

# MAZE RATS

## CORE RULES

## CHARACTER CREATION

### Saving Throws

When a player character (PC) attempts a risky action, the GM may call for a **Saving Throw**, or **Save**. The player rolls 2d (two six-sided dice), adds the appropriate ability, and +1 if their PC's Path covers the action. A total of **9 or greater** succeeds.

- **Add Strength** when using power or resilience.
- **Add Dexterity** when using agility or finesse.
- **Add Will** when using intellect or personality.

Ability scores may never rise higher than +3. Rolling a save requires the risk of danger, and failed saves always have consequences. Safe, easy tasks always succeed, absurdly difficult tasks always fail.

If the task is directly opposed by another character, the GM may call for an **Opposed Save**, in which both characters roll a save and try to beat the other's total. Defenders win ties, or the save is rerolled.

### NPC Reactions

When encountering an NPC of unknown disposition, the party leader may make a WIL save to determine if they are cooperative or not.

### Initiative

If one group surprises another, it gains initiative and acts first. If not, pick which side has initiative randomly. Sides alternate turns until combat ends.

On a side's turn, each of its characters may take two actions. Surprised characters that fail a WIL save skip their first turn. Actions include attacking (only once per round), moving about 20 feet, drinking a potion, or combat maneuvers.

### Spellcasting

Casting a spell takes two actions. To cast a spell, lose HP equal to the cost of the effect you want to create. See "Sigil Magic."

### Combat

To attack a target, roll 2d and add your PC's Combat Bonus (+1 at level 1). Ranged attacks are prohibited in close combat. If the total **exceeds** the target's Armor Class (AC), you hit and deal damage to their HP equal to the difference (+1 if using a heavy weapon). **Unarmored characters have AC 6**. Light armor and shields provide +1 AC each, and heavy armor provides +2 AC. Zero HP means death.

As an action, characters can also attempt combat maneuvers (disarming, tripping, grappling, etc.) as long as they are not wearing heavy armor. The GM may call for a standard or opposed save.

### Morale

When an NPC faces more danger than they were expecting (their leader or half of their group is defeated, they lose half of their HP, etc.) the GM may call for a WIL save to see if they flee or surrender.

### Healing

Heal half your damage (rounded up) by eating a ration during a rest or by using a bandage and passing a healing (WIL) save. Each works once per day.

### Leveling Up

At the end of each session, the GM gives 1 to 3 XP (based on the session's difficulty) to each PC who survived the whole session. 1 bonus XP is awarded to PCs whose players were unusually clever. When you have enough XP, gain a level and 2 max HP.

| XP | LVL | Level Features                                 |
|----|-----|------------------------------------------------|
| 2  | 2   | Ability Score +1                               |
| 6  | 3   | Ability Score +1 <b>OR</b> Combat Bonus +1     |
| 12 | 4   | Gain an additional Sigil slot                  |
| 20 | 5   | Ability Score +1 <b>AND</b> join a second Path |
| 30 | 6   | Ability Score +1 <b>OR</b> Combat Bonus +1     |
| 42 | 7   | Gain an additional Sigil slot                  |
| 56 | 8   | Ability Score +1                               |
| 72 | 9   | Ability Score +1 <b>OR</b> Combat Bonus +1     |
| 90 | 10  | Gain an additional Sigil slot                  |

### 1. Roll or choose abilities

Roll a row or choose one with GM permission.

| 1d | Strength | Dexterity | Will |
|----|----------|-----------|------|
| 1  | +1       | +0        | -1   |
| 2  | +1       | -1        | +0   |
| 3  | +0       | +1        | -1   |
| 4  | -1       | +1        | +0   |
| 5  | +0       | -1        | +1   |
| 6  | -1       | +0        | +1   |

### 2. Set your HP and Combat Bonus

You start with a max of 6 hit points, and a Combat Bonus of +1. Your max HP rises by 2 every level.

### 3. Roll or choose a path

You path adds +1 to related saving throws. You will choose a second path at level 5.

| 1d | Path                                                                                               |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <b>Fingersmith:</b> Picking locks, picking pockets, tinkering with machines, sleight of hand, etc. |
| 2  | <b>Greenwatch:</b> Tracking, trapping, foraging, weather-watching, orienteering, survival, etc.    |
| 3  | <b>Inksworn:</b> Languages, lore, arcana, etiquette, deciphering scripts, forgery, etc.            |
| 4  | <b>Roofrat:</b> Climbing ropes or walls, balancing, contorting, leaping, free running, etc.        |
| 5  | <b>Sawbones:</b> Alchemy, potion-making, poisoning, dissection, surgery, healing, etc.             |
| 6  | <b>Shadowjack:</b> Moving silently, blending in, impersonation, hiding in shadows, etc.            |

### 4. Choose a gear package

**A)** Light armor, a shield, and a light weapon.

**B)** Light armor and a heavy weapon.

- **Light Armor:** +1 AC
- **Shield (1 hand):** +1 AC
- **Light Weapon (1 hand):** Handaxe, dagger, mace, short sword, throwing knives or sling.
- **Heavy Weapon (2 hands, +1 damage):** Spear, halberd, hammer, longsword, bow or crossbow.

### 5. Roll or choose six items

Roll an item by rolling 2d. The first die indicates the group, the second indicates the item within the group. I.e. "3, 4" means group 3, item 4: Lantern.

|                |                 |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Animal Scent   | Cooking Pot     | Grappling Hook  |
| Three Rations  | Crowbar         | Incense         |
| Black Grease   | Deck of Cards   | Iron Spikes     |
| Bottle of Wine | Fifty Foot Rope | Lantern         |
| Caltrops       | Fishing Net     | Lantern Oil     |
| Chalk          | Glass Marbles   | Large Sack      |
| Love Potion    | Sewing Kit      | Three Bandages  |
| Lump of Resin  | Shovel          | Three Lockpicks |
| Lump of Wax    | Waterskin       | Knife           |
| Manacles       | Small Tent      | Vial of Acid    |
| Tinderbox      | Steel Mirror    | Vial of Poison  |
| Roll of Twine  | Ten Foot Pole   | Whistle         |

### 6. Roll or invent appearance

|                |              |           |
|----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Aquiline       | Bullnecked   | Furrowed  |
| Athletic       | Chiseled     | Gaunt     |
| Barrel-Chested | Coltish      | Gorgeous  |
| Boney          | Corpulent    | Grizzled  |
| Brawny         | Craggy       | Haggard   |
| Brutish        | Delicate     | Handsome  |
| Ill-favored    | Sinewy       | Towering  |
| Lanky          | Slender      | Trim      |
| Pudgy          | Slumped      | Weathered |
| Rakish         | Solid        | Willowy   |
| Rosy           | Square-Jawed | Wiry      |
| Scrawny        | Statuesque   | Wrinkled  |

### 7. Roll or invent details

|                 |                |                 |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Arctic Furs     | Broken Nose    | Desert Robes    |
| Battle Scars    | Bronze Skinned | Dreadlocks      |
| Belts & Pouches | Burn Scars     | Exotic Accent   |
| Body Paint      | Cult Insignia  | Faded Finery    |
| Braided Hair    | Dark Skinned   | Flogging Scars  |
| Bright Silks    | Deerskins      | Hair Ornaments  |
| Haute Couture   | One-Eyed       | Soldier Uniform |
| Hooded Cloak    | Pale Skinned   | Strange Charms  |
| Missing Ear     | Perfumed       | Tangled Hair    |
| Mohawk          | Piercings      | Tattoos         |
| Nine Fingers    | Ritual Scars   | Topknot         |
| Oiled Hair      | Shaved Head    | War Paint       |

### 9. Name your character

# THE MARKET

**Light Weapons (2og) (1 hand):** Handaxes, daggers, maces, short swords, throwing knives, slings, etc.

**Heavy Weapon (4og) (2 hands, +1 damage):** Spear, halberd, hammer, longsword, bow, crossbow, etc.

**Shield (1og) (1 hand):** +1 AC.

**Light Armor (10og):** Padded, leather, etc. +1 AC.

**Heavy Armor (20og):** Chain, plate, etc. +2 AC.

**Common Items (1-5g):** 50ft Rope, Chalk, Tinderbox, Torch, Bag of Marbles, Lockpick, Iron Spikes, Rations, Steel Mirror, Candles, 10ft Chain, 10ft Pole, Steel Wire, Grease, Glue, Net, Sack, Crowbar, Tent, Hatchet, Pickaxe, Saw, Grappling Hook, Shovel, Lantern, Lantern Oil, Bear Trap, Pliers, etc.

**Luxury Items (20-100g):** Book, Glass Mirror, Spy-glass, Musical Instrument, Poison, Acid, Antitoxin, Ether, Flashpowder, Smokebomb, Potion, etc.

**Animals:** Mule (2og), Horse (10og), Dog (5g), Blood-hound (10og), Chicken (5g), Falcon (1,000g).

**Transport:** Cart (3og), Wagon (10og), Coach (25og). Rowboat (5og), Fishing boat (50og), Caravel (5,000g), Warship (10,000g).

**Property:** Small House (1,000g), Tavern (2,000g), Guildhall (5,000g), Manor (10,000g) Fortified Outpost (25,000g), Country Estate (50,000g), Castle (200,000g), Palace (1,000,000g).

**Domestic Servants (1-10og/month):** 3 HP, AC 6, one ability up to +2.

**Torchbearer (5-10g/day):** 3 HP, AC 6, Torch.

**Guide (10-20g/day):** 5 HP, AC 6, Maps, Mule.

**Mercenary (20-50g/day):** 7 HP, AC 7 or 8, Short Sword or Bow, Combat Bonus +1.

**Specialist (50-100g/day):** 5 HP, AC 6, Tools, one ability up to +2, appropriate path.

**Magician (100-200g/day):** 7 HP, AC 7, one sigil.

**Sigil (1,000-10,000g):** The cost is usually between 1,000 and 5,000, but may rise higher for spells that are weirder, extremely specific, or innately powerful. Inscribing a sigil may take up to a week, and you will feel metaphysically disoriented until it is finished.

# SIGIL MAGIC

Magic is encoded in unique, arcane tattoos called spell sigils. PCs start out with no sigils, but may purchase them during the game. The number of sigils you may bear at any one time is limited by your sigil slots, which start at 1, but may increase as your PC levels. If a PC gains more sigils than they have slots, the excess sigils are overwritten and lost. When players wish to buy a sigil, the GM generates the several sigils offered by the shop, using the charts to the right, modifying or rerolling if the results are confusing or dull. The best way to do this is to combine an effect or element with a form, but other combinations are possible. The GM should feel free to invent unique sigils at will.

When players cast a spell, they tell the GM what kind of effect they want to create within the limits of the sigil's name. **Magic can never heal HP.** The GM then sets a HP cost for that effect, based on its power and how closely it aligns with the sigil's name. The GM should use previous rulings as precedents for determining the cost of new effects. Minor spells typically cost between 1 and 4 HP, major spells between 5 and 8 HP, and master spells between 9 and 12. Players may negotiate costs by adding or removing effects, or ask for a lower cost if they risk a corruption vs. WIL save. The final decision is the GM's. Consult the guidelines below.

**(+1 HP)** Increase range or area of effect of the spell by one step, (Close > Nearby > Far > Distant).

**(+1 HP)** Add an additional target to the spell.

**(+1 HP)** Increase the duration of the spell by one step, either linearly (1 round > 2 rounds > 3 rounds etc.) or exponentially (round > minute > hour > day etc.) depending on the type of spell.

**(+1 HP)** Increase spell damage one step, typically something like 3 > 6 > 9 > 12.

**(+1 HP)** Add an additional effect to the spell. For example: your light spell emits a blinding flash, your invisibility spell no longer casts a faint shadow, you entangle spell now also deals crushing damage, etc.

**(+1 HP)** Spell target may not make a save to resist.

## Corporeal Effects

|            |              |             |
|------------|--------------|-------------|
| Rending    | Creeping     | Duplicating |
| Hastening  | Crushing     | Animating   |
| Attracting | Greasing     | Enveloping  |
| Binding    | Repelling    | Expanding   |
| Blossoming | Transporting | Levitating  |
| Consuming  | Diminishing  | Grasping    |

|              |               |             |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Hindering    | Petrifying    | Fusing      |
| Imprisoning  | Phasing       | Screaming   |
| Spawning     | Piercing      | Sealing     |
| Illuminating | Shapeshifting | Shielding   |
| Resurrecting | Pursuing      | Dividing    |
| Opening      | Reflecting    | Transmuting |

## Corporeal Elements

|       |           |         |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| Acid  | Insect    | Clay    |
| Vine  | Blood     | Crow    |
| Bat   | Bone      | Crystal |
| Venom | Brimstone | Flesh   |
| Salt  | Water     | Stone   |
| Sand  | Worm      | Rat     |

|        |         |          |
|--------|---------|----------|
| Fungus | Lava    | Obsidian |
| Glass  | Tar     | Amber    |
| Honey  | Thorn   | Brine    |
| Ice    | Wine    | Sap      |
| Iron   | Serpent | Milk     |
| Oil    | Slime   | Moss     |

## Corporeal Forms

|          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| Fist     | Assassin | Crystal   |
| Fountain | Bastion  | Elemental |
| Gate     | Beast    | Eye       |
| Golem    | Blade    | Face      |
| Hand     | Colossus | Lock      |
| Heart    | Column   | Maze      |

|          |        |          |
|----------|--------|----------|
| Tentacle | Wall   | Monolith |
| Throne   | Tunnel | Mouth    |
| Shroud   | Tree   | Road     |
| Swarm    | Trap   | Sentinel |
| Steed    | Tower  | Servant  |
| Shield   | Tongue | Web      |

## Ethereal Effects

|             |             |              |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Terrifying  | Soothing    | Blinding     |
| Revoluting  | Menacing    | Deafening    |
| Nullifying  | Withering   | Silencing    |
| Enraging    | Foreseeing  | Enlightening |
| Maddening   | Energizing  | Charming     |
| Bewildering | Emboldening | Compelling   |

|               |             |              |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Paralyzing    | Scrying     | Disguising   |
| Excruciating  | Wearying    | Summoning    |
| Deceiving     | Dispelling  | Banishing    |
| Mesmerizing   | Deciphering | Warding      |
| Revealing     | Mindreading | Intoxicating |
| Communicating | Concealing  |              |

## Ethereal Elements

|           |             |         |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| Battle    | Probability | Fog     |
| Plague    | Dusk        | Ash     |
| Mutation  | Rot         | Steam   |
| Nightmare | Smoke       | Snow    |
| Plague    | Wind        | Rain    |
| Time      | Dust        | Harmony |

|       |      |           |
|-------|------|-----------|
| Star  | Sun  | Chaos     |
| Echo  | Moon | Stasis    |
| Fire  | Void | Thunder   |
| Dream | Pain | Lightning |
| Doom  | Soul | Light     |
| Ghost | Mind | Shadow    |

## Ethereal Forms

|       |        |         |
|-------|--------|---------|
| Cloud | Arc    | Bolt    |
| Coil  | Aura   | Bubble  |
| Cone  | Beacon | Burst   |
| Cube  | Beam   | Call    |
| Disk  | Blast  | Cascade |
| Touch | Blob   | Circle  |

|         |        |        |
|---------|--------|--------|
| Torrent | Storm  | Field  |
| Portal  | Spray  | Form   |
| Word    | Loop   | Gaze   |
| Pulse   | Moment | Grip   |
| Pyramid | Nexus  | Wave   |
| Ray     | Shard  | Vortex |