

Amalgam 8

A diceless role-playing system.

By Steve Caruso, Nayla Caruso, and Andrew Bell
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De of habitation.

8 Oh that men would

Lord, for his goodness

wonderful

men.

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11 Because they rebelled against the
WORDS of God : and contemned the
counsell of the most high :

12 Therefore hee brought downe
their heart with labour : they fel downe,
and there was none to helpe.

Angry

Fallen

Swordsman

Swift

Flying

Inscrutable

Unstoppable

Strength

Fortitude

Resolved

Focused

Unshakable

Wounded

Fearful

Stevie

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Chapter 1: A Word Game

**3 And God said,* Let there be light:
and there was light.**

**4 And God saw the light, that it was
good: and God divided† the light from
the darkeneste.**

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

- Genesis 1:3-4
1611 King James Bible

Words have always had a certain mysticism in religious tradition. In the book of Genesis, the God of the Hebrews speaks the world into existence. In the Middle Ages, magicians used “magic words” to cause their tricks to work, and in various folk religions knowing the name of a kami, spirit or angel, a “word of power,” was believed to afford a certain amount of control over the supernatural.

Modern cultures are the same, where one must “give their word” as a promise, or sign their name, their personal words of identification, onto a piece of paper as a legally binding token. According to the famous Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, words shape thought, and in turn one’s mode of thought shapes the words they use. Words in Amalgam are no different, as it is words that shape your Character and the

world around them.

What will you need to play? Well that depends. For the beginner, we recommend that you have 10 index cards for each starting character. A second tool that you may find useful in your experience with this game is a good dictionary, as mastery of words and their meanings greatly helps the flow of the game. Other than that, be creative.

Amalgam was designed to be a generic roleplaying system which is well suited for all genres. Where many systems focus upon sets of statistics and numbers to represent more or less realistic simulations of chance, Amalgam focuses more heavily upon role-playing, itself. This leaves less focus on rules, and more focus on creatively weaving the story with words.

We will dispense with this philosophy now...

Chapter 2: The Amalgamate

A•mal•ga•mate n.

A joined or unified whole.

Everything in this world is made up of pieces. Even the word “pieces” is made up of letters. Each letter makes a sound, and each sound can be broken down into where you form it in your mouth. Your mouth is made of several organs, which are in turn made of cells, which are in turn made of molecules, which are in turn... well you get the idea.

In Amalgam, Characters are made up of **Words**. To be more specific, these Words are usually adjectives, so in Amalgam Characters are effortlessly easy to conceive. No points, no “rolling up;” a Character is made up by how one would describe them... “in their own words.”

A Character's Words

Now the *Amalgamate*, besides being the title of this chapter, is the name of the overall “pool” of Words that a Character is made up of. Beginning Characters start out with 10 *different* Words, plus or minus depending on several options that they may take (but we will get to

those later). Each one of these Words must describe the Character in some way. For example, if we were creating a Thief, we may come up with something similar to what we see below:

Thief Strong Wiry Civil Agile
Focused Limber Swift Guileful Persuasive

Thief – Obviously our character is a thief.

Strong – He's done some weightlifting.

Wiry – He's not too bulky, but muscular.

Civil – Our boy here is no ruffian.

Agile – He's quick on his feet.

Focused – He's good at ignoring distractions.

Limber – He's readily adaptable.

Swift – Quick in and quick out.

Guileful – He's tricky to let on.

Persuasive – And even if he does, he can convince you otherwise.



Snags

Every Character has quirks and things that make them interesting. **Snags** are Words that embody these things that are generally not something that one can use to their advantage, such as “Smoker,” “Obese,” “Agoraphobic,” etc. A new Character can take up to 3 Snags and for each Snag they take, they may add an

additional Word to their Amalgamate. Snags must be removed via in-game efforts and bought back with double the Experience, which we will discuss in a little bit.

They are generally marked with an (S) to distinguish them.

Templates

The Storyteller can also offer **Templates** depending on what the game needs. Templates can be pretty much anything, from “races” to “character classes” to “archetypes.” All a Template consists of is a small list of Words that a Character takes “for free.” They don't

count towards their Word limit, but they must be accepted “as is.” They tend to act like “pre-packaged” snippets of Character flavor.

Generally, Template words are marked with a (T) to distinguish them from other Words.

Gaining Words

As a Character progresses in Amalgam, instead of gaining experience points or extra levels, Characters gain more Words. The schedule by which they are acquired is not set

in stone, but a good practice that seems to work out well is to award one Word (of the Player's choice) per excursion. In certain circumstances,

the Storyteller can also award “Bonus Words” for Players who roleplay exceptionally well.

It is also good practice to allow a Player to choose *appropriate* Words for their Character. For example, a Character that did

nothing but sit around and eat pizza for the entire adventure should not get away with a new “Athletic.” Once again this is up to the good judgement of the Storyteller and input from all of the Players involved.

Word Levels

Working with additional words, however, can cause some difficulty keeping them all straight

(especially when the list grows long). As a result, Words eventually combine and **Level** up.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Word} + \text{Word} + \text{Word} &= \text{Word L2} \\ \text{Word L2} + \text{Word L2} + \text{Word L2} &= \text{Word L3}\end{aligned}$$

When a Character possesses three of the same Word, they combine to form a Level 2 Word, which counts as 2 Words towards resolving an Action. Three Level 2 Words become a Level 3

Word (which counts as 3 Words). Where many games may put a cap at Level 3, there is nothing to stop Characters from gaining even higher-Level Words.

Proficiencies

Once a Word reaches Level 3, a Player may immediately take a **Proficiency** on it. A Proficiency is a “sub-word” that describes a particular specialty or niche use for that Word which allows them a special bonus under certain circumstances.

For example, someone with a Runner L3 could take “Sprint” which would give a bonus when speeding over short distances, but not over long hauls.

Proficiencies can also represent particular maneuvers. For example, someone with Brawler L3 could take “Sucker Punch”

which would bestow a bonus when their target isn’t expecting an attack.

The general rule is that Proficiency is unique enough that Character may only make use of it in very specific circumstances. For example, it would be improper to take “Speedy” on Runner, as it is far too general.

Now, the specific type of bonus that a Character can take depends on several possible choices which are explained in detail in *Chapter 4: Manipulating Words*, but we need to cover a little more about the rules before they’ll make any sense. For now, simply keep this in mind.

Activity & Autonomy

Now that we've decided a Character's Words, we need to better understand how they work within the dynamics of the game.

One is never all that they are at every time of day. Even if you're usually sharp, the average person wakes up groggy in the morning. If you're tired, after you rest you feel

invigorated again. It takes effort to be compassionate in the heat of an argument, and it takes time to think through a problem when distracted.

As such, out of all of a Character's Words, they may only have 5 that are **Active** at any give time. Those five Active Words

represent and determine what your Character is ready for at that moment. For example, our Thief friend may want to have the following Active when picking a lock:

Thief Strong Wiry Civil Agile
Focused Limber Swift Guileful Persuasive

Or the following Active when they are sweet-talking their way out of a tricky situation:

Thief Strong Wiry Civil Agile
Focused Limber Swift Guileful Persuasive

Active Words are the Words that your Character has “under control” at any given time. Words that are “Inactive” or *Autonomous* go about their merry way. This is how some

Words may cause problems: Any Words that you do not have Active and under control, will act on their own accord.

As such, Words that are Autonomous generally will not give you any help in a tricky situation unless there is a reasonable exception, for it is the number of relevant Active Words in your Amalgamate that determines how a Character will faire with individual tasks.

Snags, for all intents and purposes, are Words that are *always* Autonomous. As a result Character may never have one of their Snags Active and “under control” under any circumstances.

Chapter 3: Resolving Actions

When confronted with a situation, or an **Action** that a Character wishes to undertake, instead of rolling dice, we need but do three things: First, we need to figure out how apt they

are to complete the Action. Second we must figure out how difficult the task is, and thirdly throw a bit of randomness in to see if they succeed.

The Pledge

As mentioned above, the first thing to figure out how apt your Character is to completing an Action. This is simply determined by adding up the number of Words in your Character's Active Amalgamate that would be appropriate towards completing the task.

Simply adding them up is not enough. The Player must *address* the Storyteller with a descriptive narrative detailing what they are planning to do and *emphasizing* which Words they plan to do it with. This is known as the **Pledge**.

For example, looking back at our Thief let's assume that he's trying to pick a lock with the following words:

Thief Strong Wiry Civil Agile
Focused Limber Swift Guileful Persuasive

Looking over things carefully, the Thief's Player addresses the Storyteller:

*"**Focusing** carefully, I **Swiftly** pick the lock with my **Agile** fingers."*

This would give him a Pledge of 3. If (as another example) he becomes impatient with the task and gives up, he may choose to say:

*"Getting frustrated, with a **Wiry** grip on the knob, I give the door a **Strong** blow with my shoulder."*

Which would give him a Pledge of 2 with great roleplaying effect.

If the Storyteller believes that one or more of the Words the Player chose to be inappropriate, or notices an Autonomous Word in the Character's Amalgamate that may cause problems, they may respond in like narrative, which reduces the Character's Pledge appropriately.

For example, if a Character who was trying to hide behind some cover had the word Large inactive, the Storyteller might say:

*"As you crouch down behind the bush, your **Large** frame isn't completely covered by the branches."*

This would reduce the Character's Pledge by 1; however, the Player is now completely open to start another Pledge to defend their use of the Words in question. Pledges between Player and Storyteller may go back and forth until either the Player is satisfied with their final Pledge, or the Storyteller after several iterations wishes to move on by saying *"The task is at hand."*

Difficulty

Next, depending on how hard the task at hand is, the Storyteller will choose an appropriate **Difficulty**. Most Difficulties are based upon pre-determined conditions (especially when dealing with other Characters) which we'll cover later on. Otherwise, it is up to the Storyteller to figure things out. Here is a suggested list of Difficulties which are a good way to feel out the average encounter.

Depending on the situation, the Storyteller may opt to adjust the Difficulty on the fly, and at the Storyteller's option, they may decide to keep the Difficulty a secret. This brings us to:

1 - Ridiculously easy tasks

(Breathing. Remembering your name.)

3 - Easy tasks

(Climb a rope ladder. Write legibly.)

5 - Average tasks

(Hear an approaching guard.)

10 - Tough tasks

(Rig a wagon wheel to fall off.)

13 - Challenging tasks

(Swim in stormy weather.)

15 - Hard tasks

(Open an average lock.)

20 - Very hard tasks

(Leap across a 30 foot cavern.)

25 - Impossibly hard tasks











(Hack into a government mainframe, blindfolded.)

Throwing Random Numbers

Random numbers are, traditionally, represented by dice in roleplaying systems; however, dice can sometimes be a bit cumbersome and tend to get lost. Amalgam, seeks to rely heavily upon roleplaying as storytelling, so where dice *can* be used, throwing random numbers is the preferred method of resolution.

To do so, the player of the Character in question turns and faces the Storyteller (or another player if they wish) and engage in an alternate form of Rock-Paper-Scissors. Instead of throwing one of the three traditional gestures of the game on the fourth shake ("one, two, three - *shoot!*") the two parties extend 1 to 5 fingers. The collection of pointing digits shown is added up. *If the total is over 5, subtract 5.* The result is a rather random number between 1

and 5 (very useful for our purposes). This is known as a **Random Throw**.

	1	5	4	3	X
	2	1	5	X	3
	3	2	X	5	4
	4	X	2	1	5
	X	4	3	2	1
					

Success and Failure

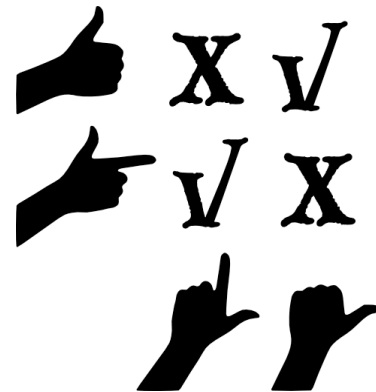
Pledge + Random Throw \geq Difficulty
Success!

Pledge + Random Throw < Difficulty
Failure!

To actually determine the *Success* or *Failure* of the Action, take a Random Throw, add the Character's Pledge to it, and if the final value (known as the Character's *Performance*) meets or exceeds the Difficulty, the Character succeeds. Otherwise the attempt is a failure and the Character is otherwise unable to complete their Action.

Degree of Success

When one Succeeds at an Action, the result may have to take the *Degree of Success* into account. This determines exactly how well your Character has pulled the Action off. The value is simply determined by the highest Level Word used in the Action. For example, if someone's highest Level Word was a Strength L2, their Degree of Success is 2. If someone's highest Level Word was a Sword L4, their Degree of Success is 4.



Critical Throws & Failures

Of course, there always has to be a catch and that is exactly how *Critical Throws* and *Critical Failures* work. In throwing a random number, if by some twist of fate **doubles** show up (both parties throw the same number of fingers as indicated by "X" on the *Throwing Random Numbers* chart), a flash round of odds and evens is played.

If you throw evens, you have scored a Critical Throw. Your Performance becomes your Pledge + 10 and if you Succeed, your Degree of Success is **doubled**.

If you throw odds, you have scored a Critical Failure. Both your total Performance and Degree of Success are reduced to **0**.

Taking 5

When a Character is not in a situation that is under duress, is unopposed, and has plenty of time to work at a task, their Player may opt to **Take 5**. Effectively, in such a situation, a Character can resolve an Action with a Performance equal to their appropriate Word Levels + 5 without the need for a Throw.

This, of course, eliminates the possibility of a Critical Throw, but at the same time eliminates the possibility of a Critical Failure. The Storyteller is the ultimate authority on when such a resolution is appropriate to attempt.

Plinth

When a Character is in a new situation and decides they wish to proceed without exerting themselves, the Storyteller may allow them to resolve an action by their *Plinth*, or a Performance equal to the total Level of their appropriate Words without a Throw. If their Plinth it is over the normal Difficulty, they in essence receive an automatic success.

Their Plinth cannot be used more than once for any situation, and further attempts must be Thrown.

Common situations where resolving an Action by a Character's Plinth may be a good idea include:

- Picking up first-impression details of a new scene they come across.
- Doing everyday Actions as part of their routine.
- Any other effortless Action.

Chapter 4: Manipulating Words



Words in Amalgam can be “manipulated” in a variety of ways to achieve a number of in-game effects. In this chapter we’ll go over the rules concerning them.

Switching Words

The most rudimentary way of manipulating Words is determining which Words are Active and which are Autonomous. As such, **Switching** allows you to swap Words in and out of your Active Amalgamate during the course of the story.

Generally, a Player may switch one of their Character’s Words before taking an Action. If a Player chooses to take no Action with their Character for that round, or takes an

Action that involves waiting (such as aiming or setting themselves up to spring a trap, they may switch two Words rather than one.

If the Character is not in a stressful situation, they may swap their Words however they wish. Free-swapping is especially useful while Taking 5 or in preparation for a conflict or quest.

Imposing Words

Whenever a Character tries to affect another Character (whether by persuasion, by diplomacy, sword and shield, etc.) they may attempt do so by **Imposition**.

Imposition is the process by which a Character can temporarily alter the Words in another Character's Amalgamate. For example, to quiet a frightened Character, they may impose the Word "Calm." To sneak past a guard, they may try to impose the Word "Oblivious," or to physically hurt another Character, they can try to impose the Word "Wounded."

Depending on the setting and genre of the game, the Storyteller and Players collectively may come up with conventions for various in-game effects.

Let us say that our Thief Character wishes to fast-talk their way past security into a building. By taking an Action with a Difficulty of 5, the Thief may attempt to Impose the Word of their choice upon their opponent. An opening Pledge might be something like the following:

*"With a **Civil** tone, I express to him in a **Guilefully Persuasive** manner that I left my identification in my office upstairs... He seems like a **Compliant** sort."*

In the above example, our Thief is Pledging *Civil*, *Guileful*, and *Persuasive* against the guard (a Pledge of 3) in an attempt to Impose the word *Compliant*, so that he may pass.

Now, after the acting Character makes their initial Pledge for their Action, the defending Character may immediately Pledge any appropriate Active Words they have in their Amalgamate to increase the Difficulty by

their combined Level. They may not, however, alter their current configuration beforehand by swapping any of their Words.

So now, the guard (played by the Storyteller) may reply with the following Pledge:

*"Being **Stubborn** by nature, I want to do this by the book. Let's hear this story."*

The guard has Pledged *Stubborn* in his defense, making his Pledge equal to 1.

Now our Thief will make their Throw at +3 (their total Pledge) against a Difficulty of 6 (5 + the guard's Pledge). A little tricky, but doable.

If the acting Character succeeds, the defending Character must now deal with the Imposition. A number of Levels of their Active Words (equal to the Degree of Success, in this case known as **Influence**) now become the Word the acting Character chose to Impose, starting with the Words that were Pledged in defense.

Once those run out, the pool of choices opens up to include the Character's Active Amalgamate, and in both cases it is the defending Player's choice which Words are changed.

In certain circumstances, a Player may opt not to Pledge any Words in Defense of an Imposition. For example, if another Character is trying to heal them, it would not be a very good idea to resist. Even in this situation, the Storyteller may counter-Pledge any Autonomous Words that might get in the way.

Multi-Level Words & Influence

When dealing with Influence, Words of multiple Levels (i.e. Level 2 or higher) have a special advantage: They can resist more Influence before they are overcome.

For example, let's say that the security guard's *Stubborn*, from our previous example, was a Level 2. In this case, an Influence of 1 would not be enough to alter a Level 2

Word. Instead, the Storyteller will have to note down how much Influence the guard's *Stubborn* has been hit with. The next time someone tries to Impose upon that Word, the previous Influence will be taken into account as well.

Multiple points of Influence can be absorbed in this way by multiple Words at a time. For example, if a Character has two Level 2 Words Pledged in defense, and is hit with 2 points of Influence, they may opt for each of their Level 2 Words to absorb one point each, allowing the Character to continue unscathed.

Now, the "banked" Influence accumulated will eventually go away as would

Restoring Words

One can **Restore** Words back to their previous state either over time or through in-game efforts.

Generally, all Imposed Words are returned to their previous forms at the beginning of an adventure, after a good night's sleep, or at any point where the Characters have had enough time to properly recover (in similar manner to Influence).

For Characters who wish to be more proactive in Restoring their Words, they can be brought back to their previous state by succeeding in actions where the Words in question would have been used. In a sense, by

Exhausting Words

When your Character is attempting to perform an Action that is exceedingly difficult or wishes to put everything they have into the result, their Player may choose to **Exhaust** one or more of their Active Words.

Each Word they choose to Exhaust, must be declared before the Action is resolved with a Throw and may be counted as *double* its Level. As a result, however, at the end of the Action it is immediately Imposed by the word "*Exhausted*."

be appropriate. Under normal circumstances, this means that they should go away when the Character has adequate time to rest and recover (i.e. a good night's sleep). If the Character is continually subjected to stress (no sleep, torture, etc.), the Influence will not go away.

One last and very important thing to remember is if the defending Character did not Pledge any Words in defense, when absorbing Influence, all of their Words are treated as if they are Level 1 (i.e. 1 point of Influence causes them to change). They have been simply caught off guard.

succeeding without their help they are able to restore their confidence in their own abilities. This, of course is left up to the Storyteller.

Characters may also opt to try and Restore Words through healing or meditative abilities. The Difficulty for such an action is equal to 5 + the total Level of Imposed Words. The Degree of Success is then deducted from the Influence of whichever Words are appropriate. Once all Influence on a Word is removed, the Word is restored.

All *Exhausteds* that are acquired in this way cannot be Restored without appropriate in-game actions, such as a uninterrupted rest or non-trivial healing efforts. If a Character Exhausts all of their Active Words at once, at the end of their Action they become Incapacitated.

One cannot Exhaust Words when they Take 5 or use their Plinth.

Incapacitation & Destroying Words

If a Character has all of their Active Words Imposed upon, they become **Incapacitated**. If it is from physical Imposition, they've been knocked down. If it's from mental Imposition, they are stunned. For all intents and purposes, they are unable to act until they are able to Switch in 5 fresh, unhindered Words, either one at a time or have them Restored by another Character.

Additionally, once a Character has no more Active Words to Impose upon, further Imposition can **Destroy** them. Strength is shattered. Beauty is ruined. Willpower is cut to ribbons. In short, they are removed from the Character's Amalgamate and can only be gained back through the awarding of Experience.

Losing a Word is a jarring event, and should be roleplayed accordingly. For example, if a Character were to lose the word "Calm," it would be appropriate for them to become suddenly panicked. If they were to lose the word "Strong," the in-game effect may be that they have broken a bone.

Words that are Destroyed leave their Active slots empty, and must have other Words Switched in to take their place.

When all of one's Active Words are Destroyed (i.e. all Active slots are emptied), they expire as a Playable Character. If it is from physical wounds, they die. If it is from emotional damage, they go insane, etc. The Character is now the Storyteller's responsibility and the Player must start afresh.

Combat Rounds

Sometimes when flurries of Impositions go back and forth, the flow of play needs to become more organized to facilitate it. **Combat Rounds** are a quick and clean way in Amalgam to solve this problem.

First, each Player must Pledge what their Character intends to do, describing their actions along with their Words that fit. This can be a good time for the Players to collaborate and coordinate with each other.

If Weapons or Armor are involved, read up on the chapter on Items to understand how they work. Aggressive Actions are carried out by Imposing appropriate Words.

For example, for physical combat "Wounded," "Broken," "Blinded," "Bleeding," etc. For mental combat "Confused," "Dazed," "Complacent," "Flustered," etc. Overall, the Words you Impose upon opponents should always serve a purpose, from Imposing

"Ignorant" upon them to sneak by or by Imposing "Wound" on them to bring them down.

Second, the Storyteller assigns Difficulty modifiers to each player based upon the quality of their descriptions and tactical considerations. If there are a lot of Characters to keep track of, these can be represented by putting tokens down on the table, or handing over index cards.

Third, everyone Throws *at the same time* against the Storyteller to determine their Performances and potential Degrees of Success.

Fourth, the Characters then act in the order of their Performances, the Storyteller detailing their Successes and Failures.

Finally, when all else is settled, start a new round until there is no need to keep up rounds.

That's about it.

Word Proficiencies

Back in Chapter 2 we discussed **Proficiencies**, “sub-words” that describe a particular specialty or niche use for that Word which allows them a special bonus under certain circumstances.

To re-iterate, the rule is that a Proficiency must be unique enough that the Character may only make use of it in very specific circumstances. For example, it would

be improper to take “Speedy” on Runner, as it is far too general.

Something like “Sprinter” may be more appropriate, as then it would only garner advantages on short-distance running, or at the very beginning of a chase.

In these circumstance, the Proficiency gives a +1 to the Character’s Performance and, if successful, a +1 to their Degree of Success.

Stacking Words

In the midst of an encounter where more skill or finesse is necessary, a Character may choose to **Stack** one or more of their Words. Stacking, in essence, allows a Character to utilize more than 5 Words in their Amalgamate when in the thick of a conflict, and has several requirements.

First, it takes an entire, Action to Stack one Word on top of another. Your Character is preparing themselves, focusing, bearing down, or readying their next move and this should be expressed with appropriate role-playing. Unstacking them is not a full Action, and is treated like a normal Word swap out.

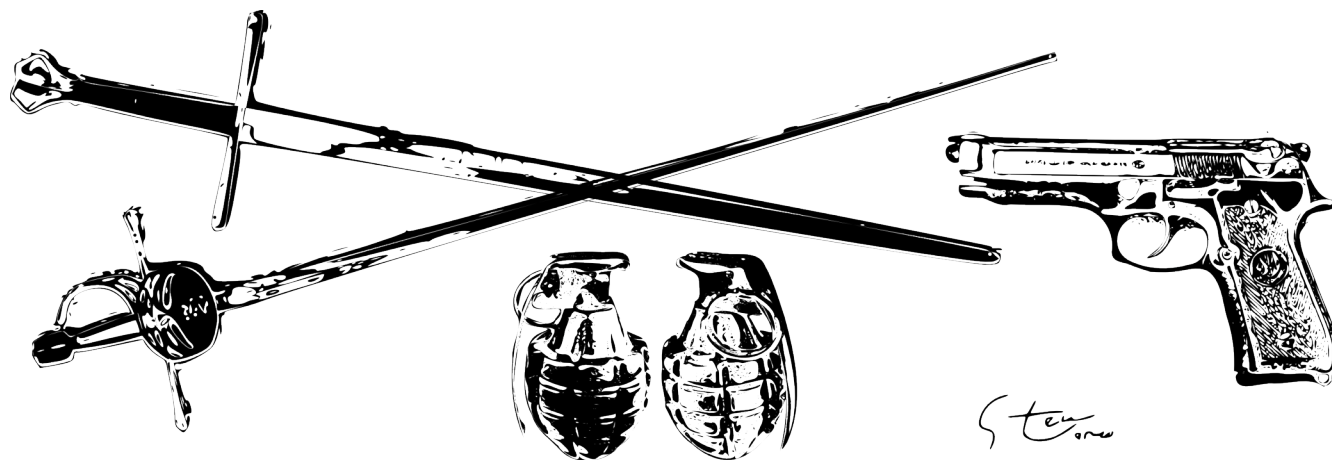
Second, almost like a “pyramid,” Words can only have Words of *one Level lower* Stacked upon them. For example, a Level 2 Word can have a Level 1 Word Stacked. A

Level 3 Word can have a Level 2 Word Stacked, and in turn can have a Level 1 Word Stacked on top of that. Each Word Stack takes up a single Active slot in an Amalgamate.

Third, also like a “pyramid” if the Word that another Word is Stacked upon is Imposed, Exhausted, or Destroyed, so too is their fate. This is the bit of risk associated with Stacking.

Finally, you may not Stack Words when Taking 5, using your Plinth, or are in an unopposed Action. Stacking is a heat-of-the-moment mechanic for use when facing dynamic odds, and once such an encounter is over all stacked Words return to their normal Inactive positions.

Chapter 5: Items



Items are treated as Words. In order to use an Item, you must “equip” it as an Active Word. The Level of the Item can range from 1 to 5, and acts as a Word of that Level. When a Character uses an item that they would not

normally be proficient with (for example, they do not have any Words or knowledge that would be appropriate to use it with), the Storyteller may assign a Difficulty modifier as appropriate.

Item Level

Item Level is generally determined by how powerful or well-suited to a particular purpose it is. It is best to make common, “mundane” items Level 1. For example, Items which you could not accomplish a task easily without, such as a screwdriver, a can opener, a

key, should all be Level 1. Good “standard” items should be Level 2, and high-quality Items should be Level 3.

Level 4 items are harder to find and usually denote exceptional crafting where Level 5 should be reserved for unique or rare items.

Weapons

Weapons generally, excusing the pun, give you an edge in combat by increasing the number of appropriate Word Levels in your Amalgamate as well as higher-level Weapons giving you a boost to your Degree of Success beyond the Level 3 cap of normal Words.

Example Weapons:

- Level 1:** Knives, Slingshots, Small Projectiles
- Level 2:** Swords, Polearms, Shortbow, Smallarms
- Level 3:** Fine Blades, Longbow, Longarms
- Level 4:** Assault Rifles, Hollow Points, Battle Axes
- Level 5:** Legendary Blades, Explosives

Armor

Armor, once Active may be Pledged in defense of whomever is trying to harm you. For example, if our Thief has a Flak Jacket L2, any other Character attempting to attack them

would have a -2 penalty on their Throw (or have their Difficulty increased by 2, depending on how you look at it).

Example Armor:

- Level 1:** Knee or Shoulder Pads, Protective Gloves
- Level 2:** Hardened Leather, Kendo Bogu
- Level 3:** Chainmail, Flak Jacket
- Level 4:** Full Kevlar, Steel Breastplate and Greaves
- Level 5:** Full Steel Armor, Bomb Squad Armor

Additionally, to determine a reasonable Level for a piece of Armor, the Storyteller should take the total area that it covers, along with its quality into account. For example, it would be foolish to give something as small as a

Codpiece (regardless of how... confident a Character is about themselves) any more than one Level.

Finally, different types of Armor are not appropriate in different situations. Something made of kevlar will stop a bullet, but a knife would cut through it with little trouble. It is up to the Players and the Storyteller to keep these situations in mind, and is not something that is worth a chart to outline in this book. Brains and common sense should take precedence over manipulating the rules to undue advantage.



Chapter 6: Additional Rules

The following are a number of alternate or additional rules that some Storytellers and Players can use:

Using Dice

Some roleplayers do prefer the feel of dice in their hands rather than simply flicking fingers. This can be accomplished using standard 6-sided dice. When resolving actions, add up your appropriate Words as usual, but instead of throwing fingers, roll a die. On 1-5, it resolves

as usual, but a roll of 6 prompts a Critical Throw Check. Roll another die, and on an even number (2, 4, 6) the roll is a Critical Throw, where on an odd number (1, 3, 5) the roll is a Critical Failure. From there, play resumes normally.

Advanced Items

Some Storytellers may find items with merely a Level value far too simplistic. Instead, they may treat an Item like a separate Amalgamate. Give the item its own number of Words, as well as a specified number of

Active Slots that determine how many of those Words can be Active at a given time. The players will be required to configure their Words as strategically as possible.

Risk

When a Character is performing an Action and wishes to take a gamble, the Storyteller may allow them to take a few levels of **Risk**. For each Level of Risk employed, the Character's Performance is reduced by one, but

their Degree of Success is increased by one. This gives the effect of reducing their chances of Success, but increasing the benefits of succeeding if they do.

Plot Points

If a Character does something truly extraordinary, the Storyteller may opt to award them a **Plot Point**. The Player who owns a Plot

Point may choose to use it as a +1 bonus on any Throw that they choose, provided they announce it beforehand.

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Credits

Written and Illustrated by
Steve Caruso

Developed by
Steve Caruso • Nayla Caruso • Andrew Bell

Artwork Models
Alice Zelman • Phil Gillhaus
Tea Provino (RIP) • Nayla Caruso

Amalgam is always a work in progress.
If you have any ideas (or notice any goofs) be sure to send them in:
RogueLeaf@gmail.com