THE CRYING BLADES HOUSERULES

VOLUME ONE
CHARACTERS & BASICS

Summary

INTRODUCTION

The Crying Blades is a set of rules, HouseRules, for roleplaying games, and especially for OSRs such as Lamentations of the Flame Princess and Swords & Wizardry. It's a set of rules of medieval fantasy and sorcery, of nostalgia and innovation. You will be familiar with most of its rules, somehow; its framework is far from revolutionary, but at the same time, the various pieces that have been put together in this House-Rules document, bring to the table the flavor of a unique game.

As with any OSR game, you are free and actually encouraged to tear apart the various rules, mix them with others, deconstruct and assemble them once more in a different shape. The Crying Blades is your toy - your box of toys, now. Do as you wish with the various pieces. Twist them and turn them around, bend them, erase them, improve them, adjust them together with your friends so that they'll suit your style of play.

The game is composed by three manuals, currently in the writing. The first manual (the one you're holding) contains the characters creation instructions and all the basic rules, including combat and magic, but no spells.

A second, separate book contains all the spells and blessings of sorcerers and clerics, and everything about magic.

The third and final book is indeed designed for the GM: monsters and adventures material, especially random tables, will be provided in this last manual of the series.

CREDITS

Besides the Original Fantasy Game, and perhaps even more than the Original, many other games have influenced me.

Such a list can never be fully exhaustive, so I included here for credits only those games that had a very significant, visible impact on my design:

- Lamentations of the Flame Princess by James Raggi
- Swords & Wizardry by By Matthew J. Finch
- WhiteHack by Christian Mehrstam
- BlackHack by David Black
- Apocalypse World by Vincent Baker
- Dungeon World by LaTorra and Koebel
- Freebooters of the Frontier by Jason Lutes
- Fate by Evil Hat
- Rosie Turner and Logan Knight of www.lastgaspgrimoire.com

Influence (or plagiarism) doesn't necessarily mean exact compatibility. I've done my best to retain the maximum compatibility but you will notice that a few numbers are off, here and there.

> *Comments like this one will indicate possible compatibility issues or warning, or explanations about certain design choices, and sometimes will contain houseruling suggestions.*

ILLUSTRATIONS

To the side is the complete list of artists whose artwork (public domain or not) is used in the book. Most of the artwork is in public domain. If you notice that I have failed to identify the artist properly for some image, please notify me.

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OSR Randomness

"Dice are wiser than players", some say. "Embrace randomness", say others.

There is quite a big deal of randomness built-in in this game, starting from the characters' attributes scores and then continuing with talents, traits, even names if you want.

Whenever you face a random result, embrace it. You might be tempted to force a certain choice - and that's fine, I'm not the RPG-police going to hunt you down for that. If for example you are going to pick characters' traits from the tables without rolling them, be my guest; if you decide to pick talents instead of rolling them, go ahead.

But as you play, if you stick to randomness you'll discover the pleasant feeling of growing attached to the undefined sense of wonder that only chance (in the right proportion) can give.

Game Material

Every player should have a dice set that includes 1 die of each size: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20, d100. The percentile die (the d100, numbered from 00 to 90, to use with the d10) is seldom necessary, but it comes in the regular dice sets anyway, and you might find it useful for random tables and for random percentile rolls for houserules.

While making characters, players will roll 3d6 together for Attributes' scores, but they can pass dice around, since every standard dice set has only one six-sided die.

Each class has a dedicated character sheet. Print multiple copies for each Class (a normal group usually will have enough with 3 fighters, 2 clerics, 2 rogues and 2 sorcerers, to accommodate various combinations).

Each player should receive the character sheet for the class they've chosen after rolling their character.

The Setting

This game is built along the lines of the classic OSR, therefore can be adapted to various fantasy settings, without problems.

There is, though, a suggested setting which is implied also in the game illustrations, which is one you're all familiar with: it's Earth, in the early Middle Age, but filled with sorcery and monsters, with dungeons and with dragons, with demons and cults and abominations. Perhaps, Earth is even a flat circle.

This setting gives all players the possibility to jump right in and have all the necessary basic knowledge and information. They don't need to study the lore of some fantasy world, or question the GM about the common customs of an unknown culture. Everyone remembers at least a little bit about the medieval times from they've read in school, or from other books or movies. Everyone is by default approximately on the same page. This setting doesn't take away the magic of discovery: it's going to be such a twisted, different medieval world that the pleasure of adventuring in it will be as with any fantasy setting.

Northern Europe

You will reasonably begin your adventures in continental Europe, and if you follow the standard classic fantasy tropes you should probably set-up the group in the northern part of the continent, or perhaps in England (call it Anglia or something like that).

If you want to push it further away from known territories, think of the crusades and the middle-east as an alternative. Think of human settlements in the form of Points-Of-Light: civilization is a modest force when compared to wilderness. Cities and villages should be few, sparse and relatively weak compared to the strength of The Wild. It's a dark age of superstition and dark terrors, but also of magic and miracles; it's a shitty life for many but of gold and adventures for a few brave others.

The Wild

The Wilderness - also called The Wild - is like a dark mantle that covers the continent, even in the south where once the Empire was strongest and brought order and civilization. Those times are long gone, though.

The majority of the forces of The Wild are content in hunting humans for food or fun, but some of the most diabolical of them actively pursue the annihilation or enslavement of humankind. Depending who you ask - a noble, a merchant, a cleric - they will give you different responses about what moves the forces of The Wild. They'll tell you they're after power or money, that they're just brutal beasts or that they're moved by the evil plans of Lucifer. Regardless of its motivations, The Wild is the strongest force out there. Even when safe behind a village's palisade or a city's walls, the characters should always remember that The Wild is out there, ready to get them.

There are a few powers that may occasionally contrast The Wild: the nobles and their armies, the sorcerers and their powers, the church and its miracles. But those powers are rarely united, and more often involved in a demented race for power within the small human establishments.

The Adventurers

So in the end common adventurers are those left to strive against The Wild. They are hired for their skills and courage, or they're simply trying to make a living or build a name for themselves, or they adventure with the hope to get rich. For The Wild is mortally dangerous but - often - rich: rich of treasures stolen from ancient cities and from dead adventurers, rich of dark secrets and obscure powers from the otherworlds of demons.

Dungeons will be monsters' lairs, caves infested with abominations, the ruins of the Empire, wicked wizards' towers, abandoned villages, cities and churches populated by monstrosities, or fortresses of undead soldiers waiting to march at the orders of another ancient centurion revived by a careless necromancer.

Your characters will begin as simple adventurers, with some basic skills and, if you're lucky, with a few good scores and a little better chance of surviving. Be wary, and be strong; life is hard and cheap when you're an adventurer. Be brave, but be smarter; or your dice will roll soon enough a new character.

The Crying Blades

The Crying Blades are probably just a legend: they're named after their magic swords that cry after they've slain an enemy.

According to the rumors, the Crying Blades are a gang of adventurers, acting as mercenaries on the pay-book of nobles and merchants, of priests and commoners. They are often greedy bastards, and their rich employers always have to pay more than they'd like for their services. On the other hand, it's common knowledge that commoners and regular folks usually enjoy a better treatment. When they deal with the Crying Blades, customers pay according to their own wealth, not just for the service they require or the skills of the adventurers they hire.

If you ask around, you'll hear different opinions about the Crying Blades: some say they act for the greater good, for the glory of God; other say they protect regular people from monsters and abominations, from demons and demi-humans. Several priests accuse them of making use of sorcery and blasphemous rituals; others swear that there are christian clerics among their ranks.

There are clear reports indicating that the Crying Blades, when not in service, have a tendency to go tomb-raiding and show no remorse to plunder recent christian graves as well as ancient loot.

They've been involved in several recent intrigues for this or that crown: they do not hesitate to use poison or stealthy blades to get rid of their enemies, but rarely remain in charge if they seize any sort of political power. They tend to favor the life of adventuring: they seem restless and eager to get involved in the next trouble.

All reports about the Crying Blades are, in the end, inconclusive. It is impossible to determine clearly the size of this mercenary gang, if it even exists. Its members appear to be sworn to secrecy sometimes, and other times show no concern about proclaiming themselves as crying blades.

Some scholars have suggested that the Crying Blades is a sort of common name adopted by different gangs, with no connections between one another, with no real initiation ritual, with no proper membership.

If this is true, it means that several different groups of lawless fighters, depraved sorcerers, sneaky rogues and blasphemous clerics would be traveling the land, slaying monsters and humans with the same lack of mercy, seeking gold and glory, obeying their murderous instincts as well as some sort of twisted, capricious, sense of righteousness... It's a broken, desperate land, the land that must depend on such men to fight the Wild.

The weapons of choice of most of the mercenaries belonging to the Crying Blades is, of course, the sword. While it is not the most practical weapon against other armored or shielded men, it works well enough against monsters, and it cross-shape makes it a suitable object for enchantments and blessings.

The Crying Blades, by their name, are magic swords carried by some of the members of this mercenary group. All these swords have a quite visible skull on the hilt: either on the pommel or on the rain-guard. It is rumored that these are real human skulls, but they're quite small. Anyway, the swords get their name, *crying blades*, by the fact that they cry tears of blood when they kill an innocent.

What's most peculiar is that apparently the definition of innocent, in the mind of the magic sword, changes depending on who wields it. In other words, and in game's terms, a Crying Blade will cry tears of blood when the wielder will kill someone of their own alignment. If the Crying Blade is used to kill someone of a different alignment, the Crying Blade will shed no tears.

There is no known procedure to get your hands on such a blade, nor a known meeting point for mercenaries of the Crying Blades, therefore the characters will have to work hard to get their hands on one (or more) of these.

THE ETERNAL CITY

One of my favorite settings is the so called "Eternal City" or "Infinite City" - I change the name depending on the mood. Often the two names refer to the same place; perhaps according to different cultures, or different legends.

The Eternal City might be Rome, or what is left of it after the Empire was destroyed by the merciless tides of history... and an invasion of monsters and demons with no precedents. The Eter-

nal City is now surrounded by an immense wall, higher than a castle tower and with no gates.

The wall is huge, so long and so thick it must have been built by someone, *something*, with far better skills than the simple men now left to garrison it. It makes you wonder if stories about dwarves, elves and giants might be true.

Standing guard on the wall are countless soldiers of every kingdom, every duchy, every city-state of the continent. It's literally an army, by size and complexity of operations, and everyone is involved in maintaining the wall's security.

Everyone is trying to make sure that what's in the city will remain *inside*. Of course, together with monsters, the city must contain so, so many treasures...

There are no gates on the wall, but there is a way to reach the Eternal City below. There are some crates that can be lowered with rope, and in some points of the wall, a few platforms have been built on the inside of the wall, to facilitate the process of lowering such crates or lifting them.

In some places, even though the practice is frowned upon by most nobles, the soldiers of this or that kingdom dispatch criminals down the wall. Some are allowed back in, after a while, if they carry enough treasure to buy their freedom back.

It is dangerous to enter the Eternal City like this: some have perished just in the process of descending, and not many have come back from their expeditions in the city.

And even if someone would make it back alive to the wall, who can guarantee that they'll be lifted back again into the kingdoms of humans?
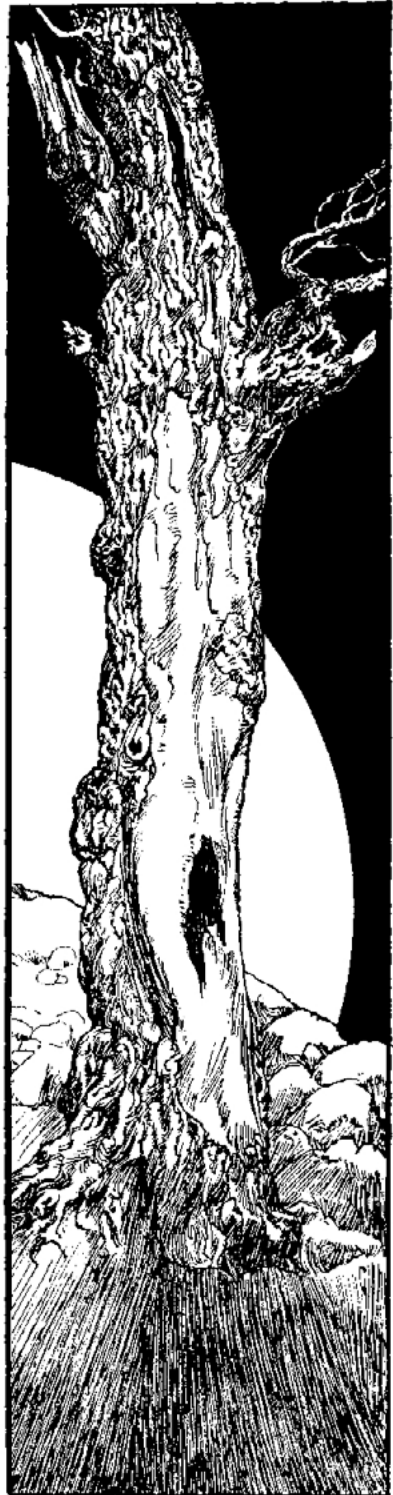
This chapter is about generating your character. The GM is encouraged to study this part of the manual, so that she can support players who are not yet familiar with the game's rules.

THE CHARACTERS

ATTRIBUTES

For each of the six attributes, in order (Charisma, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Strength, Wisdom), **roll 3d6**.

Just record the results; don't write on the character sheet, yet. Record the results as follows: the **totals** are assigned in order to the attributes' score, while the **lowest** of the three dice rolled for each attribute is registered as the **Gift value** for the related attribute.

For example, if you rolled 3, 4 and 6 for Charisma, the Charisma attribute score is 13, and Charisma Gift is 3. Gift will influence a few character's options, as described later.

You can decide to swap one attribute score with another, at character creation, but only once. If you do so, swap also the Gift value. Once you decided if to swap scores or not, you can start writing on the character sheet.

Write also the attributes' **modifiers**, as in Table 1, to the side (Attributes modifiers). When using these modifiers (and similar others), if you need to roll

Attribute Score	Modifier
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

Table 1: Attribute modifiers

higher than a given number, consider that the +X must give you **an advantage**, so it's added to your roll. If you need to roll below, consider the +X as added to the number itself.

In other words, a +x must be to your advantage, as player, a -x to your disadvantage.

As a reference, consider that **average human NPCs** would have a score of 9 in half their attributes (modifier 0), and a score 6 (modifier -1) in the other half.

Only special NPCs will have significantly different attributes' scores.

Accept Your Character

If four or more attributes have a negative modifier, you can choose to raise the highest of them up to the score of 10 (with modifier 0), or to discard the character and make a new one. If you discard the character, you cannot discard the next one.

> *A deadly campaign means no re-rolls of your character. Embrace whatever Fate handed you over: playing a shitty character will be quite an experience.*

Gift

This value, next to each of the attributes, is an expandable factor; it never increases, nor it's recovered.

Gift has a certain impact on various aspects of the game, as follows:
• Number of starting talents
• Maximum level for multiclassing
• Maximum increments to the attribute score
• Re-rolls for the attribute

Gift determines the number of your **starting talents**, according to your class' core attribute: strength for fighters, wisdom for clerics, intelligence for sorcerers, dexterity for rogues.

Gift determines the **maximum level** you can reach in a secondary class, if you **multiclass**. You can reach with your secondary class a level equal to the Gift value for the core attribute of that class. There is, of course, no limit on the primary class.

For example, a Cleric that wants to multiclass as Rogue, can reach as Rogue a Level equal but not greater than the Dexterity (Rogue's core attribute) Gift value.

Gift limits the amount of times you can **increase an attribute score** when you gain a new level.

Every time you select (among various options) to raise an attribute score by one at level-up, you **burn** (permanently lose) one Gift point on the same attribute. When you no longer have Gift points for a given attribute, you cannot increase its score.

> *The lowest scores attributes are more likely to have also low Gift values: the profile of a given character is bound to evolve into a better version of what it was at level one, but without fundamentally changing, even with the increase of attributes' scores.*

Last but not least, Gift is a life-safer mechanism, extremely precious at lower levels. Whenever you fail a roll with a certain attribute (which includes Saving Throws) and you want to re-roll, you can **burn** a Gift point of that attribute and re-roll.

Explain how your character gets another chance and doesn't suffer the dire consequences of the first failed roll. If you fail the second roll, that sucks. You can still burn another Gift point, as long as you have them, to re-roll again.

When you burn Gift points (increasing an attribute score or re-rolling), it does not influence the maximum level for a multiclass you **already** acquired, but it limits any **future** multiclass option you want to take. Starting talents are not affected, if you already selected them.

Gift points you burned will never be restored. Use them wisely: they are there to save your life. But don't hesitate: you cannot burn a Gift point after the GM has declared you dead.

ATTRIBUTES EXPLANATION

Each attribute presents a few additional modifiers or scores: these will be registered on the character sheet. They will not change often (only if the attribute score changes).

Charisma (CHA) indicates attitude for leadership and the ability to influence others. It is especially effective in gaining and retaining allies and obtaining favorable reactions, making a good first impression, and even getting a better price for stuff.

It also indicates - with a certain measure of accuracy - the appeal and even physical beauty of your character; if you want your character to get laid, Charisma is not a dump stat.

Bonuses:
- **Max. Hirelings**: 3 ± CHA modifier
- **Discount**: if positive, CHA mod. x 10% discount on all prices
- **Reaction**: ± CHA mod for all reaction rolls

Constitution is an indication of good health and resistance, endurance and toughness. It has a direct influence on the character's Hit Points and capability to suffer damage, in combat and other situations.

It is an important attribute especially for characters more involved in combat or exposed to direct physical harm.

Bonuses:
- **Hit Points**: if positive, add CON mod. to all the Hit Dice rolls for HP

- **Save vs. Death**: final Saving Throw, used also when resurrected by a Cleric; its score (roll under to succeed) is 5 + Level ± CON modifier

Dexterity is a combination of agility and speed, reflex and manual coordination and skills.

It affects the character's Initiative (the possibility to act first in combat or other dangerous situations), Armor Class (a defensive score used in combat) and the ability with ranged weapons. It is probably the most important attribute for a rogue.

Bonuses:
- **Initiative**: always roll Initiative ± DEX modifier
- **Armor Class**: if DEX mod. is positive, add a simple +1 to the Armor Class
- **Ranged Attacks**: if DEX mod. is positive, add a simple +1 to all the rolls to hit and to all damage inflicted with ranged weapons

Intelligence is an approximate indication of the character's knowledge and capability to work with complex matters. Of course the player's wits must take precedence but this score gives an indication of both innate talent and educated learning.

A low score does not indicate stupidly; it just represents lack of formal education, in an age where most people could barely write their own name. Intelligence affects the capability to for languages and has a direct impact on sorcery.

Bonuses:
- **Languages**: if INT mod. is positive, add that many languages (more in the appropriate section)
- **Spells**: number of spells (+ Level) per day

Strength is first of all raw muscle, but also proficiency in armed and unarmed melee combat.

It has an influence also on the harm inflicted on opponents, on the probability to break doors, chains and bars, to lift heavy weights and carry weight for a long period of time. It is the most important attribute for a fighter.

Bonuses:
- **Melee Attacks**: apply the STR mod. if positive to all the rolls to hit in melee
- **Damage Bonus**: apply the STR mod. if positive to all damage inflicted in melee
- **Weight**: indicates the weight (slots) that the character can carry

The "Melee Attacks bonus" and "Damage Bonus" modifiers are often reserved only to the fighter class. If you want a game where all characters can take part to melee fights actively and with better odds, let all characters enjoy this bonus, otherwise keep it restricted to fighters only.

Wisdom measures the character's perception and insight, and it indicates the connection with the spiritual world. Although the character's decisions and ability to gather clues or make decision ultimately relies on the player's skills, Wisdom has an influence on what a character can perceive at first glance.

This attribute affects also clerics with their miracles' working (spells), and saving throws against illusions, deceptions and similar.

Bonuses:
- **Notice**: if WIS mod. is positive, add +1 to your chance to notice something (2 in 6 instead of the default 1 in 6, on a d6 roll)
- Blessings: number of blessings (+ Level) per day

In some cases, you apply an attribute modifier both when positive and when negative (like for Max. Hirelings; a negative modifier reduces the number of available hirelings). In other cases, you apply the modifier only when positive (like CON mod. added to Hit Points). A third case, see to the side for the Dexterity modifier, is when you add a fixed value (+1 for DEX) in case the modifier is positive, regardless of the value of the modifier itself.

When using the various attributes for rolls or saving throws, the habits and mastering style of your GM and the traditions of your group will have a great influence to decide whether to call for a roll, or to just role play the situation, or to have the GM make a ruling instead.

In many OSR games, for example, Charisma is basically a "leadership" ability, rather than a measure of beauty or capability to seduce NPCs. Only in more recent games Charisma became a "*roll to convince*" replacing the "*role play to convince*".

Not all groups work in the same way, but the fundamental idea behind OSR is to test **the player's skills** as much as the character's attributes. If possible, using the player's input and ideas, and using role play rather than rolls, is the best way to run a smooth game in pure OSR style.

If your table doesn't work too well with the old-style *more role-play* and *less roll-play*, try something in between, with one of the below two approaches.

Use rolls to **setup the initial premises** of the action, then role play the rest, so you get to rely both on numbers and players' skills. Also, the GM might roll whenever she feels like she wants to leave the final decision about success or failure in the hands of the fate. Sticking to Charisma, you can for example use a roll to determine the initial reaction of an NPC, and use that result (positive or negative) to begin role play the scene.

Alternatively, a roll could be used to **determine a final response**, with role play as a pre-requisite for even attempting the roll (for example, if you don't sound convincing with your own negotiational skills, you don't get to roll Charisma to obtain any result).

CLASSES

These are the character's classes available in the game: fighter, cleric, sorcerer and rogue.

Fighters are the straight-to-melee characters; they are the ones that can grow into very powerful warriors, and offer mostly fighting talents.

Clerics, in this world, are of the Christian church. They have special spells called miracles or blessings (which work even if the Cleric does not believe or lost their faith!), which feature for example healing powers.

Sorcerers are those who are devoted to the obscure path of the dark arts. They rely on their arcane knowledge and their collection of spells, and rarely excel in anything else.

Rogues are in it usually for the money: they are capable in multiple areas of expertise; they are specialists, sometimes thieves, always versatile.

A character's class cannot be changed later in the game.

Most human NPCs are considered to have **no class**; they are the equivalent of a level 0 characters. Special human NPCs would be the exception.

If your GM allows non-human characters in the game, they should be houseruled as a class (also known as race-as-class).

The Primary Attribute

The primary attribute for the various classes is the following:
• Fighters: strength
• Clerics: wisdom
• Sorcerers: intelligence
• Rogues: dexterity

Saving Throws

There are different types of Saving Throws, which will be described in details in the game basic rules.

While filling your character sheet, consider the following: the **value (roll under)** of each Saving Throw is equal to **5 + Level ± Attribute modifier.**

Each class grants a different bonus to different Saving Throws.

The Saving Throws bonuses are listed with each class' Talents, in the next chapter.

Skills And Talents

Every character has access to a list of **specific skills** that often come useful during adventures. Each skill is represented by a probability, by default a 1in6. Rogues are much better than other characters with these skills, as you will see in the Classes chapter.

Talents are another unique feature of each class: they represent special abilities and unique bonuses or capabilities. They are determined randomly, according to the class.

Hit Points Die

Hit Points (HP) are a measure not just of the character's physical health, but also a general abstraction of stamina and will to fight and push forward.

When creating your character, roll the **Hit Points Die** indicated by your class (d8 for fighter, d6 for cleric or rogue, d4 for sorcerer), and add the Hit Points bonus of the Constitution modifier (if positive).

Abbreviations

Attributes:
CHA = Charisma
CON = Constitution
DEX = Dexterity
INT = Intelligence
STR = Strength
WIS = Wisdom

Attributes related:
GIF = Gift score/value
mod = attribute modifier

Combined examples:
CHA-GIF = Charisma Gift
STR mod = Strength modifier

This is the number of **Maximum** Hit Points (max HP) for your character at level one. HP cannot be healed above the Maximum Hit Points: that's the upper limit you character can reach.

Regular Level 0 human NPCs have a simple d6 HP (no re-rolls).

When the current HP **go to 0 or below**, the character is unconscious, and deadly wounded.

Same as other scores, Hit Points can increase when the character gains Levels through the game (but **not** on every Level as in other games).

Remember that the Constitution modifier, if positive, is applied every time you increase the HP by rolling the Hit Dice.

You will find more details about Armor Class (see to the side) in the combat chapter. For now, just know that AC 0 here is approximately the same as Ascending Armor Class 10 or 12 in most OSR games.

ARMOR CLASS

Armor Class in the game starts at a very simple value of 0 (zero). Add the +1 from Dexterity, if applicable: this is your (raw) **Basic Armor Class**.

You use the Basic Armor Class if a character is fighting unarmored, or if some condition makes the armor (and shield) irrelevant for protection.

A negative Armor Class for a character (because of penalties etc.) is always considered to be zero.

The highest the score, the better, assuming your character can use efficiently that type of armor, and you are not overloading him with too much weight.

A character wearing armor increases their AC adding the AC value of the strongest armor piece they wear (if they wear leather and plate, keep the plate AC value), plus the value for the shield, if used.

COMBAT BONUSES

There are different types of bonuses that apply to combat situations:
- Melee attack bonus: bonus to the to-hit roll in melee
- Melee damage bonus: bonus to the harm inflicted by melee attacks

Hit Points:
HP = Hit Points
HD = Hit (Points) Die
Max HP = Maximum Hit Points
Cur HP = Current Hit Points

Others:
AB = Attack Bonus
AC = Armor Class
ST = Saving Throw

Levels:
Lev or LVL = Character Level
XP = Experience Points
PWL = Power Level for spells

Weight/Treasure:
Enc = Encumbrance
1 Encumbrance = 4 Load (or weights)
sp/sc = silver pieces/coins
gp/gc = gold pieces/coins

- Ranged attacks bonus; also a roll to hit, but with ranged weapons
- Ranged damage bonus, this time for ranged attacks

The To Hit and Damage **bonuses in melee** are derived by the Strength attribute; as already explained, in most games these will be restricted to the fighter class only. The bonus is equal to the STR-mod value, if positive; a +2 in strength equals a +2 bonus To Hit and damage in melee.

The **Ranged** attack bonus, instead, and the damage bonus for ranged weapons, is derived by the Dexterity attribute. This is available to all classes. If the Dexterity modifier is positive (+1 or more), add a +1 bonus to hit with ranged weapons and +1 to damage.

Languages

For the purpose of the classic games, languages are a crucial component when trying to negotiate with monsters or with other potentially hostile humans. But such rules could be neglected in favor of roleplaying: it's more interesting to see character negotiate than to prevent the negotiation because of a lack of a common language.

The **default rule**, therefore, is that every communication with humans should be possible. If the conditions are particularly exceptional (a meeting with foreigners that don't speak the local tongue), then a successful attribute check on Intelligence should be enough to allow a basic conversation.

There is always a little in common between languages, someone who knows a few words, the possibility to mimic a concept with your hands, etc.

Communication **with monsters** can also be facilitated: let the monsters be able to speck the common human tongue, usualy.

Again, a positive check on Intelligence might allow a character to communicate with a monster in its own monstrous tongue. It could be done to make sure others cannot understand the conversation, or perhaps to gain the monster's favor.

Language Lists

If your group decides instead to use an explicit **language list**, each character begins the game with enough knowledge of their own native tongue. Moreover, every character will have enough knowledge of a mix of Latin

In any case, using or not specific languages' lists, consider that normal characters do not have the skills to read and write the language used for magic, with the exception of the sorcerer's class.

(or a similar "common" tongue) and traders' lingo to be able to communicate with all other characters and with the locals (wherever you set your adventure), even if the character themselves may come from afar.

Every character, besides their own native language and the common tongue, will speak a number of additional languages as indicated **by the Intelligence modifier**, if positive. A character with a +2 therefore will know an additional two languages.

Characters with a negative Intelligence modifier will be illiterate, **unable to read and write** even their own native tongue. Characters with a zero modifier or a positive modifier will be able to **read and write** in each of the languages they know.

To add new languages, the intelligence score must be raised (adding points when gaining Levels) so that the related modifier is increased.

Equipment

The standard rules for equipment, weight and related encumbrance are outlined in the dedicated chapter, after the Classes. The game provides a standard system for items and weight, plus two house-rules system (dice-based and slots-based) for you to evaluate and build upon, if you wish.

Here is just a brief presentation for the character's creation purpose.

Silver Pieces

The game economy is based on silver coins, or **silver pieces** (sp). When creating a new character, roll and start with 3d6 x 10 silver pieces, to buy the initial equipment.

When calculating your purchases, remember that a **high Charisma** score gives you the right to a discount.

Gold coins, although quite rare, are worth nominally 10 silver pieces, but it's rare to be able to obtain their full value, when exchanged. Count them as 10 silver only for the purpose of banking them and gaining XP. For exchange and spending purposes, the GM will make a ruling, and give you a figure usually between 7 to 9.

Encumbrance

Every character can wear armor and carry weapons and various equipments up to a certain limit. Above that limit, the character is considered to be encumbered and thus hampered in certain tasks.

Before the starting adventure, usually characters have the possibility to spend their starting silver to buy their initial equipment. While doing so, they must keep in consideration their **Maximum Load**, that is how much they can carry before encurring into penalties.

Every object has a weight or load value (usually 1 or 2): the character can carry a number of such points **equal to their Strength score**. They can also carry a number of **small items** (weight or load of zero) again equal to their Strength score.

The suggestion is to **delete** on the character sheet the slots that cannot be used: for example with a Strength 14 character, delete the slots from 15 to 18.

For compatibility and to group items together, consider that **4 weights, 4 items, are equivalent to 1 Encumbrance point**. In general, consider that items are a combination of their pure weight and also technical encumbrace caused by having to carry around the object itself. A long but light item might have a higher load value of a smaller but heavier object; because the smalle object is easier to carry.

Items that you carry above your Strength score, will give you progressive penalties because of encumbrance.

IDENTITY

Select a name for your character. If you're undecided or need inspiration, a list of names is provided in the next page, and you can select one of those names. If you embrace random-ness to the very core, roll on the table instead of picking your name.

> *There is no Alignment section in here because by default the game does not require alignment. As an indication, placing characters or their actions or values among this or that alignment, depends greatly by the observer's beliefs. Clerics for example have the annoying tendency to consider non-legal characters as chaotic even when they're neutral. If you need to determine a character's alignment, for example to determine the effects of a spell or enchantment of an OSR module, by default all characters are neutral. Only significant deeds reinforced by strong beliefs, and supported by a certain consistency of actions, might allow the GM to rule a character as chaotic or legal. The Wild, of course, couldn't care less about your thoughts on alignment and philosophy.*

TRAITS

Traits are provided only for the sake of roleplaying and better characterization in the game. This part is open to hacking and houseruling (such as mechanical effect for traits).

"Negative traits" are not really all that negative and of course they do not imply any sort of judgement by the author. They are negative in the common sense of the term, and only within the boundaries of the game. They are challenging and funny, interesting to bring into the game, that's all there is to them.

For your character creation, proceed as follows:

- Roll on the table of Characters' Traits on the next pages; if you rolled an **even** number, use the Positive Traits, if you rolled an **odd** number use the Negative Traits table
- Write the trait for your character on your sheet, selecting either the one indicated by your roll, or the one immediately before or after
- You should roll again, for a second trait, and decide which table to use for this second trait (for example if you roll a 34 on your d100, you can take the positive or negative Trait with number 34, depending on which inspires you the most)

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CHARACTER NAMES

Roll	Name (M)	Name (F)	Roll	Name (M)	Name (F)
1	Abelardus	Abigail	51	Kade	Iola
2	Acacius	Adelphia	52	Leofwin	Isebella
3	Achim	Agatha	53	Leon	Itala
4	Acteon	Agnes	54	Malvor	Jael
5	Adwhar	Agola	55	Maurice	Jivete
6	Aiken	Aldith	56	Michael	Joan
7	Ailwin	Amaris	57	Milio	Jocasta
8	Alair	Anabel	58	Milon	Junia
9	Albanus	Anika	59	Moheb	Juturnia
10	Alexis	Arelia	60	Nardil	Laelia
11	Alivan	Ariel	61	Nasam	Laetitia
12	Alrike	Athalia	62	Nava	Liecia
13	Antumar	Avice	63	Nicon	Lilith
14	Argan	Belia	64	Nuno	Lucia
15	Arighorn	Bethel	65	Oddo	Lyle
16	Aymer	Cahedia	66	Osbert	Memura
17	Bahal	Calista	67	Paeon	Miriam
18	Basilius	Cemathia	68	Paulus	Nance
19	Calix	Certhia	69	Pontus	Nediva
20	Chelbo	Chan	70	Rafael	Neir
21	Debrek	Chana	71	Ranulf	Orpah
22	Dorus	Clarice	72	Richard	Pax
23	Dwain	Claricia	73	Roger	Qualle
24	Eban	Claudia	74	Romanus	Rachel
25	Ebert	Clotild	75	Samer	Rama
26	Efrain	Clyvia	76	Saul	Reba
27	Elazar	Dana	77	Sechok	Regin
28	Eldon	Daria	78	Semuel	Richenda
29	Ennius	Decima	79	Silvester	Roesia
30	Ernestus	Dina	80	Simeon	Rohese
31	Fabius	Dirthora	81	Simon	Sarah
32	Fulvius	Donamira	82	Stipen	Saris
33	Fuskar	Eden	83	Stiren	Shari
34	Gaius	Edith	84	Sulam	Silva
35	Galahor	Electra	85	Tacitus	Sylaberth
36	Gavin	Elise	86	Tascar	Talia
37	Geoffrey	Emmot	87	Telian	Tasia
38	Geranat	Eowin	88	Thomas	Thaymet
39	Gilbert	Etullian	89	Timeus	Tiva
40	Gladwin	Euran	90	Tobias	Unaa
41	Glothor	Eustella	91	Touval	Undine
42	Gwak	Everien	92	Ulber	Urania
43	Hadrian	Firobena	93	Ulkhan	Verna
44	Henry	Flora	94	Ulsak	Vita
45	Herod	Gavina	95	Uri	Xandara
46	Horst	Gilah	96	Uriel	Xanthe
47	Hugh	Gilla	97	Wimarc	Xuna
48	Isaac	Gisela	98	Yakov	Yaffa
49	Isllay	Herleve	99	Yousef	Yeintil
50	Juda	Hilda	100	Zeno	Zhoire

Table 2: Characters' names

Positive Traits

Roll	Trait	Roll	Trait
1	Resolute	51	Assertive
2	Fair	52	Loyal
3	Reliable	53	Confident
4	Strong face	54	Austere
5	Refined	55	Determined
6	Charming smile	56	Tactful
7	Cautious	57	Blue eyes
8	Helpful	58	Handsome
9	Confident	59	Brave
10	Disciplined	60	Creative
11	Noble	61	Kind face
12	Piercing eyes	62	Impartial
13	Trustworthy smile	63	Courteous
14	Noble posture	64	Calm, cool posture
15	Loving	65	Sympathetic
16	Kind	66	Steady hands
17	Braided hair	67	Long hair
18	Careful	68	Patient
19	Precise	69	Jewelry and rings
20	Elegant gloves and boots	70	Dignified
21	Athletic	71	Solid body
22	Easygoing	72	Shaved head
23	Big mustache (or long hair)	73	Resourceful
24	Beautiful beard (or hair)	74	Organized
25	Kind	75	Young face
26	Cooperative	76	Honest
27	Curious	77	Measured
28	Gracious body	78	Curly hair
29	Knowledgeable	79	Practical
30	Comanding voice	80	Beautiful skin
31	Persistent	81	Dimplomatic
32	Stoic	82	Joyous
33	Noble nose	83	Quick eyes
34	Alluring	84	Classy
35	Logical	85	Passionate
36	Focused	86	Bright eyes
37	Romantic	87	Tolerant
38	Cape, furs, animal claws	88	Elegant clothes
39	Sweet	89	Pretty
40	Exotic eyes	90	Efficient
41	Ritual tattoes	91	Polite
42	Formal	92	Fiery eyes
43	Spontaneous	93	Experienced
44	Wise eyes	94	Dynamic
45	Vigorous	95	Forgiving
46	Friendly	96	Long, adorned hair
47	Wise	97	Vivacious
48	Generous	98	Tenacious
49	Fierce	99	Eloquent
50	Entertaining	100	Inspirational

Table 3: Characters' positive traits

NEGATIVE TRAITS

Roll	Trait	Roll	Trait
1	Agoraphobic	51	Rebellious
2	Superstitious	52	Cheater
3	Mysterious tattoes	53	Brutish
4	Sleepyhead	54	No hair (full body)
5	Big feet	55	Disloyal
6	Disorganized	56	Small eyes
7	Vain	57	Moody
8	Long nose	58	Awkward
9	Impatient	59	Indiscrete
10	Tormented eyes	60	Arrogant
11	Lustful	61	Broken teeth
12	Aggressive	62	Rude
13	Clumsy	63	Sloppy
14	Weak stomach	64	Lazy
15	Broken nose	65	Raspy voice
16	Reckless	66	Insecure
17	Missing finger(s)	67	Acid scars
18	Irritable	68	Scarred face
19	Black teeth	69	Hot headed
20	Red eyes	70	Balding
21	Big mouth	71	Hysterical
22	Merciless	72	Shy face
23	Pockmarked	73	Selfish
24	Haunted eyes	74	Boastful
25	Smelly	75	Liar
26	Cowardly	76	Dirty clothes
27	Light limp	77	Indiscrete
28	Wild hair	78	Cruel
29	Hostile	79	Squeaky voice
30	Pale	80	Bitter face
31	Big ears	81	Stubborn
32	Careless	82	Furious
33	Scrawny body	83	Large head
34	Large eyebrows	84	Manipulative
35	White hair	85	Barbaric outlook
36	Hypochondriac	86	Obsessive
37	Shifty face	87	Missing ear
38	Absent minded	88	Greedy
39	Missing eye	89	Multiple scars
40	Snobbish	90	Primitive
41	Burn scars	91	Rough
42	Pretentious	92	Vengeful
43	Hasty	93	Twisted face
44	Petulant	94	Childish
45	Weathered face	95	Insolent
46	Glum	96	Sickly body
47	Anxious	97	Zealous
48	Neglected clothing	98	Envious
49	Hesitant	99	Claustrophobic
50	Shameless	100	Dishonest

Table 4: Characters' negative traits

Characters' Classes are presented in this chapter as a combination of various **talents and restrictions**.

Restrictions put a limit on what a certain character can or cannot do, if they belong to a certain class. Talents, on the other hand, are useful bits of rules to boost a character performance in certain occasions, suitable to the class profile. Additional rules, presented in the advanced section, offer the characters the possibility to multiclass, gaining features from different classes, although the GM might rule this out for certain games.

After the various Classes and related talents, a brief section presents the rules for the **various skills** (especially relevant for Rogues).

CHARACTERS' CLASSES

Talents

In the game, talents are special features available only to a certain class or a certain character. Every class offers several talents, some active from the start and others that are optional.

Among those optional, a few are selected randomly at the beginning of the game. As the character progresses to higher levels, more Talents will become available.

When you **create your character**, you can roll on the Talents' list for your class a number of times equal to the Gift value of your core attribute. These will be your starting talents, together with the default talents of your class.

For example, if you select fighter as the class for your character, roll a number of times equal to the Gift value of Strength. Use Wisdom for clerics, Intelligence for sorcerers and Dexterity for rogues.

At character creation, if you roll the same Talent **twice**, it still counts as a spent roll, and you just don't get any talent to add to your list.

Whenever you **gain a new level**, you are offered the choice of gaining a new Talent among those available to your class, if you choose to do so, by rolling again.

Note that this doesn't come from just gaining a level: you have a few different options upon gaining a level (increasing attributes score, increasing HP, or rolling for a new talent). If you choose to gain a new talent, you get to roll again on the talents table of your class.

If you roll a talent you already have, you are free to select the first one before or after, that you don't already have. If you choose to gain a new talent, the roll is never lost.

Innate Talents

Some **Innate Talents** are available to the characters at the moment of creation. Those have no class restriction, any character can have them. To select one or more innate talents, you need to roll on the list below. You cannot choose; it's innate and it's random.

You can get Innate Talents **only** at the moment of character creation, not later (they cannot be chosen as part of the level advancements).

So if you want a shot at getting one Innate Talent, you can spend one of your Talents' rolls on this list. In other words, you give up a roll for a talent of your class, and roll for an innate talent instead.

1) Healing fast: when regaining HP, the character always regains +1 more, or +2 more if you're a fighter.

2) Iron bones: you have 1d4 HP more to start with. Also: without weapons you still inflict 1d4 damage.

3) Vicious: all your damage rolls done with weapons have a +2 damage.

4) Underdog: when you fight an enemy whose Level or HD is higher than your own Level, your AC is increased by 1.

5) Me first: when you roll Initiative, take an additional +2.

6) Always prepared: regardless of your STR score, you can fill all 18 slots for small items in your inventory, with no penalty.

7) Read magic: can read magic (as the spell) naturally. This even makes the character able to cast from scrolls or books, regardless of the class. Requires one turn to concentrate for reading and one for casting from the scroll, not necessarily consecutive.

8) A strange feeling: once per session, the GM will tell you if you're missing something. It's their choice if to tell you about something significant, but you can also ask yourself, just to make sure...

9) A sense for magic: can detect magic as the Detect magic spell, but only if the character concentrates for one turn (lasts as the spell).

10) Fast learner: when XP is assigned, subtract 5% of the total and mark it for yourself; the rest is divided evenly among all group members.

11) Everything is food: you need half the number of rations of other characters (mark half when you eat one). All your saves vs. poison have a +2 bonus.

12) Compass: you always know where north is, and where up and down are. Any roll based on orientation will get a +2 bonus.

13) Lucky, sometimes: can change a 1 for a 20 or a 20 for a 1, but only once per dungeon/adventure location.

14) Trader: when you change gold for silver, always get 10.

15) Perfect memory: what you see is like written in stone in your mind. It still takes you normal time to read, but you can reproduce anything from memory. You can even rewrite spells you saw written (even if your classe doesn't allow you to use them), and a sorcerer can use your reproduction to copy and learn the spell (but not use it as a scroll).
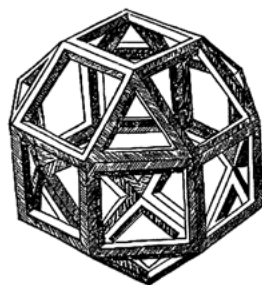
16) Blessed water: you can bless water with your blood. Spend 2 HP (up to a maximum of 10) to bless the water and who drinks it gains 1 HP. The water loses power in 1d10 turns.

17) Eagle-eye: when you used ranged weapons, you always hit the intended target, never others. You still need to roll to see if you hit your target to make damage.

18) Deep pockets: unless they strip you naked, you can always declare you have a little item (maximum the size of a knife) hidden on you.

19) Resistant to magic: your Saving Throws vs. magic are with +2.

20) The Chosen: select the Innate Talent that you prefer.

FIGHTER

If your class is fighter, you get a number of Talents equal to your Strength Gift. Roll a d10 to determine each one of them.

Besides those random, a fighter has the following talents and restrictions too:

Hit Points Dice: d8.

Attack bonus: add your Level/3 (rounded down) to your melee attack rolls, plus the normal To-Hit modifier.

For ranged attack, use the normal bonus from the Dexterity score.

Damage: add the strength modifier for damage if positive (in some games only the fighter has access to this).

Armor/Shield permitted: any (no penalty for heavy armor).

Weapons permitted: any (no penalty to hit with 2-handed weapons).

Magic items: can carry a number of magic, enchanted, blessed, charmed items equal to their Level, and never more than nine. More exposes the character to danger according to the GM's judgement, including de-activating talents temporarily and other penalties.

Magic: cannot cast any type of spell (unless multiclassing).

Robust: Saving Throws with STR and CON are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2).

Skills: select one between Explorer, Guide, or Hunter.

Fighter's Talents

Any of the following talents can be unlocked as a starting Talent (up to a max. number of Talents equal to the Gift value of the STR attribute) or when gaining a level (with no limitation to the number of talents).

1) Bastion: calculate the Basic Armor Class (before armor) adding +1 if the STR mod. or the CON mod. is positive. Do not apply the DEX modifier.

2) Blood drive: after killing an enemy or reducing them to 0 HP, the fighter regains a number of HP equal to their own (fighter's) Level divided by 2 (rounded down); this can happen only once per combat.

3) Push: after a successful attack landed by the fighter, the enemy is pushed back and the fighter can step in into their place instead.

4) Steel trained: wearing any metal (chainmail or plate) and carrying any metal shield, counts only as 1 Encumbrance (4 weight) in total, not more.

5) Defend: giving up other actions like moving or attacking, a fighter can defend another character for a round. All the attacks against that character will use the fighter AC, and even if they hit, they have a 50% of chances to hit the fighter instead of the other character (roll: even for fighter, odd for the other).

6) Merciless: all damage rolls done by the fighter are increased by the fighter Level/2 (rounded down) plus strength bonus, if any. Double it for 2-handed weapons.

7) Hard trained: no penalty (as all fighters) but bonus +2 To-Hit for using 2-handed or pole weapons and one of these can be carried for no encumbrance (list in weight 0 items).

8) Attacking stance: fighters can assume an attacking stance that offers them multiple attacks; one more per Level divided by 3 (rounded down). Each bonus attack comes at the price of a cumulative -1 AC.

9) Multiple Attacks: the fighter can make one attack per level each round, against enemies with 1 HD or less. The fighter can attack multiple 1 HD enemies and with a last attack, a stronger one.

10) Lucky one: yeah, go ahead and pick one talent of your choice.
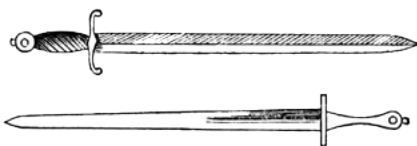
You may roll for these only when getting to Level 6 or higher:

1) Critic: the fighter scores a critic (hit automatically and for double damage) on a roll of 19 and 20, not just 20.

2) Block and parry: by forsaking their attack, a fighter can increase their AC +2, and gain +2 to hit and +2 to damage in the next round. They can forsake a second attack round for a cumulative +4 to hit and +4 to damage in the third round. If the fighter is hit, though, the bonus is lost.

3) Double attack: throw a weapon on the off-hand (like a dagger) and attack with another (like a sword), or attack and then throw the same weapon, in one round.

4) Momentum: after killing an enemy or reducing them to 0 HP, the fighter can once attack a nearby enemy with a new attack roll, in the same round.

5) Parry and disarm: after a successful attack, the fighter can forsake their damage roll and disarm the opponent if they pass a Strength attribute check. The opponent must have HD equal or lower than the character level.

6) Slayer: when fighting a large monster, fighters can grapple, or even climb on the enemy, with a successful DEX roll. If they succeed, and for as long as they manage to hold on (the GM might rule that re-rolls are required), they attack with a bonus of +2 and inflict +2 damage.

CLERIC

If your class is cleric, you get a number of Talents equal to your Wisdom Gift. Roll a d10 to determine each one of them.

Besides those random, a cleric has the following talents and restrictions too:

Hit Points Die: d6.

Attack bonus: normal To-Hit modifier for melee.

For ranged attack, use the normal bonus from the Dexterity score.

Damage: add the strength modifier for damage if positive (in some games only the fighter has access to this).

Armor/Shield Permitted: any, but with penalty for heavy armor.

Weapons Permitted: any, but with penalty for 2-handed weapons.

Magic: can cast miracles and blessings from the cleric's spell list.

Cannot produce scrolls or charge staffs or wands; needs a sorcerer to make potions.

Multiclass: cannot multiclass as a sorcerer.

Divine protection: Saving Throws with CON and WIS are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2).

Skills: select one between Explorer, Guide, or Hunter.

Cleric's Talents

Any of the following talents can be unlocked as a starting Talent (up to a max. number of Talents equal to the Gift value of the WIS attribute) or when gaining a level (with no limitation to the number of talents).

Note that Turn Undead is considered to be a spell, not a talent, therefore it is listed with the cleric's miracles and blessings. Rules about miracles and blessings are available in a dedicated chapter.

1) Comfort: when taking a short rest, through prayer you regain +1 HP. Every character that prays with you gains the same benefit, regardless of their real faith.

2) Divine intercession: Saving Throws with DEX and CHA are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2).

3) Divine tool: select randomly one of your starting miracles; when casting it you don't need energy for it (you still need to roll, and it can be Unstable).

4) Holy Symbol against undead: you can bless a single holy symbol that will then aid your allies. They can use it to turn undead as you would, but when they do, you must roll for the blessing (as if you were casting it) and it's drained from your energy (mark it as one of the spells of today). You can have only one symbol at the time, and you must know the Turn Undead blessing before you can prepare it. Blessing another symbol will break the previous unused symbol.

5) Blessed wood: you can make a blessed staff (or a wand), as long as it has some holy symbol on it. It works like the sorcerer's staff or wand, but can have a max. of 3 spells ready in it, and cannot be charged with a single, flexible, ready-spell.

6) Holy scrolls: you can write blessed scrolls with a clerical spell in it; everyone (with no restriction) can read them and use them if they read your language. The time and the costs (in holy offerings) is the same as the one of the sorcerer.

7) Blessed by blood: your blood counts as a holy symbol; when you're hurt (or you hurt yourself) you can cast miracles even if they've taken away your holy symbol.

8) Exorcist: your Turn Undead blessings always affect an additional number of undead HDs equal to your Level.

9) The Unspeakable Truth: in the sorcerers' books you found proof that your divinity is not alone in this world. Your faith is lost or shaken, but you can now read sorcerers' scrolls to cast sorcerers' spells (that are then erased) but you must use Read magic first. You still cannot use sorcerer's spells from memory or other items.

10) Lucky one: yeah, go ahead and pick one talent of your choice.

ADDITIONAL TALENTS

You may roll for these only when getting to Level 6 or higher:
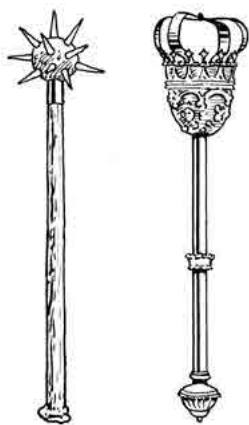
1) Steel trained: wearing any metal (chainmail or plate) and carrying any metal shield, counts only as 1 Encumbrance (4 weight) in total, not more, and remove penalties for heavy armor.

2) Robust: Saving Throws with STR and CON are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2).

3) Shield master: by letting your shield to be destroyed by an attack, you can reduce to zero the damage you would suffer this round from a single opponent.

4) War trained: using 2-handed or pole weapons incur in no penalty (no -2 to hit) and one of these can be carried with no encumbrance (list in weight 0 items), but get no bonus.

5) Punisher: add your Level/3 to your To-Hit rolls, but only against non-human adversaries or cursed/possessed humans.

6) Divine warrior: select one fighter's talent and use it as your own.

Sorcerer

If your class is sorcerer, you get a number of Talents equal to your Intelligence Gift. Roll a d10 to determine each one of them.

Besides those random, a sorcerer has the following talents and restrictions too:

Hit Points Dice: d4.

Attack bonus: normal To-Hit modifier for melee.

For ranged attack, use the normal bonus from the Dexterity score.

Damage: add the strength modifier for damage if positive (in some games only the fighter has access to this).

Armor/Shield Permitted: any, but with penalty for heavy armor.

Weapons Permitted: any, but with penalty for 2-handed weapons.

Magic: can cast spells from the sorcerer's spell list.

Can use scrolls, staffs and wands, and create potions.

Cannot cast spells if severely or heavily encumbered (2 or more above the Encumbrance Limit).

Multiclass: cannot multiclass as a cleric.

Moon-guard: Saving Throws with INT and WIS are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2). The INT modifier applies for all saves against any form of sorcery. or curse or similar.

Spellbook: the sorcerer also starts the game with a spellbook containing a number of random spells. All the rules about sorcery are in a dedicated chapter.

Skills: select one between Explorer, Guide, or Hunter.

Sorcerer's Talents

Any of the following talents can be unlocked as a starting Talent (up to a max. number of Talents equal to the Gift value of the INT attribute) or when gaining a level (with no limitation to the number of talents).

1) Silent caster: the sorcerer is a master in non-verbal casting. They can cast spells without talking, just by doing the necessary (visible) movements.

2) Immobile caster: the sorcerer can cast just with words, no need for gestures. This also removes the restriction on casting when encumbered.

3) Natural energy: select randomly one of your starting spells; when casting it you don't need energy (you still need to roll and it can be Unstable).

4) Staff master: you always know where your staff or wand is. With a round of concentration, you can hear, see, feel, smell, touch, as if you were there.

5) Power source: the first spell you cast during the day, does not count towards your daily limit. The GM might allow this talent to be acquired multiple times to increase the sorcerer's spells daily limit.

6) Fast learner: every time you pay for new spells, you pay 75 XP per PWL instead of the default 100.

7) Hardwork: it takes less time for you to write scrolls and spellbooks, or make potions. Remove the +1d6 days from the necessary time; keep only spell PWL as the necessary time.

8) Fast preparation: when you recover spells from the Unstable state, you can recover two instead of one.

9) Magic forge: you can treat a weapon like a sword, or a spear, etc. as a wand or a staff, and charge it with spells. It's handy but as fragile as an original wand in case of trouble while charging it.

10) Lucky one: yeah, go ahead and pick one talent of your choice.

Additional Talents

You may roll for these only when getting to Level 6 or higher:

1) Scholar: the sorcerer can select one clerical blessing of PWL 2, or two clerical blessings of PWL 1. These are transcribed to the spellbook as new spells, and are available as normal spells (they count for the daily limit, they are cast rolling with INT etc.).

Rogue

2) Potion master: you can replicate a potion (even if it contains a spell you don't know or if it contains a clerical blessing). The process requires passing a ST with INT and the original potion is destroyed regardless of the result. In case of success, you can then write this potion as a spell in you spellbook, but you cannot cast it: you can only use it to load the spell into a new potion (with its regular cost).

3) Magic touch: just by touching an object, including scrolls or spellbooks, if it's magical you immediately gain knowledge of its powers; it counts at all purposes as a Read magic spell, but requires no casting and no time.

4) Tools master: when charging a staff or wand, a success allows you to store the same spell twice in the wood, if you choose to do so (for the price of one, but counting for the staff's maximum number of spells).

5) Focused charge: if you charge only the same spell into a staff or wand, it can hold up to your LVLx2 instead of up to your LVL. You still must charge each spell individually, though.

6) Wands/staffs arsenal: you can have two charged staffs or wands instead of the normal single one.

If your class is rogue, you get a number of Talents equal to your Dexterity Gift. Roll a d10 to determine each one of them.

Besides those random, a rogue has the following talents and restrictions too:

Hit Points Dice: d6.

Attack bonus: normal To-Hit modifier for melee.
For ranged attack, use the normal bonus from the Dexterity score.

Damage: add the strength modifier for damage if positive (in some games only the fighter has access to this).

Armor/Shield Permitted: any, but with penalty for heavy armor.

Weapons Permitted: any, but with penalty for 2-handed weapons.

Movement bonus: bonus for various actions can be obtained with talents that are tied to Skills. If the bonus is related to movement, it does not apply if the rogue is heavily or severely encumbered.

Magic: cannot cast any type of spell (unless multiclassing).

Lucky bastard: Saving Throws with DEX and CHA are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2).

Skills: select one between Explorer, Guide, or Hunter, and also one between Thief, Tinkerer, Assassin. More details on the next page.

Special Skills

All characters start with a chance of 1 in 6 on all the skills (as on the character sheet). Other classes get to choose one between Explorer, Guide, or Hunter and mark a second dot in each of the skills of the chosen profile.

• **Explorer**: notice, mapping, climb
• **Guide**: notice, swim, foraging
• **Hunter**: notice, hunting, stealth

A rogue will select one of the profiles above, and also one among Thief, Tinkerer, Assassin. Mark a second dot (2 in 6 chance) on all the skills included in this other profile.

• **Thief**: notice, stealth, finesse
• **Tinkerer**: notice, traps, finesse
• **Assassin**: stealth, climb, finesse

Additional dots are gained with talents, as shown to the side.

Rogue's Talents

Any of the following talents can be unlocked as a starting Talent (up to a max. number of Talents equal to the Gift value of the DEX attribute) or when gaining a level (with no limitation to the number of talents).

The maximum score for each of the Skills, that improve by talents, is 5 (5 in 6 chance).

1) Nasty: all damage rolls made by the rogue are increased by one.

2) Double attack: throw a weapon on the off-hand (like a dagger) and attack with another (like a sword), or attack and then throw the same weapon, in one round.

3) Second blade: a second small blade can be used in the off-hand; it grants +1 AC and +1 damage in combat.

4) Explorer: gain 1 dot in one Explorer skill and 1 dot in a different skill of your choosing.

5) Guide: 1 dot in one Guide skill and 1 in a skill of your choosing...

6) Hunter: 1 dot in one Hunter skill and 1 in a skill of your choosing...

7) Thief: 1 dot in one Thief skill and 1 in a skill of your choosing...

8) Tinkerer: 1 dot in one Tinkerer skill and 1 in a skill of your choosing...

9) Assassin: 1 dot in one Assassin skill and 1 in a skill of your choosing...

10) Lucky one: yeah, go ahead and pick one talent of your choice.

Additional Talents

You may roll for these only when getting to Level 6 or higher:

1) Good aim: increase the range of any ranged weapon you use by 1, or by 2 if the original range was 4 or more.

2) Backstab: when hitting from behind (usually +4 To-Hit and +2 damage) the rogue will also inflict additional damage equal to their Level/2 (rounded down). The +4 To-Hit remains the same.

3) Always lucky: once per session, if you fail a Saving Throw, you can try a re-roll, but the second result stands.

4) Invisible: enemies will consider you the less dangerous and attack you last or with their weakest members; if the target is random, all others count double than you.

5) Evasion: you never remain long in chains; every evasion from chains, manacles, prisons, etc. gains a +2 bonus per day/hour (at GM discretion) for a maximum of +6.

6) Parry and disarm: after a successful attack, the rogue can forsake their damage roll and disarm the opponent if they pass a Dexterity attribute check. The opponent must have HD equal or lower than the character level.

7) A little magic: you can read magic (as the spell) naturally. This even makes your character able to cast from scrolls or books. Requires one turn to concentrate and one for casting.

8) Perfect aim: all damage you inflict with ranged weapons is increased by your LVL/3 (rounded down). This sums to other bonuses, if any.

9) A magic touch: you can select one spell of PWL 1 or 2 from the sorcerer's list; you can cast it once per day (no PowerMatrix) but you need to roll with INT for possible failure.

10) Poison master: you can extract poisons from the remains of uncommon monsters. The GM will provide you with the details and dosage (and perhaps require that you work on it on a rest period to obtain the poison). The effects may vary from additional damage to paralysis or other more peculiar effects, as described by the GM. It is up to you to keep track of which poison you can extract from which monster, and what is the effect.

If you are a real rogue, probably one of the first things you will do is to negotiate a different set of skills and of specialties with the GM.

This chapter contains the full lists of the available equipment, and the rules to deal with the characters' gear using any of the proposed rules systems:

- Standard items' list and encumbrance
- Dice-based equipment (fastest)
- Slots-based equipment (more detailed than dice-based, but still fast enough)

The classic items' list and encumbrance system is the same as in other games: items have a certain weight (calculated as generic Encumbrance points) and it's up to the player to keep track of how much weight the character is carrying.

The other two systems are simpler and faster - especially in the early stages of the game.

When using dice-based or slots-based equipment rules, weapons and armor are purchased and tracked separately.

In these systems the dice or the slots are intended to replace tracking of mundane gear: same as weapons and armors all the unique objects, scrolls, magic items, and so on, will be tracked and treated separately.

It will be up to the GM to rule if a certain item belongs to the regular, mundane equipment or not, and if it has any encumbrance impact.

In dungeons, equipment is critical, but many groups don't bother tracking items and often even encumbrance is neglected. The dice-based and slots-based alternative systems have the advantage of being easier to implement, thus more likely to see some use in play.

EQUIPMENT

Common Rules

The following rules are valid regardless of the system in use. Of course, for dice-based or slots-based systems you will need to deal with the Weight of single objects only occasionally.

Some objects (all if using the classic system, or those considerer out of the dice-based or slots-based systems) have a Weight.

As a generic guideline, single objects are counted as 1 Weight. **Four weights equal one Encumbrance point.**

A sack of **100 coins or equivalent loot** counts as 1 Weight; four sacks are 1 Encumbrance point.

Very large treasures or special treasures might count as one (or more) point of encumbrance on their own, if very heavy.

The **Maximum Load** a character can carry is a number of weights equal to their Strength score.

If you need to approximate in Encumbrance points, round them up.

Strength Score	Max Encumbrance
4–	1
5-8	2
8-12	3
13-16	4
17+	5

Table 5: Encumbrance by Strength score

For every point of Encumbrance (4 weights) above the limit, the character is progressively encumbered, as follows:
• Lightly encumbered
• Heavily encumbered
• Severely encumbered

Encumbrance Penalty

For every point of Encumbrance above the limit, the character suffers the following penalty:
• **Lightly encumbered**: -1 to Initiative rolls and all combat rolls
• **Heavily encumbered**: -2 to Initiative rolls and to all combat rolls
• **Severely encumbered**: -3 to Initiative rolls, to all combat rolls and to all Saving Throws and Attribute checks related to movement

Moving With Encumbrance

If you track movement in an exact fashion (feet per turn/round and miles per day etc.), you can inflict a **progressive penalty of a 20%** for each level of encumbrance.

On the other hand, the movement during the **exploration phase**, which is slow and careful in nature, it is not affected by the characters' load. The penalty for the movement rate should affect only situations where speed or agility are important: while fighting and while running for speed, while swimming, climbing and the like for agility.

The game takes this into account by suggesting a progressive penalty to Initiative and combat rolls, then also to Saving Throws and Attributes check for severely encumbered characters.

Anything of 4 or more points above the Encumbrance limit is considered over-encumbered. Over-encumbered characters suffer the penalties as severely encumbered, and are also significantly hampered in their movement and resistance. The GM will rule accordingly, up to failing actions automatically, requiring double rest, additional rations and so on.

Standard Equipment System

The standard rules for equipment allow players to buy items in the traditional way, acquiring gear exactly as they desire, and keeping precise track of each single item.

At character creation, each player rolls 3d6 and gets x10 silver coins for the initial purchases (remember to consider the possible discount for high Charisma score).

Weight System

To calculate encumbrance within the standard system, consider that every character can carry:

• A number of "small" (weight 0) items equal to their Strength score
• A number of normal items (weight 1) equal to their Strength score
• Heavy items (weight 2 or more) are written to take up a number of slots equal to their weight
• Every 4 items above the limit, the encumbrance is increased of one (light, heavy, severe)

The character sheet offers a handy list with up to 18 slots for normal items and up to 18 slots for small items.

When creating the character, **erase** (for example fill them with black) the slots above your Strength score, and you can fill the rest with items.

Once all the slots are full, you must write into the Encumbrance boxes: each of them can have up to 4 items and you suffer the **related penalty**.

If you fill the small items list, you must still write to the encumbrance slots: you are not overloaded with weight but with too many things anyway, that hinder you somehow.

For the purpose of calculating how much a character is carrying, **a sack of treasure** of 100 coins is the equivalent of one item. Same for a sack of small jewels.

Weapons are listed each as a single item (1 Weight) and 2-handed or pole weapons count as two items (2 Weight).

Armor (worn or carried) is listed as a single item if non-metal. Metal armor counts as 4 items (1 Enc. point) if chainmail, 8 items if plate (2 Enc. points).

Shields count as a single item (1 Weight) if wooden, 4 items if metal (1 Enc. point), 8 items if large (2 Enc. points).

Especially for large weapons and shields, the encumbrance is considered not just in terms of weight but also impediment in movement for carrying large or long weapons or shields.

Equipment Lists

With items divided by category, the tables in the next pages contain all the standard available equipment. Of course different items and special gear can be purchased through negotiation between the GM and the players.

Weapons have cost and encumbrance, but also damage and range. Details are described in the combat chapter, but as a reference consider that for ranged weapons, range doesn't measure an exact distance, but **the number Zones** you can reach, thus how many rounds away you are from your opponent.

Melee Weapons

More information is available in the Combat chapter:
- Weapon: weapon name and if with star* indicates a 2-handed weapon
- (*) 2-handed weapons: all 2-handed weapons have a **-2 penalty To-Hit**, except for the fighter
- Cost: price in silver pieces
- Damage: harm die of the weapon
- Range: Reach or Close (see details below)
- Encumbrance: encumbrance value; 0=small item, 1/4 takes a single slot (equal to 1 Weight), 2/4 two slots, 1 counts as 1 Encumbrance point (or 4/4), 2 counts as 2 encumbrance points (8/4)

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Range	Encumbrance
Lance *	30	1d12	R	2/4
Pike or spear *	30	1d8	R	2/4
Staff *	5	1d4	R-	2/4
Longsword, Great axe *	50	1d10+1	R-	2/4
Club	5	1d4	C	1/4
Iron mace, Battle axe	20	1d6	C	1/4
Sword	35	1d6	C	1/4
Dagger, Hand axe	20	1d4	C	1/4
Knife	10	1d3	C-	1/4

Table 6: Melee weapons

Ranges for melee weapons are intended as follows:
- R (reach): reach further than others, can strike from second rank, and keep enemies at bay
- R- (reach minus): reach further but cannot keep enemies at bay
- C (close): standard melee combat, duel, hand to hand fights
- C- (close minus): at disadvantage against other weapons

Additional notes on weapons:
- Lance: must be used on horse-back with one hand, otherwise counts as a spear and must be used 2-handed
- Pike or spear: must be used 2-handed. If 1-handed, counts as a dagger
- Staff: must be used 2-handed. If 1-handed, counts as a club
- Longsword: must be used 2-handed. If 1-handed, counts as a regular sword

- Club and Iron mace: consider a club anything improvised; an iron mace is built especially for fights. Same for a Battle axe vs. a Hand axe
- Sword: if used 2-handed add 1 to the damage, but it doesn't become a longsword nor gains R-. Use it as a general example for other war weapons
- Dagger: or any short sword, hand axe, hatchet, and similar
- Knife: any small, improvised blade
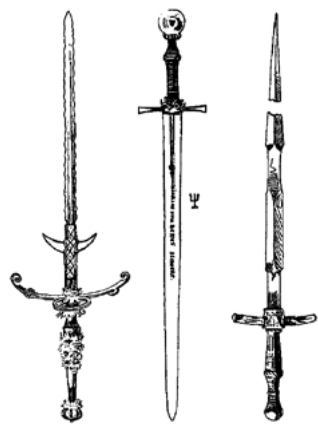
Ranged Weapons

More information is available in the Combat chapter.

Some items are melee weapons that can be thrown, like a spear or a dagger. For these items the cost is not indicated (see the melee weapons table). The damage and encumbrance, on the other hand, are included for reference also in the ranged table.

For these weapons the range value is different between melee (see previous table) and ranged; in the ranged table you will find the range for throwing such weapons.
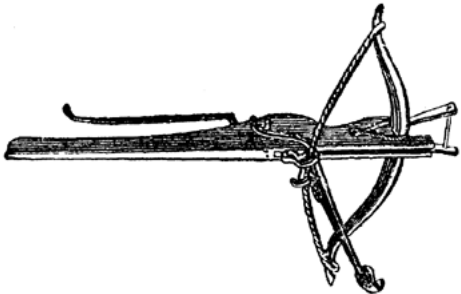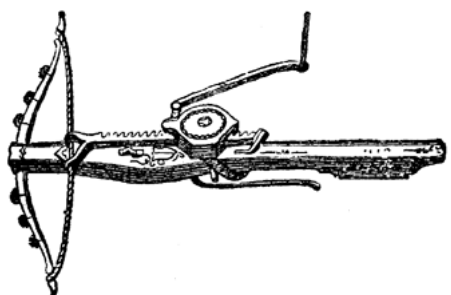
Weapon	Cost	Damage	Range	Encumbrance
Short bow	25	d6	4	1/4
Hunting bow	35	d8	6	2/4
Long bow	50	d8+1	8	2/4
Crossbow	40	d10	6 *	2/4
Sling	1	1d4	3	1/4
Thrown rock	/	1d2	1	0
10 Arrows, darts	5	/	/	1/4
Thrown Spear	/	1d8	3	2/4
Thrown dagger or hand axe	/	1d4	1	1/4

Table 7: Ranged weapons

For ranged weapons, ranges are intended as follows: the number indicates **how many Zones**, further away from you, you can reach with this weapon.

This is not the longest range for the weapon: it's the longest for efficient targeted shots.

A Zone is an abstract distance unit explained with more details in the basic rules of the game. It takes usually a single round, in combat, to move from one Zone to another, at normal speed.

This means that you can translate the Zones as range, into number of shots. A weapon with range 3 will allow you 3 attacks against a far away enemies, before they can close on you in melee. Even if the enemies are further away than 3 zones, with a range 3 weapon you would not be able to hit them before they reached 3 zones distance from you, so you still get 3 attacks at most.

All the ranged weapons can target enemies at range 0, in the same zone with you: if the enemy attacks you in melee, though, you will not be able to get additional shots. You can still target enemies at range zero which are engaged with your companions.

Note that with bows, you can let lose an arrow per round, in combat, assuming that you have arrows in a quiver or in hand. They basically have no "reload" time. With a crossbow, (*) you have one shot per fight, unless the enemy leaves you alone for a while to reload, or is quite far. It will take 3 full rounds to reload a crossbow.

The range of 6 indicated for the crossbow means 6 Zones, 6 rounds, and must take into account the 3 rounds to reload if the character wants more than a single shot. Basically, against a charging enemy you get a first shot at range 6, reload and get another at range 3, then it's your decision if to prepare for melee or reload and have the last shot at range 0.

Every attack to targets in the same zone or adjacent zones has no penalty. Targets far away might be ruled to have increasing AC vs. the ranged attack (+1 per Zone), same as targets with cover.

Armors And Shields

Armor provides protection to the character in form of increased AC - making the character not harder to hit, but to hit for damage.

If a character wears multiple armor suits, use the value of the highest, but do not add them up. What adds up, is the Armor Class benefit of armor and then shield.

(*) Heavy armor (full plate) and kite or tower metal shields inflict a **cumulative -1 Initiative penalty** to all characters except fighters.

Armor	Cost	AC	Encumbrance
Fur or heavy clothing	10	+1	0
Leather, or partial metal	25	+2	1/4
Chainmail or light plate	100	+4	1 (4/4)
Full plate armor including helm *	1,000	+6	2 (8/4)
Wooden shield or buckler	10	+1	1/4
Metal shield (usually rounded)	50	+2	1 (4/4)
Kite or tower metal shield *	100	+3	2 (8/4)

Table 8: Armors and shields

Various Gear

The next tables contain a list of basic gear that should be available to all characters for purchase at the start of the game and upon returning to civilization.

Remember that you can get a **better** version of almost anything by paying double, or a **luxury**, much better version paying thrice the price (just for show). In some cases a better version could be also more functional; pay double to upgrade a short rope to medium, and thrice the price for a long rope (increasing the weight too).

For all items, read the table as follows:
• Cost: the standard price in a large village or small city
• Weight: weight is usually 1, intended as 1/4 of an Encumbrance point, or any other number indicated
• Weight marked in parenthesis like (1), means that the item is usually not carried
• If no weight is indicated, with a slash like / it means the item has no weight
• A slash in parenthesis (/) means undefined weight for an item that usually cannot be carried

Some items are going to be cheaper (up to 50% cheaper) when in rural areas (far from other human settlements), like animals or basic tools, simply built. When in large cities, on the other hand, you can expect a small price reduction (up to 20% cheaper) for items which are usually more elaborate and that therefore have a wider market in a larger establishment.

The GM might even rule that certain items are available only in cities (like war horses, or chainmail and plate armors, or rogue tools, etc...).
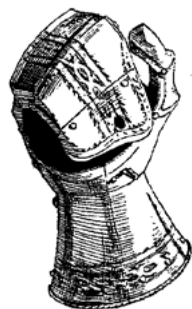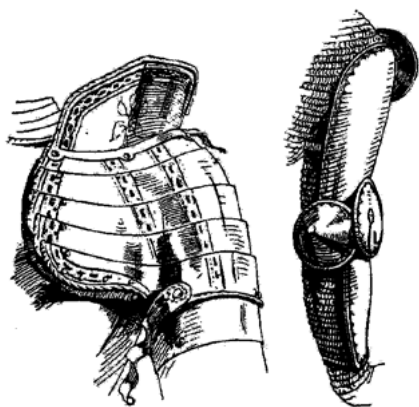
Animals	Cost	Weight
Dog (small)	5	(1 or 2)
Dog (fight, trained)	50	(4)
Horse (riding)	100	(/)
Horse (war)	400	(/)
Mule or pony	50	(/)
Other (small)	5	(1 or 2)

Table 9: Equipment, animals

Food	Cost	Weight
Alcoholics	5	1
Drink	3	/
Meal	1	/
Rations (normal)	1	1
Rations (dry)	3	1
Feed your animal	1	1

Table 12: Equipment, food

Containers	Cost	Weight
Backpack	5	1
Barrel (large)	3	2
Bottle or flask	2	1
Chest	15	2
Pouch	5	/
Quiver (for ~20)	5	1
Sack	2	/
Saddlebag	5	1

Table 10: Equipment, containers

Lodging & Services	Cost	Weight
Barn (night)	1	(/)
Daily coach ride	10	(/)
Daily boat ride	5	(/)
Inn (common room)	1	(/)
Inn (private room)	10	(/)
Inn (very fancy)	30	(/)
Rent (per room)	25	(/)
Short coach ride	2	(/)
Short ship ride	2	(/)

Table 13: Equipment, lodging & services

Vehicles	Cost	Weight
Cart	50	(/)
Raft	10	(/)
Lifeboat	100	(/)

Table 11: Equipment, vehicles

Miscellaneous	Cost	Weight
Bedroll	2	1
Bell	10	/
Book	20	1
Book (for spells)	100	1
Candles (20)	1	/
Chain (short)	25	2
Chalk	1	/
Clothes (normal)	5	1
Crampons	5	1
Crowbar	2	1
Fishing gear	2	1
Flint & steel	1	/
Garlic	1	/
Grappling hook	5	1
Hammer	1	1
Holy cross	25	/
Holy water	15	/
Hourglass	50	/
Ink	1	/
Ladder (short)	5	4
Lantern	5	1
Lock	10	/
Manacles	15	/
Mirror	20	/
Musical instrument	5	1
Nails	1	/
Oil (lantern)	5	1
Parchment	1	/
Pick (or tool)	5	2
Pole	1	3
Pulley	3	1
Rogue tools	50	1
Rope (short)	2	1
Spikes	1	/
Tent (for 1)	10	2
Tobacco	1	/
Torches (3)	1	1
Whistle	1	/

Table 21: Equipment (miscellaneous)

There is no basic capacity indicated for containers, such as sacks or backpacks; rule an approximate amount between 1 Enc. (4/4) up to 4 (16/4).

STARTING PACKAGES

When starting the game, the group could also use the predefined packages exemplified below. Remember that objects with weight will go in one list (up to a number of items equal to the STR score), and weight 0 items will go in another list (again, up to the STR score). In the lists, items are shown with an indication of how many slots they take. These packages, and others that you will create, speed up the starting of the game; offer them with discount!

Pack 1; price 49 sp; all the below have weight 11, + 9 items of weight 0
• Backpack + Quiver, 1 slot each
• 10 + 10 arrows, 1 slot each
• 4 Rations (normal), 1 slot each
• Lantern + Oil, 1 slot each
• Hammer, 1 slot
• Weight 0: 5 empty sacks, chalk, flint & steel, nails, whistle, 1 slot each

Pack 2; price 38 sp; all the below have weight 9, + 9 items of weight 0
• Backpack
• 3 Rations (normal), 1 slot each
• Rope (medium), 2 slots total
• Lantern + Oil, 1 slot each
• Bedroll, 1 slot
• Weight 0: 5 empty sacks, candles, ink, parchment, flint & steel, 1 slot each

Pack 3; price 78 sp; all the below have weight 13, + 6 items of weight 0
• Backpack + Quiver, 1 slot each
• 2 Rations (normal), 1 slot each
• 10 + 10 arrows, 1 slot each
• 3 + 3 torches, 1 slot for each 3
• Bedroll, 1 slot
• Crowbar, 1 slot
• Pole, 3 slots (it's quite long)
• Weight 0: 1 empty sack, tobacco, candles (20), lock, manacles, mirror, 1 slot each

Dice-Based Equipment

With this alternative equipment rules, everything that is not a notable piece of gear or not an important or magic item, is considered to be a pack of generic stuff.

This generic adventuring pack is represented by a die: **the die has a size, a weight and a price**. Bigger dice cost and weight more, but offer more chances of offering the correct equipment in case of need.

By reducing the equipment die size you simulate the depletion of various items like torches or rations or ammunitions, and the availability or lack of specific gear such as ropes, poles, and other tools.

Use The Equipment Die

To buy the equipment die, you simply pay the price indicated by the table below. Note that each equipment die also has an encumbrance factor to keep in mind.

Equip. die	Cost	Encumb.
d4	20 sp	1
d6	40 sp	2
d8	80 sp	3
d10	120 sp	4
d12	150 sp	5

Table 22: Equipment die

Since the equipment die has an encumbrance value (instead of weight), you can simplify the calculation by using Table 5: Encumbrance by Strength score, back on page 44. Otherwise, use the normal lists with slots in the character sheet, and for each Enc. point, write the equipment die across 4 slots.

When needing and using equipment (water, rations, rope, poles, torches, hooks, nails, or even small animals) and of course before every fight where you want to use arrows or darts, **roll your equipment die**:

1) If you roll a 1, you don't have the given piece of gear you need. Perhaps you had it before, but it's lost, broken, spoiled...

2-3) If you roll a 2 or 3, you have the piece of gear you need, but the equipment die is reduced in size by one factor (i.e. a d10 becomes a d8).

4+) If you roll a 4 or more, you have what you need, and keep the die as it is.

Max-X) If you roll the maximum of the die you have (i.e. an 8 on a d8), you have what you need but the equipment die is reduced in size by one factor (same as 2-3). On a d4, apply instead the above rule for rolling a 4.

You get a sense of how well stocked you are by the die size; if you are down to a d4, you're running seriously low on equipment.

When you roll a 2-3 on a d4, you have really nothing left after that use; your backpack is fucking empty.

If instead you roll a 1 on your d4, you don't have that specific item, but you might have something else instead. Say what you need as an alternative, and roll again.

Remember that you need to track weapons and armor separately, and also treasures.

Slots-Based Equipment

The slots-based equipment is a solid compromise between the simplicy and speed of a dice-based system, that requires no lists, and the standard system that offers complete control over your inventory, but takes time.

With the slots-based system, you buy a predefined number of gear slots. Every time you need an item, you write it down **and use a slot** (or more, depending on the item size and weight).

This slot(s) is now in use, and the item is in your possession and will be treated as an item you own.

If something gets ruined, spoiled, lost or simply used (like torches, arrows, rations) you just cancel the item as you would do with the standard inventory system (but the slot you bought is now "spent" and cannot be re-used).

For all purposes, you deal with the inventory as with the standard system (you can carry a number of slots equal to Strength score, use weight and size as for regular equipment, etc.). The real difference is that you buy a number of slots instead of specific objects, and then define what's in each slot during the adventure, not in advance. The slots combine heavy and weight zero items.

You cannot add slot to slot to save money: you must buy the total you want.

Equip. slots	Cost	Encumb.
4	20 sp	1
6	40 sp	2
8	80 sp	3
10	120 sp	4
12	150 sp	5

Table 22: Equipment die
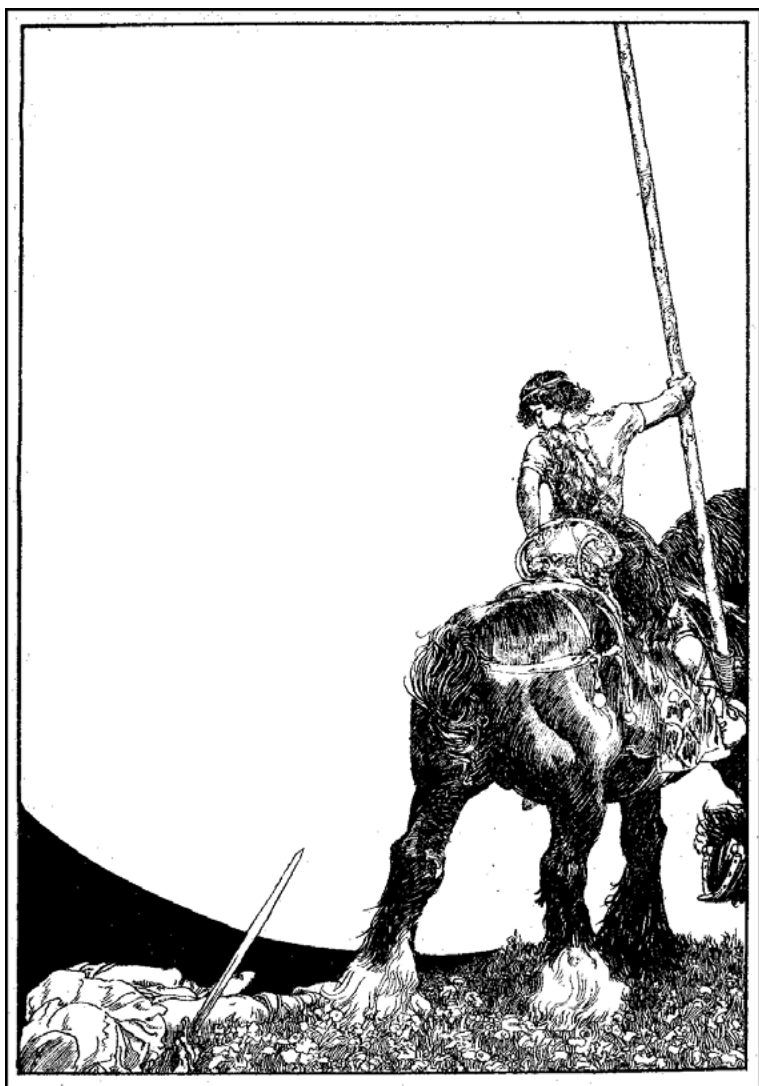
The next spread pages present the game's character sheet, and here you have instructions how to fill it with the information you need. The character sheet contains numbers that will reference to the instructions below.

A clean version of the character sheet, without numbers, is available right after, so that you can make copies for your players. Of course, the character sheet pdf file is also available on the website for download.

1) **Character name and player name**: here you fill the basic information for your character. For **traits**, add of course the keywords from the character creation process. Write the **class** in the parchment box to the right, and the **alignment** if in use in your game.

2) **Attributes**: here go the various attributes scores, together with the value of Gift and the modifier.

3) The largest box should contain the attribute **score** (in the example, 14 for Constitution); the diamond box to the left is the **Gift** value (3 in the example), and the one to the right is the attribute **modifier** (+1 in the example). Note that every attribute also has a reminder of the various bonuses and score affecter by it.

4) Each attribute has a related **Saving Throw**: its score is 5+Level (in this example, Level 2) + the attribute modifier. Therefore the CON Save of this eaxmple is 8, written in the box with the inverted rounded corners.

Every class has different bonuses to the Saving Throws, to different attributes. Mark the dot in the corner to indicate which attributes have the class +2 bonus, and increse the Saving Throw score accordingly.

5) **Armor Class**: at the top write the possible modifier from Dexterity (1 in the example sheet). To the left is the space for the armor itself (2, leather, in the exampel) and to the right for the shield (+1, wooden shield). The total (4 in the example) goes in the central space.

CHARACTER SHEET

6) **Hit Points**: write the maximum (fully healed) in the small heart to the left. Write the current HP (or mark lost HP points) in the large heart with the stabbing knife and the blood...

7) **Iniative**: write the Dexterity modifier here; it's the same as with the attribute but having it here works as a reminder for the initiative roll.

THE CRYING BLADES HOUSERULES

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Character & Player names:

Traits:

1

ATTRIBUTES
GIFT, SCORES & MODIFIERS

2

SAVING THROWS

5+mod +Level

Mark the +2 class bonus ○

CHArisma

Hirelings: 3 ± mod
Discount: if mod>0, mod x10% off
Reaction roll: ± mod

3

CONstitution

3 | *14* | *+1*

Hit Points: if mod>0, HD+mod
Save vs Death: 5+level+mod

4

8

vs charm/ possession

vs poison/ harm/ death

DEXterity

Initiative: d6±mod
Armor Class: if mod>0, +1
Ranged: if mod>0, +1 to hit & damage

vs traps, dodge/ avoid

INTelligence

Languages: if mod>0, read&write,
add mod known languages
Daily Spells: mod+level

vs spells/ curses/ magic

STRength

15

Melee: if mod>0, +mod to hit & damage
Load: carry items = STR score

vs paralysis/ fire/stone

WISdom

Notice: if mod>0, +1 notice
Daily Blessings: mod+level

vs undead/ deception

ARMOR CLASS

base (0/1)

1

AC total

4

armor only

2 | *+1*

shield bonus

5

HIT POINTS

max

current

6

INITIATIVE

dexterity mod

7

HIT DICE

die size

constitution bonus

8

Class: [1]

Alignment:

XP
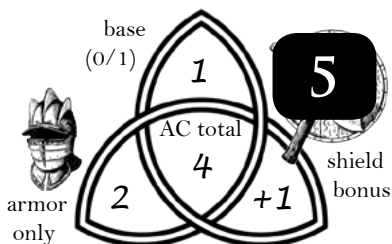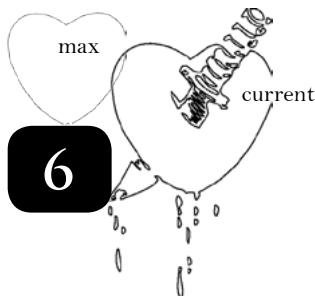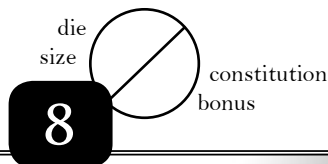
current **300**

to next **2000** [9]

[10]

2
LEVEL

[11]

Adventuring Skills

Climb

Mapping

Finesse

Notice

Foraging

Stealth

Hunting

Swim

Traps

Gear		
Normal items		
1	*Ration*	
2	*Chain (short)*	
3		
4	*Sword*	
5	*Leather armor*	
6		
7		[12]
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
keep lines=STR		

Encumbrance	
-1 Initiative & combat	
1	
2	
3	
4	[14]

Encumbrance	
-2 Initiative & combat	
1	
2	
3	
4	

Encumbrance	
-3 Initiative & combat	
-3 Saves, -3 attr. checks	
1	
2	
3	
4	

Gear		
Small items		
1	*Chalk*	
2	*Mirror*	
3		
4		[13]
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
keep lines=STR		

Melee [15]

to hit bonus

damage bonus

Ranged

to hit bonus

damage bonus

Weapon/Armor	Dmg/AC	Range	Enc
	[16]		

8) Write here the **Hit Dice** from your class, and its **bonus** (the bonus to the hit dice that you receive from the Constitution score).

9) The hourglass drawing is made to host the XP tracking of your character. Write at the top the **current Experience Points** you have (300 in the example sheet in the previous page), and at the bottom the **next level threshold** that you need to reach.

10) In the large circle in the top right of the character sheet, write **your current Level** (Level 2 in the example in the previous page).

11) All the **Adventuring Skills** are presented with a 6-sided die icon. Fill the pips to represent the success chance of each skill, for example fill 3 dots for Notice for a 3 in 6 chance. There is space to add an additional skill, next to "Traps". By default, all Skills begin at 1 in 6.

12) **Gear (normal items)**: write here the items you carry. Note that this character has Strength score 15, which means the slots above that value were **erased** (not to be used). Each item takes as many slots as it's indicated by its weigth (for example 1 slot for a ration, and 2 slots for a short chain which is considerably heavy). Weapons and armor items are also written here.

13) **Gear (small items)**: this is the list for items with weight 0. This list mirrors the one for regular items; all the slots with value higher than the Strength score have been erased (not to be used).

14) Once any of the two Gear lists (normal and/or small items) is full, start writing additional items here, in the central boxes marked **Encumbrance**. As soon as you start to fill any of these slots, you **suffer the penalty indicated**. If you free any of the slots in the regular lists, move items from the highest Encumbrance list back to the normal lists. If you clear one of the boxes, you no longer suffer its penalty.

15) **Melee & Ranged attacks**: write here the bonus to-hit for melee and ranged (from the Strength and Dexterity modifiers respectively), and the damage bonuses, if any.

16) **Weapons & Armor list**: list in this table your main weapons and armor(s), including shields. Track the damage or AC bonus, their range (if applicable) and Encumbrance value, for reference.

Character Sheet Reverse

The character sheet does not have space for **Talents and other notes** (including spells or blessings, for example); these are supposed to be tracked on the other side of the paper sheet.

Each class has a special reverse that you can print, if you want, with the different lists of Talents and some additional space (for example for Innate Talents or other notes).

There is also a "neutral" reverse sheet available, with no indication of class and no default talents listed, which you can use if you want to give players more freedom or to build your own custom classes.

THE
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Character & Player names:

Traits:

ATTRIBUTES
GIFT, SCORES & MODIFIERS

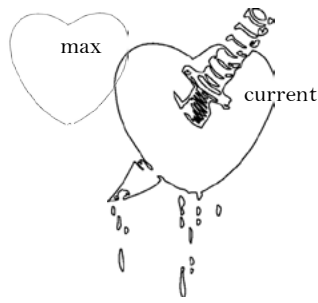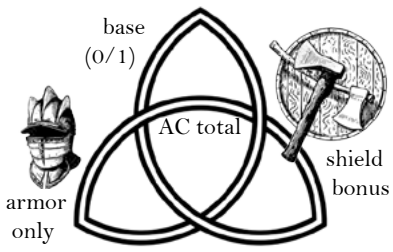# SAVING
THROWS

5+mod +Level

Mark the +2 class bonus ◯

CHArisma
Hirelings: 3 ± mod
Discount: if mod>0, mod x10% off
Reaction roll: ± mod

vs charm/ possession

CONstitution
Hit Points: if mod>0, HD+mod
Save vs Death: 5+level+mod

vs poison/ harm/ death

DEXterity
Initiative: d6±mod
Armor Class: if mod>0, +1
Ranged: if mod>0, +1 to hit & damage

vs traps, dodge/ avoid

INTelligence
Languages: if mod>0, read&write,
add mod known languages
Daily Spells: mod+level

vs spells/ curses/ magic

STRength
Melee: if mod>0, +mod to hit & damage
Load: carry items = STR score

vs paralysis/ fire/stone

WISdom
Notice: if mod>0, +1 notice
Daily Blessings: mod+level

vs undead/ deception

ARMOR CLASS

base (0/1)

AC total

armor only

shield bonus

HIT POINTS

max

current

INITIATIVE

dexterity mod

HIT DICE

die size

constitution bonus

Class:

Alignment:

XP

current

to next

LEVEL

Adventuring Skills

Climb

Mapping

Finesse

Notice

Foraging

Stealth

Hunting

Swim

Traps

Gear
Normal items

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
keep lines=STR

Encumbrance
−1 Initiative & combat

1
2
3
4

Encumbrance
−2 Initiative & combat

1
2
3
4

Encumbrance
−3 Initiative & combat
−3 Saves, −3 attr. checks

1
2
3
4

Gear
Small items

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
keep lines=STR

Melee

to hit bonus

damage bonus

Ranged

to hit bonus

damage bonus

Weapon/Armor	Dmg/AC	Range	Enc

This chapter presents the rules for the **most common** events in dungeons and adventures: Saving Throws, regular Attribute checks, and usage of the various skills (especially for rogues). Moreover, here you'll find rules also for Time and space and distances, Perception and searching.

In the chapter that comes afterwards, you will find, then, the advanced rules for Levels and XP, for Multiclassing, for Harm and dangers, and for Hirelings and secondary characters.

Afterwards, the final chapters of the manual will present the detailed rules for Combat and Encounters, and for Sorcery, and Blessings, with the Level One spells.

CHAPTER VI

BASIC RULES

Saving Throws

Saving Throws are rolled with a d20 against the related value, which is a function of the attribute modifier and the character's level. Different attributes are used for different kinds of Saving Throws.

The value of the Saving Throw is equal to: **5+Level+Attribute modifier**.

When a character is facing danger and harm or consequence might be inflicted upon them, usually the player is allowed a Saving Throw, unless the rules (for example of a spell) or the GM judgment forbids it.

To **make the save**, the d20 roll must be equal or lower than the Saving Throw threshold. Better attributes modifiers grant a better chance of making the save, and so does increasing the character's level.

The **maximum value** a Saving Throw threshold can reach is 19, regardless of the attribute modifier and level.

A natural 1 is considered always a success and a 20 always a failure, regardless of the threshold and possible modifiers to the roll.

A character is allowed only a single Saving Throw against a certain danger: when a trap springs a rogue might dodge to avoid it (rolling against DEX) while a fighter might endure the hit (rolling with CON).

A player cannot roll to dodge and, upon failure, roll to endure.

Attributes And Saves

Consider these guidelines to adjudicate against which attribute to roll:

Charisma: vs. any kind of charming and possession effect, including spells

Constitution: vs. any kind of physical damage that is already inflicted (like poison or being hit by a trap). Includes ultimate saves against sudden death

Dexterity: vs. all danger that can be dodged or avoided (including area effects like certain spells and most traps)

Intelligence: resisting spells and spell-like effects (most magic, including magic items) that are not purely elemental (for example save vs. a curse, but not vs. petrification or vs. a fireball)

Strength: vs. any kind of physical damage that cannot be avoided, but just resisted for a short time or endured (like burning, drowning, freezing and similar), and also spells or powers like turning into stone

Wisdom: vs. all kind of deception and illusions, and against all cleric-like abilities or spells, including most undead magic, and dark-clerics

> *Saving Throws increase level by level, as in the other OSR games, but here there is no need for any table.*

Class Modifiers

Note that there are additional modifiers granted by the character's class. Those are listed under the class talents and repeated again below. The class bonus increases the chance of passing the Saving Throw by 2, for different types of saves depending on the class.

Fighter: Saving Throws with STR and CON are rolled with an additional bonus of +2 to determine the Save threshold (roll under 5 + Level + attribute modifier + 2).

Cleric: Saving Throws with CON and WIS are rolled with +2.

Sorcerer: Saving Throws with INT and WIS are rolled with +2.

Rogue: Saving Throws with DEX and CHA are rolled with +2.

Attributes Checks

In several cases, during the game, the characters will attempt to perform actions which are **dangerous or with an uncertain outcome**.

When this happens, the GM will judge which attribute is better suited for the task at hand, also according to the player's description of what the character is trying to do.

The player then rolls a d20 and the action is successful if the roll is **equal or lower** than the attribute score.

A roll of 1 is always a success, a roll of 20 always a failure.

Note the two main differences between an Attribute Check and a Saving Throw:
- An attribute check is usually called for **by a character's action**, by an active approach, while a Saving Throw assumes a passive stance or just a reaction, and presents a component of luck
- An attribute check needs to roll equal or lower than the attribute score; the Saving Throw is influenced by the modifier but **increases in time** with the character's level

Before calling for any Attribute Check, though, make sure that the action is not covered already by the standard **adventuring Skills** (the specialties of the Rogues).

If the action is one of those covered by the adventuring Skills, use the Skill (even if it has a low chance, like 1 in 6 or 2 in 6) instead of the Attribute Check.

As an example for how the various rolls are used: a character walks in a dungeon corridor searching for traps, here the GM should call a **Skill test** with a d6 roll for the Notice Skill.

The character fails the roll, and while checking the corridor, he triggers a trap that opens on a deep pit. The character jumps back: the GM calls for a **Saving Throw** on Dexterity, and with a success the character manages to step back without falling into the pit.
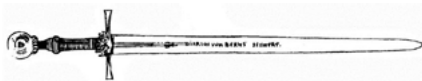
At this point, though, the character needs a successful **Attribute check** on Dexterity to jump to the other side of the pit, if he wants to continue to head down this specific corridor.

If you make the wrong call about what to roll (for example roll a Saving Throw instead of an Attribute check), it's fine. The world doesn't end, the game doesn't break; carry on playing and it will all be fine.
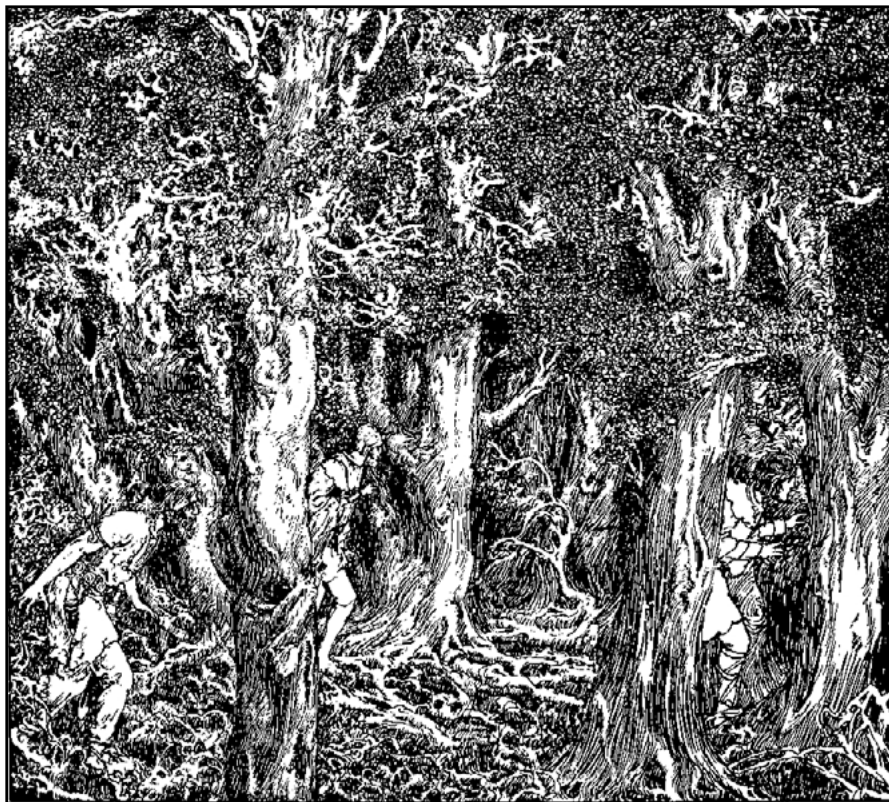
Adventuring Skills

The game provides a list of default adventuring skills, that are grouped into subsets related to a profession or trade that each character might have performed in the past.

The list, of course, might be expanded depending on the needs of your game. For basic dungeon adventures, though, the list should suffice.

The **basic list of skills** includes:
- Climb
- Finesse
- Foraging
- Hunting
- Mapping
- Notice
- Stealth
- Swim
- Traps

Each Skill is presented with a d6 on the character sheet, and **by default** every character should mark one dot for a 1 in 6 chance of success for every skill.

When you roll a Skill test, you succeed if you roll **equal or under** your Skill score, with a 6d.

Note that you roll with a d6 and not with a d20, here.

Skills' Groups

At character creation, as previously written, all characters begin with a 1 in 6 chance in every Skill.

All characters then select **one group** of the following, and add a point to each of the skills in the group, bringing those to a 2 in 6 chance:
- **Explorer**: notice, mapping, climb
- **Guide**: notice, swim, foraging
- **Hunter**: notice, hunting, stealth

This is the first **and only** improvement to the standard adventuring Skills that characters other than Rogues have.

Rogues, instead, progress in their skills with talents, thus getting better at the various tasks.

For other characters classes to progress in a skill, they should multiclass as rogues, and get the appropriate talents.

At character creation the rogues (and **only the rogues**), besides choosing one group of the above, get to **select a second, additional group**:
- **Thief**: notice, stealth, finesse
- **Tinkerer**: notice, traps, finesse
- **Assassin**: stealth, climb, finesse

Same as for the first group, add to each of the Skills of this second group a dot, increasing the chances of success.

It is probable that some Skill will appear both in the first and in the second group, thus you will bring its score up to a 3 in 6 chance.

The next paragraphs illustrate briefly what each Skill means, how the Skill rolls are resolved for success or failure, and how the rogue (or other classes) can use them to their advantage.

The Skills system provides a strong characterization for the rogue as the only "real" adventurer of the group, the tomb-raider, the treasure-hunter. Fighters have the strength to kill enemies, Clerics have healing blessings and work well against undeads, Sorcerers might pull the occasional fancy magic trick... But the rogue is the one that brings the party into the dungeon and out alive and with treasure. You can give all classes a better access to Skills and Skills improvements if you want, but then, just remove the Rogue class all together.

Climb

Use this skill whenever the character wants to climb walls or other impervious surfaces, without visible handholds or under significant pressure (for example while in a hurry, or trying to make very little noise, and similar).

Of course, **generic movement maneuvers** can be resolved also with an Attribute check on Dexterity, but for anything strictly related to Climb, use the Skill.

Want to use the Attribute check? That's for "untrained", "unskilled" climbing. Use the Skill first: grant exceptional success if the roll is good, inflict lighter harm or less harsh consequences in case of a roll failure. Then offer the other characters a chance to roll an Attribute check instead of a Skill test: but the consequences for failure will be harder, and success always comes at some price.

Finesse

This skill includes **various delicate tasks** performed with a light, gentle and trained touch. Pick-pocketing, charming and picking locks are classic examples of this sort of tasks. Opening locks of course requires also the proper tools.

If a door or chest cannot be unlocked, **it can be broken**. It requires a different sort of tool (for example an axe) and takes 1 full turn for wooden doors, 2+1d4 (or more) turns for stronger materials.

A door or chest **that is stuck** (but not locked) requires an Attribute check on Strength to be forced open. Crowbars or two characters working together have 1 in 6 chances more.

Foraging

When outdoor, procure automatically **1 ration** per day, during normal travel (no speed reduction) if the Skill test is successful. If more food is required, roll the Skill test, with success granting **1d2 rations**, but this will slow down the party by 50% of their movement rate.

A positive Skill test is required to **find water** in difficult conditions (otherwise it's assumed to be part of the regular rations). With a positive Skill test it's even possible to gather 1 single ration per day in dungeons or in otherwise harsh environments, where there is no apparent source of food.

Different environments which are especially difficult or alien might provide a penalty to the roll, as determined by the GM or the module. Consider that a -1 to a foraging Skill test is equivalent to a -20% or a -4 on a d20 test.

With a successful Skill test, the character is also able to **detect poison** in food or liquids (or even lightly spoiled food), and able to understand if food found in dungeons is edible.

Hunting

Procure **1d4 rations** but only with a positive Skill test. Hunting is a time consuming activity for the party, while traveling: reduce the movement rate of the group by 50% regardless of the result of the Skill test.

The activity requires **suitable weapons** (like bows or crossbows with arrows or bolts), or at least a spear or similar. If the dungeon has underground fauna, it is possible to hunt it as well, assuming that the GM rules their meat edible.

More importantly, the Hunting Skill is also used **for all tracking purposes**: either to track a specific monster, animal or human, indoor or outdoor.

With positive Skill test(s) it is possible to locate the target's track, to follow the track, and to gather information about the target, and follow it to its destination or setup an ambush before it reaches it.

Multiple tests, when successful, will grant additional useful information, not just about the target but also about the surroundings and the nature of the place.

MAPPING

Any character that has both hands free and material (parchment and ink) can **sketch a map** of the dungeon or the surroundings, while the group is on the move. This map should be drawn according to the GM descriptions of the environment.

The GM, on the other hand, should **not** draw much and mostly provide basic references and approximate distances. A map drawn by the GM for the group should have nothing much than circles, squares, lines that indicate corridors. While it should not be intentionally out of proportion or wrong, it should not be corrected or fixed or improved by the GM: it represents the characters' first impressions and adds to the verbal description, nothing more. It is not a professional map to use to navigate the dungeon or spot hidden secrets by its architecture.

A positive Skill test with mapping, on the other hand, allows the characters to ask the GM to finally **step in and correct the map**. Depending on the size of the dungeon and the time characters spend exploring and drawing the map, the GM will intervene and introduce some corrections, with precision, and perhaps even add some clues.

A positive Skill test for mapping can be also used, rather than for the map itself, to **discern useful details** about the surroundings.

This Skill test requires the character to spend an entire turn analyzing the situation, studying the architecture of the place (regardless of it being natural or artificial), and moving around. Even if there is no map, the GM should provide some **quality information** about the situation, or details about which way to take to go back to an entrance, to find a way down or up, and similar.

If there are traps in the immediate surroundings, the character will detect them, although only limited to being able to see either the trigger or the possible effect of the trap (for example, seeing a pressure plate or the holes in the wall from which spikes will spring).

Other information could be provided for example about the inhabitants of the place, or about the presence of secret passages and similar.

Note that this skill **does not replace Notice**: the Mapping skill requires an active action from the character and will not provide exact and complete information, but useful clues for the player to process.

> *You know when there's a chance to get lost in a dungeon? This is the skill the players will test to try to avoid getting lost.*

NOTICE

The Notice Skill is definitely one of those used most often by players: **searching for anything**: searching for traps, searching for hidden treasures, searching for clues, searching for secret doors and secret passages.

Note that the Skill, when used actively by the players declaring an action, will **take a turn for every Zone** that is subject to inspection.

For the Skill to activate and therefore for the roll to be made for the test, **the players must tell the GM** what are they looking for, how they are inspecting the room or walls or environment and the like. Depending on the GM's judgment of such searching endeavor, details **might be revealed without even rolling**, or after a positive roll.

> *This is a roll that some GMs might decide to keep hidden and then say "Nothing's found," both for failed rolls as well as for successful rolls when nothing's hidden.*

Notice is also a passive Skill: in some cases the players might receive clues, information, additional details from the GM, even when they're not actively looking for something.

For this reason, the GM should keep track of the Notice score of every character: when entering a new area, a new Zone, when rolling for encounters, the GM would also roll a single d6 for the group, and reveal information to the characters whose Notice skill is high enough to pass the test (equal or higher than the d6 roll).

STEALTH

Everyone can try to hide or move silently or sneak to attack an enemy from behind, often with disastrous results. A positive Skill test with Stealth, on the other hand, allows a character **to go undetected** as long as there are shadows where to hide, or no conspicuous actions (such as an attack) are attempted.

As long as the character remains hidden, he can move silently at slow pace, explore the surroundings, or set up an ambush.

Note that stealth is applicable only **in the right conditions**: the character must not have been already seen, an attempt to hide requires a valid place indeed where to hide; and an attack from behind is possible against an unaware opponent or against an opponent already engaged with someone else.

In other words, the Stealth skill cannot be used to overwrite current adverse conditions, but only to exploit opportunities or take advantage of some neutral or favorable environment.

Swim

While assuming that **all characters can swim**, with this skill you're much less likely to get in trouble in water. The skill allows to perform a test to overcome the risk of drowning, to perform special actions even while in water, to dive and search treasure under water, and so on. Remember that the risk of drowning can be faced also with a Saving Throw on Strength.

Traps

When a trap is found, and only when it's found and somehow the character has access to its mechanism or some of its components, an attempt can be made to disable it with **a Traps skill test**, to tamper with the mechanism, or even just to investigate it and gather additional information.

The Finesse skill cannot replace this one, which requires specific engineering knowledge and not just a light touch.

Rogue tools are necessary to work on most traps, although in some cases a player's inventive approach can overcome the lack of tools, or provide a solution to disable the trap without rolling.

Time & Space

Unless you play with miniatures and you want to track time and distances in a precise way, the game offers a simpler approach to these matters.

Rounds And Turns

During fights or peculiar situations when **time-tracking becomes critical** for tactical reason, you play with **Rounds**.

Rounds last only a few moments and allow a character to perform a basic movement and one action. If you need to assign an exact length to a round, it's somewhere between 5, 6 seconds, up to 10 or 20 seconds.

More details about Rounds and actions allowed in a single Round during fights, are presented in the combat section.

Turns, on the other hand, are a **more abstract unit of time**. A Turn in a dungeon is the time necessary to explore a room or a corridor, checking for traps and treasures, for example.

As a general rule, consider a turn as **lasting several minutes**, usually between 5 to 10 minutes. If you need to make an exact ruling, assume that a Turn is 10 minutes and that **1 hour is made of 6 Turns**.

Turns in different situations can become hours, days, months, depending on what's the subject matter.

Turns are typically used to compare performances and speed, and track time for recurring actions like rest, need for food, duration of specific items, random encounters, and such.

Rest And Recovery Times

A fundamental phase of any dungeon or hostile territory exploration is **resting and making camp**, indoor or outdoor, to sleep for the night, or even just stop for some food and a brief rest. These rest phases are the ones also used to regain Hit Points.

A **short rest period** takes 3 Turns, requires no preparation and gives the characters a chance to restore Hit Points, as follows:

• Regain 1 Hit Point at the end of the rest period
• Regain 1 Hit Point at the start of the rest period if an Attribute check on Constitution is passed successfully
• Regain 1 Hit Point if one ration is consumed

The Hit Points gain is **cumulative**: a successful Attribute check + consuming a ration + resting until the end of the 3-Turns period, grants a character 3 Hit Points back.

A short rest can be done multiple times per day, but a character is allowed to regain Hit Points in this manner **only once every 24 hours**.

A group might take multiple short rests per day, if they wish. Each character decides when to attempt the roll and recover the other Hit Points, but only once.

Setting camp for the night (or taking a long rest) is mandatory, once per day. This time is not counted in Turns but it's a much longer period. You can consider a long rest as requiring 8 hours between setting camp, preparing food, and taking turns while sleeping.

Depending on the environment it could be a time filled with possible encounters, or a peaceful break.

During a long rest, characters regain Hit Points in the same way as in a short rest.

Making camp for the night does not have any mechanical advantage vs. the short rest, but this is the only time when Sorcerers and Clerics regain their strength for new spells. Besides that, the long rest is simply longer than the short rest.

On the other hand, missing their daily long rest takes a heavy toll on characters; **for every day without it**, take a -1 penalty to all rolls (Attribute checks, Saving throws, Skill tests, combat, etc.).

When back to civilization, characters regain 3 Hit Points the first night they spend in comfort, 2 HP the next, then 1 HP every following day.

Part of the lost Hit Points are not caused by harm, but simply exhaustion, stress, bruises. While adventuring you suffer more of these, thus also recover more (more HP restored).

Zones And Distances

Distances in the game are not measured by an exact amount of feet, meters, miles, but are **considered as Zones**. When the action begins, the area is divided in Zones.

A Zone is a single area that shares a common ground, or anything nearby the characters. For example, during exploration a Zone might be a corridor or part of it, an entire small room or part of a larger room, and so on.

If there are different ground levels, other obstacles or obstructions; if there are specific light sources and different light conditions; if the ground changes substantially and so on; all these cases are valid examples of **when to break a Zone** and declare a second one.

For the purposes of defining the combat ground (Zones are especially useful in combat), a room can be usually ruled as a single Zone. In some cases the same room might be divided in two or three Zones, if there are different floor levels, stairs, **obstacles that separate areas**, and similar impediments. Also a very large room or a long corridor can be divided in multiple Zones just **because of its size**.

In other words, single architectural elements (a room, a corridor, a flight of stairs, a tunnel, a cave, and so on) is a single Zone, unless there is a clear reason to split it. In the same way, moving from one architectural element to another, typically **breaks the Zone**.

These Zones serve both as **real measures** (a large room could be divided in three Zones, for example, to show that it takes time to move across it), and as **abstract distances** (for example an altar might be on a higher platform at the end of a room and become a separate Zone).

Zones And Combat

In combat, everyone that is **in the same Zone** as the character, can be attacked **in the same round**; or it can be reached with **a simple movement** followed by an attack in the same round.

If the entire party fights in a small room, unless there's a valid reason against it, any character should be able to engage **with any of the enemies** (and the other way around).

Moving from Zone to Zone in combat, instead, will require **one round for every Zone**. This round must be dedicated to movement (and only minor actions, but not attacking or casting a spell). More details about this are in the Combat chapter.

Use abstract Zones and split the space of a room or an area when it makes sense also **from a tactical point of view** (higher ground, significant cover, etc.).

When a Zone is **hard to reach** because of some obstacle or impediment, or when a Zone is defended and moving within it means getting close to an enemy, the enemy holding the Zone **has the initiative**. They don't necessarily attack the character, for example if they were previously engaged; but if they do, they have the initiative.

Zones are also useful when determining **the range of weapons**.

Range for weapons is expressed not with a linear distance, but with the number of rounds that will pass before the opponent will be able to close in on the shooter.

Assuming a regular rate of movement of 1 Zone per turn, the range of a weapon is actually **the same** in terms number of rounds, and number of Zones.

Perception & Search

There is a fundamental difference between the generic perception (intended as attention to surroundings, good sight and hearing, and similar) and the act of **actively** searching for something, valuable or dangerous.

In many cases, only when the players declare that they spend time searching a room or a corridor or something, the GM will reveal all or part of what might be hidden there. A secret door, for example, is not something a character would notice by accident, most of the times.

Perception

The perception roll is used whenever the character is **not actively** searching for something, but has nevertheless a chance to detect or become aware of a danger or perhaps of something of value.

This sort of roll can be done in two different ways: the GM rolling a d6 for the character(s), and revealing information if the roll is below the Notice skill score (basically a Skill test), or with a **default chance** (for example 1 in 6) as determined by the adventure.

Usually, the second option (a 1 in 6, sometimes a 2 in 6 chance) is the one used the most.

The perception roll is increased **by a positive Wisdom modifier**, of an additional +1 chance (see also the description of the Wisdom attribute).

Note that typically a success will not indicate something very precise or give away all the secrets of a room; a success in a passive roll should just give hints, or allow a single, specific finding.
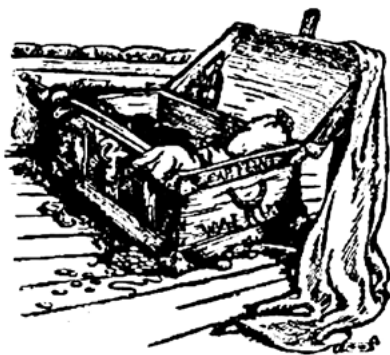
This sort of passive perception roll could be used by the GM **as a last resort** before triggering a trap while moving down a corridor, or when opening a door before checking it, or against being surprised by an ambush.

Also, passive perception rolls can be used even just to get an indication of how many details to reveal **at a first glance** about a location, a situation or an NPC. In these cases, again, the GM would provide more hints and clues then exact information.

Perception rolls are always done with a d6; for this reason, the GM usually rolls a d6 and a d8 together at intervals. The d6 is the perception roll for the characters, while the d8 is the random encounter die (use a d8 instead of a d6 for the possible random encounter: you can use the traditional 1 in 8 instead of 1 in 6 chance of making an encounter).

Searching

Where perception is a passive, involuntary roll, a search is instead an action **declared by the players**. Searching usually **takes one Turn for one Zone**, but more characters can

extend the search to multiple areas. Regardless of the number of characters, though, searching a zone never takes less than one Turn.

If **more characters search together**, for every additional character besides the first focusing on the same Zone, add a +1 to their roll. In this case, usually the roll is done by the character with the highest score while others contribute with the +1 bonus.

If characters search different zones, or if they search independently (perhaps trying to snatch a treasure before others will find it), every character rolls independently and with no bonus.

While the perception roll, when done passively, typically uses a fixed predefined chance (for example 1 in 6), when a character is actively searching, **roll a standard Notice skill test**.

Roll a d6, and if the roll is equal or lower than the number of dots in the Notice skill, the player has the right to receive all the useful information about the subject of the search: secret doors, hidden treasures, traps and so on.

Remember that the value of the Notice skill is improved **by a positive Wisdom modifier**, of an additional +1 chance (see also the description of the Wisdom attribute).

When conducting the search, players should still say to the GM what they're looking for and where. Generic declarations of searching the entire room or corridor will easily spring any trap in the proximity.

In fact, to even get to roll for search, the players should engage in conversation with the GM and explain how their search is conducted.

While adventuring underground, characters are supposed to carry their own source of light, usually torches and lamps, sometimes candles. Each of them has a different duration and gives light in different areas.

Candles last 12 turns - around two hours - give light only in a single Zone, and not too well.

While candles allow characters to hope to go undetected and permit them to march in areas that otherwise would be too dark, candles do not emit enough light to conduct a search in the proper way.

Searching a Zone only at the light of a candle requires double the time.

Moreover, the group will need at least one candle for every character; otherwise those without candles are rules as to be in the dark for penalties.

Torches last 10 turns - just short of two hours - while a flask of oil will be enough for a **lamp** to burn for 24 turns - around four hours.

Both **torches and lamps** light two Zones or even three or more if placed strategically, or if the Zones are configured as small Zones that divide an area more for tactical reasons than for its size.

When characters carry torches or lamps they need one every two characters, more or less. For small groups, a torch at front and a torch at back of the marching line is usually enough.

Torches and lamps provide enough light for normal search rolls.

Regardless of the source of light, if the group has light candles, torches or lamps, they cannot gain the benefit of surprise against monsters that live in the dark.

On the other hand, if the characters carry torches or lamps, these will give away their presence **3 in 6 times** and allow the monsters a chance to surprise the characters.

Candles, instead, will not give away the presence of characters unless in total darkness. In general, candles will make monsters notice characters **only 1 in 6 times**. More on this in the Surprise section of the encounters.

> *The duration of such light sources can be tracked with a progressive list of checkboxes, a countdown clock, or with a spare die of the appropriate size.*

ADVANCED RULINGS

LEVELS AND XP

Experience Points (XP) are the measure of the character's improvement in the game. They are gained basically by killing or **defeating adversaries**, and by **collecting treasure**.

Upon reaching a certain threshold of XP, a character gains a new Level. The rules do not support characters progressing beyond level 10.

The Level is both an indication of the generic strength and capabilities of a character, and the way to unlock new powers.

Enemy HD	XP reward
<1	5
1	10
2	20
3	40
4	60
5	100
6	150
7	250
8	450
9	650
10+	1,000

Table 23: XP for killing enemies

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters gain XP **as a group**, and all surviving members calculate and divide XP in equal parts (rounded down) upon returning to civilization and between sessions.

To gain XP **for defeating or killing** an adversary, such adversary must be a threat to the characters (either because of its nature - for example for monsters - or because of its actions - for example attacking the characters).

An adversary is considered to be defeated when was prior somehow engaged (in melee or ranged combat), but also spells, enemy surrender or retreat, killing (a monster) by surprise or from afar, all count as defeating.

The XP granted by an adversary depends on their Hit Dice, as in the table above.

The same enemy (if not killed in the first encounter) grants XP **only once** in the same session.

Sneaking by or avoiding any confrontation with negotiations, do not count as defeating - and thus grant **no XP**.

Of course, in many cases avoiding the confrontation will grant characters a different kind of reward other than XP (for example managing to loot a treasure without the need for a fight, or just help them to stay alive a little longer).

Looting and collecting treasure is the primary source of XP in the game. What counts as treasure is:

- Coins collected during adventures
- All treasure converted into coin upon the first return to civilization
- All treasure looted from monsters or monsters' lairs, or in adventurous locations

What does **not** count for XP is

- Occasional looting in civilized areas, unless very risky
- Selling gear or magic items that have been used by the characters or by others in the adventure
- Rewards, investments returns, money gained legally at no risk, occasional robbing of ordinary people at little risk
- Treasure such as jewelry or magic items that the characters keep in their possession

The XP reward system is one of the most houseruled sections of every game. Some GMs award XP also for simply attending the gaming session, others for quests or missions, and so on. Just proceed with whatever is fine with your group, although it's recommended to try first the standard system. Remember also that XP rewards encourage certain behaviors but at the same time can be perceived as bribes ("if you do this, I'll give you 10 XP") or as an attempt to direct the game, as GM, and negating players the right to make their own strategic decisions ("if you don't leave the dungeon but make it down another level, you'll get 100 XP"). If you houserule XP rewards, try to do it using tangible milestones and measurable objectives, agreed upon with the players.

To gain XP from treasure, the treasure itself must be returned to civilization and banked. Anything spent during the adventure to sustain or equip the characters, does not count for XP.

When treasure is banked, **every 1 silver counts as 1 XP** for the group (regardless of how the money is perhaps distributed among characters). Gold coins count as 10 XP even though the market value might be lower than that.

In the sessions that follow the XP reward, treasure that has been banked can be spent without losing any XP.

Gaining A Level

When the character gained enough XP, they advance to the new level. Advancement to the next level can be done **only** between sessions or in a pause in play at the end of an adventure.

This is also tied to the XP awarding: XP is distributed only when the characters return to civilization (between adventures) or between sessions, and so gaining a new level is similarly restricted.

On the other hand, if the session ends and XP is distributed among the characters for the enemies defeated (but not for treasure not banked yet), and this is enough to gain a level, a character can do so in the middle of the adventure (but still at the end of the session or during a break in play).

The rule is in place fundamentally to avoid disruption to the game because someone wants their character to pass to the new level while others are playing. The game, the adventure and its events, must have the precedence.

The XP required to gain a level is equal to 1,000 multiplied for the current character's level. When gaining a Level, this amount of XP (and only that) **is spent**.

Other points are maintained and then counted again for the purpose of gaining the next level.

Therefore, instead of a having to consult a progression table, players know exactly how much XP they need every time: the current character's level x 1,000.

Current Level	XP to next Level
1	1,000
2	2,000
3	3,000
4	4,000
Etc...	

Table 24: XP to reach next level

Or in a more traditional fashion (but remember that the XP is spent to get to the new levels):

Level	XP required
1	0 (new PC)
2	1,000
3	2,000
4	3,000
Etc...	

Table 25: XP requirements (classic)

> *The XP requirement for gaining a new level is lower, in this game, than in other OSR games. The reason is that the characters actually do not progress as much as in other games, with a single level. For example, you don't always gain HP. You may consider a level in this game to be roughly half of a level of other OSR games.*

For example, a level one character will need to gain 1,000 XP and upon reaching that, they will get to be level two, and the 1,000 XP is spent. The same character will now need to earn another 2,000 XP to get to level three.

Note that the XP required for each level is like currency: it's like buying a level. If a level one character gains 1,345 XP, they will spend 1,000 to get to level 2, and the character remains with 345 XP. They will need to reach 2,000 for the next level, but they start already at 345.

Spending Additional XP

When passing to a new level, some classes might spend additional XP to achieve special advancements. Of the basic classes, fighters and rogues progress normally, while sorcerers and clerics have the chance to spend more XP to gain new spells or blessings.

As described in the dedicated chapters, every spell or blessing has what's called a Power-Level (PWL), named as such to distinguish it from the character's levels. Learning a new spell or blessing has a cost in XP equal to **its PWL multiplied by 100**. Therefore, a sorcerer can learn a new spell, or a cleric a new blessing, by paying PWLx100 in XP. A PowerLevel two spell, for example, would cost 200 XP.

Note that the sorcerer and cleric can do this only when they get to a new level: they must spend for the level, and spend additional XP based on the PWL of the new spells or blessings that they wish to learn.

The default limit for sorcerers and clerics is determined by their new level: they can acquire spells or blessings whose total PWL is equal or lower than the character's level.

Character Improvement

When the character gains a Level there are **three improvements** that are available to be chosen: Hit Points, Talents, or Attributes' scores:

- **Gain Hit Points**: roll the class HD and add the result to the Max HP. If a character is hurt, the current HP increases of the same value

- **Gain a Talent**: roll to gain a new talent from those available to your class. You roll; you don't choose. If you roll a talent you already have, you get the next one in order or the one before

- **Increase an Attribute score**: add one point to an attribute of your choice. If this changes the modifier, update it and increase the related bonuses. Increasing the attribute **burns one Gift point**, and the attribute cannot be increased when no Gift points are available

These options do not exclude, for sorcerers or clerics, the acquisition of new spells and blessing which are paid for separately, in XP.

Note that some Talents also include the Level number as part of their bonus, so those are automatically updated when you gain a Level.

Multiclass

Multiclassing is not encouraged, but it is often a feature requested by players, so it is present in the game, although limited by the Gift score of the core attribute of the new class.

When a player **wants to multiclass**, they should declare so when they gain a level. Instead of increasing their current level for their main class, they instead gain Level One of **a secondary class**. The secondary class can be written on the character sheet next to the other, and so will be the new level.

For example, a Level 5 Sorcerer decides to multiclass as a fighter instead of becoming Level 6. The player writes "Class: Sorcerer/Fighter" and then also "Level: 5/1".

Level One Multiclassing

When gaining Level One of a new class, the character does not make a regular advancement (adding HP, adding a talent or increasing an attribute score), but instead they automatically gain **one of the basic talents** of the new class, **or roll for a random talent** of the new class.

Basic talents are for example the Hit Die, or the capability to cast spells or blessings, and so on. Also talents like having no penalties for heavy armor,

for 2-handed weapons, or improvement to certain Saving Throws are allowed as basic talent choices. Note that the player can pick one of those, and only one, but it's not random.

As an alternative, the player can roll a d10 and gain one random talent of the new class.

Multiclassing And Levels

When gaining a new Level, the player will decide if to increase the level of their main class (and make a regular improvement) or if to increase the level of their secondary class, and in this case they can make an improvement using the secondary class HD if they chose it, or taking a new talent of their secondary class.

Note that you use the **Hit Die of the secondary class** only when you make an advancement for the level of the secondary class, and only if you chose it as a talent before.

When taking **a talent of the secondary class**, the player can always decide if to pick one of the basic talents (of their choice) or roll for the d10 for the other talents.

When a talent or anything else (a spell, a written adventure, something specific in a 3rd party module) mentions a level, apply the level of the relevant class: the primary level for the primary class talents, and the secondary level for the secondary class talents.

If it's unclear which level to use, always consider the primary, highest level as the character level, and their primary class as their class.

The secondary level and secondary class are relevant only for the talents and skills of that class (not for spells, not for other content).

Multiclassing Restrictions

There are several restrictions to the multiclassing process, which make it difficult for the characters to increase their secondary class more than a few levels:

- Before multiclassing, a character must have reached **at least Level 2** or higher in their main class
- The secondary class must always be one level or more **lower** than the primary class
- The secondary class is limited **by the Gift score** of the core attribute of the secondary class

In other words, the secondary class level must always remain lower than the original class level, but also cannot go any higher than the Gift score of the secondary class core attribute.

For example, the sorcerer multiclassing into a fighter has Strength as core ability of the secondary class (fighter). So they can go as high (in Levels for the fighter) as the Gift score of Strength.

Since the Gift points can be burned during the game for re-rolls for that attribute, and to increase that attribute score, it is possible that the Gift score will be very low (or even zero).

If it's zero already, the class that has that attribute as core cannot be chosen as secondary class.

If the Gift score drops to zero, or below the Level of the secondary class, during the game, then the character cannot progress anymore in that class. These levels, though, are not lost.

For example, if the sorcerer had Strength Gift of 2, they could advance up to Fighter level 2. If they do, and then they burn Strength Gift points for re-rolls or increasing the Strength attribute score, they will remain Level 2, but cannot progress further.

Gain New Levels

When a character that has multiclass gains XP, they need to gain 1,000 x the total **of the two classes together**.

In other words, a level in a secondary class counts as a level in the primary, for the purpose of determining how much is XP is required for the next level.

For example the Sorcerer/Fighter with Level 5/1 needs 6,000 (Current Level x 1,000) to gain a new level.

The Current Level is calculated as the sum of the two classes. This means that progressing to the new level is not faster nor slower, when multiclassing.

Hirelings

Characters have the possibility to hire retainers and gain allies over the course of their adventures, to accompany them for a reasonable salary or profit share. There are fundamentally three different types of hirelings:

- **Retainers**: they will accompany the characters in their adventures and share the risks and profits of such adventures
- **Specialists**: they will provide a specific service to the characters, and can usually be found only in larger towns
- **Allies**: they are complete characters, starting at level one and available to replace the character in case of death (also called henchmen)

Limitations

A character can have a number of retainers and allies (in total) at their service equal or lower than the number of **Max. Hirelings** , as indicated by the Charisma score ($3 \pm$ CHA modifier).

Specialists that are hired for specific jobs and act independently do not count, but they do count whenever they are hired to accompany the character for a period of time or for a specific adventure, thus acting like skilled retainers.

Retainers

Standard retainers are class-less humans, not highly specialized in fighting or anything else.

To hire a standard retainer the character should pay **25 sp upfront**, which will be used for the retainer to put together their basic gear: a melee weapon, a leather armor and a shield, a backpack and similar. Retainers will also require additional **5 sp per day**, as basic salary, to be paid weekly, and expect usually a **5% share** of their master profit, paid at the end of the adventure.

Should the retainer die in service, all unpaid salary plus a 5% of the master profit is expected to be paid to the family, if the characters return to the same location where they hired the retainer.

Failing to pay the family is usually considered an offense of the local customs, and will result in difficulties to hire more retainers in the same area.

Retainers have **1d6 HP** and no special bonus or penalties.

Roll **Attributes checks** with a score of 9, and **Saving Throws** with a simple score of 5 (retainers are level zero).

When a retainer **helps a character**, for example in breaking a door, in searching a room, and so on, it counts as a normal character.

Of course, because of their role of support, they are expected to **take orders** from the characters, carry weight for them, and even **take some risks**, like marching at the head of the column or at the back with a torch, or probing a corridor and so on.

In combat, retainers don't have initiative or attack rolls; they fight as long as their master fights, or as long as other characters do. When it's time to roll dice, the player will choose, in advance, if they want **a bonus To-Hit or a bonus to damage**.

For each retainer involved in combat, the player receives **a bonus of +1**. These points can be allocated to either rolls, and if two or more retainers are involved in the fight, can be split. For example, with three retainers, the player might take a +2 To-Hit and +1 to damage.

Retainers **have AC 3** (leather and shield) and suffer the monster damage whenever the player rolls below 10 + monster's HD. Any damage inflicted by the monster is **divided equally** between the character and the retainer(s). If the number is uneven, the retainer (the meat shield) **suffers more damage** than the character.

If the character has AC higher than the retainer, the retainer might be the only one suffering damage in that round.

Retainers regain HP as regular characters and can be healed.

You may need to improvise some proper ruling in certain cases: for example what about a sorcerer or a character that attacks with a ranged weapon? What are their retainers doing? If they accept to get into melee even while their master is far from them, you could still use the natural d20 roll for casting the spell or for the ranged attack to see if the retainers have hit the monster or if it was the other way around. As an alternative, a sorcerer's retainer might fight side by side with another character, a fighter, while the sorcerer keeps the distance. In that case, it would be easier to use the fighter's roll, and even let the fighter decide if to take To-Hit or damage bonus.

LOYALTY

For each retainer hired by the character, assign them a loyalty die as by the table, according to the Charisma score of their master.

Whenever something particularly dangerous has happened that might have **scared the shit out of them** (like ugly sorcery, the death of another retainer, the appearance of terrible monsters), or after a fight or another event where the retainer **has suffered harm**, roll the loyalty die.

Charisma score	Loyalty
3-5	d4
6-12	d6
13-15	d8
16-17	d10
18	d12

Table 26: Retainers' loyalty

Roll the loyalty die also when the retainer is asked to take a clear risk in place of the characters. In this case roll **before the task** to see if the retainer accepts, and after (if needed, depending on the outcome of the action: was it scary? Was it harmful?).

When rolling the loyalty die, consult the following guidelines to determine the retainer's reaction:

1) If you roll a 1, the retainer will leave the service of the character as soon as possible (it could be also when they will be back to civilization), and will refuse to take any more risks.

2–3) If you roll a 2 or 3, the retainer remains in service and obeys to orders, taking risks as requested, but its loyalty die is reduced in size by one factor (i.e. a d10 becomes a d8).

4+) If you roll a 4 or more, the retainer remains in service and obeys to orders, taking risks as requested. Keep the loyalty die as it is.

Whenever the characters make camp for the night, **increase the loyalty die** by one size the morning after (and remember to restore HP if the retainer was hurt).

The loyalty die cannot be restored past its original size, which depends on the Charisma score of the master character, but **better pay** can improve this. **Double daily pay** (10 sp per day) will increase the loyalty die by one factor, but never past d12. An **additional 5% of profit share** will also increase the loyalty die of one factor, but never past d12. These can be offered from the start or even during the adventure. If a retainer receives a promise of better pay, increase their loyalty die right away.

SPECIALISTS

Specialists are better skilled than retainers but significantly more costly. When they are hired for a specific job, they are paid accordingly **and act independently**, but if the character wishes them to stick around for the length of an adventure, a daily pay is required plus a share of the profit.

Moreover, a specialist that accompanies a character will count **as a retainer**, for the purpose of the limit to the number of **Max. Hirelings** that the character can have, according to the Charisma score.

A sample list of specialists is provided below, for single tasks, with a basic indication of the percentage of success (BCoS: Basic Chance of Success) the character can expect for their request (if reasonable). All prices are in silver.

Very difficult requests will decrease the chance of success, and better pay or more time allowed to complete task will increase the chance of success.

Alchemist: improve time or quality for working on wands, staffs, scrolls, potions. BCoS: 75%. Cost: 500.

Armorer: improve weapons and armors for a group. BCoS: 75%. Cost 200.

Assassin: kill a single target as required by the characters. BCoS: 60%. Cost 800.

Craftsman: specialized labor tasks. BCoS: 80%. Cost 100.

Guard: protect a location, an estate, or treasure. BCoS: 75%. Cost 200.

Guide: provide guidance or tracking in the wilderness. BCoS: 85%. Cost 200.

Healer: improve healing rate while under treatment, or treat minor wounds, poisoning, diseases. A higher cost will allow even more serious injuries to be treated, but travel to a large city might be required. BCoS: 65%. Cost 200.

Hunter: provide rations and water for the group while traveling in the wilderness. BCoS: 85%. Cost 100.

Mercenary: will not provide guarding service to locations nor kill on command, but serves as a body-guard or as an enforcer. BCoS: 80%. Cost 150.

Scholar: reduce the time necessary for sorcery activities by removing the +1d6 days. BCoS: 75%. Cost 200.

Spy: gather information about a target or a specific topic, otherwise unavailable to the characters. BCoS: 65%. Cost 400.

Thief: steal a specific object or something as instructed by the characters. If the target is unknown, the work of a spy might be required in preparation. BCoS: 50%. Cost 400.

Specialists As Retainers

When a specialist is hired as a retainer, they receive a **daily pay of 10 sp**, and expect a **10% share** of their master profit.

There is no fee for gear, as the specialist comes already equipped, but there is a hiring cost to be paid in advance, depending on the retainer skills. This hiring cost is about a half of the cost for a single task of the same retainer.

When **creating a specialist** as a retainer, the player rolls their attributes and assigns scores so that they have the relevant attributes with the highest scores (like Strength for a fighter).

Specialists are considered to be **as Level 2 characters**, with a Class (for example fighter, rogue, etc.).

After rolling stats, give a retainer the following:
- **Hit Points** equal the highest roll of the chosen class, +2
- **One talent** (of your choice) as by the class you've chosen (for example choose Skills to upgrade for a rogue)
- Adequate **equipment**, determined with the help of the GM
- Assign to the specialist a loyalty die as you do for retainers, but **increase its size by one** by default; these are professionals, not fearful peasants

Allies

Allies, or henchmen, are those who follow the characters for loyalty and for glory, and are available also as **possible replacement characters**, should an original character die.

An ally is generated as a Level One character - roll attributes, HP, talents, and so on. An ally could be a brand new character, or also be a retainer that survived in service for long enough to deserve some attention and get their own character sheet, **but not a specialist**.

By default, a character will be known enough to gather an ally **when reaching Level 5**, and one more every 2 levels beyond that (at level 7, 9, etc.).

Allies have **no loyalty die**, because they are not NPCs controlled by the GM, but they are characters controlled by the players.

Allies get the same daily pay as retainers do, and the same share of profit, as a generic indication, but will not leave if not paid.

More important: **allies get XP** if the player decides to let them have it. Divide the XP as usual between the characters of the group, but allies can receive up to 50% of their master XP (reducing the master's XP of course).

As characters progress and gain levels, they might be able to obtain the service of more skilled but more expensive specialists. As a general rule, increase the specialists Level not beyond level 5. Anyone higher than that has probably better things to do than be paid to go on adventures. When adding levels to specialists, the players will choose if to add talents or Hit Points or increase Attribute scores, as they would do for a regular character. The cost of the specialist increases of 5 sp per day per level added, and the requested percentage of profit also increases by 5% per level added. For example, a Level 4 Specialist will allow the players to add two advancements (talents, HP or attribute score) and will cost 20 sp per day and 20% profit share.

Dangers

This section contains guidelines for various dangers and hazards, besides traditional fights.

Attribute Score Loss

Instead of inflicting HP damage, a loss of points on an Attribute's score is another way to present harm suffered by the characters. **An attribute's score loss** can have a drastic impact on the characters' capabilities, so it should be used for significant dangers, or when you need a **countdown to zero**.

For the basic attribute's score loss, the traditional method is to reduce the attribute's score for example by one or two points. This often leads to recalculating the modifiers, and then you also need to track the daily recovery rate (one point per day).

Sometimes an attribute's score loss **continues with time**, unless some solution is applied by the character(s); for example a disease might require an antidote or a healing spell, a bleeding wound could require some rest and medications, and so on.

In case of a continuous score loss, if any of the attribute's scores is **reduced to zero**, the character dies.

Rarely, an attribute score loss is **permanent** and there is no recovery. Otherwise refer to the regular healing rules (usually healing 1 point per day).

Since modifiers have an impact on various aspects (i.e. Constitution on HP, Strength on attack rolls and harm, and so on), this can be a lengthy process, and quite complex to track on the character sheet. As an alternative, see the **persistent penalty** proposed next.

Persistent Penalty

As an alternative to the Attribute score loss, the GM might assign a **persistent penalty** to one or more Attributes. Such penalty should be usually in the range of -1 to -4.

While less common and with a more arbitrary feel to it, it is at least much easier to track because it's noted once in the character sheet and requires no recalculations.

It becomes relevant is only when an **Attribute check or a Saving Throw** are called for the related attribute. Note that a persistent penalty is a drastic measure if compared with the score loss, because it has an impact directly on **all the related rolls**.

On the other hand, it's impact is consistent across all scores (while the score loss varies depending on the modifiers' thresholds).

Finally, also consider that a persistent penalty could be applied, **with the same mechanics, to Skills**, not just Attributes.

Any persistent penalty should be recovered the same as the Ability score loss; **1 point per day**.

Diseases

Treat diseases as poison for the purpose of Saving Throws, so roll **with Constitution**. Saving Throws are also used to monitor the progress of the disease, usually, and the final effects before healing.

A series of **consecutive Saves** could be set up for a disease, for example as follows: one to avoid infection (upon exposure), one when the incubation period ends and the disease manifests, and then at more or less regular intervals. Serious diseases might have these regular intervals getting closer and closer as the disease progresses; other cronic conditions might present long intervals of time between Saves.

Failure in the first Save (infection) means getting sick; failure(s) in the next checks (when incubation ends, and then at intervals) means **some sort of effect** (as bland as 1 HP loss, as serious as progressive attribute's score loss that can kill the character).

A success in the first roll usually means **not getting sick at all**, while success in the others ranges from getting rid of the disease to simply avoiding the negative effect for that single time.

Note that the character becomes aware of the disease, usually, when the incubation ends (the second roll). A real bastard GM might even roll in secret for infection, so that the player will know of the disease only when also the character will.

If you want to simplify things, you might roll once for infection, and then once to determine how the disease will progress.

The difference between the roll and the success threshold of the Saving Throw will be a guideline to determine how serious or bland the consequences were.

For example you could use the difference between the roll and the Saving Throw success threshold to count how many times the disease will inflict its effects (still at intervals, not all together) on the character.

Falling

A character needs to fall from a significant height before it needs to be treated as a matter of HP loss or other damage. One way to deal with this is to assume a number of dice for the height of the fall. As an example, consider **1d6 damage** for every storey height they fall from.

This sort of damage can have in proportion a different impact depending on the HP of the characters. A level one character should fear this sort of falls, while a high level character would be more resilient to this kind of damage.

In reality, falling from a certain height affects human bodies in very similar ways, regardless of their combat prowess, experience and so on.

To reflect this, the damage is proposed to be **in percentage** to the total HP of the character. The procedure would be as follows:

- Roll a CON Saving Throw then apply damage in proportion
- For a failed Save, apply a fifth (20%) of the Max HP damage for every storey height. Note that percentage is calculated on the character's HP
- For a successful save, inflict only half of the damage

A character with 10 HP would suffer 2 HP (20%) of harm for a fall for every storey height, or 1 HP in case of successful Save. A character with 20 HP would suffer 4 HP (20% of their Max HP) of harm (or 2 HP for a successful Save). Higher HP means **higher damage suffered**; and for both characters, regardless of their HP, a five storey height fall is fatal (100% of the HP).

Percentage Damage

As seen for falling, it is possible to rule that certain damage affects **all characters in the same way**, regardless of their Max HP value. Such damage is expressed in a percentage of the HP loss in case of failed ST or suffered harm. If you make the harm significant you can rule a 10% or even 20% HP damage. This is recovered at the usual healing rate.

As an alternative to an HP% damage, consider the Attribute Score loss, or the Persistent penalty to an Attribute modifier as mechanical representations of a damage that should proportionally affect weaker and stronger characters.

POISON

A component of a lot of traps, a vicious ointment on the blade of enemies, even foul water or rotten food can be source of poisoning for a character. The character must roll a Saving Throw with CON **to prevent the poison's effects**.

Effects can range from mild HP loss to an Attribute score loss, from slumber and unconsciousness to death.

A successful Saving Throw usually allows to avoid the effect of the venom, although very powerful ones might have **a partial effect** even after a positive ST.

Drugs and alcohol are considered to act like poison when in high dosages. Moderate, inebriating amounts will cause a -2 score to DEX and INT (or a -1 penalty, instead) and -1 to all Saving Throws, if the character fails a Save on Constitution to resist these effects.

Consuming more after suffering the above penalties will trigger also unconsciousness, memory loss, and so on.

If the character assumes the drug or alcohol of their own initiative, they can forfeit the Save vs. this negative effects, assuming they want to enjoy the other effects of such substances.

Frequent and excessive usage of substantial amounts will lead to more severe penalties and addiction.

STARVATION

All characters are supposed to eat every day. There is no need to keep track of exact times, but roughly every 24h characters should take the time for a short rest and food. The usual time to consume rations is when the characters rest or make camp to regain Hit Points.

Rations (as in the equipment list) are considered to be adequate **for 1 person for 1 day**. Consuming one per day is the minimum, two is benficial since it allows a higher recovery of Hit Points.

Lack of rations for a day means rolling a Saving Throw with Constitution, and failure the loss of 1 point of the Constitution attribute. Repeat the roll for every day without food.

These points are **not recovered** until the character cannot feed, so regular rest does not help. When there are food and water, the recovery for starvation can proceed **twice faster than normal**.

When Constitution reaches zero, the character is starved to death.

There are no half-rations. If the group wants to **split rations**, simply have a different character roll the ST for skipping the ration on different days.

Lack of water is a more severe issue: every 24h roll a Saving Throw on Constitution, and the loss of the Constitution score in case of failure is 50% the first time, 25% the second time, and death on the third failed ST.

For simplicity, consider the 1 Ration as comprising both food and water, by default. Finding water should be relatively easy except in very specific places, designed explicitly to be problematic.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Every character needs at least a few hours sleep every 24h, otherwise a general penalty of -1 **to every kind of task or roll** (incl. Saving Throws, rolls in combat, etc.) should be applied.

The penalty is **cumulative**, day by day, until the character does not get a full uninterrupted sleep of 8 hours.

When that happens, all penalties are removed.

Morris M Williams

While proceeding through their adventures, the characters will often make contact with other creatures - human or not - inside or outside of dungeons.

This chapter is about ruling how each of these encounters will begin, what will be the reaction of the creatures involved and of course about how to conduct combat, when needed.

ENCOUNTERS & COMBAT

ENCOUNTERS

An encounter is a moment in the game where the group of characters is facing another creature or group of creatures, with defined stats and scores, which could turn into combat.

These other creatures might be humans - and indeed humans would be the most common encounters in civilized areas - or could be monsters, wild animals, and so on.

Many creatures, even in the Wild, might **not be hostile** from the very beginning, unless clearly threatened.

Within the space of a dungeon, instead, it's safe to assume that the majority (**but not all**) of the encounters will resolve in a fight, since the characters are armed intruders in someone else's lair or territory.

When the characters move into an area where they **could have** an encounter (entering a room of a pre-made dungeon, for example, where the module or GM writeup registers the presence of monters), it's time to follow the encounter procedure. The same applies technically for any new area of the dungeon or location, if you apply **random encounters** rules (again, see the module or GM writeup, or the default rule for random encounters).

The procedure for the encounters resolution is the following:
• Situation
• Light
• Surprise
• Reaction

Each of those takes precedence over all the items that follow. For example, the situation might dictate which side will detect the other first, taking precedence over lighting or surprise, and lighting takes precedence over surprise rolls.

The reaction roll, finally, is resolved (if needed) after determining which side detects the other first.

SITUATION

The **situation** includes anything relevant to the situation's description: it might be a GM note in the dungeon writeup or a note in the module with the pre-made dungeon (for example: "the monster will always notice the characters approaching" or "the monster will always notice the characters unless invisible").

Note that this includes also **any ruling by the GM**, either in favor of the characters or of the monsters (the "fictional positioning", as referred by other games). For example, the GM might rule in favor of the characters if they have properly setup an ambush.

The situation might rule in favor of one of the two sides and thus **bypass light and surprise rules**, determining right away which side has the initiative.

Otherwise, it could simply provide a bonus (for example a +1 to Initiative, or to the reaction roll, etc.), according to the GM's judgement.

> *Always deal first of all, with what the encounter "looks like". Often this will tell you clearly which side will surprise the other, without the need for further rolls. If as GM you don't feel like making an explicit ruling in favor of this or that side, consider giving a bonus (a +1 is unlikely to break your game).*

LIGHT

The second factor to consider in an encounter is light: as already described in the dedicated section if the group has lit candles, torches or lamps, they cannot gain the benefit of surprise against monsters **that usually live in the dark**.

Therefore, if the monster has night vision (thus is sensitive to light), the surprise rules apply only to determine if the monster will surprise the characters or not. The monster itself, cannot be surprised and will always be aware of the presence of the characters (this, though, doesn't mean the monster is automatically an enemy).

Any other **similar condition** (for example a monster with the power to detect the smell of humans at a certain distance, or a monster sensitive to metal when the characters are all armed with swords and wear chainmail, etc.) will be ruled in the same way: the monster will be aware of the characters and cannot be surprised.

If the characters meet with monsters with no night vision, or with other humans, and if the characters carry **lit torches or lamps**, they will be spotted on a roll of 1-3 on a d6 (3 out of 6 times), unless also the other party is in the same condition (moving with torches or lamps). If indeed the other party is not moving (for example in a camp or in a room), the approaching characters can be seen on a roll of 1-3 on a d6, but not the other way around.

Candles, instead, will not give away the presence of characters unless in total darkness. and only **1 in 6 times**.

Other environmental conditions, or special conditions like encumbrance vs. monsters with keen hearing, or carrying bags of gold and treasure, marching with a heavy load or marching while loudly arguing about the next move, should receive a similar ruling.

Assign a 3 in 6 chance for the group to be detected, and a 1 in 6 for minor noises or minor problematic behaviors.

Surprise

If the situation is **decently balanced** or **quite traditional** (like the characters walking carefully in a dungeon corridor with little candles, to reduce chances of alerting monsters, or carefully entering a room where they suspect there would be monsters), then resort to the rules for surprise.

Apply the rules of surprise also for groups meeting on equal ground for example, if none of the two gave away their presence in advance somehow.

As explained, if the characters carry lit lamps or torches, the enemy is not likely to be surprised, and even candles can give away the presence of the characters.

If instead this doesn't happen, if the characters were careful enough or lucky enough with their rolls, the enemy **might be surprised instead**.

You can shape the encounter accordingly: for example the enemy might be asleep or somehow busy enough not to have noticed the approaching characters.

The enemy is **surprised by the characters** only on a roll of 6 on a d6.

Note that you can use the same roll you would use for light.

Whenever you have the need for a specific ruling for surprise, you can use the same measures as for the lit sources of light and general surprise. If the characters are making their presence known (they make noise, or they move in a territory more familiar to their enemies), they are detected in a 3 in 6 chance. If they're especially careful (and can describe how they are careful, not just state it), then they are detected in a 1 in 6 chance. But with a roll of 6 on a d6, it's the characters that will surprise the enemy.

Roll d6	Surprise
1	Characters are surprised even if they march with candles in the dark or near darkness
2-3	Characters are surprised but only if they have torches or lamps in dark environments
4-5	None is surprised
6	Monster(s) is surprised by the characters

Table 27: Light and surprise in encounters

If the notes you have about the encounters do not allow for the monster to be surprised (for example describe the enemy as vigilant or waiting for the characters), don't roll: the enemy just knows of their presence.

This is not an option to abuse, but it's definitely something that could happen, and should be verified as part of the first stage ("Situation"), without the need to proceed further down in the list for light and for surprise.

In other words, you get to the rolls for light and then for surprise only if the situation allows it.

Reaction

Roll	Reaction
4–	Hostile
5-6	Unfriendly, diffident
7-9	Evasive, scared
10-11	Open, communicative
12+	Friendly

Table 28: Reaction table

The reaction roll is the last one necessary for the encounter to take shape: once the ligth and surprise determined if there is any of the two sides that is going to catch the other by surprise, what will be the initial attidute of the encountered humans or creatures towards the characters?

An encounter, in fact, does not necessarily resolve with violence every time. Of course for a certain type of creatures a friendly attitude might need some adjustment: a wild bear in a cave is not going to be friendly to humans. For a bear, that would just mean "I am not going to try to eat you right away".

Anyway; if violence is not the only possible reaction of the other party, the table to the side will provide a **guideline for a random reaction**.

In normal conditions, simply roll a d12 on the reaction table.

If conditions are **mostly favorable or at least neutral** to the characters (a human settlement if compared to some remote forest in the Wild), use the same table but roll a d20 instead. A friendly result doesn't imply any gain for the characters unless they find a correct way to exploit that friendly predisposition, nor it means that the NPCs will do anything against their self-interest.

If the conditions are **significantly unfavorable** to the characters (an encounter with intelligent monsters), you might roll a d10, excluding a possible friendly reaction (unless from a bonus).

Remember to **apply the Charisma modifier** for the reaction roll. Use the score of the character marching at front, if the encounter is unplanned, or use the score of the character that takes charge of the first contact at the beginning of the encounter.

Of course, if another character of the group has a chance to interact with the other party before a definitive reaction is established, they could apply a better Charisma modifier to the roll.

To be interacting with humans, this means usually talking – with potentially hostile creatures it could mean also being the first they will look at as a target.

When communicating the monsters or the NPCs' reactions to characters, describe clearly how the other humans or creatures act, but **don't say explicitly** what this behavior means. If some of the characters know the language of the others or have a reasonable way to understand those reactions, give more explicit clues.

It will be up to the players to give an exact interpretation to what you describe. Be verbose in these descriptions, be obvious, but don't be explicit.

Also consider that some behaviors would mean different things **for different cultures or different species**. Again, if some of the characters have some knowledge about for example how to appear non-threatening to a diffident wild beast or how to communicate with a non-human species, provide them with more details.

Note that you should try to be as consistent as you can in your descriptions, so that players can gather knowledge and experience from previous encounters, and learn how to deal with the next.

Rolling for the encounters is quite easy: every time the characters enter a new area or a new zone, the GM should roll the following:
- d6 for light/surprise
- d8 for encounter
- d12 for default reaction (or d10 or d20 if the situation is more or less favorable)

A single roll will resolve all what's needed to determine the encounter response.

First of all, the GM should read the **d8 for the encounter** itself. Most OSR games define a random encounter as occurring on a 1 in 6 chance. In this game, a random encounter occurs **on a 1 in 8 chance, or 2 in 8 chance** if the previous encounter was missed (stick to 2 in 8 for the next rolls until an encounter occurs, then return to 1 in 8). If the rolls is not 1 in 8 or 2 in 8 on the d8 for the encounter, the other rolls can be ignored.

If instead there is an encoutner, or if the encounter is ruled by the module or GM's notes, **read the d6** for the light or surprise.

Once you have determined if one of the two sides have surprised the other or detected the other in advance, **read the reaction on the d12** – or the d10 or d20 depending on the different conditions. If you rolled the default d12 but realize you should have used a d10, subtract 2, or if you should have used the d20, add 4 (not 8) to your roll.

Of course, you roll **only the dice you need**: if the enemy is known to be there and aggressive, roll just the d6, no need for the others. Similarly, exclude from the roll the dice that you would need to determine something that instead you already know.

Random Encounters

Depending on the characteristics of the area explored by the characters (a dungeon, a forest, natural caves, a fortress, a city and so on...), the GM should have some random encounter tables available.

Random encounters are what make the environment of most dungeons, wilderness areas or cities, real and alive. They provide meaningful interaction with the world, sometimes in terms of a fight, and participate in the depletion of characters' valuable time and resources. Or better: favor the exchange of time and resources for XP and coin.

Random encounters are what make a long journey or stay in an hostile territory a dangerous predicament, even if characters are mostly idle and try to just recover their strength, like when they make camp.

By default, **roll a d8 every 3 turns** for random encounters. You get an encounter on a result of 1 – if you do not, then **the next roll** will give you an encounter on a result of 1 or 2. If you still don't get an encounter, don't increase it further: keep 1 and 2 as results for an encounter.

As soon as you get an encounter, the next roll will be back to 1 in 8 chance.

These **odds can vary** (for example starting as 1-3 in 8 chance for an encounter in a more populated dungeon), or the rolls might be done **more or less frequently** than the default roll every 3 Turns. If you use a pre-made adventure, use their recommended frequency and chance of encounter.

The frequency of the encounter varies much **depending on the location**: in natural locations such as forests, mountains, caves, the GM should roll less frequently.

For a period of **some hours of rest** (characters making camp and setting watch turns), make the roll every 6 Turns (every 1 hour). The reason is that characters don't wander around, thus making it less likely to run into monsters or other encounters.

The random encounter tables should be prepared in advance and are part of the dungeon or adventure design.

There are also plenty of free resources to consult on the internet with already-made random encounters that you're encouraged to make use of.

Do your best to configure meaningful encounters; don't roll for the chance of harmless, boring encounters. Use the encounters to reinforce your vision of the game: add weirdness or add danger, add mystery or add fear, add violence or add magic, and so on, depending on the sense, the feel of the world you want to communicate to the players.

Starting Position

The enemy position becomes critically relevant if the reaction roll (or the encounter description in the module or GM notes) defines this as a dangerous encounter.

Characters can enter in melee combat with enemies that are **in the same Zone**, so the GM needs to be able to tell if this is a viable option or not. If you don't have a precise location, if your description as GM didn't include enough details to infer that with common sense, you can roll a d6 to determine the initial position of the enemy.

If an enemy is in a different Zone, the character needs first of all to reach them, before they can attack.

Roll	Position
1	At least 3 Zones away
2-3	Closest adjacent Zone
4-5	In the same Zone
6	Other Zone, perhaps better defended

Table 29: Enemy's position

> *The system is built to retain the maximum compatibility (it's one point off in favor of characters, but honestly, who cares?) and its math, once grasped, is quite simple. The system does not make it more likely for either to hit: it's not going to just exchange damage roll after roll. Usually only one of the two will hit, and it's rare that no one hits the other.*

Combat Basics

In this game the combat system does not distinguish between characters' attacks and enemies' attacks; the clash between two adversaries is resolved **with a single roll**: either one of the two hits the other, or both hit each other, or (rarely) there's no hit.

The Single Roll

The foundation of the **single roll system** in combat is as follows: the player rolls a d20 to hit vs. the monster's Armor Class (using a classic Ascending Armor Class for monsters).

Rolling **equal or higher than the monster's AC** (including modifiers, such as To-Hit bonus from STR) means hitting the monster.

The same d20 roll - raw, this time, without modifiers - is used to check if the monster hits the character.

The monster hits the character when the raw roll is **equal or lower than 10 + Monster's HD** (for example an HD 1 monster hits on a roll of 11 or lower; an HD 3 monster on a roll of 13 or lower, and so on).

The monster, though, doesn't hit with numbers **equal or lower than the character's Armor Class**. This is why the character's AC starts at 0. For example a character with a shield (AC 1) is safe on a roll of 1 on the d20.

This system reduces to the minimum the boring rolls where nothing happens: no more "character misses" followed by "monster misses". The high rolls usually indicate a hit from the character to the enemy, and often low rolls are not just a miss, but being hit.

The math of this system is solid enough, and after a few rolls you'll get the hang of it.

The chance to hit for the character is the same as in many OSR game: roll a

d20 equal or higher than the monster AC, using classic modifiers such as the To-Hit bonus derived from Strength (or the Dexterity bonus for ranged attacks).

The chance to hit for the monster, if you compare it to the classic attack tables for ascending Armor Class, just one point off in favor of the characters.

Note that the chance to hit for a monster increases with the monster's HD, as in the classic attack tables. The main difference is that the monster wants the player to roll low, instead of using a GM's roll and hoping for a high roll.

> *A more exact system would assign to the monster a hit on 11 + monster HD, but it's much easier with 10 + HD. Using 10 + HD, an HD 1 monster hits on 11 or less, an HD 2 on 12 or less, etc.*

The chance to hit for the monster is decreased by the character wearing armor. Also in this case, the system uses the same math of the classic attack tables, taking one point off for each AC point.

The difference is that instead of taking those points off at the top of the scale (i.e. increasing the number the monster needs to roll), the Armor Class is accounted for at the bottom of the scale. In other words, the AC simply says that the character is not hit when rolling equal or lower than the character's AC.

> *Problems arise for monsters with 11+ HD. A monster with 12 HD would hit on 22 or minus (on a d20), but still miss on a roll equal or lower than the character's AC (thus "wasting" the 2 points over 20). But you can wrap the excess point(s) above 20 back from 1, and override the character's AC.*

SINGLE ROLL EXAMPLES

These are a couple of basic examples that will help to clarify how the single roll work.

First example: a level one character, with no bonus To-Hit and a simple shield (so the character's AC is 1), fights an HD 1 monster, with AC 12.

The player rolls a d20:
- **12+**: on a 12 or more (equal or higher than the monster AC) the character hits the monster
- **11-**: on a 11 (10 + the Monster HD which is 1) or less, the monster hits the character
- **1**: except on a roll of a 1, that's the character's AC thanks to the shield, thus the monster doesn't hit

This is a simple example, because the two scores are clearly separated. In some cases there might be even a gap in the middle, where no one hits the other.

If instead the scores overlap (the monster's AC and the 10 + monster's HD for hitting the character), both the character and the monster can hit each other in the same round.

Second example: here both can hit at the same time. A character with a +2 To-Hit and AC 3 faces an HD 5 monster, with AC 13.

The player rolls a d20:
- **11+**: the character has a +2 To-Hit; they hit the monster with 11 or more (the monster's AC is 13 but there's the +2 To-Hit)
- **11-15**: on a roll between 11 to 15, both hit each other
- **15-**: the monster hits the character on a 15 or less (10 + monster HD)
- **3-**: On a 3 or less (character's AC) the monster misses (and so does the character)

Reading Single Rolls

It takes a little to get a hang of the system, but it will allow you to have faster and deadlier fights, with no awkward moments when adversaries keep missing each other.

To speed up the reading of the attack roll, use this approach, starting from the side that has the initiative (more about Initiative in the dedicated paragraph), or just use the tables below:

For the character, take the d20 roll plus modifiers and ask yourself: is it equal or higher than the monster's AC? If yes, roll for damage.

For the monster, take the d20 roll, raw (no modifiers) and ask yourself: is it higher than the character's AC but lower or equal to 10 + monster's HD? If yes, roll for damage.

Character's attack table: apply the bonus to hit, if present.

Result	Roll
Hit	Equal or higher than Monster's AC
Miss	Lower than Monster's AC

Table 30: Character's attack table

Monster's attack table: no modifiers, use the raw roll.

Result	Roll
Miss	Higher than 10 + Monster's HD
Hit	Equal or lower than 10 + Monster's HD
Miss	Equal or lower than character's AC

Table 31: Monster's attack table

One-Sided Attacks

To deal with cases when **only one** of the opponents can hit the other, for example if one uses a ranged weapon and the other is still trying to close the gap between them, you roll in the same way, but there is damage inflicted **only** when the roll is in favor of the combatant **in position to inflict harm**.

For example, if a character with a bow looses an arrow against an approaching undead, and keeps out of reach of the undead rusty sword, then if the player rolls high enough, they inflict damage on the undead. If the roll is lower than the 10 + monster's HD, on the other hand, the undead still has no way to harm the character (as it would in other circumstances).

It works **also the other way around**, when it's the monster having the possibility to hit a character without fearing a return attack: if the roll is lower than 10 + monster's HD, the monster hits (excluding the character's AC range), but if the roll is higher than the monster's AC, the character doesn't have the chance to inflict damage.

The one-sided attack rule applies **to ranged weapons** vs. melee weapons, or also **when one side outnumbers the other**.

For two monsters vs. one character, for example: the player declares the character's attack against one of the monsters and rolls with the regular procedure. For the second monster, the player rolls the d20 again: a high roll that would allow the character to inflict damage is ignored, but a low roll allows the second monster to score a hit.

Note that the one sided attack rolls are still **made by the player**; the GM doesn't need to roll. A similar procedure **applies for Initiative as well**. See the details in the next section.

Initiative

The first things to do when combat begins, is to determine the initiative. **Having the initiative** means having the chance to move or attack first, inflicting damage if hitting successfully, and perhaps avoiding the enemy attack if the first single blow is enough to kill or incapacitate the opponent.

To determine the Initiative, **each character** rolls a d6 + Initiative modifier (from Dexterity).

The GM will roll a d6 (with a modifier, if necessary) for the opposition. A **single roll** will be enough to determine the initiative of the enemies that will act as a group. Use the best score for Initiative for the monsters.

Every character that rolled equal or higher than the enemy (including the Initiative modifier) **will go before the enemy**; characters that rolled lower **will go after**. Of course, whoever goes after should be still alive and conscious to declare and attempt whatever action.

The Initiative roll is valid **only for the first round of combat**; roll normally with the d20 as previously explained, and apply the result only if positive for the side that's holding the initiative (One-Sided Attacks).

This means that if a character has the initiative over their enemy, you consider only a roll which is above the enemy's AC, and ignore a roll that is below the 10 + monster's HD that would hit the character. If instead the monster has the initiative, you roll the d20 and consider only a roll that is below the 10 + monster's HD and has a chance to hit the character.

After the first round, every character that is engaged in melee attacks and defends **at the same time** and harm inflicted and suffered is applied as if happening at the same time.

Of course, one-sided attacks are still valid if there are ranged weapons involved, or if one side outnumbers the other and other cases when a combatant has the possibility to harm another without fearing a return attack.

Penalties To Initiative

Remember that the encumbrance level and the design of Zones have an impact on the Initiative.

The **Encumbrance level** gives a progressive penalty to the characters, as also written on the character sheet

When a Zone is harder to reach because of some obstacle or impediment, or when a Zone is well defended and moving within it means getting close to an enemy, the enemy holding the Zone has the initiative

No Initiative roll is required if the enemy holds the initiative because of the Zone; in this case: just roll the attack with d20 and keep the result only if at the advantage of side defending the Zone.

DAMAGE ROLL AND DEATH

The single combat rolls determines if any of the combattants has hit the other. If the roll plus modifier is equal or higher than the monster's AC, the character has successfully hit the monster; if the raw roll is equal or lower than 10 + monster's HD but higher than the character's AC, the monster has managed to hit the character.

When there's a hit, there's damage: **roll the appropriate damage die** and subtract the result from the target Hit Points. For damage rolled by characters, harm is usually **the weapon die** plus perhaps the damage modifier from Strength (or also from certain Talents); for the monster the harm is determined by the **type of attack(s)** they have, whihc are presented in the monster's stats.

Characters that are reduced **at 0 (zero) HP**, are mortally wounded and unconscious.

They will die in 1d6 rounds + their Level, unless someone heals them properly to at least 1 HP.

A **negative score (below 0)** for more than the class HD is treated as **sudden death** (-8 is sudden death for a fighter, -6 for a cleric or rogue, -4 for a sorcerer), regardless of the level.

Monsters that are reduced to 0 (zero) HP are also mortally wounded and unconscious. Usually for monsters there's nobody around healing and trying to take care of them, but in any case for simple monsters you can consider zero or below **as sudden death**.

For very special monsters or for important NPCs, count the monster's HD as the class HD of a character and as its level. This determines how many rounds they have at 0 HP before dying (1d6 + monster's HD rounds), and at which negative HP score to trigger sudden death.
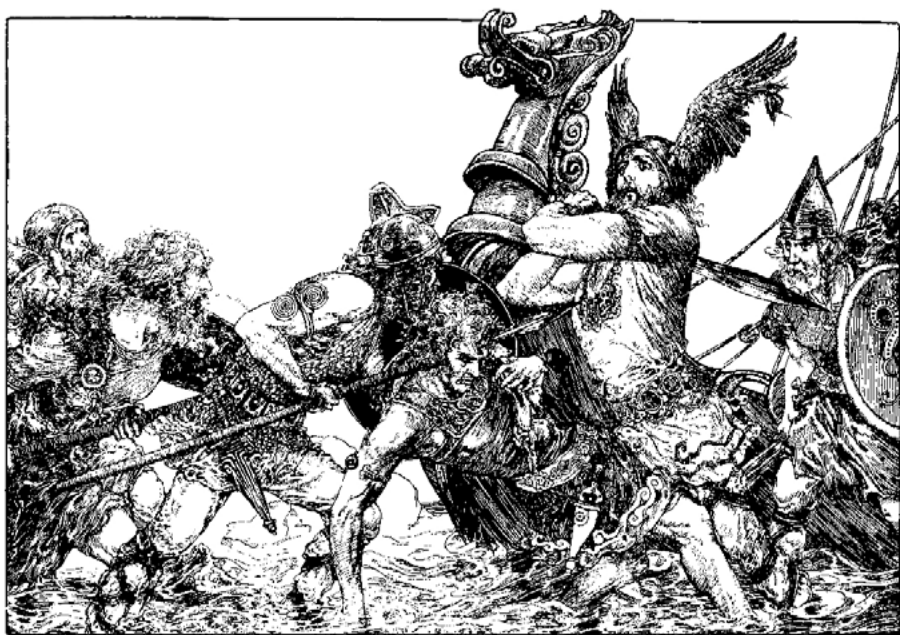
Rounds & Actions

In a single combat round, a character can perform actions as follows:

- **Minor movement**: a minor movement allows a character to move within the same Zone, for example to engage a specific enemy, engage a different one, or to get in a certain position
- **Major movement**: a major movement is to a different Zone. It might even involve an Attribute check if the Zone to reach is somehow problematic. A major movement means the character cannot make another major move
- **Minor action**: minor actions are for simple, easy actions; for example readying a weapon or an object, but not making use of them
- **Major action**: a major action is making use of an ability, an attribute, a tool, a weapon; for example an attack (using a weapon), casting a spell, aiming with a ranged weapon, using an item

In one's round, a character or a monster can make only **one minor and one major** movement or action, in any combination, and any order.

Below are some examples of valid combinations:

- Move within the Zone (minor move) and cast a spell (major action)
- Move within the Zone (minor) and attack an opponent (major)
- Kill the current opponent with an attack (major), then move to another enemy within the Zone (minor)
- Ready a weapon (minor) and attack (major)
- Extract a scroll (minor) and read the scroll (major)

You can also forfeit a major move or action for a minor one; for example:

- Ready a weapon (minor) and move within the Zone (minor)
- Ready a weapon (minor) and hand another weapon to another character next to you (minor)
- Ready a weapon (minor) and extract a scroll (minor)

Because two major actions or movements **are not allowed** (with the exception of certain Talents), characters cannot make more than one attack or cast one spell per round (major actions).

At any time, if the character or the monster ends up in a situation where they are not engaged in combat and cannot harm an enemy, but suffer an attack because of someone else's action, use the regular d20 roll and consider the result only if positive for the side which is attacking.

HOLD ACTION

A character going first with Initiative can decide to hold their actions and wait to see what the opponents do, before making their own decision.

The player **should declare to hold**, when their time for acting comes, and then they have the right to interrupt the enemy and take their action when they wish.

Note that the interruption must be made when someone has completed their own actions. They can for example attack after an enemy has completed an exchange of harm with another character and before another pair will make their roll.

They cannot, however, interrupt the actions of a single opponent, while still resolving their outcome.

They cannot, for example, take action between an attack roll and its damage roll.

MORE ON COMBAT

While the rules in the previous pages allow you deal with all the basic actions in combat, the rules that follow will serve as guidelines for special cases and as clarifications for specific circumstances.

CRITICS

The default rule is that a character **always hits on a roll of a natural 20**. As in Saving Throws and Attribute checks a roll of 1 is always a success, a roll of 20 in combat is always a hit regardless of the monster's AC.

Additionally, a roll of a natural 20 is considered a critical hit, a powerful strike, and **inflicts double damage** (roll the weapon damage twice).

Also monsters have the possibility to score a critic: since they cannot score a critic on a roll of 1 (that is usually covered by the character's Armor Class), a monster scores a critic when they roll **exactly equal** to 10 + monster's HD.

For example an HD 3 monster scores a critic on a natural roll of 13.

Also for the monsters, the roll of a critic means hitting automatically, and rolling double damage.

Using Spells

Casting a spell or working a clerical blessing during combat is a problematic but often useful action. A spell or blessing takes one round for the sorcerer or cleric and counts as a major action, thus replacing for example an attack.

If a attack is executed successfully against the caster, before they can attempt their roll, they lose concentration and the spell fails automatically (roll for the appropriate consequence).

Since many actions occur simultaneously because of the single roll, a sorcerer or a cleric gets to cast a spell or blessing only if no monster managed to hit them during the round when they planned to cast.

To keep easily track of this, when a character wants to use a spell, they declare it at the beginning of the round, but only roll at the end of the round if they suffered no damage during that round.

If an enemy is attacking the casting sorcerer or cleric with other magic, both spells will go off at the same time and therefore there is no risk that they will stop each other.

Weapons & Armors Penalties

With the **exception of the fighter class**, characters suffer penalties for using weapons and armors which they're not trained for.

Therefore, cleric, rogues and sorcerers take a **-2 To-Hit** with 2-handed weapons.

Similarly, using heavy plate armor and/or kite or tower metal shields inflict a **-1 Initiative** penalty to all classes except the fighter. This penalty to Initiative cumulates with penalties due to Encumbrance, if any.

Aim And Cover

When losing a shot into melee, use a die to randomly determine who's going to be hit. Large or very large creatures can count for twice or thrice the regular humans. **Each enemy counts twice**, by default, because even if aiming is hard, the shooter will always try to hit an adversary.

For example, if a character and a monster are fighting, and another character loses an arrow into the melee, roll a d6: 1-2 will hit the other character, 3-6 (twice the chance) will hit the monster.

The shooter will still need to roll to hit **against the target AC**, before rolling for damage.

If the character takes **a full round to aim**, though, as a major action, they can decide exactly who they are going to hit.

As when determining the target by chance, the character loosing the arrow after aiming, still needs to roll to hit, but **with +2 bonus**, to beat the target's AC to inflict damage.

If a target is taking cover, they **gain AC proportionally**:
- +2 AC for minor cover
- +4 AC for good cover
- +6 AC for almost complete cover

Targets behind full cover of course cannot be hit. Note that sometimes taking cover might require a minor action (within the same Zone) or a major action (diving, jumping, moving to a different Zone).

Ranged weapons are hard to use when pressed in melee: you can make the usage of ranged weapons more problematic in melee by ruling that any aiming character which suffers damage, loses aim on the target.

Attacks from behind gain a +2 To-Hit and a +2 to the damage roll, if successful. This is valid both for characters hitting monsters from behind, and monsters attacking characters from behind.

When checking the monster's AC or character's AC, while they're target of an attack from behind, you should also subtract the possible DEX bonus and the shield AC. For simplicity, instead, just count attacks from behind as having instead a **total +4 To-Hit and +2 damage**.

Attacks from an advantage point (for example higher ground) grant a +2 to hit and a +2 to damage.

Advantage points are never static: allow the narration of the combat to shape them creatively, and monsters will also try to exploit such tactics, if they're just a bit smarter than a brainless undead.

The minor movement in a round (within the same Zone) can often grant an advantage to those who have the initiative and inventive for describing appropriate tactics.

In more complex situations or when monsters are also trying to exploit positioning, major actions will take precedence over minor actions (the side that forsakes their attack this round in favor of positioning better, gains the advantage point for next round).

Disadvantageous situations (like darkness for humans, vs. monsters with night vision) might inflict penalties from -2 to -6, or bonus to the other party.

Shadows and insufficient light are a -2 penalty, near complete darkness or complete darkness a -6 penalty.

Attacks against **an helpless opponent** are an automatic hit, and inflict maximum damage automatically.

Mounted combat counts for all purposes as a constant advantage in melee (+2 to hit, +2 damage) and also as an additional +2 AC. Of course this applies when the opponent is instead on foot.

If the character fights **unarmed**, they inflict only 1d2 damage.

Using items in combat (major action) is allowed only with items that are ready at hand, or extracted from a belt pouch or a pocket (minor action).

Everything large enough to be carried **in a sack or backpack**, takes 1d4 rounds to be extracted, and searching for it counts as a major action for all the necessary rounds.

Throwing holy water, flaming oil, or other liquids or objects for tactical (or other) reasons, is usually a simple DEX check rather than an attack. Holy water deals from 1d6 to 1d10 damage to undead and cursed opponents; flaming oil only 1d6, but for three consecutive rounds.

If the fire damage is more than 10 in total, the target is now completely on fire (1d8 damage per round).

If you decide **to press your opponent**, take -4 AC but gain a +2 To-Hit; on the contrary if you aim just to **defend yourself**, gain a +2 AC at the price of -4 To-Hit.

Morale

There is no morale check for characters, because it's the players and **only the players** who will determine if the characters will flee some fight or danger. The only exception to that are certain spells like Fear, but those allow a Saving Throw.

For hirelings there is a special loyalty die which decreases by size as their morale and courage fade because of harm and danger.

Morale checks as described below, therefore, are reserved **for monsters and human NPCs** which act as the opposition of the characters.

A morale check is done vs. **a target number of 6**: rolling six or higher with the die means that the enemy stays in the battle and keeps fighting.

Rolling 5 or less means the enemy will attempt to retreat, flee, surrender, or try to negotiate with the characters. Many wild animals and monsters, in fact, have their own survival at higher priority than killing the characters or inflicting them yet another wound or guarding a certain treasure. This is equally, if not even more true, for smarter monsters and for human NPCs.

Whenever a single monster or human NPC has lost **half or more of their HP**, roll a d10, vs. the target number of 6. Whenever they're down **to the last Hit Points**, roll a d8.

Some monsters, **particularly brave or stupid or aggressive**, are less likely to fail their morale check: for them, when reaching half of HP lost, roll a d12 instead of d10 vs. the target number of 6.

If you're using a pre-made module and have no details about the monsters' morale, use your own judgement.

Undead and other otherworldly creatures might roll a d20, or even need no morale check at all. A skeleton will never retreat as long as the necromancer is nearby, for example.

For groups, decrease the die size when a group has been reduced to half of the members, increase it if the enemy has some reason to stay and fight, like protecting their own lair or puppies, and similar.

Remember to use morale checks: there are conditions when monsters or enemies will fight to death, but those should probably not be the majority of your encounters. When a monster or human NPC flees because of a failed morale check, characters earn XP as if they killed or defeated the opponent.

If the same opponent reappears in the same session, though, do not award XP again for defeating it a second time.

Healing

Hit Points lost are recovered with rest, medicine and magical healing by clerics. See also on page 72 the **Rest and Recovery times** chapter.

A **short rest period** takes 3 Turns, requires no preparation and gives the characters a chance to restore Hit Points, as shown below. The HP gain is **cumulative** for each of those options. A character is allowed to regain Hit Points in this manner **only once every 24 hours**:
• Regain 1 Hit Point at the end of the rest period
• Regain 1 Hit Point at the start of the rest period if an Attribute check on Constitution is passed successfully
• Regain 1 Hit Point if one ration is consumed

Setting camp for the night (or taking a long rest) is mandatory, once per day. This time is not counted in Turns but it's a much longer period, like 8 hours or so. During a long rest, characters regain Hit Points **in the same way** as in a short rest.

When back to civilization, characters regain 3 Hit Points the first night they spend in comfort, 2 HP the next, then 1 HP every following day.

While back to civilization, characters can also obtain the support of **medicine or clerics**, and speed up their recovery significantly. Investing 100 silver pieces in medicine or healing, they can recover 1 HD (Hit Dice, depending on the class) per day in addition to the regular points.

If any Attribute score was reduced, such score is recovered at the rate of 1 point per day.

Sorcery, also vulgarly called magic, is the very special art of gathering ethereal energy and forging it into spells. This energy descends from the astral sphere that surrounds our planet, where are the sun, the stars, the moon and the comets.

It's an art that requires many years of formal training, involving mathematics and astrology, and of course countless hours spent on esoteric text looking like meaningless garbage to anyone who's not a sorcerer. A sorcerer in this game, therefore, is someone with a talent but that intensely trained; is someone with a gift that needed to severly cultivate it for years.

And despite the years of training, every sorcerer must spend time **every day** studying, to maintain their power.

SORCERY

Sorcerers, thus, are not druids, witches, or some other wild powers; they are knowledgeable, disciplined scholars; sometimes crazy in their craving for more power, sometimes reckless in their exploration of the mysteries of magic, sometimes wary and careful and paranoid.

Wild powers such as druids and witches, though, do exist and are referred to as users of Wild Magic, and are a challenging match for the sorcery of disciplined magic, and are great adventuring material for the GM.

MAGIC RULES

The basic concepts of casting spells and miracles are common to the two classes, sorcerers and clerics, at least **from a mechanical prospective**. In terms of flavor in play and setting, though, the two types of magic **are fundamentally different**.

Casting spells works according to these simple rules:

• Casting **always requires a roll**: an Attribute check on Intelligence for a Sorcerer (Wisdom for a cleric)
• Casting can be done **fast**, by taking a single combat round, **or slow** by using a full round (10 min.) or more
• There are **daily limits** to how many spells (fast and slow) can be cast
• The caster usually has at their disposal **all of the known spells** (no forgetting, no preparing)
• There are some **bad consequences** for failing the roll to cast a spell

Clearly, given the previous description, there is **no cast & forget** and **no list of prepared spells**, thus the magic users do not need to prepare their lists in advance.

> *While cast & forget provides mechanical balance to the game, the purpose of this hack is not to maintain balance. Instead, having all spells available means faster preparation (players don't waste time) and more interesting choices (which spells to use, assuming all known spells are available).*
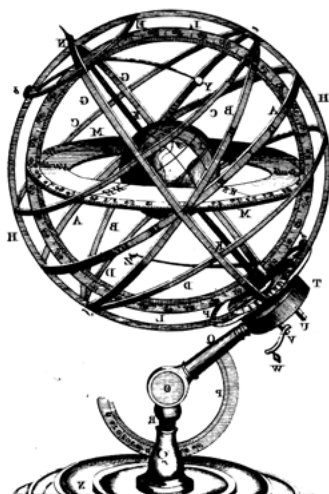
Casting Spells

A sorcerer knows all the spells that are contained in their spellbook (see the dedicated paragraph about spellbooks for more information). The magic use knows and holds in memory all the necessary gestures and words of power of a spell, all the precise calculations about the stars and other ethereal bodies, all the rituals details and so on.

All these spells are considered "ready" and can be cast by the sorcerer, at any time, provided that the sorcerer can recite the **necessary words** and make the **required gestures**.

When casting a spell, the sorcerer takes a Turn (several minutes) to concentrate, unless the sorcerer is ready to unleash the spell fast enough (a Round of combat, a few seconds) at greater risk.

Regardless of the casting time (a Turn or a Round), the sorcerer must pass **an Intelligence Attribute check** to cast the spell successfully.

A success in the Attribute check means the spell casting was flawless; the spell's effects apply as indicated.

During the time taken for casting, the sorcerer cannot do other significant actions. They can move at slow pace but cannot interact with others. **If they are interrupted** by something stresful or painful (like receiving damage in combat), they lose concentration and the casting fails.

Sorcerers have a limited magical energy available, and can cast **a number of spells per day** equal to their Level + the Intelligence modifier.

All spells (cast in a Turn or in a Round) count towards this limit, and the level of the spell is irrelevant, unless otherwise stated by the spell's description itself.

> *Other classic features of OSR games, such as spellbooks, scrolls, staffs and wands, are part of the magic rules, with some tuning. Moreover, the magic users still need their daily time with their spellbook to regain power and be able to cast again the next day, and to recover unstable spells.*

Fail To Cast A Spell

A failure in casting, because of an interruption or because of a failure with dice, requires the sorcerer to roll on the table below.

Roll 1d6	Effect
1-2	Energy drain; additional cost
3-4	Spell backfires; suffer harm
5-6	Spell becomes unstable

Table 32: Failure to cast a spell

If the spell was cast taking the appropriate amount of time (a Turn), roll twice on the table: **the player will decide** which effect to apply of the two possible results. If both results are the same, just apply that.

If the spell was cast in haste, taking only one Round in combat or just a few instant (for example to face an emergency situation), roll twice but **the GM decides** which effect to apply, to maximum deteriment for the character.

The negative effects for failing the roll to cast are described below. In all cases, remember that casting fails, so the spell's effects **do not apply**.

Energy drain (1-2): the spell drains additional energy from the caster. Mark it as if cast twice. If the caster doesn't have enough energy for that, mark what's possible and also apply damage as in a roll of 3-4.

Spell backfires (3-4): the spell backfires and inflict 1d6 damage against the caster. As an alternative the GM might propose the destruction of something or another unwelcome effect, but the player can refuse and just take damage.

Spell unstable (5-6): the spell becomes unstable and **cannot be used again** until recovered (see appropriate rules for that).

Unstable Spells

U nstable spells **always fail casting**; the character has lost grip on the spell's special workings, they're basically unavailable until recovered. An unstable spell is not forgotten but the sorcerer needs to put some thoughts in order before casting it again.

It will take a an hour or two of study to regain control of an Unstable spell. Sorcerers can do this while the group takes **a long rest** or camps for the night. Only one Unstable spell can be regained during a period of rest or while making camp. **If more than one spell is Unstable**, the sorcerer needs to wait until the next long rest or occasion to make camp, to recover another.

If the characters are back to civilization, assume that two spells per day are recovered from the Unstable state.

There are several other options that you can insert as a cost for failing to cast a spell. The ones proposed by default have simple yet effective consequences: reduce the number of spells available (drain energy), inflict consequences (harm), take away spells (unstable), thus forcing the sorcerer to come up sometimes with improvised solutions or improvised tactics, to face these consequences. Alternatives may include reducing an Attribute score (for example drain CON points for exhaustion or INT points for concentration), varying the cost according to the spells' level, working the spell backwards or to some unintended effect, and so on. If you customize the table, it is recommended not to go beyond a d8 or d10 roll, and make sure your players are aware of these changes. They might not approve of them, but a trained sorcerer must know what to expect upon failure to cast.

Spellbooks

Spellbooks are the core of the arcane knowledge of a sorcerer. They are written in a way that **only the owner** can actually read and study those spells, or read them to cast as if from a scroll.

Spells like **Read Magic** are necessary for a sorcerer to be able to read other spellbooks and thus gain – or steal – additional knowledge from others' works. Other classes cannot read a sorcerer's spellbook to gain knowledge from it.

Every night or during periods of long rest, sorcerers study their own spellbook to refresh their memory of the spells and to maintain their knowledge. If a spellbook is **lost or stolen**, the sorcerer cannot study spells again, and thus loses the possibility to cast, within 1d6 day(s).

Writing spells on a spellbook (from memory or copying) is a special task that the sorcerer can perform given enough time (see details in the related paragraph). It is possible to **reconstruct** a lost or stolen spellbook from memory, but it will take quite some time, thus the spellbook is the most precious possession of every sorcerer.

Starting Spells

A sorcerer begins the game with some **random spells**; these spells are written in a spellbook that is part of the basic equipment of the character. It comes at no cost and counts as a single item for encumbrance. The number of starting spells of a sorcerer is equal to the Intelligence attribute modifier, and always at least one.

These sterting spells are **randomly determined**, and are exclusively Power-Level One (PWL-1) spells.

Gaining Spells

Every time the sorcerer gains a Level, they have the opportunity to add to their spellbook a variable number of **new spells, by paying the correct price in XP**. The spells offered in the manual are the common spells that sorcerers can study and trade knowledge about with other magic practitioners, within civilization, and therefore require no additional research.

You can assume that the sorcerer had already enough information about these spells, and finally gained enough power or knowledge to properly master them. These new spells are **automatically written** to the spellbook and there is no cost for them in terms of silver or time to allocate.

The spells will cost XP as follows:
- A spell costs 100 XP x PWL
- Multiple spells can be added at the same time
- The total of the PWL of the spells added up, cannot exceed the character's new level

Spells can also be gained by reading them from **scrolls, spellbooks or other magical treasures** found in the adventures.

These spells must first be copied to the spellbook in order to become part of the sorcerer's knowledge, with the necessary time and money investment (as described in the appropriate chapter).

These **"found" spells** cost the sorcerer no XP at all; just time and money to write.

Note that while the regular spells are added only when passing to a new level, the "found" spells are added to the spellbook once the writing procedure is completed.

WRITING TO THE SPELLBOOK

To write a spell to the spellbook, the sorcerer needs peace and quiet: this can be done only when the group camps for the night or between adventures, back in civilization.

The process is long and expensive but it's the only way for a sorcerer to gain use of a new spell, with the exception of those gained on a new Level, which are transcribed automatically by paying their XP price.

The process will require **a variable duration**: 1 day for each PWL of the spell, +1d6 days. Each day has a cost of **50 silver pieces**, in various arcane materials.

Copying a spell on your spellbook from a dungeon wall can be a lengthy and dangerous process, besides being expensive. Spells found written in stone or in anything that is not a scroll or a spellbook, usually count as if written on a spellbook.

A spell can be copied to the spellbook from:
- **Memory**: i.e. to reconstruct a lost spellbook
- **A scroll**: the sorcerer must cast Read Magic to be able to understand the scroll; this will in the end erase the scroll as if the spell was cast
- **Another spellbook**: as from the scroll, the sorcerer must use Read Magic and at the end the spell is erased from the original spellbook
- **Other**: as determined by the GM, for example runes on stone, or sewed into fabric, etc.

Finding a way to copy an unmovable spell (for example written in stone) or to mimic a spell cast by a monster or an NPC, and similar endeavors, are classic tasks for advanced sorcerers. The GM might allow such exploits, with an appropriate risk involved.

Magical Instruments

Many sorcerers make use not only of a spellbook, but also of scrolls, potions and staffs or wands.

Rules to deal with these instruments are presented in this chapter.

All magical instruments are common among sorcerers, but the game should emphasize the rarity of magic users and how precious anything magical is: scrolls, potions, staffs and wands and other magic items are precious treasure and **not for sale** on the market.

Use And Write Scrolls

Scrolls with inscribed spells allow a sorcerer to cast the written spell **without a roll**, thus without taking any risk of failure, even in the middle of combat. They also don't drain the caster's energy, so they **do not count** towards the daily spell's quota.

The spell is erased from the scroll after casting. Note that if the sorcerer is casting in combat and is interrupted by a successful attack against them, the casting fails and the spell is erased anyway.

To write a scroll, the sorcerer must allocate 1 day for each PWL of the spell +1d6 days (as for writing on the spellbook). The cost, though, is just **10 silver per day** in arcane materials. When casting from a scroll they wrote themselves, a sorcerer does not need to roll and does not need Read Magic.

When casting from a scroll **written by someone else**, the sorcerer must use Read Magic first, to even know what's the spell on the scroll. After that, they can read and cast from the scroll **at any time** (without the need to use Read Magic again).

> *If the spell uses the caster's level, a scroll counts as for the Level of the reader, not the writer.*

Potions

Making a potion – a ready to use and liquid versions of a spell – is possible **only for sorcerers**, although sorcerers can also instill a **cleric's spell** (such as a healing spell) into a potion.

The process will require 1 day for each PWL of the spell, +1d6 days. Each day has a cost of **20 silver pieces**, in various ingredients. At the end of the process, the sorcerer or the cleric must cast successfully the spell they want to instill into the potion. A failure, besides the regular consequences, will also **waste the potion**.

While scrolls are usable only by sorcerers, potions can be drunk by any sort of character. It is up to the GM to rule if a certain spell cannot be instilled in a potion or not.

Staffs And Wands

Staffs and wands can store spells as scrolls do, and have the very significant advantage that the spell doesn't need to be read: the energy of the spell is imbued into the wood and ready to cast right away.

As scrolls or potions, staffs and wands **do not** need any roll and **do not** drain energy from the caster, to be used.

Using a staff or wand in combat is the safest choice: the caster's energy is preserved, no roll is required and there is no chance of interruption because of an attack against the sorcerer.

But a sorcerer can carry and own only one charged staff or wand at the time: starting to charge or use a second staff or wand will break the bond with the first one, and discharge it.

Since spells do not need to be read to be cast, other classes can use staffs or wands, not only sorcerers.

Characters of other classes, though, will not be aware of the spell contained in the staff until it's cast. A sorcerer, on the other hand, can use Read Magic to determine which spells are loaded into a staff or wand.

If **multiple spells** are loaded into a wand or staff, determine randomly which one is cast by a character that has no knowledge about which spells are contained in the magical object.

A sorcerer, of course, decides which spells to trigger, since with Read Magic they can gain knowledge of the spells contained in the staff or wand.

Each staff or wand can hold a number of spells **whose total PWL** is equal or lower to the sorcerer's Level.

To charge the staff or wand, those spells must be cast regularly with the wood as target, and cost **20 silver per PWL** in additional arcane materials.

A staff or wand can absorb **one spell per day, maximum**, otherwise it will break. Failure in casting the spell often (50% chance plus the normal trouble for failed spells) breaks the wood, wasting previous spells.

Ready Spell

While the caster has a staff or wand in hand, they can also keep one of their own spells (from their own memory, from the spellbook) **ready to fire**. This is not a spell charged into the staff or wand: the sorcerer simply uses the staff to maintain concentration.

To setup this spell, it must be cast successfully (for example taking one turn to do it slowly), and it counts towards the daily quota.

The spell, then, **remains charged** into the staff or wand until it's released by the sorcerer. Releasing the spell is an action that takes an instant: it drains no additional energy and takes no time, and requires no roll.

Of course, this ready-spell can be discharged at any time, and can be changed for another, by casting a different spell.

A failure in casting to setup the ready-spell will cause the wood to break in 50% of the cases, so this is potentially quite risky, because it could break a staff or wand loaded with other precious and useful spells.

Casting From The Book

In case of emergency a spellbook can be used **as a scroll** but only by its owner (or someone else with the usage of a Read Magic spell). It is even possible to cast an Unstable spell this way.

The spell requires no roll and does not count towards the daily quota, but the spell is then erased by draining its magic. Since it's erased from the spellbook, it's no longer part of the sorcerer spell list.

The sorcerer can re-write the spell to the spellbook from memory, but this process will require days and silver as for any other spell to add to the spellbook.

Until the spell is not re-written to the spellbook, the sorcerer can no longer cast it from memory.

Sorcerer's Activities

All the sorcerer's activities that require time are mutually exclusive. In other words, during a period of rest when making camp or a day in downtime, a sorcerer can choose **one option**:
• Stabilize one Unstable spell
• Write to the spell book
• Write to a scroll
• Prepare a potion
• Charge a wand or staff

Spells

The next pages contain the Power-Level One spells available to the sorcerers, to roll at character creations. Additional spells will be provided in the sorcery manual planned to be released as Volume Two.

Having a separate book for spells comes handy at the table, because that book often remains in the hands of the players running sorcerer(s) and cleric(s), while the GM can keep the rules book.

Spells are divided by PowerLevel and numbered sequentially. Roll a d10 for the sorcerer's starting spells.

You can of course rule that also new spells are rolled randomly (the sorcerer only determines the PWL by paying XP, then rolls on the appropriate list).

PowerLevel 1

1) Charm Person
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 3 zones
Duration: Until dispelled

This spell affects one targeted living human or humanoid (only sentient bipeds) of a size not larger than a regular human. A Saving Throw is allowed, if the target fails it will treat the caster as a trusted friend.

2) Detect Magic
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 2 zones
Duration: 2 turns

The caster can detect magic in places, people or things. For example, magical items may be discovered with this spell, as well as the presence of a charm laid upon a person or a place. A magical light will appear around all magic within the range. Invisible creatures are seen as a glowing shape when invisibility is a spell and not a magic feature or property. No details about the magic are revealed by this spell, but Read Magic can be used as a follow-up spell to gather information.

3) Hold Portal
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 3 zones + LVL zones
Duration: 1d6 turns + LVL Turns

This spell holds a door (or equivalent) closed for the spell's duration or until dispelled (i.e. with a knock spell or dispel magic). The caster can move away from the door: the range indicates the maximum distance from the door when casting. Creatures immune to magic can shatter the spell without effort.

4) Light
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 2 zones
Duration: 5 turns + LVL Turns

The target (person or object), which must be within range, produces a light about as bright as a torch. It illuminates 2 zones, 3 at best. The caster can reduce the light, but only by ending the spell the light can be fully extinguished.

5) Magic Missile
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 3 zones + LVL zones
Duration: Immediate

A magical missile strikes from the caster fingertips, against a target which

must be at least partialy visibile. The caster can decide either roll to hit for 1d6+1 damage, or strike automatically for 1d4+1 damage. No Saving Throw is allowed. The caster can strike two missiles at level 5 and three at level 10 (no more). In this case the target can be different for each missile.

6) Protection from Evil
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: Caster
Duration: 6 turns (approx. 1 hour)

Creates a magical field of protection around the caster, blocking out all evil creatures, mind control, summoned creatures and similar. The caster gains a +2 AC against their attacks, and +2 for Saving Throws against their spells and similar. The spell does not grant immunity but serves as additional protection, and allows the caster to attack those evil creatures from behind this magic protection.

7) Read Languages
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: Normal reading distance
Duration: Two readings

This spell allows the caster to decipher any written language that is not magical, for example directions, instructions, formulae, and maps. This can be particularly useful for treasure maps, but it does not solve any codes nor grants the caster any understanding beyond their actual knowledge.

8) Read Magic
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 2 zones
Duration: 2 scrolls or any two other magical writings

This spell allows the caster to read magic scrolls, spell books, dungeon walls and similar. When an items has been read once, it remains understandable forever to the caster. A Saving Throw is allowed for cursed scrolls and similar, to avoid triggering their effect. The spell can also be used to understand the power of magical items or creatures within range.

9) Sleep
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: 5 zones
Duration: 6 turns (approx. 1 hour)

This spell puts enemies into an enchanted slumber (no saving throw permitted). Attacking sleeping creatures will instantly wake them up. The caster affects a number of total HD enemies up to 1d6 + caster LVL, starting with lowest HD creatures. For example with a roll of 3 a caster of LVL 2 will affect up to 5 HD creatures; if 2 HD 1(+) creatures are present, they'll be affected; if then a third creature of HD 4(+) is present, it won't be affected. A lonely HD 4 creature would instead be affected.

10) Shield
Spell Level: Magic-User, 1st Level
Range: Caster
Duration: 2 turns

An invisible shield protects the caster from physical attacks; it grants the caster an Armor Class of 7 against ranged attacks and AC 6 in melee. If the caster AC is already better, simply grants a +1 AC.

Reversing Spells

It is possible for a caster to reverse a spell, negotiating with the GM the exact details of how the reversed spell works. For some spells, reversing would just cause problems (for example reversing a Charm person spell), but for others is can prove useful. For example:

- Detect magic could be used to **conceal** a spell or magical item
- Hold portal could be reversed to **keep a door open** (but not to unlock it or force it open)
- Light could be used to generate a **supernatural darkness** that defeats monsters' ability to see in the dark

The standard rule is that a caster that wants to reverse a spell, must learn its reverse workings independently, **as a separate and new spell**. The original, standard spell, must be learned first, and only once that has been acquired, the caster can add its reverse when gaining new spells.

As an alternative, allow the reverse of a spell to be known by default when the regular spell is known by the caster; in this case, forcing a spell to reverse its nature will demand that the caster applies more energy into it.

Therefore, when casting a reverse spell, the spell counts **always as two spells**. For example, a sorcerer that knows the Light spell, could always be allowed to cast a Darkness spell (its reverse) but should mark it as if casting two of the available daily spells, instead of just one. This means exhausting the caster's energy faster, but allows more flexibility which is often fun.

The kind of magic power used by clerics is sometimes referred to as miracles, since they are believed to be a direct emanation of the divine power of God and the Christian church. More often, though, their work is just referred to as blessings.

Where sorcerers are scholars of the dark arts, clerics represent a power which is divine and requires not just studying, but **prayer and meditation**.

Clerics need this type of prayers and meditation as much as sorcerers need time with their spellbooks, although clerics do not depend on books to memorize their blessings. It's interesting to notice, though, that the loss of faith or even plain blasphemy has never made a cleric lose their power.

For this reason, sorcerers believe that the power used by the Christian clerics is nothing but Wild Magic reworked into different rituals, but with the same source of the ancient pagan rites. Such opinions, of course, are subject of violent debate and heresy accusations, and it's not rare for blood to be spilled over such matters.

For casting their miracles and blessings, clerics **need to hold a small religious symbol** (often a cross hanging from their neck). Lacking that, also fixing their eyes on a religious representation – such as a statue or a painting, will do.

> *Using Clerics of a real religion might be a problematic choice for some GM or players. Discuss together if instead your game should feature original gods and spiritis, rather than those of christianity – although these are those everyone is likely familiar with, thus usually works well for immersion.*

BLESSINGS

BLESSINGS' RULES

As already explained, clerics' blessings are cast in the same way as sorcerer's spells, from a mechanical prospective:

- Casting **always requires a roll**: an Attribute check on Wisdom for a Cleric (Intelligence for a sorcerer)
- Casting can be done **fast**, by taking a single combat round, **or slow** by using a full round (10 min.) or more

- There are **daily limits** to how many blessings (fast and slow) can be cast
- The cleric usually has at their disposal **all of the known blessings** (no forgetting, no preparing)
- There are some **bad consequences** for failing the roll to cast a blessing

Same as the sorcerer, the cleric doesn't need to prepare in advance a spell list.

Casting Blessings

Same as a sorcerer, a cleric has access to all the blessings they've learned so far, without the need to decide which ones to memorize on each day.

When casting a blessing, the cleric takes a Turn (several minutes) to concentrate and speck the appropriate words and prayers. As for spells, blessings can also be cast within a few seconds (a single Round of combat), but at greater risk.

Regardless of the casting time (a Turn or a Round), the cleric must pass **a Wisdom Attribute check** to cast the blessing successfully.

A success in the Attribute check means the blessing casting was flawless and that the blessing's effects apply as indicated.

While casting the cleric cannot perform other significant actions; they can move at slow pace but cannot really interact with other people or things. Stress or pain, as for sorcerers, will cause the blessing to fail.

Clerics have a limited **number of blessings to cast per day**: equal to their Level + the Wisdom modifier. The clerics believe that the exhaustion caused by casting is a sign of the divity to warn the cleric not to abuse their power.

All blessings (cast in a Turn or in a Round) count towards this limit, and the level of the blessing is irrelevant, unless otherwise stated by the blessing's description itself.

Fail To Cast A Blessing

A failure in casting, because of an interruption or because of a failure with dice, requires the cleric to roll on the table to the side.

If the blessing was cast taking more time (a Turn), roll twice on the table: **the player will decide** which effect to apply of the two possible results. If both results are the same, just apply that.
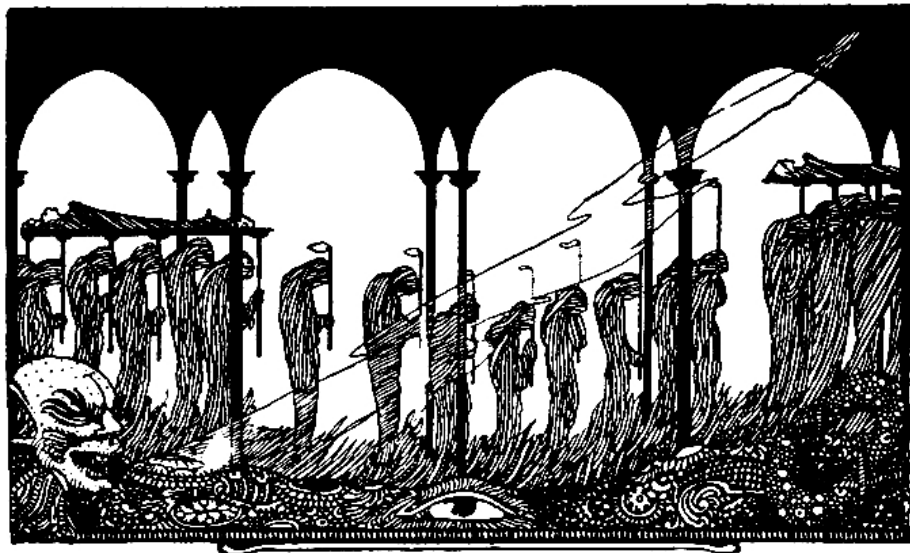
Roll 1d6	Effect
1-2	Energy drain; additional cost
3-4	Blessing backfires; suffer harm
5-6	Blessing becomes unstable

Table 33: Failure to cast a blessing

If the blessing was cast in haste, taking only one Round in combat or just a few instant (for example to face an emergency situation), roll twice but **the GM decides** which effect to apply, to maximum deteriment for the character.

The negative effects for failing the roll to cast are described below. In all cases, remember that casting fails, so the blessing's effects **do not apply**.

Energy drain (1-2): the blessing drains additional energy from the caster. Mark it as if cast twice. If the caster doesn't have enough energy for that, mark what's possible and also apply damage as in a roll of 3-4.

Blessing backfires (3-4): the blessing backfires and inflict 1d6 damage against the caster. As an alternative the GM might propose the destruction of something or another unwelcome effect, but the player can refuse and just take damage.

Blessing unstable (5-6): the blessing becomes unstable and **cannot be used again** until recovered (see appropriate rules for that).

Unstable Blessings

Unstable blessings **always fail casting**; the character's faith is shaken and the character needs time and prayers and meditation to regain confidence. An unstable blessing is not lost or forgotten but the cleric needs to regain trust and confidence, and strenghten their soul, before casting it again.

Usually clerics can do their prayers and ceremonies when the group takes a **long rest** or camps for the night.

Only one Unstable blessing can be regained during a period of rest or while making camp. **If more than one blessing is Unstable**, the cleric needs to wait until the next long rest or occasion to make camp, to recover another.

If the characters are back to civilization, assume that two blessings per day are recovered from the Unstable state.

Other Notes

Clerics have no need of spellbooks, on the contrary of the sorcerers. On the other hand, the different nature of their blessings (or their own faith which translates into mechanical restrictions) does not allow them to write scrolls, use staffs and wands, or make potions.

The only exception to the rule is when the cleric gains one of the specific talents that give them special powers: for example "Blessed staff" allows a cleric to create a staff to hold clerical blessings, and "Holy Scrolls" works in a similar way, but gives to the cleric the possibility to write scrolls with clerical blessings.

To prepare potions (healing potions are a classic precious resource for adventurers), a cleric needs the assistance of a sorcerer. The process is described in the sorcery section of the manual: the sorcerer is the one in control and the cleric just needs to cast the blessing.

Blessings

The next pages contain the Power-Level One blessings available to the clerics, to roll at character creations. Additional blessing will be provided in the magic manual planned to be released as Volume Two.

PowerLevel 1

1) **Cure Light Wounds**
 Blessing Level: Cleric, 1st Level
 Range: Touch
 Duration: Immediate

By imposing the religious symbol, the cleric cures 1d6+1 HP of damage, and heals light wounds.

2) **Detect Evil**
 Blessing Level: Cleric, 1st Level
 Range: 3 zones
 Duration: 6 turns (approx. 1 hour)

The cleric detects any form of evil within range: evil enchantments, intentions, thoughts, auras, creatures. Traps, poisons, mechanical devices etc. are not inherently evil and cannot be detected with this.

3) **Detect Magic**
 Blessing Level: Cleric, 1st Level
 Range: 2 zones
 Duration: 2 turns

The caster can detect magic in places, people or things. For example, magical items may be discovered with this spell, as well as the presence of a charm laid upon a person or a place. A magical light will appear around all magic within the range. Invisible creatures are seen as a glowing shape when invisibility is a spell and not a magic feature or property. No details about the magic are revealed by this spell, but Read Magic can be used as a follow-up spell to gather information.

4) **Light**
 Blessing Level: Cleric; 1st Level
 Range: 2 zones
 Duration: 10 turns + LVL Turns

The target (person or object), which must be within range, produces a light about as bright as a torch. It illuminates 2 zones, 3 at best. The caster can reduce the light, but only by ending the spell the light can be fully extinguished.

5) **Protection from Evil**
 Blessing Level: Cleric, 1st Level
 Range: Caster
 Duration: 12 turns (approx. 2 hours)

Creates a magical field of protection around the caster, blocking out all evil creatures, mind control, summoned creatures and similar. The caster gains a +2 AC against their attacks, and +2 for Saving Throws against their spells and similar. The spell does not grant immunity but serves as additional protection, and allows the caster to attack those evil creatures from behind this magic protection.

6) **Purify Food and Drink**
 Blessing Level: Cleric, 1st Level
 Range: Touch
 Duration: Immediate

Enough food and water for up to a dozen people is made pure, removing spoilage and poisons. The spell does

not make edible something that is not, but for example can turn the flesh of a monster into something that could feed a human being without making them sick or poisoning them. It also removes poison, but only from food and drinks.

7) Turn minor Undead I
Spell Level: Cleric, 1st Level
Range: 2 zones
Duration: 1d6 + LVL Turns

The cleric has the chance to turn a variable number of undead, if the blessing is cast successfully. Roll a d6 and an equal number of Hit Dice undeads will turn. For example, on a d6 roll of 3, the cleric could turn 3 undeads of 1 HD each, or 1 undead of 1 HD and 1 of 2 HD. Undead with lower HD will always be turned before those of higher level.

8) Turn minor Undead I
When rolling to determine the random starting spells or new spells, consider Turn minor Undead I as taking scores 7-8 on a d8.

By default, it is not possible for clerics to reverse their healing blessings into something harmful, or anyway to change or reverse the nature of any blessing. Blessings are not just spells, but a manifestation of the divine power granted to clerics by their divinity. Reversing a blessing would be an heresy, it would require an abjuration of the cleric's faith and the equivalent of a reversal of alignment. It is left to the GM and the player to decide if to offer this possibility to the cleric character in special cases, and if to allow perhaps NPCs to cast heretic and twisted blessings and miracles.

Analytical Index

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