

Heroes of the Borderlands

Orcus is a tabletop roleplaying game based on the fourth edition of the world's most popular roleplaying game. The *Heroes* series is a quick way to create balanced and fun *Orcus* heroes so you can quickly get to playing.

Heroes of the Borderlands introduces four characters: the Grim (a member of the Fighter class), the Seraph (Cleric class), the Haunt (Ranger class) and the Mindfire Adept (Wizard class).

Character Creation

Choose one of the four playbooks (the one-pager brochures for each character option).

The instructions below assume you are starting at level 1. If starting at a higher level, see "Leveling up", below.

Abilities and Skills: Distribute +3, +2, +1, +0 and -1 between the five abilities, then add +1 to any one ability. Any time your character must make a Constitution check, use Strength instead.

Unlike regular *Orcus* characters, *Heroes* characters do not add their ability scores to attack rolls, defenses, number of recoveries, damage or other pre-calculated stats. Abilities are mostly used for skills and (when it comes to the Strength stat) carrying capacity/encumbrance.

Ancestry: Every playbook has a default ancestry, but you are not required to use it. You can paste a different ancestry on top. Either way, most ancestries will tell you to select a bonus language, bonus feat and bonus talent. The language options are provided. The feats and talents are separate sticker sheets.

Some feats and talents have extra requirements, usually a certain level. A character that does not meet the requirements cannot select that feat or talent.

Other features: Occasionally, a character gets to make other choices at level 1 (for example, the Seraph gets a Channel Faith power). Select those now.

Powers: Under Class Features, each character has listed the powers they get at level 1. Assemble the relevant power cards.

Proficiencies: Characters can wield weapons and wands in which they are proficient. They can wield weapons they are not proficient in, but with a -2 penalty to the attack roll. Characters can wear armor they are not proficient with, but while they do they take a -2 penalty to attack rolls and to their Reflex defense.

Martial weapons typically do more damage than simple ones. Do not use the weapon rules from *Orcus*. In *Heroes of the Borderlands*, all weapons have a +2 proficiency bonus

(already included) and do not have special riders like "improved crit".

Equipment: At first level, each character starts with some standard equipment and can choose a few items specifically.

Powers

There are two main rules for using powers:

Usage: Any encounter power can be used once per encounter (unless otherwise specified). Characters get their encounter powers back after a short rest (five minutes). Any daily power can be used once per day (unless otherwise specified).

Impetus and Stamina costs: Some encounter and daily powers have an additional cost, called Impetus (for encounter powers) or Stamina (for daily powers). You can only use these powers if you have one or more Impetus or Stamina left, and they use up 1 Impetus or 1 Stamina respectively. You can still only use these once per encounter/day unless otherwise specified.

Leveling up

When a character gets enough experience points (XP) for their next level (1,000 XP to go from level 1 to level 2), they increase in level. Strike out their existing level, and use the row for their new level to determine attack rolls, defenses, and so on. If there is an entry in the Other column, the character gets that thing: a new feat, talent, Impetus power or Stamina power.

Feats and talents are distinguished by shape: feats have hard corners, talents have two rounded corners.

These playbooks go up to level 10, the "adventurer tier". Rules for levels 11 to 20 (the "prestige tier") and levels 21 to 30 (the "epic tier") are yet to come.

Repeatable feats can be taken multiple times, choosing a different option each time. For example, Skill Training gives you a new trained skill. You can keep taking that feat as long as you have untrained skills.

New statuses

Heroes of the Borderlands standardizes some buffs so they are easier to keep track of. These are called "boons".

- **Blessed** +2 bonus to all saving throws
- **Fortified** +2 bonus to all defenses
- **Guided** +4 bonus to all skill checks
- **Hastened** +2 bonus to Speed
- **Honed** +2 bonus to all attacks

It also introduces a new saving throw condition: “save maintains”.

Save maintains: At the end of your next turn, make a saving throw. On a success, keep the boon. On a failure, lose it.

There is one new condition:

Encumbered You suffer a -2 penalty to Speed

Power options

Some powers have the “Cantrip” option. This is a different way to use the power, usually out of combat. It

doesn't use up the power, so for example if you use the cantrip effect of *drowsy*, you can still cast *drowsy* later in the day. It can even be used if the power has already been expended; if you have cast *drowsy* already, you can still use the cantrip effect.

Monsters

Monsters use a simplified stat block. Treat a monster's defenses as the result of any other checks or rolls they would make. For example, instead of rolling initiative monsters use their Reflex defense. Instead of making a Perception check, monsters use their Will defense.