

Exalted Errata

(AKA, “Doh, how did we all miss all that!”)

This version created 05/08/02

Virtues without Bonus Points (Page 100)

The rules contradict themselves on pages 100 and 104. The paragraph immediately below the bulleted Virtue descriptions on page 100 is in error – the maximum value you can raise a to Virtue without the use of Bonus Points is 3.

(spotted by Tanuki)

Eclipse Caste Anima Power (page 127)

The Eclipse Caste learning other powers is a little unclear. To be explicit: not only do they pay double the XP cost, they also pay double the activation cost for out-of-Caste Charms. If the Eclipse favors the Ability required for a Charm, he pays twice the favored XP cost. If he does not favor the Ability, or cannot (for example, Eclipses cannot ever favor Lunar Charms), then he pays double the unfavored rate to learn the Charm.

Ascetic Drive (Page 132)

The Ascetic Drive Limit Break lasts for a number of days equal to your Temperance.

Heaven Thunder Hammer (Page 160)

Read “For each health level of damage he inflicts before soak...” as “For each point of raw, pre-soak damage he inflicts...”

(spotted by madchemist)

Fire And Stones Strike (Page 163)

This one is entertainingly confusing. Clearly, nazi ninja frogmen secretly altered the manuscript. For every mote you spend on Fire and Stones strike, one of your damage dice will not be rolled, it will be an automatic success. It does not add to the damage of the attack, it merely takes what would normally be dice rolled for damage and converts them to automatic successes. This is a wager – if you do less dice of damage than you paid the conversion cost on, you have wasted the Essence. Obviously, if you can hit them at all while using this Charm, you will generally do at least one Health Level of damage, since all successful attacks do 1 die of damage. If the opponent is protected by Invulnerable Skin of Bronze or something else that completely defends against wimpy attacks, and you throw a wimpy attack at them, you will not do an automatic health level.

(Spotted by madchemist)

Glorious Solar Saber (Page 164)

The Saber has a Speed of +3, and an Accuracy and Defense of +1 each.

Corona of Radiance (Page 166)

The description of this Charm mentions the Charm “Solar Blaze”. That’s what Corona of Radiance was before the name changed.

Golden Essence Block (Page 166)

This Charm is an exception to the general Ability + Attribute rule. When using Golden Essence Block, you can’t make your dice pool exceed your normal parry pool (Dexterity + Melee + whatever bonuses you may have lying around from the weapon or your specialties). It’s most efficient in parrying multiple extra attackers where a couple parry dice is all you need. If combined with something like Dipping Swallow Defense it proves very useful for parrying the attacks of Exalts as well. For more on reflexive Charms that give you extra dice and how they combine with reflexive Charms that give you full parries and dodges, see the “Dice Pool Maximums” entry in the Technical Rules Clarifications section of this document.

(spotted by Brandon Quina, revised at his request as well)

Heavenly Guardian Defense (Page 166)

It says this can block unblockable attacks “including those from arrows”, implying that you normally can’t, when the Drama chapter clearly states you can. This is a holdover from earlier versions of the rules, when Archery attacks were harder to block. Heavenly Guardian Defense can still block pretty much any sort of physical attack, it’s just arrows aren’t anything special anymore.

(spotted by Dace98)

Judge’s Ear Technique (Page 185)

This reads “Minimum Ability: 2, Minimum Investigation: 1”, it should read, “Minimum Investigation: 2, Minimum Essence: 1”

(spotted by Laurel)

Irresistible Questioning Technique (Page 186)

On the sixth line of the first paragraph of the charm’s description, it says that a weak effect occurs if the target’s Willpower is less than or equal to “twice the Exalted’s Willpower”. This should read “twice the Exalted’s Essence” instead.

(spotted by Laurel)

Healing Trance Meditation (page 191)

Healing Trance Meditation refers twice to itself as if it were a different Charm. The text is actually referring to Bodily Regeneration Prana.

Reed in the Wind (Page 197)

Each mote spent on Reed in the Wind adds 2 dice to the character’s Dexterity + Dodge pool, not 1 die as the Charm description at one point implies.

(Spotted my madchemist)

Foul Air of Argument Technique (Page 205)

This Charm is lacking a Type. Its Type is Simple.

(spotted by Laurel)

Venomous Rumors Technique (Page 212)

This charm is also lacking a Type. It is also Type: Simple.

(spotted by Laurel)

Wood Dragon’s Claw (page 220)

The claws have a speed of +3, an accuracy of +2 and a defense of +2.

Clinching Fix (Page 240):

If a character attempts to escape a clinch, the character restraining gets a Dexterity + Martial Arts or Dexterity + Brawl roll to restrain the target. The current wording is confusing.

(spotted by me)

The Other Rule Of 10 (Page 241)

On Page 241, it states that Extras don’t reroll 10s. This means that 10s don’t count as 2 successes for them. Doh.

(Spotted by rook111)

Bashing Damage Beyond Incapacitated (page 233)

A character who takes bashing damage beyond the Incapacitated level is *knocked out*. Such characters are bludgeoned into unconsciousness, and are unable to act to defend themselves. If they take any levels of lethal or aggravated damage while knocked out, they are killed. If they take more levels of bashing damage, start converting levels of bashing damage into lethal damage from the top of the wound track down. When the character’s incapacitated level is converted to lethal damage, he dies as per the rules on dying. If the blow that knocks the character out does health levels beyond the victim’s incapacitated level, this damage

is also converted, so it is possible to kill someone with a punch, particularly if they've taken lethal injuries before they got into the punchup.

At the end of the scene in which the character was knocked out, he may make a Stamina + Endurance check at difficulty 1, without wound penalties. If it succeeds, the character heals his incapacitated level and awakens at -4. If he fails the roll, he remains unconscious until the Incapacitated level heals naturally – this means 12 hours out cold for unExalted characters, or 3 hours for Exalted characters.

(Spotted by a lot of people)

Sprinting And Jumping While Injured (page 233)

As noted on page 87, characters can sprint up to (Dexterity x 3) + 20 yards as their only action for the turn. A character who is at -0 can sprint normally. A character at -1 can sprint (Dexterity x 2) + 12 yards. A character at -2 or below cannot sprint at all. If the character has his sprinting distance increased by Charms or other effects, multiply the final distance by 2/3 (60%) at -1.

As noted on page 252, uninjured character can normally jump their Strength + Athletics in **yards** vertically, or twice that far horizontally. Characters at -0 leap normally. Characters at -1 can jump only (Strength + Athletics) x 2 **feet** vertically, or twice that horizontally. Characters at -2 can jump only Strength + Athletics **feet** vertically, and twice that far horizontally. Characters at -4 or Incapacitated cannot jump at all.

Characters who have their jumping distance increased through the use of Charms multiply their final jumping distance by this value. If the character's jumping distance is replaced with a fixed value, multiply the value by 2/3 (60%) if the character is at -1 or by 1/3 (30%) if the character is at -2.

(Spotted by me, I think)

Infection and the unExalted (page 233)

If you make the Stamina + Endurance roll to beat the infection of an infected wound, the fever breaks and the infection goes away. Sorry that wasn't explicit.

(Spotted by Stephenls)

Doing Damage To Extras (page 241)

It is assumed that characters applying automatic damage to extras are probably doing enough to kill or severely wound the extra. Characters who do not do a lot of damage, for example people armed with throwing weapons, may be put in situations where the automatic damage rules actually make combat longer, because they can't roll multiple damage successes. Characters are not required to use the automatic damage system for Extras if it affects their chances of killing the extra, they can just roll the number of damage dice they would roll against a normal target and apply it to the extra's small small number of wound levels. Characters doing 8 or more damage above the Extra's soak cannot invoke this exception, and the Storyteller should feel free to strangle players who insist on rolling their damage against every single extra in a large fight.

(spotted by Jason Langlois)

What The Heck Do Dragon-Blooded Do? (Page 306)

The first paragraph on page 306 implies that everyone can use multiple Reflexive Charms in a single turn without a Combo. This is just poor phrasing on my part. What the paragraph means to say is that the Dragon-Blooded may freely use Reflexive Charms in the same turn they use other Charms, without the need for a Combo. They can activate one or many reflexive Charms, so long as they can pay the activation cost, without this counting against the one Charm per turn limit. The Dragon-Blooded still need Combos if they wish to use more than one non-reflexive Charm in the same turn.

(Spotted by Winteredge)

What The Heck Do Sidereals Do? (Page 310)

Sidereals basically use astrological powers to break the rules of the game. When they use Charms, they lower the target number they have to roll on the dice to get a success, so rather than rolling a 7, they only need a 6, 5 or 4 to get a success. This is in their description, it lists this as "lowering the difficulty". It's not, it's lowering the target number; the difficulty (the number of successes they need to roll) stays unchanged. Ten lashes to me for slipping on my own system and using a WoD-ism.

(Spotted by Stephenls)

What color is a Sidereal's aura? (page 29/311)

The Chosen of Saturn glow violet, and not orange, when they exert their powers. This matches the color of their aura when they make the Lesser Sign of Saturn.
(spotted by Gregordyne)

Abyssal Ox-Body (page 314)

In the third sentence of the second paragraph of the first column of page 314, there is a potentially misleading typo. It says that Abyssal Exalted's Ox-Body Technique gives them "a -0 and two -1 health levels". This should be "a -0 OR two -1 health levels".
(Spotted by dspaul)

Cut Off Exceptional Weapons Text (page 326)

The boxed text on page 326 should end with the sentence:
"Improving a thrown weapon's range adds 10 to its range characteristic." Everything but the word "improving" was lost.
(I caught this before anyone brought it up)

Exalted Rules Changes

We thought the playtesters had gotten everything, but people have found that the no-armor soak enhances are too expensive for what they do. The following rulings officially supercede and replace the text in the main book.

Durability of Oak Meditation (page 176)

The Essence cost of this Charm is reduced to one mote per 2 dice rolled, from 1 mote per die.

Iron Skin Concentration (page 176)

The cost for the Charm remains unchanged, but the Duration: is now "One scene" – the character no longer need roll to see how long the effect lasts.

Spirit Strengthens the Skin (page 176)

The cost of this Charm is reduced to 2 motes per point of additional bashing soak.

Iron Kettle Body (page 178)

The cost of this Charm is reduced to 2 motes.

Exalted Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQ

Q: What is the scale of the map in the main book?

A: The scale of the map in the endpapers of the main book is about 1:50,688,000. 1 inch equals about 800 miles.
(Answered by the inestimable Cason Snow)

Q: Can you start with spells?

A: You can exchange starting Charms for spells on a 1-for-1 basis, provided you know the proper sorcery Charm for the spell. This is clearly stated in the first full paragraph of the first column of page 100.
(everyone asks this question)

Q: Could you make sure that nobody gets confused by the specialty pricing system?

A: Specialties for Caste Abilities are listed as costing 2-for-1. This means you get 2 dots of Speciality for 1 Bonus Point, not vice-versa.

(asked by Leningrad, who wasn't actually confused, but was concerned someone might be)

Q: If I raise my Virtues during chargen, does my Willpower go up?

A: Yes. In fact, raising your Virtues is the only way to make your Willpower go above 8 during chargen.

(Asked by Madchemist)

Q: Can I start with items that I can't afford?

A: Not officially, but I'd suggest that if a player has a good explanation for the character's ownership of expensive gear, that the character be allowed to start with it for one Bonus Point per two Resources dots of the item's cost (rounded up). So a Resources 1 or 2 item would cost 1 Bonus Point, a Resources 3 or 4 item would cost 2 Bonus Points, and a Resources 5 item would cost 3 Bonus Points.

(asked by Akuma56k, I think)

Q: Can I split my Artifact background up?

A: Yes. If you have Artifact-3, you could start with a level 3 Artifact, three level 1 Artifacts, or a level 2 Artifact and a level 1 Artifact.

(Also asked by Akuma56k, I think)

Q: How do the number of motes I spend and the intensity of my anima banner relate?

A: The Anima Banner table on page 149 and the accompanying text on page 148 and 149 isn't entirely clear. The intensity of the display is cumulative over multiple uses of Peripheral Essence, and not determined on a per-use basis. As noted, the display fades at the rate of one entry per scene. If, in subsequent scenes, the character spends further Peripheral Essence, the banner will increase in intensity. Assume that a fading banner is at the very top of its display category, in terms of how many motes the character can be presumed to have "spent"; in other words, if you spend even a single mote of Peripheral Essence during the period when your banner is fading, the banner will instantly jump up to the next category.

(spotted by Mike Todd)

Q: Is there any difference between Personal and Peripheral Essence, other than that one causes the anima banner to appear?

A: No.

(asked by Dracon)

Q: Can I mix the expenditure of Personal and Peripheral Essence?

A: Yes, you may mix them freely, so long as you pay the full cost of the effect.

(asked by Dracon)

Q: If I use Durability of Oak Meditation, is all the Essence I spent buying dice committed until it ends?

A: Yes. It only lasts one scene, but bad luck can potentially crimp the effects of Essence-Gathering Temper by leaving all your Essence committed.

(asked by Daimonix)

Q: Why are there two slots for anima on the sheet?

A: The little one at the top is you to list what your iconic anima looks like — "pheonix", "character as an angel", "hornytoad"; whatever. The big one on the bottom left of the sheet is for you to record the anima power effects of your Caste.

Q: What do Northerners look like?

A: Oops. Didn't include a description of this in the setting chapter. Northerners look like Scandinavians — they have pale skin and black, red, blonde or white hair. They tend to be apple-cheeked, with large frames and heavy builds predominating.

(Everyone asks this)

Q: How does Cascade of Cutting Terror work?

A: It doubles your dice pool, including specialties, equipment bonuses and so on. Note that this is a Supplemental Charm — the effects are applied /after/ the character splits her dice pool, not before. And the full cost of the charm must be paid each time it is used. Cascade of Cutting Terror is compatible with precision of the Striking Raptor, so you can explicitly double your dice pool, then add your Dexterity + Thrown on top of that. This is there to help make up for the fact that Thrown-type weapons do little damage, and the attack type lacks a flexible Ferocious Jab or Hungry Tiger Cut-style Charm; Falling Icicle Strike is impressive, but only works if you're sneaking.

(Asked by Madchemist)

Items FAQ

Q: I want exceptional armor! How does it work?

A: You get two +1 bonuses to spread between the armor's three values; it can have a +1/+1 soak, lessen the Mobility Penalty by 1 or decrease the Fatigue Value by 1. You can't double up on a bonus. Also, as with exceptional weapons, the cost of the armor increases by •. Ridiculously expensive armor stays at Resources ••••• but it's almost impossible to find someone who can make an exceptional suit, and it will take them a very long while to do it.

(asked by many people)

Q: Can I attune to an item that isn't of my Magical Material without it costing an arm and a leg and the thing exploding?

A: Yes, but you don't get the special materials bonus unless you try to force it to harmonize with your Essence. You pay the basic cost for a no-benefits attunement, and twice that for an attempt to activate the material's properties.

(nobody asked this one, I just decided to answer it)

Q: How much does it cost to attune a Reaver Daiklave?

A: It isn't explicitly stated that reaver daiklaves cost 5 motes to attune, but they do.

Q: If I have a Hearthstone set in an item, and I'm enjoying the Hearthstone's effects, does it also help my Essence pool recharge faster?

A: Yes.

Q: I have a Hearthstone in an item, and I take the stone out and put it in the weapon of my friend. Does the effect of the stone linger for 24 hours as a deliberate misreading of the text might suggest?

A: No. If you unsocket the hearthstone, the hearthstone stops providing benefits. Attunement lingers, but if you aren't carrying the stone in an attuned item, its effects stop immediately. Only one person can have the magic stone at a time.

Q: Are weapons of the Five Magical Metals ALWAYS incredibly obvious in their composition? For example, are Orichalcum weapons always golden?

A: Yes, they really do all look like super anime attack weapons. If you carry one openly, you are declaring yourself to be one of the Exalted armed for battle. Obviously, more subtle ones may have been designed, but they were never the regular run of the forges.

(Asked by Winteredge)

Q: It seems weird that my character has a regular orichalcum daiklave.

A: To be honest, there probably weren't many orichalcum weapons of below Artifact 4 made, and if they ever were used, they sure weren't the personal weapons of Usurpation-era Solars. However, I didn't want to make the game devoid of a power level for Solars between "mortal blade" and "Excalibur". If you want to portray the world "realistically", most daiklaves, reaver daiklaves and grand daiklaves are probably made out of jade, with a fair number of moonsilver and soulsteel. What orichalcum and starmetal weapons

are available should be very rare and very powerful. You probably don't want to do this to your game, but you might consider it if you value "authenticity".

Q: It is mentioned that to make a magical object you must always craft with one or more of the Five Magical Materials. In the First Age, was this always necessary?

A: Well, almost always involve the Materials, but they are not necessarily made purely of those materials. Daiklaves and other magical weapons, for example, are of alloyed steel. Other items contain only some components made of the Magical Materials, and a few prodigies were created with none at all, but they're very rare

(Asked by Winteredge)

Spirits And Monsters FAQ

Q: On page 292, under the Materialize Charm, it says that dematerialized spirits cannot affect the material world, while the Slat Gem of the Spirit's Eye on page 339 and the text at the bottom of the first column on page 290 indicate that they can do so using Essence. What up with that?

A: Well, for starters, you might be an Eclipse Caste who learned Dematerialize from an elemental. Also, while they're not in the main book, there are certain powerful and expensive Charms that allow spirits to use other Charms to affect the material world for a scene. If you want to use it in your games before **Games of Divinity** comes out, the effect is:

Touch the Real

Cost: 10 motes, 1 Willpower

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Valor: 3

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Materialize

For the remainder of the Scene, a dematerialized spirit can use Charms to affect materialized targets. This Charm is rare and coveted by spirits, for obvious reasons.

(asked by Slugburn)

Q: Another Materialize Charm question — how much does it cost a Materialized spirit (or Dematerialized Elemental) to revert to its natural state, and is it a dice or reflexive action?

A: It's free and it's a dice action, but there is probably a development of the Materialize Charm a spirit could devise that let them flee the material world reflexively for an Essence cost.

(asked by Winteredge)

Q: Do Materialized spirits need to eat or sleep?

A: No, but they often will. Erymanthoi, for example, will eat practically anything. Look at them – do you think your pets would be safe around one?

(asked by Winteredge)

Q: The game implies spirits need constant Essence to exist in a material state. If I want my spirits to run around materialized all the time, is there a way to do it without attuning them to a Manse or Demesne I control?

A: The Lore Charm Essence-Lending Method on page 187 fits the bill.

(asked by Winteredge)

Q: The description of summoning Demons, it says that you can command them to follow one task of indefinite time limit. Does that include something that will go on forever?

A: Indefinite implies forever, yes. Obviously, while bound and loyal to the spirit as well as the letter of your commands, they're malevolent and resentful of their servitude. Order them to operate your salt-creating machine indefinitely and you'll be the root of a fairy tale.

(asked by Winteredge)

Q: What is the “Property” Background?

A: The old name for Resources.

Q: What is the “Status” Background?

A: A now-deleted Background that converts to Influence and Backing.

Combat, Timing And Dice FAQ

Q: If something bypasses my armor, what soak do I get?

A: Some Charms say they ignore armor and can be soaked only by your Stamina, meaning the character’s natural soak. A lot of Resistance charms increase your natural soak. The effects of these soak-increasing Charms count as natural soak, not armor. For example, if someone used Armor-Penetrating Fang Strike on you after you had hyped yourself up with Durability of Oak Meditation and Iron Skin Concentration, the Fang Strike wouldn’t bypass your increased soak. Note that natural soak, Charm-enhanced or otherwise, cannot soak Aggravated damage, only armor can. This does indeed mean that if someone uses the Armor-Penetrating Fang Strike and the Essence Venom Strike together against you in a combo, you will probably die if they hit you solidly.

(asked by Dbuss)

Q: My Exalts can’t easily defeat extras. What gives, isn’t this a game about HK cinema?

A: The defensive advantage is not as strong as it may seem. For example, I’m Joe Blow, an average newly exalted Solar with a 4 Strength, 4 Dex, 4 Melee, and +3 Melee speciality in Daiklaves. I use an orichalcum daiklave, which is not the best weapon in the world, but it compensates for my lack of skill with its +3 Accuracy and +3 Parry bonus. My total attack pool is 14 dice.

My opponent is the best of the best, an elite imperial soldier dressed in articulated plate and carrying a shield and axe. He rolls 6 dice to attack, 3 dice to dodge, and 5 dice to parry. I hit him with my magic golden sword, and he aborts to a parry, as there’s no way he’ll dodge this with a mobility penalty. He rolls the statistically average 3 successes, I roll 6 (7 for the statistical average, -1 because as Imperial heavy infantry, he has a shield). That’s +3 to my damage, for a total of 12, so I can either do an automatic health level to him, or roll 3 dice of damage. Personally, I’d roll the damage, but either way, with a single blow, I’ve just knocked aside the defense of the most heavily armed and extensively trained soldier on the face of Creation, and I probably injured him badly enough he’s going to retire from the engagement so as to not bleed out from the chest wound I just punched through his exquisite armor. Other than my sword, I didn’t even use magic, and I did this through a full defense action.

Obviously, I can get killed here if I’m careless. If I’m not wearing good armor or paying attention to defense properly, several of these guys can overwhelm me. But I’m not actually all that combative a character. I’m physically okay, but by no means am I the deadliest thing on two legs.

Let’s say I’m Invincible Sword Princess, an experienced Solar. I have a 4 Essence, 4 Dex, 5 Strength, 5 Melee, +3 speciality in my weapon, and my Charm choices have both depth and breadth. I wield an Orichalcum Grand Daiklave. I see the heavy infantry coming at least 6 seconds before they hit, and over the next 2 turns, I activate Strength Increasing Exercise and Fivefold Bulwark Stance, for a total cost of 17 and a Willpower. My strength is now 9, I have a 13 die autoparry against all attacks that aren’t blindsides, and I display no anima banner, so you don’t even know you’re dead yet. If I hit you, that’s 20L base damage. The question is now "how many ways can I split my dice pool and still be pretty sure of getting past a 5 die parry?" That’s how many imperial heavy infantry I can kill per turn. I unfailingly cut guys in articulated plate armor in half with /every blow/.

Invincible Sword Princess or something equally horrifying is what you can expect out of seriously combat-centered starting character, or from almost any experienced (100-200xp) PC. There’s a scale of PC power, and "kill any mortal with a single blow, no matter how armored" isn’t at the bottom of it, it’s a fair way up.

On the mortal scale, the the reason the defense is fairly strong is because historically it is, and while Exalted is about anime fantasy heroes, they're in a pretty "realistic" world. Armor generally protects the vitals quite effectively, meaning most battlefield injuries are light, bleeding wounds that sap strength and morale, with the vast majority of casualties occurring during the cavalry pursuit following a rout. Mortal combat is bludgeoning one-another to death with occasional lucky blows because that's how it was in the good old days. Getting past that and into the realms of pure heroic bloodbath is a major point for characters. Some Chosen are merely superlative, others are transcendent.

On an Exalted scale, the defense is relatively strong so that people like Invincible Sword Princess can fight one-another.

Also, keep in mind that while elite troops are often used to attack the Exalted, they are still rare. People ship them in from across the world because they're the only folks that can stand against the Chosen. Even Joe Blow, who by Exalted standards is just "okay" at combat, is still cutting regular infantry apart pretty handily -- 1 automatic level and several dice of damage, minimum.

Elite troops are experienced, long-service military professionals. the number of places with troops like that available in any number is fairly small -- the bodyguard of the Tri-Khan, the Virgin Brides of Ahlat, the Imperial Heavy Foot, career-service helots and citizens of Lookshy, some Nexus mercenary formations and not too many other folks in the "detailed" world of the game field formed units of elite troops. Their gear and salaries are just too expensive for most states to maintain more than a few hundred of them, and they'll either be dispersed at their estates as landed nobility or concentrated on the palace as the guys who keep the local ruler on his throne.

(originally written as an rpg.net post in response to Mock)

Q: How do I split dice pools for defense?

A: Characters who are attacked have a number of options

If he is attacked *before* his action, he may:

Do Nothing The character is hit if the attacker rolls one or more successes. Apply passive modifiers like increased difficulty due to shield, range or poor visibility, but the character rolls no dice to negate the attacker's successes. Likely to result in painful damage unless it is very high difficulty to hit the character.

Abort To Parry If it is possible to parry the attack, the character rolls her Dexterity + one of the applicable martial skills + specialties + the defense bonus of the weapon. See page 230 of the **Exalted** book for what the appropriate martial skills for blocking various types of attack are. An Exalted character performing this maneuver who knows a reflexive Charm that can add to parry rolls or who has a Combo containing such a Charm can activate the Charm or Combo normally to add dice to her parry pool. This is the character's Charm for the turn, and he can use no other until the turn ends.

The number of successes rolled on the parry is subtracted from the successes on the attack roll, and if the successes on the defense roll tie with or exceed the remaining successes on the attack roll, then the attack misses. A character who aborts to a parry can make *one* parry. That is her action for the turn, and he cannot attack or otherwise make a dice action. If she is attacked again, she is able only to *activate persistent effects, activate reflexive Charms, activate a Combo* or *do nothing*.

Characters with extra actions held can expend them reflexively to full parry. This is really only relevant to spirits using Principle of Motion and other beings that can hold extra actions and expend them reflexively.

Full Dodge If it is possible to dodge the attack, the character may declare that he is going to "full dodge". The player rolls the character's Dexterity + Dodge + any specialties. Remember to subtract mobility penalties. Exalted characters with Charms that add dice to Dodge rolls (like Reed In The Wind or Serpentine Evasion) or a Combo that contains such Charms can activate it to add dice to his Dodge dice pool. This is then the character's Charm for the turn, and he can use no other until the turn ends. Remember that if you boost the dice pool of multiple dodges, you have to activate the dice adder each time.

As with *aborting to parry*, the successes the character rolls are subtracted from the successes on the attack, and the character can totally defeat incoming attacks with a good enough roll. However, unlike aborting to

parry, the Full Dodge doesn't defend against only a single attack. The character may also dodge attacks occurring subsequently in the turn. The second attack is dodged with the character's (Dexterity + Dodge + specialties) - 1. The third attack would be dodged at (Dexterity + Dodge + specialties) - 2, The fourth at (Dex + Dodge + spec) - 3, and so on until the penalty for successive dodges equal's the dodging character's Dex + Dodge + spec pool, at which point dodging becomes useless. This penalty cannot reduce the character's Dodge pool below 0.

Characters may also Full Dodge for their action for the turn.

Characters with multiple *actions* may make a Full Dodge as one of their actions to have a persistent defense for the rest of the turn, and then act normally with their other actions. Actions spent to full dodge have to be actual extra actions, like those granted by Charms like Principal of Motion or Uncoiling Serpent Prana, not extra attacks (like those granted by most Extra Action type combat Charms) or those granted by taking multiple action penalties. A character who does this and who has a number of extra actions available in a given turn can reflexively spend one of those extra actions to "refresh" his full dodge pool, which resets all the penalties for dodging multiple attacks to -0. This can prove exceedingly useful if the character is trapped in a mob scene and being attacked from every direction. Note that characters can only activate Extra Actions type Charms on their initiative, and that Uncoiling Serpent Prana users cannot hold actions, they can only refresh their Dodge pools on their initiative. Spirits are better off, as Principle of Motion allows the actions to be held until spent.

Spending extra actions for full dodge is how most spirits achieve a persistent defense — by using extra actions granted by the Charm Principle of Motion to give themselves full dodges the first time they're attacked every turn, and then refreshing it as needed.

Activate A Reflexive Charm Even if the character is unable or unwilling to spend an action to defend, he can activate a reflexive defensive Charm to allow him to defend against the attack. These Charms come in three general types. If the defense is invalid, using a Charm doesn't make it any more applicable. For example, Seven Shadow Evasion cannot evade an attack that explicitly cannot be dodged. Remember that without a Combo, a character can activate only one Charm per turn. The Charm can, however, be used as often as the Chosen wishes during that turn.

Dice Adders: These charms add dice to the character's defense pool by increasing their dice pool in a martial skill or Dodge roll. Every kind of Exalt has a maximum number of dice that can be added to his pools with Charms like this. As noted above, if the character is attempting to dodge or parry normally, he may use Charms to add to his dice pool. However, if the character has no dice action available to dodge or parry, the activation of a reflexive dice adder allows him to "build" an appropriate defensive pool from 0 dice. This latter use is a very inefficient means of defense, but it may be all that's available to weak Exalts, or it could be that the threat is so insignificant that the use of a full defense Charm would be overkill. Example dice adder Charms are Reed in the Wind, Golden Essence Block and Serpentine Evasion.

Full Defense: These Charms allow the character to roll his full pool, meaning his full Dexterity + Dodge + specialties, or his full Dexterity + Melee + specialties + item bonus. A character who puts one of these Charms into a Combo with the same sort of dice adder Charm can get a defense action, then add extra dice to it. To be explicit, the defensive action these Charms provide does not add dice, it simply grants the action at full dice pool. Think of them as extremely limited sorts of extra action Charms. Examples are Shadow Over Water and Dipping Swallow Defense.

Special Defense: These are Charms that defend the character in some other, generally extremely effective fashion. The Solar examples are the Seven Shadow Evasion and the Heavenly Guardian Defense. Both these defensive Charms automatically perfectly defend against a single eligible attack. Other types of Chosen may be required to make a defense roll and obtain at only one success to avoid the attack, may subtract random numbers of successes from an attack roll, or may otherwise perform strange mechanical acts to avoid attacks. In general, special defenses cannot benefit from combination with dice adder or full defense Charms.

Activate A Combo If the character has a Combo that has applicable reflexive Charms in it, he may activate the Combo, either in conjunction with an abort to parry or a full dodge, or on its own to construct a purely magical defense. The Combo's Willpower activation cost must be paid as normal, and the Combo displays its unmistakable signature. Remember that non-Instant Charms cannot be put into Combos.

Utilize Persistent Effects Characters may have continuing effects from Hearthstones, magical items or Charms invoked earlier and still in effect. Examples are the Windhands Gemstone Hearthstone, the Celestial Circle spell Dolorous Reflection and the effects of Charms like Flow Like Blood and Fivefold Bulwark Stance. If a character has reflexive Charms that will aid the roll or a Combo that contains Charms that enhance the effect, then the character may activate the Charms or Combo to enhance the defenses. For example, character with Reed in the Wind could activate it to enhance the ongoing effects of Flow Like Blood, paying motes to add dice to individual dodges just as if they were normal dodges.

In general, Characters can only attempt each form of defense only once per attack. A character can dodge once, parry once, and if the attack has not been halted, soak once. A Solar character cannot use Shadow Over Water, fail to dodge, and then use the Seven Shadow Evasion, though it would be valid to use Shadow Over Water, fail to dodge, and then use Heavenly Guardian Defense to infallibly parry the attack, because one is a dodge and the other is a parry. If a character can both parry and dodge, he can resolve them in whichever order he pleases.

If a character is attacked *after* his action, he may:

Do Nothing As above.

Use Held Defensive Actions When a character takes his turn, he can perform multiple actions (sometimes called “splitting his dice pool”). Each action is subject to an increasingly high negative modifier, as the character is increasingly hurried as he performs each action. The name of the act is a misleading holdover from older systems used in the original editions of the **World of Darkness** games. There is no actual splitting involved, the character simply subtracts dice from his pool. Splitting dice pools for multiple actions is described on page 92 of the **Exalted** main rulebook under “Multiple Actions”.

Characters may wish to defer taking some of their actions and hold them in reserve so they can roll to block or dodge the attacks of people slower than they are. These are normal actions, counted as part of the character’s actions for the turn. After the character’s action, these deferred defensive actions remain available until the end of the turn (NOT until the character’s next action). Defensive actions not used at the end of the turn are lost. Defensive actions occur “after” the character’s actions for the turn, and are thus at lower dice pools than the character’s primary actions. See page 230 of the **Exalted** main rulebook for the full rules.

Unlike when making a defense before the character’s turn, there’s no difference in terms of performance between the various martial abilities and Dodge. The character should use whatever is plausible and gives the best dice pool.

Keep in mind that under many circumstances, including when using Charms of types Simple and Extra Actions, characters cannot split their dice pool, but can perform only a single action during the turn (typically, activating the effects of a powerful Charm).

Activate A Reflexive Charm This is exactly like activating a defensive Charm before the character’s action. Again, remember that a character cannot use several different Charms during a turn without a Combo, they can only use the same one over and over. If the character is attacked repeatedly, they will have to use the same Charm to defend against all the attacks.

Activate a Combo As above.

Activate A Persistent Effect As above.

Q: Explain the tactics of splitting dice pools.

A: The penalty for the last action in a split turn is $-(2x-1)$, where x is the number of extra actions you're taking. Making this decision for most mortals is easy. Mortals who get beat on their initiative go full defense. It doesn't matter if they dodge or parry, whichever is better. They probably have shields, and most mortals are going to have trouble getting 2 successes on second and subsequent attacks to get past the shield. Obviously, dodging is better, but most mortals are armored, and the mobility penalty and their low dice pools generally make dodging not-very-attractive.

Exalted and legendary-level mortals have more choices available. The last-action penalty for the different splits is:

2 actions: -3 dice

3 actions: -5 dice

4 actions: -7 dice

5 actions: -9 dice

6 actions: -11 dice

7 actions: -13 dice

8 actions: -15 dice

I'd advise taking actions until your last action is at about 3-5 dice, whichever you're more comfortable with. Obviously, if someone good is resisting, err on the side of larger pools. Winning the initiative gives you the luxury of both attacking and defending, so don't forget to defend. I'd recommend taking half your total actions as defenses. Remember that actions are rolled in chronological order of occurrence, so your defenses will be of lower dice pool than your attacks. You may wish to forego one of your attacks and just take one less action to bring up your defense pools. You can win on initiative, split and go all out, but this is only really good in one-on-one engagements. Even in a one-on-one, an armored foe with a shield may just trust the shield and armor and let you throw your 5 attacks, then drop a few back on defenseless old you.

Most higher-pool mortals who lose initiative will parry, though a few may dodge. The necessity of armor among mortals makes dodging hard, because few people are going to learn to dodge at all. Really heroically gifted guys may jump around in a reinforced buff jacket, but that's just heroes. People who don't have four or five skills at a professional level generally aren't gifted enough to be a nimble armored warrior. Also, there's a variety of dodge character that's the no-armor speed queen. They use a fast weapon and have a high wits, they hit you with 3 attacks and reserve 2 defenses, giving them a roughly 7 and 6 die parry against you, and on the rare occasions they lose initiative, they full dodge with like 11 dice.

Nimble armored warriors and speed queens can kill careless Exalts, and they should be able to. They're people who walk the edge of human capability. A mortal with a 15 dice melee pool is easily Miyamoto Musashi's equal. People like this are the kind of folks who become Dawn Caste Solar Exalted. Of course they can drain a non-combat Solar of Essence or kill a Terrestrial. They won't last long, but they may not have to if the Exalt got cocky and didn't fight properly.

Exalts and split dice pools gets weird, because of the different levels of combat performance within Exaltedness. You really need to have a persistent defensive effect on, and this can get problematic because Charms of longer than instant duration won't fit into Combos. I'd recommend making a Combo of Surprise Anticipation Method and Dipping Swallow Defense or Shadow Over Water, so you can preserve your dice action to do an Athletics stunt and get out of sight or reach long enough to get up something of scene duration. Melee characters shouldn't just rely on the defensive nature of Fivefold Bulwark Stance, if you're blindsided you can potentially lose the ability to use even Reflexive Charms. Without a persistent effect, the Exalted have to react on an attack-by-attack basis. If I didn't have a persistent defense, I'd fight very defensively. Keep the fights one on one so you're not put in a position where you have to spend Essence on a case by case basis to parry every fighter in a press.

Without Essence, you'll probably win initiative, but just make a single attack per turn against the mortal, even if you split into 4 or 5 or 6 actions, and reserve the rest as defensive actions. He'll have a very hard time blocking your primary attack even at -6 dice. If you lose initiative, throw Shadow Over Water or Dipping Swallow Defense, stunt out to get the Essence back, and kill the guy with a full-dicepool attack. As long as you keep the fights one-on-one and have a good stunt sense, you can probably keep your Essence flow neutral or positive while dropping a foe every turn or two. As long as you keep the flow neutral or better, you can do it without displaying your anima banner, by spending and regaining just Personal Essence.

Keep in mind that very few troops are going to be trained for fighting Exalts. Most of them won't know to try to flurry the Exalted to wear down his Essence, or that giving an Exalt even a few seconds to catch their breath can mean the difference between a Chosen spending to defend against each attack and one who's

automatically defending. This is the kind of stuff they teach Immaculate Monks and elite military formations. Non-elite ones probably spend too much time working the unit farm or impressed as a national labor force to get much beyond regular drill practice. Their NCOs are happy if they get to the point where they don't flinch when shouted at, assuming that their NCOs are skilled in anything but maintaining dressage and administering beatings. Wolfpack tactics for fighting demigods are straight out.

Still, if you want to fight a whole army, you really need a persistent defense. Otherwise, they just offer too many threats for you to hope to magically intercept each of them. Automatic defenses are good, but there are others. Several stacked awe / terror effects or invulnerable skin of bronze and reinforced breastplate together work too.

(originally written as an rpg.net post in response to a question by Mock)

Exalted Rulings

(AKA “people will ask questions you could never begin to anticipate”)

When you “split your dice pool”, you’re not “splitting” anything. The figure of speech is just a game term from older White Wolf products that was so ingrained in the staff that we didn’t realize we’d used it. When you perform multiple actions, you actually perform multiple dice actions. A character who “split his dice pool” to attack three times is making three separate attacks, not one attack split three ways. Supplemental Charms (defined on page 154) are applied to these actual dice actions after the multiple action penalty (see the Order of Modifiers boxed text on page 229 of the **Exalted** main book). They are *not* paid for and applied at the beginning of the character’s turn to see how many actions she can take. This is made explicit under “Multiple Actions” on page 235.

This also goes for Dodge or another other Abilities subject to the effect of supplemental Charms that add dice. When a character goes full Dodge, he has his Dexterity + Dodge + specialties for the first dodge, and if he wants to use Reed in the Wind to enhance that, that’s fine, but that’s for the first dodge and the first dodge only. If you made another dodge and wanted to enhance that with Reed in the Wind also, you’d have to pay separately for the second activation of the Charm.

(requested by Maycross)

The act of spending Peripheral Essence, and not having the Essence “extended”, is what makes the anima banner flare. Think of running electricity through a wire. It’s the act of making the power run through the wire, not what the blender on the end of the wire is doing, that makes the wire get hot. Even if you spend Peripheral Essence that stays out of your pool for many many scenes (for example, attuning to an object or commit it to a Charm of long duration) the anima banner fades at the normal rate.

(requested by Winteredge)

If you commit Essence to an effect or attunement, the Essence comes out of the pool you spent it from and stays out of that pool until the commitment ends, so you should try to commit from your Peripheral Essence pool unless you like not having any Personal Essence.

(requested by Winteredge)

If you are a member of the Night Caste and you perform an act that requires committed Essence, and you spend the motes from your Peripheral Essence pool and use your anima ability to suppress the anima display, you do not end up with twice the required amount of Essence locked up in the effect or attunement. To be explicit, if a member of the Night Caste spends motes suppressing the anima display caused by committing Peripheral Essence to an effect or attune to an object, the motes spent suppressing the display of the character’s anima banner return at the normal rate, even if the motes used to generate the effect or achieve the attunement remain committed.

(requested by madchemist)

Training in multi-Ability Charms is an issue since they've begun to appear here and there. Add the minimum Ability ratings of the Charm together for the purposes of determining how long training takes. A character must Favor all Abilities involved to treat the Charm as favored.
(requested by Amul Kumar)

Technical Rules Clarifications:

These are technical clarifications of the Exalted rules. I am making them after watching fans discuss playing the game and after playing the game pretty extensively myself. These are clarifications of the intent of the rules – the rules texts to date already make these assumptions, I'm just making them explicit here.

Rules changes go someplace different and thankfully are much smaller than this.

In many cases, people with established house rules covering these subjects will disagree with me. If you care enough that you already have house timing rules or house rules on categorical stacking limits, more power to you. Clearly, you already know what's going on and you should do whatever you think is best for your group. The reason that these rulings work the way they do is to preserve the integrity of Exalted's kung fu combat system. If you use these rulings, the game should stay mechanically stable and interesting even with very powerful characters. If you disagree with them, you've bought the game, you're certainly free to do it however you want, but this is the way that I think is gonna keep it the most fun for the longest time.

Dice Pool Maximums:

Each kind of Exalt has some kind of concrete wall defined for them that limits the number of dice they can add to a roll via Charms. For Solars and Abyssals, it's Attribute + Ability, for Dragon-Blooded, it's Ability + specialty (if the Terrestrial is acting in the speciality), for Lunars, it's Attribute, for Sidereals, Essence. This is your maximum bonus for Charms that add dice. If those dice come from several Charms, they're still bonus dice added by Charms and you can't exceed your maximum.

This is important for the Dragon-Blooded, who often give one-another long term bonuses, but also for things like the Drunken Warrior Technique in Caste Book: Zenith, both of which would otherwise allow stratospheric multiple additions when used in conjunction with Reed In The Wind. This is made clear on page 177 of the Dragon-Blooded book, but it is reiterated here for the benefit of players who don't have the Dragon-Blooded hardback.

To answer any questions about this contradicting the boxed text on page 154 of the Exalted main book that says bonuses are applied irrespective of the effects of other Charms, this is talking about you not being able to add dice with Charm A and then use Charm B to double the result of the Ability + Charm A's effect. The only solar Charm that can break this rule, Cascade of Cutting Terror, has an entry in the errata that explicitly permits it to do so, and in the second printing and later of the main rules, the Charm text has been changed to make the exception explicit.

Note that this ruling discusses dice added by Charms. Bonus dice coming from other sources are not subject to this limit nor do they count against it.

It is specifically worth noting that charms which allow the character to "parry at full Dexterity + Melee" or "dodge at full Dodge pool" or some similar verbiage (meaning Dipping Swallow Defense and Shadow Over Water, but I don't want to limit it to just those Charms because there are other kinds of Exalted) are not adding bonus dice and don't count against the bonus dice limit for the Exalt. They are enabling a kind of action -- a dodge or parry at full dice pool -- not adding dice. It's easier to think of them as a very limited kind of extra action Charm than as granting bonus dice.

(Thanks to Xanzzibar for the question about full dodge / parry Charms)

Multiplication and Effect Stacking:

The rule of infinite wisdom is to not let multipliers run together. Like it says in the boxed text on page 154, use the base numbers, not the numbers after other Charms have their effect. If two things double the weapon's damage before soak, it does triple damage, not quadruple damage. Bonuses from other stuff, like items, magic spells and hearthstones, should generally always stack with each other and with Charms bonuses unless they're clearly mutually exclusive. D&D3 has an elaborate keyword system to test for effect compatibility, Exalted pretty much just assumes they stack. Still, regardless of the origin of the modifier, apply the effects individually, not in sequence with other effects kicking in at the same time.

The only place this may get problematic is that some people are so awesome or hypnotic or whatever that you're always at some ungodly penalty trying to fight them. My suggestion is either to jump these guys before they get the horrendous stack of effects going and make them burn up all their Essence defending themselves from your multiattack combo, or to circumvent their defenses. For example, a lot of penalties against missile attacks are environmental. Ever notice that Archery Charm called "There Is No Wind"? The one that makes all environmental penalties go away? Yeah, well that guy doing Serpent Form while Riding the Whirlwind over there is about to learn about it when you drop your Sight Without Eyes / There Is No Wind zen archer combo on him.

It's hard to be coated in a thick layer of penalties that doesn't have some weak points that another Exalt can exploit. It could be that it takes forever to activate and a lot of Essence to get running, or that it's all based on conditional effects like Hearthstones, items and spells that you can neutralize or circumvent.

Protect well the secrets of your technique, because there are rules for recognizing what's inside a Combo you activate on page 213 of the main book, and someone who sees you fight can learn how you do battle.

The Applicability of Perfection:

Perfect dodges, soaks and parries carry with them an interesting question. Given that the perfect defense always wins (see the boxed text on page 167), can a character's perfect defense allow them to evade situations where the defense is inapplicable? For example, can a character use Seven Shadow Evasion to sidestep an attack using Cascade of Cutting Terror, which specifically states that the attack cannot be dodged, only blocked?

The answer is no. The charm's effect is infallible, the Charm itself is not. If the character is not allowed to dodge the attack, then there's no chance for the Charm's effects to take place. Dodging is an inapplicable action – it doesn't matter how perfect it is, there's no way for it to happen. Yes, this makes having an array of defenses more important, because Seven Shadow Evasion isn't the only defense you need.

Of specific note is Adamant Skin Technique. Adamant Skin Technique protects against damage as in "12L", not damage as in "any negative effect". If someone hits you with an attack that decreases your attributes or makes your soul fall off, Adamant Skin Technique won't help there. There probably is a Solar charm in the Essence 6-7 region that absolutely prevents any negative effects whatsoever from an attack, but Adamant Skin Technique isn't it. However, Adamant Skin Technique *will* protect against attacks like Armor-Penetrating Fang Strike, because that's an attempt to defeat the Charm's effects, rather than trumping the applicability of the Charm.

Note that an "exception" to this is Heavenly Guardian Defense, the penultimate parry Charm in the main book's Melee tree. This Charm is specifically noted as blocking even attacks that cannot be blocked. And indeed, page 167 rules here, and this defense really can really block any single attack, hence its Willpower cost. Characters wishing to develop a less extravagant version of this Charm that's still vulnerable to unblockable attacks can probably do so and have it cost in the 6-7 motes. Likewise, a truly perfect dodge Charm using Willpower is also possible.

One Activation Per Instant:

In general, a Charm can be activated only once per instant. An instant is the abstract period in which instant duration Charms are invoked– the moment captured by the dice when the character leaps to parry or dodge, for example, or when the character soaks damage from an attack. This is very important with reflexives and for certain other Charms. For example, a character cannot invoke Iron Kettle Body repeatedly to multiply its soak bonus against one attack, cannot use Essence Gathering Temper repeatedly against the same blow, cannot use Serpentine Evasion several times to "stack" the bonus dodge dice, and cannot use Shadow Over Water or Dipping Swallow Defense again and again to repeatedly dodge or parry the same attack.

This is designed to prevent exploitive uses of Charms – "instant" is to be construed narrowly. The idea is to prevent the stacking of Instant-duration reflexive Charms with themselves, not that you cannot use Anointment of Miraculous Health twice on the same injury. Characters who want stacked effects will have to learn two similar but compatible Charms and place them in a Combo. Some Charms may specifically have the characters use them repeatedly on a single event, but these Charms will state this explicitly. As usual, the text of the Charm supercedes the rules.

Multiple Defense Actions:

Characters may, through various Charms or other effects, have a variety of defenses at their disposal and able to bear on an individual attack. Through a Combo or scene duration effects, they may be able to both dodge and parry and attack with some number of dice, and possibly even counterattack as well. It is permissible to both dodge and parry an attack, with each defensive effect negating more successes. If the Charm texts don't dictate which happens first, the defender gets to pick which defenses are applied in what order, which can make it very dangerous to attack certain kinds of riposte specialists. See the ruling above about only activating Charms once per instant. This is allowing you to use Dipping Swallow Defense while you have Flow Like Blood active, not allowing you to use Dipping Swallow Defense repeatedly to make multiple parries against a single attack. In general, you can only make one defense of a give type against an attack. Though Charms might exist that give "second chances" to parry or dodge or whatever, these will explicitly say so in the Charms text.

For Example: Seven Thunder Kid is fighting the Mask of Winters. Mask of Winters attacks him with some improbable netherworld kung-fu move, and rolls 20 successes on his attack. Seven Thunder Kid has Flow Like Blood and Angry Predator Frenzy Style (from Caste Book: Dawn) active. Seven Thunder Kid rolls his Dexterity + Dodge + any speciality he might have there that helps, and gets 8 successes. Not nearly enough. The Kid now spends one of his extra actions, aborts to a parry in response to Mask Of Winters, and rolls his Dexterity + Martial Arts + his specialty in tiger claws, and get 6 successes. Still not enough. Looks like Seven Thunder Kid is gonna take a hit. Now Seven Thunder Kid's persistent Angry Predator Frenzy Style kicks in, and he gets a simultaneous reflexive counterattack at 11 dice (his 5 Martial Arts + the 6 remaining successes Mask of Winters rolled on his attack).

(Thanks to LetTheWookieeWin for pointing out the need to clarify matters about Dipping Swallow Defense)