

AUBAINE

PLAYER HANDBOOK

BOOK • V0.2.1

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WELCOME TO AUBAINE

Aubaine is a tabletop roleplaying game. One person describes a world, the others each play a character inside it, and everyone finds out together what happens. There is no screen, no compulsory board, and no winner.

If you have never played one, this chapter is enough to sit down at a table. If you have, it tells you what Aubaine does differently.

WHAT HAPPENS AT A TABLE

A session is a conversation with dice in it.

The GM describes a situation. You say what your character does. The GM says what comes of it, and if the outcome is uncertain a **Roll** settles it. Then the situation has changed, and round it goes again.

That loop is the whole game. It runs the same on searching a cupboard as on a duel.

WHO DOES WHAT

The GM

The game master. They describe the world, play everything that is not a player character, settle what the rules leave open, and set the difficulty of what you attempt. They are not playing against you.

The players

Each holds one character, decides what they do and speaks for them. You decide your character's actions, never their results.

The table

All of you. It is the table that decides the tone, and what belongs in the fiction and what does not. Those conversations happen outside the game, and they matter more than any rule.

WHAT YOU NEED

- A character sheet.
- Dice: d12s above all, plus a d4 and a few others for damage.
- Something to write with, because the sheet changes in play.

- Your two Trees, your Archetype's and your Domain's.

Nothing else. No miniatures and no grid: distances are counted in metres and said out loud.

WHAT AUBAINE DOES ITS OWN WAY

One Roll

Everything resolves on $2d12 + \text{one Characteristic} + \text{one Aptitude}$. There is no separate attack roll and no separate saving throw. One formula, everywhere.

No fixed pairs

No **Aptitude** belongs to a **Characteristic**. The way you act decides the pair, so a character stays useful outside their speciality.

No levels

A character does not go up a step and drag everything else with them. Three separate currencies buy three separate things.

Equipment is made

You find materials, follow a recipe, make the Rolls. Buying over a counter exists, but it does not cover much.

Memory limits you

You know many Skills and **memorise** only a few at a time. What you carry is a choice, and it is replayed at every rest.

A GAME THAT MOVES

Aubaine is free and open. Its rules, Skills, Trees and equipment live in a public repository, and the site you are reading renders it directly.

That has a practical consequence. There is no edition, no supplement to buy, nothing behind a paywall. A Skill adjustment, a new Tree or a new piece of equipment arrives without anything becoming obsolete, and every plate downloads and prints at home.

It also has a consequence for this book. It explains mechanics, not catalogues. When you need to know which Trees exist today, or exactly what a

HOW TO PLAY

A **Roll** is always the same calculation:

2d12 + one Characteristic + one Aptitude

There is no second formula. An attack, a dodge, a lie and a morning at the forge all resolve this way. What changes is the pair you use and the number you have to reach.

WHEN DICE COME OUT

You do not roll for everything. A Roll costs the table time, so it has to decide something.

1. **Describe.** You say what your character wants and how they go about it.
2. **Roll.** If the outcome is uncertain and failing costs something, you make a Roll.
3. **Resolve.** The result settles it, and the situation moves on.

An action whose outcome is not in doubt succeeds without a Roll. An action the fiction forbids does not get one either: it fails. Between the two, you roll.

CHOOSING THE PAIR

No **Aptitude** is tied to a **Characteristic**. The GM picks the pair from the way you are acting, and every combination is open.

That is what keeps you useful outside your speciality. A character built on **Strength** intimidates by breaking a table rather than by raising their voice, and the Roll becomes Strength + **Intimidation**. A character with nothing but **Intelligence** gets past a physical obstacle by understanding it, and the Roll becomes Intelligence + **Athletics**.

It also gives you a floor. Without the Aptitude you would want, you keep your Characteristic: nobody rolls bare dice.

A Skill may impose its pair. Its text says so when it does.

NAMING A ROLL

Two ways, depending on what the rule needs to pin down.

- A **Melee Roll**, when only the Aptitude matters.
- A **Strength + Melee Roll**, when the whole pair has to be known.

AGAINST WHAT

The total is compared against one of three defences.

DC

A number the GM sets, or one printed in a rule.

AC

The Armour Class, when an attack targets a creature directly.

Opposed Roll

The Roll of whoever is on the other side. Both sides roll.

Matching the defence is enough. Equal or higher is a success.

OPPOSED ROLLS

Everyone rolls, and the highest total wins. On a tie, settle it in this order:

1. the higher combined Characteristic and Aptitude;
2. the greater net number of **Advantages**;
3. the status quo.

A status quo means whoever was trying to change the situation does not manage it. Where no status quo exists, only the tied Rolls are made again.

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE

An **Advantage** adds a d12 to the Roll. You keep the two highest dice.

A **Disadvantage** adds a d12 to the Roll. You keep the two lowest dice.

The total is always worked out from two dice, however many you rolled.

STACKING

An Advantage and a Disadvantage cancel, one for one. Count both, remove the pairs, apply whatever is left.

CREATING A CHARACTER

Eight steps, in order. The first seven are decided, the last is calculated. Do not fill in a single numbered box before step 8: a character is placed first and counted afterwards.

WHAT THE GM GIVES YOU

A new character receives:

- one Domain Tree;
- one Archetype Tree;
- two Species Skills;
- 25 Experience Points (XP);
- 22 Mastery Points (MP);
- 3 Potential Points (PP).

The GM announces any change to that set before the table starts. A one-shot and a long campaign do not open on the same numbers.

THREE CURRENCIES

They do not convert into one another. A currency spent in the wrong place is only recovered in play.

XP

Buys Trees, Skills and their Levels. A character has no overall level: their XP is everything that goes up.

MP

Buys the six **Characteristics**, the **Aptitudes** and the **Speciality**.

PP

Buys the three resource paths: **Vitality**, **Memory** and **Energy**.

THE ORDER OF THE STEPS

1. **Species, Archetype, Domain.** Choose them from what the GM offers, and your regional origin where the Species has any. They fix your two Trees, your two Species Skills and your movement.
2. **The Soul.** Write down the **Phobia**, the **Mania**, the **Flaw**, the **Speciality** and the **Gift**.
3. **Characteristics.** Spend MP.
4. **Aptitudes and Speciality.** Spend MP.

5. **Resources.** Place the 3 PP.

6. **Skills.** Spend the 25 XP in your Trees.

7. **Equipment.** Fill the eight worn slots.

8. **Derived values.** Work out **HP**, **Memory**, **Energy**, **AC**, **Speed** and **Initiative**.

A step can be replayed as long as nobody has rolled a die. After the first **Roll** of the first session the sheet is fixed, and progression takes over.

THE SOUL

The Soul is what sets a character apart once the numbers are equal. It is decided with the GM, in whatever tone the table has set for itself.

Every character carries five pieces of it.

Phobia

A fear that weighs on their decisions. It earns its place when it costs something.

Mania

A habit, an obsession, a gesture that keeps coming back.

Flaw

A lasting trait that draws trouble towards them.

Speciality

A narrow personal field they excel in.

Gift

An exceptional faculty that belongs to them alone.

KARMA

The **Phobia**, the **Mania** and the **Flaw** each carry a **Karma** slot. A character therefore holds at most three points, one per slot.

The GM grants a Karma point when they judge it deserved, and chooses the slot. A slot already filled does not take a second. Karma you hold disappears neither at a rest nor at the end of a session.

Spend a point before a Roll, or after the throw while the result is still unresolved. Each point adds an **Advantage** or a **Disadvantage** to the Roll

TREES AND SKILLS

Your XP goes almost entirely into your two Trees. A Tree is a plate: a grid of Skills joined by lines, with a core in the middle carrying its name.

You have two, an Archetype's and a Domain's. The Archetype says how your character acts, the Domain says what with.

A Berserker and a Marchand are two Archetypes; Feu and Terre are two Domains. These are only examples: the list of published Trees lives and changes. The trees index carries the current one, and that is what counts, not this chapter.

Every Tree has its printed plate, downloadable from its page. When a Tree changes, its plate changes with it: there is no edition to buy again, and nothing waits for a supplement.

READING A PLATE

Each node is a Skill, and its shape gives its type: a circle for an active Skill, a rounded square for a passive one, a concave shape for a special one.

The border carries the Skill's Domain or Domains, which gives its colour. A Skill with no Domain is Neutral. The gold token carries its price in XP.

The lines join a node to its neighbours. **They draw how the plate reads, they do not set prerequisites.** Nothing in a Tree forces you to buy one node before another: the price is the only barrier.

BUYING A SKILL

Each purchase costs 5 to 100 XP, in steps of 5, and the price is printed on the Skill.

Buying a Skill means learning it, not **memorising** it. A Skill you have learnt is yours for good. What is limited is how many you can carry at once, and your **Memory** is what says so.

A Memorised Skill is a Skill you carry and can play. It takes 1 Memory, except in the cases listed under "Where your Memory goes".

LEVELS

Some Skills carry Levels, bought separately and in order. A Level is not a new Skill: it is the same

one, doing more.

A Memorised Skill takes 1 Memory whatever its Level. Raising a Skill therefore never costs you room, only XP.

Some Skills give rise to another, more specialised one, which appears as its own node joined to its base.

TAGS

A Skill may carry tags, printed at the foot of its card. They group Skills of the same nature, so that another rule, an item or a state can name them all at once instead of one by one.

They read in this order, and a Skill carries only the ones it needs.

Practice

How the Skill is practised, such as **Spell** or **Manoeuvre**. One at most.

School

The family its effect belongs to, such as **Healing** or **Illusion**. One at most.

Special

A particularity that carries a rule, such as **Unleashed**. As many as it takes.

The Skills index carries the current list: its Practice, School and Special filters show every value, and each tag gives its definition there.

Two Practices set a condition. You need a Catalyseur equipped, meaning a piece of equipment that carries the Catalyseur property, to activate a Spell, whether it is passive or active: without one, a Spell cannot be cast and a passive Spell stops applying. A Shout, for its part, only affects creatures that can hear it.

THE COMMON BANK

Alongside your Trees, a list of Skills belongs to nobody: the Common Bank.

They are independent of one another. Any character may buy one at any time, whatever their Trees, for its price in XP and the **Prerequisite** some of

COMBAT

Combat has no resolution rules of its own. The **Rolls** are the same ones you make everywhere else. What it adds is an order of play and a budget per turn.

YOUR TURN

On your turn you have four things. They are independent: not spending one does not give you another.

One Action

Most Skills are played here, starting with [Attaquer](#).

One Bonus Action

A quick action, usually reserved for Skills that say so. It does not replace the Action, and nothing converts one into the other.

One movement

Your Speed, 9 metres by default. Split it freely before, during and after your actions.

One Reaction

Outside your turn, when a rule gives you a trigger. It comes back at the start of your next turn.

DISTANCE

Everything is counted in steps of 1.5 metres. Contact is 1.5 metres, a reach weapon carries 3 metres, and the usual ranged distances are 9, 12 and 18 metres.

You may break your movement as often as you like within your turn, so long as the total stays inside your Speed.

Your Speed can fall to 0, and several states manage it. **Movement** of 0 does not stop you acting: you keep your Action, your Bonus Action and your Reaction.

INITIATIVE

At the start of a fight, each player character rolls:

1d4 + **Dexterity**

Play runs from the highest result down to the lowest. Players win ties against their opponents, and settle ties among themselves however they like.

The die is deliberately small. A gap in **Dexterity** weighs heavily in this order, more than in any other Roll in the game.

The order holds for the whole fight. It is not rolled again each round.

TWO VARIANTS

The GM may roll once for a group of identical creatures, and separately for each major creature. That shortens a fight with many opponents without changing any rule.

They may also group allied positions that run together with no opponent between them. Allies in one block then interleave their movement and their actions. Each keeps their own start and end of turn, which matters for anything that triggers there, and Reactions interrupt as normal.

ATTACKING

The [Attaquer](#) action makes one attack with an equipped weapon or unarmed.

Make the Roll the weapon states against the target's **AC**. On a success the target takes the weapon's damage, increased by the **Characteristic** that Roll used.

That **Characteristic** always adds. It is the same one on both sides of the calculation: whatever let you hit is what makes the blow land harder.

Unarmed, a Strike resolves on a **Strength + Melee Roll**, at 1.5 metres, for 1d4 + **Strength** damage.

WHAT A WEAPON STATES

Every weapon prints its own line, and that line is what counts:

- the **Characteristic** and the **Aptitude** of its Roll;
- one range, and only one;
- its damage dice and damage type;
- its properties.

A target beyond the range cannot be attacked. No general rule lets you shoot further by accepting a penalty; that takes a property saying so.

RESTING AND PROGRESSION

Between fights two things recharge: your resources, by resting, and your character, by progression. They have nothing to do with one another.

THE SHORT REST

Ten minutes of pause, during which you can do light activity. You may take at most two between **Long Rests**.

At the end you recover:

- half your maximum **HP**, rounded down;
- half your maximum **Energy**, rounded down;
- the Skills marked “Once per **Short Rest**”.

Half the maximum, not half what is missing. A character on 2 HP out of 30 recovers 15 and comes back at 17. You never exceed your maximum.

THE LONG REST

Eight hours of sleep. Two Long Rests must be sixteen hours apart, which allows one per daily cycle.

At the end you recover all your HP, all your Energy, and the Skills marked “Once per Short Rest” or “Once per Long Rest”.

WHAT A REST DOES NOT RESTORE

Karma

A point you hold stays, and an empty slot stays empty. Neither rest nor the end of a session touches it.

Temporary HP

Healing does not restore it, and whatever is left disappears at the end of a rest.

CHANGING YOUR MEMORISED SKILLS

Both rests allow it, except for your two Species Skills, which are fixed at creation. It is the only moment you rearrange what your **Memory** holds, which makes the Short Rest the group’s real breathing space: ten minutes is enough to reach the next fight with a different set of Skills.

THE EXPECTED RHYTHM

The game is calibrated on five or six significant encounters between Long Rests, with two Short Rests in between. Across a full cycle your available Energy therefore comes to roughly double your maximum.

That is a design benchmark, not a rule. A table that rests less plays thriftier characters, and the GM adjusts what they send.

PROGRESSION

A character has no overall level. Nothing goes up a step and drags the rest with it.

The three currencies of character creation are the currencies of progression too, and they keep arriving separately. A fourth reward joins them in play: materials, recipes and equipment, which feed crafting.

The GM announces which one they are granting. They set the pace, and they are not held to the same one from campaign to campaign.

XP

Granted when the group overcomes a significant obstacle, and everyone receives the same amount.

Overcoming does not mean defeating. Going around, convincing, containing, escaping or otherwise resolving the problem all count.

ACHIEVEMENT	XP PER CHARACTER
Minor but significant	5
Important objective	10
Major milestone	25
Conclusion of an arc	50

The same obstacle does not pay twice because it repeats. A trapped door crossed ten times is one reward.

MP AND PP

These are milestone rewards, never per-enemy rewards. At the end of a major stage the GM may grant 3 Mastery Points, or 1 Potential Point, or the

EQUIPMENT

A creature wears eight pieces at a time, one per slot. Until a piece is worn it does nothing: nothing applies from inside a bag.

Skills granted by an equipped piece do not count against your **Memory** and do not have to be learnt. The piece grants them while it is worn, and takes them back when you remove it.

THE EIGHT SLOTS

Head

Helm, hood, crown. What protects or marks the face.

Armour

The piece that carries your Armour Class formula. One at a time.

Boots

Shoes and greaves: what touches the ground and what sets your Speed.

Necklace

Torc, amulet, pendant. Worn against the skin, under the armour.

Left hand

A weapon, a shield, or nothing. A two-handed weapon takes both.

Right hand

As the left. Two Light weapons, one in each hand, open an attack as a **Bonus Action**.

Jewel (x2)

Two independent slots. Ring, set stone, carved talisman.

Every catalogue entry prints what concerns it: its headline value, its stats, its named properties, its recipe and what it grants. Those numbers belong to the piece and are not repeated anywhere else.

The GM announces what you begin equipped with. With no armour your **AC** is 12 + **Dexterity**, and an unarmed **Strike** deals 1d4 + **Strength**: a character with nothing is not a defenceless one.

FINDING MATERIALS

Equipment is obtained by crafting far more than by buying. What you can wear therefore depends on the materials you bring back.

After a significant encounter, or the discovery of a workable source, each character receives one **Loot Opportunity**. Spend it one of two ways.

Random loot

Roll the source's **Loot Die**. The GM reads its **Loot Table** and announces what you get. No further **Roll**.

Targeted harvest

Say what you are after and how you recover it. The GM sets the **Roll** and its **DC**. On a failure the **Opportunity** is spent for nothing.

The first is safe and asks nothing of you. The second aims precisely and may yield nothing. A target the fiction does not allow you to extract is not obtained on a **Roll**.

READING A MATERIAL

A material carries a name, one or more **Types**, and a **Material Value**. So: Wolf hide (**Types**: Leather, Beast; **Value**: 1).

Within a single piece of crafting, a material counts towards only one of its **Types**, even if it carries several the recipe accepts.

CRAFTING

An entry's box names its discipline, its cost, the **Types** it accepts and its **Rolls** in order.

1. Gather materials covering each of the **Types** asked for.
2. Meet or exceed the cost, across all materials together. How it is spread between the **Types** is free: one ingot and ten hides do as well as an even split.
3. Commit the materials, then make the **Rolls** in order.

Every **Roll** has to succeed. The materials are consumed from the start: if a **Roll** fails, the crafting

BASIC SKILLS

Some Skills belong to nobody. Every creature has them, from the first round of the first session to the end of the campaign. They cost no XP, they take up no **Memory**, they ask for no **Energy**, and no Tree sells them.

They are the list of what you can always attempt: [Attaquer](#), [Courir](#), [Se cacher](#), [Aider](#), [Se désengager](#), [Esquiver](#) and the others.

READING AN ENTRY

They read like the ones in your Trees: the name, then what the Skill asks in order to be played, its range and its duration, then its rule. They carry neither a price nor a tick box, since there is nothing to buy and nothing to **memorise**.

An entry marked “1 **Attack**” is not played on its own: it replaces one of the Attacks of the [Attaquer](#) action. That is the case for manoeuvres such as [Bousculer](#) and [Agripper](#).

IMPROVISING

The list opens on [Improviser](#), which says what the others do not.

When nothing covers what you are attempting, say what your character wants and how they go about it. The GM answers three things: whether it is possible, what the attempt costs and risks, and which **Roll** settles it.

This list is not closed. It describes what tables do most often, not the limit of what they may do.

SPECIES

Species is the first of the three choices in step 1, alongside Archetype and Domain.

WHAT A SPECIES FIXES

It brings two things at creation:

- **two Species Skills**, kept from among those the Species offers. They are **Memorised** without taking up any **Memory** and do not have to be bought. Once creation is over, you can no longer change them;
- **your Movement**, where it differs from the default 9 metres.

Both are granted outright. They cost neither XP nor MP, and they do not count against the 22 MP or the 25 XP the GM gives you.

A Species may also name the languages you speak, read and write.

KEEPING TWO OF THE SKILLS OFFERED

A Species offers more Skills than it grants. You keep two at creation. The rest are not lost: they stay buyable afterwards in the Common Bank, at the price printed on the Skill, and their **Prerequisite** reserves them to your Species. You memorise a Species Skill bought this way like any other, and it takes 1 Memory while it is Memorised.

Two characters of the same Species therefore do not start with the same ground covered.

A Species that offers only two Skills leaves no choice: you take both.

REGIONAL ORIGINS

Some Species divide into regional origins, presented on the Species page. You choose yours at creation, and you then keep your two Skills from among those of your Species and your regional origin.

The Skills of a regional origin carry that origin as a Prerequisite. A character from another origin cannot buy them.

WHERE TO READ THE SPECIES

The Species index carries the current list, and each Species page its Movement, its regional origins, the Skills it offers and how settled its writing is. That index is what holds, not this chapter.

A Species still in Draft carries its badge. While a table plays on entries that are not settled, the GM announces the Species available and the Skills each one offers.

EXPLORING AND INTERACTING

Combat is the most heavily ruled part of the game. The rest, which takes up most of it, runs on far less.

WHAT ALREADY EXISTS

Outside combat everything goes through the ordinary loop: you describe, the GM sets a **Roll** and a **DC** where there is one, the result settles it. The chapter on the Roll therefore already holds the rules.

Several basic Skills earn their keep mainly here. [Se cacher](#) and [Chercher](#) oppose one another, and [Improviser](#) covers what no entry anticipates.

The Loot Opportunity, described with equipment, is the only moment of exploration that any rule puts a number on today.

WHAT IS STILL TO BE WRITTEN

Aubaine does not yet publish rules for:

- travel and its pace;
- light, darkness and what can be perceived in them;
- how long a search takes and what it turns up;
- environmental hazards;
- the structure of a social scene.

None of that is settled by a dedicated mechanic. Until then the GM leans on the ordinary loop and on the difficulty ladder.

This page will be filled as those rules are written.

AUBAINE

UNLEASH YOUR IMAGINATION • BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE

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