

# LIBRAM NOVUS



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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fifth issue of **Libram Novus**. In this issue, we have decided to explore a few things that are of use to both players and Game Masters.

To start off the issue, we bring you an article entitled, *Playing with Skill*, in which we provide you with some ways of handling and resolving certain types of skills. Specifically, we deal with some guidelines for handling Craftsmen. A Craftsman is a character who uses his skills to create or make something as part of his daily job. Blacksmiths, weapon smiths, carpenters, sculptors, painters, etc. all fall within this category. We will bring you a way of ranking those craftsmen, and for determining the creation of high quality items.

In the second half of this article, we will explore Herbcraft, another sub-skill of Crafts. With this skill, characters will be able to use herbs to allow them to heal faster than normal, as well as for treating illnesses and other maladies. Not to mention Herbcraft is also used in the making of Herbal Remedies, which actually do have a touch of magic in them.

And to round out the issue, we will introduce the idea of Training Paths. Training Paths help to tie characters to the setting by providing them with goals that they can accomplish. Goals which, upon completion, can unlock talents or provide other benefits to the character.

Enjoy!

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# PLAYING WITH SKILL



When I create characters, I often like to create characters that have some secondary skills that they can use to make money when not adventuring. This often translates into the character having some sort of crafting skill, allowing them create items.

Occasionally, this crafting skill may be related to the character's Class, such as an Archer having skill as a Bowyer or Fletcher, able to make bows or arrows respectively. This is always a good thing for a character that is traveling in the wilds and is far from the nearest shop where he can get more ammunition.

As mentioned in the core rules, skill rolls should only be called for when there is some sort of pressure or to heighten the tension, and that if the character has the skill and time and tools, that he should simply be allowed to accomplish the task at hand at the end of whatever time requirements might be associated with the task.

However, using this default method of not requiring rolls will also only result in average work. Craftsmen often strive to create high quality works, which can then be sold for greater amounts. Additionally, high quality works often reflect that the craftsman is more skilled in his trade than others and striving to be the best at something is a trait that all of the races tend to share.

## CRAFTSMANSHIP

One way that craftsmen and others may gauge the potential level of skill that a specific craftsman may have is by the awarding of certain titles.

In game terms, these titles are awarded based upon how many skill ranks that the character has. For the craftsmen themselves, they will usually be a part of a guild or organization of some sort for their craft, and the titles of Master and Grand Master may be restricted to only certain individuals, thus it is possible to have a character who has the ranks to be called a Master or Grand Master, but who only has a title of a lesser degree of skill.

For example, a Blacksmith's Guild may only allow 10 Masters and 1 Grand Master at any given time. So, while a Tradesman might have 25 ranks in smithing and be considered to be a master smith, he is still only a Tradesman since he hasn't been officially elevated to the rank of Master by the Guild.

You will also notice that the titles are based upon the number of skill ranks in the given skill and not the total bonus. Thus the character's stat bonus and any special bonuses that might apply to the skill are not counted as part of the actual training that the character has received.

What this means then, is that skill ranks represent learned knowledge while stat bonuses and special bonuses, such as those granted by Talents, represent a natural aptitude or innate ability with the chosen craft. This allows for both prodigies and those who have to use hard work to achieve the same overall level of capability while still having the titles being based on the measurable knowledge and not innate ability.

### Craftsmanship Titles

Title	Skill Ranks	
Apprentice	1-5 Ranks	
Journeyman	6-12 Ranks	
Master	Tradesman	13-20 Ranks
	Artisan	21-30 Ranks
	Grand Master	31+ Ranks

In the Craftsmanship Titles table, we actually have 2 columns for 3 of the rows. The column on the left (Master) applies to un-guilded crafts or to crafts that have a less formal hierarchy. The column on the right (Tradesman, Artisan, Grand Master) is mainly for use with those crafts that have formalized guilds and a more structured hierarchy and internal government.

In any case, here is a more explanatory definition of each title:

**Apprentice:** An Apprentice is one who has just started learning the craft. Quite often, he learns by watching his master and performing menial tasks for him, usually in preparation for the actual crafting process. As he gains in skill, he will learn the basics of the craft. His attempt to create items will usually result in serviceable products, though they will rarely be perfect or very pretty.

**Journeyman:** A Journeyman has mastered the basics of his craft and is often entrusted with handling nearly all of the routine day-to-day tasks and operations associated with his craft. Journeymen are often sent out to do the work to gain experience and broaden their horizons before they are even considered for elevation to the rank of Tradesman. Journeymen, even those on the road, are attached to, and must report to their Master.

**Tradesman:** This is one of the lowest levels of Mastery, and many craftsmen rarely move beyond this rank. The Tradesman has the knowledge and skill required to support both himself and his family. He is able to accomplish all of the tasks required of his craft and can occasionally produce works that are above average. Tradesmen are only allowed to have a single apprentice at a time.

**Artisan:** An Artisan is considered to be a leader in his craft. An Artisan has often spent years perfecting his skill in his craft and may know of rare or secret techniques that are hidden from or unknown to many others within the craft. Being raised to the level of Artisan requires nomination and election of other Artisans within the craft, so it is not unusual to see Tradesmen who are nearly as skilled or more skilled as some Artisans. Artisans can often produce works that are of high quality when they put their mind to it. Artisans often have multiple Apprentices, and sometimes even

a Journeyman or two working directly for him.

**Grand Master:** There are very few Grand Masters in any craft since it is often the highest rank attainable in any guild. Grand Masters will, more often than not, produce works of high quality and may even produce works that are truly one of a kind. Grand Masters almost always have knowledge of secret or hidden techniques that the majority of his craft does not know, and sometimes have knowledge that is thought to have been lost or forgotten, even by other Masters. Grand Masters are also very well versed in experimentation and in finding new processes and techniques for the creation of works within their craft. Grand Masters will often have huge workshops, employing Apprentices, Journeymen and even a few Tradesmen.

### BASIC CRAFTING TARGET NUMBERS

Now, if we are going to be expanding the Craft skill to allow for the creation of high quality items, then we need to at least give some information regarding the Target Numbers required for the crafting of normal items.

Many players who like giving their characters skill in various types of crafts will likely be asking if they can make certain items. The Crafting TNs table will answer this question. The table is geared more towards weapons and armor, but the Other Items section near the bottom can be used for any other type of equipment. The GM need only define the complexity of the item to be crafted.

CRAFTING TNs	
Item	TN*
Armor	Varies
Shields	Varies
Weapons	
Arrows/Crossbow Bolts	18
Axes	19
Bows & Crossbows	16+
Chains Plus	20
Clubs	15+
Great Blades	22
Hammers	18+
Heavy Blades	20
Light Blades	16+
Pole Arms	22
Quarterstaves	15+
Short Blades	15+
Sling Shots	20
Slings	15
Spears	18
Special Weapons	16+
Traps	Varies
Other Items	
Simple Item (wooden spoon)	10
Typical Item (iron pot)	15
Moderately Complex Item (bell, hinges, etc.)	18
Complex Item (lock)	20
Very Complex Item (ships, glassware, etc.)	25
Musical Instrument	+5

\* = this is the TN if the character has the exact crafting skill required. Increase the TN by 3 if the character has a related skill.