

## **How To Create A Grog In Eight Easy Steps**

### **Step 1. Pick a character Concept**

Come up with an idea for your grog. Grog always have some training in martial skills. Your grog could be a bandit, a footman, a bodyguard, a mugger, etc.

### **Step 2 Choose Virtues and Flaws**

Virtues and Flaws are features of the character that are not shared by most people, special benefits in the case of Virtues, and disadvantages in the case of Flaws. They cover supernatural abilities, enemies, obsessions, and aptitudes, as well as much more.

Grog are somewhat limited in their choice of Virtues and Flaws, to ensure that they remain minor characters. They may have up to three points of Flaws, and a corresponding number of Virtues. Grog should only have Minor Virtues and Flaws. Grog may not have The Gift, and may not have Story Flaws.

All characters must take a Social Status. There are a number of default Social Statuses that cost no points.

Grog may not take more than one Personality Virtue OR one Personality Flaw.

A Minor Flaw gives the character one point with which to purchase Virtues. A Minor Virtue costs one point.

Below is a list of allowable Virtues and Flaws for Grog.

| <b>VIRTUES<sup>1</sup></b>     |                               |                             |                            |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Supernatural, Minor</b>     | <b>General, Minor</b>         | <b>Social Status, Minor</b> | <b>Social Status, Free</b> |
| Animal Ken                     | Affinity with ability         | Clerk                       | Covenfolk                  |
| Dowsing                        | Apt student                   | Custos                      | Craftsman                  |
| Enchanting Music               | Arcane Lore                   | Failed Apprentice           | Merchant                   |
| Lesser Immunity                | Berserk                       | Gentleman's woman           | Peasant                    |
| Lesser Purifying Touch         | Book Learner                  | Knight                      | Wanderer                   |
| Magic Sensitivity              | Cautious with Ability         | Mendicant Friar             |                            |
| Premonitions                   | Clear Thinker                 | Mercenary Captain           | <i>Badchan</i>             |
| Second Sight                   | Common Sense                  | Priest                      | <i>Shammash</i>            |
| Sense Holiness and Unholiness  | Educated                      | Wise One                    |                            |
| Skinchanger                    | Enduring Constitution         |                             |                            |
| Wilderness Sense               | Faerie Blood                  | <i>Brother Chaplain</i>     |                            |
|                                | Famous                        | <i>Brother Knight</i>       |                            |
| <i>Ceremony</i>                | Free Expression               | <i>Brother Sergeant</i>     |                            |
| <i>Strong Angelic Heritage</i> | Good Teacher                  | <i>Eastern Priest</i>       |                            |
| <i>Sufi</i>                    | Gossip                        | 'Alim                       |                            |
|                                | Great (Characteristic)        | <i>Bureaucrat</i>           |                            |
|                                | Improved Characteristics      | <i>Emir</i>                 |                            |
|                                | Inoffensive to animals        | <i>Mamluk</i>               |                            |
|                                | Inspirational                 | <i>Sufi</i>                 |                            |
|                                | Intuition                     | <i>Chazzan</i>              |                            |
|                                | Keen vision                   | <i>Kohein</i>               |                            |
|                                | Large                         | <i>Levite</i>               |                            |
|                                | Latent Magical Ability        | <i>Rabbi</i>                |                            |
|                                | Learn (Ability) from Mistakes |                             |                            |
|                                | Light Touch                   |                             |                            |
|                                | Lightning Reflexes            |                             |                            |
|                                | LongWinded                    |                             |                            |
|                                | Luck                          |                             |                            |
|                                | Rapid Convalescence           |                             |                            |
|                                | Perfect Balance               |                             |                            |
|                                | Piercing Gaze                 |                             |                            |
|                                | Priviledged Upbringing        |                             |                            |
|                                | Protection                    |                             |                            |
|                                | Puissant Ability              |                             |                            |
|                                | Relic                         |                             |                            |
|                                | Reserves of Strength          |                             |                            |
|                                | Self-Confident                |                             |                            |
|                                | Sharp Ears                    |                             |                            |
|                                | Social Contacts               |                             |                            |
|                                | Strong Willed                 |                             |                            |
|                                | Student of (Realm)            |                             |                            |
|                                | Temporal Influence            |                             |                            |
|                                | Tough                         |                             |                            |
|                                | Troupe Upbringing             |                             |                            |
|                                | True Love (PC)                |                             |                            |
|                                | Unaging                       |                             |                            |
|                                | Venus Blessing                |                             |                            |
|                                | Warrior                       |                             |                            |
|                                | Well-Traveled                 |                             |                            |

<sup>1</sup> Italicised Virtues are found in the Ars Magica supplement "The Divine". All others are in the main rulebook.

| FLAWS                |                         |                        |                       |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Personality, Minor   | Social Status, Minor    | Supernatural, Minor    | General, Minor        |
| Busybody             | Branded Criminal        | Lesser Malediction     | Ability Block         |
| Carefree             | Outcast                 | Offensive to animals   | Afflicted Tongue      |
| Compulsion           | Outlaw Leader           | Visions                | Arthritis             |
| Continance           |                         |                        | Clumsy                |
| Covenant Upbringing  | <i>Failed Monk</i>      | <i>Non-Traditional</i> | Disfigured            |
| Delusion             | <i>Outsider (Minor)</i> |                        | Feral Upbringing      |
| Depressed            |                         |                        | Fragile Constitution  |
| Dutybound            |                         |                        | Hunchback             |
| Faerie Upbringing    |                         |                        | Incomprehensible      |
| Fear                 |                         |                        | Infamous              |
| Higher Purpose       |                         |                        | Lame                  |
| Humble               |                         |                        | Missing Ear           |
| Judged Unfairly      |                         |                        | Missing Eye           |
| Lost Love            |                         |                        | Missing Hand          |
| Noncombatant         |                         |                        | Motion Sickness       |
| Obsessed             |                         |                        | No Sense of Direction |
| Oversensitive        |                         |                        | Obese                 |
| Nocturnal            |                         |                        | Palsied Hands         |
| Pessimistic          |                         |                        | Poor (Characteristic) |
| Poor Memory          |                         |                        | Poor Eyesight         |
| Prohibition          |                         |                        | Poor Hearing          |
| Reckless             |                         |                        | Poor Student          |
| Reclusive            |                         |                        | Small Frame           |
| Short Attention Span |                         |                        | Social Handicap       |
| Simple-Minded        |                         |                        | Tainted with Evil     |
| Sheltered Upbringing |                         |                        | Weak Characteristics  |
| Soft-Hearted         |                         |                        |                       |
| Temperate            |                         |                        | <i>Apostate</i>       |
| Transvestite         |                         |                        | <i>Eunuch</i>         |
| Vow                  |                         |                        |                       |
| Weakness             |                         |                        |                       |
| Weak Willed          |                         |                        |                       |

### Step 3 Buy characteristics

All characters share 8 characteristics, summarized below –

*Intelligence* (INT): represents both the memory and the capacity to learn and think

*Perception* (PER): quantifies the ability to notice things, as well as powers of intuition

*Strength* (STR): measures physical power – lifting, pushing, shoving, heaving, moving

*Stamina* (STA): measures the limits of the character’s physical endurance

*Presence* (PRE): describes a characters appearance, demeanor, and charisma

*Communication* (COM): represents the aptitude for self-expression

*Dexterity* (DEX): the ability to move with agility and manipulate objects accurately and skillfully.

*Quickness* (QIK): measures reaction speed and reflexes

The “average” value for a characteristic in *Ars Magica* is zero (0). Characters may purchase their characteristics to higher levels, and may also lower characteristics below

zero in order to get more points to spend raising other characteristics. Characteristics may not be raised above +3 or lowered below -3 (for exceptions, see the Virtue Great Characteristic and the Flaw Poor Characteristic)

Characteristics are bought using points. The cost is listed on the following table. You start with seven points to spend. Characteristics reduced below zero give more points to spend.

| Characteristic Score | Cost   |
|----------------------|--------|
| +3                   | 6      |
| +2                   | 3      |
| +1                   | 1      |
| 0                    | 0      |
| -1                   | Gain 1 |
| -2                   | Gain 3 |
| -3                   | Gain 6 |

### Step 4 Abilities

Abilities represent the character's learned abilities. Groggs (and Companions) acquire abilities in two blocks – early childhood and later life.

Your character's age determines the maximum score he or she can have in any Ability at character creation. This limit does not apply to characters in play, and there is no cap on Abilities during play. In practice it is unlikely that an Ability will rise above ten, but it is possible.

| Age                | Maximum Ability |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Under 30           | 5               |
| 30-35              | 6               |
| 36-40 <sup>2</sup> | 7               |
| 41-45              | 8               |
| 46+                | 9               |

Abilities are purchased with points, using the following chart.

| Ability Score | Cost to buy | Cost to raise |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1             | 5           | 5             |
| 2             | 15          | 10            |
| 3             | 30          | 15            |
| 4             | 50          | 20            |
| 5             | 75          | 25            |
| 6             | 105         | 30            |
| 7             | 140         | 35            |
| 8             | 180         | 40            |
| 9             | 225         | 45            |

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<sup>2</sup> Note that characters of age 35 or above must begin making Aging rolls.

## Step 4a: Early Childhood

During the first five years of the characters life they gain a score of 5 in their native language and 45 points to divide between Area Lore (for the place the character is growing up), Athletics, Brawl, Charm, Folk Ken, Guile, Living Language (other than the character's native language), Stealth, Survival, and Swim. You do not need to put points into all of these Abilities, only the ones that best suit your conception of the character. This represents the skills that the character picks up as a child.

## Step 4b: Later Life

After early childhood the character gains 15 experience points per year, which may be placed in any Abilities, as long as the character has a Virtue that permits him or her to learn that ability (Academic, Arcane, Martial, and Supernatural abilities require a Virtue). A list of Abilities is found below:

| <b>Abilities</b>    |                      |                 |                |                                |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>General</b>      | <b>Academic</b>      | <b>Arcane</b>   | <b>Martial</b> | <b>Supernatural</b>            |
| (Area) Lore         | Artes Liberales*     | Code of Hermes* | Bows           | Animal Ken*                    |
| Animal Handling     | Civil and Canon Law* | Dominion Lore*  | Great Weapons  | Dowsing*                       |
| Athletics           | Common Law*          | Faerie Lore*    | Single Weapons | Enchanting Music*              |
| Awareness           | (Dead Language)*     | Finesse         | Thrown Weapons | Entrancement*                  |
| Bargain             | Medicine*            | Infernal Lore*  |                | Magic Sensitivity*             |
| Brawl               | Philosophae*         | Magic Lore*     |                | Premonitions*                  |
| Carouse             | Theology*            | Parma Magica*   |                | Second Sight*                  |
| Charm               |                      | Penetration     |                | Sense Holiness and Unholiness* |
| Chirurgry*          |                      |                 |                | Shapeshifter*                  |
| Concentration       |                      |                 |                | Wilderness Sense*              |
| Craft (type)        |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Etiquette           |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Folk Ken            |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Guile               |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Hunt                |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Intrigue            |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Leadership          |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Legerdemain*        |                      |                 |                |                                |
| (Living Language)   |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Music               |                      |                 |                |                                |
| (Organization) Lore |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Profession (type)   |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Ride                |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Stealth             |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Survival            |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Swim                |                      |                 |                |                                |
| Teaching            |                      |                 |                |                                |

## **Step 6 Personality**

Personality traits are short descriptions of important features of your character's personality. For major characters, they should be nothing more than a memory aide and a reason to think about the character's personality during creation. For grogs, however, they are significant. Because grogs are often shared between players, or not played for long periods, personality traits can be used as a concrete guide to playing the character. They can be positive or negative. "Loyal" is a particularly important trait for grogs as it is a measure of how attached they are to the covenant. "Brave" is an important trait for warriors, and indicates how courageous the character is in the face of danger.

Choose three words to describe your character. For grogs one of these traits should be "Brave" and another should be "Loyal". The third should be some characteristic distinctive to the character. These traits may be given a value between +3 (high) and -3 (low).

In practice Personality Traits are seldom rolled, and are included more to define the personality of the character than as dice roll modifiers.

## **Step 7 Reputation**

Reputation determines whether or not people have heard of the character and what they have heard. Most grogs will not begin the game with a Reputation, but some virtues and flaws will give the character one

## **Step 8 Equipment**

Rather than listing a cost for each piece of equipment, *Ars Magica* lists them under three general categories – inexpensive, Standard, and Expensive. For Grogs, the type of equipment they have access to is determined by the wealth of the covenant they serve. Grogs of the *Reservo Scientia* covenant are restricted to items of Standard cost or below. In general players should not worry too much about an extensive equipment list for Grogs. Arms and armor, and perhaps a few tools and some food, are all they generally require (and beer, don't forget the beer!)

A list of arms and armor can be found on pp. 176-177.

War Horses are very expensive, so Grogs cannot have access to them. A small riding horse is permissible, however, if the Grog has a "Ride" score of 3 or more.