

Mystic Wood Elf Handbook

- as of December 1993

I. Rules

1. MWE are not considered (full-blooded) Elves by NERO. MWE are Elf-Satyr hybrids...mostly Wild and Wood Elves. THEREFORE, the MWE is not bound by the Elven Dis-advantage package Note that MWE do consider themselves to be "Elves." However, MWE must wear ear tips and horns. Acceptable horn colors are black, white, ivory, and brown. Other colors will be accepted on a case by case basis, but colors like red/blue/paisley are right out! Latex horns are available from various sources for about \$15 and ears cost between \$4 and \$15 depending on type and size.

2. MWE may buy resist/break charm at a cost of 5 BP per use. For each time the skill is purchased, the MWE may use this ability as either a standard Elven Resist Charm or as a special ability to dispel a Charm-type magic (Charm, Shun) or monster power (Influence, Vampire Charm).

Please Note: Charm Break takes 1 minute, does not require eye contact, and causes 1 body point damage to the MWE who uses the ability, regardless of the outcome. (Needless to say, 1 body point is a lot unless you are high level. Please role-play that this is a tiring and draining skill, even if the body point is shorn off from the effect of a bless/greater bless spell.)

3. MWE MUST BUY A CRAFT-TYPE SKILL AT EACH LEVEL. The exception is for a starting character, which has until he/she reaches high first level (24 BP total) to buy a skill. The applicable skills are (see NERO Rulebook): Healing Skills, Scholarly skills, Herbal Lore, Trades and Crafts skills, and any of the "Create" (production) skills: potion, poison, scroll, or trap (NB: spell slots or combat skills are NOT considered skills for purposes of this requirement.) Do not be misled by awkward wording in the rulebook - MWE may buy the Craftsman (Other) skill at 2 BP rather than 3 BP. This skill allows a PC to earn a living by plying their trade, whatever that may be. Some examples are: Storyteller, Bard, Cook, Spy, Herbalist, Torturer, Tracker, and Dancer.

4. MWE MAY NOT USE THE FOLLOWING SPELLS OR POISONS, OR ANY ITEMS WHICH PRODUCE LIKE EFFECTS: Charm spells, Love, Domination, Euphoria, Enslavement Poisons. Ideally, the MWE will not even have the recipes/spells of these types at all.

5. MWE'S MUST FOLLOW THE MWE HONOR CODE, as appropriate for their clan, at all times. Failure to follow the code, or grossly bad role-playing, will result in written warnings and expulsion from the race. Appeals may be made to the non-Human Marshal and will be adjudicated. (It's TOUGH to screw this up, so let's not take this as a challenge!)

6. MWE live an average of 600 years, 40-60 is when a MWE is eligible to become a full adult member of the clan.

7. MWE have a remarkable tolerance for alcohol.

8. MWE may not engage in kidnapping, nor may they own slaves.

9. MWE may sometimes become angry to the point of berserk fury. Known as the "Blood Rage", it has specific triggers for each MWE - and is usually triggered by the presence of hated enemies (known slavers, child abusers, etc.) Blood Rage grants no advantages to the MWE in terms of increased combat abilities, and may in fact hamper their performance, as the MWE tends to forget all but physical attacks when fully possessed by this anger. Blood Rage may be willingly entered, but takes restraint and/or unconsciousness to leave-or time.

II. Everything Else:

A. MWE HONOR CODE

1. Your word is your bond. Promises are kept regardless of circumstances, BUT promises extracted under extreme threat, torture, or coercion are invalid. It is dishonorable to set up a situation where one must knowingly break an oath. Truth is stranger than fiction - and usually less believable; the best lie is the truth.

2. "Charm" magic's, Love poisons, etc. are indicative of - at the very least - an utter lack of imagination. Why deny another's free will when you can trick them into a course of action which they will believe is theirs - if this proves ineffective, the thing need not be done. If someone is THAT fond of Charm, but then a basket, flute, and cobra.

3. Clan = family. Likewise, the Clan Elders are your parents. Of course, you don't have to like each member of your clan - just don't kill them without some sort of provocation.

4. Vendettas are between two parties: the offender and the offended - if a non-involved party is injured, or worse, during the pursuit of revenge, appropriate recompense must be made.

5. Never seek revenge immediately - savor the felling and wait for the proper time to present itself.

6. Seek to help those who help you. No kindness is so small as to be worthy of reciprocation.

7. Money is not as important as a favor - debts owed and/or received serve only to increase your fortunes. ("Barter makes the world go 'round...")

8. All living creatures are worthy of respect - until they prove themselves otherwise. Do not seek to strike the first blow, but the last.

9. Any job worth doing, any action worth performing, is worth doing correctly. Crafts are a manifestation of the skill and dedication of the craftsperson. You are what you do.

B. Names: MWE have two names: their Elven name (which need not sound Tolkienish) and what is called their "road" name.

1. The Elven name is given by the parents and is used most often by MWE from the same area/clan as the PC. To tell an outsider (non MWE) one's Elven name implies great trust, love, respect - or some combination of all three. Powerful and binding oaths are sworn on the Elven name (q.v. the MWE honor Code). It is not necessary to tell one's Elven name to another MWE, nor is it considered rude. However, it does make for a formal introduction.

2. "Road" Name: This is the name that is usually given to the MWE by his/her peers of family - but which can be self-bestowed. The name is significant and is based either on an (in)famous event in the MWE's life, or on an ideal or attitude that the MWE wishes to project, or be known for. (FYI: Havoc is the first case, Random is the second.) The "Road" name is how a MWE introduces themselves to non-MWE's.

C. Clans: There are three clans in the Mystic Woods. They are at least non-hostile towards each other, and are usually quite well-disposed towards each other.

1. Clan Ahora: The word that best describes this clan (in general) is "Luftmensch," which literally means "man-of-air." This is a group that enjoys all forms of communication...and believe that "the best lie is the truth." They are, by nature, a moody lot - if you don't like their mood, just wait a minute, it'll change! This is not to say that they are a clan of liars, but you should be warned not to expect more than a few beans for your cow on market day - magic ones, if you're lucky (and it's a good cow). Baron Munchausen is a prime example of a member of this clan.

2. Clan Jongleur: The word that best describes this clan is "Ra-coon" (an ancient word meaning "curious one who'll eat all your food"). This clan is perhaps the most pookish - or is that pookish? This clan is perhaps the easiest to interact with, happy and curious, and they'll steal your belt and cut your

throat if you're rude. Happy doesn't mean stupid. Indiana Jones is a prime example of this clan.

3. Clan Daemona: The word that bests describe this clan is "affected." They suffer from an excess of attitude (but they are not quite as pompous as they act, and love to poke fun at themselves - and hate it when others join in). Don Quixote would make a wonderful Daemona.

D. Attitudes: MWEs don't think they're necessarily better than everyone else...they just believe they're in on the joke that is life.

E. Social Structure: Extended family, not matriarchal or patriarchal as a whole. The society stresses individual abilities.

F. Government:

1. Council of Elders: (There is a separate Council for each clan, which settles in-clan disputes). Made up of 6 members of the clan who are USUALLY older than most, however ability counts a great deal. It is not unheard of for a relatively young clan member to sit on the Council of Elders by virtue of great skill or wisdom (or sense of humor).

2. Great Council: (Settles inter-clan disputes, and sends appropriate diplomats or aid to further MWE causes.) Made up of 6 members, 2 from each clan (none of whom are members of their clan's Council of Elders). Meets 4 times year at each Festival time; may be called in emergency session as needed.

G. Festivals: There are four Festivals in the Mystic Wood (and wherever else they may dwell in numbers) on the Solstices and Equinoxes of each year. Festival is a week-long marketplace/bazaar of the bizarre/time of justice/time of gift-making...to celebrate MWE life, as well as to receive news from afar.

H. Rite of Passage/Growing Up: When a "child" (of 40-50 or thereabouts) is judged ready to become an adult, they are given some supplies for traveling and are told to go out and see the world, and can't come back until they have a story to tell. Usually, this will take about a month or so, however anything longer than a week would not be viewed with scorn, nor is a trip of many years or even decades unusual. (NOTE: MWEs do not mature slower than other races.) When the child returns and tells the story, they are given their road names and introduced to the clans at the next Festival. Also, they receive a tattoo, which is of almost any design - save that Clan Daemona tattoos must include a triangle, Clan Jongleur a circle, and Clan Ahora a square. These tattoos are kept most secret and are not displayed lightly (just like a MWE does not share their Elven name to just anyone.)

II. Helpful Hints for Playing a MWE

1. The polite form of address to use when speaking to another MWE is "Cousin."

2. Try to use your Craftsman (Other) skill(s) in-game as much as possible. Role-play, role-play, and role-play!

3. It is common for a MWE to refer to a final death as "walking the long road. "The strongest oath a MWE can make would involve using their Elven name and saying (roughly) "May I walk the long road if I fail to <insert promised action here>."

4. When Journeying, remember that getting there is all the fun. Don't forget to stop and smell the roses.

5. General rule of thumb for appropriate MWE garb: Clean, comfortable, and amusing. Clean, because it probably won't be for long; comfortable, because you owe it to yourself; and amusing, because if it isn't, why bother?

6. Don't overdo the Blood Rage...kill crazy scholars are fun to watch, but aren't conducive to a long-lived PC.