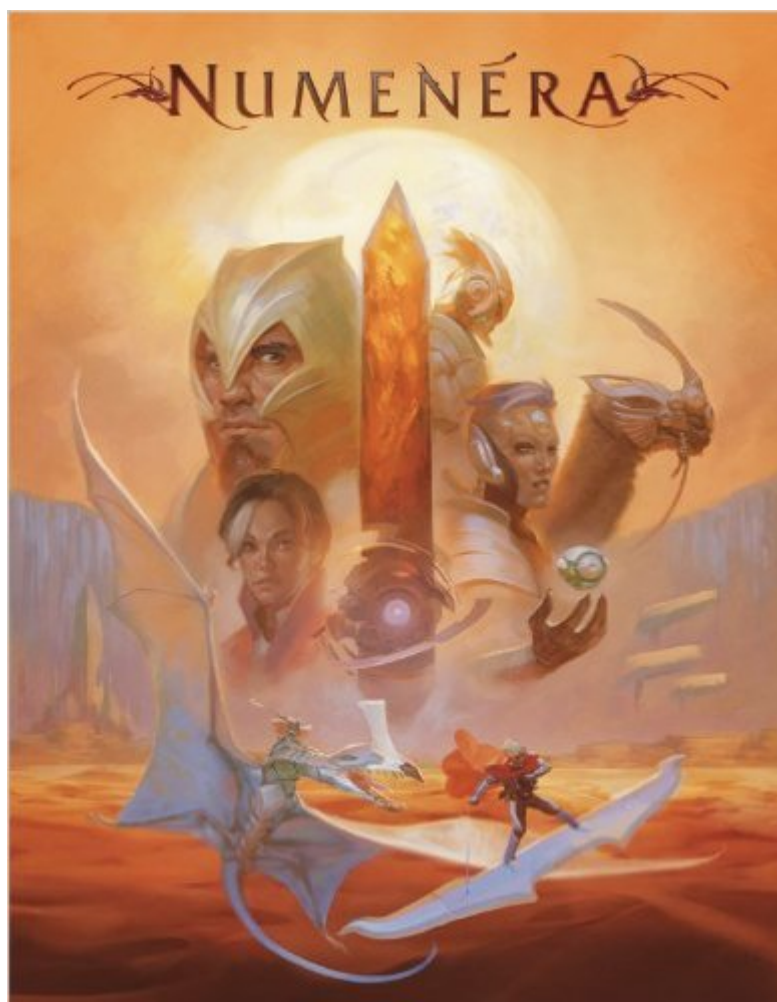


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Numenera Corebook



Synopsis

MCG001 Numenera Core Book RPG Monte Cook Games Numenera is a science fantasy roleplaying game set in the far distant future. Humanity lives amid the remnants of eight great civilizations that have risen and fallen on Earth. These are the people of the Ninth World. This new world is filled with remnants of all the former worlds: bits of nanotechnology, the dataweb threaded among still-orbiting satellites, bio-engineered creatures, and myriad strange and wondrous devices. These remnants have become known as the numenera. Player characters explore this world of mystery and danger to find these leftover artifacts of the past, not to dwell upon the old ways, but to help forge their new destinies, utilizing the so-called magic of the past to create a promising future.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Numenera Core Book is part rulebook, part campaign guide. This is a game system that's intertwined with its setting, not just a set of rules that includes an example of how they can be used. The rules are unobtrusive, though, so I have no doubt that a group that wanted to use them for a different game could do so. That said, I'm not sure why you wouldn't want to try this new setting. There are already rules out there for almost any game; this is how to play in the Ninth World, the science-fantasy world of Numenera. The scope is massive, the drama is intimate, and the wonder is overwhelming. There's something special about the Ninth World that has the potential to be an incredible game for your group, and the Numenera book includes enough detail on it to go as deep as you are willing. As for rules, instead of consulting the rules to see how performing this action is different from another, you learn a basic way of resolving every decision. The rest of your attention can be on your character, instead of your character sheet. That sounds like what a lot of people are

looking for. But it's not a perfect fit each time. It's a lot of "RP," but for my taste it's a little light on the "G." Here are some rules that stood out: 1) Your stats are your resources. As you perform physical stunts, your physical stat (Might) drops, and you become exhausted or drained. A long con lying to a raider prince is stressful and takes its toll on the mental stat (Intellect) that you used to deceive him. This also includes taking damage. You have no traditional hit point total that's only used when tracking damage; the same Might score you use to hit with a sword is reduced when someone hits you! I love this.

I've been playing tabletop RPGs for over two decades, and this is perhaps the most well-designed game I've ever encountered. The system is simple but very elegant, and allows the GM ("game master") to focus on the most important part of his role: to craft an interesting story. The GM doesn't need to keep track of complex blocks of statistics for monsters and NPCs, and never even has to roll a die. Basically, if you think the most important part of "roleplaying game" is the roleplaying part, Numenera's "Cypher" system does a great job of doing what it needs to do while staying out of your way. I really hope the game developer publishes a book that allows the use of this system in other settings. Speaking of the setting, it's also rather impressive. The Ninth World setting is earth, but one billion years in the future. Eight major civilizations (not all of them human) have risen and fallen, leaving behind artifacts of such advanced technology that the current medieval civilization views them as magic. The entire game is based on Arthur C. Clarke's often-quoted statement "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic", and books like Gene Wolfe's Books of the New Sun series are heavy influences. It's certainly a refreshing twist on the standard high fantasy setting. Finally, the book itself is well-designed and written. While a few typos are to be expected of any book of sufficient length, Numenera has remarkably few, and those few are minor and don't detract from the quality of the book in the slightest. I've seen game books released for established and popular games by large game companies that have many more (and more significant) errors.

Monte Cook's Numenera, Kickstarted in August 2012, is a delight to look at, to read, and to run. It is filled to the brim with gorgeous color art by a variety of artists. Its chapters, especially those sections relating to the setting, are written in a variety of voices, the reasons for which are explained in the "Living in the Ninth World" episode of the Transmissions From the Ninth World podcast. The rules, which Monte calls the Cypher System, are lightweight and designed to get out of the way in the interest of telling an awesome story and having fun with the players. Tasks are rated on a difficulty

of 1-10; target number is three times the difficulty on a d20. Skills, assets, and effort can all reduce the difficulty of any given roll. Character creation is a sentence: I am a _____ (descriptor) _____ (type) who _____ (focus). The descriptor tells you something about how your character interacts with the world, be they learned, rugged, stealthy, or one of many other options. Your type is what you are: glaive (the warrior), nano (the mage), or jack (of all trades). Your focus is what you do. This adds special abilities to your character and can be elemental- (Bears a Halo of Fire), talent- (Masters Weaponry), or activity- (Explores Dark Places) based -- or something else entirely (Fuses Flesh and Steel). All told, there are more than 1,000 ways to customize your character between those three choices. The setting is Earth in a billion-with-a-b years. Civilization, such as it is, is built upon the ruins of eight unimaginably powerful empires who mastered technologies we can't begin to fathom (see type 5+ of the Kardashev Scale).

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