

Introduction

Busiris is a colony of a distant, almost fabled, Empire. It is a melting pot where the high culture & ancient magic of the Empire meets a new continent full of promise & danger. Here the Old Deities compete with the Wild Spirit Lords of the interior & their feral magic.

Being a place of both peril & fabulous riches it attracts the best & worst men of the Empire. Ambitious Princes, devious Priests & greedy Merchants rub shoulders with Mercenaries, Adventurers & Tomb Robbers.

Everyone is out to make their fortune & advance their destiny far from the stultifying & oppressive 'harmony' of the Empire proper. Intrigue, conspiracy & betrayal are as common as the rain is not.

The cardinal rule is: if there isn't a rule for it – make it up as you go along. Have fun!

Rules of Play

When things get interesting the game is played in *Turns* of about ten seconds in length.

Each turn follows the sequence below:

1. Movement

Adventurers can choose to move before or after their enemies. Note that squares are 5' across.

They can move up to 3 + Speed in squares, -1 if in Medium Armour, -2 if in Heavy/Very Heavy.

You cannot move through a solid object over waist high or another figure (unless they let you). You can climb over or up an object but this is at half speed. Swimming & Stealthy movement is also at half speed.

2. Use Magic

A **Sorcerer** can cast one spell from his Spellbook in a turn. Spells can be cast repetitively but require a successful Lore check. An enemy will resist a spell cast upon him so deduct the enemy's INT from the Sorcerers Lore skill.

To cast a spell on an enemy you must be able to see him.

A **Priest** can use Holy Light or Healing once in a turn, but not both.

3. Bloody Combat

Adventurers & monsters can attack once each in a turn. The Adventurers always attack first.

You can only engage another figure in close combat in a square next to your own (including diagonally).

You can shoot at any figure that is in line of sight & range, even if they are fighting.

The attacker makes a Fighting or Shooting skill check minus their opponent's DEX.

If there is more than one attacker attacking a single opponent in close combat each one gets +1 to their Training Level. Thieves get +2 in this situation.

The difference between what the attacker needs & what he scores is the damage. For example a Adventurer needs an 8 or less & then rolls a 2, he causes six points of damage to his opponent.

If his weapon is Two-handed, a Crossbow or a Hunting Spear he gets +1 to damage.

Armour stops the first few points of damage. Light Armour stops 1 point, Medium 2, Heavy 3, Very Heavy 4. A light shield stops 1 extra point on top of armour or a heavy shield stops 2 extra points.

If his armour doesn't stop all the damage the defender must make a Toughness skill roll.

He must roll less than his Toughness minus the remaining damage, or he becomes Wounded.

A Wounded figure has all his skills reduced by 3 points (including Toughness).

If wounded a second time he is knocked out.

A KO'd figure can be easily killed or captured.

4. Use other Skills

Anything not listed above can now be done.

Adventurer Creation

Attributes

New Adventurers have ten points to divide between the four attributes below. Each attribute must be given between one & four points.

Strength	STR	Dexterity	DEX
Intellect	INT	Spirit	SPT

Skills

Skill	Aptitude	Examples
Agility	DEX x 2	<i>Climb, Leap</i>
Craft	DEX + INT	<i>Make, Repair</i>
Fighting	STR + INT	<i>Kill, Maim</i>
Lore	INT x 2	<i>Lore, Memory</i>
Perception	INT + SPT	<i>Spot, Hear</i>
Persuasion	SPT x 2	<i>Charm, Con</i>
Shooting	DEX + INT	<i>Sniper</i>
Speed	STR + DEX	<i>Run, React</i>
Stealth	DEX + SPT	<i>Sneak, Hide</i>
Toughness	STR + SPT	<i>Grit, Courage</i>

Training

New Adventurers are Trained in two skills & Familiar with three others of their choice.

The remainder are Untrained.

Training level	Bonus
Untrained	-1
Familiar	+0
Trained	+1
Experienced	+2
Mastered	+3

Skill Check

Roll less than Aptitude + Training + Race + Profession on 1D20.

When using a skill a roll of 1 is an automatic success & a roll of 20 an automatic failure.

Race

Old Kingdom: The peoples of the Old Kingdom come from the core provinces of the Empire. They are tall, slender, bronzed of skin, dark of hair & eye, & very cultured. They make up the Officer Class of the Army & most nobles come from Old Kingdom families.

Old Kingdom adventurers will find that many in society will naturally defer to them. Officials may assume that they lead the company of adventurers that they are members of. They may find people from the poorer classes do not initially trust them.

+1 INT, +2 Persuasion

New Kingdom: The majority of the Empire's subjects are New Kingdom. They populate the middle ranks of the Army, the bureaucracy of the Empire & the Priesthood, as well as the Merchant & Artisan classes. Not generally as tall as Old Kingdom people, they are nonetheless still slender, bronzed of skin & dark of hair & eye.

Being from the majority has its advantages, not least of which is acceptance by people in most stations in society.

+1 SPT, +2 Lore

Nubian: These are enormous black men & women who come from the southernmost provinces of the Empire. They are marked by their long, often braided & lustrous black hair. They have traditionally served in the Temple Guards. Many Noble houses also employ them in their retinues.

In recent centuries many Nubians who came to serve the Temples have settled their families within the Empire & now work in a number of trades.

+1 STR, +2 Fighting

Bedu: The Bedu are fierce desert nomads, they are dark of skin & hair, but have grey eyes & hooked noses. They tend to be short, wiry & very fast.

When the Empire first came to Busiris, the Bedu were their enemies & the Imperial Army came to respect the fierce resistance the outnumbered & outclassed tribesmen put up. A series of devastating defeats brought the tribes to the negotiating table & soon the Bedu had become part of the Empire with all the benefits & hazards that can bring.

+1 DEX, +2 Stealth

Kymeri: The Kymeri were once the 'Terror of the North'. Barbarian raiders who moved swiftly down upon the cities of the Empire from their dense forests, lofty mountains & frozen Taiga. Now many have settled within the Empire bringing their dynamism & martial skills to its service.

Kymeri are of average height, with strong builds, fair of skin & hair & have blue, grey or green eyes.

Many Old & New Kingdom peoples still regard the Kymeri as little more than savages & may react accordingly. Some though have come to appreciate the lyrical oral culture of the Kymeri. Kymeri women in particular are appreciated for their beautiful singing voices.

+1 SPT, +2 Toughness

Profession

Soldier: The professional man-at-arms. Be he a Warrior from the savage tribes, a member of the Imperial Army, a Temple Guard or just a plain Mercenary, he shares a common set of skills.

Many soldiers come from the Kymeri, Nubian & New Kingdom races.

Fighting +2, Double Trouble, any Armour & Shield.

Sorcerer: The dabbler in the arcane mysteries of the cosmos. These may be college-trained mages, apprenticed thaumaturges or natural witches. Each has learnt to master a selection of useful rituals that can bring useful magical power to their party.

Due to their high regard for learning & literacy many Sorcerers come from come from Old & New Kingdom families.

As a master of magic, he starts with three spells of his choice in his spellbook.

Lore +2, Spells, no Armour allowed.

Thief: These are men & women who often make their living on the wrong side of the law. They may be capable burglars, smugglers, cut-purses or brigands. In any case they bring many useful talents to a band of adventurers.

Thieves come from all the Imperial races.

Craft +2, Stealth +2, Burglary, only Light Armour.

Priest: There are many Deities in the Empire & these are liberal with their blessings as they try to woo people into worshipping them. Priests may come from the six established state religions, any one of many smaller sects or cults, or have a personal understanding with their deity. What all can do is tap into their Deity's divine power & perform blessings.

Many Priests, especially of the Imperial religions, come from Old & New Kingdom families.

Persuasion +2, Holy Light, Healing, only Light or Medium Armour & Shield.

Hunter: Many people, especially on the fringes of the civilised world, make their living tracking, pathfinding, hunting & trapping. Their knowledge & FoE can be invaluable to any party.

Both the Kymeri & the Bedu set great store by the path of the Hunter..

Toughness +2, Survival, only Light Armour & Shield.

Professional Abilities

Double Trouble; A Soldier can attack twice in a turn if he has not moved.

Burglary; A Thief can use his Craft skill to pick locks, or to find & disarm traps.

Holy Light; As long as the Priest stands still & holds up his holy symbol this light will prevent Undead approaching closer than 10'.

Healing; A Priest's touch makes a KO'd figure just wounded, or a wounded one whole.

Survival; Can track animals or enemies, & find food, shelter & water in the wilderness.

Initial Equipment

Once all the more exciting aspects of an Adventurer have been decided we come to the more mundane matter of equipping them. A new Adventurer begins with the clothes they stand up in and 100 silver coins with which to purchase everything they need to survive.

All but 5 silver must be spent on equipment. This represents the kit that they have acquired up until this point in their lives. Any remaining cash is what is left of their last pay.

Equipment is listed in the rules supplement called The Souk.

Improving Adventurers

After an adventure the Adventurers divide the loot between them equally. They can then spend some of this on training to improve themselves.

Cost Improvement

500	Improve Attribute by +1
100	Improve a Skill's training level by +1
200	A Sorcerer can choose a new spell to add to his spellbook.

Costs are in Silver Pieces.

An Adventurer can also improve by buying better equipment, or by finding & using magical armour, weapons & other stuff.

Sorcerer Spells

The Sorcerer cannot cast a spell if he is in an adjacent square to an enemy.

Befriend: One person likes you for five minutes. He will help & defend you, but not do anything suicidal. He will remember afterwards what you did.

Befuddle: Target can't cast spells & may only take non-offensive actions. Lasts 3 turns.

Blind: Enemy is blinded for 3 turns. Range 30'

Countermagic: This disrupts a spell targeted at the Sorcerer & nullifies it. This is the only spell that can be cast as an immediate reaction & not on the Sorcerer's turn.

Daze: Enemy cannot attack for 3 turns. He can still move & defend himself. Range 30'.

Dodge: Reduces the Combat skill of anyone who attacks the Sorcerer by 1 for 3 turns.

Dragon Scale: Sorcerer has equivalent of Heavy Armour for 3 turns. Doesn't work with Dodge.

Enchant Weapon: Touch a Weapon to give it +1 to Fighting/ Shooting skill for 3 turns. Weapon can only have one enchantment.

Fire Bolt: If Sorcerer makes a Shooting check this automatically causes a wound (i.e. no armour can stop it). Range 30'.

Float: Touch person to let them float up/down 30' per turn.

Haste: Sorcerer can move again in Magic phase.

Ignite: This sets fire to a single flammable object that is touched by the Sorcerer.

Invisibility: Sorcerer cannot be seen for 3 turns unless he attacks an enemy in any way.

Lock & Bar: Touch holds a door shut against anything except an *Open Says I* spell.

Open Says I: Touch opens a locked door or lid.

Teleport: Sorcerer disappears & reappears at any point he can see within 60'.

Terrify: Enemy must pass a Toughness check to attack Sorcerer. Lasts 3 turns.