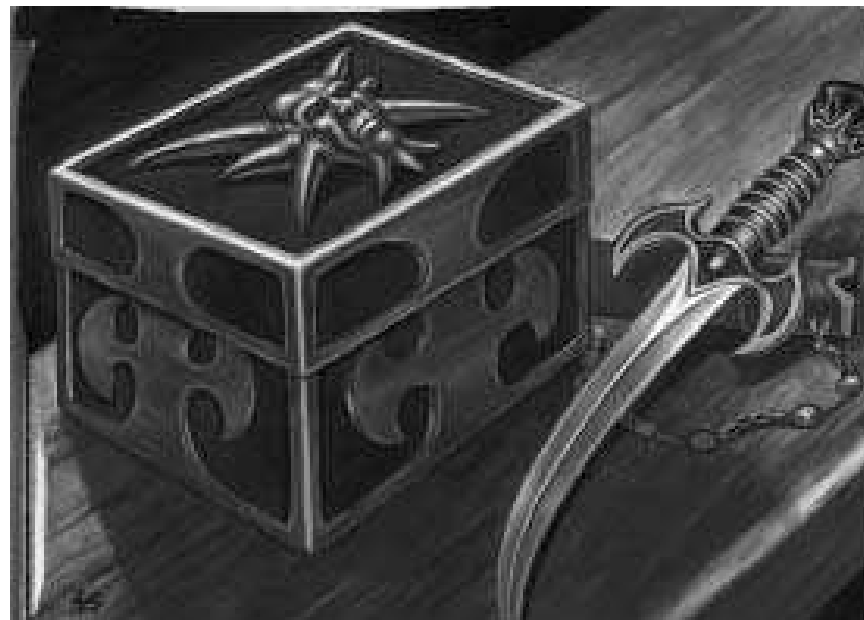
Perception [DC 26]: The hero notices things in the displays that uplift his morale.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Degrees of Failure: The skill challenge ends when the hero accrues three failures or when the number of successes is met, but each failure causes the character to move two steps down the Condition Track.

Success: The hero emerges from the glass columns with a tattoo of a dragon and knowing the true history of the Aiel. He is now a clan chief.

Failure: The hero is reduced to zero hit points and falls unconscious in the glass columns, after which he begins suffering from the effects of dehydration and exhaustion. He must make a Constitution check to determine if he recovers, with failure bringing his death.



CLEANSE TAINT

In this challenge, a primary channeler, possibly combined in a channeling circle, is attempting to cleanse one person from a dark taint. Suan Sanche once performed this skill challenge on Matrim Cauthon.

CL 14

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Channel (DC 38)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Focus [DC 37]: The hero can attempt to recover from a failed save and compose herself.

Knowledge (Health) [DC 33]: The heroes can attempt to remember knowledge acquired regarding tainted objects and its effects on the human body.

Treat Injury [DC 36]: The heroes can attempt to stave off the negative effects, and death, by successfully applying medical aid.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Catastrophic Failure: If the primary channeler fails a skill check by 10 or more, the heroes accrue two failures instead of one.

Degrees of Success: Even if the primary channeler fails this skill challenge, the tainted person gains a number of Constitution and Wisdom points back equal to the number of successes.

Recovery: If the primary channeler succeeds on a check by 5 or more, the hero can choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The tainted person is fully relieved of the taint and its negative effects. He is fatigued, however, and moves four steps down the condition track immediately upon success.

Failure: The tainted person is not relieved of the taint, but regains Constitution and Wisdom each equal to the successes gained. He is fatigued, and moves four steps down the condition track immediately after the skill challenge. This skill challenge cannot be attempted again until he fully recovers from his fatigue.

DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS

In this challenge, a hero or group of heroes tries to gain the favor of a high-ranking noble, such as a High Lord.

CL 5

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Persuasion (varies; as change attitude)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Deception [opposed DC]: The hero may try to embellish or deceive the noble in order to impress him or gain his sympathy.

Focus [DC 26]: A hero may recover from a failed roll by making a successful Focus check to compose herself and getting things back on track.

Knowledge (politics) [DC 27]: The hero may use her knowledge of *daes dae'mar* to gain an upper hand or find something to use against the noble.

Perception [DC 30]: A hero may attempt to read the surface emotions and feelings of the noble.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Opposed DC: The DCs of Deception checks are opposed the noble's Perception check.

Recovery: When a hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, she may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The heroes convince the noble to grant them a reasonable favor, such as a pardon for a minor crime, a loan of money, or resources to complete a task, or even to argue for their cause in a court session.

Failure: The noble declines to help the heroes. He might remain amiable with the heroes, or he may become an enemy. Depending on the situation, he might even call for their immediate arrest.

FIND BRIGAND

In this challenge, a hero tracks down a brigand who is hiding in the countryside, harassing a nearby town or village. After this challenge, a fight may likely ensue.

CL 5

Complexity: 2 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Survival (DC 29)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Endurance [DC 31]: The hero can forgo sleep to continue the search if it goes into the nighttime.

Knowledge (nature) [DC 30]: The hero can use his knowledge of the natural environment to his advantage.

Challenge Effects: There are no challenge effects in place for this challenge.

Success: The hero manages to track down the brigand and determine his exact location.

Failure: The hero loses track of any clues of the brigand's traverse, and fails to locate him.

HERON MARK TEST

In this challenge, a hero displays his swordsmanship in front of blademasters, who then determine his worthiness to carry a heron-marked blade.

CL 6

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Focus (DC 27)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Acrobatics [DC 28]: The hero can use tumbles and other feats of agility during his display.

Athletics [DC 27]: The hero can use jumps and other feats of athleticism during his display.

Deception [DC 29]: The hero can use impressive feints during his display.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Extreme Success: If the hero earns a success with a check result that of 37 or more on a Focus check made for this challenge, he earns two successes instead of one.

Success: The man being tested is granted the right to wield and carry the heron-marked blade and is given the official status of blademaster.

Failure: The judges deem the applicant unworthy of carrying the heron-marked blade and do not give him the title of blademaster.

HORSE RACE

In this scene, the character is racing a horse on a track against other horses. Whoever gets to eleven successes first wins.

CL 2

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before race ends)

Primary Skill: Ride (opposed DC, bonus or penalty depending on horses of opponents or hero's own horse)

Secondary Skills: There are no secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Opposed DC: The DC is determined by the Ride checks of all other participants.

Timed Challenge: Instead of accruing a number of successes before three failures, the jockey must earn eleven successes before any other opponents do. If there is a tie, all racers involved with the tie make one final Ride check to determine the winner.

Success: The hero wins the race.

Failure: The hero loses the race.

LEAD BATTLE

In this scene, the hero, within the duties of his rank, leads the strategy and tactics of a battle.

CL 14

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Knowledge (tactics; opposed DC)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Deception [DC 28]: The heroes can attempt tactical feints, false retreats or charges, or



other displays to trick the enemy army.

Perception [DC 22]: The heroes attempt to see holes in the opponent's strategy and take advantage of them.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Opposed DC: The Knowledge (tactics) check DC is determined by the Knowledge (tactics) checks of all other military commanders.

Success: The hero's tactical brilliance gives your army a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and all Defenses until the end of the battle.

Failure: The hero's tactics are bested by the enemy. The opposing army gains a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and all Defenses until the end of the battle.

MEETING WITH THE AMYRLIN SEAT

In this scene, the hero meets with the Amyrlin Seat and attempts to gain her favor or aid.

CL 8

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Persuasion (varies; as change attitude)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Deception [opposed DC]: The hero may try to embellish or deceive the Amyrlin Seat in order to impress her or gain her sympathy.

Focus [DC 30]: A hero may recover from a failed roll by making a successful Focus check to compose himself and getting things back on track.

Perception [DC 35]: A hero may attempt to read the surface emotions and feelings of the Amyrlin Seat.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Opposed DC: The DCs of Deception checks are opposed the Amyrlin Seat's Perception check.

Recovery: When a hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, he may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The hero gains the Amyrlin's favor and she is willing to aid him with any reasonable thing requested.

Failure: The Amyrlin declines to help the hero and he does not gain her favor. Depending on the circumstances and nature of the requests, she may become hostile or even attempt to have the hero and any allies arrested.

MEETING WITH AN OGIER ELDER

In this scene, the hero meets with the Elders of an Ogier *stедding* and attempts to gain his favor or aid.

CL 7

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Persuasion (varies; as change attitude +5)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Deception [opposed DC +5]: The hero may try to embellish or deceive the Ogier Elder in order to impress her or gain her sympathy.

Focus [DC 29]: A hero may recover from a failed roll by making a successful Focus check to compose himself and getting things back on track.

Perception [DC 39]: A hero may attempt to read the surface emotions and feelings of the Ogier Elder.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Opposed DC: The DCs of Deception checks are opposed the Elder's Perception check.

Recovery: When a hero succeeds on a check by 5 or more, he may choose to remove one failure instead of earning a success.

Success: The hero gains the Ogier Elder's favor and he is willing to aid him with any reasonable thing requested.

Failure: The Elder declines to help the hero and he does not gain his favor. Depending on the circumstances and nature of the requests, he may have the hero and any with him forced to leave the *stедding* if they are in one.

NAVIGATE THE WAYS

In this scene, the hero attempts to navigate the dangerous Ways, doing so quickly enough to avoid *Machin Shin*.

CL 9

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures) for desired destination, 1 (5 successes before 3 failures) for any destination

Primary Skill: Survival (DC 28)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Endurance [DC 26]: If this is a chance besides the first attempt at navigating the Ways, an Endurance check may be made to avoid penalties from retries.

Focus [DC 28]: When *Machin Shin* becomes a factor, the hero may make a Focus check. Success on this check means that the penalties to all Skill checks as a result of the Black Wind are avoided.

Knowledge (academics) [DC 29]: The hero uses her knowledge of the Ways to advance the expedition.

Perception [DC 27]: The hero attempts to perceive surroundings and potential dangers to improve the chances of success and survival.

* Note that if the no member of the party is able to understand Ogier writing,

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Retries: After failure, the hero may immediately attempt to try again, but the difficulties of all checks increase by +5 (including Endurance and Focus, above).

Success: The hero is able to navigate the ways either to the desired location (Complexity 2), or to any destination (Complexity 1).

Failure: The hero becomes lost in the Ways, and must find a way out by trying again. The GM may determine when *Machin Shin* becomes a threat and all DCs to Skill checks increase by +5 (including all checks above, as well as Focus). Once it does, failure results in consumption by the Black Wind.

RESEARCH

The hero does research on a large field of study, such as biographies of the male channelers who broke the world, tactics of the greatest five generals of the past hundred years, or architectural designs of Ogier-made cities.

CL 2

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Knowledge (most applicable; DC 24)

Secondary Skills: The following is a suggested secondary skill for this skill challenge.

Gather Information [DC 27]: The hero may try to find out local rumors that may shed light or hint at answers she is seeking.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Close Call: The hero accrues a failure only if she fails a skill check by 5 or more.

Success: The hero gains the knowledge desired on the subject, and may reroll Knowledge checks made pertaining to that specific knowledge for the rest of the book.

Failure: The hero does not gain the knowledge desired.

SELLING GOODS

The hero sells carried goods. This is especially common for merchants and Tinkers. This process may take several hours, or several days, depending on the amount of goods.

CL 1

Complexity: 2 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Persuasion (DC 20)

Secondary Skills: The following are suggested secondary skills for this skill challenge.

Deception [DC 22]: The hero may try to exaggerate the worth of his items through cleverly placed words and salesmanship.

Gather Information [DC22]: The hero gets to know the locale and their general moods and needs, helping him determine how best to sell them his goods.

Knowledge (culture) [DC 21]: The hero uses previous knowledge of the local residents to help him determine how best to sell them his goods.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Close Call: The hero accrues a failure only if she fails a skill check by 5 or more.

Success: The hero sells his goods, gaining their listed value plus 25%, then minus 10% for each failure.

Failure: The hero manages to only sell a few items. He unloads 0% of his goods plus 10% for each success.

TEST FOR THE SHAWL

The hero takes the test to become a Sister, a full Aes Sedai.

CL 8

Complexity: 3 (11 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skill: Channel (DC 30)

Secondary Skills: The following is a suggested secondary skill for this skill challenge.

Focus [DC 29]: The hero may compose herself and open herself to the One Power in a way that eliminates distractions.

Challenge Effects: The following challenge effects are in place for this challenge.

Close Call: The hero accrues a failure only if she fails a skill check by 5 or more.

Success: Each Channel skill success represents nine to ten simple weaves, which must be performed perfectly. If the hero succeeds at all the checks, she gains the shawl and becomes an Aes Sedai Sister. She swears the Three Oaths on the Oath Rod and chooses an Ajah.

Failure: The hero fails the test and does not become an Aes Sedai Sister at this time.