

GURPS

Fourth Edition

DUNGEON FANTASY 4TM

SAGESTM



By Sean Punch

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

THE BRAINS OF THE OUTFIT

Some brave souls seek enlightenment in the darkest dungeons. In a hack-n-slash world, most end up skewered, barbecued, and eaten – but occasionally, knowledge truly does prove to be power.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages lets you roleplay one of the fortunate few who successfully mix reading with bleeding, who put the “wordplay” in swordplay, who . . . you get the idea (you’re supposed to be smart!). This learned work gives you:

- The artificer, a new profession that adds craft and technology to the party’s arsenal – complete with rules for gizmos and gadgeteering in the dungeon.
- The scholar, another new archetype, who backs up swords and spells with obscure lore (like where ancient cultures hid their stuff) and who can remember the most surprising things . . . even magic!
- Lenses for combining these new templates with the ones in *Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*.
- Funky new artificer gadgets that any delver can use.
- Complete rules for books, maps, and magical scrolls – including entirely new types of scrolls that work for anyone.

Because not every party has to consist *entirely* of illiterate ogre barbarians!

By Sean Punch

Cover Art by Bob Stevlic

Illustrations by Zach Howard, Ed Northcott, Klaus Scherwinski, and Dan Smith



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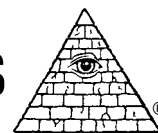
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GURPS Line Editor ■ SEAN PUNCH
e23 Manager ■ PAUL CHAPMAN
Page Design ■ PHILIP REED and
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Art Director ■ WILL SCHOONOVER
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Indexer ■ THOMAS WEIGEL
Prepress Checkers ■ WILL SCHOONOVER
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INTRODUCTION

Sage. A “wise man” – priest, professor, scientist, etc.
– *GURPS Basic Set*

Dungeon delvers are generally very *physical*. They kick in doors, massacre monsters, smash open chests, and haul off loot. Spellcasters may *seem* more cerebral, but that’s a means to an end. Bards use their wits to control minds and score free drinks, clerical and druidic wisdom revolves around smiting whatever offends some god, and most wizards’ deep thoughts concern new and better ways to explode things and discover immortality. Genuine *thinkers* are rare in the dungeon, with good reason: stopping to think is a great way to get eaten!

Thus, the sage’s role in dungeon fantasy is traditionally played by NPCs: village wise women, mysterious old men at taverns, spacey priestesses, and pipe-smoking academics from the temple and the Wizards’ Guild. The heroes meet such folk in town and listen to their tales of fantastic wealth and grave danger. Then they bid adieu, follow the baffling map or riddle to a stinking pit, and get down to the business of doors, monsters, chests, and loot.

For as long as hack-and-slash fantasy has existed, though, brave players have wanted to try their hand at playing inventors and professors courageous or crazy enough to enter the field. *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages* aims to make this possible. *Possible* doesn’t mean *easy*, of course – these roles are extremely challenging!

About the Author

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist and ended up as the *GURPS* Line Editor. Since 1995, he has compiled the two *GURPS Compendium* volumes, written *GURPS Wizards* and *GURPS Undead*, edited or revised over 20 other *GURPS* books, and masterminded rules for dozens more. Most recently, he created the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition* with co-author David Pulver, wrote *GURPS Powers* with co-author Phil Masters, and wrote *GURPS Martial Arts* with co-author Peter V. Dell’Orto. Sean has been a fanatical gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, computers, and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec, with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.



parts (low-value junk like scrap metal, sticks, and rocks). This, too, takes 1d×5 minutes.

The adaptation is *permanent* if the final item is worth no more than the initial gear. If the final creation is worth more, a successful Engineer roll gives a jury-rig that endures for *one* use (see *What Use Is It?*, p. 7). The original components are always recoverable unless the Engineer roll was a critical failure, which destroys them.

ARTIFICER

250 points

Every delver loves wonderful toys – and *you* are the one who makes them! You're the go-to guy for potions, armor adjustments, and finicky traps that even the thief is reluctant to touch. But unlike alchemists and armorers in town, you're not happy to stay parked in a shop. Your goal is to perfect your art, and there's no better academy than the trick- and trap-filled hell-holes commissioned by dying kings and mad wizards.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 13 [60]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 11 [10].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 13 [0]; Per 13 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [0]; Basic Move 6 [0].

Advantages: Dungeon Artificer 4 [20]; Equipment Bond ×2 (Any *two* starting tools or kits) [2]; Gizmos 3 [15]; and Quick Gadgeteer [50]. • 40 points chosen from among DX +1 or +2 [20 or 40], IQ +1 or +2 [20 or 40], Equipment Bond (other) [1/item], Gizmos 4+ [5/level], High Manual Dexterity 1-4 [5/level], Lifting ST 1-3 [3/level], Luck [15] or Extraordinary Luck [30], Serendipity [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Versatile [5], Wealth (Comfortable, Wealthy, or Very Wealthy) [10, 20, or 30], or Weapon Bond [1].

Disadvantages: Compulsive Inventing (12) [-5]. • -20 points chosen from among Absent-Mindedness [-15], Bad Sight (Mitigator, Corrective Spectacles, -60%) [-10], Curious [-5*], Hard of Hearing [-10], Overconfidence [-5*], Pyromania [-5*], Trickster [-15*], or worsen Compulsive Inventing from (12) to (9) [-7] for -2 points or (6) [-10] for -5 points. • A further -25 points chosen from among the previous traits or Bad Temper [-10*], Greed [-15*], Impulsiveness [-10*], Jealousy [-10], Kleptomania [-15*], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], Post-Combat Shakes [-5*], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], or Stubbornness [-5].

Primary Skills: Alchemy (VH) IQ+3 [4]-16†; Engineer (Gadgets) (H) IQ+3 [2]-16†; Fast-Draw (Gadget) (E) DX+4 [1]-17†; and Scrounging (E) Per+4 [1]-17†.

Secondary Skills: Forced Entry (E) DX+1 [2]-14; Armoury (Body Armor), Armoury (Melee Weapons), Armoury (Missile Weapons), and Traps, all (A) IQ+3 [1]-16†; and Lockpicking (A) IQ [2]-13. • *One* of Crossbow (E) DX+2 [4]-15 or Throwing (A) DX+1 [4]-14. • *One* of Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword, all (A) DX+1 [4]-14. • *One* of Shield or Shield (Buckler), both (E) DX+2 [4]-15; Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-14; or raise main Melee Weapon skill to DX+2 [8]-15.

Background Skills: *Five* of Knot-Tying or Leatherworking, both (E) DX [1]-13; Climbing or Stealth, both (A) DX-1 [1]-12; First Aid (E) IQ [1]-13; Architecture, Cartography, Hazardous Materials (Magical), Holdout, Merchant, or Smith (any), all (A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Counterfeiting or Jeweler, both (H) IQ-2 [1]-11; or Search (A) Per-1 [1]-12.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +4 for Dungeon Artificer (p. 4).

Customization Notes

Artificers are distinguished more by their actions in the field – their Gizmos and jury-rigs – than by their abilities. Still, there are two familiar, almost diametrically opposed stereotypes. Most artificers fall somewhere in between.

The *engineer* is practical, and relies on a good stock of supplies, a well-loved set of tools, and his skills. He tends to have more IQ, and nearly always sufficient Wealth that he can acquire a wide selection of items to reveal as Gizmos. However, he doesn't *rely* on Gizmos. He lugs a lot of gear (making Lifting ST valuable), much of which is likely to be carefully selected, justifying Equipment Bond with tools and Signature Gear in the form of exceptional arms and armor (*his* designs!). He favors weapons that double as tools, wielding a hatchet with Axe/Mace or a machete with Shortsword. His background skills tend to be crafts – Architecture, Jeweler, Smith, Leatherworking, etc. – along with Merchant to help him fund his work.

The *mad inventor*, by contrast, prefers to travel light, and finds merchants and bank accounts tiresome. He meets each challenge with genius, guts, good fortune . . . and *Gizmos*, often 5, 10, or more. Lady Luck is his ally, and he's as likely to invest in Luck and Serendipity as in Gizmos. If forced to fight, he uses weapons suited to a civilized genius, wielded with Rapier, Saber, or Smallsword, and often enhanced with Weapon Bond. Background skills inevitably include Hazardous Materials for handling things that sane inventors avoid. Counterfeiting, Holdout, Search, and Stealth are valuable when money runs short.

Artificers are served well by trading some points from quirks for equipment – even if they're Wealthy *and* have Signature Gear. An artificer's hardware defines him! The more paraphernalia he has, the wider his options for Gizmos. Keep *detailed* lists of what he's carrying and what's in limbo, waiting to show up as Gizmos.

LENSES FOR ARTIFICERS

Artificers enjoy turning one thing into another – an urge that sometimes leads them to reinvent *themselves*. The following lenses let artificers learn other professions, and work like those in *Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*.

Artificer-Barbarian

+50 points

Artificers benefit greatly from added muscle – it helps them carry more tools and pull out bigger Gizmos! In addition, outdoor skills fill a distinct deficiency in their training.

Attributes: +2 ST [20]; +2 HT [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -0.5 Basic Speed [-10].

Advantages: High Pain Threshold [10].

Skills: *Ten* of Camouflage (E) IQ [1]; Animal Handling (any), Disguise (Animals), Navigation (Land), or Weather Sense, all (A) IQ-1 [1]; Mimicry (Animal Sounds or Bird Calls) or Naturalist, both (H) IQ-2 [1]; Swimming (E) HT [1]; Running (A) HT-1 [1]; Fishing (E) Per [1]; or Survival (any) or Tracking, both (A) Per-1 [1].

CHAPTER FOUR

WRITINGS

Books, codices, folios, scrolls . . . texts of all varieties are a scholar's life and love. Many are also valuable to other delvers, particularly wizards. All such items are "special orders." Delvers may start out with them, but to obtain them in play, they'll have to go on an adventure: visit a famous bookseller in a distant city, rob a library (or a famous bookseller), or loot a dungeon and hope for literate orcs!

MANUALS

A *manual* is a guide to one particular Cultural Familiarity, Language, or IQ-, Will-, or Per-based skill. Manuals come in three basic formats, distinguished by how many points they can grant readers with Book-Learned Wisdom (p. 8). Each has a base cost (higher than the price to learn new skills in *Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level* – manuals give away secrets that instructors could charge for!) and a base weight. These latter stats are often modified.

Primer: Scholars may temporarily add 1 point in the subject matter. Anybody can study this for 15 weeks on the road or in town and then spend 1 point to learn its lore permanently. It has no other value to non-scholars. \$25, 3 lbs.

Textbook: Scholars may temporarily acquire up to 2 points in the topic. A textbook can teach a skill permanently, just like a primer. Those who lack the skill can consult it in the field to get a default roll for a skill that normally doesn't allow one: attribute-4 if Easy, attribute-5 if Average, attribute-6 if Hard, or attribute-7 if Very Hard. \$50, 6 lbs.

Thesis: Scholars may temporarily acquire however many points the book is rated for – at least 3 points and sometimes much more for skills, usually 6 points for Languages. For everyone else, this is no better than a textbook. \$25/point, 12 lbs.

Modifiers

The following modifiers are "stackable" unless noted otherwise. Each has a "cost factor" (CF), which works like the CF for weapons and armor: final cost is the base cost above multiplied by (1 + total CF). Weight effects multiply together.

Knowledge Type

Base prices reflect *common knowledge*: a living Language, Cultural Familiarity for a widespread race or nationality, or a typical mundane skill that defaults to IQ, Will, or Per (see *Common Knowledge*, p. 14). Rarefied knowledge costs more:

Obscure Knowledge: "Dead" Languages, Cultural Familiarities for lost civilizations, and mundane IQ-, Will-, or Per-based skills without defaults (Alchemy, Body Language, Engineer, Hidden Lore, Musical Composition, Musical Instrument, Religious Ritual, Speed-Reading, Surgery, Ventriloquism, and Veterinary) or with few legitimate uses (Counterfeiting, Forgery, Holdout, Lockpicking, Poisons, Shadowing, Smuggling, Streetwise, and Traps). +1 CF.

Esoteric Knowledge: Thaumatology, or any IQ-, Will-, or Per-based skill normally restricted to individuals with powers, including bardic skills, chi skills, Esoteric Medicine, Exorcism, and Herb Lore. +2 CF.

Magic: Spells! +3 CF.

Production Quality

Low-tech bookmaking is *costly*, so scribes use as little material as possible. Base price buys a leather-bound palimpsest with few diagrams and minuscule, eye-straining writing crammed into every corner. Better production values can improve on this:

*Dwarven**: Pages are thin sheets of engraved *metal*. Never burns or suffers water damage. *Doubles* weight. +4 CF.

*Faerie**: Thin, gauzy stuff lets tiny readers tote copies of the *Necronomicon*. Weight is 1/6 normal! +14 CF.

Fine†: Full-sized reproduction or original on new pages, with large text in straight lines, blank margins for notes, and many diagrams. For skills, this gives those who *know* the skill +1 to rolls against that skill or Research when using the book. This only applies in situations where it's possible to spread out the book and refer to it – never in social situations, the dark, etc. For scholars, it also gives +1 to Speed-Reading rolls for Book-Learned Wisdom – and it's legitimate to "learn" the skill from the book and claim the +1 for having it open. *Doubles* weight. +8 CF.

Very Fine†: *Luxurious*, with color diagrams (picked out in tiny gems if dwarven, or magically glowing if faerie), ample page markers, and an index. Works as a fine manual, but bonuses become +2. *Doubles* weight. +17 CF.

* Dwarven and faerie are mutually exclusive.

† Fine and very fine are mutually exclusive.

Spellbooks

Spellbooks or *grimoires* are simply primers, textbooks, or theses on magic (+3 CF). Casters value them because their high intrinsic worth makes them suitable as power items, because they're a way to learn spells without training costs, and because many contain spells that are otherwise "off-limits" in the campaign. The following features also appeal:

- Textbook- and thesis-sized spellbooks can "split up" points between several *related* spells. Each spell must *either* be a prerequisite for one of the others *or* have one of those spells as a prerequisite. Clerical and druidic spells lack prerequisite spells, but use these rules for *this* purpose. Scholar-casters and caster-scholars with Book-Learned Wisdom can only acquire points in a spell equal to the number earmarked for it.

- Textbook- and thesis-sized grimoires let readers with Magery or Power Investiture, as appropriate, cast spells at default! The book must be held in two hands and read aloud in a firm voice (forget about being sneaky). Double casting time! Roll against IQ-6 for a Hard spell or IQ-7 for a Very Hard one, but add Magery or Power Investiture.

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