DEMI GODS

A roleplaying game about heroes who are more than ordinary mortals.

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1: Attributes

Beings in the game have five attributes.

- **Insight**: Intuition and perception. Insight measures both how keen the senses are and instinctive realisations, including perception of the presence of magic.
- **Lore**: How much one knows and how deeply. Not intelligence as such, but how learned one is on a wide variety of subjects.
- **Presence**: Personal charisma and magnetism. Making an impression and swaying the emotions rather than the intellect are governed by presence.
- **Vitality**: Physical strength, agility, stamina, and willpower. Vitality measures how much anguish a character can suffer. It governs most physical actions outside combat.
- **Warfare**: Skill at fighting of all kinds, including both physical combat and a grasp of strategy and tactics.

Attribute levels are as follows:

- **Level 1**: Below human average
  The character might be broken in some way, naive, ignorant, or simply inept.
- **Level 2**: Human average
- **Level 3**: Talented human
  An ordinary mortal with an attribute at this level excels, ahead of most of their peers. They will do well in a profession which makes use of the attribute, especially if they have a relevant focus.
- **Level 4**: Peak human ability
  Within a field represented by an attribute, the character excels at a level equalling the very best ordinary mortals.
- **Level 5**: Beyond human
  The character excels at all fields associated with an attribute at the same level as the very best ordinary experts in a single one of those fields. With a focus, the character could go even further.
• Level 6: Stretching credibility
  It’s just about possible that a human could accomplish a task at this level, if they were one of the best in the world and extremely lucky. For a character with an attribute at this level, such things are routine.

• Level 7: Beyond human
  An attribute at this level can accomplish what is technically possible, but beyond any ordinary human ability. Depending on the attribute, a character could be able to lift as much as an elephant, see as well as an eagle, or win a fight with a dragon or dozens of ordinary opponents.

• Level 8: Mythic
  A mythic attribute is not bound by ordinary physics. A mythic character could know the contents of every book in the world, have such an intense presence that nobody can approach without invitation, shoot an arrow any distance, and part the ocean with their breath.

Many people will have a focus for an attribute, indicating a particular strength. A focus is a +1 bonus to an attribute within a narrow area.

**Examples of Foci**

- Insight: Create Art, Games of Chance, Magic Sensitivity, Read Emotions, Spot Hidden, Streetwise
- Lore: Academia, Bureaucracy, Engineering, Languages, Magical Knowledge, Medicine
- Presence: Awe, Diplomacy, Inspire Others, Leadership, Oratory, Project Sincerity
- Vitality: Agility, Courage, Determination, Physical Strength, Running, Stealth
- Warfare: Ambush, Hand to hand combat, Military Engineering, Sharp Shooter, Strategist
Gifts are magical talents and supernatural abilities. Each power has a cost, from 0 to 5, reflecting its scope.

- Gifts are on a scale similar to attributes, and when testing a gift it will often be compared to an attribute of a being affected. For a level of 2 a gift costs no points. More power costs points. A level 4 gift costs 1 point, and has a scope beyond that of an ordinary human. A level 6 gift costs 2 points, and is well beyond the human scale in what it can do. A level 8 gift, costing 3 points, can do something powerful and mythic in scope, and will be almost impossible for anyone, human or greater, to resist.

- Gifts are likely to come up frequently in play (GM’s discretion) rather than being specialist, add 1 point.

- If a gift is flexible rather than a single trick, add 1 point. Styles of magic letting one cast a variety of spells tend to be flexible.

The following gifts are examples. Note that gifts do not boost attributes (for this, choose a focus) but rather let one do something different.

**Divination (1 or 2 points)**

A character with this gift knows a way of divination, with which they can locate people and objects, gain visions of distant places, and learn hidden information at the GM’s discretion. There is no scale for this gift, but it is flexible. Depending on how much information the GM gives out, it may or may not be frequent; the cost is 1 or 2 points accordingly. Perhaps there are multiple ways of divination available—gazing into smoke, astrology, and observing the movements of clouds and birds—and some are more useful than others.

**Dragonfire (3 points)**

Dragonfire is intense, and is on a scale of level 6. It can also burn anything, even materials which are not normally flammable. This gift costs 2 points for its scale, and an extra point for being frequent, as are most gifts with the potential for violence. It’s a brutal world. However, it cannot be considered flexible.
Flight (1 point)

One with this gift can fly at about the same speed they can walk or run. This is not a powerful gift; the equivalent level is 2. Nor is it flexible. It’s useful enough to count as frequent. If the flight were rapid, being as fast as a horse can gallop, this gift would be at a higher level, and be more expensive; perhaps costing 2 points for being at level 4. Extremely rapid flight, as fast as a vehicle in the modern era would be at level 6, and cost 3 points. Even without this gift, a character with a Vitality attribute of level 6 could probably run just as fast; for one with such a high vitality attribute, since flight would be no faster than they could run in any case, there would be a case for lowering the cost of this gift back to 1 point again.

The Gift of Tongues (0 points)

The character can speak all languages. Note that a character with a high level of Lore likely speaks most languages they will encounter anyway, and a few forgotten tongues. That said, for a character of Lore level 3 or below, this gift will come in useful, and it might be useful even at level 4. Though sometimes handy, this gift is not powerful, frequent, or flexible, meaning it costs no points.

Luck of the Sea (0 points)

The character is an impeccable sailor, and when on a ship there are always favourable winds, and storms are easily avoided. This gift is subtle, but not powerful, flexible, or something which will come up frequently. It costs no points.

Perfect Health (0 points)

A being with this gift is always in perfect health. They are immune to disease, and do not suffer through age; perhaps they do not age at all. This gift is useful, of course, but not powerful as such, nor flexible, nor something which will come up frequently in play. The gift costs no points.

Rune Magic (1 point)

Rune Magic is the practice of enchanting objects through carving a rune. A blade enhanced with rune magic might always be sharp, a walking staff grant speed and good luck on journeys, a musical instrument always in tune and never hitting an off note. The possibilities are endless, making this gift flexible. However, it is neither powerful nor particularly frequent.
Shapechanger (3 points)

A shapechanger can shift into different animal forms, probably without their clothing and possessions. In a suitable animal form, they can fly, breathe water, track by scent, be immensely strong or fast, and so on. This gift is certainly flexible. It will also be frequently useful. Some of these forms are more powerful than ordinary people; the gift is at level 4.

A weaker variant will let a character take on just one animal form; this variant costs just 2 points, or even 1 point depending on the form.
A player character has 20 points to spend on attributes and powers. They also have a single free cost 0 power, and a focus for each attribute. No attribute can be above level 6.

They also have a drive and a doom.

A character’s drive is what inspires them into action. They are demigods, beyond human, and will not live quiet lives. Pick something grand.

A character’s doom is how they are likely to die. A doom is not certain, but the forces of the world will eventually drive a character towards it. Pick something tragic and poignant, or something cathartic.
4: Resolution

The Resolution Mechanic

Each player in a game of *Demigods* needs two Fudge/Fate dice. To resolve a conflict, the GM describes the conflict and its difficulty. In the case of a conflict with an NPC, the difficulty is the level of the NPC’s attribute relevant to the conflict.

Resolution is large scale, revolving around big portions of scenes rather than on a "blow by blow" basis. The player picks their relevant attribute, adds +1 if they have a relevant focus, and rolls and adds the two dice to the total.

Consult the following list:

- Result is two or more higher than the difficulty: Clear and straightforward success. No cost is involved.
- Result one higher than the difficulty. The player character succeeds. There may be an associated minor cost if the action is dangerous.
- Result equal to the difficulty. The player has a choice of withdrawing, failing but without any consequence, or succeeding but with a major cost.
- Result one lower than the difficulty. The player character fails and suffers a minor cost if the action is dangerous.
- Results two or more lower than the difficulty. The player character fails and suffers a major cost.

If two characters cooperate on a task, both roll; pick the better roll. On a failure, the player character with the worse roll suffers a minor cost; the GM decides if there is a draw here. If there is a major cost, treat it as two minor costs; one for each character taking part.

Only players roll; for other beings and NPCs, treat the dice rolled as zero. If two NPCs of the same level cooperate, treat their level as one higher, if cooperation is possible. If four NPCs cooperate, if such extensive cooperation is possible, treat their level as two higher, and if eight cooperate, treat their level as three higher.
Use of Gifts in Conflicts

Sometimes a player might wish to use a gift rather than an attribute in a contest. This is fine. The following guidelines apply.

- A gift should have an associated level; otherwise, treat it as level 2.
- If a character initiates an attack with an aggressive gift (such as dragon-fire) they can use it for the initial roll. If the conflict continues after the first roll, the character must use an attribute or another gift for subsequent rolls.
- A character can use a defensive gift if responding to an attack for the initial roll, as above.

A high-level gift will only overwhelm attributes if victory is total.

Costs

For a minor cost, the GM picks one of the following, or another consequence of similar scope.

- The character suffers one level of anguish (see below).
- The character attracts unwanted attention.
- The attempt at the task, successful or not, takes up valuable time.

For a major cost, the GM picks one of the following, or another consequence of similar scope.

- The character suffers two levels of anguish (see below).
- The character makes an enemy.
- The character is trapped or separated from companions.
- The character moves closer to their doom (see below).

Doom

A character might move closer to their doom as a major cost. The first time the doom major cost comes up, the character sees the pieces which will be their doom. The second time, the character sees an omen forecasting their doom. The third time, their doom falls.
Anguish and Recovery

A character suffers anguish when they suffer an injury, mental shock, or social humiliation. A character may suffer a number of levels of anguish equal to their Vitality score before they are out of action. A character who suffers excess anguish through injury may well die. One who suffers excess anguish through mental shock may be driven into madness.

Excess anguish through social humiliation means a character’s name is forever blackened in a particular community; they may be exiled or imprisoned.

A character can recover from levels of anguish, at a rate of one level per week of rest and relaxation, without any strenuous challenges. Healing gifts and similar magic can speed this rate to one level per day, with a level recovered immediately after the time it is suffered.
Aelf

The aelfr are beings of beauty and magic, who often go out of phase of the world; neither they nor their dwellings can be seen by mortals when they do not wish them to be seen. From time to time the aelfr steal human children and bring them up, for purposes unknown to mortals.

Insight 4
Lore 4
Presence 5
Vitality 2
Warfare 3

Gifts:

- Glamours (1 point). An aelf can create illusions and even small solid objects from magic, which persist until touched by iron, or the next dawn.

- Out of Phase (1 point). The aelves and their dwelling places cannot be seen by mortals unless an aelf wishes to reveal itself. However, once an aelf has revealed itself to a mortal or group of mortals, it cannot hide again for the rest of the scene.
**Dragon**

Dragons are embodiments of greed and wrath. They are scaled reptilian flying monsters, fiercely intelligent, even sarcastically witty. They breathe fire and hoard wealth.

There are also variant dragons, such as the Lindworm who breathes corrosive poison rather than flame, and is serpentine with no wings.

Insight 4  
Lore 4  
Presence 5  
Vitality 7  
Warfare 6  

Gifts:

- Dragonfire (see above)
- Flight (see above)
- Hoard of wealth (2 points). A dragon will accumulate a vast hoard of wealth. This has many uses, even though the dragon will be reluctant to lose even a single coin of it.

**Draugr**

A draugr is an animated corpse or, perhaps even more frightening, a piece of a corpse, possessed by an evil spirit, full of hatred for the living.

Insight 2  
Lore 3  
Presence 2  
Vitality 3  
Warfare 4  

Gifts:

- That which is dead (1 points). A draugr is already dead. It need not breathe, eat, sleep, and so on. And injuries which would kill a mortal do no harm to a draugr, though they may disable it; only magic or complete destruction of the body can destroy a draugr for good.
Jotun

The Jotnar are giants of fire and ice, the greatest of whom are rivals to the gods themselves. Even ordinary jotuns as described here are giants and masters of lore and magic, mightier than any mortal, and with no love for man or god.

Insight 4
Lore 5
Presence 3
Vitality 6 Focus: Giant Warfare 5

Gifts:

- Ice and Fire (3 points). A Jotun is immune to extremes of temperature, and even magical fire and cold. Any Jotun has magic involving either ice or fire. This magic lets them command fire and cold, creating it, controlling its movements, even using it as a weapon. This gift is at level 6.

Landvaettir

The landvaettir is a spirit of a place, such as a hill, a forest grove, or a river. Normally it has no form, being part of the land, but can materialise a body for when interaction is needed. Locally, a landvaettir is as powerful as a god; it may even be a god.

Insight 8
Lore 5
Presence 6
Vitality 7
Warfare 4 Focus: Protect the land

Gifts:

- Materialised Body (2 points). The body a landvaettir uses is a construct it uses to interact with people, which it can form in less than a minute, or let fade away. Once the body is present, it remains for at least the rest of a scene. If the body is killed or destroyed, it does no harm to the Landvaettir, though it cannot form another body until the next dawn. Rather a landvaettir can only be destroyed if the landscape in which it resides is destroyed.

- Spirit of the Land (4 points). A landvaettir has complete control of the landscape of which it is a part. It can control the weather, any animals, cause plants to grow extremely rapidly, and even move the earth, for landslides and earthquakes. It can also perceive everything within its landscape, even the thoughts of those within. When used in a conflict, this power is at level 8.
**Troll**

The trolls, like the aelfr, are a race out of phase with ordinary reality. They lack the other glamours of the aelfr, but rather are as strong as giants, despite not being much larger than human size. The trolls and aelfr have been enemies from a time before mortals walked the Earth.

Insight 3  
Lore 4  
Presence 2  
Vitality 6  
Focus: Brute physical strength  
Warfare 4

**Gifts:**

- Out of Phase (see above for aelfr)
- Rune Magic. See above.

**Vorth**

The vorthr are undead spirits, who should have departed the Earth but have not. A vorth rather lingers as a ghost of malice, often haunting a particular location once important in life.

Insight 5  
Lore 4  
Presence 5  
Focus: Cause fear (a vorth can use this as a mental attack)  
Vitality 2  
Warfare 3

**Gifts:**

- Undead Spirit (1 point). A vorth is insubstantial, and cannot be physically harmed unless it chooses to materialise to interact with the physical world. Once it materialises, it must remain vulnerable for the rest of a scene.
Warg

A warg is far greater than an ordinary wolf. It is as big as a wild boar, intelligent, and can dominate ordinary wolves. Wargs can converse with each-other, but cannot replicate human speech.

Insight 4  Focus: Scent Tracking
Lore 3
Presence 3  Focus: Command Wolves
Vitality 4
Warfare 4

Gifts:

• Wolf Lord (0 points). A warg can communicate with and command any ordinary wolves it comes across. Some wargs lead massive packs of wolves.