AVATAR LEGENDS

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO PLAY IN THIS BELOVED SETTING AND CREATE YOUR OWN HEROIC LEGENDS!


AVATAR
LEGENDS
THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

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CHAPTER 1
WELCOME TO THE GAME

第一章

CHAPTER 1

This chapter introduces you to **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** and gives you a general overview of the setting and what you do in the game, along with an introduction to roleplaying if you are new to roleplaying games! It also covers the materials you need to play and safety tools to keep the game fun for everyone at the table.

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game is a heroic adventure game set in the world of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *The Legend of Korra*. This world is a fantasy setting inspired by Asian and North American Indigenous cultures, a land filled with breathtaking landscapes, majestic hybrid beasts, and unique marvels of technology and industry. Yet, it is also a world defined by struggle in which there are no absolute villains or perfect heroes—only people with complex motivations who come into conflict with others while striving to forge a future they believe is best.

Avatar Legends

Originally, this setting was only a single show—*Avatar: The Last Airbender*—that told the story of Avatar Aang's journey to master the four elements and save the world. But this world's history spans thousands of years, and over time, many more of its stories across multiple eras of Avatars have been told—including comics, novels, and of course, the epic series featuring Aang's successor, *The Legend of Korra*. Together, these works make up *Avatar Legends*, a broad term for all of the different stories that detail the adventures of heroes of the Four Nations (and Republic City). This vast universe of *Avatar Legends* is often referred to as **the Avatarverse**—a universe that encompasses the entire human and natural history of this unique world.

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game gives you and your friends a chance to create your own *Avatar Legends* stories within five distinct eras, including tools for creating your own heroes and your own adventures in the Avatarverse. You and your friends get to be the team of heroes at the center of your own show, exploring the Four Nations, confronting threats, and saving the day just like Team Avatar.

If you've never played a tabletop roleplaying game before, welcome! Starting a new hobby can feel daunting, but everything you need to learn how to play is included right here in this book, including how to make your heroes and tell amazing stories in the Avatarverse. Don't be afraid to jump in and get started; the best way to learn how to roleplay is to try it out for yourself!

A World of Adventure

Many people in the Avatarverse are **benders,** possessing the ability to manipulate one of the four elements—earth, fire, air, or water. But whether they're benders or non-benders, the people of this world have faced centuries of trials and tribulations, conflicts within and between nations, peoples, and even spirits!

For most of the world's history, **the Avatar**—a human capable of bending all four elements—has been responsible for maintaining **balance** in the world and serving as a bridge between the spiritual and physical planes of existence. Following a cycle through the elements from earth to fire, fire to air, air to water, and water back to earth, the Avatar reincarnates after each lifetime into a different nation, carrying forward the Avatar Spirit and its great responsibility. Many people look to the Avatar for guidance and justice, hoping to see the most capable bender in the world solve their problems and placing an enormous burden on this lone person to be a savior.

But the Avatar is not the only hero in this world. Many are called to bring balance where there is disorder and seek justice where there is suffering. Some of these heroes are benders themselves, but others use martial arts, weapon training, or technology to triumph in their amazing adventures and build a better world. These heroes might sometimes stand with the Avatar in times of great trouble, but often they must join with other heroes—without the Avatar's guidance—to bring balance.

What is Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game?

In **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, you and your friends tell a story about a group of young heroes who join together to fight for what's right in a complicated and nuanced world. One of your friends acts as the gamemaster (GM), describing the problems the heroes face and the people they meet along the way; the rest of you take on the roles of individual heroes, seeking to make the Avatarverse a better place.

This game focuses on stories of adventure and the personal journeys of heroes through the various trials in their lives. It's a game for people of all ages who want to look at the Avatarverse beyond the scope of the existing shows, comics, and stories and explore the meaningful actions heroes take for the good of others. If you have ever wanted to throw yourself into the Avatarverse and craft your own adventures alongside your closest friends, then **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is for you!

What is an RPG?

A tabletop roleplaying game (sometimes abbreviated to TTRPG or RPG) is a storytelling game for three to six people played at a table—or online— with pen, paper, and dice. The game plays out as if you and your friends were cooperatively telling a story together. Over a few hours, your collective tale evolves and changes, going to new and unexpected places based on the characters' actions. You may even end up playing multiple sessions that build on the events of your first session and deepen the characters' stories!

Most players take on the role of a character in the setting of the game. Alongside your friends—who play their own characters—you describe what your character looks like and what they do. You say what they say, either describing their words ("I say something intimidating and glower at the guard!") or speaking them verbatim ("I say, 'I'll never forgive the Fire Nation!'"). You think about how your character thinks and feels, and you guide all their actions.

One of your friends plays a special role—the gamemaster (GM). They portray the rest of the world, including all the other characters. They describe what every other character does or says and fill in any holes in the setting so that everyone at the table shares the same imaginary world in their heads. In a game focused on an existing property, like **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, the GM also helps to productively introduce existing elements like major characters or events from the setting.

Very importantly, the GM isn't playing *against* the other players. They're here to try to represent the world faithfully while building out a set of interesting conflicts—to say what happens and what exists in a way that makes the fictional world *make sense*. And they're here to keep things compelling and exciting—which includes honoring how awesome the other players' characters are!

Your Heroes

In **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** you play one of the many heroes of the Four Nations. Your goal is to protect the world from harm and stand up for those without the power to stand up for themselves. You fight on the side of what is right, even if that is the most difficult path to take, and you understand that to achieve peace there must be balance in all things.

Each player in **Avatar Legends: the Roleplaying Game** creates their own hero using a playbook, a kind of hero archetype—a set of abilities and details and story elements all wrapped together to help you make the coolest character possible. Each hero is known as a **player character (PC)** in contrast to characters not controlled by the players called **non-player characters (NPCs)**.

You and your fellow PCs are the main characters; your decisions matter the most to the tale you're telling together. As you play, the GM presents the PCs with locations, situations, and characters that create new, interesting choices and events. For example, your characters might be invited to a soiree at the Earth King's palace, a spot you know will attract several thieves looking to steal the King's precious jewels. Your GM describes what the party looks like, the interesting guests attending, the surprising events that take place, and the dangerous actions of the thieves. You decide what your heroes do to respond to the situation at hand!

The Rules

For the most part, a tabletop roleplaying game plays like a conversation—you take turns speaking, describing the action or sharing dialogue, reacting to each other, switching back and forth between in-character and out-of-character speech. But the conversation leads to places of uncertainty, times when no one knows what happens next. When one character tries to jump from a burning building to safety—across a ten-foot gap—no one knows for sure what happens: do they make the jump or come crashing down?

In those moments, you turn to the game's rules; they help you to figure out what happens in moments of **tense uncertainty**, guiding the conversation forward into new, interesting, and surprising outcomes. The rules themselves provide guidance on when they come into play, but most of the time, the GM has to provide some additional interpretation to help the mechanics fit the very specific situation in your game.

What's more, the GM also acts as a kind of impartial judge, helping the table determine when the rules come into play. If there's ever doubt about whether or not the rules apply, the GM acts as the final arbiter and decision maker. If a character is jumping from a burning building, the GM might look at the rules and the situations in which they're supposed to come into play, and then decide that, yes, there *absolutely is uncertainty here*. Time to go to the rules!

If, on the other hand, a character is jumping from one building to another when there's no fire and the two buildings are practically touching, the GM might look at the rules, look at the situations in which they're supposed to come into play, and decide that there's *no real uncertainty here*. There's no tension. The character just does it.

The Story

Telling a story together through roleplaying isn't like writing a screenplay, in which a sole writer is in complete and total control over the narrative. Instead, the GM offers problems for the players to confront while making room to be surprised by how the PCs respond to the conflicts at hand, and the players make choices about what their characters do, playing off each other and finding out what happens together.

Thus, each individual story of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is like an **episode** of your own television show—the heroes learn about problems, figure out what they want to do, engage in some action, then discover the resolution of those problems through their choices. But unlike those shows, nothing is scripted, and you play to find out what happens!

But a single episode rarely resolves everything. You and your fellow companions might defeat a dangerous villain and save a village from destruction, but that doesn't mean that there are no further problems for the heroes to face. In fact, that defeated villain might reveal that there are larger forces in play, leading to the companions undertaking a larger mission that spans multiple sessions of play.

That larger overarching story—composed of multiple, complete story episodes—is called a **season**. Sometimes groups only tell short stories, perhaps a single episode or just two or three, but often the longer stories are what makes roleplaying games truly memorable. After all, what could be better than getting to watch the heroes *you and your friends created* grow and change over the course of many adventures?

The Avatarverse

While all the rules and advice in this book are designed to support stories in the Avatarverse, there are a few core ideas you need to keep in mind while you play. **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** tells stories of adventure and action against the backdrop of the Avatarverse, a fantasy setting in which any individual person can change the course of history…but no one can escape the decisions of the past.

In other words, the potential for change is infinite—there is always a new challenge to be met, a new future to be built, a new legacy to be forged—but the Avatarverse is a place in which people remember what came before, whether that be the great deeds of Avatar Aang and Fire Lord Zuko, the terrible destruction wrought by Fire Lord Sozin, or the innumerable warlords and bandits that lived and died long before Avatar Kyoshi first learned earthbending. The past matters, now more than ever, and the consequences of your actions will echo long after you are gone.

The stories you tell through this game are not stories of the battle between good and evil. Instead, they are stories about how people try to make a better future while dealing with the problems of the past. They are stories about misguided figures who take things too far and heroes who make sacrifices to find compromises and new ways forward in equal measure.

Your characters in this story are always capable heroes with the training and willpower necessary to make the world a better place. They're drawn together by events that called them to undertake an important struggle—see Outline the Inciting Incident, page 111—but that goal is too large for them to accomplish overnight. Instead, they will have to work together to make a meaningful difference. Sometimes that means they must discover a hidden truth or deep learning; sometimes it means they must win the trust of a worthy ally; and sometimes that means they must defeat a dangerous and powerful foe.

Each of these goals is complicated by the characters' own internal struggles, the way they are torn between their principles as they deal with problems. For example, the heroes might finally confront a murderous bandit who has been terrorizing the nearby villages, only to discover the bandit is keeping a community of people fed who would have otherwise starved. Will the heroes set things right no matter the cost? Or do they seek redemption for the bandit based on his good deeds?

Even though each episode's story will likely be about a particular conflict or villain or problem, the decisions the companions make echo throughout the setting. And when you play a full campaign, you not only encounter the long-term effects of your own actions, but you also see how your character is changed and shaped by the decisions you make. Forging a better future also means forging a new version of yourself!

The Eras

Each game of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** begins with your group picking an era as the backdrop for your game. The eras are each tied to the span of an Avatar's life—except for the Hundred Year War era during which Avatar Aang was frozen—and focuses on distinct themes which define the type of game you play. The full text of Chapter 2 describes these eras more deeply, but here's a quick list that describes the rough focus and details of each era:



The Kyoshi Era covers the events right after *The Shadow of Kyoshi* novel. Play in the Kyoshi Era if you want to fight in battles against rogues and bandits and deal with governmental corruption as the nations establish their borders.



The Roku Era covers the time right after Sozin became Fire Lord and before Roku married. Play in the Roku Era if you want to deal with tensions between different nations and the trials of maintaining an uneasy peace.



The Hundred Year War Era focuses on the time just before Avatar Aang's awakening at the beginning of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Play in the Hundred Year War era if you want to rebel against unjust rule, protect the weak, and stand up to tyranny.



The Aang Era is set immediately after the events of the *Imbalance* comics trilogy, some time after the end of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Play in the Aang Era if you want to heal the world after tragedy and help push it into a brighter future.



The Korra Era covers a period that takes place after the events of the *Ruins of the Empire* comic trilogy, sometime after the end of *The Legend of Korra*. Play in the Korra Era if you want to deal with the repercussions of imperialism and play in a modernized era.

The Four Nations

For centuries, the world has been split into four distinct nations each with their own cultures and customs. While individuals from these nations often form lifelong bonds of friendship and love, the nations themselves are often in conflict. Your heroes may travel from place to place or stay in one location, but they must always contend with the politics and peoples of the places they visit during their adventures.

You can read more about the full history of each of the Four Nations—and locations that only exist in later eras, like Republic City—in Chapter 2. For now, here's a short summary of each of the Four Nations, their history, and some of the most important issues that are likely to arise if they appear in your game.

THE EARTH KINGDOM

The largest of the Four Nations, the Earth Kingdom has been ruled by a monarchy for much of its history. It is known for its sheer vastness and diversity of both geography and peoples. Despite the history of hardship in the rural areas neglected by the government, the citizens of the Earth Kingdom are known for their strength, resilience, and unyielding nature. When they are knocked down, they rarely stay down for long. They draw their strength from the immortal earth and immovable mountains.



THE FIRE NATION

The Fire Nation is located on a group of islands to the west of the Earth Kingdom. It boasts an impressive military, and its navy is a force to be reckoned with. This is in large part because travel by water is a necessity on the islands. In addition to its military, the Fire Nation is known for its robust economy and industrial achievements. The Fire Nation is filled with people who value innovation, technology, discipline, and strength of all kinds.



THE AIR NOMADS

Determined to focus on a spiritual life separate from the rest of the world, the Air Nomads roamed the world while maintaining four distinct Air Temples in nearly inaccessible locations. Tragically, Fire Lord Sozin ordered the Fire Nation military to kill all Air Nomads at the start of the Hundred Year War (page 58); Avatar Aang was the only survivor. Over a century later, a number of people gained airbending abilities during the Harmonic Convergence, ushering in a new Air Nation under the guidance of Aang's son, Tenzin.



THE WATER TRIBES

Divided into the Southern Water Tribe and the Northern Water Tribe—alongside a smaller group based in the Foggy Swamp—the people of the polar tribes are skilled at sailing and navigating challenging terrain. However, there is a long history of tension between the two tribes, and the Southern Water Tribe has often struggled while their Northern counterpart thrived. Both are known for their powerful loyalty and unrelenting perseverance, like the waves of the ocean crashing onto the beaches' shores.



The Trainings

People of the Four Nations have mastered many types of trainings, each requiring years of practice. Ranging from elemental bending to weapons and technology, these trainings both empower the heroes of these stories and define how they see the world.



Waterbending

Water is movement, change, and grace. The element cannot be broken and even in its most rigid forms has the ability to melt and reform. It is a dynamic element, subtle but powerful. Waterbending is inspired by the real-world martial art *Tai Chi.* This style's flowing motions allow a Waterbender to use their element defensively to redirect an opponent's attack, or offensively in the form of water whips, ice attacks, or large waves. Certain Waterbenders can also redirect energy paths in the body to heal injuries.





Earthbending

Earth is strong, stable, and constant. The element stands the test of time; it is a steady element, bold and unyielding. Earthbending is inspired by the real-world *Hung Ga*, known for solid stances and blunt punches, with fists formed into diverse shapes and toughened by striking exercises. Earthbenders can harness the formative energy of the earth, powerfully punch boulders, and ride platforms of stone to impossible heights.





Firebending

Fire is pure energy, destruction, and regeneration. The element can either consume everything around it in a powerful blaze, or heat it with a brilliant intensity that is impossible to ignore. It is an energetic element, bright and mighty. Firebending is inspired by the real-world *Northern Shaolin*, associated with the Shaolin Monastery. These fighters use fast, athletic movements including jumps, spins, and extended linear stances, powered by breath. Firebenders can exhale fire, wield flames like daggers, and grow a singular flame into a raging bonfire.





Airbending

Air is flexible, playful, but still powerful. The element goes where it wills and expands and contracts to meet its environment. Air is an open element, breeding freedom and bolstering spirits. Airbending is loosely based on the real-world *Baguazhang*. The martial art's circular motions and footwork allows one person to defend against multiple enemies. Airbenders are quick and nimble using their skills to defend from and evade attacks. Airbenders can ride balls of spinning air, quell cyclones, and sweep even the heaviest objects into weightlessness.





Weapons

Weapons are precise, intimidating, and fierce. They demand craftsmanship to create and discipline to master. In the right hands, a weapon can level the playing field between a non-bender and a bender. Fighters trained in the use of weapons can come from any nation. Their first specialty likely comes from their home nation with a weapon and fighting style unique to their home region, but it can also include unarmed combat such as chi-blocking. Weapons in the Avatarverse take inspiration from real world Asian and Indigenous cultures, such as the Chinese *dao* (saber) and other traditional weapons.





Technology

Technology is brilliance, power, and innovation. It changes what is possible and pushes the boundaries of established norms. It is intricate, yet mighty. Technological innovation can be found throughout the Four Nations; heroes who use technology spring up all over the world. Of course, advanced technology varies by the era—an Earth Kingdom technologist in the Roku Era might use smoke bombs and traps, whereas a technologist in the Korra Era might use an electrified rod or mechanized vehicles!



Playing to Find Out

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game depends *upon a crucial core idea*: play to find out what happens.

There will be times in the story when you think you know exactly what should happen next, when the path of the tale you've been telling becomes clear and you feel like you know just where the game should go next. You just *know* the mysterious enemy you've been tracking through Omashu should turn out to be your estranged sister, and you're *so sure* you should confront each other in an exciting duel that ends with you both in tears! It would be *perfect*! The GM should *make it happen*!

But as Uncle Iroh said, "Destiny is a funny thing. You never know how things are going to work out." Part of the fun of this game is not knowing where the story will go. Let go of the need to control the narrative and play to find out what happens! Don't pre-plan your story; instead let the mechanics lead you into unexpected, novel outcomes based on the conflicts that emerge from the decisions you've made throughout the game.

Discipline and Destiny

Playing to find out requires discipline from the players and the GM, a commitment to the mechanics of the game and how they play out over time. You are the authors of this story, but one of the main reasons to play a roleplaying game—instead of just telling stories around the campfire—is that the mechanics of the game allow you to make real decisions, to commit to choices and find out what happens when those choices play out in front of you.

In order for those decisions to have meaning, you have to commit to both the decision and the consequence. For example, if your character refuses to help her brother with his scheme to take over the family's business, you've made a choice—as an author of the story and a player of the game—about how you want your tale to go. You've made a statement about what matters to you, perhaps even altering your internal balance!

Yet…the outcome might lead you to wish you had done something different. Perhaps your character's brother will turn against her, filled with malice at her "betrayal," or he might win and decide to cut her and her companions off from crucial resources in an important moment. It's tempting in those moments to try to undermine the costs and consequences, to argue that things should be easier or that your decision mattered less than it did.

But what kind of story avoids loss and misfortune completely? What memorable tales focus on heroes who make every decision perfectly? Your story only has meaning if the choices you and your friends make feel as real to you as they do to your characters.

Of course, the Avatarverse is filled with prophecies and foretellings, destinies bestowed upon heroes that they must live up to before their stories are done. You don't have to ignore these when you're playing to find out what happens, but you do need to keep an open mind! Myths and legends rarely play out the way we think they must—surprises abound!—and your character's story is no different. Allow yourself to be surprised by what happens when you play the game, and your story will be richer for it.

Safety Tools

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game is a family-friendly game, open to anyone who wants to journey across the Four Nations to restore balance to the world. At the same time, following the game where it takes your story can sometimes lead you to some pretty uncomfortable spaces, especially around the darker themes of *Avatar Legends* stories like genocide and loss. It's okay to tackle these kinds of serious subjects, provided you and your group have the tools you need to handle such a situation.

In general, it's always a good idea to talk about the game. Talk about it before you start, talk about it during play, talk about it after. Check in with your fellow players often and be sure everyone is having fun together. Be mature and understanding with each other as you talk about how the game affected you and others, including times in which you disagreed about what should happen or how it felt.

Beyond talking, there are many tools for keeping your table on the same page, to make sure the game is comfortable and fun for everyone. Here are a few of our favorites!

Lines and Veils

Lines and Veils is an exercise developed by Ron Edwards and expanded on by the gaming community to help your group have a discussion about what content you want to exclude completely (lines) and what content you want to fade to black on instead of showing it "on-screen" (veils). *Avatar Legends* focuses on family-friendly stories, but the Avatar Kyoshi novels have a very different tone than Avatar Aang's story!

Before you sit down to play, ask every player—including the GM—to contribute to a shared list of lines and veils. Players should add content they don't want to see at all in the game to the list of lines and content they want to include (but not see directly) on the list of veils. Lines should never appear in your game; veiled content can be included, but it is never shown directly. Each group's preferences for lines and veils is different!

Read more about lines and veils at tinyurl.com/lines-veils-rpg

The X-Card

The X-Card is a handy tool originally developed by John Stavropoulos. Take an index card or a piece of paper and draw an X on it, and then put it in the middle of your table. That's your X-Card. If someone is feeling uncomfortable out-of-character in any way because of something happening in the game, they can point to, tap, or hold up the X-Card—whatever works for them.

In that moment, everybody in the group stops, and the player who used the card explains how they'd like to change, remove, or skip past the content that made them uncomfortable. It's up to them whether they explain why. The other players may have a few questions to make sure they understand exactly what was X-Carded. Once you're ready to start again, you can pick up where you left off, leaving out whatever was X-Carded.

In practice, the X-Card is as important just to have as it is to actually use. A lot of players feel much more comfortable knowing that the X-Card is there, whether or not they actually have to use it. It's an especially great tool when you're playing with people you don't know all that well!

Read more about the X-Card at tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg



What You Need to Play

To play **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, you need a group of friends who want to play at least one game session of roughly two to four hours. One episode is often enough to tell a compelling story, but the game really shines when the characters get a chance to grow and develop over time. You need one person to be the GM and three to five other players to take on the role of player characters.

A Quiet Place

Roleplaying games require a good deal of attention and focus from all the players, so it's a good idea to find a quiet, private place to play the game. After all, you're going to want to listen to the other players and the GM! It can be tempting to try to run a game at a loud diner or in a crowded party, but it's always better to have a private space. In addition, people often bring tasty snacks or nice drinks to share; roleplaying is as much a social activity as it is a game!

Dice

You need at least **two six-sided dice**, like the kind you find in most family-friendly boardgames. One pair is enough to play, but it's a lot easier if everyone has their own dice to roll; you can also opt to use a free online dice roller if you don't have access to dice. Many groups like to get dice that reflect their training, such as red dice for Firebenders and blue dice for Waterbenders. The GM doesn't need any dice at all!

Pencils and Paper

Finally, each player needs pencils and erasers to fill in the play materials. You'll be constantly changing your playbook—picking new abilities, marking down fatigue, and much more! It's also handy to have some scrap paper or notecards on hand to keep a list of important characters and locations. A lot of people like to take notes on what their character gets up to in a session so they can reference them later. This can be particularly useful if your character has a specific quest set before them or there's a long break in between sessions.

Play Materials

You need this book and a copy of the **play materials**: the playbooks, the GM Worksheet, and the Campaign Creation Worksheet. You might not use all ten playbooks included with this book—or you might add more from other books, like *Wan Shi Tong's Adventure Guide*—but you need to print out the ones you're going to use. You can download the play materials at: magpiegames.com/avatarrpg





CHAPTER 2

THE WORLD OF AVATAR

第二章

CHAPTER 2

This chapter contains setting information for the five eras in which you can set your game. The start of the chapter includes a general introduction of the world and its various cultures along with era-neutral locations, which exist in all five eras. Each era includes important themes, historical events, important figures, and plot hooks to inspire your game.

The world of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is expansive and diverse, with figures immortalized in epic legacy and conflicts that span generations. For thousands of years, people have worked in tandem to build cities, wage wars, and expand civilizations. Whether through social change, martial prowess, technological brilliance, or bending, those changing the world for the better tirelessly work to maintain balance.

The Avatarverse is complex, changing significantly throughout its history. The setting is primarily inspired by different Asian and Indigenous cultures, but no nation is a direct representation of a specific real-life culture. It has its own unique stories, politics, geography, philosophies, and spiritualities, all tied to the four major elements in the world: water, earth, fire, and air.

This chapter details setting information for the game and includes different **eras**—familiar points in the timeline when your story could be set. The Avatar has an important impact on the world in any given era, but there are many stories to explore outside their impressive adventures. Benders and non-benders alike have the power to shape the world, whether they're close allies of the Avatar or people who never cross the Avatar's path.

This section is a primer on setting information that players and game masters should know before diving into a game.

- **Exploring History** looks at the setting's history before the eras featured in this book, exploring the origins of bending and the Avatar.
- **The Four Nations** explores important locations you can use in your game, with legacies so long they span every era!
- **A World of Balance** provides information on key spiritual and cultural concepts that affect the Avatarverse.
- **Navigating the Eras** explains how each era is presented in this book and what you can expect to find in each section.

Exploring History

Long before the world split into the Four Nations, humans and spirits lived alongside one another. Bending was not a refined art, but instead a gift bestowed upon humans to keep them safe in the dangerous wilds. All of this changed when a man named Wan meddled in the eternal conflict between peace and chaos, unleashing a chain of events that sundered the human and spirit worlds and caused him to become the first Avatar.

Before the Avatar

Long ago, humans and spirits inhabited separate realms. But then two primordial spirits—Raava and Vaatu—pierced the barrier separating them, allowing spirits to enter the physical world. Fearing the spirits of the wilds, humans built cities on the backs of giant lion-turtles to keep themselves safe. When the humans ventured forth into the spirit wilds to hunt and gather food, the lion-turtles, each with an affinity for an element, granted them the gift of bending that element on the condition that the humans return their gift upon coming home.

Two **spirit portals**, one in the South Pole and the other in the North Pole, remained open at all times so spirits could pass between the realms. Though most humans feared the spirits, those living atop the air lion-turtle befriended them, establishing a relationship that would lay the spiritual foundations for the Air Nomads. Otherwise, the experience of most humans during this period was confined to their lion-turtle, with begrudging respect paid to the alien world outside.

Two primordial spirits engaged in an endless battle over the balance of the world, a conflict that defined the world even as humans remained largely unaware of this struggle. **Raava**, the spirit of light and peace, had held **Vaatu**, the spirit of darkness and chaos, at bay for ten thousand years since a planetary alignment called Harmonic Convergence—ensuring that light and peace largely defined the world. But this balance did not last; everything changed when a human named Wan stumbled upon one of these battles and altered the course of history forever.



Creation of the Avatar

Unlike most humans, Wan was intimately familiar with spirits by the time he encountered Raava and Vaatu. His people had banished him into the spirit wilds when he refused to return the firebending gift after a hunting expedition. Though Wan first struggled to live in the wilds, he soon grew close to many of the spirits there. Unfortunately, all his experiences in the spirit wilds did not prepare him for his encounter with Raava and Vaatu.

When Wan discovered the two spirits, he saw how their battle destroyed the landscape and how Vaatu struggled to free himself from Raava. Wan confronted the spirits to try and convince them to stop the destruction, but Raava had no desire for human assistance. So Vaatu took advantage of Wan's desire to help, tricking the human into attacking Raava so he could escape.

Furious, Raava explained Wan's mistake to him—his interference had unleashed this spirit of chaos to freely roam the world. Vaatu would surely grow stronger and annihilate both the human and spirit worlds during the next Harmonic Convergence. Wan had made a terrible first impression on one of his world's most powerful forces.

Wan managed to convince Raava that she only had a chance at defeating the dark spirit if they worked together. Raava helped Wan to master the bending of all four elements—a feat no human had ever accomplished—and the two grew close as they trained in preparation for Harmonic Convergence. Eventually, Raava came to recognize Wan's nobility and courage.

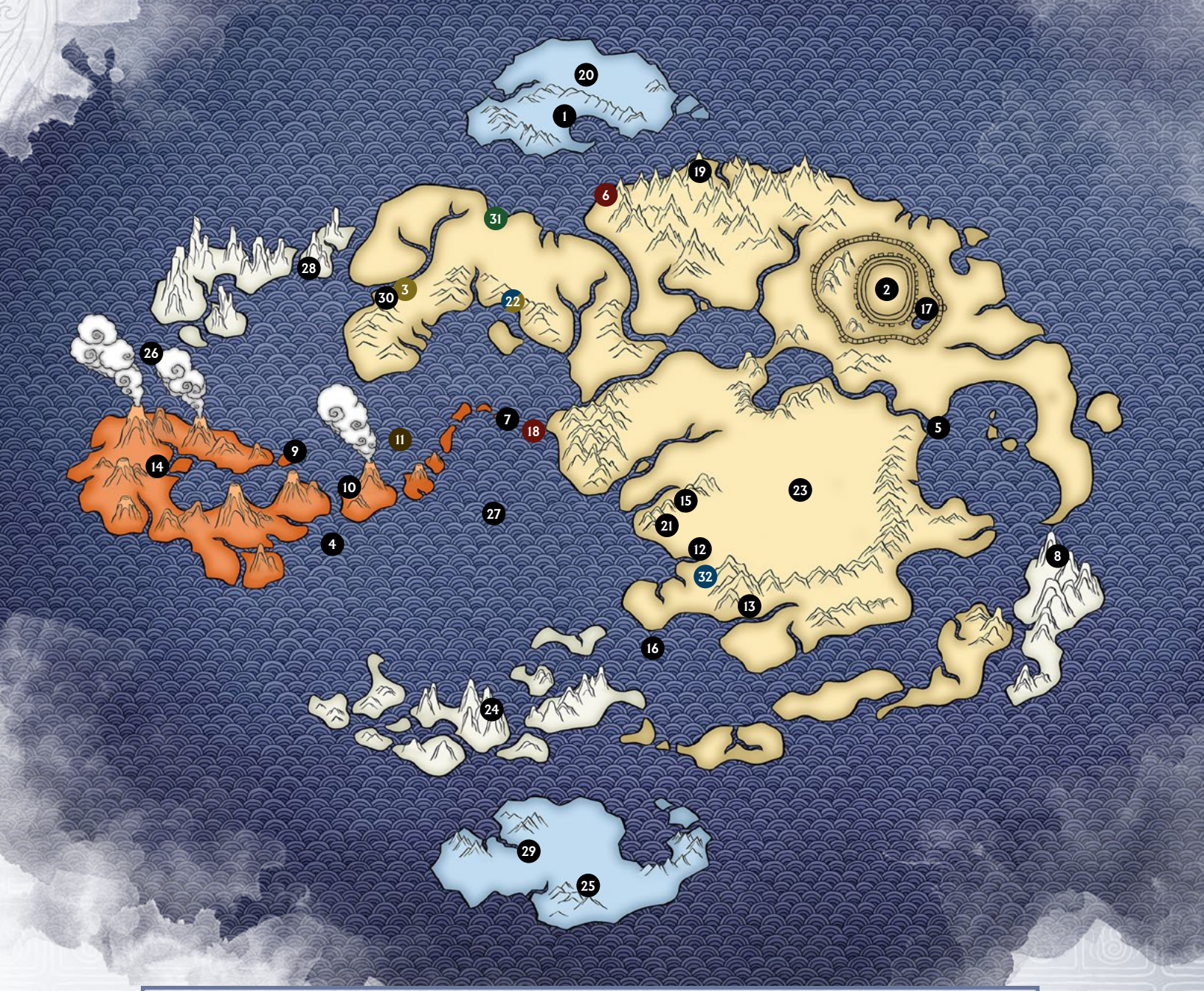
The two then confronted Vaatu during Harmonic Convergence and—during their epic battle—Wan and Raava fused together as **the Avatar** to defeat the chaos spirit. They sealed Vaatu away into the Tree of Time, a large tree situated in the Spirit World, and closed the spirit portals so that humans and spirits would once again live in separate worlds. From that point forward, Wan decreed, the Avatar would act as the bridge between the human and spirit worlds.

The fusion of Wan and Raava created the **Avatar Spirit** and Wan became the first Avatar. From that moment, Avatar Wan worked to bring peace to the world. However, universal harmony is not a job one can accomplish in a lifetime; after Wan's death, the Avatar Spirit transferred to a new Avatar, beginning an **Avatar Cycle** in which the Avatar reincarnates each lifetime with the goal of bringing balance to the world.

The Avatar's Abilities

The Avatar is the only human capable of bending all four elements. Though the Avatars can often access memories from their past lives and speak with their past incarnations through meditation, each one is a unique individual and must relearn how to master each element. The Avatar first learns to bend the element native to their nation and then learns the rest of the elements in the order of the Avatar Cycle: fire, air, water, and then earth, endlessly circling and recurring. Each nation has a unique method of determining the Avatar's identity as a young child and different ways of training them.

The Avatar's most powerful ability is to enter the **Avatar State**, a defense mechanism in which they are able to perform incredible acts of bending by channeling the energy of all their past lives at once. Avatars enter this state as a response to mortal danger or high stress, and can even manifest the appearance of a past self during it. Unfortunately, if the Avatar were ever to die in the Avatar State, the reincarnation cycle would be interrupted and the Avatar would cease to exist.



Map Key

1. Agna Qel'a
2. Ba Sing Se
3. Beifong Metalbending Academy AE
4. Bhanti Island
5. Chameleon Bay
6. Chenbao RE
7. Crescent Island
8. Eastern Air Temple
9. Ember Island
10. Fire Fountain City
11. Fire Island Prison HYW
12. Foggy Swamp
13. Gaoling
14. Hari Bulkan
15. Kolau Mountain Range
16. Kyoshi Island
17. Lake Laogai
18. Natsuo Island RE
19. Northern Air Temple
20. Northern Spirit Portal
21. Omashu
22. Republic City KoE/ Cranefish Town AE
23. Si Wong Desert
24. Southern Air Temple
25. Southern Spirit Portal
26. Sun Warriors' Ancient City
27. Water Tribe Sacred Island
28. Western Air Temple
29. Wolf Cove
30. Yu Dao
31. Zigan Village KyE
32. Zaofu KoE

Eras Color Code

Era Neutral Location ●
Kyoshi Era KyE
Roku Era RE
Hundred Year War HYW
Aang Era AE
Korra Era KoE

The Four Nations

The Four Nations are the stage for constantly changing conflicts, alliances, and adventures. Each era impacts the next, building on foundations laid thousands of years ago. Though the nations undergo many major shifts throughout history, there are locations that remain largely consistent no matter what era you play in.

The lands of Avatar Legends are wondrous and diverse. They range from scorching hot to bitterly cold and the people who live in each land have adapted to their natural surroundings by either living alongside nature or overcoming its obstacles. Each Nation is geographically unique and comes with its own set of natural wonders.

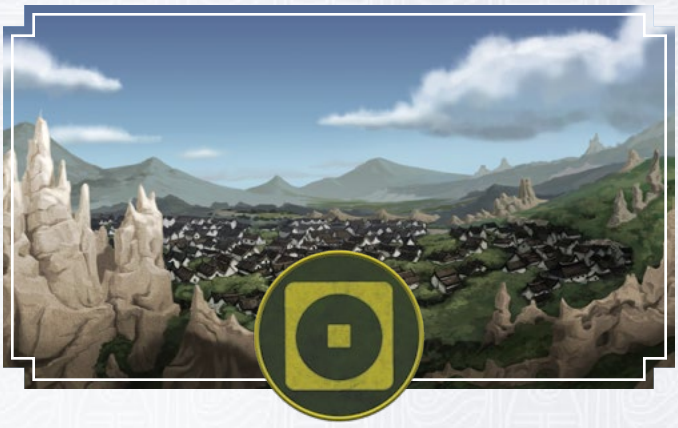
The **Water Tribes** primarily exist in the frigid North and South poles. Both poles are frozen landscapes where snow, sleet, and freezing temperatures are the norm. Little grows in either pole and the tribespeople hunt, forage, and trade for sustenance. Snowy mountains dot both the North and South and both tribes use the sea as a primary mode of transportation between different towns and villages. The Foggy Swamp tribespeople are an exception to their waterbending cousins, inhabiting a damp, warm swamp within the Earth Kingdom where strong spiritual energy (and water) ties them to the impressive flora in the area.

The **Earth Kingdom** is the largest nation and has the most varied landscape. From scorching deserts, to frozen mountains, to rolling hills, to balmy beaches. How people in the Earth Kingdom contend with its nature is dependent on the region. Larger Earth Kingdom cities are marvels of architecture and technology no matter what era you visit them in. However, many areas suffer from poor infrastructure; the Kingdom is too large—and the leaders often too corrupt—for full oversight and development of poorer regions.

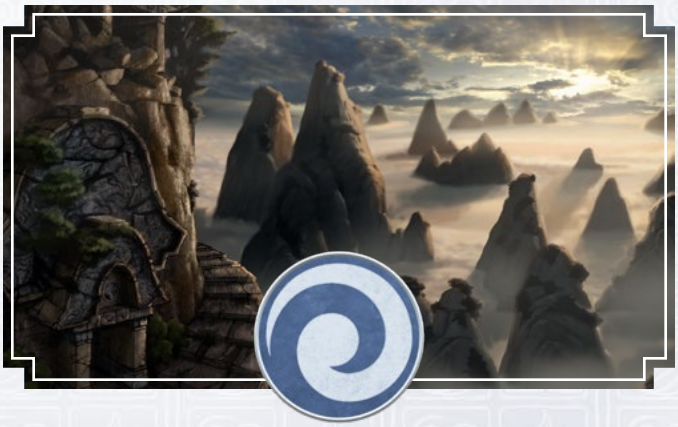
The **Fire Nation** is a series of islands to the west of the Earth Kingdom with numerous volcanoes. The climate ranges from pleasantly warm to scorching hot with many beautiful tropical beaches to visit on the various islands. Many of the Fire Nation volcanoes between the mountainous regions of the islands are active in every era. The warm weather suits the nation's Firebenders just fine and over the years inventors have developed many different ships for people to navigate between the islands.

The **Air Nomads** (or **Air Nation** in the Korra Era) are a nomadic people, but have four temples located at the edges of the map, each named after the four cardinal directions: north, south, east, and west. Most Air Nomad temples are located in high, rocky locations that are hard to reach for anyone except Airbenders, sky bison, and other flying creatures. Though the temples are built in mountainous areas, they are far from devoid of life, with many pockets of beautiful greenery and ancient trees welcoming any number of local species.











The Water Tribes

The Water Tribes are two distinct tribes living at the northern and southern poles of the world; for most of human history, both were governed by the Northern Water Tribe. They are not only united by political bonds, but also by a shared spiritual heritage and waterbending. Additionally, a smaller settlement of Waterbenders lives in seclusion in a part of the Earth Kingdom called Foggy Swamp. Each group has its own traditions, values, and waterbending styles.

Over the years, the two polar tribes have harbored tension between them and the chaos of the Hundred Year War only aggravated that tension. During the war, the Northern and Southern Tribes stopped communicating with one another, isolating the Southern Water Tribe. With fewer resources and weaker political structures, the Southern Tribe was eventually devastated by the Fire Nation's relentless attacks. The war's end did not resolve the problem; Northerners arrived to assist the Southerners with reconstruction, but viewed them as incapable of properly governing themselves, and the Southerners' resentment grew into a nationalist movement. During the Korra Era, this escalated into a civil war between the tribes, ending with the Southern Water Tribe finally gaining independence from the North.

Both Water Tribes are known for being resourceful survivors, and since both poles experience extremely cold weather, outsiders may struggle when visiting either of the two tribes. Firebenders have the hardest time in the coldest reaches of the poles, especially during the harsh winds and snowfall. Even locals aren't immune to freezing to death or getting lost in the ice should a bad storm roll in, but visitors are the most in danger due to their unfamiliarity with the area.

Agna Qel'a

A city of ice with impenetrable walls housing the spirits of Moon and Ocean

Agna Qel'a is the capital of the Northern Water Tribe. It is a massive port city built into an ice wall in the North Pole and situated on the shore of the Northern Sea. Towering walls of ice and a network of moats keep invaders at bay. In addition, it is home to a skilled army, waterbending warriors, and some of the best healers in the world. Canoes steered by Waterbenders ferry people from one location to another via the massive canals all throughout the city.

The Royal Palace is the largest and highest structure in Agna Qel'a. It's a multi-tiered structure surrounded by numerous waterfalls that feed into the canals of the city. The impressive balance of architecture and ice throughout this ancient city is a wonder to behold.

The lush and verdant Spirit Oasis hidden within the city is the single most important spiritual location to the Northern Water Tribe. Its thriving, tropical environment is completely unlike the rest of the North Pole, and is said to be nurtured by the energy of Tui, the Moon Spirit, and La, the Ocean Spirit. The two spirits live in a small pond within it as two koi fish constantly circling each other. After the era of Wan, the first Avatar, the first Waterbenders learned bending from observing the power of the moon over the ocean, and so these two spirits hold great significance to the tribe. During the full moon, people make offerings of food to Tui and La.

Wolf Cove

The capital of the South Pole struggling to find its identity amidst turmoil

Wolf Cove is the Southern Water Tribe's capital and has undergone some extreme changes throughout history. It struggled economically during the Kyoshi Era, was nearly destroyed during the Hundred Year War, then grew significantly during the Southern Reconstruction Project in the Aang Era, and endured occupation by the Northern Water Tribe during the civil war of the Korra Era. During its reconstruction after that occupation, the city gained a waterbending school and a royal palace. After all those changes, it had grown so much it was hardly recognizable as the original Capital City of eras long past. A Council of Elders governed the tribe and city for much of history, though the Northern Water Tribe sat at the head of the power hierarchy until the Southern Water Tribe gained its independence.

Foggy Swamp

An isolated water tribe who can bend the water in plants

The Foggy Swamp is located in the southwest of the Earth Kingdom and is the home of a group of Waterbenders who settled there long ago. The swamp grew from an ancient banyan-grove tree that now stands in the center of the region, its roots reaching out far into the distance. The swamp is a spiritual destination as people often experience visions while traveling between its roots and over its waters.

The Waterbenders who live in the Foggy Swamp practice plantbending, a form of waterbending in which they tap into the moisture inside plants to manipulate them. Through plantbending, people can take control of vines to entangle opponents or extract water out of large plants to use in a waterbending attack. During the full moon, Plantbenders can manipulate bigger plants such as large trees.

For many years, the Foggy Swamp Waterbenders lived in secret, away from the constant politics of the Four Nations. Avatar Aang and his friends encountered their community at the end of the Hundred Year War, exposing them to the rest of the world.

Spirit Portals

Portals to the Spirit World located at either pole

Both the North and South pole each have their own spirit portal—a physical gateway to the Spirit World. When open, these portals appear as giant beams of light shooting upwards from the ground towards the sky, with the Northern spirit portal glowing red and the Southern portal glowing white. Each is located in a wild forest, which thrives off residual spiritual energy, deep in the wilderness of its respective pole. Travelling to either spirit portal is exceedingly difficult, because of the harsh frozen landscape of the poles. Even the most skilled survivalists of the Water Tribes wouldn't make the trek unless such a journey was of the utmost importance and many take this as a sign to leave the spirits at peace. The portals were closed by Avatar Wan, but were reopened many years later by Avatar Korra. You can read more about the spirit portals—and the Spirit World—on page 29.



TUI AND LA

Tui and La are the Moon and Ocean Spirits that inhabit the Spirit Oasis. Years ago the two of them chose to leave the Spirit World for the mortal one to help humanity and made the Spirit Oasis their home. In the Oasis, Tui took the form of a white koi fish with a black spot on its head, while La turned into a black koi fish with a white spot on its head. Tui has healing powers, and La has the power to drag an enemy into the Fog of Lost Souls, a prison for humans in the Spirit World. During the Hundred Year War, Tui was gravely wounded, but the brave sacrifice of Yue, the Northern Water Tribe princess, restored Tui at the cost of Yue's own life.



The Earth Kingdom

The Earth Kingdom is gigantic, encompassing all kinds of terrain and peoples, large cities and small villages alike. It is home to numerous cultures, making it distinct from the other nations with its diversity. An **Earth Monarch** rules the entire 55-state kingdom from the walled city of Ba Sing Se, but individual regions also have their own local governments. The further away a village is from Ba Sing Se, the more autonomy it enjoys. And since the kingdom is enormous, the outermost villages of the kingdom have been quite autonomous indeed.

The region's early history is filled with war between various groups vying for power, as seen in the time of Avatar Wan (page 17) when settlers first fought for control of the territories that eventually became the Earth Kingdom. War has played a major role in the kingdom's existence ever since. Much of the kingdom was seized by the Fire Nation during the Hundred Year War, including the great city of Omashu, which often vied with Ba Sing Se for political power.

Even after Avatar Aang and his allies brought an end to the Hundred Year War, the Earth Kingdom struggled with the long-term effects of colonization. Other challenges the people of this kingdom have faced throughout nearly every era include poverty, organized crime, and corrupt law enforcement and government. Due to the nation's size, it's hard to generalize its peoples, aside to say they're as diverse as the world itself.

Ba Sing Se

A sprawling city rife with corruption protected by an impenetrable wall

Ba Sing Se is the capital of the Earth Kingdom, situated in the northeast of the continent. It is the largest city in the world, the seat of power for the Earth Kingdom, and self-sufficient, with farms, a lake, and many local industries. Ba Sing Se is also one of the oldest cities in the world, dating back thousands of years. Ba Sing Se is home to the impressive Ba Sing Se University in the Middle Ring, which offers many different courses of study.

The city is divided into several rings separated by giant walls. From outermost ring to innermost, there is:

- The defensive Outer Wall
- The Agrarian Zone
- The defensive Inner Wall
- The Lower Ring, where the poorer citizens live
- The Middle Ring, where the middle-class citizens live
- The Upper Ring with the Royal Palace and where the wealthiest citizens live alongside military and government officials

The class differences between the rings of Ba Sing Se are built into the very structure of the city. Of all the rings, the Lower Ring is the most densely populated with rampant poverty and criminal activity. Those who want to travel around Ba Sing Se may run into some challenges depending on their class and perceived importance: residents of the Upper Ring may go where they please within Ba Sing Se; residents of the Middle Ring may travel anywhere freely except the Upper Ring; and residents of the Lower Ring may not travel to the Middle or Upper Rings without a passport.

Omashu

A mountain-top city with unique technology operated by bending

Omashu is the second largest city in the Earth Kingdom after Ba Sing Se. An impressive sight, it stands in the southwest of the Earth Kingdom high atop a mountain within the Kolau Mountain Range. Legend has it that the city was founded to honor the tragic lovers Oma and Shu who carried on a forbidden romance despite hailing from warring villages. According to the story, Shu died in battle between the villages, and in her grief, Oma enacted an amazing feat of earthbending that could have destroyed both settlements. Instead, she declared the war over, and the two populations merged to create the city of Omashu.

The city's most unusual feature is its mail delivery system. This intricate system is a network of large chutes partly operated by earthbending. Omashu is also known for innovation and technological progress; its inventors see technology and bending as working hand in hand. Due to its size, importance, and unique innovations, Omashu has always competed with Ba Sing Se for prominence in the Earth Kingdom.

Si Wong Desert

A vast and deadly desert

The beautiful and deadly Si Wong Desert lies near the center of the Earth Kingdom. Crossing it is all but impossible, especially for those unfamiliar with the sheer size of the desert and its unforgiving environment. The Si Wong Tribes who live in the area are masters of survival. The oldest of these tribes are the beetle-headed merchants, prolific traders who ride giant rhinoceros beetles and have settlements throughout the desert.

Those who wish to travel across the Si Wong Desert should do well to find a guide and stock up on supplies and information about the area. The best place to do this is at the Misty Palms Oasis to the southwest. The beetle-headed merchants make a point of visiting the oasis frequently to conduct business. A mysterious iceberg with spiritual properties sits in the center of the town, supplying water and mist.

Kyoshi Island

A large island home to the renowned Kyoshi Warriors

Before Avatar Kyoshi (page 32) faced off against Chin the Conqueror, Kyoshi Island was physically part of the Yokoya Peninsula. Kyoshi had long guarded the independence and self-sufficiency of her homeland. She founded an all-female military order known as the Kyoshi Warriors, who evolved from a self-defense organization for local women to elite protectors of the isolated region. When Chin the Conqueror attempted to take the peninsula by force, she tore it from the continent, creating the island it is today.

Kyoshi Island and the Kyoshi Warriors have continued to hold importance throughout the eras. The island serves as a home and training ground to these amazing martial artists renowned the world over for their fighting style and skill with metal battle fans. Avatar Aang inspired the Warriors to back the Earth Kingdom's efforts during the Hundred Year War, and after that a group of the warriors went on to serve as Fire Lord Zuko's bodyguards.



WAN SHI TONG

Wan Shi Tong, a massive owl-like spirit, presides over the Spirit Library hidden in the Si Wong Desert. He had accumulated and preserved knowledge to share with humanity in the hopes that they would use it to improve themselves and their civilizations. During the Hundred Year War, a junior lieutenant in the Fire Navy named Zhao (page 64) took advantage of the library, scouring its knowledge for military purposes. Zhao burned down the part of the library containing information about the Fire Nation, leaving Wan Shi Tong with a terrible impression of humans. After Zhao's barbarous actions, Wan Shi Tong refused to allow humans to enter the library and eventually moved it back into the Spirit World.



The Fire Nation

The Fire Nation covers an archipelago dotted with active volcanoes to the west of the Earth Kingdom. Originally, the noble clans of the Fire Nation held a great deal of influence and power, sometimes equal to that of the **Fire Lord**—the official ruler of the Fire Nation. However, after the Camellia-Peony War during the Kyoshi Era, the power structure steadily shifted so the Fire Lord alone governed the nation.

Until the reign of Fire Lord Sozin and the Hundred Year War, **Fire Sages** acted as the religious authorities of the Fire Nation. These influential spiritual leaders conducted their affairs at the High Temple in the Fire Nation Capital. The Sages were heavily invested in Fire Nation history and kept extensive documentation of it within the Dragonbone Catacombs beneath this temple. Because they were highly involved in political matters, they were no strangers to intrigue and taking sides during conflicts. Ozai held no interest in spiritual matters, however, and the Fire Sages lost much of their power during his rule.

The Fire Nation was responsible for the Air Nomad Genocide (page 59) and subsequent Hundred Year War during the reigns of Fire Lord Sozin and his successor son and grandson, Fire Lords Azulon and Ozai, respectively. When Ozai's son Fire Lord Zuko rose to power, he spent much time and effort trying to repair the damage of his predecessors by dedicating funds, people, and attention to restoration efforts. Under his reign, the Fire Nation pivoted away from waging war and towards efforts to support world harmony, such as the creation of the United Republic of Nations (page 82) from former Fire Nation colonies.

The Fire Nation Capital

A sprawling city built atop and within an island volcano

The Fire Nation Capital is the home to the royal family and the seat of government. There is a harbor for ships, a High Temple for the Fire Sages, a prison, and a network of tunnels beneath the city perfect for conducting secret operations. The Great Gates of Azulon, built in the time of their namesake, protect the city. To fend off outside threats, guards raise a net between the two great dragon statues and a statue of Azulon and set it alight.

The wealthy elite of the city live in Hari Bulkan, housed within a dormant volcanic crater. The Fire Nation Royal Palace is located here along with the Coronation Temple and Plaza. The path up the volcano to Hari Bulkan is protected by a series of strategic switchbacks, designed by Fire Lord Sozin, which force anyone making the ascent to walk in single file.

Other important districts include the industrial Harbor City and the nearby Royal Plaza, which is not only remarkable to behold, but strategically lined with battlements from the Roku Era to slow down any attempted invasion. Many of the commoners in the capital live in Harbor City and suffer stigma for living there—they are of a lower status than people who can afford to live in other districts.

The Fire Nation Capital is also home to the Royal Fire Academy for Girls, a prestigious military academy educating female youths in combat and strategy. The school is intense—in some eras so competitive that deaths have occurred during an Agni Kai, a rare and tragic occurrence that exemplifies how the academy fosters competition to the point of fanatic perfection.

Fire Fountain City

An ancient city with mystical roots

Originally called North Chung-Ling, Fire Fountain City is best known for its role in the Camellia-Peony War during the Kyoshi Era and its contribution to the Fire Nation's war efforts during the Hundred Year War. Since the Hundred Year War, it's been a highly industrialized, modern city with numerous bustling districts to explore and get lost in. It is located on Shuhon Island in the eastern part of the Fire Nation.

The city was originally a seedy tourist trap hawked as a "spiritual destination", cashing in on the hallucinogenic effects of the flammable vapors lying below the land. During the Hundred Year War, it became an important industrial city integral to the Fire Nation's military power. The fountain, for which the city was renamed, is a massive statue of Fire Lord Ozai built during the Hundred Year War that shoots fire out of its hands and mouth.

Bhanti Island

An island of Fire Sages with a magical healing pool

Sages have lived on Bhanti Island in the south of the Fire Nation for thousands of years. They live isolated from the rest of the world and choose to remain uninvolved in its troubles. The temple on the island is made of several stone pagodas, and underneath is a cavern with a pool of water that can heal the gravest of injuries. The island's Sages used these waters to heal Avatar Korra after a dark spirit attacked her and she lost her memory. The island is also home to a large library containing multitudes of tomes of spiritual knowledge, including details about dark spirits and how to deal with them. Avatar Kuruk and Fire Sage Nyahitha used this library for research to help them in their grueling battle against dark spirits.

Sun Warriors' Ancient City

A forgotten city and home to dragons

This ancient city built around firebending dragons is labyrinthine and guarded with traps to capture any unwanted visitors. The Sun Warriors, the city's inhabitants, were the first people to master firebending after humans left the lion-turtle cities, and their bending is more strongly connected to the sun than other Firebenders. Two dragons—Ran and Shaw—live in their ancient city with them.

For thousands of years, the warriors have guarded the Eternal Flame—a fire given to them by the dragons ages ago and kept eternally burning. Since the Sun Warriors live in isolation, from the era of Avatar Roku onwards, the world believed that both the dragons and the warriors were extinct until Avatar Aang encountered them again. In truth, the dragons live in their ancient city and while Fire Lord Sozin's tradition of hunting dragons for glory nearly depleted their entire population, they and the Sun Warriors survived.



AGNI KAI

The Agni Kai is a ceremonial Firebender duel between two opponents, which technically ends when one opponent burns the other. It is often used as a high-stakes way to settle scores between two parties when one, or both, feels egregiously harmed by the other. It also confirms a person's social standing by proving one a better Firebender than the other. An Agni Kai is a grave matter and Firebenders don't engage in the duel lightly—not only because it can be deadly, but because anything agreed upon based on the outcome of the duel must be upheld by the loser.

Any Firebender can be challenged to an Agni Kai, even the Fire Lord. However, this rarely happens as Fire Lords are supremely powerful Firebenders who are not often known for their mercy.



The Air Nomads

Prior to the Hundred Year War, all Air Nomads were Airbenders. They lived in harmony with their sky bison and valued pacifism, often choosing to maintain distance from the rest of the world's conflicts. Many lived nomadic lives and traveled the world, while others stayed attached to one of their four Air Temples. They lived according to monastic traditions, and the Northern and Southern Air Temples acted as homes for Air Monks while the Eastern and Western Air Temples acted as homes for Air Nuns. All Airbenders grew up to become monks and nuns unless they chose to leave the Air Nomad life behind or were exiled.

Even before the first Avatar came into the world, the Air Nomads interacted with spirits regularly and lived in peace with them. That early connection with the Spirit World continued to manifest itself in the Airbenders' relationship with spirits. Avatar Yangchen, an Avatar born into the Air Nomads, acted as a diplomat and negotiator in matters regarding the Spirit World, and struck several deals with spirits to maintain peace between them and the human world during her time. Once she passed, it was the Air Nomads' responsibility to keep up these arrangements, or else risk offending destructive spirits.

At the beginning of the Hundred Year War, Fire Lord Sozin orchestrated a genocide that wiped out all the Air Nomads except for Avatar Aang. Much of the Air Nomads' history and culture was lost during the war, but Avatar Aang worked to revive it after the war's conclusion along with the help of the Air Acolytes, a group of people devoted to learning Air Nomad traditions. These Air Acolytes restored the temples and looked after them. Then, after Harmonic Convergence during the Korra Era and Korra's decision to keep the spirit portals open, many non-benders across the world suddenly gained airbending abilities, joining together under the guidance of Aang's son, Tenzin, to create a new Air Nation dedicated to bringing balance to the world.

Northern Air Temple

A towering temple only accessible through the air

The Northern Air Temple is located in the mountains in the north of the Earth Kingdom and exclusively housed Air Monks for much of history. The Air Nomads constructed the temple to best harness the natural flows of air and wind, as seen in the design of its big hallways. The surrounding area is mountainous, and to the north there is ocean and then, quite a ways off, the Northern Water Tribe.

During the Hundred Year War, a group of Earth Kingdom refugees, including a man known as the Mechanist, made the Northern Air Temple their home and installed many new inventions there. The Fire Nation forced the Mechanist to create weapons for its military, but eventually the inventor ended up assisting the defeat of the Fire Nation. After the Hundred Year War, his inventions were moved elsewhere. The temple saw the return of Airbenders following Harmonic Convergence when many of the new Airbenders went to the Northern Air Temple to train. Sadly, the Red Lotus destroyed the temple during Avatar Korra's time in their attempt to capture and kill her.

Eastern Air Temple

A temple of significant spiritual power

The Eastern Air Temple was one of the two temples that housed only Air Nuns for most of its existence. Situated across three adjacent mountains in the southeast of the Earth Kingdom, the pagodas on each mountain are connected by bridges, and the temple includes sky bison stables. Though the most badly damaged of the four temples during the Air Nomad Genocide, this temple was repaired by Avatar Aang and the Air Acolytes after the conclusion of the Hundred Year War.

Out of all the four temples, the Eastern Air Temple has the most spiritual power and significance. Dragonfly bunny spirits favor the area, and there is a meditation circle near the temple. This circle is a spiritual hotspot that attracted a swarm of dark spirits during the years it went neglected. Once Avatar Korra cleansed it, Jinora, a highly skilled Airbender, used the meditation circle to help guide Korra into the Spirit World for the first time.

Southern Air Temple

An Air Nomad temple home to flying lemurs and sky bison

The Southern Air Temple is one of the two temples to exclusively house Air Monks and is located in the Patola Mountain Range in the South Sea. The temple has beautiful open gardens, an airball arena, twisting paths, and statues of past Avatars. One of the other special features of this temple is that it has some doors that can only be opened via airbending. It is also Avatar Aang's childhood home; shortly after he ran away from it, the Fire Nation raided the temple and killed all its inhabitants, including Aang's beloved mentor, Monk Gyatso. Prior to the Hundred Year War, the temple had been home to many flying lemurs and a healthy population of sky bison, all of whom returned after its restoration. When the Air Acolytes fully repaired the temple, they installed a statue of Avatar Aang as an addition, as well as several other new buildings.

Western Air Temple

An upside-down mountain temple located in a strategically important location

The Western Air Temple is the childhood home of Avatar Yangchen and housed only Air Nuns. Built beneath a cliff as though the buildings were hanging upside down, this temple is particularly difficult to find if you don't know where to look. It is located in the mountains north of the Fire Nation, specifically north of the Sun Warriors' ancient city. The Western Air Temple looks very intimidating, but it also has fun elements like a sky bison obstacle course, a racetrack, and a giant Pai Sho table.

Like the other Air Temples, the Western Air Temple was raided during the Air Nomad Genocide, though it suffered minimal damage. However, it was partly destroyed toward the end of the Hundred Year War when Aang took refuge there with his friends, first by the explosive attacks of a Firebender assassin and then by Azula's (page 64) forces. Like the other temples, the Western Air Temple was eventually restored by the Air Acolytes after the end of the Hundred Year War.



AIR NOMAD TATTOOS

The Air Nomads are spiritual people who seek to live in balance with the world. They have a close connection to spirits and powerful Air Nomads are even able to project their spirit out of their body. When an Air Nomad masters airbending they receive tattoos as the sign of their mastery. These tattoos are five light blue arrows—one extending from the forehead down the back, one arrow on each arm and one arrow on each leg (when possible).

The Air Nomads originally learned airbending from sky bison and the tattoos mimic the bison's natural markings, namely the arrow leading from the creature's head down its back. Most Airbenders earn their tattoos later in life, as true mastery over airbending is difficult to learn. The tattoos are something to aspire to and many Airbenders see them as a massive accomplishment deserving of respect. There is a rare exception for extremely skilled benders who gain their tattoos when they're younger—like Avatar Aang at the age of twelve and his granddaughter Jinora at the age of eleven.

A World of Balance

For most of recorded history, the world has been divided into the Four Nations, each with its own form of bending and unique cultural characteristics. Each nation is unique, but a few concepts and organizations span the entire world. This section looks at various topics important to people throughout the nations and the impact they have on the Avatarverse.



Bending

Certain people can manipulate one of four elements. This ability is called bending, and its origins go back to when humans built cities on the backs of the lion-turtles thousands of years ago (page 16). After humans left the lion-turtle cities for good, legend says that they learned bending from animals like the earthbending badger-moles, firebending dragons, airbending sky bison, and in the case of Waterbenders, the spirits of the moon and ocean.

All benders are born with innate elemental abilities, and must undergo training to master their element. They can only bend a single element, though specialized forms of bending can push that element to its limits. For instance, some Earthbenders can metalbend, some Firebenders are able to generate or redirect lightning, and some Waterbenders can use their bending to heal.

Though often used for fighting, bending is also used for practical purposes such as construction and farming. The type of bending a person is born with depends on the nation they come from and those who have parents from different nations might be born with either of their bending abilities. After the Harmonic Convergence of the Korra Era (page 80), numerous non-benders from across the world suddenly gained the ability to airbend, irrespective of their cultural background.

Many benders fear chi-blocking, a special technique that disrupts the flow of chi energy through one's body and thereby their bending ability. This technique was once so rare that up until the Korra Era, only a select few had mastered the art. Chi-blockers quickly jab at certain pressure points in their opponent's body, often with their fingers or knuckles. While anyone can learn chi-blocking, non-benders often learn this technique to defend against benders. In addition to disrupting bending, chi-blocking can lock up the target's muscles, making it temporarily difficult or even impossible to use them.

Technology

Progress in the Four Nations is all about ingenuity and vision. Throughout each era, inventors create new and innovative technology that pushes society forward. What that technology looks like is dependent where the inventor is located, and may or may not involve the use of benders. A Water Tribe inventor might prioritize innovative gear to help her people survive the harsh tundra, and an inventor from the Si Wong Desert might create a new way to traverse the vast sands. Technologists are creative and masters of solving problems that affect their daily lives.

The eras don't directly correspond to any real-world analogues, but each has a theme and aesthetic unique to the setting. Below are a few examples of innovative creations, some inspired by the real world, to give you a feel for what is possible in any given era.

The Kyoshi Era

- A bronze single-shot hand cannon made with Fire Nation explosives.
- A rudder designed for steering larger vessels, allowing the Water Tribes to dominate the oceans.
- An extensive collection of building plans made by Air Nomads on their travels to other nations.

The Roku Era

- A steam-powered Fire Nation ship.
- Alchemical herbs foraged from the Foggy Swamp and turned into healing balms.
- A portable water pump to put a dampener on a Firebender's plans.

The Hundred Year War

- A steam-powered Fire Nation dirigible.
- Medicinal curatives to compensate for the lack of Water Tribe healers.
- Goggles allowing the wearer to see things at great distances and extremely close-up.

The Aang Era

- Generators to propel newer, larger pieces of machinery.
- A gas-powered snowmobile to race between the slopes of the Southern Water Tribe.
- An electric lamp to brighten the deepest badger-mole tunnels.

The Korra Era

- A speedy motorcycle to zip through the roads of Republic City.
- An electrified baton to fend off Triad members.
- A portable camera to capture special moments.



The Spirit World

From the time the Avatar first came into existence until the Harmonic Convergence during the Korra Era (page 80), humans and spirits lived in separate worlds. Once, spirits and humans could travel bodily between the worlds through the spirit portals, but Avatar Wan closed them during his time. Afterwards, crossing between the physical and spirit worlds was still possible, but a rare occurrence. To reach the Spirit World a human had to project their spirit out of their body via meditation or be stolen against their will by a malevolent spirit. Likewise, if a spirit wanted to travel to the physical world, they could only cross over at certain locations, during specific times of the year, such as during a solstice.

Just as the physical world has many different types of people and places, the Spirit World is home to many kinds of spirits and landscapes. There are mountains, valleys, groves, and great bodies of water, some which appear inviting while others are bleak and forbidding. One such place is the Fog of Lost Souls, where trapped humans relive their worst memories over and over again.

During the Harmonic Convergence ten thousand years after Wan, Avatar Korra decided to keep the spirit portals at the North and South Poles open so that spirits and humans could find a way to achieve balance side by side. She also inadvertently created a new spirit portal in Republic City. Ever since then, spirits and humans may physically cross back and forth between the worlds easily, and many spirits reside in the human world.



The Order of the White Lotus

The Order of the White Lotus is a secret society with members from all Four Nations and their subtle, yet masterful influence is felt in all five eras. A group of benders and non-benders alike, the organization is not based in any one location and operates throughout the entire world. The White Lotus originated from a group of scholars dedicated to improving the world and uniting the nations. Through the years the group focused their efforts on guiding the Avatar as a way to foster balance in the world and work for the greater good.

The game Pai Sho holds an important role in the White Lotus organization. Throughout its existence, its members used the game as a method of secret communication. Pai Sho allows members to strategize and pass information to one another out in the open, without anyone else knowing what is being communicated. Additionally, society members can recognize others through the symbol of a white lotus that resembles the white lotus tile in Pai Sho.

The White Lotus functioned in secret for the majority of its existence until Iroh, revealing himself as a leader of the order, mobilized them in the liberation of Ba Sing Se during the Hundred Year War, at which point they became more open with their actions. By the time of Avatar Korra, their existence was public knowledge and agents of the White Lotus were easily identifiable.

Soon after the conclusion of the Hundred Year War, conflict within the Order led to the birth of a new group that split off from the White Lotus. The Red Lotus was an anarchist movement within the White Lotus originally led by a man named Xai Bau. The group later became an enemy of Avatar Korra, attempting to bring an end to the Avatar's reincarnation cycle altogether. Read more about the order of the Red Lotus on page 80.

Discrimination and Challenges

Like the real world, the Avatarverse is filled with a variety of beliefs and points of view, including views that unfairly discriminate or cruelly draw power from targeting "others" within any given society. *Avatar Legends* stories often grapple with issues of gender, sexuality, and class—and like the real world, there may be racial or ethnic discrimination underlying these issues.

What discrimination looks like in the Avatarverse depends on the era and nation in which you're playing. Fast-held views often change with time and evolve as people confront new perspectives and learn from each other. What may be true for one era may not be true for another. Below are a few Avatarverse examples of what this may look like in your game:

- The Water Tribes have accepted relationships outside of the heterosexual cultural norm so long as people kept it private. However, the Northern Water Tribe maintained strict gender roles well into the Aang Era, with women only being permitted to learn waterbending for healing and men only for combat. Likewise, for many eras Water Tribe women could not choose their spouses for themselves. By the Korra Era, the Northern Water Tribe did not adhere so strictly to these gendered traditions.

- There is often a vast disparity between wealthy and poor within the Earth Kingdom spanning all the eras. This strife between the classes has led to multiple uprisings in Ba Sing Se and beyond, and remains a constant issue within the Kingdom.

- The Fire Nation was relatively tolerant until Fire Lord Sozin. He was responsible for stoking xenophobic hate within his people and also outlawed same-sex marriage later in his life. Sozin used propaganda campaigns to justify committing genocide against the Air Nomads.

- Out of all Four Nations the Air Nomads have consistently been the most progressive. Before the genocide, Nomad philosophies meant children were raised by the community rather than a dual-parent home and communities welcomed people from all walks of life. Air Nomads are generally able to love people of any gender or background without fear of being judged or rejected by their people.

Telling a story that is other than your own can be a way for you to empathize with an experience outside yourself and grow as a role-player. For example, acknowledging the differences in the Four Nations of how each treats gender and sexuality is an important link to the real-world struggles people face today. The Avatarverse may be fictitious, but the stories told in it are about very real perseverance and growth. Don't be afraid to feature the challenges certain characters may face depending on where they are from; this can support the personal stories of your heroes and aid in a fun gaming experience.

To ensure a comfortable and safe gaming experience for all while engaging these concepts—or any other sensitive topic—check out the safety tools described on page 12.

Navigating the Eras

Now that you have a basic understanding of the Avatarverse, let's look at the rest of this chapter—the eras. Each era is named after the Avatar who lived during that time, with the exception of the Hundred Year War when the Avatar was missing. Rather than focusing on the history of the entire world, **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** zooms in on a timespan within each era to give you gameable information to use while you play:



The Kyoshi Era covers the events right after *The Shadow of Kyoshi* novel. Play in the Kyoshi Era if you want to fight in battles against rogues and bandits and deal with governmental corruption as the nations establish their borders.



The Roku Era covers the time right after Sozin became Fire Lord and before Roku married. Play in the Roku Era if you want to deal with tensions between different nations and the trials of maintaining an uneasy peace.



The Hundred Year War Era focuses on the time just before Avatar Aang's awakening at the beginning of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Play in the Hundred Year War Era if you want to rebel against unjust rule, protect the weak, and stand up to tyranny.



The Aang Era is set after the events of the *Imbalance* comics trilogy, some time after the end of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Play in the Aang Era if you want to heal the world after tragedy and help push it into a brighter future.



The Korra Era covers a period that takes place after the events of the *Ruins of the Empire* comic trilogy, some time after the end of *The Legend of Korra*. Play in the Korra Era if you want to deal with the repercussions of imperialism and play in a modernized era.

The Breakdown

Each era is laid out in the same way:

- **Where We Start**—Each era as outlined in this book takes place during a specific time in history. This section pinpoints exactly when that time is and what transpired just before it.
- **Avatar Information**—The impact of the Avatar's actions and reputation is felt throughout the entire world. This section covers the life, deeds, and public view of the current Avatar up to that point in the timeline.
- **Significant Themes**—Different eras lend themselves particularly well to exploring specific themes. This section outlines them and gives suggestions for how to incorporate some of those themes into an adventure. Each theme has three linked GM moves that directly engage with the theme. GM moves are explained on page 229, but are included here for ease of reference.
- **Important Events**—Each time period is shaped by the events that led up to that point. This section expands on the information in "Where We Start" and covers some of the most important recent events that have influenced that era. It also lists the direct consequences of each historical event that you'll tackle in your game.
- **The Four Nations**—Each era has an overview of every nation which includes: its history in the given era, notable figures in the era who helped shape the world, and threats and challenges you could face while exploring, which directly link to the themes of the era. The Four Nations are presented in the Avatar reincarnation order—fire, air, water, earth—with the nation of the current Avatar first.

Adventures Set in Different Periods

Each era section in this chapter details the state of the world during a specific time within those eras. But what if you want to play a game set during another time in the era?

You can use that era section as a baseline to work from and make adjustments from there, referring to the era that comes before or after for more information. For instance, if you want to set a game during the Siege of Ba Sing Se, you could use the Hundred Year War Era section as your foundation and refer to the following Aang Era section to help fill in the gaps. You can even decide that the adventure takes place in an alternate timeline so that it's okay if the characters end up changing the course of history as seen in the shows. Just make sure that everyone playing agrees with that choice.

Similarly, you could set a game in the future and explore the era of the Avatar that comes after Korra, though be prepared for some trickier worldbuilding since you'll have to make some big decisions about how the world has changed in that time!



The Kyoshi Era

Where We Start

The Kyoshi Era specifically outlines the time directly following the conclusion of *Shadow of Kyoshi*. The Four Nations are at peace with one another, but internal political and criminal troubles are rampant. There is governmental instability in both the Fire Nation and Earth Kingdom, controversy surrounding the Avatar, and organized groups of outlaws terrorizing citizens—this is especially rampant in the Earth Kingdom, where criminals known as *daofei* seize any opportunity to secure power for themselves. With several individuals in leadership positions either corrupt or unfit to lead, many people have no one to rely on when defending their homes and loved ones.

Avatar Kyoshi tirelessly works to shape a world safe for everyone to thrive in, but unlike Avatars before her, people question her legitimacy, because her friend Yun was originally declared the Avatar. When Yun discovered he wasn't the Avatar, he went on a vengeful rampage, driven into madness with the help of a dark spirit. Kyoshi was forced to end his path of violence when they fought and she killed him. Despite the turmoil in her personal life, Kyoshi remains steadfast in her mission to see the Four Nations rise above the conflicts plaguing them.

In the **Earth Kingdom**, the *daofei* group known as the Yellow Necks tried to make a return under the name The Autumn Bloom Society, but Kyoshi ended their plans when she killed their leader, Xu Ping An. *Daofei* continue to be a big problem in the kingdom, however, especially in the Lower Ring of Ba Sing Se. Similarly, Kyoshi may have defeated the Fifth Nation pirate fleet, but a few splinter fleets still roam the waters bordering the Earth Kingdom.

The **Fire Nation** struggles to recover from the Camellia-Peony War—a succession conflict between various clans that threw the country into chaos. Many are unhappy that Fire Lord Zoryu still sits on the throne, preferring his illegitimate half-brother, Chaejin of the Saowon clan, to rule the Fire Nation. Chaejin and his mother, Lady Huazo, live under house arrest with their dreams of claiming the throne shattered. The Fire Lord now looks to create a centralized government, taking any real power away from the clans and placing it behind the throne.

The **Air Nomads** are isolated in this era and dealing with the loss of important spiritual sites. Many Nomads see the suffering of others outside their temples and wish to help by providing spiritual guidance, but often when the Nomads offer help their actions are met with skepticism. Some elders (page 40) now debate this issue internally, but for the most part the Air Nomads remain uninvolved with the human world and focus on spiritual matters.

The **Water Tribes** have not suffered explosive drama and conflict the way the Earth Kingdom and Fire Nation have. Instead, the Northern Water Tribe sees a strengthening of wealth while the Southern Water Tribe struggles with an economic collapse. While some work on the political stage to fight this, many southern tribespeople embrace piracy as a means to provide for themselves.

Avatar Kyoshi

Kyoshi's childhood was difficult. Her parents, a runaway Air Nun named Jesa and a thief named Hark, founded the Flying Opera Company, a *daofei* group. They left Kyoshi in the care of a stranger in Yokoya Port, and then never returned. Kyoshi was kicked out onto the street and grew up as an orphan.

Rather than Kyoshi being identified as the Avatar from an early age, a boy named Yun was mistakenly identified instead. Kyoshi went on to work for Yun and eventually showed herself to be the Avatar when she defeated the Fifth Nation (page 34) with a frightening display of earthbending. Kyoshi was eventually forced to kill Yun when spiritual corruption and the revelation of the deceit fed to him as a child drove him to a merciless and violent rampage against anyone who'd ever lied to him about being the Avatar.

Kyoshi isn't currently a popular Avatar. Her closest allies are *daofei*, she sometimes fumbles in diplomatic situations, and she doesn't hesitate to resort to violence. To those who know her, Kyoshi is smart, decisive, and loyal. She has the makings of a great Avatar, but needs time to come into her own and fix much of what is broken. The people she trusts most in the world are the Flying Opera Company members and especially her girlfriend Rangi, whom she has known since she was a servant.

Kyoshi Era Significant Themes

Justice and Revenge

With so many wrongs committed without anyone in power willing to bring the criminals to justice, people may find they need to seek out justice—or revenge—on their own. In many instances, the guilty party *is* one of the individuals in power. When people cannot avenge or rescue their loved ones themselves, they look to others to do the job on their behalf, even if those others are outlaws.

GM MOVES:

- *Call revenge justice and vice versa*
- *Put allies on the side of revenge, or enemies on the side of justice*
- *Force the companions to decide what justice looks like*

Betrayal and Loyalty

Sometimes the people you trust the most end up hurting you the worst. A student might learn that their bending teacher has kept a terrible secret from them, or a character's new *daofei* family might insist upon a show of loyalty that involves harming a former ally. Enemies become teammates, and friends become new enemies. While selfishness is sometimes to blame for these shifting alliances, the desire to survive is often the root problem. That makes true friendships hard to come by in this era, and well worth fighting for.

GM MOVES:

- *Test "unbreakable" bonds*
- *Reveal shocking betrayals*
- *Turn former enemies into allies and vice versa*

Abuse of Authority

Government and criminal leaders alike abuse their influence over others in this era. While some leaders are incompetent, others are actively cruel and self-serving. Individuals who hold less power are seen as expendable pieces in these crooked bigshots' games, and those who aren't careful can become pawns without even realizing it.

GM MOVES:

- *Reveal a blatant or hidden abuse of an authority's power*
- *Represent a system that defends incompetent leaders*
- *Manipulate, bribe, or threaten "pawns" into uncomfortable action*

Loss and Abandonment

Many Earth Kingdom children were orphaned because of the Yellow Neck Uprising; an entire generation of young adults have only themselves to rely on. They were juggled between guardians and kicked out into the street, and many were forgotten. Now these people must learn to trust again. Those who had a very difficult time growing up or were betrayed by someone they trusted may have sworn to never rely on others ever again.

GM MOVES:

- *Focus on quiet moments of connection and healing*
- *Lash out against an offer of kindness*
- *Provide opportunities for people to earn and reciprocate trust*

Law and Order

Conflicts within and between *daofei* groups, as well as between criminals and law enforcement, are widespread at this time. Not all outlaws are the same, and for many having a family of criminals is a better alternative to fending for themselves on the streets. While some *daofei*, like the Yellow Necks, have lofty goals of overthrowing the Earth Kingdom's government, other outlaws just want to survive and look out for their own, like the Southern Water Tribe pirates. Meanwhile, local law enforcement often doesn't know how to handle the rampant criminal behavior. In some cases, powerful criminals pay them to look the other way. With many people forced to extremes just to survive, a life of crime is an appealing option.

GM MOVES:

- *Provide justifiable reasons for a life of crime*
- *Display the familial structure of criminal organizations*
- *Erupt into open conflict between law and order on the street*

Harmony Without, Turmoil Within

Appearances are everything to many governments, organizations, and even families. Some groups go through more trouble to appear to have everything under control than they do to actually get things under control. Fire Nation clans who feel their influence wane with the subtle shifts in power might fight to keep up appearances so that their rivals don't think they've grown weak. Air Temples may seem tranquil to guests while Airbenders argue behind closed doors about the direction of their people.

GM MOVES:

- *Present superficial positivity masking deeper problems*
- *Demand conflicts be pushed into the shadows*
- *Challenge the status quo*

Important Events

The following is a list of important events, which occur leading up to and during this era. Each event has a list of the current consequences for stories in this era.

The Wars of Secrets and Daggers

The Wars of Secrets and Daggers were collectively a succession conflict between the Earth Kingdom princes in Ba Sing Se that coincided with the Yellow Neck Uprising. Before the conflict, the Earth Kingdom had an extensive Royal Family with each person in line for the throne desiring the title of Earth Monarch. To anyone beyond nobility close to the throne, the Royal Family seem cordial, even friendly, with one another, but as each sibling smiled to one another at court, they sharpened knives behind their backs.

The princes carried out their schemes in secret, hiring assassins to do their dirty work while they made a show of being polite and supportive of each other at public events. As the princes silently battled, many of the monarchy's duties were neglected and the common people suffered. The memory of this bloody time is still fresh within Earth Kingdom ministries, and people in power may use an abundance of caution when it comes to personal safety.

Current consequences:

- Politicians are invested in protecting themselves, not their people.
- Many times local law enforcement goes unchecked by their political supervisors.
- The Earth Kingdom people's trust in their monarchy is at an all-time low.

The Yellow Neck Uprising

The Yellow Necks were a large *daofei* group based in the Earth Kingdom, named for the yellow scarves they wore around their necks. Their leader, the infamous Xu Ping An, wanted to create a world in which social outcasts ruled, and believed that the spirits supported the Yellow Necks and their revolutionary vision. He initially only had a few followers, but eventually his innate charisma and the allure of unchecked power drew many *daofei* to his cause.

Xu Ping An was also relentlessly cruel and encouraged pillaging and murdering law-abiders, including children. The Earth King and army were unwilling to protect the more remote villages of the Earth Kingdom, leaving them vulnerable as the Yellow Necks ransacked and destroyed them. The uprising was a startling failure of the Earth Kingdom nobility to protect their people thanks to most of them being embroiled in the Wars of Secrets and Daggers and terror of the Yellow Necks gripped the entire expansive nation. The uprising lasted for years and ended at the Battle of Zhulu Pass about a decade ago when the Earth Kingdom Sage Jianzhu buried many of the *daofei* alive.

Current consequences:

- A generation has lived parentless and fending for themselves.
- Many people distrust *daofei*, even those who claim to help.
- Surviving adherents look to re-form the Yellow Necks under different names.

The Fall of the Fifth Nation

Up until recently, the Fifth Nation was the most powerful pirate fleet in the world. Its long history, large numbers, and impressive strength set it apart from other pirate fleets in the world. Members originally came from the Southern Water Tribe, but the fleet was made up of people of all ethnicities and believed in treating their members equally. Because the fleet was so large, splinter fleets broke away to pursue expeditions and other missions on their own while the larger fleet conducted business as usual.

Before it was defeated, the Fifth Nation was led by a woman named Tagaka who inherited the leadership from her father. Tagaka was more aggressive and ruthless than her father and used her tenacity to rebuild the fleet after it was diminished under his command. She did so by attacking other pirate groups and adopting any survivors into the Fifth Nation.

A couple of years ago, the Fifth Nation met its demise in the South Pole during a confrontation with Kyoshi, the wrongly identified Avatar Yun, and his support team. The Fifth Nation set up the meeting as a peaceful negotiation, but secretly planned a trap for the Avatar. Kyoshi destroyed the fleet with intensely powerful earthbending; shortly afterwards, she began training to determine whether she was actually the true Avatar. The Fifth Nation lost their leader, Tagaka, to imprisonment and became little more than a handful of splinter fleets.

Current consequences:

- Splinter fleets of pirates roam the oceans looking for bounty.
- Deprived of a trading partner, the Southern Water Tribe suffers economically from the Fifth Nation's downfall.
- Some pirates seek to free Tagaka and rebuild the nation.

The False Avatar

Avatar Kuruk, Kyoshi's predecessor, was a disappointment as an Avatar, and with instability growing worse in the Earth Kingdom, there was desperation to find the next one quickly. An Air Monk named Kelsang and an Earth Kingdom Sage named Jianzhu visited Yokoya Port in their search for the Avatar. They nearly identified Kyoshi by her interaction with the Avatar relics, but the process was interrupted when she ran away. Instead, an Earthbender named Yun was incorrectly identified as the Avatar.

Feeling a bond with the young girl, Kelsang raised Kyoshi at the Avatar mansion where she worked as a servant for Yun. Years later, she used unbelievably powerful earthbending to destroy much of the Fifth Nation while on a mission with Yun and was subsequently identified as the Avatar. However, her abilities were discovered so late, many struggled to believe her status.

When Jianzhu killed Kelsang, Kyoshi made it her mission to avenge her adoptive father, but during her final confrontation with Jianzhu, Yun interrupted, killing Jianzhu himself at the last moment. Kyoshi later killed Yun, seeing no other way to stop his violent rampage against anyone who'd lied to him about being the Avatar.

Current consequences:

- Kyoshi isn't yet trusted by the public as the Avatar.
- Kyoshi struggles with vengeance and balance.
- The Avatar mansion was destroyed by Kyoshi and Yun's final fight.



The Poisoning of the Earth Sages

The Earth Sages of the Kyoshi Era were spiritual leaders who wielded a vast amount of political power. The order originated from Bhanti (page 25) immigrants, but through the years the Sages' purpose warped as they became mired in Earth Kingdom politics. After seeing Kuruk's failings as Avatar, the Sages were deeply involved in finding his successor.

The Sage Jianzhu, "Avatar" Yun's mentor, performed a number of nefarious deeds to cover up his own incompetence once he realized Kyoshi was the Avatar. Amongst them was abandoning his own pupil, Yun, to the brutality of the dark spirit who'd revealed the truth (fully detailed in the novel, *The Rise of Kyoshi*).

When the Earth Sages discovered this treachery, they held a conclave to determine whether Jianzhu should be removed as Yun's teacher. Having expected this confrontation sooner or later, Jianzhu poisoned many of the Sages, greatly reducing their numbers. A supernaturally corrupted Yun later killed Jianzhu while the Sage was battling Kyoshi.

Current consequences:

- The Earth Sages have lost their political power and mistrust one another after Jianzhu's betrayal.
- Some Sages work to return to their spiritual roots away from the corruption of politics.
- Local politicians vie for control in the power vacuum left by murdered Sages who were once de facto rulers of certain regions.

Camellia-Peony War

The Camellia-Peony War was a brutal succession conflict between Prince Zoryu, who was backed by the Keohso clan, and his brother Chaejin, who was backed by the Saowon clan. Chaejin was Fire Lord Chaeryu's illegitimate son, born to his mistress Lady Huazo, and the embarrassed Fire Lord went so far as to forbid anyone in court from mentioning him. When Chaeryu died, Zoryu claimed the throne and the two clans looked for any excuse to clash. One such excuse came when Kyoshi inadvertently set off a diplomatic crisis by misidentifying Chaejin as Zoryu, and then speaking out of turn to Zoryu himself, at the Royal Palace.

Both sides in the war were ruthless and more than willing to resort to lies, manipulation, and violence. Fire Lord Zoryu won and wanted to destroy the entire Saowon clan in his victory, but Kyoshi prevented him from doing so. He has since made it his mission to weaken the Fire Nation's noble clans so that eventually all Fire Nation subjects will be loyal only to the Fire Lord.

Current consequences:

- The Fire Lord has promoted family members of loyal clans within his government and ousted any rivals.
- Clans in general become less significant; common people unhappy with their current clan's ruler begin to look to the Fire Lord to resolve the situation, instead of keeping it an internal clan matter.
- The Saowon clan is a dying clan with little to no political capital.



The Earth Kingdom is Avatar Kyoshi's home, and during this era the considerable unrest in the kingdom is intensifying. Outlaws fight both amongst themselves and with law enforcement, and the Earth Kingdom government is unable to protect all its citizens. The kingdom's remote villages are the most vulnerable, as they hold little importance to the Earth Kingdom's economy and are therefore not protected.

This issue was exemplified by Zigan Village, a settlement in the northwest of the kingdom brought to the brink of ruin because of the Earth Kingdom's lack of oversight and terrible mismanagement by the teenage Governor Te Sihung. The village nearly fell to an avoidable famine because Te followed in his father's footsteps, confiscating grain from locals and selling it for his own profit. Fortunately, Kyoshi solved this issue by making the governor promise to do better moving forward, but not all villages are so lucky.

Like the outlying villages, the Earth Kingdom's cities face their own challenges. Prosperous cities must contend with *daofei* interference and engrained political corruption. In particular, Ba Sing Se (page 22) is home to numerous *daofei* groups including several former Yellow Necks. The farther from the center of the city you are, the less security there is, and those who live in the Lower Ring know all too well that they are on their own when it comes to dealing with the *daofei*.

Notable Figures and Groups

Kirima

A confident waterbending teacher and professional criminal

Kirima is Kyoshi's waterbending teacher and a loyal member of the Flying Opera Company. Though she has some rough edges, she cares deeply about the other members of the company. She is supremely confident in her skills as a fighter and a performer, and it is difficult to intimidate her. Though she has a long criminal history, she has little patience for "silly *daofei* customs" such as nicknames.

Now that she has recovered from broken legs in a fight against Yun, Kirima is eager to find less dangerous jobs to set her up for her eventual retirement. Those jobs, of course, need to be illegal. Now that the Flying Opera Company is more visible to the public eye thanks to its connection to the Avatar, finding jobs is more challenging. Some *daofei* are hesitant to work with the company, while other *daofei* are a little too eager because they want something from the Avatar. Anyone looking to join the Flying Opera Company needs to prove their skill and trustworthiness to Kirima, and she isn't easy to trick.

Lao Ge

A suspiciously long-lived member of the Flying Opera Company

Lao Ge is an old member of the Flying Opera Company who may or may not have the secret to immortality. Rumor has it that Lao Ge is over two hundred years old, and he has had many pupils who sought him out specifically to learn his secrets, though Lao Ge refuses to provide any straightforward answers. Also known in some circles as Tieguai, the elderly man uses numerous disguises to avoid drawing attention to himself, such as pretending to be a bumbling drunkard. In truth, he is an Earthbender and a skilled assassin who believes in killing those who cause suffering to others.

Those who seek impossible longevity—or training in assassination—might come to Lao Ge for help. Finding him isn't easy, as he slipped into the shadows after Kyoshi defeated Yun. Making a show of bringing down or spectacularly humiliating a corrupt figurehead would likely get Lao Ge's attention.

Wong

An earthbending teacher dedicated to his daofei *family*

Wong is one of Kyoshi's earthbending teachers and a longtime member of the Flying Opera Company. He is not afraid to put himself in harm's way in service to his friends and has sought revenge when those friends were hurt or worse. He also has no qualms with stealing from those he feels undeserving, as he and Kirima gladly looted Jianzhu's mansion and lived off the profits for a time.

Earthbenders in trouble with the law and in need of training might seek out Wong as a teacher, and if any member of the Flying Opera Company is in trouble, new or old, Wong is one of the first people to help. Like Kirima, Wong is working on pruning and building the company's criminal network. He hopes to expand it far past Chameleon Bay in the coming years.

Mok and Wai

Two infamous criminals with conflicting views of the Avatar

Mok is a well-known outlaw and the Yellow Necks' former second-in-command. He insists on being called Uncle Mok as a sign of respect. He is currently in prison after being arrested by the Ba Sing Se police. His imprisoned associate, Wai, is a *daofei* lieutenant who highly respects Kyoshi almost to the point of worship. Wai has no trouble resorting to violence as a form of punishment for insubordination, but his reverence for the Avatar trumps his loyalty to the Yellow Necks.

Heroes might take advantage of this difference between the two to undermine any nefarious plans they are concocting. Just because Wai reveres the Avatar doesn't necessarily mean that he respects the wishes of her allies, however. Both men surely intend to escape to form yet another version of the Yellow Necks after the failure of the Autumn Bloom Society (page 32).

Auntie Mui

A knowledge broker and former servant of the Avatar

Auntie Mui is the former head of the kitchen staff at Avatar Mansion. She has known Kyoshi for many years and she cared for both Kyoshi and the late Yun. Likewise, the Avatar cares for Mui and keeping her safe is important to her. Auntie Mui has a lot of insider knowledge and contacts after working as a servant for so long. She also knows all the ins and outs of the Yokoya Peninsula.

If Auntie Mui overhears a plot against Kyoshi, she may be the one to ask the heroes to protect Kyoshi. Auntie Mui might even make for a good spy at a noble household since nobles often overlook servants.

The Beifong Family

An obscenely wealthy and influential Earth Kingdom family

The Beifong family is a highly influential and wealthy clan with many members. The late Lu Beifong led it until his recent death in the Fire Nation at the hands of Yun. Lu left behind many grandchildren but did not have much faith in their potential as leaders or Earthbenders. Still, the family has immense political sway in the Earth Kingdom and getting on their bad side is a huge mistake, while they are a powerful ally to anyone on their good side.

One or more of Lu's grandchildren may seek instruction or a special advantage in the struggle to rise to the top of the family. Particularly ruthless and ambitious grandchildren may be inspired by the recent Wars of Secrets and Daggers and resort to violence to get ahead. If one of Lu Beifong's descendants senses a target on their back, they may hire capable heroes to protect them and sniff out assassination plots.

Threats and Challenges

Daofei

Linked theme: Law and Order

One of the largest threats in the Earth Kingdom during the Kyoshi Era is *daofei*—even if the heroes are *daofei* themselves. These groups of outlaws butt heads with each other and are subject to deadly infighting. Powerful *daofei* might hold sway over local governments, while weaker groups are much more vulnerable to the authorities. A *daofei* group might be involved in any criminal activity from smuggling to assassinations, and some, such as the Yellow Necks, even aspire to overthrow the government.

Different groups have different processes that prospective members need to go through in order to join. While some *daofei* groups are more informal, many have long-standing traditions centered on loyalty and strength that are important to them. Veteran *daofei* might ask prospective members to commit particularly risky crimes to prove they aren't cowards, or to perform mundane but grueling tasks for a period of time. Oaths must be sworn upon joining, and should those oaths be broken there are usually dire consequences.

The Fifth Nation Splinter Fleets

Linked theme: Betrayal and Loyalty

Once the most powerful group of pirates in the world, the Fifth Nation was all but wiped out by Avatar Kyoshi before she was recognized as the Avatar. They kidnapped and enslaved civilians, and became especially emboldened after the death of Avatar Kuruk as there was one less force to keep them in check. The pirate group is composed of people of many different backgrounds and includes benders and non-benders alike. Though reduced to splinter fleets, these pirates have years of experience terrorizing the coasts and shouldn't be taken lightly. Those who wish to leave their crew behind for a new life may make enemies out of former friends depending on that crew's disposition. No two fleets are exactly alike, as new leaders command them based on their own personal ethics.

The Flying Opera Company

The Flying Opera Company is a *daofei* network founded by Avatar Kyoshi's late parents, Jesa and Hark. Once very large with chapters in different locations, it now only consists of the Chameleon Bay chapter. The group comprises the majority of the Avatar's team of teachers and allies. They historically disguised themselves as traveling performers to hide their criminal activities. Kirima, Lao Ge, Wong, Rangi, and Kyoshi are all members. Those who join generally must make fifty-four oaths, but the most important ones are to never take an honest job and never to abide by the law from that point on.

The Yellow Necks' Legacy

The Yellow Necks were a large and infamous group that pillaged settlements and murdered civilians regardless of gender or age. Though they reformed under several different names only to collapse time and time again, some former members still want to return to their former power. After their leader Xu Ping An was imprisoned in Zigan Village, they rebranded themselves as the Autumn Bloom Society. Then, once Xu Ping An was killed, another group reformed as the Triad of the Golden Wing. No matter how many times they are defeated, they always seem to come back under some new name.

Law Enforcement

Linked theme: Law and Order

The police in Ba Sing Se often make bad decisions in their handling of *daofei*, and it's not uncommon for civilians to suffer the consequences. Citizens of the Lower Ring are particularly vulnerable to both *daofei* and law enforcement as they are not prioritized by the Earth Kingdom government. The police are more likely to go after small *daofei* groups than bigger ones, because they're scared and the smaller groups are easier targets.

A high security prison in the Agrarian Zone of Ba Sing Se beneath Lake Laogai holds criminals of note such as Tagaka (page 42). Escape is nearly impossible, and heroes looking to rescue someone falsely accused must come up with a solid plan before breaking in. Likewise, heroes dealing with law enforcement in the Earth Kingdom may find that the law causes more problems than they solve, and that cleaning up after them is a challenging undertaking.

Though the Four Nations are at peace, the Fire Nation is prepared for any confrontation with the other three nations and has iron-clad strategies for dealing with each of them. Despite that external mistrust, most of the Fire Nation's problems come from within as they recover from the Camellia-Peony War. Change is coming, and not everyone is prepared for it.

It's hard to find anyone in power who didn't have stakes in the Camellia-Peony War. Those who allied with the Saowon Clan, led by Lady Huazo and her son Chaejin, during the succession conflict are potential targets for scrutiny and discrimination. Such is the position of the Fire Sages who backed the Saowon Clan, because their High Sage is the uncle of Lady Huazo. Similarly, merchants who sold their businesses and lands to the Saowon Clan now struggle with damaged reputations. The conflict may have officially ended, but its impact still ripples through the Fire Nation.

One place where the conflict between the clans remains particularly strong is North Chung-Ling. Both clans had a presence here during the Camellia-Peony War. North Chung-Ling, later known as Fire Fountain City (page 25), is located on Shuhon Island in the eastern part of the Fire Nation. With its reputation as a spiritual location due to its vision-inducing natural gas, North Chung-Ling was something of a tourist destination with people setting up fake spiritual experiences and shows for visitors. Sadly, thanks to the clan conflict, the city and its attractions are worn down, and the tension between the clans makes it a dour place to live.

Notable Figures and Groups

Fire Lord Zoryu

The ruler of the Fire Nation who recently won a succession conflict

Fire Lord Zoryu is the leader of the Fire Nation, though he was not very popular with his people during his early reign. Arrogant and vindictive, he would have executed all of the Saowon clan had Kyoshi and Lao Ge of the Flying Opera Company not interfered. Zoryu now intends to steadily strip away the various noble clans' influence so that eventually the Fire Lord remains the only true authority in the Fire Nation.

Heroes with ties to the Saowon clan or any other clan with ambitious plans will find Zoryu a dangerous enemy to have. He would love an excuse to kill Chaejin and would not hesitate to do so if his half-brother escaped house arrest.

Chaejin

The Fire Lord's half-brother who lives as a hostage after losing a succession conflict

Chaejin is the illegitimate half-brother of Zoryu and wished to usurp the throne, though he had no plan as to how he could shape the Fire Nation if he ever achieved that goal. He is now a hostage of the Keohso along with his mother, Lady Huazo. He cares deeply about his mother and will likely do just about anything to see her freed, a task he cannot accomplish without outside help.

Chaejin has many resources to offer heroes willing to help him, but all of those resources are based in his home of Ma'inka Island. He can make them available in exchange for his freedom, or at least his mother's. Ma'inka Island is financially prosperous, and Chaejin's clan was in the process of amassing money to support his bid for the throne before he was defeated.

Lady Huazo

The leader of the Saowon clan living in captivity

Lady Huazo is the intelligent and persistent leader of the Saowon clan. She put in a monumental effort to get her son, Chaejin, on the Fire Nation throne during the Camellia-Peony War, but her clan ultimately lost the conflict. Once the late Fire Lord Chaeryu's mistress, Lady Huazo spent many years working around Chaeryu's needs until his death finally made it so that Chaejin could return to court.

Though their defeat means that both Lady Huazo and Chaejin are prisoners of Fire Lord Zoryu, Huazo is patient and determined. Anyone who interacts with her is liable to be treated like an insignificant inferior, as she cares deeply about power, hierarchy, and appearances. Though her shot at getting her son on the throne is over, she seeks to escape house arrest and may resort to blackmail if given the opportunity.

Rangi

A skilled Firebender who joined The Flying Opera Company to help the Avatar

Since Rangi was once a firebending Fire Army officer, she tends to be combative and stubborn and has never shied away from a fight, especially when her loved ones' safety was at stake. Her training has made her a strong, but authoritative leader who cares deeply about those around her. Though she took the oaths to become a member of the Flying Opera Company to help her girlfriend Kyoshi, Rangi does not generally trust *daofei*.

Rangi's mother is Hei-Ran, the former headmistress of the Royal Fire Academy for Girls. Both are members of the Sei'naka clan who have taught firebending to the royal family for generations. Rangi is a highly competent firebending instructor, and any Firebender would be lucky to have her as a teacher. She is also knowledgeable about how to deal with *daofei*, so heroes in need of help who aren't strictly on either side of the law might turn to Rangi for insider information.

Hei-Ran

A master Firebender learning to delegate as she recovers from injury

Once the Headmistress of the Royal Fire Academy for Girls, and then Yun's firebending teacher, Hei-Ran is a skilled Firebender who was once friends with Avatar Kuruk and is also Rangi's mother. A former student of the Royal Fire Academy for Girls, Hei-Ran held a reputation as a truly dangerous opponent in Agni Kais and still holds the record for most "accidental" kills. She has taken a break from most strenuous things after recovering from a serious injury Yun inflicted on her.

Hei-Ran has many connections, including former colleagues from the Academy, and she may ask them to assist her in matters connected to the Fire Nation or the Avatar now that she is retired. If there is corruption or something suspicious going on at the Academy, she may be able to pull some strings there as well.

Nyahitha

A Fire Sage with extensive spiritual knowledge and experience with dark spirits

Nyahitha was a Fire Sage who studied and hunted dark spirits with Avatar Kuruk in secret. He was also Kuruk's drinking buddy, in large part because Kuruk needed an outlet for his depression that developed from dealing with said spirits. Slotted to be High Sage, Nyahitha fell out of favor when the eldest uncle from an opposing clan to his own took the position. Though Nyahitha now works as a charlatan fortune-teller in North Chung-Ling, he is still capable of great things and helped Kyoshi connect to Kuruk.

If someone is suffering from a spiritual sickness or injury, Nyahitha might be able to diagnose and treat it. He is less likely to directly help with dark spirits, however, since he has bad memories connected to his time fighting them with Kuruk. Should heroes need his assistance with such matters, they need to convince him that he is singularly suited to helping them.

Threats and Challenges

Keohso Clan

Linked theme: Abuse of Authority

The Keohso clan was one of the two noble houses involved in the Camellia-Peony War. Fire Lord Zoryu's late mother was Keohso, so that clan is extremely loyal to the throne. Though the succession conflict is over, there is still tension between the Keohso and Saowon clans. The Keohso are brutally unforgiving when one of their own does business with the Saowon, and any Keohso showing outright sympathy risks being attacked.

Heroes may be pressured to reveal their loyalties while in the Fire Nation, or have a target painted on their backs for associating with members of the Saowon clan. Now that the Keohso clan's claim on the throne is cemented, important figures within the clan vie for standing and influence. Unfortunately for them, Zoryu is set on establishing the Fire Lord's voice as the only one that truly matters in the Fire Nation.

Saowon Clan

Linked theme: Justice and Revenge

The Saowon clan was the noble house on the other side of the Camellia-Peony War. In a relatively short span of time they grew from a weak clan to a thriving, influential one. Nonetheless, they lost the succession conflict. With their leader, Lady Huazo, and her son, Chaejin, under house arrest, the Saowon are without their two most important leaders. Though it would be incredibly risky, the clan almost surely has aspirations of breaking them out, but if they aren't careful, they are likely to start another civil war.

Life is not easy for the Saowon clan right now, so members may plead with companions to conduct business on their behalf in situations where their clan name presents a problem. Companions with ties to the clan might visit their home on Ma'inka Island and assist in the clan's reorganization now that Chaejin and Lady Huazo are imprisoned by Zoryu. Power and responsibilities must change hands with the two leaders gone, and if the clan is to survive, leadership needs to pass to someone ready to do the hard work.



The Fall of Noble Clans

Linked theme: Harmony Without, Turmoil Within

Ever since the end of the Camellia-Peony War, Fire Lord Zoryu has worked to slowly dismantle the noble clans. He believes a central Fire Nation government will prevent potential future civil wars. His plan is expansive and generational, but the work has begun. Though the Keohso technically won the conflict succession, Zoryu's plans for the future of the Fire Nation extend to all of the noble clans—including the Keohso.

Those who belong to noble clans may start to see their people's power slipping away, and they either have to adapt or fight against it. Some clan leaders may now be sycophants in the presence of the Fire Lord in order to maintain what power they have, while others may prefer to let their clans' power fade over behaving in such a way.



The Air Nomads have isolated themselves while struggling with mounting internal issues. Leading into this era, Earth Kingdom Sages blamed the Air Nomads' detachment for Kuruk's failures as an Avatar. This tension continued when the Air Nomads of the Southern Air Temple provided sanctuary to Kyoshi after her confrontation with Jianzhu. Many opposed the idea that she was the true Avatar, but the Air Nomads still took her in. This has culminated in the Air Nomad Elders focusing their people on internal matters, not only to avoid conflict, but as a matter of survival.

Thriving towns near Air Nomad temples struggle with banditry, causing the townsfolk to leave to larger cities in search of work and safety. Having been burned one too many times by interfering with others' lives, many Nomads are hesitant to get too involved unless asked for direct assistance. Rather than working with the towns to build a sustainable life near the temples, the Air Nomads accept that each individual has free will and must do what they need to thrive.

This detachment is compounded by the loss of spiritual sites, which Air Nomads have protected for years. Avatar Kuruk's mission to destroy Dark Spirits left many spiritual sites in the human world unattended. While the Air Nomads struggled to pick up the slack, their mission fails and comes to an end in this era. Thanks to human meddling and lack of care, the final few spirits residing at these sites will pull their homes into the Spirit World, further separating humans and spirits. Air Nomads accept that reversing what's happening is a lost cause, and now focus on protecting the sites while they still remain and recording what knowledge they can before it is lost to humans forever.

Notable Figures and Groups

Four Councils of Elders

An esteemed council of Air Nomads who serve as leaders

Each Air Temple is governed by a separate council of elders. Members of the elder councils are master Airbenders, having earned their tattoos and more before serving their people. These elders serve as leaders in both political and religious capacities, and help to identify the Avatar during eras when the Avatar is born into the Air Nomads. The Council of Elders at the Southern Air Temple took Kyoshi in during the tumultuous time right after her reveal of her Avatar status. The Elders can be set in their ways, however, as the Southern Air Temple Elders exiled Kelsang and marked him in a lower place of honor in their registers because he had taken lives. Airbenders seeking spiritual guidance may want to ask their local Council of Elders for advice, or the Elders may send an Airbender out into the world to pursue some mission if they truly believe it serves the greater good.

Namthöse

An Air Nomad elder set on keeping Airbenders out of the world's troubles

Namthöse is an esteemed member of the Northern Air Temple's Council of Elders. He is an avid proponent for the Air Nomads staying uninvolved in the conflicts of the world and actively tries to discourage young Airbenders from absorbing too much outside news for fear they will become distracted from their paths. Currently, he is trying to instate a rule to allow only Air Nomads to visit the Northern Air Temple while also preventing Airbenders still in training there from interacting with outsiders. He believes that the other three nations are so prone to violence that they must not be permitted to influence young Airbenders in any way. Foreigners who have business with the Northern Air Temple find it very hard to get in touch with anyone other than those Namthöse deems appropriate.

Jinpa

An air monk, secretary to the Avatar, and secret member of the White Lotus

A monk from the Southern Air Temple, Jinpa is Kyoshi's secretary and a member of the White Lotus. Jinpa excels at handling the intricacies of political and diplomatic matters and tries to keep Kyoshi in check when she gets carried away with dealing with the corrupt through violence. Though he chooses pacifism when he can, he understands that sometimes a fight is necessary for the greater good. He is secretly involved with the Order of the White Lotus and takes his responsibilities as a member seriously, doing his best to help Kyoshi become a great Avatar.

During this era, the Order of the White Lotus's activities and very existence are hidden from the public. Jinpa may occasionally drop hints to Kyoshi about his involvement, but he never admits to anything outright. Those who heard rumors about the secret order and want to do good in the world may find the group very attractive, but discovering any information about it is a challenge all on its own. Jinpa isn't likely to reveal the existence of the Order, but could be swayed if the Avatar's life is at stake.

Matangi

The head of an Earth Kingdom orphanage outside the Eastern Air Temple

Matangi, a renegade Air Nun, is the head of an orphanage in the Earth Kingdom, despite advice from the elders to stay out of worldly affairs. She originally founded the orphanage to help children orphaned in the Yellow Neck Uprising, where the crisis led to a large number of deaths. Many of those children are grown-ups or teenagers now, and sometimes they come back to her for help when they run into trouble. Whenever one of her former charges turns out to be in a *daofei* group, she is torn between staying uninvolved and helping them. Much of the time, she can't bring herself to turn her back on those who need her no matter what the circumstances.

Matangi has a way of fostering greatness. Heroes who need to find someone who grew up in the orphanage may seek her out, but she only gives information if she trusts them not to hurt her former charges. Many of the children she helped raise would do anything for her, so she has quite a network of contacts to pull from when disaster strikes as well.

What's Lost

What is the Singing Path? Who is Róng? What other spiritual sites are the Air Nomads losing? These specifics are up to you and your game. None of the sites the Air Nomads protect in this era make it to the Roku Era and the Nomads know they're fighting a losing battle. Stories you tell surrounding these sites engage the theme of Loss and Abandonment from the unique perspective of the Air Nomads. A player who chooses to portray an Air Nomad in this era must balance their spiritual duty and their natural inclination to travel and explore. The tragedy of the Air Nomads in this era is that while they are accused of not caring about the outside world, they in fact care very deeply. So deeply that they often must ignore worldly concerns to focus on preserving spiritual knowledge for generations to come. Much of which, we as fans of the Avatarverse know, is sadly lost during the Hundred Year War.

Gyemtsen

An Air Nun fighting her secret desire to exact revenge

Gyemtsen is an Air Nun from the Eastern Air Temple. She left her position as a sought-after airbending teacher to protect the Singing Path after her sister died protecting it. The Singing Path is a spiritual site in the Earth Kingdom guarded by a spirit named Róng and is now corrupted by a *daofei* group known as the Ghost Tigers using it as a hideout. Thanks to continued harassment by the Ghost Tigers, Róng now wishes to pull her home into the Spirit World, but can't do it while they're still there.

Ever since her sister's death at the hands of the Ghost Tigers, Gyemtsen struggles with urges to exact vengeance, urges that violate the ethics of the Air Nomads. She chases the Ghost Tigers through the winding stones of the Singing Path and steers them away from neighboring towns…while inching ever closer to the idea that if she can't find a way to remove them from the Singing Path peacefully, she will do it by force.

Mangal

A restless soul in tune with the spirits

Mangal is a troublemaker (at least by Air Nomad standards) who lives in the Northern Air Temple. He has snuck away from the Northern Air Temple many times before and used to play tricks on the Air Monks as a kid. Though few know it, Mangal is very good at spirit projecting and communicating with spirits. He can even solve problems in nearby villages just by sensing what is causing the spirits distress and helping to fix it.

Mangal is contemplating running away from the temple for good since he's so misunderstood. He knows the surrounding area well, including places where local *daofei* frequent. Heroes with spirit problems or issues with local *daofei* would find a useful guide in Mangal, but he does have a tendency to get into trouble.

Threats and Challenges

Protecting the Avatar Relics

Linked theme: Law and Order

One of the Air Nomads' responsibilities is to protect the relics used to help identify the Avatar. These relics are a collection of four toys (a stuffed hog-monkey, a clay turtle-duck, a drum, and a whirligig) that belonged to past incarnations of the Avatar. When testing children to see if they are potentially the Avatar, the relics get mixed with a wide variety of random toys. The Air Nomads display the toys in front of the children, and if one of them chooses the correct ones, it indicates that the child has memories of their past lives as the Avatar.

Very early in this era, the toys were stolen by an air monk named Kelsang to expedite the search for the Avatar, highlighting the relics' vulnerability. Though Kelsang returned the relics when he was finished with them, the Air Monks worry about them being stolen again by outsiders or traitors. Other parties may want to steal the relics for nefarious reasons, which would be a devastating loss for the Air Nomads. For instance, a wealthy antiquarian might hire a thief to steal a relic for his collection, or an Air Nomad who wants to create a new sect might take them as leverage.

Exile

Linked theme: Loss and Abandonment

The Air Nomads on the whole value pacifism and emotional detachment, so when one of their own engages in violence or reckless behavior there are consequences. Kelsang, Kyoshi's late adoptive father and an Air Monk, was exiled from the Southern Air Temple after he destroyed a Fifth Nation splinter fleet and stole the Avatar relics. Airbenders who follow his example are likely to find themselves in exile as well, and it is not easy to get back in the Air Nomads' good graces.

Air Nomads who turn from their people's teachings and face exile may band together and explore the world. Perhaps, they do not denounce violence when it is used to defend innocent people. Many elders condemn this selfishness, claiming that it only serves to divide the Air Nomads and ignores the spiritual duties each Nomad has. This embrace of freedom is growing, however, and there is little the Elders can do to stop it.

Criticism of Philosophy

Linked theme: Harmony Without, Turmoil Within

Since the Air Nomads highly value peace, pacifism, and detachment, they often do not get involved with conflicts taking place outside their bubble. That said, many Air Nomads involve themselves in spiritual matters no matter what nation they are in. This can lead to people in the region they visit resenting the Nomads for their focus on their own personal goals and the spirits, rather than the people standing right in front of them.

Air Nomads are likely to face these types of criticisms when traveling throughout the world, or they may feel similarly about their people's philosophy themselves. When arriving in a new area, Air Nomads may be refused entrance even if they're there to solve a matter with spirits. Likewise, Nomad infighting on whether they should help people outside their nation could hinder a group's mission, despite everyone's best intentions.

Water Tribes
KYOSHI ERA

The startling differences between the Northern and Southern Water Tribes are never more apparent than during the Kyoshi Era. The Southern Water Tribe has suffered economically for some time, which has resulted in many people leaving to pursue a life of piracy instead. The Southern capital, Wolf Cove (page 21), was once much larger, but it has been steadily shrinking in population as people move from the city to villages upon the open ice to provide for themselves. Even after the fall of the Fifth Nation, piracy is a tempting alternative to poverty. The Southern Water Tribe has no navy to protect itself with, and as a result is particularly vulnerable.

In contrast, Agna Qel'a (page 20) and the Northern Water Tribe's economic success is evident in the design of their Royal Palace, their military, and the general well-being of their population. During this time, Agna Qel'a is open to visitors who generally must arrive via ship or sky bison. Avatar Kuruk was born in the Northern Water Tribe, but because of his perceived failings as the Avatar, mentioning him in polite company is frowned upon.

Many in the South question how those in the North could claim to govern them and fail to support their struggling peoples. With the tribal chieftains at a political stalemate, lesser chieftains in the South now organize themselves to parlay with the North and open up new roads of communication. While these chieftains may have lost hope in the South, they'll ensure their people's survival.



Notable Figures and Groups

Atuat

The most skilled healer in the world

Atuat is an incredibly powerful healer from the Northern Water Tribe, and if she can't heal someone it means there is no help for them at all. Atuat is cocky and a bit impetuous, but only because she is very confident in herself and her legitimately impressive skills. When not attending to people as a healer, Atuat enjoys getting up to a little mischief and fun. The fastest way to her heart is to invite Atuat on an adventure. Even while assisting the Avatar, she still found time to gamble, eat good food, and show off a little.

Those studying healing through waterbending could learn a lot from her, but Atuat is fairly traditional in her beliefs. Since only women are allowed to learn healing in the Northern Water Tribe, Atuat is likely to only offer instruction to other women. Should a hero or their ally become badly wounded, Atuat might be their only hope of recovery.

Tagaka

A former pirate queen being held in the prison beneath Lake Laogai

Tagaka is a cunning Waterbender who led the Fifth Nation, and whose father and grandfather led the Fifth Nation before her. She is a ruthless opponent and cleverly hid her true strength as a bender for many years. When Tagaka was captured and sent to prison following the destruction of her fleet, the remnants of the pirate group were left without a leader.

Now, all that remains of the Fifth Nation is a handful of splinter fleets, but they may very well regroup and find a new leader if they can't rescue Tagaka from the prison beneath Lake Laogai. Heroes might be sent to rescue her, but not necessarily out of concern for the pirate queen…Tagaka enslaved many people during her time leading the Fifth Nation, and she may be the only person who remembers where she ultimately sent those people.

Avatar Kuruk

The previous Avatar on a quest to find his fiancée

Avatar Kuruk died when he was only thirty-three years old, and his time as the Avatar is considered by most to be a deep disappointment as he let many of his responsibilities slip. In truth, Kuruk's life was marred by tragedy and loneliness, and he turned to unhealthy coping mechanisms to deal with the pain caused by hunting dark spirits. Though Kuruk is no longer alive, he has attempted to communicate with and help the current Avatar. On one such occasion, Kyoshi connected with him while she was in the Spirit World and he revealed some of his most important memories to her.

Those who find themselves in the Spirit World and in need of help might run across Kuruk, as he is on a mission there to find his deceased fiancée, Ummi, taken by Koh the Face Stealer. Also, his memory is still felt in the Northern Water Tribe, and friends of his may still be struggling to come to terms with the course of his life.

Pitseolak

An old warrior on a mission to restore his tribe and bring an end to piracy

Pitseolak is an older warrior from the Southern Water Tribe determined to hunt down pirates from his tribe and make them return home. He blames the recent history of young people going off to become pirates for the Southern Water Tribe's decline. Combat is a challenge for the elderly warrior, but he still has some fight in him and what he lacks in physical prowess he makes up for in battle wisdom.

Unlike the Northern Water Tribe which has robust and organized defenses, the Southern Water Tribe relies on a militia. Many Capital City militia members respect Pitseolak for his dedication and almost supernatural skill with a bladed boomerang, despite his often outspoken and wacky nature. Warriors looking to train in weapons could hardly find a better teacher, but Pitseolak will want help with pirates in return.

Aupilaarjuk

A stealthy courier who brings important messages from one tribe to the other

Aupilaarjuk is an adventurous courier from the Southern Water Tribe responsible for delivering special correspondences between the two tribes. Her job is risky because sometimes she carries messages that others don't want to arrive at their destination, and there's a great distance between the two tribes where things can go wrong. Her current job is of the utmost importance as she ferries messages between the lesser politicians of the two tribes working to support the south and defend against pirates.

She can offer introductions to important people in either tribe, as well as to the White Lotus with whom she's had a few clandestine interactions. Aupilaarjuk only speaks of her relationship with the White Lotus to a trusted few since she occasionally works as a courier for them as well. When the White Lotus hires her to make a delivery, it's because that delivery is of extreme importance and would result in disaster if it fell into the wrong hands.

Chukagnak

A healer-turned-pirate who wants to climb to the top

Chukagnak is a young Northern Water Tribe healer who has embraced a life of piracy. She was a poor healer and hated the man she was arranged to marry, so she left home before the trappings of tradition could swallow her. Now she lives life by her own rules and respects others who do the same as long as they don't get in her way. Chukagnak loves the little luxuries in life, whether they come in the form of silky pillows, extravagant feasts, or exotic birds. She doesn't care what others think of her, but does tire of disrespect quickly and has no qualms with throwing repeat offenders overboard.

Chukagnak is a bit of an oddity within the pirate world since not many from the Northern Water Tribe turn to this kind of life. She is now in command of a Fifth Nation splinter fleet at odds with some of the other splinter fleets. Recently, she sank several ships filled with valuable cargo but had to escape before they could retrieve it. Heroes who need items in that cargo must consult with Chukagnak to locate it, but she always asks for a favor or boon in return.

Threats and Challenges

Economic Troubles in the Southern Water Tribe

Linked theme: Loss and Abandonment

The Southern Water Tribe is far from thriving. While the worst is yet to come in the Hundred Year War (page 56), members of the tribe feel the strain of the failing economy. Some locals must leave home to find more lucrative work, while others may take on riskier jobs nearby, such as hunting dangerous creatures, in order to make ends meet. If heroes need something from members of the Southern Water Tribe, they may need to lend help first before anyone can afford to take the time to assist.

The Earth Kingdom Sage Jianzhu recently tried to persuade Lu Beifong to lend the Southern Water Tribe money in order for them to better thrive, but his attempt failed due to the political maneuvering of Beifong's chamberlain, Hui, before all three of them died. Though Hui claimed to oppose the proposed loan because the tribe could become a threat to the Earth Kingdom if it grew too much…in reality, he wanted to thwart the initiative simply because it was Jianzhu who proposed it.

Entrance to the Spirit World

Linked theme: Harmony Without, Turmoil Within

Though the Spirit Oasis is beautiful and serene, it has unfortunately been struck by tragedy in the past. Koh the Face Stealer, a frightening spirit who lives up to his name, emerged from the Oasis to abduct Avatar Kuruk's fiancée, Ummi. He then, of course, stole her face as well. Though these types of incidents are rare, it does seem that there may be a passage to the Spirit World at the bottom of the pond. Those who visit the Spirit Oasis may be at risk should another spirit with malicious intentions rise out of the waters.

If a spirit were to arise, the Water Tribes' people are perhaps the best equipped to deal with it, as they've lived near the Spirit Oasis and both Spirit Portals (page 21) for their entire existence. However, the world is changing and as the Air Nomads struggle to maintain other spiritual sites in the world, the Water Tribes may face unexpected opposition from the spiritual sites they've lived in harmony with for so many years.

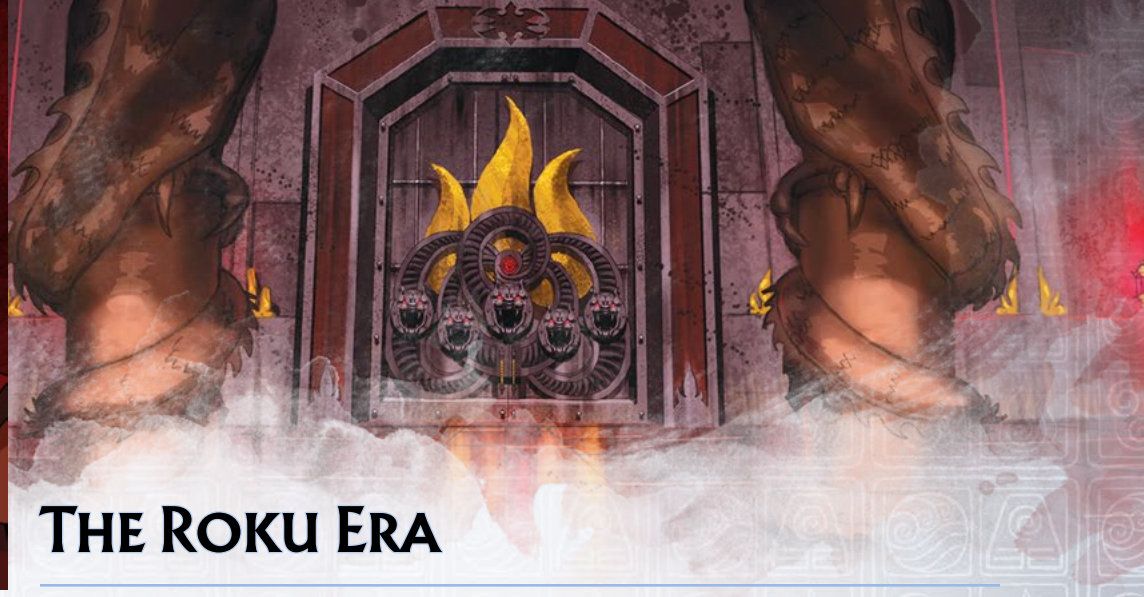
Piracy

Linked theme: Law and Order

The Fifth Nation is now a handful of dangerous splinter fleets and there are still unaffiliated pirates on the sea. Many of them come from the Southern Water Tribe, turning to piracy in order to avoid poverty. Now that there is a hole left behind by the Fifth Nation, perhaps another pirate fleet can rise to power and fill it. Members of the Southern Water Tribe may need to leave their families and homes behind to pursue such a life, but they may also be better able to support those families with the money they earn as pirates.

Anyone traveling by sea risks encountering these pirates. Someone chasing a ship to a coastal village might encounter hostile villagers willing to hide the pirates, because they provide food for their community. Anyone on land looking to hold these sailors accountable for their actions must wade into the murky waters of deciding who is truly guilty—those who steal to survive or those who have so much and refuse to share.





The Roku Era

Where We Start

The Roku Era specifically details the time between Sozin's coronation and Avatar Roku's wedding. The world is currently in an unprecedented time of peace, though minor skirmishes still occur between the Four Nations. This peace is in part due to Roku being an extremely competent Avatar, the Air Nomads keeping the peace internationally, and the diplomatic work that keeps disputes from boiling over into open war.

During this era, the Four Nations see most conflict on the political field where they jockey for political power and resources. Academic and industrial institutions churn out a number of new technologies, which each nation's government wants to produce and exploit. The nations vie for resources to produce these valuable inventions, resulting in numerous small-scale or diplomatic conflicts.

The **Air Nomads** do their best to keep peace on an international scale, by lending aid when requested by the other nations or the Avatar himself. However, they also face their own problems with a renegade order called the Guiding Wind. The Guiding Wind believes the Air Nomads have grown complacent in their search for enlightenment and seek too much cooperation with the corrupt and exploitative wealthy citizens of other nations. Many Elders denounce the Guiding Wind for their disruptive actions. With the Air Nomads being pulled in so many different directions, it seems to only be a matter of time before the stresses overwhelm them and they're spread too thin to help everyone.

The Guiding Wind is also active in the **Fire Nation** where young nobility embrace Air Nomad philosophy. This movement is in part led by Fire Lord Sozin's sister, Zeisan, who intends to swear off her earthly possessions in exchange for a life of austerity. But the Air Nomads and his sister are just two problems the new Fire Lord intends to tackle. After bringing the warring families of the Fire Nation to heel, the Fire Lord has made great strides towards progress in his country. Instituting new plans to uplift the poorest of the nation and starting the tradition of dragon hunting to assert his dominance, Sozin's legacy as Fire Lord looks promising indeed.

Sozin's actions are in stark contrast to those of the **Earth Kingdom** monarch Jialun who dedicates a large amount of his time undoing the constitution set out by his predecessors. First, the Earth King dissolved the Earth Sage order, unseating his most vocal opponents. Then, he overturned old laws and instated new ones to consolidate his power. Some pockets of the Earth Kingdom suffer under the new laws, but others willing to play the Earth King's game have flourished.

The **Water Tribes** in this era work with one another to secure trade routes and grow the prosperity of their people. Though the Northern Water Tribe chief and the Southern Water Tribe chiefs often disagree on how to solve issues, they present a united front to the rest of the world, making them real players on the international stage. Unfortunately, many worry all their work may be for naught if they cannot appease the spirits who seem agitated by the technological innovations—and looming conflicts—of this new age.

Avatar Roku

Avatar Roku grew up as a Fire Nation noble and the best friend of Prince Sozin. Roku spent much of his time visiting the Royal Palace and never wanted for much of anything in his life. He was a kind, determined, and friendly child. When Roku turned 16, he was identified as the Avatar, and before he left on his journey to master the elements, his dear friend Sozin gave him the Fire Nation's Crown Prince headpiece as a sign of their friendship.

Roku traveled the world for years learning to master the elements and he made a few good friends along the way including Monk Gyatso and the master Waterbender Taqukaq. Through his travels Roku learned many things about the world. He saw how unique each nation was and how their peace was held together by fragile threads. He learned what it was like for people living in poverty and realized what his privilege afforded him in his youth. Traveling the nations wasn't just about learning the elements for Roku; it was about understanding the world and his important duties as Avatar.

These lessons were driven home when his impatient need to master the Avatar State caused the destruction of the Crescent Island Temple. Since then, Roku's been cautious and subtle in his actions and takes his duties very seriously. He is a highly competent Avatar who has helped to avert numerous international incidents over the years with the help of many close allies from the Four Nations, especially Air Nomads.

Roku Era Significant Themes

Connection vs. Isolation

It's a time of collaboration. Prosperous conditions have turned citizens' attention outward, and new technologies bridge the distance between the nations. Roku's work as Avatar focuses on fostering this international collaboration and stifling conflicts before they break into war. People look for new solutions to improve lives and seek connections with other cultures to better understand the world. But some resist the growing cooperation. These isolationists believe things were better before the nations interacted so often, and that more distance between the nations eliminates the risk of terrible conflict. Those who seek greater integration view the isolationists as needlessly cautious and afraid, seeking to put off a future all but inevitable.

GM MOVES:

- *Propose an unlikely alliance*
- *Break a beneficial alliance*
- *Share information for free*

Internal Conflicts vs. External Problems

Leaders manipulate those around them and blame issues on outside influences, sometimes out of honest belief, sometimes to build their powerbase. In the ever-more-connected world, it's difficult to tell when a problem like local poverty is genuinely an outgrowth of contact between peoples, and when such conflicts are just a useful scapegoat for the wealthy and powerful. A leader could truly believe outsiders are a corrupting influence when they blame problems with a renegade spirit on the destructive practices of a visiting group from another nation. However, some use the actions of other peoples to distract from their own nefarious deeds—a local fishing magnate can easily blame polluted waters on ships from another nation.

GM MOVES:

- *Blame issues on outsiders*
- *Mock a person's "otherness"*
- *Throw support behind the majority or those in power*

Resources and Industrialization

The world is experiencing a renaissance of ideas and creativity, which goes hand in hand with industrialization. As more of the world starts to develop new technologies, the need for resources is an issue. The various nations squabble over territory that allows them to get the goods they need. In the meantime other parties, like members of the Water Tribes and Air Nomads, worry about how this rapid progress affects the spirits. Agitated spirits now roam forests around the poles—could all this new technology be the reason? Or perhaps the conflicts over the resources themselves are to blame?

GM MOVES:

- *Ignore a spiritual concern in favor of technology*
- *Claim a resource with contested ownership*
- *Advance something quickly rather than carefully*

Testing Alliances

As the world becomes more globally integrated people ask themselves—do we pull together or break apart? As the Four Nations begin to collaborate more, people wonder how much is too much? In order to answer the above questions, they test their alliances with one another. They try to get as much as they can for themselves, without angering another too much. Some do this to test the loyalty of their allies, but others do it for personal gain. They exploit the weaknesses they see and stoke conflicts between other parties to take the heat off themselves.

GM MOVES:

- *Demand help for nothing in return*
- *Overstep the boundaries of existing alliances*
- *Back up your allies in a conflict*

Propaganda and Secrets

Outright wars are rare. Sometimes members of two nations may get into a skirmish, but it's never anything close to a "war." This era is a time of peace and most people want to keep it this way. Many trade in secrets to keep this uneasy peace between nations, resorting to blackmail rather than diplomacy to get their way. Leaders use propaganda to instill unwavering loyalty in their followers, while also taking questionable clandestine action. Every person and nation has secrets and the only question is—how can they use them for their own benefit before someone else does?

GM MOVES:

- *Share a secret about someone else to get your way*
- *Blackmail someone with a secret*
- *Blame wrongdoing on someone else*

Important Events

The following is a list of important events, which occur leading up to and during this era. Each event has a list of the current consequences for stories in this era.

The Night of Silenced Sages

When Roku had only just begun his journey to master the four elements, the Earth Kingdom experienced a seismic change no one dared acknowledge—the end of the Earth Sage order. The Earth Sages were weakened since Kyoshi's time and the sages of this era looked to right the wrongs of their past. Though fewer in number, they worked as scholars lecturing on how to expand the bureaucratic channels to benefit the poorest in society. And they spoke out against Earth King Jialun's (page 54) changes to the constitution Kyoshi and the 46th Earth King drafted.

Then, in a single night, Jialun sent out Dai Li agents to round up every last Earth Sage. No one knew where they went and those who dared look for the sages disappeared as well. By the end of the week, the people learned to remain silent about the sages. Then, the Earth Sage temples re-opened, re-branded as Royal Learning Halls. A scant few of those who disappeared returned…not as sages, but Grand Lectors, keepers of these new halls, forswearing any connection to the Earth Sage tradition.

Current consequences:

- There are no known Earth Sages left in the Earth Kingdom.
- The Royal Learning Halls are heavily monitored by the crown.
- The Earth King has little organized outspoken internal opposition.

The Northern Passage

For years, the Northern Water Tribe and the northern Earth Kingdom state of Chenbao have been embroiled in a dispute over local fishing and trade routes. Both nations have engaged in minor skirmishes and militarized the waters in-between as a show of force. A massive tsunami swept through those waters and struck the northern coast of Chenbao, nearly setting off a military conflict between the two sides. Chenbao blamed Waterbenders for sending the tsunami, while the Northern Water Tribe blamed Earthbenders for creating an underwater earthquake. The truth is that both sides suffered losses from a natural disaster—the tsunami destroyed several Earth Kingdom towns *and* completely wrecked a Northern Water Tribe fleet. Greater tragedy was averted when Avatar Roku—supported by several airbending masters from the Northern Air Temple—intervened before a full-scale war broke out. Though both sides backed down, their navies remain in the waters ready to act at the first sign of wrongdoing from the other side. And the conflict is on a path back to greater tension as the governor of Chenbao now tries to tax any Water Tribe goods or ships traveling through these waters…

Current consequences:

- Relations between the Northern Water Tribe and the Earth Kingdom are poor.
- The waters between the Earth Kingdom and the Northern Water Tribe are functionally blockaded by both sides.
- Air Nomads remain active in the region to keep a tenuous peace.

Destruction of the Crescent Island Fire Temple

After his stint in the Earth Kingdom mastering earthbending, Roku returned home to master the Avatar State. Using the power of the winter solstice sun to enhance his abilities, Roku entered the Avatar State, but couldn't control his powers. He accidentally destroyed the Crescent Island Fire Temple and caused an eruption in a nearby volcano. Thanks to the help of Fire Sage Kaja (page 49), Roku regained control of himself, but the damage was already done.

Roku has now rebuilt the temple for the sages, but the island region still faces seismic instability thanks to the now-active volcano. Many remote villages struggle with rebuilding in the face of earthquakes and the Fire Sages fear it is just a matter of time before the volcano erupts again. Many villagers wish to relocate to other parts of the Fire Nation given the relentless seismic activity, but there are few places they can go. The Fire Lord has sent aid to the villages, but as the officials of his government have explained that's all he can do—as the Fire Nation doesn't have plentiful empty land—unlike the Earth Kingdom.

Current consequences:

- Crescent Island and surrounding islands still deal with seismic instability.
- Avatar Roku has become a more restrained and thoughtful Avatar.
- Anti-Earth Kingdom sentiment grows in the outlying islands affected by seismic activity as their neighbor has neither sent benders to aid them nor offered them a place to shelter.

The Fire & Air Center of Learning

Air Nomad philosophy's growing influence in the Fire Nation has led to Fire Nation citizens building a place to teach Air Nomad culture in the Fire Nation. This center is funded by a select group of Fire Nation nobles who've embraced Air Nomad teachings and pushed for a partnership between both nations. While the Air Nomads hesitated at first, all four temples eventually supported the idea—as a way to forge peace and cooperation between nations.

The Guiding Wind, a group of Air Nomads who believe the "corrupt" nobles are leading the Air Nomads away from spiritual enlightenment, have sabotaged the construction on numerous occasions in protest. In response, Fire Lord Sozin seized control of the building site from the nobility and entrenched his loyal military guard to protect the local population. Sozin won't remove his guard until the Guiding Wind leaves and the Guiding Wind has no plans on halting their sabotage until the construction ends completely; see more on the Guiding Wind on page 51.

Current consequences:

- Construction on the center has halted.
- The Guiding Wind continues to sabotage the building site.
- The Fire Nation army has set up a blockade to the site to "protect the citizenry."

Dragon Hunts

Seizing the Fire & Air Center of Learning eroded Sozin's political support. In a show of his power as Fire Lord, and wanting to appear more fearsome than his father, he began the Dragon Hunts. So far, only a few dragons have been found and killed, but the nobility embrace this new sport with a voracious appetite. Whoever finds and slays a dragon gains the honorary title of Dragon from the crown and increases (as per rumor) their firebending abilities a thousand-fold. These hunts earn Sozin loyalty amongst the nobility who enjoy the prestige the extra title grants and the ability to one-up their competitors. Those with greater historical or spiritual awareness, such as the Fire Sages, struggle with the murder of ancient creatures with such a deep connection to firebending.

The imbalance created by killing these magnificent creatures has already shown up in the natural world. Spirits are drawn to the locations where dragons are slain and strange occurrences seem to haunt the area. Sozin has formed an elite taskforce to deal with these occurrences and keep them under wraps from the general population.

Current consequences:

- Dragons either hide or strike first against the humans hunting them.
- Nobles and spiritual leaders disagree on the morality of the Dragon Hunts.
- The hunts are creating imbalance with the spiritual world.

The Grand Tour of the *Unity*

During this era, new technological institutes and universities spring up around the world—scholars, inventors, and educators directly forge connections with one another in the name of progress. It's a time of unprecedented collaboration fostered by business and academia to solve the era's most pressing concerns. The *Unity* seafaring vessel is a joint venture funded by the business magnate Tiqriganiannig (often called Tiq; page 52) with various learning institutes across the world. It was built within the past year or so with the accumulated knowledge of these technological institutes. Now, the *Unity* embarks on a year-long world trek to visit all the different nations, sharing their studies and technology in a gesture of togetherness. Unfortunately, nearly all the ruling bodies of the world (and a few rivals of Tiq) wish to stop the voyage! The governments tend to view the *Unity* as a trick, an attempt to deploy spies all over the world; Tiq's rivals, on the other hand, are simply jealous of the *Unity*'s success and want to see the massive ship sunk.

Current consequences:

- There is a technological renaissance across the Four Nations.
- The *Unity*'s Grand Tour sees the ship traveling all over the world carrying people of import.
- The tour is slowed by constant sabotage and bureaucratic roadblocks.



STOKING THE FIRE

One major conflict of this era that plays out behind curtains of smoke and fire is the conflict brewing between Fire Lord Sozin and his sister Princess Zeisan. Zeisan follows Air Nomad philosophy and her goal is to dethrone her family, who she believes are evil to the core. Her actions infuriate her brother to no end. However, a deeper story brews beneath the surface.

When Zeisan first started her training with the Air Nomad Sister Rioshon (page 50), the two women fell in love. Sadly, Zeisan's goal to unravel her brother's plans requires a politically motivated marriage to a monk named Khandro rather than a romantic one to Rioshon. So, the two women's love goes unvoiced; they both understand there are greater things at stake than their own personal happiness. Zeisan and Khandro have a similar understanding—both have a lot to gain from marrying one another, and they are working together as allies to take down the Fire Nation nobility. Current Fire Nation norms are friendly to queer couples, so the two women could have a public relationship...but Sozin goes on to outlaw same-sex couples before the end of this era (page 30).

Fire Nation
Roku Era

The Fire Nation in this era is generally stable and more or less united. Internal conflicts, like the Camellia-Peony War of the Kyoshi Era, haven't stricken the nation for decades, and Fire Lord Sozin's ascension to the throne was painless and uncontested. The Fire Nation has spent decades focusing on internal matters, and with a new Fire Lord on the throne, the people have begun to look beyond their borders. As Sozin has stated many times, the Fire Nation has so much to offer the world and it is time they start sharing.

The Fire Nation's burgeoning outward interest is represented in a number of ways. They're focused on developing faster and better forms of transportation (specifically via coal power) to bring the rest of the world closer than ever. Sozin jump-started his nation's development of coal-powered vessels and created hundreds of jobs for the poorest members of society, building his great fleet. Materials for the fleet are scarce and the Fire Nation has come into political conflict with the Earth Kingdom on numerous occasions over resources, which Sozin has quietly used to stoke anti-Earth Kingdom sentiment in his nation.

Despite any political machinations, scholars and diplomats attempt to open relations with other nations and share mutually beneficial technologies with one another to further Fire Nation knowledge. While the Fire Lord encourages his people to drink deep from the well of knowledge in other nations, within his borders he tries to preserve Fire Nation culture. The largest roadblock to this is the younger nobles, many of whom now seek out Air Nomads to guide them on the principles of enlightenment.

The Air Nomads have gone so far as to build an Air Nomad center of learning within the Fire Nation (page 46) with funds from Fire Nation nobles. As a small offshoot of Air Nomads called the Guiding Wind have caused trouble with the building of the temple, Sozin has sent his military guard to the location to protect the local population—a move hailed with great respect by many of the common folk on the islands who question the Guiding Wind's motives.



Notable Figures and Groups

Fire Lord Sozin

A competent ruler with imperial ambitions

When Sozin ascended to the throne, he was eager to make a name for himself. His father, a staunch traditionalist, allowed the Fire Nation's internal politics to proceed as they had for decades. Sozin struck a more aggressive stance in relation to the Fire Nation nobility. He quashed the remaining internal fighting between families, and now works to secure their loyalty to the crown through political channels. One major roadblock has been some of the nobles' embrace of Air Nomad ideals, spearheaded by Sozin's sister Zeisan, which infuriates him to no end.

To counteract his sister's influence, he's begun nationalistic propaganda campaigns targeting the poorest members of society. He's generous to those less fortunate and wins people over by providing food, shelter, and work, which are all dependent on his success as Fire Lord. Sozin can be a strong ally, but he's deeply nationalistic and has his eyes set beyond the Fire Nation. He always conducts himself with intelligence and an odd warmth, but underneath his veneer of decorum is a fiery inferno of unbridled ambition.

Princess Zeisan

A chi-blocking princess working to undo her family's corruption

Zeisan was born without firebending and spent her childhood pitted against her brother Sozin to prove her worthiness. To survive her family, she devoted herself to Air Nomad training under Sister Rioshon, who taught her many things including chi-blocking. Zeisan shares her brother's intensity and doubts her own ability to be good, but is focused on dismantling her family's corruption.

During training, Zeisan and Rioshon fell in love, but their pairing was not advantageous to Zeisan's dynasty-toppling ambitions. Instead, she has just announced her intention to marry Khandro of the Guiding Wind (page 50) and wishes to renounce her titles and wealth in favor of a spiritual life. Her example is popular enough that other young nobles now vow the same, and Zeisan senses in the Guiding Wind the destabilizing element she needs to undermine her brother. The princess can be a powerful ally to any hero needing political help against the Fire Nation or a boost to escape trouble with Fire Nation nobility.

General Oraso Eiko

A famous general who wants the Fire Nation isolated

General Oraso Eiko, a decorated military leader, led the united Fire Nation troops in the last real conflict between the clans in the name of the new Fire Lord Sozin. Thanks to her know-how, she won the battle and the nation finally united under the throne. Now, the general supports the Fire Lord's internal initiative to build infrastructure and provide jobs to the populace, but questions the expense of a Fire Nation fleet. Why not remain isolated and prosperous? There has to be something more here, but the general is not sure she wants to find out. The general respects anyone coming from a military background and could ask for those heroes' help when Fire Nation interests are at stake.

Fire Sage Kaja

A friendly, spiritual man devoted to the Avatar

Kaja is committed to the cause of balance and service of the Avatar. After helping Roku master the Avatar State, he remains a staunch supporter of the Avatar. Internally, Kaja works with his fellow Fire Sages to preserve Fire Nation spirituality and often serves as advisor to the Fire Lord on these matters. Unlike Sozin, Kaja is unworried about the Air Nomads' influence on Fire Nation nobility. Fads have a way of coming and going among the rich; his focus is on maintaining tradition for future generations. Kaja is concerned with what he sees from his own nation's subtle moves, but he does not wish to distract the Avatar from important international work. Kaja could ask heroes for help getting to the bottom of the Fire Nation's international activities or ensuring the Avatar's will is carried out in the Fire Nation.

Uzuku Yuyan

A legendary markswoman transforming archery into art

Uzuku Yuyan is an astonishing markswoman. Firing an arrow from a bow is no mere physical act; it is spiritual, requiring perfect harmony between archer and arrow. She transformed her archery into an art form, and many a noble has sponsored her in exchange for demonstrations and lessons. Now, Uzuku faces pressure to share her incredible skills with the Fire Nation. Some want her as one of the nation's deadliest agents; others want her to teach new archers her incredible skills. She feels a loyalty to her homeland, but is conflicted—they seek to change her artistic gifts into crass violence. Heroes might find a teacher with her or they might find an ally if they can convince her to take new action with regard to her homeland.

Nyn Chei

An idealist inventor who embraces the power of coal

Nyn is a brilliant technologist who has provided much design and invention for the Fire Nation's coal-powered fleet. She has a real hope for connecting the world, believing her ships will unite the nations and lead to greater academic discourse. To that end she's reached out to fellow inventors from all nations in hopes of collaboration after her falling out with her former lover and fellow inventor Massak (page 53). Heroes could seek Nyn out if they need help building the impossible or for a smart solution to a difficult situation. Likewise, Nyn needs materials from all over the world and could ask some heroes to aid her.

Threats and Challenges

Crescent Island Disaster

Linked theme: Internal Conflicts vs. External Problems

Roku's activation of the Crescent Island volcano caused seismic instability in the surrounding islands. People are still working on rebuilding and the Avatar is regularly seen around these islands when he has a moment to spare from his normal duties. People on these islands are desperate to rebuild some form of stability in their lives and Sozin's anti-Earth Kingdom propaganda campaigns in the islands work. It's much easier for people on the islands to blame the Earth Kingdom for their problems, rather than looking too deeply at what their own nation is (or isn't) doing for them. Instead, people blame the Earth Kingdom's lack of support and their greedy claim to Natsuo Island (page 55).

The Princess and the Fire Lord

Linked theme: Testing Alliances

Princess Zeisan is earnest in her plan to give up her riches and rank for a life of poverty and service, even though such an act would greatly frustrate her family. However, she knows that when Sozin is angry he gets sloppy—maybe she can trick him into revealing his schemes to her. She's seen Sozin's avarice first hand and knows it's only a matter of time until he makes a big move to show off his power. Political backstabbing isn't in line with the Air Nomad ideals she tries to adhere to…but she's willing to abide this evil if it means she can ultimately do good.

Sozin was blindsided by his sister's relationship with the Guiding Wind's leader Khandro and nearly couldn't control his rage when she proposed marriage to the monk. He sees the Guiding Wind's anti-nobility beliefs as a direct threat to him and is determined to stop her by any means necessary. He's fought with Zeisan for as long as he can remember and now that he is Fire Lord he refuses to back down.

Dragons in Danger

Linked theme: Propaganda and Secrets

Many members of the nobility now seek a dragon to hunt, kill, and gain legendary firebending abilities from its death. Bolstered by Sozin's leadership, many see the dragon hunts as a right bequeathed to them by the benevolence of the Fire Lord and their own nobility. The dragon hunts have caused numerous ethical debates between the nobility and spiritual leaders, but the most unexpected result of the hunts has been the imbalance created within the Spirit World.

Spirits seem drawn to the locations where dragons die and strange occurrences abound around those sites. Luckily, most of the deaths have occurred away from populated areas and Sozin has been quick to send his taskforce to clean up any "messes" left by the hunt. However, the imbalance created by the deaths has even drawn a joint envoy from the Water Tribes who sensed the disturbance. The envoy has faced a number of issues when investigating the death sites, most disturbingly a propaganda campaign by Sozin, which blames the spiritual activity on *their* visits rather than the other way around. Many Fire Nation citizens mistrust the tribespeople and refuse to help them investigate, seeing them as nuisances and trouble-makers.



The Air Nomads of the Roku Era are influential and their teachings have spread far and wide. Much of this is due to the direct support and involvement of the political families within the Fire Nation. This relationship is being celebrated with the construction of a Fire & Air Center of Learning in the Fire Nation, made possible through the funding and management of Fire Nation nobility. The construction of this center is a divisive issue, and a small school of Air Nomads called the Guiding Wind, led by the popular philosopher Khandro, speaks out against its construction and demands an end to Air Nomad affiliation with any nation's ruling classes.

The Guiding Wind is a small order, not officially recognized by the Four Temples of the Air Nomads. They want autonomy over both their physical and spiritual life and aim to undermine the controlling power of elites. Avatar Roku often calls on the Air Nomads to aid other nations, but the Guiding Wind refuses on the grounds he is overstepping by asking that they involve themselves in politics. In contrast, most Air Nomad temples gladly help when Roku calls, not only in the border dispute between the Earth Kingdom and Northern Water Tribe (page 46), but in natural disasters like the earthquakes in the east of the Earth Kingdom.

Master Youdron continues to support the Air Nomads' relationship with the Avatar and with elites of all nations as a way to help the world and reach more people. The conflict between Youdron's perspective and that of the upstart Guiding Wind has sparked an internal discourse within the Air Nomads on whether they should turn more inwards as the Guiding Wind suggests, or continue to help the rest of the world where they can. Part of this tension comes from whether or not the Air Nomads should embrace those with lots of worldly prosperity (like the nobility) or reject them and any trappings of wealth altogether, because working with other nations means also working with those unwilling to cede power or wealth.

Notable Figures and Groups

Youdron

An elder who opposes the Guiding Wind

Master Youdron is an elderly airbending monk and an Air Nomad Elder. As a representative of the Air Nomads, he stands in opposition to Khandro and his teachings. Youdron believes the Air Nomads should work with the Avatar and the other nations to reach more people and help the world. He accepts that dealing with the elites is a means to that end.

Youdron, a cautious man, knows of the danger the Fire Nation poses to his people should they cross the Fire Lord. As a precaution, Youdron has begun transcribing some of their most sacred practices into coded texts and hiding them in places around the Four Nations. Youdron is pulled in many different directions in his old age, and as the Guiding Wind movement gains popularity he could use help in his secret mission.

Khandro

A devout Air Nomad and popular philosopher

Khandro is the charismatic and ambitious head of the Guiding Wind movement; he argues that the relationship between the Air Nomads and the nobility of the world has impeded the spiritual growth of people across all nations. Khandro truly believes that the ideals of the Guiding Wind will help him and his people reach spiritual enlightenment and that marrying Zeisan (page 48), the sister of the Fire Lord, will help him destabilize the nobility structures in the Fire Nation. Khandro has an abiding respect for Zeisan and what she is willing to do to unravel the corruption in her country. For their plan to work he must marry the princess—against the advice of his most loyal acolytes—and risk incurring the wrath of the Fire Lord.

Currently, Khandro is recruiting members of the Air Nomad temples to his cause. Those who feel they're being spread too thin or worry about the nobility's influence have embraced his teachings. Khandro can be a powerful ally to those looking to topple Fire Nation nobility if they can prove they believe in the Guiding Wind's ideals.

Rioshon

A chi-blocking Air Nun famed for her martial prowess

Rioshon is a skilled Airbender and chi-blocker from the Western Air Temple, sought the world over for her martial skills. She's serious, intelligent, and speaks honestly in most situations, even if it means angering people. The nun only teaches students she is absolutely sure will only use the attained knowledge for principles adhering to traditional Air Nomad philosophy.

One such student was Princess Zeisan, who Rioshon taught to chi-block. Over the course of their training together, Rioshon and Zeisan fell in love, but never publicly acknowledged it. Rioshon has heard rumors that Princess Zeisan's rejection of her family has angered Fire Lord Sozin. She now worries harm may befall the princess, and she might have to step in to help Zeisan, despite swearing to stay apart in fear that Sozin might discover their love for each other and use it against his sister.

Gyatso

Master Airbender and friend of Avatar Roku

Gyatso, a young, friendly, goofy monk of the Southern Air Temple, just became a master Airbender. He's good friends with Avatar Roku, who often comes to Gyatso for practical advice or for a fresh perspective when he's feeling dour. Gyatso remains neutral in the conflicts and internal debate about whether the Air Nomads should become more isolationist or continue embracing the world. He believes diversity amongst his people is a good thing and internal debate eventually leads to fruitful progress no matter the decision. To that end, he encourages the temples to discuss and debate one another in the spirit of compromise. Anyone who wants a level head in disputes can find no finer monk than Gyatso. He manages to effortlessly work levity into difficult situations yet takes everyone's feelings seriously.

Norri

A young Air Nomad with a strong bond to sky bison

Sister Norri is a young Air Nomad student who shepherds the sky bison near the Western Air Temple. She's fun-loving, knows all there is to know about bison, and likes to cause a little bit of chaos for her mentors. Norri's dedication to the bison has interfered many times with her gaining her master tattoos. While she cares for the spiritual teachings of her people, she's not overly bothered with mastering airbending and is constantly distracted by any number of matters concerning sky bison. Recently, she and her bison companion, Swish, have been tasked with a secret mission by master Youdron to hide sacred Air Nomad artifacts. She's in over her head, has never been so far from her temple, and could use a bit of help!

Anada

A brilliant engineer adopted by the Air Nomads

Sister Anada is an engineer whose innovative designs created the Fire & Air Center of Learning. Anada was orphaned in the Fire Nation and cared for by her grandmother as a baby, but when her grandmother couldn't care for a child any longer, she gave her over to be raised by the Air Nomads as a nun.

Anada can't bend, a rarity in Air Nomad society, but her skills earned her the opportunity to return to the Fire Nation and reunite with her beloved grandmother. She happily accepted that chance, but things aren't turning out as planned. Work on the center has halted due to the Guiding Wind's interference and the Fire Nation military guard seizing control of the site. Anada and the other Air Nomads need help untangling this situation before it escalates.

Threats and Challenges

Eastern Air Temple

Linked themes: Resources and Industrialization

In order to fund a number of infrastructure advancements in the Earth Kingdom, the eastern states strip-mine the mountains in the region near the Eastern Air Temple. Having little need for the resources, the Air Nomads of the temple did little to stop the miners, until they dug so deep into the mountains they angered a local spirit.

The giant spirit, called Stone Dreamer, shaped like a gigantic canyon crawler with hundreds of legs, was a sleepy, peaceful spirit despite its appearance. It slumbered near the Eastern Temple because it enjoyed the quiet, but when the miners disrupted its home—even after being warned by the Air Nomads—it went on a rampage, destroying equipment and threatening towns. The Council of Elders at the Eastern Temple debate whether or not they should step in to help—doesn't the spirit have a right to protect its home?

Nobility & the Guiding Wind

Some may find the idea of the Guiding Wind accepting Fire Nation, Earth Kingdom, or even Water Tribe nobility into their ranks perplexing. What's important to remember is the young nobles who join the Guiding Wind are rebels just like the movement. They're the ultimate fist in the face to the ideal of nobility, because these youths gave up their wealth and power for enlightenment, whereas the nobles supporting the Fire & Air Center of Learning did not. Khandro gladly welcomes any nobles into his order who adhere to its ideals.

Guiding Wind

Linked theme: Testing Alliances

The Guiding Wind, led by Monk Khandro, is a renegade order of Air Nomads, not officially recognized by any of the four temples. The Eastern Air Temple views them as too disruptive, the North as too extreme, and the West as too in opposition to tradition. The South has yet to take an official stance. Khandro happily criticizes every temple, believing every Council of Elders lazy at best.

One element that worries Khandro about his movement is the string of violent acts supposedly perpetrated by members of his order in the Fire Nation. Violent acts aren't in line with the Guiding Wind's principles, let alone those of the Air Nomads as a whole. Khandro can't trace the reports to any known members. He is left to wonder—if the Air Nomads aren't perpetrating violence in the name of the Guiding Wind…who would do such a thing and why? Maybe the Fire Lord's supporters have an idea.

Holding Things Together

Linked theme: Resources and Industrialization

Working together with Avatar Roku, the Air Nomads are spread across the world helping to keep peace in the various nations. They're diplomats, spiritual advisors, and even martial defenders when needed. Most Air Nomads don't have time to engage in the philosophical discussions on the nature of their order that the Council of Elders and various Air Nomad philosophers do—they're out in the world doing things, instead.

Many Airbenders recognize they're starting to be worn thin. While they have enough Air Nomads to fulfill their duties for now, the temples can sometimes be near-empty as members rush out to deal with one disaster or the next. The idea that anyone would mount a full-scale attack on the peaceful Air Nomads is inconceivable…and yet some Air Nomads have become aware that if an all-out attack came, they would have trouble mustering enough strength in one place to stop the attackers.

Water Tribes
Roku Era

The Water Tribes are reexamining their role in the world, struggling to find a path true to their traditions as the Fire Nation and Earth Kingdom rapidly expand their reach—all while the spirits in the polar regions grow agitated and aggressive. Many suspect that these changes within the Spirit World are because of the rapid industrialization happening all over the world and seek to quell the spirits before it is too late.

Many tribespeople also now believe the tribes should look outward, traveling to the other nations more frequently to trade with allies or even attempting to gain control of important shipping routes; others seek to follow the model of the Air Nomads by avoiding direct conflict in favor of living in harmony on traditional lands. Yet, no one in the tribes can deny the world is changing around them—both Southern chieftain Qanitt and Northern chief Skiri propose new ideas for the future of the tribes.

Qanitt is a popular Southern chieftain who wants to secure political ties through peaceful means and cooperation. They see the signs of the spirits' agitation and believe it's important to gain allies as soon as possible. They want to open up stronger relationships with other nations, especially taking advantage of the tribes' resources and crafts to create trade connections with the others. In contrast, Skiri believes other nations have taken enough from the tribes. Foreigners patrol the waters with abandon and ignore the outcry from the spirits. The Northern chief believes the tribes should meet the other nations on their own terms—aggression and battle—as it seems the only way to get the other nations to listen.

Despite the disagreements between the North and South, communication between the two is open and fruitful. Though on opposite sides of the world, both work with one another for mutual benefit. They've so far been willing to put any internal disagreement aside to present a united front on the international stage.

Notable Figures and Groups

Qanitt

A Southern Water Tribe chieftain looking to grow the economy

Qanitt is the cool-headed chieftain of the prominent city of Whale Harbor in the Southern Water Tribe. They're a modernist who looks to facilitate the two tribes working in harmony, joining together on political and economic programs that benefit both. They've made several trips to the North to try to establish plans for economic expansion—they're convinced the two Tribes can only stand against the agitated spirits and the encroaching reach of the other nations together. But Qanitt acknowledges a need for a secure source of resources, such as ore and trading partners, to do so. To that end the chieftain searches for heroes who can help them peacefully secure these resources, either by forging new shipping routes or opening up new agreements between the tribes and trading partners. In return Qanitt offers support to allies who've proven their loyalty, and as a person with significant popularity in the South, this is valuable indeed.

Skiri

The Northern Water Tribe chief who wants to seize power for the Tribes

Skiri is the forceful chief of the Northern Water Tribe. He is convinced that the Tribes should engage the conflicts of the day, seizing control of trade routes and imposing fees on those Fire Nation and Earth Kingdom ships traveling via open water. He isn't against Qanitt's proposals for more cooperation, but he believes the Tribes need to aggressively protect what is theirs before seeking more international cooperation. His proposals are controversial, and he has resorted to blackmail and threats to advance his cause. He pushed the hardest for attacking the Earth Kingdom after the earthquake (page 46), but cooler heads prevailed.

Though a popular leader at home, Skiri has lost international allies by often speaking out against the Earth King, who many see as harmless. Skiri is willing to pay good money to any person who can get him intel on the Earth Kingdom's movements and plans.

Makittuq

A powerful Waterbender with a deep connection to spirits

Makittuq is a tall woman with a broad, warm smile. A powerful bender of the Northern Water Tribe, Makittuq has always felt isolated from others, more in touch with the spirits than people. From a young age she knew she was assigned the wrong gender at birth; when her family rejected her need to live openly as her true identity, she found solace in interacting with spirits who understood her true self. As the spirits have become agitated, Makittuq has taken it upon herself to develop her rare waterbending ability to calm spirits thrown out of balance. She lives near the edge of a large spirit forest and does her best to keep Dark Spirits from attacking Agna Qel'a and other settlements. She's happy for assistance from heroes also looking for ways to maintain balance with the spirits and will teach any worthy Waterbender how to heal others regardless of their gender.

Tiqriganiannig

A wealthy merchant looking to expand her reach

Tiqriganiannig (or Tiq), the richest person in the South, made her fortune shipping Southern textiles and art throughout the Earth Kingdom. She avidly supports Qanitt's efforts to expand the Tribe's economic reach, proudly reminding anyone who listens that her imports regularly inspire the newest fashion trends in the Earth Kingdom. Tiq isn't shy about throwing her money around either. She's even financially supporting "freedom fighters" in the Earth Kingdom who hope to unseat Earth King Jialun. After all, taxes on her shipments could be a lot lower with someone else in charge!

Heroes could run into Tiq anywhere her ships carry goods. Happy to rope anyone competent into her employ, she is currently looking for people to help guard the Grand Tour of the *Unity* (page 47) from pirates and Earth Kingdom spies.



Taqukaq

Avatar Roku's waterbending master

Taqukaq is the Northern waterbending master who taught Avatar Roku waterbending. He initially refused to train Roku, believing that any Fire Nation subject would hold a higher loyalty to the Fire Lord than the people of the Four Nations. However, Roku refused to seek another instructor and eventually convinced Taqukaq of his devotion by living in the North for several years.

The Waterbender is a kind, soft-spoken man with an innate charisma and force of personality. He uses these gifts to perform diplomatic missions for the Water Tribes…along with a bit of covert espionage along the way. He spends his time between the Fire Nation and Northern Water Tribe investigating allegations that the Fire Nation has stolen Tribe technology. Taqukaq is wary of any person willing to selflessly help him with his mission, but accepts help from those who prove their motivations earnest.

Massak

A master boatwright wary of the Fire Nation

Massak is a master boatwright of the Southern Water Tribe. Her work with Nyn Chei (page 49) was pivotal in the development of the Fire Nation's fleet, but Massak saw her design was used to create a defensive patrol ship, rather than a trade ship that could swiftly reach the Water Tribes as promised. Nyn and Massak have not spoken for years, and Massak now regrets the aid she provided her former lover and design partner—although she still misses Nyn dearly.

Currently, Massak is being courted by Earth Kingdom recruiters, looking to have her as a guest lecturer in Ba Sing Se's Royal Learning Hall. Despite her suspicions after hearing rumors of what happened to the Earth Sages (page 46), Massak is considering the offer; her insatiable curiosity might still get the best of her. Perhaps by accepting the position, she can unravel whatever scheme the Earth Kingdom has cooked up. She's currently looking for allies willing to join her in digging deeper into the Earth King's secrets…

Threats and Challenges

Sacred Island

Linked theme: Testing Alliances

This halfway point between the Water Tribes, off the coast of the Earth Kingdom, has spiritual and cultural significance to both the North and South. For thousands of years any severe disputes between the two Tribes were brought to this island, and chiefs make a voyage to the island at least once in their careers to pay respect to the land.

On one such voyage, a Southern chieftain by the name of Tana was surprised to find Fire Nation ships docked on the island. Through political channels Northern chief Skiri learned the Fire Nation now claims the island as their own. Skiri is ready to send a majority of his fleet to reclaim the island, but needs support from the Southern chieftains. So far the chieftains haven't come to a consensus on what to do as many are unwilling to start an all-out war with the Fire Nation.

Water Dispute

Linked theme: Connection vs. Isolation

The waters between the Northern Water Tribe and the Earth Kingdom contain valuable fishing grounds and waterways leading into both the Earth Kingdom and the Fire Nation. The Northern Water Tribes and the Earth Kingdom have been embroiled in a conflict for control of the waterways, which came to a head after a devastating tsunami (page 46). After Avatar Roku stepped in and Air Nomads arrived to help keep the peace, the conflict quieted for a time.

However, the governor of Chenbao has demanded taxes on Water Tribe merchant ships who use the northern passage, though there is no practical way to enforce this. The merchant ships have avoided the taxes with their sailing mastery, but any goods they sell in the Earth Kingdom are now contraband—and the governor hopes this move escalates the situation, as he petitions the Earth King for military assistance enforcing his tax.

Angered Spirits

Linked theme: Resources and Industrialization

Bands of dark spirits now rage through the wilderness in both the North and South. Some remote villages have been attacked by these spirits, hurting people and damaging homes. Members of both tribes are worried, because though they've kept the spirits appeased for now, it is only a matter of time before the situation becomes untenable.

Most spiritually-focused tribespeople feel not only a deep sense of duty to the spirits, but to the rest of the world to ensure things remain peaceful for everyone. Some scholars and spiritual leaders believe this increase of spiritual activity is linked to the various nations extending their reach and abusing natural resources for technological advancement. With the Fire Nation laying claim to Water Tribe sacred land and hunting dragons, and the Earth Kingdom displacing spirits in their search for natural resources, no wonder the spirits in the world are in chaos.

Earth Kingdom
Roku Era

In this era, the 55 Earth Kingdom states have become increasingly isolationist. In the previous era, Avatar Kyoshi (page 32) helped shape various bureaucratic policies in order to aid the poorest of the kingdom and strengthen ties between states. These policies carried through to this era and were embraced by the Earth Sages. After seeing their order embarrassed and diminished in past years, the sages sought redemption by getting the states to work with one another, embracing their role as wise advisors and academics. This laid the groundwork for the sages regaining much of the trust they lost. They even dared speak out against the Earth King when they felt his actions became too brazen. Then, in one night, the Earth Sage order was eliminated (page 46).

Ever since the order's destruction, the current Earth King has manipulated the constitution, set up by Kyoshi and the 46th Earth King, into a bloated piece of legislation, which only the rich know how to exploit. Earth King Jialun is a cruel man who cares very little for his people and very much about maintaining power. He is willing to take extreme measures to ensure his uncontested rule and foments xenophobic hate for other nations and internal squabbling to avoid losing power—thus the peasants have something to hate other than him.

Thanks to Jialun's greed, people in the kingdom suffer. Meanwhile, governors of the various states rule near-autonomously; even the most noble governors face an uphill battle combatting the corruption their more nefarious counterparts gleefully embrace. There's little in the form of broad technological advancement in the Earth Kingdom at this time, not because there aren't scholars working on it, but because any new technology is seized by the crown and gifted out to vassals as the Earth King sees fit.



Notable Figures and Groups

Earth King Jialun

The corrupt Earth King looking to stay in power by any means necessary

Jialun is a petty, calculating man continuously underestimated because of the bureaucratic nature of the Earth Kingdom. To outsiders he's a ruler trapped in the binds of an ineffective system which fails to empower people, but Jialun knows he's the spider spinning the web. After he did away with the sages, he manipulated the system to his benefit and the incompetence he portrays is entirely by design. He keeps his people subjugated and ruthlessly removes any opposition to his rule, all from an appearance of weakness. Internationally, he manipulates others to keep the people in the Earth Kingdom focused on threats from outside rather than within.

Jialun is likely to contact heroes if they have something he wants or something he can exploit. If they cause enough trouble, they're likely to encounter the Dai Li first, and Jialun second only if they cannot be contained. The Earth King is never one to overplay his hand and always approaches as a friend first to entrap a person in his schemes.

Guo Xun

The benevolent queen of Omashu who works to undermine Jialun's rule

Guo Xun is the graceful and elderly queen of Omashu. As a child, she idolized Kyoshi, who supported Guo Xun's family taking the throne with the sacred duty to protect Omashu. When she became queen, she wholeheartedly embraced the political structure the Avatar helped create. She despises Jialun, finding most of his actions cheap and selfish; only someone insecure in their power needs to weaken the standing of those who have nothing to begin with. So, she works as a balancing force to Jialun's machinations, embroiling her city and its diplomats in just enough conflict to not spark an all-out war with Ba Sing Se.

Guo Xun is likely to contact heroes if they're notably opposed to Jialun's schemes in the Earth Kingdom. She might ask them to spy for her or smuggle technologies for her scholars undetected in the Earth Kingdom. She's a brilliant political strategist and can help sharpen the keenest minds.

Sud

The earthbending master who taught the Avatar

Sud is a middle-aged earthbending master with a blunt and straightforward attitude. The Earthbender is famed throughout the kingdom for his honesty and grit. There's no stronger believer in the Earth Kingdom and what it represents than Sud, who is convinced Earth Kingdom citizens can hammer out the issues with their great nation and see a brighter future.

The Earthbender was recently summoned to instruct Earth King Jialun in advanced earthbending techniques, after Sud's success with teaching Roku. Through the months Sud's spent at the palace he's noticed Jialun is not so ignorant as he pretends to be. Sud's worried the king has nefarious plans for the kingdom, but the earthbending master is in over his head when it comes to politics. He may need a hero's help to unravel the schemes the Earth King has put in place.

Grand Lector Willow

A former Earth Sage working to preserve knowledge of her extinct order

When the Earth Sage order was abolished, Willow received two choices—evolve or disappear forever. Rather than perish with her order, she accepted a new position teaching in the rebranded Royal Learning Halls and vowed to never speak of her order again. Those who still fondly remember the sages see the flighty lector Willow as a traitor, someone who betrayed her colleagues for a prestigious new position, but Willow is not entirely as she seems.

Within the soft-spoken lector burns a fire of rebellion. She is furious about what happened to her fellow sages and the knowledge they worked to protect. From her position in the Royal Learning Halls, she works to preserve ancient Earth Sage knowledge for a time when her destroyed order may be resurrected. Currently, she's in search of allies who can help her do this, to smuggle ancient scrolls to safe locations and perhaps to uncover what happened to her missing colleagues.

Ban Buhai

A spy who poses as a lowly fish merchant

Buhai is an unremarkable fish merchant who often takes his stock to sell in Ba Sing Se…but really, Buhai is a spy for the Earth King who uses his fishing business as an excuse to be away for long periods of time spying on the Northern Water Tribe. He's extremely good at his job and even the name Buhai is an alias—to those who know the truth of him, he's only referred to as Echo.

The spy's current mission is to discover a way to destabilize the Water Tribes' alliance with one another. The Earth King believes that if he can get the North to act unilaterally without an agreement with the South, it would drive a wedge between the tribes. To that end, Buhai gathers intel on the North's chief to exploit at a later time.

Langzi

A notorious outlaw folk hero looking to stamp out corruption

Langzi is a wandering outlaw with a penchant for doling out justice. People say they're a master warrior who can wield almost any weapon. No one knows who they are or what they look like, as they always keep their face covered in a mask, but their focus is on taking down corrupt politicians who exploit the common folk. They're currently at the top of the Dai Li's most wanted list.

In truth, Langzi was a swordsmith named Junyi who fell in love with one of his clients. The two men were set to run away together when his lover's wife, who was mayor of the town, discovered the affair. She had her husband killed and pinned the crime on Junyi, manipulating the system so he had no way to prove his innocence. Since then, Junyi has been on the run, posing as a lowly beggar in various towns to uncover corrupt people in power and bring them to justice under the identity of Langzi. Junyi never seeks out allies, but could potentially work with people who align with his goals.

Threats and Challenges

Natsuo Island

Linked theme: Resources and Industrialization

Natsuo Island lies just between the Fire Nation and Earth Kingdom just off the coast of Crescent Island. Because of its proximity to both nations, both governments never laid claim to it… until now, following the discovery of a large cache of ore on the island. Sozin claims the island is part of the Fire Nation and that the citizens of the Fire Nation need the island after the Crescent Island disaster (page 46).

The Earth King knows Sozin's posturing serves his nation's growing industry, not his people, and isn't willing to let the Fire Nation have the island without opposition. If Jialun goads Sozin into making the first move towards aggression, even better. To that end he's sent a few military vessels on training exercises just off the island's coast and waits to see Sozin's next move.

Ba Sing Se vs. Omashu

Linked theme: Propaganda and Secrets

Omashu and Ba Sing Se have often vied for prominence within the Earth Kingdom and this era is no different. Guo Xun, the queen of Omashu, hates the Earth King and does everything in her power to undermine his influence short of starting an all-out war. Both monarchs have numerous spies in each other's courts and both throne rooms are vipers' nests.

Recently, the delivery system in Omashu, long chutes weaving through the city navigated with earthbending, has been acting up. Lines are crumbling and wares fly from the chutes and injure citizens. Guo Xun is sure this is Jialun's sabotage and she's looking for a way to prove it. She needs the saboteur caught and enough evidence to utterly humiliate Jialun next time she visits Ba Sing Se.

Floods in the South

Linked theme: Connection vs. Isolation

The south of the Earth Kingdom faces a number of floods, which have devastated small towns and infrastructure. Rather than sending aid to these remote villages, the Earth King has sent troops offering the citizens affected by these floods a home in Ba Sing Se's Lower Ring in return for work fortifying the Outer Wall. With some towns experiencing a near-leveling of their infrastructure, many consider it.

In contrast, some accepted the aid from the Air Nomads of the Southern Air Temple. Though the Air Nomads of the south have been hesitant to overstep their bounds in Earth Kingdom land, they're more than willing to help when natural disaster strikes. Some Earth Kingdom citizens question if it is wise to reject the king's generous offer in lieu of asking the Air Nomads' help, but surely the king is too magnanimous to truly take offense.





The Hundred Year War Era

Where We Start

The Hundred Year War Era details the state of the world just before the start of the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* show. The Hundred Year War is the most tragic time in the world's known history. The Four Nations are divided like never before, and balance and harmony are little more than distant memories. The starkest representation of this divide is the loss of the Air Nomads to genocide, with the exception of Avatar Aang, who has disappeared. The world had to do without an Avatar for the entirety of the war, and most people living today weren't alive during a time with an active Avatar.

The war began when Fire Lord Sozin and the **Fire Nation** military took advantage of the Great Comet, now known as Sozin's Comet, as it passed by the planet and temporarily increased all firebending abilities across the world. With this power, Sozin conducted the Air Nomad Genocide (page 58), the war's horrifying opening salvo designed to kill the Avatar and instill fear in the people of other nations. Though Avatar Aang survived by entering the Avatar State and freezing himself in an iceberg, as far as the world knew, he vanished. Fire Lord Sozin and his son Azulon continued the war by invading, raiding, and colonizing the other surviving nations. The current Fire Lord and son of Azulon, Ozai, bears the same agenda as his predecessors: to weaken and attack every city and settlement until the entire world belongs to the Fire Nation.

The **Water Tribes** are completely disconnected from one another, as they have been ever since about 50 years after the war began. The Northern Water Tribe keeps behind their walled city of Agna Qel'a, which successfully fends off all attempts at invasion, while the Southern Water Tribe hangs on by a thread. Only a handful of years ago, the Fire Nation raided Southern Water Tribe settlements with the goal of killing or capturing all Waterbenders in the South. While the warriors from the Southern Water Tribe left to take the fight to the Fire Nation, those who remain work to keep each other safe and their tribe alive.

Though the walls of Ba Sing Se keep its citizens safe from invasion, the Fire Nation has a firm grasp on many rural **Earth Kingdom** areas. Some Fire Nation colonies in the Earth Kingdom date back to Avatar Roku's time (page 44), and the Fire Nation established many more throughout the war. Political corruption in Ba Sing Se is rampant, with a secret police force known as the Dai Li brainwashing citizens to maintain the facade that there is no war.

In some parts of the world, life struggles onward in an uneasy normalcy, but the war rages on and the Fire Nation spreads across the globe. Safety is an illusion; those who live in vulnerable areas are forced to make sacrifices in order to survive, pushing many to their limits. History is at a turning point, and while the prospects are grim, some still fight for a better future.

A World Without an Avatar

As far as the world is concerned, there is no Avatar. There are theories and rumors, but for nearly a full century the world has existed without the Avatar's influence. There is no Avatar to keep the Fire Nation in check, and Ozai and his supporters aim to keep it that way. To ensure their dominance they hunt for the missing Avatar, who they presume is a very old man by this point—if he's even alive.

As for the other nations, many have abandoned hope in the idea of the Avatar returning to restore balance to the world. King Bumi, the ruler of Omashu, is the only living person who was friends with Avatar Aang before his disappearance. For everyone else, the Avatar is steadily becoming nothing more than a legend.



Hundred Year War Era Significant Themes

The Brutality of War

The war affects nearly everyone in some way and defines many people's lives. With catastrophic losses, it's no surprise that many people are traumatized. Many have lost loved ones in the war, like Jet (page 63), the leader of the Freedom Fighters in the Earth Kingdom, who lost his parents. Violence and destruction do not affect everyone in the same way, and some may butt heads over their different ways of coping. A more solemn and respectful person might take issue with another who contends with the tragedies of war by making jokes and not taking anything seriously.

GM MOVES:

- *Present a desperate situation*
- *Push an NPC to their limit*
- *Take from someone who has nothing*

Survival and Secrets

Many people don't have the luxury of focusing on much other than survival, and often the key to survival is to hide the truth. For example, when the Fire Nation launched raids against the Southern Water Tribe, they hunted down every last Waterbender they could find. The very few who weren't caught only survived because they and their loved ones lied about their bending abilities. Stories like that abound in myriad forms, from Earth Kingdom villages functionally starved by tyrannical Fire Nation governors to Waterbenders driven into hiding or to terrible extremes in order to save themselves.

GM MOVES:

- *Lie, cheat, and steal for survival*
- *Hide the truth for the right reasons*
- *Mistrust outsiders on principle*

Morals Being Tested

It isn't always easy to choose between right and wrong, especially if your life is at stake. Fire Nation citizens may question their nation's choices and their participation in them, but fear betraying their leaders at the risk of putting their loved ones in danger. Those who suffer may question how far is too far for survival or revenge. Some may have no problem sacrificing the lives of innocents if it saves more innocent lives in the long run, while others may not even be able to bring themselves to harm someone responsible for the deaths of many.

GM MOVES:

- *Push a PC's principle to the breaking point*
- *Present a tempting solution with harsh consequences*
- *Destroy something to protect an NPC's loved ones*

Colonization in Progress

Throughout the war, Fire Nation colonists seized parts of the Earth Kingdom and emptied Air Nomad lands. Some regions have been home to both Earth Kingdom locals and Fire Nation colonists for generations, while other areas are freshly colonized. Though some Earth Kingdom citizens have adapted to living side by side with their colonizers, others can't abide by it. Earth Kingdom citizens living in these settlements may try to fight back while others may insist on pacifism in hopes of preventing further bloodshed.

GM MOVES:

- *Attack with Fire Nation soldiers*
- *Present powerful figures torn by conflicting loyalties*
- *Threaten or destroy a unique cultural item or practice*

Hope in Rebellion

In the midst of war and despair, some people choose to keep hope alive and fight back no matter what it takes. Oppression thrives where people have lost hope in resistance. Communities and individuals who aren't ready to surrender have a hard battle in front of them, but hope has a way of inspiring communities to join the good fight. People who hold onto their dreams of a better future are an integral part of this era and a major key to ending the war.

GM MOVES:

- *Rebel against unjust rule*
- *Rally an inspirational ally*
- *Give the PCs items or persons to protect*

Important Events

The following is a list of important events, which occur leading up to and during this era. Each event has a list of the current consequences for stories in this era.

The Disappearance of Avatar Aang

Nearly a century ago just before the Fire Nation attacked, Avatar Aang disappeared after running away with his sky bison, Appa. Struggling with his identity as the Avatar and upset over the news that he had to leave the Southern Air Temple to begin his official training, Aang ran off only to be caught in a storm. To survive, he involuntarily entered the Avatar state and froze himself and Appa in an iceberg, where he still remains. No one in the world (except for rare individuals, such as King Bumi) knows what happened to the Avatar, what his name was, or what he looked like, only that the Avatar disappeared. Some, like Prince Zuko, believe he is an old man, but others believe the Avatar's reincarnation cycle simply came to an end.

Current consequences:

- There is no Avatar.
- Most people don't believe the Avatar will come back.
- The world has lost more of its connection with the Spirit World.

The Air Nomad Genocide

Not long after the Avatar's disappearance, the Fire Nation attacked the other three nations with overwhelming force. When Sozin's Comet passed overhead, all Firebenders experienced a monumental increase in their abilities. With this temporary amplification of power, the Fire Nation killed all of the Air Nomads and severely damaged their temples.

The speed and efficiency the Fire Nation used to exterminate the Air Nomads stunned the world. While the Air Nomads' allies intended to come to their aid, they were busy contending with the Fire Nation on other fronts, creating the perfect environment for the Fire Lord's nefarious plans. Fire Lord Sozin's actions in the Roku Era built up the Fire Nation's military to a force that the Air Nomads were unable to contend with. Though Avatar Aang was the prime target of the attack, he ended up being the only survivor of the Air Nomads—though that truth is unknown to the world.

The Air Nomads are now relegated to footnotes in history books for the new generation of this era. Even then, there is little history the Fire Nation hasn't warped to fit its narrative and many records on Air Nomads are incomplete. A few people may visit their temples and wonder at the lost civilization but a scant few truly remember the Nomads.

Current consequences:

- There are no Air Nomads.
- The Air Nomad temples are for the most part empty (see the Mechanist on page 63).
- There is no one to tend to the spiritual sites the Air Nomads once cared for.

Southern Water Tribe Raids

Forty years into the war, Fire Lord Sozin's successor, Azulon, targeted the Waterbenders of the Southern Water Tribe. His soldiers took many Waterbenders to high security prisons or murdered them, and the population of the Southern Water Tribe dropped drastically. Rather than helping their fellow tribespeople, the citizens of the Northern Water Tribe further isolated themselves, shoring up their own defenses in case the ire of the Fire Nation turned on them next. This served to isolate the two tribes from one another, where they once presented a united front on many occasions.

The Southern Water Tribe raids only ended when Azulon was satisfied that he rid the world of the last Southern Waterbender, a woman named Kya. In truth, she was not the bender they were seeking, but lied and said she was to protect her daughter Katara, the real Waterbender (page 72).

Current consequences:

- The Southern Water Tribe numbers are dwindling.
- Most Southern Waterbenders are imprisoned.
- The remaining Southern Water Tribe warriors have left their homes to launch guerilla attacks on the Fire Nation.

The Siege of Ba Sing Se

The failed Siege of Ba Sing Se ended only a few years ago after lasting a grueling six hundred days. General Iroh, heir to the Fire Nation throne at the time, led the siege. The Fire Army got as far as breaching the Outer Wall and made their way through the Agrarian Zone. Around this time, Iroh's son, Lu Ten, was badly injured in the assault and soon succumbed to his wounds. Suffering his son's death made Iroh realize that the siege cost too many lives and destroyed the morale of the soldiers. Iroh ended the siege and eventually Ba Sing Se retook their lost ground and repaired the Outer Wall.

Current consequences:

- Ba Sing Se is one of the last strongholds of the Earth Kingdom.
- The Ba Sing Se government grows increasingly xenophobic.
- The Fire Nation is working on new technologies to breach the Outer Wall.

The Death of Fire Lord Azulon

After Iroh withdrew from Ba Sing Se, his brother Ozai demanded that their father remove Iroh as heir to the Fire Nation throne. Fire Lord Azulon, infuriated by this demand, ordered Ozai to kill his firstborn, Zuko, so that he would understand the pain of losing a firstborn son as Iroh had. Ozai planned to follow these orders, but his wife Ursa made a deal with him instead. She created a poison Ozai could use on his father in exchange for him sparing Zuko's life. Ozai banished Ursa and secretly assassinated Azulon so he could claim the throne.

Current consequences:

- Ozai, not Iroh, is the current Fire Lord.
- Prince Zuko is exiled from the Fire Nation until he finds the Avatar.
- Ursa is missing, presumed dead.

THE AIR NOMAD GENOCIDE

There are no Air Nomads alive during this era, because of the Air Nomad Genocide nearly a century ago. The Air Temples are damaged and in some cases left in ruins. The Mechanist and other Earth Kingdom refugees currently live in the Northern Air Temple, but their technology overtakes much of what was originally there. The Fire Nation has removed or destroyed most of the important relics in the other temples, but there are secrets that only the Air Nomads knew. Some of them likely still lie hidden within the temples.

The way the world remembers the Air Nomads varies from nation to nation. A few Southern Water Tribe members still speak of the Nomads in hushed tones. Isolated from the majority of Fire Nation propaganda, they realize their people now face an eerily similar fate to the Air Nomads. In Ba Sing Se, no one is even allowed to speak of the war, and it is hard to talk about the Air Nomads without speaking of their demise. Meanwhile, Fire Nation propaganda has spread lies about the Air Nomads, claiming that they aspired to conquer the world and that therefore the Fire Army's actions were justified.

For now, the Air Nomads are tragically absent from the world, and nowhere is this absence felt more strongly than in the vacant and overgrown Air Temples.



Water Tribes
Hundred Year War Era

During the Hundred Year War, the Northern and Southern Water Tribes are isolated and not communicating with one another. Since the tribes reside at either pole, the distance is too great to cross with the Fire Navy roaming the seas. Some Southerners, however, still feel that the Northern Water Tribe has abandoned their sister tribe to a terrible fate. While the Northern Water Tribe has successfully defended themselves against the Fire Nation's attacks to the point where they are essentially left alone, the Southern Water Tribe isn't nearly as lucky.

The Fire Nation's Southern Raiders wreaked havoc on the villages of the South Pole, imprisoning or killing every Waterbender they could find. With the warriors of the Southern Water Tribe off fighting the Fire Nation throughout the world, the survivors in the South are all but defenseless. The Southern Water Tribe as a whole faces near cultural extinction; it's up to the children and elderly to keep the tribe going.

Chief Arnook is the leader of the Northern Water Tribe, while the Southern Water Tribe is split into several small villages. Chieftain Hakoda leads one of those villages, though he is now absent as he leads attacks against the Fire Nation's military forces. Both of these leaders are pillars of their communities, and many look to them to understand how they should feel about and approach the war.

Notable Figures and Groups

Arnook

The composed and friendly leader of the Northern Water Tribe

Arnook is the Chief of the Northern Water Tribe and a warrior. He is a capable leader and skilled warrior who follows the traditions of his people. Along with leading the tribe, he carries the knowledge that his daughter, Princess Yue, will one day become the Moon Spirit, Tui (page 21). When Yue was born, she became very ill and her parents visited Tui and La in the Spirit Oasis for help. Tui healed her, but later Arnook had a vision of Yue's ultimate fate. While giving up one's mortal life to save the Moon Spirit is a tremendous honor, the knowledge haunts him.

Arnook keeps a wary eye on the Fire Nation, but knows Agna Qel'a is well defended from the rest of the world. Though he wishes for the two Water Tribes to unite, his desire to protect his people from the Fire Navy means he keeps his forces close to home. Arnook could be willing to help a hero who asked for his aid, if it did not threaten the safety of the Northern Water Tribe.



Pakku

A curmudgeon waterbending teacher set in his ways

Pakku is an elderly waterbending teacher who lives with the Northern Water Tribe and a secret member of the White Lotus (page 30). A harsh and irritable instructor, he is skilled at what he does and tremendously proud of the Northern Water Tribe. Pakku is adamant that women should learn waterbending for healing and men should learn waterbending for combat, as that is how it has always been done.

Because Pakku is from an older generation, he remembers when the Southern and Northern Water Tribes weren't cut off from each other. People looking for information about the tribes during the earlier part of the war may come looking for Pakku for answers, but he won't give them up easily. Anyone who needs a favor from the teacher must earn his respect first.

Yagoda

A kind healing arts teacher who has a way with children

Yagoda is a healing master from the Northern Water Tribe. She has a special gift for instructing the very young as she is kind and fairly laid back. Since the Northern Water Tribe has strict rules about only men being allowed to learn waterbending to fight and only women learning waterbending to heal, Yagoda must abide by those rules when taking on students.

Anyone who suffers an injury while in Agna Qel'a is likely to be tended to by one of Yagoda's former students or perhaps Yagoda herself if the injury is bad enough. Those in search of the best possible healing teacher might seek her out for instruction, but if they aren't a woman, they might want to look for one of her more open-minded students instead.

Hakoda

A loving father and chieftain fighting the war far from home

Hakoda is a Southern Water Tribe chieftain and father to a young Waterbender named Katara and a young warrior named Sokka. He is a kindhearted person who understands what it's like to feel helpless against the Fire Nation, as he lost his wife, Kya, to Fire Nation raiders. As part of a small fleet currently targeting vulnerable Fire Navy units, Hakoda puts his life in harm's way every day in order to protect his tribe and family. Since the Fire Nation has more advanced technology at their disposal, Hakoda's group of warriors use their superior knowledge of the waters and material mastery to stay ahead of the soldiers. Hakoda and his group are strong allies for those who have faced loss due to the war and are willing to do whatever it takes to bring an end to it.

Mamnguqsualuq

The leader of a secret Southern Water Tribe settlement

Mamnguqsualuq is the wily elderly leader of a small Southern Water Tribe settlement that lives in a hidden cave system. Her original home was one of the first to suffer at the hands of the Fire Nation's raiders, and as a young scout she found a complex cave system that went deep into the ice but was still warm enough to live in, with many fish swimming in big pools. Mamnguqsualuq moved her entire settlement into the caves, and they have lived there ever since.

No other tribes know about these caves, but they may spot moving apparitions far off in the snow drift. This lends credence to the rumors of dark spirits in that area of the South Pole, and few dare to go near. Mamnguqsualuq cautiously takes in anyone who needs shelter so long as she believes they can be trusted. She's also one of the most skilled scouts and trackers left in the south with her unparalleled knowledge of the land.

Hama

A Bloodbender on the run from the Fire Nation

Hama is a waterbending master who was born in the Southern Water Tribe. She survived the Fire Nation's relentless raids only to be captured and locked away in a prison for Waterbenders. During her years of imprisonment, in a place the Fire Nation specially designed to make waterbending impossible, she realized she was more powerful during a full moon and could control the water in bodies. Through years of training manipulating elephant rats she mastered bloodbending and used it to escape.

Hama is twisted from her years of torturous imprisonment and often unable to think clearly when it comes to the Fire Nation and its people, even if they're innocent of crimes. She's looking for a safe place to retire, but it seems the Fire Nation is just about everywhere. Hama is a powerful bender and will help fellow Waterbenders, people from the tribes, or those who oppose the Fire Nation.

Threats and Challenges

Aftermath of the Southern Raids

Linked theme: The Brutality of War

The Southern Raiders harmed the Southern Water Tribe in more ways than one. Since the attacks, the tribe has struggled with cultural decline because so many of the people who kept the tribe's traditions were killed or captured. They also see the beginnings of an imbalance with the Spirit World, with dark spirits becoming more active due to the decline in spiritual practices. Additionally, members of the Southern Water Tribe must cope with almost no Waterbenders. Many barely have time to grieve the loss of their loved ones, let alone maintain old traditions. Those who want to protect the tribe's history and heritage have a difficult task, as important cultural knowledge disappears forever with the deaths of its keepers and the theft of important artifacts by the Fire Nation.

Too Young to Fight

Linked theme: Hope in Rebellion

Plenty of young members of both Tribes are eager to become fully fledged warriors, but the world is a dangerous place for the unprepared. The Northern Water Tribe focuses solely on defense, so aspiring warriors who want to do more than stand guard atop ice walls have a hard time finding teachers willing to instruct them, let alone then escaping Agna Qel'a to participate in the wider war. In the Southern Water Tribe, the youngest warriors are tasked with staying home and protecting those the adult warriors left behind. Children and teenagers who want to go help the war effort have a difficult decision to make. Should they even consider leaving their wards behind if it causes hardship? Or is joining the fight worth it to protect their people and cultural heritage?

The Fire Island Prison

Linked theme: The Brutality of War

The Fire Nation's prison located on a remote Fire Island is specially designed to contain Waterbenders by being brutally dry. Prisoners are kept in cages suspended from the ground, and dry air is piped in so that they can't harness any water in the air. Treatment of the inmates is inhumane, and anyone who steps out of line is severely punished.

Waterbenders who were not killed in the Southern Raids are kept in this prison or others like it, and escape is only a forlorn dream. These Waterbenders are in no shape to fight their way out and Waterbenders breaking in to free prisoners need to bring their own water to fight with. There is one story of a Waterbender successfully escaping the prison, even with no water to be seen—the guards who survived talk about "bending sweat" and "bloodbending," but official Fire Nation policy holds that no one has ever escaped, and that there is no such thing as "bloodbending."



King Kuei, the 52nd Earth King, currently rules the Earth Kingdom from the heart of Ba Sing Se under the corrupt guidance of Grand Secretariat Long Feng. Kuei is completely unaware that a war is even happening as Long Feng has taken extreme measures to keep him in the dark. Kuei may be king in name, but the Grand Secretariat makes all decisions for him. He has even forbidden Earth Kingdom citizens from so much as mentioning the war to maintain the ruse.

With the Outer Wall of Ba Sing Se repaired after Iroh's siege (page 58), it is as ready to defend against Fire Nation attacks as ever before. Likewise, the mountaintop city of Omashu flourishes as a bastion of resistance against the Fire Nation. Its technologists and crafters supply the bulk of weapons to the rest of the Earth Kingdom resistance.

Despite Omashu's best efforts, the rest of the Earth Kingdom struggles. The Fire Army has conquered or destroyed many areas, and the Earth Kingdom cannot defend all its territories. Refugees from throughout the kingdom flee to Ba Sing Se in hopes of finding safety there and as a result, the Lower Ring is overcrowded. The quality of life is subpar in this part of the city, and many issues there are ignored by the government.

Sadly, being ignored by the government in Ba Sing Se is often the best fate an Earth Kingdom citizen could hope for. Rural government officials and Fire Nation soldiers take advantage of the chaos to harass and extort locals. Some Earth Kingdom soldiers stationed in small villages steal from their own civilians and threaten anyone who stands up to them. Even within Ba Sing Se, the Dai Li—a secret police force controlled by Long Feng—intimidates and brainwashes anyone who speaks of the war. Ba Sing Se's walls may keep civilians safe from the outside, but very little keeps them safe from corrupt forces on the inside.

Notable Figures and Groups

Long Feng

A scheming politician who controls the crown

Long Feng, the corrupt Grand Secretariat of Ba Sing Se, keeps the Earth King in the dark about the existence of the Hundred Year War. His thirst for power makes him ambitious, and his skill as a manipulator combined with the king's sheltered life makes it easy for Long Feng to use him as a puppet to further his agenda. In addition to serving as advisor to the king, Long Feng is also the head of the Dai Li. He keeps secret files on people of interest locked away in his office and sometimes intercepts letters to or from them. While the Dai Li handle most minor incidents (catching someone speaking about the war), people who consistently get the Dai Li's attention or are caught sending a message to the king must face Long Feng directly.

King Bumi

The feisty king of Omashu and master Earthbender

Bumi is the eccentric, elderly king of Omashu. He's highly skilled at earthbending and though he appears frail, scatter-brained, and whacky with his wry smile and unkempt hair, he is in fact stronger than ever. Under his guidance, Omashu turned from a remote bastion to the main supplier of weapons for the Earth Kingdom resistance. Bumi fosters his most skilled inventors to create practical and effective weaponry and uses his tactical mind to get these supplies all over the Earth Kingdom.

Even with Bumi's best efforts, the Fire Nation is taking land faster than he can supply it. If a hero can help the King smuggle weapons or foil Fire Nation plans, he'd happily accept their help. He might even teach someone advanced earthbending techniques if they truly help the war effort…although that requires them to decipher his lessons through the whispers to himself and the giggling outbursts.

The Council of Five

Five generals who report to a corrupt official

The Council of Five is a group of five Earth Kingdom generals who lead the Earth Kingdom war efforts. Led by General How, the council oversees all things militaristic and also presides over the Royal Earthbender Guards. In addition to How, the other members are the wrathful General Sung, the taciturn General Yiwen, the strict General Khièu, and General Duanmu, who is just about fed up with Long Feng's machinations. Each of them lives within the Upper Ring of Ba Sing Se and they frequently convene at the palace.

Historically, this group worked in conjunction with the Earth King as his hand-picked advisors, but during this time they are appointed by Grand Secretariat Long Feng. The Council of Five share all of their plans and information with Long Feng because they believe it is in the best interests of the Earth Kingdom. However, some council members may be willing to keep small secrets from Long Feng if convinced it serves Kuei and the Earth Kingdom. Though most Council members fear the Grand Secretariat, many secretly remain loyal to the crown they swore to defend.

The Dai Li

A secret police force with a tight grip on Ba Sing Se

Long Feng controls a secret police force called the Dai Li. Originally created and trained by Avatar Kyoshi much to her later regret, the Dai Li were meant to preserve the Earth Kingdom's cultural heritage and traditions. Now, they use hypnosis to brainwash people in the facility hidden underneath Lake Laogai and act as spies for Long Feng.

The Dai Li are chosen at a young age and molded into the perfect secret agents, making it difficult, though not impossible, to sway their loyalties. One of the Dai Li's signature techniques is the use of rock gloves to restrain their opponents and pin them against surfaces. It's extremely difficult to break free from these restraints for anyone except Earthbenders. Anyone who breaks the illusion that "There is no war in Ba Sing Se" is a potential target for the Dai Li. Likewise, the Dai Li may try to intimidate anyone seen associating with suspected dissidents into acting as informants.

King Kuei

You'll notice King Kuei is absent from our list of notable figures. If you want to deal with the Earth King during the Hundred Year War Era, you're actually dealing with Long Feng. King Kuei is the 52nd Earth King, and while he has technically been on the throne since he was four years old, he does not actually do much ruling. Grand Secretariat Long Feng has made all decisions on his behalf since Kuei was a child, and the king doesn't much mind it since he has no idea that there is a war going on. In fact, King Kuei has never even left the premises of the Royal Palace. Right now, King Kuei's main concerns are keeping himself amused, growing his menagerie, throwing parties, and pampering his best friend, a pet bear named Bosco.

Jet and the Freedom Fighters

A group of rebels determined to destroy the Fire Nation

The Freedom Fighters are a group of young Earth Kingdom refugees ostensibly dedicated to protecting the Earth Kingdom. This means ridding the world of any and all Fire Nation citizens that cross their path—the Fighters' mission of protection often becoming one of vengeance. Though composed entirely of kids, the group stands their own against trained Fire Army soldiers and ambushes their troops to cut off their supply lines.

Led by a charismatic and manipulative boy named Jet whose parents were murdered by the Rough Rhinos (page 65), the Freedom Fighters include Smellerbee, Longshot, Pipsqueak, the Duke, Sneers, and several others who have joined them over time. Their secret base is located in a network of treehouses obscured by foliage in the woods near a western Earth Kingdom village, Gaipan. The fighters take their lead from Jet, who is ruthless in his quest to destroy the Fire Nation. He is the most willing to kill defenseless Fire Nation and Earth Kingdom civilians alike if it brings down the Fire Army as well.

The Mechanist

A brilliant inventor in servitude to the Fire Nation

The Mechanist is an Earth Kingdom refugee living in the Northern Air Temple (page 26) with a number of other refugees, including his son, Teo. Before coming to the temple, his village was destroyed by a flood that killed his wife and paralyzed his son from the waist down. Along with the other survivors, the Mechanist discovered the Northern Air Temple, where they still reside.

As a genius inventor, the Mechanist was inspired by the temple and the Airbenders who once lived there. He built gliders that allowed his people to fly, including a chair glider for Teo. Though the group first lived there in secret, the Fire Nation discovered them and coerced the Mechanist into building weapons for the Fire Nation. Though the Mechanist hates helping the Fire Nation, he creates new inventions for their war effort, knowing that the other refugees and his son would suffer if he refused.

Threats and Challenges

There Is No War in Ba Sing Se

Linked theme: Survival and Secrets

The Dai Li have a secret underground base they use to brainwash Earth Kingdom dissidents. If anyone discovers the seriousness of the war outside of Ba Sing Se, if any refugee dares speak of what's outside the city's walls, or if someone rises to enough prominence and causes trouble for the Dai Li—they're sent away to be "re-educated" under Lake Laogai. Likewise, a person who makes enemies out of Long Feng might find themselves captured by the Dai Li and brought to the base. During the re-education process, victims are forced to look at a bright flashing light while the phrase "there is no war in Ba Sing Se" is repeated by a Dai Li agent. Once brainwashed into forgetting about the war, the person is released back into their old life.

Corruption in Ba Sing Se

Linked theme: Morals Being Tested

Long Feng isn't the only nefarious authority figure in Ba Sing Se. There are also lesser government officials equally as corrupt. These politicians wield no small amount of local power, which they abuse as the mood strikes them. Politics in Ba Sing Se is a viper's nest rife with danger; sometimes government officials conspire together to take down a joint rival, and sometimes they compete with each other to better their own political position through back-stabbing. However, these tenuous ties between people in power can also work in the heroes' favor—perhaps one of the Council of Five could be convinced to work against Long Feng's orders or a government official could be bribed to do the right thing; either way, someone meddling in politics should tread carefully, because the citizens of the Earth Kingdom have internalized that it's always the common people who suffer the most and pay the price for the corruption in the city.

Fire Nation Colonies

Linked theme: Colonization in Progress

Tensions are high in regions of the Earth Kingdom where Fire Nation colonists and Earth Kingdom civilians live side by side. Though some communities have merged over time like the city of Yu Dao where Earth Kingdom locals and Fire Nation colonists created new families together, it hardly means peaceful relations. Some Earth Kingdom civilians resent their colonizer family members, friends, and neighbors who they view as foreign, despising other Earth Kingdom citizens who've embraced them. For others, a merged life is the only one they've ever known and they've built their whole lives upon that foundation. Those unhappy with the current arrangement, no matter their origin, find ways to make life unbearable for their neighbors under the nose of Fire Nation troops—they sabotage crops, socially isolate families, and refuse to trade with anyone they see as "other."

Fire Nation
Hundred Year War Era

The Fire Nation has experienced a recent shift in leadership after the secret assassination of Fire Lord Azulon. Though Iroh (page 65) was meant to take the throne after his father's passing, Ozai orchestrated events so that he became Fire Lord instead. Ozai is just as set on world domination as his father and grandfather before him and has sent out his son, Prince Zuko, with the help of Iroh, to hunt down the Avatar. The prince is forbidden to return home until he completes his mission.

Now more than ever, the Fire Nation heavily prioritizes its military and industrial power. Its navy and its army have never been stronger, and they occupy much of the Earth Kingdom. There are no signs that Fire Lord Ozai and his military plan to stop their cruel campaigns, and the fates of the Air Nomads and Southern Water Tribe serve as tragic reminders of just what the Fire Nation is capable of. Much of this history and truth of current events is kept silent within the Fire Islands themselves, where children only learn the glorious history of their country, which paints the Air Nomads as aggressors and the Fire Nation as the peoples who lift other nations up from poverty and chaos. A new generation of Fire Nation citizens have grown up on the lies of the crown, ignorant of what's really happening outside their borders other than the propaganda they're regularly fed.

While some citizens do not agree with what their nation is doing, a few of them dare to stand against the government, though certainly not openly. To do so would lead to being branded as a traitor and thrown in prison, or worse. People who wish to rebel against Ozai and his government do so in secret, but some objectives cannot be accomplished silently.

Notable Figures and Groups

Fire Lord Ozai

The merciless leader of the Fire Nation

Ozai was not first in line to become Fire Lord, though he desperately longed for the throne and resented his older brother Iroh's claim to it. Now that Ozai has the throne, he uses his authority to aggressively further the Fire Nation's century-long quest for world domination. Since taking power, Ozai has spent most of his time ruling from the Royal Palace and surrounding area.

Ozai is ruthless in matters of revenge, power, and politics. This cruelty is no more evident than how he treats his own family—Ozai is responsible for permanently scarring his son Zuko by burning him on the face, and Ozai threatened his wife by suggesting he would murder Zuko, before she bargained for her son's life and was secretly exiled. He sentences people to exile without a second thought and sends assassins to kill those whose existence merely bothers him. If his citizens create obstacles to his agenda, he does not hesitate to make an example of them. He expects full and undying loyalty from all his subjects and frequently tests that loyalty, even using his servants to spy on his family.

Princess Azula

A power-hungry member of the Fire Nation royal family

Princess Azula is the heir to the throne and an adept Firebender known first and foremost for her cruelty and desire for power. As her father's favorite child, she spends most of her time at the Royal Palace and is an ambitious perfectionist who emulates him in many ways. Azula is as calculating as she is lethal with her firebending powers, which include the ability to lightningbend, and she knows exactly how to manipulate someone's emotions to make them vulnerable.

Azula rarely deems anyone worthy of her time unless they can further her goal of impressing her father. Her two closest friends are Ty Lee and Mai, whom she met at the Royal Fire Academy for Girls. The two friends are very different from Azula; Ty Lee is very upbeat and friendly and Mai comes across as apathetic and gloomy. Even as Azula's best friends, the two girls aren't spared her wrath, but they remain loyal to the princess…for now.

Commander Zhao

An ambitious Fire Navy commander bent on climbing to the top

Zhao is the commander of a Fire Navy fleet, steadily climbing the ladder of power. He learned firebending from Jeong Jeong before the admiral defected, but only cares for its destructive power rather than finding balance and precision through mental discipline.

Zhao has an incredible advantage over his rivals; some time ago, he used the Spirit Library in the Si Wong Desert (page 23) to learn the Water Tribes' weaknesses. He then burned down the section of the library dedicated to the Fire Nation so that no one could learn about the Fire Nation's vulnerabilities. Zhao has enemies and rivals even within the Fire Nation as evidenced by his loathing of Prince Zuko. If someone has insider knowledge about one of his opponents, he turns on the charm and tries to procure it. Should that not work, he is more than happy to use violent measures to acquire that knowledge instead.



War Minister Qin

A Fire Nation official in search of innovative military technology

Qin, an opportunistic Fire Nation official, seeks to create and steal the best inventions and machinery for the military. He sees these inventions as his ticket to prestige. His ability to draw out and exploit the best in other inventors and supplement it with his own technical expertise means he is always on top of the newest inventions for the army. One of his primary sources of technology right now is the Mechanist (page 63) in the Northern Air Temple. Qin makes regular visits to the temple to check on the Mechanist's progress and procure his latest inventions. Now that the War Minister has gotten a taste of true ingenuity, Qin's hunger for innovation is greater than ever. Anyone who has a piece of new technology is in danger of attracting his attention, and he will gladly blackmail innocents in order to take it for himself.

Jeong Jeong

A legendary firebending Fire Navy defector

Jeong Jeong is an ex-Fire Nation admiral and a firebending teacher who has become something of a legend. When he defected, he moved to the Earth Kingdom where he now travels with a small tribe of followers. He is an incredibly skilled Firebender who is fully aware of firebending's destructive potential and how it can be used to devastating effect. He has sworn never to teach firebending again after seeing students use his teachings toward gruesome ends. Zhao is the most destructive of those students, and he looks down on his former teacher for turning his back on the Fire Nation. Jeong Jeong is also a reclusive member of the Order of the White Lotus (page 30). He can be difficult to track down since he never stays in one place for long for fear of being captured by the Fire Nation.

Chey

A cheerful Fire Nation defector with explosives skills

Chey is an ex-Fire Nation captain who questioned using his explosives expertise to destroy Earth Kingdom villages and defected. He reveres Jeong Jeong and uses his expertise to thwart the Fire Nation rather than serving it. Chey dutifully follows his mentor everywhere he goes and practically worships the older deserter.

Chey is much more outgoing and hopeful than Jeong Jeong, which is a source of tension between the two. Chey believes he can still actively make the world a better place. He is more than willing to lend out his skills if it means protecting the innocent.

Colonel Mongke and the Rough Rhinos

A group of mercenaries who attack the vulnerable

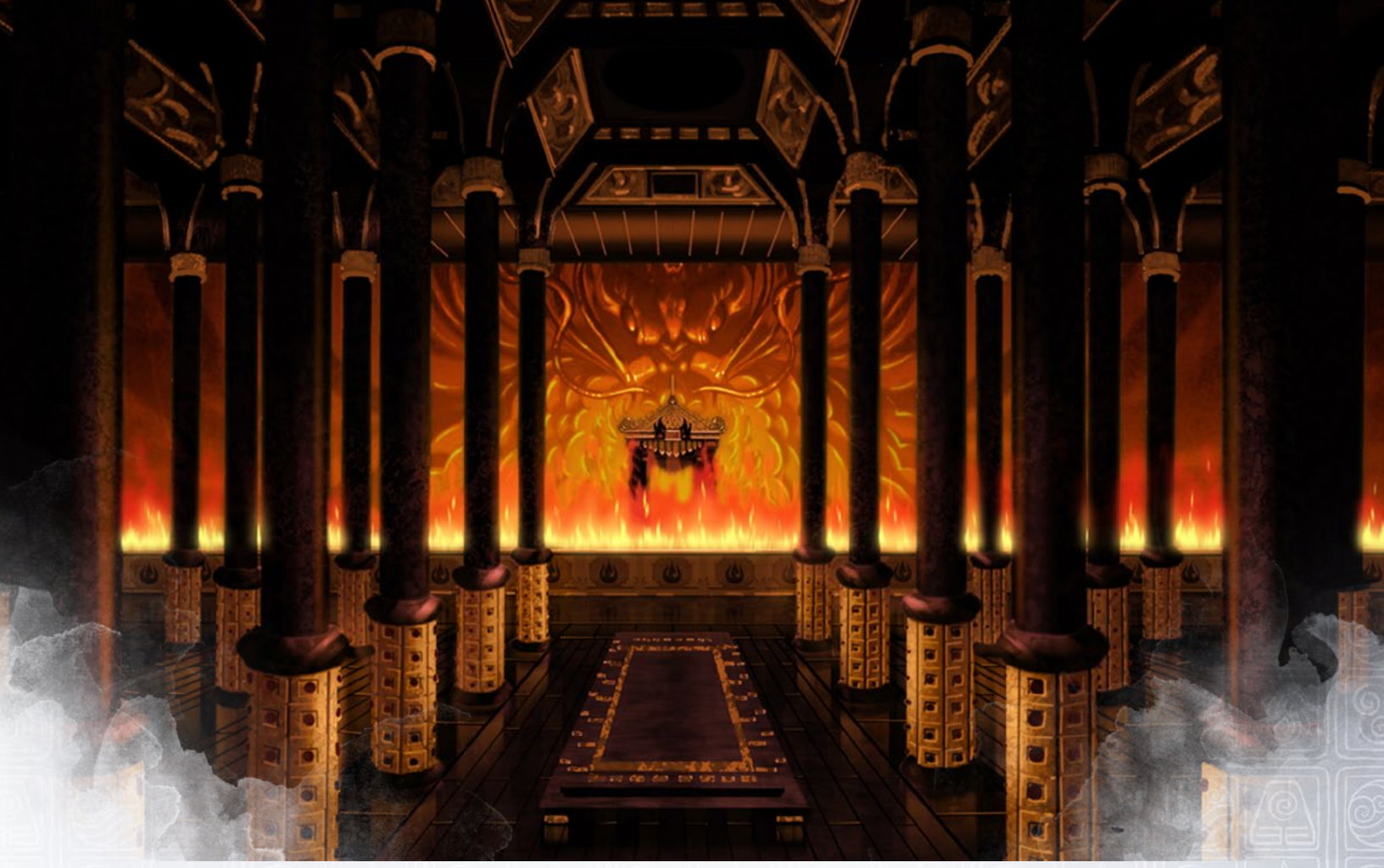
The Rough Rhinos are an elite group of Fire Nation soldiers who ride komodo-rhinos led by a Firebender called Colonel Mongke. The Colonel's ruthless, intelligent nature makes him exceedingly dangerous. Where other leaders may care about their soldiers, Mongke only cares about himself and isn't afraid to lose some people if it means he survives. Anyone unlucky enough to encounter this group of soldiers has a nasty fight on their hands, as the Rough Rhinos are known for their brutality. If anyone stands in defense of a vulnerable Earth Kingdom village the Rough Rhinos target, Colonel Mongke takes it as a personal challenge and won't rest until that village lies in ruins.



GENERAL IROH

Iroh is a decorated war general and was first in-line to inherit the Fire Nation throne before his brother Ozai. As a young man, Iroh proved himself worthy to the dragons Ran and Shaw (page 25) who taught him to Firebend without hatred or aggression. In order to protect them, he told everyone he killed the last dragon earning him the title, 'The Dragon of the West'. Iroh was also clever enough to watch Waterbenders' techniques and adapt them to redirect lightning through his body, proving he not only has a keen mind, but ample wisdom.

Iroh lost his son Lu Ten during the 600-day Siege of Ba Sing Se (page 58). This irrevocably changed him and when his father died shortly after, Iroh left the throne to Ozai. Iroh travelled the world for a time, becoming a member of the White Lotus on his journey, before eventually returning to the Fire Nation capital and becoming the guide of his nephew Zuko. Iroh is currently travelling the world with Zuko, who has been tasked by his father Ozai to find the Avatar. Iroh is dedicated to Zuko and little could pull him away from helping him. Zuko is aggressive and abrasive to anyone who gets in his way. That said, if Iroh's attention could be diverted for a short time, the only things the old man asks for to share his wisdom are a warm cup of tea and a good conversation.



Threats and Challenges

Bitter Rivalry

Linked theme: Morals Being Tested

Many soldiers and officers in the Fire Nation military see the war as an excellent chance to prove themselves and advance in the ranks. This often means competing with peers for a position or assignment, and this competition can get dirty. Officers may frame others for their mistakes, and soldiers might engage in contests that measure who can do the most damage to an Earth Kingdom village they're raiding. Lifelong friends turn against each other when a tempting enough prize is on the table, especially if that prize means escaping the more grueling parts of war. One person might even start a rivalry with somebody who doesn't want anything to do with it, but it's hard not to participate if your reputation and well-being are on the line.

Do Not Question the Fire Lord

Linked theme: Survival and Secrets

Fire Lord Ozai is the supreme leader of the Fire Nation, and that means that his word is the law. Advisors who push back against his decrees end up exiled or assassinated, and military officials reluctant to follow through on his orders are replaced in the blink of an eye. Anyone under the Fire Lord's employ who wants to rebel must be exceedingly smart, and at least a little bit paranoid, to not get caught. The Fire Lord's spies are everywhere and no one can be truly trusted.

This influence extends to all Fire Nation strongholds; no one is safe from scrutiny. Those who do transgress face punishments based on the severity of their actions. A person who merely questions the Fire Lord's decisions may get off with a stern warning, but should that person openly question the Fire Lord again, a prison cell may be waiting for them. Those who dare to act against his interests or openly defy his wishes face even steeper consequences.

The Silent Rebellion

Linked theme: Hope in Rebellion

Outside the Fire Islands, Fire Nation officers exert their control over the colonies. While a few officers may act as benevolent rulers, many are power-hungry warlords exerting an iron fist over their population. While these overlords take orders from commanding officers, and in turn the Fire Lord, many are left to their own devices to rule as they see fit.

However, this disconnect from the rule of the Fire Nation also means more room for people to rebel against unjust rule. Secrecy and subterfuge are necessary elements when it comes to fighting the Fire Nation. Those lucky enough to find like-minded individuals must figure out how to meet and communicate without getting caught, and should they get caught, they will need a plan of escape.

PLAYING A FIRE NATION CHARACTER

Players who create Fire Nation PCs in this era encounter a unique problem—the Fire Nation and its armies are a dangerous threat to the world. How can a player create a heroic PC from a nation led by such an unbalanced regime?

NO NATION IS A MONOLITH

First, keep in mind that the Fire Nation consists of people with different desires, drives, and beliefs. Some of those people are truly dangerous, like the Fire Lord and his daughter. But most of those people aren't monsters—some aren't even aware of their nation's true crimes! Others are trying to stop the war, whether through rebellion or diplomacy. For every Fire Nation zealot, committed entirely to Ozai's purposes, there is a Fire Nation hero, ready to stand against their own nation to protect others.

Players looking to play Fire Nation characters should always emphasize this diversity. Just because the Fire Nation military and elites are pursuing the Hundred Year War doesn't mean that every Fire Nation citizen is on board. Rebels, freedom fighters, peace advocates, conscientious objectors, and more are all great options for Fire Nation characters in this era.

DISCOVERY AS AN ARC

For Fire Nation PCs in the Hundred Year War Era, the discovery of the extent of the Fire Nation's crimes creates a compelling arc. *Avatar Legends* heroes are always good people at heart; a PC from the Fire Nation who comes to see all the harm the Fire Nation has done and continues to do must confront that pain.

A Fire Nation PC might encounter the truth in the inciting incident of your game, coming to realize the truth of the Fire Nation's cruel policies as they encounter new perspectives and make new friends. This discovery sets up an arc for the PC in which they must grapple with their relationship to their home culture. But don't create a PC who doesn't already understand the Fire Nation's crimes. Discovering the truth in the inciting incident is fine; discovering the truth during play means the PC might not find a path forward as a hero.

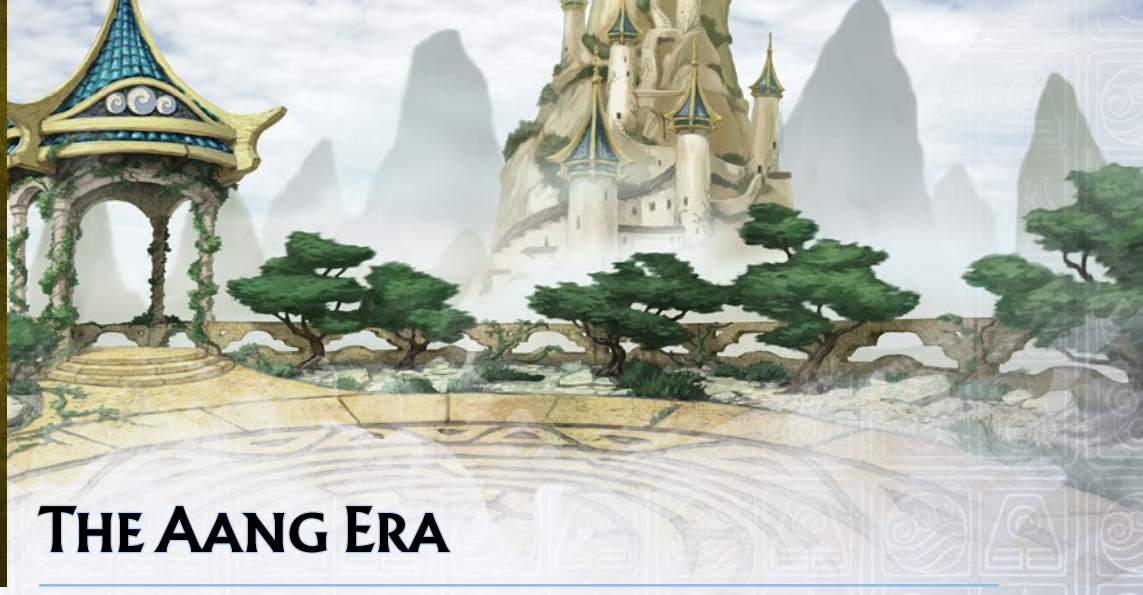
REDEMPTION AS AN ARC

Fire Nation PCs in the Hundred Year War Era might also aim for redemption arcs in which they were somewhat complicit in their nation's crimes. A discovery arc is easier; a character who didn't realize their mistake, but immediately sets out to correct it is one that's easily recognizable as a hero. A character who instead participated in the terrible behavior, but now seeks to make up for it, is likely a character with a long road to travel.

For any player interested in playing a PC on such a redemptive arc, make sure that the crimes of your PC are not irredeemably heinous, and that the other players are comfortable with the story you are establishing (see Safety Tools on page 12 for more on how you can check in with the other players).

Much like with an arc of discovery, any PC on an arc of redemption should already be on that arc at the start of play. If the character hasn't yet come to realize how wrong they were, and still defends their actions, they aren't ready to be a heroic PC yet.





The Aang Era

Where We Start

The Aang Era specifically details the state of the world just after the conclusion of the *Imbalance* comic trilogy. The Hundred Year War is finally over thanks to Avatar Aang and his team. This era is one of hope after a long stretch of strife. It is a time of possibility, cooperation, and healing, restoring balance to the world. For the first time in years, the nations have a chance at true cooperation, but many struggle with embracing the forgiveness needed for collaboration. Plenty fight against progress towards social and political cooperation, and those who cannot change find themselves left behind, holding onto narrow-minded attitudes that are quickly becoming outdated.

Fire Lord Zuko now sits on the **Fire Nation** throne after joining forces with the Avatar to stop his father, and he faces unhappy citizens who've made attempts on his life. Aang and Zuko work to repair the damage done by the Fire Nation during the war, but despite their best intentions, it hasn't always turned out the way they'd like. Decolonization is well underway in the **Earth Kingdom**. The Harmony Restoration Movement (page 70) was intended to establish balance among the nations by moving Fire Nation colonists back to the Fire Nation, but it wasn't universally embraced. Many people didn't want to be forced out of settlements they had lived in for so long, and multicultural families did not want to be broken up.

While some in the Earth Kingdom strive to remain integrated, other places push to separate—and not always due to nationality, but also to increasing tensions between benders and non-benders. This is exemplified by the bending supremacist uprising in Cranefish Town. Though the Avatar and his team stopped the uprising, plenty of people (most of them benders, though not all) believe only benders should be in leadership roles. Tensions caused by the bending supremacist movement aren't going away any time soon.

The **Water Tribes** face their own obstacles on the path towards healing. The Southern Water Tribe slowly works on reconstruction after a century of extreme hardship during the war, but rebuilding has come with its own set of problems… The Northern Water Tribe assisted in the Southern Reconstruction Project, an endeavor meant to repair its sister tribe, only to make a play for the South's valuable oil depository. Maliq (page 73), an engineer sent by the Northern Water Tribe, believed that oil-fueled machinery created equality between non-benders and benders, but the Southerners ultimately forced him and the other workers to withdraw.

This era is a surreal time for many people—the first time in a century when the nations haven't been in direct conflict. A generation of children who've only known war finally get a taste of peace. Some wounds, such as the genocide of the **Air Nomads** or the loss of loved ones during the war, cannot be repaired. Even so, there is more promise for the future than in over a century, and the heroes of this era must see that promise fulfilled.

Avatar Aang

Avatar Aang is technically over a hundred years old, but is actually just a teenager. When he was twelve, he learned he would become the next Avatar and fled his responsibilities in fear. He was caught in a storm and reflexively entered the Avatar State, freezing himself and his sky bison Appa in an iceberg for protection. Fire Lord Sozin launched his attack on the other nations instigating the Hundred Year War (page 56) while Aang and Appa remained frozen for nearly a century. When he awoke, Aang was stunned to learn that the world was at war and devastated that his people, the Air Nomads, were all dead. Now, he is the only living Airbender, though he has recently started mentoring a group called the Air Acolytes to keep Air Nomad culture alive.

Aang has been busy since coming out of the iceberg. With the help of his friends, he fought Fire Lord Ozai and brought an end to the Hundred Year War, kept civil unrest from breaking out in the former Fire colonies, and halted a bending supremacist uprising… just to name a few of his activities. Aang had to grow into his role, as all Avatars do, but he truly wants to see balance restored to the world and is willing to put in the work.

In his personal life, he has started a romantic relationship with Katara, a Southern Water Tribe Waterbender, and cemented his unlikely friendship with Fire Lord Zuko. Aang and Zuko's friendship has a special importance in the world of diplomatic relations, as it serves an essential part of restoring balance between the Four Nations. Now, Aang and Katara spend much of their time and attention on the industry-focused Cranefish Town. Aang hopes it becomes a thriving, inclusive community despite the problems it has faced. Little does he know that this area is destined to become one of the most important cities in the world—Republic City (page 82).

AANG ERA SIGNIFICANT THEMES

HEALING DEEP WOUNDS

People all over the globe confront the trauma they suffered throughout the war and find ways to move forward as best they can. For those who lost loved ones, homes, or parts of their culture like the Southern Water Tribe did, the path forward is especially challenging. Not everyone heals the same way, and one person's healing journey might be another person's nightmare. Someone who heals themselves by investing all their energy into doing something productive may not understand someone who needs time alone to heal.

GM MOVES:

- *Offer comfort from an unlikely source*
- *Show a weakness to gain understanding and empathy*
- *Embrace an earnest offer for help*

GROWING PAINS

Each nation is experiencing political and societal changes, and so are their citizens. Some of these changes are more painful and face more resistance than others, such as when Fire Lord Zuko and Earth King Kuei tried to move Fire Nation colonists out of the Earth Kingdom (page 70). Even those who want to embrace change and growth may become impatient when things don't change fast enough or when they run into obstacles along the way. The path towards the future of the Four Nations is a rocky one, but at least there is a path.

GM MOVES:

- *Lash out with the frustration of the impatient or the ignored*
- *Offer a surprising source of assistance*
- *Challenge an established norm*

COEXISTENCE

The Four Nations were divided for a century, and now people must learn how to coexist alongside each other. Some are eager to go out and explore a diverse world and see what it has to offer or what they can contribute to it, but others wish for nations to isolate themselves. Some believe decolonization means all people should return to the land of their ancestors, while others feel integration is the way to achieve peace. One way or another, the world must learn how to operate now that the Fire Nation is an ally instead of a foe.

GM MOVES:

- *Depict neighbors protecting neighbors*
- *Mix two cultures to create something unique*
- *Remind everyone of the Fire Nation's formerly global reach*

INDUSTRIAL ADVANCEMENT

New technologies bring limitless possibilities to the world, but not everyone is happy with this rapid push into the future. The Southern Water Tribe struggles with holding onto its cultural identity while also embracing rapid industrialization and renovation. Meanwhile, technological advancement in Cranefish Town means non-benders can find more work than ever, but at the same time, benders are being made redundant by machines. These seeds of discord took root, splitting the inhabitants of the town right down the middle and giving birth to the first bending supremacist movement. Now, aftershocks of that movement's insurrection ripple throughout the world.

GM MOVES:

- *Attack those who don't conform to another's view of the world*
- *Destroy useful technology*
- *Offer an easy but untested solution*

FINDING WHAT WAS LOST

The end of the war meant people could finally embrace lost bits of culture outlawed by the former Fire Nation regime. The Avatar has begun reconstruction of the Air Temples with the aid of the Air Acolytes, and Earth Kingdom towns rediscover old traditions. As the Southern Water Tribe recovers from stunning losses in the war, many youths learn the stories of their people to pass on to future generations and learn what it is to be a member of their tribe in peacetime.

GM MOVES:

- *Reward an insatiable interest in history and culture*
- *Tell a story of the past relevant to the present*
- *Covet unique cultural items and make them important*

Important Events

The following is a list of important events, which occur leading up to and during this era. Each event has a list of the current consequences for the stories you craft in this era.

The End of the Hundred Year War

Only a couple of years ago, Avatar Aang brought an end to the war with the help of allies from all nations. The final battle took place when Ozai had just named himself Phoenix King and Azula was crowned Fire Lord in her father's stead. Both Firebenders were greatly empowered by Sozin's Comet flying overhead, which amplified their firebending powers, but Aang still took on Ozai while Zuko and Katara battled Azula. Meanwhile, the Avatar's other allies, including Uncle Iroh, Toph Beifong, Sokka, and Suki, halted the advance of the Fire Nation airship fleet into the Earth Kingdom.

After Aang defeated Fire Lord Ozai and stripped him of his bending abilities, Ozai was imprisoned for his crimes in Hari Bulkan Prison near the Royal Palace. Now, Fire Lord Zuko governs the Fire Nation as the world grapples with how it has been changed by the war, from the genocide of the Air Nomads to the existence of new multicultural post-colonial societies.

Current consequences:

- Avatar Aang is the only Air Nomad left.
- Fire Nation citizens face stigma for their nation's actions during the war.
- Many people now come from multicultural backgrounds.

The Harmony Restoration Movement

Not long after the end of the Hundred Year War, Earth King Kuei and Fire Lord Zuko made an agreement to extract Fire Nation colonists from the Earth Kingdom. The first year went smoothly, and people from the newer colonies were excited to return home. However, the movement met resistance when the citizens of the much older colony of Yu Dao refused to relocate. Many had been there for generations, and even some Earth Kingdom citizens fought against the movement to protect their friends and family. Not all Earth Kingdom citizens felt that way, though, and many took to the streets to protest letting the Fire Nation colonists stay. Both King Kuei and Fire Lord Zuko sent troops to Yu Dao, and war very nearly broke out.

Luckily, Avatar Aang and his allies prevented the battle from escalating, and the movement ended with Yu Dao electing a new government with both Earth Kingdom and Fire Nation representatives. On the international stage, Fire Lord Zuko and King Kuei signed the Treaty of Yu Dao helping to secure peace between their two nations. Additionally, Zuko agreed to pay war reparations to the Earth Kingdom to help them rebuild, which was an unpopular choice with some Fire Nation citizens.

Current consequences:

- Fire Nation colonists still live in the Earth Kingdom.
- Many people on both sides are unhappy with how the movement ended.
- The Earth King and Fire Lord both face criticisms for how they handled the movement.

New Ozai Society Uprising

The New Ozai Society is a clandestine group whose goal is to reinstate Ozai as Fire Lord. They see Zuko as a weak Fire Lord who does not prioritize his people the way his father did. The group launched attacks on Zuko and his family, but were defeated. Though the leader, Ukano, turned himself in, the group has many members with some still at large. Ukano truly did not trust Zuko, but he was manipulated into attacking the young Fire Lord by Azula, Zuko's sister, who threatened Ukano while she was disguised as a dark spirit.

Current consequences:

- A group of Kyoshi Warriors (page 75) now protect the Fire Lord.
- Zuko still faces attempts on his life.
- Members of the New Ozai Society are still at large.

The Southern Reconstruction Project

The Southern Water Tribe started to rebuild and modernize with the help of its northern counterpart and the other nations, but tensions between the two tribes is an obstacle. Hakoda, the Head Chieftain of the Southern Water Tribe, agreed to work with two architects from the Northern Water Tribe to urbanize Capital City and its surrounding areas. They built an oil refinery, but the North intended to take control of the oil, believing the South inadequate to manage the resource. Gilak, a warrior from the Southern Water Tribe, led a group against the northerners but fell to his death in an attack. The threat of violence has calmed since Gilak's death, but conflict between the two tribes is still palpable.

Current consequences:

- Southern Water Tribe citizens are still unhappy Hakoda, the Southern Water Tribe chief, wants cooperation with the North.
- Relations between the North and South are strained.
- Earth Kingdom companies now help the South continue to rebuild.

Bending Supremacist Uprising

In the rapidly growing Earth Kingdom settlement of Cranefish Town, some benders lost jobs to new machinery operable by anyone. Many of these benders harbored feelings of superiority over non-benders, and unrest broke out between the two groups, with non-bender workers targeted for violence and a ban proposed on public acts of bending. An Earthbender factory owner named Liling capitalized on the growing chaos and organized a group of bending supremacists to sabotage businesses with the aim of putting the town under bender control. The Avatar and his friends ended this movement, but the bending supremacist sentiment has not vanished and has a lasting impact on the world beyond this era (page 80).

Current consequences:

- More and more benders lose their status as skilled workers.
- Many non-benders accrue wealth and status thanks to machines that can now do the work of benders.
- The bending supremacist movement still exists.

Air Acolytes
Aang Era

Though Aang is the only Airbender in the world, Air Nomad culture lives on through the Air Acolytes—a group created by the Avatar dedicated to keeping Nomad traditions alive. The Air Acolytes originated from the Official Avatar Aang Fan Club, which was so popular it had several chapters in different locations. At first, Aang was skeptical of the members' desire to incorporate all things Air Nomad into their lives, but he now teaches the acolytes all about Air Nomad celebrations, practices, stories, and philosophy.

The Air Temples are still in rough shape after the Hundred Year War and decades of disrepair, but with the number of Air Acolytes growing, it may be time to start repairs soon. There are relics to reclaim, lost lives to honor, and old responsibilities to uphold. The path forward may not be entirely clear, but as Aang continues to gain new allies in the form of the Acolytes, the future looks brighter and brighter.

Notable Figures and Groups

Xing Ying

An Avatar Aang Fan Club president turned Air Acolyte

Xing Ying, one of the first Air Acolytes, made a bad first impression on Aang because she had Airbender master tattoos despite not being an Airbender. As the president of the Yu Dao chapter of the Official Avatar Aang Fan Club, Xing Ying learned everything she could about Aang and the Air Nomads. Her love of the culture inspired her to get the tattoos, but she failed to realize how doing so was disrespectful to Air Nomad tradition.

Now, Xing Ying wears a headband to cover up part of her tattoo but continues to study Air Nomad culture with great enthusiasm. Prospective Air Acolytes would be wise to spend time traveling with Xing Ying before joining. Though Xing Ying prefers resolving conflict through communication, in unavoidable fights she is very capable of defending herself. When possible, she always tries to bring the fight to a swift and peaceful conclusion.

Jingbo

A committed Air Acolyte looking to help in whatever way he can

Jingbo is an eager Air Acolyte who wants to help the Avatar through thoughtful dedication. He struggles with certain aspects of Air Nomad traditions, namely meditation, but his commitment to the Acolytes is steadfast. Though he isn't a bender, Jingbo doesn't hesitate to enter a dangerous situation if it means he can protect others or defend Air Nomad ideals. He also doesn't mind taking on more mundane tasks, such as carrying supplies, and is happy to participate as an Acolyte in any way possible. Jingbo's earnest enthusiasm can provide aspiring Acolytes with insight into the less romantic truths of being an Acolyte and help people differentiate between the fantasy and reality of joining.

Yee-Li

An Air Acolyte keeping tradition alive

Yee-Li is one of the founding members of the Ba Sing Se chapter of the Avatar Aang Fan Club. One of the original Air Acolytes, she is so dedicated to keeping Air Nomad tradition alive that Toph, one of Aang's closest allies, has accused her of focusing too much on the past. Toph's criticism has not deterred Yee-Li, however. Yee-Li is particularly fond of Air Nomad music, and she plays the cymbals when the Acolytes play together. Interestingly, Yee-Li has a soft spot for The Dark One (page 74), one of Toph's first metalbending students, even though her personality is much more cheerful and his is more brooding. If heroes need to take on a particularly daunting task, Yee-Li might be able to get both the Air Acolytes and the Beifong Metalbenders on their side.

Threats and Challenges

Reviving Air Nomad Culture

Linked theme: Finding What Was Lost

The Air Acolytes have a challenging task in learning and preserving Air Nomad culture, and not just because they have only one living Air Nomad to learn from. So much that belonged to the Air Nomads was destroyed during the Hundred Year War. This makes every relic and piece of documentation especially precious now. Much of what survived in the war was stolen, often by the Fire Nation. In addition to recovering the physical pieces of Air Nomad history, the Air Acolytes do their best to memorize how holidays are celebrated, stories told, and rituals conducted, so that they don't have to rely on Aang to give them instructions.

Appropriation vs. Appreciation

Linked theme: Growing Pains

It's not always clear where the line is between preserving Air Nomad culture and appropriating it in a disrespectful way. For instance, Airbender tattoos can only be earned through years of mastering airbending forms and Air Nomad philosophy. Though Avatar Aang believes that the Acolytes have the hearts of Air Nomads, there are still lines that shouldn't be crossed. Figuring out those lines and being willing to learn from mistakes is all a part of the Air Acolytes' mission. Heroes may need to contend with aspiring Acolytes who don't care about these boundaries, especially if they cause problems by pretending to be experts on all things Air Nomad.

Maintaining Balance with Spirits

Linked theme: Coexistence

The Air Acolytes already had their first run-in with the Spirit World when the Earthen Fire Refinery provoked the ire of the ancient spirit General Old Iron (featured in *The Rift* comic series). The Acolytes are quickly learning that making peace with spirits is a big part of what the Air Nomads did, and now they share that responsibility. They must not only consider the agreements that Avatar Yangchen made with spirits long ago, but how to help the Avatar when he seeks to foster balance between humans and spirits. And if they can't reach Aang in a crisis, hopefully the Acolytes have learned enough from him to act!



The Water Tribes have been busy since the end of the war. The Southern Water Tribe expanded considerably in a short span of time, though the road to revitalization hasn't been without its obstacles. Tensions between the Northern and Southern Water Tribes during the Southern Reconstruction Project finally blew up after a conflict over an oil depository. The Northern Water Tribe sent people to oversee the project, and when they discovered the oil depository there, the North attempted to quietly claim control of the resource. Conflict broke out between both tribes, and Gilak, the leader of the southern nationalist uprising, died…though his resentment lives on in many other Southern Tribe members.

Hakoda is the current Head Chieftain of the Southern Water Tribe, while Chief Arnook (page 60) still governs the North, with the South ultimately answering to him as well. Some southerners fear that the Northern Tribe's influence and the rate of growth will lead to the Southern Water Tribe's cultural identity fading. It is hard to completely disregard these fears, seeing as the South Pole is already all but unrecognizable as the same South Pole from before the war.

To that end a younger faction of Southern Water Tribe people work towards recovering their people's cultural identity. New Waterbenders are born and strive to discover how their powers connect to their people's culture. The youth believe their people's stories don't have to fade into history and can be integrated into the tribe's new future. They've set about collecting stories and objects thought lost during the war and archiving them for future generations.

Notable Figures and Groups

Katara

A kindhearted waterbending master working to help those in need

Katara is one of the few surviving Waterbenders from the Southern Water Tribe and an essential part of the Avatar's team. She lost her mother to the Fire Nation's raiders (page 58) and was separated from her father, Hakoda, while he was off fighting. Together with her older brother Sokka, she helped to bring about the end of the war and continues to aid Avatar Aang whenever she can.

In addition to being an amazing waterbending fighter, Katara is a skilled healer whose talent only grows more powerful with time. She can teach both forms of waterbending, combat and healing, to benders who want to improve their abilities and doesn't restrict anyone based on gender. Katara is kind, optimistic, and protective of her friends. She has a hard time saying no to people in trouble and therefore takes on more than she and her allies can handle.

Sokka

A loyal warrior with a passion for complex plans

Over the past couple of years, Sokka has come into his own as a warrior and an individual. He works with Aang to restore peace and fought alongside him and Katara to end the war. He's trained as a warrior since his youth and often uses a boomerang in combat. More recently, he trained as a swordsman and forged his own sword out of a meteorite, which he subsequently lost when he foiled a Fire Nation airship attack on the Earth Kingdom.

Sokka tends to take things less seriously than his younger sister Katara, but is fiercely loyal to his loved ones. If something were to happen to any of them, he would do whatever it takes to save them. Likewise, if something were to happen to him, he has plenty of people who would stop at nothing to rescue him, including his formidable girlfriend Suki (page 75), the leader of the Kyoshi Warriors.

Hakoda

The Chieftain of the quickly growing Southern Water Tribe

As the Chieftain of the Southern Water Tribe, Hakoda must call on all the leadership skills he used during the war to lead an expanding community. Hakoda is an intelligent, open, and charismatic leader. When he isn't keeping the Southern and Northern Water Tribes from arguing with one another, he focuses on shaping the future of his tribe.

Should they hold strictly to the spiritual traditions of the past or focus on keeping up with the industrial endeavors of other nations? Should the tribe make compromises to appease the North, or should they forge a separate identity? He tackles these questions daily, and the more help he can get, the better. Heroes who want to help have plenty of opportunities to do so as the Chieftain is both trying to grow the tribe and navigate political conflicts that sometimes turn violent.

Malina

An architect from the Northern Water Tribe living in the South Pole

Malina, a Waterbender and brilliant architect, comes from the Northern Water Tribe but now lives with the South. Anyone near the South Pole who needs help with an engineering endeavor would be hard pressed to find someone more capable. Malina recently started a romantic relationship with Hakoda and has been assisting in the Southern Water Tribe's continued development.

When Malina first arrived in the South, she originally intended to help the Northern Water Tribe take control, but she ultimately changed her mind and decided it was better for the South to grow on their own terms. Her brother, Maliq, did not share her opinion, causing some strife between them. Malina is a good ally for anyone who needs to investigate why certain engineering projects fail and if there's sabotage involved.



Maliq

An engineer who wants to see the Northern Water Tribe's dominance

Like his sister Malina, Maliq is an architect and engineer from the Northern Water Tribe. He came to the Southern Water Tribe to assist in the Southern Reconstruction Project, believing that the tribe was incapable of helping themselves. Maliq was forced to return to the Northern Water Tribe along with the other northerners who came with the same agenda. Unsurprisingly, his relationship with his sister is strained since their disagreement about the project.

Maliq now works on a plan to convince his sister that he was right about the Southern Water Tribe's weaknesses as he moves between the North and the South. He will go to great lengths to make his point because he believes it to be for the greater good of both tribes. His biggest advantage is that Malina would love for her brother to turn a new leaf—Maliq could take advantage of that love she has for him.

Nakul

A storyteller recovering her tribe's lost history

Nakul, a young storykeeper from the Southern Water Tribe, travels from village to village collecting stories from the South. After being orphaned in the war, Nakul moved around frequently throughout the years and experienced the enduring spirit of her people through the different memories shared with her by her caretakers. Now, as a young adult, she wants to bring this living history to all members of her tribe.

Nakul dreams of building a giant storyhouse in Wolf Cove with archives of all the history she's collected over the years. She intends to include history not only from the South, but from the North as well, in hopes that discovering shared stories might help heal the bad blood between the two tribes. Currently, Nakul and her fellow storykeepers struggle with reaching the most remote villages of both North and South to collect their stories and could use competent warriors to protect them on their journeys.

Threats and Challenges

Enduring Conflict Between North and South

Linked theme: Coexistence

Since the end of the war, the existing tension between the two Water Tribes grows, and the South is rife with murmurs of anti-Northern sentiment. Southern Tribe citizens feel that the Northerners acted selfishly by not providing any assistance during the war and now see any Northern offer to help as opportunistic and often selfish. The North's recent attempt to claim the Southern Tribes' oil depository stoked fears of the North's weakness for corruption, and members of the Northern Water Tribe are not especially welcome in the South Pole right now. Any earnest offer of help from the North is met with suspicion, as the South isn't ready to forgive their sister tribe for abandoning them during the war. Heroes who need the assistance of both tribes will be hard pressed to get them to cooperate without an argument breaking out, and people from both tribes may even demand them to pick a side.

Prejudiced Perceptions of the Southern Water Tribe

Linked theme: Industrial Advancement

The people of the Southern Water Tribe are among this world's most resilient survivors, and now that the war is over, they finally have a chance to return to important traditions. It is a time of both remembrance and renewal, and one of the things the tribe needs most right now is time to reconnect with their cultural identity after being forced to focus only on survival for so long. This renaissance of cultural celebration comes with new industrial growth as the South rebuilds much of what was lost during the war.

Most people throughout the world don't recognize the Southern Water Tribe for its strength, despite the clear example of their prowess when their warriors helped the Avatar defeat Fire Lord Ozai. When they look at the tribe in comparison to its Northern counterpart, which has industrialized significantly throughout the war, they see a collection of villages that has seemingly only just begun to form a larger "civilization".

Recovering Waterbending Prisoners

Linked theme: Healing Deep Wounds

The Fire Nation may have freed its Waterbender prisoners at the end of the war, but many of them must still heal from the trauma of their extended imprisonment. Some of the prisoners are elderly, and returning home is only the beginning of their recovery. Some may not feel comfortable in the South Pole after all the changes it's gone through and how much time they've spent away. Still others may discover they have an emotional block that prevents them from waterbending. Those who wish to help these former prisoners have several options, but each recovering Waterbender is a unique case. Helpful heroes could reunite a former prisoner with their long-lost loved ones, find answers to what happened to missing friends, try to figure out how to restore their bending, or accompany them on a quest for revenge against war criminals.

Earth Kingdom
Aang Era

Life in the Earth Kingdom is improving since the end of the Hundred Year War, but the nation struggles with decolonization. Each former Fire Nation colony must figure out what an integrated future looks like for them, and without accepting compromise, there's no way to make everyone happy. Settlements near Yu Dao and Cranefish Town have the opportunity to forge a larger, more diverse community (and later become parts of the United Republic of Nations—see page 82).

One way the Earth Kingdom progresses towards decolonization is focusing on technological innovation, which helps to bridge the divide between natives and colonizers. These advancements spell promise for future prosperity, but aren't without their own challenges. New divides between benders and non-benders form in the Earth Kingdom as some benders' jobs are made obsolete by technology (see "Bending Supremacist Uprising," page 70).

The Earthen Fire Refinery, a crystal refinery, is owned and operated by the world's first international post-war business: Earthen Fire Industries. In the past, the factory only employed benders to work the production lines because they needed Earthbenders to extract the crystals, Waterbenders to purify them, and Firebenders to heat the ovens. And now thanks to recent mechanical upgrades, non-benders can work alongside benders here. The Earthen Fire Refinery employs so many people that a settlement named Cranefish Town sprouted up nearby. The Kyoshi Warriors work as the town's de facto law enforcement for the time being.

Notable Figures and Groups

Toph Beifong

A young earthbending master and pioneer in the art of metalbending

Toph Beifong is a living legend and has been known to steal the spotlight even with the Avatar right next to her. Along with being a master Earthbender, Toph is also the first person to discover and hone metalbending. She currently runs Beifong Metalbending Academy where she and her students train Earthbenders with the potential to metalbend.

Though she comes from the aristocratic Beifong family, Toph hates formalities, rituals, and fancy stuff, and loves to say and do whatever she pleases. Toph learned earthbending from badger-moles instead of human teachers, which partly accounts for her unique bending style. Being blind has led her to develop a bending-led way to sense people and objects through vibrations in the earth; she can even sense changes in people's breathing and heartbeats, making her a human lie detector. Aspiring benders—especially disabled students seeking a teacher with similar experiences—may seek her out for training because of her unprecedented skill, but she is a tough teacher. When she isn't at her academy, she is usually off helping the Avatar or working as a representative for Earthen Fire Industries.

Lao Beifong

A powerful businessman vested in the future of Cranefish Town

Lao Beifong is the co-founder of Earthen Fire Refinery in Cranefish Town. He is also Toph's father, though they were estranged until recently. Like his daughter, Lao can be stubborn and hardheaded, and he shows his love for Toph by worrying about what's best for her.

Lao is a knowledgeable businessman who tries to prioritize the well-being of his employees. Noticing that Cranefish Town was growing rapidly and crime was on the rise, he created the local Business Council to govern the town. Concerned that benders were using their abilities to rob non-benders, he proposed to outlaw public bending. This fueled the beginnings of the Bender Supremacist Uprising, and while Aang and his allies stopped it, Lao has lingering fears. Now that things have calmed down, he guides aspiring entrepreneurs and does what he can to employ locals looking for work.

King Kuei

The 52nd Earth King finally taking a stand for his people

The 52nd Earth King spent the vast majority of his life oblivious and sheltered. Long Feng (page 62), the Grand Secretariat who manipulated Kuei for many years, is now imprisoned. Kuei, now active in the governance of his city and nation, does his best to improve the Earth Kingdom and its relations with the other nations. Unfortunately, he overcompensates for his embarrassing past, such as when he led an army against the Fire Nation colonists who didn't want to leave Yu Dao…fortunately, the Avatar was there to set him on the right path!

Kuei's beloved and pampered pet bear, Bosco, often travels with him, which makes him cut a more flamboyant figure than most kings. Those looking to help the Earth Kingdom recover from the war might seek Kuei out for an assignment. Conversely, heroes who notice Kuei taking an ill-advised path may try to convince him to take another one.

Beifong Metalbending Academy

The world's first metalbenders

The Beifong Metalbending Academy is located near Yu Dao in what used to be a firebending dojo during the occupation. Though Toph Beifong had a rocky start with her first three students, their progress shows promise for the future of metalbending. Those first three students—Ho Tun, Penga, and The Dark One—now teach classes at the academy. Ho Tun can be a bit anxious at times, the young Penga is working through obsessive habits, and The Dark One's first true love is poetry, but all three are capable Earthbenders with metalbending abilities, and each is dedicated to helping where they are needed. They even assisted in the Southern Reconstruction Project (page 70) in the South Pole. Because metalbending is still a newly discovered form of bending, anyone in need of an Earthbender with metalbending training must come to the academy. Though the number of students is growing, it's often Ho Tun, Penga, and The Dark One who get sent out on missions.



Kyoshi Warriors

A group of female warriors working as Cranefish Town's police force

Avatar Kyoshi (page 32) founded the Kyoshi Warriors for the purpose of protecting Yokoya Peninsula (now Kyoshi Island). The warriors dress in green armor, metal headdresses, and makeup that resembles what Kyoshi wore during her time. They also often wield specialized war fans in battle. After aiding in the Hundred Year War, they expanded their role as protectors and acted as Fire Lord Zuko's bodyguards for some time. One of their most recent endeavors has been training the police in Cranefish Town, where a group of them still reside.

Suki, a young woman who began her training at eight years old, currently leads the Kyoshi Warriors. In addition to fighting with the standard Kyoshi war fans, she has also learned chi-blocking, thanks to Ty Lee (page 64), who is now also a Kyoshi Warrior and has shared her chi-blocking mastery with many other warriors. The group is entirely made up of women, except for Sokka, Suki's boyfriend, who was briefly an honorary member.

Bending Supremacists

A group of extremists who believe benders are inherently superior

Though the bender supremacist uprising was quelled, some people still feel that benders are superior to non-benders and worry about machines replacing benders in the workplace. Liling, the leader of the bending supremacist movement in Cranefish Town, believed non-benders should not hold positions of power as they are inherently weaker. Despite her best efforts to start a war—and to kill her daughter, Ru, for abandoning the cause to side with the Avatar—Liling failed and now resides in Cranefish Town's prison, though she may be moved to a more secure location soon.

Cranefish Town was the seat of this bigotry-fueled conflict, but people throughout the Earth Kingdom and the rest of the world share the same ideas about the superiority of benders. Bending supremacists sabotage factories where benders have lost jobs to machines and carry out attacks on non-benders in power, giving the heroes ample opportunity to foil their plans if they know what to look out for.

Threats and Challenges

The Challenges of Decolonization

Linked theme: Coexistence

Yu Dao is not the only town with a mix of Fire Nation colonists and Earth Kingdom citizens living there, and not everyone agrees about what these towns should look like from here on out. Colonists who decide (or are pressured) to move back to the Fire Nation may not have lived there since they were children; others have never lived there. Young people with one parent from the Earth Kingdom and one from the Fire Nation may feel their loyalties do not lie with any single nation, but with their unique mixed community. Diverse settlements like Cranefish Town are attractive to citizens looking for belonging that isn't dependent on being accepted by any one nation. However, they may also attract unwanted attention from people who don't believe cultures should mix.

Healing from War

Linked theme: Healing Deep Wounds

So much was lost during the war. Some refugees stay in Ba Sing Se's Lower Ring and others move back to the villages they evacuated—if those villages still stand. Rebuilding pillaged villages isn't only a physically laborious task, but an emotionally taxing one as well. Some people have lingering unanswered questions about the fates of loved ones they were separated from during the war. A few may find closure by confirming a loved one's death or reuniting with them, but others must choose between devoting themselves to hunting down answers they may never find or moving forward without those answers. Heroes may want to embark on an epic journey to track down a friend who went missing during the war or stay close to home to fight off bandits taking advantage of their recovering village. They may even want revenge against a friend who betrayed them in the heat of battle to save their own skin.

Life in the Lower Ring of Ba Sing Se

Linked theme: Growing Pains

For refugees living in the Lower Ring, the end of the war hasn't brought much in the way of relief. The area is still overcrowded, and the government does not provide enough resources to the citizens who live there. Those in the Lower Ring may feel forgotten as the rest of the world starts to heal. Some of the problems that plague the Lower Ring include poverty, crime, poor sanitation, and overcrowding.

Though the corruption in the government is better since Long Feng was deposed, the Lower Ring is still a vulnerable target for crime bosses and government officials alike who take advantage of this chaotic time. Heroes who want to spend some time in the Lower Ring have plenty to keep them occupied between all the growing criminal organizations. It's also a great place for someone to go into hiding.

Fire Nation
Aang Era

The Hundred Year War is over, Zuko is now Fire Lord, and the Fire Nation must now contend with its bloody history of imperialism. Since his tumultuous ascension to the throne, Zuko faces constant attacks by those who want his imprisoned father reinstated. While Ozai remains in prison, stripped of his bending, Zuko's sister Azula is still at large. Despite these challenges, the new Fire Lord and his allies are set on steering the Fire Nation away from its imperialist history and towards a world united in harmony.

It is a strange time to be a Fire Nation citizen or colonist. Much of the world still resents the Fire Nation because of the grievous harm its government and military inflicted, and many do not know how to feel about its civilians. After all, many willingly supported Fire Lord Ozai's regime or allied with it in fear of punishment. For the first time in a century, the people of the Fire Nation must learn what it means to be part of the world and not just a part of the Fire Nation.

To that end many Fire Nation citizens work where they can to repair some of the damage inflicted by the war. As a result of Zuko's reforms, scholars strive to recover lost history and eliminate deceitful propaganda long taught in school texts; Fire Nation inventors contact Earth Kingdom colleagues to collaborate for the first time in over a century; and the Fire Nation now crafts policy to ensure nothing like the Hundred Year War ever happens again.



Notable Figures and Groups

Fire Lord Zuko

The new Fire Lord who works with the Avatar to restore balance

Zuko is the first Fire Lord in generations to look beyond an imperialist agenda for the Fire Nation. Trying to do things differently and turn back decades of wrongdoing is no small task. Between upsetting people with the attempted Harmony Restoration Movement, fending off assassination attempts, and contending with his sister Azula's machinations, Zuko has a lot on his hands.

Some citizens of the Fire Nation don't believe what is best for the rest of the world is what is best for them, and that makes Zuko feel like he must choose between them and diplomatic relations. Though he may doubt himself sometimes, it is clear to his closest friends, like Avatar Aang, that he will have a tremendous influence on the world for the better. Heroes hoping to improve diplomatic relations between nations might serve the Fire Lord directly, try to protect his life against threats, or work with him on restoration projects.

Uncle Iroh

A wise and compassionate mentor still providing guidance in retirement

Iroh, no longer the war-focused "Dragon of the West" as in his youth, now finds joy in the small things in life—like tea—and the company of others. He is one of the Avatar's wisest and most compassionate allies and helps anyone fighting for harmony and justice. The Fire Lord is like another son to him, and Iroh has stood by Zuko through thick and thin. Though he mostly spends his days running his tea shop, the Jasmine Dragon in Ba Sing Se, he still aids Zuko and the Avatar whenever he can, even stepping in as interim Fire Lord when Zuko needs to attend to personal matters. Additionally, he still serves as a Grand Lotus in the Order of the White Lotus. Those looking to join the White Lotus in order to help bring peace to the world would be wise to seek him out.

Azula

The dangerous Fire Princess at her wits' end

After failing to defeat the Avatar and his allies with her father, Azula was institutionalized rather than imprisoned, as the fight pushed the princess to her breaking point. Zuko then withdrew Azula from the institution to help search for their missing mother Ursa, but Azula used the mission as a chance to try to kill her instead. After that, she disguised herself as a dark spirit, in order to manipulate the New Ozai Society (page 70) into attacking Zuko…to make him strong, or so she claims.

Despite everything that has happened Azula may very well care for the welfare of her brother…though their relationship remains tenuous. Azula still has the remaining Fire Warriors at her disposal, but she could choose to strike out on her own instead. Chances are she isn't far from Zuko, and she is unlikely to be willingly taken alive.

Nergüi

A skilled assassin working to mend past misdeeds

During the war Nergüi only ever acted with the belief that the Fire Nation brought prosperity to the world, even as he took on heinous missions for his home nation. Every horrible thing he'd done was put into question when Ozai was defeated, and the extent of his genocidal plans became apparent. For the first time in his life, Nergüi suffered a crisis of faith. After a year of despair, Nergüi swore to dedicate his remaining years to undoing the wrong he inflicted on the world.

To that end, Nergüi still works as a spy…but for the new government. He specializes in hunting down the worst offenders of the Hundred Year War and bringing them in to stand trial for their crimes. Nergüi is still learning what it means to be on the right side of things and while his espionage skills may be unparalleled, he always benefits from people who provide a moral compass on his missions.

Fire Warriors

Azula's mysterious group of warriors plotting their next move

The Fire Warriors are a group led by Azula who impersonated dark spirits, Kemurikage, to manipulate the New Ozai Society. The group was comprised of women Azula broke out of mental health institutions, as Azula herself was in a similar facility after Zuko and Katara defeated her at the end of the Hundred Year War. The Fire Warriors went so far as to abduct children to make themselves more believable as local dark spirits, but Avatar Aang, Zuko, Mai, and the Kyoshi Warriors rescued them.

Though many of the Fire Warriors were captured, Azula and a handful of others managed to get away. With their numbers reduced—and Azula not necessarily standing by the group she founded—the Fire Warriors are wantonly reckless with their plans. They might target heroes who help Zuko or find ways to turn other citizens against their Fire Lord.

Satoru

A young industrialist chasing after the future in order to escape his past

Satoru is a young Fire Nation citizen who works in the Earthen Fire Refinery. He was first employed there by his uncle Loban, but has found more freedom since Loban joined the Air Acolytes. He now works alongside Lao Beifong to help Cranefish Town prosper. If there are strange goings-on in Cranefish Town, Satoru knows about them.

Satoru had a crush on Toph for a while (page 74) and worships her as a hero of the Hundred Year War. Though not a bender himself, he is in awe of Toph's bending abilities and aspires to accomplish things with technology that formerly only benders could do. He is passionate about innovation and helping his employees and the people of Cranefish Town.

Threats and Challenges

Repairing Damage and Investigating War Crimes

Linked theme: Healing Deep Wounds

The Fire Nation's military grievously harmed the other nations under Ozai's rule, and not everyone is willing to trust Fire Nation citizens. In some parts of the world, Fire Nation citizens are used to walking freely and openly, the advantage of being on the side of successful conquerors; now no longer a privileged class, they are treated as ordinary people or outcasts. In other parts of the world, people aren't used to seeing Fire Nation citizens at all without accompanying soldiers and officers of the Fire Army. Few understand this conundrum as deeply as the scholars and investigators responsible for documenting the Fire Nation's war crimes in an attempt to formulate appropriate reparations.

Investigators' jobs are difficult in that they must investigate crimes that took place all throughout the war, often with little to no recorded evidence save for numerous first-person accounts. No matter what investigators conclude, their reports are highly contested for being biased one way or another. Heroes who want to help the Fire Nation with reparations could aid investigators in compiling evidence and hunting down war criminals still at large.

Uncertain Loyalties

Linked theme: Growing Pains

While some officials openly criticize Fire Lord Zuko, others hold their tongues while secretly plotting to get rid of him. These plots aren't solely focused on the Fire Lord himself—they may include his entire cabinet of advisors. Government officials who came to power after Ozai was ousted fight against a century of hate for a peaceful future. They work openly and honestly with the Fire Lord, engaging in hours of discussion and debate of what the future of the Fire Nation should be.

Hiding amongst these officials are politicians who outwardly agree with the Fire Lord's plans, but secretly conspire against him. They also work against their colleagues, stir up hate, and try to swiftly thwart any plan towards progress. If heroes could find a way to uncover these traitors, it would go a long way towards reforming the Fire Nation's political system.

Lingering Prejudice

Linked theme: Coexistence

The Fire Nation works to establish peaceful relations with the other nations, but it's hard to shrug off a century's worth of propaganda. Some citizens and former officials alike still believe the rest of the world would be better off under Fire Nation rule. When foreigners visit the Fire Nation, they might run into prejudiced individuals who don't want them there and business owners who don't want to offer their services. Similarly, when Fire Nation citizens visit other nations for the first time, they may be surprised to find that these places are not like how they were depicted in propaganda. Heroes from other nations who don't want to stand out may have a difficult time if they run into those holding onto wartime prejudices. Antagonistic groups like the Fire Warriors or New Ozai Society may take advantage of people's prejudice in order to gain extra resources or thwart opposition.





The Korra Era

The Korra Era specifically details the state of the world immediately after the end of the *Ruins of the Empire* comic trilogy. The world has undergone significant changes since the previous era, including the creation of **Republic City**. This metropolis is the heart of the **United Republic of Nations**, a sovereign state where people from all nations live and work together.

It's a time of great technological advancement, with the citizens of Republic City taking a particular interest in industrial endeavors and cultural innovation. Bending is now a sporting event beloved by the public, and many question whether bending is necessary as technology continues to evolve. Vehicles fill the streets, smoke plumes from factories, and benders and non-benders alike travel the skies in airships.

For the first time in history, the two **Water Tribes** are now truly independent from one another. Both survived a civil war that ended with the Southern Water Tribe finally gaining a long-desired independence from the North. And for the first time in ten thousand years, humans and spirits have free access to each other's worlds thanks to Avatar Korra. She opened the spirit portals at both poles, during the Harmonic Convergence after defeating the chaos spirit, Vaatu (page 16), who tried to plunge the world into darkness. Later, an additional portal was created in Republic City.

Airbenders have also returned to the world! Due to Harmonic Convergence (page 80), various people from every walk of life and in every nation have spontaneously gained airbending powers. Aang's son, Tenzin, works with his family to teach these new Airbenders to master their abilities and to embrace Air Nomad culture, as he continues his father's dream to rebuild the **Air Nation**.

Meanwhile, the **Earth Kingdom** cycles through leaders, from the tyrannical Queen Hou-Ting, to the militaristic dictatorship of the metalbending Kuvira, and finally to the young King Wu who hopes to transition the kingdom into a democracy. Through these transitions of leadership, there were two attempts to forcefully unite the various provinces of the kingdom into an Earth Empire, but Avatar Korra and her allies stopped both. Kuvira, the first leader of the failed Earth Empire, has now stood trial and pleaded guilty for her war crimes. The Avatar and many others believe that she is truly remorseful for her actions, but the damage and pain she caused runs deep both in the Earth Kingdom and the United Republic of Nations.

The **Fire Nation** remains relatively peaceful during this era. Having learned hard lessons from the past, Fire Lord Izumi is a wise and thoughtful leader who is determined to work with the other nations, instead of conquering them. Within the Fire Nation itself, Izumi and her people focus on developing their cultural identity beyond imperialism, embracing the new wonders this beautiful future has to offer.

On a more disturbing note, extremist groups such as the Red Lotus reawaken to shape the world according to their twisted ideals. Political upheaval is a constant in this era, with the Earth Kingdom, United Republic of Nations, and Water Tribes experiencing their own crises. After so much turmoil, it feels as though the entire world is holding its breath as it waits for the next crisis.

Avatar Korra

Avatar Korra was born and raised in the Southern Water Tribe, but has spent much of her career as the Avatar in Republic City. Unlike other Avatars before her, Korra contends with an age unlike any other, one in which people don't revere the Avatar as they used to. Modern technology means the Avatar is watched like never before and her actions are scrutinized by the press. However, if there is anyone who can handle this, it's Korra; with a tenacious will to perform her duties, she thrives where others might have failed.

Korra can be stubborn and quick to jump into a fight, but her determination has enabled her to accomplish things no other Avatar has, such as being the first Avatar who can metalbend. When the Red Lotus terrorists broke out of their prison, they poisoned Korra with mercury, but she survived the assassination attempt, though she spent three years recovering from the physical and emotional trauma.

Korra can no longer connect with her past lives after being temporarily separated from Raava, the spirit that makes up part of the Avatar Spirit during the Harmonic Convergence (page 80). Luckily, the Avatar Spirit continues to live on and so will the Avatar line, but as far as Korra knows her connection to her past incarnations is permanently severed. Even so, Korra is a highly capable Avatar and has dealt with crisis after crisis with tenacity and courage. Her Team Avatar includes Bolin, Mako, her polar bear-dog Naga, and her girlfriend Asami.

Korra Era Significant Themes

Extremism Born of Fear

Every crisis in this era has its roots in extremist movements and fascist regimes. Non-benders fear being oppressed by benders, while benders fear being made obsolete by fast-advancing technology. These fears led to the bending supremacist movement in the prior era (page 70) and the anti-bending movement in this one. The Earth Empire's success, however fleeting, gave people a taste of a fascist dictatorship. Extremist movements have a way of inspiring more extremist movements, so it is essential to stay alert, wary, and critical of any seeds of intolerance and bigotry being planted.

GM MOVES:

- *Advance an opposing polarizing standpoint*
- *Force a PC to take a side*
- *Discredit logic and science in favor of gut-feel*

Redemption

The world isn't black and white; it's a vibrant tapestry balancing the tones and hues of impulse and action. Sometimes a person can spin out of balance, embracing chaos or extremist ideas, but striving to find balance again isn't beyond anyone's grasp. People who forced their ideals on others, violently or otherwise, may realize they need to make reparations to those harmed along the way. Cruel, violent, or stupid actions all have a cost, but everyone can strive to regain inner balance.

GM MOVES:

- *Take the wrong path with the "right" intentions*
- *Justify aggressive actions with moral reasoning*
- *Turn a foe into an ally*

The Duties of Leadership

With so many leaders proving to be corrupt, good ones are more valuable than ever. Republic City, the Earth Kingdom, and both Water Tribes have all seen new leaders rise to power, amidst a growing feeling throughout the world that it is time to replace what doesn't work. After so much disappointment, people have high expectations of their leaders, and it is easy for leaders to become overwhelmed with their people's conflicting needs, values, and philosophies. New leaders quickly learn it is impossible to please everyone.

GM MOVES:

- *Rebel against unjust regulations*
- *Ruthlessly interrogate leadership, even if it's just*
- *Present impossible promises from people in power*

Setting Boundaries

People everywhere set and negotiate their boundaries to ensure independence. Humans and spirits struggle to live alongside each other, with no easy solutions to achieving balance. The United Republic of Nations struggled with the short-lived Earth Empire and its determination to reclaim Republic City for itself. Even Ba Sing Se contends with unprecedented change after the wall separating the Lower and Middle Rings fell. As the boundaries between cultures, peoples, and territories shift, people may find that they want to see change in the boundaries within their personal lives as well.

GM MOVES:

- *Set a surprising boundary*
- *Obstinately oppose changes from positions of power*
- *Manifest a crowd acting dangerously from righteous anger*

Industrialization vs. Tradition

Technology can now accomplish or surpass feats of bending, which some view as a threat and others as a blessing. Inventors embrace this new technology and see how far they can push their art in the name of science, sometimes to devastating results and sometimes to miraculous discoveries. Republic City is full of skyscrapers, automobiles, factories, power plants, airships, and there will be more technological changes going forward. A few other regions try to hold onto their old ways, but the desire for technology and industry is contagious. The world is full of inevitable disagreements about whether these changes are for the better.

GM MOVES:

- *Show technology overcoming bending in surprising or dangerous ways*
- *Destroy or attack new, misunderstood technology*
- *Abuse a discovery for personal gain*

Important Events

The following is a list of important events, which occur leading up to and during this era. Each event has a list of the current consequences for the stories you craft in this era.

Anti-Bending Revolution

A masked figure called Amon led the anti-bending revolution in Republic City, gaining influence thanks to his mysterious ability to take away people's bending. In truth, Amon was a Waterbender, though he lied and claimed that he was a non-bender whose family was murdered by a Firebender. His followers called themselves **Equalists**, and they were eager to see Amon strip all benders of their abilities, a feat he accomplished through bloodbending—he even managed to take away Avatar Korra's bending for a time. The revolution came to an end when Amon's identity as a bender was revealed and its other leader, Hiroshi Sato, was imprisoned. Even now, years later, there are still Equalists at large, both violent and non-violent, and enemies might try to manipulate them into attacking the Avatar or other foes.

Current consequences:

- Equalists are still a threat.
- There is a tension between benders and non-benders in the world, in part due to new technology.
- Some benders are hypervigilant in identifying and persecuting Equalists.

Water Tribe Civil War

Tensions between the two Water Tribes finally came to a head in this era, leading to a civil war between Southern Water Tribe rebels and the governing Northern Water Tribe. Unalaq, the Chief of the Northern Water Tribe and Korra's uncle, instigated the crisis. He saw the Southern Water Tribe as an inferior civilization that had lost its connection to the spirits and true Water Tribe culture. His proposed solution was for the North to rule over the South.

At the height of the Civil War, Unalaq had troops stationed in the Southern Water Tribe and pushed the rebels out of the area. He badly injured his brother Tonraq and imprisoned him for standing against him. The war ended when Avatar Korra defeated Unalaq and the Southern Water Tribe gained independence.

Current consequences:

- The Southern Tribe and Northern Tribe are independent.
- Unalaq's children, Desna and Eska, now rule the Northern Water Tribe.
- The South thrives in comparison to earlier eras, balancing an embrace of the new with respect for tradition.

Harmonic Convergence

Once every ten thousand years, the planets align, amplifying spiritual energy worldwide. This rare event played a crucial role in Unalaq's plans. During the most recent Harmonic Convergence, Unalaq merged with the chaos spirit Vaatu to create a Dark Avatar, a powerful being capable of great feats of bending and destruction. A battle ensued between Avatar Korra and the Dark Avatar in Republic City's bay, and though it was a close call and the Avatar Spirit Raava was seemingly destroyed for a time, Korra was victorious. Afterwards, she chose to keep the spirit portals open so that spirits and humans could once more live together and learn from each other for the first time in ten thousand years. This decision radically changed the world, and some people like Raiko, the president of Republic City at the time, thought the shift dangerously disruptive. Also, after Harmonic Convergence, many non-benders across the world suddenly gained airbending abilities. You can read more about the Harmonic Convergence and Vaatu on page 17.

Current consequences:

- The spirit portals in both poles remain open.
- Vaatu's spirit is dissipated.
- Avatar Korra no longer has access to her past lives; the Avatar cycle has restarted with her as the originator.

The Red Lotus

The Red Lotus splintered off from the Order of the White Lotus (page 30) shortly after the conclusion of the Hundred Year War. They sought to destroy the world's governments and any remaining separation between spirits and humans. When Avatar Korra was just a child two young members of the group, Unalaq and Zaheer, hoped to achieve this goal by kidnapping Avatar Korra and indoctrinating her, though this kidnapping failed. Instead, all four attempted kidnappers were imprisoned in separate facilities, and Unalaq (who had only helped plan the kidnapping) broke ties with the Red Lotus.

When the Red Lotus' leader, Zaheer, suddenly gained airbending abilities after the Harmonic Convergence, he broke out of prison and helped his three co-conspirators escape their prisons as well. Zaheer assassinated the Earth Queen Hou-Ting, and a lavabending member of the group named Ghazan brought down the wall between the Lower and Middle Rings of Ba Sing Se. The group then managed to capture the Avatar and very nearly succeeded in killing her while she was in the Avatar State. Though the Red Lotus was defeated, their actions have left a lasting mark on the world.

Current consequences:

- Earth King Wu now governs the Earth Kingdom.
- Zaheer is imprisoned in an underground facility.
- Other members of the Red Lotus may still be at large.



Rise of the Earth Empire

After the Red Lotus terrorists assassinated the Earth Queen, the Earth Kingdom fell to chaos. Citizens tired of the crown's abuse of power did not want to see the kingdom return to old ways, and bandits took advantage of the disruption to target vulnerable villages. Kuvira, a military leader and master Earthbender trained in metalbending by Suyin Beifong, capitalized on the situation by working to stabilize Ba Sing Se. For this she was rewarded with the position of Earth Kingdom provisional leader, a position she began to abuse by enslaving villages to a massive war effort under the guise of reuniting all the Kingdom's states.

When the time came for her to cede power to King Wu, she instead proclaimed the monarchy dissolved, established the Earth Empire, and then launched an invasion of the United Republic of Nations to reclaim the land it was on. Kuvira's ambition became her downfall, as she nearly died due to her own spirit energy cannon which created a new spirit portal in Republic City. Korra saved her, and Kuvira subsequently surrendered when she realized the Avatar outmatched her.

Current consequences:

- Kuvira is under house arrest in Zaofu.
- There is a new spirit portal in Republic City under the stewardship of the new Air Nation.
- The spirits claim and protect the area of the city directly around the new spirit portal.

The Gaoling Crisis

After Korra and her allies defeated Kuvira, there was a second attempt at replacing the Earth Kingdom with the Earth Empire. Commander Guan, who was the head of the Earth Empire's southern forces when Kuvira was in charge, led this uprising. Improving upon brainwashing techniques used decades ago by Long Feng and the Dai Li, Guan used technologically enhanced mind control to gain supporters and undermine the democratic elections established by King Wu.

Though Guan's uprising ultimately ended with defeat, it served as proof that there is still much division in the Earth Kingdom. Now that the Earth Empire has dissolved, King Wu still rules the Earth Kingdom. He wishes to guide the Earth Kingdom into a democracy but has decided to do so slowly since not all of his citizens were ready for a big change.

Current consequences:

- King Wu slowly works to turn the Earth Kingdom into a democracy.
- Guan is imprisoned, but some of his brainwashing technologies are unaccounted for and may be developed into new forms for which there is no cure.
- The poorest villages of the Earth Kingdom are economically devastated by the manipulations of two failed Earth Empires.

United Republic of Nations
Korra Era

Republic City has grown substantially in only a matter of decades, making it one of the most important economic and cultural hubs in the world. The city started off as Cranefish Town in the Earth Kingdom and became a metropolis as more people desired to live in a multicultural environment. Now, Republic City hosts the pro-bending championship, companies like Cabbage Corp and Future Industries, inventors, industrialists, and Air Temple Island, which serves as a home for Tenzin's family as well as a haven of Air Nomad culture.

Republic City is also home to a new spirit portal. Kuvira created the portal by accident when she lost control of a spirit energy cannon (page 81). This portal became the source of much conflict in the city, with spirits and humans fighting over the territory. Wonyong Keum, the CEO of Keum Enterprises, wanted to build an amusement park around the portal, complete with guided tours into the Spirit World, and went so far as to hire the Triple Threat Triad to secure the area. After that plan backfired and led to the Triple Threats turning against him, he eventually signed a contract giving the lands to the Air Nomads who now protect the portal.

The newly elected president of the United Republic of Nations is Zhu Li Moon. President Moon won the election after working tirelessly to help the people living in the temporary evacuee camp after the Earth Empire invasion. As for law enforcement, the United Republic of Nations has its own military, the United Forces, and a police force with an elite squad of Earthbenders, all trained in metalbending and equipped with metal wire reels and metal armor.

Allies

Zhu Li Moon

The hardworking President of the United Republic of Nations

Zhu Li, the current president of the United Republic of Nations, recently won the election over former president Raiko. She is a selfless, compassionate, and considerate leader who genuinely cares about the well-being of the people of the United Republic of Nations. During Kuvira's uprising, Zhu Li joined the Avatar in the fight against the Earth Empire and personally tried to sabotage the spirit energy cannon.

Recently, Zhu Li married her former boss, Varrick (page 84), a successful businessman with flexible morals. Because Zhu Li prioritizes the citizens she governs over all else, she sometimes forgets to take care of herself. Heroes who help preserve Zhu Li's precious time and energy by taking on Republic City's problems themselves are sure to win the president's good will. If there seems to be more depth to an issue in the city than meets the eye, chances are heroes can find the beginnings of an answer from Zhu Li.

Asami Sato

The bold and brilliant CEO of Future Industries

Asami Sato runs Future Industries, a company based in Republic City that creates cutting-edge technology, vehicles, and industrial equipment. The company, founded by Hiroshi Sato, Asami's father, was passed on to Asami when he was apprehended as a co-leader of the Equalist movement (page 80).

Asami has been friends with Korra since she first came to Republic City, and the two officially started a romantic relationship after defeating Kuvira. Those who target Asami's loved ones better know what they're doing, as Asami is a skilled engineer, strategist, and martial artist. She's also clever enough to put her extensive connections and resources to good use. Heroes in need of advanced technology or vehicles might turn to Asami for help. Non-benders in particular could find her a useful ally, since she has numerous tricks up her sleeve for facing a master bender.

Lin Beifong

Republic City's fierce and headstrong Chief of Police

Lin Beifong is the Chief of Police in Republic City and the daughter of the legendary Toph Beifong (page 86). Like the other officers in her metalbending police force, she uses metalbending to apprehend criminals and wreck large metal structures, including vehicles, when necessary. Rough around the edges and abrasive, Lin generally chooses to do things by the book with little flexibility.

She also has a strong moral compass. Lin devotes herself to keeping innocent people safe and aiding the Avatar during the times when their moral compasses align…and sometimes even when they don't. She is a strong ally and a terrifying enemy due to her relentless personality. Heroes contending with criminal activity might turn to Lin for help or advice. Otherwise, Lin might ask heroes to work for her undercover in order to learn about a triad's or an extremist group's inner workings.



Spirit Energy

Given the world's burgeoning power demands, some inventors now look to spirit energy as a possible solution. The potential for this new energy source seems near-limitless. With new technologies and urbanization on the rise, this energy source could be just what the nations need to push them into the future.

However, this is an increasingly controversial topic thanks in part to Kuvira's creation of a destructive super weapon (page 81). Many people, such as Avatar Korra, are wary of spirit energy and believe spirit-based energy is a non-starter, not only because of the destruction it can cause, but also for how it could potentially harm humans' relationship with the spirits even more.

Bolin

A skilled Earthbender who can bend lava

Bolin grew up with his older brother Mako on the streets of Republic City after their parents were killed by a Firebender. They made their own way, and became pro-bending athletes, the Fire Ferrets, with Avatar Korra later joining their team. Bolin is an impressive Earthbender who later learned to bend lava. He's goofy, kind, and rarely seen without his loyal companion, a fire ferret named Pabu.

After his time as a pro-bender, Bolin starred in movers (moving picture films) for a time before a stint working as an officer in Kuvira's military. When Bolin realized Kuvira's nefarious intentions for the Earth Kingdom, he broke free from her influence and aided the Avatar in defeating Kuvira's giant mecha. Recently, he decided to pursue a career in politics, and now works as President Moon's assistant.

Mako

A skilled Firebender and Republic City detective

As the older brother, Mako has always felt a heavy sense of dutiful responsibility. When the boys were young, he did everything in his power to protect Bolin. This led to Mako having a sternness and no-nonsense attitude, which he's softened over the years through caring for the people he loves. Today, he's thoughtful, pensive, and able to bend fire and lightning.

The Firebender dated both Asami Sato and Avatar Korra; while the two women are now in a relationship with one another, Mako still loves and supports both of them as friends. Mako's innate warmth and willingess to do what it takes to protect the people he loves has made him an integral part of the Avatar's entourage. Through the years, Mako has worked his way up from being a beat cop to a detective in Republic City's police force.

Threats and Challenges

The Republic City Spirit Portal

Linked theme: Industrialization vs. Tradition

The Republic City spirit portal is a source of constant conflict and its location in the middle of a big city draws a lot of attention. President Zhu Li Moon withdrew the United Forces from the area when she won the election with the goal of promoting peace and cooperation instead of fear. Should conflict between spirits and humans escalate again, however, this spirit portal likely sits at the center of it.

Surrounded by tangled spirit vines, the portal once led to a meadow of flowers, though the spirits have razed the area just inside the portal to discourage meddling humans from crossing over into the Spirit World. Those wishing to enter the Spirit World may try to use this portal since it is more easily accessible than the frigid wilderness of the North and South Poles where the two other portals are located. But to do so, they'll have to contend with members of the Air Nation, who protect the area.

Triads

Linked theme: The Duties of Leadership

Several triads operate within Republic City, and some of these criminal organizations have large numbers and powerful connections. Government officials and corporations have a history of hiring the triads to do their dirty work. Some of the most well-known triads in the city include the Triple Threats and the Creeping Crystal Triad.

Being part of a triad is dangerous work, as members have both law enforcement and other triads to worry about. Much of the time there is also the threat of backstabbing within the ranks of any triad as well. Anyone involved with a triad needs to be prepared for a lot of deceit, betrayal, and in-fighting. Heroes who make an enemy out of a triad find Republic City exponentially more dangerous.

Remaining Red Lotus Supporters

Linked theme: Extremism Born of Fear

Korra and her allies defeated the known core of the Red Lotus, but it is impossible to know how many supporters are still out there and whether they may be planning another attack on the Avatar. Without any clear leaders, ambitious plans usually remain just that—plans, and nothing more. Zaheer still lives, and while breaking him out of prison would be incredibly difficult, the prison's defenses may not stop his followers from trying. Now that the three other leaders are dead, members of the Red Lotus looking to climb to a place of power and authority may see this as a perfect opportunity. An aspiring leader struggling to gain acceptance in the Red Lotus might even launch a reckless attack against the Avatar or her supporters in order to prove they are right for the job.



Though both Water Tribes were at war only years ago, relations between the two are now relatively calm. The tribes were all but officially separate for years, but now each works to define who they are with true independence. Both the North and South maintain lines of communication with one another, ever careful not to slip into old patterns from when they were united. The twins Desna and Eska currently lead the Northern Water Tribe, having taken up governing the tribe after their father was defeated by Korra, and Tonraq (Avatar Korra's father) leads the Southern Water Tribe.

Desna and Eska, though exceedingly dour in nature, do not intend to make the same mistakes as their father, and they focus the North on making healthy connections with the outside world. As tradition states, the North must always care for the spirits, but in this modern age more is needed. While the leaders are loath to admit it, and thus show it in their actions instead, the North can no longer stand on its own in an era of increased international cooperation.

The Southern Water Tribe is the largest it's ever been, having seen a much-needed population boom since the end of the Hundred Year War. Relations between the tribes are aided by the relationship between their leaders; Desna and Eska are Tonraq's nephew and niece, and while they fought against their uncle during the civil war, all three now enjoy a more peaceful relationship. The Southern Tribe's ability to adapt and overcome offered them many boons in the modern era. International ventures of Southern Tribe businesspeople see widespread success across the world and foster a boom in industry and an expansion of their wares across the globe.

Notable Figures and Groups

Tonraq and Senna

The Avatar's parents and the caretakers of the Southern Water Tribe

Tonraq and Senna are Avatar Korra's parents, and Tonraq has been the official Chief of the Southern Water Tribe since the tribe gained its independence. The civil war was hard on the couple for many reasons, one of them being that Unalaq (page 80), Tonraq's brother, violently attacked Tonraq and tried to kill his daughter. Being the parents of the Avatar isn't easy, and Korra even turned against her father at one time, believing he didn't trust her to make wise decisions in regards to her training.

Senna, by far the calmest and most composed of the three family members, sometimes must act as a grounding force for the other two. When a brewing problem appears in the Southern Water Tribe, Tonraq and Senna are often some of the first to know about it. Heroes who discover something afoot in the tribe might want to bring the information to them so they can prepare for what's coming.

Kya

A master Waterbender, healer, and warrior

Kya is Aang and Katara's daughter, and, like her mother, she is a skilled Waterbender and healer who has traveled extensively. Kya lives in the Southern Water Tribe but goes where she is needed. Most recently, she traveled to Republic City after Kuvira's uprising to help in the evacuee camps. When disaster strikes, she can quickly switch between healing the injured and taking on attackers without missing a beat.

As a queer woman, Kya is particularly supportive of Korra and Asami's relationship. She has a nurturing streak as well as a bit of a snarky one, but she never lets a grudge or hurt feelings stand between her and protecting her family. Kya is also extremely perceptive and uses that skill to her advantage, when not distracted by one of her siblings. She does have some lingering pain, though, from her father favoring Tenzin, the Airbender, over his other children.

Desna and Eska

Twin leaders of the Northern Water Tribe

Desna and Eska are the twin waterbending leaders of the Northern Water Tribe who took over after their father's corruption and defeat. The two are practically inseparable and share similar affectations—namely, a constant air of mild disdain. Though they remained loyal to their father almost until his demise, the twins do not hold any ill will towards Korra for her conflict with their father, as they recognize that he was no longer the father they knew when their battle took place.

Eska and Desna spend their time governing the Northern Water Tribe, and anyone who wants to get on the good side of one must get on the good side of both, but the twins have little tolerance for insincere sycophants. Heroes who want their respect are best served by being honest and direct with them, though they still may get drolly mocked in return.

Varrick

An absurdly wealthy businessman who excels at getting into and out of trouble

Iknik Blackstone Varrick grew up poor in the Southern Water Tribe, and went on to become an extraordinarily wealthy businessman, making some truly bad decisions along the way. He was partly responsible for the Water Tribe civil war, escalating the conflict by orchestrating the bombing of the Southern Water Tribe Cultural Center and blaming the attack on the North, but the businessman escaped without suffering the full consequences of his actions. He took part in stoking another war by aiding Kuvira (page 87) in creating the technology to harvest power from spirit vines. However, upon realizing that Kuvira planned to use these vines as a weapon, Varrick worked together with Korra to stop the would-be dictator.

Varrick is married to President Moon (page 82). His over-the-top personality makes him hard to ignore. While self-centered, Varrick is also clever, supportive of his friends, and has a steadily growing sense of integrity. He certainly has enough money to assist in the most outlandish of endeavors so long as someone can sell him on the idea.

Threats and Challenges

Young Leaders

Linked theme: The Duties of Leadership

Desna and Eska lead the Northern Water Tribe since their father died trying to kill the Avatar, but it can be hard for some people to trust in leaders who are so young. What's worse is that some citizens of the Northern Water Tribe may look at the twins and see two children who betrayed their father instead of two leaders who made the correct decision in a difficult situation. The twins are also not the most personable leaders and their acerbic wit can make for tense political situations. With the world in flux, it may be the perfect time for conspirators in the Northern Water Tribe to strike at their leaders and take over. Desna and Eska are skilled Waterbenders who can defend themselves, but they may need help if someone corrupt attempts to usurp them or makes them seem incompetent.

The Northern and Southern Spirit Portals

Linked theme: Setting Boundaries

These two portals caused a lot of trouble for the Avatar a few years ago during the civil war, and they remain points of interest for those looking to take advantage of or harm the Spirit World. The spirit portal in Republic City is guarded by the Air Nomads now, but the two original portals are not as strictly protected since they sit out in the wild, in the middle of frigid wastelands. But these natural barriers have become less of a deterrent as technology advances past anyone's expectations. Unlike centuries before, the tribes in charge of protecting these portals are pulled in new directions balancing a modern world with their spiritual duties. Cunning businessmen like Wonyong Keum (page 82) may think of new ways to exploit the portals for money, though any such plans are almost guaranteed to backfire.

Moving Past Tolerance

Linked theme: The Duties of Leadership

The Water Tribes have traditionally accepted same-sex relationships so long as people keep them quiet. Now that Avatar Korra and Asami are out about their relationship, they may inspire other queer Water Tribe members to come out as well. This has also led to many of the younger generation in the Northern Water Tribe question the relevance of their parents arranging their marriages for them. It's a modern world to them and people should be able to love who they want confidently and proudly. Traditionalists may not take well to this more open behavior, while those quietly supportive may struggle to vocalize their support for fear of ostracization.

Desna and Eska have made it clear that gender plays no role in deciding who can and cannot marry each other. When they receive pushback against this decree, they have been known to make more personal appearances at same-sex weddings shortly after. Some believe that they do this just to amuse themselves, but those close to the twin rulers know that they truly support these relationships and aren't going to change their minds.



Varrick Global Industries

The Korra Era sees the rise of a new phenomenon—the corporation—giant international companies that provide goods and services across the globe. This new age means people can get things faster than ever before and corporations use their resources to ensure they're the ones getting new products to consumers rather than their competitors. Some news sources even speculate that the rise of these large conglomerations could mean the death of local business, but the era is young and who knows where the future will lead? A few of the largest corporations are Future Industries, Cabbage Corp, and of course Varrick Global Industries.

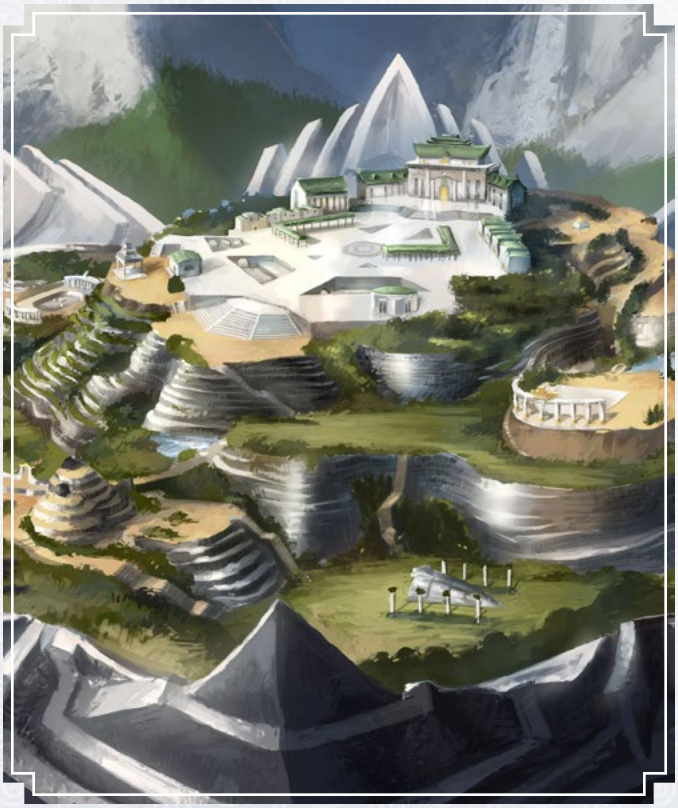
Headed by the infamous Southern Water Tribe businessman Varrick, Varrick Global Industries is the premier corporation for technological development. It develops the best, most innovative inventions, devices that are both practical and delightful. One of the most famous inventions by Varrick and used by his company was movers (movies), which began as propaganda, but are now embraced as an a popular form of entertainment.

Earth Kingdom
Korra Era

The Earth Kingdom has experienced nonstop turmoil since the assassination of Queen Hou-Ting. King Wu currently governs the kingdom, though he intends to rule only for as long as necessary until the kingdom can successfully transition into a democratic nation. The monarchy is still important to many people within the Earth Kingdom, and if the recent events with the Earth Empire have taught the leaders of the Earth Kingdom anything, it's that wide-scale change takes time.

Since the kingdom is fresh off two dictatorships that exploited the vulnerabilities of small villages contending with poverty and bandits, trust in authority figures is hard to come by. Life in its smaller villages has never been easy, and promises of safety usually come with ulterior motives. King Wu's wish for democracy is a far cry from anything people in rural communities need at any given moment. Food and shelter are at the forefront of people's minds; to that end, many people move from the countryside to the city in search of work. Unfortunately, many of these immigrants find larger city governments too overloaded to care for them and triads willing to take advantage of them.

In Ba Sing Se, citizens must learn how to navigate life without the wall between the Lower and Middle Rings. While many who lived in the Lower Ring despised the wall, many in the Middle Ring enjoyed it, because they felt it improved their quality of life. Now the well-off are forced to mingle with the poor, and opportunities to change one's fortunes are there for anyone enterprising enough to seize them. It's an unprecedented time of integration in Ba Sing Se, and it's unlikely to be a smooth transition.



Notable Figures and Groups

King Wu

A king ushering his kingdom into a new age of democracy

King Wu is the 54th Earth Monarch. Young, privileged, and used to a life of comfort, Wu looked forward to taking the throne after his great aunt Hou-Ting's assassination. Unfortunately, Kuvira spoke against his rise to power during his coronation and effectively usurped him. Since then, Wu has grown up a lot, though he still loves to break into song at inappropriate times. He is a gifted public speaker and knows how to both work up and calm a crowd. While he still has moments of shallow vanity, he is steadily learning more about what it means to govern. After trying to rush the process of turning the Earth Kingdom into a democracy, Wu understands that his people need time to adjust, and patience is a necessary part of leadership. Heroes who want to help Wu might volunteer to oversee elections in different regions of the Earth Kingdom and protect them from sabotage. As a public figure, Wu also needs constant protection from threats.

Suyin Beifong

A metalbending pioneer and the leader of Zaofu

Suyin is the leader and founder of Zaofu, a city that's home to many Earthbenders who can metalbend, collectively known as the Metal Clan. She is also the daughter of the famed Toph Beifong. Like her mother and sister, Lin (page 82), Suyin is highly skilled in metalbending. She has five children, a passion for the arts, and takes a particular interest in dance. Unlike her sister, Suyin is a cheerful free spirit and had an irresponsible and rebellious streak as a teenager. The two sisters did not get along when they were young because of this difference, but Suyin has matured since then.

Baatar Jr., Suyin's son, was engaged to Kuvira until her defeat. The Earth Empire uprising and Gaoling Crisis both hit Suyin hard. She, along with the rest of the Metal Clan, have even less tolerance for aspiring military dictators now than ever before.

Toph Beifong

An elderly metalbending master who keeps getting pulled back into the fray

Toph Beifong continued to help out Avatar Aang throughout her adult life just as she had in her youth. After teaching metalbending for a time, she settled in Republic City and served as its chief of police. Many decades have passed since then, and Toph spends much of her time in Foggy Swamp where she'd be enjoying the peace and quiet, if not for the world continually bothering her!

When Avatar Korra suffered from the effects of mercury poisoning, Toph aided her. When Suyin and her family were captured by the Earth Empire, Toph came to the rescue. After that, Korra and King Wu asked Toph to run for office in Gaoling…and she very reluctantly agreed to do so. The election was called off, but Toph helped resolve the overall crisis and is back in the swamp trying to find some peace once again. Heroes who want this metalbending master's help will have a very tricky time convincing her to yet again come out of retirement.



Kuvira

A former dictator of a failed regime looking for redemption

Kuvira did a lot of damage when she tried to form the Earth Empire and is now eager to fix her mistakes. Kuvira only recently owned up to the full extent of the wrongs she committed. Returning home to Zaofu was humbling for Kuvira and she was forced to face her ex-fiancée, Bataar Jr., whom she tried to kill with a spirit energy weapon. By acknowledging the people she hurt with her actions, Kuvira started down the road towards redemption. Her genuine remorse and assistance ending the Earth Empire (page 81) was enough that she is allowed to be under house arrest in Zaofu rather than prison.

Kuvira is a skilled military leader and tactician. She's smart, can think on her feet, and is willing to make tough calls for causes she believes in. While she may offer help in order to redeem herself further, trusting her is not a simple matter. Even if her intentions are honest, plenty of people don't believe she has the right to redemption. If King Wu, Suyin Beifong, and the Avatar all agree to send her on a mission, they will likely assign people to watch her carefully. This job also necessarily includes preventing angry civilians from trying to assassinate her if they see her out in the world.

Threats and Challenges

Brainwashing Technology

Linked theme: Extremism Born of Fear

A scientist named Dr. Sheng developed advanced brainwashing methods for Commander Guan's (page 81) use. While its effects have been negated in Gaoling, it is still at risk of being used elsewhere by anyone who had a chance to investigate or steal the technology. Well-meaning, enterprising inventors may research the technology trying to see if it has practical uses in society, beyond mass population control. However, it is a slippery slope experimenting with such destructive technology and the effects could be disastrous.

Those brainwashed during the Gaoling Crisis may experience possible unpredictable side effects in the future. Should rumors spread of odd behavior somewhere in the Earth Kingdom, King Wu or Suyin might send heroes to the source to determine whether brainwashing plays a role. Otherwise, heroes might find that an enemy is truly being controlled by someone else through brainwashing.

Shift to Democracy

Linked theme: The Duties of Leadership

King Wu intends to abolish the Earth Kingdom monarchy, but it's a slow process since not everyone in the kingdom is ready for it. No two states in the Earth Kingdom are identical, so it is hard to say how any one of them will react to the news of a potential election. Each state has been tasked by Wu with holding their own elections, but may do so on their own time table.

Many rural inhabitants are so busy focused on trying to find their next meal that democracy seems like a distant concept. Corrupt local politicians who are currently in power capitalize on the rampant poverty by feeding their citizens lies about holding elections, placing the blame on the Earth King. It may seem like King Wu is shifting his responsibilities to care for his people onto someone else. Heroes may need to protect people running for office, and in especially tough situations, they may need to convince potential candidates to run at all.

Earth Empire Loyalists

Linked theme: Extremism Born of Fear

Some still believe the United Republic of Nations should belong to the Earth Kingdom, and that the kingdom is no place for people from other nations. It is a strange time to be living in the Earth Kingdom if you or your family are multicultural or originally from one of the other nations. The nation is the most blended it has ever been, but Earth Kingdom fundamentalists threaten the established diversity.

Since there were two attempted uprisings back-to-back, it isn't hard to imagine more taking place in the future. The Gaoling Crisis is not the last time nationalism inspires a harmful movement in the Earth Kingdom, and some regions might inch closer to a civil war. If the heroes are lucky and clever, they might stop a disaster from blowing up in the first place. Otherwise, they may have to navigate another uprising as they pursue their goals.

Fire Nation
Korra Era

Fire Lord Izumi skillfully leads the Fire Nation into a brighter future, holding fast to the ideals of her father Zuko. The Fire Lord's government uses an abundance of caution when it comes to military engagements or anything that has the potential to lead them closer to the nation's old ways. As far as they are concerned, war is only an option when there are absolutely no other options left. Fire Lord Izumi only offered military help to the United Republic of Nations when Raiko, the former president, agreed to focus on defensive measures instead of aggressive ones in the fight against the Earth Empire.

The Fire Nation government now looks inward to determine how they should be structured. Fire Lord Izumi is concerned not only about what best serves them now, but also what supports and serves them in the eras to come. She and many of her officials hope to soon invite the other nations to establish embassies within the capital of Hari Bulkan to continue fostering peaceful and cooperative relations. Before moving forward on that front, the government is removing the last of the Fire Nation monuments erected to honor those who perpetuated war crimes during the Hundred Year War.

Zuko is still alive and invested in the well-being of the Avatar and the world at large. Since stepping down as Fire Lord, he has made being an ambassador for the Fire Nation his first priority. Izumi's son, Iroh, a general in the United Forces, helps to solidify the Fire Nation's relationship with the United Republic of Nations. He and Izumi both see to it that the Fire Nation continues to make reparations for the damage done during the Hundred Year War.



Notable Figures and Groups

Fire Lord Izumi

The cautious Fire Lord who is mindful of her nation's history

Fire Lord Izumi is famous for her efforts to reform the Fire Nation's government and cultivate peaceful relations with the other nations, including the United Republic of Nations. Her father Zuko shares her eagerness to continue moving away from the Fire Nation's brutal past. Izumi is calm, rational, and steadfast, making decisions on behalf of the Fire Nation that not only take its well-being in mind, but the well-being of the rest of the world as well.

She has little tolerance for jokes or levity in serious discussions, as she is determined to treat important decisions with the respect they deserve. Heroes who hail from the Fire Nation and serve the Fire Lord must conduct themselves with the utmost integrity, because their behavior reflects the nation as a whole. Izumi's standards are high, and she is very particular about who she sends out into the world on the Fire Nation's behalf.

Dalja Ro

The head of a special force dedicated to helping when disaster strikes

Dalja Ro is the driven and tireless leader of the Fire Nation's Relief Fleet. Dalja first inspired the fleet over a decade ago when they still served as an admiral in the Fire Navy. When a volcano erupted and devastated the village at its base, Dalja rerouted ships to rescue civilians and provide medical aid. The government was so impressed that they tasked Dalja with organizing a fleet dedicated to aiding civilians during disasters. Soon, the fleet was being dispatched to lend help after earthquakes, mine collapses, and tsunamis.

Dalja never turns down anyone who wants to help and is especially grateful when benders from other nations offer up their services. They often recruit graduates from the Royal Fire Academy for Girls, where they went to school. During their time at the Academy, Dalja realized they didn't truly feel like a girl, and the support of their classmates helped shape Dalja into the person they are today. They remain an admiral in the Fire Navy, but the Fire Nation has committed to funding the Relief Fleet for actions throughout the world, anywhere that needs its help.

Zuko

The former Fire Lord who still seeks to help bring peace to the world

Since he stepped down from the throne, Zuko lives on Ember Island, a famed vacation spot. He has hardly been living a life of pure serenity, however, as he's kept himself busy supporting the policies of his daughter, Fire Lord Izumi, and promoting peace in the world. Outside of the Fire Nation, he is also heavily invested in the well-being of Republic City and the Southern Water Tribe.

Zuko is quick to act when he can be of service, often traveling long distances on his dragon, Druk, to lend aid. He was intense and impulsive in his youth, but now the former Fire Lord's passions are tempered by the years of wisdom under his belt, and he uses his experience to help wherever he can. Zuko's priority is his family and if danger strikes, he's there. Since Zuko carries a lot of clout, he can also pull some strings on a hero's behalf, especially in the Fire Nation, Republic City, or the Southern Water Tribe.



General Iroh

A general in the United Forces with a strong moral compass

General Iroh, named after his great-granduncle, is a leader in the United Republic of Nations' military and Fire Lord Izumi's son. Iroh is charismatic and thoughtful with a kind heart and military mind like his late great uncle. Though part of the Fire Nation Royal Family, he serves in the United Forces and strictly follows his orders, even on the rare occasion when they go against the Avatar's wishes. Despite that fact, Iroh and Korra have worked together more often than they've worked against each other.

Technically, Iroh is in line for the Fire Nation throne, but his status as a general in the United Forces makes that uncertain. Fire Lord Izumi's goal to stay outside of military conflicts doesn't always mesh with Iroh's duties and the two sometimes disagree when it comes to the best course of action when the United Republic calls on Fire Nation aid. Politicians and military advisors alike are curious to see what direction Iroh takes in the future; they wonder if he will continue his loyalty to the United Republic, or if he will embrace his role as Fire Nation prince. If heroes need military backup or if they suspect a large-scale attack will be launched against the United Republic of Nations, they may want to turn to Iroh for help.

Threats and Challenges

Requests for Fire Military Help

Linked themes: The Duties of Leadership

There are difficult decisions to be made whenever other nations ask the Fire Nation to lend military assistance. Since the end of the Hundred Year War, the Fire Nation has tried to steer away from its heavily militarized history. Maintaining distance from the Fire Nation's imperialist past means fighting against generations-worth of history that has shaped the nation, and Fire Lord Izumi isn't about to make any decisions about military matters lightly. Likewise, Izumi learned lessons from her father in caring for her people and knows the careful balancing act needed between putting your people first and caring for the international community. Many officials and citizens in the Fire Nation feel similarly and support the Fire Lord's decisions. Should anyone come to the Fire Nation for assistance from their armed forces, it had better be because they are the last possible resort.

Continuing Reparations

Linked themes: Redemption

The Fire Nation is dedicated to repairing as much harm from the Hundred Year War as possible, and they continue to take measures to do so to this day. For instance, the Fire Nation and Southern Water Tribe scholars work on a traveling showcase of tribal history to celebrate it throughout the world. Fire Nation officials have also done their best to return Air Nomad relics to the Air Acolytes and the burgeoning Air Nation, though some were destroyed or lost.

Fire Lord Izumi continues her father's practice of sending workers to assist in overseas construction projects and relief efforts as a natural outgrowth from their reparations work. Sometimes the other nations need a very specialized kind of help, like when dark spirits or extremist groups attack, or something important is stolen. In these cases, Izumi may send heroes with specialized experience and knowledge on behalf of the Fire Nation.

Protecting the Dragons

Linked themes: Industrialization vs. Tradition

Legend has it that dragons were the first Firebenders. Now, there are only three known dragons left in the world, and Zuko has met them all. When he was a teenager, he befriended Ran and Shaw on the Sun Warrior's Island. In his 20s, he found a juvenile dragon he named Druk, who shared an ancestry with Ran and Shaw. Over the years, Druk grew up and became Zuko's loyal companion, and the two of them flew around the world together.

There are people out there who specifically like to hunt rare, majestic animals, however, and if they take risks to capture sky bison, they are almost certainly willing to take big risks to capture a creature as rare as a dragon. Additionally, conservationists may want to search the wilderness for possible undocumented dragons in order to establish a sanctuary for them. If any other dragons exist it could mean a new renaissance for the species.



The Air Nation is revitalized now that there are more Airbenders in the world again. Thanks to the work of Avatar Aang and his allies, the Nomad temples are now fully restored (save the Northern Air Temple; see page 26) and Acolytes preserve the ways of the Nomads for generations to come. The Air Nation now strives to help bring balance to the world as their predecessors did before the Hundred Year War.

The culture might not be the same as it once was, but this group of Airbenders and Air Acolytes work together to form a new cultural identity informed by, but not the same as, its past. For quite some time, Avatar Aang's son, Tenzin, and his three eldest children were the only Airbenders in the world with the exception of Korra. After Harmonic Convergence, many non-benders suddenly gained airbending abilities. Now, the Air Nation is made up of Acolytes and Airbenders from each of the other nations. The sky bison population even bounced back.

The Nomads recently took on the responsibility of caring for the Republic City spirit portal. Relations between spirits and humans have been rough since the spirit portals re-opened, but the Airbenders and Acolytes work hard to help keep balance between the physical world and the Spirit World. It's a natural role for them to take, as the Air Nomads communed with spirits for thousands of years before the genocide (page 58).

Notable Figures and Groups

Tenzin

An airbending master raising a family of Airbenders in a dangerous world

Tenzin is Avatar Aang and Katara's son. He has spent his life keeping the practice of airbending and Air Nomad culture alive. His wife, Pema, is an Air Acolyte, and three of his children—Jinora, Ikki, and Meelo—are Airbenders while the fourth, Rohan, is still a toddler whose bending abilities may not have manifested yet. Some consider Tenzin to be uptight and strict, but his behavior is born out of a deep desire to uphold his father's legacy and ensure a decent future for his family and the Air Nation.

Tenzin was also Avatar Korra's airbending teacher. The two have not always seen eye to eye and both Tenzin and Korra can be stubborn, which causes friction between the two. However, Tenzin's years and experience have taught him patience—a trait that often mends any disagreements the two may have. The relationship Tenzin and Korra share is special, a friendship forged in forgiveness and acceptance.

He has tried to pass on his spirituality to his children, and Jinora has taken a special interest in the spiritual matters of Air Nomad culture. Heroes who want to pursue a spiritual quest might come to Tenzin for advice. Likewise, anyone fighting to protect the Air Nation and its history has an ally in Tenzin.

Jinora

An airbending master with a knack for understanding spirits

Jinora is an extremely skilled Airbender and a master at navigating the Spirit World, communicating with spirits and befriending them. She is particularly adept at spirit projection and locating people and things while her consciousness is outside of her body. When her father couldn't help the Avatar enter the Spirit World, it was Jinora who proved capable and did so instead. Soon after, Jinora was anointed an airbending master and given her arrow tattoos, the mark of a master Airbender. It's a distinction she shares only with her father and Korra.

As the oldest of her siblings, Jinora can occasionally get frustrated when the others distract her, complain, or question her decisions. She is greatly respected by the other members of the Air Nation and has taught airbending since she was very young. Anyone having difficulty with spirits or wanting to develop their spiritual abilities could find no one better to help them than Jinora.

Bumi

A clever military commander who recently developed airbending abilities

Bumi is the eldest of Avatar Aang and Katara's three children, and up until a few years ago, he was a non-bender. As the Commander of the Second Division of the United Forces, Bumi was a skilled leader, daring almost to the point of recklessness. He has a knack for spotting advantageous tactical opportunities even in the most dire of circumstances. The recent Harmonic Convergence threw a new challenge Bumi's way when he developed airbending skills. He had to learn how to use these abilities from scratch and is still working on mastering them.

Bumi tends to tell elaborate and dramatic stories that most people believe are greatly embellished. Though he occasionally acts out in immature ways, Bumi would do anything for his family and doesn't run away from difficult situations. Those who aspire to become world-class military strategists could learn a lot from him, as he is well-respected by his peers and superiors alike in the United Forces. Just don't expect a conventional education.

The New Airbenders

Individuals who developed airbending after Harmonic Convergence

The Air Nation now includes a growing number of Airbenders who come from all over the world, such as Suyin Beifong's (page 86) daughter Opal and a former thief named Kai who were both born in the Earth Kingdom. These new Airbenders were so valuable that Earth Queen Hou-Ting had many abducted and forced them to join her army. Avatar Korra, Tenzin, and Bumi rescued the Airbenders from the queen and gave them the option to either go their own ways or train under Tenzin.

Most Airbenders have a few years of training under their belt, but not all people with airbending talents joined the Air Nation—some are still out there, reluctant to leave their loved ones behind. Airbenders who choose to train with Tenzin continue the tradition of travelling and aiding the Avatar. Now the new Airbenders can be found all over the globe. Some live a nomadic lifestyle and travel from place to place looking to be of service, while others care for the Air Temples, and still others haven't yet joined the Air Nation as a whole.



Threats and Challenges

Destruction of the Northern Air Temple

Linked theme: Industrialization vs. Tradition

The Red Lotus destroyed the Northern Air Temple completely. Ghazan (page 80) used his lavabending to tear the temple down, leaving only ruins. Any history it held is lost, save for what lives on in the surviving Air Nomads.

Some of the Air Nation may wish to find a place to fill the gap that this temple has left, and there may even be those who hold out hope of somehow rebuilding the temple. However, if the Air Nation were to rebuild the temple, they'd need substantial assistance and resources to do so. Then, there is the question as to what form will the temple take? And will it be a bastion of Nomad history or a modernized temple of a new era? Without someone willing to take on this monumental task, the Northern Air Temple remains lost for now.

Reluctant Airbenders

Linked theme: The Duties of Leadership

Plenty of people developed airbending abilities after Harmonic Convergence but decided not to train at the Northern Air Temple with the others. Some of them may still struggle with these new abilities, and some may have decided to put them to nefarious uses. Airbending is a difficult art to master, and a bender may never reach their full potential without guidance.

Those who come to the Air Nomads now might have spent time using incorrect techniques that are hard to correct now that they've become habits. Retraining them will be difficult both for the students and for their teachers. The effort is worth it, though—Air Nomads are needed now more than ever. Not only to work with the growing number of spirits, but to be a force of balance in the world.

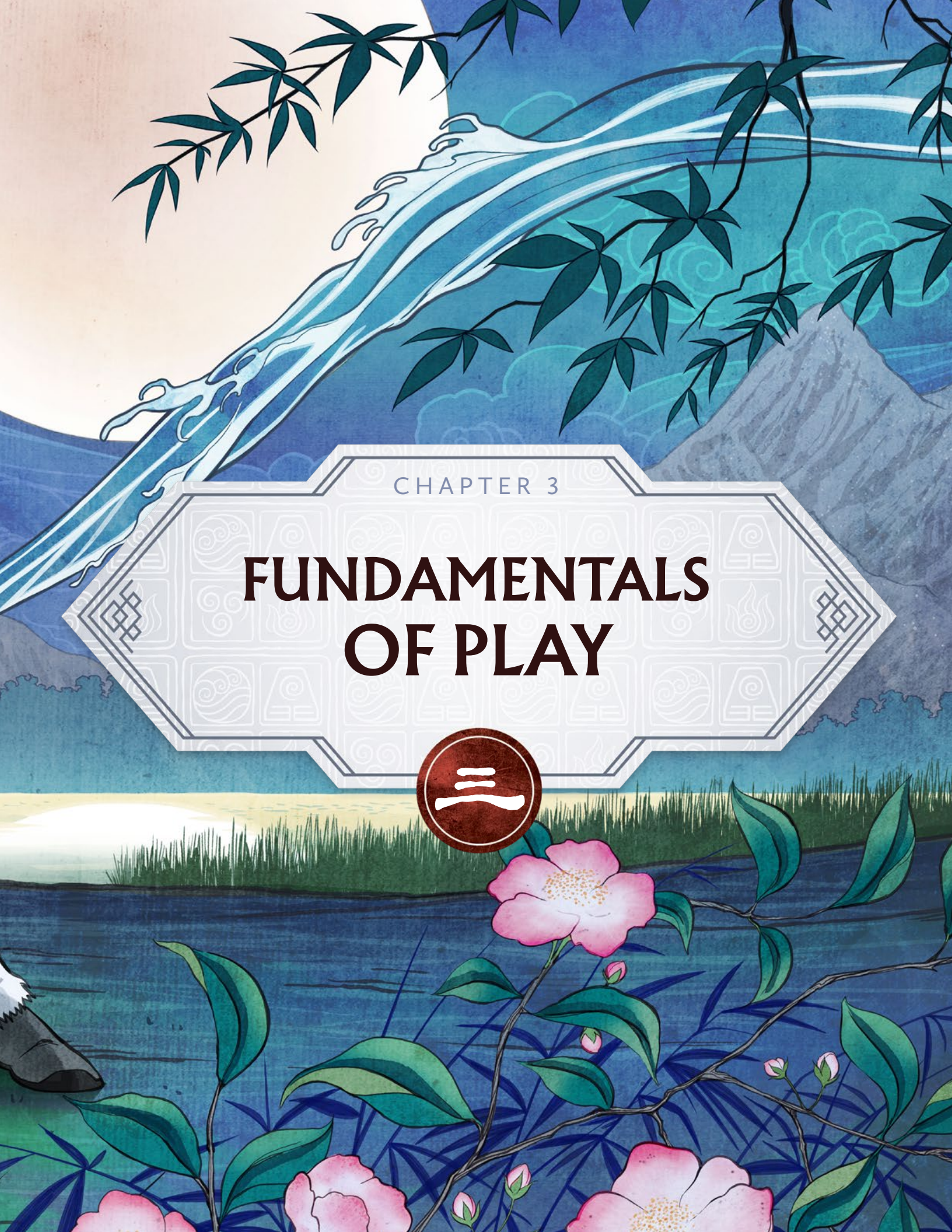
Portal Caretakers

Linked themes: Setting Boundaries

The Air Nomads are now caretakers of the spirit portal in Republic City, along with the lands that surround them. Not only must the Nomads contend with people looking to exploit the portal for personal gain, but they must work with the spirits who wish to live in the mortal world. This is no easy task, especially for a nation as small as the Air Nomads.

The push and pull between spirits and humans can be hard to navigate. This is exemplified in Republic City, where the spirits have taken over large portions of the city and the human inhabitants struggle with their new neighbors. Many spirits feel humans must simply accept their presence, but it's a hard matter to contend with as humans often see themselves as the center of the world. Unresolved issues with living alongside one another mean humans and spirits could fight, an event the Air Nomads work tirelessly to prevent.





CHAPTER 3

FUNDAMENTALS OF PLAY

第三章

CHAPTER 3

This chapter goes over the fundamentals of the game itself, including what roleplaying is, framing scenes and using moves, and the core elements of play like fatigue, conditions, balance, and bending. It is a crucial intro to the game and if you've never played a roleplaying game before, this is a great place to start. If you are an experienced roleplayer, it's valuable to read this chapter to learn more about how **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** works.

Roleplaying is a conversation. That means it's *easy*! You sit down at a table—or start an online video call—with dice and pencils and sheets of paper, and…you talk with each other. You might take turns (or even interrupt each other in excitement) but the conversation keeps moving, each person pushing it forward by adding their own contribution to the collective story.

The Conversation

If you remember playing pretend with your friends as a little kid, the conversation that drives a roleplaying game is kind of like that! You talk about the interesting things your characters do, have adventures, and build on each other's contributions. You might invent new characters on the spot if you need them, but you might also play the same characters over and over in a continuing story of adventures, one after another.

Playing make-believe wasn't all in your head; you'd use action figures to represent your characters, cool sticks as swords or wizard staves, and the features of the jungle gym on your playground as inspiration for your imaginary world. In other words, you'd use tools as springboards for an interesting conversation, drawing in new ideas to keep your story fresh and the action moving forward.

In a game like **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, you just use different tools! You have the history of the Four Nations to spark ideas for conflicts, villains, heroes, and more; you have playbooks, which provide support for creating companions; and you have the rules of the game itself, which guide you to surprising, interesting things to say. The tools in this book aren't limits on your imagination; they are springboards and structures that push you to keep things moving in interesting directions.

Regardless of what sparks your imagination, the conversation usually revolves around your characters, the heroes of the story. You say what they do and how they react to the world and other characters. Since the other players don't live in your head, you also sometimes convey your character's thoughts, emotions, and feelings to the other players and the GM, like when you say, "My character looks down at the ground, and you can tell what you said really hurt his feelings."

There are also times in the conversation when you slip directly into your character's shoes, no longer narrating but actually taking on their persona. You make the gestures your character makes; you say things your character says. Most people do this without thinking much about it! It's pretty natural to *become* your character while you play, to want what they want, to fear the outcome of the dice at crucial moments or to be elated when they win the day. Some of the best moments in a roleplaying game happen when the real world falls away and you experience the importance and meaning of the fictional world firsthand.

The conversation in a roleplaying game evolves naturally over the course of the session as you go back and forth between narrating and embodying your character. The rules of the game are all about driving that conversation toward interesting places, but it's your job as a group to keep the conversation interesting. Grand duels between bending masters! Heroic sacrifices for the greater good! Confrontations with powerful villains! Wherever the fiction takes you…

Many Sessions, Many Stories

One of the best parts about roleplaying is that it's not limited to a single story written in advance or one path that you have to walk from beginning to end. Instead, you and your friends can create as many stories as you like with the tools in this book, both tales featuring the same characters in repeating adventures over the course of many sessions of play or brand-new characters that have adventures in completely different locations and eras.

Roleplaying gives you a chance to spend time with your friends telling stories, providing structure for those conversations and distributing the work of making the story awesome across the whole group. But each story you tell is just one among many—roleplaying gives you the tools to try new things and introduce new ideas together as a team.

The conversation you have through play is a bit like getting to make your own **Avatar Legends** show or movie; you get to design the characters, you get to create the conflicts, and you get to say what happens to those characters as they go on adventures and learn and grow. All of this—across many sessions of play—comes from you and your friends, your imagination and creativity providing materials alongside the rules in this book to create brand-new stories of the Avatarverse!

Framing Scenes

The best way to keep the conversation moving is for your group to **frame scenes**—situations that put the companions in the middle of interesting conflicts and opportunities. Instead of sitting around talking about legendary characters and the history of the Four Nations, your group should put your companions into concrete locations with concrete objectives. Don't say, "Oh, these Equalist terrorists in Republic City are scary!"—frame a scene in which the companions come upon terrorists planting a bomb under a bridge.

The GM has the most responsibility for framing scenes—they ultimately decide which scenes get played and which don't—but everyone in the group can help ensure scenes start in a compelling place and go somewhere meaningful. Any player can offer up scenes for the group, contributing to the narrative by suggesting a scene to push the story forward.

There are lots of ways to push the story forward, not all of which are dire or melodramatic. Both Team Aang and Team Korra had plenty of time to tell jokes and hang out with friends. But those scenes were also opportunities for something interesting to happen! Interludes are a huge part of what makes the show great, but they always set up the next interesting thing—finding the bomb!—that moves the characters to action.

This might all sound complicated, but once you get started, the rules of the game (and the GM) help keep things running smoothly. Just think about your story like an episode of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* or *The Legend of Korra*. Cut straight to the good stuff—the dramatic struggles against dangerous villains, the passionate discussions about what's right and wrong in a tough situation, or the quieter scenes of your companions having fun and getting to know each other. **Skip the boring stuff and get right to the core of what's happening or what's about to happen.**

EXAMPLE

The companions have just closed out a fight against a Republic City gang using advanced Equalist tech, and the GM is looking to set a new scene. "Hey, so I think we cut to the police station, right? Lin Beifong is gonna have a few questions for you…" the GM says.

"Wait! Hold up! I wouldn't want to go answer those questions yet, not until I have more answers for myself!" Tyrelle holds up his hand. "I've got Technology training! I'd want to go investigate their equipment and figure out if it's new or old."

The GM stops to consider. Tyrelle wants his character, Teru Jinno, to look into the Equalist weapons…but that doesn't sound like a thrilling scene for the other characters. It also sounds like it might be resolved without any additional mechanics. After all, it doesn't seem that uncertain—it's not like the origins of the equipment are particularly hidden or hard to find for a technology expert.

"How about this—we cut to you all in your hideout in the city's Spirit Wilds, and Teru is bent over a workbench, taking apart the glove. You've figured out these gloves are definitely older, originating from the original Equalist uprising. And that's when the door smashes inward; standing on the other side are Lin Beifong and her Metalbenders! 'I've got some questions for you kids,' she says."

Izzy, Iris's player, groans, and Nadja, Nokahhak's player, says, "Aaah! She's here in our hideout! Lin is my idol!"

The GM grins and asks—"What do you do now?"

Hard Scene Framing

Sometimes the GM wants to quickly move things along or jump right into a tense or difficult situation. Maybe the consequences of an earlier decision have come to bear, hard and fast—a spirit you angered in a previous session decides to wreak havoc, or you have to appear before Republic City's chief of police to explain why you let a Triple Threat Triad gangster go free. The GM tells you what's happening and all you can do is react!

This technique is called **hard scene framing**, mostly because there's less room for negotiation: the scene starts and the companions must react as best they can to the unfolding drama. While villains may love to monologue, sometimes they don't give the PCs a chance to plan before they unleash their dastardly schemes.

EXAMPLE

It's a bit later, after the scene with Lin. The PCs have split up to tend to their myriad of personal responsibilities. There've been a couple of light-hearted, quieter scenes so far, and the GM is looking to ramp up the tension again. They turn to Peng's player, Paxton. "Peng, you were headed back to the pro-bending arena to check in with your team, right?" the GM asks.

"Yep, I want to make sure I at least show my face at practice so they don't kick me off the team!" Paxton says.

"Excellent," says the GM. They could set a scene with Peng arriving at the training area, palling around with teammates, having some emotional scenes or arguments…but instead, the GM decides to hard frame a scene to inject some instant tension!

"You come into the training room, Peng, looking for your teammates, only to see a group of black-clad, masked figures holding the limp forms of your teammates—it looks like you've stumbled into an abduction! What do you do?"

If you plan on running a game of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** as the GM, check out page 222 for more on how to run effective scenes during your campaign.

What Do You Do?

"What do you do?" is a constant refrain in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. The story moves quickly, and there isn't time for you to construct detailed plans when Fire Nation soldiers are invading a village or a spirit portal threatens to destroy a city block. Scene framing is about getting characters to the question "What do you do?" as quickly as possible, making the companions' choices count because they are in the middle of the action.

In fact, **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is about action, about stories of the companions seizing the day and making a difference for the people around them. Even scenes with normal conversations, quiet reflection, or intimate moments are dramatic or meaningful, as the characters try to address the issues that matter to them by convincing people to act. Every moment in the game isn't explosions and yelling, but each and every story beat has something important at stake and the PCs must meet the moment!

As Uncle Iroh told Zuko when they were hiding in Ba Sing Se: "Life happens wherever you are, whether you make it or not." Sometimes there isn't time to debate the right course of action for hours on end when the people around you need help!

Fictional Positioning

The setup of scenes is important; it plays a key role in the **fictional positioning** of the characters—the place they occupy in the story you create together. A character who is angry, tired, and ready for a fight has a different fictional position than someone happy and energized, but completely unprepared for conflict—just as a Firebender has a different fictional position than a Waterbender. Your group's collective understanding of who your characters are, what they are doing, and how they are feeling matters as much as any dice roll or number on your sheet.

The world you create together when you play is called **the fiction**, the collection of everything happening—and that has already happened—in your story, your episode, your season. The fiction includes the setting of the game, all the history of the Four Nations and their interplay…but more importantly, it includes everything your characters are, have been, and have done. You won't write down every moment that occurs, but your group has a collective memory, an agreement about what happened and who did what!

Sticking to what you've contributed to the fiction—to the fictional position you've established—even if it makes trouble for your hero and their companions takes discipline. You should practice holding yourself true to what's already happened, even if you didn't know at the time how your actions would influence the story. But part of the joy of playing this game is discovering how the fiction adds up and creates surprising and interesting outcomes you never could've predicted.

EXAMPLE

Paxton reels at the GM's description of Peng's teammates being abducted. "No way! Nobody steals the Iron Seal-Snakes—not under my nose! I snatch a cloud of the earthbending disks out of their holders and I fling them at the baddies holding my friends!"

The GM nods and smiles. "No uncertainty here—they're taken unawares as you hurl the disks into them. The two black-clad figures holding your friends get smacked to the side…but that's when you take stock and realize how many of them there really are, especially as a few more slip in from the rooftop windows upon hearing the commotion. It looks like there are about 15 of them now."

"Oh…oh dear. Uh, maybe I shouldn't have just let them know I was here," says Paxton.

"Maybe, but it's too late now! They're closing in on you, their masked faces looking pretty ominous. What do you do?"

Knowing that your decisions can have lasting repercussions can make everyone at the table worried about making *perfect* decisions—but crucially, there aren't really any *perfect* decisions. Slowing down play to get flawless information and make foolproof judgements is far more likely to ruin everyone's fun than leaping into danger and finding out what happens!

It's always okay to clarify a situation or hone in on a detail before making a decision and adding to the fiction. All the players and the GM should regularly ask questions and go back and forth to make sure you get on the same page about the fiction and the fictional positioning of the characters—you need to understand, for example, if you are surrounded by a firestorm versus several burning trees, or if you are currently being watched by the public versus being in private (at least to your knowledge).

That said, there's a big difference between wanting to know a bit more about a situation before making a decision and trying to make the decision all over again because you don't like the mess you caused! Those messy situations are a huge part of what makes *the game* fun, and the group has to keep everyone honest about sticking to what's actually happened in the fiction.

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game works best when both the players *and* the GM stick to the fiction, building on what's already been created instead of rewriting the story to fit the current moment. It can be tempting to rewrite something to make the current situation easier—or to introduce tension when things get slow—but you have to trust that the story you're building together has new places to go. You wouldn't pull out a foundational brick from a structure, and neither should you yank out important, established truths from your fiction.

EXAMPLE

Peng's battle against the abductors raged out across the rooftop of the arena; the abductors exhibited incredible acrobatic skills and tried to flee while Peng kept up with them and followed them, always trying to yank them back within reach. But after the battle has raged for a while—Peng has a bunch of conditions and fatigue marked, and some of his foes have peeled off (in the GM's mind, to escape)—Paxton has a sudden realization…

"Oh, shoot, wait—we're way far away from the training room now, aren't we? Oh, crud! Are they just going to abduct my teammates? I should've put them somewhere safe before chasing these guys!" Paxton exclaims.

The GM considers for a moment—they want to support Peng's player, so maybe it would be reasonable that Peng quickly put the teammates somewhere safer before running out of the room. But they also realize they need to stay true to the fiction, and it's interesting that Peng chose to rush forward instead of staying to safely protect their teammates…

"Yeah, sorry—you think you see the masked figures who escaped slipping back into the training room below, as the ones still in front of you form a block, preventing you from passing. What do you do now?" says the GM.

Think of it like trying to avoid a bad twist in the show late in a season. It's frustrating to find out that a character who clearly died, on-screen—there was a body and everything!—never *actually* died, and they've *actually* been working in secret with the character you *thought* was their hated enemy! It's more satisfying to commit to the clarity of the fiction and build on the character's death to find out what happens to their villainous organization now that they are gone. When you stick to the established fiction, you create opportunities for the story to grow in unexpected directions!

That said, you can't follow up on every plot thread you might generate, especially if the companions keep moving from nation to nation. It's okay for some things to fade into the background or for an old villain to resurface—having escaped from prison or recruited new allies—in order to focus on the things that matter to your story right now. There's a big difference between defying the logic of your story by ignoring what you established earlier and allowing it to flourish by focusing on what matters right now.



Moves and Dice

Framing scenes is the first step to an interesting conversation, but it's the **moves** that connect your heroes to the fiction in exciting ways. Each move is a small set of rules that resolves conflicts, answers questions, and pushes the story forward. Moves are like the programming language of the game—"When you do X, then do Y"—defining the fiction when your characters take meaningful actions.

One exciting thing about this kind of storytelling is that sometimes no one—not even the GM—knows what will happen next. Can a character sneak past the Fire Nation guards? Can they stop a falling boulder from crushing a teammate? In these moments, the moves take center stage, helping you and your group decide what happens to resolve the uncertainty. You don't just decide as a group—you **trick** the guards to get past them or **rely on your skills and training** to earthbend the rocks away.

At the start of the game, every companion gets access to the **basic moves** (page 127) and can use those moves freely. Each companion also gets their own **playbook moves**—specific moves that point the characters in specific directions—and can add more moves over the course of play as they grow. In general, basic moves cover situations that come up all the time, while other moves cover more character-specific or rare situations.

Triggering Moves

Moves don't fire off whenever you think it might be interesting; they are instead triggered by something you say in the conversation, usually an action your hero takes in the fiction. **If you want to trigger a move, you have to do the thing that triggers it.** You can always avoid making a move, but then you have to avoid taking that action in the fiction. Since every move ties directly into the fiction, all moves are governed by the same idea: *to do it, you do it.*

If you want to **plead with an NPC** for help finding a lost child, you have to openly ask an NPC for help, perhaps begging the chief of a village to help you search in the blizzard outside. And if you decide to fall to your knees and beg the chief for help, you're **pleading with an NPC** and the move triggers…whether you like it or not.

EXAMPLE

Paxton isn't sure how his character, Peng, can both defeat his opponents and rescue his kidnapped teammates. "I…I put my hands up. 'Wait, wait,' I say. 'Look, can we work something out? What do you want, money? I can get you money,'" Paxton says.

The GM briefly considers Paxton's attempt to talk as ***pleading***, but these foes don't "care what Peng thinks." After looking at their current drive—"to get the Iron Seal-Snakes to lose or forfeit their next match"—and balance principle—Subterfuge—the GM decides to just say what happens next. "The masked figures stop coming closer, making clear they're listening. The one in front says, in a garbled, weird voice, 'You come with us, and we'll leave them.'"

Paxton winces. "No, I don't like that at all …but I'm not sure I see a better option. 'All right, I'll go,' I say."

The GM arches an eyebrow. "Are you telling the truth? Do you actually mean to go quietly?"

"No," says Paxton. "I'm going to try to escape as soon as I can."

"Okay, that sounds like you're ***tricking*** them, then—you want them to buy into this plan and leave your friends alone, but you're not actually playing along," the GM says.

"Oh, wait—I didn't want to trigger that move. If I go with them willingly, does that mean I can't try to escape at all?"

"Nah—it means you're going with them 'in good faith' for now, but when the situation changes you can always try to escape later. If you want them to believe you're telling the truth right now, and take some action right this second based on that lie, then you're ***tricking*** them," the GM explains.

"Yeah, okay…I think I'd prefer not to go with them. So yeah, I want them to pull back, leave my friends alone, but then once they're up here, I'll run and try to get to my friends first. I guess I'll ***trick*** them," Paxton says.

"Okay, you probably need to sell the trick a bit, too—maybe let them bind your wrists. That cool?" the GM asks, thinking of the fiction and what would make sense for the trick to actually land.

"Not at all, but I'll do it," says Paxton.

"Excellent. One of them steps forward to tie your wrists. Roll with Creativity!" the GM says.

Rolling Dice

When you commit to a course of action that triggers a move, you usually end up rolling dice. You don't roll dice any other time. If a move calls for dice, roll them and consult the move for what happens next. Sometimes players snap up the dice, ready to charge into action and save the day…but the fiction always comes first, and you have to trigger a move before you roll. Say what you do, then figure out the move that follows.

It's fine to think of the move you want to make *first* and then *figure out* what fiction you want to use to trigger the move. If you look over your basic moves sheet (see Appendix C) and decide maybe you want to **trick** someone, then start thinking of a distraction or hustle to trigger **trick an NPC**—it might take you a moment to decide what trick can work, but you can't roll the dice until everyone's on the same page: you have to do the trick in the fiction to get to **trick an NPC** and roll the dice!

But not all moves use dice. Some moves—such as **Not Done Yet!** (page 172) or **Fueled by Anger** (page 180)—tell you and the GM what happens when they are triggered. No dice rolled.

Hits and Misses

When a move asks you to roll dice, roll **two six-sided dice (2d6)**, add the two results together, and follow the outcomes of the move. Traditionally, moves ask you to roll with a stat—like "roll with **Harmony**" or "roll with **Passion**"—meaning you add that stat to the dice total. A character with **Harmony** +2, for example, adds 2 to the total when "rolling with **Harmony**," and a character with **Passion** -2 subtracts 2 from the total when "rolling with **Passion**." There are ways to get bonuses—or suffer penalties—to your roll, but **you never roll with more than a +4 or less than a -3**, no matter what bonuses or penalties you have.

Weak Hits and Strong Hits

Move outcomes are straightforward: anything totaling 7 or more is a **hit**, anything totaling 6 or less is a **miss**. Some moves give additional options on a 10+ or give you more description for what happens on a 7–9 or miss. Each move is unique, so read the move carefully before you roll the dice to find out what kind of outcomes you might find on the other side of the roll.

In general, a hit means you get what you want; rolling a 7+ on the dice is almost always preferable to rolling a 6 or less. If you're trying to **trick an NPC**, for example, then a 7+ on your roll means they're fooled, at least for a few moments, probably long enough for you to have a shot at your broader goals.

When you roll a 7+, you get something, but it's not always pretty. When you roll a 7–9—a **weak hit**—there might be some serious costs or complications, but your roll is not a failure. Sometimes those costs are direct—like marking 1-fatigue or incurring some negative consequences alongside your success—but sometimes a 7–9 means you get fewer positive results from the move you just made.

A 10+ is often described as a **strong hit**. If a move tells you to do something on a 10+, it usually means that you get a bonus or strong result, well beyond what you would get if you rolled a 7–9 result. Most of the time, you're hoping for a 10+ when you pick up the dice and roll, especially if you want to avoid the costs of a weak hit!

EXAMPLE

After more fighting, the top of the building Peng and his opponents are standing on is about to come down! Luckily, Teru Jinno is piloting a prototype miniature zeppelin to provide help, with the rest of their companions aboard. Unluckily, they're not going to be able to get in easy reach before the collapse begins!

"I run off the roof and leap towards the zeppelin!" Paxton says. "Can I throw myself with earthbending? ***Rely on skills and training***?"

"Well, you can throw yourself, but it's a desperate, risky gamble—you're throwing yourself through the air, hoping to get within reach of your friends in a zeppelin a good 30 feet away. This is definitely ***pushing your luck***," says the GM. "Roll with **Passion**!"

Paxton does, and he gets a 10+! "According to the move, you do it, but it costs you to scrape by. Also, a lucky opportunity falls into your lap!" says the GM. "Alright, so I think it's easy to imagine what it costs you—this is utterly terrifying. You're throwing yourself out into the open air, and you're not sure you'll reach anyone who can catch you. Mark Afraid."

"Yeah, that makes sense," says Paxton.

"But then, for the lucky opportunity—one of the masked figures won't let you go, and chases after you. They get thrown by the wave you push through the ceiling, too, and even as your hand wraps around one of the rods of the zeppelin, they madly wrap their arms onto you! It's a lot of weight, but you're pretty strong; more importantly, you can tell they feel that same fear as you. This would be a great time to intimidate them by threatening to drop them or something!"

But imagine if Paxton had instead rolled a 7–9…

Paxton rolls and gets a 7–9! "According to the move, you do it, but it costs you to scrape by," says the GM. "Alright, so I think this takes an enormous amount of effort to pull off, to throw yourself through the air like this, and then catch the zeppelin and pull yourself up. Mark 3-fatigue."

"3-fatigue? Jeez, I only have two blank. I guess I take a condition, too?" says Paxton.

"Yeah, go ahead and pick. The good news, though, is that by pushing yourself to your absolute limit, you manage to do it and throw yourself right into the zeppelin, leaving your foes behind you!"



Misses and Failures

A miss isn't always a failure: it just means the GM tells you what happens. It's likely your character won't like what the GM says, since the GM's job is to push the fiction in interesting directions, but—as a player—you will often find yourself enjoying the way the twist ramps up the tension.

In fact, some of the most interesting misses give you exactly what you wanted but in the worst possible way:

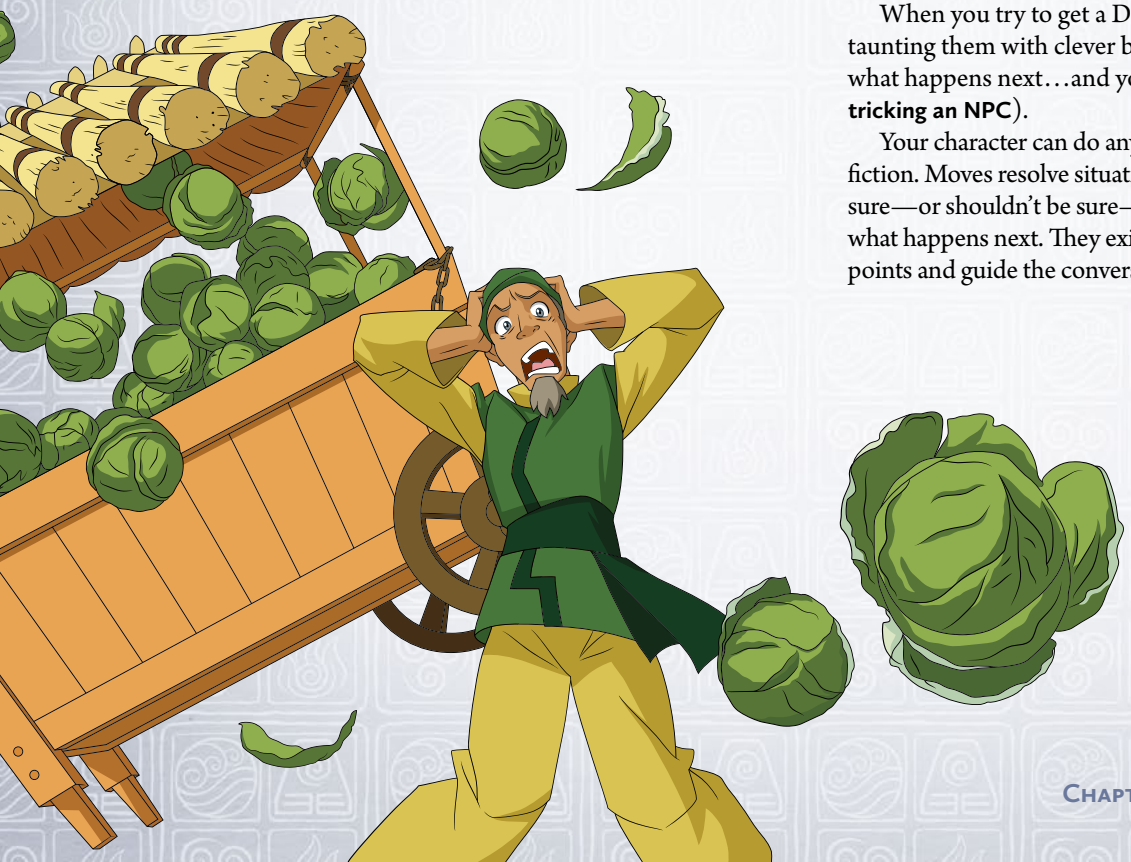
EXAMPLE

But imagine if, in the last example, Paxton had instead rolled a 6-...

"Oof," says the GM. "Yeah, you try to create a wave of earth across the roof to throw you, but it winds up utterly ripping the roof to pieces. You get chucked, hard, through the air, right at the zeppelin. You smash into the side—go ahead and mark 2-fatigue—but more importantly, the whole building starts to collapse with the force of your bending. You watch in horror from the zeppelin as the training building starts to turn into rubble and dust."

The GM isn't playing *against* you, but one of their main jobs is pushing the story forward with dangerous twists and difficult choices! While the focus is always on an interesting story, the GM has to introduce down beats to make the stakes of the story real, to remind you that your misses have real consequences. They might not be failures, but they will be challenging outcomes that push you to rise above them.

The GM never rolls dice in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. Instead, they tell you what's happening and respond to your actions. If you're the GM, see **Chapter 8: Running the Game** on page 222 for more on your role in the game, including making your own moves and resolving conflicts between players.



Reversed Moves

There are exceptions to always wanting a 10+! Some moves are **reversed**; you want to roll low when you try to **deny a callout** (page 139) or **resist an NPC shifting your balance** (page 140) because the more committed you are to a principle, the more you add to your roll when you make these moves. When a move is reversed, you avoid the costs and complications when you roll low and have to make difficult choices when you roll a 10+!

Triggers and Uncertainty

There are only seven basic moves, plus a handful of moves that address aiding other PCs, balance, and combat. Does that mean that's *all* you can do in the game? What if you want to do something not included in these moves?

The answer is simple: **the moves point to places where no one knows what happens next**.

If you want to use your earthbending to create a stone chair in the middle of an open field—no urgency, no danger, no risk—then there is no uncertainty. The players and the GM all know what happens next. You make the chair!

If you want to throw out a cute quip about the situation at hand to make everyone laugh—without expecting anyone to act in a particular way because of your joke—there is no uncertainty. Everyone can respond however they like!

But when you use your earthbending to create a dam across a raging river before it floods the town downstream, then no one knows what happens next! *That's* when a move triggers (such as **rely on your skills and training**).

When you try to get a Dai Li agent to reveal their plan by taunting them with clever barbs and insults, then no one knows what happens next…and you're likely triggering a move (such as **tricking an NPC**).

Your character can do anything that makes sense within the fiction. Moves resolve situations where both player and GM aren't sure—or shouldn't be sure—about what happens next, to tell you what happens next. They exist to highlight the natural tension points and guide the conversation toward interesting places!

Core Elements

In the chapters that follow this one, you can find the rules that govern the conversation—the basic moves (pages 127), the playbooks (page 164), and more. But before you read on to those specifics, it's helpful for you to understand a few core elements of the game that show up in virtually every session!

Fatigue

Every companion has a fatigue track with five boxes on it. When you mark fatigue, it represents getting physically, mentally, and/or emotionally tired, stressed, and worn down. Once you've marked all five boxes, you're on the verge of collapsing or passing out; nearly everything risky you do is difficult and might put you out of action.

Fatigue is a simple, short-term cost that has a big impact on your character when it overwhelms them; but it doesn't affect them much in the long-term. You might mark fatigue when you bend the elements in a particularly stressful or difficult way—or when you want to strike out with them in a fight—but you can recover that lost energy by getting some rest or when another companion **guides and comforts** you (page 128).

If you've marked all five fatigue boxes, then any time a game rule gives you the choice between marking fatigue or doing something else, you have to do the something else. If a move says you must mark fatigue to use the move…you can't use the move. If someone or something else inflicts fatigue on you, involuntarily, then since you have no boxes left to check, you mark the same number of conditions instead.

Clearing Fatigue

So, how do you get less fatigued? You can always **guide and comfort** other PCs (page 128)—and they can **guide and comfort** you too! **Guiding and comforting** each other allows you to clear fatigue (and conditions) when your companions are there for each other, offering advice and support in times of need!

Of course, getting some rest helps as well. If you get a chance for some time away from your pressing troubles and exciting adventures, you can clear fatigue off-screen:

- Sleeping rough, like a night spent on the cold ground with rocks for a bed, clears 2-fatigue.
- A night's rest in a covered stable or barn clears 3-fatigue.
- A night's rest in a comfortable space, like an actual house, with a mat underneath you and a blanket over you, clears 4-fatigue.
- A week's rest pretty much anywhere—even in the wilderness—clears 5-fatigue.

You need food and water to get the benefits of rest as well—it's not the kind of thing you need to keep careful track of, but if you rest in the middle of the desert without any water at all, then you're not going to recover much fatigue, if any.

The same goes for traveling; unless you've arranged for highly comfortable, secure passage, you're only going to clear one or two fatigue on a long journey. Sure, you might get one or two restful days while stowing away on a freighter that takes you all the way from the Fire Nation capital to the North Pole, but the ordinary stresses of avoiding guards, searching for food, and staying out of sight are going to keep you from recovering the way you would if you booked the same trip on a fancy cruise…



Conditions

A condition is an emotional state which leaves you uncomfortable and vulnerable. Every companion has five conditions they can mark when something particularly stressful happens to them: **Afraid**, **Angry**, **Guilty**, **Insecure**, and **Troubled**. If you don't have a condition marked, you might still feel that emotion, but it won't last long or isn't intense enough to affect your actions. If you have a condition marked, then you feel the associated emotion at some deep level, and it might affect your actions in subtle ways for days or weeks, even if you don't openly show the emotion to others.

How should a character act when they're Afraid or Insecure? That's entirely up to you—an angry Kyoshi and an angry Aang are very, very different people! The one thing pre-defined about the effect of each condition is how it affects specific moves you make, giving you a penalty to the following moves. As long as you're…

- **Afraid**, take -2 to **intimidate** and **call someone out**
- **Angry**, take -2 to **guide and comfort** and **assess a situation**
- **Guilty**, take -2 to **push your luck** and +2 to **deny a callout**
- **Insecure**, take -2 to **trick** and **resist shifting your balance**
- **Troubled**, take -2 to **plead** and **rely on your skills or training**

Condition penalties are added to your stat along with any other modifiers like a bonus from **assessing a situation** (page 127) or a playbook move. For example, an Angry character with Harmony -1 would **guide and comfort** (page 128) other characters with a -3 modifier!

Taken Out by Conditions

If you've already marked all five conditions and you must mark another, you're taken out. You become unconscious, injured, distraught, or trapped. Your actions can't trigger moves or affect the scene anymore. You're at the mercy of the other characters in the scene and might be disarmed, captured, or otherwise limited. Even if a companion tries to **guide and comfort** you, you can't open up to them at all or clear any conditions. It's not until after the scene ends that you recover, after you've had some time off or your opposition frees you. When you recover, clear all marked fatigue, but keep all your conditions marked.

Clearing Conditions

You can remove a marked condition in a few ways. One of the other PCs might try to **guide and comfort** you; or you might do something risky or unproductive to clear a specific condition. To clear…

- **Afraid**: run from danger or difficulty.
- **Angry**: break something important or lash out at a friend.
- **Guilty**: make a personal sacrifice to absolve your guilt.
- **Insecure**: take foolhardy action without talking to your companions.
- **Troubled**: seek guidance from a mentor or powerful figure.

After clearing the condition, you feel better about yourself and the situation, but not right away—you fully clear the condition at the end of the scene, not right as you take the action that clears it. Even when you've started to let go of the emotion, it takes you the rest of the scene to clear your head and move past the condition.

- **Clearing Afraid** requires you to avoid or flee from a difficult or dangerous situation—anything from running away from a villain to fleeing the room when someone wants to have a conversation about your recent actions. The key is avoidance! Instead of confronting something, you run from it.

- **Clearing Angry** requires you to vent your anger, either by breaking something important or lashing out at a friend. It's not enough to just break a random vase—you have to take your anger out on something important. What's important is different for every character, but the GM should ask if and why an object is important when the Angry character breaks it. If you lash out at a friend, it should be clear how your anger pushes you past your usual limits!

- **Clearing Guilty** requires you to pay some cost on behalf of others, those you feel you've wronged or let down. It doesn't require them to actually absolve you of your guilt—just so long as you pay a price in an attempt to redeem yourself. This might be anything from standing alone against a dangerous foe so your teammates can escape to agreeing to follow the advice of a mentor when it's hard to follow.

- **Clearing Insecure** requires you to jump into action without thinking things through in a desperate bid to prove yourself, putting yourself in danger before you've prepared for what's to come. You might decide to attack a powerful foe before the rest of your team arrives or agree to a difficult task before you've heard all the details. Either way, you have to impulsively act without consulting your team or thinking too hard about the consequences.

- **Clearing Troubled** requires you to regain your confidence by seeking guidance and reassurance from someone competent and capable, either a mentor or a powerful figure. "A mentor" covers any NPC whose advice you've received or sought before, and a "powerful figure" covers any NPC you see as powerful, be it social power, bending skill, emotional influence, etc. When you're Troubled, you need help or clarity to restore your confidence. Until you get guidance from someone whose advice has meaning to you, you are plagued by self-doubt and struggling with indecision.

EXAMPLE

Beryl, the Icon, marks Guilty after she visits her hometown and finds out that while she's been gone, her sick grandfather passed away. "Beryl wishes she'd been there with every fiber of her being," says Beryl's player, Bei.

Beryl clears Guilty after she lets the forces hunting her take her captive, in exchange for leaving her hometown alone, safe and sound. It's a sacrifice to honor her grandfather and her home—"It's the least she can do," says Bei.

Remember that even if you take the action, you only clear the condition at the end of the scene. You can clear multiple conditions in one scene, but you continue to be affected by the penalty for the entirety of the scene.

Balance

Every companion has a balance track that consists of two **principles**, core beliefs or ideals your character wrestles with throughout their adventures. These principles are opposed, but not directly—they represent different ways of thinking about the world and your character's problems and rarely boil down to simple opposites. For example, a character whose first principle is **Self-Reliance** likely won't have a contending principle that makes them rely on others; instead, they might have something like **Trust**, representing the degree to which they are willing to believe that other people can take care of themselves.

Principles, Balance, and Center

Each balance principle reflects a specific worldview, manifesting as part philosophy and part feeling. When they appear on your playbook, that means they're both important to your character and in tension with their other important principle, establishing your character's inner conflict. During the story, your character's thoughts and experiences push and pull them towards one idea or the other.



You track how you feel about your principles on the balance track—both your **current balance** and your **center**, the point to which you return to when you have time or rest. Your balance may **shift** as a result of moves, or as a result of an NPC consciously or unconsciously shifting your balance towards a principle by how they speak and behave toward you, but your character's balance returns to their center over time.

It's up to you to decide how much your current balance affects the way you play your character. A companion whose center is near the middle of the track might be actively pursuing one of the ideals, determined to shift that direction whenever possible; a companion near the edge of the track might be pushing back the other direction, hoping to avoid slipping over the edge of the track and losing their balance. There's no right answer!

Like conditions, your balance is a tool you can use to guide your character that has mechanical effects, but your balance doesn't limit your actions unless someone **calls you out** (page 138) to act in accordance with one of your principles or you **lose your balance** (page 141). In those cases, you work with the GM to determine how your character acts when their internal struggle boils over into passionate action!

Shifting Your Balance

When told to shift your balance toward one principle or the other, you move your balance (however you track it, be it with a stone or a penciled-in circle) toward the end of that track where that principle is written. The moves (page 127) of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** often tell you when to shift your balance, but sometimes the GM also shifts your balance because of the decisions you've made in the story.

When told to shift your balance towards your center, you shift your balance towards wherever your center is currently; when you're told to shift your balance away from center, you shift your balance away from your center and toward one of your principles. If you are at your center and told to shift your balance away from center, you pick which way it shifts. No matter which direction you shift, you lose your balance if you shift off the end of one side of your track.

EXAMPLE

Quartz, the Guardian, has a balance track split between Trust and Self-Reliance. Quartz's center is currently at +1 Trust/-1 Self-Reliance, and his Balance is at +2 Trust/-2 Self-Reliance. When talking to another major NPC—a smarmy villain asking for Quartz's trust—he's told to shift his balance toward Trust. That would put it at +3 Trust/-3 Self-Reliance, and put Quartz right on the edge of losing his balance!

Later, with his Balance and center in the same place, Quartz is told to shift his balance toward center. He has to shift his Balance back to +2 Trust/-2 Self-Reliance from +3 Trust/-3 Self-Reliance—that's the only direction that counts as "toward center." Of course, if Quartz was told to shift away from center, he would lose his balance!

Losing Your Balance

If a shift takes you over the edge, past the end of the track, you **lose your balance** (page 141). Characters who lose their balance—including NPCs—lose control of their powers, act out in accordance with their principles, or even give give in to their opposition! They regain control after they have some time to recover, but they must **shift their center** as a result of the experience (page 218).

You can never choose to shift your balance off the edge of the track and lose your balance, but several moves—including **resisting shifting your balance** (page 140)—allow the GM or other players to shift your balance up to and over the edge of the track.

EXAMPLE

Quartz decides he's had enough of the smarmy villain and decides to resist shifting his balance when the villain pushes Quartz to help him commit a crime. Unfortunately, Quartz misses on the roll; the GM has to shift Quartz's balance twice! Since Quartz is already at +2 Trust / -2 Self-Reliance, shifting twice towards Trust pushes Quartz over the edge...and Quartz loses his balance! The GM directs Quartz to look at the move—**lose your balance**—to see what happens next...

Returning to Center

Whenever time passes—or you have a chance to rest and reflect—reset your balance to your center. A single night usually isn't enough for your character to regain their composure and bring their balance back to center, but it's possible that a particularly calming location or practicing meditation might help you find yourself again…

Bending

In *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *The Legend of Korra*, most of the heroes are benders capable of amazing feats. The ones who aren't benders have incredible mastery of weapons or technologies that rivals bending itself!

But regardless of their bending prowess—or other fantastic abilities—the stories of *Avatar Legends* aren't really about the companions' bending. Instead, the characters use their bending to go on adventures in service of their broader story—finding their role in the world, exploring the drive inside their heart that moves them, caring for the people in their lives.

Bending in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** works the same way—you use it constantly…but it's not your story. All of the trainings, including bending, are tools your character uses to get stuff done, whether fighting to protect the innocent from immediate harm or convincing political leaders to take the problems of ordinary people seriously.

What does that look like in the game? Trainings don't have a lot of limits, so it's up to you and your group to say when and how your training is useful. Sometimes, it's obvious—"I want to waterbend that boat back to us so we can save the people on it!"—but sometimes it's a bit more subtle—"I want to earthbend out little handholds all up the side of this building so we can climb it!"

Either way, the mechanics of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** both support and challenge you as you use your powers. As you push yourself to accomplish great things with your training, you'll find costs and complications that make those accomplishments meaningful; when doing easy things—like lighting a small fire with your firebending—you won't need to invoke the mechanics at all, and you and the GM will simply say what happens.

EXAMPLE

Haki, the Successor, is trying to get to the top floor of a city office building in one of the Fire Nation colonies, hoping to rescue his friend who was captured by the local authorities.

"No one's spotted me yet, right? I'll just use my firebending to leap up to the second floor and break in through a window," says Hector, Haki's player.

"Sure," says the GM. "I don't think that's uncertain or dangerous, so it's not even a roll. But once you're up there, you'll have to find a way past the guards you saw patrolling when you and the other companions cased the place yesterday."

"Ugh. Could I maybe just jump all the way to the roof using my firebending? It's only like eight stories, right?"

"Yes! That would be awesome," says the GM. "Maybe doing like a wall jump between the office and the building next to it?"

Hector nods. "Do I need to roll for that?

"Yeah," says the GM. "That's a lot harder than jumping up one story, so you'll have to **rely on your skills and training** to make it all the way up without any costs or consequences…"

Just remember…your training is always real, always part of the fictional position of your character within the story. You can't waterbend a boat to you if you can't waterbend; if you're a Firebender or Earthbender you have to swim to that boat instead. And there are specialized bending techniques using skills like lightning redirection or metalbending that must be learned from others on your journey.



Core Elements for NPCs

NPCs also have fatigue tracks and conditions: three fatigue boxes and one condition for most, five fatigue boxes and three conditions if they're moderately important, and ten fatigue boxes and five conditions if they're a major character—a stalwart ally or formidable villain.

NPC fatigue and conditions work identically to PC fatigue and conditions—NPCs also mark fatigue to activate techniques, mark conditions exactly like PCs, and get taken out if they must mark a condition and cannot do so. Read more about NPC fatigue and conditions on page 234.

NPCs can also have a balance track, but only if they are important. NPC balance tracks only have a single principle that ranges from 0 to +1 (minor NPCs), +2 (major NPCs), or +3 (master NPCs). That said, they can **lose their balance** if they are pushed over the edge, and major NPCs can even shift their centers! See page 234 for more on NPC balance.

Starting a Game

Before you play **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, there are a few things you need to prepare and a few things you need to think about as a group. You can read more about setting up the fiction of your game—choosing a scope and era—in Chapter 4 (page 108), but this section outlines some of the underlying assumptions you should consider before you go through that process!

Preparing to Play

You need a space to play. If you're playing face-to-face, you want a table big enough for everybody to sit around it, spread out a bit, put their character sheets down, and roll dice. Make sure you've got printed copies of the basic moves and the playbooks ready to go, along with a pair of dice for each player, a batch of index cards or sticky notes, and a bunch of pencils.

If you're playing online, make sure you've got everyone included in your audio or video call and some tools for keeping everyone on the same page: an online character keeper or shared document, an online dice roller, and all the PDFs of the basic moves and playbooks. You can learn more about online tools specifically designed for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** at magpiegames.com/avatarrpg.

Don't hesitate to take breaks when needed—while it's better if nobody stops for a meal in the middle of play, bathroom breaks, snack breaks, stand-up-and-stretch breaks are just fine. No need to rush! Even the Avatar takes a break sometimes to feed the otter-penguins!

Choosing an Era

One of the most important decisions you'll make as a group is which era to use for your story. **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** features five different eras, four tied to the life of a major Avatar—Kyoshi, Roku, Aang, and Korra—and one that explores the Hundred Year War when Avatar Aang was frozen in ice. These eras are detailed in **Chapter 2: The World of Avatar** (page 31), including their major events and important people.

The eras are quite different from each other, each emphasizing different themes and conflicts. The Kyoshi Era, for example, depicts a world beset by warlords and bandits—a time that needed heroes to protect ordinary people as the nations struggle to maintain their borders—while the Korra Era focuses on the arrival of modern technologies as the world grows more integrated and connected every day.

Spend time as a group choosing an era before you start play! Think carefully about what kind of game you want to play together and pick an era that fits that style of story. Don't be surprised if a game set during the Hundred Year War focuses on conflicts around the War or if a game set during the Roku Era is dominated by political considerations and shadowy politics. Each era is built to focus on different stories! You can find more on choosing an era in **Chapter 4: Making Characters**, on page 108.

Setting Expectations

The stories of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** range from goofy and fun—"My cabbages!"—to serious and dark, like Avatar Kuruk's battles against dark spirits in the Kyoshi novels or Korra's battles to cope with her traumas in later seasons of *The Legend of Korra*. It's important that everybody's on the same page about what to expect from the tone and style of your game. You have room to nudge the tone according to your table's choices, and the playbooks you select inherently change the game's style. But here are some basic elements you always need to think about:

Growing Up in the Avatarverse

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game is a fantasy adventure setting inspired by Asian and North American Indigenous cultures, a land filled with breathtaking temples, majestic sky bison, and unique marvels of technology. Yet, it is also a world defined by struggle—there are no truly evil villains or perfect heroes—as people with complex motivations come into conflict with others to forge a future they believe is best.

All of the characters have grown up in a world with benders, the Avatar, and the Four Nations. They may not know the history of those Nations or how the current Avatar deals with problems, but they know about bending, the general concepts of the Avatar cycle, and the major conflicts of the current era. And depending on the era, they might even be familiar with stuff like metalbending or advanced technologies like mecha suits and Satomobiles!

The companions can be surprised by new and amazing powers, but they don't walk around in awe that ordinary people can bend the elements or master an incredible fighting style. Those things are a normal part of life if you've grown up in the Four Nations.

Your Team

In **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, you always play a team of heroic, young companions who have stepped up to make the world a better place. The specifics of your team are filled in by the choices you make when choosing your era, scope, and purpose (page 108), as well as when you choose playbooks and make your characters. That said, a few things are always true:

- **You are all skilled martial artists.** Regardless of your training (page 116), every one of you is a skilled martial artist prepared to spar and scuffle with competent opponents. Even companions who focus on technology have taken some self-defense classes and can handle themselves in a fight. Nearly every corner of the Avatarverse is filled with people who have some degree of training—even if some of those people are non-benders—but all of the PCs are particularly skilled and capable.

- **You have all answered the call willingly.** You might have been pressured to take on the role of a hero (or taken on the role because you feel guilty about your past actions), but you have chosen to be a part of the team. That's why your team won't fracture or collapse at the first conflict—one way or another, you want to be here fulfilling your group's purpose with your fellow companions.



- **You aren't killers or villains.** You're a team of young heroes. You might have made mistakes or even hurt people in the past. But you aren't killers or villains; you don't solve problems by hurting people without regard for the consequences. If your team feels they need to take more drastic action—like killing a dangerous villain to save lives—you might grapple with the complexities of killing as a solution to difficult problems. But so far, none of you have crossed that line or gone down that dark path.

- **You are friendly!** While some of the other companions might give you a headache or make you roll your eyes at their silly antics, you are all friendly with each other. You might have only met during the inciting incident (page 111) or still be learning about each other, but you know your adventures will draw you closer. It's okay to be rivals with a teammate—or even a bit jealous of them sometimes—but you all are closer to friends than not. If ever your character comes to believe they are entirely at odds with the other PCs—or perhaps even bitter enemies or foes—that's a sign that it might be time for you to make a new companion who fits in better with the group.

- **You are still growing and learning**. All of the heroes of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**—regardless of age—are people who are still learning who they are and what they care about. Your two balance principles (page 102) are in tension because you haven't quite decided what you care about most, and your adventures are in part about discovering what truly matters to you!

Redemption and Loss

The stories of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**—as action-packed and fun as they can be—are never truly free of the burdens of loss…or the potential for redemption. Death and tragedy are common across the Four Nations, and almost no one who grows up during an era of great conflict—like the Hundred Year War—is untouched by the horrors of war. Much of the power of these stories revolves around the hope that heroes bring to ordinary people, the fierce love they have for goodness and kindness, and their ability to stand up for what's right; the inclusion of great loss and injustice is crucial for the companions to rise to that occasion.

And while some villains appear to be truly monstrous and cruel like Fire Lord Ozai, many of the characters who oppose your companions are not such monsters. Some are ordinary people with differing perspectives or needs. Others have committed themselves to making the world better but have lost balance and are on the path to making terrible decisions. Just as loss and tragedy are fertile grounds for heroism, conflicts and disagreements often start stories of redemption and forgiveness. It's easy to write off the opposition as villains, but many of the tales of the Avatarverse are about the heroes helping the villains see the damage they have done instead of beating those villains into submission with the elements.

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game is all about balance—seeking it, finding it, *and* losing it. No story told in this world should ever be simple or easy, nor will it be without hope or optimism.





CHAPTER 4

MAKING CHARACTERS

第四章

CHAPTER 4

This chapter sets you up to start playing, including instructions on how to choose an era, a scope, and a group focus. In addition, it covers the inciting incident that brings the PCs—the heroes—together at the start of your adventures. When the stage is set and the main characters are introduced, you can jump right into telling your story. Whoever takes the role of the GM doesn't have to plan anything—by following the steps in this chapter, you do the prep work together!

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game requires your group to first set the stage for your story by making some big decisions about your game's theme, the setting, and each player's character. This process means working with everyone else, whether you're a player or the GM, and ensuring everyone is heard. Everyone at the table has equal say in deciding all of the following elements of the game: **era**, **scope**, **group focus**, and **inciting incident**. Together you will craft a background for your game that leaves everyone excited to play to find out what happens!

Setting Up Your Game

Before you make your character, roll any dice, or confront any villains, you and your group need to set up your story. The Avatarverse is enormous, covering huge amounts of territory and hundreds of years, and you've got to select which parts you want to focus on and what you hope to accomplish as heroes. The groundwork you lay before you play is crucial to ensuring that everyone gets to have the experience they want playing the game!

This initial phase—the **setup phase**—requires your group to do a lot of talking about what kind of game you want to have. Don't be shy! If you want to focus on a particular part of the setting or the history, tell your group. Together, you all can work together to find a setup for your story that meets everyone's needs. And if you're going to use safety tools like lines and veils or the X-Card (page 12), the setup phase is a great time to introduce them and establish how your group will use them during play.

You're going to be making some big decisions and establishing important facts about your game's story during this phase. But don't worry, you don't need to keep all of this in your head! As you decide on each component of *your* story, write it down on the *Campaign Creation Worksheet* (see Appendix C) in the play materials to keep track of it. Think of the worksheet as a reference tool, like the "plot bibles" TV writers create and use to keep track of all the important things they need to remember about the show! It's likely you'll return to that sheet in later sessions to refresh your memory about what you decided during this phase!

You can download all the **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** play materials at magpiegames.com/avatarrpg.

Choose an Era

Before you do anything else, you need to decide on which **era** of history your game uses as a backdrop. You, another player, or the GM might already have a strong opinion on what era to play in—that's great! Just make sure everyone at the table is just as excited to play in that era too. **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** offers five eras to choose from, each tied to the span of an Avatar's life (except for the Hundred Year War Era) and each focuses on distinct themes that define the type of game you play. Here's a quick list of the base emphasis and details of each era (described in more detail in **Chapter 2: The World of Avatar**):



The Kyoshi Era covers the events right after *The Shadow of Kyoshi* novel. Play in the Kyoshi Era if you want to fight in battles against rogues and bandits and deal with governmental corruption as the nations establish their borders.



The Roku Era covers the time right after Sozin became Fire Lord and before Roku married. Play in the Roku Era if you want to deal with tensions between different nations and the trials of maintaining an uneasy peace.



The Hundred Year War Era focuses on the time just before Avatar Aang's awakening at the beginning of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Play in the Hundred Year War Era if you want to rebel against unjust rule, protect the weak, and stand up to tyranny.



The Aang Era is set after the events of the *Imbalance* comics trilogy, some time after the end of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Play in the Aang Era if you want to heal the world after tragedy and help push it into a brighter future.



The Korra Era covers a period that takes place after the events of the *Ruins of the Empire* comic trilogy, some time after the end of *The Legend of Korra*. Play in the Korra Era if you want to deal with the repercussions of imperialism and play in a modernized era.

Choose a Scope

Now that you know *when* your game takes place, it's time to decide *where* it takes place! The **scope** of your game measures how much of the Four Nations you expect to explore over the course of play. Are you interested in having every episode take place somewhere new or would you rather zoom in on just one location and explore its residents' struggles? Using your era as a guide, pick a scope for your game and describe it on the *Campaign Creation Worksheet*.

- **If your scope is broad**—extending across the whole Earth Kingdom, the entirety of the world's oceans, or the whole world—you might sail by ship or fly by bison from destination to destination, solving problems which affect multiple states and peoples. Avatar Kyoshi and Avatar Aang both had stories with extremely broad scopes, going on adventures that required them to travel the whole world. A broad scope might focus on Water Tribe refugees from the South Pole traveling north to seek shelter in the capital of Agna Qel'a during the Hundred Year War.

- **If your scope is narrow**—focusing on Ba Sing Se, or Agna Qel'a, or the Foggy Swamp—you might explore a single region or city in greater depth and detail; you might occasionally visit outside locations but always return to your original site afterward. Avatar Korra's story had a narrower focus in Season One of *The Legend of Korra*, centering on Republic City's complex power politics. A narrow scope for your own game might deal with protecting Kyoshi Island and the Avatar's legacy from an outside threat or invader in Roku's Era.

Once you've determined your scope, briefly describe it on the *Campaign Creation Worksheet* ("Fire Fountain City," "the Si Wong Desert," "the islands of the Southern Archipelago," etc.). Your scope isn't set in stone and can change over the course of play. If it does, though, that's likely an indicator you're moving on to a new season of your game (page 255)…

EXAMPLE

Nadja, Izzy, Tyrelle, Seiji, and Ruhan are starting up a game along with their GM. They've already decided to set it within the Korra Era, but now they need to talk about the scope of their game.

"To help give us a starting point, is anybody here interested in a roaming game, the kind where you visit a new place every episode?" the GM asks. Some of the players indicate a bit of interest, but no one expresses a strong desire.

"And what about a game with a more specific setting, where we're in the same place every episode?" This time, Seiji and Tyrelle both speak up.

"Yeah, I think I'm interested in really developing a cast of characters in the same location," says Seiji.

"I'm less interested in episodic, isolated plots," says Tyrelle. "So I think I want to be in a single consistent location where everything strings together."

"Awesome," says the GM. "We should think about specific locations or areas." The rest of the players nod.

"Obviously, we could do Republic City," says the GM. "We can also do Hari Bulkan in the Fire Nation, or Ba Sing Se in the Earth Kingdom. We don't even have to do a city—we could do just a larger area that keeps us focused, like one island near the Northern Water Tribe. Or we could do an Air Temple! Anything jumping out to anyone?"

"Republic City sounds pretty great, actually," says Izzy. "It has the spirit portal now, it has plenty of rebuilding to do after the Earth Empire attack, there's all kinds of stories and characters who can be there."

"Yeah, I'm interested in playing a Yuyan archer, but Republic City can really have any kind of character in it, so that sounds good to me," says Ruhan.

With that, the group settles on their scope—Republic City!





Choose a Group Focus

With your era and scope determined, you need to establish the reason your group sticks together with a **group focus**. Your group focus is the purpose which first united your companions to achieve a common goal. Your characters might disagree about how to achieve it, but they all believe the goal is so important that it's worth risking danger and changing their futures. As a group, choose one of the following verbs to be your group focus, then determine the object of that verb's action:

- To **defeat** [dangerous foe]
- To **protect** [place, idea, culture, person, thing]
- To **change** [culture, society, place, person]
- To **deliver** [person, thing] to [place, culture, person]
- To **rescue** [person, thing]
- To **learn** [idea, culture, training, history]

EXAMPLE

Next, the group has to discuss their desired focus!

"Any ideas about what you want to play with?" asks the GM.

"I would love to do more stories around the spirit vine weapons, they were scary," says Izzy.

"For me, the Triads of Republic City are pretty interesting," says Nadja.

"Well, what if we combine those? The Triads are getting their hands on illicit spirit vine technology!" suggests Tyrelle.

"So let's do 'To defeat an enemy' as our focus, and have the enemy be some big Triad boss!" says Seiji.

"I kind of like the idea that we're investigating, though, and we don't know who we're up against," says Ruhan. "What about, 'To protect Republic City' from the spirit vine weapons?"

The rest of the group agrees—they like the idea of a game with an investigative, intrigue element as they search for the illicit spirit vine weapons in Republic City!

Detailing Your Group Focus

Whatever you choose, the group focus is a problem too complicated to overcome in one episode (or game session). It's the kind of thing that takes an entire season of a show or volume of a comic series to solve. You don't need to fill in all the details about the group focus right now, but consider some of the following questions to make sure it's robust enough to push the story forward:

- **If you're trying to defeat a dangerous foe:** what makes them powerful and compelling? Why are they a danger to innocents or nature? What kind of followers or minions do they command? Why hasn't anyone taken them down yet?
- **If you're trying to protect someone or something:** why are they important to a lot of people? What makes them vulnerable to danger if you don't get involved? Why are they worth protecting? Who might oppose you protecting them?
- **If you're trying to change someone or something:** what has happened recently to convince your characters that now is the time for change? What do you want to be different? What established rules or practices of a culture, society, or place are you trying to change, and what are you trying to change them *to*? For the person you're trying to change, do you want to convince them they're wrong, or are you trying to make them a better person? What do the people connected to that culture, society, or place think about the way things are and the way you want things to be?
- **If you're trying to deliver someone or something to somewhere or someone else:** why is the thing you are delivering so important? Why can't others step in to deliver it? Who doesn't want it delivered, and why? What are some of the dangers you might face along the way?
- **If you're trying to rescue someone or something:** who has taken it captive, or holds it? Why must it be freed from them? Why hasn't anyone else successfully freed it so far? What will you do with it once you do free it?
- **If you're trying to learn something:** what makes that knowledge difficult or illegal to obtain? Who's trying to stop you from learning it, and why? Who else is trying to learn it, and will their efforts help or hinder yours? Is your group focus something you can tell everyone you meet, or must you keep it secret?

Just like your scope, your group focus may evolve as you play, but big changes—like moving from protecting a place to defeating a villain threatening the whole world—may be a sign that it's time for a new season!

Outline the Inciting Incident

In order to flesh out the group focus, you need to create an **inciting incident** to start your game off with some action! The inciting incident is the plot of your series' "pilot episode," the story of how the companions met one another and committed themselves to your group focus. If your group focus is "to rescue a rebellion leader" during the Hundred Year War Era, for example, your inciting incident will explain important details like how your characters met, why they care about rescuing this person, who captured them, and who wants to stop you.

The inciting incident is not a full session of play; instead, you craft it together at the table like a few good friends retelling an epic escapade that happened the week before. Choose options that are interesting—but leave them open-ended, since you'll need to fully understand your characters before you can fill in all the details!

Start by picking a place within your scope where this incident happened. Then, as a group, choose three of the following—one for each act of your opening story:

ACT 1

- We befriended **[ALLY]** who gave us access to **[VALUABLE ITEM]**.
- We discovered a secret hidden by **[POWERFUL FIGURE]**.
- We did something fun, but drew the ire of **[POWERFUL FIGURE]** in the process.
- We learned the frightening plans of **[POWERFUL FOE]**.

ACT 2

- We stole **[VALUABLE ITEM]** from **[POWERFUL FOE]**.
- We discovered a terrible truth about **[LOCATION OR POWERFUL FIGURE]**.
- We defended **[ALLY OR PLACE]** from **[POWERFUL FOE]**.
- We destroyed **[VALUABLE ITEM]** and drew the ire of its owner, **[POWERFUL FOE]**.

ACT 3

- We fought and barely defeated **[POWERFUL FOE]**.
- We narrowly escaped capture by **[POWERFUL FOE]**.
- We saved or rescued **[ALLY]** from **[POWERFUL FIGURE]**.
- We were saved from **[POWERFUL FOE]** by **[ALLY]**, to their own detriment.

As you decide, think of each choice as the start (**Act 1**), middle (**Act 2**), and end (**Act 3**) of that first episode, detailing whatever you need to construct the opening of your adventures! You can use any of the items or characters you came up with when setting up your group focus, but you can also invent new villains, items, allies, etc., as you need them. Just connect the three events to explain how your companions met and where your adventure goes from here. Try not to get caught up in explaining everything. It's important to keep things general, because your characters don't exist yet and there needs to be room for expansion later on.

EXAMPLE

"Now we set up our inciting incident!" says the GM. "We know we're in Republic City, and the thing that connects the group is a shared interest in stopping the illicit spirit vine weapons. With that in mind, any of the Act 1 options seem interesting?"

"'We discovered a secret hidden by a powerful figure' makes a lot of sense," says Nadja. "We have to have learned about the spirit vine weapons, right?"

"Cool! Who's the powerful figure, then?" asks the GM.

"The leader of a new Triad...the Iron Cloud Triad!" says Seiji.

"Yeah! We found a hidden cache of spirit vine tech in Iron Cloud territory!" says Tyrelle.

"Excellent!" says the GM. "What about Act 2? Did you steal some of that tech? Or maybe you destroyed it?"

"Oh, I definitely think we destroyed it," says Iris. "And we drew the ire of its owner...who is the same guy, right?"

"That's just fine, though!" the GM says. "We're reinforcing how important that NPC is. Or, we can always revise the NPC included in the Act 1 prompt—what if the secret you discovered was this series of hidden chambers in the rebuilt parts of the city, not the actual spirit vine technology? So someone participating in the reconstruction of the city after the Earth Empire attack had these special, secret labs hidden there, and now they're researching spirit vine weapons with the help of local Triads!"

"Oh, that's awesome!" says Ruhan. "And can we say maybe they're like a competitor of Future Industries? They're originally from the Fire Nation, and their company is...Ember Global!"

"Wait, what if it's like a new executive of the known rival of Future Industries—Cabbage Corp? They can still be from the Fire Nation, but they're in charge of Cabbage Corp special projects, and they're trying to secretly research spirit vines, using the Triads for protection and black market supplies!" says Izzy. Ruhan nods in agreement!

"All of that is fantastic!" says the GM. "So to recap, in Act 1, you discovered a secret hidden by this executive of Cabbage Corp. Let's give them a name...Ihing Shuryao.

"So Ihing used Cabbage Corp resources to help rebuild after the Empire's attack, and hid this secret set of chambers underneath the new structures. You discovered those along with the spirit vine testing and tech inside. And then in Act 2, you destroyed that equipment and incurred the wrath of the leader of the Iron Cloud Triad...let's give them a name...Ben Luo. And what about Act 3? Any ideas?" the GM asks.

"I don't think we saved or rescued anybody, and I don't think we defeated anybody," says Tyrelle. "Maybe we were rescued?"

"I like that we're on our own in this investigation, though, and we don't know who to trust," says Seiji. "Can we say that we narrowly escaped capture by another foe, someone who makes us doubt the people who should be helping us? What if it's a corrupt guy in the police force working for the Triad?"

"Ah, that's great!" says Nadja.

"Awesome!" says the GM. "Let's say his name is Quan Sun, and he's actually considered a pretty upstanding officer by most everybody else, so no one suspects him. And with that, we've got our inciting incident!"

You're the Hero!

Now that you have a group focus to direct your game, and a sketch of your story's pilot episode, it's time to meet the stars of the series—you! Each player creates a character linked to the group focus you just created—a skilled, competent hero with plenty to learn and a desire to change the world for the better. You can create any kind of character you can imagine! Over the course of their journey, your character grows, learns new abilities, and shifts between two opposing beliefs at the heart of their story.

Choosing a Playbook

First, you're going to choose a playbook—an outline of a character archetype which you can customize to make your own. Like in *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *The Legend of Korra*, each player character in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** possesses a specialized skill set and grapples with a particular story arc. Your playbook represents these core elements through your abilities, your balance principles, and other features on the sheet. There are ten playbooks to choose from in this book: the **Adamant**, the **Bold**, the **Guardian**, the **Hammer**, the **Icon**, the **Idealist**, the **Pillar**, the **Prodigy**, the **Rogue**, and the **Successor.**

Everyone (except the GM) chooses one of these playbooks to create their character. Each playbook can only be used by one player. This is because each playbook is more than a collection of powers—they give each character specific tools and challenges tailored to their individual themes, in order to help each player tell a certain kind of story and differentiate their character from the other companions in your campaign. Imagine if there were two Kataras in *Avatar: The Last Airbender*! If you and another player want the same playbook, talk with each other to find the best solution and ask the GM for alternative suggestions.

Choosing a playbook doesn't mean you're locked into playing a specific character—it's a foundation on which to build. That foundation might be the same for everyone who chooses to play the Bold, but no two Bold characters look the same—even though they have the same principles! As your character develops, they gain new talents and skills, learn combat techniques, and even shift their worldview towards one ideal over another. Whether you're playing your character just once or across multiple sessions, make sure the themes, issues, and abilities they deal with are exciting to you.

It's possible to eventually change playbooks, moving from one set of story arcs, conflicts, and skill sets to another. Usually this only happens at the end of a long story arc, but there are times where you might find your character's story changing dramatically before the group's overall story reaches a point of resolution. In those cases, you might grow into a new playbook…or find that a new character is a better fit for the new stories you want to tell. You can check out **Chapter 7: Advancement** to learn more about how your character might grow and change and **Chapter 9: Seasons & Campaigns** to read more about how to change playbooks if you reach that point!

The Playbooks

Your character's playbook defines what role they fill in the group and how that role relates to the conflicts that drive them. A playbook helps you define your character's personality, relationships, and even how they fight. Any of the playbooks can bend one of the four elements—there's no "bender" playbook—but they don't have to in order to be a hero! Think about the kind of character you want and compare it to the themes of each playbook. If you're not sure which playbook fits your vision best, ask the GM or the group for suggestions!

You can choose from these ten playbooks:

- **The Adamant** will fix the world, even if it means breaking all the rules. Play the Adamant if you want to contend with what "doing right" means in a complicated world.
- **The Bold** fights to live up to their self-image and earn others' trust and confidence. Play the Bold if you want to build your reputation and leadership skills.
- **The Guardian** defends someone close to them, steadfast and watchful. Play the Guardian if you want to be the first to see danger coming and the last line of defense.
- **The Hammer** is strong, tough, and looking for a deserving face to punch. Play the Hammer if you want to grapple with what force can and can't solve.
- **The Icon** comes from an ancient tradition and inherits some serious standards to live up to. Play the Icon if you want to be torn between your heart and your duty.
- **The Idealist** has a past, full of suffering and tragedy, that strengthened their beliefs. Play the Idealist if you want to awaken the hope in everyone around you.
- **The Pillar** is an experienced team player and leader of a famous group of warriors. Play the Pillar if you want to be a savvy tactician who binds the team together.
- **The Prodigy** not only excels at their training, but has taken it even beyond their masters' teachings. Play the Prodigy if you want to stretch the limits of your training and abilities.
- **The Rogue** is a rule-breaker, a joker, a delinquent—a figure on the fringes who snipes at the people in charge. Play the Rogue if you like the idea of being a troublemaker.
- **The Successor** comes from a powerful, tarnished lineage. Play the Successor if you want to struggle against your lineage as it threatens to draw you in.

More information about each of the playbooks and their themes can be found in **Chapter 6: Playbooks**, along with everything else you might need to know about each playbook!

The Character Concept

After choosing your playbook, it's a good idea to have the full character concept percolating in the back of your head. Before you make any choices, consider how everything ties together—essentially, what the one-sentence description of your character might be. Making your character fully come together—so that their high **Passion** and their waterbending and their urban background all add up to a whole—is one of the biggest jobs you have during character creation. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you move forward:

First, think about how your character is tied to the scope, group focus, and inciting incident you just created. If your group's goal is to defeat a dangerous foe, did your character previously lose everything to that foe and now seeks revenge? If your scope is narrowed down to a single village, were they born and raised there or were they passing through from elsewhere and got caught up in the inciting incident? Don't worry about answering these questions in detail yet—you'll fill in these details when you get to your history questions (page 119). For now, a rough idea can give you guidance!

Also consider the era your group chose and use that to guide your concept. Maybe you're interested in connecting your character to an organization or event in your chosen era. Remember that certain kinds of bending, technology, and even cultures are either more common or less common from era to era—the way Air Nomads are absent during the Hundred Year War (page 58). As you think about your character, make sure they connect to the era as much as the group focus and incident.

Develop a strong connection between the character and the goal you've decided on. If your character doesn't match the focus, scope, or incident, they might still be an interesting hero, but they'll struggle to fit into the group and *this* game's story. If you have a character you're enthusiastic to play, but are unsure of how to fit them into the game—talk to the GM and other players about how you can tie your concept back to the focus and incident.

Concept or Playbook First?

In tabletop roleplaying games and storytelling, much of the time you create a "character concept," something like a simple one-sentence outline of a character like "Waterbending former fisherman turned warrior" or "Ex-Fire Nation soldier seeking to make amends." Having a good character concept can be a real boon to figuring out a character.

So, should you come up with a character concept, and then choose a playbook to match? Or should you choose a playbook and let it guide your entire character concept?

Either way can work, but try to choose your playbook first and let it guide you. Playbooks are designed to help create interesting characters, but they also guide you toward making choices that fit the issues and arc of that playbook. In other words, they're designed to guide you to make characters who have plenty of dramatic heft for a full campaign.

If you prefer to tailor a playbook to a pre-existing character concept, be aware that can hit some weird, surprising, and unexpected roadblocks…but if you're up for the challenge, go for it! Just keep in mind that everything on the playbook, including the questions asked to fill in the character's backstory, is there to help create characters who perfectly fit *Avatar Legends* stories.



Playing Outside Your Experience

The world of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *The Legend of Korra* draws influences from a wide variety of Asian and Indigenous cultures. Just like our world, these stories feature heroes of different cultures, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, religions, and abilities. For some players, this might be your first time playing a game in a world where all the characters don't share your background.

Players should explore this world through the eyes of its people, and that might mean playing outside of your own experience. You might create a character who shares a culture similar to your own, but of a different gender; you might play someone from a nation based on a culture that isn't your own. That's fine! When playing outside your own experiences there can be an impulse (or fear) that you need to do so "the right way." While it's true that certain depictions or representations of marginalized groups are based on stereotypes, misinformation, or hate speech and are hurtful, there's nothing wrong with playing someone different from yourself if done so mindfully.

What's most important about playing outside your experience is that you portray a whole *person*, not just an identity or a label. The stories of *Avatar* are often about learning the depth of others' experiences, even if we might not truly understand what it's like to live them. For example, Suki was upset by Sokka's close-minded sexism but through training him in the traditions of the Kyoshi Warriors, she got him to overcome his upbringing and treat her like an equal. When you play **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, you can take the opportunity to consider other perspectives and challenge your preconceptions. In doing so, you have the chance to grow your own empathy with others as you play, just like your favorite heroes do.

Name Your Character

Now that you've chosen your playbook, it's time to give your character a name and decide what they look like. Names are generally tied to the Four Nations so choose one that makes sense based on their origin or cultural heritage. Depending on the era of your game, your character's name might directly connect to their heritage or culture (like in the divided world of the Kyoshi Era) or might reflect a diverse, cosmopolitan background (like in the more connected world of the Korra Era).

While watching *Avatar: The Last Airbender* you may have noticed a lot of names are taken from real world cultures; the names provided in this book are no different. Although there is considerable variety in influences across the Four Nations, Earth Kingdom names are heavily inspired by Chinese names; Fire Nation names by Japanese names; Air Nomad names by Tibetan and Nepali names; and Water Tribe names by Inuit or Khmer names, alongside Vietnamese names for characters from the Foggy Swamp. Many of the names listed below are found within various real-world cultures, but the lists also feature fictitious names in keeping with the *Avatar* world. If you'd like a unique name for your character that isn't listed below, read up on the cultures mentioned and their naming conventions to pick one which suits your character and their story.

Earth Kingdom

The Earth Kingdom is vast with a wide variety of cultures among its people. Earth Kingdom names are composed of one or two syllables—many of these appear in the other three nations' nomenclatures, so feel free to use these names for Fire, Air, and Water characters as well. Use one or two syllables for both given and surnames. Or you can use names of precious stones (e.g. Garnet, Amethyst, Pearl), plants (e.g. Peony, Camellia, Willow), or concepts (e.g. Faith, Hope, Joy) as Earth Kingdom-style given names as well.

Water Tribes

Water Tribe characters go by a single name without a surname, but introduce themselves as "[name] of [homeland]" (e.g. "Bato of the Southern Water Tribe"). Water Tribe members often name children after beloved family members who've passed on as a way to gift the child with characteristics from their ancestors. Choose a single name from the list on the next page.

Fire Nation

Fire Nation characters have given names and clan names, which act as surnames. They don't usually mention their clan names when they introduce themselves, unless it's relevant to the situation or they're trying to show off for some reason. Families in the Fire Nation often like to pass individual syllables in their names on to one another: a woman named Zaagar might pass a syllable in her name on to her child, naming them Daozaa or Garrun.

Clan Names: Abe, Anzai, Banno, Bessho, Chatan, Chūza, Daimon, Date, Endō, Fukai, Fuwa, Gomi, Haga, Hoshi, Iju, Imai, Jinno, Kizu, Kuki, Miya, Mori, Nezu, Noro, Oda, Oku, Sawa, Seki, Takei, Tsuji, Ueta, Ura, Waki, Watai, Yagyū, Yuda, Zaizen

Names and Meaning

These name lists draw from various real-world cultures, many of which place a deep importance on names and their meanings. For example, Inuit names are often carefully chosen for the child to honor a deceased family member or exceptional person; many Chinese families believe names carry great meaning and various sources are carefully consulted before a child is named. Look into the culture of the name you pick to learn more about the importance of names!

Some of these names are gendered within their specific cultures, but all names presented are gender neutral. Feel free to use them for any character you create!

Air Nomads

Air Nomads traditionally go by a single name with no surname, usually modified by "monk" for Air Nomad men or "sister" for Air Nomad women and referencing their Air Temple (e.g. Sister Dolma of the Eastern Air Temple). Monks live in the North and South Air Temples, while Sisters live in the East and West. Choose a single name from the list below.

Air Nomad Names

Name	Origin	Meaning
Aditi	Hindi	Boundless
Akash	Hindi	Open space
Anil	Hindi	Air/wind
Baljin	Tibetan	Fortune giver
Batsal	Nepali	Love/affection
Chaha	Nepali	Wish/desire
Chime	Tibetan	Eternal
Chimini	Nepali	Light
Devna	Nepali	Divine
Diki	Tibetan	Happiness
Dronma	Tibetan	Light
Ehani	Nepali	Song
Gawa	Tibetan	To love
Gedun	Tibetan	Seeking enlightenment
Jetsun	Tibetan	Venerable
Mukta	Hindi	Liberated
Samlo	Tibetan	Glorious idea
Toofan	Nepali	Wind
Yeshe	Tibetan	Wisdom
Zaya	Tibetan	Flourishing

Earth Kingdom Names

Name	Origin	Meaning
Binh	Vietnamese	Peaceful
Bowen	Chinese	Abundant/rich
Caihong	Chinese	Colorful rainbow
Chia-Hao	Chinese	Having a great objective in life
Dae	Korean	Greatness
Diu	Chinese	Down to earth
Hanna	Chinese	Beautiful flower
Heng	Chinese	Eternal
Kim	Vietnamese	Gold
Kyung	Korean	Respect
Minh	Vietnamese	Bright
Nuan	Chinese	Wholehearted
Qiang	Chinese	Strong
Quiyue	Chinese	Autumn moon
Shufen	Chinese	Good fragrance
Thi	Vietnamese	Poem
Woong	Korean	Magnificence
Xiaobo	Chinese	Little wrestler
Ya-Ting	Chinese	Beautiful and graceful
Zixin	Chinese	Self-confidence

Fire Nation Names

Name	Origin	Meaning
Asayo	Japanese	Morning
Ayami	Japanese	Colorful
Bashira	Japanese	Joyful
Davaa	Mongolian	Threshold
Erdene	Mongolian	Treasure
Ganzaya	Mongolian	Steel fate
Hanako	Japanese	Flower child
Jaw Long	Chinese	Like a dragon
Kayo	Japanese	Good
Keisuke	Japanese	Save
Kenshin	Japanese	Modest
Manami	Japanese	Love
Mayu	Japanese	Evening
Qacha	Mongolian	Flank
Qudan	Mongolian	Cliff
Satsuki	Japanese	Early moon
Saya	Japanese	Sand
Tuguslar	Mongolian	Easygoing/playful
Yuka	Japanese	Reason
Zolzaya	Mongolian	Fate/destiny

Polar Water Tribe Names

Name	Origin	Meaning
Achak	Algonquin	Spirit
Aklaq	Inuit	Black bear
Aputi	Inuit	Snow
Atka	Inuit	Guardian spirit
Hanta	Inuit	Hunter
Kallik	Inuit	Lightning
Kanti	Algonquin	Sings
Kitchi	Algonquin	Brave
Makwa	Anishinaabe	Bear
Meeka	Inuit	Courageous
Miki	Inuit	Small
Niimi	Anishinaabe	They are dancing
Noodin	Anishinaabe	Wind
Siqniq	Inuit	Sun
Tapisa	Inuit	Arctic flower
Thaki	Algonquin	Cold
Ukiuk	Inuit	Winter
Waaseyaa	Anishinaabe	First light from the rising sun
Yuka	Inuit	Bright star
Ziibi	Anishinaabe	River

Foggy Swamp Water Tribe Names

Name	Origin	Meaning
Ary	Khmer	Knowledge
Binh	Vietnamese	Peaceful
Chea	Khmer	Healthy
Jia	Chinese	Home, family
Ju	Chinese	Big
Leap	Khmer	Good fortune
Maly	Vietnamese	Blossom
Rith	Vietnamese	Courage
Yan	Chinese	Beautiful
Zan	Chinese	Help





Training & Fighting Style

Based on your character concept, decide what kind of **training** your character has! Their training determines what kinds of skills they've learned and how they defend themselves (and others). All companions from across the Four Nations can handle themselves in a fight, and your character is no exception. Do they bend one of the four elements or are they a non-bender with skill in weapons or the use of advanced technology? Choosing to not be a bender doesn't put your character at a disadvantage—weapon-users and technologists can hold their own against benders! Each hero in the group doesn't need to have different training; pick what suits your character best. As you make this decision, think about how your character gained these skills—are they self-taught, did they beg someone to teach them, or did they grow up with a group of instructors?

Your character's training determines what kinds of techniques they can execute in combat exchanges, but it also influences what you call upon when you use any move, especially **rely on your skills and training** (page 133). There's no one "bending" move—you can apply your training to any move you make! An Airbender can throw their voice to distract a guard and **trick** someone; an archer can shoot an arrow at someone's feet and say the next one won't miss to **intimidate** them; and a tinkerer can make a wind-up toy for a sad child to **guide and comfort** them.

Once you've chosen your character's training, decide on their signature **fighting style**. A fighting style changes the way your character fights, making them different from other benders of the same element or other non-bending martial artists who use a similar approach. You don't need to develop every single move they know—a simple phrase or rough description is enough here. If you're a weapon fighter, you might write down "Boomerang Expert" or choose something more evocative, like naming your character's style of using a shield for offense and defense, "Lion-Turtle Style."

Some playbook moves allow you to gain a second kind of training. While a hero trained in Weapons or Technology can gain a bending style or vice versa, no character can ever have more than one kind of bending! Curious about specialized bending forms such as lavabending? Check out Specialized Bending on page 216.

Your character can specialize in any one of the following types of martial training:



Waterbending

Weaving water into snapping and slashing whips, manipulating one's breath into clouds of freezing ice, sculpting liquid into a defensive shield—waterbending warriors manipulate their element with fluidity and grace. A Waterbender might defend their allies by creating liquid barriers to freeze weapons and attackers, or they might be an aggressive warrior who unleashes torrential water jets or concealable weapons made of ice. Not all Waterbenders are warriors—some have healing powers as well. A Waterbender might carry a waterskin with them to have something to bend at all times, or prefer to use nearby liquids instead—some Waterbenders can even use their sweat.

Fighting Style Suggestions: keeping feet on ever-moving puddles of water, wielding weapons made of ice, wearing a suit covered in waterskins, rapid shifting of water from liquid to gas to solid, jewelry made of ice used as projectiles



Earthbending

Levitating stones to hurl them into obstacles, encasing one's body in a protective shell of earth, transmuting earth to quicksand to immobilize an enemy—earthbending warriors often bide their time, using their element to defend until the perfect moment to counterattack. An Earthbender might be a durable defender with slow and deliberate strikes, or they might sunder the earth to disorient and separate their foes. Some Earthbenders prefer to go barefoot to stay connected to their element; others carry tools like earthen discs or stone gauntlets to have something to bend nearby.

Fighting Style Suggestions: sandbending, moving into and traveling through earth, wearing bands of stone and using them as controllable rings, seismic sensing, covering yourself in rock armor



Firebending

Slicing through a barrier with a blade of flame, pinning enemies behind cover by unleashing a concentrated fire stream, driving an opponent away with a series of fireballs—firebending warriors manipulate their chi and ambient fire with intense and aggressive results. A Firebender might prefer to barrage their foes from afar with precise fire bolts, or mix close punches and kicks with flame bursts to take the fight directly to the enemy. Because Firebenders manipulate their own energy, they don't need to access their element from their immediate environment and are always "armed."

Fighting Style Suggestions: pulling heat out of a place with one hand and emitting heat from the other hand, creating knives or a sword of flame, breathing fire, swinging chained censers emitting smoke and flame, throwing superheated pinpoint darts of fire



Airbending

Swiping air upwards to deflect incoming arrows, pulling air around a weapon to disarm someone, decreasing one's own air resistance to outmaneuver a stronger foe—airbending warriors use their element to defend themselves and redirect hostile energy. An Airbender might be a cautious pacifist who enhances their speed to avoid danger and exhaust enemies, or a more proactive protector who employs bursts of wind to control the battlefield. An Airbender might wear flowing clothes to create air ripples they can volley at attackers, or carry a special item or tool to focus their bending, like using a flute to focus air jets and amplify sound vibrations.

Fighting Style Suggestions: defying gravity (running up walls, never touching the ground on a cushion of air), summoning imprecise gale force winds, throwing miniature tornadoes, deployable glider, using wind to move at high velocity



Weapons

Raining arrows down on opponents, pulling off a dangerous trick with a boomerang, deflecting blows with bare hands—weapon warriors are martial experts who can hold their own against benders. This training can represent any martial character who isn't a bender—duelists, archers, unarmed chi blockers, and more. A weapon warrior might be an amateur boxer fighting in seedy bars, a person transformed by a spirit, or a member of an ancient martial order. Weapon warriors might carry a variety of weapons appropriate to their style and era, or they might wield a single weapon so masterfully it's an extension of themselves.

Fighting Style Suggestions: golden meteor hammer, dual dragon-engraved broadswords, acrobatic chi blocking, massive jade bow, ancient three-section staff



Technology

Setting jury-rigged traps and snares, hurling flasks of alchemical concoctions, engaging enemies with self-made electrified weapons—a technology-based warrior uses their expertise with devices and machines to engage foes and resolve threats. A technological warrior might be an eager grease monkey with a love for deconstructing technology, a trapper adapting their survival skills on the fly, or a military engineer who wields and maintains advanced weapons and armor. While some weapon-using characters might also carry advanced weapons—like an electrified glove—they lack the expertise to build and repair these machines. Technological warriors might use a single complex device with many effects, carry the tools they need to create devices on the fly, or use simpler tools to devastating effect.

Fighting Style Suggestions: throwable bomb pellets, complex slingshots hidden all over your outfit, electrified glove, bola traps, hidden wire reels and launchers

Background

Who was your character and where did they come from before getting caught up in the inciting incident? Your **background** explains your character's origins and training, giving your character a backstory that goes beyond what you've already established through the inciting incident.

Choose *up to two* backgrounds to describe your character's upbringing. Sometimes these backgrounds work together to describe one unified backstory—Military and Privileged could describe a hero from a noble family of the Fire Nation—but they might also describe two different periods of your character's history, like a hero who studied at a monastery for years but left to join a band of outlaws when the monastery was destroyed.

Your backgrounds affect social situations and tell us what kind of talents you might draw on when you trigger moves. The aforementioned outlaw monk might have a really hard time tricking a group of Fire Nation nobles into believing she's one of them, but a hero who has been a noble his whole life might be able to not only convince them he belongs but know someone in the crowd! Of course, the tables would turn if the two heroes found themselves on the streets of Ba Sing Se…



Military

You trained to fight as a soldier in a military unit such as a mercenary company, a regional militia, or a state government's standing army. Are you a soldier, sailor, or spy? Do you still answer to your commanding officer, or have you gone rogue?

Examples: Kyoshi Warriors, Iroh, Kuvira

Monastic

You are or were a monk, nun, or acolyte of a particular order. Perhaps you were devoted to finding enlightenment or helping others in a community with other like-minded devotees, or perhaps you were committed to scholastic rituals and bureaucratic traditions. What is your order's goal? What are its rules? In what ways did your upbringing agree with you, and in what ways did you long for something different?

Examples: Avatar Aang, Fire Sage Shyu, Gyatso

Outlaw

You live outside the bounds of law and order as a criminal, insurrectionist, or pirate. Were you born into the lawless life, or did you come into it later on? Did you choose the outlaw life, or did the outlaw life choose you? Do you work alone or with a gang? Whom have you hurt just to stay alive?

Examples: Flying Opera Company, Jet and the Freedom Fighters, Tokuga

Privileged

You grew up in the lap of luxury, wealth, or prestige as a hereditary aristocrat, prominent merchant, or even the heir to a successful crime family. What advantages did your upbringing give you? Now that you're no longer surrounded by safety and ease, what do you miss—and what do you fear?

Examples: Asami, Zuko, the Beifong family

Urban

You grew up running the streets of a big city like the Northern Water Tribe capital, Yu Dao, or Republic City. You rub shoulders with people from many different walks of life, and you might not feel so at home if your journey takes you to the wilderness. What unexpected skills and knowledge do you have from city life? Which urban amenities do you miss—and which hardships do you not miss?

Examples: King Bumi, Bolin, Jargala

Wilderness

You grew up in a town or household surrounded by nature, the elements in their most raw form, and developed advanced survival skills because of it. Which terrain makes you feel at home? What special skill are you most proud of—perhaps orienteering, herbalism, sailing, or animal training? What excites you, and what scares you, about big-city adventures?

Examples: Avatar Korra, Lek, Katara

Hometown

After choosing your background, select a **hometown**, the place where you grew up and spent most of your life. Depending on the scope of the game it might be where the story takes place, a place you've long since left in memory, or somewhere you've just left behind in order to go on a grand adventure. Is it a bustling metropolis like Ba Sing Se or Republic City, a trading hub like Yokoya Port, an isolated settlement like Makapu Village, or perhaps a specific corner of the wilderness? How does your hero feel about their hometown—proud, nostalgic, resentful, or something else? These things don't need to be on your playbook, but the way they feel about their hometown can help guide your roleplay and the GM can use it to develop the story! If your hometown is within the scope of your game, you're far more likely to visit it (alongside your character's history) than if it's in some far-off place—so choose accordingly! Feel free to draw inspiration from Chapter 2 or make up a whole new location!

Demeanors

Every playbook has six **demeanors**, ways your character tends to behave in social situations or when they're under pressure. Choose one or more from the options listed on your playbook, or make up your own if your vision of your character isn't covered there. You might choose demeanors that tie into or contrast each other. When introducing your hero later on in this process, make sure everyone has a sense of how your character presents themselves and acts under pressure so they can develop a dynamic with them.

Your demeanor doesn't affect the game rules but is important because it affects how your character sees and interacts with the world (and how others see them). The specific options listed for each playbook are there for a reason—they help guide you to the sorts of characters that playbook complements. An Icon might be Naive and Playful if they've been sheltered from the world and want to chase their interests over their responsibilities, or they might be Haughty and Grave if they believe their role should be respected by others and hold their burden important above all else.

Choose Your Look

Think about what your hero looks like physically—what they wear, how they carry themselves, if they have any distinguishing traits or personal habits, and so on. What would your character look like on the screen of their own TV show, or in the pages of their own comic? What are their distinctive characteristics that help the audience recognize them whenever they show up? Your character might have physical traits like a scar reflecting their past or obvious tattoos that identify their heritage or connection to a group. Do they speak quietly and cautiously, or do they always fidget or talk expressively with their hands? Are their clothes practical and comfortable for travel or are they luxurious and extravagant?

There are no options or lists to pick from for your character's look so let your imagination run wild! Write down a few notes about their most notable features to help describe them to everyone else. If you need inspiration, look through character designs and costumes from the TV series or comics.

History Questions

Under *History* on the back of the playbook, you'll find five questions about your character's story so far. Take a moment to answer these now, using any ideas or details you might have already come up with during the earlier character creation steps. Your answers explain how your character came to be the person they are today, and why they belong to this particular playbook archetype instead of another. For most playbooks, these questions come in the following order:

- The first question concerns your character's **motivation**—why they act as they do and what's most important to them.
- The next two questions are about the **non-player characters (NPCs)** important to you. The GM plays these characters, so if you get stuck, ask them for suggestions.
- The fourth question is about an **object** or **symbol** that belongs to your character—something really important to them, like Avatar Kyoshi's makeup or Katara's necklace.
- The fifth question is about **why you're committed to the group**—why you choose to be here, with these companions, pursuing the group's purpose. Make sure to use this connection to explain your character's attachment to the group focus.



Stats

Every hero in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** has four **stats** (short for "statistics") on their playbook. These numbers define your character's strengths and weaknesses across four parts of their personality: **Creativity**, **Focus**, **Harmony**, and **Passion**. In game terms, they describe how strong (if they're positive) or weak (if they're negative) your character is at certain actions that involve those aptitudes.

- **Creativity** measures your ability to think quickly and unconventionally, to come up with surprising plans or breathtaking art. Avatar Aang, Satoru, and Asami Satō all have strong **Creativity**.
- **Focus** measures your character's ability to perform difficult or precise tasks under pressure, to shut out distractions and work in a patient, disciplined, or stubborn manner. Rangi, Princess Azula, and Tenzin all have strong **Focus**.
- **Harmony** measures your character's social sensitivity, care, and empathy, their aptitude at taking into account the views and feelings of others and acting in an honest and compassionate way. Katara, Uncle Iroh, and Zaheer all have strong **Harmony**.
- **Passion** measures the intensity of your character's emotions and drive, and how good they are at listening to their feelings and turning them into decisive action. Mako, Prince Zuko, and Avatar Korra all have strong **Passion**.

Every playbook starts with a predetermined set of stats. Most playbooks start with two stats rated +1, one rated +0, and one -1, although some (especially those you might find in additional expansion materials for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**) may have a +2, two +0s, and one -1. Whatever your initial stats are, **add +1 to one of those stats now**, either specializing in one of your strengths or offsetting one of your weaknesses. If you're not sure where to put your +1, look at the list of basic moves as well as your character's moves to figure out which ones look fun to you and important to your character concept, and what stats they require. As your character advances through play, you can increase your character's stats to represent their growth and training over time.

It's important to remember that **you can only raise a stat to +3 by choosing a special move that increases the stat to +3**. Those moves specify they grant +1 to a single stat, as well as the maximum value that stat can be rated (usually +3 for special moves). Stats have a maximum rating of +2 without such moves, both at character creation and during play.

Fatigue

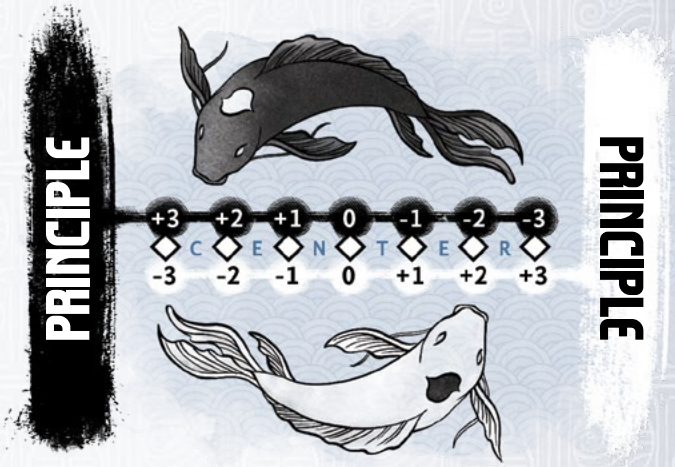
Your character has a **fatigue track** with five boxes. When your character gets exhausted or injured, emotionally or physically, you mark fatigue by checking off one of those boxes. You don't have to worry about these just yet! More information about marking and recovering fatigue is in **Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Play**.

Conditions

A **condition** is an emotional state that makes trouble for your character, making certain actions harder to perform successfully. Stressful situations require you to mark a condition to indicate how your character feels right now. You don't start out with any conditions marked. More information about marking and clearing conditions is in **Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Play**.

Balance

Every PC has a balance track on their playbook which measures the push and pull of your character's beliefs. You'll find each of the two poles marked with a **principle**—an idea about yourself or the world that matters to your hero. However, these two ideas are always in tension. Your character isn't sure how to uphold one principle without denying the other, and their feelings about which has more importance change during the course of a game session. The balance track looks like this:



At the start of play, your **balance** and your **center** are both in the middle of the track—**you can shift your balance once in either direction right now**, but you don't have to. Your balance represents where your mind and spirit are right now and shifts regularly throughout the game. Your center represents your "default" position, where you return to when not under duress and pressure from others. Your center may actually change over the course of the game, but it happens rarely. Your balance always provides a pair of numbers, one for each of your principles. Those two numbers are your **principle scores**, or just your principles. Your two principle scores are always directly opposite each other, meaning that if your balance puts one principle at +2, then the other is at -2, and vice versa.

Your balance determines how your character feels about one of the central conflicts of their identity, but it's also useful for calling upon as a strength when you **live up to your principle**. You can read more about balance moves on page 137!

Moment of Balance

Your playbook's **Moment of Balance** doesn't require any decisions to be made but it's important that you familiarize yourself with it. Your Moment of Balance is a special and extremely powerful move that resolves an entire scene of conflict as described on your sheet. When you invoke it, you don't roll—instead, you take the spotlight and gain control of the scene, following the script of the text and describing how you accomplish something seemingly impossible in spite of overwhelming opposition.

Because your Moment of Balance is so powerful and marks a significant milestone in your hero's story, your character must unlock their Moment of Balance through advancement (see page 210) before it can be used. Then, you must have your balance at your center in order to actually use the Moment of Balance. But once triggered, it removes uncertainty from the scene, and lets you grab the spotlight and do incredible things!

Your Moment of Balance is a big deal—it's your chance to save the day, no matter the odds! By reading the text of the move, you can learn a lot about the core underlying theme of your playbook. When you use it, the action should feel like the most memorable scene or episode in the "TV series" of your game.

Playbook Moves and Features

While each character can perform any of the basic moves in the game, your **playbook moves** are the special qualities and abilities that make your character different from everyone else's. Look over the options available to you on your playbook and **choose two moves** that match your character concept or that you think would be fun or interesting to use in play. Each move either improves a stat, changes how a basic move or playbook feature works, or grants an entirely new ability. If you want to change which stat you put a +1 in because you've taken a move that also gives you a bonus, you can—the game hasn't started yet. You can't make a playbook move unless you have it checked on your sheet! Later on, as your character learns and grows, you get access to more moves—sometimes even from other playbooks.

Each playbook also has a **feature**, a special kind of playbook move which other playbooks cannot take (even with advancement). Features involve making choices about additional details that further define your character, their backstory, and the fictional world around them. They also directly relate to and support your playbook's theme. The Guardian has to choose a ward, another character they're always trying to keep safe, while the Hammer has to choose an adversary they're pursuing in hopes of bringing them to their idea of justice. Fill in these details now, referring back to your overall concept, the group focus, inciting incident, and the other characters as necessary.

For more information about the basic moves and triggering moves in general, see **Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Play**. For more information about your playbook's specific moves and features, see **Chapter 6: Playbooks**. For more information about gaining new moves and changing your playbook through advancement, see **Chapter 7: Advancement**.

What About Bending?

You'll notice that aside from choosing which training you want during character creation and choosing any starting techniques, very little of the process of making a character for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is about bending. That's not an accident! Bending is a huge part of the game, but it might not show up in the way you expect...

A bending PC can use their bending in nearly anything they do. Their bending shows up when they rely on their skills and training to build an ice bridge, or when they trick an NPC by causing a pool of water off to the side to bubble, or when they guide and comfort someone by crafting a perfect ice flower as a gift. Their bending will be a huge part of how they participate in combat exchanges and how they interact with the fictional world as a whole.

But when you think of a main character in *Avatar: The Last Airbender* or *The Legend of Korra*, you might think of their bending abilities first; yet the things that really make them special are about who they are, what they believe, and how they act. Aang is the Avatar, but he's also fun-loving, weighed down by responsibility, committed to helping people—saying only "He can bend all four elements" leaves so much of his character unspoken. Mako is a Firebender who can lightningbend, but he's also protective, loyal, skeptical, and focused—saying only "He's a Firebender" doesn't really do him justice!

Every bending PC in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is capable of impressive and awesome feats of bending, but the things that make them great characters for stories go well beyond their bending alone. The character creation process is designed to help your PCs come alive, so they can truly shine as the heroes of your own stories!

Connections

Don't fill out this section yet—connections tell you how your PC is connected to the other companions and you haven't been introduced to those other PCs! Check back in on your connections while "Bringing the Cast Together" (see page 123). You'll select which of the other PCs fills each connection when you've had a chance to meet those characters and introduce your own!

DO I HAVE TO FIGHT?

You might have noticed we refer to your character as both a companion and a warrior. Every player character in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is competent and trained to fight—that's part of what makes them a hero. The world of *Avatar* is full of conflict and action, and martial arts in their various forms, from hand-to-hand combat to the bending arts, are an important part of the world's stories. Your character *will* get into a fight during their journey at some point.

This doesn't mean your character has to like fighting! Fighting isn't just about aggression and causing harm—it's also about self-defense and protecting others. Your character can participate in combat exchanges without landing a single blow yourself, perhaps using Test Balance to frustrate an opponent into losing their cool or creating obstacles for your enemies and advantages for your friends.

Most importantly, while combat is expected in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, fights don't end in death. Sometimes you will run opponents off without filling their fatigue, conditions, or balance tracks, and sometimes you can resolve a conflict with words after a single exchange of blows. When your character inflicts injury on others, they might want to hurt them—but your characters aren't killers. The world of *Avatar* doesn't shy away from the idea of death but outright murder isn't something your companions do (and if they do, it changes their lives forever). It's always possible for a character or NPC to die during the game, but these moments should have serious weight, only happen with the entire group's consent, and never occur as a frivolous consequence.



COMBAT TECHNIQUE

Each hero in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is a trained warrior of some kind and starts their adventure with some extra **advanced techniques** that they can use in combat exchanges. These advanced techniques can be used in place of (or in addition to) the basic techniques, depending on your stance move results.

- If you're playing a single session game, start with a single **mastered** technique.
- If you're creating a character for a full campaign, start with one mastered technique and one **learned** technique.

For more on basic techniques and learned, practiced, or mastered advanced techniques, see page 211.

You have acquired your starting advanced techniques through lots of practice and training. How did you learn it and from whom? What does it say about your character and how they approach conflicts?

Choose your starting advanced techniques from your playbook's own advanced technique and all other techniques available to your skills and training. Each playbook has their own unique combat technique that they can choose, representing the combat style and theme of that type of hero. The Guardian can Divert attacks against their allies to take the blows themselves, while the Hammer can Overwhelm enemies, causing them to suffer emotion and exhaustion. However, instead of your playbook's technique, you can choose one of several techniques (see Appendix A) based on your character's fighting style. Your character always uses their training in combat but these style-based techniques demonstrate knowledge of a particular trick or signature maneuver that your hero is especially good at.

By default, your playbook technique is your mastered choice, and you pick your learned technique from the rest of those available to you, but you may choose to adjust, modify, or swap these. Talk to the GM as you go to make sure everything you pick makes sense.

Whichever techniques you choose, write them down on your playbook under *Combat Techniques* and mark each of the boxes labeled L (learned), P (practiced), and M (mastered) as appropriate. A mastered technique has you marking all three boxes; a practiced technique just has the first two (learned and practiced) marked; and a learned technique just has learned marked. During a combat exchange you can choose your techniques as appropriate based on your stance and your roll. For more information on exchanges and how to use techniques, see page 146.

The NPCs you meet during the game may know their own advanced techniques, and might use them against you (if they're hostile) or be willing to teach them to you if they're allies or you petition them. For more information on learning new techniques, see page 211.

Growth Question

At the end of every game session, the players discuss what their companions learned during the course of the episode. There are three questions everyone always answers—you can see those on page 142—but each playbook also has a question which only that character answers. Each "yes" answer allows you to check a growth box. When you mark the fourth growth box, you advance (page 210) and choose one of the options under growth advancement. You don't have any decisions to make here but consider what triggers this so you can play towards it. The rate at which your character advances and grows is in *your* hands!

Introducing Your Character

Once everyone else has filled out most of their playbooks—everything except connections—it's time to meet the rest of the companions who your character teamed up with during the inciting incident! Go around the table and introduce your character by name and describe their appearance, training, background, demeanor, and answers to their history questions. As each player tells the group about their hero, this is a good time for everyone—especially the GM—to ask questions to gain a deeper understanding of each character.

During introductions you might get additional ideas about how each character fits into the inciting incident and its different plot points. That's great! You can connect your companions to certain moments or aspects of those events, but you don't need to detail everything. You can always flash back to those moments during play as you learn more about your companions and the world. The inciting incident has already happened and the most exciting parts of your characters' stories are yet to come!

Bringing the Cast Together

Now that you know who the rest of the group are, you can draw **connections** between your characters! Using what the other players have told you, fill out both connections on your playbooks to link your character with two other companions. Each of your connections establishes a relationship between your hero and another character. They can represent long-standing ties (a family member, an old friend, a coworker/unit member, etc.) or they can reflect a dynamic that emerged between the two of you after meeting and joining forces during the inciting incident.

Take turns choosing one of your connections and offering it to another player whose character you think fits that relationship well (or would be fun to roleplay it with). If the player agrees, write their character's name down in the relevant space on your playbook—you're connected! Continue taking turns and making connections, giving everyone a chance to define your group's relationships as you set out on your adventure.

Once all the players have finished each of these steps and you have connections with the other companions, you're ready to play the game! Gather your gear, focus your energy, and prepare for the adventure of a lifetime.

Can I Play a Canon Character?

While the characters in *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and *The Legend of Korra* are fantastic, their stories have already been told! When you play **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** you have the chance to create your own unique hero who deals with similar challenges to those existing characters, while telling your own stories and exploring new (and familiar) parts of the world. Of course, if you're really interested in playing an existing character, you can absolutely do that...as long as everyone else at the table is excited about it too! Just bear in mind that this chapter is written to help create your own original characters, and that there is no other material on playing canonical characters in these rules.

...**So can I be the Avatar?** The Avatar is the most powerful bender in the world during each age, reincarnated endlessly to help bring balance to the world. It's only natural that you might want to play as them, especially if you're a longtime fan. However, each era already has an established Avatar! If you're playing in Roku's Era, Roku is struggling to maintain international peace and his friendship with Fire Lord Sozin. If you're playing in the Hundred Year War Era, Aang is frozen beneath the waters of the South Pole. In many cases, the endings of these stories are already written (even if there are gaps here and there). This text is written assuming you are not playing the Avatar.

The most important reason there aren't rules for playing the Avatar is that being the Avatar creates an imbalance of narrative importance in the game—you're the main character, even if you don't want or intend to be! This means that the other players can get pushed to the side and get less spotlight time during the game. While the rest of your Team Avatar are important to the story, whoever plays the Avatar will inevitably get the lion's share of attention in the game as NPCs seek them out for advice or to mediate disputes, challenge their rulings, or try to sway them to support their cause. In normal play, every character in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is as important as everyone else, and every character gets to contribute to the story equally in their own unique ways!





CHAPTER 5

CORE MOVES

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CHAPTER 5

This chapter dives into the main mechanic of the game—moves! It explains how to use moves and what all the terminology attached to a move means. It also breaks down the moves you'll use in game and gives you examples of how to use them. The end of the chapter deals with combat exchanges, statuses, and techniques and ends with a long example that incorporates all of the advice here into one coherent experience!

Moves are the core of playing **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. Whenever a player takes an action that triggers an appropriate move, or something happens in the game that triggers a move, you pick up the dice, roll, and follow what the move describes! If something isn't a move, you don't roll—either it happens or the GM makes their own move.

Moves are broken up into **basic moves** that every character can make, **playbook moves** unique to each playbook, and moves related to specific parts of the game that need their own categories, like **combat moves**. This chapter describes how and when to make the moves most central to the game—basic moves and balance moves—as well as how to run combat exchanges with techniques. For information on individual playbook moves, see **Chapter 6: Playbooks**.

Using Moves in Play

A **move** is an action with a trigger and one or more outcomes that "move" the game forward. The trigger tells you how and when to make that move, like "When you **push your luck** in a risky situation…" or "When you **assess a situation**…" If you meet the criteria of a move's trigger, you're making that move! Follow the rest of the move to find out if you need to roll the dice or not—and if so, which stat to add to your roll—as well as what happens next.

Some playbook moves give you a bonus instead of having a trigger (like giving you +1 to a stat) or give you access to an in-game asset or effect (like having an animal companion)—those moves functionally say "when you select this playbook move, take +1 to a stat" or "gain a clever animal companion." Most of the moves in the game, however, follow the format "When you ____, roll with a stat."

The GM has final say on whether or not you trigger a move, as well as which move you trigger. If you do something in the game that triggers a move, they should call for you to make it ("That sounds like you're **intimidating this NPC**, right? Go ahead and roll with your **Passion**!"). If you're uncertain which move you should be making, or if you think you're making a different move than what the GM called for, talk to the GM and make sure your character's intent with their actions or words is clear before moving forward.

There are two key phrases to keep in mind when playing **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**—**always follow the fiction**, and **to do it, you need to do it**.

Always Follow the Fiction

As you describe what your character does and says, the GM responds by describing what NPCs say and do, as well as how the world responds—this is the "conversation" of the game. At some point, you'll come to a situation where the outcome of your action is uncertain or dangerous, or otherwise *triggers* one of the game's moves. When that happens, turn to the triggered move, roll the dice (or not, depending on the move), and do what the move says.

If you describe an action that doesn't trigger a move, there's no need to roll any dice—it wasn't a move, and there's no uncertainty! The GM might say that you do it outright, or they might make a GM move of their own in response, according to their agendas, guidelines, and baselines (see page 224 for more). In this way, you're *always following the fiction* by focusing on what's happening in the story and turning to the game mechanics as they come up.

To Do It, Do It

If you want to make a specific move, you can—you just need to describe what you're doing and how you're doing it. Make sure you actually hit the trigger of a move before reaching for the dice! Do you want to try to **plead with an NPC** to get them to help you? You need to do more than just ask them for a favor, and they need to care what you think! Want to **rely on your skills and training** to slip a guard's keys off their belt without being noticed? Describe how you use your training (like a bending maneuver) or your skills (like an Outlaw background as a pickpocket) to accomplish your goal!

In some cases, your action might actually trigger a different move than the one you wanted—a sheltered monk who tries to pick a pocket is probably **pushing their luck** instead of **relying on skills and training**. Even if you want the results or effects of a move, you need to do more than just say "I make this move" and roll the dice—*you need to do it to do it*.

As a player, focus more on describing what your character does first and turn to the moves as you find yourself making them. However, it's totally fine to try and angle your actions and roleplaying towards making certain moves—especially your cool and unique playbook moves! Just remember that you need to *do it to do it*, so make sure you take actions that trigger those moves if you want to use them. Remember, there are no rolls without a specific trigger or outcome—if your actions haven't triggered a move, keep playing until you finally trigger one.

Basic Moves

Every character in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** can use basic moves, each of which move the game's story forward. There are seven of them: **assess a situation**, **guide and comfort**, **intimidate**, **plead**, **push your luck**, **rely on your skills and training**, and **trick**. The move to **help another companion** is also explained here. This section covers how each of the moves work in more detail with in-game examples.

Assess a Situation

When you **assess a situation**, roll with **Creativity**. On a 7–9, ask one question. On a 10+, ask two. Take +1 ongoing when acting on the answers.

- What here can I use to _____?
- Who or what is the biggest threat?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What's my best way out/in/through?
- Who or what is in the greatest danger?

Looking for a way to escape the path of a rampaging boar-q-pine, scouting ahead for danger in a mysterious cave, sizing up your opposition in a heated negotiation—any time you try to gather specific or useful information during a tense moment, you make the **assess a situation** move. If you're simply taking in a scene or looking for surface details about a situation, you don't trigger this move just yet. The GM tells you everything you could want to know at the surface level—even if they tell you, "From a quick glance, you're not sure, you can't tell." Once you start scrutinizing a situation in more detail, look for specific information, or want to find answers to any of the questions listed under this move, then you're **assessing a situation**.

Crucially, the GM always answers the questions fully and honestly. When you ask, *"Who or what is the biggest threat?"* their answer *is* the biggest threat. If someone new shows up or the situation changes, then the answer might change, but at the moment that you ask the question, you can know the answer is complete and true.

Whatever answers you get, you take +1 ongoing when acting on that information. This means as long as you take action based on those answers, you add +1 to all moves you make. If the situation changes significantly—like if a new, bigger threat appears or you find your way out of the situation—then this bonus no longer applies. It's possible to act on multiple answers at once, in which case you stack the +1 ongoing bonus, as long as you don't exceed the limit of +4 to a roll (including your stats).

Options for Assessing a Situation

"What here can I use to ____?" is the question to ask if you're looking for something specific to accomplish a goal, whether it's an item or environmental feature. If you're being chased by gangsters through busy city streets, you might ask the GM, "What here can I use to slow them down?" You can fill in the blank with anything you like, but sometimes the answer might be "nothing," in which case you have to think on your feet or try a different tactic.

"Who or what is the biggest threat?" tells you who or what is the most dangerous person or thing in the situation. You can specify if you're most concerned with threats to yourself or to others. The GM then tells you which of the multiple hostile NPCs is the most dangerous to you and your companions, which of the various hazards in an environment is the most important to avoid, or just who is the nastiest, most intimidating person in the room.

"What should I be on the lookout for?" lets you know what dangers or complications hide here, foreshadowing problems before they arise; you might find signs of something dangerous on the horizon or notice a hazard just before it appears. If you're **assessing a situation** while exploring the Foggy Swamp and ask this question, the GM might say you notice a wild cat-gator lying in wait. If you ask this question in a tense village after dark, you might notice everyone has charms nailed to their homes to ward off dark spirits.

"What's my best way out/in/through?" helps you figure out a way to get into or out of somewhere. When you ask this question, decide which of the three options you're focusing on—out, in, or through. A way out helps you escape the situation, a way in helps get you *into* danger, and a way through helps you bypass obstacles or impediments.

"Who or what is in the greatest danger?" might sound similar to "Who or what is the biggest threat?" but it's about finding vulnerabilities in your surroundings, not dangers to yourself. When you ask this question, you're focusing on the people *affected* by threats, rather than identifying the threats themselves. This can give you insight into impending perils or the plans of an antagonistic NPC.

EXAMPLE

Haki the Successor has been thrown into a cell by the Earth Kingdom soldiers! Hector, Haki's player, says, "I'm wandering around the cell, examining everything. I need to find a way out! Can I **assess the situation**?" The GM agrees, and Hector rolls, getting an 11. *"What's my best way out?"* asks Hector.

"You can't really firebend your way out of here—the cell's too small, you might just roast yourself," says the GM. "But you can try to land pinpoint strikes on the cell's bars—they're crumbling, and if you apply your chi-blocking techniques just right, you might be able to knock them out. What's your other question?"

Hector thinks for a moment, and then says, "*What should I be on the lookout for?* What's going to get in the way of my escape?"

"Oh, yeah, well there's guards in this place, but you think you can handle them—the big problem is the water traps you spy in the ceiling. They're barrels of water that can be dropped with a bit of earthbending, and they'll douse fires in a moment—clearly, this prison has handled Firebenders before. So, what do you do?"

EXAMPLE

Nokahhak the Bold finds herself in the middle of a fancy-dress party—one for which she was deeply unprepared—trying to earn the favor of a local business leader named Wing! "I stand to the side, just kind of taking it all in," says Nokahhak's player, Nadja.

"Are you **assessing the situation**?" asks the GM.

"Well, not originally, but…yeah, that makes sense." Nadja rolls and gets a 9. "I want to know *what can I use here to impress Wing?*"

"Interesting!" says the GM. "You spy Wing out on the dance floor, enjoying herself. The dance is formal, but you can tell Wing has a flair for the dramatic—she keeps dipping and twirling her partner. Maybe you can impress her with a dance?"

Guide and Comfort

When you try to honestly **guide and comfort** another person, roll with **Harmony**. On a hit, they choose one:

- They embrace your guidance and comfort. They may clear a condition or 2-fatigue, and you may ask one question; they must answer honestly.
- They shut you down. They inflict a condition on you, and you shift their balance in response.

On a 10+, if they embrace your guidance and comfort, you may also shift their balance.

Offering life advice to a friend as you brew them a cup of tea, reaching out to someone in pain to show them they're not alone, teaching a peer self-control through a bending exercise—any time you try to comfort, offer guidance, or steer someone's course of action through wisdom, not persuasion, you're **guiding and comforting** someone. This move allows you to help others clear their conditions and fatigue, while also learning about their current feelings…as long as they open up to you. The person you're trying to **guide and comfort** might not want to hear any advice and push you away instead! That stings, but you still make them think, even if they don't accept your words or offers of comfort.

In order to trigger this move, you need to *honestly* offer comfort or guidance to someone else. If you're deceiving someone by being nice, you're **tricking** them, not **guiding and comforting** them. If you're desperately trying to get them to act in a certain way for your sake, then you're probably **pleading**. If you're pushing them to act in accordance with their own values, you're **calling them out** with their principle. When you **guide and comfort**, you're being genuine and showing the other person you care about them and how they feel. You might be offering wisdom or advice, but you're not getting them to do something right this second—you're just trying to guide them to a better place, to a better balance. Asking someone if they're all right is a start but you need to offer guidance or comfort to trigger the move (even if you don't know exactly what's on their mind when you do).

The most obvious time to **guide and comfort** someone is when sharing a quiet moment, like while making camp or after a tense situation, but it's not the only time you can reach out! You might try to **guide and comfort** an NPC after trading blows in a combat exchange, for example. Maybe you're confronted by a fellow sword fighting student who blames you for failing to protect your shared master's life. You can see the anger and guilt in their eyes as you parry their wild swings, so you sheathe your sword and say, "I know you're in pain; I am too. But killing me won't bring Master Yeong back. We all tried to save her; now we need to work together to honor her memory." The GM describes your classmate fighting back tears as they quaveringly point their sword at you; to find out if your words get through to them, the GM says you're **guiding and comforting**!



Options for Guiding and Comforting

The most important part of **guiding and comforting** someone is that your target needs to either accept you reaching out or shut you down. If you **guide and comfort** another PC, they need to do more than just say, "I embrace your guidance and comfort"—they need to show everyone *how* they do that! This looks different depending on the situation. If you offer a hug and words of reassurance, maybe the other person falls into your arms and sobs out their true feelings. If you show someone how they could improve one of their weaknesses, they might shut you down and blow up in your face about how you're always telling them they're not good enough!

If *"they embrace your guidance and comfort,"* your target chooses to immediately clear one of their marked conditions *or* clear 2-fatigue. Your offer of comfort helps calm them down or helps them find the strength to press on, depending on the situation. On a 10+, you can also shift their balance however you want. Your words deeply affect them in this moment and get them to consider things in a new light. In both cases, you can ask one question—any one question—and they must answer honestly. The question is generally best phrased in the fiction, something your character asks their character, but it can include awareness that goes slightly beyond the fiction; their "honesty" can take the form of telling glances or body language. You do not have to ask a question if you don't want to ask one.

If *"they shut you down,"* your target immediately inflicts a condition on you instead—it hurts when you try to help and the other person shuts you out! After they inflict a condition on you, you shift their balance. They might not open up to you but your words still stick with them, reinforcing an already-strong belief, pushing them back from the brink, or helping them find some kind of balance.

EXAMPLE

Lukta the Idealist doesn't want to keep fighting against Xue, a Southern Water Tribe rebel and someone Lukta sees a lot of themselves in. "As we're both panting there after exchanging blows, can I **guide and comfort** Xue?" asks Lex, Lukta's player.

"Sure!" says the GM. "What exactly do you do?"

"Hm. I say, 'We don't have to do this. We're more alike than not, and we can work together to bring about real change,'" says Lex.

"That sounds like a guide, sure, but it's not quite enough—she was just hurling ice spikes at you, after all," says the GM.

"Fair enough," says Lex. "I put down my tool belt full of traps."

"Oh, nice!" says the GM. "Yeah, that sounds right. Go ahead and roll!" Lex rolls and gets a 10! The GM takes a look at Xue's drive and balance principle, and decides that Xue embraces Lukta's guidance.

"There's a long pause, with a lot of tension...but then she lowers her stance and straightens up. 'Okay,' she says. 'Then how do we do that?'"

The GM has Xue clear her Angry condition. "Do you have a question you want to ask Xue?"

"Yeah," says Lex. "I say it bluntly, 'As much as possible, we don't fight. Each other, our foes, anyone. If we can talk to them, guide them to a better path, we do that. Do you think you can do that?'"

"She looks at you blankly, but then she nods, and you can feel the fierceness in her nod. She believes she can," says the GM. "Do you want to shift her balance? You know her principle is Justice."

"Yeah, I think so—I'm reshaping her idea of how to get justice, but I'm also supporting it, so I say shift it up," says Lex.

EXAMPLE

Shihan the Pillar has sought out a distraught Teru Jinno after Teru was berated by his parents, successfully finding him up on a rooftop overlooking Republic City. "I want to **guide and comfort** Teru—I approach and put one hand on his shoulder and say, 'They don't have to define you, you know. You pick who you want to be,'" says Shihan's player, Seiji.

"Yeah, that sounds like trying to **guide and comfort**. Roll for it!" Seiji rolls and gets an 8.

"Okay, Teru, do you open up to Shihan?" asks the GM.

"No," says Tyrelle. "I'm Angry, so I'm lashing out at a friend to clear it. 'What do you know about it?! You're just a pro-bender, and you don't even know who your parents are!'"

"Goodness," says the GM. "All right, so that means Shihan, you mark a condition, but you also get to shift Teru's balance."

"I'm still shifting it toward Progress," says Seiji. "I think my words at least partially got through. And I'm marking Troubled."

HOLD, +1 FORWARD, & +1 ONGOING

Some moves refer to hold, taking +1 forward, and taking +1 ongoing as outcomes—these are bonuses! **Hold** is a temporary resource connected to the move you got it from—when you receive it, you "hold" onto it until you spend it as outlined by that move. If a move tells you to "hold 3," for example, you gain three points to spend on that move's options and effects. Moves with hold often tell you how to spend it, like "one-for-one," meaning you can spend one point of hold on one of the move's possible effects. Since you're "holding" onto it, you don't need to spend all of your hold at once! You might spend hold right away on an effect or save it for later in a scene.

Hold usually has to be spent in the course of the conversation or scene in which you gain it, unless the move specifies how and when the hold expires. If you're unsure if your hold is still available, ask the GM for clarification. If you have hold from multiple sources, they don't pool together and you can't spend it between two moves' options. To keep track of any hold, you might use a die, tokens, or coins, or just make hatch marks on your playbook—but most of the time, you spend it fast enough that you don't have to keep close track.

When a move tells you to **take +1 forward**, you gain +1 on your next roll that applies. These effects often state "take +1 forward to/when ___," meaning the bonus is added to the action or condition listed. Once you've used the bonus, it's gone. Since a +1 forward applies to the *next* roll you make that fits the conditions, you can't hang onto it for later—it's not hold! When a move tells you to **take +1 ongoing** instead, that bonus applies to *all* applicable rolls as described by the move. Moves that give +1 ongoing tell you how long the bonus lasts for, but if need be, the GM is the final arbiter of when the bonus ceases to apply—usually when much time has passed or the situation has substantially changed.

Intimidate

When you **intimidate an NPC** into backing off or giving in, roll with **Passion**. On a hit, they choose one. On a 10+, first, you pick one they cannot choose.

- They run to escape or get backup.
- They back down but keep watch.
- They give in with a few stipulations.
- They attack you, but off-balance; the GM marks a condition on them.

Demanding surrender from a *daofei* society leader at spearpoint after taking out their minions, using your family's dangerous reputation to pressure a smuggler into giving you a stolen item, threatening a bouncer to let you into an exclusive gambling house—any time you threaten an NPC into retreat or surrender with words or fists, you are **intimidating** them. You might **intimidate an NPC** with physical threats and harsh words but you can just as easily intimidate them with displays of power, blackmail, or other more subtle tactics. As long as you're trying to scare them off or pressuring them to give up/in, you make the move.

If you roll a hit to **intimidate**, your target (not you) chooses one of the four options based on their goals and the fiction. If you roll a 10+, you limit the NPC's actions by removing one option before they choose, pushing them further in the direction you want. If you want to force an NPC to surrender without fleeing, remove their option to *"run to escape or get backup."* If you don't care if they flee but you don't want to come to blows (again), say they can't *"attack you off-balance."*

Note that you can only target NPCs with this move—if you want to push your companions to do (or not do) something, you need to try a different tactic (like **calling them out**, see page 138). Although you might argue with each other about the right thing to do at the moment, PCs in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** find other ways to resolve differences and have more agency than NPCs.

Options for Intimidating

When you roll a hit to **intimidate an NPC**, remember that the GM chooses how your target responds. This depends on their goals, feelings (and marked conditions), and the fiction of the game, but they might just give you what you want even if you don't roll a 10+.

If *"they run to escape or get backup,"* they immediately try to flee the scene. If you want to stop the NPC, you need to try something fast or even drop into a combat exchange to keep them here. Once they leave, they either stay gone if they're trying to escape or alert others and escalate the situation.

If *"they back down but keep watch,"* they give in to you for now but they're still on their guard. They won't make a move against you just yet but if you give them a reason or push them further, the situation gets worse. Hostile NPCs give you leeway but with hands on their weapons, while others keep a stern eye on any potential troublemaking.

If *"they give in with a few stipulations,"* they do what you want (back off or give in) but they've demands of their own. If you go back on these, things are likely to get messy. They might only back off if you promise to back off as well or want something from you in exchange.

If *"they attack you, but off-balance,"* they lash out (and likely trigger a combat exchange) but they're struck by your words in some way—the GM also marks an appropriate condition on them. This reflects you getting under their skin, which gives you a slight advantage as the interaction comes to blows.

EXAMPLE

Quartz the Guardian wants to get into the Spirit Shrine, but it's guarded by Fire Nation soldiers. Quinn, Quartz's player, describes Quartz stomping up to the guards. "I'm getting close and telling them I'm an undercover Fire Nation operative—I'm doing my best to look all impressive and cow them into letting me through. Is that an **intimidate**?"

"No, I don't think so," says the GM. "It's more of a **trick**—it depends upon them believing you're an undercover Fire Nation operative, right?"

"Ah, I get it," says Quinn. "Okay, well, I still want to say that, but it's pure pretense—I don't care if they buy it or not. I just stand there, glaring at them, flexing my muscles, picking at scars."

The GM considers—in another situation, it might not be quite enough to be intimidating just to stare and flex, but here, these are only regular guards. "Perfect, that's an **intimidate**. Roll!"

Quinn rolls and gets a 12! "I kind of want to say that they can't run and get backup...but I think I'm more worried about them attacking me and slowing me down, so I pick that. They can't attack me."

"Great!" says the GM. "They look at each other, and it's clear they both don't want a fight. 'Ah, yes, uh, sir,' says one. 'Feel free to make your way inside.' As soon as you do, you look behind and you see they've run off, presumably to go get help. What do you do?"

EXAMPLE

Teru Jinno the Successor has just been apprehended by Republic City's police force. He's wrapped up in metal wire as they're carting him off. "One officer sneers at you," says the GM. "'Anything to say for yourself?' she asks."

"I look back up at her and sneer right back," says Tyrelle, Teru's player. "'Yeah,' I say. 'Wait until my mother hears about this. Aiko Jinno isn't known to be kind to those who interfere with her plans...or her family.'"

"Is that an **intimidate**? Invoking the name of your great and terrible mother?" asks the GM.

"Oh for sure," says Tyrelle, and he rolls. He gets a 7.

The GM considers what the guards will do—the GM could pick any option off the list, but in this case they think it'd be better if the guards just give in. "Well, immediately as soon as they hear your mother's name, the officers all share a glance, and then they begin to rapidly unwind you from the metal wire. 'Apologies, sir,' says one through gritted teeth. 'We had no idea who you were. Please give the Lady Jinno our best wishes.' They clearly are angry with you, Teru, but there's no way they want to cross Aiko Jinno."

Plead

When you **plead with an NPC** who cares what you think for help, support, or action, roll with **Harmony**. On a 7–9, they need something more—evidence that this is the right course, guidance in making the right choices, or resources to aid them—before they act; the GM tells you what they need. On a 10+, they act now and do their best until the situation changes.

Begging a friendly innkeeper to hide you from the Fire Nation soldiers pursuing you, asking a grateful prisoner you've just freed to stay and help instead of escaping, asking a mentor to teach you a bending technique they don't think you're ready to learn—any time you try to get help or a favor from an NPC, you are **pleading with an NPC**. This move is for more than just calling in a favor or asking for them to back you up. If you ask an NPC for something small (especially something that doesn't cost them anything), or request help that they're already willing to give, you don't trigger this move. If they're reluctant to assist, the request could cost them or put them in danger, or other things at play might cause them to resist, then you need to **plead** with them to get their help.

The other important thing about triggering this move is that the NPC needs to care what you think. If you try to convince an utterly hostile NPC, an NPC who doesn't take you seriously, or an NPC whose life and wellbeing isn't affected by you in any significant way, you can't **plead** with them. To get an NPC to care about what you think, you need to have an established relationship or do something to make a good impression—you might be their mentor or family member or demonstrate your competence through action or by helping them.

In general, this move covers persuasion that isn't rooted in wisdom or philosophy, and instead focuses on immediate action. If you're trying to guide someone to (or away from) balance, then you're **guiding and comforting** them (page 128); if you're trying to get them to act in a specific way right now, you're **pleading** with them.

Options for Pleading

When you roll a hit to **plead** with an NPC, they'll do or give you what you ask for, but they may need a little push before springing into action. On a 7–9, they need reassurance or something extra before helping. An NPC might agree to help you travel through a dangerous area but only if you bring them some supplies they lack for the journey. Another NPC might agree to teach you a dangerous combat technique on the condition you can prove you'll use it responsibly first. Either way, they won't commit to helping you until you give them what they need first.

On a 10+, however, they don't need any reassurances—they do what you ask right away to the best of their abilities. Remember, if the situation changes, their response might change as well! If things become dangerous or don't work out, they may revoke that support. If you **plead** with a village elder to change an old tradition and you get a 10+, you might convince them to try it for now but they'll go back on the agreement if it goes badly for any reason.



EXAMPLE

Beryl the Icon is trying to get the people of the local town to band together to resist the approaching Fire Nation soldiers. "'Please, everyone,'" says Bei, Beryl's player. "'They're going to ruin your homes unless we stand together, united, against them!' Can I **plead** with them?"

"Well, I'm not sure they care what you think," says the GM.

"But I'm the last of the Chitin Warriors!" says Bei. "I climb on top of the back of my stag-beetle when I say all this. They should care because I'm a legendary warrior! I'm the Icon!"

"Fair enough," says the GM. The GM also thinks it's fine here to treat the whole group as a single NPC—at this moment, the whole group functionally has the same drive and principle.

Bei rolls to **plead** and gets a 7. "The townsfolk look at you, standing on the stag, then at each other, then back at you. Then one of them says, 'Maybe we have a chance with the Chitin Warrior leading us.' A bunch of others echo that sentiment, and soon the whole crowd is revving itself up. They're ready to fight the Fire Nation, but only if you're right at the front, leading them."

EXAMPLE

Iris the Adamant wants Captain Dai of the United Republic Military to give her and her team a ride on his zeppelin. "'Pretty please?'" says Izzy, Iris's player. "'You won't even know we're on board, and we don't even need to stay for long, just until we get to the mountains.' Can I **plead** with him? I did do him that favor before, when the New Equalists attacked."

The GM nods in agreement—Iris did help Dai, and he does care what she thinks—and Izzy rolls. She gets a 10! "Dai looks around, and then says, 'All right, come on, now. Just keep your heads low and stay quiet so you don't get me in trouble.'"

Push Your Luck

When you **push your luck** in a risky situation, say what you want to do and roll with **Passion**. On a hit, you do it, but it costs you to scrape by; the GM tells you what it costs you. On a 10+, your boldness pays off despite the cost; the GM tells you what other lucky opportunity falls in your lap.

Swimming through rapids after a pirate ship, convincing someone you weren't stealing from them after being caught red-handed, leaping to catch a priceless artifact before it shatters on the floor while your hands and feet are bound—any time you rely on fate and luck to carry you through instead of skills or training, you're **pushing your luck**. If you're attempting something complicated or risky outside the scope of your training (bending, weapons, or technology), or one of your backgrounds, you trigger this move. A character who's never sailed before has to **push their luck** to steer a boat through a heavy storm, while a PC who served on a pirate ship's crew could **rely on their skills and training** (page 133) to do the same thing.

This acts as a catch-all move for doing anything risky that doesn't neatly translate to any of the other basic moves. If the outcome of your dangerous action is uncertain or you're relying on fortune itself to carry you through a risky action, you need to **push your luck**. The stakes don't have to be incredibly high for you to make this move—there just has to be interesting uncertainty about outcomes!

In some cases, you might try to do something simply beyond both your skills and training, or you might be hoping for a lucky break. The GM may either say you outright can't do that given the circumstances or just tell you what happens when you try.

Options for Pushing Your Luck

When you roll a hit to **push your luck**, you always pay a cost for your audacity. The exact cost of succeeding by the skin of your teeth is the GM's call, and it depends on the situation. The most common cost is marking one or more fatigue or a condition (mostly for physical actions), but costs can include anything: using up supplies, shifting your balance, or more abstract costs. You might claw your way out of a quick-flowing river but ruin your rations or lose a personal item in the water. You might survive a tense social situation with your lies intact, but lose the trust of an involved NPC or expose others to danger.

Despite the cost, **pushing your luck** can pay off in the form of an unforeseen opportunity when you roll a 10+. This opportunity is either caused by your boldness or you noticing something in the process of **pushing your luck**. As such, it's usually a time-sensitive opening that must be capitalized on quickly (by you or your companions). The GM describes the opportunity. Remember that getting the opportunity never means that you avoid paying the cost inherent in the move—you *always* pay a cost when you **push your luck**!



EXAMPLE

Kirilaq the Rogue is in a bit of a sticky situation and wants to escape. She's currently locked in a tower overlooking the sea below, awaiting the return of the local tyrannical Earth Kingdom governor, who will not look fondly upon her. "Okay...but I have a window, right?" asks Kayla, Kirilaq's player. The GM nods.

"Then...I dive out the window to the sea below! They didn't know I was a Waterbender when they locked me in here, did they? Yeah, it'll be perfect! I'll just waterbend the sea to catch me! So that's **rely on my skills and training**, right?"

"Hold on," says the GM. "You are very, very, *very* high. Sure, you can try this—your waterbending abilities give you the slimmest of chances. But it's definitely **pushing your luck**, not **relying on your skills and training**."

Kayla decides to do it anyway, and rolls. She gets an 11! "Okay, so the cost you pay is that this still hurts a bunch, like getting punched in your whole body at once as you hit the water. Mark 3-fatigue. But the opportunity—as you fall, you see a boat out there. You're certain it's not flying Earth Kingdom colors, but you're not certain of much else. If you want, you can use your momentum to bend yourself in an arc through the water and fly up onto the deck of the ship. That'll only cost 1-fatigue more. So, what do you do?"

EXAMPLE

Ren Tsuji the Prodigy has wound up in the cockpit of a hummingbird mecha suit, trying to flee from a squadron of biplanes flown by Triad members! "I gun it!" shouts Ruhan, Ren's player.

"Hold up," says the GM. "No way you know how to fly this thing. You're a master martial artist, the greatest archer in the world and deadly with any weapon invented...but you're not at all trained in Technology, are you?" Ruhan shakes their head. "That's what I thought. This is **pushing your luck**, my friend."

Ruhan rolls and gets a 9. "Excellent," says the GM. "So you blast through the air, doing your best to make this thing fly and dodge at the same time—and it works! But not before the mech takes a few hits from the biplanes' new lightning guns. You pull away from the other biplanes, which turn back to the city as you hurtle into the mountains...where you are DEFINITELY going to crash."

Rely on Your Skills and Training

When you **rely on your skills and training** to overcome an obstacle, gain new insight, or perform a familiar custom, roll with **Focus**. On a hit, you do it. On a 7–9, you do it imperfectly—the GM tells you how your approach might lead to unexpected consequences; accept those consequences or mark 1-fatigue.

Using wilderness survival skills to pacify an angry armadillo-bear, invoking courtly etiquette to blend into a Fire Nation noble's party, creating handholds in a stone wall to infiltrate a compound—any time you use your expertise and knowledge to overcome a significant complication or risk, you're **relying on your skills and training**. When you try to do something risky that isn't covered by any of the other moves and involves your training, one of your backgrounds, or other skills, you use this move. Like **pushing your luck**, this catch-all move covers a lot of things but requires more specificity.

To know whether or not you can **rely on your skills and training**, you need to know *what* your skills and training are. At the start of the game, the clearest indicators of these are your training (bending, weapons, technology) and your backgrounds. If your character used to work at City Hall in Republic City (using the Urban and Privileged backgrounds), it stands to reason that you can **rely on your skills and training** to play politics and navigate bureaucracy, know your way around the city, and fit into high society. If you're an Airbender, you might **rely on your airbending** to cushion your fall off a rooftop, deflect incoming projectiles with a burst of wind, or even—with enough training—sense danger by air vibrations alone. Your playbook can also point to things that you can **rely** on, like the Icon's **Burden & Tradition** or the Successor's **A Tainted Past**.

What's important is to make note of what these skills and training are as they come up, and to keep in mind what's outside your areas of expertise. As you play, you'll gain more skills and learn about what things your character can do with their training. Your character might eventually gain mastery over a wide array of skills and talents but at the start of the game, there's only so much you can **rely on your skills and training** to do.

The actual effects of this move cover a lot of ground, as well. First, you can try to overcome obstacles. Most commonly this means physical obstacles, like barriers or hazards, but it can mean social obstacles as well. Your firebending can help you blast the door into ashes, but your upbringing as a servant in the high court of the Fire Nation can help you get into the servants' quarters of the local manor without any suspicion. You can even "overcome an obstacle" to quickly dispatch low-threat foes, if appropriate—clocking two clueless guards on the back of the head might knock them out with a single **rely on your skills and training** move, bypassing combat altogether. "Overcome obstacles" is a fairly open-ended idea that almost always means, "solve a problem with your training or skills."

You can also try to gain new insights. When you **rely on your skills and training** to do so, you're using your expertise or specific abilities to look for more specific information than what you might find just by examining a scene or even **assessing a situation**. You might use your training to improve or extend your senses—like earthbending to locate a hidden attacker through seismic sense—or give you specialized insights that others without your skills might miss, like a Technologist figuring out how to shut down an experimental device gone haywire.



WHERE'S THE BENDING MOVE?

There is no one "bending" move—bending (or an action using non-bending training) happens with a move, not because of it. Moves instead focus on your character's intent. In game terms, whether you sling a rock near a guard to get them to leave their post or use airbending to throw your voice and taunt them away, you're **tricking** them. You might **guide and comfort** someone by saying kind things to them, or you might create a gentle fire that warms the two of you as you huddle in the night air. If you use bending in some way that doesn't match up easily with any of the other moves, it's most likely **relying on your skills and training**, but even then you might end up **pushing your luck** if it's particularly risky or uncertain.

Your background also determines what kinds of information you can obtain—an Outlaw PC can identify and decipher thieves' signature graffiti, a Monastic PC can identify the significance of religious iconography, and so on. Whenever you want to learn something beyond the scope of **assessing a situation**, you can **rely on your skills and training** if it's in your wheelhouse.

Finally, you can try to perform a familiar custom. This aspect of **relying on your skills and training** is most often about social actions (like fitting in somewhere) but it also covers specific rites, rituals, and practices based on your training or background. A Privileged PC from a noble family can try to infiltrate an illicit auction by knowing the right things to say, while another PC with a reclusive Monastic background might need to **push their luck** to blend in. A PC with the Wilderness background from the Southern Water Tribe could **rely on their skills and training** to undertake the ice-dodging rite of passage, steering their boat through danger to prove they've come of age. If you're attempting to bypass an obstacle or navigate a situation that you've experienced before as part of your background or training, it's probably a familiar custom.

Because this move covers so many different things, it can be tempting to use it for everything, so make sure you're not triggering a different move instead. Generally, if any other move fits better, use that one. If you're generally looking over a besieged area to see what's useful, what's in danger, and so on, you're **assessing a situation** even if you have a background as a siege engineer. But if you use that Military background as a siege engineer to specifically locate structural weak points for demolition (gaining new insight), you're **relying on your skills and training** rather than **assessing a situation**. The GM makes the final call on which move is appropriate.

Options for Relying on Your Skills & Training

Unlike when you **push your luck**, the consequences for rolling a 7–9 (and even a miss) on this move aren't as harsh. You have more control over your approach because of your experience, and you're capable of dealing with complications as they arise. On a 7–9, you accomplish your goal but not quite in the way you wanted or intended—the GM tells you how your action *might* lead to unexpected consequences. This information is for you, the player, so you can decide if you want to let this happen or not.

If you choose to accept those consequences, your character might know what's coming or they could be totally caught off-guard. By choosing to mark fatigue instead, your character sees that complication as or just before it happens and manages to straighten themselves out before it makes things worse. When you mark fatigue, describe how you compensate for your less-than-perfect attempt or otherwise push through.

EXAMPLE

Quartz the Guardian wants to warn the local Earth Kingdom military forces about an impending Fire Nation ambush, but Quartz has a Military background—he knows that it's not going to be the easiest thing in the world to reach the right ears. "Can I use my knowledge of the military to find someone at the right rank and position who'd listen to me, and who can actually do something with that advice?" asks Quinn.

"Sure," the GM says. "But first you have to find the officer; you'll have to figure out a way to persuade them once you've found them. Roll to **rely on your skills and training.**"

Quinn nods and rolls, getting a 9. "So I think that this means you're going to be noticed as you go around the camp," says the GM. "You are drawing the attention of people in the military camp who think you're suspicious—they won't intervene before you talk to someone, but they might make it tough to get out of here. Unless you mark fatigue to avoid notice."

"Oof, I don't have much fatigue to mark," says Quinn. "I'll just let them spy me."

"Great," says the GM. "So you find a lieutenant, her uniform is just the right degree of muddy and torn, her face just the right amount of hardened but open, that you think she's one of those officers who's reasonable, and who's well-liked enough to command respect. What do you do?"

EXAMPLE

Ren Tsuji the Prodigy is trying to fire an arrow into the conductor's compartment of a train to break the controls. "Okay, this is definitely **pushing your luck**," says the GM. "It's a ridiculous shot."

"I'm the Prodigy!" says Ruhan. "I'm the best archer in the world!"

The GM considers the situation—Ruhan has a point. "That's fair. Because this is your jam—archery—and the train is stationary, and you're not in any dire condition right now, just standing firmly on a rooftop, let's just make it a **rely on your skills and training.**"

Ruhan rolls and gets an 8. "I think this is about how much control you have over exactly what you hit with your arrow—whether you just smash the controls so no one can even start the train, or whether you break the controls so no one can operate them, but wind up locking them into full throttle."

"Oh, man, I definitely don't want to make this into a rocket train. I mark the fatigue," says Ruhan.

"Excellent! So you break the controls!"

Trick

When you **trick an NPC**, roll with **Creativity**. On a hit, they fall for it and do what you want for the moment. On a 7–9, pick one. On a 10+, pick two.

- They stumble; take +1 forward to acting against them.
- They act foolishly; the GM tells you what additional opportunity they give you.
- They overcommit; they are deceived for some time.

Faking illness to draw a guard into your prison cell, dressing up as a dark spirit to scare intruders away, convincing a ship captain to give you passage with forged papers—any time you use your wits and skills to fool, confuse, or deceive NPCs, you're **tricking an NPC**. This move covers all sorts of deception, from bald-faced lies to creating diversions. Whether you're bluffing your way into or out of somewhere, fooling or distracting someone, or otherwise convincing an NPC of a falsehood for some reason, it's a **trick**. If you just lie without any intent to push the NPC to action, though, you're not **tricking**. And if you lie in a particularly ridiculous, completely incredible way—the NPC has to be a fool to fall for it—then you're probably **pushing your luck**.

When you trigger this move, first tell the GM what you're trying to get the NPC to do. If you're not trying to get them to do something right this second, then you're not **tricking** them yet. On a hit, they take the bait and do what you want, but only for a short while. You then get to choose *how* they fall for your trickery—they might be briefly thrown off or flustered, make a mistake you can capitalize on, or buy it hook, line, and sinker. A roll of 7–9 lets you choose one of these options, while a particularly effective trick on a 10+ lets you choose two instead.

Missing on a **trick** attempt can result in a lot of different results. The most obvious outcome is that your target catches you in your lie or discovers your deception. They might just as easily go along with it but reveal a new complication about the situation in the process. They might even believe your trickery in a way that brings too much attention to you—not only do you convince the opera house staff that you're filling in for a sick performer, but they tell you you're about to miss your cue and shove you on stage!

Options for Tricking

If *"they stumble,"* the NPC believes your deception and it catches them off guard. When you next make a move against them based on your trickery, you take +1 to the roll. If you don't choose this option, they buy your trick but you can't continue to use it as leverage.

If *"they act foolishly,"* they fall for your trick in a way that also creates another opening for you to take advantage of. They might reveal something hidden, falsely assume something else that benefits you, or otherwise give you a chance to act. Whatever it is, it's only a momentary opening and you still need to act quickly to seize it. If you don't choose this option, your trick grants the original opportunity without any extra openings.

If *"they overcommit,"* not only do they take the bait but you sell it so well that it takes a long time for them to realize they've been fleeced. If you don't choose this option, your trick deceives them but they catch on sooner rather than later to your trickery.



EXAMPLE

Kirilaq the Rogue is at a local watering hole, and she settles in playing games of dice with some Fire Nation guards. "I kind of want to play with them, keeping them talking and losing intentionally long enough that they let slip something important—I really want to know what's in the crates we saw the guards carting into town. Is that a **rely on skills and training** with my Criminal background? Playing dice games, playing someone?" asks Kirilaq's player, Kayla.

"No, I think it's a **trick**," says the GM. "Your skills and training let you **trick** like this, but **trick** is more specific and more direct, and it matches the whole thing that you're doing."

Kayla agrees and rolls, getting a 10! "I definitely want them to overcommit—I don't want them to figure this out for a while—and...I think I want them to act foolishly, too."

"Excellent," says the GM. "So they're really into this, enjoying beating you—but of course, only by the skin of their teeth, you make sure, to keep the tension—and they start openly talking about all manner of things, including the crates and how they think dragon eggs are inside, and where exactly the eggs are going to be stored. They even imply the lock is special, how no one can get in without a special tool, and one guard shows you a weird flute in his tunic."

EXAMPLE

Nokahhak the Bold wants to save her friends from being captured by some Triad toughs! "I rush out toward them, shrieking and screaming and looking behind me," says Nadja. "'SPIRIT! SPIRIT ON THE LOOSE! RUN! RUUUN!' I want them to bolt!"

"Hm," says the GM. "That seems a little unlikely to fool them—yeah, there are spirits around Republic City now, but one random stranger yelling isn't that convincing. I'd say you're **pushing your luck** right now."

"Can I make some subtle airbending motions, create a whistling, groaning wind that blasts out from the alley to help sell it?" asks Nadja.

"Oh, absolutely, that's perfect. Roll to **trick these NPCs**!"

Nadja rolls and gets a 7. "I just want them to stumble—that way, if they do figure out what's up, I'll get a +1 forward against them," says Nadja.

"Excellent," says the GM. "So the Triad toughs start running away from the weird wind pouring out of the alley, and that gives you and your friends a chance to flee in the other direction!"

Help

When you take appropriate action to **help a companion**, mark 1-fatigue to give them a +1 to their roll (after the roll). You cannot help in a combat exchange in this way.

Airbending wind into the sails as your companion steers your ship through jagged rocks, splitting up to look for clues in an abandoned temple, putting on a dramatic performance to help sell your companion's con—any time you step in and assist another PC's actions, you are **helping a companion**. This can help them succeed by either improving their roll from a 6 (a miss) to a 7, or a 9 to 10!

In order to **help a companion**, you must provide assistance somehow, and you must mark fatigue. It's not enough to say, "I'm helping" and mark fatigue—you need to explain how you're helping your companion succeed! If they're repairing a sabotaged Satomobile mid-race, for example, yelling advice at them from across the crowded racetrack isn't going to cut it. If you can't think of a way to help or you can't mark fatigue, your character is either out of ideas at the moment or tapped out and can't **help** another PC.

As mentioned before, **helping a companion** can only increase their roll by 1. If your help doesn't bring your companion up a range of success (i.e. **helping** on a roll of 6 or 9), there's no need to **help**—it won't change the outcome of their move. You also can't **help** more than once for the same ally's move, even if you have the fatigue to burn. However, you can still count on the rest of your companions—multiple allies can **help** with the same move! To do so, everyone providing aid to that PC's roll must describe how they assist in the moment and must spend 1-fatigue each.

You can **help a companion** on most moves *except* the **stance move** in combat exchanges. (For more on the **stance move**, see page 148.) This is because the speed and chaos of combat emphasizes your individual actions. When fights break out, it's assumed that you are generally doing the best you can to defend yourself and others involved. Instead of **helping** on individual approaches themselves, you can still use techniques like Ready or Bolster to apply useful status effects to your allies or the environment, and you can coordinate your strategy in each exchange.

EXAMPLE

Iris the Adamant, played by Izzy, rolls to **rely on her skills and training** to try to earthbend a massive chunk of dirt and stone to flip it on top of the nearby charging mecha suit. Izzy rolls and gets a total of a 9—a hit, but it will still cost Iris something.

"Can I help?" asks Seiji, the player of Shihan the Pillar and another Earthbender.

"Sure!" says the GM. "What do you actually do?"

"Hm. Iris and I bend pretty differently, but I use my style to make the earth flow like water in a big circle, creating a ditch so it's easier for Iris to lift the whole chunk of earth," says Seiji.

"Cool! Mark 1-fatigue. That'll give Iris a +1 and make that roll a 10!" says the GM.

EXAMPLE

Lukta the Idealist, played by Lex, is trying to **plead** with Uhakka, a Northern Water Tribe ship captain, to stop Uhakka and her crew of Waterbenders from launching a tsunami at a nearby village with a Fire Nation production facility.

"Please, there are innocent people in that village. They don't deserve what you're about to do to them—you're going to take their homes away, the way the Fire Nation has taken away the homes of so many," says Lex, speaking directly as Lukta. The GM nods, and Lex rolls with **Harmony** and gets a 6 total—a miss!

"I want to help!" says Hector, the player of Haki the Successor. "I can mark fatigue to make that a 7, right?"

"You can, if you can do something to actually help," says the GM. "What do you do or say?"

"I say, 'I'm from the Fire Nation, and my family has done a lot of harm to innocent people—I know what it costs. Don't become like them!'" says Hector.

"Hm...I don't think that works. Uhakka has a lot of anger towards the Fire Nation, so identifying as a Fire Nation citizen isn't going to help get her to listen," says the GM.

"Can I help?" asks Kayla, the player of Kirilaq the Rogue. "I'm from the Southern Water Tribe, maybe he'll listen to me."

"You might have been able to help, but aren't you already trying to waterbend the giant wave away, even as they raise it? You're a bit busy, so you probably can't help now, not without losing concentration on what you're doing," says the GM. "So it stands as a miss, and here's what happens next..."



Balance Moves

In addition to the basic moves, every character can make any of the **balance moves** too. These moves affect your character's balance track, their principles, and the balance of others. The five balance moves are **live up to your principle**, **call someone out**, **deny a callout**, **resist shifting your balance**, and **lose your balance**. Your character's balance is their heart, what guides their story, and their long-term development all in one. This section explains how each of these crucial systems and moves work in detail. For more on the general systems of your principles and balance, see page 102.

Live Up to Your Principle

When you **take action in accordance with the values of a principle**, mark 1-fatigue to roll with that principle instead of whatever stat you would normally roll.

The Hammer wants to punch an antagonistic NPC that they blame for a bad situation, but realizes their target isn't some evil mastermind…they're scared and being manipulated by others. Rather than give in to their instincts, the Hammer offers a hand to the other person and declares that they understand what they're going through and want to help, not hurt them—the Hammer is **guiding and comforting** that NPC, but also **living up to their principle** of Care!

Any time you take action that aligns with one of your playbook's two principles on your balance track, you can **live up to your principle** before you make your move. Rather than roll with the stat that move normally tells you to, you roll with the principle's value on your balance track. This means as your balance track shifts hard to one side, you roll with an increasingly high bonus when **living up to your principle** in that direction. In this way, you can offset a low or negative stat by **living up to your principle** if that principle matches your action. However, this isn't something you can do all the time—pushing yourself to embody a principle in this way always costs 1-fatigue!

To trigger this move, your action needs to meet two conditions. First, it has to be an action that triggers a move with a stat roll (basic, playbook, even the **stance move**)—if a move tells you to roll without any modifiers, you can't **live up to your principle**, just like how you can't if a move's outcome doesn't require you to roll dice. Second, it has to fit the values of one of your principles. When the Icon **intimidates** someone into backing down, it's not enough for them to say they're **living up to their principle** of Role—they need to describe and show how they're using their belief in their position and their status as the Icon in this moment, in order to use their Role instead of their **Passion**.

If you want to **live up to your principle** but you're not sure how, talk to the GM or the group about how you can make your actions align with the principle you're trying to live up to. The GM might tell you that you need to do a little more to truly live up to that principle, or that you might need to pursue another course of action to live up to the principle.

EXAMPLE

Teru Jinno the Hammer, played by Tyrelle, is trying to keep a squad of metalbending police away from local street rat Ping, who's been framed for a crime he didn't commit. The police are ready to knock Teru Jinno out, but he doesn't exactly want to harm them—he just wants to hold them off long enough for Ping to escape. The exchange begins, and Tyrelle chooses that Teru Jinno defends and maneuvers—he thinks that's the best way to try to divert the police without really harming them that much.

"Great! Roll with **Focus**, then, for the stance move!" says the GM.

"I have **Focus** -1, but I want to live up to my principle instead—this is Care, right?"

"Is it? Still seems like you're forcefully trying to keep the police at bay," says the GM.

"Sure, but I'm not just thrashing them, and I'm not relying on intimidating them with my sheer strength or anything," says Tyrelle. "I'm keeping them busy, and I'm taking care not to actually hurt them too much. In addition to the fact that I'm doing all of this because I care about Ping."

"The second thing seems a little iffy to me," says the GM. "You get into fights all the time because you care about people, so that's not really how I understood Care to work for you. But the fact that you're being cautious and careful in the fight, not just slamming them, makes sense. It kind of suggests to me that you're not about to pick techniques that wildly rip up the area or anything, right?"

"Yeah, for sure," says Tyrelle. "I'll see what I roll before I pick, but I'm aiming toward stuff like Seize a Position to move my hummingbird mecha into the way, or Ready to try to fire one of my foam canisters and make it hard for them to keep coming at us."

"Randomly throwing sticky, hardening foam into an alley is about as careful as it gets for the Hammer," says the GM, smiling. "Sounds good! Mark 1-fatigue and roll with Care!"



Call Someone Out

When you **openly call on someone to live up to their principle**, shift your balance away from center, then name and roll with their principle. On a hit, they are called to act as you say; they must either do it or mark a condition. On a 7–9, they challenge your view of the world in turn; mark 1-fatigue or they shift your balance as they choose. On a miss, they can demand you act in accordance with one of your principles instead; mark a condition or act as they request.

When you make this move, you remind someone (a PC or NPC) of one of their principles and call on them to take immediate action related to that ideal. You might be reminding them of their responsibilities, begging them to live up to their ideals, or calling them on how their actions are inconsistent with their beliefs. You can't trigger this move by being subtle—you must openly call on them to do so. When characters in *Avatar: The Last Airbender* or *The Legend of Korra* tell people to their face or in front of others that they need to step up or act a certain way by appealing to their beliefs or using their own words against them, they're **calling someone out**!

When you make this move, you need to shift your own balance away from center first—this represents your character taking a strong position and standing up for what they believe in. You then name the principle you're calling on your target to live up to, and roll with the value of that principle—meaning you roll with *their* balance, not your own. Someone with a strong belief in their principle is easier to push in this way, while someone whose worldview has shifted away from a belief is much harder to reach.

Remember, you need to name your target's principle to make this move—you need to know exactly how to appeal to their beliefs. If you already know someone's principle (like another PC or an NPC whose principle you've learned through another move), you're good to go. If you *think* you know an NPC's principle and call them out, you can still try to name their principle. If you're close enough that you essentially name the same idea, you can still make this move even if you're not exactly correct about the phrasing. The GM is the final arbiter of whether or not you are close enough. For example, if an NPC's principle is Justice and you call on them to live up to their principle of Law, the GM may decide it's close enough.

On a hit, your words land and your target is called to act as you say—but they still don't *have* to do it, and you have *not* mind-controlled them somehow! Your target still has the agency to choose to do or not do what you called on them to do, even as they feel the pull of their principles. If they don't choose to do what you call them to do, they must mark a condition as they feel internal conflict between what they want and their obligation. On a roll of 10+, that's where things end, but on a 7–9, your target gets a dig at you as well that forces you to let them shift *your* balance in turn however they want (unless you mark a fatigue). If you mark a fatigue, you're exerting yourself to rebut or ignore their push.

On a miss, you still call your target out—but they not only deflect your words, they turn the moment to focus on *you* instead, pressuring you to act in accordance with one of *your* principles! Your words either don't connect with them or they redirect your attempt to pressure them. This doesn't have to be hostile or aggressive but just like when you **call someone out**, their response has weight to it. When the Hammer misses **calling out** a community leader to stand up to some local gangs, the community leader responds that attacking the gang will only make them angrier; she'll take help resolving the situation but they demand the Hammer live up to their principle of Care, making them promise to negotiate with the gang instead of escalating to violence. The Hammer needs to either accept the NPC's terms or mark a condition and keep their own counsel.

Note that on a miss, you're pushed to act in accordance with one of your principles but you aren't being **called out**. The decision to either do as you're requested or mark a condition is built into this move's outcome. This means if you roll a miss to **call someone out**, you can't **deny a callout** to refuse the demand they make as a result.

EXAMPLE

Beryl the Icon, played by Bei, wants to attack the group of Fire Nation mercenaries who have just abducted the glowing snakesquid spirit of the nearby swamp. "We can free her!" says Bei, speaking directly as Beryl. "I have to free her! It's one of my duties!"

"We can't," says Quinn, speaking directly as Quartz the Guardian. "You saw those mercenaries in action! They have a guy who shoots lightning from his mouth! And there's that lady whose hands just melted a sword as she blocked it! They're too dangerous. We need to be careful, take our time, not charge in."

"If we wait, they might get away! They might find refuge at a fortress or something!" says Bei. "We have to act now!"

"It's way too dangerous, and I won't let you do it," says Quinn

"Ugh! I wish I could **plead** with you!" says Bei.

"You can't **plead** with Quartz because he's a PC," says the GM. "But you can **call on him to live up to his principle**."

"Oh, great idea! Yeah! Your principles are Self-Reliance and Trust, right?" asks Bei. Quinn nods. "So...I think I'm asking you to trust me. I want to call on you to live up to Trust!"

"What exactly do you say that really cinches you calling out Quartz?" asks the GM.

"I say, 'Look. I'm the Chitin Warrior. I'm not just your little sister anymore. I was chosen by our elders, by the forest, and by Ochin'—I give my stag-beetle a little pat when I say her name—'and I need you to trust in me the way they did. I know we have to do this. Can you trust me that I know what I'm doing?'" says Bei.

"Excellent!" says the GM as Quinn groans and nods—he agrees that what Beryl is saying would call on his Trust principle! "Okay then, Beryl, go ahead and shift your balance away from center—sounds clearly like you're shifting toward Role—and then roll with Quartz's Trust." Bei rolls and gets an 8!

"Grr. I don't want to mark a condition, so I guess I will go along with this," says Quinn. "But I'm shifting your balance toward Role—'Alright, Chitin Warrior,' I say to Beryl. I don't think I've ever called you that before, out loud."

"I'd love to shift my balance toward Role, but that's getting a little high then...I mark 1-fatigue instead!" says Bei.



Deny a Callout

When you **deny an NPC calling on you to live up to your principle**, roll with that principle. On a hit, act as they say or mark 1-fatigue. On a 10+, their words hit hard; you must also shift your balance towards the called-on principle. On a miss, you stand strong; clear a condition, clear 1-fatigue, or shift your balance, your choice.

NPCs can, and will, call on you to live up to one of your principles just as you can call them out. When they do, you *must* choose: accept their words and do what they demand (whether you like it or not), or reject them and make this move. The NPC doesn't have to know your principle; it's up to the GM to tell you when their demand for action lines up with your internal struggles.

When an NPC calls on you to live up to one of your principles and you **deny** them, you must roll with the called-on principle. If you're the Idealist and have +2 Forgiveness and -2 Action, you roll with +2 if you reject a call to Forgiveness or -2 to reject a call to Action. But this move is reversed from most—if you **deny a callout**, then you want to roll *low*, not high. This means that it's easier to reject NPCs calling on you to live up to the principle you're neglecting…and much harder to resist living up to what you believe in.

Unlike almost every other move, you have the most control when you roll a miss to **deny a callout**—a miss means that you hold your ground in the face of the NPC's influence. In fact, your resilience allows you to either clear a condition, clear 1-fatigue, or shift your balance however you choose.

If you choose to shift your balance, you might shift away from the called-on principle to show them what you truly believe in or to outright reject their demands. You might shift towards the called-on principle instead, showing that while you chose not to follow their demands or their interpretation of the principle, your commitment to that core idea remains strong.

If you roll a hit when **denying a callout**, they make you stop in your tracks; maybe you know deep down that they're right, or maybe they hit a sore spot. You have a choice: either act as they say or mark 1-fatigue. On a 10+, you need to choose *and* you also shift your balance towards the called-on principle.

EXAMPLE

Ren Tsuji the Prodigy, played by Ruhan, is having a heated conversation with Yonsang, their former teacher in the Yuyan archers.

"'You don't belong here, Ren,' Yonsang says, and he puts one hand on your shoulder. 'You're the greatest student I have ever known, and you belong back with the people who can help you rise still further. Come back to the Yuyan Archers with me.' He's definitely calling out your Excellence principle, Ren," says the GM.

"I want to **deny him calling me out**! 'I have friends here, people who care about me, and who've already helped me become better. I'm not leaving.' Do I roll with my Excellence?" asks Ruhan. The GM nods, and Ruhan rolls—and gets a 12!

"On this move, rolling high means his words really got to you," the GM says. "You've got to agree to go with him right now—and you've got to mean it, even if things change down the line—or you've got to mark 1-fatigue. And either way, your balance is shifting towards Excellence."

"I'm definitely not going, so I mark 1-fatigue!" says Ruhan.

Resist Shifting Your Balance

When you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, roll. On a hit, you maintain your current balance in spite of their words or deeds. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7–9, choose one.

- Clear a condition or mark growth by immediately acting to prove them wrong
- Shift your balance towards the opposite principle
- Learn what their principle is (if they have one); if you already know, take +1 forward against them

On a miss, they know just what to say to throw you off balance. Mark a condition, and the GM shifts your balance twice.

Most NPCs are complex characters with their own beliefs, goals, and feelings—just like your characters! As you interact with them, they may try to get you to see the world the way they do, shifting your balance as they provide mentorship, stand up for their beliefs, try to manipulate you, or tell you how things really are. In these moments they want to change your mind or challenge your beliefs, rather than call on you to act immediately a certain way (as with **calling someone out**). It's more than just offering a different opinion—shifting your balance represents actively changing what you think (well-intentioned or not). You can either let them shape you and move your balance track in the direction of their choice… or push back against them and **resist shifting your balance**.

When you **resist shifting your balance**, you're not just choosing to ignore an NPC's words—you're rejecting any shift to your balance, the current state of your principles and beliefs. If you accept their words, you're open to changing your perspective at this moment; if you resist them, you're sticking to your guns.

To **resist**, you roll without a modifier—no stat applies. On a hit, you hold strong despite their actions and words, which means that your balance stays where it is, and you choose one response from the list of options (or two if you rolled a 10+).

If you choose to *"clear a condition or mark growth,"* you must immediately act to prove the NPC wrong. For example, if they try to shift your Guardian towards Self-Reliance by asserting that your friends will always let you down, and you successfully resist them, you need to show that NPC they're wrong—perhaps by demonstrating your Trust in your companions. Doing so either reinvigorates you (by clearing a condition) or represents a moment of introspection that helps you learn about yourself or change (by marking growth).

If you choose to *"shift your balance towards the opposite principle,"* you're not just denying the NPC's attempt to change your beliefs; you're actively asserting beliefs opposed to what they have said. You don't have to do anything special in the fiction, but it's usually good to tell your group how they can tell you've steeled yourself in the face of the NPC's influence.

If you choose to *"learn what their principle is,"* you gain insight into the NPC as they try to push you towards (or away from) one of your principles. Their attempt to shift your balance reveals their own underlying philosophy, or (if you already know it) deepens your understanding of it. Once you know an NPC's principle, you can start to make moves that require knowing it, like **calling out the NPC** (page 138).

If you try to **resist shifting your balance** and roll a miss, however, the NPC's words hit you extra hard. Maybe they know how to push your buttons, use your fears or insecurities against you, or just say the right thing at the right time. To reflect being struck in an emotional pressure point, you must mark a condition and shift your balance *twice* in the direction of the GM's choice. Almost always, that lines up with the NPC's chosen direction—their words needled you and changed you, after all—but it's possible the GM might shift you twice in the opposite direction if the fiction fits. It's also possible that this causes you to **lose your balance**!

Remember that you can only **resist shifting your balance** when an *NPC* tries to shift your balance. Usually this only happens during regular play, when they say something to you—not as the result of another move. If another PC counsels you or challenges your thinking, they can try to **guide and comfort** you but you only shift your balance if they roll a 10+, or if you reject them in response. If an NPC shifts your balance during a combat exchange by Testing Your Balance (page 156), you can't **resist shifting your balance**. The rapid pace of an exchange means there isn't enough time to reject or process the shift caused by any given technique.

EXAMPLE

Haki the Successor, played by Hector, has just finished fighting an impromptu Agni Kai against his childhood best friend turned rebel leader, Zo Jian.

"Zo looks up at you, hurt in her eyes," says the GM. "'You always told me how you wanted to be someone different,' she says as she gets to her knees. 'But you're just like the rest of your family.' And then she hangs her head low in submission. She's definitely shifting your balance, toward Tradition, making yourself see how much like your family you really are."

"Wait, isn't she saying it's a bad thing, though?" asks Hector. "Shouldn't she be shifting my balance away from Tradition?"

"I see your point," says the GM. "But if you want to play that you have a stunned reaction, horrified by the revelation, then that's probably you **resisting her shifting your balance**, not just accepting it."

"Then I do that, I **resist her shifting my balance**! Do I add one of my principles to the roll?" asks Hector.

"Nope, just roll," says the GM. Hector rolls and gets a 10. "I want to clear a condition by immediately acting to prove her wrong, and I'll shift my balance toward the opposite principle."

"What do you do to prove her wrong?" asks the GM.

"I reach out and carefully, kindly, gently lift her up. 'I'm not like them,' I say. 'I never wanted to fight you like this. I just wanted you to stop taking dangerous actions that might hurt other people. You can't let your rage define you as a leader; you have to seek peace, in all things.'"

"Oh, excellent! So you're proving you're different by **guiding and comforting** Zo Jian!" says the GM.

"I didn't think of that, but yeah!" says Hector.

"Alright, clear your condition and shift your balance toward Progress, and then go ahead and roll with **Harmony** to **guide and comfort**!"

Lose Your Balance

If your balance shifts past the end of the track, you **lose your balance**. You obsess over that principle to a degree that's not healthy for you or anyone around you. Choose one of the following:

- Give in or submit to your opposition
- Lose control of yourself in a destructive and harmful way
- Take an extreme action in line with the principle, then flee

Afterward, when you've had some time to recover and recenter yourself, shift your center one step towards the principle you exceeded and clear all your conditions and fatigue. Reset your balance to your new center.

As you become more set in your ways and beliefs, you may find yourself leaning towards one principle more than another. This can be a good thing! Your firm belief in one of your principles makes it beneficial to **live up to your principle** when it really matters. However, you're teetering on the edge of danger—you'll have a hard time **denying a callout** on that strong principle, and if you shift your balance further, you **lose your balance**. When you do, you become so obsessed with that principle that you end up causing problems for yourself and others. You lose your balance.

You can only **lose your balance** on-screen. In all cases, when you lose your balance, you are in some way removed from the action afterward. Sometimes you might flee. Sometimes you might fall unconscious. You might still be in the scene, but you're not an active participant—you can't respond to someone if they try to **guide and comfort** you, and you can't trigger most moves or be proactive, at least not yet. It's a bit like being taken out—you're not an active agent until you've had some time to recover.

If you choose to *"give in or submit to your opposition,"* you're so overcome by the principle that you're overwhelmed and resign to giving up rather than resist further. If your opposition wants you to do something—instead of just surrendering—then choosing this option means you follow through on whatever they want you to do. In order to choose this option, you need opposition to give in to; you can't give up or give in without any opposing force.

If you *"lose control of yourself in a destructive and harmful way,"* your obsession with that principle causes you to lash out at the people and world around you. You might lose control of your firebending and erupt a burst of flame as you vent your frustration, or become so overcome with your belief in Progress that you destroy a priceless heirloom of your lineage. Whatever happens, something is destroyed or someone gets hurt (physically or emotionally).

If you *"take an extreme action in line with the principle and flee,"* your temporary fixation on that principle means you do something drastic in pursuit of that belief. This is a catch-all for other kinds of extreme, intense actions you might take that show your overcommitment to your principle. Whatever you do has to be costly and consequential—it's not extreme if you come out in more or less the same place on the other side. After you take the action, you flee the scene, and you can't return—you're out until the scene changes.

If your *center* shifts past +3 or -3, then it might be time to change your playbook or retire your character. See page 219 for more on the ways your character's story might shift dramatically.



EXAMPLE

Nokkahak the Bold, played by Nadja, is in an exchange, fighting with the dangerous "King" Kezhu, when King uses the Test Balance technique on Nokkahak!

"King looks at you with scorn in his eyes. The ground beneath him keeps shooting up little pebbles that enter orbit around him with each step—it's kind of intimidating. 'Not bad so far, kid, but I've been taking it easy on you,' he says. 'Run home to your friends before I actually start trying. You don't have what it takes to face me alone.' He's shifting your balance away from center, which in your case means away from Confidence and towards Friendship."

"My balance goes off the edge," says Nadja. "I **lose my balance**!"

"That only happens at the end of the exchange, but since it's just you and King and both of you have gone, it's the end of the exchange right now! So you **lose your balance**, Nokkahak—in some way, you are out of the fight because what he says throws you off. Which of the options from the move do you pick?" asks the GM.

"I'm not sure," says Nadja. "I don't want to give in to him—he might just kill me! He's a pretty scary guy..."

"In this case, he's actually telling you to run back to your friends," says the GM. "I'm fine if giving in here means you run away."

"What would 'losing control of myself in a destructive or harmful way' mean here? I'm already trying to use my training to fight him and it's not going very well" asks Nadja.

"It might not make a ton of sense for this situation," says the GM. "If it doesn't, you should pick something else."

"Okay," says Nadja. "Then I give in and flee! I run away to go find my friends!"



ADVANCEMENT BEYOND GROWTH

In many tabletop roleplaying games, characters become stronger and more straightforwardly powerful over the course of the campaign. That's true to some extent of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** as well—PCs earn growth, which eventually becomes advancements that improve the character. So it can be easy for everyone in the game to focus on accumulating growth as the primary form of advancement in the whole campaign. But growth is just one method of "advancement," and the others are just as crucial—both players and GMs should keep these other forms of advancement in mind!

PCs grow in their trainings by acquiring new techniques, first and foremost. The best way to easily differentiate between a novice Firebender and a trained master is by how many and which techniques they have. PCs can find new masters to teach them techniques—often, a PC will identify a technique that a foe just used against them, and then set out to learn that technique, perhaps even from that very foe! Both players and the GM should keep an eye out for opportunities for the PCs to learn new techniques, especially because fulfilling mastery conditions is one of the best ways for PCs to be faced with hard lessons (see page 214 for more on mastery conditions).

The way the PCs struggle with their balance principles is another kind of development and advancement. As a PC pushes their center ever closer to one principle, they both become stronger in some respects—better able to **live up to their principle**—and closer to losing their balance! And at some point, a PC will resolve the tension between their principles, genuinely choosing one over the other. That kind of advancement can lead a PC to changing playbooks entirely, or even retiring from play!

As you play **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, be sure to keep these other forms of advancement in mind—and read more about them in **Chapter 7: Advancement**!

Advancement Moves

These moves provide ways for your character to change and grow, while tying back to the central themes of the game itself. Both of these moves are explained in much greater depth in **Chapter 7: Advancement**.

Growth Questions

At the end of each session, each player answers the following questions:

- Did you learn something challenging, exciting, or complicated about the world?
- Did you stop a dangerous threat or solve a community problem?
- Did you guide a companion towards balance or end the session at your center?

Each player also answers their playbook's unique personal growth question. For each "yes", mark growth. When you have marked four growth, you take a growth advancement.

Growth questions point at core lessons the PCs can learn about themselves and the world, pushing them to be open-minded heroes. The core three questions can be answered collectively as a group, while each PC's individual playbook question is answered individually. For more on growth questions, see page 209.

Training Move

When you spend time with a teacher learning and training in a new technique, roll with modifiers from the following questions:

- Is your balance in line with your center or are you free of conditions? If yes, take +1.
- Do you and your teacher share at least one background? If yes, take +1.
- Does your teacher agree with your reasons for training and learning? If no, take -1.
- Is the technique easy to grasp based on your current training, experience, and skills? If no, take -1.

On a hit, you learn the technique, and your master shifts your balance. On a 10+, you learn it with ease, and it takes as little time as possible. On a 7–9, it either takes more time than normal, or you must mark two conditions. On a miss, you can't learn the technique yet because you need another lesson before you can grasp its full use. Your master will tell you what additional task you must undertake to put yourself into the correct state of mind; do it, and you learn the technique.

The training move is all about acquiring new techniques by studying with a master. It almost always requires you to have a teacher, and it requires you to have the appropriate training to learn the technique. For more on the training move, see page 212. For more on techniques you might learn, see Appendix A.

Custom Moves

Now that you've seen how moves work, and have a sense of what the basic, playbook, and balance moves do, you might be interested in creating moves of your own, especially if you're the GM! All of the existing moves are designed to tie **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** together and reinforce the kinds of stories told about the Four Nations and its young heroes. When you make a custom move, you can refine those tools into moves specific to the kind of story you and your group want to tell. Whether it's adding a move unique to a location or a move suited to specific kinds of social interactions, creating custom moves can add specificity to your game. This section helps explain how to do all that. Primarily, this section is for GMs—players will very rarely, if ever, invent their own custom moves.



When to use Custom Moves

The core moves of this game can see you through a vast array of situations—you won't *need* a custom move to resolve something like a fight or a negotiation because the basic moves already do a lot of that work. Custom moves, then, are for when you *want* something more suited to an individual situation. They're for times when the situation is specific enough, different enough, and interesting enough to warrant a more focused move to resolve some uncertainty.

Maybe there's a bending exam you want to make more interesting than just seeing how players **rely on their skills and training**—a custom move can make that moment more dynamic and specific, allowing you to even differentiate between a bending exam at a Firebender Academy and a traditional coming-of-age test in the Air Nation. Sometimes you want moves to represent important locations in your game as well, like a move that triggers when players travel through the Foggy Swamp and encounter its natural hazards or spiritual whispers reflecting their psyches. In all these cases, your custom move is bringing something particular to life with new and interesting consequences all its own.

But just as important as having an interesting situation for the move is having a fundamental uncertainty for the move to resolve. Each custom move needs to *move* the story forward in an interesting way and resolve some real uncertainty—if it's not interesting or the outcome doesn't push the story forward by resolving uncertainty, it probably doesn't need to be a move and can just happen in the fiction. When something becomes a move, it's important to the game because it has rules attached to it and the outcome of the move changes the fiction and the stakes of play in a new, challenging, or exciting way.

For example, if there are no interesting outcomes of those bending tests, or if the results are guaranteed, then there's no uncertainty—you wouldn't use a basic move to resolve the situation and you certainly don't need a custom move. If the PCs are being guided safely through the Foggy Swamp by locals, then maybe there is no uncertainty about navigating the dangers of the Swamp…but there might still be uncertainty about whatever spiritual connections or messages the PCs receive while journeying through the swamp.

If you can't identify both the uncertainty that the custom move is meant to resolve and the interesting situation that makes the custom move fun and compelling then you probably don't need a custom move. Either one of the core moves of the game can resolve the situation, or the GM can just say what happens in the fiction. But if the situation is interesting, and there is some key uncertainty, and the core moves don't quite resolve the uncertainty clearly, then the GM might want to invent a custom move for the situation.

Finally, think of custom moves as adding an exclamation point to a moment in the game, really drawing attention to it and making every player sit up and take notice. Adding a custom move for a particular element highlights it! The idea should already be interesting enough to support that attention. The key here is that if something is happening that you really want to draw attention to, to make a significant moment of impact, and it has the appropriate interesting qualities and uncertainty—then a custom move is perfect!

For example, imagine that an Airbender PC is trying to earn their tattoos, and they face one final test. That test could probably be resolved by the results of **rely on skills and training**. But it's also the perfect moment for a custom move! The test is certainly interesting and exciting, a real moment of focus for that character and that culture. There is definitely uncertainty—not simply whether or not the character passes, but *why* the character might pass or fail, and what they might have to do next as a result. So when the GM creates a custom move to resolve the test, it fits the needs of the game perfectly!

Building Custom Moves

Generally speaking, a move has the following components:

- A trigger: "When _____ happens…"
- An outcome: "…_____ happens." This could involve rolling the dice but it can also just give hold or involve choosing options from a list instead.
- Stakes: If the move *does* require rolling the dice, you need to define what happens on each of the possible outcomes—a 10+, a 7–9, and a 6-.

For that last part, remember that a 10+ means things go pretty well (sometimes flawlessly), a 7–9 means it generally works but with some kind of cost or complication, and a 6- means things get worse or even more complicated. A 6- doesn't always mean failure—it could mean you do what you wanted, but you overdo it or make things worse in the process!

Aside from the mechanics listed above, remember once more that any custom move needs to fit these criteria in order to be a move at all:

- The move needs to trigger when attempting an interesting, risky, or uncertain action.
- The move needs to create or lead to outcomes that push the game's fiction forward.

Trigger

The **trigger** of a move determines when you turn to it; it's what happens in the game that activates the game mechanics. A trigger needs to be clear and explicit about when it happens—if it's too generic, it'll either be triggered constantly (which can slow the game down or lead to chaos, depending on its outcomes) or the game will fall apart as people argue when that move is or isn't triggered. "When you **airbend**…" isn't good because it triggers constantly every time you use your airbending to do anything.

The action that triggers the move also has to be interesting too! "When you **airbend**…" isn't particularly exciting because you can already perform simple airbending tasks if you're an Airbender!

The trigger also needs to involve some kind of uncertainty—if we know what will happen when you do something, or there isn't any kind of ambiguity about an action's outcome, it either happens outright or the GM makes a move to reflect that obvious outcome. "When you **airbend**…" doesn't have any stakes, and it's too generic so it could cover both simple actions and extremely complex ones.

The more specific you can be about when and how a move triggers, under exciting or interesting circumstances with unknown outcomes, the stronger your custom move will be. "When you **airbend**…" is too open-ended, but refining it to something like "When you **use airbending alone to fly with your glider** through danger or avoid obstacles…" makes it much clearer about *what* needs to happen in the fiction (airbending flight), *when* it happens (flying with the glider), and notes the uncertainty (danger or obstacles).

The trigger is especially important to a custom move because it tells everyone something very specific is now important to the scope and focus of your particular game. Its existence means those fictional circumstances will come up much more often than if the move didn't exist, and the players will come to care about resolving their outcomes in this specific way.

Outcome

In addition to the trigger for the move, you need to know what happens as a result of the move—what are the PCs trying to accomplish and what are the action's results and effects? The outcome(s) of a move can be a singular effect or come from a list of options, but however it's decided, it needs to change the situation or open up an avenue for new challenges and storytelling. If a move's outcome doesn't change the game world or the story in some way, it needs to be stronger. A move's outcomes should always provide a way forward or lead to further action. If it doesn't, then the move isn't a move or it doesn't need to exist.

Let's say that Pai Sho has become an important part of your game and you want to make a custom move around it.

You start with the move:

> When you play an opponent in Pai Sho, roll with **Focus**. On a 10+, you win handily. On a 7–9, it's a close game but you win; mark a condition. On a miss, you lose.

This move doesn't really change the state of the game with its outcomes, unless winning or losing the game has some truly serious stakes that come with it. It's also not particularly interesting! All that happens is you win or lose the game, possibly at the cost of a condition. This move might be resolved by **relying on your skills and training** if you know Pai Sho well enough and it's important to know if you win or not; the outcome of the game could also be resolved metaphorically, like winning an argument and making a winning move in the fiction at the same time.

Maybe what's really important about Pai Sho in your game is its social aspect and the use of the game as a vehicle for social dueling and reading others. With that in mind, here's an alternate trigger: "When you **study an NPC opponent during a game of Pai Sho**, roll with **Harmony**." The effects also need to change to match the new intent—studying an opponent through play by observing not just their tactics but their behaviors and mannerisms.

So the outcome becomes:

> When you study an NPC opponent during a game of Pai Sho, roll with **Harmony**. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7–9, hold 1. While playing this game, spend hold—1-for-1—on one of these options:
> - Exchange banter over simple plays. Ask them a question about what's on their mind; they must answer honestly or mark 1-fatigue. Then they ask you a question and you must answer honestly or mark 1-fatigue as before.
> - Ask a leading question and lay a trap for them in the game. Their response to your guile reveals something about their personality or reveals their principle.
> - Pressure them with words and make an aggressive play. If you know their principle, mark 1-fatigue to shift their balance away from center by questioning or challenging their beliefs or perspective.

What makes this revision stronger is how it affects the framework of your game. The move is no longer about just winning or losing; it's about understanding your opponent. It makes the winning or losing more metaphorical by connecting gameplay to the ebb and flow of bantering and throwing barbs as you place game tiles. Each outcome also changes the flow of the game somehow—you trade information and states of mind with the NPC, learn what they believe in, or make a power play in the moment, each of which leads to new situations and challenges.

There are several common types of outcomes:

- **Direct, instant effects:** When this move triggers, something happens that changes the game's fiction without involving other mechanics in its resolution. These effects might most often be purely fictional but they could determine how the rules are used in certain situations as well. Even if the move doesn't explicitly set things up with game mechanics, it can still imply those situations with its fiction. For example, a move that gives or takes away an NPC's trust sets up how PCs might be able to **plead** with them later (or not).

- **Shift balance:** Your move can result in shifting a target's balance or shifting your own balance, depending on the situation (voluntarily or not). When a move results in shifting balance, it means that move is about reinforcing or challenging the target's beliefs somehow. A move might offer flexibility or choice in how that person's balance shifts in either direction, or in who decides how balance shifts. This move could instead only shift one's balance away from or only towards their center. Either way, it needs to be clear which way balance shifts and what happens that causes the shift. Is the person making the move strengthening the target's beliefs or trying to convince them of an opposing viewpoint?

- **Inflict or remove conditions:** Your move can inflict a condition on another PC or another target, depending on the format and intention of the move. If a move involves conditions, it should indicate and reflect the emotional stakes and situations in which the move applies. Moves that inflict conditions imply "harm," although it isn't physical—you're taking an emotional blow or having your confidence shaken. On the other hand, a move that clears a condition implies comfort or rest.

- **Apply status effects:** Similar to a move that inflicts conditions, your move can result in applying one or more status effects to a PC or NPC. These moves should clearly outline the conditions in which these status effects apply and when or how they might be cleared (if the status doesn't already specify an endpoint). For example, a move about falling into an ancient ruin's trap could apply the *Doomed* status until the PC escapes. A location-based move for a region with a heavy rainy season could grant *Empowered* on Waterbenders and Airbenders for as long as the storm lasts.

- **Inflict or clear fatigue:** Your move can inflict fatigue if it involves some kind of harm, exhaustion, or strain as an outcome. Your move can clear fatigue instead if it involves rest, recuperation, or some other form of relief. A move might inflict fatigue or affect how much fatigue is marked to represent environmental conditions (whenever you mark fatigue in extreme desert heat, mark an additional fatigue), or it could be a cost paid when making a move (mark 1-fatigue and roll with **A STAT**). A move that inflicts or clears fatigue should be explicit about why and how a PC becomes more or less physically, mentally, or emotionally drained or worn down.

- **Choose options:** Your move can allow players to choose one or more results from a list of options. The number of choices might be static or they might be determined by the results of a roll ("On a 7–9, choose one; on a 10+, choose two," etc.). When a move provides options, the player making the move has more agency in where the story goes next or how things shake out.

- **Gain and spend hold:** Your move can give players access to hold, which they can spend within a certain timeframe or situation on various benefits or fictional effects. This is similar to choosing from a list of options, except that it allows the player to parcel out the effects based on the context of the game (rather than making a more sweeping choice all at once).

Stakes

A custom move needs to have stakes, especially if it involves rolling the dice. If the move doesn't have any consequences or risks involved, why are we rolling instead of just narrating what happens or asking the GM to make a move? If a move doesn't involve rolling the dice, how do things change or progress after the move resolves?

When thinking about the stakes of a move that involves rolling the dice, consider what it means to get a hit or a miss. As a general rule, a 10+ means that you get everything that you want or more than you set out to do; a 7–9 means you get some of what you want or have to deal with a complication or cost; and a miss means things go badly or the situation changes dramatically. When you create a move with these kinds of results, use the outcomes to shape the move's results. If a move gives a player hold, a 10+ could give several hold while a 7–9 might only give one. That same move might instead only give one or two hold but a 10+ result might have an extra effect that a 7–9 result doesn't. A move that lets a player choose from a list of options could give more than one choice on a hit with a fixed result on a miss, or it could let the player choose on a hit while the *target* of the move (or the GM) chooses the outcome on a miss.

If your move just happens without rolling dice, stakes are also important to consider—instead of finding out what happens with dice, you know what happens in the moment and you play to find out what happens after that. The move still needs to make a change to the world, either by affecting the people, the environment, or the narrative itself, to be a move. If a move's outcome doesn't change the game or do something interesting in the story, it either doesn't need to be a move and can just happen through roleplay, or it needs to be stronger.

Combat Exchanges

You may be heroes, and you may do your best to uphold balance, and you may try to help people and solve problems with kind words and generous action…but eventually, you're going to be surrounded by angry waterbending pirates uninterested in your kind words or your generous actions. All they want is that silver boomerang on your back. You can't **intimidate** them—trying to **intimidate** them and missing is how you got into this mess. So you pull that silver boomerang off your back, lift it, and get ready. Time to fight!

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game features a combat system designed to represent the fluidity and push and pull of fights in the Avatarverse. Combatants decide how they approach the conflict, and then take action, using their trained techniques to pull off impressive stunts. You and your foes trade blows in bouts of action called **exchanges**, until someone runs, surrenders, or is defeated!



Exchanges vs. Basic Moves

Before you dive deeper into the system of exchanges, however, it's important for you to know—you don't have to use the exchange system for literally every fight. When a fight pops up—when one PC says, "I'm blasting those guys with wind!" and "those guys" might fight back—then everyone in your game considers whether or not you actually need to use exchanges and the deeper combat system. The basic moves of the game don't include any moves specifically about fighting, but **rely on your skills and training** and **push your luck** can together cover a lot of ground for physical action—including some kinds of fighting!

The difference between using the basic moves to resolve a fight and using the exchange system is all about uncertainty and importance. If the fight isn't uncertain at all—the enemy combatants have no chance against the companions, whatsoever—then the moves don't really trigger. The GM won't call for them, let alone the exchange system! There's no uncertainty, so the GM just says what happens! This situation is rare—most combatants have a slim chance of making a dent, even if they're not particularly adept—but if it happens, just keep the conversation moving.

Then, assuming that there is uncertainty—that the players and the GM aren't entirely sure how this fight can go—use the following ideas to think about whether or not the basic moves can handle the situation. The GM in particular thinks about the following premises when a fight is on the horizon, examining whether each is true or not:

- The enemy fighters are just obstacles, not interesting, complex, or difficult opponents.
- The stakes of the fight are boring—if the companions lost entirely, it would be frustrating and if they won, it would be lackluster.
- This fight isn't an interesting impact moment on its own—it isn't the climax of the episode, it isn't the culmination of the companions' plans and actions, it isn't a moment of confrontation with a meaningful or interesting antagonist or villain.

If all of the premises are true, then it's a great time to use **rely on your skills and training** to resolve the fight. On a hit, the PCs handle the low-level enemies, taking them out or running them off. On a 7–9, the enemy combatants fight back, and the PC might suffer a status or a condition, unless they can mark fatigue to get past it. On a miss, the GM makes a move as hard as they like and uses that move to make interesting things happen—be it a much more dangerous enemy arriving (and likely spurring a switch to the exchange system) or the fight accidentally knocking over a torch and starting a massive fire! Even in situations where the PCs might be outnumbered, you can still use **push your luck** to resolve the fight quickly when the fight itself isn't actually of interest.

If, however, some of the premises aren't true—the enemy fighters *are* interesting, complex, named characters; the stakes of the fight are interesting, and if the PCs lost, it would lead somewhere interesting; or the fight itself *is* the climactic moment of the episode—then that's a good sign you should switch over to the exchange system. In other words, as a quick rule of thumb:

- If there is no uncertainty about the fight, keep the conversation moving.
- If there is uncertainty but it's not an interesting fight in any way—nobody at the table is interested in the actual fight—then resolve it with the appropriate basic moves.
- If there is uncertainty and someone at the table is interested in the actual fight, resolve it using the exchange system.

Running Exchanges

In the full combat system of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, combat takes place in exchanges, sets of blows, blocks, and dodges that combine into a single fluid sequence. Imagine two foes circling each other then closing , one throwing a fireball and then a leg sweep, the other dodging both attacks before throwing a blast of air into the first fighter, flattening them against a wall. That whole series of blows covers one exchange. An exchange isn't "You get one punch, and I get one kick"—an exchange covers several individual strikes, dodges, blocks, and moves that you can envision in a flurry of bending, weaponry, and martial skill.

An exchange begins when the two combatants start moving and striking at each other more than anything else, and it ends right as they break apart, even just for a moment, before diving into a new exchange! Don't think of exchanges in terms of actual time. Think of them in terms of cinematic tension; a series of attacks back and forth between two foes might be one to three exchanges or so, before the camera turns to a different set of fighters.

Combat exchanges also don't have to happen in immediate succession—characters can talk to one other or take other actions between exchanges. Imagine two combatants coming together, exchanging blows—a fireball, a wind-blade, a twisting block and counterstrike—before they are hurled apart and rise to their feet, breathing heavily. At that moment, if one of them charges the other, and the other meets the charge, then a new exchange begins. But if one of them starts talking, that might trigger **plead**, or **intimidate**, or **call out**. If one of them tries to subtly freeze the floor between them, that might be **rely on skills and training**; if one of them tries to distract the other to create an opportunity, that might be **trick**.

Always remember that the next exchange only starts when the two of them directly physically engage each other. Even if they both focus on defense and maneuvering, or evasion and observation, they're still taking physical actions that you can imagine in and around the other—one of them trying to get on top of the building nearby while the other lifts an earth shield. As soon as they both recommit to the fight, a new exchange has begun.

Beginning a Combat

You're interested in this combat, you are uncertain, and you don't want to resolve it with the basic moves. Excellent! Now, how do you start your fight?

First things first—the GM makes sure everyone in the fight is clear on the situation. Who is involved in the fight? Where exactly are you fighting? What are the surroundings like? Players ask questions of the GM to help clarify the situation as the GM fills in the details. The most important things to note:

- What is the environment like?
- Who all is fighting?
- Who is engaged with whom?

Describing the environment isn't about clearly stating advantageous features to use in the fight—that's closer to answering **assess a situation** questions, although if someone does **assess the situation** then that explains the environment pretty well all on its own. The key here is to ensure that no one in the fight is surprised by an obvious feature. You don't want a Waterbender to say, "I didn't know there was a canal running along the road!" halfway through the fight!

Explaining who is fighting—and their positions—clarifies the size and importance of the combatants and gives the PCs one last chance to try to avoid a fight (if that's even possible). Just like with the environment, no player should say, "Wait, I didn't realize there were sixty guys standing in the open, ready to fight us!" What's more, if someone is present but *not* participating at all in the fight, that's just as important to note.

Explaining who engages with whom is a critical step in starting a combat. One fighter is **engaged** with another if they are in reach of each other's skills, training, and techniques, and if they actively focus on each other. The GM is the primary arbiter of who engages with whom, but every combatant is almost never engaged with every other combatant. Different fighters face off against different foes, saying, "I'll hold them off," or "Don't worry, I've got this guy." Each set of engaged fighters has its own exchanges, and changing who you're engaged with in a fight is only worth noting if you specified who you were fighting from the start for a fictionally appropriate reason.

Exchange Combatants

Every exchange requires at least two combatants **engaged** with each other. It's not an exchange if one person is punching, but the other person refuses to fight, dodge, block, or respond physically in any way! Both combatants have to be involved in the fight, each responding and reacting in kind; if someone insists on just taking each blow on the chin, completely refusing to meet the attacker…then the consequences of those blows just happen in full!

When a combat starts, however, the GM should split engaged fighters up into their own individual exchanges instead of lumping everyone together into one giant exchange. The Airbender focuses on the Fire Nation guards, while the Earthbender takes on the Fire Nation general herself, and the Waterbender doesn't participate in an exchange at all—he's busy dousing the fires on the village! The Airbender vs. Fire Nation guards is one exchange, while the Earthbender vs. Fire Nation general is a second, separate exchange; the Waterbender isn't even in an exchange since they aren't engaged with anyone, making moves when appropriate and joining an exchange only if they jump into the fight!

If the PCs want to gang up on one enemy, they can do that… just so long as there aren't other enemies who might divert them and peel them off. If three PCs go up against a squad of guards, their lieutenant, and a rampaging spirit, the GM should ask which characters attend to which enemies. Think of it this way: if no PC specifically addresses and focuses on a particular threat, then that's a golden opportunity for the GM to make a hard move to show what that threat actually does while no one stops them! The more that you can break up exchanges into bouts of three or fewer combatants, the more effective your combat exchanges will be.

Regardless, every player in the game, the GM especially, should make sure everyone understands who is involved in any given exchange, so the companions know exactly who they're fighting. "Surprise attacks," which involve one party attacking someone unable to defend themselves, aren't a part of exchanges, so combat—an exchange of strikes, dodges, blocks, and so on—isn't really happening yet.

Approaches & Techniques

When an exchange begins, every combatant chooses one **approach** to use. Their approach signifies the overarching way they act throughout the exchange. There are only three approaches in the game:

- **Defend and maneuver**—you are blocking incoming strikes with a strong guard, tiring out your opponents, shifting position, knocking down blasts of fire or air sent at you without giving up ground, but seizing opportunities to change your standing or retreat.
- **Advance and attack**—you are throwing punches, fireballs, water whips, etc. at your opponent, pressing them and trying to inflict harm, sticking close to your foes to ensure you can strike at them.
- **Evade and observe**—you are slipping around blows, twisting just out of reach of your enemy, all the while taking in your opponent, watching them, learning about how they fight, and perhaps even exchanging verbal barbs.

Your approach determines the overall style you apply to this exchange in terms of what you're actually doing—if you're **evading and observing**, you're not charging and pummeling your foe. What's more, your chosen approach determines the **techniques** available to you within the exchange. In every exchange, each combatant can use one or more techniques, which represent individual moves or actions within the exchange. Techniques allow you to directly affect the other combatants or the environment around you, perhaps inflicting fatigue or conditions, inflicting or clearing statuses, or even shifting your foe's balance.

Every trained combatant in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** has access to the **basic techniques**, the core tactics tied to each approach. Each approach has three basic techniques tied to it, to represent the general set of actions most combatants could undertake when using that approach. If a character isn't trained well enough to easily and consistently use those basic techniques, there's a good chance they aren't trained well enough to even *be* a combatant in a real exchange—there's no uncertainty when a trained Firebender goes up against a kid who can't yet consistently create a tiny flame in their palm.

There are also **advanced techniques**, techniques that represent greater training and require time to master. PCs can have advanced techniques at **learned**, **practiced**, or **mastered** levels.

- A learned technique is one that the PC has been taught but hasn't yet successfully employed in combat.
- A practiced technique is one that the PC has been taught and has used in combat.
- A mastered technique is one that the PC has fully mastered by completing a special mastery condition set to them by their teacher.

If an NPC knows an advanced technique, they have it mastered—the GM doesn't track learned or practiced techniques for NPCs.

You can find more on advanced techniques and learned, practiced, and mastered levels on page 211. For now, what's most important to know is that characters use mastered techniques the same way they use basic techniques—with ease and facility. But learned or practiced techniques are harder to use, with greater costs.

NPCs, Techniques, and Changing Balance

The number of techniques an NPC can use for their approach is determined by 1 + their current balance at the start of that approach. In other words, if an NPC **defends and maneuvers** and has a principle of +1 at the start of the resolution of the **defend and maneuver** approach, they get to use two techniques.

An NPC who shifts their balance before resolving their approach might get a different number of techniques. If a PC uses Strike against that same NPC during **advance and attack**, thereby shifting the NPC's balance and increasing their principle to +2, the NPC gets to use three techniques during **evade and observe**.

The NPC's balance at the start of their chosen approach is all that matters. Whatever their balance was at the start of the exchange is irrelevant!

The Stance Move

Choosing an approach only declares the basic style a combatant uses during an exchange—each combatant still has to choose specific techniques to use. An NPC can always use a number of techniques equal to their balance rating +1. To determine how many techniques a PC combatant can use, they make the **stance move** when resolving approaches: each player rolls with the appropriate stat, based on the approach they chose.

- **Defend and maneuver** rolls with **Focus**
- **Advance and attack** rolls with **Passion**
- **Evade and observe** rolls with **Creativity** or **Harmony**, the PC's choice

> On a 7–9, use one basic or mastered technique. On a 10+, choose one from this list instead:
> - Mark 1-fatigue to use a learned technique
> - Use one practiced technique
> - Use two different basic or mastered techniques
>
> On a miss, you stumble, but you can shift your balance away from center to use one basic technique.

Keep in mind that this means on a miss, you can almost always use one basic technique, but only a basic technique—you can't use any advanced techniques on a miss, even mastered ones.

The disadvantage of using a learned or practiced technique is that you must roll a 10+ on the **stance move**, and for a learned technique you must pay an additional cost. But because you don't choose techniques until after you have rolled the stance move, you can always choose to use a basic or mastered technique on a 7–9, even if you were hoping to get to use your learned or practiced technique.

Step-By-Step Exchange

Once you know who the combatants are in the exchange, follow these steps to resolve the exchange:

STEP 1

The GM chooses approaches

For each non-player combatant in the exchange, the GM chooses an approach. The GM should note these approaches down but keep them secret—the players don't get to know what approaches the NPCs chose when they decide what to do. The GM doesn't choose any techniques yet.

STEP 2

Each player chooses approaches

For each PC in the exchange, their player chooses their approach. Players should feel free to discuss what approaches they're choosing, and don't have to keep it secret. Players don't choose any techniques yet. If the PCs are fighting each other for some reason—a rare occurrence, but possible—then they choose approaches secretly.

STEP 3

The GM reveals what they chose for each NPC

The GM reveals their chosen approaches, and any other unrevealed approaches are now revealed, so every combatant's chosen approach is public.

STEPS 4-6

Resolve each approach

Resolve the approaches in order, starting with all **defend and maneuver** approaches, followed by all **advance and attack** approaches, followed by all **evade and observe** approaches. When resolving each approach, PCs who chose that approach roll the **stance move** to see how many techniques they may use. NPCs use techniques equal to 1 + their current balance as it stands specifically at the start of that approach.

PCs choose their techniques first, and then the NPCs choose their techniques to use. All techniques within an approach are functionally resolved simultaneously.

If anyone is taken out or loses their balance, they don't suffer those consequences yet, even if their approach hasn't been resolved yet. The same goes for statuses (page 151)—the effect of the status doesn't kick in until the exchange ends.

STEP 7

Resolve being taken out or losing your balance

Now, whoever has been taken out or lost their balance resolves those effects. If necessary, PCs resolve first, and NPCs second. Remember that because you don't resolve **losing your balance** until this step, then before this step, your balance still counts as its highest possible extreme (+3 for PCs, and +1, +2, +3, or higher for NPCs depending upon their status). That means even if a PC loses their balance, they might be able to **live up to their principle** one last time with it at +3 before the end of the exchange. Similarly, an NPC still gets the benefit of their high balance in one last exchange before they lose their balance.

EXCHANGE STEPS SUMMARY

1. The GM chooses an approach for each NPC or group of NPCs in the exchange; the GM keeps their choice secret.
2. Each player of a PC in the exchange chooses an approach for their character. If multiple players have PCs in the exchange, they can talk and coordinate. Their choices can be public, but if the PCs oppose each other, they keep their choices secret and reveal in the next step.
3. The GM reveals what they chose for each NPC, and PCs opposing each other reveal their previously secret approaches.
4. All combatants who chose **defend and maneuver** resolve their approach.
5. All combatants who chose **advance and attack** resolve their approach.
6. All combatants who chose **evade and observe** resolve their approach.
7. All characters who lost their balance or were taken out now resolve those results.





After the Exchange

The full effects of a character being taken out or losing their balance resolve outside of fight exchanges. While a character might know they are taken out during the **advance and attack** approach phase or lose their balance during the **evade and observe** approach phase, they don't actually get taken out until the exchange is over.

When a PC **loses their balance**, their player chooses options, and the GM says what happens without uncertainty—everyone at the table knows that a character lost their balance, and the full effect of that move must come into play. A character losing their balance is at an inflection point for their story!

Similarly, when a PC is taken out, they are unable to act any more. The exact details of how they are taken out can be set up outside of fight exchanges—but almost always, a PC being taken out is a golden opportunity for the GM to make another move. That might lead to the PC getting captured or the NPCs acting with impunity to take what they were after or otherwise win the day.

Remember that after an exchange ends, there is no requirement to go right into another exchange. The combatants break apart after their exchange of blows, and maybe they decide to throw words at each other as they breathe heavily and circle each other, looking for a better position. Maybe no combatants want to fight anymore. Maybe a combatant has decided that fighting directly is a losing strategy, so they quickly set fire to their surroundings, hoping to distract the companions with danger.

If multiple combatants want to keep fighting, then another exchange ensues. This also covers situations in which one side wants to only defend or evade—they're still "fighting," still actively participating in the exchange, even if it's only to protect themselves. If only one combatant (or one side of combatants) wants to keep fighting—to the extent that their targets won't even resist incoming blows—then no exchange is needed; the attackers simply inflict fatigue or conditions on their targets. And if no combatants are engaging each other, then there's no need for an exchange at all!

This also helps sort out when a fight's fully over. If all combatants on one side of the conflict are defeated, unable to continue fighting in any way, then no more exchanges are needed! The GM uses the drives and balance principles of involved NPCs to determine how they react, as well. If a group of soldiers have their leader knocked out by the PCs, then soldiers with a drive "To survive" are going to run! Similarly, if all the PCs are defeated or flee, the GM can decide how the NPCs react—capturing the PCs, fleeing themselves, etc.—based on their drives and balance principles.

For the most part, long combats that run for many exchanges until both sides are totally exhausted are quite rare in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. Instead, both PCs and NPCs usually take the chance offered by the end of an exchange to pursue new tactics, offer a truce, or get away from the fight!

Statuses

Throughout **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, but especially in combat exchanges, characters might find themselves suffering ill effects or benefitting from positive effects as a result of their environment. They might be lit on fire or caught under a fallen beam. They might be trapped in the earth or be slipping and sliding around on a surface covered in ice. They might be well-equipped and supported for an upcoming challenge or might draw extra strength from the full moon in the sky.

All of these effects are covered by **statuses**, specific states that apply mechanical effects to reflect the way the character's environment affects them. Many combat techniques assign or remove statuses, but other moves might inflict or bestow statuses as well.

Statuses are always based on something true in the fiction. No character is ever just *Trapped* without any further explanation—they're caught by something, be it ice or earth or a fallen building. No character is ever just *Empowered* without any further explanation—something empowers them, be it the potency of the place they stand upon in the Spirit World, or the pure intensity of the fire around them enhancing their firebending.

That means that a status can be removed from a character if the fiction changes. If someone's on fire, but they dive into a lake—they're not on fire anymore! And they probably aren't *Doomed* anymore, as a result. Players and the GM always work together to get on the same page about the cause of a status and its meaning in the fiction. That way, everybody understands how to remove the status, and why a given character might have a hard time with that. An Airbender might not be able to easily clear the ice surrounding them, but a Firebender would have an easy time extinguishing a flaming sleeve!

NPCs can suffer or benefit from statuses just like PCs and can escape from or lose statuses just as PCs can—as long as the fiction changes, meaning they or others take appropriate action.

Negative Statuses

- **Doomed:** You're in grave danger—mark 1-fatigue every few seconds (or each exchange) until you free yourself.
- **Impaired:** You're slowed or off-balance—mark 1-fatigue or take -2 to all physical actions (PCs) / choose one fewer technique (NPCs).
- **Trapped:** You're completely helpless—you must mark a combination of three conditions or fatigue to escape.
- **Stunned:** You're caught off-guard—you can't act or respond for a few seconds until you steady yourself.

Positive Statuses

- **Empowered:** Your abilities are naturally stronger in this moment—clear 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange.
- **Favored:** You're buoyed by circumstance—choose an additional basic or mastered technique in the next exchange, even on a miss.
- **Inspired:** You're ready to stand for something—clear *Inspired* to shift your balance toward a principle of your choice.
- **Prepared:** You're ready for what's coming—clear *Prepared* to take +1 to an appropriate roll (after the roll) or avoid marking a condition.

Doomed NEGATIVE

> You're in grave danger—mark 1-fatigue every few seconds (or each exchange) until you free yourself.

Doomed is the status for when you're drowning, or when you're on fire, or when the stone around you isn't simply immobilizing you—it's crushing you. It represents a constant, ongoing pressure upon you, causing you to mark fatigue at a steady rate until you are free. The GM decides exactly how often you mark fatigue during play, unless you're in exchanges—then, you should mark 1-fatigue at the beginning of each exchange. Remember that if you can't mark more fatigue, you mark conditions instead.

Much of the time, you can't be *Doomed* unless you're first *Impaired*, or *Impaired* and *Trapped*. You won't be drowning unless something holds you in the water; you won't be slowly crushed by rock without first being trapped in rock. But sometimes it's appropriate—your entire outfit, head to toe, can be set on fire by an angry firebending master without warning!

Empowered POSITIVE

> Your abilities are naturally stronger in this moment—clear 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange.

Empowered is the status for when a Waterbender fights under a full moon, or a Firebender draws on the strength of Sozin's Comet, or a swordswoman has been filled with the invigorating power of a friendly spirit—those moments when you are made far stronger than normal, almost always by something external to yourself.

You aren't *Empowered* just because you have the high ground (which is closer to *Favored*) or because you set up some valuable defenses (which is closer to *Prepared*); you're *Empowered* when you are strengthened far beyond your usual abilities. You usually can't really pursue this status with a technique during combat—it isn't the kind of status that a quick tweak to your environment can provide.

The GM adjudicates *Empowered* more than any other status, but they're encouraged, as always, to be a fan of the PCs. If there's an interesting, believable reason why someone is *Empowered* in this moment—for example, a Firebender standing in the middle of a raging forest fire—then the GM honors that reason by bestowing *Empowered* upon the character. Similarly, once that believable reason goes away—the forest fire is put out, or the Firebender moves away—then the status also goes away.

Empowered clears 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange, meaning after all approaches and techniques have been resolved. If you're not in exchanges, then you clear 1-fatigue every few seconds, like an inversion of *Doomed*.



Favored POSITIVE

> You're buoyed by circumstance—choose an additional basic or mastered technique in the next exchange, even on a miss.

Favored is the status for when a Firebender jet-steps to the top of the building for a clear vantage on the Earthbenders below, or when an Airbender has accelerated themselves with a gale force wind at their back, or when the Technologist flips on the hyper-charge setting on their electric gauntlet. It represents those moments when you have a temporary, situational advantage, whether due to your position in the environment, a quick trick you've pulled, or some other fleeting edge. *Favored* is different from *Prepared* because *Prepared* represents real set-up or resources, now being deployed, while *Favored* doesn't require any of that set-up, planning, or preparation. In the middle of a fight, if a Waterbender smashes a dam and fills the area with water, they might become *Favored*—it's not enough of a shift to make them *Empowered*, and too haphazard and immediate to make them *Prepared*.

Favored allows you to choose an additional basic or mastered technique in the next exchange, but you cannot use *Favored* to use the same technique twice. You must also choose a technique from the appropriate approach.

Usually, *Favored* only affects the single exchange after you earn the status. If there is no immediate exchange after you earn the status, but a new exchange picks up within a relatively close amount of time, then the status affects that new exchange. If there is no exchange at all after you earn the status, it dissipates with no effect—but often, an enemy who realizes their foe is *Favored* may surrender instead of facing the full force of their foe's strength.

You can also lose *Favored* if something happens in the fiction that takes away your temporary advantage before you get to use it—for example, an Earthbender **advances and attacks** and uses Smash against the building you're standing atop before you can **evade and observe** from a higher vantage point.

A small set of techniques, such as Lava Star (page 283) allow you to extend the duration of *Favored* for multiple exchanges, but usually require great skill and concentration!

Impaired NEGATIVE

> You're slowed or off-balance—mark 1-fatigue or take -2 to all physical actions (PCs) / choose one fewer technique (NPCs).

Impaired is the status for when you're standing on slippery ice or coughing on the smoke filling the air or sinking slowly into mud. It represents you being thrown off, your footing made unsteady, your strength being sapped. You're not out of the fight yet, not knocked out…but you're weakened or held back in some way.

PCs and NPCs both can ignore the effects of being *Impaired* at the cost of 1-fatigue. For PCs, *Impaired* forces them to roll at -2 for any physical action—which includes the **stance move** in combat exchanges. A PC might be able to get away with **pleading** or **guiding and comforting**, without taking a -2 from *Impaired*, but sometimes it's still hard to **plead** through a cloud of smoke! Marking fatigue to ignore the -2 represents expending extra energy to temporarily overcome the impairment…but it's still present, and still affects you the next time you try a physical action—you mark fatigue to push your way through the smoke, coughing and wheezing, but still functional. If you wanted to airbend the smoke cloud away, though, you might be better off using Ready (page 154).

That said, *Impaired* is usually the first and easiest negative status to inflict on anyone. In turn, it's usually the easiest status effect to remove. Get off the ice sheet and you're no longer *Impaired*; clear the smoke with a gust of wind and you're no longer *Impaired*; dry out the mud and you're no longer *Impaired*.

For an NPC, the GM makes moves as appropriate to represent how they are *Impaired*, perhaps creating opportunities in the fiction for a PC to act without an NPC interfering. In combat, an NPC may use one fewer technique (to a minimum of 0) as long as they are *Impaired*, unless they mark 1-fatigue to push past the impairment.

Inspired POSITIVE

> You're ready to stand for something—clear Inspired to shift your balance toward a principle of your choice.

Inspired is the status for when a dear friend has given you the confidence to keep fighting onward, or when you're invigorated after seeing an ally fighting against impossible odds but somehow winning, or when you see the people you're fighting for and your resolve becomes steely. *Inspired* covers those moments when your character is bolstered emotionally, almost like a positive condition—they're made more determined or bolder, not physically *Empowered* or situationally *Favored*.

You can choose when you want to clear *Inspired* to shift your balance toward a principle of your choice. You can clear it the moment you take *Inspired*, or you can hold onto it and use the status later. *Inspired* dissipates either when enough time has passed that the extra excitement and energy similarly dissipates, or something happens that robs you of your internal inspiration—be it the harsh words of a mentor (or even a foe), or the sight of an ally being defeated.

Prepared POSITIVE

> You're ready for what's coming—clear Prepared to take +1 to an appropriate roll (after rolling) or avoid marking a condition.

Prepared is the status for when the Technologist stands in the crook of a giant slingshot pulling back ever further, or when the Weapons-user fills their pockets and belts with throwing knives from an armory, or when the Waterbender takes a moment to fashion a new icy club. *Prepared* covers those situations when you actually take steps to prepare, and you set up resources or devices in advance of needing them. It isn't for fleeting moments of superiority—those are better expressed by *Favored*.

You choose when to clear *Prepared* to take the +1 on an appropriate roll—you take the +1 after you've rolled—or to avoid marking a condition. You choose when to clear *Prepared*; even when suffering a condition, you don't have to clear *Prepared* if you don't want to.

If you do clear *Prepared*, you have to make sure that it fits the fiction—you can't clear *Prepared* for your full-body-slingshot to avoid a condition inflicted by cruel words from your father! You can't take +1 from being *Prepared* with your throwing knives to then **guide and comfort** a friend! *Prepared* can still easily apply in situations other than combat exchanges, just so long as the fiction of your preparations makes sense.

If something else eliminates your preparations—an enemy swordsman cuts the slingshot, a guard takes away your throwing knives—then you lose *Prepared*.

Stunned NEGATIVE

> You're caught off-guard—you can't act or respond for a few seconds until you steady yourself.

Stunned is the status for when you get the wind knocked out of you by a fall, or when your head gets clocked by a flying chunk of metal, or when a combustionbender manages to cause an explosion right in front of your face. It represents those moments when you're completely thrown off, unable to think or act with intent, until you manage to put yourself back together again.

Stunned leaves a character functionally helpless. The status never lasts for very long—no more than a minute or two at most—but that's always long enough for a foe to take advantage. A *Stunned* character isn't able to respond—even in the middle of a fierce combat—which means there's no uncertainty when an enemy acts against them; the GM just says what happens.

Usually, *Stunned* is only inflicted by specific techniques and abilities. But *Stunned* can make sense if someone gets *Impaired* a second time—perhaps by a strong strike from a blunt weapon or a blast of airbending—depending upon the actual fictional cause. *Stunned* can occur without warning or any other status if it makes sense in the fiction—for example, it might be the best way to establish the severity of a sudden blow from a hidden enemy.

When Statuses Take Effect

Statuses are immediately true in the fiction—you're *Inspired* by a friend or *Trapped* by ice—but the effects only apply at the end of the exchange. If you become *Stunned* during the advance and attack approach, it won't affect you when you resolve evade and observe. Exchanges represent action taking place nigh-simultaneously; the effects of the status don't come into play until you move on to the next exchange, or the next set of moves outside of exchanges!

Trapped NEGATIVE

> You're completely helpless—you must mark a combination of three conditions or fatigue to escape.

Trapped is the status for when you're encased in ice, or you can't move because a heavy beam has pinned you, or you've been pulled into the earth so only your head sticks out. It represents immobility, an inability to take physical action unless you put out a massive effort to get yourself free. If every combatant on one side of a fight is *Trapped* and unable to free themselves…then the fight's over!

To be able to free yourself from being *Trapped*, you must mark a combination of three conditions or fatigue—so you could mark 1-fatigue and two conditions, or three conditions, or 3-fatigue, etc.—but you must also be able to take appropriate action to free yourself. If you're encased in ice, but you're a Technologist with a pack of flares on your belt, then maybe you can figure out a way to wriggle and light one, melting the ice. If you're encased in ice, but you're an Airbender…you might be out of luck! But always talk about what you do to free yourself. The GM, as always, is a fan of the PCs, so if you present some cool, reasonable way to apply your skills and training to get free that makes sense within the fiction, they will at best say "yes," and allow your PC to pay the cost; at worst, they'll consider this **relying on your skills and training**.

In combat exchanges, you can pay the cost and free yourself in between exchanges, as long as no one immediately rolls into another exchange. But if the fight is raging around you, then you might be helpless for an exchange as you free yourself (and pay the cost) and your comrades try to keep your foes away from you. If a friend does something to free you, however, then you can be set free without having to pay the normal cost of the status! A firebending ally who melts the ice encasing you removes *Trapped* at no additional cost.

If you are targeted by a foe while *Trapped*, and nothing stops the foe from acting, then there's no uncertainty—you can't move, after all—and the GM says what happens. Remember that bending requires movement in nearly every case to use!

Most of the time, you must be *Impaired* before you can be *Trapped*—it's hard to trap mobile fighters! But sometimes a technique might apply the status directly, or in the situation it makes sense to inflict *Trapped* straight away—for example, when a mudslide crashes down a mountain and catches a character unawares.

Basic Techniques

Defend and Maneuver Approach

When you **defend and maneuver**, you're protecting yourself or others, focusing on the environment and advantages you can build or disadvantages you can inflict. You change your position, maybe try to escape, maybe get to higher ground. You're not attacking directly, but you do your best to block enemy blows. This approach isn't as aggressive as **advance and attack**, but it isn't as standoffish as **evade and observe**. It's a solid, resistant, tactical approach. The basic techniques for this approach are as follows:

Ready

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Mark 1-fatigue to ready yourself or your environment, assigning or clearing a fictionally appropriate status of nearby characters or yourself.

When you use Ready, you set yourself or others up, just as you like. Maybe you spread an ice sheet on the ground, setting up the other characters as *Impaired*. Maybe you create your own ice weapons, setting yourself up as *Prepared*. You can affect a group of foes or a group of allies, as long as what you do makes sense. Think of Ready as tipping the odds in your favor, but without overt, hostile, aggressive action. If you set your foes on fire, you're not using Ready—you're probably doing Smash, or Hinder. If you're creating a line of flame between you and them, however—that's definitely Ready.

Whatever status you inflict with Ready is ultimately determined by the GM, so make sure you are clear about your actions in the fiction when you Ready! Similarly, whether or not you can clear away another status—for example, melting the ice and removing *Impaired*—depends upon your skills and training, too! There isn't a hard and fast rule for which actions in the fiction lead to specific status effects. Obviously a Firebender can melt the ice with fire, but if an Earthbender moves a large, flat rock into the middle of the ice sheet, then maybe that clears *Impaired* from any PC who manages to use Seize a Position and move to that rock.

Retaliate

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Steel yourself for their blows. Each time a foe inflicts fatigue, a condition, or shifts your balance in this exchange, inflict 1-fatigue on that foe.

When you use Retaliate, you make your opponent struggle, tiring them out with return strikes or forcing them to hit harder to breach your defenses. In order to hit you, your opponent has to pay a higher cost—you inflict 1-fatigue on them whenever they inflict fatigue, a condition, or shift your balance! Of course, if your opponent strikes at you but fails to inflict any harm on you for whatever reason, then you don't inflict any fatigue on them.

If your opponent inflicts 2-fatigue on you, you still only inflict 1-fatigue in return. Similarly, when your opponent inflicts two conditions on you, you only inflict 1-fatigue in return. If they inflict a condition on you two separate times, however—from two separate techniques, for example—then you inflict 1-fatigue for each, for 2-fatigue total. The key is to think of it in terms of each significant blow they strike on you; you only inflict 1-fatigue in return each time they land a significant blow, representing that additional cost you're imposing each time they get in a real hit.

Seize a Position

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Move to a new location. Engage/disengage with a foe, overcome a negative status or danger, establish an advantageous position, or escape the scene. Any foe engaged with you can mark 1-fatigue to block this technique.

When you use Seize a Position, you move through the battlefield, trying to achieve a particular place of your choice. In every exchange, the combatants are understood to be moving to greater or lesser extents. Seize a Position, though, is for specific movement toward a particular target or goal—not just the generalized motion of combat. So if you want to go somewhere in particular, or if you want to charge into battle with a new enemy, or if you want to flee from your current opponent…all of that is Seize a Position.

Seize a Position is also a great way to clear negative statuses that depend upon where you currently stand. If you're *Impaired* because you're standing in knee-deep water, you can use Seize a Position to get out of it! More rarely, Seize a Position might grant you a positive status—likely *Favored*—if you take a particularly beneficial position on the battlefield.

If you try to escape the scene, that only happens at the end of the exchange, but as long as you aren't stopped, you're gone! Remember, though, that this is for escaping the scene—if you want to lurk at the edges of the fight and be able to reenter it later, you're better off using Seize a Position within or around the fight, instead of trying to escape altogether. If you try to escape but a foe manages to inflict enough fatigue or conditions on you to take you out—for example, with Strike as you flee—then you are taken out *and* you escape! You wind up helpless and at the mercy of whatever GM move the GM wants to make…but you weren't blocked from escaping, so you do successfully get away from the fight! The GM shouldn't move to immediately capture you with the enemies you just escaped from…but you might have unthinkingly escaped into a cave and wake up to find a platypus-bear coming home!

Any foe engaged with you can mark 1-fatigue to stop you from seizing your new position. This represents your opponents expending their own energy to keep you at bay, stopping you from taking that high ground, keeping you in the water, or preventing your escape. All it takes is a single foe marking 1-fatigue to stop you from assuming a superior position or escaping…but remember, trying to make your foes tire themselves out stopping your movement around the field can be a worthwhile strategy!

Advance and Attack Approach

When you **advance and attack**, you move into direct battle with your foes, sticking to them aggressively, sending countless blows their way. This is a very aggressive approach, not standing back and letting your foe come to you but instead coming at them, hard. You might also expend energy attacking the environment to reshape it to your advantage in some way, but it's still framed by aggression, advancement, forward-motion—you don't carefully change the terrain, you break it with force! The basic techniques for this approach are as follows:

Strike

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Strike a foe in reach, forcing them to mark 2-fatigue, mark a condition, or shift their balance away from center, their choice. Mark 1-fatigue to instead choose to hammer them with your blows, forcing them to mark 2-fatigue, *or* strike where they are weak, inflicting a condition.

When you use Strike, you focus on landing heavy blows against your opponent. If you choose the **advance and attack** approach in general, you're probably sending attacks your enemy's way, but if you choose Strike, you're really committing to landing those hits.

Your Strike must be against a foe you're engaged with, in reach of your skills and training. If you just want to use Strike at no additional cost to you, you can leave it up to your foe how they absorb the hit—they get to choose if they mark 2-fatigue, mark a condition, or shift their balance away from center. Whatever they choose, they should explain a bit how they took your hit, and how it matches. If they mark 2-fatigue, maybe they put up a tiring block; if they mark a condition, maybe you manage to hit them, and it enrages them (or frightens them, or makes them insecure, etc.). If they shift balance, then maybe they keep the worst of your hits at bay, but at the end of the exchange, they recommit, double-down on their beliefs and desire to fight.

If you want control over how your opponent absorbs your Strike, however, you can mark 1-fatigue to push yourself harder and either hammer them (inflicting 2-fatigue) or hit where they are weak (inflicting a condition). You can't force them to shift their balance in this way.



Pressure

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Impress or intimidate a foe. Choose an approach—your foe cannot choose to use that approach in the next exchange.

When you use Pressure against a foe, you keep them at bay, limiting their options for the next exchange. You impress or intimidate your opposition with whatever you do, bringing an emotional component to your physical actions—describe exactly how you press your foe and how it deprives them of the chance to deploy that approach.

If you back your foe into a corner, with their back against the wall, maybe you're preventing them from **evading and observing**—no keeping their distance when they're at point blank against a wall! If you keep them constantly moving, not able to find their footing, maybe you're preventing them from **advancing and attacking**—they can't push back against you! If you lay heavy blows on them, so they can barely keep their guard up, maybe you're preventing them from **defending and maneuvering**—they can't block fast enough, so they're forced to either attack or evade!

If multiple allies all use Pressure against the same target, then they can highly limit the foe's options. But remember, whatever you do has to make sense—it's not impossible, but very hard to have a situation in which three coordinating allies can remove every possible approach from an enemy. The GM is the final adjudicator on whether or not the use of Pressure makes sense.

Smash

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Mark 1-fatigue to destroy or destabilize something in the environment—possibly inflicting or overcoming a fictionally appropriate positive or negative status.

When you use Smash, you break, wreck, destroy, or destabilize the environment in some way. Maybe you use a sharp slice of water to cut the rope holding a light overhead, use earthbending to rip away a whole wall, or use a careful blast of wind to rip the leaves off a tree. Smash is a great way to directly affect the environment, but it always does so in a destructive fashion—not adding to the environment so much as removing or demolishing it.

Smash can easily remove statuses: if an enemy is *Favored* because they're surrounded by ancient stones, then smashing those stones removes that status. Similarly, if you suffer from *Impaired* because smoke is filling the room around you, breaking a wall and letting in fresh air can remove that status. You can even inflict a status on someone by using Smash—knocking a tree over onto an enemy might inflict *Trapped* unless they get away quickly, for example. Make sure you describe what you're targeting and how, so that the GM can adjudicate what statuses are removed or inflicted.

Even if you don't inflict a status, however, keep in mind that Smash still changes the battleground. Destroying the dam and sending water cascading onto the fires in the area still puts out those fires, no matter whether or not anyone suffers a status!

Evade and Observe Approach

When you **evade and observe**, you keep your distance, not running away from your foe but avoiding letting them get close enough to really land any major hits. You dance and dodge, avoiding more than blocking, trying to take in a better sense of your foe and your environment. Instead of intensely focusing on your enemies, you observe the situation and possibly formulate a better strategy.

Note that when you choose **evade and observe** as your approach, you immediately clear 1-fatigue. If you don't have any fatigue marked, you don't get this benefit. This represents how you fundamentally take a step back, calm yourself a bit, and refocus every time you choose this approach. The basic techniques for this approach are as follows:

Test Balance

EVADE & OBSERVE

Mark 1-fatigue to challenge an engaged foe's balance. Ask what their principle is; they must answer honestly. If you already know their principle, instead shift their balance away from center by questioning or challenging their beliefs or perspective.

When you use Test Balance, you watch your foe, observing how they respond to your movements, seeing how the techniques and actions they use add up…and you're also talking to them. Test Balance is a great technique for speaking to your foe in the middle of an exchange, be it taunting them, questioning them, bargaining with them—any kind of words designed to reach them and either push them to reveal something about themselves, or to reshape themselves.

When you *"ask what their principle is,"* this is both in-fiction and out-of-fiction. You ask and they must answer at the level of players at the table, but in the actual fight, you might be asking, "What do you care about?! What is driving you to fight like this?!" Even if they try to hide it or stonewall you in the fiction, their player (the GM for all NPCs) must answer honestly, out of character.

If you've previously learned their principle in some other way, you may instead shift their balance away from their center. To do that, you must question or challenge their beliefs or perspective—most often, you say things to them that challenge their beliefs, but you can also describe how the actions you take in the middle of the exchange force them to question their own beliefs.

What's more, if you *think* you already know their principle, you can name it without having "learned" it first! For example, if you've been watching the NPC and you're pretty sure their principle is something like "Money," then you can tell the GM you're using Test Balance, and describe how you tell them there's no profit in this fight, even as you frustrate their every attempt to land a blow against you. As long as you're in the ballpark, then you can shift their balance; if their principle is "Greed," you're close enough, for example!

If you aren't close enough, however, that doesn't mean you wasted the technique. In their response to your prodding, they reveal their real principle, just as if you had asked in the first place. You always get something when you use Test Balance!

Bolster or Hinder

EVADE & OBSERVE

Aid or impede a nearby character, inflicting an appropriate status.

When you use Bolster or Hinder, you use your skills and training to apply a status effect (page 151) to one particular character (or one single group of NPCs). Unlike Ready, this technique doesn't affect the whole environment—it's focused on your particular target. In turn, that means Bolster or Hinder can be much more aggressive. Lighting a foe on fire to inflict *Doomed* on them definitely hinders them! Furthermore, Ready can help you directly—when you use Ready, you might make yourself *Prepared*. Bolster or Hinder, on the other hand, always targets someone else!

Bolster or Hinder is almost always about creating a new status, not removing an existing status. Most of the time, you'll apply a positive status to an ally or a negative status to a foe, but, you might rarely find a situation when this technique might remove a status—for example, airbending an ally past the ice below them to remove *Impaired*.

As with all techniques, make sure you describe what you actually do to use Bolster or Hinder. The status you inflict is always based on the fiction, so it's crucial for everyone—especially the GM—to understand what you do to determine the right status!

Commit

EVADE & OBSERVE

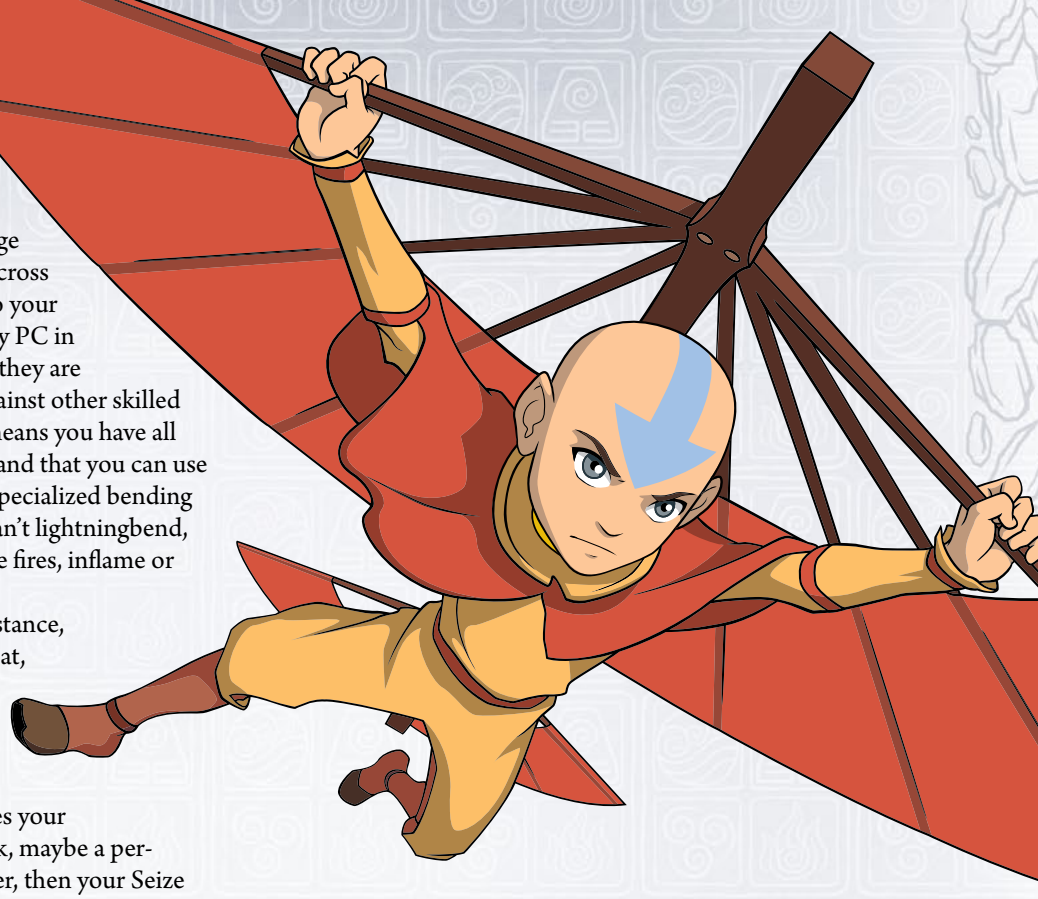
Recenter yourself amidst the fray. Shift your balance toward one of your principles; the next time you **live up to that principle**, do not mark fatigue.

When you use Commit, you do your best to refocus and recenter yourself. You already do a bit of this every time you **evade and observe**, but using the Commit technique actively gives yourself a chance to step back from the fray and change your state of mind.

Commit can appear to be a fairly "fictionless" technique—it's internal to the character and involves relatively little outward action. But you still describe exactly what you do and that outward action. Does the camera close in on your face as you take in and let out a deep breath? Do you say anything, to yourself or to others? What memories or moments or words flash through your mind? All of this should play into our understanding of why you shift your balance toward your principle, why you are strengthened in your belief.

After using Commit, you do not have to mark fatigue the next time you **live up to the selected principle**. This effect lasts until the situation changes drastically; if you haven't **lived up to the principle** usually by the end of the fight, then the effect dissipates. So be sure to shift up a principle you want to use, and then use it!

Because you shift toward "one of your principles," you can effectively use this technique to shift toward your center, lowering your risk of **losing your balance**. Remember, though, that if you do this, there's a good chance the principle you shifted towards is 0 or lower—so you don't get much benefit out of **living up to it**.



Trainings in Combat

Whenever you engage someone in combat, you're using your training. The skills that allow you to toss out strikes, dodge or block incoming attacks, or easily move across complicated battlegrounds—those all tie to your training. The baseline understanding for any PC in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is that they are skilled enough to participate in combats against other skilled opponents, regularly. In game terms, that means you have all the basic techniques completely mastered, and that you can use your training in nearly any way that isn't a specialized bending form—maybe your Firebender character can't lightningbend, but they can definitely throw fireballs, ignite fires, inflame or quench existing fires, etc.

That means whenever you choose your stance, use your techniques, and think about combat, you always couch it in terms of your own training. Just like with any other portion of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, the fictional world takes precedence. If you're an Earthbender, then your Strike uses your earthbending—maybe you throw a big rock, maybe a perfectly targeted pebble. If you're an Airbender, then your Seize a Position uses your airbending—maybe with some kind of air scooter, maybe with just a rushing wind giving you speed.

Use your fighting style to add particular shading and specificity to whatever you do in combat, too. If your fighting style involves using fans to channel your airbending, then describe how your Retaliate has you standing at the ready, fans unfolded, prepared to hurl a burst of wind at any foe who gets too close. If your fighting style involves your sash, soaked in water and thus controllable by your waterbending, then describe how your Smash involves the water-drenched sash snapping out from your hand to wrap around the scaffold's support and rip it away.

Your fighting style doesn't have to be involved in every blow you strike—sometimes, even though your Firebender's style is "swinging a chain with a flaming censer at each end," you just want to toss a fireball at someone! That's okay, but the more you can weave your fighting style into your attacks, blocks, and dodges, the better. Think of fighting style in this context as a way for you to distinguish your character from all the other fighters who share the same training, and a way to add additional capabilities to your moves—if you're whipping that chain around, maybe you can tangle someone up, and that's not normally something a Firebender could do!

The nature of your training influences what makes sense, what you can and can't do, and how it ultimately affects other characters and the environment. The GM is the final arbiter of this, ensuring that the world remains believable while honoring the PCs and their awesomeness. But an Airbender trying to break ice will always have a harder time than an Earthbender hurling a rock at it, or a Firebender melting it away, or a Waterbender turning it back to liquid and pulling it into a bottle. A swordswoman trying to put out a fire is always going to have a harder time than a Firebender simply extinguishing it, or a Waterbender pulling a torrent from the river, or a Technologist carrying some foaming device.

So when you participate in exchanges, make sure you always say what your character actually does in the fiction! Remember that to do it, you have to do it! That way, your whole group can always get on the same page about what the actual environment looks like, who does what, and why certain statuses come into play. For example, when someone uses Ready, they "assign or clear a fictionally appropriate status from nearby characters (ex: *Impaired*) or yourself (ex: *Prepared*)." The only way to know what's fictionally appropriate is to play to your training, and say what, exactly, you're doing to use Ready!

That's just as true for Test Balance—you still have to say what exactly you're doing or saying to your opponent in order to test their balance and figure out their principle. And the other character's player (most often the GM) has to do the same, making clear what they say or do in response that reveals their principle or shows how their balance shifts!

Try not to just say, "I **advance and attack**, and I choose Strike." Say, "I take up my fighting stance, before hurling myself at the Earthbender. I **advance and attack**. And when I get close enough, I sweep my hands through the air and send a crisscross of fire arcs at his feet—I use Strike!"

Weaving it All Together

This chapter presented all the different core mechanics of the game, from basic moves to balance moves to combat exchanges, as if they are disparate, separate elements. But whether you're running or playing **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, what you're doing in your game is weaving everything together into one coherent tapestry, one ongoing conversation.

While you're playing, you and the other players just talk about what you do and think and say, until a move is triggered; that move then resolves, players make necessary choices and the GM connects it all together, and the game picks up again. If you get into a fight, you may go into a combat exchange to resolve a series of blows back and forth, and then immediately go right into one of the balance moves as your PC cries out to their opponent to stop fighting. Everything connects into a whole, and all of the tools are, to some extent, available all together.

If you're a player, it's your job to help weave it all together by continuing to think as your character, to describe what they do, how they react, and so on. You can always choose to angle toward a move of some kind, trying to trigger it specifically—and you can even call out to the GM that you're trying to trigger it—but you always have to include the framing of your character's actions in the fiction. If you focus on what your character does and thinks and says, then you'll help create the connective tissue to tie the whole game together. You won't flow from one combat exchange into another just because that's what's "supposed" to happen; instead, you might make another move that makes more sense for what your character is doing in the moment, or you might go into a new combat exchange because that's what your character chooses. The more you emphasize the things your character says, does, and thinks, the more you'll help connect the whole game into one coherent story.

If you're the GM, it's your job to help weave it all together by filling in the gaps between the moves and mechanics. When the conversation of the game flows into a basic move and then back into the normal conversation and fiction, the GM helps to bring all the mechanical results of the move back into something in the story. For example, a character marking 1-fatigue appears tired or breathless, or a character marking Angry shows it on their face, and so on. Sometimes that means asking questions of the PCs to help go from the mechanics of the move back to what's actually happening in the fiction; sometimes that means just saying what happens, especially on a miss. In combat exchanges, the GM helps to string together the disparate techniques and approaches into an actual scene in the fiction, with characters moving around, speaking to each other, acting and responding.

In every case, the key to weaving the game together, to making it more than just the sum of its parts, is to make as much as possible exist within the fiction itself. The game mechanics refer to the in-fiction world—they're never just numbers on a page!

Extended Example of Play

This is an extended example of actual play. It specifically does not include a combat exchange—if you want to see an example of a combat exchange, check out page 240. This example is about the flow of moves, the conversation, and the way the GM thinks about the fiction and responds to the PCs.

The PCs in this example are:

- **Iris (she/her), the Adamant**, an Earthbender who deserted the Earth Empire military after she saw Kuvira's spirit cannon. Now she wants to remove those weapons from the world. Played by Izzy.
- **Nokahhak (she/her), the Bold**, an Airbender originally from the Northern Water Tribe, now trained at a recovered Air Temple and ready to prove herself! Played by Nadja.
- **Ren Tsuji (they/them), the Prodigy**, a master archer of the Fire Nation, taking a leave of absence from the Yuyan Archers to see Republic City. Played by Ruhan.
- **Shihan (he/him), the Pillar**, a Republic City Earthbender and leader of a specialized squad of United Military urban-combat experts called "The Street Soldiers." Played by Seiji.
- **Teru Jinno (he/him), the Hammer**, a formerly criminal technologist who flies a salvaged/stolen hummingbird mech. Played by Tyrelle.

Last session, the heroes found clear evidence of hand-held spirit vine weapons in the hands of Triad members. Now, they want to do something about it. The GM picks up with the heroes' planning to uncover more information about the underground spirit-vine-weapon trade by attending Uncle Guzai's Temple of Fortune—a seedy gambling den known to be a hub for local triad members. The PCs are in Iris's apartment in the city—a small place, but cozy, with haphazard couches for everybody to crash on—and they're arguing about exactly what to do. Iris and Teru Jinno think they should just smash down the door, but Ren and Shihan think watching the enemy is very important, and Nokahhak actually agrees with Ren but wants to impress Teru…

"I look very indecisive," says Nokahhak's player, Nadja. "My eyes are flicking back and forth between Ren and Teru."

"'Nok, come on,' I say," says Ren's player, Ruhan. "'Throwing yourself into a pit of Triad members to try to shake answers loose from them…that's not brave. That's just dumb. You're smarter than that. Be the Airbender Tenzin would be proud to call his student.' Can I **guide and comfort** Nokahhak?"

"I can kinda see it," says the GM. "But it's way closer to openly **calling on someone** to live up to their principle. You're playing on Nokahhak's Confidence, right?"

"Yes! That's even better!" Ruhan shifts Ren Tsuji's balance one step away from center—now Ren is at Excellence +2—and then Ruhan rolls 2d6, adding in Nokahhak's Confidence principle, currently at +1. Ruhan gets a 6—not quite enough!

"Can I **help**?" asks Seiji. "I really want Nokahhak to buy into what Ren Tsuji is saying. "

"Yeah," says the GM. "What do you do?"

"I step forward and put my hand on Ren's shoulder, looking at Nokahhak seriously. 'Yeah, you're better than that. You're a Water Tribe warrior and an Air Nation Airbender!' I really want to sell how awesome Nokahhak is," says Seiji.

"Great! Mark fatigue!" Seiji marks one of Shihan's fatigue, and Ruhan's roll is now a 7—a hit! Nokahhak must act as Ren Tsuji says or mark a condition, and Ren must mark 1-fatigue or let Nokahhak shift Ren's balance once in either direction. Ren's plea works on Nokahhak, but it leaves Ren open to Nokahhak's words.

"Okay, Nok? What do you do?" asks the GM.

"I don't want to mark a condition," says Nadja. "I say, 'Okay, yeah. We've got to be careful—that's the smart play.' Then I look apologetically at Teru Jinno."

"Don't forget, you get to shift Ren's balance unless Ren marks 1-fatigue," says the GM.

"Right, yeah. I want to shift Ren back toward Community—definitely down from Excellence! 'Good call, Ren,' I say to them. I want them to feel like I listened, like they're a part of something, not just the outsider who's smarter than everybody!" says Nadja.

Ruhan decides not to mark 1-fatigue and shifts Ren's balance back to Excellence +1.

"'I still think we should just blow down the door!'" says Tyrelle as Teru Jinno. "'I'm not ready to go along with this plan!'"

The PCs could try to persuade Teru Jinno much as Ren persuaded Nokahhak—by **calling out** Teru's Care principle, for example—but the GM thinks the game needs to move on to some new conflicts and decides to introduce something new to the scene.

"There's a knock on the door. Iris, you recognize the voice on the other side when it says, 'Hey! Open up! We know you're in there!' It's Kehan, your former Earth Empire comrade in your squad. Have you talked at all since you've come to Republic City?" the GM says. They're turning attention on Iris, who hasn't really gotten to participate in the argument for a bit, to share the spotlight and get everyone involved.

"Oh, no, I think I was trying to steer clear of my old life," says Izzy. "I haven't talked to Kehan in ages."

"Great. Well, that's definitely his voice on the other side of the door. What do you do?"

"I'm not sure," says Izzy. "I think I'm frozen after recognizing Kehan's voice."

"Yeah, that's fine," says the GM. "Teru? What do you do?" Again, the GM tries to share the spotlight with someone who was less engaged earlier.

"I react immediately," says Tyrelle. "I leap up, tear open the door, and say, 'What?' to whoever is on the other side."

"Awesome! So, Iris, why don't you tell us what you remember Kehan looking like?" asks the GM.

"Oh, I remember that he looked young, full of energy and patriotic fire. He was clean shaven," says Tyrelle.

"Was he powerfully built? Lanky?"

"I think he didn't seem big enough to fill out his uniform," says Izzy.

"Yeah, great. Iris, he doesn't look the same at all. Now he's got a chinstrap beard, and a few burn scars along his cheek. His head is now half-shaved, half not, and the hair he does have is long and hangs over the side of his face. He looks tougher, maybe not super-muscly, exactly, but definitely like the smaller guy you remember was hardened in the time since last you've seen him. He's wearing a green suit with silver accents, and it's a pretty nice suit. He's also got two other people behind him, one of them wearing a brownish red suit with a truncheon in her hand and a scar running over her lips, and the other with a blue jacket and a long braided beard.

"Teru, the guy in front—Kehan—looks a smidge startled as you tear open the door and face him, but you're not a big person, and in no time Kehan is scowling at you and looking at you like you're nothing. 'That's not a good way to greet guests,' he says. 'You gonna invite us in?'"

"Wait a sec," says Seiji. "These guys sound like triad members. Would I recognize them from my work with the Street Soldiers?"

"Yes," says the GM. "You've seen them all before, though you've probably never tangled with them or arrested them outright. They're Triple Threats."

"Okay, cool," says Seiji. "I get up then, and I hiss to Teru, 'Play this cool.' I don't want to get into a fight with the Triads in Iris's apartment."

"Pfft," says Tyrelle. "I can take them. 'No, you don't get invited in. Say what you came here for and then leave us alone.' Can I **intimidate** them?"

"Sure—you want them to back off so they just stay out here in the hall and then leave, instead of coming in?" Tyrelle nods in response. "What do you actually do to frighten them?" the GM asks.

"I pull out one of my little two-pronged taser devices and flick the button so electricity crackles across it," Tyrelle says. Teru Jinno's fighting style uses a hummingbird mech, but he often has all manner of devices on his person, so it makes sense that Teru Jinno has the device on hand.

"Excellent," says the GM. "Roll with **PASSION**!" Tyrelle rolls and gets a 12!

"I pick that they can't attack us; like I said, I don't want to get in a fight right here." The GM looks at the other options for the Triad members, and chooses that they back down but keep watch—they're fine staying in the hall and keeping things to a discussion, but they're still ready if things escalate.

"Kehan's eyes flick to your device, and he says 'Fine. Be that way. We heard you all were asking questions, and we decided to be polite, introduce ourselves, and offer our help as friendly neighborhood representatives. Uncle Guzai's Temple of Fortune is a pillar of the community, and you should only go there in good faith, to lose your money and spend time in good company. There certainly aren't any illegal weapons there.'"

"'And what, I'm supposed to just believe that?'" says Tyrelle, speaking as Teru.

"'Most certainly. Both because it's true, and because it's good for your health.' Kehan then makes a motion to the other two, and they start to shift away. 'Be seeing you,'" says the GM.

"Wait!" says Izzy. "Before they go, I want to pop my head around Teru. 'Kehan, wait,' I say."

"Kehan freezes at the sound of your voice, Izzy, and slowly turns to look at you. 'Iris?' he says."

"'Kehan, we're trying to get rid of the spirit vine weapons. You know they're too dangerous. You know they shouldn't be in the hands of…people who might use them. Please…help us. Help me. Tell us where the weapons are…"

"Oh, that definitely sounds like you're **pleading** with him," says the GM. "Roll with **HARMONY**!"

"Oh, crud, I'm at -1 **HARMONY**," says Izzy. "Wait, can I **live up to my principle**? I'm being restrained, I'm trying to talk to someone instead of barging ahead! My Restraint is +0, a little better than -1 **HARMONY**."

"Yeah, that makes sense. Roll it!"

Izzy marks a fatigue to **live up** to her Restraint and rolls…and gets a 3!

"Oof," says the GM. "Your friends could help you get to a 7 if all four of them each marked 1-fatigue, but your appeal here is so personal, I don't think they can help in the fiction." The GM considers what move to make and decides to keep it fairly simple—*inflict a condition* will do the trick (page 230).

"There's this moment where you think Kehan's face is clearing, like he might actually listen…but then he hardens: 'I don't owe you anything,' he says. 'You always said the Earth Empire was right, that it was the only way to fix the world. You said it took courage to do what was necessary. And then one day, you just abandoned us. And now, you're here trying to tell me that the weapons are too dangerous? I'm not going to tell you anything, and you can't make me. You don't have it in you anymore.' Mark a condition, Iris—I think Insecure, right? He's making you doubt yourself., right?

"I think it might be Guilty, but I've already got that marked. So yeah, Insecure fits," says Izzy, and she marks Insecure on her sheet. "And it kind of sounds like he's shifting my balance, calling back how much I was about doing what was necessary."

"Oh, sure!" says the GM. They hadn't planned on Kehan shifting Iris's balance, but it makes sense. "He's shifting your balance away from Restraint. Do you accept it?"

"No, I don't want to let this moment define me. I want to **resist** it, but I've got Insecure marked now, so I'm rolling at a -2, right?" The GM nods, and Izzy rolls. She gets a total of a 7!

"Great! So I don't shift my balance at all! And I actually want to clear a condition by proving him wrong immediately—can I clear Insecure even though I just marked it?" asks Izzy.

"I think that depends on what you do. How do you try to prove him wrong?" asks the GM.

"I move over to him and I put an arm on him, and I say, 'I was wrong back then. The Earth Empire was wrong. It wasn't the only way to fix the world, and it takes way more courage to admit you're wrong and to try to do better. And for what it's worth…I'm sorry for what I did to you.' Is that enough?" asks Izzy.

The GM considers for a moment—what Iris said was meaningful. There's an uncertainty to whether or not Iris's words would reach Kehan, but the GM thinks she is proving him wrong to herself. "Yeah, I think you should clear a condition or mark growth, but I also think you're **guiding and comforting** him—you want to guide him to forgiveness because it'll help him too, right?" Izzy nods. "So why don't you roll with **Harmony** again." Izzy clears Guilty, groans because she's rolling on her -1 again, and rolls. She manages to get an 8 this time!

But does Kehan embrace Iris's guidance or shut her down? The GM created Kehan just now, so they haven't assigned him a drive or a balance principle yet. The GM does both right now—Kehan has a drive to take over the Triple Threat Triad and his principle is Dominance. The GM thinks Kehan has just skyrocketed from a minor NPC to a major NPC, thanks to Iris's interest in him, so Kehan has a balance track of 0 to +2. The GM sets Kehan's initial balance to +2 Dominance—Kehan was already pretty far down that track by the time he showed up at the apartment today. With that in mind, the GM decides that Kehan wouldn't embrace Iris's guidance—not yet.

"Again, there's this moment that reads like Kehan is trying to get there, trying to forgive you…but then he can't. He pulls his arm away from you and says, 'Your lame apologies aren't worth anything.' And then he and the other two move away down the hall. He shut you down, Iris, so go ahead and mark a condition—Troubled, I think, for what you see happening to him. But you do get to shift his balance, too. You probably don't quite know yet what his principle is, though you might have some guesses, but you can still tell me if you want to shift his balance up or down—do you want to make him more or less extreme?"

"Down! Definitely down," says Izzy.

"Great. So the three of them leave, and you're left alone again. What do you do?"

"As they go," says Seiji. "I want to slip out of the apartment and track them. I just go, I don't wait for anyone else. I've got an Urban background—can I follow them, move through the city to see where they're going?"

"Oh, definitely!" says the GM. "I do think it's risky, though—they might catch you following them. Why don't you roll to **rely on your skills and training**?"

Seiji rolls and gets a total of a 7, so the GM has to tell Seiji what unexpected consequences Shihan might face. "You do it," say the GM. "You follow them through the city. What does that look like, Shihan?"

"Oh, I use my earthbending to move slowly, cautiously, silently through alleys, making the streets themselves ripple and flow like water as I go," say Seiji.

"Very cool! Yeah, you ripple through alleys to keep an eye on them, but you're leaving the alleyways a mess. You're going to draw the attention of a local spirit who takes pride in maintaining the streets unless you mark fatigue to control the mess," says the GM.

"Shoot. Well, I don't have much fatigue to mark, so I guess I accept it," says Seiji.

"Perfect. So you see the Triad guys actually going into a derelict building—one with a spirit vine shooting through it from bottom to top—but just as you're about to get a closer look, you hear a voice yell at you. 'Hey! Stop ruining my alley! I just fixed that!' And then you see this six-legged bunny spirit with a flat tail, frantically trying to flatten out the ground of the alleys that you've left askew, and glaring at you. What do you do?"





CHAPTER 6

PLAYBOOKS

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CHAPTER 6

This chapter contains all ten of the base playbooks, as well as advice for each playbook's moves, features, and story arcs. The advice helps expand on the core ideas of each playbook, setting you up for success without demanding you always take the same course, in addition to mechanics advice on the particular moves and features of these playbooks. Remember that each player in the game should use a different playbook.

Creating a character for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** always starts by choosing a playbook. You can read more about character creation in **Chapter 4: Making Characters**, but this chapter details everything you need to know about the playbooks themselves so you can decide which one is for you!

Ten Base Playbooks

The **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** core book features ten playbooks, detailed in full throughout this chapter. Every playbook presented in this chapter includes advice on the core ideas of the playbook, its balance principles, its growth question, and then its individual features and moves.

The advice about the balance principles and growth question is there to give you a good starting point for conceiving of the playbook, but as always, those aren't chains—you should over time explore and elaborate upon your understanding of the character, their principles, and their issues. In the mechanical section, not every move is covered—only those which are tricky in some way or require further explanation. The other self-explanatory moves are not detailed further in this chapter.

You might notice some differences between your printable playbooks (available in PDF at magpiegames.com/avatarrpg) and the playbooks as printed here—the ones in this chapter are missing all of the blank fill-in spaces and some of the full tracks you'll find on the printable version. That's because these are designed primarily for reference instead of actual use; if you're playing the game, make sure you print out your own playbooks, or use some scrap paper to record additional details. Everything unique about the playbooks, including their special features, moves, and principles, are all included here, though, for you to peruse and examine.

This chapter builds heavily on the advice and information from earlier chapters, including explanations of how balance principles work, how moves in general work, and so on. And if you're interested in knowing more about how your character can grow and change over time, make sure to check **Chapter 7: Advancement**.

Building Your Unique Character

The playbook you choose is an interesting collection of possibilities and trajectories—like a catapult aimed toward the mountains, it'll generally send you flying toward the peaks, but where you actually land, the path you actually take, is always a bit different. The world of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** holds an infinite number of stories and interesting characters, each one of them unique. Playbooks are designed to get you started, sending you off toward dramatic, involving stories but giving you plenty of room to make your character your own.

The two most distinctive and important parts of any playbook to take a look at are the balance principles and the feature. Every playbook has its own unique pair of balance principles that point at the core tension of that playbook, and one of your primary jobs while designing your character is to consider how your hero thinks about their own balance and the ways that the world pushes and pulls them according to the ideals they hold most dear. Every Hammer wrestles with Care and Force…but not every Hammer thinks about Care and Force in the same way!

Every playbook also has its own unique feature that defines whatever is special, both mechanically and in the fiction, about that playbook. Take a close look at each playbook's feature when choosing which playbook you want to play; they are surprisingly central to the way the playbooks work during play.

More Playbooks?

The ten playbooks presented here are the "base" playbooks because they're a solid foundation for any campaign of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, but you may have other playbooks available to you (in **Wan Shi Tong's Adventure Guide** or another supplement). Those playbooks have their own advice and guidance, found in those respective supplements!

If you want to use those additional playbooks, feel free to use them right alongside any of the playbooks featured here. The playbooks are all built to be used together, creating interesting tensions and synergies as the companions set out on their adventures. Of course, talk with your group about which playbooks you're interested in as you make your character; you want to give everyone a chance to talk about what they want to see from the group and the game during your campaign!

The Core Playbooks



The Adamant

A zealous advocate with a heart of gold and a diamond-hard will, ready to do what it takes to fix the world. Their balance principles are Restraint vs. Results.



The Idealist

A survivor of some terrible harm, now struggling to maintain hope and a belief in the good of the world and others. Their balance principles are Forgiveness vs. Action.



The Bold

A charming adventurer who knows they're greater than others assume, striving to show their worth. Their balance principles are Loyalty vs. Confidence.



The Pillar

A proficient leader, coming from their own special team but now devoted to this new group of companions, trying to help the others to cohere. Their balance principles are Support vs. Leadership.



The Guardian

A protector and defender, devoted to others...perhaps to their own detriment; they have adopted one of their companions as their ward. Their balance principles are Self-Reliance vs. Trust.



The Prodigy

An extraordinarily capable practitioner of their training, but that tends to make them a bit too arrogant and isolated. Their balance principles are Excellence vs. Community.



The Hammer

A fighter, looking to solve problems by smashing them, even when that might not be the right solution. Their balance principles are Force vs. Care.



The Rogue

A vagabond who has struggled to survive—they've never felt they belonged, and they've become a rebel and a troublemaker to make it. Their balance principles are Friendship vs. Survival.



The Icon

A chosen figure of an ancient tradition, expected to carry forward the duties of their role regardless of what they want. Their balance principles are Role vs. Freedom.



The Successor

The inheritor of a massively powerful legacy, known all over, with its own dark history. Their balance principles are Tradition vs. Progress.


THE ADAMANT

The Adamant

The Adamant will fix the world, even if it means breaking all the rules. Play the Adamant if you want to contend with what "doing right" means in a complicated world.

Pragmatic, fervent, dangerous, self-sacrificing. The Adamant is deeply committed to a cause, to the point that they may break all the rules to achieve their end. Sometimes, they might even go a bit too far in their drive—they have no hesitation to push and push and push when it comes to the causes they think are just. That's why the Adamant needs a **lodestar**, the one person they listen to who can rein them in, let them know that maybe they should cool it and hold off a bit.

The Adamant can sometimes be dismissive of others, especially if those others stand in the way of the Adamant's goals… but they're also aware of their tendency to go too far, and to make sure they listen to the right voices telling them to hold back. The distinction between heroism and villainy can be a fine line for the Adamant, with their focus on results over means. They want to stay on the right side of that line, and they need their friends to find the right path forward.

Starting Stats

Creativity 0, Focus +1, Harmony -1, Passion +1

Demeanor Options

Above-it-all, Perfectionist, Chilly, Rebellious, Flippant, Standoffish

History

- What experience of being deceived or manipulated convinced you to steel yourself against being swayed by other people?
- Who was your first lodestar, and why were they an exception? Why aren't they your lodestar anymore?
- Who earned your grudging respect by teaching you pragmatism?
- What heirloom or piece of craftsmanship do you carry to remind you to stay true to yourself?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ takes issue with my methods—perhaps they have a point, but I certainly can't admit that to them!
- _____ is my lodestar; something about them makes them the one person I let my guard down around.

Moment of Balance

You've held true to a core of conviction even while getting your hands dirty to do what you deemed necessary. But balance means appreciating that other people are just as complex as you are, not merely obstacles or pawns. Tell the GM how you solve an intractable problem or calm a terrible conflict by relating to dangerous people on a human level.

Principles



Restraint vs Results



The Adamant's two principles reflect their self-awareness and their attempt to manage their best and worst impulses. The Adamant's Results principle is all about their drive to change things for the better and have it stick. An Adamant with a high Results principle cares more about getting results than what it might cost. They're pragmatic to a fault, willing to make sacrifices and tough choices to achieve the things they deem worth it.

The Adamant's Restraint principle, on the other hand, is all about their desire to hold back and be careful, to think and comprehend and plan instead of bulling ahead. An Adamant with a high Restraint principle still wants to achieve the same ends, but they're not doing so at any cost. They consider different paths and are more willing to compromise or accept imperfect solutions if it means avoiding other terrible consequences.

The Adamant's Moment of Balance pushes them to manage their principles to pursue Results without giving up Restraint. They find that place of equilibrium in seeing other people as people, not just as pawns to achieve an end…but then understanding that those people can still help achieve results, perhaps more so if they're treated equally. The Adamant's Moment of Balance has them treating other dangerous people empathetically and humanely, and achieving their results anyway.

The Lodestar

There's only one person you often let past your emotional walls.

Name your lodestar (choose a PC to start):_____

You can shift your lodestar to someone new when they **guide and comfort** you and you open up to them, or when you **guide and comfort** them and they open up to you. If you do choose to shift your lodestar, clear a condition.

When you **shut down someone vulnerable to harsh words or icy silence**, shift your balance toward Results and roll with Results. On a hit, they mark a condition and you may clear the same condition. On a 10+, they also cannot shift your balance or **call you out** for the rest of the scene. On a miss, they have exactly the right retort; mark a condition and they shift your balance. You cannot use this on your lodestar.

When your lodestar **shifts your balance** or **calls you out**, you cannot resist it. Treat an NPC lodestar calling you out as if you rolled a 10+, and a PC lodestar calling you out as if they rolled a 10+.

When you **consult your lodestar for advice on a problem** (or permission to use your preferred solution), roll with Restraint. On a 10+ take all three; on a 7–9 they choose two:

- You see the wisdom of their advice. They shift your balance; follow their advice and they shift your balance again.
- The conversation bolsters you. Clear a condition or 2-fatigue.
- They feel at ease offering their opinion. They clear a condition or 2-fatigue.

On a miss, something about their advice infuriates you. Mark a condition or have the GM shift your balance twice.

The Adamant's Lodestar

As the Adamant, your lodestar is the person you listen to and rely on to set you straight. You let them in and keep others at bay. Make sure your lodestar is another PC when you create your character.

Shutting someone down, as described within your lodestar feature, represents the way that your Adamant character tends not to let people besides the lodestar into their heart. Shutting someone down can be useful for you to inflict conditions and sometimes clear them, but it's important to note that you can never use it on your lodestar. When your lodestar tries to **call you out** on your principle, it's treated in the worst possible way for you—you have no way to resist it without cost.

On the other hand, you can gain advice from your lodestar that can actually help you accomplish your goals…when you have a high enough Restraint to take the time to actually talk to them. Note that only the first option—*they shift your balance; follow their advice and they shift your balance again*—produces an effect that depends upon you actually following their advice.

You can change who your lodestar is over the course of play. If you **guide and comfort** someone and they open up to you, you can make that person your new lodestar. If someone **guides and comforts** you and you open up to them, you can make that person your new lodestar. In either case, if the person being **guided and comforted** doesn't open up, you can't switch. When you do switch, make sure to clear a condition above and beyond any you might clear for the **guide and comfort**.

Moves — Choose Two

☐ This Was a Victory

When you reveal that you have sabotaged a building, device, or vehicle right as it becomes relevant, mark fatigue and roll with **Passion**. On a hit, your work pays off, creating an opportunity for you and your allies at just the right time. On a 7–9, the opportunity is fleeting—act fast to stay ahead of the consequences. On a miss, your action was ill-judged and something or someone you care about is hurt as collateral damage.

☐ Takes One to Know One

When you verbally needle someone by finding the weaknesses in their armor, roll with **Focus**. On a hit, ask 1 question. On a 7–9, they ask 1 of you as well:

- What is your principle?
- What do you need to prove?
- What could shake your certainty?
- Whom do you care about more than you let on?

Anyone who lies or stonewalls marks 2-fatigue. On a miss, your attack leaves you exposed; they may ask you any one question from the list, and you must answer honestly.

☐ No Time for Feelings

When you have equal or fewer conditions marked than your highest principle, mark fatigue to push down your feelings for the rest of the scene and ignore condition penalties until the end of the scene. When you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, mark a condition to roll with conditions marked (max +4). You cannot then choose to clear a condition by immediately proving them wrong.

☐ I Don't Hate You

When you **guide and comfort** someone in an awkward, understated, or idiosyncratic fashion, roll with **Passion** instead of **Harmony** if you mark Insecure or Insecure is already marked.

☐ Driven by Justice

Take +1 to **Passion** (max +3).

Moves Advice

For **I Don't Hate You**, you must have Insecure marked to represent how awkwardly you act. If you don't have it marked, you can choose to mark it.

For **This Was a Victory**, you reveal your sabotage after you could have performed it. You mark fatigue not at the moment you engaged in sabotage, but at the moment it actually matters and comes into play, like revealing that you weakened a bridge just as the soldiers chasing you start to cross it. On a 7–9, your sabotage only creates a quick opportunity. On a miss, your sabotage now causes different, worse, or more expansive problems than you anticipated.

For **No Time for Feelings**, there are two discrete effects to this move that both point to how you try to resist your feelings, even when others push you on them. Whenever you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, you can mark a condition to roll with conditions instead of rolling without any bonus. The condition you mark immediately helps you, but you can't roll with higher than a +4. If you choose to do this, however, you can't choose to clear a condition by immediately acting to prove them wrong—you're stuck with whatever condition you marked, at least for a bit. You can, however, choose to mark growth by immediately acting to prove them wrong.

For the other part of the move, you can only internalize your conditions and ignore their penalties when you have conditions marked up to your highest principle—so if your Restraint is at +3, and you have four conditions marked, you can't ignore the penalties by marking fatigue. Otherwise, though, you can do it at any time, and you ignore penalties for the rest of the scene you're in.

For **Takes One to Know One**, make sure you actually needle your target, saying things that pick at them and mess with them! Be aware that doing so can reveal something of your own character at the same time, as on a 7–9 they get to ask you a question as well. This move is different from most question-centered moves in that the other party doesn't have to answer the question, even out of character. They can instead mark 2-fatigue to stonewall and try to hide the answer. On a miss, however, you don't get the option of stonewalling, and must answer honestly.

Pinpoint Aim

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Take the time you need to line up a perfect shot; become *Prepared*. In the next exchange, if you **advance and attack**, roll with **Focus** or **Passion**, your choice. If you use Strike, you do not have to mark fatigue to choose what you inflict.

For Pinpoint Aim, the Adamant's playbook advanced technique, you are preparing a more powerful shot in the next exchange. You don't have to choose any particular option—you can try to use this as a bluff, and just take the *Prepared* status! But if you do **advance and attack**, you get to roll either **Focus** or **Passion**, your choice, and if you do use Strike, you get to choose what you inflict without marking fatigue.

Growth Question

> Did you seek support or guidance from others?

The Adamant's growth question is all about learning to see other people as sources of wisdom and understanding. When the Adamant seeks support or guidance from others, they learn to temper their own drive with the ideas of others.




THE BOLD

The Bold

The Bold fights to live up to their self-image and earn others' trust and confidence. Play the Bold if you want to build your reputation and leadership skills.

Self-doubting, boastful, clever, curious. The Bold is sure that they have it in them to be someone great—a great warrior, an exceptional artist, a master bender—even if they aren't really there yet, even if others make sure that the Bold knows they aren't there yet. They will be, someday. They just need to work up to it, okay? They're working up to it!

The Bold is trying to prove themselves. They may present to the world a confident, capable face, may even boast about their excellence—but that's nearly always a facade, an attempt to sell themselves on their own skills as much as to convince anyone else. But at the same time, the Bold isn't all talk—they are committed to making the world better, and especially for their friends, their family, and the people they care about.

Starting Stats

Creativity +1, Focus +1, Harmony 0, Passion -1

Demeanor Options

Impatient, Sensitive, Affable, Enthusiastic, Talkative, Impetuous

History

- Why do you feel the need to prove yourself so badly?
- Who epitomizes the kind of big, bold figure you hope to be?
- Whose approval do you think you will never attain?
- What token or symbol do you wear to prove you are serious?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ scoffs at me and my plans; one day I'll show them what I can do.
- _____ has a pretty good head on their shoulders; they're a great sounding board for my ideas.

Moment of Balance

The greatest heroes of your age may have overwhelming confidence, but balance isn't about pursuing greatness for the sake of greatness. You find a way to stand with your companions like no one else ever could. Tell the GM how you strike down an impossibly strong enemy or obstacle to protect your friends from harm as the best version of yourself.

Principles



Loyalty vs Confidence



The Bold struggles between the principles of Loyalty and Confidence. Their Loyalty principle emphasizes how much they are committed to others, and in turn, how much they make themselves subordinate to others, putting the needs of their friends and companions far ahead of their own goals and feelings. A high Loyalty Bold cares more about others, how those others see the Bold, and what those others want or need than they care about their own needs.

Their Confidence principle emphasizes their belief in themselves, their own abilities, and their own status. A confident Bold takes action decisively, demands the respect due them, and makes their own decisions independently of others. A high Confidence Bold is likely to chart their own path—even when their friends might want them to choose a different way forward—seizing the day and taking risks that pay off in big ways!

The Bold tries to balance these two principles by finding ways to be confident without overriding or ignoring their commitments to others, by finding ways to be dutiful to those they care about without subordinating their own desires. The Bold's Moment of Balance exemplifies this; they find a way to be absolutely amazing, entirely self-assured and capable, as they defend their friends and companions. They find their own way in the service of others, proving they can do much more than others expected while staying true to their friends' needs.

Legacy of Excellence

You have dedicated yourself to accomplishing great, exciting deeds and becoming worthy of the trust others place in you. Choose four drives to mark at the start of play. When you fulfill a marked drive, strike it out, and mark growth or clear a condition. When your four marked drives are all struck out, choose and mark four new drives. When all drives are struck out, change playbooks or accept a position of great responsibility and retire from a life of adventure.

- ☐ successfully lead your companions in battle
- ☐ give your affection to someone worthy
- ☐ start a real fight with a dangerous master
- ☐ do justice to a friend or mentor's guidance
- ☐ take down a dangerous threat all on your own
- ☐ openly outperform an authority figure
- ☐ save a friend's life
- ☐ get a fancy new outfit
- ☐ earn the respect of an adult you admire
- ☐ openly call out a friend's unworthy actions
- ☐ form a strong relationship with a new master
- ☐ stop a fight with calm words
- ☐ sacrifice your pride or love for a greater good
- ☐ defend an inhabited place from dire threats
- ☐ stand up to someone who doesn't respect you
- ☐ make a friend live up to a principle they have neglected
- ☐ show mercy or forgiveness to a dangerous person
- ☐ stand up to someone abusing their power
- ☐ tame or befriend a dangerous beast or rare creature
- ☐ pull off a ridiculous stunt

The Bold's Legacy of Excellence

Your **Legacy of Excellence** is all about doing impressive things that others will remember and might even talk about down the line. They don't have to be bombastic—*stopping a fight with calm words* is still impressive and shows you coming into your own.

You and the GM should agree when you have fulfilled a drive, but ultimately the decision is more yours than the GM's. "Fulfilling a drive" means that you honestly feel you have achieved that desire, that goal, and can move on, and ultimately, you're the final arbiter of whether or not that happened.

Remember you can't pick more drives until you've accomplished the initial four you chose; when you pick your next four, the cycle begins again. If you have a drive that really doesn't feel right anymore, but you don't think you're going to fulfill it, then you can work with the GM to change it at the end of the session.

If you run out of drives, that's a good sign it's about time for you to switch playbooks!

Moves — Choose Two

☐ Best Friend

Your best friend is small, fuzzy, and dependable. Unlike all your other relationships, this one is simple and true. You can understand and communicate with your small companion and—although they may give you a hard time now and again—they are always there when you need them most. Whenever your pal could help you push your luck, mark fatigue to roll with **Creativity** instead of **Passion**. If your pet ever gets hurt, mark a condition.

☐ Here's the Plan

When you commit to a plan you've proposed to the group, roll with **Creativity**; take a -1 for each of your companions who isn't on board. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7–9, hold 1. You can spend your hold 1-for-1 while the plan is being carried out to overcome or evade an obstacle, create an advantage, or neutralize a danger; if any of your companions abandon you while the plan is underway, you must mark a condition. On a miss, hold 1, but your plan goes awry when you encounter surprising opposition.

☐ Not Done Yet!

Once per session, when you are taken out, shift your balance towards center to stay up for one more combat exchange. After that exchange ends, you become helpless, unconscious, or otherwise incapable of continuing on, and are taken out as normal.

☐ You Missed Something

When you evaluate a friendly NPC's plan to get something done, roll with **Focus**. On a hit, the GM tells you how you can drastically improve the chances of success; get it done, and they're sure to come through on top. On a 7–9, the problems inherent in the plan are fairly serious; the NPC will be resistant to making the necessary changes. On a miss, something about the plan throws you for a loop; the GM tells you what obvious danger the NPC is ignoring...or what they're hiding about their intent.

☐ Straight Shooter

When you tell an NPC the blunt, honest truth about what you really think of them and their plans, roll with **Focus**. On a hit, they'll look upon your honesty favorably; they'll answer a non-compromising question honestly and grant you a simple favor. On a 7–9, they also give you an honest assessment of how they see you; mark a condition. On a miss, you're a bit too honest—they're either furious or genuinely hurt.

Moves Advice

For **Best Friend**, remember to name and describe your animal companion! They should be small—Pabu and Momo, not Naga or Appa. Your pet can help you **push your luck** whenever it makes sense; as long as you're willing to pay the cost, they'll be pretty handy much of the time! Just remember, if they help you they're likely endangering themselves and might get hurt.

For **Here's the Plan**, the trigger about "committing to a plan you've proposed to the group" means that you've decided that *this* is the plan the group uses. You aren't open to changing plans anymore! You've committed! So you can't trigger this move until you've truly committed, and don't try to roll this move if you want to keep your options open. You take -1 on the roll for this move for each companion who isn't on board with the plan—just ask their players, plainly, whether they're on board. They answer honestly, and you take a -1 for each player who says no.

The hold generated by this move allows you to overcome or evade an obstacle, create an advantage, or neutralize a danger while you execute the plan. When you spend a hold, you're saying you set something up in advance to serve the plan, or you prepared your team to act in concert at a particular juncture; you anticipated this obstacle, the need for this advantage, or the weaknesses of this danger, so you now spend a hold to employ those preparations. Keep in mind that this allows you as a player to avoid planning every single aspect of the plan—your character is sharp, and they have thought of all the angles, so you can spend hold to overcome something whether or not *you* specifically planned it out in advance.

Keep in mind that if a companion ditches your plan while you're enacting it, you must mark a condition! And on a miss, even though you get some hold—your preparations weren't for naught—your plan can't account for everything. No backing out, though! You already committed to the plan! The GM will tell you when you encounter surprising opposition.

For **Not Done Yet!**, remember that being taken out specifically refers to having all of your conditions marked and needing to mark another. This move won't help you if your balance tips over the edge, for example. It also won't help you in most non-combat situations, although at the GM's discretion it lets you make one more move or take one more action before being taken out. In combat, you may act for one more exchange. Because you are going to be taken out anyway, you don't have to mark any additional conditions inflicted on you during this exchange (although remember, you can't choose to mark fatigue or conditions if you have none to mark—you're only ignoring those conditions inflicted upon you by others).

For **You Missed Something**, whatever you perceive to improve the NPC's plan is true. Even if they don't like what you have to say or it's particularly difficult to accomplish, you can be assured that what you propose will actually make their plan go more smoothly.

For **Straight Shooter**, just because they "look upon your honesty favorably," they don't have to actually like you; they just see your being honest as a kind of respectable action, though they might still ultimately dislike you for it. As such, "they'll answer a non-compromising question honestly and grant you a simple favor" means that whatever they give you, it can't cost them too much. They'll answer a question that doesn't harm them or cause trouble for them; they'll grant you a favor that doesn't actually stretch them far at all.

Tag Team

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Work with an ally against the same foe; choose an engaged foe and an ally—double any fatigue, conditions, or balance shifts that ally inflicts upon that foe.

For Tag Team, the Bold's playbook advanced technique, choose the foe and the ally before resolving **advance and attack**. Assuming you are in reach and able to help, you double the fatigue, conditions, and balance shifts inflicted by that ally on that foe.

Growth Question

> Did you express vulnerability by admitting you were wrong or that you should have listened to someone you ignored?

The Bold's growth question focuses on the idea of learning by humbling themselves, admitting they were wrong and seeking help from others. They can still ultimately become more confident thanks to this help—learning to fight like a Kyoshi Warrior is a boon to their self-confidence—but they have to humble themselves to seek aid first!




THE GUARDIAN

The Guardian

The Guardian defends someone close to them, steadfast and watchful. Play the Guardian if you want to be the first to see danger coming and the last line of defense.

Tough, cynical, protective, devoted. The Guardian is a protector of one other person—their **ward**—utterly determined to keep them safe and sound against all threats and dangers. Whether or not that person wants protection is not always as important to the Guardian as it should be!

The Guardian knows how dangerous the world can be and is determined to keep someone else safe from that danger. It's an altruistic impulse and a selfish one at the same time—they want to help someone, protect them…but that desire comes from feeling no one else is trustworthy except the Guardian.

Starting Stats

Creativity -1, Focus +1, Harmony 0, Passion +1

Demeanor Options

Harsh, Serious, Polite, Quiet, Suspicious, Cautious

History

- What pushed you to assume responsibility for the people you care about?
- Whom have you protected for so long... but maybe doesn't need you anymore?
- Who used to be in your circle of trust before they betrayed you?
- What tattered garment or adornment reminds you of those you protect...or failed to protect?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ is my ward—they need me to have their back, end of story.
- _____ looks like they're more than capable without my help; I'm glad some of us can take care of ourselves.

Moment of Balance

You've sworn to protect the people you care about, but balance is about finding your own place in the world as well. You know what you're capable of accomplishing, and you step up to show the world your unique strength. Tell the GM how you put your own life on the line to defeat a villain or danger that seems unstoppable.

Principles



Self-Reliance vs Trust



The Guardian's struggle is between the principles of Self-Reliance and Trust. Their Self-Reliance principle is all about a mistrust of others and the world. The Guardian knows they can handle problems on their own...but they have a hard time trusting other people to handle themselves. It's not just about the Guardian's own confidence; it's about their difficulty letting others help or handle things on their own. A Self-Reliant Guardian is very capable and confident, but also likely cynical, doubting others and liable to handle any problem by themselves.

Their Trust principle is about putting faith in others, letting them handle problems without the Guardian's presence or aid. As Trust goes up, the Guardian comes to believe in a greater and stronger connection to others, their companions especially, and comes to rely on them. A Trusting Guardian knows their companions have their back, but might trust to the point of complacency, missing important details or warning signs that a more Self-Reliant Guardian would pick up on.

The Guardian tries to balance these two principles by finding a place where they are acting, working to keep the people they care about safe, but also trusting those people to live their own lives and keep themselves safe most of the time. The Guardian's Moment of Balance exemplifies this; they act to defeat some dangerous villain or threat, putting their own life on the line and relying on themselves, but putting enough trust into others that they don't need to hold back.

Protector's Burden

You take it upon yourself to protect the people around you in general, but you have someone in particular you keep safe.

Name your ward (choose a PC to start): _____

When they mark a condition in front of you, mark fatigue or a condition. Your ward can always **call on you to live up to your principle**—without shifting their balance away from center—and they take +1 to do it.

At the beginning of each session, roll, taking +1 for each yes:

- Do you believe your ward listens to you more often than not?
- Have you recently protected them or helped them with a problem?
- Is there an immediate threat to your ward that you are aware of?

On a 7–9, hold 1. On a 10+, hold 2. At any time, spend the hold to:

- Take a 10+ without rolling on any move to defend or protect them
- Track them down even if they are hidden or avoiding you
- Figure out what they're up to without them knowing

On a miss, hold 1, but…you're drifting apart on different paths. By the end of the session, you must choose one:

- Decide you're the only one who can keep them safe; shift your balance twice toward Self-Reliance and keep them as your ward
- Decide they can handle life without your protection; shift your balance twice toward Trust and switch your ward to a new person

You may also switch your ward if they leave play or are no longer present for some reason. When you switch your ward, you can switch to an NPC (if the GM agrees).

The Guardian's Protector's Burden

Your ward is the person you have committed yourself to keeping safe. When your ward marks a condition in front of you, you feel it and must mark a fatigue or a condition as well. This only matters if it happens in front of you, however—if they mark a condition in your absence, you aren't required to mark anything.

For the start of session roll, you are the final arbiter of the answers; if you believe that a particular NPC is a threat, then you take +1 for the third question, even if others disagree. On a miss, you must choose to recommit to guarding your ward or trust them enough to let them go. You must decide by the end of the session and shift your balance accordingly. The decision is ultimately yours—being a Guardian can be an overbearing role and doesn't require you to take your ward's opinion into account…although you should check in with the other player!

When you spend your hold to take a 10+ to defend or protect your ward, the most important idea here is again your belief. If you believe what you are doing protects your ward, then spending the hold is warranted.

Spending a hold to track your ward down indicates your general understanding of them, and your overarching skeptical, watchful nature. You always have a lead on your ward…spending a hold just means you follow it quickly.

Spending a hold to figure out what they're up to also applies your understanding of them to find answers, asking around, looking at evidence, checking where they've been, etc. You firm up a pretty clear picture, all without ever needing to directly ask your ward what they've been doing.

Moves — Choose Two

☐ Suspicious Mind

When you watch a person carefully to figure them out, roll with **Focus**. On a 7–9, hold 1. On a 10+, hold 2. Spend your hold, 1-for-1, to ask their player questions while you observe or interact with them; they must answer honestly.

- Are you telling the truth?
- What are you truly feeling?
- What do you really want right now?
- What are you worried about?
- What are you about to do?

☐ Badge of Authority

You have some badge or symbol of authority from your background, something that makes you someone to be listened to, if not well-liked or entirely respected. When you give an NPC an order based on that authority and their recognition of it, roll with **Passion**. On a hit, they do what you say. On a 7–9, they choose 1:

- They do it, but in lackluster fashion
- They say they need something first to be able to do it
- They do it, but they're going to talk to your superiors

On a miss, the authority of your badge doesn't sway them; they do as they please and you take -1 forward against them.

☐ Catch a Liar

When you are suspicious of someone, write their name here: _____

You cannot write another until you have made them admit their guilt and misdeeds in front of an audience, or until you no longer seek to uncover their secrets. When they admit their guilt and misdeeds in front of an audience, clear their name from this move. When you no longer seek to uncover their secrets, you may mark a condition to clear their name from this move. When you expose that person's lies or wrong-doing, clear all your fatigue and up to two conditions. When you try to **intimidate** them into admitting their real crimes by using actual evidence, you can eliminate one additional option from the list on any hit before they choose.

☐ Furrowed Brow

Take +1 **Focus** (max +3).

☐ Martyr Complex

When you have a total of 8 between conditions marked, highest principle, and fatigue marked, take +1 ongoing to all moves.

Moves Advice

For **Suspicious Mind**, you get hold, which you can spend to ask questions from the list throughout your interaction or observation—but once you stop talking to them or watching them, for example if the scene changes, you lose your remaining unspent hold.

For **Badge of Authority**, make sure to pick what your badge is physically and who recognizes it. It doesn't have to be a law officer's badge at all—it could be a beautiful blue rose, symbol of your criminal organization, or it could be a ring made of pure garnet, symbol of your military squad. Either way, it has to be one thing—you can't have your general look or demeanor represent your authority. In all cases, you can only trigger this move if they recognize your authority; someone who doesn't care about your criminal blue rose won't listen to your orders!

On a 7–9, remember that they still follow your command on all options, but it always comes with a complication, be it that they need a prerequisite fulfilled first, they're going to check-in with your superiors, or they're going to do a poor job of it.

For **Catch a Liar**, if the line is blank, you can always write in a name as soon as you decide you're suspicious of them. Once you have a name there, though, you can only erase it and write a new name if they admit their guilt or misdeeds, or if you mark a condition and give up your pursuit of their secrets. "Exposing that person's lies or wrong-doing" means that you're providing evidence to a third party—but it doesn't guarantee that the person you're suspicious of will admit their guilt. That's where **intimidating** them with real evidence can come in handy.

For **Martyr Complex**, remember that you take a +1 ongoing to everything—but you must have a total of eight between your highest principle, marked conditions, and marked fatigue. To really take advantage of this move, you've got to live on the edge of catastrophe!

Divert

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Step into the way of blows intended for allies; when any ally within reach suffers a blow this exchange, you can suffer it for them. If you also use Retaliate this exchange, deal an additional 1-fatigue each time.

For Divert, the Guardian's advanced playbook technique, you can take the hits that your allies would take. Those allies have to be within reach—as in, your training and abilities allow you to actually reach them and intervene very quickly. You suffer the blow for them, which means they don't suffer anything—they don't mark any conditions or fatigue from the blow—but you suffer the blow in full instead. If you match this technique with Retaliate, then you inflict an additional 1-fatigue each time you are struck (usually meaning you inflict 2-fatigue).

Growth Question

> Did you pursue a desire or goal of your own, outside of protecting others?

The Guardian's growth question is about edging toward a place of self-development, self-awareness—not just self-reliance, but a belief that takes the Guardian past only protecting people and toward making decisions for themselves.




THE HAMMER

The Hammer

The Hammer is strong, tough, and looking for a deserving face to punch. Play the Hammer if you want to grapple with what force can and can't solve.

Brash, daring, forceful, foolhardy. The Hammer is a powerful fighter, a dangerous enemy, and a blunt object—they don't really have that many additional strategies or approaches beyond "punch it hard." They constantly face the difficulty of wanting to make the world better, to serve real justice and protect the innocent…all without a particularly versatile toolset.

The Hammer is, at heart, a hero. They're trying to do good! They're not just a bully or a fighter—they serve a strong belief in right and wrong! They've just found punching a useful or appropriate response to badness, and they got real good at it! But now that they've joined this group and are pursuing an important, larger purpose, they are encountering problems they can't punch into submission—foes against whom combat isn't even an option, let alone the right option.

Starting Stats

Creativity +1, Focus -1, Harmony 0, Passion +1

Demeanor Options

Playful, Blunt, Quiet, Loud, Excessive, Determined

History

- What injustice has driven you to use your strength for good?
- Who represents the kind of positive strength and force you want to embody?
- Who tried their best to teach you restraint, calm, and thoughtfulness?
- What fragile trinket or heirloom do you keep and protect?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ has a way to solve problems with words instead of fists—it's really impressive!
- I worry _____ won't be able to hold their own when things get tough. I'm going to toughen them up!

Moment of Balance

You can knock down every wall in the world, but balance isn't found in conquest and destruction. You know some walls need to stand to keep people safe. Tell the GM how you put yourself directly in the path of an inescapable threat to completely protect someone or something from harm.

Principles



Force vs Care



The Hammer's struggle is between the principles of Force and Care. The Hammer is drawn between a desire to use overwhelming, direct force to enact change on the world, and a desire to be careful, to use the right application of will and strength at the right moment. Their Force principle is all about their desire to smash their way through problems and foes. Some obstacles can only be bulldozed! Some foes deserve to be destroyed! The Hammer is very good at punching their way to victory, and the Force principle represents that impulse.

Their Care principle is all about their belief that the world is worth saving, protecting, and serving… and their desire to pull their punches so they don't smash all of it. The use of Force has an unfortunate tendency to leave things broken and shattered—perhaps even to snap things when they could have been saved, redeemed, or rescued. Care is about the Hammer coming to understand and appreciate the need to prevent collateral damage, sometimes to give others a chance to make new decisions and better themselves instead of being broken.

The Hammer tries to balance these two principles by finding when it's time to hit hard, and when it's time to pull a punch. Their Moment of Balance is all about successfully finding that equilibrium—punching hard to act as a wall and protect something worth protecting. Breaking and destroying isn't the goal in that moment, so much as the goal is saving something they care about…but the Hammer is ready to hit harder than ever to do that.

Bringing Them Down

You always have an adversary, one who represents the things you're trying to smash through—tyranny, inequality, war; larger and more dangerous concepts that, to you at least, this one person embodies. Your adversary is someone significant and powerful—someone who actually deserves the amount of force you can bring to bear.

Name your adversary: _____

Choose a goal you have for your adversary:

☐ Capture them ☐ Depose them ☐ Expose them
☐ Discredit them ☐ Restrain them ☐ Exile them

Take -1 ongoing to **plead** with, **trick**, or **guide and comfort** your adversary.

Changing Your Adversary

You can change your adversary any time you mark a condition, or at the end of each session. When you do, choose an appropriate goal, and the GM shifts your balance twice to match your new adversary and your new goal.

When you successfully accomplish your goal and defeat your adversary, take a growth advancement and choose a new adversary.

Fighting Your Adversary

When you enter into a fight against your adversary, clear all fatigue and become *Inspired*. When you select any combat approach against your adversary, mark fatigue to roll with conditions marked instead of your normal stat.

The Hammer's Bringing Them Down

Part of why the Hammer encounters such difficulty at the start of your campaign is that they are up against an **adversary**, a real foe who deserves to be defeated but who cannot be struck down like all the rest. The adversary represents an even larger, even more invulnerable force—tyranny, inequality, war, and so on—but this person, you can face and fight.

Your goal for your adversary is one that you can't achieve just by punching, for whatever reason. If your goal is to capture your adversary, then they're elusive and incredibly hard to find and reach. If your goal is to depose them, then the very system that props your adversary up is invested in their continued rein. If your goal is to restrain them, then they can weasel out of whatever restraints you impose.

Changing your adversary when you mark a condition almost always means that your new choice of adversary is tied to whatever caused you to mark that condition. Changing your adversary at the end of the session is a good chance to realign when the events of the session had changed your goals. If you do change at the end of a session, remember that you can't lose your balance off-screen (see page 141).

"Successfully accomplishing your goal and defeating your adversary" should be pretty clear to everyone, including yourself and the GM. If there's any dissent about whether you really defeated your adversary, then you most likely haven't yet.

Entering a fight against your adversary means they must be present and active—they don't have to be the primary opposition, but you're not entering a fight against them if it's just their minions, for example. When you roll with conditions marked instead of your normal stat, your maximum bonus is +5.

Moves Choose Two

☐ Fueled by Anger

Mark Angry to use an additional basic or mastered technique when you **advance and attack**, even on a miss. While Angry is marked, take +1 ongoing to **intimidate** others.

☐ Walls Can't Hold Me

When you **rely on your skills and training** to dangerously smash your way through walls or other obstacles, roll with **Passion** instead of **Focus**.

☐ Punch Where It Matters

When you **assess a situation**, you can always ask, "Who or what here is most vulnerable to me?", even on a miss. Remember to take +1 ongoing to act in accordance with the answer.

☐ Comprehend Your Foe

When you **defend and maneuver** against a foe whose balance principle you know, you may mark fatigue to roll with **Creativity** instead of **Focus**.

☐ Stand and Fight!

When you provoke an NPC opponent into attacking you, roll with **Passion**. On a hit, they're coming at you specifically. On a 10+, you're ready for them; clear a condition or become *Prepared*. On a miss, they take advantage of your provocation to strike a blow where you least expect it.

Moves Advice

For **Fueled by Anger**, remember that you can't mark Angry if it's already marked.

For **Walls Can't Hold Me**, "dangerously smashing your way through walls or other obstacles" means that the most likely additional consequence of your action is collateral damage to others, or unintended additional destruction to your environment.

For **Punch Where It Matters**, "Who here is most vulnerable to me?" doesn't always have to refer specifically to combat. The GM might give you an answer pointing out other vulnerabilities—for example, someone might be most vulnerable to you because you know their secret.

For **Comprehend Your Foe**, you can name their balance principle in the moment, much like when you **call them out**; as long as you're close enough, and the principle you name contains the same overarching idea as their principle, the move can trigger.

For **Stand and Fight!**, you can use the move to start a whole new fight, or you can use it between exchanges to try to get an opponent to pay attention to you, first and foremost. On a miss, the GM will tell you where they strike the blow, and how.

Overwhelm

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Throw a punch with all your weight behind it; mark 3-fatigue to inflict *Stunned* on an engaged foe.

For Overwhelm, the Hammer's playbook advanced technique, you have access to one of the best ways to instantly and easily inflict *Stunned* on a foe. Remember that you can't choose to mark 3-fatigue if you don't have three empty boxes to mark.

Growth Question

> Did you make progress towards your goal against your adversary?

The Hammer's growth question drives them to always aim themselves at their adversary. "Make progress toward your goal" means they took some step to achieve their goal against their adversary, whether or not the end is in sight.




THE ICON

The Icon

The Icon comes from an ancient tradition and inherits some serious standards to live up to. Play the Icon if you want to be torn between your heart and your duty.

Torn, fun-loving, anxious, dutiful. The Icon was raised to fulfill a particular duty and role in their society—an important role, an honored role, a role that so many others, from adults to children, envy. But the Icon isn't sure they want the role. They weren't given any real choice in the matter; it's their role according to destiny, tradition, prophecy, or some other impulse that guided the hands of their parents, mentors, or guardians.

The Icon's role is tied to some culture or tradition, so be sure to think about exactly what their role is and how it connects to them when making the character. Tying the Icon into the scope of your game is a good idea—if your scope is the whole of the world, then the Icon's role and associated cultural tradition can be world-spanning, but if the scope of your game is Republic City, the Icon's role can be much more restricted to the city's limits.

The Icon has had the massive import of their role impressed upon them from a young age; they have always known how important the duties were. Now, they have all of that responsibility foisted upon them, and where once they could be themselves and live their life, everyone expects them to be something else now.

Starting Stats

Creativity 0, Focus +1, Harmony +1, Passion -1

Demeanor Options

Naive, Playful, Needy, Sad, Haughty, Grave

History

- What tradition do you represent as its icon? Why can't you set down the role?
- Who was your chief mentor, teaching you the nature of your burden and its value?
- Who showed you that even with the weight of your burden, you could still find ways to play?
- What token of your burden and tradition do you always carry?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ seems to not fully understand what it means that I'm the icon of my tradition... and I kind of like feeling free around them.
- _____ makes me feel better about my responsibilities and my burden with a smile and a few kind words.

Moment of Balance

Others have laid a path for you that you cannot escape, but balance means you understand the limits of their vision. You make the role your own in this moment, charting a new path for yourself and your tradition. Tell the GM how your new understanding of your burdens forges a new way forward for everyone.

Principles



Role vs Freedom



The Icon is split between the two principles of their Role and their Freedom. The Icon's Role principle represents their commitment to and belief in all the duties and meaning of their role. The higher their Role, the more they believe in those duties and the greater their adherence to that job. An Icon with a high Role integrates their sense of identity with the role; they begin to see the world through the eyes of someone fulfilling a duty first and foremost, long before they think of their own needs.

The Icon's Freedom principle represents their desire to be free to make their own choices, act as they want, and just have fun. It's the freedom other people enjoy—at least, those people who are not defined by such a rigid set of important responsibilities. An Icon with a high Freedom tries to avoid their role and its duties, often with significant consequences. They may try to foist their work off on other people or institutions, or just let the work go completely undone to pursue their own fun adventures.

The Icon tries to find a balance between these two principles by defining themselves and their role all at once. Their Moment of Balance reflects them not simply assuming the role as others have described it, but remaking the role on their own—exerting the freedom to choose the role and to define it their own way. They may end up rejecting the role as others conceive it...but they may also reinvent the role itself in ways that inspire others to commit to the idea of the role even further.

Burden and Tradition

You are an icon of your burden and tradition. You are expected to be its exemplar, its single most important representative, trained up from a young age and saddled with the weight of history. You have been told that you are vital to the world.

Choose **3 responsibilities** of your burden and tradition you are expected to assume:

Protecting humanity from natural disasters and dark spirits; destroying dangerous creatures; overthrowing tyrants; serving and defending rightful rulers; performing rituals; providing aid and succor to the downtrodden; searching for hidden histories and artifacts; guarding nature from threats and destruction; safekeeping records and relics

Choose **3 prohibitions** of your burden and tradition:

Never refuse an earnest request for help; never express great emotion; never run from a fight; never start a fight; never deny someone knowledge or truth; never use your role for gain or profit; never intervene in a community without invitation; never withhold forgiveness; never steal or cheat

Live Up to Your Role

When you live up to your Role through the responsibilities of your burden and tradition despite opposition or danger, shift your balance toward Role instead of marking fatigue, and clear fatigue equal to your Role (minimum 0-fatigue).

Break Tradition

When you directly and openly break a prohibition of your burden and tradition, mark a condition, shift your balance twice towards Freedom, and mark growth.

End of Session

At the end of each session, answer these after your standard growth questions.

- **Did I uphold a responsibility?**
  If yes, shift balance toward Role and clear a condition.
- **Did I break a prohibition?**
  If yes, shift balance toward Freedom. Underline one prohibition you broke during the session. If it's already underlined, cross it out—it doesn't mean anything to you to break it again.

The Icon's Burden and Tradition

The Icon's **Burden and Tradition** feature defines the particulars of the role they're expected to fulfill. Every role has three major responsibilities and three major prohibitions; there might be countless minor duties and prohibitions, but the Icon had these ones drilled into them. Their responsibilities are jobs the Icon is expected to perform, for their society, their culture, or the world as a whole. Their prohibitions are actions meant to be avoided at all times.

Whichever responsibilities and prohibitions you choose, make sure you're interested in those aspects of play. By making them a responsibility or a prohibition, you ensure these actions matter to your game. For example, if you choose "never refuse an earnest request for help," you're saying you want to get into situations to do just that. If you can't see yourself ever refusing an earnest request for help—or you're not interested in the GM making moves that push you into situations where you might refuse—then don't pick that prohibition.

Living up to your Role triggers the core balance move **live up to your principle**. But whereas that move only requires you to take action in accordance with the values of a principle, for your special benefits to apply, you must do so "despite opposition or danger," meaning that you don't trigger the effects unless you actually adhere to the responsibilities of your **Burden and Tradition** in the face of opposition or danger. The benefit is that you can shift your balance toward Role instead of marking fatigue, and you get to clear fatigue equal to your Role after shifting. Because you shift your Role first, you get to use your improved Role both for the clearing of fatigue and for the substitute stat.

The minimum fatigue you clear is 0—if your Role isn't positive after the shift, you don't clear anything, but you don't mark fatigue for a negative principle, either. You can still **live up to your principle** normally without triggering this effect.

Breaking tradition means directly and openly violating a prohibition of your **Burden and Tradition**. It should be clear when you do so, and it should be observable to others—if you break a prohibition secretly or known only to you, it doesn't trigger this effect. If you're unsure whether or not you're directly and openly violating a prohibition of your **Burden and Tradition**, ask the GM what they think. And the GM should do their part to warn you when they think you're about to do that, in case you don't know. "Directly and openly" means that you can't stumble, accidentally, into breaking a tradition—you have to do so intentionally.

When you do break tradition, you mark a condition to represent the toll of violating the rules so ingrained in you, but then you shift your balance twice toward Freedom and mark growth.

For your end of session questions, you and the GM should work together to have the same answer to the questions. You are the final arbiter—the answers represent your internal understanding of your responsibilities and prohibitions—but the GM can push you on whether or not you really acted as you should have. In both cases, remember that any balance shift can't cause you to lose balance off-screen. If you shift your balance at the end of the session and you would **lose your balance**, you instead stay at +3 in the appropriate principle.

MOVES CHOOSE TWO

☐ USE THEIR MOMENTUM
When you are engaged with a large or powerful foe, mark fatigue to **advance and attack** with **Focus** instead of **Passion**. If you do, you become *Prepared* and may also choose to use Retaliate as if it were an **advance and attack** technique.

☐ BONZU PIPPINPADDLEOPSICOPOLIS... THE THIRD
When you **trick an NPC** by assuming a silly disguise or fake identity, mark Insecure to treat your roll as if it was a 12+. If Insecure is already marked, mark 2-fatigue instead.

☐ CONCENTRATION
Take +1 **Focus** (max +3).

☐ OTTER-PENGUINS, UNAGI, AND HOT SPRINGS
When you visit a new inhabited location you might know about, roll with **Harmony**. On a 7–9, ask 1. On a 10+, ask 2. PCs who interact with one of the answers clear 1-fatigue or mark growth.

- What's the best local pastime?
- What interesting locations are nearby?
- Who is the most famous person here?
- What special tradition is prized by locals?
- What's the most interesting legend locals recount about this place?

On a miss, tell the GM what you expected to find; they will tell you how this place is different!

☐ YIP YIP!
You have an animal companion large enough to ride. Name them and choose their species:
Sky bison, polar bear-dog, eel-hound, cat-gator, elephant-mandrill, gemsbok-bull, shirshu, komodo-rhino, sabertooth moose-lion, flying boar, walrus-yak, flying fish-opotamus

- When you fight beside your animal companion, mark 1-fatigue to become *Favored* for an exchange
- When something hurts your animal companion, mark a condition
- When you and your friends travel via your animal companion, everyone clears all fatigue

Wall of Perfection
DEFEND & MANEUVER

Create a perfect wall of defense around yourself and any allies directly next to you; mark 1-fatigue to block a single attack towards the wall or keep an enemy at bay who tries to penetrate the wall.

For Wall of Perfection, the Icon's playbook advanced technique, "block a single attack toward the wall" means that you prevent any inflicted fatigue, conditions, or balance shifts from that attack—but only if the wall could actually block that kind of attack. A wall of ice would have a tough time blocking angry words, for example.

Moves Advice
For **Use Their Momentum**, you become *Prepared* after you roll to **advance and attack**. You may use Retaliate as if it were an **advance and attack** technique the same exchange that you trigger this move.

For **Otter-Penguins, Unagi, and Hot Springs**, "a new inhabited location you might know about" is a place that you haven't been to during the game yet, but your character might've heard about sometime in the past. "PCs who interact with one of the answers clear 1-fatigue or mark growth" include all PCs, though you should tell them about the interesting features first. Furthermore, if you roll a 10+, any given PC can interact with each answer independently—so they can clear 1-fatigue once each for both answers, or clear 1-fatigue when interacting with one answer and mark growth when interacting with the other, or even mark growth once each for both answers. On a miss, what you recall or what you heard about the place is incorrect, and the GM reveals how.

For **Yip Yip!**, you can choose an animal species not listed if you want. In order to travel via your animal companion, you have to journey for at least a few hours or overnight; riding them across a small village won't clear any fatigue.

Growth Question
> Did you accomplish a feat worthy of your burden and tradition?

The Icon's growth question points them at building upon the foundation of their role in a similar way. What matters is if they did something worthy of their burden and tradition, whether or not it adhered to any of their prohibitions or responsibilities.



THE IDEALIST



The Idealist

The Idealist has a past, full of suffering and tragedy, that strengthened their beliefs. Play the Idealist if you want to awaken the hope in everyone around you.

Noble, pained, kind, committed. The Idealist has suffered some tragedy in their past, something terrible that left them with pain and anger…but also, with hope. Even in the face of tragedy, they felt and pursued a belief that people could be great, that the world could be better. The Idealist pursues that belief, taking action to help people, connect them, and solve problems.

The Idealist still has an edge to them, however, and a capacity for unforgiveness. After all, something terrible happened to them, and it can be hard not to crave vengeance against those responsible. At their best, the Idealist can turn that drive into a push to change the world for the better. At their worst, it can drive the Idealist to extreme, dangerous action.

Starting Stats

Creativity 0, Focus -1, Harmony +1, Passion +1

Demeanor Options

Lonely, Compassionate, Joyful, Grieving, Earnest, Resolute

History

- What tragedy befell you at a young age?
- Who do you hold most responsible for the tragedy? Why?
- Who helped you through your grief? What did they teach you?
- What symbol, heirloom, or mark do you carry to remind you of what you lost?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- I recognize some of the pain I have felt inside of _____; I'm going to try to help them.
- _____ frustrates me so much when they act without thinking about the consequences!

Moment of Balance

The pain of the world can be overwhelming, but balance brings peace. You bring everything around you to a stop—villains, arguments, disaster—and set the world right. Tell the GM how your compassionate actions end a conflict utterly and completely.

Principles



Forgiveness vs Action



The Idealist's two principles of Forgiveness and Action represent these two poles. Their Forgiveness principle is all about their desire and ability to forgive, to move on past transgressions and offenses through empathy, understanding, and emotional catharsis. Forgiveness doesn't mean the Idealist offers it to everyone, unambiguously—it just means the Idealist is committed to resolving and moving on from past pain and injury. Sometimes it needs someone repentant on the other side; other times, the Idealist expressing forgiveness is more important than the perpetrator asking for it.

The Idealist's Action principle, on the other hand, drives them to take action, to do things and change the world directly. Sometimes, Action expresses itself as vengeance, attempts to punish those responsible for wrongdoing. Other times, it expresses itself as using the drive toward justice to directly act and make things better, destroying dangers, protecting the innocent, and making real, immediate change.

The Idealist tries to balance these two principles by finding a way to both take action and make change...and to be compassionate, merciful, and forgiving. Their Moment of Balance signifies finding this perfect equilibrium. The Idealist stops the actions of others, whether through their skills and training or through their words, and finds a way to fix a major problem through compassionate action.

Never Turn My Back

You've seen sadness and grief. You're no stranger to loss and pain. But you know the world can be a better place. And nothing happens without good people fighting for what's right...

You have a code—choose three ideals from the list to define it:

- ☐ Always speak the truth
- ☐ Always stand up to bullies
- ☐ Always keep your promises
- ☐ Never strike the first blow
- ☐ Never deny a request for help
- ☐ Never leave a friend behind

When you live up to your ideals at a significant cost, someone who witnessed (or hears about) your sacrifice approaches you to affirm their allegiance to your group's purpose; write their name down on the list of allies below.

Allies

You can always **plead** with these allies—they always care what you think; they always open up to you if you **guide and comfort** them; and you can **call on them to live up to their principles** as if you had rolled a 10+ by erasing their name from your list of allies.

The Idealist's Never Turn My Back

The Idealist's code isn't binding the way that the Icon's prohibitions and responsibilities might be. The code doesn't represent rules that another has imposed on the Idealist, so much as the very ideals that they picked for themselves, the things they strive for to be the best version of themselves.

When you pick your **ideals**, make sure you pick things you are interested in doing in the face of difficulty. For example, if you pick "never strike the first blow," you're saying that you want conflicts in which you might want to strike first. Maybe you'll face off against obnoxious, terrible enemies who try to provoke you into attacking; maybe you'll encounter foes skilled at oblique threats, so they can do you harm without ever "striking the first blow." If you *don't* pick "never strike the first blow," however, you're saying you're disinterested in conflicts about provocation and foes who can't or shouldn't be targeted directly.

The GM is the ultimate arbiter of whether or not you live up to your ideals at a significant cost—the question isn't about the Idealist's own belief in their actions, but about whether others have heard of the sacrifice and have been impressed. The GM determines the person approaching the Idealist, who should approach sooner than later. They don't need to have witnessed the act immediately, however—they might just have heard about it and approach later. Either way, they are impressed with the Idealist and they appreciate their group's purpose.

When you **call on an ally to live up to their principles** as if you had rolled a 10+ by erasing their name from your list of allies, it means you're pushing your relationship with them. You're using up some of the goodwill you've earned to get them to act appropriately, according to their beliefs. You can still earn that goodwill back if you again live up to your ideals at a significant cost; at the GM's discretion, a former ally can always approach and let you write their name down again!

Moves — Choose Two

☐ The Strength of Your Heart

When you use Seize a Position, foes must mark 2-fatigue to block your movement.

☐ Whatever I Can

When you spend time talking to the locals about their problems, roll with **Harmony**. On a hit, you hear about the most significant and serious problem at hand; the GM will tell you who it affects and what is the cause. On a 10+, you can ask a follow up question about the problem or cause; you take +1 ongoing when you act on the answer. On a miss, you wind up creating a whole new problem with your questions and ideas.

☐ Your Rules Stink

When you stand up to an adult by telling them their rules are stupid, roll with **Passion**. On a hit, they are surprised by your argument; they must shift their balance or offer you a way forward, past the rules. On a 10+, both. On a miss, your efforts to move them only reveal how strongly they believe in the system—mark a condition as their resistance leaves you reeling.

☐ It Doesn't Belong to You!

When you secretly pocket something owned by someone undeserving, roll with **Harmony**. On a hit, you swipe something from them (your choice) without them noticing you took it. On a 7–9, the thing you took isn't exactly what you thought it was; the GM will tell you how. On a miss, you grab the goods, but they notice—and pursue—as soon as you exit the scene.

☐ Can't Knock Me Down

When you are engaged in combat with superior opposition and openly refuse to back down or flee, roll with **Harmony** for the rest of the battle whenever you **defend and maneuver**; you cannot choose to escape the scene by using Seize a Position for the rest of the fight.

Moves Advice

For **The Strength of Your Heart**, foes must mark 1-fatigue beyond the normal amount to block your movement. Most of the time, that means they'll mark 2-fatigue, but, for example, a foe who has an advanced technique that lets them block your movement at no fatigue cost has to mark 1-fatigue.

For **Whatever I Can**, you gain a better sense of the overall problem by talking to the locals who open up to you a bit. The problem you hear about genuinely is the most significant and serious problem, and you know it—even if the people you're talking to don't quite frame it that way.

For **Your Rules Stink**, you do have to stand up to an adult, specifically, even if you too are a young adult. You can't call out a kid's rules as stupid in the same way. If they offer you a way forward, past the rules, then they remove an obstacle in your path or otherwise retreat, giving you what you were after.

For **It Doesn't Belong to You!**, be sure to ask for any interesting things around you when you think you've found a good target—someone undeserving of those things. You can always **assess a situation** to try to get some guidance, but there are almost always some baubles or interesting artifacts the GM can point out. In the worst case, on a hit, you swipe *something*, even if you aren't paying close attention to what, and the GM can tell you exactly what you grabbed. Of course, on a 7–9, you grabbed something different from even what you might have intended.

For **Can't Knock Me Down**, you trigger the change when you make clear, to everyone watching, how you won't back down in the face of this obviously superior opposition. If the opposition is equal to you, but not superior, then you don't trigger the effect. If you only internally decide not to back down, then you don't trigger the effect. Once the effect is triggered, you cannot choose to escape the scene by using Seize a Position—you're in it until someone loses their balance or is taken out, or until your opposition flees.

Disorient

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Pummel an engaged foe with quick blows; mark 1-fatigue to shift their balance away from center.

For Disorient, the Idealist's playbook advanced technique, you are using your blows to drive your opponent to greater, more intense commitment and belief. They get thrown off balance and recommit in a way that might make them momentarily more powerful, but ultimately makes it easier to get them to lose their balance. Think of it like goading or infuriating attacks!

Growth Question

> Did you improve the lives of a community of average citizens or help an ordinary person with their problems?

The Idealist's growth question points them always toward helping people, wherever they go. Be it a whole community of average citizens or an ordinary person, the Idealist grows when they aid the innocent, the less powerful, or the needy. Their growth question won't drive them to help the powerful or the mighty, of course.




領袖
THE PILLAR

The Pillar

The Pillar is an experienced team player and leader of a famous group of warriors. Play the Pillar if you want to be a savvy tactician who binds the team together.

Supportive, self-assured, quiet, tactical. The Pillar comes from a background in which they worked with, even led, a larger team. They know what it takes to work well with a group, and they bring that skillset to this new group of companions. Of course, they can't just take charge and demand everyone act the way they want…right?

The Pillar is exactly that to the group, a "pillar" to hold up the rest, to support, help, and guide them. Sometimes that means the Pillar can be a quiet presence in the background; other times, it means the Pillar moves to the forefront and takes charge. The difficulty for the Pillar comes in figuring out which time is which, and what this group needs from them!

Starting Stats

Creativity +1, Focus 0, Harmony +1, Passion -1

Demeanor Options

Confident, Lighthearted, Critical, Stern, Gentle, Warm

History

- How did you rise to lead a renowned squad or group?
- Who was your closest friend and confidant in the squad?
- Who never thought you deserved to lead the group?
- What uniform, heirloom, or symbol do you carry as a talisman of the group?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ doesn't really respect my accomplishments; they probably need a lesson or two.
- _____ seems like they would've been a good candidate to be a part of my squad; I'll look after them.

Moment of Balance

You define yourself as a part of a larger group, and in this moment, the group defines itself by you. You rally them, move among them, saying the right things and providing the right guidance so your group works with perfect cohesion and confidence. Tell the GM what you say to each of your companions so that in this moment, you overcome an indomitable challenge, together.

Principles



Support vs Leadership



The Pillar's two principles represent these two approaches to supporting the group. The Pillar's Support principle is all about intentionally moving into a supportive position, helping others in a quieter, subtler way. Expressing Support means that the Pillar is figuring out how to help others on their own path, with their own choices. A Pillar like this eases the burdens on others in less obvious, but no less important, ways.

The Pillar's Leadership principle, on the other hand, is all about directly and openly guiding others to the best versions of themselves. A Pillar committed to Leadership isn't just being quietly supportive, but tries directly to shape their companions for the better, telling them how they should act, what they should do, how they should respond to danger, etc. This kind of Pillar isn't going to sit on the sidelines—this kind of Pillar takes their position in the spotlight to lead by word and example.

The Pillar tries to be of most use for their friends and their group by balancing these two principles, acting in a leading role that supports others in their growth. Their Moment of Balance exemplifies this moment when the Pillar rallies the entire group around them. In that moment, the Pillar becomes the perfect support and the perfect leader for the whole group, helping everyone achieve their best selves all at once in perfect cohesion. Keep in mind that the Pillar's Moment of Balance needs the group to be present to really trigger—it's about the whole team, not the Pillar alone.

Squad Leader

You were the leader of a small group of 10 or so well-trained warriors from a recognized and noble tradition.

Where does your squad call home? _____

Which are the most well known traits of your squad? (choose up to 3): *our weapons, our fighting style, our battle cry, our costumes, our legends, our purpose*

What does your squad value? (choose 2): *Excellence, Justice, Duty, Mercy, Tradition, Protection*

Despite being the leader, you chose to travel with your new companions for the time being, until you've achieved this group's purpose. **Choose where your team is without you:**

protecting the team's home while you are away; protecting a powerful figure; temporarily disbanded or exiled; training and preparing for something important; journeying and doing good works throughout your scope; escorting important travelers; stationed at an important location; performing traditional or ceremonial duties

Within any group, you serve a role both subtle and overt, sometimes leading the team, sometimes helping it glue itself together. You earn Team through your leadership style, and you spend Team through your support style. At the end of each session, you may change 1 style of leadership and 1 style of support.

Choose 2 styles of leadership.
Earn 1-Team when...

- ☐ **Firm:** ...you openly **call on a companion to live up to their principle**.
- ☐ **Inspiring:** ...you **live up to your principle** and roll a hit.
- ☐ **Diplomatic:** ...you **plead with an NPC** for help and roll a 10+.
- ☐ **Empathetic:** ...you **guide and comfort** a companion and they open up to you.
- ☐ **Guidance:** ...you **assess a situation** and give a companion instructions based on the answers
- ☐ **Indomitable:** ...you roll a hit when you **resist shifting your balance** or you **deny a callout**.

Choose 2 styles of support.
Spend 1-Team when...

- ☐ **Comforting:** ...you spend time one-on-one in a quiet moment with a companion to clear a condition from them.
- ☐ **Invigorating:** ...you rally a companion to action in a tense moment to clear 2-fatigue from them.
- ☐ **Defending:** ...you are within reach of a companion in combat to clear a negative status from them.
- ☐ **Bolstering:** ...you help another companion to give them a +1 to their roll, after the roll.
- ☐ **Encouraging:** ...you openly endorse a friend **living up to their principle** to shift their balance toward that principle.
- ☐ **Trusting:** ...you openly endorse a friend **resisting shifting their balance** to give them +2, after the roll.

The Pillar's Squad Leader

The Pillar is the leader of a **squad**, a team of ten or so well-trained warriors, identifiable within the scope of your game—if you're playing an Earth Kingdom-scope game, then they're known at least throughout the Earth Kingdom, while if you're playing a world-scope game, then they're known throughout the world.

For the moment, the Pillar is traveling with this group of companions, having chosen to take a leave of absence from their other team. The Pillar's squad still exists, and they can easily show up during play. But the Pillar has still chosen to be with these companions (the other PCs) for now, helping them with their worthy goals and giving them the support and leadership they need. If the Pillar would rather depart from the PCs and go back to their other team, then it's likely time for the Pillar to exit play. If the Pillar is NEVER going back to their other team, then it's likely time for the Pillar to change playbooks!

The Pillar has two styles of leadership, ways to earn **Team**—a Pillar-only special resource—that they can then spend to help their companions through their two styles of support. There is no limit to the amount of Team that the Pillar can accrue, and they keep their Team until they spend it.

To earn 1 Team, trigger a move—like **openly calling on a companion to live up to their principle** for Firm, or **assessing a situation** and giving a companion instructions based on the answers you receive for Guidance—you can only earn 1 Team for each move rolled.

When you spend Team for a style of support, you can't spend multiple times for the same trigger—once per move or triggered moment, only!

Remember that you can change one style of leadership and one style of support at the end of each session, to make sure the triggers for each match your current view of how you support and lead.

Slide Around the Blow

EVADE & OBSERVE

You move perfectly, slipping past strikes and demanding an opponent's attention; a foe you are engaged with must remain engaged with you and can only use techniques against you in the next exchange. If no foe is engaged with you, you may slip through the fight to engage a new foe (no foe may mark fatigue to stop you).

For Slide Around the Blow, the Pillar's playbook advanced technique, you ensure that a foe can't go after another target, or you slip through the fight to engage a new foe without being hindered.

MOVES CHOOSE TWO

☐ UNDERSTANDING MIEN
Take +1 to **HARMONY** (max +3).

☐ A WARRIOR'S HEART
When you **live up to your principle** while you have 3+ conditions marked, ignore your condition penalties. When you **live up to your principle** while you have 5 conditions marked, don't mark fatigue.

☐ OUT OF UNIFORM
When you put on a disguised or physically altered persona to fool a community into thinking you're two different people, roll with **CREATIVITY**. On a hit, people mostly unfamiliar with you won't connect your two personas. On a 7–9, this is the last time you can pull this trick without them catching on. On a miss, someone misidentifies you when you switch in a way that causes more trouble for you.

☐ FIGHTING LIKE DANCING
When you **advance and attack** against a group of foes—or a foe who has previously defeated you—roll with **HARMONY** instead of **PASSION**.

☐ TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
When you **lose your balance** in a battle, instead of choosing one of the normal options, you may instead sacrifice yourself for your companions. If you do, your companions have a chance to get away without issue, and you are taken out (and possibly captured). You also choose 1:

- Leave a clue your companions can follow
- Throw your companions one vulnerable object
- Provoke an opponent, shifting their balance twice

MOVES ADVICE
For **Out of Uniform**, you're most likely using your specialized squad costume to essentially have two different identities. It's a good way to take actions and not be held to the consequences later. You roll the move every time you switch your uniform to fool a specific group, but on a 7–9, this is the last time you can switch without someone actually putting it together.

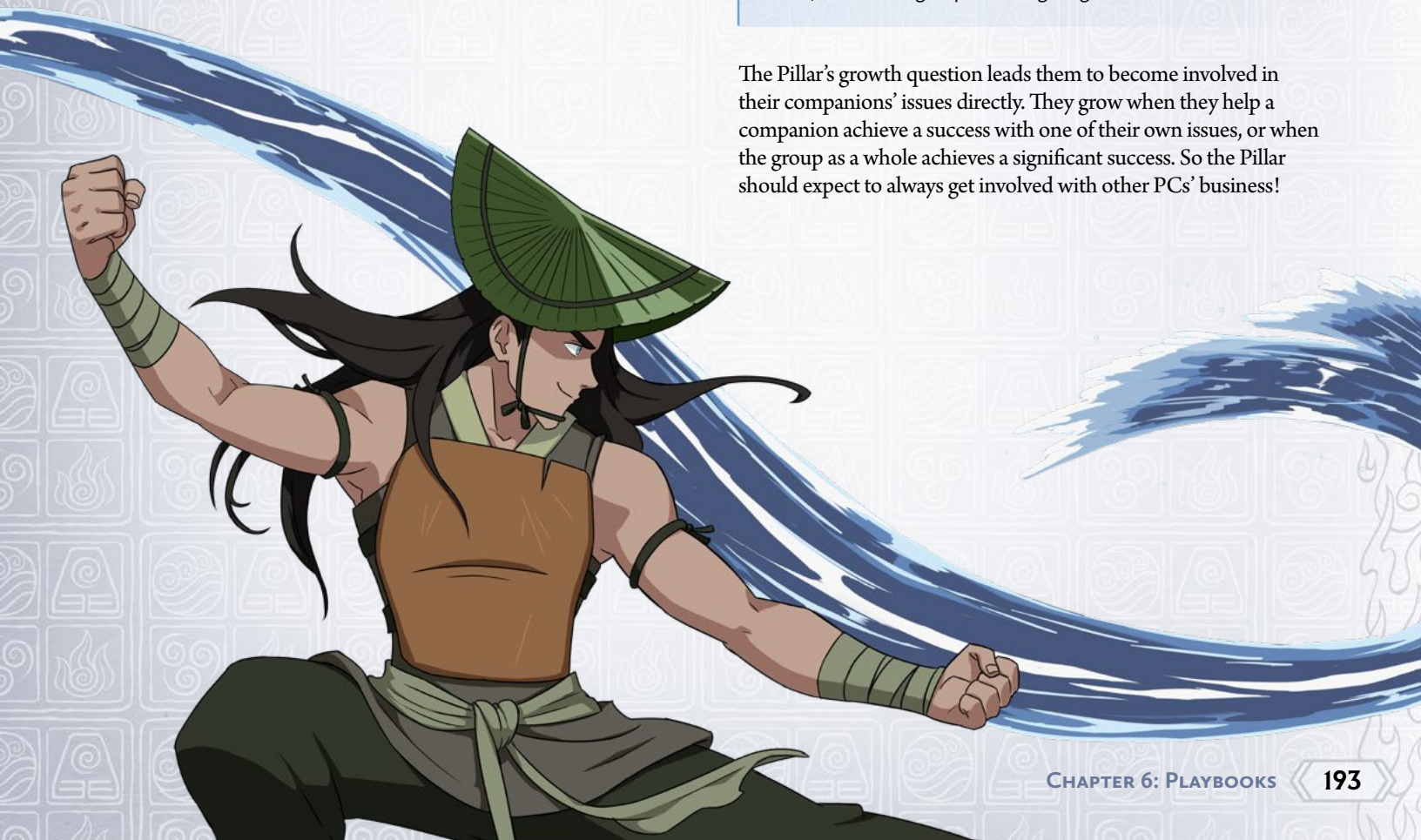
For **Taking Care of Business**, you have a chance to turn a loss into a self-sacrificing move on behalf of your friends. You can only trigger this move when you **lose your balance**. You'll always be taken out, and likely captured—though if the GM strongly believes they wouldn't take you captive, they don't have to; you're simply left at their mercy. In exchange, you give your friends the chance to get away without making any other moves, and you take some significant action before you're taken out. If you don't leave a clue for your companions to follow, they will have a hard time finding you wherever your captors take you; if you throw a vulnerable object, you're grabbing something nearby that's vulnerable to you—even something belonging to your enemies—and getting it to your friends.

For **A Warrior's Heart**, both effects can stack, allowing you to both ignore your condition penalties and avoid marking fatigue when you have five conditions marked.

For **Fighting like Dancing**, "a single foe who has previously defeated you" can mean any kind of defeat, so long as you feel like you were defeated. You always gain the benefits against any group.

GROWTH QUESTION
> Did you help a companion find a significant success with their issues, or lead the group in finding a significant collective success?

The Pillar's growth question leads them to become involved in their companions' issues directly. They grow when they help a companion achieve a success with one of their own issues, or when the group as a whole achieves a significant success. So the Pillar should expect to always get involved with other PCs' business!




天才
THE PRODIGY

The Prodigy

The Prodigy not only excels at their training, but has taken it even beyond their masters' teachings. Play the Prodigy if you want to stretch the limits of your training and abilities.

Arrogant, extraordinary, stubborn, masterful. The Prodigy is more than just capable or skilled—they are truly extraordinary, and their skillset blows others—even with equivalent age or training—out of the water. They can do things that some believe are straight-up impossible. And what's more…they know it.

The Prodigy excels at their skills and training, to an extent that likely drove any number of their teachers or peers to hate them. The Prodigy has at least one teacher who genuinely helped them find the full extent of what they could do, but they've had to become tough developing their abilities. They know how capable they are and they know what they can do; they have grown tired of being told what they can or can't do. They find it tough to form a connection with others, especially when no one else can keep up with them.

Starting Stats

Creativity -1, Focus +2, Harmony 0, Passion 0

Demeanor Options

Curious, Proud, Defensive, Resolute, Direct, Stubborn

History

- When did you first accomplish something your teachers thought would be impossible for you?
- Who gave you the lessons and support you needed to discover your incredible abilities?
- Who cares for you greatly but doesn't understand your talent?
- What strange talisman or detail of your clothing plays a role in your talents?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ could use training from someone who knows what they're doing; I suppose I am up to the task.
- I'm not sure if the overtures of friendship from _____ make me happy, mad, or both.

Moment of Balance

You've always struggled to rely on other people—it feels like it makes you weak. But in this moment, connection to others is the very source of your strength. You call upon your commitment to the group to push yourself beyond your limits and do the impossible. Tell the GM how you accomplish a feat no one ever has before to help or save your friends.

Principles



Excellence vs Community



This struggle between their own innate abilities and their ability to bond with others is at the heart of the Prodigy's two principles. Their principle of Excellence emphasizes how much they believe in themselves and their own abilities, and their commitment to being the best. The Prodigy, already incredibly capable, knows they can get better still, and they know that they deserve recognition from others as being the greatest. A Prodigy with a high Excellence is both determined to be the best...and to be seen as the best.

Their principle of Community, on the other hand, emphasizes how lonely it can be at the top, and how the Prodigy comes to desire connection with others—a community. Because they excel so much, they've likely had difficulty connecting with anybody, but a Prodigy committed to Community still tries to make those connections, to find friends or mentors or even students. After all, one of the best ways the Prodigy can connect with others is to make them excellent too. A Prodigy with a high Community is less concerned with beating everyone than they are with forming meaningful bonds with the people around them, lifting them up in the process.

The Prodigy tries to balance this desire for community with their desire to be the best. Their Moment of Balance is when they find that perfect equilibrium, realizing that they became better because of their community and their friends, that saving or helping their friends can drive them to greater lengths than just a selfish sense of superiority ever could.

Extraordinary Skill

You aren't just capable in your area of skill and training; you're astonishing. A true prodigy, excelling and learning far more quickly than anyone would expect. You start play with one additional mastered technique.

Choose two areas in which your mastery is particularly impressive:

☐ Shaping	☐ Maneuvering	☐ Breaking
☐ Sensing	☐ Forcing	☐ Guarding

When you **rely on your skills and training**, use a combat stance, or otherwise trigger a move while using your mastery, ignore penalties from conditions or statuses.

When you see someone use an unknown technique, if it is available to your skills and training, you may mark fatigue to shift your balance towards Excellence and take the technique as learned. **You can only do this if your balance is at +1 Excellence or higher.** You must still get a mastery condition from a master of the technique in order to move the technique from practiced to mastered.

When you study with a teacher to learn a new technique, shift your balance towards Community and automatically learn the technique at the practiced level (skipping learned). **You cannot learn techniques by studying with a teacher if your Balance is +0 Community or lower.**

When you spend time teaching a fellow companion a technique available to their skills and training, roll with Community. On a hit, you teach well enough; they learn the technique. On a 7–9, you get impatient or frustrated; choose to either take it out on them and inflict 2 conditions, or take it out on yourself and suffer 2 conditions. On a miss, you get too frustrated with their inadequacies; both of you suffer 2 conditions, and you can never try to teach them this technique again.

The Prodigy's Extraordinary Skill

The Prodigy starts with one more mastered technique than normal. If playing with the full rules, that means the Prodigy starts with two mastered techniques and one learned technique.

The Prodigy's **extraordinary skill** lives in particular areas of their training. They're so skilled in those areas that whenever they do something using those general foci, they can ignore penalties from conditions or negative status effects.

What's more, the Prodigy can learn and master new techniques with a rapidity beyond nearly anyone else. They can learn techniques just by seeing others use them, as long as they have +1 Excellence or higher. On the other hand, when they actually do study with a master, they can learn new techniques beginning at practiced level, skipping learned, as long as they have at least +0 Community.

In addition, the Prodigy can actually teach their fellow companions new techniques. Remember that the techniques you teach them have to be available to their skills and training, and that if you get a miss, you can never teach them that technique again. For more on teaching techniques, see page 212.

Moves — Choose Two

☐ Judging a Rival

When you size someone up, roll with **Focus**. On a 7–9, ask one. On a 10+, ask two.

- what are your weaknesses / strengths?
- how can I show you dominance / submission?
- what do you intend to do next?
- what do you wish I'd do right now?

On a miss, they notice you watching them; they may ask you 1 question from the list.

☐ An Open Mind

You can learn techniques from other skills and trainings, as long as you have a teacher. You can learn up to three such techniques, total. Take a +1 on the training move to learn such techniques.

☐ Challenge

When you throw a boastful challenge at an opponent before a fight, roll with **Passion**. On a hit, the challenge lands; if you win the fight, choose 1 from below. But your challenge goads them to impressive heights; they may choose 1 extra technique in every exchange for the duration of the fight. On a 10+, clear all fatigue at the end of the fight if you are victorious.

If you win, choose 1: your opponent must...

- teach you a technique of theirs, or help you master one you already know.
- give you answers or an item of your choice.
- acknowledge your superiority; shift your balance twice towards Excellence.
- take your side in a future conflict.

On a miss, they dismiss your challenge and refuse to fight; they inflict a condition on you.

☐ Wait and Listen

When you **assess a situation** while taking the time to use your extraordinary skills to absorb hidden or deep information, mark 1-fatigue, roll with **Focus** instead of **Creativity**, and become *Prepared*.

☐ Surprising Entrance

When you **trick someone** by using your skills to disappear and reappear somewhere else within the same scene, roll with **Focus** instead of **Creativity**.

Moves Advice

For **Judging a Rival**, you can size up a foe much like **assessing a situation**. The answers you receive are always true, and if you take associated actions—like showing superiority after the character explicitly tells you what it takes to do so—you can avoid the need to trigger another move.

For **An Open Mind**, you can learn versions of techniques associated with other skills and training but adapted for your own abilities. You might learn to use Flame Knives (page 284) as a Waterbender, substitituing razor sharp ice for the usual firebending required for the technique. Remember that you need a teacher—you can't just learn the technique by watching it—and you can only learn three total techniques this way.

For **Challenge**, you can essentially challenge a foe to set stakes for the fight. You might make the fight harder on yourself, but you can guarantee certain results. On a hit, they always uphold their end of the challenge as long as you win. On a miss, though, they won't fight you for the challenge. If you attack them first, they'll defend themselves, but they make it clear they don't think you're worth the effort.

For **Wait and Listen**, make sure to describe how you are using your exceptional skills and abilities to gain special information. You always become *Prepared* after marking 1-fatigue, even on a miss.

For **Surprising Entrance**, your skills allow you to move in some surprising way, disappearing and reappearing within the same scene. When you use these skills, you're **tricking** opponents with Focus instead of Creativity—the point is to use them to force your foes to lose track of you, and then reappear somewhere unexpected, but within the same scene. Misdirection is important to this move—this isn't just for smashing through walls, but for suddenly disappearing into the earth and reappearing on the other side of the wall. You must reappear somewhere within the same scene, meaning you can't use this move to straight up escape…but you can definitely use this move to put yourself in position to escape.

Growth Question

> Did you express gratitude to a companion for their presence, support, or teaching?

The Prodigy's growth question encourages them away from out-and-out arrogance and solitude. Whether the Prodigy emphasizes Excellence or Community, they don't have to be annoying about how awesome they are! The Prodigy who is still able to connect with individuals, who is able to find excellence in others, is the Prodigy who grows and develops as a person.

Steady Stance

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Assume a strong, steady stance; any foes engaged with you who chose to **advance and attack** this exchange must mark 1-fatigue. Negate the first condition or negative status inflicted on you in this exchange. If no conditions or negative statuses were inflicted on you in this exchange, become *Empowered* for the next exchange.

For Steady Stance, the Prodigy's playbook advanced technique, you are assuming a strong stance, prepared to be struck and absorb the hit. Any and every foe engaged with you who **advanced and attacked** this exchange must mark 1-fatigue—and because Steady Stance is a **defend and maneuver** technique, it might use up their fatigue before they get to make their choices. You negate the first condition or negative status inflicted on you in this exchange, but only the first—so if you would mark a condition, but then someone else inflicts *Impaired* on you, you only ignore the condition. If no conditions or negative statuses were inflicted on you this exchange, then you become *Empowered* for the next exchange—the *Empowered* status taking effect and aiding you all throughout the next exchange. If you ignore the only condition or negative status that would be inflicted on you, then that counts as "no conditions or negative statuses were inflicted."




THE ROGUE
滾賴

The Rogue

The Rogue is a rule-breaker, a joker, a delinquent—a figure on the fringes who snipes at the people in charge. Play the Rogue if you like the idea of being a troublemaker.

Troublemaking, lonely, attention-seeking, selfish. The Rogue is an outsider and a miscreant, whatever their background or training might be. If they're from a Privileged or Military upbringing, they might look like a different kind of delinquent than one from an Outlaw or Urban background…but in either case, they're known as a troublemaker even among their own people. Someone with an Outlaw background might be stereotyped as being a criminal by people from other backgrounds, but a Rogue with an Outlaw background is trouble even for other criminals.

The Rogue became such a scoundrel and rulebreaker out of a need to survive. Something in their circumstances and background threatened their life, perhaps outright, perhaps metaphorically. For some Rogues, they became rulebreakers because they needed food; for others, they became rulebreakers because life threatened to drain them of personality or hope or will. Whatever the case, they didn't just start causing trouble for the heck of it—or rather, causing trouble for the heck of it helped them survive in the first place.

Starting Stats

Creativity +1, Focus 0, Harmony -1, Passion +1

Demeanor Options

Acerbic, Joking, Cynical, Sly, Extreme, Wild

History

- How did you come to feel that the only way to survive was to break the rules?
- Who kept trying to reach a kind hand out towards you, only to be rebuffed?
- Who was ready to do anything to break you of your bad habits?
- What is your favorite possession that you stole, swiped, or otherwise acquired illegitimately?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ is waaaaay too uptight, too trapped in themselves; they need to break some rules!
- _____ is amazing and I hope they like me; maybe they're worth playing it straight?

Moment of Balance

You learned early on that you had to do what you needed to survive, and that sometimes that meant you lost friends. Now, you find a new balance: rule-breaking isn't something that just drives people away—it's something you can use constructively, with your friends! Tell the GM how you lead your companions to break all the rules and accomplish an incredible feat.

Principles



Friendship vs Survival



The Rogue's principles represent their struggle with their habits, formed out of a need to survive, and their desire not to drive others away with the same bad habits. The Rogue's principle of Survival is their drive and need to selfishly make it through difficulties alive—but not necessarily well, or triumphantly. They grew whatever defenses and strategies they needed to make it through bad times mostly intact, but their defenses and strategies often left others out in the cold, and tended not to produce constructive results. A Rogue acting on Survival isn't trying to win a fight; they're desperately trying to survive it, at any cost. A Rogue with a high Survival is self-centered, but practically impossible to destroy.

The Rogue's principle of Friendship, however, represents their desire to actually form bonds over their desire to simply survive. Surviving at all costs includes the cost of most relationships, and the Rogue is aware of this tragedy. Committing to Friendship means deciding that maybe connections with their companions matter more than just avoiding harm. A Rogue with a high Friendship is willing to turn their hard-won survival skills and strategies to the task of helping their friends.

The Rogue finds a new way to combine these two principles in their Moment of Balance. In their Moment of Balance, the Rogue realizes that protecting their friends is a way to survive, too—that protecting the people they care about protects the Rogue, as well. The Rogue breaks all the rules, but does it to help others, and thereby helps themselves.

Bad Habits

You've picked up some bad habits over the years. Most other people are pretty set on trying to get you to stop. But maybe you can bring your friends along for the ride... Choose 4 bad habits you indulge:

- ☐ Casual thievery and pickpocketing
- ☐ Vandalism or sabotage
- ☐ Trespassing
- ☐ Daredevil stunts
- ☐ "Charming" insults of dangerous people
- ☐ Cons
- ☐ Rabble-rousing
- ☐ Gambling

Any necessary skills or talents related to your bad habits are considered to be part of your background.

When you **indulge a bad habit on your own**, shift your balance toward Survival, and roll with Survival. On a hit, you pull it off and vent your frustrations; clear fatigue or conditions equal to your Survival (minimum 0). If you have no fatigue or conditions, mark growth. On a 10+, you also gain a windfall, a boon or opportunity—your bad habits paid off this time. On a miss, you're caught by someone dangerous or powerful, and they complicate your life.

When you **indulge a bad habit with a friend**, shift your balance toward Friendship, and roll with Friendship. On a hit, you and your friend pull it off and grow closer; each of you makes the other *Inspired*. On a 10+, you also obtain some useful resource or information, and become *Prepared*. On a miss, something goes terribly awry; you can either take the heat yourself, or shift your Balance twice toward Survival and leave your friend in the lurch.

The Rogue's Bad Habits and Moves

The Rogue has picked up some **bad habits** over the years. These habits were part of the Rogue's need to survive, but now they tend to cause trouble as much as they help. Whatever four bad habits you pick, remember that you have all the skills necessary to be adept at those things, no matter your background and training—a privileged, military Rogue is still a fantastic thief if they choose "Casual thievery and pickpocketing."

The Rogue can pursue bad habits to vent, to clear fatigue and conditions… but only if the Rogue pursues their bad habits alone. When you "clear fatigue or conditions equal to your Survival," you split the total amount of conditions and fatigue between them however you choose. Remember that if you have nothing to clear, you mark growth, but you can't choose to clear nothing and mark growth if you have any fatigue or conditions marked. On a 10+, the GM decides what your windfall looks like.

If you pursue your bad habits with a friend, however, you can become *Inspired*, or even *Prepared* (if you roll a 10+). Remember that becoming *Prepared* on a 10+ is in addition to becoming *Inspired*. In either case, make sure you describe what you and your friend are actually doing together—to do it, you have to do it! You have to actually indulge your bad habits to trigger the move! On a miss, you choose whether you leave your friend in the lurch or take the heat yourself, and then the GM will tell you exactly what happens—but if you take the heat yourself, you give your friend a chance to get away clean, and if you choose to leave them in the lurch, you escape from consequences…for now.

Moves — Choose Two

☐ Roguish Charm

When you **plead with an NPC** or **guide and comfort someone** by flattering them and empathizing with them, mark 1-fatigue to roll with **Creativity** instead of **Harmony**.

☐ Slippery Eel-Hound

When you **defend and maneuver** and choose to use Seize a Position to escape the scene, foes must mark an additional 2-fatigue to stop you, and you may bring any allies within reach when you retreat.

☐ Is That the Best You Got?

When you goad or provoke an NPC into foolhardy action, say what you want them to do and roll with **Passion**. On a 10+, they do it. On a 7–9, they can choose 1 instead:

- They do it, but more intensely than expected—you're taken off guard.
- They do it, but more carefully than expected—they gain an advantage against you.
- They don't do it, but they embarrass themselves—they mark a condition.
- They don't do it, but only catch themself at the last minute—they stumble and give you an opportunity.

On a miss, they are provoked to take harsh action, directly against you, in a way you're ill-prepared to counter.

☐ You're Not My Master!

When you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, roll +2 instead of +0.

☐ Casing the Joint

When you **assess a situation**, add these questions to the list. You may always ask one extra question from these options, even on a miss.

- What here is most valuable or interesting to me?
- Who or what is most vulnerable to me?
- Who here is in control/wealthiest/has the most power?

Moves Advice

For **Roguish Charm**, the GM is the final arbiter of whether or not what you say is flattering or empathetic enough—whoever you're **pleading with** or **guiding and comforting** has to really feel you fawning over them for the move to trigger.

For **Slippery Eel-Hound**, the increased cost that your opponents must pay only applies if you are using Seize a Position to escape the scene. Similarly, you can only bring allies with you if you are escaping the scene. If you do bring allies with you, you don't need to pay any additional cost, but your foe can still block the entire escape attempt by paying 3-fatigue.

For **Is That the Best You Got?**, this move essentially replaces **trick an NPC** for these situations. Crucially, though, this only works to goad or provoke an NPC. If you're lying or using deception outright, then this move doesn't trigger; it requires you to insult or otherwise play on an NPC's insecurities and emotions to work.

For **You're Not My Master!**, you get the bonus any time you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, in all circumstances.

For **Casing the Joint**, the extra question you get to ask, even on a miss, must come from the questions associated with this move. Remember that you still get +1 ongoing when acting on the answers!

Sweep the Leg

ADVANCE & ATTACK

You attack where an enemy is weakest or most off-balance; if your foe has a total of three or more conditions and fatigue marked, inflict 2-fatigue. If your foe has fewer than three total conditions and fatigue marked, inflict 2-fatigue, but you must mark 1-fatigue as well.

For Sweep the Leg, the Rogue's playbook advanced technique, the primary advantage is that you can be sure you inflict 2-fatigue, without paying any special cost, as long as your opponent has three total conditions and fatigue marked. Otherwise, this technique allows you to essentially attack a second time beyond your once-per-exchange use of Strike if you roll a 10+ on **advance and attack**.

Growth Question

> Did you get a friend to join in or approve of one of your bad habits?

The Rogue's growth question is all about sharing their bad habits with new friends. If the bad habit becomes a way to bond with others, then the Rogue can grow and learn to change.



THE SUCCESSOR

傳人

The Successor

The Successor comes from a powerful, tarnished lineage. Play the Successor if you want to struggle against your lineage as it threatens to draw you in.

Prestigious, redemptive, pigeonholed, rebellious. The Successor comes from a powerful family, group, order, or lineage—they're the inheritor of real power, in one way or another, and everyone in the group believes the Successor belongs to it. But the lineage of the Successor is mired in corruption, or tragedy, or dark rumors. It's not an unequivocally noble inheritance; it's characterized by a tradition of destructive or cruel decisions and practices.

The Successor is a bit like the Icon; this identity has been foisted upon them. But unlike the Icon, this isn't some specific, honored role that the Successor faces; it has the weight of an entire legacy with its own enemies, allies, responsibilities, and benefits. What's more, nearly every NPC knows of the lineage, because the lineage holds power over or changed the scope in a significant way. If the scope of the game is the Northern Water Tribe, then the lineage is one of the most important families in the entire Northern Water Tribe, a name known to every Waterbender and ice fisher alike. Getting out from under that name, its weight, and its borne assumptions is quite the challenge for the Successor.

Starting Stats

Creativity +1, Focus +1, Harmony -1, Passion 0

Demeanor Options

Perky, Intense, By-the-book, Casual, Arrogant, Oblivious

History

- Who is the current head of your lineage? How do you love and frustrate each other?
- What close member of your lineage wants to revolutionize it?
- What do you carry that reminds you of the place most associated with your lineage?
- What part of your lineage's identity is most important and valuable to you as a person?
- Why are you committed to this group or purpose?

Connections

- _____ has major concerns, fears, or grievances with my lineage—and with me, by proxy.
- _____ seems free of their past in a way I wish I could let go of mine; hearing them talk about the future feels amazing!

Moment of Balance

You may never escape the legacy of your family, but balance allows you to learn from them without defining yourself in their image. You call upon a resource of your family to innovate a new solution to an intractable problem, never forgetting who you are in the face of incredible danger. Tell the GM how you knock down obstacles that seem impossible to overcome and save the day.

Principles



Tradition vs Progress



The Successor's split between their desire to uphold the greatness of their lineage and their desire to forge their own path is represented in their two principles. The Successor's principle of Tradition represents their commitment to the lineage, both its heritage and its practices and power. A Successor with a high Tradition cares about their lineage and seeks to uphold it. A high Tradition Successor may not be happy with the darker elements of their lineage, but they aren't out-of-hand opposed and disgusted. Instead, they see the value and power of the lineage and the way it has done things and seek to respect and honor their forebears.

The Successor's Progress principle, on the other hand, represents their desire to find new ways, different from the ways of their lineage. They don't have to be outright disrespectful or disdainful of their lineage, but they certainly aren't deeply rigid about it or refraining from making changes on the grounds that "this is how it's always been done." A Successor with high Progress very often wants to make amends for the worst excesses of their lineage but might also be looking for other non-traditional changes to their lineage.

The Successor finds a way to combine these two paths in their Moment of Balance. When they use their Moment of Balance, they both appreciate and value their lineage and everything it has given them, while also finding a new and better way to actually apply that power. They innovate while drawing on their lineage's resources to solve an unsolvable problem.

A Tainted Past

You hail from a powerful, infamous lineage—one with an impressive and terrible reputation. Your lineage has had a massive impact on the world within the scope of your story—its reach extends over the whole scope, and everyone in the scope knows of it. Choose one domain that is the source of your lineage's power—the area in which they affected the world—and another into which they're now beginning to extend their reach.

- ☐ high society
- ☐ military command
- ☐ arts and entertainment
- ☐ land ownership
- ☐ organized crime
- ☐ spiritual authority
- ☐ state politics
- ☐ business and industry
- ☐ elite academics
- ☐ vigilante militias
- ☐ media and news
- ☐ vital supply chains

Lineage Resources

You have access to your family's extensive stores of two of the following resources:

- ☐ obscure or forbidden knowledge
- ☐ introductions and connections
- ☐ servants or muscle
- ☐ high technology
- ☐ cold hard cash
- ☐ spiritual artifacts or tomes

Spend resources during the session to establish a boon you had previously asked for or obtained, something that your lineage's unique position and stores could provide: a vehicle, an invitation, a chest of jade coins, etc.

Humble Yourself

When you politely and obediently humble yourself before a powerful member of your lineage, roll with your Tradition. On a hit, you earn some credit; hold 3-resources. On a 7–9, their resources don't come without strings; you'll need to promise to fulfill some other obligation of your lineage, or let them shift your balance. On a miss, they're dissatisfied with your display; they're cutting you off until you fulfill some task they set to you.

Raid Your Lineage's Resources

When you raid your lineage's resources without their consent or knowledge, mark a condition and roll with your Progress. On a hit, hold 1-resource. On a 7–9, choose 1. On a 10+, choose 2.

- You obtain an additional 1-resource
- You nab your goodies quietly; your lineage is none the wiser
- You steel yourself for what you're doing; avoid marking a condition

On a miss, you're caught red-handed by a powerful member of your lineage who saw you coming.

The Successor's Tainted Past

The Successor's **lineage** is always powerful in at least one area and attempting to gain power in another. The area in which your lineage is powerful is their base of strength, what they're known for throughout the scope of your game, and the way that they exert power and influence at large. The area in which they are extending their reach describes where they focus their efforts to gain influence most, and where they likely find opposition.

The Successor has access to two extensive stores of resources from their lineage. Keep in mind that these aren't meant to be perfectly transferable; having access to cold hard cash doesn't mean you can easily just spend that cash to gain access to obscure or forbidden knowledge, for example.

You can spend **resources**, a special Successor-only game currency, to establish useful boons from your lineage. You gain resources when you humble yourself or when you raid your lineage's resources. In either case, you don't have to define everything you get at that moment; you can hold your resources and spend them as you need to establish something you might have gotten, asked for, or set up earlier. For example, you can spend 1-resource to have a car when you need it if you had previously humbled yourself to your high-technology lineage.

Humbling yourself does mean you have to go to a powerful member of your lineage; make sure you have someone in mind when you go, as it influences what requests and balance shifts they give you.

When you raid your lineage's resources, make sure it's clear where or how you do so, be it by breaking into your family's safe or heading down to the family factory to fill your pockets. The move covers everything else about the raid; you're only caught if you roll a miss.

Break

EVADE & OBSERVE

Target a foe's vulnerable equipment; render it useless or broken—possibly inflicting or overcoming a fictionally appropriate status.

For Break, the Successor's playbook advanced technique, you can essentially smash a piece of equipment with the **evade and observe** stance. No one can stop your use of Break, but it can only be used against equipment. The GM decides if breaking the equipment inflicts any status.

MOVES CHOOSE TWO

☐ **WAY OF THE FUTURE**
Take +1 **Creativity** (max +3).

☐ **BLACK KOALA-SHEEP**
When you behave in a way that shocks and unsettles people from one of your backgrounds, roll with **Creativity** to **intimidate** them or **push your luck**.

☐ **A LIFE OF REGRET**
When you **guide and comfort an NPC** by apologizing and honestly promising to make amends for the harm they have suffered, roll with **Focus** instead of **Harmony**. If they choose not to open up to you, you do not take +1 forward against them. If they choose to open up to you, take +1 ongoing to attempts to take action to make amends.

☐ **WALK THIS WAY**
When you make over, disguise, and/or coach your friends to fit in with a specific crowd appropriate to one of your backgrounds, roll with **Creativity**. On a 10+, the performance is flawless; you gain access to wherever you wanted to fit in while attracting little suspicion. On a 7–9, you fool nearly everyone; there's only a single gatekeeper who asks any questions or stands in your way. On a miss, the only way to get the access you desired is for one of your friends to take on an uncomfortable, dangerous, or attention-grabbing role.

☐ **WORLDLY KNOWLEDGE**
Your upbringing expanded your horizons, skillsets, and contacts. Choose another training and another background.

Moves Advice

For **Black Koala-Sheep**, the GM is the final arbiter of whether or not you behaved in a way that shocks or unsettles people from one of your backgrounds. That said, you are familiar with your backgrounds, and can ask the GM what would be shocking if you're ever unsure. In cases with some real uncertainty, you might **rely on your skills and training** for that insight.

For **A Life of Regret**, you can apologize and honestly promise to make amends for harm that you did not personally inflict—especially if that harm was inflicted by your lineage.

For **Walk This Way**, the makeover or disguise is only useful to get your friends past suspicion or observation. Make sure you know your destination when you use this move. It's not for simply passing indefinitely while in that environment, for example.

For **Worldly Knowledge**, you cannot choose a second form of bending, but you can always choose Weapons or Technology, or your first form of bending. If you take this move as an advancement, you should work with the GM to advance time a bit to give you the chance to actually acquire the relevant skills.

Growth Question

> Did you learn something meaningful or important about your lineage, its members, or its effects on the world and others?

The Successor's growth question is all about coming to learn more, discover more, and better understand their own lineage. They can grow by learning direct secrets or by learning about the lineage's effects on the world. Because the Successor's lineage should be well-known throughout the scope of your game, it shouldn't be hard to find out something about them nearly anywhere the Successor goes.







CHAPTER 7

ADVANCEMENT

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CHAPTER 7

This chapter contains rules and details for advancement and new special techniques. It explains how characters advance throughout a campaign of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, both in terms of earning growth and spending it on new advancements, and in terms of learning new techniques from masters in the world. It has advice for GMs on how to set mastery conditions for learning new techniques, but it's mostly geared towards players.

During the game you tell stories of friends and companions who go on adventures, protect the world, and bring balance to dangerous or difficult situations. But these characters don't remain static—they change over the course of the campaign. They grow, learn, and make choices about who they are and who they want to be. Often that change is depicted through a PC's balance and center shifting (see page 102) as you explore their internal tensions.

But PCs also become more skilled and capable over time, gaining new abilities and becoming better at the use of their existing abilities. This kind of change, generally called advancement, includes improvements to character stats, the acquisition of new playbook moves, and learning new techniques.

Earning Growth

Growth is a generalized kind of learning, expanding your character's mind, your experiences, and your skillset. Growth isn't about training hard, mastering some complicated new technique or ability; growth is about having your ideas challenged and coming to understand yourself and the world better.

For the most part, PCs earn growth through answering growth questions at the end of each session. There are three growth questions that the group always discusses together but answers individually, and then every character has a growth question from their own playbook that they also answer. These questions help sum up the session and point the players toward actions in-line with their playbooks.

Sometimes, PCs might earn growth through other means, often playbook moves or by **resisting shifting their balance** (see page 140), but those means always call out the circumstances in which the character earns growth. While the growth questions at the end of each session point toward the lessons your companions have learned, growth you earn during a session usually points toward important experiences you've had, like standing up for yourself in the face of pressure!

When you "mark growth" or "earn growth," you mark the next box on your growth track of four growth boxes. Once all four are marked, you earn a growth advancement, improving your stats, learning new moves, unlocking your Moment of Balance, or shifting your balance.

The Growth Move

At the end of each session, your whole group determines how much growth you've each earned through the baseline growth move, answering questions and marking one growth for each yes answered:

> At the end of each session, each player answers the following questions:
> - Did you learn something challenging, exciting, or complicated about the world?
> - Did you stop a dangerous threat or solve a community problem?
> - Did you guide a character towards balance or end the session at your center?
>
> Each player also answers their playbook's unique personal growth question. For each "yes," mark growth. When you have marked four growth, you take a growth advancement.

What Ends a Session?

The next few sections cover these questions—and the growth advancements—in greater detail, but one oft overlooked element of the growth move is how often your group makes the move! Most groups treat the "end of session" as the end of a full session of your campaign, but there's nothing wrong with running shorter sessions (two hours) or answering the growth questions midway through a session if you've reached an important stopping point, like the end of an adventure.

The more often your group evaluates growth, the more growth you're going to earn. Even if you don't answer yes to every question every time, you'll still find your character advancing much faster when you check for growth more regularly. Some groups prefer a more slow and steady pace—only checking for growth at the end of a long session—but a faster pace won't break anything!

Ultimately, the growth move should be a reminder that your story is your own, built by your group and featuring your characters. If you feel like you haven't had a chance to stop a dangerous threat, you can tell your GM you'd like to see more dangerous threats appear on screen. And if you'd like your characters to advance more quickly, you can check for growth more often.

Growth Questions

When answering the questions, the player answers on behalf of their character, but at an out-of-character level, looking at the story as a whole. The answers here can reflect the way their PC feels, but can also contrast with their feelings—a character might refuse to acknowledge that they learned how they needed their friends during a fight, but the player can usually still recognize that their PC learned that lesson.

Ultimately every answer is a conversation, and if the GM and the player or even other players disagree about the answer, then they should keep talking! Growth questions are about the characters, what they did, what they learned, what they felt, but also about getting all the players on the same page regarding the fiction, what happened, and at least one view of the events of the session. They're a good chance to collectively review the session and talk about how the players feel, and to come to a shared understanding to move forward.

It's important that the GM and the players agree on the answers to these questions. If anybody honestly disagrees with an answer, then the conversation continues until those players can reach a shared understanding. The GM can make the final call if absolutely necessary, but the GM should give the benefit of the doubt to what the player says. If a player feels that they guided someone toward balance, for example, then the GM should make an attempt to look at the situation through the player's perspective.

Here are the base questions in greater detail:

Did you learn something challenging, exciting, or complicated about the world?

This question is all about learning interesting things! As long as a PC learned something challenging, or something exciting, *or* something complicated—not necessarily all three—their answer to this question is a yes. Unsurprisingly, you will probably answer yes to this question nearly every session; the whole point of the game is to have fun and interesting adventures!

"Challenging, exciting, or complicated" is a broad set of ideas designed to aim players at thinking about whether or not their characters learned something that expands their view of the world. If a PC "learned" something completely in-line with their expectations or beliefs…they didn't really learn anything, did they? Push past the ordinary experiences of day-to-day adventuring if you want to earn a growth from this question.

"About the world" also means that the scope of what the character learned can be pretty varied. Learning that a loved one betrayed them is a kind of "learning about the world," as much as learning that not all Fire Nation citizens are evil is a kind of "learning about the world." You can also learn more about your own place in the world; discovering that your character wasn't willing to join a rebellion against an unjust ruler because they feared what the uprising would cost ordinary people is a good hint that you learned something new about your character and their values and goals.

Did you stop a dangerous threat or solve a community problem?

This question is all about solving problems! As long as a PC helped stop a dangerous threat *or* solved a community problem—not necessarily both—the answer to this question is a yes.

"Stop a dangerous threat" means exactly what it says. Thanks to your efforts, some danger was abated. A dangerous threat doesn't have to be a person; it could be an avalanche, a volcano, a tsunami, etc. And "dangerous threat" only means that it's dangerous to someone; that someone could be the PC, or it could be innocent townsfolk, or it could be the animals of the forest. "Stopping" the threat doesn't have to be permanent either. The answer is still yes as long as the danger is abated for now.

"Solve a community problem" means that you helped some community of people and solved a problem for or with them. This doesn't always have to deal with a threat! If the community is divided over the issue of whether or not to invite Earthen Fire Industries to open up a nearby factory, then that might not really be a "dangerous threat," but it's definitely a "community problem."

Did you guide a character towards balance or end the session at your center?

This question is all about balance! As long as the PC guided another character toward balance *or* ended the session with their balance at their own center—not necessarily both—the answer to this question is a yes.

"Guide a character towards balance" requires conversation and shared understanding, because it partially depends upon the character you guided. If they felt your guidance actually misled them, pushed them away from balance, then the answer might be no. However, even if they ignored your guidance, the answer might still be yes. "Balance" here can mean many things, ranging from trying to help a fellow PC push their balance to their own center, to trying to help an NPC overcome negative emotions that are hurting them and to rebalance themselves, to steering someone away from a path of danger and conflict and toward balance.

You *"end the session at your center"* when, at the end of the session, your balance and your center share the same point on the track. As long as that's true, the answer to this question is yes!

Playbook Growth Questions

Every player character then has their own specific question keyed to the nature of growth for that playbook. Answer these questions in the same way as the above, breaking them down and thinking about their terms, making sure that the table understands the answer collectively. Often, reviewing the playbook growth questions together is a good way to quickly understand the tensions and arc of each character, as well as where they are on their current journey.

Not all playbook growth questions work the same! Some are very focused, while others are broad and open to interpretation. Don't worry if you find yourself hitting your playbook's growth question less often than other players, but try to keep your playbook growth question in mind every session!

Growth Advancements

When your character has marked all four boxes of their growth track, you clear all four boxes and earn a growth advancement! The growth advancement comes into play immediately, providing your PC with its benefits as soon as you earn it. Usually this happens at the end of the session, functionally between sessions, but even if it happens during play, the PC immediately gets access to the advancement.

If you aren't sure exactly what to take, you don't need to decide immediately, but you should take the advancement by the end of the next session at the absolute latest. Your character should evolve naturally over time instead of banking three or four advancements to be used all at once!

The growth advancements are listed on every playbook, along with boxes. Each time you take a growth advancement, mark one of those boxes; if there are no empty boxes, you can't take that advancement anymore. The one exception is "Raising a stat by +1," but you may only raise any stat to a maximum of +2 total through standard growth advancements. (Some moves from some playbooks let you raise a stat to +3 total.)

This does mean eventually your character won't be able to continue to earn growth advancements—and that's okay! That signals they have already grown a great deal, and their story is likely coming to a close for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**.

GROWTH ADVANCEMENTS:

- Take a new move from your playbook ☐☐
- Take a new move from another playbook ☐☐
- Raise a stat by +1 (maximum of +2 in any given stat)
- Shift your center one step ☐☐
- Unlock your Moment of Balance ☐☐

Take a new move from your playbook/ from another playbook

These advancements let you take new moves from the **Moves** section of your or other playbooks. You can only take two more moves from your own playbook and two more moves from other playbooks. The two you take from other playbooks can come from any playbooks you choose—they don't have to be the same one.

Taking a move from a playbook **never** allows you to take that playbook's special feature. The only way to get access to a playbook's feature is to switch to that playbook (see page 218)!

Raise a stat by +1

These advancements allow you to raise one of your stats—Creativity, Focus, Harmony, or Passion—by 1, to a maximum of +2. You can take this advancement many times, eventually raising every stat to +2—but that'll take some time!

If you want to raise a stat to +3, certain playbook moves allow you to raise a stat to +3—check out The Adamant, The Guardian, The Icon, The Pillar, and The Successor playbooks for those moves.



Shift your center one step

When you take this advancement, you can immediately shift your center one step, any way you like! Remember that your center is your default, where your balance resets to when time passes. If your center ever goes past +3, then it's time to retire or change your character. You could use this advancement to shift your center past +3 if you wanted, functionally bringing the story of your character (at least as this particular playbook) to a close—see more on page 219.

Unlock your Moment of Balance

When you take this advancement, you gain the ability to use your Moment of Balance! Every playbook has its own Moment of Balance, a description of the way that playbook reaches a state of powerful, true balance, combining its principles into a greater whole. You can only use that Moment of Balance when you have unlocked it through this advancement and your balance is at your center during play. If your balance is off your center, you can't use your Moment of Balance even if you have unlocked it!

After you've used your Moment of Balance, you can still take this advancement a second time to unlock it again, allowing you to use it once more. You can read more about Moments of Balance on page 121.

Advanced Techniques

In addition to growth advancements, every PC in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** can improve themselves in another way—by learning and mastering new advanced techniques. Learning advanced techniques represents a character's skills growing, as they become capable of performing new and impressive feats consistently within combat and more powerful and dynamic uses of their training in general.

All player characters start play with all nine basic techniques mastered. In fact, every fighter in this game has mastered all nine basic techniques, based on their training. Any NPC who doesn't have all nine basic techniques mastered is not a trained fighter at the level of most in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, but might be a student or an ordinary citizen who doesn't have much cause to practice their bending in combat.

Advanced techniques, on the other hand, are more sophisticated, more complicated, and often more powerful than basic techniques. They represent complex, specific sequences of movements and corresponding states of mind and will. Any Firebender can conjure a fire, and likely blast a fireball; but only some Firebenders are trained in creating the dreaded fire pinwheel!

Learning Techniques

When a PC learns techniques in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, they always learn advanced techniques. A player character first gains an advanced technique at **learned** level, then improves it to **practiced** level, and finally to **mastered** level:

- **Learned** techniques: the PC has learned the basics and can replicate this technique some of the time. They still need practice and additional understanding to really master this.
- **Practiced** techniques: the PC has learned and successfully applied the technique in a stressful combat situation. They have a greater ability to call upon it with ease and efficacy, but have yet to fully master it; they still can't call upon the technique at will.
- **Mastered** techniques: the PC has gained full control and can perform the technique at will, consistently, every time, without question, just like the basic techniques. To master a technique, the PC must fulfill a **mastery condition**, some special task set to them by their teacher (often when the character first learns the technique, but sometimes set much later).

Mastering a new technique is often an important part of your character's journey; it might prompt them to seek out a teacher and contend with new and difficult challenges. For example, Sokka's desire to master the sword led him to study under Piandao, a master swordsman from the Fire Nation who challenged the young Sokka to grow considerably in both his sword training and his strategic thinking. Training allows your character to be guided in this journey, mastering new techniques under the eyes of a watchful teacher and mentor.

Types of Advanced Techniques

The full list of advanced techniques can be found in **Appendix A: Techniques**. Within that broader list of techniques, there are a few different types:

Universal Techniques

Any technique that can be learned by all characters, regardless of training, is a **universal technique**. These techniques tend to focus on broad strategies during a combat exchange, such as charging an opponent or protecting an ally. All trainings that are not universal are keyed to a specific training, such as waterbending techniques or technology techniques—they can only be learned by a character with that particular training.

NPCs without highly distinctive fighting styles usually use universal techniques, but remember that they always make use of their training—an Earthbender who uses a universal technique in a combat exchange is still using earthbending.

Group Techniques

Some techniques can only appear when used by groups of NPCs (page 237); these are **group techniques**. PCs can never learn group techniques—even if they fight as a group, each individual PC still retains their ability to act independently and choose their own techniques—so these techniques are only for the GM to use when designing group NPCs.

You can expect virtually all group NPCs to feature at least one group technique. These techniques are specifically created to help the GM represent a group fighting together, swarming their opponents to try to get the upper hand or scattering and withdrawing to avoid the PCs' blows.

Rare Techniques

Techniques that are particularly powerful and potent are often **rare techniques**, closely guarded secrets that masters only share with their most trusted students. Such techniques are notably more powerful than other techniques; learning them often requires a student to build a relationship with the master and mastering them often requires considerably more work.

NPCs who have mastered rare techniques are, well, rare. But they are also the only NPCs who can serve as teachers for these potent abilities.

Specialized Bending Techniques

Finally, some **specialized bending techniques** require characters to have mastered specialized forms of bending—like healing or lightningbending—in order to learn them. Each of these techniques is marked with the specialized bending form, such as "lavabending" or "metalbending." You can read more about learning and mastering specialized bending forms on page 216.

In early eras, many forms of specialized bending are virtually nonexistant, but later eras feature many characters who have mastered metalbending, lightningbending, lavabending, and more. While NPCs who have mastered these techniques are always potent foes, you can expect their rarity to be directly related to the era you've chosen for your game.



Training & Techniques

When you want to learn a new technique, first you need some way to do so. Some playbooks have special ways to learn techniques (like the Prodigy), but most need a teacher, someone who has already mastered the technique and is willing and capable of teaching it. Player characters can't, in general, teach each other techniques, even if they've mastered them; they are still finding themselves and seeking balance, so they aren't ready to be teachers yet. They have to find teachers out in the world, be they local craftspeople who have mastered some specific use of firebending, or the greatest swordswoman in the entire world.

Remember that you can only learn techniques appropriate for your own training, by default. Some playbooks have ways to get around this, but most Firebenders can only learn techniques that are either universal or specific to firebending, for example. It doesn't help a Firebender to learn how to create walls of ice!

Your teacher must have mastered the technique they're teaching you. Mechanically, this means that you aren't going to be taught by a student, someone who's still learning—they're liable to impart the wrong lessons. But within the game, masters abound! The local Waterbender angler likely has mastered techniques to aid in her day-to-day job, but those techniques are still valuable to learn and quite possibly effective in a fight—so she'd be a great master!

When you find a teacher who knows the technique and agrees to teach you, then you can use the following move.

Training Move

When you spend time with a teacher learning and training in a new technique, roll with modifiers from the following questions:

- Is your balance in line with your center or are you free of conditions? If yes, take +1.
- Do you and your teacher share at least one background? If yes, take +1.
- Does your teacher agree with your reasons for training and learning? If no, take -1.
- Is the technique easy to grasp based on your current training, experience, and skills? If no, take -1.

On a hit, you learn the technique, and your master shifts your balance. On a 10+, you learn it with ease, and it takes as little time as possible. On a 7–9, it either takes more time than normal, or you must mark two conditions. On a miss, you can't learn the technique yet because you need another lesson before you can grasp its full use. Your master will tell you what additional task you must undertake to put yourself into the correct state of mind; do it, and you learn the technique.

Basic Elements of the Training Move

"Spend time with a teacher learning and training in a new technique" means that you must both have a teacher, and you must have time. You can't learn a technique in the middle of combat (without special moves). The amount of time may vary, especially based on the results of the move, but a good rule of thumb is to expect at least half a day, if not more. Furthermore, you need to have the teacher's attention for a significant portion of that time; training is more than just a quick lesson and a day of practice on your own.

When you roll, you don't add one of your stats. Instead, you answer the four provided questions. Two of them provide a +1 if you answer "yes," and two of them impose a -1 if you answer "no." Total up the balance of these questions and roll with that total, taking into account all of the answers.

"Is your balance in line with your center or are you free of conditions" means that you learn better when you're stable, in control of yourself, in balance. The *"or"* in the question means that if you satisfy either question, you get the +1. So, if your balance is in line with your center you get a +1, or if you have no conditions marked you get a +1.

"Do you and your teacher share at least one background" means that you have a slightly easier time learning from a teacher with whom you share something in common. You aren't penalized for being different, but the similarity can smooth the way forward—so if you answer yes to this question, you get a +1 on the move.

"Does your teacher agree with your reasons for training and learning" means your teacher both understands why you want to train—the real reason, not any lies or half-truths you might have tried to use on them—and approves. In rare circumstances, your teacher might still understand your reasons for training without you explaining. You might even have lied to your teacher, only for them to see through your lies! But the vast majority of the time, if you've obscured your reasons, your teacher won't know the real reasons and thus can't agree with them. When your teacher doesn't agree with your reasons for learning, they have a harder time teaching you—there's a fundamental divide between you that makes the training more difficult. So, when the answer to this question is no, you take a -1 on the move.

"Is the technique easy to grasp based on your current training, experience, and skills?" means that difficult, complicated, or strange techniques are harder to learn. More powerful techniques are generally more complicated to grasp. Similarly, rare techniques may be even more complicated to grasp, and techniques tied to specialized forms of bending that the PC hasn't learned yet—metalbending techniques, bloodbending techniques, combustion-bending techniques—are the hardest. (For more on specialized bending, see page 216.) The GM is the final arbiter of whether the technique is easy to grasp or not but should focus on the extent of the PC's skills and all the techniques they've learned so far. In general, if there is any doubt about whether the technique should be within the PC's grasp, then the answer to this question is "no", and would impose a -1 on the roll.

WHAT IS AN ATTACK?

Many special techniques reference attacks, such as "whenever you *attack*" or "a character who *attacked* you this exchange." In all cases, an attack is any aggressive, physical move against a target during an exchange that attempts to directly inflict a condition, fatigue, balance shifts, or negative status. Actions that indirectly harm a target, such as smashing the ground beneath someone or trying to trap someone under a tree are not attacks, even if they inflict fatigue or a status like *Trapped*.

Results of the Training Move

"On a hit, you learn the technique and your master shifts your balance" means that you take the technique at learned level, and your master can shift your balance in whichever direction they choose—taking up their lessons does shift your balance at least a bit.

"On a 7–9, it either takes more time than normal, or you must mark two conditions" gives you a hard choice. If you mark two conditions, you come out of the training emotionally frustrated or thrown, but successful. If you take more time than normal, however, you're handing the GM a golden opportunity to make a GM move, to say that something happens while you're busy training that you can't affect, stop, or interfere with. It might leave you out of a fight that embroils your fellow companions; it might be something terrible happening to the local town. Be prepared!

"On a miss, you can't learn the technique yet because you need another lesson before you can grasp its full use" means exactly that—you can't complete your training right here, right now, without additional effort. *"Your master will tell you what additional task you must undertake to put yourself into the correct state of mind; do it, and you learn the technique"* means that your master will give you some other duty or task. That task takes you on a journey, changing your mind and leading you to new understanding, but allowing you to actually learn the technique in full. As soon as you complete the task, you get the technique at learned level, but the GM is the arbiter of whether or not the task is complete.

When the GM assigns you a task, it relates in some way to the nature of the technique, and the lessons the teacher might have to teach about the world, people, and balance. It doesn't have to be as complicated as a mastery condition (see below)—it's usually something you can do within a session—but that framework can be useful for thinking about appropriate tasks.

Example Tasks:

- Apologize to another player character, honestly and truly, for some wrongdoing
- Work to aid, help, or save an NPC who desperately needs it
- Journey to a nearby location of spiritual or historical prominence, and study it or meditate on it
- Obtain a local resource and deliver it to the teacher or another NPC
- Agree with the teacher, honestly, about some rule or restriction on future action



Improving Techniques

After you have learned a technique—marking it on your playbook at learned level—you can now use it in combat exchanges, but only if you roll a 10+ on the stance move (page 148) and mark an additional fatigue. Those are some high bars! The good news, however, is that you can improve your control and ability to use the technique. You can take your learned technique and make it practiced; and you can take your practiced technique and master it.

But improving techniques requires you to do some work on your own! While learning a technique requires you to find a teacher willing to train you, advancing your knowledge further requires you to go beyond direct instruction, practicing the technique during combat exchanges and (eventually) working to understand the technique at a new level through the mastery conditions your teacher sets for you.

Going from Learned to Practiced

To take your technique from learned level to practiced level, you have to use it once—just once!—in combat. That means rolling a 10+ on the **stance move**, and paying the additional cost of 1-fatigue (beyond any cost the technique itself might impose). But as soon as you've done that once, the technique is at practiced level. That means you've used it and you can call on it immediately, even in the very next combat exchange—not with the same simple ease as a mastered technique, but more easily than at learned. A practiced technique can be used when you roll a 10+ on the **stance move**, without paying any additional cost.

Going from Practiced to Mastered

To take your technique from practiced level to mastered level, you have to overcome a higher bar. You have to fulfill a mastery condition, as set to you by your teacher. A mastery condition is a special task to teach you a further lesson, to help you shift your mind and balance to a place where you can gain total control and mastery over the particular technique you're focused on.

To learn what your mastery condition must be for the technique, you must have a teacher—you have to have someone to guide you. Your mastery condition is also specifically *yours*. Every mastery condition is suited to the technique, the teacher, and the student. The condition represents what the teacher thinks the student must learn.

Most of the time, you can get a mastery condition as soon as you learn the technique. Usually, the GM assigns you just such a mastery condition after you have successfully taken the technique at learned level. But you can also get the mastery condition later, especially from more crotchety, ornery teachers who prefer you master the basics (i.e. go from learned to practiced level) before they even tell you the mastery condition. No matter what, however, a teacher, specifically, sets the mastery condition—and a different teacher might set a different mastery condition.

Setting a mastery condition requires the GM to think about the PC, the teacher, and what the teacher might want the character to learn, especially in context of this particular technique. A technique about overwhelming, defeating power taught by a quiet, unassuming monk to a brash, aggressive Hammer might lead the teacher to ask the Hammer to submit, to surrender to a dangerous foe—the lesson of defeat is crucial for the student to understand how to use that force on a foe. A technique about evasive action taught by a master thief to a boisterous, fun-loving Icon might lead the teacher to ask the Icon to purposefully make others angry with them, and then to escape from those dangerous situations—the lesson of ever-more-difficult, ever-more-dangerous evasion pushing the student to understand how to get away from trouble.

GMs should think about the following when setting a mastery condition:

- What are the PC's principles, and how does the teacher see them? If the teacher sees the character as too far one way or the other on the balance track, the teacher could set them a mastery condition to push the other way.

- What does the player character care about? If the teacher thinks the character cares too much about the wrong thing, or too little about the right thing, the teacher can set them a mastery condition that pushes them to change their priorities.

- What is the PC's personality like? If the character is too much of one thing (too aggressive, too quiet, too afraid, too serious), the teacher might set them a mastery condition that pushes them to act differently, to feel differently.

Ultimately, nearly any task can be a good mastery condition, just so long as it's interesting and leads to fun new stories; it relates to the PC specifically, connecting to their issues and sources of drama; and it's a challenge to accomplish, but certainly not impossible.

Example Mastery Conditions:

- **Defeat a specific foe in combat**—useful for when the player character would otherwise run from that foe or has difficulty standing up for themselves. *Example: Defeat the leader of the Red Ribbon Bandits, who destroyed your home.*
- **Surrender**—useful for when the PC is bold or overly brave and needs to learn a lesson in humility. Add "to a specific foe" to push them to a particular enemy they only ever want to fight. *Example: Surrender to the Chief of Police of Republic City and face them with head held high.*
- **Lose your balance**—useful for an overly careful player character, who never loses their balance, whose center has not shifted over many sessions of play. Add "in a specific situation" to make it more directed. *Example: Lose your balance in an argument with a powerful figure.*
- **Be taken out**—useful for when the PC always deals with their conditions before they can threaten to overwhelm them, when they need to learn not to run from their feelings. Add "in a specific situation" to make it more directed. *Example: Be taken out outside of combat.*
- **Seek a specific mystical or ancient location**—useful for when the overall group of companions travels quite a bit, and when the technique is strange or draws on lost wisdom. *Example: Seek the Sun Warriors in their hidden city and learn from them.*
- **Return an important artifact to its proper place**—useful for when the player character doesn't attach to places or the people in them, and needs to learn a lesson about preservation and protection. *Example: Return the spirit tome to its place of prominence in the Eastern Air Temple.*
- **Find and listen to an opposing teacher**—useful for when the teacher presents a highly polarized view of the world, and the PC needs to learn the lessons at the opposing end of the spectrum. *Example: Find the only other student of the same teacher and let them complete your training.*
- **Build a structure of spiritual or local import**—useful for when the player character is much more of a fighter or a destroyer, or even an evader who tends to run from problems, than a builder who constructs. Add "with/without using particular tools" to make it more poignant or challenging. *Example: Construct defenses around the whole of the village without your bending.*
- **Destroy a dangerous or corrupt structure**—useful for when the PC is more prone to careful, comforting, pleasant, harmonious solutions, and refuses to solve problems, even intractable ones, by bowling them over. *Example: Destroy the local polluting factory.*
- **Tell a specific person a specific, difficult truth**—useful for when the player character's issues have a lot to do with making decisions, or trying to hide things about themselves. *Example: Admit to your other teachers that you, an Icon, don't want to fulfill your Role.*
- **Use the technique in an exchange in a particular way**—useful for when the player character is reluctant to make use of an advanced technique or when the technique is particularly powerful or focused. *Example: Defeat an opponent using this technique as the final blow.*

Using Techniques Outside of Combat

Techniques are always combat-oriented in their effects, but if you've mastered a technique, then you can always perform it fairly easily. If you want to do that thing outside of combat, you can! It might be a move like **rely on your skills and training** if there are other uncertainties at play, but when you've mastered a technique, the uncertainty is no longer "Am I skilled enough to actually do this?"

Techniques represent a set of highly-ingrained skills and proficiencies suited for rapid, instantaneous action in the middle of a fight, as well—so some techniques represent abilities you could use regularly outside of combat, but are pretty tough to use easily in combat.

For example, the earthbending technique of Tunneling refers to quickly diving into the earth and popping back out with speed and accuracy. If you don't have the technique, you can't do it as well in combat...but that doesn't mean you can't do it at all outside of combat! Most likely, if you lacked the technique, you'd be **relying on your skills and training** or **pushing your luck** to do it outside of combat. And if you had the technique mastered, there might be times when you tunnel outside of combat with no uncertainty at all—you can definitely tunnel pretty well, so without other factors at play creating uncertainty, you just do it!

Lessons From Other Trainings

In general, all advanced techniques—except universal techniques—are tied to a particular training like Airbending or Weapons, and can only be learned by a character who possesses that training. Characters who have two trainings, such as one who took the Successor's **Worldly Knowledge** move, can learn techniques from each training. Learning techniques without the appropriate training requires a specific move or feature like the Prodigy's **An Open Mind** move that allows you to adapt the specific techniques of a different training to your own.

If you want to learn a specific technique outside your training, it's possible to work with your GM to develop a technique for your training that works in a similar way. For example, you might convert Water Whip (page 282) to Fire Whip, using the technique's mechanics to represent a quick burst of fire similar to a Waterbender's tendril of water.

Specialized Bending

There are some forms of bending that are so specialized only a small subsection of benders can even perform them. Earthbenders can all bend rocks, but even in the Korra Era, not all Earthbenders can also bend metal. Waterbenders can all bend a stream, but only a small, small portion of them have the training and the aptitude to bloodbend (thank goodness!).

These specialized bending forms aren't unique abilities, gifted only to a few special characters, but they are extremely difficult to master. In many cases, some benders find so little aptitude for a given form—like metalbending—that they are unable to ever learn to do it. In most cases, however, these specialized forms are an expansion of the bender's natural abilities, not new abilities altogether.

Example Specialized Bending Forms:

- **Bloodbending** (from waterbending)
- **Combustionbending** (from firebending)
- **Energybending**
- **Healing** (from waterbending)
- **Flight** (from airbending)
- **Lavabending** (from earthbending)
- **Lightningbending** (from firebending)
- **Metalbending** (from earthbending)
- **Seismic sense** (from earthbending)
- **Spiritbending** (from waterbending)
- **Spiritual projection** (from airbending)



Known Specialized Forms

The benders who master specialized forms are often cautious about who they train and teach, fearing that the techniques they might help their students master would do more harm than good. After all, very few people can "take away" the knowledge a teacher would bestow on a student! That said, here are a few techniques that show up in *Avatar Legends* stories:

Bloodbending

Waterbenders who have mastered bloodbending can bend the water inside a target's blood, contorting their limbs, cutting off circulation, or even forcing a target to move in a particular way. In most cases, bloodbending requires something to boost the Waterbender's abilities, such as a full moon.

Combustionbending

Firebenders who have mastered combustionbending channel a flow of chi from a focus—often a third-eye tattoo on their forehead—into a beam of energy which explodes on contact.

Healing

Waterbenders who have mastered healing use water to redirect and concentrate energy within a person, greatly accelerating their target's natural healing ability.

Lavabending

Earthbenders who have mastered lavabending can change the phase of earth from a solid to a liquid (magma) and back again, as well as control earth in both solid and liquid forms.

Lightningbending

Firebenders who have mastered lightningbending are able to separate negative and positive energies, bringing them together again in a furious surge of electricity. Some of these benders also have the ability to channel and redirect lightning.

Metalbending

Earthbenders who have mastered metalbending can shape and manipulate metal by bending the unrefined earth inside the metal. Completely refined metal (platinum) cannot be bent in this way.

Seismic Sense

Earthbenders who have mastered seismic sense can use vibrations in the ground to "see" the surrounding area, including anything within or touching the ground. It is common for a bender to strike the ground before using this ability to maximize the specialized form's effectiveness.

Spiritbending

Waterbenders who have mastered spiritbending use water to redirect and alter the flow of energy within a spirit, pushing the spirit toward balance (or imbalance) by adjusting their internal state.



Developing Specialized Bending

PCs can have access to these specialized forms of bending, as appropriate to their training. In general, the rules for becoming a bender with a specialty are:

- You must successfully learn a technique of that specialty to prove you have the aptitude for it at all.
- You must master a technique of that specialty to be able to use the specialty as easily as the rest of your training.

An Earthbender PC who learns a metalbending technique has proved they have the aptitude to metalbend, but they can't yet use metalbending as easily as their earthbending. They can't use metalbending to **rely on their skills and training**, or **push their luck**, or for their basic combat techniques.

An Earthbender PC who masters a metalbending technique can now use metalbending as easily as their earthbending, including for all the basic moves and the basic combat techniques. When they use Strike, they can hurl a spinning disc of metal at foes; when they use Seize a Position, they can use their metalbending to shoot out a metal grappling line and swing into the air.

At character creation, a PC always gets one mastered technique to start. If a player wants to make sure their PC starts play with a specialized form, they can take a technique of a specialized form—an Earthbender PC who starts play with a mastered metalbending technique has mastered the ability to bend metal!

Alternatively, if you're playing a longer campaign, a PC might start play with one learned technique to start. If a player wants to make sure their PC has the aptitude to learn a specialized form, they can take a technique of a specialized form at the learned level. They can eventually master that technique and the specialized form of bending at the same time!

A PC can also try to learn a specialized form of bending during play, just by using the regular training move above to study a technique of the appropriate specialized form of bending. For example, an Earthbender PC could study with a metalbending teacher to learn a metalbending technique.

When the PC tries to learn a technique from a specialized bending form they don't already know, it is definitely not *"easy to grasp based on your current training, experience, and skills,"* so the PC is guaranteed to take at least a -1 from that question for the training move.

Using the training move to learn a specialized bending form has one other significant change—when you try to learn a technique from a particular specialized bending form for the first time and you roll a miss, you lack the aptitude for that specialized bending form. You cannot learn that technique as normal, not even with a new teacher or a particular task set to you. For example, an Earthbender PC who rolls a miss while trying to learn a metalbending technique for the first time simply lacks the aptitude for metalbending—they can't learn the technique, or any other metalbending technique.

A PC who has already proved their aptitude for a specialized form of bending treats a miss as normal on the training move to learn a new technique of that specialized form. For example, a PC who already has learned a metalbending technique and is trying to learn a second metalbending technique would treat a miss on the training move as normal—they've already proved they have the aptitude to metalbend.

You can find techniques tied to these specialized forms of bending—as well as a full list of all advanced techniques— in **Appendix A: Techniques**.

Changing your Character

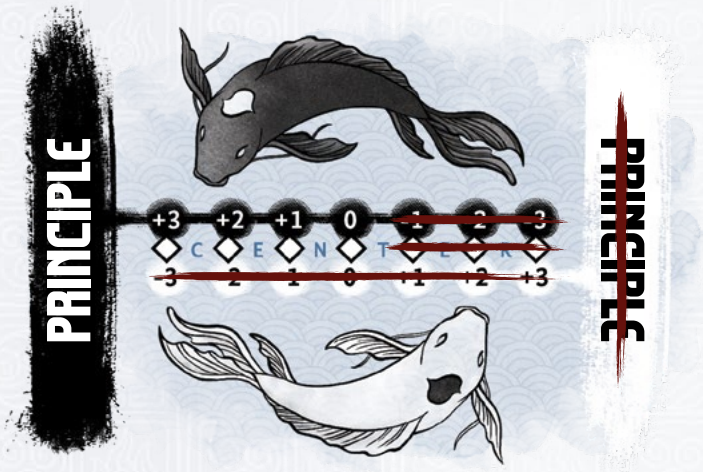
There will be times during a long campaign of play when your character undergoes massive moments of change and definition. Sometimes, they reach the end of their dramatic journey, and begin a whole new journey; other times, they reach the end of their current arc, and it is time for you to make a whole new character. Here's some advice on how to deal with these different outcomes.

Center Shifts Off the Edge

When you lose your balance—your balance shifts off the edge of the track—then your center shifts towards that principle as well. But what happens when your center shifts off the edge of the track? It takes some time, and it's difficult to do, but it can happen.

Those moments indicate that the conflict within your character about their two principles is over. They've made their choice, in favor of the principle their center shifted toward.

If that happens during a campaign of play, during a "season," then treat the PC as having only one principle—that principle—from that point forward. Their balance track stops at +0, and only goes up to +3 for that principle. They no longer have the other principle, and can't be shifted toward it, tipped toward it, called upon to **live up to it**, etc.



Their center resets to +0. If they would shift their balance below +0, they instead mark a condition. They can still **live up** to the one principle they retain, and they can still lose their balance toward that principle and shift center as a result.

The GM and player work together to go through the feature of the playbook and pick out any elements that now are resolved and don't make any sense for the PC moving forward. For any moves specific to the playbook that call upon a principle they no longer have, the character should generally lose access to those moves.

For any character who has resolved a principle like this, at the end of that campaign or season—or even earlier!—the PC must switch playbooks to something that matches their new issues, with a new set of principles.

Changing Playbooks

If a player character no longer fits a playbook—because they've resolved the two core principles of the playbook, or that the key ideas and conditions of the playbook no longer apply to them—then they can switch playbooks. Usually, it's best to save this for the end of a season of play—when the story shifts significantly, allowing some time for a "reset." But if it makes the most sense, then the character can change playbooks during a campaign or season.

Changing playbooks isn't an "advance" so much as an acknowledgment that the PC has changed; that they are something new. It isn't useful for "resetting" to get a whole new set of advancements, but it is useful for reflecting the actual issues and problems the character faces. Don't change playbooks idly! It signals a massive change in the nature of the character.

When a PC changes playbooks, the following elements stay the same:

- **Stats**—the PC's Creativity, Focus, Harmony, and Passion.
- **Marked conditions, fatigue, and growth**—these simply remain, unless time has passed and they have cleared anyway.
- **Techniques**—the character retains all techniques they have, including their old playbook-specific technique, at whatever levels they have. They do not learn any new techniques, including the playbook-specific technique of the playbook they switch to.
- **Training, fighting style, background, demeanor, look, name**—all of this established material remains.

The following elements change:

- **Balance Principles**—the character takes the new principles of the new playbook and resets their center to +0. They may shift their balance one step before the start of play.
- **Feature**—The character loses their old playbook's feature and gains their new playbook's feature. Work with the GM to determine exactly how this change fits the fiction. It is possible to agree upon some elements of the old feature that they retain, but usually they should receive all the elements of the new feature. This might require a time jump to validate certain shifts—a Bold becoming a Pillar, for example, needs time to have actually led their new squad—or a shared understanding of new truths in the fiction—an Idealist becoming a Prodigy likely discovered some new training or form of their training with which they excel, or a Successor becoming an Icon forswears their family ties and wealth to take up the mantle of some new tradition.
- **Moves**—the character retains all their current moves. They have the opportunity to swap out moves from their old playbook, one for one, with moves from their new playbook at this time.
- **Advancements**—the PC clears any unlocked Moment of Balance advancements or center-shift advancements, freeing them up to be taken again. After you have fully migrated your character to the new playbook, then you may also choose to clear up to one advancement box each of "take a new move from your own playbook" and "take a new move from another playbook." If you do that, you lose a corresponding move for your character. You are letting go of your beliefs, knowledge, interests, and traits from who you were under your previous playbook, giving yourself an opportunity to grow in new ways.

Retiring a Character

Alternatively, if the story of the character is entirely over, then the player can choose to retire that character and make a new PC. Their old character goes off into the world, pursuing whatever makes the most sense for them, but they're no longer a main character in the story of your game of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. In order to be a main character of that story, they have to be one of the companions, traveling with the group; if they have resolved their principles and issues and now seek something new, away from the group, then this is a good option.

"Retiring" a PC doesn't mean they settle down somewhere, leading a quiet unassuming existence (although it might mean that, depending upon the character). It means they are no longer a PC, no longer one of the main characters of the story that you are telling together. They still exist in the world, but they're an NPC now, if and when they show up again.

The player and GM have a conversation about the "retired" character to ensure both are on the same page for what the character is doing, where they're going, what they believe and seek. The GM should stat up them as at least a Master NPC (and quite possibly a Legend~~, to reflect their~~ importance to this particular game) with only one remaining principle of the two they had when they retired. The GM can introduce the character into play, treating them as an NPC. The retired character can potentially become a teacher of new techniques, an ally in complicated situations, or even an opponent.

Making a New Character

If a player retires a PC (or joins a campaign after it's already started), they should make a brand-new character! When making a new character, they fill out a new playbook—different from any that the other players are using—as if starting from scratch, making choices as appropriate, filling in the blanks, and so on. See page 112 for more on creating a character.

The only significant change is when it comes time to tie the new PC to the group. If the new character is to be introduced at the start of a campaign or season of play, integrate them as if they joined the group off-screen, between campaigns. Fill in connections as normal, and establish the events that connected them to the group without playing through those events.

If the new character is to be introduced during an ongoing campaign or season of play, then make sure to heavily tie that character to the purpose of the group and to at least one other player character. The new character doesn't have to be known by every other PC and can come to grow closer to everyone with time, but they must start play with a strong reason to be part of the group, and with at least one other PC advocating for their place in the group. Do not play through the discovery of who is the new player character's advocate—instead, establish that when making the character by establishing a strong connection (familial, friendship, training, etc.) between them.



Center Shifts as Character Arcs

Losing your balance and shifting your center is a hugely important part of your character's immediate story, but it's worth looking at your center as a kind of long-term measure of your character's overall arc as well. Each time you shift your center toward one of your principles, your track grows a little shorter—it's easier to lose your balance toward that principle again in the future! As you tilt one direction, toward one principle, you can start to see where your character might end up.

If you like that direction for your character, it's okay to lean into it and push toward one of those principles. In the end, you'll change playbooks and find a new chapter of your character's story or retire the character completely. But it's also okay to use your balance shift advancements (page 210) to push your character away from the edge, giving yourself more time to play out the tension inherent in your playbook's principles.




CHAPTER 8
RUNNING
THE GAME

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CHAPTER 8

This chapter contains the information you need to run the game. It explains what a Gamemaster is for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** and reviews best practices for this game, including the agendas, baselines, guidelines, and GM moves. It also explains how to use and stat up NPCs, how to handle bending and training, and how to run combat exchanges successfully.

If you're reading this, you're probably the Gamemaster (GM). Most players in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** each play their own individual character, but the GM is another player with special responsibilities. Your aim is to create the most fun—not necessarily the most deadly or trying or challenging—experience for the table, and this game is designed to help you roll with the punches and fluidly alter your plans, working with the players to create a moving story that draws on everyone's contributions!

The GM's Role

As the GM, you look at the story from within and without, describing the conflicts, institutions, and non-player characters (NPCs), as well as the broader environment and narrative. You tell the other players the time of day, where the escaped princes are hiding, what techniques the enemy soldiers use. You speed up the action when a fight drags, throw in a secret lover to spice up the story, and add a tricky, moral choice to make the other players squirm and think.

In order to manage everything you need to balance your work, you rely on the core GMing mechanics for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**—your agendas, baselines, guidelines, and moves:

- Your **agendas** are your goals as a GM. You should broadly aim for these things during play, ideas that bring the game to life and make it fun for everyone at the table.
- Your **baselines** are your "always say" rules. Whatever you say as a GM, you should always strive to remain within the boundaries of these rules.
- Your **guidelines** are how you arrive at your agendas. They're the roads you travel down to capture that Avatarverse feel, principles to remember whenever you describe anything. At any moment, at least one set of guidelines should apply.
- Your **GM moves** are actions you, as a GM, take to respond to the players, specific things you can say in the game's conversation to directly affect the story and characters.

The rest of this chapter works to help you master these mechanics, featuring sections on each core element of GMing, then exploring tools you can use for creating and portraying NPCs, managing bending and training, and running effective fight scenes.

But What Does a GM Do?

The rest of this chapter tells you how to run **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, but it's worth taking a moment to reflect on what your actual jobs are while you're running the game. Your tasks are varied, but they fall into a few big categories:

Portray the rest of the world

As GM, you describe the companions' surroundings and the people they meet. You describe what NPCs—every other character in the game who's not a player character—look like, say, and do. Players ask you questions about the world; it's your job to answer those questions, or even turn it back on the players and ask *them* to come up with an answer.

Don't worry too much about poetic descriptions or "authentic" acting on the part of the NPCs. Play in whatever way you find comfortable. You aren't solely responsible for making the session fun or interesting—every player contributes to the story and your shared experience—so focus on representing the characters and situations clearly. A clear NPC who professes a relatively straightforward set of interesting conflicts is always more moving than a mysterious stranger who does things for reasons no one understands!

Similarly, it's your job to keep track of and represent the overarching plots, storylines, and events of the broader world. A game of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** that includes *no* underlying plans from major powers, institutions, or forces, where PCs simply act and the world simply reacts, gets stale fast. It's your duty to come up with and manage these larger schemes within the world, and it's your job to decide how things resolve "off-screen" when the PCs can't be around to act. Often, this includes adjudicating conflicts that are too big for the heroes to resolve directly, like "Which army triumphs in a battle in a larger war?" or "Who wins an election in this Earth Kingdom province?"

But most importantly…you decide when dangers arise. The companions are unlikely to say something like, "Oh, we see some bandits on the road, don't we?" It's your job to introduce these sorts of dangers and to make them feel real and meaningful to the players when they arise. Obstacles, conflicts, and problems are the main sources of drama in *Avatar Legends* stories, and you've got to make sure that your game features plenty of issues for the companions to address. After all, they can't be heroes unless they have a chance to right great wrongs and have fantastic adventures!

Adjudicate the rules

Arbitrating the rules of the game falls to you. Does a specific action fall under the purview of a PC's training? Can a character's bending abilities stretch as far as their player describes? While you might discuss such questions with the players, for the sake of moving the game forward, the ultimate decision falls to you.

In particular, you say when a player has triggered a move. The other players fictionally describe what their characters do, and it falls to you to decide which move they trigger (if any). Sometimes a player tells you that they're trying to trigger a specific move, but it's still down to you to help them match their actions in the fiction to the move they're triggering.

If a PC wants to do something uncertain, risky, or dangerous and there's no clear move, chances are they're **pushing their luck**. If you don't think there's any uncertainty to resolve—the action's impossible even by **pushing their luck**, or there's no need for a move because there's no doubt about what happens next—then you just say what happens.

For example, if a player says they want their PC to shoot down the moon, that's almost certainly impossible—just say what happens. If they want to bake some delicious bao, there probably is no uncertainty—but if they're using the bao to do something else, then there could be. Try and determine the intent of the action. Are they **intimidating** a rival baker? Using the bao as a bribe to **plead** for someone to be set free? **Guiding and comforting** a friend via baked deliciousness? Use the appropriate moves in each case. If no move comes to mind—if there is no uncertainty—then they simply bake delicious bao!

This is extra important when it comes to mysteries and hunting for clues. **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is not designed for complex, Sherlock-Holmes-style mystery-solving. There's no "search for clues" move. If the companions want to look for clues, then either use a move to resolve the uncertainty—**assess a situation** might do the trick, or they might have some playbook moves—or simply tell them everything they find.

Make sure you're well acquainted with all the moves that players are likely to use—check out **Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Play** and **Chapter 5: Core Moves** for that information.

Encourage everyone to participate

The game is only fun when *everyone* is having fun. As GM, make it a point to check in often with other players to make sure everyone's having a good time. Encourage them to use their safety tools to help steer the game in a direction where everyone is enjoying themselves. Watch for players who look uncomfortable: it might be a good idea to check in with them. See more on safety tools on page 12.

While it's everyone's job to look out for each other, you as GM have a responsibility to model table etiquette and encourage others to voice concerns. If people aren't taking the safety tools seriously, make it clear that such behavior is unacceptable; if people talk over each other, step in and make sure everyone has time to contribute to the story.

All of this might sound like a tall order, but don't worry! A lot of it comes naturally, and the other players will help (whether consciously or not). After all, in the Avatarverse, those telling a tale tend to end up inextricably bound to it.

Provide structure and coherence

Roleplaying games are, by definition, a bit chaotic. No one knows exactly where the story is going to go, and things tend to change even when you think you've got them planned out in full. You're effectively telling a story with multiple narrators, each adding a new direction to the conversation each time they take an action in the fiction!

As the GM, it's your job to help bring all those chaotic contributions into alignment; you decide when scenes start and end, which NPCs show up on-screen, and which plot threads get brought up again and again! It's not up to you to determine how the story goes—the players get to make their own decisions about what their PCs do and what they care about—but it's your job to help knit all their actions and decisions and mistakes and problems together into a story. You're the one that needs to track what the antagonists are plotting, what decisions the PCs made last session, and how the rest of the world reacts to the companions and their heroic exploits.

The players will sometimes remind you about an NPC you've forgotten or a plot thread that got dropped three sessions ago. That's great! But they are still looking *to you* to answer what happened to that element of the world, especially if the question revolves around an NPC they care about—*"Wasn't he going to find someone to help with the refugees?"* It's still up to you to help the group understand how those NPCs and plot threads matter to them, to help them understand why their actions had consequences and what those consequences were in the fictional world. Sometimes this means telling them directly what happened—"Yeah! Let's say he got word to you about the new homes he's found and things are working out okay…"—and sometimes it means leaving gaps and mysteries for the PCs to explore—"That's weird you haven't heard from him, right? Maybe you should check it out…"

This part of your role becomes more important as you include more and more sessions in your campaign, as the world of your story gets larger and larger. Check out **Chapter 9: Seasons & Campaigns** for more on how to successfully manage these long-running narratives.



Agendas

Agendas are your high-level goals. Think of them as the *reason* you're running the game. Your agendas are:

- Ensure the world feels real
- Make the PCs' stories meaningful and important
- Play to find out what happens

Ensure the world feels real

Roleplaying games aren't about winning or losing. If you want players to care, they must feel that the world they explore is real, with actual stakes.

Think about what could believably happen when players take action. Make sure that the companions' actions all have believable consequences, even if they happen later down the line. If they hurt an innocent bystander, for example, how would those around the bystander react? And if the PCs have a fight against a powerful opponent and wind up smashing an entire town to splinters, wouldn't they incur the ire of the townsfolk?

And remember, "believable" is not the opposite of "fantastical." This is the Avatarverse after all, where spirits and elemental bending can be found around every corner. Consistency is key to keeping everything believable. If your Airbender easily knocks back the Fire Nation soldiers with a gust of wind the first time, you should have a decent reason why it doesn't work the next time when the dice go awry. Maybe these ones are trained to weave out of the way? Or they happen to grab onto something? Your explanation of what happens in the world has to constantly reinforce the consistency of the fiction.

Make the PCs' stories meaningful and important

The player characters are the protagonists of the story. NPCs help or hinder them along their journey, but it's your job to ensure the NPCs don't draw too much attention away from the PCs. The world contains monarchs, Avatars, spirits, and more… but this is not their story. This is the story of the companions, who through grit, courage, and skill, make meaningful change. Make sure you don't focus a lot of time showing what the NPCs do. It's crucial to give the PCs the spotlight to act and react to NPCs' actions.

Additionally, you are not the PCs' adversary—you're their guide and chronicler. Don't throw challenges and enemies at them to "test" how well they know the rules or to "wear them down." Whatever challenges the companions face, ensure they are there to make the characters' lives exciting and to allow them to take part in meaningful stories. **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is an adventure game, full of excitement, grand ideals, and drama—it's your job as GM to make the PCs' stories so awesome, so interesting, that everyone gets excited about the story you are telling together!

Play to find out what happens

One of the big reasons to play this game is to discover the story as you play. Even when you're the GM, you don't know what will happen, and you can be just as delightfully surprised as anyone at the table! The dice produce surprising results—someone misses when everyone expected them to score a full hit, or vice versa!—that can send the story into sprawling new directions.

It's also always fun to see what the other great people in your game invent, how they react to the world, and what wacky shenanigans they come up with. Regardless of how much you plan, players will always surprise you. Embrace this! Roll with the punches when the dice or the other players throw unexpected elements at you, and use the agendas, baselines, guidelines, and GM moves to respond.

This game's emphasis on surprises and spontaneous play also means that overplanning wastes time and can bog down your ability to run the game. PCs may never visit the bathhouse you carefully mapped, or the bazaar you sketched in loving detail, or the mansion you bedecked with lore-revealing paintings. Except for when game rules are concerned (and a section below teaches you how to stat out NPCs), it's usually more helpful to prepare broadly, with flexibility in mind. The adventure in this book on page 267 is a good example—while it provides details that you might never interact with, it's also designed broadly enough that it holds together if the PCs don't go to the "correct" location.



Baselines

When you're not sure which agenda you're aiming for, when the other players ask you a question and you're left a little blank, rely on your baselines. In general, always say:

- What the guidelines demand
- What the rules demand
- What honesty demands

What the guidelines demand

Rely on the guidelines to steer your story and maintain a tone and theme consistent with that of the Avatarverse. Keep them in mind always; they are useful when it comes to building the world, in coming up with story ideas, and in imagining how NPCs react. They will help you reach the agendas and are flexible enough to cover a lot of different situations. For example, *be the companions' biggest fan* means you should both provide them with opportunities to show off their powers and triumph over adversity and challenge them by showcasing the way their actions lead to meaningful (if unexpected) changes to the larger world.

If more than one guideline applies in a given situation, that's okay! As long as you follow a guideline that supports your agendas, there won't be a wrong choice between the different guidelines. In the end, there's no difference between focusing on *seeking consequences beyond death* and *using imbalance instead of evil*, if both guidelines lead you toward conflicts that fit the Avatarverse!

That said, you don't need to remember every single guideline all the time—if you ever need to remind yourself in the moment or if you aren't sure which to follow, check out your GM reference sheets!

What the rules demand

Stick to the rules and be consistent. If a PC is about to be knocked out by taking another condition, don't backtrack or fudge that fact when they tell you they don't have any conditions left to mark. Since player characters can't be permanently killed (except for rare circumstances, when there's agreement between the player and the GM), keeping to the rules only enhances your story. After all, not even the Avatar wins every single fight!

Keeping to the rules helps to create a consistent space for your players to engage the fiction; if they know they can never lose—or never win!—because you have your thumb on the scale, their choices won't be real or meaningful. Letting the dice fall where they may means that both you and they know the decisions they make matter to the fiction you all build together.

Note that "always say what the rules demand" does not mean that you must always call for rolls for every tiny action. You as GM adjudicate when the situation is uncertain, and when a move is called for. The rules are a tool for telling great stories together; you shouldn't ever ignore them, but focus on invoking them when it's productive for the story!

GMing for Other Games

There are lots of tabletop RPGs out there, and each one requires unique expertise and skills. No two RPGs are entirely alike, and while some skills from one RPG may overlap with those required by another, you should always pay close attention to the specific needs of the RPG you're playing or running today instead of assuming it works like the one you played or ran yesterday. So as you read this section, you may pick up on interesting ideas or techniques that can help you out with other RPGs...but everything here is first and foremost geared toward **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**.

What honesty demands

Finally, say what honesty demands—never lie to the other players. You are their only lens into the fiction—you don't have to tell them every single thing that's true, but you can't tell them anything untrue to preserve surprises. Phrases like "you think," "you believe," or "you can't tell" are very helpful here. For instance, if asked who's in the gallery and you know an assassin lurks in the statuary, don't say, "No one." You might say something like, "You think you're alone, but it's dark and there are plenty of shadows around," or you might call for a PC to **assess the situation** or even **push their luck** to search the area. Lying to your players or misleading them only makes it harder for them to get on the same page with you and to trust you.

Similarly, stick to the truths you've established. If you decided before the session that the kidnapped princess is in the Spirit World, don't change your mind and plop her in the theatre just because the PCs went there first. Follow your fiction.

But even as you stick to established truths, you can expand, elaborate, or manipulate those truths. While you shouldn't ignore truths you've established, it's perfectly fine to add new facts that make the game more fun. If you decide that a spirit can "only" be defeated by saltwater, but the companions steal a scroll that contains a special ritual others believe will appease the spirit…don't have the scroll turn out to be a dud. The ritual works, in some fashion. After all, the ritual need not "defeat" the spirit. Or maybe it does, by creating a salty rainstorm effect in the area. Either way, you as GM have accepted a new truth, but stayed honest by sticking to what you had planned. On top of that, you've rewarded players for playing the game and seizing new opportunities!

Guidelines

If the agendas are your goals and the baselines are what you fall back on, the guidelines are how you get to those agendas. Keep them in mind to help shape the scenes you play out with the other players. The guidelines are:

- Describe a wondrous world with a deep history
- Address the characters, not your players
- Be the companions' biggest fan
- Ask questions and let your players answer
- Put emotions on characters' sleeves
- Resolve conflicts episodically
- Remember the history of the world and characters
- Emphasize lessons throughout
- Give NPCs drives, fears, and hopes
- Make conflicts moral choices
- Use imbalance instead of evil
- Counterbalance darkness with light
- Seek consequences besides death

Describe a wondrous world with a deep history

Take time to describe small details about the world: what uniform does the staff wear at this particular Republic City hotel? What story do the intricate murals on the walls of the Air Temple depict? What are the dominant scents of the tea that's just been served? Don't overdo it with these details, but a few each scene makes the world feel richer and more alive.

Remember the word "wondrous." Lace your descriptions with things that spark curiosity and awe. The world is filled with ancient spirits, rich cultures, and deep history. What do the clothes or food you described have to do with the culture that produced them? What detail about the surroundings or buildings betray an ancient, fantastical story?

It's okay if you're not an expert on the lore of the Avatarverse! It's more important to create a sense of a history for players to hook into, than *the* history. Place that history throughout your story, and it will bring your game to life!

Address the characters, not your players

To help the other players get into character and think like their PCs, default to addressing the characters and not the players. When talking to Hector about his character Haki, say, "Haki, what do you do next?" instead of "Hector, what does Haki do next?"

Of course, there are definitely situations where you speak to the players directly. When you have issues regarding safety tools, for instance, it's a good idea to pause play and speak to the players (not their characters) about how the table should proceed.

But addressing the characters puts the PC at the forefront of the player's mind. It's good to say something like, "Haki, do you recognize Avatar Roku, standing in front of you? Or do you just see a man in Fire Nation robes with long white hair and a distinctive headpiece?" That way, you wind up both drawing in player knowledge—the player knows this is Avatar Roku, even if the character doesn't—while emphasizing the character and their point of view.



Be the companions' biggest fan

Look for opportunities to highlight the companions' unique qualities—their cool moves, backgrounds, and training. Give Waterbenders water to use; give the Successor plenty of chances to face or interact with their family. Make sure every PC gets to have their moment in the spotlight! Similarly, make sure each player gets to speak and each PC gets to act for roughly similar amounts of time, especially if the team has split up. Remember to allow a PC to make at least one move or major decision before shifting the spotlight.

Sometimes, this means foregoing a dice roll. If a companion's background, history, or training removes the uncertainty factor in a situation, no moves trigger (and as a result no roll is needed). The Hammer with a Military background might be able to win a junior soldier's cooperation without **pleading**, for example. There is no uncertainty in the fact that a junior soldier would respect the Hammer's military past, and they would simply cooperate.

Other times, being a fan means making the PCs' lives a bit harder. After all, when you're a fan of a character, you want to see them face challenges; you don't just want to see them win all the time. Powerful opponents, dangerous situations, difficult decisions—all of these give the characters a chance to shine, too.

Ask questions and let your players answer

In your role as GM you don't need all the answers. In fact, players feel more involved when you turn to them to fill in gaps in the world from time to time. This technique is especially powerful if you tie it to the PCs' stories. When you're at a loss for what to say in the story or feel the scene could benefit from additional player investment, ask the players a question that gives them a chance to build the world alongside you.

For instance, ask the PC with a Military background what marks the Fire Nation captain's rank and follow up by asking them when they first met a Fire Nation captain. If a certain PC has described a fondness for food, ask them what the Earth Queen serves at the banquet and what memories the food triggers.

Use directed questions to help propel the story forward. Asking the military PC "who was the harshest commander you had?" is more direct and stronger than "did you have a harsh commander?" That said, don't ever ask questions about things the PC couldn't know—when a PC looks through a window, don't ask them what's inside; instead, ask them how they recognize the person sitting at the table!

Put emotions on characters' sleeves

In *Avatar Legends* stories, characters' emotional and intellectual journeys are important. NPCs might sometimes keep secrets, but they're always great at betraying how they feel—portray their emotions bubbling and seething, not truly hidden at all, even when they're trying to hide some other truth. Encourage players to do the same, to roleplay the conditions that affect the companions, to take actions based on where they currently lie on their balance track.

For example, when a PC has a powerful, dangerous fight with their own parent, ask them at the end what they feel, what's going through their mind, and how it shows. If the Hammer then says, "I'm so angry I just start throwing rocks around!" that's perfect—maybe a golden opportunity for an NPC to shift the Hammer's balance toward Force, or even to have them break something important and clear Angry.

Balance and conditions aren't the only emotions, though: when an especially intense event occurs, take a moment to ask players what their PCs feel. Not only will this technique help deepen characters and their relationships with each other, answers may even trigger certain moves (especially those regarding balance).

Resolve conflicts episodically

Many of the other guidelines and ideas push you toward creating ongoing conflicts that flow into surprising new directions…but sometimes you need to wrap things up and move forward. This is not a game served by foes who cannot truly be defeated, or by situations too complicated they can never be resolved. Let the PCs be victorious, and let characters or plotlines that have served their purpose fall by the wayside.

For example, after being taken out in a fight, a minor or even major foe might be truly defeated and captured—the PCs shouldn't have to spend lots of time arguing with local authorities about how and where and whether to imprison them. If the foe is the greatest antagonist of the entire campaign, defined by their political and criminal influence, then maybe that kind of conflict is perfect…but don't hesitate to let foes of less importance or power be dealt with, completely and even off-screen to some extent. Similarly, if the PCs incur the wrath of local authorities when dealing with a foe, then all might be forgiven once they prove that foe's crimes—the PCs shouldn't have to remain on the run if that conflict is no longer interesting or serving a purpose in the overall story (besides complicating their lives).

Remember the history of the world and characters

The Avatarverse is filled with history and lore. Draw on **Chapter 2: The World of Avatar** or your knowledge of *Avatar Legends* to bring that lore into your story, but even if you're not an expert on the world, never fear: you can make it up! Are the companions trekking through an old forest? Maybe it's the site of an age-old battle! Pepper the woods with ancient weapons, crumbling skeletons, or a cairn, and figure out later what the battle was all about.

Another powerful tool in a GM's arsenal is reincorporation, taking something that happened before and putting it back into the story. Take notes about what the players do, who they met, and what forces they put into motion. Then, bring these into play in future sessions. Make it clear to the players that *their* decisions landed their PCs where they are today. The NPC that the companions made friends with might be related to another one they fight or betray; saving a town from a rampaging spirit might draw the attention of a group of rebels seeking a base of operations.

Emphasize lessons throughout

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game shines when players deal with coming-of-age stories. Their stories should be about characters growing, learning, and changing to discover who they are and what they believe in. The PCs take lessons from each other, from the world, and from the NPCs around them with equal frequency.

One way to represent growth and change is through PC balance tracks. Use conflicts and adventure hooks to allow characters to see where they stand on their balance track: use a PC's interactions with NPCs as opportunities to adjust their current balance. NPCs can even explicitly take on the role of teachers; many of them want to teach the companions lessons and shape how the PCs see the world. They can offer training in new techniques—a kind of lesson that most PCs are interested in—alongside their own beliefs and ideas.

Don't forget the end-of-session growth questions. Use them to discuss what the companions learned about the world, themselves and each other. And later, try to reincorporate, counter, or challenge old lessons based on what the players told you.

Give NPCs drives, fears, and hopes

Give all your NPCs realistic motivations and reactions. You don't need a whole backstory for each NPC, but it helps to consider the things that make them human—in particular, make sure you know what they're trying to achieve (their **drive**) and flesh it out with their fears and hopes as well. Once a character has this set of motivations, you can use them to figure out how an NPC would react to any given situation. You can portray any NPC with just their drive, but having some notion of their fears or hopes helps you bring them to life. The NPCs section (page 234) in this chapter includes more details on building NPCs, including establishing their drive.

For example, say the companions accidentally burn down an old woman's hut trying to stop a rogue spirit. They unhappily trudge over to report the damage to the old woman where she sells water at the local market. How does she react? If you've figured out her drive, you can probably come up with a believable (and interesting) reaction—maybe she's driven by a desire to live in peace, and she reacts with sadness but forgiveness. But if you know she's also afraid of dangerous warriors, maybe she doesn't even talk to the PCs anymore—maybe she runs!



Make conflicts moral choices

Stories shine when choices and goals are morally fraught or when doing the right thing involves unsavory consequences. Conflicts faced by players should make them think about their morals and principles.

For example, the cruel and conniving Princess Azula offers the companions help in taking down a bigger threat, but only in exchange for valuable information that helps Fire Lord Ozai; is the enemy of the enemy your friend (even if temporarily)? A dilemma like this is a true hard choice, giving the players something to really chew on, but not every problem has to be quite so gray and dramatic. Sometimes it's enough to have two good people in a long-standing conflict, each with good points about why they are truly right.

As the GM, try to get the PCs to make choices that provoke thought about the world and their companions' place in it, decisions that may even shift their balance. NPCs often disagree with the companions, providing opportunities for interesting drama, and some NPCs will act on that disagreement. And a PC might make surprising decisions, wrestling with their demons for a few sessions and ultimately growing through the struggle!

When thinking of interesting ways to involve moral choices, draw on the themes of your game's era and on the balance principles of the companions. These excellent sources of inspiration can pull PCs in different, conflicting directions.

Use imbalance instead of evil

In the Avatarverse, true evil is very rare. Even aggressive spirits tend to be either misunderstood, or temporarily out of balance. Humans are even more complex! When portraying antagonists, think about their motivations—drives, fears, and hopes. Make their impulses more about obsessions or taking their methods too far. The bandits don't just want to hurt people, they need food to survive a catastrophic drought. The warlord gives out harsh punishments not because she's evil, but because she's obsessed with the idea of justice.

Lean on an NPC's balance principle to help guide their antagonism. People do bad things when they stray too far from the center and lose their balance, not because of some core evil inside them. Terrible actions are usually self-justified or well-intended, but ultimately take balance principles to the extreme. Unbalanced foes act as stark reminders for PCs of what they might become if they commit to their principles too strongly.

Counterbalance darkness with light

Within all the action, strife, and drama of *Avatar Legends* stories lie moments of delight and humor—seek out these moments! A lovely night's rest in a moss-covered forest can be a whole scene; ask the players what their characters do to prepare for the night, what stories they share, what tasty morsels they discover in the wilderness. These moments also provide the perfect opportunities to build bonds between PCs, especially through **guide and comfort**.

Introduce genuinely kind, generous, or funny NPCs—not everyone is selfish or unbalanced, driven only by their own needs or philosophy. Thrust the PCs into a fashion show, a dance competition, or a family dinner. Show the PCs moments of brightness amid the troubles they have to combat—it's much easier for players to invest in NPCs or places that show them kindness, humor, or joy. Too much darkness and harsh drama will exhaust players.

Keep your players' boundaries in mind and remind them that they can use their safety tools to tell you if the game's tone gets too dark (or for that matter, too light). It's on everyone at the table to make sure there are laughs, even at the darkest times, and real stakes, even when the conflicts might initially seem a little goofy.

Seek consequences besides death

Death in the Avatarverse is always dramatic and important. PCs never die unless their players choose to let them do so. NPCs shouldn't die unless their deaths contribute to the story; the companions should never become wanton killers. If an NPC dies, there's always *someone* who's sad.

Think of other ways characters can be defeated—they might fall unconscious, give in to exhaustion, faint from fright. They might be captured, humiliated into submission, or become overwhelmed with emotion. A character defeated in an important duel might be universally scorned, banished, or forever lose their self-confidence. In rare circumstances, they might even be taken into the Spirit World, lose their bending, or encounter a more supernatural fate.

The tone of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is not one of unending despair and deep tragedy. Deaths tend to happen in the background. The risks and consequences the PCs face should be fixable, preventable, or survivable; the consequences might seem dire, but the real meat of the story is often how the companions grow and learn after losses they thought they could never endure.

GM Moves

Each game of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is a conversation going back and forth between the many players, including the GM. Sometimes, when it's your turn (as the GM) to speak, you have what you say next dictated by a player-facing move. When a PC **relies on their skills and training**, you follow the move's results, replying according to the rules of that move and the result the player rolled on their dice.

But sometimes it's your turn to speak without any player-facing move to guide you. Then, you need to say something to carry the story forward. When you do this, you are making a GM move: a specific, individual action you as GM take to keep things moving.

When to Make Your Move

You can make a GM move whenever you like—whenever it feels appropriate—but you should almost always make one when:

A player rolls a miss

Missing on a dice roll is the perfect moment to make a GM move and complicate the story. Use what's happening in the story at the moment to decide what kind of move to make.

For example, if a PC misses when trying to **rely on their skills and training** by waterbending a defensive shield for an ally, you could use the GM move **threaten someone** and narrate how a misplaced jet of water accidentally hurls the ally into the middle of the fight.

There's a lull in the action

If your session slows, when no one knows what to say next, or you feel that the PCs have had enough downtime, make a GM move to kickstart the action. In these situations, your moves don't have to be brutal; they just have to add excitement.

For example, if the companions have spent all day going over the information they have in a teahouse but don't really know where to go from there, you might use the **offer a risky opportunity** GM move and have a Triple Threat Triad leader approach them with a deal.

A player grants you a golden opportunity

Sometimes, a PC might say something or do something that feels like the perfect opportunity to make a GM move. Use these moments to emphasize the effects and consequences of their choices.

For example, when a PC, faced with a deadly duel on a rooftop, decides to simply jump off the roof to escape, they have offered up a golden opportunity to **inflict fatigue or a condition** (how much depends on where they land!). For a more subtle example, when an Idealist decides to let the starving bandits go after a long discussion about right and wrong, you might decide to **shift their balance** and move them towards Forgiveness on the balance track. It's the perfect opportunity!

In particular, PCs often have to take drastic action in order to clear their conditions (page 101). Treat these moments as easy "golden opportunities"—when a PC "takes foolhardy action without talking to their companions," they're setting themselves up for a GM move.

Soft and Hard Moves

When you make a GM move, you can either signal what you're about to do and allow a player to act before it happens—making a "softer" move that's preventable—or you can deliver a move immediately without warning— a "harder" move that hits where it hurts. Think of "soft" and "hard" as two ends of a spectrum of how much players can react to prevent the consequences—any given move can be made at many places on that spectrum.

For example, here are three different forms of the **threaten someone** move:

- Telling a player that the beams of the burning building creak ominously as they burst in to save someone is a pretty soft version of the move.
- Telling a player that they hear a crash as the beams begin to tumble down is a harder version of the move. The PC now has to react to this threat.
- Telling a player that the burning beams come crashing down around them, trapping them in the room and inflicting multiple points of fatigue on them is a very hard version of the move—the character not only took a hit, but must now deal with a worse situation.

Think about the dramatic stakes of making a move soft or hard. Soft moves imply a manageable or subtle threat. Hard moves show that a threat is dangerous and overt. For example, an enemy who arrives and immediately inflicts a condition while shooting lightning at a PC shows a much greater danger than one posturing with fingers crackling with sparks. You can also use the texture of your moves as a pacing mechanism. If the game gets a little slow and you need to up the tension, you can start making increasingly hard moves. On the other hand, if the companions have been taking a great deal of fatigue and conditions, soften your moves in order to prevent it all from becoming a little overwhelming.



GM Moves List

Here is a list of GM moves you can make, as well as examples of the kind of PC moves, actions, or other golden opportunities that can inspire you to use them. The moves are:

- Inflict fatigue or a condition
- Reveal a hidden truth
- Shift their balance
- Twist loyalties with tempting offers
- Escalate to violence
- Offer a risky or costly opportunity
- Threaten someone
- Shift the odds, suddenly
- Exploit a weakness in their history
- Provide wisdom in unlikely places
- Turn a move back on them

Inflict fatigue or a condition

When the companions do something taxing or get hurt in some way, this is the easiest move to use: just assign some fatigue or a condition. The fiction around this move can vary a lot, but always remember to put the fiction first by describing the situation—"You tumble off the boat into the cold water"—before you start telling players to mark fatigue or conditions. You've got to create a compelling world, and that means making sure that each fatigue or condition marked is tied back to the fiction.

Use your judgement as to how much to inflict, **but remember that a condition is approximately equivalent to 2-fatigue**. A punch-in-the-face from a random guard is probably worth 1-fatigue, but an angry screaming fit with one's cantankerous father-in-law might be worth a whole condition. Remember that inflicting fatigue is generally softer than inflicting conditions—fatigue is easier to get rid of without consequence—and the more of either you inflict, the harder of a move you're making.

This is a good move to effectively assign a "cost" to certain actions. An Earthbender who runs through a flaming building might be **pushing their luck**, but if you've established the inferno is enormous, you might just inflict fatigue before the roll to represent the danger. This move also helps you represent the fiction mechanically—a Waterbender who falls from the top of a building, barely arresting their fall by hitting canopies on the way down, should suffer some fatigue or conditions. Otherwise, that fall feels unrealistic. Players don't have any incentive to avoid or mitigate danger unless those threats have a cost!

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- A PC rushes through the smoke-filled corridor of a burning building; the GM tells them to mark 2-fatigue.
- A PC falls off a roof and onto the awning of a fruit stand; the GM tells them to mark a condition.
- A PC spends the day taking care of a group of energetic children; the GM tells them to mark 1-fatigue.

Reveal a hidden truth

Want to add drama to a scene? Reveal new information! While this can be a truth about a scheme or plot you've had in mind for a while, you can also create a new, explosive truth on the spot. You didn't have to know that a PC's masked foe was secretly their mother in disguise before you reveal it! Fill in mysteries with a rewarding and dramatic answer for the moment; you don't have to commit in advance to an answer that ends up making little sense in the moment.

When improvising this way, ensure that the new information fits your fiction. You may not have had the new truth in mind until this moment, but when you introduce it into the fiction, it becomes part of your story's overarching world. Don't strain believability and continuity solely for drama. When you reveal the face beneath that mask, you reveal this person has been underneath the mask the whole time. You can reveal new truths—actually, multiple people wore the mask—but the more you reveal to explain other truths, the less likely the moment lands. It's one thing if the face revealed is a PC's mother, recontextualizing everything that everyone knew about her; it's another thing if the mask is lifted to reveal a PC's secret twin no one knew existed before this very moment.

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- A PC successfully **assesses a situation** by scoping out a temple they're trying to infiltrate; when they examine the artwork, they see a story describing a difficult truth about their people's past.
- A PC spends some time cooling off and hanging out at a tea shop; they then spy a foe emerging from a door to the backroom, and realize this very tea shop hides a triad headquarters!
- A PC fails to catch a thief as he tries to get away; when he turns back with a grin, the PC sees the face of their long-lost sibling!

Shift their balance

Sometimes the companions might do things that lead you to shift their balance directly—a hard move! But usually NPCs attempt to **shift a PC's balance** when they interact with the PCs.

Sometimes, that means the NPC shifts their balance directly; other times, it means the NPC **calls the PC out** instead. **Calling someone out** is more about getting a character to act, while directly shifting balance suggests the NPC's words affect the PC's self-conception. An old man pleading for the companions to stop fighting because they're destroying the village is **calling someone out**, while the same old man scolding them for destroying the village after the fight is shifting their balance. Remember PCs can always try to **resist an NPC shifting their balance**!

Because balance is so internal (and often personal to players), a good technique is to ask the players what they think: "This seems to me like you're moving towards Tradition…what do you think?"

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The Guardian agrees to the very risky plan put forth by a rebel captain; the GM tells them to shift their balance toward Trust.
- The Hammer takes a wounded villager to safety instead of fighting soldiers, who jeer and call them cowardly; the GM tells them the soldiers are trying to shift their balance toward Force.
- The Idealist shows mercy to a band of criminals, who thank the PC; the GM tells them the grateful criminals are trying to shift the Idealist's balance toward Forgiveness.

Twist loyalties with tempting offers

The companions often think they know who's good and who's bad. This move complicates that belief. Give the companions reasons to side with enemies and reasons to doubt their allies. Maybe their allies use shady means to achieve their goals and ask the PCs to participate? Maybe their enemies want the same thing as the companions (for now…) and ask for their help? Either way, remind them that nothing is simple in the Avatarverse!

The easiest way to twist loyalties like this is with tempting offers, offers that are a little suspect but carry seductive rewards. Use these to entice the PCs into reconsidering their loyalties and to induce NPCs to change their minds and their sides in a conflict. A tempting offer put forward by a foe might imbalance an ally and change them from a friend to a dire threat.

Remember, there's no "true evil." Even if you know how your players respond to temptation, giving them choices like this is a fun way of letting PCs double down on (or explore) their beliefs and drives. In turn, the offer has to actually be tempting, so valuable they can't look away, and not so vile they know it's a trap.

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The companions successfully **guide and comfort** an anti-bending rioter; he offers to help free their friend if they join the cause.
- The identity of a mastermind is revealed to be the Icon's bending master; that teacher offers to keep training the Icon if they help her accomplish a specific goal.
- The companions wait and watch before launching an attack; while watching, they witness all the positive things their enemies actually do for the community.

Escalate to violence

Eventually, a fight is going to break out. Combat isn't the be-all and end-all of this game, but the PCs are all competent fighters with advanced techniques, and at some point or another a cool action scene is due. Set one off when appropriate!

Consider carefully when to make NPCs resort to violence; while potent (and often exciting), this is an easy move to overuse. Does an NPC's balance principle suggest it or did they just tip over on their balance track? Have the companions committed some grave act or offered a heinous insult? Does it add to the story's drama for a fight to occur *right now*? Make violence mean something.

If you use this as a harder move, you might inflict fatigue before the PCs react or begin a combat exchange, to show that their foes score a surprise hit, or that they're prepared or skilled in some way. And remember, violence doesn't necessarily mean a combat exchange—sometimes, violence can be resolved when the PCs **rely on their skills and training**, but the important idea is that the situation still escalated (see more on page 133).

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The companions insult someone; the insulted party lets out a roar and throws a punch.
- A PC misses a roll while trying to sneak through the palace; they run headfirst into an elite guard who firebends a wall of flame to cut off any escape, then settles into a stance to fight them.
- The companions steal something from a local shop; the shopkeeper chases them into the street and incites the crowd against the PCs.



Offer a risky or costly opportunity

When the companions are stuck on how to move forward, offer them risky or costly opportunities to get what they want. Show them a path to reach their goals (maybe through an NPC's offer or through a flash of insight), but make it a dangerous path. The idea isn't to demand PCs take that path—they might not choose if the path is too dangerous or isn't worth it to them! But any such offer always pushes the conversation forward productively, even if the players turn down the offer.

This move is very useful when players miss on a move but you'd like to keep the action moving forward: give them another (similar) opportunity with a risk attached. The risk can even be another (harder) GM move, such as an escalation to violence, some fatigue, or a shift in balance.

Pay attention to risk versus cost. Risk means the penalty (whatever it may be) is uncertain. A cost implies that a penalty must be paid in order to take the action. Players treat decisions differently depending on whether there's a risk or a cost associated. Change it up from time to time!

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The companions miss their roll **pleading** with a sentinel to let them through; but they do spot a trap-filled tunnel leading in the same direction.
- The companions are at a loss for how to undermine the charismatic cult-leader; but they do connect with one cultist willing to work with them to steal the cult-leader's sacred stone.
- The companions see an enemy politician make a mistake and can use it to make a fool of him entirely; but doing so could cause a balance shift in some of them.



Threaten someone

You can always make a move to put someone in a terrible position—a situation in which they have to react immediately or face some harm. It's easy to do this for PCs; when they get spotted by the guards, you've threatened that PC. But you can threaten NPCs as well, putting them into spots that demand action from the PCs. Every playbook pushes players to create some NPCs they care about. Put those loved ones in danger to raise the stakes and the tension. Maybe they get captured, thrown in front of an attack, or even threatened with emotional pain (like breakups, family feuds, or utter despair). Similarly, threatening innocent bystanders is a great way to push heroic PCs to action.

Don't be timid with this move; threatening a PC directly demands action, and threatening existing NPCs by bringing them into new situations might take the story in surprising directions. That said, players tend to fall in love with NPCs quickly. Even a character introduced earlier in that session can make a good candidate for this move. As long as the players have decided that they care—and as heroes, they should care about nearly any innocent person suddenly thrust into danger! Look for opportunities to build those characters up, bolster their relationship with the PCs, and ultimately threaten it in dramatic moments!

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The companions infiltrate an enemy legion; there, they spot a captive whom they recognize as a friend from a couple sessions prior.
- The companions are defeated in a fight; their foes ignore the companions and use the opportunity to capture someone the PCs were defending.
- The companions finish lazing about in the forest for a while; as they clean up, they see glowing eyes looking at them from the treeline.

Shift the odds, suddenly

When the action becomes predictable, twist the situation into something surprising and new. Whoever was losing might find a sudden, powerful advantage! An unseen trap might be sprung! An important NPC might appear and change everything! When you shift the odds in such a way, emphasize circumstances outside the companions' control. Avoid saying something like "You slip and fall!" Instead, say, "The stone under your feet begins to crack…"

Think of this move as injecting excitement. As long as the players still have a chance to respond, then a shift of the odds against them can be fun. Revealing that their foe actually has forces spread out, ready to ambush the PCs is fun and exciting—as long as it doesn't happen every time or leave the PCs without options.

The "suddenly" in this move means that you don't have to preface the move much. You still need it to make sense within the fiction, but this move represents traps, ambushes, and surprising new events. If the PCs are sitting pretty, thinking they're in command of the situation, this move perfectly upsets the cabbage cart!

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- A PC misses a roll while attempting to infiltrate an enemy fortress; they slip inside, only to wind up in an ambush laid by a nemesis!
- The companions joke that convincing a tiny rogue band of bandits to surrender will be easy; when confronted, they discover the bandits have some kind of powerful spirit aiding them!
- The companions handily defeat a foe; upon their enemy falling unconscious, however, their enemy's allies swarm down a hill to attack!

Exploit a weakness in their history

A PC's backstory is fertile ground in which to find story seeds. The backgrounds players pick for their companions are rich sources of inspiration! Maybe a PC's past comes back to haunt them? Maybe the fact that they were in the military makes them unpleasant in the eyes of certain NPCs? Or maybe an old friend just needs help?

Each playbook is also designed to tell a certain kind of story arc, and you're encouraged to dig through them for inspiration. The Idealist's code, the Successor's lineage, the Hammer's adversary—bring these all into play.

This move covers everything from having an existing NPC recognize a PC from the same background, to introducing one of the PC's mentors, to playing up an old rivalry—just so long as it complicates their story now. But similarly, this move also covers emphasizing the limits of skill and knowledge the PCs might have garnered from their history. A Rogue with the Outlaw and Urban backgrounds may have no knowledge whatsoever of how to contend with a fancy dress party—and in fact, might have had a run-in with someone who recognizes them in a bad way, like the rich merchant they robbed!

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The companions just defeated an enemy when the Successor's father arrives to take their foe into custody.
- The Rogue goes to the local constabulary for help, only to find out that the officers recognize them as a thief and outlaw.
- The Idealist goes to seek advice from the leader of a local village, but the leader turns out to be the same person who once perpetrated the tragedy that defines the Idealist.



Provide wisdom in unlikely places

Wisdom in the Avatarverse comes in many forms, from many places. It might come as guidance or advice, perhaps from a former enemy, perhaps from an unassuming cabbage merchant. If the companions are debating what course of action to take, a fishmonger who overhears them might offer some clarity based on his "humble experience." When the companions are agonizing about a moral decision, a child might articulate the consequences of each choice.

Wisdom might also take the form of something more concrete. For instance, advanced techniques might seem rare, but the world is full of hidden masters, or simply folks who have mastery of a very particular technique that they don't consider useful to others. A wilderness scout might have tricks up their sleeve to vanish from notice. An elderly grandparent might use a version of a deadly combat technique to entertain their grandchildren.

If you don't periodically make a move to offer PCs a chance to learn techniques or garner wisdom from those around them, they likely won't learn to seek it out. Surprise the companions with a bit of hidden wisdom from time to time…and masters who might teach them new techniques and abilities.

Example golden opportunities and moves:

- The companions defeat a rival in a duel; that rival offers to teach them a secret technique out of respect for their victory.
- The companions successfully **guided and comforted** a simple farmer whose farm just burned down; the farmer provides a lesson about the nature of forgiveness and resilience.
- The companions explore an interesting locale; there, they witness a scene or discover art and writing that sheds light on a mystery.

Turn a move back on them

When players roll a miss, a great way of creating interesting consequences is to imagine what could happen if the same move succeeded against them. Feel free to make this a harder move (for example, when the PCs fail at **intimidating an NPC**, they're forced to flee in terror instead) or a softer move, where you offer them the chance to resist the consequence in exchange for fatigue, a condition, or the like. If you use hard versions of this move, especially if you force the PCs to take an action, check in with players to see if they're okay with the momentary loss of agency.

You can be creative in interpreting the reversed move, as well—it might seem hard to turn **assess a situation** back on the PC who makes the move, but you might ask the PC a question like "What here can the NPC use to make you agree to surrender?"

Note that this move doesn't necessarily ask you to call for repeated rolls. For instance, if the Idealist uses the **call someone out** move on the Icon to get them to act, but misses, you don't need to ask the Icon to roll dice. Simply tell the Icon that they can call the Idealist out as if the Icon had rolled a 12+.

Example golden opportunities:

- A PC misses when **calling someone out**; the person they called out gets to **call out the PC**, instead.
- A PC misses when using firebending on a firebending opponent; the opponent turns the very flames the PC summoned against them.
- A PC misses when **tricking someone**; they wind up running headfirst into a foe's deception instead.

NPCs

The Avatarverse is full of all kinds of people. When creating NPCs for the companions to interact with, look to the entire spectrum of humanity. Offer the PCs a rich and diverse set of characters to interact with. It's not just soldiers, bandits, monks, and kings who inhabit the world, after all! Send in janitors, teachers, cooks, and retirees. Introduce the companions to the radish gardener who dreams of being a pro-bending star, the librarian obsessed with Avatar memorabilia, the single mother who earns money by performing as Avatar Kyoshi in the streets.

Creating NPCs

Making NPCs is not difficult! Your game will include countless NPCs who are never named and never exist as much more than one or two lines of description (likely a job or other role). The surly guard. The clumsy cabbage-seller. These NPCs do not need stats.

Once the companions interact with an NPC directly, make them memorable with a physical feature, a piece of clothing, a signature gesture or mannerism, or a personality quirk. Generally, steer clear of accents to distinguish PCs—they can play into harmful stereotypes. Sometimes small things, like a simple catchphrase, can work better than an elaborately planned vocal performance.

Stat up NPCs only when they become important. If they re-appear, become enemies, turn into allies, or if you feel that they are important to the story in some way, use the guidelines below to give them stats. It's absolutely fine to stat up an NPC at the table if you need their numbers, such as when they're entering a fight or someone **calls them out** on their principle.

NPCs come in four flavors of importance. Depending both on their importance to the story and their power level, you can classify NPCs as **minor**, **major**, **master**, and the very rare **legendary**. After the description and details of each level of NPC, you can find a stat guide, an example from *Avatar Legends*, and a sample of that kind of NPC. You can find more example NPCs—divided by level—in **Appendix B: NPCs**.

To stat up an NPC, give them:

- A name and description
- A drive, i.e. "to accomplish a goal"
- Fatigue track and conditions
- Balance track and principles
- Advanced techniques (as appropriate)

Not every NPC needs a full mechanical write-up! Sometimes you can get away with giving an NPC just a balance principle. If you do give an NPC a full fatigue track and conditions, you are saying something about the NPC—that they can fight and participate in combat exchanges. If the NPC cannot participate in combat exchanges—they have no training—then don't give them fatigue or conditions. A single inflicted fatigue or condition takes them out.

Name and Description

Use the naming advice in this book (page 114) to come up with a name. Also remember that no society is a monoculture: even during the Hundred Year War Era, people of the different nations mixed, intermarried, and settled in each other's lands. A street urchin in Omashu might have a Fire Nation name, for example, having descended from Fire Nation immigrants.

A description can be short and might include the NPC's training. A feisty bandit. A Waterbender who likes to help those in need. More important characters might need fuller descriptions.

Drive

What motivates the NPC? What do they feel driven to do? This can be a simple "to _____" phrase. For instance, "to uphold justice" or "to save their village." Use these drives to help decide how the NPCs react to the companions' actions.

Drives can also evolve over the course of a story. NPCs can and should respond to what the companions do, which might include changing their goals (especially if their new goal becomes, "to get revenge on the companions" or something similar).

Fatigue & Conditions

Each NPC should have a fatigue track, usually between 3–10 boxes, as well as one or more conditions; you can pull from the playbook conditions or invent your own to fit the NPC's personality. Minor NPCs have the shortest fatigue tracks (3-fatigue) while legendary NPCs have a full 15-fatigue track!

Principles & Balance

Unless they're an unnamed minor NPC, give them a single principle that matches their essence, their beliefs, or their personal, philosophical struggle. NPC balance principles act both as a guide to how they might behave, and to push the companions into action (and nudge their own balance tracks). In fact, it's a good idea to give some of your NPCs balance principles that match or directly oppose the companions' principles. You can create a lot of interesting tension when the companions observe the NPC acting on their principle or when the NPC **calls the companions out**! That said, if you're stuck, grab a principle from an unused playbook and use that.

Advanced Techniques

Finally, NPCs with combat training should know advanced techniques as appropriate to the story and to their level of importance. Minor NPCs probably don't have any advanced techniques—they just use the basic techniques in a fight—but all other NPCs have mastered a few advanced techniques in line with their training. See **Appendix A: Techniques** for the full list of techniques, all of which are available to NPCs!

NPC Variation

If you do give an NPC a mechanical write-up, you can deviate from the proposed guidelines a bit. One greater or fewer fatigue, condition, or balance track point is a relatively small variation that can help you more accurately represent the NPC. See "When to Diverge from the NPC Guidelines" on page 236 for more on how to tweak the NPC stats for your campaign.

Minor NPCs

These are side characters of low importance to the episode or overall story. Think of the shopkeeper whose produce is stolen from the bazaar, a guard who bars the way, an onlooker at the fair who makes an admiring comment about the companions.

Minor NPCs may be named, but just as easily could go unnamed. They tend to have rather basic capabilities and if they have combat training, tend to use only the most straightforward tactics:

- Earthbenders hurl rocks.
- Firebenders throw gouts of flame.
- Airbenders harness big gusts of wind.
- Waterbenders channel big jets of water.
- Weapons users come swinging in with regular weapons.
- Technologists apply obviously dangerous machines (harpoon guns, big tanks).

Do note that players often love to "adopt" minor NPCs and elevate them into positions of importance. If players show a particular interest in a throwaway character, it might be time to upgrade them into a major NPC. Just give them a principle, expand their balance and fatigue tracks, add a few more conditions, and add a few advanced techniques if they have combat training!

Fights with minor NPCs might not even need to involve exchanges of techniques. A simple roll of a basic move—something like **rely on your skills and training**—will often do. Fights where the outcome is certain—the companions will absolutely win, for instance—don't trigger a move at all. Most often, when an NPC doesn't have any kind of combat training, there's no uncertainty and no need for a move to be triggered; the PC might sweep them aside with a gust of wind or jet of water without even making a move.

Minor NPC Stat Guide:

- Minor NPCs often don't need fatigue, conditions, or balance, especially if they lack combat training. If they do need to be able to participate in combat, give them three fatigue, one condition, and a 0 to +1 balance track.
- Minor NPCs often don't need a principle—they're too minor to believe strongly in something—but if necessary, give them something broad or simple like Tradition or Loyalty.
- Similarly, minor NPCs don't need advanced techniques.

The Boulder and the Hippo in the Avatar: The Last Airbender *episode, "The Blind Bandit," might be minor NPCs—they're named, but they exist only to oppose Toph, not really as characters unto themselves with their own motivations.*

Sample Minor NPC: Tough Bruiser

Local muscle

Drive: To follow orders
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Angry
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Major NPCs

Major NPCs are important to the current episode or overall story: the information broker who knows where the gang is, the guide who helps the companions through the desert, the owner of the tea shop the companions repeatedly return to.

Give them a name or title (the "Best of the Yuyan Archers," for example), and at least one interesting physical feature, mannerism, or item of clothing (a scar, a stammer, or a vivid purple cloak, for instance). If you find that a minor NPC starts to appear in multiple episodes, it's a good idea to start thinking of them as a major NPC!

Major NPCs are usually pretty capable and canny. If they're combatants, they might have their own styles and distinctive visuals:

- Earthbenders might hurl rocks, change the environment, or exhibit seismic sense.
- Firebenders might throw gouts of flame, light the environment aflame, or launch themselves into the air using fire.
- Airbenders might harness big gusts of wind, throw incoming physical attacks off-course with wind, or glide along on air currents or balls of whirling air ("air scooters").
- Waterbenders might channel big jets of water, use ice creatively to shape the environment, or heal (though this is rare).
- Weapons users might come swinging in, dance around acrobatically, or attack with strength and power. Their weapons might be showier or more exotic.
- Technologists have a few tricks, surprise weapons, and unexpected capabilities to deploy—but only a few.

Major NPC Stat Guide:

- Give them five fatigue, three conditions, and a balance track from 0 to +2 at most.
- Give major NPCs a balance principle, one that reflects their primary interests and motivations, like Progress or Care.
- Major NPCs skilled in combat should have one or two advanced techniques (at most).

In the Avatar: The Last Airbender *episode, "The Blind Bandit," Xin Fu and Master Yu are both major NPCs—they have motivations and personalities. They lead their groups and both show up in later episodes as they hunt Toph. The Boulder and the Hippo might become major NPCs when they show up again to help Toph in the episode, "Day of the Black Sun."*

Sample Major NPC: Champion Pit-fighter

A champion pit-fighter

Drive: To control the pit-fighting scene
Principle: Discipline 0 +1 +2
Condition: Angry, Desperate, Guilty
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Charge, Forceful Blow*



When to Diverge from the NPC Guidelines

In general, stick to the mechanical guidelines when building NPCs. However, it's *your* game and you may wish to occasionally do something different! You should feel empowered to modify NPCs if you have a strong reason to: simply upgrade or downgrade the relevant stats (fatigue, balance track, etc.) by one level of NPC importance.

For instance:

- A physically fragile major NPC (an old grandmother of one of the PCs, for instance) might have fewer fatigue boxes or conditions. Use the fatigue suggestion for a minor NPC.
- A young, novice warrior (a sibling of a PC who left home to join the military, for instance) might not know any combat techniques (similar to a minor NPC) even though they're a major NPC.

If you find yourself wildly deviating from the proposed category—for example, giving an NPC you think is major less fatigue and fewer conditions, or giving a minor NPC much more fatigue, conditions, and a longer balance track—consider switching them to a different category altogether. You may be realizing that in your mind, this NPC serves a different role in the story than you originally expected!

Master NPCs

Master NPCs are either powerful, difficult-to-defeat combatants, or very important to the overall story. The "season-long" villain, the master teacher with incredible skills, and the powerful political ally who offers help (or missions) to the companions could all be master NPCs.

An NPC who significantly, importantly shows up for three or more episodes deserves a look to see whether or not they're a master NPC. They won't always be—for example, if they're just a regular lackey of some kind—but if they meaningfully affect the game and act as significant opposition or aid across many episodes, then they're likely a master NPC. Similarly, a minor or major NPC who develops a deep relationship with the companions, or becomes a constant antagonist, might be upgraded to a master NPC.

Master NPCs are very, very capable with their training. The question for a master NPC is never "are they skilled enough to accomplish this thing"—they have full mastery over all of the core principles and ideas of their training. Without fail, they are all combat-trained and ready. Within their expertise, it's not *if* they accomplish something, but *how*.

If they're benders, they might have access to rare techniques such as bloodbending or combustionbending. If they're non-benders, they might control ground-breaking technology, be in tune with special spirits, or be weapon masters. Feel free to get creative with masters—if you can conceive of it being done within their training style, they can do it.

Master NPC Stat Guide:

- Give them ten fatigue, five conditions, and a balance track ranging from 0 to +3 (at most).
- Master NPCs must have a balance principle. Their emotions and motivations are important, and their principle should be a consistent and regular part of the story.
- Most master NPCs should have at least two advanced techniques and likely more—you don't necessarily have to choose them all until you need them, but they could have up to five.

As important villains, Combustion Man, General Zhao, and P'Li can all be considered master NPCs.
As expert individuals with incredible skills (who nevertheless show up only briefly), Master Pakku, Jeong Jeong, and Piandao could be master NPCs (if you needed to stat them out).

Sample Master NPC: Accomplished General

A weapons master in command of extensive forces

Drive: To win favor with superiors and commanders
Principle: Ambition 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Afraid, Angry, Disgusted, Guilty, Morose
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Feint, Turn the Tables, Pinpoint Thrust*

Groups of NPCs

Sometimes, companions must face off against groups of NPCs. Rather than representing each NPC individually (which would get very old fast), use the following guidelines:

- A small group, 5–10 NPCs, can be statted as a single NPC one step above the individual members in importance.
- A medium group, 11–20 NPCs, similarly behaves like a single NPC two steps above in importance.
- A large group, or 21+ NPCs, is three steps above in importance.
- For steps of importance above master, simply add +1 fatigue and +1 condition per step.

Thus, a small group of minor NPCs is effectively one major NPC; a medium group of minor NPCs is effectively one master NPC; a large group of minor NPCs is a master NPC with +1 fatigue and +1 condition. It's uncommon to group major NPCs—they're all individuals enough that condensing them into an abstracted group (with a shared balance principle) erases what makes them special. Master and legendary NPCs should never be grouped.

Additionally, when dealing with a group, treat it as a single entity in a combat exchange. The group shares a single balance principle: it's the thing that binds the group together. The group has a single set of conditions and fatigue; if the group is taken out, it disperses and scatters. The group chooses only one approach and uses the same number of techniques as a normal NPC at its level. Also give the group at least one of the group techniques, which are only available to groups. See the group techniques in **Appendix A: Techniques**.

Often group NPCs appear paired with a major NPC, a leader for the group who is dangerous enough to be an individual threat alongside the larger group. For example, a group of guards might have a captain who could be statted up as a major NPC separate from the others.

Most of the nameless guards or bandits faced by Avatar Legends heroes are best represented as group NPCs. For example, the guards that travel with Prince Zuko and General Iroh throughout Book 1 of Avatar: The Last Airbender *are a group NPC.*

Sample Group NPC: Palace Guards

A medium group of trained guards, eager to serve

Drive: To protect the palace
Principle: Loyalty 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Afraid, Angry, Desperate, Guilty, Humiliated
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Coordination, Shield Wall, Swarm*



Legendary NPCs

Legendary NPCs are incredibly rare—important paragons of the whole setting. They should show up sparingly, maybe a cameo here or there. You can find a sample NPC for each of the five eras—the four Avatars and General Iroh—in **Appendix B: NPCs**.

It is pretty unlikely for a legendary NPC to get into combat with the companions! The role of legendary NPCs is to act as recognizable figures from the original stories, and big movers and shakers of the overarching setting—not to act as constant allies or antagonists. However, here are the guidelines to build your own if you need to give them stats:

Legendary NPC Stat Guide:

- Give them fifteen fatigue, eight conditions (meaning you have to make a few up), and a balance track ranging from 0 to +4 (at most).
- Legendary NPCs must have a balance principle reflecting their internal philosophy and worldview, much like master NPCs.
- Even legendary NPCs who don't fight often are masterful fighters. Give them at least three advanced techniques, and they can have five or more if they're especially known for their combat prowess.

The Avatars are all legendary NPCs, as are most of their companions like Rangi, Sokka, and Bolin. The spirits Raava, Vaatu, and Koh the Face Stealer might also be considered legendary NPCs.

Portraying NPCs

In terms of how NPCs *behave*, here are a few guidelines to make your characters more three-dimensional:

- Look to your **agendas, guidelines, and moves** to determine how they act. In particular, remember that there's no such thing as pure evil.
- Use the **NPCs' drives** to determine what they want and how they get it.
- Use any **conditions** marked on them to determine their emotional state and to modify their actions.
- Use their **principle** and their **current balance** to determine how committed they are to their ideals—the higher the principle, the more obsessive they grow, and the less open they are to changing their mind. It might be possible to get them to change how they act by **calling them out** and appealing to their deep investment in their principle, but **pleading** with them, **intimidating** them, or **guiding and comforting** them in ways that conflict with their principle all become more and more difficult.
- If appropriate, you can *inflict fatigue or conditions* on an NPC or *shift their balance* based on the fiction. If they become dramatically Angry or become highly committed to their principle, note this down.
- If they **mark a condition** or **shift their balance** while "on-screen," make them react—have them take action that shows the change. This works even in combat—the NPC can react between exchanges, or might alter the goal they have in the fight (thus picking new approaches or techniques). If an NPC winds up marking multiple conditions rapidly, it's often simplest to choose a dominant one and play to that…or to play up how rapidly stressed out they are, suddenly filled with conflicting and dramatic emotions!

NPCs In Combat

Companions will inevitably fight NPCs. How the fight turns out depends on the NPCs' importance and the decisions the PCs make during the conflict.

- **Minor NPCs** are "mooks," "henchpeople," of middling importance. They get tossed around easily and make the companions look cool by losing. They showcase how awesome the companions are given their training and techniques.
- **Major NPCs** are capable, challenging obstacles. Defeating them shouldn't take too long, but they might escape (perhaps even before defeat, if they feel they're losing) and return later—with a vengeance!
- **Master NPCs** are clever, motivated people with their own goals and principles—they rarely risk their lives foolishly and gladly flee if the chips are down. Unlike major NPCs, their motivation for escape tends not to be out of fear, but out of a desire to return better prepared.

What about NPC vs NPC fights?

What should the GM do if an NPC fights another NPC, and no PC intervenes or participates? Simple—just say what happens. If no PC is involved or takes action, the GM just decides what happens, based on their agendas and guidelines. If the PCs aren't even present, the GM can just tell them what they hear about the outcome. If they're watching, they can still dive in and try to interrupt the fight—but until they do, the GM can just say what happens, inflicting conditions, marking fatigue, and shifting the balance of their NPCs as they see fit.

For exchanges with important NPCs, keep the following in mind:

NPC Techniques and Behavior

- Remember to assign the foes techniques appropriate to their importance and group size; you don't have to pick them all in advance, but keep them consistent once you choose them for a given NPC.
- Foes must choose approaches in combat exchanges and use techniques equal to 1 + their current balance per exchange.
- The more important the NPC, the more likely they will retreat before total defeat, or change their target to something achievable. Important NPCs are intelligent and don't stand around to be defeated—except of course, when they do, in which case, make it dramatic!

NPC Fatigue and Conditions

- If an NPC must mark a fatigue, and cannot, they mark a condition instead.
- If an NPC must mark a condition, and cannot, they are taken out. Follow the normal rules for being taken out (see page 101).

NPC Balance

- If an NPC shifts balance off the edge of the track, they lose their balance. They must make a choice from the **lose your balance** move at the end of the exchange (they still get to use their techniques as chosen). If the NPC has previously lost their balance—even in a prior session—endeavor to select a different option than what they last chose, so they never pick the same option from the **lose your balance** move twice in a row.
- After an NPC loses their balance, shift their center—they're guaranteed to start all future fights at a different balance.
- If an NPC's center shifts off the edge, it means they go through a fundamental change, either picking a new principle, or retiring entirely from play—forever imprisoned, giving up all ambition, or (rarely) dead.

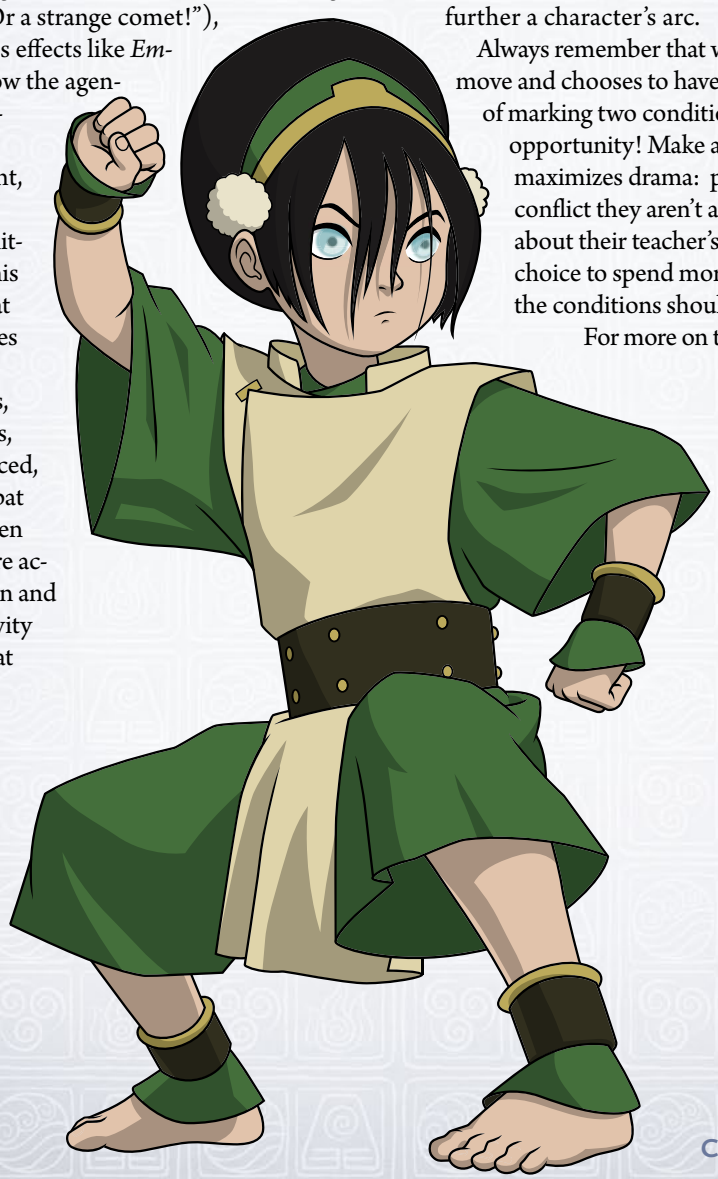
Managing Bending

Bending—mystically controlling the elements—is a pillar of the Avatarverse. The word "bender" is literally in the first story set in the world: *Avatar: The Last Airbender*.

Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game doesn't include "spell lists" or specific, rule-based ways to use bending talents. Bending the elements is more freeform. Let players infuse their creativity and personality in their character's bending. Say "yes" to interesting, unusual bending ideas, even if you haven't seen it portrayed in the source media. Remember this is a fiction-first system—always couched in terms of what is actually happening in the fiction. Players should tell you what they're trying to achieve through bending and what their characters are actually attempting.

Ensure that you maintain *some* sort of internal consistency with regards to power levels, simply to avoid confusion ("Well I froze the whole army in place with waterbending last time so why not this time?"). However, when in doubt, call for a move to resolve the uncertainty. Besides, in the Avatarverse, people often show greater-than-normal capabilities under exceptional, one-off circumstances or periods of heightened emotion or unique environmental characteristics. You can always chalk up incredible, game-breaking displays of power to something like that ("It was the stress! Or a strange comet!"), especially thanks to status effects like *Empowered*. Ultimately, follow the agendas, baselines, and guidelines, keeping everyone's enjoyment at the forefront, and you should be fine.

That said, combat is a little more constrained in this game. Remind players that the chaos of a fight requires focus and discipline. This is why combat techniques, which have specific effects, need to be learned, practiced, and mastered. Basic combat techniques often leave open the specifics of what you're actually doing, so players can and should still express creativity through those; but combat is never as open-ended as regular play.



The Role of Training

Don't forget that growth is only one form of advancement; the companions can also become stronger benders and better warriors by mastering additional techniques through training. Learning and mastering advanced techniques for combat is a great motivator, both for companions and the players who control them: within a story, companions want to deepen their skills, while players want to try out cool new abilities.

Wanting to learn advanced techniques might be the reason companions seek out ancient scrolls in old temples, or search for knowledgeable masters hidden in the world. Bending teachers can be found in many places and may not always look like what you might expect. Showcase NPCs' advanced techniques and remind players that these techniques can be learned by studying with these characters (even "villains" can have a change of heart and teach companions—look at Prince Zuko!).

Learning and mastering advanced techniques should take time and effort. Use them as rewards for achieving goals in the story. Base the conditions for mastering a technique on the character attempting the technique and the lessons they must learn. These lessons need not be training-specific. A PC may need to shift their balance, demonstrate a specific personality trait, or come to understand some fundamental truth in order to master a technique. In short, use mastery as another way to further a character's arc.

Always remember that when a PC rolls a 7–9 on the training move and chooses to have their training take time—instead of marking two conditions—they are giving you a golden opportunity! Make a move that increases the tension and maximizes drama: perhaps *the odds shift suddenly* in a conflict they aren't attending to or you *reveal a hidden truth* about their teacher's real motivations and loyalties. The choice to spend more time training instead of just marking the conditions should have an impact on the fiction!

For more on training in advancement, see page 212.

Running Fight Scenes

Combat exchanges run a little differently than the rest of the game. They're a little more "crunchy" or rules-focused. However, remember that combat doesn't occur for combat's sake. When characters fight, it's because they feel they must use force to achieve their goals. While force and violence are more common in the Avatarverse, it must still be justified by what the combatants want—few people get into a fight just for the heck of it.

Keep that in mind when running combat exchanges: rare is the NPC who simply participates in exchange after exhausting exchange, ignoring their own wellbeing. If an NPC *does* do so, it's because they're distracting the companions from something more important, or have gone berserk in some way, or feel they need to sacrifice themselves in order to prove a point. More often, NPCs take different actions after an exchange, taunt or speak to the companions, or otherwise attempt to achieve their goal.

Managing Spotlight

Think of an exchange as active contesting combatants trading a bout of blows—not a "round of combat." This might mean a single punch or a flurry of quick attacks. It may involve bending or might not.

If all the companions are in a fight with multiple opponents, it's a good idea to split exchanges up into groups. You can switch between these groups to provide every player the spotlight, and allow PCs to use techniques to shift from one to the other, or to make moves in between exchanges.

So as not to focus too much attention on one PC, think carefully before introducing one-on-one duels. These should have a good reason: maybe it's an Agni Kai and a PC has to prove themselves. Maybe one PC is distracting a major villain while the others evacuate a village. In such cases, make sure the other PCs (who are not fighting) do something meaningful, and shift the spotlight onto them after each exchange. If the other PCs have nothing to do, you should involve them in combat with more foes (henchpeople, minions, or lackeys could arrive at the scene, for instance).

Crafting Tension

Even combat exchanges can get boring if overused. You can keep exchanges interesting by varying the stakes of fights, the environments of fights, and the tactics of fights.

Make sure that not every fight is about who is left standing; few combats should ever be "to the death." Think about what the combatants want and how fighting helps them get it.

Also think about fun scenery for action, and make sure you don't repeat the same kind of scenery too often. A crowded bazaar, a rickety bridge, a series of stepping stones in a rushing river, and the treetops of a forest all offer different environmental obstacles and opportunities for a fight. Make your NPCs make use of the environment, employ what's found in it, attack it, and change it.

To vary the tactics of fights, don't have NPCs make the same choice over and over. A clever opponent doesn't strike over and over. Retreating, advancing, taking hostages, putting things and people in danger—a fighter might do all these things to gain an edge.

Extended Combat Example

This is an extended example of a fight scene with combat exchanges. It focuses almost exclusively on the combat moves—if you want to see an example that focuses on non-combat moves, check out page 158. This example is about the flow of combat exchanges, assigning statuses, and the way the GM manages the overall fight scene.

The PCs in this example include:

- **Kirilaq (she/her), the Rogue**, a Waterbender from the Southern Water Tribe who fights by making weapons out of ice. Played by Kayla.
- **Beryl (she/her), the Icon**, a Weapons-user from the Earth Kingdom who fights alongside her giant stag beetle, Ochin, and wields a chitin sword. Played by Bei.
- **Quartz (he/him), the Guardian**, an Earthbender who uses rock armor and defends his sister Beryl. Played by Quinn.
- **Haki (he/him), the Successor**, a firebending Weapons-user and chi-blocker, scion of a family of honored Fire Nation ministers known throughout the Fire Nation and beyond. Played by Hector.
- **Lukta (they/them), the Idealist**, a Technologist from the Northern Water Tribe, wielder of one-shot deployable traps. Played by Lex.

The companions have been caught in the middle of a daring prison break, where they tried to rescue Lukta's imprisoned friend, Kiwaku. They had a plan, but they were caught at exactly the wrong moment when Haki's older sister, Kyoko, recognized him! She had been visiting the prison to fulfill her role as a junior minister of the Fire Nation, and out of a sense of duty to her country, she revealed her own brother. Now, the group is surrounded by Fire Nation prison guards, the dangerous warden Jiawei, and Kyoko herself!

The GM starts by establishing who engages with whom. "Okay, so what do you all do? You're facing several opponents, but I think you have a chance to split up and engage them on your terms."

There are functionally three opponents facing the PCs, including the guards (currently a small group of minor NPCs, but they might grow in number as more arrive), Warden Jiawei (a major NPC), and Kyoko (a master NPC).

Haki's player, Hector, is quick to answer—"I'm definitely engaged with my sister. She's my problem."

Kayla is concerned with how much water her Waterbender, Kirilaq, actually has to work with—this whole place is designed to deprive Waterbenders of water, after all, so Kirilaq probably only has what she brought in her hidden water satchels. Kayla says Kirilaq will try to handle the regular guards, then.

Beryl and Quartz have been arguing lately, so Bei says that Beryl will join Kirilaq against the guards, and Quartz should go fight the warden. Quinn, voicing a bit of Quartz's frustration, agrees. Lex, as Lukta, asks Haki if he needs backup against Kyoko—Hector, as Haki, shakes his head. "I need to do this myself," he says. Lex agrees to have Lukta join Quartz against the warden, then.

The GM decides to turn attention to the fight between Kirilaq, Beryl, and the guards. This fight is happening simultaneously with the other fights, and in the same general space, but it's more manageable to break the large conflict into individual exchanges.

The GM first decides what the guards do, writing it down on a piece of scrap paper. The guards' drive is "to fulfill their duty," so the GM decides to **advance and attack**. Then, Kayla and Bei both decide what they want to do. The two of them go back and forth a bit:

"Maybe we should just both **advance and attack**, try to hit them very hard up front," says Bei.

"I'd usually prefer to **evade and observe**, but I don't have any fatigue to clear yet. So yeah, let's do that," says Kayla. They both choose to **advance and attack**.

The GM reveals the guards' approach—everyone chose **advance and attack**! The two players roll the **stance move**, each one rolling with **PASSION**. Kayla gets an 8, but Bei gets a 4! Bei decides to shift Beryl's balance away from center, toward Role in her case, to be able to pick a single basic technique to use. Kayla similarly can use one technique (although it can be advanced). The guards currently have a balance of 0, so they get to use one technique as well.

Kayla decides that Kirilaq will use Strike against the guards. "Excellent!" says the GM. "What does that look like?"

"I think I pull water out of my bag, stretch it out in my hand into a big ice javelin, and vault into the crowd of guards, spinning the spear around me the whole time!" says Kayla.

"That's awesome! And it kind of sounds like you're really exerting yourself, are you marking the fatigue for your Strike?" asks the GM.

"Definitely," Kayla responds. "I want to hammer them, inflict 2-fatigue on them as I scatter them."

"Great!" says the GM. "And Beryl?"

"Hm. I want to use my Cross Slash technique," says Bei.

"Ah, unfortunately, on a miss, you can only use a basic technique, even when you shift your balance," says the GM.

"Oh yeah, I forgot. Alright, then I use Pressure against them. As Kirilaq throws them everywhere, I'm running around the edges of the scrum, knocking them back in. I want to make sure they can't **evade and observe** next exchange; they have to fight us or defend against our attacks."

"Perfect, yeah," says the GM. "So the guards are just going to use Strike, as they swing their big spears around, trying to stab and jab at Kirilaq. They aren't going to mark fatigue, though, so Kirilaq, how do you want to take the hit?"

Kayla thinks for a second, and then says, "I think I can shift my balance. I'll go toward Friendship—me and Beryl, we're a heck of a team!"

"Wait," asks Hector. "I thought the guards were swinging spears at Kayla. Why does shifting her balance toward Friendship mean suddenly she doesn't get hit?"

"Great question," says the GM. "They're pressing Kirilaq, stabbing and attacking, pushing her—and Beryl—pretty hard. Kirilaq manages not to get hit, but barely, and it changes how Kirilaq sees herself and her relationship with her friends. If the guards had marked fatigue, they'd get to say how Kirilaq absorbed the hit and it might be more direct…but as it stands, Kirilaq is still one step closer to losing her balance!"

"Gotcha," says Hector.

"Great. So it's this awesome scene where Kirilaq leaps into the air, vaulting into the midst of the guards and then moving like the wind. The guards respond as best they can, getting in a few hits here and there, but thanks to Beryl running around the edge of the fray, they are sort of off-balance and unable to get away," says the GM.

"Yeah, and we get this moment as I duck under one of their blows where my eyes meet Beryl's, and I'm grinning madly. This is awesome, and here and now I love working with this team," says Kayla.

"Excellent! Okay, next exchange!" The GM turns attention to Quartz and Lukta against the warden. "The warden is squared off against the two of you. He puts his hands out to either side, and you realize they're covered in special gloves…which promptly ignite, turning his fists into fireballs. Okay, time to pick stances!"

The GM records the approach for the warden secretly. The warden's drive is "to squash trouble with excessive force." The GM thinks about that for a moment—the Warden could just **advance and attack**, but the longer the Warden delays, the more guards will show up. The warden probably prefers to wait until there's way too much force for the PCs to stand a chance, so the GM chooses **defend and maneuver**. The GM lets the players know they've made a choice, and then Quinn and Lex start to chat.

"I think we just want this guy out of our way, so I can get to Kiwaku. I'm thinking I might try to escape by Seize a Position with **defend and maneuver**," says Lex.

"No, we should definitely take him out! Take him captive! Use him as leverage to get what we want!" says Quinn. "We should both **advance and attack**!"

"I'm nervous about that, we don't really know for sure how tough this guy actually is," says Lex.

"He's a major NPC, for sure," says the GM—no reason to hide what kind of NPC the warden is, the players will figure it out the instant they learn how many conditions he has, or how long his balance track is. "He also seems like a pretty competent fighter—that hand-fireball technique is distinctive."

"Yeah, okay, I'm going to **defend and maneuver**," says Lex. "I really just want to get to Kiwaku and get out."

"Aw, no fun. I **advance and attack**!" says Quinn.

The GM reveals that the warden is going to **defend and maneuver**. First, Lex rolls for Lukta's **stance move** and gets a whopping 12, while Quinn roles for Quartz and gets a 10!

Lex starts thinking out loud about what to do. "Oh, hmm. I could use Ready and Seize a Position, but I have this one technique, Smoke Bomb, I'm trying to advance. I have it at learned, so I could use that and get it to practiced, right?" Lex asks.

"Yeah, definitely! Keep in mind, though, that it'll cost a fatigue because it's only learned," replies the GM.

"Wait, won't Smoke Bomb affect me, too?" asks Quinn.

"Yep. Smoke Bomb says it impairs everyone in the area, and you're definitely in the area, Quartz."

"Sorry, Quartz!" says Lex. "That's what I'm doing, I throw a smoke bomb to try to clear a way past the warden to get to Kiwaku!"

"Awesome. Well, the warden gets two techniques because his Balance is at +1."

"Wait, hold on, I just *Impaired* him! Doesn't he get one fewer technique?" asks Lex.

"New statuses only take effect next exchange, because everything is happening simultaneously. For now, he's going to use Retaliate for sure, standing ready to be attacked, but he's also going to slap his two flaming hands together and pour just a torrent of fire out—and I think he aims at Lukta. He does not like the Water Tribes. He uses the technique Fire Stream; he'll mark 3-fatigue, but he inflicts *Impaired* and *Doomed* on you, Lukta. You're on fire!" the GM says. Lex lets out a displeased noise, and the GM turns to Quinn to find out what Quartz does.

"I want to use Strike and my mastered technique, Rock Column! He's already *Impaired*, right? So that means now he's *Trapped*!"

Strictly speaking, the warden is not yet *Impaired* because the status takes effect next exchange. But the GM thinks the move makes sense.

"Technically he's *Impaired* in the next exchange, but yeah, I like it—the smoke bomb throws him off so the rock column can pin him. Yeah, that works. What do you actually do, Quartz?" asks the GM.

"Oh, I absorb a ton of dirt and stone around my arms, and then I throw it at the warden in a giant burst, slamming him against the wall! It's both the Strike and the Column! And I'll mark the 1-fatigue to hit him where he's weak, inflicting a condition!" Quinn says.

"Great! Yeah, so Lukta throws the smoke bomb but not before the warden sends that torrent of flame at them. And then just as Lukta catches fire, Quartz throws that pillar of rock into the warden, smashing against the wall, trapping him, and inflicting a condition!" says the GM.

"Alright, now it's down to Haki! You and Kyoko are circling each other, it's super intense, your martial forms kind of mirror each other, right?" Hector nods. "Awesome. Okay, let me pick an approach." The GM secretly picks an approach for Kyoko, and even though Kyoko doesn't have any fatigue to clear yet, the GM thinks she would try to appeal to her brother's Tradition principle, first and foremost, so the GM wants to make sure Kyoko can use Test Balance. They pick **evade and observe**.

Hector then picks Haki's approach: "I don't really want to fight my sister! I'd rather get her to leave me alone. Maybe I can shift her balance, get her out of here. I want to **evade and observe**!"

The GM reveals that Kyoko chose the same approach! "It's perfect, this is both of you barely engaging each other, just circling and talking, maybe throwing out a token blow or two, but never expecting them to hit. Okay, Haki, make the **stance move**!" Hector rolls and gets an 11!

"I want to use Test Balance on Kyoko, for sure—I'm pretty sure her principle is something like Patriotism," Hector says. The GM checks their notes and sees that Kyoko's principle is actually Duty, but the GM sees if Haki hits that principle anyway.

"What do you actually say to Kyoko, Haki?" asks the GM.

"Uh…'So, this is what you are now. You pick your country over your own family? You pick your country over right and wrong?' I think I'm trying to push her balance higher, I want her to go overboard," says Hector.

"Perfect," says the GM. Even though Hector didn't *exactly* say the right principle, he's close enough, especially with the actual things Haki said to Kyoko. "Her principle is Duty, but I think you nailed it; she seems troubled by your words. Mark fatigue, and I'll shift her balance. What other technique do you want to use?"

"I think…I think I'm gonna use Commit. I bet she's going to shift my balance toward Tradition, so I'm going to shift my balance toward Progress. I'm steeling myself to find a new way forward…without my sister," says Hector.

"Amazing! Yeah, and that was a good call. She's definitely going to use Test Your Balance in return. I think it's fair to say your sister is well aware that Tradition is one of your balance principles, right?" asks the GM.

"Oh, definitely," agrees Hector.

"Perfect. So she'll mark fatigue and shift you back toward Tradition. 'This isn't what I am now, this is what I've always been, and what you're supposed to be. We are a *part* of this nation. That's who our family has always been. Stop fighting it!', she says." Even though Kyoko now has a balance of +1, she only gets to use one technique this exchange because her balance was only a +0 at the start of the **evade and observe** approach.

"Okay! So that ends the exchange!" says the GM. "We've got Kirilaq mired in the middle of a bunch of guards while Beryl—riding Ochin—keeps herding them back to the fight; Quartz is pinning the warden against the wall with a rock column, shrouded in smoke; Lukta can run past to look for Kiwaku, since the warden is *Trapped*, but they're on fire; and Haki and Kyoko are trading barbs and circling each other, looking for an opportunity to strike! Awesome! Instead of going right into the next exchange, let's focus on Lukta, their clothes aflame, running past, into the prison proper. Lukta, as you get past the smoke, you can hear the alarm bells being rung all throughout the prison, and the flames on your clothes are definitely burning you—mark 1-fatigue. What do you do?"





CHAPTER 9

SEASONS & CAMPAIGNS

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CHAPTER 9

Chapter 8: Running the Game focuses on using your agendas, guidelines, and moves; this chapter expands on that information to help you manage your story across multiple sessions. While players focus on their characters' goals within the story, your job is to think broadly about how the multiple sessions of the game come together into one cohesive story, both in how you start your campaign and how to bring together an entire season of episodes.

The next chapter, **Chapter 10: Running Adventures**, contains information on creating individual **adventures**—self-contained sets of conflicts that amount to an episode of your campaign—and a sample adventure set in the Aang Era. If an adventure is like a single episode of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* or *The Legend of Korra*, a **campaign** is more like an ongoing series of episodes, a set of adventures that individually resolve while leaving room for a larger story to emerge over time. In one adventure, the companions might defeat a minor villain and save a village…but over the larger campaign the companions have to reckon with the forces that put that village in danger in the first place.

Starting Campaigns

Preparing an adventure usually involves sitting down before each session and thinking through the key elements; starting a campaign, on the other hand, means thinking about how you want to focus your story, present the game to your players, and portray antagonists across many sessions! Running a campaign is more involved than running a single, isolated adventure—often called a one-shot (page 249)—but it can be a deeply rewarding experience. Subtle shifts in the PCs' balance tracks build up over time into shifting centers and dramatic decisions; ongoing adventures give players opportunities to use their Moments of Balance and advance their characters; and recurring antagonists may even allow the companions to convince a long-time foe to switch sides!

Some campaigns only last a few short sessions—perhaps two to four episodes—and center primarily on the group focus the players chose at the start of play (page 110). However, some campaigns last longer, the episodes coming together into a **season** that has its own finale and resolution. Running any length of campaign requires you to think carefully about how you set up and start your story, but longer campaigns also require you to structure and manage the fiction between sessions, hoping to emerge over time with a cohesive whole.

This chapter covers these challenges, both giving you practical tips on what you need to start a successful campaign and helping you understand how to create characters, conflicts, and exciting conclusions that make longer seasons feel worthy of the Avatarverse.

Your First Session

The players have a fairly clear, focused job for the first session: they choose their playbooks and fill them out, selecting their moves and techniques and filling out their features. As the GM, you have a tougher job—to create a believable slice of the Avatarverse that **ensures the world feels real**, while filling that slice of the world with conflicts that **make the PCs' stories meaningful and important**, and also **playing to find out what happens**. It might feel like more work than tracking down an otter-penguin in the snowiest tundra!

But have no fear—while the players set up their characters, you're setting up everything you need to start playing without planning anything. In fact, setting up the game gives you everything you need for a single session of play or even a whole campaign!

You do most of your work setting up the game together with your group, but you need to take care of a few things before you sit down (or get on an online call) with your players.

Materials and Prep

If you're playing in person, print out all the playbooks you want to offer to the players, and make sure you have a broad idea of their balance tracks, moves, and features. You don't have to offer every playbook—maybe you don't want to deal with the Successor's family or the Pillar's squad in your story—but take the time to understand the ones you make available. Also print out enough basic moves sheets for yourself and every other player. You might want to provide everyone at the table a copy of the *Campaign Creation Worksheet*, but at minimum you should have one, and you should print yourself a copy of the *GM Sheet*. Gather up some index cards or other scrap paper, and provide enough pencils and dice for everyone to have their own set while you play.

If you're playing online, make sure all of your players have access to all the materials and let them know which playbooks they should consider. You also want to make sure you've got everyone on the same page with whatever video or audio call system you're using and however you plan on rolling dice!

You also want to take the time to read most of this book! You can probably skim **Chapter 6: Playbooks** and **Chapter 7: Advancement**. You definitely need to read **Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Play** and **Chapter 8: Running the Game** carefully; both sections contain what you need to know to run the game well.

Selecting an Era and Setting Tone

It's usually a good idea to select an era (page 108) and scope with your players before you start playing. You can decide to choose an era when you get together, but everyone benefits from having some background for the choices you make when you start.

You might even suggest an era to your group that you feel comfortable with as a GM. **Chapter 2: The World of Avatar** provides everything you need to know about each era—including significant themes for each—but it's totally okay to say you want to focus on an era or two that you're most familiar with, or that you think best fits the kind of game you want to run. For example, you may prefer the Hundred Year War Era because it feels most like the original run of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* and that's the show you know the best.

Whatever era your group picks, review the era section in **Chapter 2: The World of Avatar** and note the significant themes and adventure hooks—that's why it's useful to choose in advance of the first session, so you have time to look over the setting. When you review your chosen era in this book, take some notes on what you think is most interesting so you can talk about it during your first session! Discuss with your group the major themes you want to feature, and collectively agree about what kind of tone you want the game to have. Is it a light-hearted romp in the Kyoshi Era, filled with lawless adventure? Or is it a serious exploration of the challenges of governance set after *The Legend of Korra*? Any era can hit multiple tones, so make sure everyone is on the same page about what your campaign will feel like!

Changing History

Depending on which era you chose for your game, it's possible that the PCs' actions might alter the history of the setting. For example, a group of heroes in Roku's Era might stop Fire Lord Sozin from building up his military to attack the Air Nomads by alerting Avatar Roku to Sozin's true motives. How could he wipe out the Air Nomads without sufficient forces?

It's best to decide before you start playing how your group wants to handle events that disrupt the canonical history of the Avatarverse. For some, the official history might be a mere guide, an idea of what might happen, easily disrupted by brave adventurers. Others might view the events featured in **Chapter 2: The World of Avatar** as unalterable; either changes *cannot* happen if they alter history or some other event must change the setting back off-screen.

There's no right answer to how to play the game! Just make sure that everyone at your table knows how your group is dealing with the established history before you start play!

Starting the First Session

Once everyone is ready to play—but before anyone makes a character—start by completing the *Campaign Creation Worksheet*: select the scope and a group focus and detail the inciting incident. You can read more about choosing the group's scope and focus on page 109, but your primary job as GM is to facilitate the group's discussion.

You can still participate in the discussion, and in some cases, you might even come to the table with a pre-selected scope and focus—this is your game, too, and you should be excited to play in that world. But most importantly, the players must be invested and interested in the answers they give, so they can make exciting characters and portray them to the hilt!

Making Characters

Once the group has decided on the focus and inciting incident, it's time to make characters. Introduce each playbook and give a brief overview of each, focusing on the main issues and tensions that type of character brings to the game. Answer any questions that come up, and make suggestions to players struggling to pick a playbook. Make it clear that choosing a playbook is much more about the character's arc in the story than any particular ability, training, or technique!

Remind your players to pay close attention to each feature and their balance track; both playbook elements are a huge part of the experience of playing **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. Generally, each playbook is keyed to one or two stats, starting with higher values in those stats than any others, so also point those out when applicable—"The Successor is a high **Creativity** and **Focus** playbook, so they spend a lot of time looking for advantages (or even **tricking** people) and are pretty competent when they **rely on their skills and training**. Does that sound fun?"

Once everyone has had time to make their characters, go ahead and have each player introduce their PC. Some folks might need a bit more time, but they can catch up as everyone else introduces their characters!

Asking Probing Questions

When the players are introducing their characters, ask them probing questions to expand on what they say. Try to alternate between asking questions about the information they've already given you—"Why did your mother give you her most cherished sword?"—and asking new questions that ties them to the scope and focus of the story. Everyone should already have an answer to "Why do you care about this group or purpose?" but dig deeper, asking questions like "How did you meet the other PCs?" or "When did you first learn that [foe] was a threat?"

The goal of these questions is to both help players think about their characters and to give you lots of material to use in future conflicts. If the Prodigy's mother gave him a cherished sword because she was so proud of her son's skills, you can bring that character into play—either directly when she appears in the story or through NPCs who reflect her view of the Prodigy. Probing questions give you tools for invoking the emotions and conflicts the players want to see their characters engage, and all you have to do to figure out what they want to see in the story is ask them!

First Adventures

You don't have to prepare an entire adventure before you start playing, but you want to have a good conflict in mind as well as a few NPCs. You can read more about preparing adventures in **Chapter 10: Running Adventures**, but remember that you're *playing to find out what happens*! It's okay to discover some of the adventure, including the major antagonists and details of the conflict, alongside the PCs.

During the First Session

Character creation usually eats up a fair amount of time in the first session—sometimes even as much as two hours—but even when it takes a while to get through introductions (and all your questions!), you usually have time to start the companions off with a new episode.

Your goals for the first session are simple:

- Set up a conflict that draws in the companions
- Show off the Avatarverse and these new heroes
- Go through the mechanics of the game
- Create an awesome episode of your campaign

Once everyone has finished creating their characters, take a break and prepare an opening conflict to draw the PCs into the story. You might use an existing adventure that fits your group, but for a campaign, it's often a better idea for your first episode to draw upon whatever conflict the players decided on as their group focus. For example, if they've chosen to "defeat a dangerous foe," then you may start them off with a conflict and story that gives them a chance to advance that goal.

If possible, you also want your first session to hit the following mechanics:

- Every basic move, including **help a companion**
- Balance shifts, **living up to a principle**, and **resisting shifting your balance**
- Conditions, taking them and removing them
- Combat, including the **stance move** and statuses

In addition to showcasing the mechanics, you might want to try the following during that first session as well:

- Ask questions constantly
- Bring the action
- Build on character creation
- Call out moves as they happen
- Invoke the era
- Offer moves when players flinch
- Shift their balance
- Test their training

Ask questions constantly

Never stop asking for more details throughout the whole first session. Any time a question occurs to you about the fiction, ask it. "What happens to the bandits when you bring them back to the city?" "Why did you decide this outpost was the right one to attack?" "Who trained you to use your swords to scale stone walls?" Every answer gives you something new to build upon, a new idea you can bring into play right away…or something you can save for later, as you think about the rest of your campaign.

Bring the action

Rather than spend a lot of time setting up and hoping the players get to the conflict, throw the companions into the middle of an interesting situation. Perhaps they are sneaking into the villain's headquarters or attacking a particular holding the villain uses often; start off in the middle of the action and figure out the plan as you go! **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is about cool heroes taking action to make the world a better place *right now*, not after they've held an hour-long planning session about how they are undertaking some action and adventure.

Build on character creation

The more you reincorporate elements the players introduced during character creation, the better. Try to include several NPCs or factions the players mentioned when introducing their characters, and take every opportunity—even when the companions are on the run or in strange situations—to tie the first session to everything the players have told you about their characters. After all, it's far better for the companions to face an NPC antagonist they established in their introduction than for you to invent a brand-new character to whom they have no attachment.

Call out moves as they happen

Look for opportunities to show off the basic moves; any time a player triggers one, call it out to them, asking, "It sounds like you're trying to _____, right?" At the start of play, players need a bit of help recognizing when they've triggered a move or which move they've triggered. Don't force them into a particular action—they can always say "No, that's not quite what I want to do…"—but model for them what it looks like to move from actions in the fiction to the mechanics of the game and then back to the fiction. If players try to trigger moves without fiction, help them out there too: "I'd love to see you **intimidate** this guard! What does that look like?"

Invoke the era

No matter how you set up the initial situation, make sure that you get to the heart of the conflicts you and your players have decided to focus on. Every era has many conflicts it can represent, but you discussed with your group the tone and emphasis for your game—so bring that out during play! For example, the GM for a group that decides to emphasize political intrigue in the Roku Era might reveal that someone close to the companions has betrayed them to advance a political goal; a group that decides to focus on post-war recovery in the Aang Era might encounter tensions boiling to the surface that threaten a fragile peace. Nothing is simple in the Avatarverse; complicate the situation in a way that makes the PCs think hard about their values!

Offer moves when players flinch

In general, don't tell players what to do—leave their actions up to them. But in this first session, offer suggestions about moves they might make, especially when they seem hesitant. Always phrase it as a question rooted in the fiction—"You're a Waterbender, right? Do you want to **rely on your skills and training** to slide down from the top of the building on a stream of ice? Or maybe you want to **intimidate** these thugs with a show of force?" Often players go for a third option of their own creation, but your little push can get them thinking about what they really want to do.

Shift their balance

From the very start of play, have NPCs try to shift the balance of the companions. Have the villains tell them who they are—"You're just a weapon, aren't you? Trained to hurt those who disagree with you…"—and have their allies remind them of the consequences of their actions—"I can't believe you stood up for me. I've never seen such loyalty." **Call them out** as well, less frequently than mere shifts in their balance, but regularly enough to remind them that they can **call an NPC out** as well.

Test their training

Finally, always give the PCs a chance to show off their awesome abilities, both by presenting challenges that their trainings can solve—"The bridge is out! How do you get across?"—and by confronting them with antagonists itching for a fight. The **stance move** and statuses do most of the work of managing the fight for you, but take some time to push the players to explain how their fighting style shows up every time they fight. An Earthbender who creates rock walls and large obstacles creates different statuses, different effects in the fiction, and inflicts different conditions than a combatant who armors themselves in stone and charges into the fight!

After the First Session

Once you've finished the first session, start to think about where things might go from here. You've probably got a good idea of who the PCs are and what they care about, and you've already started to develop a roster of NPCs to bring into the story to keep it moving. And don't forget the consequences of whatever the players did in the first session! Often, whatever happens in the first session becomes a critical part of the narrative moving forward.

Let all these elements percolate; you can use them to build out a whole season of stories for your group—not by planning the full plot of each story, but by using everything your group built in the first session as hooks for the adventures and episodes that happen next!

ONE-SHOTS

Maybe your group is just trying out the system or you're running a special session of the game at a convention for people who can't get together a second time. In those and similar cases, rather than create a whole campaign, you might decide to only run a single session of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. In addition to preparing an adventure, here are a few tips for making a one-shot of the game awesome:

TIE EVERYTHING TOGETHER

Look for every opportunity to tie things together, both during the game and in character creation. Is the Hammer's adversary the same character who caused the Idealist's tragedy? Is the Successor's family the reason the Pillar's squad temporarily disbanded? You've only one chance to make the players care about the fictional world you're creating together, so do everything you can to link up their stories—and the consequences of their actions—into one cohesive whole. It's a lot more satisfying for two characters to address their stories together than for one of them to have all the spotlight.

MAKE THE STORY CINEMATIC

Think of your session less like the pilot episode of a new show and more like an Avatarverse feature film. Make harder moves (page 229) and bring the consequences to a head early and often. You don't have time to wait for a plot to develop or for a relationship to blossom; bring the heat right away so the PCs can actually resolve the big issues at play! Shoot for resolving the group's focus—escorting an NPC, defeating a villain, etc.—by the end of the session!

START WITH THE ACTION

Above all else, start your players in the middle of the action, narratively and mechanically. Frame scenes in which the companions are already in a heap of trouble—in which their plans have gone awry but there's still a chance they can save the day—or put NPCs they care about in harm's way. Don't be subtle with your moves or your NPC's plots! Think like Varrick—his movers always open with action so exciting the public can't help but watch!

Crafting a Season

Some campaigns last more than just a few sessions, long enough for the group's adventures to become a story unto themselves. Most of the existing stories in the Avatarverse are this long-form storytelling, consecutive adventures that feature recurring antagonists and allies that follow a larger structure for the whole story.

These longer campaigns can be broken down into **seasons**, longer arcs that cross sessions to bring multiple adventures into the same structure. A season might be explicitly centered on completely resolving the group's focus—defeating a villain once and for all!—but you may discover that the real aim of the season is a bit different than what it appeared on the surface, which allows multiple seasons to add up to a larger story. In *The Legend of Korra*, for example, each season has a focus on a new, unique antagonist who poses some dire threat. But in *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, even though it might appear that Aang's sole focus for the entire series is defeating Fire Lord Ozai, the real focus of each season is revealed to be something different—*"Book One: Water"* is about Aang finding a waterbending teacher, for example—until the finale of *"Book Three: Fire,"* when he confronts Ozai.

In many ways, seasons are a natural outcome of playing multiple sessions with the same group across many adventures: your PCs will grow and change, the world will respond with new threats and challenges, and eventually you'll want to wrap it up with a big, heroic ending. But crafting an awesome tale across many connected stories is challenging! Here are some of the elements you should consider as you undertake a longer campaign.

Reinforcing the Focus & Scope

One of the greatest challenges of long-form roleplaying is ensuring that the tales you tell feel like an ongoing story each time you play. In **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**, the group focus and scope are your primary tools for building something that feels more like a season than a random collection of episodes set in the Avatarverse!

The group focus is a key tool because it's an agreed-upon motivation for the story you're telling together. If your group has decided they want to protect a place from harm, then a good number of your episodes should allow them to bring that focus to bear, identifying threats to the place and figuring out the best way to address those threats while exploring their own role as heroes. If you ever feel like you're not sure where the story is going, return to that group focus and ask if you've given the PCs enough time to engage the issues they said they wanted to focus on at the start!

The scope of your story is thus equally important; the group focus might motivate action, but the scope tells you what larger frame keeps the story grounded. If your group wants the scope to focus around a Fire Sage temple, then the politics and drama of that temple are a great source of drama, week after week after week; if they've decided they want to see the whole world, then you've got a clear picture of how varied things should be each time you play.

Obviously, both the focus and the scope of your story can change—often in a season finale (page 254)—but you can always return to them as anchors that ground your narrative over time.

Episodic Structures

As your season develops, one of your biggest responsibilities is structuring the episodes over many sessions. The group's scope and focus help you to figure out what to do session to session, but you also need to think about how the whole story feels adventure to adventure.

Itinerant vs. Stable Adventures

Campaigns of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** can vary between **itinerant adventures**, in which the PCs roam from place to place, exploring a larger area, and **stable adventures**, in which the PCs stay largely based in a particular place and don't roam at large. Both are wonderful frames for adventures across the Four Nations, but they require different preparation from you as the GM.

Stories that default to itinerant adventure, like moving from town to town across the Fire Nation or joining the new Air Nation in dealing with whatever new problem arises, require the most preparation. Generally speaking, you need to prepare a full adventure for itinerant companions to ensure that you're ready to keep things interesting for your players. It's usually the case that the end of an adventure leads the PCs to leave this place and journey to the next one…which means you need to have a new set of conflicts ready to go. You can't be confident that the next session simply picks up with the consequences of the last—as the PCs move on, so too does the story.

If you've chosen a very narrow scope that keeps your PCs in one defined location, on the other hand, you may find prepared adventures much less useful; there's no point in adding on a whole new set of characters and conflicts if the events of the last episode have created a whole new series of issues for the companions to address. In fact, the best way to prepare for each session might instead be to review everything that happened in the last session and build on whatever consequences naturally arise. If the companions are based in Ba Sing Se, and last session they made a mess fighting off a group of armed thugs, then it's natural the Dai Li comes calling…

Primary vs. Secondary Adventures

Regardless of what kind of overall structure you choose for your campaign, think also about **primary adventures**—those dealing with the group focus and the major plot threads of your story—and **secondary adventures** that give everyone a break from the main conflict to investigate a crime, find a new mentor, or go to the beach! These secondary adventures can be a great way to spread around the spotlight as well; if you find that one or two PCs seem to be the main focus of the primary adventures, focus a secondary adventure on one of the others!

You can also offer multiple levels of action within an adventure as well; the companions don't have to stick together at all times! If two of the politically-focused characters decide to take their case directly to the United Republic Council, the rest of the companions might have enough time on their hands to track down that swordsmaster they heard about a few sessions ago. Spread the spotlight around as often as you can, making sure that your season features the whole ensemble cast.



Character Arcs

Player characters in **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** are always growing and changing, looking at problems differently and trying on new ways of thinking as they struggle to find balance. Over the course of a season, however, you can see that struggle resolve, each player answering the important questions their playbook asks about their character's identity.

Balance Shifts

Each PC's balance is the core of their story, the primary issue that the character has to confront along their adventures; all the action and challenges they find in the Four Nations only matters insofar as those adventures help them decide what kind of person they truly are. Their balance thus reflects their current progress on their journey, shifting back and forth until they are so committed to one part of themselves that their center shifts and they must find a new equilibrium.

In this way, you can start to see a PC **losing their balance** as fulfilling the peak of their arc, a moment in which their commitment to one part of their identity begins to eclipse other parts. Sometimes characters **lose their balance** toward alternating principles, keeping their center near the middle of their balance track as they move back and forth, but they are more likely to **lose their balance** in the same direction, emphasizing one side of their balance track as they answer the core question each playbook poses.

Lean into that tension! If the Guardian repeatedly intervenes when she thinks no one else can help, she's choosing Self-Reliance and her center will shift toward that principle. Give her allied NPCs who affirm that side of herself, and antagonists who push against that momentum and cause her to question her path. Make the question of her Self-Reliance an important question of the campaign so that her choices are reflected both in how her center shifts and how the season plays out.

Growth and New Techniques

Balance is only one dimension of character growth throughout a season; pay close attention to how often the companions hit their growth questions at the end of a session too. In general, the companions should almost always learn something challenging, exciting, or complicated about the world—that's why you're playing the game—and they should regularly have opportunities to stop dangerous threats, solve problems, and guide other characters toward balance.

Their personal growth questions, however, sometimes involve challenging behaviors—like the Prodigy genuinely expressing gratitude to another PC—or activities that require effort and investment, such as the Hammer making progress against their adversary. In these cases, look for opportunities to offer that PC chances for them to pursue that arc and earn that growth. After all, if the adversary is neglected by the Hammer, they will surely take actions on their own that remind the Hammer why they are their adversary in the first place!

At the same time, don't neglect to put opportunities for training in front of the companions as well. The PCs have to wrestle internally with their balance, but they also need to have a regular stream of mastery conditions (page 215) to contend with as well. Make sure that your NPCs—even enemies!—express an open willingness to train the PCs…and that their mastery conditions touch on the same issues of balance and growth. For example, a Bold that absolutely refuses to apologize for anything—skipping the growth they would otherwise earn each session—might be given a mastery condition that reminds them of the value of apologies; a Rogue who finds themselves on the wrong side of the law pretty much every episode might be given a mastery condition that asks them to assist the authorities in solving an actual crime.



THREATS WITH UNIQUE ABILITIES

Many of the most famous antagonists in *Avatar Legends* are threats with special abilities—everything ranging from Azula's lightningbending to Amon's psychic bloodbending to Varrick's technological marvels. Some of these are specialized forms of bending (page 216), but you don't need to limit yourself to established powers for your antagonists.

In order to create a unique ability, decide how that ability works in the fiction first. Does the antagonist bend a special material or affect the world in a strange way? Are their powers obvious or subtle? How might they affect the PCs?

Once you know what the power does, give them advanced techniques for combat exchanges as needed—like Azula's lightningbending—or express their powers through other mechanics like status effects—Amon is a bloodbender who is effectively always *Empowered*. In many cases, you won't need any sort of special mechanics; Varrick's amazing abilities are already covered by the existing mechanics of the game, including the fictional positioning inherent in his amazing (and conveniently available) devices and machines.

CREATING THREATS

Of course, characters won't grow and change without some serious opposition. The rules for creating NPCs (page 234) and statting up characters when you prep an adventure are great for giving you the tools you need to make NPCs feel real within your game, but when pondering about the broader campaign, it's useful to think about the two types of antagonists that show up across a season: episode threats and season threats.

Episode Threats

The most common threats you create as a GM are designed to last for a single adventure, like a Fire Nation general laying siege to the same town the PCs need to enter to deliver an important message. These **episode threats** are important characters in a given session—stat them up with everything they need to be meaningful opposition—but they don't need to be more complex than they appear on the surface.

For each episode threat, make sure you have a clear sense of their immediate goals. They may show up in more than one adventure, but their sights are always set on what's right in front of them. As an episode threat, the Fire Nation general is primarily focused on the immediate siege; at some point she can become a season threat (see below), making a play to conquer the entire Southern Water Tribe, but that can come later, when you're sure the PCs are interested and invested in her as an antagonist. Episode threats tend to be major NPCs, but they might also occasionally be master NPCs if it suits the fiction—for example, if they're an especially dangerous expert in their fighting style.

Resolving an episode threat usually means defeating them in a meaningful way within that adventure or session. If the Fire Nation general is beaten back and her ships destroyed, then that may very well be the end of her role as a threat. Even if you think it makes some sense she sticks around, she should only continue to be a part of the story if there is some strong, pressing reason for her to remain—a reason that goes beyond just what the character wants. If the PCs are very interested in her, or the players found her an awesome character, or she came to serve some vital role in the overall story, then it makes sense that she might return and become a season threat. Otherwise, when an episode threat is defeated, that ends their role in the story!

Season Threats

If a threat spans multiple episodes, doggedly pursuing or antagonizing the PCs even when defeated or thwarted in a single session, then it's likely a **season threat**. These NPCs are more capable and crafty (usually), but they also tend to be figureheads for larger organizations and movements who have the capacity to enact larger changes on the world. They have specific goals, but those goals focus on the bigger picture; if the Fire Nation general was a season threat, she would focus on a larger goal appropriate to your game's scope—so for your game set in and around the South Pole, she might be focused on conquering the whole continent.

Season threats are almost always master NPCs, capable of taking on a whole group of companions by themselves, but they rarely travel alone. They often have minions and soldiers (General Zhao) or equally capable close friends (Zaheer)…or both (Azula). Occasionally an episode threat might graduate to

a season threat, in the same way a minor NPC might become a major NPC, but these threats are rare and special; you usually only have one or two per season, only designing them when you need some true opposition for the PCs.

When you decide on a season threat, establish an **imbalance** fundamental to the character, a twisting of their principle that has pushed them into villainy. Zaheer's Freedom principle, for example, has been corrupted into Chaos—he believes that indiscriminately killing the world's leaders is the same thing as setting the world free—while Kuvira's Pride principle has grown into Hubris, a belief that she and she alone can rule the Earth Empire.

These imbalances don't replace the character's principle, but they offer you a sense of how the season threat acts in the absence of opportunities to achieve their immediate goals, and a way to predict how they act as their center shifts further and further to the end of their balance track. Unlike episode threats, season threats have the capacity to change tactics and seize opportunities. For example, Zaheer murdered the Earth Queen when it became apparent she couldn't deliver Korra, and Kuvira harnessed the destructive power of spirit vines when even Varrick decided they were too dangerous to use any further.

Resolving a season threat means addressing the character's fundamental imbalance in a meaningful way, either by forcing them to confront how their imbalance hurts everyone around them… or ensuring that they lack the power to ever accomplish their goals again. Most of the time, season threats can only be resolved through a season finale (page 254); any defeats such a threat suffers before the end of the season are mere setbacks in their pursuits.

How Resolved Are These Threats?

In both cases, resolving threats can sometimes lead players to be a bit confused about how "resolved" the threat really is by the end of the story. Wouldn't the Fire Nation just send another general out to lay siege to the town? The Avatarverse touches on some serious stuff; is it even possible to resolve a threat born from poverty or war?

In general, threats exist to give voice to a particular set of conflicts. Defeating them doesn't completely resolve the underlying issues—benders and non-benders still have to figure out how to share power in Republic City after Amon is defeated, for example—but the immediate crisis comes to a close in a way that resolves the issue at hand and allows everyone to move forward.

In other words, the companions may not be able to punch poverty in the face… but they can stop a bureaucratic foe from throwing people in prison for failing to pay their taxes. And if they find a way to expose that official's traitorous dealings with the local bandits, then they may give the whole town a chance to deal with the problem differently. It is unfair to the PCs to have the same issue show up again immediately—as if Zaheer escaped from prison at the start of *"Book 4: Balance,"* or Fire Lord Ozai suddenly got his powers back after Aang took them away—but the consequences of the companions' actions create space for new conflicts and threats that reflect a new set of issues!

It's useful to think of this resolution through a lens of hope. PCs who encounter the same problems over and over again will come to lose their belief that the world can get better. When a season threat is resolved, there should always be a real note of hope in their defeat—a real sense that this is a chance for things to actually improve.

Pacing Your Season

How you pace your episodes across a season depends on your group, the story, and how everyone feels on that particular day. Getting better at pacing the game is like practicing and strengthening a muscle, and it requires attention to your specific game, the players, and the situation. What works for you during your early sessions may change as you grow and develop as a group of players, learning the system and expecting more from each other. That said, here are a few general tips for pacing plays:

- **Don't worry about "filling up" four hours of game time.** Many game conventions treat this as the standard length for a roleplaying game session, but you absolutely do not have to stick to that. An action-packed or emotional two hours can be just as, or even more, satisfying than four long hours. Work with your group to find the right length for your sessions, and talk often with each other about how sessions feel when you finish one.

- **Feel free to skip time between episodes.** Time is malleable! Days, weeks, or perhaps even months could have passed since the last time we saw the companions on-screen. An episode can represent one night or one week. If nothing interesting will happen for a stretch of time, or if the companions take a little break, simply skip forward. Don't count every night of sleep and play out every single day unless it's interesting to everyone to do so.

- **Think about fatigue.** Be thoughtful about how the passage of time affects the companions' fatigue tracks. If you allow them to rest and recuperate often, they will have lots of fatigue to throw at problems. But if you push them to their limits with fast action—or no safe breaks—they will eventually have nothing left in the tank. Sometimes the former can be a lot of fun as the companions throw lots of resources at obstacles and challenges, but sometimes the tension of limited resources is more interesting!

- **Storytelling and roleplaying can be exhausting.** Take breaks! Apart from helping meet everyone's biological needs, breaks help your brain rest and come up with better, more awesome ideas. There's nothing wrong with pausing right before you make an important GM move—like a commercial break!—to take your time to think through the implications of what you're about to say. Remember that gaming online is especially tiring; many groups default to a break every hour when playing over video calls.

Above all else, remember that your story needs to move at a speed that fits your group and the story you've chosen to tell. Don't panic if a game set in Republic City amid a brewing Triad war has a different pace than a game focused on a pastoral journey across the Earth Kingdom. Each campaign and season has its own pace, and you don't need to rush!

Finales

After a number of adventures, you will get the sense that it's time for this chapter of your story to come to a close. Usually this happens around ten sessions, long enough for the conflicts you established in character creation and your first session to blossom and grow, but—hopefully!—long before everyone's gotten tired of the antagonists and issues that have taken center stage.

When you sense that your story is reaching an inflection point, take stock of the **core questions** that have been raised by the conflicts at hand. For example, you might ask "Will the villains of my story get their hands on the powerful artifact?" or "Will the PCs be able to convince the Fire Nation to arrest a dangerous political figure?" Since you're *playing to find out what happens*, these questions should abound! The core questions are those occupying the most time, the ones that you want resolved if you were watching your campaign like a show.

As your story progresses toward the end of a particular chapter, one or two core questions may come into sharper focus and demand more urgency; note which seem the most relevant for the current arc and use them to build a **finale**. The goal of a finale isn't to answer the question *for* the players, but to instead give them a chance to answer it once and for all by escalating the situation—to focus the story—and offering paths to resolution that make their decisions truly meaningful.

Escalate the Situation

In order to create a situation that truly answers the core questions you've selected, **escalate the situation** in a finale to bring the conflicts into sharper focus. You want the companions to be unable to ignore the question as they are forced to deal with threats that feel worthy of a finale—invading armies, terrifying plots, giant mechs! Your players should be keenly aware that this adventure is the end of the season, even if the "finale episode" spans two or three sessions of play.

Don't be shy when you escalate for a season finale; your players need to have the core questions thrown into sharp relief so they can rise to occasion. For example, in *"Book 1: Air"* of *The Legend of Korra*, Amon and the Equalists moved from a fringe, criminal group to an occupying force, revealing substantial military might and coordination as they began to purge bending from the city. The core question of "Will the Equalists seize power in Republic City?" escalated into a crisis that demanded that Team Korra confront Amon directly. Merely waiting for the police to handle the Equalists was no longer an option!

At the same time, remind your players that moves like **rely on your skills and training** or even **push your luck** depend on fictional positioning: it might not be possible for the companions to hold back a tsunami with their waterbending or stop an invading army from overtaking the city. Escalations create situations that demand new ways of approaching problems beyond individual moves; the companions can't just enter a combat exchange and make **stance moves** to fight off a platinum mech the size of a building! Instead they need to look at the problem with new eyes, marshaling allies, new abilities, and clever plans to address the question that the escalation poses for their team.



Offer Paths to Resolution

As your players confront the escalation of the finale, be thoughtful about providing enough fictional positioning to give them a way to confront the threats. If an invading army has arrived at Republic City, make it clear who leads the army, what they want, and what weaknesses they might have in their forces. Don't give the players a path they have to follow to find victory—they have to come up with their own plans—but make sure that everything happening is grounded in a shared understanding of the situation at hand.

For example, a villain who wants a powerful artifact might use an ancient ritual to summon titanic rock monsters to capture the PCs…no matter the cost to innocent bystanders. The companions probably can't fight the creatures directly, but running from the villain isn't answering the core question either. Make it clear what the stakes are by grounding the creatures in some limits and conditions. Perhaps the creatures only last until sundown or maybe they are bound directly to the villain such that defeating him destroys them; either way, you've grounded the story in such a way that the PCs can still make choices—and triumph—in the face of the escalation.

That said, heroes don't always win. It's possible that the end of your season might result in a tragic setback for the PCs. In *"Book 2: Earth"* of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, Azula emerged the victor—Ba Sing Se fell, Aang was nearly killed, and Team Avatar had to retreat in order to live to fight another day. You still *play to find out what happens*, and sometimes what happens is a loss that changes the world forever. Your group has to return for another season to find out how those changes—like the death of a powerful monarch—leads to new challenges in the future…

New Seasons

After a finale, your group needs to decide what happens next: is that the end of the companions' story or merely one chapter in a longer campaign? If it's the former, take some time to debrief the sessions and learn together what worked and what didn't; if your group decides to continue, here are some tips for moving into the next season.

The More Things Change...

First, identify everything that needs to change, in particular focusing on the PCs and their commitment to the group through its scope and focus. In order for a new season to start, something significant must change in the story—if all the PCs kept the same playbooks, the scope and focus remained the same, and no new characters joined the story, then the season really isn't over! Something big has to shift in the story for you to begin a new season, and that starts with understanding how the PCs relate to the existing scope and focus.

In many ways, this reflection might cause your PCs to reevaluate what the group's focus really was over the course of the last season. They might have started out trying to "change the culture of Hari Bulkan," but perhaps their real focus became "defeat a particular antagonist" or "gain some new training" that now helps them in their larger goal. In turn, that means the focus or scope for the new season might remain "the same"—but only because it turns out the prior focus or scope was different than everyone thought! As the focus of the new season is clarified—and the scope of the story becomes more refined or shifts to a new location—make sure the players understand those changes and how they affect the companions.

It's fine if all this reflection leads to a PC ending their commitment to the group! That just means their story has taken them elsewhere, and it's time for a new character. After all, Toph wasn't in *"Book 1: Water"* of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*! Any player whose character isn't returning should choose a new playbook, and as a group, at the end of any other changes, go through the inciting incident again with a new incident for the new group and its focus and scope.

In addition to new characters, some existing characters might want to change playbooks. Follow everything in **Chapter 7: Advancement** for those characters and talk about the ways in which the audience can tell that the character has changed forever. Perhaps a Successor who turned against his family to become the Hammer changes his clothing to reflect this new allegiance; perhaps an Idealist who gave up on Forgiveness to become the Adamant doesn't change her look…but anyone who knows her can tell something is different.

Finally, make sure that you take the time to establish some narrative gap between the last season and the new one. Sometimes that gap is rooted in time—a few months or even a few years—but often it's about grounding the new season in something different, like a new location or a new set of conflicts. A new setting almost always means a new scope and vice versa, so make sure to take that into account. Talk openly with your players about how the next season might be different and work together to establish what has changed.

Spin-offs and Generational Play

Your group might also decide to do something more adventurous, like make all new characters for the entire group or jump forward in time and play the next generation of heroes. Whatever tale you all decide to tell, use the events and characters from your existing story as a backdrop for the process of choosing a scope, focus, and inciting incident. Your new characters deserve a fresh start for their very own stories, even if the world has been built by those who came before them!

...The More They Stay the Same

That said, everything else should stay the same! Players can keep their techniques, their current center—although they probably should clear all fatigue and reset their balance to center—their moves, and their growth. Unless something has to change for the new season to make sense, that feature should stay the same and continue the arc the characters followed for the previous season; resetting the center of balance, for example, robs players of the ability to choose a path for their characters over multiple seasons.

Likewise, it's a great idea for you to involve NPCs and conflicts in the new season that weren't resolved in the last season. You may need to generate some new season threats (page 252) as you get started, but usually a lot of your work as a GM can continue as your story continues. The main reason groups want to keep going is to see more of the characters and stories your group established. Don't feel like you have to throw out everything and start anew!







CHAPTER 10

RUNNING ADVENTURES

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CHAPTER 10

This chapter contains advice on how to create adventures for **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. It also includes a number of tools you can use in your adventures, including a full set of adventure hooks for each era. The end of this chapter has a full adventure set in the Aang Era—*The Vanishing Act*—that you can use to start a new campaign, as a standalone adventure for an existing campaign, or as inspiration for your own adventures.

An **adventure** is a self-contained, episodic set of conflicts, NPCs, and mechanics that you, as the GM, prepare before you sit down to play with your group. Adventures don't lay out a specific series of events that *must* occur, but instead frame a conflict and establish the stakes. Ultimately, the players drive the plot of any adventure with their actions, so adventure planning is much more about preparing the conflicts than deciding on how those conflicts resolve.

Creating Adventures

When you prepare an adventure for your players, gather all of the necessary components—a conflict, a cast of characters, locations—and prep as much as you feel is necessary. You can always follow the guidance and tools in **Chapter 8: Running the Game** and **Chapter 9: Seasons & Campaigns** to offer your players challenges and conflicts keyed to whatever goes on in your game at any given moment, but it can be useful to have some material ready in advance. That said, there's no one right way to create an adventure; don't feel like you need to hit every note of your adventure prep every time you play.

Center Your Adventure

Before you craft any conflicts or NPCs for your adventure, figure out where you're starting your game, including the era. If this is a one-shot, you could start any time in any era; just pick a location based on what you think is exciting, or focus on what your players are interested in. If your adventure is part of an ongoing campaign, pick a location that makes sense for the fiction. Maybe your players said they were traveling to another town in search of a foe—set your adventure in that town as they seek their quarry. Or if the scope of your game is Ba Sing Se and your players indicated at the end of last session they wanted to interrogate a minister in the Upper Ring, set your adventure nearby.

No matter what location you choose, it should be a place that embroils the companions in conflict right away. There's no point wasting time in your adventure traveling from place to place if nothing happens. Think of the starting point of your adventure like the opening of an episode of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. The heroes arrive in a town…and disaster strikes, or there is someone following them, or they notice something strange in the distance!

What is this place like?

Once you know where the adventure starts, you can ask yourself what the location looks, smells, and feels like. You can outline where the players could go, and what places in the adventure might be important to various NPC groups. You can never cover every single base, nor should you try—PCs nearly always go somewhere you hadn't expected. That said, it's always good to have a few locations sketched out in your mind so you don't have to come up with everything on the spot, and so you can build on something that exists when inventing on the fly. Remember that you can always ask your players leading questions about the location to help fill in details based on the characters' backgrounds and experiences, taking some of the pressure off you! Some general locations to think of are:

- An interesting spot to start the adventure and frame the central conflict of the adventure
- Places the various factions can be found—a headquarters or popular gathering spot
- A few Avatarverse quirks about the location to make the world feel real, like monuments to the past or colorful local traditions

You don't need to add any mechanics or rules for the backdrops you envision. Instead, focus on how those spaces might help you frame the conflicts of the adventure and convey the themes of the era. If you want to make Republic City look busy and bustling, then describe an open air market; if you want the city to seem gritty and filled with criminal elements, an underground bending ring might be a better fit!

Example Central Location

You're playing in the Korra Era; at the end of last session, King Wu (may his reign end in democracy) tasked the companions with bringing in one of Kuvira's former generals hiding out in a remote Earth Kingdom village. This general helped Kuvira run numerous worker camps and so far has evaded trial in Republic City for his crimes. You decided to start your adventure in the village where the general is hiding, close to the site of one of Kuvira's forced labor camps. The village initially refused to bend to Kuvira's will, but she forced them to surrender and slowly isolated and starved the inhabitants, leaving them broken and vulnerable when the general returned...or at least, so he imagined.

Identify a Central Conflict

Once you've decided where to set your adventure, craft the **central conflict**—the main source of drama and opposition the players will encounter during the episode. Each central conflict needs to act as an anchor for the adventure, a complex encounter that doesn't have a straightforward answer and requires the players to dig into the source of whatever strife they've come across. Sometimes a good central conflict stems from a previous adventure, but often you can root your central conflict in the themes of the era or the realities of the location you've picked, representing the natural, emergent disagreements that exist across the Four Nations.

Example Central Conflict

When the companions arrive at the village to confront the general, the village has already captured him. Some villagers are intent on interning him for life without a trial and are not willing to give him over to the PCs; they mistrust "Republic City justice" after seeing what happened with Kuvira herself. Other villagers insist that the general be turned over to the PCs for a real trial. The conflict simmers throughout the entire community at all times.

The key to coming up with good conflicts quickly is thinking about meaningful disagreement, places in the setting where people have real reasons, beyond mere selfishness and villainy, to oppose each other and pursue their own objectives. If the companions show up and find out the general is a bad guy with lackeys and scary bending powers, then they have an opponent to fight, but not much else, no real decision to make or conflict to explore. It's much more interesting if they find out that the people of the village have their own ideas about justice—now they have real problems to solve, without obvious answers!

What if the companions do nothing?

Once you've come up with a central conflict, determine what happens **if the companions do nothing**. The players are free to make whatever decisions they want once you've presented the conflict, and they may even decide to do nothing—or they might even leave the area entirely! Mapping out a logical course of action gives you the ability to realistically portray the conflict around whatever actions the players decide to take. You can then bring those consequences to bear and show the players how their decision to avoid the conflict affected the world.

Don't count the players out, though! If they do sit back and let the conflict unfurl, you can act on your prep and portray the world moving forward with them. But at any moment the players may decide to engage the conflict and change the course of the story! By pushing things forward in an interesting way, you create room—and a pressing need—for them to jump into the action.

Think of this part of prep as getting ready to turn up the temperature in your story. If the players get the sense that inaction or avoidance means that the plot is put on pause, they won't have much reason to think their decisions matter or jump into the fray. But if they know you'll move the story forward no matter what they do, they'll be more inclined to take risks and participate.

Use the Themes

If you're struggling to develop a conflict, each era comes with five themes central to stories told in that era. Pick one of the themes to focus your adventure around. Those themes help anchor your adventure in the era you're playing in, and there's enough background in the setting for you to drive the action forward. Leaving the specifics of the conflict open means you allow your players to drive the action of the adventure. If you're still struggling, remember: themes are also linked to each nation's *Threats and Challenges*. You can use the conflicts we've presented there for adventures as well!

Example Prep for PC Inaction

The conflict between those who wish to punish the general here and those who wish to send him back to Republic City for trial comes to a boiling point. Some decide to take matters into their own hands, meting out a sentence on the general now, before anyone can take him away from the village. As they approach the prison, other villagers stand in their way. The two sides erupt into a vicious, loud, angry argument, which devolves rapidly into an actual fight. A few Earthbenders break into the general's windowless cell, but as the general tries to escape in the chaos, someone encases the general in stone, accidentally killing him in the heat of the moment and ending the fight. Both sides, stunned at the sudden violence of what's happened, start to drift away from the village, no longer sure they can trust their neighbors. The perpetrator is rapidly hidden from retribution, as well.

The above example has a lot of unanswered questions: how did the village capture this general? Are the general's allies coming to rescue him? How can the players convince the village to spare this man? All of these questions might come into play as the companions interact with the conflict, but—if they choose to remain distant—you're prepared to let things play out on their own…

How do twists and ties deepen conflict?

If you have time before the session, you can also **plan a twist to your conflict**. The Avatarverse is complex, and most conflicts are based around the tension between balance and imbalance. A twist in the adventure complicates the conflict even further, both drawing players closer to it and pushing them away from easy answers.

Example Twist

The general hid in the village because his daughter also lives there. Instead of plotting revenge, the general tried to live peacefully with her and his granddaughter, forsaking all violence once he saw what his work as a member of the Earth Empire did to the lives of the people. He didn't even resist when the locals discovered who he was and apprehended him. Should the companions even consider taking him to Republic City when he's clearly trying to turn over a new leaf and live a quiet, peaceful life helping this town and his family?

What Do You Want to Do?

Players often have specific goals for their characters or things they want to happen so their character can progress through their story. It's always a good idea to check-in with your players at the end of an adventure, asking them what they would like to do in the next few episodes. Their answers can inspire the next adventure and give you ideas to add different features from your players' stories into the adventure you're crafting.

As you run an adventure, you might find that interesting twists often present themselves. The introduction of an NPC the players really like—perhaps a kind, young Earthbender from the village—might prompt you to think about how she might be related to the central conflict, allowing you to establish her as the general's daughter. However, sometimes it is a good idea to sketch out what that twist could be in advance, as a way of setting up reveals or dramatic turns you can use if things get boring.

But a twist that isn't rooted in anything—like a random spirit attack or a sudden and meaningless betrayal—won't land. Any twist you decide to add into the story must be centered around characters, their drives, and what they could realistically do given the situation. The twist also should not contradict anything you've already established through the course of the game; you can't say the general isn't really the general if you've already established no doubt about his identity.

Alternatively, you can also **tie a conflict to a player's personal story**. Thanks to the nature of the game, all adventures are inherently tied to the companions through the choices the PCs make as they explore the conflict. As the GM you're always looking for golden opportunities to tie your adventure to a PC's story in a new and exciting way, but it doesn't hurt to be prepared. One way to spotlight a player character is to tie the conflict directly to a feature of their backstory and characters important to them. This gives the players additional buy-in for the adventure you've crafted and gives them a chance to explore different facets of their character.

Example Character Tie

The Successor finds that estranged members of her family are the ones leading the charge to punish the general here, in the village. They suffered greatly under Kuvira and the Earth Empire, and they aren't about to accept help from someone like the Successor—family that didn't even bother helping them during the war!

Like anchor NPCs (page 263), character ties work best when they focus on one character and push on that character's specific story. Try to avoid situations where every adventure has a tie for every character; it strains credulity and can make the entire adventure seem contrived and messy.

Outline Main Characters

Once you have established a setting and central conflict, **outline the main characters** who have a stake in the conflict and can push it in interesting ways. Knowing who the key players are in any adventure is important, because the companions need interesting NPCs to interact with in order to accomplish almost anything. These characters also provide the main opposition for your players in the conflict, so think about their motivations and goals ahead of time. At a minimum, sketch out the name, role, and stats for NPCs who are:

- Central to the conflict—who is the conflict about and why?
- In a position of power at the adventure location.

Example Central NPCs

- Jiro, the general. Drive: repent for what I've done.
- Chang, the mayor. Drive: keep everyone happy so I'm re-elected.
- Wei, leader of angry townsfolk. Drive: hurt Jiro like he hurt my sister.
- Yilin, leader of forgiving townsfolk. Drive: stop my friends and family from doing something they'll regret.

It's also useful to have **a few general NPCs** you can throw in who are interesting, but may not have a clear connection to the plot. Players tend to take action in unexpected ways and having a small library of interesting NPCs means you can pull one out and use them when you haven't prepared for what the players decide to do. Tying them to the location of your story means they automatically have some sort of stake in the action, but you can quickly define what that is while running your game.

Example General NPCs

- Hongyi, local merchant. Drive: regain my standing after coming back from the labor camps.
- Yuxi, impressionable youth. Drive: discover what happened to my brother who left town during Kuvira's reign.
- Kun, chief constable. Drive: exploit whoever I can to grab more power.

Make sure you take the time to **stat up each NPC central to the conflict**. It saves you a lot of heartache later on when running combat scenes to already know what techniques each character has, how long their balance track is, etc. You might decide mid-session that a previously underused character, perhaps one of your general NPCs, needs to be a major NPC, but you already know those central characters are going to matter a lot!

Preparing NPCs is also a good practice for running more interesting combats. When you first start running the game, the basic techniques might seem like a lot to grapple with by themselves, but the more experience everyone at the table has, the easier adventures are to run—giving NPCs interesting techniques to throw at your players keeps combat fun for everyone at the table!

Adventure Tools

In addition to the general guidelines provided in this chapter, you can also use **adventure tools** to drive the action forward in your story, tie players to the adventure you're crafting, or punctuate your story with exciting moments or twists.

As you run an adventure, you may naturally use some of the tools here without even intending to include them. For example, **escalations** are a tool used to amp up the action in the story when it starts to lag or your players are unsure what to do. You might already think this way as a GM—if the companions spend 15 minutes arguing in the Fire Lord's palace, a group of guards might round the corner and attack!

These tools are aimed at helping you tell interesting stories and navigate uncertainty in your game. Tools aren't required for running your adventure, but can add fun new aspects to gameplay. As you craft an adventure, think about how one or two of these tools might be useful!

Escalations

Use escalations when:

- The conflict falters and the pace of the adventure slows.
- The PCs are unsure of what they should do.
- You want to throw a twist into the game.

Escalations are GM moves specific for your adventure that reveal new information about the situation and force the PCs into action. Use an escalation if the conflicts start to falter, the pace of the story slows, or the players are unsure what to do. If players are invested in the main conflict in your adventure, it puts new and interesting information (or characters) in their way. If the players are not invested in the main conflict, it gives them opportunities to become involved or demonstrates how their inaction does or does not affect the setting around them. When you create escalations answer three questions:

- **What's happening?** This is the event that unfolds. Remember as you're describing the event that players can decide to act on it at any moment. Give your players a chance to jump in and be the heroes!
- **What happens if the PCs do nothing?** What is the conclusion of events if the PCs decide not to get involved? This can be anything from one party overcoming another, a fire spreading through the city, or something valuable being destroyed.
- **How does this link to the main conflict?** Every good escalation links back to the main conflict of your adventure. Escalations either reveal new information or emphasize things are happening with a conflict even if the players don't act, so they must connect back to the core issues facing the PCs. Linking your escalation to the main conflict is an easy way to deliver new information to your players organically, without it feeling artificial.



If you find it difficult to think of escalations on the spot, you can prepare a few logical escalations based on the characters and conflicts you have in your adventure before you start play. For each escalation, map out the three questions above and tie them to your story. Over the course of running the game you'll notice that as a GM you're often creating escalations without expressly intending to—this is great! Because the adventure is driven by player action, it's natural for you to include twists and turns, and reveal new information as the companions interact with the world.

Example Escalations

- Earth Kingdom guards and citizens are spurred on by the resistance clashing in the streets. If the companions don't intervene, the Earth Kingdom guards arrest a number of citizens, including the leader of the resistance movement.
- The mayor of a small town orders a curfew: no one is allowed outside after dark except the local guard. Anyone caught by the guards is arrested and thrown in jail.
- A group of Firebender bandits raid a village. If the companions don't help defend the village, the bandits eventually free their leader who flees into the nearby forest.

Clock

Use a clock when:
- There is pressure on your PCs to go somewhere or do something.
- The time of day is important to accomplish a goal.
- If something isn't done in time, there are dire consequences.

A clock in **Avatar: Legends: The Roleplaying Game** is a visual representation of time passing and mounting pressure on the PCs. Normally, you have a singular clock for your entire adventure, which represents time ticking down to an important event.



A clock has roughly four sections, each of which represents a narrative amount of time. For example, the time of day changing or a few hours passing. When a section of the clock is filled, an event happens, applying pressure to the companions. If the entire clock fills up, a difficult confrontation or disastrous event happens—usually, PCs do not want the clock to be filled! Sketch out what these events could be before you start playing so you're prepared when the game starts.

At the start of your adventure, draw a blank multi-part clock on a piece of scrap paper and place it in view. Explain what the clock means to your players—for example, "The clock represents time passing. The more ticks on the clock, the more time passes, and the closer your companions are to getting caught and locked up again!"

Mark a tick of the clock when the characters take a significant amount of time to do something. The ticking of the clock represents a part of the day passing and the pressure mounting on the PCs. Some examples of when to add a tick to the clock would be when the PCs:

- Hide for an extended time
- Take a long, but safe route
- Construct an elaborate distraction or clever plan
- Roll a miss (see below)

If the players roll a miss, remember that you can make as hard or as soft a move as you like…including ticking the clock. Advancing the clock is a fairly hard move, but it can be a great way to keep the story exciting! Give the players an understanding of what's happening in the fiction while you make your move—"You've spent hours trolling through the library to find a solution to deal with the spirit. Finally, you find the scroll you need, but when you look up from your books you realize the sun has set! I'm ticking a part of the clock. You have to get to the spirit quickly if this is still going to work!"—instead of just saying, "Okay, I'm ticking the clock now…"

Example Clocks

- The authorities of an Earth Kingdom city have captured an important rebel leader; the PCs only have a few ticks of the clock before they reveal the rebellion's secrets!
- The local town is searching for a lost girl; the PCs only have a few ticks of the clock before she's lost forever in the Spirit World.
- A village finds their medical supplies have been destroyed by bandits; the PCs only have a few ticks of the clock before people in the village have to be rushed to the nearby city for treatment.

Flashbacks

Use a flashback when:
- An NPC wants to tell a story.
- You want to add a meaningful tie-in for the players.
- You need to establish history.

A flashback is a moment in which you pause your current story and look to a past event. It could allow an NPC to share a story about the current conflict, establish a meaningful connection with a PC, or provide a backstory for their own villainy! Flashbacks are a useful tool because they help to earn emotional investment from your players without investing a lot of in-game time in order to do so. Flashbacks are also often collaborative; players answer questions or describe actions they've taken in the past, which creates interest and excitement about the current situation at hand.

If you want your NPC to share a story through a flashback, pause the current scene and describe a moment in the past that the NPC experienced. Explain what happened, who was there, and how the NPC felt about the event. Try to keep most of the flashback in the voice of the NPC, and take the time to fill in details as if you're the director of the scene explaining what the audience sees. The aim is to make this moment feel like a flashback in a TV show—a cinematic moment of high emotion in which your players see the drama unfolding before them.

If you want your flashback to help PCs establish a meaningful connection to an NPC, location, or item, pause the current scene and describe a moment in the past connected to the paused scene. Explain the characters who were there, the setting, and what the stakes of the scene were at that time. Then ask your players questions, which help define what happened in the past. Such as:

- Why are you here?
- Who/what is [person, location, item]to you?
- How did it/they help you? Or you help it/them?
- What ultimately resolved this conflict or encounter?

Once your players have answered enough questions to have stakes in the paused scene, conclude the flashback.

If you want mechanical support for your flashback, you can choose to let PCs impacted by the flashback shift their balance towards one of their principles or give the PC a status effect based on what they've just thought about—reflecting the way a hero can be thrown off their game with a strong memory. For example, if they're remembering a connection they had to a certain situation, it could bring up old memories that change how they feel in the moment, causing them to shift their balance toward the appropriate principle. Or if they're hearing a previously untold story from an NPC, a shocking revelation might impose *Impaired* on all the companions present.

Example Flashbacks

- The leader of the local guard tells the PCs the story of the last attack from the rebels, one that left several of his men dead.
- A wise-woman in the town has appeared in the dreams of the PCs, asking for help; what does she look like and what did she say?
- Two PCs remember their mother's illness, shifting balance accordingly.

Special Circumstances

Use special circumstances when:
- It's fictionally appropriate per the events of the story.
- Something large-scale and important is going on.
- You want to empower or weaken a group of people.

Special circumstances are events that affect a large number of people, creating a situation that requires mechanical complications for the PCs. For example, the solar eclipse in the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* episode, *"Day of the Black Sun, Part 2"*, rendered Firebenders powerless. Special circumstances are often tied to a timeline within the game you're playing—the players know when these circumstances are coming and can plan for it, or the special circumstances happen at a decided moment no matter what the companions might do to stop it.

Mechanically, **a special circumstance applies an effect to some or all characters based on the fictional positioning of the circumstance**. Some are simple, like the example above of a solar eclipse—no one can firebend—but others require more nuance and planning. Either way, a special circumstance isn't just something the companions have to push their luck to avoid; it's an ongoing effect they can't avoid at all, inflicting a condition they can't remove, a fictional limit that can't be overcome, or an advantage that can't be undermined.

Representing more ambiguous special circumstances can challenge you! For example, Sozin's Comet passing by the planet every century causes Firebenders to gain "…the strength and power of a hundred suns." That sounds really powerful, but what does that mean for the game? **In cases when the effect of a special circumstance is mechanically unclear**, use statuses (page 151) as a guide. In the case of Sozin's Comet, for example, each Firebender could be *Empowered* and *Favored* for the entire session, making both PCs and NPCs formidable opponents!

Sometimes a special circumstance isn't linked to a natural event, but instead to a character who is too powerful or strange to be mechanically considered an NPC. For example, a spirit in the area that nullifies all bending powers forces the PCs to figure out other ways to get stuff done. Or maybe the companions meet Avatar Korra! She doesn't have time to talk, but Korra recruits the players to confront a rampaging group of spirits with a rousing speech. While she races off to face a giant spirit attacking a building, the players turn to deal with the smaller spirits…and gain the status *Inspired*.

Example Special Circumstances

- Riots in the streets after a rebel leader was captured have kept the PCs up for days, unable to sleep. They are *Impaired*!
- The full moon makes all the Waterbenders in the village more powerful than normal, causing them all to be *Empowered*.
- The bandits accidentally angered a spirit associated with the village, causing the entire area to lose its connection to the Spirit World; no one can clear fatigue until someone fixes the problem.

What if a PC Loses Bending?

Many special circumstances in the Avatarverse enhance, weaken, or remove different types of bending for a certain amount of time. So, what happens when a bender can't bend? For most benders it means they can't fight, i.e., can't make the **stance move**, and aren't able to **rely on their skills and training** related to bending. Unless they've branched out into another form of training, weapons, or technology, they're substantially hindered. Many benders rely solely on their bending to accomplish most difficult physical tasks and without it they're at a loss. They'll have to **push their luck** to even try to overcome some obstacles, and they might even be *Impaired* at all things until their bending comes back!

Anchor NPC

Use an anchor NPC when:
- You want to draw attention to balance as a central theme.
- You want to spotlight one PC and their character arc.
- A complicated situation requires an NPC advocate.

An anchor NPC may be someone from a PC's past, a mentor they're searching for, or someone wise or powerful they are destined to meet. Your goal with this NPC is to pull on one side of the PC's track, like an anchor, dragging the character toward one pole of their principle in order to confront them with how that principle affects them. Anchor NPCs engage PCs with aspects of their personality in a blunt and incessant way, repeatedly pushing them to make choices that affect the PC's balance track.

When you're using an anchor NPC in your game, be careful not to overplay the NPC's influence. The intention of an anchor NPC is to add fun drama into the game, not to harass a player into portraying their character a certain way. If you find that a PC isn't interested in engaging with an anchor NPC or grows frustrated with them, it's a good time for that anchor NPC to exit.

Try to limit yourself to one anchor NPC in a session and to focus on a singular character, rather than presenting a different NPC for each player. These characters are important and meeting them should signal some sort of change or progress in a person's life. Focusing on one PC at a time gives anchor NPCs a chance to have weight and import in the narrative.

Example Anchor NPCs

- The Hammer's old military friend wants her to take to the fight to the authorities (Force) instead of negotiating peace (Care).
- The Successor's brother wants their family (Tradition) to help find the lost girl instead of working with the local town (Progress)
- The Prodigy's old mentor has been captured by the bandits, but the authorities (Community) want her to stay out of it (Excellence).

Adventure Hooks

The different eras of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** provide a nearly infinite number of conflicts and obstables that can act as a seed for your own adventures. This section provides a number of prepared adventure hooks you can use to build on that drama quickly and get your players into the middle of exciting action. If you're ever stuck for a new adventure, check out the hooks for your campaign's era and see if anything might be a good fit!

Kyoshi Era Adventure Hooks

The Three Lanterns Social Club

When a *daofei* group by the name of the Three Lanterns Social Club claims they want to join forces with the Flying Opera Company to help the Avatar, the company is immediately suspicious. Kirima tasks the companions with infiltrating this fishy *daofei* group, asking them to identify their real leader and what their motives are. To do this, the group has to hide their identities as allies of the Flying Opera Company and pretend to do anything to join these seedy outlaws. Perhaps the Three Lanterns Social Club's intentions are sincere, or perhaps their goal is to bring down the Avatar in order to make the Earth Kingdom safer for *daofei.*

The Splinter Fleet

The Fire Navy is working hard to return people enslaved by the Fifth Nation to their homes, but there is one village whose residents just can't be tracked down. If the companions want to find these missing people, they must hunt down a splinter fleet of the Fifth Nation and get them to give up the location of the villagers. Chukagnak's (page 43) fleet does not engage in slavery, but they were around when that crime was common in the Fifth Nation. Pirates don't give out information for free however, so they may ask the group for something highly questionable in exchange, such as help stealing from a dangerous target or finding loot lost in waters patrolled by the Fire Navy.

The Prison

Tagaka (page 42) is the only person who knows the location of a person she enslaved that the players need information from. So the companions must break into the prison beneath Lake Laogai to speak with her. This is a nearly impossible task, but if the companions can sneak their way inside, trick the guards into thinking they have official business there, or get themselves arrested for some serious destruction, they just might have an in. The real challenge is getting back out again—since Tagaka will likely demand her freedom before she shares any information. And as for companions who don't particularly feel like freeing someone who took slaves? They may need another creative solution for getting information out of the dreaded pirate queen.



The Governor

The young Governor Te Sihung has requested instruction in making better governing decisions, and the companions have been sent as his new mentors. Zigan Village now has a new school and herbal clinic that the poorest villagers have access to for free, but villages that have suffered like Zigan don't recover with just a couple of changes. The village needs a lot of improvements, and Te's understanding of his role is paltry, even if it is improving. If the group cannot turn him into a fit leader, an opportunistic *daofei* named Meili may take advantage of the village's vulnerability and seize control while the villagers are too disorganized to fight back.

The Lost Air Nomad

After exiling an Air Nomad named Tsewang for misdeeds she didn't commit, the Council of Elders at the Eastern Air Temple realizes their mistake and sends the companions to go find the exiled nun. Unfortunately, she seems to have vanished into thin air. The companions have to do some sleuthing to discover that the Air Nun is trying to join a *daofei* organization, and if they don't hurry to stop her she may truly never be able to return to the Eastern Air Temple.

The Escape

When Lady Huazo (page 38) escapes house arrest, the Keohso Clan tasks the companions with helping to track her down and bring her back. They are not only offering a boon with their clan, but cold hard cash as well. However, the Saowon Clan approaches the group shortly after and asks for their help bringing the escapee to safety so that she isn't forced to live the rest of her life imprisoned. The group has to make a choice about whose side to take.

Roku Era Adventure Hooks

Besieged Outpost
An outpost in the North Pole is besieged by dark spirits, and renegade warrior Kapena wants to be the one to free the outpost. If she does free them ahead of the warriors officially sent from the North, maybe it will be one step toward proving women are just as capable of being warriors as men. However, Kapena isn't foolish enough to go alone and knows she needs help to liberate the outpost.

The Renegade Merchant
Dawei, a Northern Water Tribe merchant, made a sport of antagonizing Earth Kingdom troops as he skillfully slipped by them to sell his wares in the Earth Kingdom…unfortunately Dawei's fun was cut short when he was arrested in town for peddling his wares. Aden, Dawei's girlfriend, needs help breaking her boyfriend out of jail and prefers not to go through traditional channels, which could take months.

The Price of Water
The well of a sandbending tribe on the edge of the Si Wong Desert has run dry and they've discovered a city nearby has tapped the underground reservoir, diverting water away from the desert. The tribespeople have tried negotiating with the city to halt their use of the reservoir until a mutually beneficial solution can be found, but were ignored. They're looking for a diplomat who can help them…or an inventor who can give the city a taste of their own medicine.

The Missing Nomad
An Air Monk named Mikyo went missing after traveling to the South Pole to learn what was causing the spirits to stir. The chief of the tribe closest to where the monk went missing told him not to go alone, but the young monk didn't listen. Many Air Nomads in the south are busy helping with the seismic activity in the Earth Kingdom, and the tribe feels they did enough for someone who refused to listen to their good advice. The Air Nomads are looking for someone who could brave the storm and find the missing Mikyo.

The Embarrassment
Michi is the son of a famous Fire Nation general. He's forsworn the wealth of his family and wants to live with the Air Nomads. Michi's dad won't let him go without a fight and Michi needs help getting to a Guiding Wind camp before the mercenaries his father hired catch up with him.

Operation Egg Rescue
A group of Fire Nation teenagers stole a dragon egg from a noble resting in camp after a successful hunt. The teens wanted to save the egg from the cruel fate of its parent…but forgot eggs often have two parents. A dragon is now actively hunting down its egg and the teenagers need help getting the egg back to its parent while avoiding getting eaten by an angry dragon or imprisoned by a furious noble.

Hundred Year War Adventure Hooks

The Expedition
As visitors to Ba Sing Se University, the companions are secretly tasked by the esteemed Professor Ko with recovering relics from the Air Temples in an attempt to preserve Air Nomad culture. However, each temple has its own dangers and even traveling to them is a harrowing ordeal. Between Fire Army units, bandits, and dark spirits, retrieving the relics is no normal academic endeavor.

Leaving Home
Residents of a small Earth Kingdom village must either fight back against the Fire Nation army sent to colonize them or rush to evacuate everyone to the Lower Ring of Ba Sing Se. Not everyone is willing to leave their homes and lives behind. Governor Luk, at his wits' end trying to figure out what to do, desperately reaches out to the companions for help.

The Secret War
The companions in Ba Sing Se must help their friend brainwashed by the Dai Li. He has been acting strangely after starting a demonstration to get the government to do more to help war refugees. Fortunately (or perhaps unfortunately), they have an ally in a conspiracy theorist named Wen Daosheng, but some of Wen's theories are so wild that he even believes the missing Avatar might be the true leader of the Dai Li.

The Snowstorm
The companions are traveling through a part of the South Pole rumored to be plagued by dark spirits when they meet Mamnguqsualuq, the leader of a settlement hidden in a cave system. She asks them for help, as they have a crisis on their hands. A Fire Navy ship is prowling Southern Water Tribe waters and sending scouts to look for nearby settlements, but one of the local kids is also missing in a snowstorm. She asks the group to deal with the ship while she and the other villagers go out to look for the child.

Loyalty
Myeongsu of the Order of the White Lotus has tasked the companions with infiltrating the Fire Army as spies and saboteurs in order to slow down the Fire Nation's progress toward the remote, defenseless village of Jaiyin. The problem is, if they disobey the Fire Nation's orders to wreak havoc on the smaller villages, they may give away their true loyalties. Can the characters convince the Fire Nation of their loyalty without doing irreparable harm to Earth Kingdom citizens? Or will they have to give themselves away and go on the run, therefore abandoning their mission?

The Conservationist
The companions must protect a member of the Southern Water Tribe named Kerlungner as she travels from village to village collecting stories and traditions so that they won't die out. Unfortunately, one of the areas she needs to travel through is rumored to be cursed. A particularly treacherous stretch of coast where several Fire Navy ships were wrecked is now polluted with spilled oil and metal parts, which has caused a local spirit to become very unhappy and attack anyone who ventures into its territory.

Aang Era Adventure Hooks

The Bloodbender

The companions have a sensitive task: transport Hama, a dangerous Waterbender, from a Fire Nation prison back to the Southern Water Tribe. Hama developed bloodbending after years in prison and used her abilities to abduct and imprison Fire Nation citizens, before she was captured. The Fire Nation agreed to give her to the Southern Water Tribe under the condition that she never again leave the capital. Unfortunately, angry Fire Nation veterans are determined to recapture Hama; she has every intention of fighting back.

Returning Home

Now that the war is over, some village refugees are sick of the Lower Ring of Ba Sing Se and want to return home. Unfortunately, their village was pillaged during the war, and now a large group of bandits lives in the ruins. In time, the refugees might garner aid from the authorities, but that might take years! Chungsuk, the former governor of the village, wants to launch a war against the bandits right now. The companions must aid Chungsuk and drive away the bandits if the old villagers are ever going to return to their homes.

The Relic

The Air Acolytes have started on repairs to the Eastern Air Temple, but much of it has been ransacked. When Xing Ying gets a lead that someone has sold an important Nomad relic on the black market, the companions must track it down and steal it from the buyer with a good old-fashioned heist. Unfortunately, the relic is kept in a highly secure estate and guarded by a mixed group of criminal benders who call themselves the Poison Dart.

Northern Revenge

A group of people from the Northern Water Tribe deported from the South due to their colonialist agenda are determined to sabotage the Southern Reconstruction Project. They hope when the project fails without them, it will prove the Southern Water Tribe incapable of taking care of themselves or using the oil wisely. A suspicious Sokka asks the companions to uncover the Northerners' plot and prevent this group from hurting the project.

The Missing Students

The companions must rescue a group of new Beifong Metalbending Academy students from bending supremacists. The kidnappers know a weak spot for Toph is her students, and seek to extort Earthen Fire Industries. Spies for the supremacists watch Toph and the other academy students, so it's up to the companions to save the students from the talented benders holding them hostage.

The Assassination

Pin-Yi, a local firebending prankster who does odd jobs for local criminals in the Fire Nation Capital, warns the companions about an impending assassination attempt on Iso, a high-ranking military official who supported Zuko's rise to power. Pin-Yi has been trying to warn any adult for weeks, but no one believes him because he's a notorious prankster. The assassination plot is real enough, but is only a distraction—an excuse for the Fire Warriors to incite a riot in the capital and bring Zuko's reign into question once again.

Korra Era Adventure Hooks

The Race

When a Cabbage Corp blimp crashes out at sea, accusations about who is truly responsible abound. Cabbage Corp believes they've been sabotaged, while some people at Future Industries believe Cabbage Corp is trying to frame them. Asami, however, believes that something more sinister may be going on—somebody wants the companies at each other's throats. The companions must find survivors and uncover who is really responsible for the incident, as it becomes clear soon enough that it was no accident.

The Election

An Earth Kingdom state wants to hold an election in a small province that has widely expressed interest in electing a representative, but militant royalists want to put a stop to it. They are even willing to assassinate the campaigning politicians in order to do so. King Wu tasks the companions with preventing any would-be assassins or saboteurs from derailing the election.

A Worried Groom

Akar, a famous Northern Water Tribe mover star, just came out as gay and announced his marriage to his long-time boyfriend Jieren. The two plan to get married in a big star-studded wedding in the North; Desna and Eska are even rumored to have RSVP'd! However, the notoriety of the wedding has resulted in the couple getting numerous death threats, one of which threatens their wedding day itself. Akar needs someone to get to the bottom of who could be threatening his and his future husband's life.

Last Village Standing

Doi Village in the Earth Kingdom has survived centuries of hardship and needs help recovering from the events of the past few years, but the villagers don't trust outsiders. The companions go to provide aid to this community, but its leader, Ganzaya, insists that dark spirits are at the root of the issue. Sure enough, soon after the companions arrive, they are plagued by mysterious attacks and accidents. Do the local spirits truly have something against outsiders, or are the villagers trying to drive the companions away?

The Airbender

An Airbender is committing serious crimes while dressed like an Air Nomad, which gives the actual Air Nomads a bad reputation they must mend. Tenzin tasks the companions with tracking down and recruiting this Air Nomad imposter. Tenzin has never met this Airbender and maybe they can be set on the right path after learning Nomad traditions. What makes this challenge particularly unique is the criminal is difficult to track by land and shows up seemingly out of nowhere to launch their attacks.

The Informant

Nomin, a member of the Scarlet Sword Triad in Republic City, has agreed to testify against his criminal employers in exchange for a new life in one of the Four Nations. The problem is, the Scarlet Swords aren't about to let him get away. The companions must escort Nomin to his new residence and set him up in a new, low-key life that has nothing to do with crime.



THE VANISHING ACT

This chapter, called **The Vanishing Act**, is a standalone adventure set in the Aang Era (page 68). If you've never run a game of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** before, this adventure is a great way to start—it includes all the elements you need for an exciting episode of your very own. And if your campaign isn't set in the Aang Era, you can still make use of everything included here! **The Vanishing Act** takes place in Ba Sing Se, the Earth Kingdom capital that exists in all the eras presented in this book; check out "GM Advice" for suggestions on how to set this adventure in other eras.

Premise: The legendary Flying Koi Carnival has recently set up shop within the Middle Ring of Ba Sing Se, delighting visitors with daring feats of bending and artistry. While attending the festival, Rose, the daughter of a prominent diplomat, went missing. The young woman disappeared at the carnival last night and hasn't been heard from since! Rose's mother Lei is distraught, wondering who could've taken her daughter and why. Was her disappearance connected to the carnival? Can our heroes find Rose before it is too late? All may not be what it seems under the majestic canvas tents of the Flying Koi...

Using this Adventure

The contents of this adventure create a sandbox for your PCs, a setting in which they can choose any path they'd like to move the story forward. Here are some of the tools you can find in the adventure to help guide them:

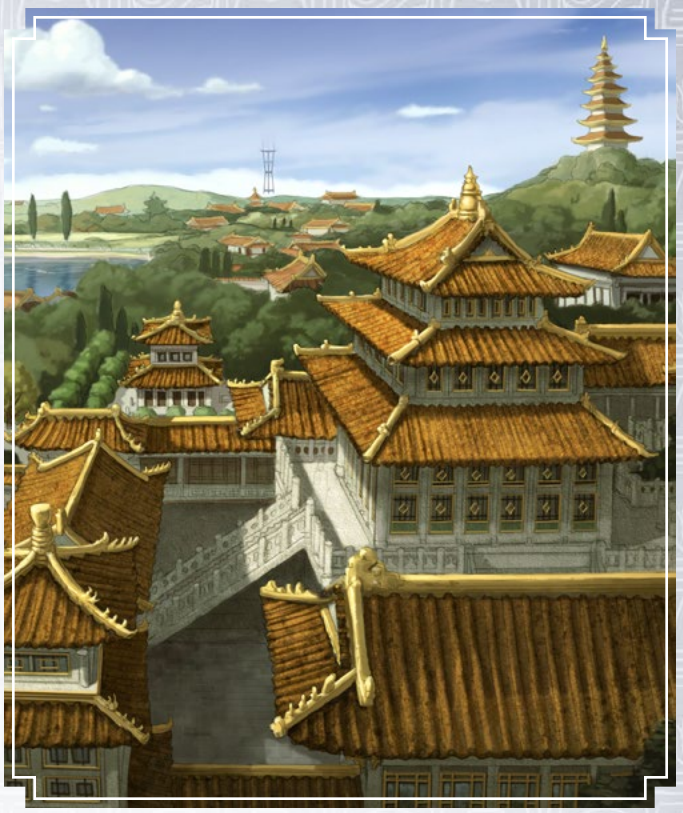
- The "Summary" provides an outline of the adventure and explains the various issues at stake in finding Rose. It includes the motivations for various NPCs and NPC factions for kidnapping Rose, along with clues about how to implicate them.
- The "Introduction" brings the PCs into the story and sets up your group to undertake the adventure.
- "Escalations" spotlights additional events you can use to amp up the tension in Ba Sing Se and to help drive the action in your game forward.
- "Important Characters & Groups" provides the backstories of NPCs and their stats for use in your game.
- "Important Locations" features different areas for the PCs to explore during the adventure and explains where important characters and clues might be found.
- "GM Advice" contains additional guidance for this adventure just for the GM, including advice on how to use this adventure in other eras.

Before you run the adventure, it's a good idea to read it in full, paying close attention to the Summary and the Introduction. Once you start playing, however, you may find the Escalations, Important Characters & Groups, and Important Locations to be the most useful tools as your players jump into the story.

No Path to the End?

If you are used to running adventures with heavily detailed encounters and prepared NPCs, it might surprise you to find few mechanics written into this adventure, beyond the escalations and some information about various characters. **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** relies on players triggering moves based on the actions they take during play instead of asking players to make any specific checks for specific actions required by the adventure. You can read more about how these moves shape play in **Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Play**.

Since every significant action a PC takes drives the action of the game forward, **there is also no prescribed order of events**. Instead, the adventure starts the PCs in a dramatic situation that demands immediate action from the heroes! It's your job to use the material in this adventure to keep things moving, providing interesting events and NPCs to consistently engage your players. The story emerges as the players make decisions about what they want to do in the face of those obstacles and challenges. You can read more about running **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** in **Chapter 8: Running the Game**.



Summary

The companions are at the Flying Koi Carnival in Ba Sing Se, a colorful delight for the eyes tucked away in the prosperous Middle Ring. A day of fun and games is derailed by an Earth Kingdom official—Detective Ziming—and a worried mother named Lei, who explain to PCs that Lei's daughter, Rose, has disappeared. The adventure assumes the players have agreed to help find Rose—she was last seen at the Flying Koi Carnival, and both Ziming and Lei agree that something nefarious must be happening if Rose has vanished.

Unbeknownst to her mother, Rose has been planning to run away with her secret girlfriend, a gangster named Hua! Now, the defiant daughter has found herself in the midst of a crime syndicates' territory war. She may need help from the players if she's going to escape…assuming the kidnapping isn't just a clever ploy to finally get away from her family!

This adventure doesn't establish who kidnapped Rose; tailor the mystery to your player's actions and ***play to find out what happens*** (page 224). There are a number of possible suspects, all with good motivation for the kidnapping! It's up to you and your group to discover the truth as you play, reacting to the players' choices while following the threads of the adventure.

To help you scatter clues wherever your players wander, "The Mystery" includes potential clues listed with the potential kidnappers. "Solving the Mystery" provides advice on how to guide players through this adventure; all of the potential kidnappers are given stats and backstories in "Important Characters & Groups."

The Mystery

As the players investigate, many different possibilities for who might've kidnapped Rose present themselves. It's your job to weave them together in interesting ways and present new information that drives the story forward or takes it in an unexpected (and fun) direction. Providing a backdrop to the kidnapping are a number of different factions, each with their own motivations:

Unbeknownst to everyone, Rose and her girlfriend **Hua** have plans of running away together. The latter is a gang member, and the former is bright, bold, and not the unwitting victim she might seem. Rose and Hua want a quiet life together in the country, where Hua will no longer have to work as second-in-command in the **Paper Lantern Gang** and Rose won't be discriminated against for her mixed Fire/Earth heritage. If they choose to arrange a "kidnapping" themselves, they're poised to use all the moving pieces mentioned here to escape the walls of Ba Sing Se.

That said, given where Rose went missing, **Ringmaster Peng** and the members of the **Flying Koi Carnival** are prime suspects, as the circus is a front for a band of thieves in disguise. In the name of equality, they steal from the rich of the Middle Ring to feed the poor of the Lower Ring, executing increasingly bold grifts. They might go so far as to kidnap and ransom the daughter of a wealthy family…

But it just so happens the Flying Koi are in the territory of the violent Paper Lantern Gang, whose reputation is at stake—the Flying Koi Carnival moved in a few months ago and refused to pay the gang the respect and dues they're owed, despite the carnival conducting criminal business on the gang's turf. Gang Leader **Cong** is desperate to assert his power—so desperate that he might be willing to frame the Flying Koi Carnival for a kidnapping…

However, both groups have been under the watchful eye of young **Detective Ziming**, who's just as motivated as Cong to prove herself and earn the respect of a Middle Ring police force that doubts her credentials and cunning. Ziming is so desperate that she might stage a kidnapping just so she can come to the rescue…

Is Rose the kidnapper?

Rose is headstrong and might not be the kidnapped "victim" at all, but the mastermind behind the entire plot, "kidnapping" herself by plotting directly with Hua to frame Cong for the crime and allowing the couple to escape Ba Sing Se. This outcome might be appropriate if the players explore greater Ba Sing Se and/or Rose's house or discover Rose and Hua's secret romance. If the players discover Rose "kidnapped" herself, perhaps she convinces them to hinder the investigation and help her and Hua to free themselves of Cong. The PCs might even plant their own clues for Detective Ziming to discover…

Example Clues

- Love letters to Hua hidden in Rose's house or the Paper Lantern Gang headquarters
- A ransom note framing Cong, waiting for the right moment to be delivered
- Rose herself, poorly disguised and seen moving freely in Ba Sing Se crowds

Is Peng the kidnapper?

Ringmaster Peng's thefts and cons grow increasingly bold. As part of his latest plan, Flying Koi Carnival performers may have kidnapped Rose, the daughter of a rich diplomat, to extort money from her mother. This would be the most extreme measure yet, and some workers close to Peng are uncomfortable with the idea. Could there be internal conflict brewing at the Flying Koi? This outcome might be appropriate if players investigate the carnival in-depth or lean on the performers to share what they know.

Example Clues

- Information about Rose and her family in the ringmaster's tent
- Stolen art in Maolo's tent, pointing to a criminal enterprise
- A mysterious ransom note that smells of popcorn

Is Cong the kidnapper?

Cong needs to get rid of the Flying Koi Carnival and fast. Their refusal to pay their dues is an embarrassment to the Paper Lantern Gang! At Hua's suggestion, Cong may have kidnapped Rose from the Flying Koi Carnival in an effort to pin the crime on the circus and have them removed from Cong's territory. With Hua behind the plan, things could all go sideways, and Cong could end up getting blamed instead, freeing Hua from his control. This outcome might be appropriate if players explore Ba Sing Se's Middle Ring outside the carnival or find the Paper Lantern Gang's headquarters.

Example Clues

- Witness accounts of a body dragged into the Paper Lantern Gang headquarters in the middle of the night
- A ransom note on artistically cut paper (see information on Cong's hobby; page 274), implicating the circus
- A conversation among unhappy, restless gang members overheard at a noodle shop

Is Detective Ziming the kidnapper?

Ziming is desperate to earn respect within the Ba Sing Se police force. Her pride may have driven her to extremes: perhaps she hired her informant Ibuki (see page 275) to kidnap Rose so that Ziming can "rescue" the girl from her abductors, pinning the crime on either the Flying Koi or the Paper Lantern Gang. This outcome might be appropriate if players explore Ba Sing Se's black market or city politics at large.

Example Clues

- A ransom note, with handwriting that matches Ziming's
- Hints to the PCs from Ibuki that he has information… for a price
- Turkey-duck feathers on the detective's coat from Daisy (see "Cabbage Merchant"; page 275)

These suggestions for who kidnapped Rose aren't necessarily mutually exclusive. Mix and match whatever works best and makes the most exciting game for the game you're running for your players. Perhaps Ziming set things up, but Rose and Hua are making the most of the situation to finally run off together!

Solving the Mystery

After the players are introduced to the kidnapping by Detective Ziming and Lei (detailed in "Introduction") your players may or may not have an idea of what they want to investigate first. Although you want to tailor this adventure to the players and their interests, **start with an idea of what outcome you find exciting.** This will help you determine what to present to your players first.

Perhaps you feel really strongly about Rose and Hua's empowerment as the true masterminds. Or perhaps you're intrigued by the political dynamic between the Paper Lantern Gang and the Flying Koi Carnival. Determine what story would be the most fun for you to play or which you think you can present most dynamically. This is your starting point, an idea of what clues to offer, especially if your PCs are interested in the investigation but not sure where to begin.

But don't offer concrete evidence yet. Let the players tell you how they conduct the investigation. Maybe they skip the carnival entirely and venture across the vast metropolitan that is Ba Sing Se to learn more about Rose's home life. If so, you can't anchor the clues about Rose's kidnapping to the Flying Koi's location; pivot to the clues (and suspects!) that fit where the episode takes you. **In other words, expect to adjust your idea of the adventure depending on the aspects of the story that most interest your players.**

The key is to encourage conversation and theorizing among the players and to listen carefully. If players are very excited about their own complicated theory behind the kidnapping or if they latch onto a particular location or character, drop clues to lead them further in that direction. Avatarverse heroes tend to end up where they are needed; let your players feel clever! Your goal is to create an interesting adventure regardless of where that adventure takes the players.

Although you want to facilitate that satisfying "We solved it!" feeling for your players, you don't want the adventure to feel too easy. Part of feeling clever is feeling like you solved a tricky puzzle. Sometimes players will have different theories at the table, and maintaining more than one possibility until the very end, or creatively combining their theories, is one way to maintain the element of surprise. If the path gets too straightforward, you need to introduce complications to keep the tension high.

If you or your players are unsure what to do next, **use an escalation (page 272), to add new information to the story and push the scene in an unexpected way.** Perhaps Maolo of the Flying Koi Carnival picks the pocket of one of the players, and they have to chase him down; when they catch up with him, he bargains some information he's heard about the Paper Lanterns kidnapping someone in exchange for the PCs letting him go. Escalations allow you to push the story in different ways when things get stale and help players successfully continue their investigation simply by being interested in the world around them.

Solving the Mystery highlights:

- Pick a starting plotline
- Follow the players' interest
- Present logical opposition
- Portray conflicts between factions
- Use escalations when unsure
- End with an exciting conflict

How does this adventure end?

Eventually, the accumulation of clues—and the players' focus—will push the group toward one suspect or another; it's your job as a GM to continue unfolding the story in new and interesting ways. Don't thwart the players or undermine what's been established, but keep the factions and characters moving in ways that make the story memorable and interesting. In other words, keep the story moving without undermining anything you've already said is true!

For example, if the companions become convinced the Paper Lanterns are trying to pin the kidnapping on the carnival, they may head to the Paper Lantern's hideout to free Rose and hand the bad guys over to Ziming. If you still have time to continue playing, you could throw in another twist using the information you know about Rose: maybe Hua convinced Cong to kidnap Rose, but while the gang is busy fighting the companions, the lovers sneak off! Not only do the companions have to fight their way through the Paper Lanterns, they also have to catch up with Hua and Rose, trailing them through the city streets while they try to figure out why Rose wasn't excited to be rescued!

The end of this adventure is largely up to the players and what they want to do, but it most likely has something to do with Rose—the PCs may confront Peng in the big top just as he plans to ransom Rose back to her mother or just miss catching Rose as she rides off into the sunset with Hua laughing on the back of an ostrich-horse after they defeat Cong. It's rare for the players to go through this adventure and not have to confront Rose and what she wants by the end of it.

Think of the end of your adventure like the end of an episode of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* or *The Legend of Korra*—you introduced the players to the issue, there's some action, a big confrontation, and then the result of the confrontation—that's how the adventure concludes. If you're running out of time, move the players to a big scene that wraps up the story, like Rose and Hua mounting a grand escape that leads to a chase through the streets or the Flying Koi Carnival trying to hide Rose as they pack up everything in the middle of the night to get out of Ba Sing Se!



Introduction

This section provides assistance on how to set your game in Ba Sing Se and how to start the adventure. If you have a good idea why your characters would be in the Middle Ring, you can skip directly to "Where we start" and set your PCs on their way.

Why are you here?

If this adventure is part of an **ongoing campaign** or even **the first adventure after your inciting incident**, it can be difficult to place your characters in this adventure if they're nowhere near the city. If you're struggling, or if your group's inciting incident doesn't start them in Ba Sing Se, give your players a sense of investment in this adventure and tailor your gameplay by asking them these additional questions before you begin:

- What information are you trying to find at Ba Sing Se?
- Who is a connection you have in the city?
- What is your favorite or least favorite circus memory, if any?

If this adventure is a **one-shot**, your job as a GM is slightly easier. Ask players to make characters who are from—or who have reason to be in—Ba Sing Se's Middle Ring. You could even tie their inciting incident to either the Flying Koi Carnival or the Paper Lanterns, giving them motivation for being at the location when the adventure starts. Since you know the contents of the adventure, you can help steer the inciting incident in a direction that connects the players directly with what is going on and then take the game from there.

Where we start

Once you've established why your characters are in the city, introduce the adventure and play! The PCs start in the Flying Koi Carnival, just after Detective Ziming and Lei tell the companions about Rose's disappearance. Before the PCs start their investigation, consider a small warm-up exercise—describe the carnival and its sights, then ask each player a question to frame their character, such as:

- What interrupted the companions' morning routines before the Carnival?
- What are the PCs wearing for a fun day at the circus?
- To what circus activity or attraction are the PCs each first drawn?
- How did they get tickets to the Flying Koi Carnival?
- Where have they seen the Flying Koi Carnival before?

Use whatever answers they give to detail how the players ran into Detective Ziming and Lei. Lei was distraught because her daughter was missing, and the detective was trying to convince Lei to let her handle the investigation alone. Ask the players questions to explain how they got involved, such as:

- What about the companions drew Lei's attention as the heroes she needed?
- Why did the PCs agree to help in the investigation?
- What made Detective Ziming willing to allow them to assist?

If the players are unsure how to answer these questions, feed them information about Lei and Ziming to help. For example, maybe Ziming accepts the companions' help as long as they're willing to help the detective prove herself to the police force…or

maybe Lei is offering a lot of money to find her daughter in spite of Ziming's assurances. There are numerous reasons the players could want to help, but they should decide on one that best justifies their buy-in for their characters to participate in the adventure.

Once you've established why the PCs agree to help, it's up to them to decide how to investigate; although, they'll find themselves tangled up in this clash of factions no matter what happens through your use of escalations.

There are a few ways the PCs can aid in the investigation beyond any plan they may engineer themselves. If they seem stuck on what to do, offer them the following information from an NPC or via gossip they've heard on the street. Then use your player-facing moves, GM moves, and escalations to take the adventure from there.

- Reported thefts have increased in the Middle Ring since the carnival arrived, and Detective Ziming is suspicious, especially since the carnival was where Rose was last spotted. Ziming suggests the PCs go undercover and join the circus. Only as one of the carnival's own can the PCs discover what really goes on backstage.
- The infamous Paper Lantern Gang runs the territory in the Middle Ring where the Flying Koi set up their carnival. If Rose was kidnapped on their turf, they're either involved or they have information. Ziming thinks they might be willing to share a lead—or return Rose—in exchange for a favor or enough money to make it worth their time.
- Lei's seen Rose hanging out with a "rough-looking" woman; even though her daughter has hidden the relationship well…a mother just knows. Lei had her housekeeper follow the woman and discovered she frequents the Stone Kettle (page 276). Fearing she'd push her rebellious daughter further away, Lei did nothing, but now Rose is missing… could the mystery woman have something to do with it?

Escalations

Through the course of this adventure, use an **escalation** if the conflicts start to falter, the pace of the story slows, or the players are unsure of what to do. Each escalation reveals new information about the situation and forces the PCs into action. If players are invested in Rose's kidnapping but unsure how to proceed, escalations toss clues or key characters into their path. If the players are not invested in Rose's kidnapping, escalations give them opportunities to become involved or, if PCs stay hands-off, to demonstrate how their inaction does or does not affect the city around them. You can read more about crafting your own escalations on page 261. Here are some examples of escalations you can use:

- Cabbages tumble through the streets, chased by a frantic Cabbage Merchant. A witness to the kidnapping, the Cabbage Merchant can be a helpful clue-giver for stuck investigators if they show him kindness and help him gather the spilled vegetables.
- A violent clash over territory erupts in the streets between the Paper Lanterns and Flying Koi Carnival. If no one stops them, the fight eventually ends but not before causing injuries to innocent bystanders and irreparable damage to surrounding property. During the chaos, a ransom note is slipped into Lei's pocket, implicating the winning faction and demanding money…or else.
- As her case comes to a close, Detective Ziming identifies a culprit—either Ringmaster Peng or Gang Leader Cong, depending on the PCs' location—and leads a raid on the Flying Koi Carnival or Paper Lantern headquarters. If no one intervenes, the leader is apprehended and led away while loudly declaring they have new information to prove their innocence.



Important Characters & Groups

The following pages contain information on these NPCs along with stats you can use for them in game—a principle (when appropriate), combat techniques, conditions, and fatigue are all listed for each character.

NPCs tied to a faction or group that come into play in the adventure are listed after the faction itself. In a combat, the gang and the leader would act separately in exchanges and choosing techniques.

Lei

Minor NPC

Rose's mother is a wealthy diplomat in Ba Sing Se and works on fostering relations between the Fire Nation and Earth Kingdom after the Hundred Year War. In search of her daughter, Lei has gone to the carnival because this was the last place Rose was seen. Obsessed with maintaining the family's pristine public image, Lei has struggled to keep her headstrong daughter in line and now balances her worry for Rose with her desire to settle the "unfortunate and uncomfortable circumstances" quietly.

Drive: Find Rose
Principle: Self-Control 0 +1
Conditions: Afraid
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Rose

Major NPC

Rose is a wealthy young woman who is studying to be a philosopher... but who has also fallen in love with a low-class member of the Paper Lantern Gang, Hua. Rose, the daughter of a Fire Nation colonial mother and Earth Kingdom diplomat father, grew up in a former Fire Nation colony and has struggled to fit in since her family was called back to Ba Sing Se after the war's end. Growing up as a half–Fire Nation teenager in an Earth Kingdom stronghold like Ba Sing Se has caused Rose no small amount of grief—she hates the capital and wants to move back to the countryside. Rose and Hua's relationship is a secret, and they have plans to elope, just as soon as Hua can get out from under Cong's thumb. Rose has never quite felt like she belonged, and her personality is characterized by her individualistic and defiant nature.

Drive: Escape to the countryside with Hua
Principle: Freedom 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Angry, Guilty, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Jet Stepping, Sense Environment*

List of important Characters & Groups

- **Lei**, an Earth Kingdom diplomat and Rose's mother
- **Rose**, the kidnapped daughter of a diplomat
- **The Flying Koi Carnival**, a secret ring of thieves disguised as performers
- **Maolo**, Peng's adopted son and second-in-command
- **Ringmaster Peng**, leader of the Flying Koi Carnival
- **Anri**, an artist and performer at the carnival
- **The Paper Lantern Gang**, a gang running territory in the Middle Ring
- **Cong**, the brutish leader of the Paper Lantern Gang
- **Hua**, Cong's second-in-command and Rose's secret girlfriend
- **Detective Ziming**, a Middle Ring detective with something to prove
- **Ibuki**, Ziming's informant
- **The Cabbage Merchant**, a hapless witness to Rose's kidnapping

The Flying Koi Performers

Major NPC Group

Swathed in a veritable rainbow of cartwheeling colors and patterns, this group of performers loyally follow Ringmaster Peng, who gives young runaways with curious talents—benders and non-benders alike—a place to call home. Each circus worker is unique in some way, whether they express themself in elaborate costume or specialized talent; for instance, an acrobat might walk around on her hands while a Firebender might create amazing firework displays using his bending. While performers distract circusgoers in the most spectacular fashion, those in the shadows have their hands in guests' pockets. The performers of the Flying Koi are thieves in disguise, executing a number of increasingly bold thefts and using the money they steal from the rich city nobles to feed the poor in the Lower Ring.

Drive: Take them for all they're worth
Principle: Justice 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Afraid, Angry, Guilty
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Scatter and Regroup*

Maolo

Major NPC

Maolo is the adopted son of Ringmaster Peng and one of the Flying Koi Carnival's most talented performers. Acrobatics, animal handling, fire juggling—Maolo does it all, but he's best known by his stage name "The Paintbender" for how he waterbends the liquid in paint to create fantastic displays onstage. In his clandestine work, he uses his waterbending talents to forge paintings from noble families while the originals are auctioned off at Ba Sing Se's black market. Maolo is deeply loyal to his father but even more so to all the Flying Koi performers, his chosen family. Maolo yearns for his father's retirement so that he can take on the ringmaster mantle and run the circus his way.

Drive: Become ringmaster
Principle: Duty 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Angry, Guilty, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Flow as Water, Water whip*

Ringmaster Peng

Master NPC

Peng, the Flying Koi Carnival's leader, grew up dirt-poor in the Lower Ring during the Hundred Year War. Years of scraping by from day to day embittered him, and when he created the Flying Koi Carnival, his goal was to change the fortunes of those who have nothing. In front of circus crowds, Ringmaster Peng is a smiling showman, but behind closed doors, everything about Peng changes: his posture, his voice, his facial expressions...While still kind to his performers, Peng is ruthless in protecting the carnival's secret cause.

Drive: Steal from the rich to give to the poor
Principle: Equality 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Angry, Afraid, Guilty, Insecure, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Attack Weakness*, *Entangler*, *Smoke Bomb*

Anri

Major NPC

Anri is an artist and performer at heart who's dreamt of joining the circus since she was a child. She's always accompanied by her trained elephant-rat, Lulu. Despite her proximity in age to Maolo, she joined the Flying Koi Carnival as Maolo's apprentice, using her earthbending skills to manipulate colorful clays in the water he bends. Recently, she graduated to being Maolo's partner-in-crime, but she hasn't yet been able to shake her self-image as a doting apprentice. Unlike Maolo, she's fully sold on Peng's mission despite how ruthless he's become... and despite Maolo confiding his worries in her. Anri has some tough decisions to make: does she betray her former master's confidence for an opportunity to get closer to the Ringmaster?

Drive: Make a name for myself
Principle: Beauty 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Angry, Guilty, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Rock Column*

The Paper Lantern Gang Members

Major NPC Group

The Paper Lantern Gang is a violent street gang led by the brutish Cong. Leaning on the intimidating presence of their leader and the ruthless enforcement of Cong's second-in-command, a Firebender named Hua, the gang has lived comfortably, holding their territory in the Middle Ring in a vice grip—that is, until the Flying Koi Carnival moved in. The thieving carnival refuses to pay the gang what they owe for working the Paper Lanterns' territory. Rumor has it the Paper Lantern Gang is the laughingstock of Ba Sing Se's criminal underbelly, and the gang members are getting restless for their leader to do something. The gang's home base lies beneath a small tea shop called the Stone Kettle.

Drive: Defend our territory and reputation
Principle: Pride 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Angry, Foolish, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Overwhelm*

Cong

Master NPC

Cong is the brutish leader of the Paper Lantern Gang, and his impressive earthbending skills and intimidating physical presence terrify most people—his gang included. Despite his martial skills, he's not the brightest person and relies on his second-in-command, Hua, to help him keep control of his territory. In fact, despite his reputation, he spends much of his time perfecting the art of papercutting and has an extensive collection of handmade shadow puppets. Cong doesn't tolerate any ridicule of his hobby, though it is sometimes joked about in whispered tones in criminal circles. Away from his papercutting supplies, you'd never guess this violent Earthbender had such a delicate hand.

Drive: Enforce my rule
Principle: Power 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Angry, Afraid, Guilty, Insecure, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Earth Sinking, Stone Shield*

Hua

Master NPC

Hua is Cong's second-in-command...but she despises him; when he's not brutish, crass, and violent, he's lazy, leaving all the hard work to her. In contrast, Hua is quiet and calm unless circumstances call for her frightening firebending skills; in the Paper Lantern Gang, she's known for swift and extreme enforcement. Hua and Rose have been secretly in love since they quite literally bumped into one another in the street...as Hua was trying to steal Rose's purse. Ever since they met, Rose has been helping Hua undermine Cong's leadership and plotting a way to escape the city.

Drive: Run away with Rose
Principle: Self-Reliance 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Angry, Afraid, Guilty, Insecure, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Fire Pinwheel, Flame Knives*

Detective Ziming

Major NPC

Detective Ziming is a Ba Sing Se native who grew up in a strict family of city guards. Ziming is the youngest of five siblings, and despite being incredibly bright, she's fully aware that she owes her recent career advancement to her family ties. This makes her even more determined to prove she deserves her detective badge. Ziming has noticed a rise in crime since the Flying Koi Carnival came to town, and though her colleagues dismiss the correlation, Ziming can't let go of the weird feeling she has that the carnival is to blame... The detective is eager and suspicious, and she's desperate to solve a case to quell her insecurity, which manifests in nervous habits such as touching her hair, repeating or second-guessing herself, and becoming swiftly defensive.

Drive: Prove I earned my badge
Principle: Pride 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Angry, Guilty, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Chart a Course*

Ibuki

Minor NPC

Ibuki is an informant Ziming uses to get information on the various criminal enterprises in the city. He's sneaky and sly, and he can get into most places without an issue. Plus, he has no qualms about working with a detective for the right price...or betraying a detective, for that matter. Ibuki invests the money he earns in his future, and for him, that means valuable art pieces. He's a collector of sorts, often skulking about the city's black markets for choice masterpieces and rare finds.

Drive: Make the best deal possible
Principle: Survival 0 +1
Conditions: Afraid
Fatigue: ◇◇◇



The Cabbage Merchant

Minor NPC

This unfortunate soul witnessed Rose's kidnapping with his beloved turkey duck Daisy while picking up a few cabbages that fell to the ground. The kidnapper took Daisy from the farmer as collateral for his silence—as long as the Cabbage Merchant stays silent, his beloved pet won't be hurt. However, a young woman's life could be on the line... What is an honest merchant to do? The Cabbage Merchant is a simple, earnest man who needs help. Aside from the perilous job of selling and protecting his cabbages (you'd be surprised at the sorts of people he's run into over the years!) the Cabbage Merchant isn't one for action and excitement. He needs someone to help him out of the pickle he's in and to save his beloved Daisy!

Drive: Ensure Daisy's safe return home
Principle: Honesty 0 +1
Conditions: Afraid
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Important Locations

The capital of the Earth Kingdom and by far the largest city in the Avatarverse, Ba Sing Se is akin to a small country in itself. This "Impenetrable City" is known for its famous walls that protect it and can be opened only with the power of earthbending. The walls divide the city into "rings" based on social status: the Outer Wall, Agrarian Zone, Inner Wall, Lower Ring, Middle Ring, and Upper Ring (read more about Ba Sing Se on page 22).

As such, Ba Sing Se is a city both grand and rife with conflict. It's a perfect place for PCs beginning a story—whether they stay to explore the city's wonders and dark secrets or embark from the capital to virtually anywhere in the world—or for an established group during an ongoing campaign.

For the purposes of this adventure, the focus is on Ba Sing Se's Middle Ring, but the broader city holds innumerable locations of note! To list them all would be an endless task. Here are the locations that pertain to Rose's kidnapping:

The Flying Koi Carnival

Sprawling across nine square city blocks in Ba Sing Se's Middle Ring, the Flying Koi Carnival feels like stepping into a completely different city, one that is lively and thriving and aglow well into the night. Jewel-toned tents in every imaginable pattern—from paisley to polka dot to plum blossom—fill the circus with guests, and cartwheeling, fire-breathing, stilt-walking performers pack the alleys between. An aromatic swirl of sugary candy and bean cakes permeates the air, tinged with savory burnt notes from rows of meat smokers. A chaotic checkerboard of food stalls, carnival games, and tents filled with oddities and attractions surrounds the massive big top tent, the site of each evening's feature show. Along the back edge of the carnival, furthest from the entrance, is a neighborhood of darkened tents where the performers and ringmaster live. Despite the joyous veneer of the Flying Koi, remember it is the operating base of a thieves' ring! Pickpockets, rigged games, and other little clues scratch away at the carnival's happy rainbow surface.

The Stone Kettle

A dingy little tea shop, the Stone Kettle is tucked in an alley off a boisterous restaurant row in the Middle Ring, not far from the Flying Koi Carnival. It's the sort of spot tourists might overlook, but local workers know they can get a good strong cup of black tea between shifts. Tended by Hua or another Paper Lantern member, the Stone Kettle appears to be a simple storefront, large enough for a small counter, a shelf of tea canisters, and a single dine-in two-top, while hiding stairs under the counter that lead to the large basement headquarters of the Paper Lantern Gang.

Although Hua has the authority to give anyone access to the secret headquarters, other Paper Lantern guards require entrants to share a passcode that changes daily, depending on what Cong eats for breakfast. The headquarters is spacious and lush, its walls intricately decorated in framed papercut art pieces made by Cong. One of several doors off the main headquarters leads to a small art studio where Gang Leader Cong prefers not to be disturbed.

The Black Market

When the clock strikes midnight in Ba Sing Se's Lower Ring, everyone knows to stay out of the abandoned watch factory on the southeast edge of town…unless they want trouble. A double knock followed by the kick of a toe on the right door grants an opportunity to whisper the password of the day… if you dare.

This is where Ba Sing Se's grimy, slimy, sly underbelly gathers nightly to make deals, gamble, and trade illegal and stolen goods. If you're looking for information, you'll probably find someone willing to sell it, assuming you're desperate or daring. If the PCs gain entry, they're rewarded with a good story and some rumors at least. Maolo and Anri might be spotted here selling stolen art. Ibuki often lurks in the shadows looking for an opportunity to make some coin. The Paper Lantern Gang used to frequent the Black Market but haven't since the Flying Koi have given them trouble.

Rose's Villa

Rose's villa is characterized by a stately, dignified quality. Everything is spotless. Everything has its place. A mix of Earth Kingdom and Fire Nation artifacts and art decorate the walls and halls as if the villa were a museum and not a home. Rose's room, untouched since her disappearance, stands in stark contrast. The desk is stacked high with scrolls and paper, the bed is unmade, and the closet is a disorganized mess with a pile of laundry in one corner.

Amid this mess, the PCs might find clues to Rose's disappearance, her secret romance with Hua, and perhaps even a plot to kidnap herself and frame Cong. In addition to the clues of Rose's own plotting, consider hiding false clues Rose might have left behind that Detective Ziming missed, clues that point to Cong as the kidnapper.

Moon Peach Inn

This once charming inn has seen better days since its original owner passed and left the property to a frantic son trying to live up to his mother's memory. Peeling patterned wallpaper and pilling velvet canopies are hallmarks of this Middle Ring inn's glorious past. While older clientele still visit to reminisce, the Moon Peach Inn is otherwise a place for those who'd rather be forgotten: the perfect spot for Rose to hide if she's kidnapped herself, or for Ibuki to hide her on behalf of Detective Ziming.

Two bits of wonder remain at the old Moon Peach: all the rooms overlook a central courtyard filled with moon peach trees, and it's said the original owner's ghost haunts the halls at dusk offering moon peach cakes before an early retirement to the Spirit World.

Middle Ring Earthmarket

This bustling farmers' market boasts all the Earth Kingdom has to offer: bean curd puffs, braised turtle-duck, deep-fried pickled radishes, cozy jook, and dumplings galore. Be sure to stop by the Cabbage Merchant's booth for his famous cabbage cookies. Booths of fresh produce and culinary delights are arranged in a ring befitting Ba Sing Se itself, around a circular courtyard with a large bronze bear statue in the center. Like spokes of a wheel, streets extend through the Middle Ring in all directions from the courtyard and, conveniently, lead to any of the previously listed locations.



GM Advice

The "Summary" holds the most important information you need to run **The Vanishing Act**; here is some additional advice you might find useful, including how to modify the adventure for different eras.

Fights in Ba Sing Se

Getting into a fight in the Middle Ring of Ba Sing Se isn't without its risks. Small skirmishes in side streets are likely to be overlooked—a lot of the action in the adventure takes place in gang territory after all. However, if characters start to throw arcs of fire through the streets of an upper-class district or set off smoke bombs obscuring a few market stalls, these actions aren't without risk.

The Middle Ring is heavily populated—not overpopulated like the Lower Ring, but there are people everywhere. A big fight means that **civilians** are involved one way or another, probably as witnesses or innocent bystanders. If you use civilians as witnesses, they're likely causing a direct problem for your players—they're witnessing a fight that should be kept secret or running off to get the authorities. If you use civilians as innocent bystanders, you're putting them in harm's way and having your players deal with the fallout. Maybe a foe grabs a civilian and uses them as a human shield, or maybe a merchant gets trapped in rubble while trying to flee the scene.

The **police** are another obstacle your PCs may encounter depending on how a fight unfolds. Police could be called in by bystanders, drawn to chaos, or even just patrolling in the neighborhood. Their first instinct is always to stop the fight, but they will quickly turn to finding someone to blame. If the police end up seriously hampering the players' investigation (and in turn Ziming's), the PCs might lose Ziming's trust, as she's trying to solve the case herself and other police may now be sniffing around. It's even possible the local police force may be in the pocket of a faction the players encounter. For example, maybe the Paper Lanterns pay off the police force to look the other way in their territory. After a fight with members of the Paper Lantern Gang, the players are surprised to find they're the ones being arrested for disturbing the peace!

Whether you decide to bring civilians and police into a fight is up to you and the scene unfolding around the PCs. If bringing in one of these two groups feels like too much to handle or keep track of, don't do it. Maybe everyone just runs away, and maybe the police turn a blind eye to the chaos. Use the police and civilians as interesting ways to add drama to your game, not to stress yourself out!

Secrets

Members of the Flying Koi Carnival are secretly thieves, and Rose and Hua's relationship is a secret, but secrets aren't worth anything to you as a GM if they don't come into play during the game. As GM, you might be tempted to guard the characters' secrets the way those characters would guard them!

Rather than treating the NPCs' secrets as something your players should never know, treat them as delicious morsels to drop at just the right times to keep your players wanting more. If the players bust into the Stone Kettle demanding that the Paper Lantern Gang hand over Rose, have Hua stand up, shocked that her girlfriend was kidnapped! If the players decide to investigate Lei's house for clues, have Maolo and Anri there giving a private "paintbending" show for diplomatic guests…whom they just so happen to (obviously) steal from throughout the show.

Use the secrets you know to add fun hooks to your game, and let the players in on the mystery, or better yet make them responsible for it. They can't let anyone know about Hua and Rose; it could ruin their chance to run away together. They can never tell anyone that the Flying Koi Carnival are thieves—the Flying Koi use the money they steal to feed the poor and the starving! Twist the secrets into moral choices for your players and push on their principles to see what they decide to do.

One-Shot Adventuring

The Vanishing Act is a perfect start for a campaign, but it also works pretty well as a one-shot adventure, a single episode you can use if you're only going to play with a group one time; here are some tips on how to run this adventure as a one-shot:

Ramp up the action

You've only got a single session to make your story awesome, so jump in with both feet. If someone might escalate to a fight, have them throw the first punch; if you want the players to find a clue, make it obvious and apparent. Anything that doesn't show up in this first session isn't ever going to show up, so get to it!

Use the factions

The factions are one of your best tools for keeping the action moving. Make sure the PCs are tied to Rose's story and care about her kidnapping, but never let them forget that the factions have agendas of their own—when the PCs start sniffing around, make sure everyone has a theory for what happened to Rose. Use those conflicting perspectives to give the companions lots to do and several different groups of allies they could enlist for help.

Hit hard with fatigue, balance shifts, etc.

Many mechanical elements of **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game** really shine when they have time to show up repeatedly on screen. It's hard for a PC to **lose their balance**, for example, if their balance only shifts once in the whole one-shot. Push the PCs hard with these elements so that their choices matter!

Good luck! Don't forget the advice in the "Introduction" on getting the game set up and check out additional one-shot tips on page 249 for more on running great one-shot adventures!

Different Eras

If your game isn't set in the Aang Era, you can still use this adventure! In most eras, much of the content can be used as is—subtly adjusting the characters and factions to match the time period—but you may want to change Rose and her family's story to something that fits the era. Rose's mixed heritage and her desire to return to the countryside with Hua exemplifies one of the themes of the Aang Era: Coexistence. If you're setting this adventure in a different era, link Rose's struggle to one of its themes to provide motivation for her actions, such as:

- **The Kyoshi Era**—*Justice and Revenge*—Lei is a corrupt Earth Kingdom official, and Rose wants to get away from her overbearing mother.
- **The Roku Era**—*Connection vs. Isolation*—It's an exciting time to be alive! Rose wants to explore the world and visit the other three nations together with her girlfriend!
- **The Hundred Year War**—*Hope in Rebellion*—Rose knows a war is happening outside the walls of Ba Sing Se, and while she isn't dumb enough to broadcast that in the Middle Ring, she wants to get out of the city and help fight the Fire Nation.
- **The Korra Era**—*Setting Boundaries*—Rose has led a sheltered life, and she wants some freedom from her family to see what she can do when she stands on her own two feet.

If you want to make more radical era-specific changes, try:

- **The Kyoshi Era:** Change the Flying Koi and Paper Lantern Gang into *daofei* who once were members of the same gang but split when Cong seized control from Peng. Peng left for a time with a few members of the gang who stayed loyal to him, Maolo, and Anri…but now Peng wants his territory back and is willing to do anything to achieve his goals, which include manipulating the other forces in the city to help him take Cong down.
- **The Roku Era:** Change the Flying Koi Carnival into secret spies for the Queen of Omashu and make Ziming an agent for the crown who suspects the carnival workers of spying. Lei is a high-ranking Earth Kingdom official who is deeply loyal to Earth King Jialun, giving the carnival all the more motivation to kidnap Rose. The carnival members have to deal with not only the Paper Lantern Gang, whose constant harassment is threatening to blow their cover, but also a nosy detective who knows too much…
- **The Hundred Year War Era:** In this era, the Flying Koi Carnival could be a group of rebels trying to expose the war outside Ba Sing Se's walls. Rose is a revolutionary, and her mother (as a high minister) knows that all is not well outside Ba Sing Se. Maybe Rose and Hua's escape plan is to join up with the circus and leave Ba Sing Se once the carnival's plan is complete, but Rose is taken to be reeducated by the Dai Li.
- **The Korra Era:** Set the adventure in Republic City! Change the Paper Lantern Gang to the Paper Lantern Triad and the Flying Koi members into secret equalists (which also requires turning a number of the characters into non-benders). The Flying Koi's goal is then not to give money to the poor, but to stoke anti-bending sentiment by performing crimes and pinning them on benders…and what better target than the already criminal Paper Lantern Triad?

APPENDIX A

TECHNIQUES

This appendix includes an array of different techniques split between universal techniques, group techniques, and the six trainings. Any specialized bending forms necessary to use a technique are called out on the technique with a stamp. Some techniques are also marked as "rare," meaning they are particularly complicated, powerful, and rare in the world; only the greatest of masters are likely to have and teach these techniques. Players can use this appendix to choose starting techniques, and GMs can use this appendix to arm NPCs with appropriate techniques.

Universal Techniques

Attack Weakness
ADVANCE & ATTACK

Strike an enemy at a weak point where they've already been injured. Mark 1-fatigue to target an engaged, *Impaired* enemy in reach; they suffer fatigue equal to however many conditions they already have marked.

Charge
ADVANCE & ATTACK

Advance straight at an enemy to strike them full force. Mark 1-fatigue to close the distance and engage with an enemy you aren't currently engaged with, inflicting one condition or 2-fatigue (their choice). Become *Favored* for the next exchange.

Duck and Twist
EVADE & OBSERVE

Rely on your fast movement to help keep you out of the worst of harm's way. Mark 1-fatigue to clear one condition and become *Favored*.

Forceful Blow
ADVANCE & ATTACK

Swing at an enemy with all your might, sending them flying. Mark 1-fatigue and inflict 2-fatigue or one condition on your target (your choice). Then push them to a new position of your choice unless they mark 2-fatigue.

Furious Assault*
ADVANCE & ATTACK

Make an unbalanced, impassioned strike. Become *Impaired* due to your overwhelming passion, shift your balance away from center, and inflict conditions equal to your **Passion** on an enemy; NPCs instead inflict conditions equal to their current balance. You may only remove *Impaired* when your balance is at your center.

Pounce*
ADVANCE & ATTACKK

Press the advantage against an enemy who is off-balance. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict *Impaired* on a foe, or inflict *Stunned* on an *Impaired* foe, or inflict 5-fatigue on a *Stunned* foe.

Protect
DEFEND & MANEUVER

Protect an ally within reach. Mark 1-fatigue to intercept and stop an attack made against them in this exchange; if no attack is made against them in this exchange, you both become *Inspired*.

*Rare Technique

Rapid Assessment
EVADE & OBSERVE

Quickly take in your situation far faster than normal. Ask one question about the situation at hand. Become *Prepared* to act on the answer, and you may call out your plan to an ally to make them *Prepared* as well.

Seek Vulnerabilities
EVADE & OBSERVE

Examine your foe for weak points. The next time you inflict a condition or fatigue on them, you may also shift their balance. If you know what their principle is, then you may mark 1-fatigue to shift their balance a second time.

Sense Environment
EVADE & OBSERVE

Look for opportunities to usefully reshape your environment. The next time you **advance and attack** or **defend and maneuver**, you may use Smash or Ready, as appropriate, in addition to any other techniques you use, even on a miss. When you use Smash or Ready this way, do not mark fatigue.

Stand Strong
DEFEND & MANEUVER

Plant your feet and prepare yourself for incoming blows. Become *Prepared*, and you automatically block or avoid any negative statuses inflicted on you this exchange.

Suck It Up
DEFEND & MANEUVER

Focus and absorb a blow, readying yourself to act immediately after. For each attack that inflicts fatigue, conditions, or balance shifts on you this exchange, choose one additional technique next exchange (even if you roll a miss on the **stance move**).

Take Cover
DEFEND & MANEUVER

Swerve and maneuver into cover. The first attack on you this exchange strikes your cover, damaging or destroying it, but leaving you unharmed.

Group Techniques

Attend to Commands
EVADE & OBSERVE

A leading voice in the group takes a moment to organize it effectively. The group clears *Impaired*, becomes *Inspired*, and inflicts an additional 1-fatigue on all attacks made next exchange.

Coordination
EVADE & OBSERVE

The group sets itself up to launch a concerted, skilled attack upon its targets next exchange. The group becomes *Prepared* and *Favored* and may clear 2-fatigue or a condition (in addition to the normal 1-fatigue for evade and observe).

Draw Foe
EVADE & OBSERVE

The group misleads foes into overextending themselves. The group targets an engaged foe who chose the **advance and attack** approach this exchange. That foe must mark 1-fatigue, becomes *Impaired*, and is moved out of reach of allies.

Engulf
DEFEND & MANEUVER

The whole group shifts forward en masse, engulfing their target and engaging them. An engulfed target becomes *Impaired* and cannot escape or disengage this exchange. The group automatically uses Strike against each *Impaired* foe within reach.

Focused Fire
ADVANCE & ATTACK

The group pours out all of its attacks simultaneously, in synchronized fashion, against the same target. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict 2-fatigue and a condition. If the group was *Prepared* for this attack, inflict an additional 2-fatigue and another condition.

Overwhelm
ADVANCE & ATTACK

Strike at every combatant in reach. All foes engaged with the group must mark 2-fatigue or one condition, their choice.

Scatter and Regroup
EVADE & OBSERVE

The group splits apart and reforms nearby. The group clears one condition. Any foe engaged with the group is no longer engaged with the group, and the group can advance and engage with foes as it chooses; any foes the group engages with are *Impaired*.

Shield Wall
DEFEND & MANEUVER

The group together forms a barricade. The group becomes *Favored*, and ignores the first 2-fatigue and one condition it would mark this exchange. Next exchange, all movement or maneuvering past the shield wall is automatically blocked.

Spread Out
DEFEND & MANEUVER

The group spreads itself out to cover more ground and avoid large-scale attacks. The group cannot suffer more than 1-fatigue, one condition, or one balance shift from any individual attack—the attacker chooses which if necessary. The group can also engage with any foes in a much wider reach, and pays no cost to keep an engaged foe from escaping.

Surround
ADVANCE & ATTACK

The group closes around a single foe. Every additional attack made on that foe during this exchange inflicts an additional 1-fatigue. Every attack made by a surrounded foe forces them to suffer 1-fatigue.

Swarm
ADVANCE & ATTACK

The group throws itself upon a foe with no heed to its own safety. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict 2-fatigue on a single target. This technique may be chosen multiple times. Each time it is chosen after the first, it inflicts an additional 1-fatigue.

Test Defenses
EVADE & OBSERVE

The group slowly probes the defenses of a foe, one or two members attacking individually to determine the foe's abilities. The group becomes *Prepared*, *Favored*, *Inspired*, and learns the balance principle of its target; the chosen foe may immediately use Strike on the group in turn.

Protect Objective
DEFEND & MANEUVER

The group surrounds a person, place, or object with their backs to it, to protect it from attack, disruption, or seizure. The group marks 2-fatigue and becomes *Prepared*. All foes near or engaged with the protected target become disengaged and pushed back from the target and are now engaged with the group. No foe can reach the protected target until the group is scattered or loses *Prepared*.

Waterbending Techniques

Blood Twisting*

BLOOD

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Use bloodbending to move and twist a foe's body in painful ways. You must be *Empowered* to use this technique. Inflict a condition on your foe. If they are already *Impaired*, *Trapped*, or *Doomed*, inflict an additional condition. If this is your first, second, or third time ever using this technique, mark a condition.

Breath of Ice

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Become ready to breathe shivering cold upon any foe who gets close to you. Any foe engaged with you at any point in this exchange becomes *Impaired* until they clear the ice from their limbs.

Creeping Ice

EVADE & OBSERVE

Carefully and stealthily extend a sheet of ice out beneath foes of your choice; they become *Impaired* as long as they remain on the ice, and you become *Prepared* to engage with them.

Crushing Grip of Seas*

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Throw a tendril of water that wraps around a foe's limb and holds it in place. Mark 1-fatigue and inflict *Impaired* on a foe; mark an additional 2-fatigue to inflict *Trapped* on that foe with a second tendril. If the foe is already *Impaired*, you only need to pay 2-fatigue for *Trapped*.

Flow as Water

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Use a jet of water to propel you smoothly around obstacles. Mark 1-fatigue and move to a new location. If you engage with or disengage from a foe, they are *Impaired*.

Freeze Blood*

BLOOD

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Use bloodbending to seize a target and hold them in place. You must be *Empowered* to use this technique. Mark 1-fatigue; your target becomes *Trapped* and/or *Doomed*, your choice. If this is your first, second, or third time ever using this technique, mark a condition.

Ice Gauntlet

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Cover your hand with a sheathe of ice. Become *Prepared*. When you next make an attack, inflict an additional 1-fatigue.

*Rare Technique

Ice Prison*

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Aggressively wrap a foe in ice. Mark 2-fatigue to inflict *Trapped* on a foe standing in water or on ice.

Refresh

HEAL

EVADE & OBSERVE

Apply water to reinvigorate and close wounds on a willing target. Mark 1-fatigue to heal an ally in reach who is **evading and observing**. Clear an appropriate status from them, and clear 3-fatigue or two conditions.

Stream the Water

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Push a high-powered stream of water from a significant source. Mark fatigue to inflict a condition on a foe within reach of the water source; they are pinned against something and cannot shift positions or engage foes other than you until they break the stream or you drop it. Mark 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange to continue the stream.

Slip Over Ice

EVADE & OBSERVE

Use ice and water to slip around your environment with ease while putting foes off-balance. Clear 1-fatigue (in addition to clearing 1-fatigue via **evade and observe**) and reposition foes within reach, deciding who is engaged with whom unless they are willing to mark 1-fatigue and become *Impaired* to remain where they are.

Water Cloak*

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Surround yourself with water; mark fatigue and hold 3. Spend your hold 1-for-1 to reduce the 1-fatigue or conditions inflicted by an incoming attack by 1; to become *Favored* for the next exchange, as long as you use waterbending techniques; or to throw water into the environment, affecting it and possibly inflicting a status. Mark 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange to maintain the hold to the next exchange.

Water Whip

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Lash out with a tendril of water. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict a condition or 2-fatigue, your choice.

Earthbending Techniques

Detect the Heavy Step*

SEISMIC SENSE

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Use seismic sense to detect the instant an enemy is about to move against you. Become *Prepared*, and at any time during this exchange, you may lose your *Prepared* status and mark 1-fatigue to interrupt an enemy as they use a technique; they must mark an additional 3-fatigue or you disrupt their attempt to act, canceling the technique.

Dust Stepping

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Step up into the air on thin pillars of dust and stone. Advance to a higher position and become *Favored* and *Prepared*. Any foe engaged with you can mark 2-fatigue to block this effect.

Earth Armor

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Gather earth, crystal, or other available material around you to create armor. Hold 3. Spend one hold to negate one condition or 2-fatigue inflicted upon you. While you have hold, you are *Favored*. You must spend hold—at least one—whenever an incoming attack would inflict fatigue or conditions.

Earth Gauntlet

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Wrap your arm or fist in rock and strike! Mark 1-fatigue; inflict one condition or 2-fatigue. You can also knock your foe out of reach and disengage; they must mark an additional fatigue to resist.

Earth Launch

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Throw yourself into the air with a massive burst of force. Mark 1-fatigue and become *Favored*. You disengage with all foes who can't reach you high in the air for the rest of this exchange, but you come right back down into their midst at the end of this exchange.

Earth Sinking*

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Sink a foe into the earth itself. Mark 2-fatigue to trap an enemy standing on the ground in the earth; they become *Trapped*.

Eat Dirt

EVADE & OBSERVE

Even the smallest pebble can cause a gator-phant to stumble. Cause a foe to lose their footing. Your target is *Impaired* and unable to choose **defend and maneuver** in the next exchange.

*Rare Technique

Ground Shift

EVADE & OBSERVE

Twist the ground itself to displace or unbalance foes. Target an individual foe or an area. If you target an area, mark 1-fatigue. All affected foes become *Impaired* for an exchange, or *Stunned* if they are already *Impaired*.

Lava Star*

LAVA

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Create a floating, spinning star of lava that can cut through nearly anything. Mark 1-fatigue and become *Favored* as long as the star is active. Every time you use the star as part of an attack, you can also cut through or destroy part of the scenery as if you had used the Smash basic technique, at no additional cost. You may mark 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange to keep the star active.

Metal Bindings*

METAL

EVADE & OBSERVE

Catch an enemy's limbs in metal you control. They become *Impaired* and cannot remove the status unless they are able to metalbend or the fight ends. While they are *Impaired* and you are engaged with them, you are *Favored*.

Rock Column

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Pin a foe with a column of earth. Inflict *Impaired* on a single combatant. If they are already *Impaired*, inflict *Trapped*. If they are already *Trapped*, inflict *Doomed*.

Stone Shield*

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Raise a defensive shield of stone that protects you or someone else. Mark 1-fatigue to raise the shield. Anyone protected by the Stone Shield gains *Impaired*—it's tough to move inside. This shield blocks the first attack directed toward it each exchange. The Stone Shield cannot move and is not destroyed by an attack—it remains in place until you decide it comes down. You can elect to use the raw material in the wall for an earthbending technique, reducing its cost by 1-fatigue and removing the Stone Shield.

Thick Mud

EVADE & OBSERVE

Transform the earth and stone around you into sticky, sucking mud. Any foes engaged with and acting against you in this exchange become stuck and *Impaired*; you may use *Strike* against each stuck foe in the next exchange, regardless of your chosen approach and in addition to your normal techniques.

Firebending Techniques

A Single Spark



Evade & Observe

Unleash your emotions into the flames around you. Mark 1-fatigue to hold 1 for each condition you have marked. Spend your hold 1-for-1 in the next exchange to pay the costs of techniques as if it was fatigue, to inflict *Doomed* on a foe you target with firebending, or to use Seize a Position—no matter what approach you used—in addition to your other techniques.

Arc Lightning*

Lightning



Evade & Observe

Channel lightning through your body against a closely engaged foe. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict a condition on an engaged foe who used an **advance and attack** technique against you this exchange; if they already have two conditions marked, they are also *Stunned*.

Breath of Fire



Advance & Attack

Breathe fire in a massive gout. Mark 1-fatigue to set alight as much or as little of your surroundings as you choose and try to set aflame any foes within reach. Those foes must either retreat and disengage with you, becoming *Impaired*, or suffer 2-fatigue and become *Doomed* as they catch fire.

Explosive Blast*

Combustion



Advance & Attack

Fire a sparking, spitting beam of focused energy that explodes when it reaches its target. Your target must either dive for cover or take the blow. If they dive for cover, they mark 2-fatigue and become *Impaired*; if they are already *Impaired*, they cannot dive for cover. If they take the blow, they mark 4-fatigue.

Fire Blade



Advance & Attack

Swipe your surroundings with a blade of flame. Mark 1-fatigue to slice through a piece of your surroundings and destabilize your foe's footing, inflicting 2-fatigue and *Impaired* on them.

Fire Pinwheel*



Advance & Attack

Throw a spinning disc of pure flame. Mark 1-fatigue; your target must either mark 2 conditions, or mark 1-fatigue and dodge the disc and allow it to set everything around them aflame (possibly inflicting negative statuses).

*Rare Technique

Fire Stream



Defend & Maneuver

Pour fire upon a target. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict *Impaired* on them. Mark 3-fatigue to inflict *Doomed* and *Impaired*. Mark 5-fatigue to inflict *Trapped*, *Doomed*, and *Impaired*.

Fire Whip



Defend & Maneuver

Lash out from a distance. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict 2-fatigue or a condition (target's choice), and enemies must mark 1-fatigue to get close enough to attack you this exchange.

Flame Knives



Advance & Attack

Mark up to 3-fatigue. Hold an equal number of flames. Lose 1-flame at the end of each exchange after this one. When you inflict fatigue or conditions on a foe, inflict an additional 1-fatigue for each remaining flame.

Jet Stepping



Evade & Observe

Advance to a higher position and become *Favored* and *Prepared* for the next exchange. Any foe engaged with you can mark 2-fatigue to block this technique.

Lightning Blast*

Lightning



Advance & Attack

Hurl a bolt of lightning at a target. Mark up to 3-fatigue. For each fatigue you mark, your target must mark 2-fatigue.

Spiral Flare Kick*



Advance & Attack

Spin skyward on jets of flame as you lash out with your legs. Mark 1-fatigue to target two individual foes or one group with this attack. Individual foes must each mark 2-fatigue or one condition, their choice; the group must mark 4-fatigue or two conditions, their choice.

Wall of Fiery Breath



Defend & Maneuver

Breathe a gout of flame that keeps foes back as you maneuver away from them. Mark one condition and move to a new position. Foes must keep their distance and become disengaged, or push through the flame and suffer 4-fatigue.

Airbending Techniques

Air Cushion
Evade & Observe

Soften the blows an ally takes and get them back on their feet faster. Mark 1-fatigue to clear 2-fatigue, one condition, or any one status from an ally within reach who was struck by an attack this exchange.

Air Scooter
Evade & Observe

Summon a ball or ring of air under yourself. While riding it, you are *Favored*. You can sacrifice your air scooter to avoid marking fatigue or conditions when you are struck by an attack.

Air Swipe
Defend & Maneuver

Prepare to cast an arc of pressurized air to knock away incoming attacks and throw enemies off-balance. If any enemy attacks you, you may mark 1-fatigue to cast the arc and block or divert the strike. If no enemy has attacked you by the end of the exchange, you may cast the arc to inflict 2-fatigue on up to three enemies.

Breath of Wind*
Advance & Attack

Exhale mightily via pursed lips. Mark 1-fatigue to knock down a single target and inflict *Stunned* on them unless they mark 4-fatigue.

Cannonball
Advance & Attack

Rush forward with the might of the wind behind you and crash into a foe. Mark 1-fatigue to target a foe you aren't currently engaged with and rush at them. You become engaged with them (disengaging with other current foes) and inflict a condition on them.

Cushion the Forceful Fist*
Evade & Observe

Put a cushion of twisting air around your body that keeps physical strikes at bay. Mark 2-fatigue to become *Favored*; you are immune to hard, physical, forceful attacks and blows (a hurled rock, a direct and forceful blast of flame, a jet of water) until the end of the next exchange.

Directed Funnel
Advance & Attack

Create a spinning funnel of air that can fire objects at high speed. Mark 1-fatigue; each ally in reach can mark 1-fatigue to toss an appropriate small object into the funnel—inflict 2-fatigue on a target within reach for each ally who does.

Reed in the Wind*
Evade & Observe

Adjust your movements to perfectly match and avoid the movements of a foe. Mark 2-fatigue and secretly name the approach you believe your foe will use in the next exchange; reveal it after approaches are chosen in the next exchange. If you were incorrect, you may shift your chosen approach. If you were correct, you become immediately *Favored* for that exchange, and they cannot target you with any techniques.

Shockwave*
Evade & Observe

Leap into the air and hurtle back to the ground, sending a massive burst of pressurized air all around you. Mark 2-fatigue; everyone in the area, including allies, is thrown away, disengaging and becoming *Stunned* unless they mark 4-fatigue.

Small Vortex
Evade & Observe

Spin a single enemy off the ground on a small vortex. Mark 3-fatigue; your target becomes *Impaired* and *Stunned*.

Suction
Evade & Observe

Snatch a small object off the ground or from a foe's hand with a sucking wind. The object snaps to your hand unless someone marks 2-fatigue to hold it or block its movement.

Twisting Wind
Defend & Maneuver

Effortlessly flow around blows like the wind itself. For each foe engaged with you who chose an **advance and attack** approach, clear 1-fatigue and hold 1-momentum. If you **advance and attack** next exchange, you may spend your momentum instead of fatigue.

Wind Run
Defend & Maneuver

Race at high speeds, dodging attacks and seeking escape. Mark 1-fatigue to slip to a particular point of escape, disengaging from foes; you don't engage any new foes. If no one re-engages with you or blocks your retreat by the end of the exchange, you escape the scene.

*Rare Technique

Weapons Techniques

Boom!*

Advance & Attack

Throw a small prepared explosive into the midst of your foes. Mark 2-fatigue or clear *Prepared* to toss the explosive into your enemies' midst. Everyone in range (including allies in the area) must either mark 3-fatigue to dive away, or mark a condition and become *Stunned*, their choice.

Chi Blocking Jabs*

Advance & Attack

Pinpoint weapon or hand strikes to block a foe's chi. Mark 1-fatigue to block a foe's chi with your strikes, inflicting a condition and rendering a limb useless (and blocking bending with that limb). An enemy with one fewer useful limb chooses 1 fewer technique to use each exchange. Limbs become usable again when combat ends or three exchanges pass.

Chart a Course*

Evade & Observe

Plan a clear and perfect path of action. Secretly choose your approach and up to two techniques you plan to use in the next exchange (noting them in advance). If you use those techniques in the next exchange, reveal your planning; those techniques cost no fatigue and cannot be canceled or blocked. Anyone engaged with you can mark 1-fatigue to look at the note.

Counterstrike

Defend & Maneuver

Using impeccable timing, read your foe's movement and lash out with blinding speed. Execute a Strike as if you had marked 1-fatigue against an engaged foe who chose **advance and attack** as their approach. You cannot use this technique if you have any negative statuses.

Disarm

Defend & Maneuver

Target your foe's ability to fight by breaking, removing, or limiting a particular style. Mark 2-fatigue to name any advanced **advance and attack** technique your foe has—they are unable to use that technique for the remainder of this encounter.

Feint

Evade & Observe

Trick your foes into overextending themselves against you. If you were targeted by any attacks this exchange, you may mark 1-fatigue to immediately inflict a condition on each of your attackers.

*Rare Technique

Parry

Defend & Maneuver

Stop a foe's attack before it connects. Choose a foe who used **advance and attack** this exchange; during **advance and attack**, mark fatigue—1-for-1—to cancel an attack they use against you after they pay the costs.

Pin a Fly to a Tree*

Advance & Attack

Fire arrows with perfect accuracy to pin a foe in place. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict *Impaired* on a target, or 3-fatigue to inflict *Impaired* and *Trapped*.

Pinpoint Thrust

Advance & Attack

Using a thrusting or stabbing weapon, go straight for the target with precision and accuracy. Mark 1-fatigue and inflict 2-fatigue and *Impaired* on your foe. You may mark an additional 1-fatigue to move yourself to a new position within reach immediately; any foes engaged with you may mark 1-fatigue to block this movement.

Switch It Up

Evade & Observe

Switch up your style, footwork, weapon, or bearing, causing your foe to second-guess your next move. Mark 1-fatigue to become *Prepared* and force an engaged foe to reveal their choice of approach before you choose yours during the next exchange.

Take the High Ground

Defend & Maneuver

Move to an advantageous position above your foe. Mark 1-fatigue, become *Favored*, and ignore all fatigue, conditions, and negative statuses inflicted on you by attacks they make against you this exchange.

Turn the Tables*

Advance & Attack

Make careful strikes to undermine your foe's advantageous position. Mark 1-fatigue to knock your foe from their position to a new, disadvantageous location, inflicting 1-fatigue. If your foe was *Favored* or *Prepared* at the start of the exchange, you do not mark fatigue, you inflict an additional 1-fatigue, and they lose all appropriate positive statuses. These costs and consequences cannot be canceled or avoided by another technique.

Technology Techniques

Better, Faster, Stronger

Defend & Maneuver

You push your equipment to its limits to move fast and charge up. Mark 1-fatigue to use Seize a Position, but no foe can block you. You may mark an additional 1-fatigue to gain *Empowered* for as long as you maintain the new position, or to move to an unsafe, unstable area and make it safe.

Blinded By Science

Advance & Attack

Use your gadgets and gizmos in a way that confuses and dazzles even the most tech-savvy foe. Mark up to 3-fatigue as you throw out your devices. If you mark 1-fatigue, inflict 1-fatigue and *Impaired* on your foe. If you mark 2-fatigue, inflict *Trapped* or *Stunned* on your foe, as well. If you mark 3-fatigue, inflict both *Trapped* and *Stunned* in addition to the 1-fatigue effects.

Collect Material

Evade & Observe

Scrounge up bits and bobs from the area around you that you can use to your advantage. Take 3-gears and become *Prepared*. Spend gears 1-for-1 instead of fatigue on technology techniques or basic techniques using technology training.

Entangler

Advance & Attack

Entangle a foe with a weapon or device. Mark 1-fatigue to wrap the entangling object around your foe; they are *Trapped*. They break free automatically after they are *Trapped* for two full exchanges.

Full-Power Attack*

Advance & Attack

Discharge your batteries, release the high-tension coils, and otherwise unleash the full charge of your equipment! Become *Impaired* and inflict 2-fatigue on a targeted foe. Spend all gears you currently hold 1-for-1 to inflict 1 additional fatigue. If you spend 3 or more gears in this way, inflict 2 additional fatigue. You cannot earn gears for the rest of this scene—your equipment is too damaged, depleted, or otherwise used up.

Jolt

Advance & Attack

Launch a disruptive attack on a target within reach in an attempt to control or slow them. Mark 1-fatigue to target a person or object. If you target a person, they must shift their balance away from center; if they are a technology user or covered in metal, they become *Stunned*; if you target an object, it is temporarily slowed or shut down.

Jury Rig*

Advance & Attack

Create a new device on the fly. You gain *Favored*, hold 1-gear, and name one basic technique from any approach. As long as you hold this device, you can use that technique as if it was part of your current approach by spending 1-gear. Otherwise, spend gears 1-for-1 instead of fatigue on technology techniques or basic techniques using technology training.

Pinpoint Flaws

Evade & Observe

Identify weak points in your environment. Name a status you wish to inflict on a foe next exchange; the GM will tell you what you need to break in your environment to inflict that status. Next exchange, you may use Smash in addition to any other techniques you use, no matter what approach you choose.

Plant Trap

Evade & Observe

Place a snare or triggered explosive into your environment. Mark 1-fatigue; the next enemy who enters the trapped area must mark a condition and shift their balance away from center.

Rebuild

Defend & Maneuver

Using your technological know-how, you improve your situation by quickly tuning, repairing, and adjusting your available equipment. Mark 1-fatigue, clear a condition, and gain 3-gears. Spend gears 1-for-1 instead of fatigue on technology techniques or basic techniques using technology training.

Smoke Bomb

Defend & Maneuver

Throw a smoke bomb to cover your escape from the combat. Mark 1-fatigue to immediately *Impair* every other combatant in the area. You escape at the end of this exchange. Any foe who is engaged with you and not *Impaired* may mark 1-fatigue to block your escape.

Wind Up*

Defend & Maneuver

Wind up a technological device to build tension and charge! Gain 1-gear and become *Favored*; then, mark up to 2-fatigue, and hold 2 additional gears for each fatigue you mark. Spend gears 1-for-1 instead of fatigue on technology techniques or basic techniques using technology training.

*Rare Technique

APPENDIX B

NPCS

This appendix includes several pre-built NPCs split between minor, major, master, groups, and legendary categories. The NPCs here are useful for a GM who quickly needs inspiration for an NPC's mechanical features; any of these NPCs can be adapted to fit several different kinds of character. When adapting one of these NPCs, pay attention to the balance principle, the drive, and techniques in particular—make sure those fit the NPC you need in the moment. The legends here are all iconic characters from the Avatarverse stories, each with a rare technique they are uniquely suited to use and teach.

Minor NPCs

Town Guard
A local guard

Drive: To keep order in the town
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Village Hunter
A skilled trapper and hunter

Drive: To see their village thrive
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Angry
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Trader
A traveling merchant

Drive: To become prosperous
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Afraid
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Shopkeeper
An owner of a successful city shop

Drive: To maintain their social standing
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Tough Bruiser
Local muscle

Drive: To follow orders
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Afraid
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Soldier
A trained grunt of a larger unit

Drive: To follow orders
Principle: 0 +1
Condition: Guilty
Fatigue: ◇◇◇

Major NPCs

Outlaw Captain
A leader of pirates, bandits, or criminals

Drive: To take what others can't hold
Principle: Survival 0 +1 +2
Condition: Angry, Afraid, Foolish
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Sense Environment, Duck and Twist*

Champion Pit-Fighter
A champion pit-fighter

Drive: To control the pit-fighting scene
Principle: Discipline 0 +1 +2
Condition: Angry, Desperate, Guilty
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Charge, Forceful Blow*

Military Commander
A trained and capable military commander

Drive: To protect their subordinates
Principle: Duty 0 +1 +2
Condition: Angry, Jaded, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Rapid Assessment*

Noble
A member of the ruling class

Drive: To seek excitement and novelty
Principle: Freedom 0 +1 +2
Condition: Despondent, Hopeless, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *None*

Political Leader
A local mayor, magistrate, or governor

Drive: To minimize problems
Principle: Community 0 +1 +2
Condition: Afraid, Frantic, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *None*

Master NPCs

Accomplished General

A weaponmaster in command of extensive forces

Drive: To win favor with their commander
Principle: Ambition 0 +1 +2 +3
Condition: Afraid, Angry, Disgusted, Guilty, Morose
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Feint, Turn the Tables, Pinpoint Thrust*

Obsessive Inventor

A creator of dangerous and innovative devices

Drive: To create perfection
Principle: Progress 0 +1 +2 +3
Condition: Afraid, Angry, Insecure, Manic, Offended
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Jolt, Collect Materials, Wind Up*

Rebel Leader

A rebel war leader in the Earth Kingdom

Drive: To overthrow the existing government
Principle: Justice 0 +1 +2 +3
Condition: Afraid, Angry, Guilty, Hopeless, Humiliated
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Earth Armor, Stone Shield*

Triad Leader

An infamous firebending Republic City criminal

Drive: To maintain their empire
Principle: Role 0 +1 +2 +3
Condition: Afraid, Fixated, Frustrated, Insecure, Vengeful
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Lightning Blast, Flame Knives*

Water Tribe Chief

An experienced and trusted Water Tribe leader

Drive: To protect their people
Principle: Tradition 0 +1 +2 +3
Condition: Angry, Guilty, Insecure, Stubborn, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Technique: *Crushing Grip of Seas, Stream the Water*

NPC Groups

Small Mob

A small mob of minor thugs

Drive: To punish those who wronged them
Principle: Retribution 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Angry, Insecure, Troubled
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Overwhelm*

Military Squad

A small squad of trained soldiers

Drive: To accomplish their given objective
Principle: Duty 0 +1 +2
Conditions: Afraid, Guilty, Insecure
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Focused Fire, Protect Objective*

Palace Guards

A medium group of trained guards, eager to serve

Drive: To protect the palace
Principle: Loyalty 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Afraid, Angry, Desperate, Guilty, Humiliated
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Coordination, Shield Wall, Swarm*

Republic City Police Squad

A medium group of Metalbenders

Drive: To enforce law and order
Principle: Results 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Distracted, Guilty, Overbearing, Troubled, Zealous
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Metal Bindings, Spread Out, Test Defenses*

Elite Rebels

A medium group of elite revolutionaries

Drive: To overturn authority
Principle: Freedom 0 +1 +2 +3
Conditions: Afraid, Guilty, Hopeless, Insecure, Overconfident
Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇
Techniques: *Scatter and Regroup, Swarm, Surround*



Kyoshi

Background on p.32

"...only justice will bring peace."

Drive

Balance by any means necessary

How to Play Kyoshi

- Be direct. The Avatar is fierce and assertive. No matter what her internal feelings may be, Kyoshi makes her voice heard.
- Take risks and seize the moment. Kyoshi is an Avatar of action and, when she needs to, she acts decisively and swiftly. Kyoshi has no qualms about knocking a few heads together if it gets results.
- Prioritize justice. She may not be the best at reading people, but Kyoshi knows right from wrong. She grew up with nothing and saw how people in power abused their position; there is no way that's happening under her watch.

Bring Kyoshi in...

- ...when people in power hurt those they are meant to protect.
- ...when a hero doubts what to do and the stakes are high.
- ...when a hard decision needs to be made by someone important.

Techniques

Breath of Fire

Advance & Attack

Breathe fire in a massive gout. Mark 1-fatigue to set alight as much or as little of your surroundings as you choose and try to set aflame any foes within reach. Those foes must either retreat and disengage with you, becoming *Impaired*, or suffer 2-fatigue and become *Doomed* as they catch fire.

Dust-Stepping

Defend & Maneuver

Step up into the air on thin pillars of dust and stone. Advance to a higher position and become *Favored* and *Prepared*. Any foe engaged with you can mark 2-fatigue to block this effect.

Earthquake*

Advance & Attack

Ripple the earth and stone all around you with terrible force. Any structures around you are damaged or destroyed, inflicting up to 4-fatigue (GM's choice) on anyone inside and *Impairing* and *Trapping* them.

*Rare Technique

Principle

0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Justice

Conditions

- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Insecure
- ☐ Troubled
- ☐ Cold
- ☐ Obsessed
- ☐ Vengeful

Fatigue



Roku

Background on p.44

"It was bitter work, but the results were worth it."

Drive

Maintain the peace and show restraint

How to Play Roku

- Exude competence. Roku is a skilled Avatar. He's taken the time required to know what his job entails and does it exceptionally well.
- Find the middle ground. Roku's work as Avatar is largely focused on maintaining peace between the Four Nations. He does everything in his power to negotiate, calm, and guide potentially volatile situations.
- Appreciate novelty and individuality. The Avatar has traveled extensively and knows the world is full of beautiful unique things. He believes people are stronger when their talents are valued and takes the time to listen to what others have to say.

Bring Roku in...

- ...when important matters are about to escalate to violence.
- ...when the companions have meddled in political affairs beyond their ken.
- ...when a critical agreement has been broken.

Techniques

Breath of Wind

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Exhale mightily through pursed lips. Mark 1-fatigue to knock down a single target and inflict *Stunned* on them unless they mark 4-fatigue.

Fire Stream

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Pour fire upon a target. Mark 1-fatigue to inflict *Impaired* on them. Mark 3-fatigue to inflict *Doomed* and *Impaired*. Mark 5-fatigue to inflict *Trapped*, *Doomed*, and *Impaired*.

Lava Wave*

LAVA

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Raise and push a wave of lava from the earth around you. The wave destroys and sets fire to anything in the environment that it touches. Foes in its path have to fling themselves out of the way, marking 2-fatigue and becoming *Impaired*, or becoming *Stunned* and *Doomed* as the wave knocks them to the side and catches them aflame.

*Rare Technique

Conditions

- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Insecure
- ☐ Troubled
- ☐ Exhausted
- ☐ Frustrated
- ☐ Remorseful

Principle

0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Peace

Fatigue



General Iroh

Background on p.65

"It is important to draw wisdom from many different places."

Drive

Learn from the past and cultivate the future

How to Play General Iroh

- Be warm, gracious, and regretful. Iroh tries his best to make others feel welcome in his presence and doesn't let his ego get the better of him. He is dealing with the relatively fresh tragedy of his son's death, which drove him to abdicate his position as heir to the throne; that sadness still touches him.
- Prize wisdom like a cup of finely brewed tea. Knowledge is the key to greatness and Iroh knows this better than most. He's an avid listener and has a way of teasing information out of others that they might not have even realized they knew themselves.
- Cultivate greatness. Iroh has the knack for being in the right place at the right time and bringing out the best in people. He notices the spark in people that others might miss and endeavors to guide people along the right path.

Bring Iroh in...

- ...when a hero needs bolstering from an unlikely source.
- ...when the White Lotus needs something done.
- ...when someone threatens to upset the spiritual balance.

Techniques

Lightning Blast*

LIGHTNING

ADVANCE & ATTACK

Hurl a bolt of lightning at a target. Mark up to 3-fatigue. For each fatigue you mark, your target must mark 2-fatigue.

Redirect Lightning*

DEFEND & MANEUVER

If you are targeted by a lightning attack, turn it back on the attacker. If you use this technique normally by **defending and maneuvering**, it applies for the exchange; otherwise, you can mark 2-fatigue to do it in any exchange without using a technique, no matter what approach you chose.

Wall of Fiery Breath

DEFEND & MANEUVER

Breathe a gout of flame that keeps foes back as you maneuver away from them. Mark one condition and move to a new position. Foes must keep their distance and become disengaged, or push through the flame and suffer 4-fatigue.

*Rare Technique

Principle

0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Compassion

Conditions

- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Insecure
- ☐ Troubled
- ☐ Remorseful
- ☐ Disappointed
- ☐ Horrified

Fatigue



Principle

0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Kindness

Conditions

- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Insecure
- ☐ Troubled
- ☐ Overwhelmed
- ☐ Obstinate
- ☐ Foolish

Fatigue

Aang

Background on p.68

"It's easy to do nothing, but it's hard to forgive."

Drive

Heal the world and restore the balance

How to Play Aang

- Have fun! Aang knows how to have fun and bring levity to nearly any situation. He takes his duties as Avatar seriously, but that doesn't mean he can't do them in a friendly, silly manner, with a laugh or two...or three.
- Preserve the past and look to the future. Much was lost during the war and Aang wants to preserve as much history as possible, especially when it comes to the Air Nomads. At the same time, he helps build a new future to heal the scars of the past.
- Empathize, understand, and take stock. Aang works hard to understand the position of others in an open and honest manner. When he's criticized or opposed he often tries to hear what the other person is saying and evaluate his own actions.

Bring Aang in...

- ...when a new piece of Air Nomad culture is unearthed.
- ...when the balance between spirits and humans is threatened.
- ...when large or important parties can't let go of past conflicts.

Techniques

Air Scooter

Evade & Observe

Summon a ball or ring of air under yourself. While riding it, you are *Favored*. You can sacrifice your air scooter to avoid marking fatigue or conditions when you are struck by an attack.

Concussive Wake*

Advance & Attack

Run in a circle to build up momentum and then release a highly compressed blast of air in the shape of your silhouette. Mark 2-fatigue. Inflict 4-fatigue or two conditions on your target, their choice. They also choose to either become *Stunned* or to allow themselves to be flung away, well out of reach.

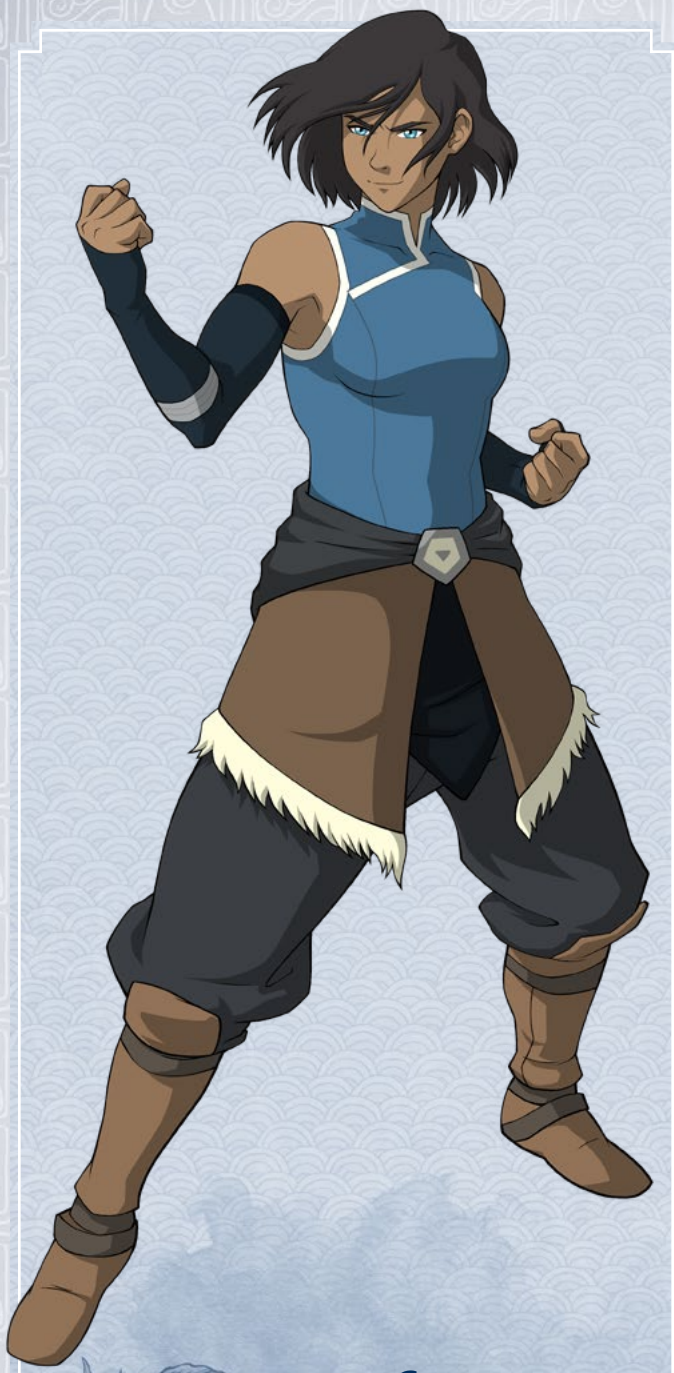
Detect the Heavy Step

Seismic

Defend & Maneuver

Use seismic sense to detect the instant an enemy is about to move against you. Become *Prepared*, and at any time during this exchange, you may lose your *Prepared* status and mark fatigue to interrupt an enemy as they use a technique; they must mark an additional 3-fatigue or you disrupt their attempt to act, canceling the technique.

*Rare Technique



Principle

0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Care

Fatigue

Conditions

- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Insecure
- ☐ Troubled
- ☐ Enraged
- ☐ Frustrated
- ☐ Overconfident

Korra

Background on p.78

"I needed to understand what real suffering was, so I could become more compassionate to others."

Drive

Forge a new path for the future

How to Play Korra

- Say what's on your mind. Korra speaks her mind to anyone who is willing to listen (and yells it at those who aren't). Speaking out of turn has embarrassed her more than a few times, but Korra is honest with her emotions and open in her communication.
- Care with abandon. The Avatar genuinely cares about her role and isn't apathetic or distant. She's willing to give her all when solving a situation and expects those around her to do the same.
- Follow your own path. There's little Korra can't do if she puts her mind to it and she's always forged her own path to being the Avatar. Korra acknowledges the past, but believes the best way forward is trying in earnest and doing your best.

Bring Korra in...

- ...when a tyrannical foe needs to be taught a lesson.
- ...when spirits are in danger.
- ...when there is a significant and seemingly insoluble problem.

Techniques

Flame Knives

Advance & Attack

Mark up to 3-fatigue. Hold an equal number of flames. Lose 1-flame at the end of each exchange after this one. When you inflict fatigue or conditions on a foe, inflict an additional 1-fatigue for each remaining flame.

Hurl Metal*

Advance & Attack — Metal

Rip and bend big pieces of metal in the surrounding area to strike at a foe. Mark 1-fatigue and inflict 2-fatigue or one condition, your choice, on your target. They also either lose a positive status or suffer *Impaired* as they are knocked off-balance.

Refresh

Evade & Observe — Heal

Apply water to reinvigorate and close wounds on a willing target. Mark fatigue to heal an ally in reach who is **evading and observing**. Clear an appropriate status from them, and clear 3-fatigue or two conditions.

*Rare Technique

APPENDIX C

PLAY MATERIALS

This appendix includes useful references for playing **Avatar Legends: The Roleplaying Game**. There are four sheets included here: a basic moves reference, a combat exchange reference, a campaign creation worksheet, and a GM reference. While all of the information on these pages is in this book, these reference sheets collect the rules in one place to make them easy to use in actual play. For the game as a whole, you need one campaign creation worksheet and one GM reference; for each individual player (including the GM), you need one basic moves reference and one combat exchange reference. There are digital versions of these play materials, including additional NPC tracking sheets, available at magpiegames.com/avatarrpg.

Basic Moves

Assess a Situation

When you **assess a situation**, roll with Creativity. On a 7–9, ask one question. On a 10+, ask two. Take +1 ongoing when acting on the answers.

- What here can I use to _____?
- Who or what is the biggest threat?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What's my best way out/in/through?
- Who or what is in the greatest danger?

Plead

When you **plead with an NPC** who cares what you think for help, support, or action, roll with Harmony. On a 7–9, they need something more—evidence that this is the right course, guidance in making the right choices, or resources to aid them—before they act; the GM tells you what they need. On a 10+, they act now and do their best until the situation changes.

Help

When you take appropriate action to **help a companion**, mark 1-fatigue to give them a +1 to their roll (after the roll). You cannot help in a combat exchange in this way.

Rely on Your Skills & Training

When you **rely on your skills and training** to overcome an obstacle, gain new insight, or perform a familiar custom, roll with Focus. On a hit, you do it. On a 7–9, you do it imperfectly— the GM tells you how your approach might lead to unexpected consequences; accept those consequences or mark 1-fatigue.

Push Your Luck

When you **push your luck** in a risky situation, say what you want to do and roll with Passion. On a hit, you do it, but it costs you to scrape by; the GM tells you what it costs you. On a 10+, your boldness pays off despite the cost; the GM tells you what other lucky opportunity falls in your lap.

Intimidate

When you **intimidate an NPC** into backing off or giving in, roll with Passion. On a hit, they choose one. On a 10+, first, you pick one they cannot choose.

- They run to escape or get backup.
- They back down but keep watch.
- They give in with a few stipulations.
- They attack you, but off-balance; the GM marks a condition on them.

Guide and Comfort

When you try to honestly **guide and comfort** another person, roll with Harmony. On a hit, they choose one:

- They embrace your guidance and comfort. They may clear a condition or 2-fatigue, and you may ask one question; they must answer honestly.
- They shut you down. They inflict a condition on you, and you shift their balance in response.

On a 10+, if they embrace your guidance and comfort, you may also shift their balance.

Trick

When you **trick an NPC**, roll with Creativity. On a hit, they fall for it and do what you want for the moment. On a 7–9, pick one. On a 10+, pick two.

- They stumble; take +1 forward to acting against them.
- They act foolishly; the GM tells you what additional opportunity they give you.
- They overcommit; they are deceived for some time.

Balance Moves

Live Up to Your Principle

When you **take action in accordance with the values of a principle**, mark 1-fatigue to roll with that principle instead of whatever stat you would normally roll.

Call Someone Out

When you **openly call on someone to live up to their principle**, shift your balance away from center, then name and roll with their principle. On a hit, they are called to act as you say; they must either do it or mark a condition. On a 7–9, they challenge your view of the world in turn; mark 1-fatigue or they shift your balance as they choose. On a miss, they can demand you act in accordance with one of your principles instead; mark a condition or act as they request.

Deny a Callout

When you **deny an NPC calling on you to live up to your principle**, roll with that principle. On a hit, act as they say or mark 1-fatigue. On a 10+, their words hit hard; you must also shift your balance towards the called-on principle. On a miss, you stand strong; clear a condition, clear 1-fatigue, or shift your balance, your choice.

Resist Shifting Your Balance

When you **resist an NPC shifting your balance**, roll. On a hit, you maintain your current balance in spite of their words or deeds. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7–9, choose one.

- Clear a condition or mark growth by immediately acting to prove them wrong
- Shift your balance towards the opposite principle
- Learn what their principle is (if they have one); if you already know, take +1 forward against them

On a miss, they know just what to say to throw you off balance. Mark a condition, and the GM shifts your balance twice.

Lose Your Balance

If your balance shifts past the end of the track, **you lose your balance**. You obsess over that principle to a degree that's not healthy for you or anyone around you. Choose one of the following:

- Give in or submit to your opposition
- Lose control of yourself in a destructive and harmful way
- Take an extreme action in line with the principle, then flee

Afterward, when you've had some time to recover and recenter yourself, shift your center one step towards the principle you exceeded and clear all your conditions and fatigue. Reset your balance to your new center.

Growth Questions

At the end of each session, each player answers the following questions:

- Did you learn something challenging, exciting, or complicated about the world?
- Did you stop a dangerous threat or solve a community problem?
- Did you guide a companion towards balance or end the session at your center?

Each player also answers their playbook's unique personal growth question. For each yes, mark growth. When you have marked four growth, you take a growth advancement.

Clearing Conditions

- **Afraid:** run from danger or difficulty.
- **Angry:** break something important or lash out at a friend.
- **Guilty:** make a personal sacrifice to absolve your guilt.
- **Insecure:** take foolhardy action without talking to your companions.
- **Troubled:** seek guidance from a mentor or powerful figure.

AVATAR LEGENDS
THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

Combat Exchanges

Exchange Steps

1 The GM chooses an approach for each NPC or group of NPCs in the exchange; the GM keeps their choice secret.

2 Each player of a PC in the exchange chooses an approach for their character. If multiple players have PCs in the exchange, they can talk and coordinate. Their choices can be public, but if the PCs oppose each other, they keep their choices secret and reveal in the next step.

3 The GM reveals what they chose for each NPC, and PCs opposing each other reveal their previously secret approaches.

4 All combatants who chose **defend and maneuver** resolve their approach.

5 All combatants who chose **advance and attack** resolve their approach.

6 All combatants who chose **evade and observe** resolve their approach.

7 All characters who lost their balance or were taken out now resolve those results.

After the Exchange

- The full effects of a character **being taken out** or **losing their balance** resolve outside of fight exchanges.
- **When a PC is taken out**, they are unable to act any more. The exact details of how they are taken out can be set up outside of fight exchanges—but almost always, a PC being taken out is a golden opportunity for the GM to make another move.
- **After an exchange ends**, there is no requirement to go right into another exchange.
- If **multiple combatants want to keep fighting**, then another exchange ensues. This also covers situations in which one side wants to only defend or evade.
- If **only one combatant (or one side of combatants) wants to keep fighting**—to the extent that their targets won't even resist incoming blows—then no exchange is needed; the attackers simply inflict fatigue or conditions on their targets.
- If **no combatants are engaging each other**, then there's no need for an exchange at all!
- If **all combatants on one side of the conflict are defeated**, unable to continue fighting in any way, then no more exchanges are needed!

Stance Move

FOR PCs

When you resolve your approach, roll with the appropriate stat:

- **Defend and maneuver** rolls with **Focus**
- **Advance and attack** rolls with **Passion**
- **Evade and observe** rolls with **Creativity** or **Harmony**, the PC's choice

On a 7–9, use one basic or mastered technique. On a 10+, choose one from this list instead:

- Mark 1-fatigue to use a learned technique
- Use one practiced technique
- Use two different basic or mastered techniques

On a miss, you stumble, but you can shift your balance away from center to use one basic technique.

FOR NPCs

NPCs always use a number of techniques equal to 1 + their balance rating, chosen by the GM.

Statuses

Some techniques within a combat exchange assign statuses to characters based on the fiction, such as a character getting *Trapped* by ice or metal. Techniques may assign the following:

Negative Statuses

- **Doomed:** You're in grave danger—mark 1-fatigue every few seconds (or each exchange) until you free yourself.
- **Impaired:** You're slowed or off-balance—mark 1-fatigue or take a -2 to all physical actions (PCs) / choose one fewer technique (NPCs).
- **Trapped:** You're completely helpless—you must mark a combination of three conditions or fatigue to escape.
- **Stunned:** You're caught off-guard—you can't act or respond for a few seconds until you steady yourself.

Positive Statuses

- **Empowered:** Your abilities are naturally stronger in this moment—clear 1-fatigue at the end of each exchange.
- **Favored:** You're buoyed by circumstance—choose an additional basic or mastered technique in the next exchange, even on a miss.
- **Inspired:** You're ready to stand for something—clear *Inspired* to shift your balance toward a principle of your choice.
- **Prepared:** You're ready for what's coming—clear *Prepared* to take +1 to an appropriate roll (after the roll) or avoid marking a condition.

Basic Techniques

Defend & Maneuver

Roll with Focus

Ready

Mark 1-fatigue to ready yourself or your environment, assigning or clearing a fictionally appropriate status of nearby characters or yourself.

Retaliate

Steel yourself for their blows. Each time a foe inflicts fatigue, a condition, or shifts your balance in this exchange, inflict 1-fatigue on that foe.

Seize a Position

Move to a new location. Engage/disengage with a foe, overcome a negative status or danger, establish an advantageous position, or escape the scene. Any foe engaged with you can mark 1-fatigue to block this technique.

Advance & Attack

Roll with Passion

Strike

Strike a foe in reach, forcing them to mark 2-fatigue, mark a condition, or shift their balance away from center, their choice. Mark 1-fatigue to instead choose to hammer them with your blows, forcing them to mark 2-fatigue, or strike where they are weak, inflicting a condition.

Pressure

Impress or intimidate a foe. Choose an approach—your foe cannot choose to use that approach in the next exchange.

Smash

Mark 1-fatigue to destroy or destabilize something in the environment—possibly inflicting or overcoming a fictionally appropriate positive or negative status.

Evade & Observe

Clear 1-Fatigue & Roll with Creativity or Harmony

Test Balance

Mark 1-fatigue to challenge an engaged foe's balance. Ask what their principle is; they must answer honestly. If you already know their principle, instead shift their balance away from center by questioning or challenging their beliefs or perspective.

Bolster or Hinder

Aid or impede a nearby character, inflicting an appropriate status.

Commit

Recenter yourself amidst the fray. Shift your balance toward one of your principles; the next time you live up to that principle, do not mark fatigue.

Campaign Creation Worksheet

Choose an Era:

☐ Custom Era: _____



☐ Kyoshi Era



☐ Roku Era



☐ Hundred Year War



☐ Aang Era



☐ Korra Era

Choose a Scope:

Choose a Group Focus:

- ☐ To defeat [dangerous foe]
- ☐ To protect [place, idea, culture, person, thing]
- ☐ To change [culture, society, place, person]
- ☐ To deliver [person, thing] to [place, culture, person]
- ☐ To rescue [person, thing]
- ☐ To learn [idea, culture, training, history]

Group Focus Details:

Detail your Inciting Incident:

Act 1:

Act 2:

Act 3:

Location: _____

Act 1:

- ☐ We befriended [ally] who gave us access to [valuable item].
- ☐ We discovered a secret hidden by [powerful figure].
- ☐ We did something fun, but drew the ire of [powerful figure] in the process.
- ☐ We learned the frightening plans of [powerful foe].

Act 2:

- ☐ We stole [valuable item] from [powerful foe].
- ☐ We discovered a terrible truth about [location or powerful figure].
- ☐ We defended [ally or place] from [powerful foe].
- ☐ We destroyed [valuable item] and drew the ire of its owner, [powerful foe].

Act 3:

- ☐ We fought and barely defeated [powerful foe].
- ☐ We narrowly escaped capture by [powerful foe].
- ☐ We saved or rescued [ally] from [powerful figure].
- ☐ We were saved from [powerful foe] by [ally], to their own detriment.

Allies & Enemies

Game Master Reference Sheet

Agendas
- Ensure the world feels real
- Make the PCs' stories meaningful and important
- Play to find out what happens

Baselines
Always say...
- What the guidelines demand
- What the rules demand
- What honesty demands

Guidelines
- Describe a wondrous world with a deep history
- Address the characters, not your players
- Be the companions' biggest fan
- Ask questions and let your players answer
- Put emotions on characters' sleeves
- Resolve conflicts episodically
- Remember the history of the world and characters
- Emphasize lessons throughout
- Give NPCs drives, fears, and hopes
- Make conflicts moral choices
- Use imbalance instead of evil
- Counterbalance darkness with light
- Seek consequences besides death

GM Moves
- Reveal a hidden truth
- Inflict fatigue or a condition
- Shift their balance
- Twist loyalties with tempting offers
- Escalate to violence
- Offer a risky or costly opportunity
- Threaten someone
- Shift the odds, suddenly
- Exploit a weakness in their history
- Provide wisdom in unlikely places
- Turn a move back on them

If you get stuck...

Beseech them for help
They're heroes—they'll always be inclined to provide real assistance to those in need, even if they aren't sure how to immediately be of use or solve the problem.

Upset their balance
The arc of each and every PC is centered on their balance and the conflict between their principles. Introduce characters and situations that help upset the balance, pushing the PCs up and down their balance tracks and challenging their decisions.

Focus on their trainings
The heroes know enough to be capable, but they still have plenty to learn. NPCs who offer to teach them, or who show off new techniques the PCs want to learn, always provide a new path forward.

Training Move

When you spend time with a teacher learning and training in a new technique, roll with modifiers from the following questions:
- Is your balance in line with your center or are you free of conditions? If yes, take +1.
- Do you and your teacher share at least one background? If yes, take +1.
- Does your teacher agree with your reasons for training and learning? If no, take -1.
- Is the technique easy to grasp based on your current training, experience, and skills? If no, take -1.

On a hit, you learn the technique, and your master shifts your balance. On a 10+, you learn it with ease, and it takes as little time as possible. On a 7-9, it either takes more time than normal, or you must mark two conditions. On a miss, you can't learn the technique yet because you need another lesson before you can grasp its full use. Your master will tell you what additional task you must undertake to put yourself into the correct state of mind; do it, and you learn the technique.

Techniques
Techniques represent discrete skills or forms that characters have learned with their training. PCs can have techniques at **Learned**, **Practiced**, or **Mastered** levels.

Learned Techniques:
- can only be used on a 10+ on the stance move
- cost an extra 1-fatigue to use
- advance to Practiced level when used in combat

Practiced Techniques:
- can only be used on a 10+ on the stance move
- advance to Mastered level when the PC accomplishes the mastery condition set to them by their teacher

Mastered Techniques:
- can be used as easily as basic techniques

Mastery conditions are set to a PC by their teacher to fully master a technique.

Sample Mastery Conditions
- Defeat a specific foe in combat
- Surrender
- Lose your balance
- Be taken out
- Seek a specific mystical or ancient location
- Return an important artifact to its proper place
- Find and listen to an opposing teacher
- Build a structure of spiritual or local import
- Destroy a dangerous or corrupt structure
- Tell a specific person a specific, difficult truth
- Use the technique in an exchange in a particular way
- Repeat an act or lesson that the teacher had to endure themself

Important Places (See map on page 18 for corresponding eras)
- **Agna Qel'a** [pg.20] *Northern Water Tribe* - A city of ice with impenetrable walls housing the spirits of Moon and Ocean
- **Ba Sing Se** [pg. 22] *Earth Kingdom* - A sprawling city rife with corruption protected by an impenetrable wall
- **Bhanti Island** [pg. 25] *Fire Nation* - Island of Fire Sages with magical healing pool
- **Crescent Island** [pg. 46] *Fire Nation* - Fire Temple island, destroyed accidentally by Avatar Roku
- **Eastern Air Temple** [pg. 27] *Air Nomads* - Air Nomad temple with significant spiritual power
- **Fire Fountain City** [pg. 25] *Fire Nation* - An ancient city with mystical roots
- **Fire Nation Capital** [pg. 24] *Fire Nation* - A sprawling city built atop and within an island volcano
- **Foggy Swamp** [pg. 21] *Foggy Swamp Tribe* - Home to an isolated water tribe who can bend the water in plants
- **Gaoling** [pg. 81] *Earth Kingdom* - Town in the Earth Kingdom, later home to the first democratic elections
- **Kyoshi Island** [pg. 23] *Earth Kingdom* - A large island home to the renowned Kyoshi Warriors
- **Lake Laogai** [pg. 62] *Earth Kingdom* - A lake within the outer wall of Ba Sing Se with a secret Dai Li facility underneath
- **Northern Air Temple** [pg. 26] *Air Nomads* - A towering temple only accessible through the air
- **Northern Spirit Portal** [pg. 21] *Northern Water Tribe* - Portal to the Spirit World, closed until the Korra Era
- **Omashu** [pg. 23] *Earth Kingdom* - A mountain-top city with unique technology operated by bending
- **Republic City** [pg. 82] *United Republic* - Central city of the relatively young United Republic
- **Si Wong Desert** [pg. 23] *Earth Kingdom* - A vast and deadly desert
- **Southern Air Temple** [pg. 27] *Air Nomads* - An Air Nomad temple home to flying lemurs and sky bison
- **Southern Spirit Portal** [pg. 21] *Southern Water Tribe* - Portal to the Spirit World, closed until the Korra Era
- **Sun Warriors' Ancient City** [pg. 25] *Fire Nation* - A forgotten city and home to dragons
- **Water Tribe Sacred Island** [pg. 53] *Water Tribes* - The halfway point between the Water Tribes
- **Western Air Temple** [pg. 27] *Air Nomads* - An upside-down mountain temple located in a strategically important location
- **Wolf Cove** [pg. 21] *Southern Water Tribe* - The capital of the South Pole struggling to find its identity amidst turmoil
- **Yu Dao** [pg. 70] *Earth Kingdom* - The oldest Fire Nation colony of the Hundred Year War

Assorted Additional Place Names: Use these if you need inspiration for a brand new location during play!
Flutterbat Cave, Diamond Island, Windtear Pass, Shimmerleaf Forest, Golden Mountain, Port Sail, Downpour Town, Highcloud, Icy Shin's, Yano's Glade, Bridge Crossing, Stoneside, Wu Chasm, Broken Branch Forest, Hungry Swamp, Ruby Marshes, Spear Plains, Mount Bao, Ripple River, Songbird Haven, Badger-Frog Bay, Dragon-Moose Fork

NPCs

Groups of NPCs

- A **small group**, 5–10 NPCs, can be statted as a single NPC one step above the individual members in importance. E.g., a small group of minor NPCs is the equivalent of one major NPC.
- A **medium group**, 11–20 NPCs, similarly behaves like a single NPC two steps above in importance. E.g., a medium group of minor NPCs is the equivalent of one master NPC.
- A **large group**, or 21+ NPCs, is three steps above in importance. E.g., a large group of minor NPCs is the equivalent of one legendary NPC.
- For steps of importance above master, simply add +1 fatigue, and +1 condition per step. E.g., a large group of major NPCs is the equivalent of a legendary NPC, +1 fatigue, +1 condition.

Training Inspiration

Airbending

- **Minor:** Big gusts of wind
- **Major:** Throwing incoming physical attacks off-course with wind, gliding along on air currents or balls of whirling air
- **Master:** Impossible grace, near-weightlessness, perfect dodging, gale-force winds

Waterbending

- **Minor:** Channeling big jets of water
- **Major:** Use ice creatively to shape the environment, heal (rarer)
- **Master:** Instantly changing water to ice and back, many limbs of water, sliding on ice

Earthbending

- **Minor:** Hurl rocks
- **Major:** Change the environment, exhibit seismic sense
- **Master:** Instant shifts from defense to offense (wall of earth turns into hurled rock), precision control, massive control

Firebending

- **Minor:** Throw gouts of flame
- **Major:** Light the environment aflame, launch themselves into the air with fire
- **Master:** Throwing fire at long distances, enormous fireballs, waves of flame

Technology

- **Minor:** Obviously dangerous machines (harpoon guns, big tanks)
- **Major:** Tricks, surprise weapons, and unexpected capabilities—but only a few
- **Master:** Endless supplies of small devices with dangerous uses

Weapons

- **Minor:** Swing with regular weapons
- **Major:** Dance around acrobatically, attack with strength and power
- **Master:** Distinctive and difficult weapons used with perfect precision and might

Minor NPC

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1

Fatigue: ◇◇◇ **Condition:** ☐

Technique:

Minor NPC

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1

Fatigue: ◇◇◇ **Condition:** ☐

Technique:

Minor NPC

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1

Fatigue: ◇◇◇ **Condition:** ☐

Technique:

Minor NPC

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1

Fatigue: ◇◇◇ **Condition:** ☐

Technique:

Major NPC ☐ Group

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1 +2

Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇

Conditions: ☐

☐ ☐

Techniques:

Notes:

Master NPC ☐ Group

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1 +2 +3

Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇

Conditions: ☐

☐ ☐

☐ ☐

Techniques:

Notes:

Legendary NPC ☐ Group

Name:

Training:

Drive:

Principle: 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

Fatigue: ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇ ◇◇◇◇◇

Conditions:

☐ ☐

☐ ☐

☐ ☐

☐ ☐

Techniques:

Notes:

Name List

Air Nomad Names
Aditi, Akash, Anil, Batsal, Chaha, Chang, Chimini, Devna, Ehani, Hayate, Idha, Imay, Mukta, Sanani, Soma, Sora, Tau, Toofan, Unnat, Yawen

Polar Water Tribe Names
Achak, Aklaq, Aputi, Atka, Hanta, Kallik, Kanti, Kitchi, Makwa, Meeka, Miki, Niimi, Noodin, Siqniq, Tapisa, Thaki, Ukiuk, Waaseyaa, Yuka, Ziibi

Foggy Swamp Water Tribe Names
Bai, Bo, He, Jia, Ju, Mu, Shi, Yan, Zan

Earth Kingdom Names
Binh, Bowen, Caihong, Chia-Hao, Dae, Diu, Hanna, Heng, Kim, Kyung, Minh, Nuah, Qiang, Queue, Shufen, Thi, Woong, Xiaobo, Ya-Ting, Zixin

Fire Nation Names
Asayo, Ayami, Bashira, Davaa, Erden, Ganzaya, Hanako, Jaw Long, Kayo, Keisuke, Kenshin, Manami, Mayu, Qacha, Qudan, Satsuki, Saya, Tuguslar, Yuka, Zolzaya

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