

# Ashwick Plantation

Rulebook v.0.1

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# Introduction

Welcome to the world of *Ashwick Plantation*, a Live Action Roleplaying Game of Survival Horror produced by Worth-It Entertainment. This book contains rules for creating a character and playing in our interpretation of 17th Century New England.

## Special Thanks

Endeavors such as this are built upon the shoulders of those who came before us. We have all been influenced by many people and things far too numerous to mention here. A few particular mentions of those who made *Ashwick Plantation* possible:

David Buresh, Aaron Caldwell, Scott Docherty, Matt Flynn, Katherine Journeay, Lachlann Graheme, Mike Kanarek, Lisa Lassner, Bill McAllister, and Aaron Newman

## Mature Players

*Ashwick Plantation* is a game for mature role-players. Maturity isn't measured by age so much as a desire to help build a game that is fun and respectful. The genre of horror can create great stress among its participants, and we intend to have open communication with our players if they need it. However, we reserve the right to make scenes that are both inspiring and intense.

We are interested in dramatic scenes, and some of those may involve self-sacrifice and even character death. We take these decisions seriously, and we expect you and your fellow players to as well.

## Fun and Sportsmanship

The purpose of this game is for the participants to have fun, including not only the players, but the volunteers and staff as well. This may not always be realistic, but it's what we're aiming for.

It is the responsibility of all people involved in the game to make a reasonable effort to see that other people are able to enjoy themselves. If you are staffing an event, please remember that you are there to entertain the players. If you are playing, please keep in mind that the staff are volunteering their services to make the event possible and fun for you, and give them due consideration for this.

For out-of-game instances, personal theft, harassment, and abuse of any kind will not be tolerated.

For in-game instances of PvP, do not take action against other players for frivolous reasons. Act with intent and think of ways to initiate conflict that will better the game as a whole and for the player(s) you are interacting with.

Players or staff who consistently cause problems or friction to the detriment of other people's fun, whether they are breaking the letter of the rules or not, may be asked to leave.

## Ethical Concerns

We are aware that in the 21st Century social moirés are very different then they were in 1675. The past three centuries have seen incredible changes to local culture, but we will touch upon a few specific aspect here:

While slavery is alive in the 17th Century, it was close to nonexistent within Plymouth Colony. While other colonies had slaves early on, we have found no record of slavery in Plymouth Colony until 1685, a full decade after *Ashwick Plantation* takes place. However, the colony's economics and politics did not occur in a vacuum. While slaves may not be owned in the colony, the effects of it will be palpable in a very small amount of our scenes.

Also, while slavery is nonexistent in the colony, indentured servitude is alive and well. The use of servants was varied: some were children learning a trade, some were men and women with hopes of a new and better life once their contract ended, and others still were criminals. Having a servant, however, was not a frivolous venture. Masters must take care of their servants and are legally responsible for all their actions. Dozens of laws were passed in Plymouth Colony ensuring a servant's health and rights. We will be exploring indentured servitude and its nuances throughout the campaign, and we invite players to create characters around this social dynamic if they wish.

As this game takes place during a war between Native American tribes and English colonists, it is important to know that not all tribes fought against the English. The allies and enemies of specific tribes are as varied and intriguing as those of European countries. We will focus on these differences in addition to other unique characteristics of each tribe's culture as we build a full and rich world. We invite players to create Native American characters if they wish, and we will also ensure that appropriate measures are taken in maintaining respect for all people involved.

Concurrently, religion in a historical setting can also be difficult to portray with great effect and sincerity. Christianity, and more specifically, Puritanism, is the dominant religion among English colonists. Merchants and others who came over from Europe who did not follow the same sect of Christianity were called "Adventurers." While Quakers were harshly treated in the early years of the colonies, by 1675 their presence was tolerated - if looked down upon as a second class citizen. There will be stories that involve navigating religious persecution, and we invite players to create Quaker characters if they wish with the caveat that their faith could possibly create narrative obstructions. We also invite players to create characters from other religious backgrounds, however, expect that there will be considerable discussion about how your character fits into Ashwick's society.

Lastly, witchcraft. Witch hunts were not unknown in the colonies, specifically New England. While Salem's infamous trials are decades away, there were prior instances of witch hunts in the surrounding areas. These hunts did not entirely focus on women either as a small minority of men were also brought to trial.

Witchcraft in *Ashwick Plantation* takes two forms: paganism (religion) and sorcery (magick). The differences are in how the world interacts with you and vice versa. A lawman might see you hanging herbs in celebration of a pagan holiday and think nothing of it (herbs and plants were ubiquitously hung in homes). However, performing rituals, incants, or other acts that might be considered sorcery would certainly draw the attention of the law.

A player does not need paganism to interact with sorcery, nor does a player need sorcery to interact with paganism. The two are separate. sorcerers do not necessarily pay heed to pagan gods, and pagans do not all practice sorcery.

We invite players to create characters that are pagans with the same caveat that we give to Quakers: expect hostility and possible persecution if exposed.

We also invite players to create characters who want to delve into the metaphysical aspects of a world ruled more by belief and spirituality. While it is not immediately available to players, there may be avenues to unlock those mysteries.



## Chapter 1: Background

### King Phillip's War

*"Your governor is but a subject. I shall treat only with my brother, King Charles of England. When he comes, I am ready."* - Metacomet, Grand Sachem of the Wampanoag

*Ashwick Plantation* takes place during a most troublesome time in colonial history: King Philip's War. It is Spring of 1675, and the Great Sachem Metacomet - known as King Philip to the English - is about to begin a two year reign of terror through the southern and western towns of Massachusetts. Over the past decade or so, relations between the Algonquins and Plymouth Colony have deteriorated. The Algonquins - under Metacomet's brother, the previous Great Sachem, Wamsutta - have begun selling land to other colonists, while Plymouth Colony themselves have undertaken acts of theft, extortion, and murder. Metacomet, himself, believes that the Plymouth colonists are responsible for the killing of Wamsutta and other tribesman, thus setting off a war that would unite many native tribes and bring great destruction upon the English.

This is the bloodiest war in the history of colonial America. Ten percent of the colonies' fighting-aged men would die, more than half of New England's towns were attacked, and many were destroyed. Alas, the war would hit the Native Americans much worse than the colonists as the tribes of Southern New England would lose forty - yes, forty - percent of their population due to warfare and disease.

## The New World

*"For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us."* - John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony

The mystery of the Americas enticed European countries through its promise of wealth and increased influences. Although the Spanish were the first to settle in America, England established a dominant presence on the Atlantic coast, building up Plimoth Plantation, Virginia, and others. Many who came to the New World wanted to escape religious persecution, looking for a new life in a new land.

Settlers who made the trek from England to the New World were commonly entire family units. By traveling to America and establishing colonies in the name of England, these brave families wished to set an example for the world of a good and just society within these foreign lands.

## Native Americans

*"What is this you call property? It cannot be the earth, for the land is our mother, nourishing all her children, beasts, birds, fish and all men. The woods, the streams, everything on it belongs to everybody and is for the use of all. How can one man say it belongs only to him?"* - Massassoit, Grand Sachem of the Wampanoag

When the first colonists arrived in Massachusetts, the Wampanoags were curious and cautious, yet friendly to the Europeans. Since the colonists were not adept at farming in the North American soil and lacked the skills necessary for surviving in unfamiliar territory, the Wampanoags took pity on the Europeans, offering food to help them survive. In return, the colonists offered to trade various items to the Native Americans for their help including knives, axes, weapons, cooking utensils, fish hooks, etc. Wampanoags traded furs and pelts for these European items, which they used as an advantage above their rival tribes.

Peace, however, did not last long between the colonists and the Wampanoags. At first, the Native Americans allowed colonists to live on pieces of land within their territories. The English saw this as a right to occupy and permanently own territory, and steadily encroached upon Wampanoag land, sometimes even occupying entire villages while the Native Americans were away hunting, fishing, or gathering resources.

While land was one conflict the Wampanoags faced, another was disease brought in by the settlers. Since there were new European diseases spread across a foreign land (such as smallpox, diphtheria, etc.), the Native Americans had little to no immunity against them. Most of the Eastern tribes suffered greatly from these diseases, while the colonists suffered from their own slew of new diseases as well.

## Ashwick Plantation



*“Will ye embark unto this place with His work? Will ye endeavor with Humility and Serve Him? Will ye bow to the light in this wooded darkness, the salvation in this new world, the everlasting work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Then join us in reverence of His great works, in the land of Ashwick Plantation.”* - Nathaniel Albright, Selectman and Constable of Ashwick Plantation

Ashwick Plantation was founded in 1650 by a group of freemen. They received a charter from Plymouth Colony allowing the establishment of a single town south of Taunton. As the years progressed, Plymouth Colony expanded and surrounded the thickly wooded lands of Ashwick Plantation. Freetown, Swansea, and Middleborough all sprung forth in the following years creating a lone forested settlement amidst the growing farmlands of Plymouth Colony.

Ashwick Plantation is set against the western bank of the Assonet River. While there is fertile land for farming, wood is the main source of employment as there is exceptional timber in the nearby forest. Pine and maple are typically used locally while oak is often sent to the shipyards in Taunton. A few small mines in the northwest of the settlement have recently brought in lead, iron, and - in rare occasions - silver. The fauna is also robust as local fur trappers hunt many forms of game from hare to fox to deer.

Within the town proper, the scenery is typical: small, thatched-roof buildings for up to three families, a forge and tannery for local craftsmen, a pillory near the town square, and of course, a church for prayer and services. The nearby docks allow for commerce to flow through Ashwick Plantation as the Assonet filters out into the Taunton River and then to the Atlantic Ocean. Most often, the town sends out more than it receives, but there are a few occasions when imports make their way into the hands of the colonists.

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## **Life in Ashwick Plantation**

### **The Meetinghouse**

*“Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they won’t bear their weight, and these places are not seen.”* Jonathan Edwards, Pastor

The Meetinghouse serves as the bedrock of the community both for government and worship. Meetings occur here to inform the citizens of new laws and to take census.

Church services occurred in the meetinghouse where many gathered. Worship of the Protestant sect of Christianity was the only formally tolerated religion in Plymouth Colony. “Adventurers” (non-Puritan Europeans) were not expected to conform, however they were treated with disdain. Quakers - known as Friends - are only recently beginning to enjoy glimpses of freedom as they were persecuted a decade prior, but they may not practice their worship at the meetinghouse.

### **Contact with Europe**

*“Let go and overhaul the lifts! Clear away all the bowlines! Tend the lee braces! Haul taut! Haul taut, lads!”*

- Sylvia Planters, First Mate of the *Prudence Voyage*

By 1675, English Colonists were more populous in the New England colonies than the Native Americans due to a myriad of reasons, but perhaps most impressively to the English crown was the development of trade. In New England lumber and furs were the commodities for the Crown, whilst the colonists received staple goods to help them survive harsh winters, drought, and famine.

The colonies were a prosperous venture for the British Empire and its citizens in spite of - and partially in part because of - a restrictive government. Tariffs on goods sent from the colonies to the British Isles, and extensive regulations on what goods could and couldn't be kept by the colonists themselves. For example, lumber felled from a tree larger than one foot in diameter could not be used for colonial needs. Instead, law required the lumber be sent back to England to maintain the British shipyards and navies. Failure to abide this law resulted in fines, arrests, or worse. Any trade done with foreign powers would necessarily need to be kept somewhat covert due to laws prohibiting such commerce.

With trade increasing, so too did communication. Depending on the seasons and winds, a trip from England to the colonies took between two and three months while the return trip back to England would take slightly less time. Tales from sailors and merchants were the most common forms of engagement with the Motherland although correspondence by mail was also consistent. Contrary to much of the rest of the European world, colonists of New England were exceptionally literate, and the first printing presses in the New World cropped up in the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth colonies.

England was not the only area to receive news from Plymouth Colony. Virginia, New York, and the newly acquired Rupert's Land were all less than a few weeks journey. Trade with Native Americans brought news from all over, the ever-mercantile Dutch were never afraid to slip word of a rumor or two provided there was profit in it, and the French fur traders from the north made their way into English lands for commerce as well while ships from the Caribbean brought sugar for rum distilleries as part of the Triangular Slave Trade route.

## **The Market**

*"I have traveled from town to town trading wares and services. I have victuals and tools, luxuries and staples. Whatever your need, I can procure it."* - Hope Babbington, Yankee peddler

Ashwick Plantation holds Market Day every Saturday. Any merchant traveling to Providence or Taunton would carry on past this sleepy little town, but on Market Day? Travelers can surely profit! Fur-traders from the north, fisherman from the south, mail carriers from Boston, and Yankee peddlers all fill the town with a variety of goods and services. Skilled merchants vie for the best deals while ship captains pluck the next young landlubber looking to strike it rich at sea. Coins, commodities, and information are the currency of the marketplace. If you're rich in one, you can be rich in them all.



## Chapter 2: Combat Rules

Physical conflict at *Ashwick Plantation* is resolved via safe, simulated combat. Players and NPCs strike each other with padded foam weapons, nerf darts, and certain other safe implements. Any item which can be used to strike a player or NPC must be checked by a safety marshal at check in and can be rechecked at any time. Players are encouraged to carefully review weapon construction and safety guidelines before bringing items they intend to use in combat to game. Staff generally cannot provide players with backup weapons if the ones they bring fail to pass inspection.

### Hitting Each Other

Players will generally be struck by one of two types of objects in-game.

1. Foam darts fired from toy guns. Homemade darts are not allowed.
2. Foam or latex 'boffer' weapons swung by opponents as melee weapons and made from PVC, graphite, or fiberglass cores and covered with foam and either duct tape or soft latex.

### Legal Hits

Hits to the hands do not count as legal hits, nor do hits to the head or groin. Players are expected to adjust their fighting style to avoid striking these areas. If you are struck in the head, neck, or groin with a bullet or boffer, do not take the effect. If someone repeatedly hits one of these areas, call "CAUTION: Check your swings/aim." Please note that if you find yourself being struck in the head, neck, or groin often that this may have something to do with the way that you are fighting and you should adjust. Some players 'lead with their head', putting these illegal strike areas in spots that are difficult to avoid hitting in regular combat. You

should avoid doing this as doing so deliberately is considered cheating, but staff will be happy to help players learn to avoid it.

## **Lightest Touch**

Players are expected to 'pull their swings.' The goal is to make contact with a weapon with enough force that a player feels the strike and no more. Players are expected to keep their melee strikes under control so that even an illegal strike to the face or groin will not hurt. The rule of thumb is to pull your weapon back as soon as you feel any resistance whatsoever. Following through on your swings or generating more force than is necessary with a melee attack is illegal. If you find an opponent swinging hard enough to make you uncomfortable call "CAUTION: Check your swings."

## **The Charging Rule**

You must maintain a safe distance from any active opponent. If you can reach out and touch the torso of an opponent with your hand then you are too close and you must back away. If you find an opponent engaging too close call "CAUTION: Charging."

## **Archery**

Archery is an acceptable form of combat in *Ashwick Plantation*, however, there are safety concerns in regards to archers. Archers may not parry with their bows if they are not a fully-padded surface. As such, in order to maintain safety, players attacking archers should attempt to avoid hitting bows as well. Do not tread on arrows. Arrows are typically made of fiberglass and will break if stepped on hard enough which will create unnecessary hazards.

## **Blocking**

As soon as a weapon strike collides with any object held or carried by a player it is expected that a player will withdraw their weapon in keeping with the 'lightest touch' rule. Just the same, it occasionally happens that a weapon may strike a weapon being used to block or a shield or obstacle and then come into contact with an enemy. A weapon is only considered to have successfully struck the first thing it comes in contact with. In other words, if someone blocks your strike with a shield and then their shoulder brushes your sword it counts as a strike blocked by their shield until you have swung again.

## **Claws and Natural Weaponry**

Some characters have the ability to use claws or natural weaponry.

Claws are considered to be melee weapons and can be used to block melee attacks. Claws are not affected by Disarm. Destroy effects delivered to such weaponry will cause a Maim effect to the limb using the weapon.

If you are holding a claw that is struck by an attack and you cannot legally block with the claw due to some game effect, you will be affected by the attack since you cannot drop the claw in response to the strike.

## Critters

Critters are rubber snakes, rats, or miscellaneous other creatures. Usually they will have bells attached, and if the bell goes off, then the critter has bitten you causing 1 Damage.

## Machine Gunning/90° swings:

After every melee weapon strike a weapon must be withdrawn by a full 90 degrees in order to count as a new swing. In the case of thrusting weapons a weapon must be drawn back by at least one full arm's length. Players being struck by barrages of hits that do not follow these rules (so called 'machine gunning') may ignore all but the first strike. You should call "CLARIFY: machine gunning" if you feel an opponent is doing this repeatedly.

## Taking Damage

When you are legally hit, you take damage. Each point of damage reduces your Essence. You may have skills or items that allow you to resist or avoid damage in some way. You must roleplay that you were hit in some way and were able to sustain the damage without falling unconscious.

Damage is broken down into four categories:

- Melee - 1 Damage
- Ranged - 2 Damage
- Firearms - 3 Damage
- Any Damage From Behind - 5 Damage

You do not need to call your damage when swinging, only call out "Effects." The reason for this is to have a "quiet" game, where calls and verbiage do not get in the way of the scene. You should be able to tell the difference between a hit from a nerf dart (gun), an arrow, or a boffer (sword).

## Armor

Armor in *Ashwick Plantation* is location-based. There are five locations for armor: chest, each leg, and each arm. For instance, if you have leather pants or metal greaves, they count as armor for your legs. Armor must cover  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the body location. Armor is broken up into 2 types:

- Leather Armor - leather or fur padding grants the 1 "Resist" per location.
- Metal armor - gauntlets, greaves, and cuirasses grant immunity to attacks that deal 1 Damage to the location.

Note: While wearing back armor is encouraged for costuming purposes, it does not give any beneficial effects.

## **On Death and Dying**

We are engaging in the horror genre, and death is a critical component of the game. Death in our game is held in stages.

### **0 Essence / Exhausted**

When you are at 0 Essence, you must roleplay exhaustion and attempt to leave the scene for 3 minutes. You are conscious and able to continue your wonderfully horrific life for the time being. Receiving a "Heal" or any other effect that would bring you to 1 Essence or higher negates these effects. You retain any other effects you may still be under.

### **Dying**

After 3 minutes of 0 Essence, you are "Dying" and have 3 minutes to be cured. You must roleplay being unconscious. If someone begins surgery or in other ways could attempt to heal you, your "timer" is paused. If you receive a "Cure Dying" effect, you are brought back to 1 Essence. You retain any other effects your body may still be under. Additionally, you receive one Critical Effect. Report to a Game Marshal in a reasonably quick time to assess your injuries.

If you do not receive a "Cure Dying" and no one has paused your "timer" within 3 minutes, report to a Game Marshal.

### **Critical Effects**

You are gravely injured. Report to a Game Marshal who will assist you in determining what exactly your detriment(s) will be. You've had a near death experience, and these effects may extremely alter your character's physical and mental ability. We intend most of these effects to be roleplay intensive, but they may also affect abilities with skills. For example, a "crippled hand" would disallow the use of a 2-handed weapon like a polearm or musket.

### **Death**

If you would receive a third Critical Effect, your character dies. Please see a Game Marshal.

# The Three Out-of-Game Calls

## Caution

This phrase indicates some condition that may threaten the health of a player. A caution should never last more than 10 seconds. It indicates that those people who are close to or involved in that problem should pause so someone can get clear, get up, or move away from a threat. Only those people nearby need pause until the problem is resolved. Everyone involved in a caution is still responsible to the game and should still be cautious of in game threats. They may move away from the Caution or pause until the person has dealt with the problem.

## Clarification

This phrase works like Caution, but it indicates that someone needs a quick explanation of what happened. People directly involved pause for while someone repeats a verbal or quickly indicates a condition or result of something. This should be used infrequently, if ever. It is present for new players who may be overwhelmed and confused during their first game or two.

## Emergency

This phrase should come up rarely. This means that there is some medical emergency that needs attention. The game play stops, and everyone who hears the emergency should drop to a knee to indicate that a real problem exists. Emergency should only be called if there is a real problem and someone could be hurt.

## List of Effects

Most damage within *Ashwick Plantation* is uncalled. Throughout combat, though, you may hear "Called" attacks. "Called" attacks do something other than a single point of damage, as indicated by the attacker loudly and clearly announcing the effect as soon as they begin their attack.

A current list of Effects:

- Cure Dying - You are cured of the "Dying" State. You are now at 1 Essence and have not died, but you must see a Game Marshal for "Critical Effects."
- Destroy and Destroy "Item" - Any Item hit is broken and must be repaired before it is used again. If you are hit and the call is Destroy "Item," the item specified is destroyed and not the item hit.
- Diagnose - You are diagnosed of your injuries. You may tell someone how much Essence, what ailments, and what illnesses you may have.
- Disarm - You must drop your weapon if you are hit with a Disarm attack.
- Disengage - When someone gestures at you and shouts "Disengage," you must move back three steps from the person before being able to approach again.
- Heal - You gain 1 Essence.
- Maim - You lose the use of the limb. This effect lasts until you receive a "Heal."
- Pin - You must stay with one foot in the same place for 30 seconds.
- Resist - You may resist the effects of the hit you received. This includes damage and effects. You must roleplay shrugging off the effect in some way but do not need to call "Resist."
- Slam - You must fall to your knees for 3 seconds or fall on your back before resuming any other movements.
- Slow - You may not run. You may only walk. This effect lasts until you receive a "Heal."



## Chapter 3: Character Creation

Character Creation is simple in regards to stats: you have Essence and you have skills. Bonuses will be available for submitting your character a month in advance of your first event and working with us for determining your background. Further information is pending.

### Essence

Essence is the core attribute of *Ashwick Plantation*. It does not measure the capabilities of you as a player, nor does it limit your natural abilities. It is only a limit to the game skills you can use. As an example, you are not limited in your ability to pick up heavy objects or run long distances, but you are limited in how many game skills you can use before your character is exhausted.

Your Essence at character creation is set at 4. If you submit an approved Character History for your character, you will receive an extra point of Essence. There may be other ways to increase your Essence as well.

Essence measures your health. Every damage you take reduces your Essence by 1. If you are reduced to 0 Essence, you are “Exhausted.” See the section “On Death and Dying” for more information.

Essence also measures your ability to work. Many skills cost Essence to use. When you are reduced to 0 Essence, you can no longer use any abilities (even those that have no Essence cost) until you can regain at least 1 Essence.

Some game effects can Reset exhausted Essence. Essence also Resets at the beginning of each event you attend.



## Choosing Headers and Skills

At Character Creation, you will choose 2 Headers. Each header grants you a Basic Skill. You may then also choose 1 Advanced Skill. This Advanced Skill must be chosen from one of your Headers. As you progress, you will also be able to acquire Master Skills.

<b>Choose 2 Headers</b> (Gain 2 Basic Skills)	<b>Choose 1 Advanced Skill</b> (You must have the prerequisite header)	<b>Master Skill</b> (As you progress, you may attain a Master Skill) (You must have the prerequisite Advanced Skill)
<b>Combat</b>	<b>Offense / Defense</b>	<b>Offense / Defense</b>
<b>Crafting</b>	<b>Apothecary / Tools / Weapons and Armor</b>	<b>Apothecary / Tools / Weapons and Armor</b>
<b>Gathering</b>	<b>Gardening / Logging / Mining / Trapping</b>	<b>Gardening / Logging / Miner / Trapping</b>
<b>Healing</b>	<b>First Aid / Surgery</b>	<b>First Aid / Surgery</b>

Example:

You want to play a character that is a fur trapper and a survivalist. You select Gathering and Healing as your two Basic Skills. You then select Trapping as your one Advanced skill.

There are other skills available in the game that are not listed here, however; these are called hidden skills. We will have a lot of different hidden skills, so everything is not exactly as it seems.

## Respeccing and Multiple Characters

There are times at which you realize that you have a skill that you do not want. We understand this. We are not going to allow characters to respec wholesale, but we do allow you to decide against a given skill after trying it out. As long as you purchased your skill within the two games previous, you may remove it from your character and get a full refund, but doing so prohibits you from learning the same skill for a year.

If you decide that your character has grown in the wrong direction, we have a different solution. We encourage multiple characters in *Ashwick Plantation*. It is planned to be a dynamic game with a lot of hidden things in it, and the game could grow in a way that you as a player didn't expect. To help with this we are willing to give half of your earned skills outside of initial character generation to any additional character you may have or any future character you may make.

## **Submitting your Character**

Character is integral to *Ashwick Plantation* - without characters, the town itself cannot survive. To help this, we would like you to submit your character background and projected skills to us at least one month before your first game. We will offer suggestions as to how your character can better affect - and be affected by - the world in which you will be living. We hope to have a dialog with every player to help them build the best character they can and to tie our story into their backgrounds as much as possible.

Submitting your character earlier than one month before your first game is encouraged. The more time we have to work your character into the world, the better. We will announce when character submission is open.

## **A Final Word**

We are building a dynamic game that will grow and change as play occurs. Players will be able to influence the world and see the impact of their actions. Be involved. Try and change the world. You may discover something new and amazing. Accept that other players are doing the same and they may discover something new and amazing as well. Varied experiences make the game world richer.



## Chapter 4: Headers and Skills

### Combat

*“They that had no Powder-horns nor Shot-bags, should immediately make them; ordering the Officers to take special care that they were ready to March into the Woods an hour before day” - Benjamin Church, Entertaining Passages Relating to Philip's War*

The past few generations were tumultuous at best for English families. The religious wars of Reformation including the recent civil war have torn apart the lives of nobles and commoners alike for over a century. With the advent of gunpowder, military tactics were in upheaval as well: castles were abandoned for polygonal forts, heavy cavalry for infantry musketeers and arquebusiers.

In the New World, change to warfare came just as quickly. Native tribes who fought with bows and arrows quickly traded with colonists for firearms in hopes of having the upper hand against their rivals. Native tribes were lead into battle by an elder - either a sachem or a counselor to a sachem. They often used quick raiding tactics to confuse the enemy and use surprise as a weapon.

English towns, themselves, typically required able-bodied persons to be a part of the local militia as there was no large contingent of centralized military in Plymouth Colony, and local 'musters' for training purposes were a consistent part of a colonist's life. Some mercenary bands termed "Rangers" were also used in place of - or as auxiliaries - to militia forces.

### **Basic Combat**

You may spend 1 Essence and gain “Disarm” for 2 attacks.

## Offense

*“Our axes are sharp; our guns readied as we stand against the enemy.” - Hausis, Narragansett Warrior*

The weaponry of King Philip’s War was varied. While firearms were the premier form, resources for gunpowder and lead ammunition were somewhat scarce. Most combatants used tools as improvised weapons like axes, hammers, and clubs. It was not unheard of for there to be a few pikes for the militia to use, and Native Americans made extensive use of tomahawks and bows and arrows when not firing muskets.

### **Advanced Offense**

You may spend 1 Essence and gain “Pin” for 2 attacks.

### **Master Offense**

You may spend 1 Essence and gain “Slow” for 2 attacks.

## Defensive Combat

*“In general, equipment would have remained functional, with musketeers and arquebusiers clothed in fustian doublets, chain mail jackets, and sometimes corselets and steel helmets, carrying a sword and dagger. The pikemen might have been more heavily armed, wearing steel corselets and metal pouldrons, vambraces and tasses and most certainly a steel cap. However for the sake of mobility, this equipment was often limited to a breast and back plate, and in the low countries there were few pitched battles that warranted the use of heavy armor. Many of the mercenary companies were very poorly clad, and existed in extreme discomfort pending payment for their services; arms and equipment were often in short supply.”*

- Walter Morgan, *The Expedition in Holland*

Armor changed significantly as firearms became more ubiquitous. Where before a combatant was nearly impervious to harm in plate armor, muskets made knights and their heavy armor impractical. Instead, warriors typically used cuirasses and helms for protection in vital areas only or wore versatile armor like thick furs and leather that were meant to stave off the elements as much as a sword. Tassets on the thighs and gauntlets on the hands were not unheard of for infantryman as well.

### **Advanced Defense**

You may spend 1 Essence and “Resist” the next ranged attack (does not include hits from behind)..

### **Master Defense**

You may spend 1 Essence and “Resist” the next firearm attack

# Crafting

*"Craftsmen are the backbone of our colony. Our society would crumble without their gracious services."* - Josiah Winslow, Governor and General-in-Chief of Plymouth Colony

Craftsmen made a vast amount of items used by the Ashwick community, such as furniture, tools, wheels, utensils, and glass. There were blacksmiths, apothecaries, brabeners, cartographers, gunsmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, and others. For the highest quality items, colonists relied on master craftsmen who owned their own shops where they could sell their products and/or services.

In order to become a master craftsman, however, the path was long and arduous. One would have to first become an apprentice. Apprentices served the craftsman for four to seven years, starting around the age of ten. By the end of that time, they were required to create a "master piece" to prove they are proficient enough to become a journeyman craftsman. Journeymen traveled to nearby villages, making and repairing goods until they saved up enough money to open their own shop, thereby becoming master craftsmen.

## Basic Crafting

You may repair any item, and you will also receive a small recipe book with which you can craft items. You may spend 1 Essence and 3 minutes at the Forge or Tannery to repair items. You may also spend 1 Essence and 3 minutes at the Cauldron to craft 1 Basic Apothecary Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Basic or Durable Item.

## Apothecary

*"Life's greatest unhappiness is health's smallest grievances clogged, and an apothecary's has the cure to these ailments."* - Sylvia Belcher, Apothecary

Apothecary, as a profession, dates back to ancient Babylon, and in England, the apothecaries merited their own livery company: the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, founded in 1617. Here in the colonies, the support system is less established than back home. Instead of libraries for research, colonists must rely on their own knowledge. Familiar supplies are limited as well, but there is an unlimited supply of discovery and possibilities. People have needs: to heal their ills, prevent sickness, and other (perhaps less savory) necessities the knowledge of which is provided almost entirely apothecaries. Some experimentation may be required, but the end result is the betterment of all.

## Advanced Apothecary

When you use Basic Crafting at the Cauldron you may craft 1 Superior Apothecary Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Superior Apothecary Item. You also receive an expanded recipe book with which to craft Apothecary items specifically.

## Master Apothecary

When you use Basic Crafting at the Cauldron you may craft 1 Rare Apothecary Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Rare Apothecary Item. You also receive an expanded recipe book with which to craft Apothecary items specifically.

## Tools

*"Tools are the heart of the craftsman."* - Margaret Bohannon, Blacksmith

Every utility item had to be made by hand in Ashwick by journeyman and master craftsmen. In order to make these items, tools were formed specifically for the type of craftsman. Each specialization required tools, such as scuppets, axes, funnels, compasses, files, augers, gimlets, braces, chisels, gouges, drawknives, hammers, saws, squares, bevels, and others. The most ancient of tools used were the chisels and gouges, which were used in wood carving. Bench chisels were used for light and general purpose work about the village. In order to build defensive structures around Ashwick, the scruppet, which was an entrenching tool, could be used. To gather wood from the surrounding forest, a felling axe would be the lumberjack's tool of the trade, its long and narrow blade being used to chop down trees and cut off tree limbs. The broad axe, however, was more suitable for hewing. In the cooking trade, iron funnels were used in the mill for the purpose of grinding grains. Lastly, squares and bevels were tools of the artisans, used to check the accuracy of angles other than 90 degrees.

### **Advanced Tools**

When you use Basic Crafting at the Tannery or Forge, you may craft 1 Superior Tool Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Superior Tool Item. You also receive an expanded recipe book with which to craft Tools items specifically.

### **Master Tools**

When you use Basic Crafting at the Tannery or Forge you may craft 1 Rare Tool Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Rare Tool Item. You also receive an expanded recipe book with which to craft Tools items specifically.

## Weapons and Armor

*"All inhabitants, including those exempt from militia duty, are required to have armes in their howses fitt for service, with powder, bullets, match, as other souldiers..."* - Firearms and Civic Duty order passed June 18, 1645

Although England was an ocean away from the colonies along America's eastern coast, the colonists were still under England's military control. They were required to be trained and serve as a reserve army in case of invasion in the New World. Unfortunately, in the colonies, they were typically the vanguard more often than not. The colonists needed to be prepared to defend themselves from threats from the French, the Dutch, or the Native Americans. Military leaders were appointed to each town where they trained the bands of men to use pikes and muskets for their own and the colony's protection. This reserve army was the colony's infantry, full of pikemen and musketeers.

In battle formation, musketeers shot the enemy and armored pikemen protected them, since it took quite a bit of time to load a bullet, stuff in the powder, aim, and shoot. Musketeers didn't usually have much armor,

seeing how the pikemen kept them protected. They may have worn padded jackets or buff coats made with thick leather, while the pikemen wore tassets, which were flaps of iron, used to protect their thighs. Metal breastplates and chainmail were also fairly common for pikemen to wear.

Due the demand for weapons being extremely high as every colonist needed to be armed and available to fight, weapons and armor smiths became a great asset in any town.

### **Advanced Weapons and Armor**

When you use Basic Crafting at the Tannery or Forge, you may craft 1 Superior Weapon or Armor Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Superior Weapon or Armor Item. You also receive an expanded recipe book with which to craft Weapons and Armor items specifically.

### **Master Weapons and Armor**

When you use Basic Crafting at the Tannery or Forge you may craft 1 Rare Weapon or Armor Item. You may also spend a Between Game Action to craft any Rare Weapon or Armor Item. You also receive an expanded recipe book with which to craft Weapons and Armor items specifically.

## **Gathering**

*“Hot lavender, mints, savory marjoram;  
The marigold, that goes to bed wi’ the sun,  
and with him rise weeping.”*  
-William Shakespeare, *Winter’s Tale*, 4.1.1981-84

The New World offered various types of plants and herbs to be used by the Ashwick colonists. Some were used for food or cooking purposes, while others were applied to salves, tonics, and medicinal concoctions created the apothecaries of the town. These new and exotic plants and herbs could be found within the surrounding forest or traded from the Native Americans of the area. The garden within Ashwick’s confines did not start from scratch. It bloomed through hard work and the perseverance used to discovered the location’s wide variety of plants and herbs, ranging from basil and dandelion, to opium and sassafras.

### **Basic Gathering**

You may spend 1 Essence and 3 minutes of roleplay to use the Trapping Grounds, Garden, Mine, and Lumberyard. Each time you spend 1 Essence, you may take one component.

## **Fur Trapping**

*“From Acadia, down the Hudson, over to the shores Plymouth, there is no lack of beast in these wooded lands. I have taken beaver and elk alike. The bounty of this New World is plenty, and I intend to profit from it.”* - Jeanne Lecroix, French trapper

New France paved the way for the fur trade during the 17th Century. Superior felting techniques allowed for beaver fur to come into fashion, and it was an incredibly lucrative export for the French. The New England area, however, was much richer in deer, fox, and hare. While these pelts didn’t sell nearly as well across the

pond, they were a vital resource to the colonists during the harsh winters when thick furs were in high demand, not to mention its use as a main source of food for inland colonists who were unable to acquire a large quantity of fish.

### **Advanced Trapping**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Trapping Grounds, you may take 2 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

### **Master Trapping**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Trapping Grounds, you may take 4 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

## Gardening

*"We may talk what we please... of lilies, and lions rampant, and spread eagles, in fields d'or or d'argent; but, if heraldry were guided by reason, a plough in a field arable would be the most noble and ancient arms." - Abraham Cowley, Of Agriculture*

Tending a garden may seem like a small thing, but in the colonies, it was essential. While farmers toiled away over expansive acres, their crops were volatile and typically took months to cultivate. Colonists kept gardens for seasonal variety, spontaneity, and a healthier diet. Gardens were also a place for the extraction of medicines. Herbs and spices are used in poultices and salves. Without major medical supplies or knowledge, colonists turned to home remedies passed down through the generations.

### **Advanced Gardening**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Garden, you may take 2 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

### **Master Gardening**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Garden, you may take 4 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

## Logging

*"And we restrain and forbid all persons whatsoever from felling; cutting or destroying any such trees without the royal licence of us, our heirs and successors first had and obtained, upon penalty of forfeiting one hundred pounds sterling unto us, our heirs and successors, for every such tree." - Province Charter of Massachusetts Bay*

Lumber was the lifeblood of the colonies. There were extreme restrictions on what lumber you could keep, and restrictions on what you could export. While the Navigation Acts bottlenecked the market for most commodities, lumber was one of the few exemptions. Oak, cedar, and chestnut were all used for shipbuilding, and the white pine, in particular, served a multitude of uses.

The large swaths of forest in New England helped develop great shipbuilding ports for the area: Salem, Boston, Portsmouth, Newport. With ships came skilled workers - carpenters and blacksmiths, coopers and



joiners, and with these skilled workers came economic prosperity. The success and failure of the colonies is directly tied to its lumber industry, and the land of Ashwick is dense with timber.

### **Advanced Logging**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Lumberyard, you may take 2 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

### **Master Logging**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Lumberyard, you may take 4 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

## **Mining**

*"A great day, indeed, when the bog brings us new yield." - Eunice Waterbury, Miner*

While the Spanish mined for gold in the mountains of South America, little of it was discovered in the English colonies. Even basic metals like tin was hard to come by. Iron was somewhat plentiful, however, not in the normal way.

Bog iron was plentiful as impure deposits that were found in swamps, springs, and other groundwater areas. Many waterways were deepened or dried out in an effort to capture deeper deposits. Saugus' ironworks was a major producer in the area, and their success led to business expansions into Concord and Sudbury while other proprietors scoured for new deposits as well.

Lead deposits were also found in the New England colonies and were a source windows, pewter, and ammunition, and while it was extremely rare, it wasn't unheard of to come across a small deposit of silver. Other important metals like copper, brass, and zinc would typically need to be imported.

### **Advanced Mining**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Mine, you may take 2 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

### **Master Mining**

When you use the Basic Gathering skill at the Mine, you may take 4 items instead of 1. This skill does not stack.

## **Healing**

*"Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord." - James 5:14*

Physicians of the time believed the human body contained four “humors” or elements: blood (fire), phlegm (earth), black bile (water), and yellow bile (air). It was the physician’s job to maintain the balance between these four humors. Since they lacked knowledge and resources in the New World, doctors had to rely on these elements and specific remedies to help balance them out. For cold illnesses, hot medicines were given to the patient, like a diet of hot pepper. For hot illnesses, cold medicines were given to the patient, and so on. Although doctors had little knowledge and resources in the New World in their practice, they created many medicines and remedies to help their patients by combining herbs and plants. For more life-threatening diseases, a series of techniques were applied to the patient to help them recover. Bloodletting, purging (emetic or enema), blistering, and poisoning could be used to help cure those fallen to illnesses. One medicine at the time, Calomel, would act like a poison within the human body because of its close relation to mercury.

Even though physicians lacked resources and knowledge, they frequently passed their known remedies and medicines from one doctor to another, hoping to spread their knowledge and understanding of the plants and herbs around Ashwick and the New World. They learned from daily life and from watching other physicians. Occasionally, colonists would learn how to mix different herbs and plants together from the Mahicans, Mohegans, or Wampanoags, although it was rare, given their strained relationship with the colonies.

The Mahicans, Mohegans, and Wampanoags of the area relied heavily on medicinal herbs and plants. Typically there were two elders for each tribe (and their assistants) who would treat most injuries. By mixing herbs, roots, and other natural plants within their surrounding environment, they could heal various medical problems. They believed health was a measure of the strength of the spirit - the two were intertwined. One would have to stay strong spiritually, mentally, and physically so as not to get sick. Keeping in harmony with themselves, those around them, their surrounding environment, and the Creator helps keeps illness away. They also astounded the colonists since they were remarkably resilient to injuries and diseases the colonists would have normally deemed fatal.

### **Basic Healing**

You may Diagnose someone’s ailments and can tend to those who are sick. Spend 1 minute of roleplay to either grant “Heal” to an “Exhausted” character or to “Diagnose” someone.

### **First Aid**

*“Here. Drink this and spend some time in the sweat lodge. If it continues, we will bring you to the shaman.”* - Quissocus, Wampanoag Elder

For most injuries not requiring surgery, bandages and salves were applied to the wounded area of a patient. Bandages were typically made out of muslin and many surgeons kept rolls of it in ready supply while salves were created using oil or beeswax as a base with medicinal herbs added to the base to help with swelling, pain, and inflammation. Honey was frequently used as a topical ointment to help heal infected wounds then covered in a muslin bandage. If a wound was inflamed, they were dressed in “cooling” substances, since inflammation was taken as a “hot” humor. Taking the four elements into account, doctors would apply bandages soaked in wine or turpentine and wrap them around the inflamed area, thus “cooling” the wound.

Along with herbal remedies and dressings, Native American healers used suction tubes or cups as well as purging and purification to help rid the body of disease. Sacred stones were also rubbed over the affected part of the body to help heal the wound. For purification, the Mohicans, Mohegans, and Wampanoags used sweat lodges and baths to help flush the body of illnesses and disease. The practices could be as simple as laying under a blanket in the hot sun, or as complex as sitting inside a small conical structure covered in blankets and branches full of hot stones. Water would be poured over these hot stones to create the steam necessary for purification. Sage was often burned and wiped on the skin to purify the soul. As for purging, Native American healers used roughly the same herbal remedies as the colonists did, which were typically herbs and plants found within their surrounding environment.

### **Advanced First Aid**

Spend 1 Essence and 1 minute tending to someone. You may grant “Heal” to that person. This may be used multiple times. Each additional use on the same person takes 1 minute, but does not cost additional Essence. You also receive a recipe book on how to handle a few specific illnesses and diseases.

### **Master of First Aid**

Spend 1 Essence and 30 seconds tending someone to grant “Heal” to that person. This may be used multiple times. Each additional use on the same person takes 30 seconds, but does not cost additional Essence. You also receive a recipe book on how to handle a few specific illnesses and diseases.

## **Surgery**

*“Do you not know that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.” - Corinthians 6:19*

The colonists believed that the human body was sacred and was created in God’s image. It was a vessel that the Holy Spirit was housed within, therefore, opening up a human body was taboo. Surgeons were often thought to mutilate the body, making it unholy. The colonists of Ashwick would only go to a surgeon if absolutely necessary, otherwise medicines and first aid practices were to be used, instead. Since surgeons were frequently looked down upon, none of the colonists specialized strictly in surgery. Rather, they would take on other professions, such as being a barber. Barbers of the time did everything from cutting hair to pulling teeth to removing gallstones, it just depended on what task you wished for them to perform. When operating on a patient, however, surgeons had few resources to numb the pain the patient felt. By opening a colonist’s body, not only did surgeons risk the taboo of the sacred vessel, the patient also had to be aware that they would feel absolutely everything.

The Mohegan, Mohican, and Wampanoag healers didn’t perform surgery on their patients. However, they did use specific tools to help the patient overcome the illness or weakened physical state they were in. Disease was typically linked to the spirit, so a shaman would often be called in to perform rituals to assist the elder in healing the patient. They used fur, skins, bone, crystals, shells, roots, and feathers to seek help from spirit guides of whichever creature or location these items originated from. Along with these tools, they also used masks to frighten away the spirit causing the disease or pain within the patient. This was one way to exorcise the spirit plaguing the patient, and another was through dancing and shaking rattles around the patient, hoping to ward the spirit away and purify the soul.

### **Advanced Surgery**

Spend 1 Essence and 5 minutes tending to a “Dying” person. Call “Cure Dying” which will bring someone back to 1 Essence. The injured person must report to a GM for further instructions on their “Critical Effect.” You also receive a recipe book on how to handle a few specific illnesses and diseases.

### **Master of Surgery**

You may spend 1 Essence and 3 minutes tending to a “Dying” person. Call “Cure Dying” which will bring someone back to 1 Essence . The injured person must report to a GM for further instructions on their “Critical Effect.” You also receive a recipe book on how to handle a few specific illnesses and diseases.

## **Increasing and Buying New Skills**

After each event you have attended, you may increase one skill. In order to buy a new skill, you must first find a way to learn the new skill. You must fulfill a 3 minute roleplay requirement before the end of the event in order to be able to use the skill. You must still adhere to the prerequisites of the skill before obtaining it. For example, if you wish to buy the Advanced Skill “Advanced Trapping,” you must first have the Basic Skill “Gathering.”

## **Between Game Actions**

If you write a Report Card telling us about your experience at our event, you will receive one “Between Game Action” (BGA). If you NPC twice for LARPs that we have an exchange with, you will receive an additional BGA.

BGAs are nebulous in nature. You can do something in the town or any of the surrounding areas that you can attend to In-Game. If you have the access to a “Travel” BGA, you may travel to faraway towns. You may also put in extra work for money, help someone with a task, or do other things you were unable to finish during the event.

#### **Example 1:**

Judith is a Tanner, and she wants to make leather armor to sell at the next event. Judith has the Crafter ability and uses it in her BGA. When she comes to the next event, she receives a leather armor tag.

#### **Example 2:**

Judith spends two weekends helping other LARPs that have an exchange with *Ashwick Plantation*. She receives an additional BGA before her next event. With her free time, Judith decides she wants patch up her house after the long, hard winter. Judith’s work reduces her upkeep for the next event.

#### **Example 3:**

Judith also bought a horse and wagon at the last event. This allows her to access to a “Travel” BGA. Instead of patching up the house, Judith decides she would rather travel to Providence and sell the leather armor she made. With the extra money she made from Providence, she is able to pay for her upkeep and still have a profit.



## Chapter 5: Economy

*"Individual ambition serves the common good."* - Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*

The Economy of *Ashwick Plantation* is based on Coin and Barter. Silver coins called sixpence will be the standard measurement of trade. Any items shown for sale will have a "C" after a number to denote the amount of coin necessary to buy the item. 4C translates to 4 sixpence coins.

### Technology

We are looking to reasonably emulate a 1670s atmosphere to the best of our ability. We are going to ask that our players work with us to make a game that feels right and allows us the stage in order for us to tell the stories we are looking to tell.

Keep in mind that because of the Live Action nature of *Ashwick Plantation*, fragile items, delicate costuming and objects from that replicate colonial life are wonderful, but are brought into the game at your own risk.

### Components

Herbs, Fur, Ore, and Wood are the basic components of *Ashwick Plantation*. You may find other components throughout the region, however, these are the most common found in the Plantation. You can use these components to create and / or repair items.

## Barter

Like most of the colonies, much of the economy can be used through bartering just as easily as it can through coinage. Some people may value certain items higher than others, but through contacts and favors, you can earn your way through many different avenues.

## Upkeep

Players must maintain their Upkeep between events. Upkeep for players is 4C to be paid at the beginning of each event. A player may instead pay 16C and be considered Well Fed.

A Well Fed character has +1 maximum Essence for an entire event.

## Durability, Crafting, and Repairs

Most items in *Ashwick Plantation* have a durability rating. Basic items will have a durability of 2 (events). At check-in, your items will be checked for durability. If an item is at durability 0, you will need to have it repaired before you can use it. You do not lose the item. Destroy effects render an item immediately broken.

If you have the Crafter skill, you may use the Forge and Tannery and can repair items. Repairing an item costs components and production. If you have the components for your own item, you do not need to pay for components. If you are repairing your own item, you pay yourself the cost, meaning Crafters have free production costs. Yes, that means a Crafter with the necessary components can craft and repair for free.

Example 1:

John needs to repair his Basic Waraxe. It costs 2C to production cost and 2C to buy the components necessary. John must pay 4C to a Crafter who can repair his Basic Waraxe.

Example 2:

Instead of repairing his Basic Waraxe, John wants to simply buy a Durable one. A Durable Waraxe costs 8C for components and will cost 8C in production. John must pay 16C for his Durable Waraxe.

Example 3:

John needs to repair the Durable Waraxe. John recently took up crafting as skill because he's figured out there's a lot of money to be made in it - what with all the coins he's spent already. It costs 8C to buy the components to repair his Durable Waraxe, but he doesn't need to pay the 8C in production costs to repair it as he can do the repairs himself. John must pay 8C in component cost to repair his Durable Waraxe.

You can only Craft items between events as a BGA (exception: Apothecary items can be crafted on site). Crafting takes considerable amounts of time which cannot be measured in a simple day (especially if you're off saving Tommy who fell in the well again). You can, however, use the Forge or Tannery to repair items during the an event.



## Chapter 6: Prop Construction

Combat is resolved with a staged system that uses props. In order to ensure that these props are safe, certain guidelines on their construction are necessary. Weapons and ammunition must be checked at each and every event where they might be used. You are responsible for the safety of any prop you swing or throw in combat, so you should check them yourself during the course of an event.

Every player is responsible for bringing their own weapons and ammunition. We will try to have weapons for rent at our events, but we can make no guarantees about the availability of these props.

We reserve the right to fail any weapon or ammunition we deem unsafe. It is not uncommon for weapons to fail or break, so you should try to bring a backup weapon and materials to repair your props.

### Melee

Constructing a weapon requires time and patience, but it is not that hard once you have practiced a bit. A main problem with weapon materials is that they vary wildly, even within the same brand name. Even if you follow the suggestions, it is remotely possible that a weapon could fail because of a strange inconsistency in the core or foam.

#### 1 - Choose Your Weapon

First, you have to figure out what type of weapon you are making and determine the length and construction requirements. The various weapon types are explained below, however, they all follow the same length requirements:

Type Minimum" Maximum"

Short 18" / 36" - Short Weapons can be used florentine style

Long Sword 37" / 48" - Long weapons cannot be used florentine style

Two-Handed 49" / 72"\* - Two-Handed weapons must be held with two hands at all times.

### **Blades**

These weapons represent daggers and all types of swords. A bladed weapon has a striking surface that covers at least 2/3 of its entire length. The weapon may have a cross guard or hand guard, but the guard must be made entirely of pipe foam or the equivalent.

### **Tools/Improvised Weapons**

These weapons represent anything that could reasonably be used as a tool or improvised weapon. A tool needs padding that covers at least 1/2 of its entire length. The striking surface is at least 6" long. It may be open celled foam that extends at least 1" from the shaft, or it could be an additional layer of pipe foam.

### **Polearms**

Covering all types of longer pole weapons, polearms have the advantage of reach. A polearm must have padding that covers down the striking end at least 1/2 of its entire length. The striking surface must cover at least 12", and must include additional padding of open celled foam that extends at least 1" from the shaft or another layer of pipe foam cut in half.

### **Staves**

Staves have a striking surface on both sides of the weapon. Each striking surface covers at least 1/3 its entire length. The middle section of the staff must also be padded, although you can use 3/8" padding for the grip of the staff so long as the full 5/8" is used for the striking surfaces. Because both ends of the staff are striking surfaces, the middle of the staff is aluminum and each end has PVC or CPVC. The staff has a thrusting tip on both ends.

Staff Lengths

Type Minimum" Maximum"

Staff\* 49" 72"

### **Claws**

These weapons represent some kind of natural weaponry. A claw needs padding that covers at least 2/3 of its entire length. The striking surface is the padded area of the weapon above the grip. Claws are not affected by Disarm effects. If a claw is affected by a Destroy effect, the character will take a Maim effect to the limb holding the claw.

## **2 - Create the Core**

Next you must create the weapon core. Your core materials depend on the length of the weapon, which you determined in step one. The weapon core will need to be 4" shorter than the overall length of the weapon. Each end must be capped with a coin or strapping tape so there is no hole at the end. Each pipe insulation overlap will need to be 1" and the foam thrusting tip must be 2" in length. The core materials we allow are described below.



## 1/2" PVC

This common core can be used for one handed weapons and is used with aluminum to make two handed weapons. You will want to find schedule 20 PVC pipe with a thin wall. There are schedule 40 pipes with thicker walls that are too heavy to make good weapons. This core can also be bent into bows by applying very hot water, or softening it if you are good with the heat of a stove or gas burner.

## Aluminum

This material has no give, so it cannot be used for one handed weapons. The purpose of aluminum is to give two handed weapons less whip. Two handed weapons use a 7/8" galvanized aluminum and 1/2" PVC core. The cores should be picked so the PVC fits snugly into the aluminum. They should overlap about three inches and be secured together with a flexible adhesive like Plumber's Goop or with a good amount of strapping tape wrapped around the seam. I would suggest both the adhesive and a small amount of strapping tape. Suggested lengths for long weapons are as follows.

72" weapons should have 48" of aluminum and 23" of PVC. With 3" of overlap you have a core that is 68" long. This leaves you room for the required 1" overlap of pipe foam on each end and a 2" thrusting tip.

64" weapons are a little shorter, so you can use a little more PVC. You should use 36" of aluminum and 27" of PVC. With 3" of overlap this gives you a core that is 60" long. This leaves you room for the required 1" overlap of pipe foam on each end and a 2" thrusting tip.

A staff should have aluminum in the middle of the weapon with PVC on either side where the striking ends are. You will have to cut the core a full 6" shorter to give room for 1" of overlap and 2" of thrusting tip on both sides. The staff should use the ratio of half its length as aluminum in the middle and one fourth as CPVC on each side. Two handed weapons of different lengths should use similar ratios so they are not too whippy but have give at the striking end.

## .505 Ultralight and .745 Ultralight

The core this refers to is actually called spiral wound fiberglass tubing use for one handed weapons. One handed weapons use the .505 diameter pole. .745 diameter is almost twice as expensive as .505, but it is needed if you intend to make ultralight two handed weapons. Since this tubing is only 64" long, to make pole-arm length weapons of 72" you will need to add foam to the "head" of the weapon to get to the maximum length. Ultralight two handed weapons require extra padding on one side of blade consisting of 1" of open cell foam or an extra layer of 5/8" pipe foam.

Because ultralight weapons are so light, we are especially careful to insure that those using these weapons roleplay their swings properly. Though we allow the use of these cores, this is considered a privilege and players who perpetually swing from the wrist and machine gun will lose this privilege.

## 3 - Pad the Striking Area

Next you will have to add the padding to the striking surface of the weapon. The padding should be a minimum of 1/2" thick pipe insulation.

The pipe foam should fit snugly over the pipe without rattling. If the foam is too big, you may add a strip of weather insulation to the core or use strapping tape to pad out the core at three or four points. We prefer to use weapons with a diameter of around 2", but we allow a wedge to be removed from the pipe foam to be so long as the diameter of the weapon is no less than 1 and 1/2". We reserve the right to restrict such weapons

if this proves to be problematic.

The pipe insulation must extend past the end of every core by at least 1" and the resulting hole must be filled with a rolled up bit of pipe insulation. Use strapping tape to hold in the filler.

Once the basic padding is added, you may add extra padding to two handed weapons using another layer of pipe insulation cut in half to fit over the foam. You may also use a narrow strip of open cell foam. Weapon heads are also made from open cell foam. Attach the extra padding with strapping tape to prepare it for the final layer of duct or kite tape.

It is suggested that two handed weapons, particularly staves, cover the grip area or at least most of the grip area with a thin walled pipe insulation to protect against accidental contact with the grip. This is not required unless a player is reported to hit opponents frequently with the grip of the weapon.

#### **4 - Add Cross Guards**

Cross guards and hand guards may be added to blades using pipe insulation or similar materials. All guards must have give and be deemed safe by the staff. Other weapons may have a small hand guard if it only protects that hand.

#### **5 - Add the Pommel**

For a pommel, pipe insulation must extend past both ends of the core by at least 1" and the resulting hole must be filled with a rolled up bit of pipe insulation. Use strapping tape to hold in the filler.

#### **6 - Add a Thrusting Tip**

The tip of the striking surface must have a thrusting tip. This tip is 2" of open cell foam. Longer thrusting tips tend to bend. Cut the foam to cover the tip. Once the tip is in place, use duct tape or kite tape to cover the tip. Take a length of tape and place it so it goes across the end of the tip and down both sides, attaching the tip to the weapon. If the tip is round, use a razor to cut the corners so the tape conforms to the tip. Now add another piece of tape so it goes across the end and down the exposed sides of the foam tip. Use a razor to cut the corners so the tape overlaps slightly and conforms to the tip. Finally, poke many tiny holes all over the tip so the air can escape and the tip can contract and expand freely.

If the weapon uses other open cell foam, you might find that when the foam compresses that the tape wrinkles as it sticks to itself. You can prevent this by covering the open cell foam with plastic wrap used for food storage before taping over the foam.

#### **7 - Cover with Tape**

You may now cover the entire weapon with duct tape. Kite tape or a nylon sleeve is also allowed. The tape should run down the length of the weapon and have a slight overlap. It should not be wrapped in a spiral around the blade. Even duct tape varies in weight and thickness, so you should look for a thinner, light tape. The majority of the weapon should be black or gray where there is metal, and black or brown where there is wood. Bright colors are not allowed as the primary color of the weapon, though decorations are allowed. Fabric sleeves should fit snugly to the foam and be secured at the base of the blade.

## Bows and Arrows

While archery had declined with the advent of muskets, it was not entirely uncommon to see colonists and Native Americans alike use a bow and arrow. For *Ashwick Plantation*, we will allow bows with no more than a 30 lb draw weight. It is encouraged to pad the ends of your bow to ensure safety.

IDV arrows are currently accepted by staff, and we will be partnering with crafters in the area to bring a local alternative as well.

## Firearms

To represent firearms, *Ashwick Plantation* uses a blow dart system attached to a wooden stock. All firearms props must fire soft ammunition such as NERF darts. We will have a list of preferred crafters for our firearms as they are specific to our game. If you would like to create your own firearms, please contact staff for schematics.

Muskets, regardless of the weight or balance of the prop, must be held in two hands to be fired. You cannot wield another weapon prop while holding a musket. Ammunition that strikes a shield or weapon will affect the person carrying the item.

Because a gun prop is not a legal parrying device, if your gun is struck, you must either take the effect or drop the weapon. However, players are not encouraged to strike gun props, as they could be damaged. A hit to the limb(s) holding the weapon counts as a hit to the weapon for purposes of landing such effects as Disarm or Destroy on a firearm.

## Armor

In *Ashwick Plantation* there are two types of armor: leather and metal. Armor must cover  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the body location. The body locations are as follows: chest, each leg, and each arm. Back armor does not count for combat purposes, but is suggested for costuming.

Leather and furs are acceptable armor as is metal. You may use any real or faux material for leather, and you may use any metal material. You must add some form of padding to your armor's edges to ensure safety. There must also be no protrusions on your armor that may impact a weapon.



## Chapter 7: Rules of Etiquette

### Physical Contact

Physical contact is allowed, however, only with consent. "Do you accept my physical roleplay" is a term often heard in this regards.

### Searching a Character

To search someone, approach within searching distance and tell them in a low voice "I am searching you." The player may simply reveal items you have found. The player may make a pouch available for you to reach into and take items. Players should not demand unreasonable searches with too much detail - a search should take no more than a minute.

### Weapons

No real weapons are allowed in-game. You are only permitted to bring small penknives and multi-tools. Anything larger than 6" is considered a weapon by Massachusetts state law, and we reserve the right to eject you from game without warning and/or notify authorities as necessary.

## **Carrying a Character**

To carry a character, simply tell the person "I pick you up" and role play carrying them along. They must get up and walk. You cannot move faster than a walk while carrying someone else. If you are unable to move while being carried you walk with your head bowed and arms at your sides.

If you are carrying a character and that character is struck by an effect from a melee, missile, or packet attack that is not beneficial, you will also take that effect unless you "drop" the character immediately. If you are being carried and someone "drops" you then you role play falling to the ground. If you are being carried, you must role play an effect with a moan or grunt even if you are paralyzed or dead to indicate you have been struck. If you are carrying someone who role plays an effect, and you do not know what the effect was, you must drop them. You may pick up a body after dropping it as soon as that body stops moving.

## **No Alcohol or Drugs**

There will be no alcohol or drugs allowed on site.

## **Prop Restrictions**

You are not allowed to break, destroy, or take apart any prop. If a prop is attached to a wall by a chain, for example, you cannot attempt to break or detach that chain in any way. Effects that destroy an item do not change the basic structure of a prop; it just makes the item unusable for any game related purpose.

## **Game Environment**

During game play, a player may attempt to enter any area within the game boundaries unless the area is marked with an information sign. Areas marked with information signs are either special areas with additional rules described by the sign or they are out of game and impassable.

## **Special Areas**

Areas with special restrictions or rules will be a marked sign with game information describing the circumstances that make the area special.