

RACES of NERO

<i>RACE</i>	<i>ADVANTAGES</i>	<i>DISADVANTAGES</i>
Barbarian	+2 Body Points to Start Detect Celestial Magic: 2BP	Double cost for Scholarly skills
Biata	Break Charm: 2BP Resist Charm: 3BP Resist Sleep: 2BP	Cannot buy Read Magic
Drae	Resist Charm: 3BP Resist Sleep: 2BP Half cost for Archery	-2 Body Points in the day Cannot buy Two Handed Blunt Cannot buy Two Handed Sword
Dwarf	+1 Body Point to Start Resist Poison: 4BP -1 cost for Armorsmith and Weaponsmith	Double cost for Read Magic Cannot buy two handed weapons
Elf	Resist Charm: 3BP Resist Sleep: 2BP Half cost for Archery	-1 Body Point to start Cannot buy Two Handed Blunt Cannot buy Two Handed Sword
Gypsy	Gypsy Curse/Remove Gypsy Curse: 2GP	-
Half Ogre	+2 Body Points to start	Double cost for Scholarly skills
Half Orc	+2 Body Points to start	Double cost for Scholarly skills
Hobling	Resist Poison: 4BP Half cost for Pick Locks Half cost for Disarm Traps	-1 Body Point to start Cannot use two handed weapons Cannot be a Fighter
Mystic Wood Elf	Break Charm: 2BP Resist Charm: 3BP -1 cost for Craftsman (Type)	Must buy "craft" skills each level
Sarr	Resist Poison: 4BP Scenting Ability	Cannot buy blunt weapons or ranged weapons Cannot buy Waylay
Scavenger	Resist Poison: 4BP Scenting Ability	Double cost for Scholarly skills

The human race is not the only race in the world of NERO. There are many mythical and unusual races, such as elves, dwarves, half-orcs, and other more exotic races. Some NERO chapters have additional races or variations of the listed races.

In order to give the game a multiracial feel, each race has been developed individually to add to everyone's enjoyment. To keep the balance of each particular race, there are certain fundamental requirements that each player of that race must observe. We do this so that you will be placing yourself into a real culture that provides the most interaction with other players.

Racial abilities help you to understand a race's outlook on life. You must understand the necessities of roleplaying your race based on the advantages and disadvantages of that race. You should purchase your particular racial abilities as soon as possible.

Playing your race means knowing and understanding your races' culture and society. Some races have their culture based on certain societies in our own world and other races are purely fantastic like the elves or hobblings. Others are based on popular mythology or folklore. Other races such as the biata have been time-consumingly created from scratch, creating a unique aspect to our game.

It is important to understand that you will be given a brief description of your race's society but that it is up to you to integrate yourself into it. Your local chapter will have a "race packet" which provides more roleplaying background.

If you wish to play one of these races, you must wear the appropriate makeup to distinguish yourself. All exposed skin must be covered with the appropriate makeup. Any props (such as elf ears) must be worn at all times.

Remember that you cannot wear makeup to disguise yourself to appear as a race you are not, nor can you act in such a way as to mislead others as to your race. If you are not playing a barbarian or a gypsy, you cannot dress, talk and act like one.

When choosing a race to play, consider how you will look as that race. Although NERO is a game that encourages you to "be all that you can't be," if you are 5' 5" and weigh 120 pounds, you probably shouldn't play a half ogre, and if you are 6' 6" and weigh

275, you probably wouldn't make a believable hobling. However, although it is discouraged, there is no rule stopping you from playing a character against your body type, so feel free to do what you want!

NERO expects you to play your character's race properly. Half orcs should be slow witted, barbarians should act uncouth, and drae should shun the sunlight. Even though we strongly encourage everyone to avoid clichés and stereotypes when creating their character histories, you must abide by your racial characteristics. You cannot write your history to be the "outsider" of your race and be the one barbarian who is a genius celestial caster, the one gypsy who is quiet and shy, or the one drae who likes to go sunbathing.

A player not acting as described for his or her character's race will not be allowed to continue playing that character and will have to start another one.

There is no such thing as a true "half" race for purposes of NERO rules. If your character history has your father as an elf and your mother as a gypsy, that is fine, but you can only take the attributes of one of those races. In-game you can tell everyone you're "half elf/half gypsy" but out-of-game, you are one race or the other. You must then take all the advantages, disadvantages and physical characteristics of that single race and none of the unique characteristics of the other. No character may have the powers, physical characteristics, or "mannerisms" of more than one race. It should always be very clear to everyone what race you are.

These roleplaying rules are put in place to allow players to make assumptions about the races. When you see someone wearing pointed ears, you know that they may have certain abilities such as *Resist Sleep* and that may change your strategy with dealing with them.

You can conclude that every biata you see will dislike celestial magic and every dwarf will appreciate and study well-made weapons. Every race must act like and be identifiable as that race by all other players. By adhering to racial characteristics, this fantasy world of ours becomes much more real.

The following lists the basic NERO races (other than human). This is a very short overview. If you play one of these races, you can ask for a longer handout for your particular race that will provide more background for your character.

The skills mentioned in the descriptions below are explained in greater detail in the "Skill Descriptions" section. When reference is made to "Scholarly Skills" or "Stealth Skills," it means only those skills listed under those categories in the Skill cost tables. ("Scholarly Skills" for example includes *Read and Write* and *Read Magic*.)

Note that if you are playing a nonhuman, you should buy your racial skills as soon as possible. After all, how can you possibly roleplay your race properly if you don't have the basic skills and abilities that help to define that race? If you reach 5th level or so and still haven't purchased your skills, other members of your race should treat you as inferior or look at you with pity because you cannot resist sleep or break a charm.

The next section of this book lists the various races other than human. (If playing a human, you are free to devise any sort of personality you wish without any benefits or disadvantages.)

Barbarian

Barbarians come from nomadic tribes and are unused to "civilized" society. They are a very superstitious lot and may often perform unusual small ceremonies to rid themselves of their "curse." ("Oh-oh! Seven hoblins just crossed path! Bad luck! Now I must tie string around finger and walk backwards for an hour!")

This is not to imply that barbarians have to be stupid—merely uncultured and somewhat primitive. In order to be identifiable as barbarians, you should talk poorly, dress in furs, and otherwise look primitive.

Although in-game there is a rumor about barbarians being able to go into a "berserker rage" where they can do great damage, such a skill does not exist in the NERO game. It's all roleplaying.

Barbarian tribes (usually named after animals) are often very competitive and not too friendly.

Barbarian tribes are very earth friendly and in fact, celestial magic was unheard of by barbarians until the more "civilized" beings began moving into their area. As such, barbarians distrust celestial magic and consider it "not natural." Barbarians fear and distrust celestial magics and will dislike having celestial protective spells cast upon them. This distrust only applies to Celestial Defensive spells, and does not apply to Celestial Magic Items. It should be noted that there are some characters that refuse to use Celestial Magic Items for roleplay reasons of their own. This "Celestial Abstinence" is not required by the rules in any way. All players are encouraged to roleplay their characters in any way that they consider fun.

When a barbarian reaches the age of 18, he or she will ask the tribe leader for a Task of Adulthood. This task must require an extreme amount of bravery and challenge and may take many years to accomplish. Only when the task is completed will the barbarian be considered a true member of the tribe. Barbarians who switch tribes are likewise required to perform such a task.

Barbarians are strong and thus start off with two extra body points. They have to pay double for all Scholarly skills. They can also buy the skill *Detect Celestial Magic* which, once a day, will allow the barbarian to determine whether an item has any celestial magics present upon it.

Biata

According to legend, biata are descended from a barbarian tribe, but they do not act or look like barbarians. They have large upturned feathery eyebrows and often grow feathers in their hair and claws on their fingers as well. (The claws are decorative in nature and cannot be used as weapons.)

Biata tend to be very orderly in their philosophy of life—they always act with a purpose. They will not do things “on a whim” and are always working towards some goal. To other races, this tends to make them seem like extremists—either very good or very evil—but even the most evil biata will have his or her own code of ethics and will never act erratically or randomly. This also makes the biata seem very stubborn.

They are also very secretive about the origins of their race and will treat all other races as “outsiders” rarely worthy of complete trust.

It is said that biata were formed through magical mating of a gryphon and a human (or perhaps a barbarian). The Gryphon barbarian tribe was made up entirely of biata, and until the last Great Celestial Change in 590, all biata looked human.

Having celestial protective spells cast upon biata causes great discomfort. Most will refuse to sleep behind *Wards* and will not use celestial magic items. This distrust only applies to Celestial Defensive spells, and does not apply to Celestial Magic Items. It should be noted that there are some characters that refuse to use Celestial Magic Items for roleplay reasons of their own. This “Celestial Abstinence” is not required by the rules in any way. All players are encouraged to roleplay their characters in any way that they consider fun.

Biata, like stone elves, have spent years honing mental skills and as such can perform certain mental mind abilities. These abilities are all completely roleplaying in nature. Generally speaking, a biata can remove roleplaying insanity based on memories or otherwise “cure” mental damage on any willing subject. You cannot use this ability to tell if another player is telling the truth or to have that player remember events forgotten due to a *Forget-it* elixir or otherwise get around any NERO rule. A player always has the right to refuse to roleplay any of these skills and can at any time decide to “break off” contact or be cured.

In order to use this roleplaying skill, you must touch the other person and concentrate completely by either staring into each other’s eyes or having their eyes closed. You cannot perform any other in-game skill while roleplaying this. Any biata who simply touches someone and says “There, you no longer have a fear of heights (or whatever)” is not playing the race properly. For more information about these skills, see “Mind Abilities” in the chapter on Special Abilities.

Biata can buy the skills *Break Charm*, *Resist Charm*, and *Resist Sleep*. Biata are attuned to earth magics and as such, cannot learn *Read Magic*.

Drae

Drae are dark elves, a mysterious race that mostly lives underground, shunning sunlight. They have jet black skin, white or silver hair, and pointed ears. They rarely socialize with other races and keep to themselves and generally feel themselves to be superior to all other races.

When playing a drae, the bottom line to remember is honor. The drae culture emphasizes honor to such a degree that a drae who has lost honor must commit suicide as punishment before honor can be regained.

This does not mean that you cannot be an evil drae; it merely means that you will keep your word once it is given. If you are disgraced in any way, you will publicly do what needs to be done for your honor to be restored.

Drae can have a sense of humor but must take their own actions very seriously. There are drae entertainers (though rare) but even these regard honor as the highest attribute.

Drae have -2 Body Points in the daytime (defined as 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). At 6 a.m., the drae loses 2 points from their maximum Body Points (never below one Body Point), adjusting their current Body Points to match, if necessary. This means that a drae will never fall unconscious due to this penalty. At 6 p.m., the drae’s maximum Body Points go up by exactly the same number of points that they went down the night before. This rule cannot be used to circumvent other effects where Body Points are lost.

Like other elves, they can buy *Resist Sleep* and *Resist Charm*. They cannot buy the skills *Two Handed Blunt* or *Two handed Sword*.

Dwarf

Dwarves are sturdy individuals who live in mountainous regions. Dwarves in NERO are not necessarily short (remember that all players and monsters are the same size as the person playing them), but taller players should think twice about playing a dwarf. In-game, the rumor is that dwarves are the small cousins of hill giants, and so to the giants, they were seen as short.

Dwarves tend to be friendly but secretive. They all have beards, although many females prefer a long “goatee.”

Their race enjoys and appreciates good craftsmanship, especially in weapons, armor, and jewelry. Because they live so much longer than humans, they tend to dislike the human’s faster paced lifestyles (but they generally like the food).

Dwarves have an extreme hatred of trolls who often attack and take the dwarven caves for themselves. Their history is very lengthy but is mostly comprised of stories and legends of great dwarven heroes. Some of these stories can take many hours or even days to tell completely, and no self-respecting dwarf would consider telling an abridged version.

Dwarves are generally peaceful and have no problem with other races—although they think elves are pompous, humans are impatient, hobblings are troublemakers, and half orcs and half ogres are incapable of understanding the finer things in life (like a well made weapon and a fine wine).

They start with one extra body point and can buy *Weaponsmith* and *Armorsmith* skills for one point less. They can buy *Resist Poison*. Dwarves cannot buy the skills *Polearm*, *Staff*, *Two Handed Blunt* or *Two Handed Sword*. They must pay double for *Read Magic*.

Elf

Elves are long-lived people with pointed ears. That may be the only thing all the elven races have in common!

All elves can buy the skills *Resist Sleep* and *Resist Charm*. They have one less Body Point than a human character of the same class and level. They can buy *Archery* skill at half cost (round up), but they cannot buy the skills *Two Handed Blunt* or *Two Handed Sword*.

There are many varieties of elves. The most common are:

Amani elf: Amani elves are descendants of Quentari elves. Many years ago, a political rift developed in Quentari and many of the elves moved to the Ash Forest (or the "Amani" forest in their language) in the Duchy of Ashbury in Evendarr to start anew. Since then, they have spread all over the continent.

Amani elves are friendlier and more down-to-earth than their Quentari cousins. They get along much better with other races but still do not socialize a great deal with them. In fact, some parts of the Ash Forest are closed to other races completely. Even though they socialize with other races, they rarely marry any other than their fellow Amani elves. An Amani who falls in love with another race is not shunned from the society, but is obviously not treated with the same degree of respect by his or her fellow Amani elves.

Quentari elf: Quentari elves come from the elven kingdom of Quentari. They consider themselves to be the most civilized race; all others are barbaric in comparison. To some degree this is true—they have the oldest culture, the greatest cities, and the most learned scholars. It is this attitude however that makes their living with other races a problem, as no one likes being seen as inferior. Quentari elves tend to largely be scholars, and it is rare to encounter a Quentari elf who does not know how to read and write. When fighting, they tend to prefer bow and short swords, but even then, fighting is seen as a last resort when peaceful negotiations are unsuccessful.

Stone elf: Stone elves have whitish skin, upturned eyebrows, and pointed ears. Stone elves do not show emotions and as such are viewed by other races as humorless and intense. This is part of their culture as well as being part of their race. This restriction makes the stone elves very hard to roleplay—if you cannot keep a straight face when told a funny joke, you should not be playing a stone elf.

They have a natural affinity for celestial magics and make excellent celestial casters. Although there are of course healers in their society, most stone elf casters are celestial.

Stone elves, like biata, have spent years honing mental skills and as such can perform certain mental mind abilities. These abilities are all completely roleplaying in nature. Generally speaking, a stone elf can remove roleplaying insanity based on emotions or otherwise "cure" mental damage on any willing subject. You cannot use this ability to tell if another player is telling the truth or to have that player remember memories lost to *Forget-it* elixirs or otherwise get around any NERO rule. A player always has the right to refuse to roleplay any of these skills and can at any time decide to "break off" contact or be cured.

In order to use this roleplaying skill, you must touch the other person and concentrate completely. Any Stone elf who simply touches someone and says "There, you no longer have a fear of heights (or whatever)" is not playing the race properly. For more information about these skills, see "Mind Abilities" in the chapter on Special Abilities.

Wild Elf: Wild elves live in nomadic tribes like barbarians and share many barbarian traits. Wild elves are distinguished in-game by their furs and other barbarian clothing, even though they have pointed ears like all other elves.

Wild elves are not treated as "real elves" by most of the rest of the elven race. There is no outright warring going on, but the wild elves often feel as if they are second-class citizens even though they generally have all the rights as any other citizen.

The wild elf society is similar to the cultures of some American Indian tribes, with an emphasis on hunting and tracking skills.

Gypsy

Unlike other races that are distinguished by physical features, gypsies are defined by costume, behavior, and culture. To be a gypsy means to be boisterous, extroverted, and larger than life. Gypsies, a fiery and passionate race, love to dance and sing.

The most important aspect of gypsy life is family. The gypsies (or *Romani* as they call themselves) have enormous loyalty to their people, treating each as a family member and referring to them as "brother" or "sister."

Many gypsy tribes may coexist in the same area, each being ruled by its own Bandoleer or "Prince/Princess." There is a Gypsy King but quite often this figure is far removed from normal gypsy life and has no great influence over the local tribes. Usually a gypsy tribe will have its own distinctive predominate color or marking, used to differentiate itself from other tribes in the area.

Gypsies can bestow or remove *Gypsy Curse* which is limited by the Gypsy Code of Honor. The Gypsy Code of Honor requires that a gypsy be always honest and trustworthy among members of his or her own tribe. The gypsy will support the other tribe members and will do whatever it takes to help (including lying to, stealing from, cursing or killing non-tribe members).

The Gypsy Code of Honor means respecting the actions of fellow gypsies as well. If a gypsy throws a *Gypsy Curse* on someone, it had better be for a good reason (otherwise, the recipient might take action against the entire tribe). If there was a good reason, then the entire tribe will support that gypsy.

Half Ogre

Half ogres are not human/ogre hybrids, but are rather a race that closely resembles ogres in coloration and behavior and were dubbed half ogres by those that first encountered them. They have yellow skin and protruding lower fangs.

Half ogres are tougher than average and are almost always fighters. They tend to be less intelligent and should roleplay difficulty in understanding complicated subjects. Note also that half ogres have a very short life expectancy compared to other races, and they mature faster, so that your starting player may only be four years old!

Half ogres are very tough fighters and they know it. It will be very rare when a half ogre shows any fear. They are usually first to run into battle and will almost never run away. However, they have an innate fear of undead and will have to summon up a ton of courage to fight any zombie, skeleton or vampire that comes their way.

Half ogres tend to see the world in simple ways. What good is writing if you can't fight with it? They think most of the other races are spoiled and live too fancily. Half ogres would rather spend their money on new weapons and armor than on fancy homes, fancy food, or fancy clothes.

Half ogres think that the concept of nobility is the most ridiculous idea "civilized" society has to offer. In the half ogre tribes, the tribal leaders are the best fighters. In fact, half ogres are constantly fighting among themselves for dominance.

If a half ogre sees another, it is likely that they will fight to establish who is dominant. The fight is never to the death but only until one of the half ogres acknowledges the other's superiority. There is never any cheating nor are there sneak attacks in this sort of battle; there is great honor at stake in the half ogre community.

They start with two extra Body Points and must pay double for all Scholarly skills.

Half Orc

Half orcs may have at one time been human/orc hybrids but have now evolved into a race of their own. They have green skin and protruding lower fangs or teeth.

Half orcs are tougher than average and are almost always fighters. They tend to be less intelligent and should roleplay difficulty in understanding complicated subjects. Note also that half orcs have a very short life expectancy so that your starting player may only be four years old!

Half orcs regard honor in combat as the highest and most respected goal in life. They would rather die in combat than of old age, and would never be seen running from a battle unless the situation were completely overwhelming.

The half orc society is clan-based, where families and blood relations are regarded as most important. Individual half orcs may leave the family to adventure with other races in order to establish glory and a name for themselves.

Half orcs start with two extra Body Points. They must pay double for all Scholarly skills.

Hobling

Hobblings are peaceful people and generally are smaller than average. They have furry feet and hands, as well as bushy sideburns and eyebrows.

Hobblings love working with their hands and as such are often craftsmen. They are friendly and cheerful and have a great sense of humor, and quite often use their charisma to their advantage.

Hobblings do not generally like adventure even though they love the treasure that can come from adventuring. Their treasure will be spent on fine food, good clothes, and a high standard of living.

Their love of living well means that most hobblings are businesspeople first. The thought of doing something for free is appalling to them, and although to some this appears to be mere laziness, in fact hobblings consider this common sense. They are completely honest in their business deals however and always keep to their promises once made—however, you'd better read any contract with a hobbling very carefully, as they know all the loopholes. They make excellent spies as long as the money keeps coming in.

Hobblings begin with one less Body Point. Hobblings cannot be fighters and cannot use two handed weapons. They can buy *Pick Locks* and *Disarm/Arm Traps* at half price (round up) and can buy the racial ability *Resist Poison*.

Mystic Wood Elf

Mystic Wood elves are a strange race of creatures originally from the Mystic Wood in Northern Evendarr. They are not really elves but were called that by the people who first encountered them. Mystic Wood elves have elven ears but also small horns on their foreheads. Popular theory holds that they are descended from elven-satyr/nymph hybrids, but this has never been proven..

Mystic Wood elves hate (or at the very least find distasteful) all forms of enslavement, from slavery and kidnapping to magical charms and alchemical controls. For example, a Mystic Wood elf that finds a *Dominate* elixir will probably destroy it. They may also attempt to break any charms they find on others.

Mystic Wood elf society is organized into 3 major clans, and these clans are viewed as family by the Mystic Wood elf. Mystic Wood elves have two names, their "road" name which they commonly use, and their "real" name which they usually only share with their most trusted friends outside the Mystic Wood elven community. Mystic Wood elves have a remarkably high tolerance for alcohol and love travel and adventure. For them, getting there is not half the fun, it's all the fun.

Mystic Wood elves are natural born artisans, and can buy *craftsman (other)* skill for 2 build points instead of the 3 build that it costs other races. For each level attained, a Mystic Wood elf must buy at least one of the following skills: *Alchemy, Armorsmith, Craftsman (type), Create Potion, Create Scroll, Create Traps, Disarm/Arm Traps, Evaluate Item, First Aid, Healing Arts, Herbal Lore, Pick Locks, Read and Write, Read Magic, or Weaponsmith*. Mystic Wood elves can also resist charm for 3 build and charm break for 2 build. As they are not elves, Mystic Wood elves are not bound by the elven disadvantage package (i.e., they do not lose 1 body and can use two handed weapons).

Sarr

Sarr are a race of felinoids, so the best way to roleplay a sarr is to think like a cat!

Sarr should be insatiably curious and independent. Although they will form attachments for adventuring groups, they will also strike out on their own in search of adventure when the urge hits them, and can easily turn on former friends if wronged.

Do not think that sarr are cute little fluffy kitties; they are some of the fiercest fighters of all the races. They never forget an enemy and always seek revenge no matter how long it takes.

Sarr are susceptible to catnip and also peppermint leaves. They will become agitated and will have either an extreme violent reaction or a playful one. Of course, when a cat plays, it does so by attacking something . . .

Sarr must wear makeup to appear as one of the large hunting cats. The bottom of the nose should be dark. Whiskers, stripes or spots may be added if appropriate. If you play a black panther sarr, you must wear a prosthetic cat nose, cat ears, or other additions to make it clear to all that you are not a drae.

Sarr may buy the skill *Resist Poison*. They also have superior scenting abilities, and as such may detect an alchemical substance or disease on an item if they spend one minute inspecting it. (This racial skill does not allow them to tell what kind of alchemical substance or disease is present.)

Sarr cannot buy the skills *Archery, One Handed Blunt, Staff, Thrown Weapon, Two Handed Blunt, or Waylay*. The only small weapon allowable is a dagger or hatchet. All weapons must be edged.

Scavenger

"Scavenger" is a generic term used for any type not covered by the other races. They are humanoids with mundane animallike characteristics (rat, badger, skunk, dog). Players are free to use their imagination in creating a scavenger as long as makeup is worn and it is obvious that the player is not playing a monster or another player race. (For example, you cannot be a "cat" scavenger because there would be no way out-of-game to differentiate you from a sarr.)

Scavengers should roleplay their particular animal's characteristic. A scavenger possum should play dead during a battle. A scavenger dog might enjoy hunting. A scavenger fox should be cunning.

All scavengers do not understand the concept of possessions as do the other races. They will take what they need and share what they don't. In exchange, they of course expect others to give them what they need when they need it.

Scavengers are very hardy survivors on the fringe of civilization and can buy the skill *Resist Poison*. They have superior scenting abilities and may detect an alchemical substance or disease on a item if they spend one minute inspecting the item. (This racial skill does not allow them to tell what kind of alchemical substance or disease is present.)

As they do not have the upbringing and education of other races, Scavengers must pay double cost for all scholarly skills.