

SWORDSMEN & SKELETONS SECOND EDITION: AN OLD SCHOOL ROLEPLAYING CLONE® DRAGON TROVE LLC, 2017

CREATING A CHARACTER

Distribute 75 points (maximum 18, minimum 3) among 6 requisites

Strength (STR, for attack rolls and damage)

Intelligence (INT, bonus spell levels a warlock memorizes per day)

Wisdom (WIS, bonus spell levels a priest memorizes per day)

Dexterity (DEX, for Armor Class)

Constitution (CON, for hit points/level)

Charisma (CHA, chance to persuade).

REQUISITE MODIFIERS							Every point above 18 grants an extra +1 bonus
3	4-5	6-8	9-12	13-15	16-17	18	
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	

CHOOSE A CHARACTER CLASS, RACE AND ALIGNMENT

Player Character (PC) Classes

Priest: +1 to attack roll/2 levels, Hit Dice (HD)=1d6/level (hit points gained per level), uses any armor and mace, casts priest spells. Gains a power from his god, developed secretly with the game master (GM).

Swordsman: +1 to attack roll/level, HD=1d8/level, uses any armor and weapon, additional attack/round at levels evenly divisible by 6. +3 to Saving Throws (SV), see below.

Warlock: +1 to attack roll/3 levels, HD=1d4/level, uses dagger, no armor, casts warlock spells.

Character Races

All races except men see in the dark.

Man: Gains a special ability developed with the game master.

Dwarf: +4 SV vs. magic, and to note sloping corridors, moving walls, and traps.

Elf: Advances as both swordsman and warlock, and gets better ability of each (i.e. combat as swordsman, spells as warlock). +2 SV to notice secret doors.

Half Orc: +1 damage, -1 to persuade, +1 sense of smell.

Goblin: +1 to surprise underground.

Halfling: +1 to move unseen in woods, -1 damage in melee.

Experience and Levels

Killing monsters is worth 100 experience points/HD, quadrupled if they can cast spells, can only be hit by magic, and/or have ranged attacks, or doubled if they have other special powers. Treasure is worth one experience point/GP. Characters need 2,000 experience points to reach second level, doubled per level through 7th, then +100,000/level, Elves need double at all levels.

Alignments

law (good), chaos (evil), and neutral (unintelligent monsters). Law must be honorable; Chaos need not, but -2 SV when persuading (even Chaos does not trust Chaos).

BUY EQUIPMENT

Start with 100 gold (GP)

Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Torch	1GP	flask of wine or oil	5GP
Flint & Steel	1GP	100' rope & grapnel	2GP
Holy water	25GP	riding horse and saddle	50GP
Sword (1d8 damage) *	10GP	bow and 20 arrows (1d6 damage)**	20GP
Mace/spear (1d6 damage) *	5GP	Leather armor(Armor Class[AC]12, Move[MV] 12)	5GP
Dagger (1d4 damage) *	2GP	chainmail (AC 14, MV 9)	75GP
Shield (AC +1)	5GP	plate armor (AC 16, MV 6)	120GP

* Silvered weapons cost triple listed amount

**range is in the room, in line of sight, but not at adjacent foes

Note: Unarmored PCs with no dexterity modifier are AC 10 and MV 12.

HOW TO PLAY

On entering a room, woodland clearing, cave or equivalent, each side rolls 1d6 to determine **surprise**, if only one side scores a 1-2, they get a free round, then dice each round to see which side goes first.

Characters move up to full MV and do one other thing (attack, cast a spell, switch weapons, recite a poem, etc.). **To Attack**: Roll d20 >=monster's AC, as modified by character level and strength, to hit. Monsters attack as swordsmen. Roll damage based on weapon, modified by strength. If a character tries something novel, he must save (SV): Roll >=17 on a 20 sided die (D20), +1/level, Swordsmen gain an additional +3; characters may get a bonus/penalty for high/low requisites at GM's discretion. **Monsters flee at 50% losses**, unless they make a D20 Morale Check of 9+; and must check again each time they lose a comrade. At **zero hit points** monsters are dead; characters are unconscious at 0, dead at -10. **Traps** cause 1d6 damage per dungeon level and **poison** paralyzes, a SV negates either one.

SPELLS

All spells affect a single target in the same room, unless line of sight is blocked or target is adjacent to the caster, last the duration of combat, and are negated by a SV unless target is willing, or specifically stated otherwise. There is no description if the spell is self-explanatory. Each spell can only be cast once/day, unless memorized multiple times. A priest or warlock can memorize and cast 2 levels of spells/character level/day; he cannot memorize spells of higher than half his character level rounded up, nor more spells of a higher spell level than any lower spell level.

Priest Spells

Level 1

Cure Light Wounds: Regains 1d6 hit points, range=touch.

Detect Evil.

Detect Magic.

Light: Illuminates the room OR blinds one target (-4 to hit).

Zeal: +2 AC.

Level 2

Hold Person: Paralyzes 1d4 targets (or 1 target, at -2 SV).

Forbidden: Destroys 1d6 undead.

Speak with Animals.

Level 3

Remove Curse/Disease.

Defiance: +3 to spell saves for 1 day.

Speak with Dead.

Level 4

Cure Serious Wounds: Triple strength cure light wounds.

Neutralize Poison: Range=touch.

Protection Circle: 10' radius, keeps out evil magical monsters, all other evil monsters attack into it at -1 to hit and AC.

Sticks to Snakes: Creates 1d8, 1 HD poisonous snakes that obey the caster.

Level 5

Commune: GM answers 3 yes/no questions honestly.

Dispel Evil: As dispel magic, but also effects enchanted monsters.

Holy Zeal: +7 AC.

Warlock Spells

Level 1

Charm Person: One humanoid becomes caster's ally.

Detect Magic.

Light: as priest spell.

Sleep: Puts 2d8 levels of living targets to sleep, all must be under 5 HD, no SV.

Read Magical Writings.

Level 2

Hold Person: As priest spell.

Detect Evil.

Detect Invisible.

Invisibility: Range=touch, lasts until target attacks.

Phantasmal Force: Creates an illusion that is real unless disbelieved.

Level 3

Dispel Magic: Negates any spell; roll 11+ on 1d20, + warlock's level, -target caster's level.

Fiery, Icy or Lightning Wrath: Causes 1d6 damage per warlock's level to all enemies in room, in line of sight, as a heat, cold or electric attack (3 different spells); SV for half damage.

Fly: Range=touch.

Haste: All allies get 2 attacks/round.

Group Invisibility: As invisibility; affects all allies within 10'.

Level 4

Charm Monster: As charm person, affects any living monster.

Polymorph Other: Permanently turns target into any creature.

Polymorph Self: Warlock turns into any creature, gaining its MV (flight, if any), but no other powers.

Fire or Ice Walk: 60' long. 20' high, creatures under 3 HD cannot pass through, others take 1d6 damage; double if fire/cold based.

Fear: All foes SV or flee.

Remove Curse: as priest spell.

Level 5

Animate Dead: Creates 1d6 skeletons/level over 8 to obey the warlock, permanent.

Hold Monster: As hold person; affects any living monster.

Iron Wall: 60' long, 20' high, 3' thick.

TREASURE AND MONSTERS

25% for monsters in a lair (not wandering) to have 1d6 x monster's experience value in GP. Roll 1d20+the single toughest monster's hit dice; on 21+, 1d4 Magic Items are found. Roll 1d12: 1=*Cursed Item*: Roll again, item has reverse effect. 2-4=*Healing Potion*: Heals 1d6 hit points, one use only. 5-7=*Spell Potion*: Casts a random spell, one use only. 8=*Enchanted Item*: Ring, wand, hat, whatever; casts the same random spell 1 to 3 times per day. 9=*Enchanted Weapon*: Random type, roll 4d6, use the lowest single die for its bonus to hit and damage per attack, can

kill monsters that are immune to non-magical weapons. 10=*Enchanted Armor*: Random type, roll 4d6, use the lowest single die for its bonus to AC.

11=*Spirit Amulet*: +1d4 to random requisite, animal based: lion=STR, fox=INT, owl=WIS, ferret=DEX, bull=CON, peacock=CHA. 12=*Monstrous Amulet*: Gain random monster's 'Special' column abilities (below); roll twice, gain weakest, can wear only one monstrous amulet at a time. *Wandering Monster Encounters* occur each 10 rounds on a roll of 6 on 1d6. Roll 1d20 on the table below. For a weaker/tougher dungeon (Level 1-3 or 7-9) roll twice, and encounter the weaker/tougher monster. *Number encountered*=2d6-HD+dungeon level.

WANDERING MONSTER ENCOUNTERS

Monster HD are D8 unless otherwise noted. Special attacks allow a SV for no effect.

1 Blue Dragon@	AC: 17	HD: 9	Damage: 2x1d6 & 3d6*	Special: Lightning Wrath 3 times/day	MV: 9/24 (flight)
2 Centaur@	AC: 15	HD: 4	Damage: 1d6 & 1d8	Special: SV to read the stars	MV: 18
3 Giant Spider^	AC: 13	HD: 2+2	Damage: 1d6 + poison	Special: Poison; surprise on 1-3	MV: 18
4 Gnoll	AC: 14	HD: 2	Damage: 1d10	Special: +6 SV to sniff out opponents	MV: 9
5 Goblin#	AC: 12	HD: 1d6	Damage: 1d6	Special: -1 to hit in sunlight	MV: 9
6 Harpy	AC: 12	HD: 3	Damage: 2x1d3 & 1d6*	Special: Flies, charm person	MV: 6/18 (flight)
7 Hill Giant	AC: 15	HD: 8	Damage: 1d8+6*	Special: STR 21, throws boulders	MV: 12
8 Human Bandit#	AC: 12	HD: 1	Damage: 1d8	Special: Surprise on 1-3	MV: 12
9 Lizardman	AC: 14	HD: 2	Damage: 2x1d3 & 1d8	Special: Breathes underwater	MV: 6/12 (swim)
10 Medusa^	AC: 14	HD: 6	Damage: 1d4 & poison*	Special: Gaze turns to stone (range)	MV: 9
11 Ogre	AC: 14	HD: 4+1	Damage: 1d6+4	Special: STR 19	MV: 9
12 Orc	AC: 13	HD: 1	Damage: 1d8	Special: -1 to hit in sunlight	MV: 12
13 Skeleton	AC: 11	HD: 1	Damage: 1d6	Special: Mindless; never check morale	MV: 12
14 Werewolf	AC: 14	HD: 4	Damage: Bite 2d4*	Special: Only damaged by silver/magic	MV: 12
15 White Dragon@	AC: 17	HD: 6	Damage: 2x1d4 & 2d8*	Special: Icy Wrath 3 times/day	MV: 9/24 (flight)
16 Wight@^	AC: 15	HD: 3	Damage: level drain only*	Special: Only damaged by silver/magic	MV: 9
17 Wolf	AC: 12	HD: 2+2	Damage: 1d4+1	Special: As gnoll & howl scares horses	MV: 18
18 Wraith@^	AC: 16	HD: 4	Damage: 1d6 + level drain*	Special: Only damaged by magic	MV: 9/15 (flight)
19 Sorcerous Monster: Special: Roll again. Casts spells as a priest or warlock of equal level. Can be both sorcerous and tremendous.					
20 Tremendous Monster: Special: Roll again. Add +4 HD, AC and damage per attack; can get this result multiple times.					

*Attacks count as magical. @Sees invisible on a successful save. ^+2 Morale. #-2 Morale

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Swordsmen & Skeletons was written as an experiment. It is an attempt to see if all of the essential elements of an old school role playing game could be condensed onto a single sheet of paper. It was a successful experiment, but it does assume a working knowledge of role playing conventions, which, in fact, the earliest rpg rules did. The best way to learn to play S&S (or any rpg, though this is a very simple one, and good to start with) is to take it to a friend who is an experienced role player. He will figure out the rules in no time, and you can be playing shortly. However, if no one in your group has ever played an rpg before, the sample session below should make things clear enough.

Three friends, Adam, Bob and Clint are playing a session. Adam is the GM. He has written up a dungeon on a piece of graph paper, filling it with traps, monsters and treasure. The players adventure through it, and Adam maps it for them as they go. Bob is playing Brokus, a 4th level dwarf priest: STR 13, INT 9, WIS 18, DEX 9, CON 16 and CHA 10, armed with mace, chainmail and shield, AC 15 (no bonus for 9 DEX), he has 21 hit points (4d6, and an additional 2 points per level for 16 CON) spells cure light wounds x4, hold person x1, find traps x1, and three bonus first level spells for his high WIS: detect magic, detect evil, and light; he has 9,400 experience points from previous adventures. With Brokus is Clagar the Red (Clint), a 4th level human swordsman: STR 18, INT 9, WIS 6, DEX 16, CON 16 and CHA 10, armed with sword, chainmail and shield, AC 17 (because of a +2 bonus for 16 DEX), he has 27 hit points (4d8, and an additional 2 points per level for 16 CON) since he and Brokus are boon companions and have always adventured together, they have divided their experience evenly, and he also has 9,400 experience points. Both are aligned with law. Each player has written his character information on a 5 x 8 card. They have wandered in the dungeon and have arrived at a closed door.

Bob: Brokus gives the door a very slight push, not enough to move it more than a fraction of an inch. Does it seem to be locked?

Adam: No, it seems to move freely.

Clint: Clagar listens at it to see if he can hear anything inside.

Adam: Okay, that will require a SV. The roll is 17+, +4 for his level, and +3 because he's a swordsman. But, listening takes patience, and Clagar has a Wisdom penalty of -1. Altogether, you need to roll 11 or better on a twenty sided die (1d20).

Clint: [Rolls] 14. I got it, what do I hear?

Adam: Low, gruff voices, probably not human. You can't make them out, but they sound like they are quietly arguing.

Bob: [To Clint] Let Brokus open the door. He can try his hold person spell if things are really rough.

Clint: Go for it.

Bob: Brokus opens the door quietly, trying to gain surprise.

Adam: The door opens. [Here Adam lays out what is behind the door. This is a 30' x 40' room, so it is set up on a grid -often a simple chess board, though more elaborate options exist- as 6

x 8, 5' squares, crossing each of which will require 1 MV per round, there are no doors in the room (none visible, anyway) but three large gnolls, are at the opposite end of the room, their backs to the adventurers, arguing over a wooden chest]. Go ahead and roll for surprise.

Bob: [Rolls 1d6], a 2, we surprised them!

Adam: Not necessarily. I won't let them roll to surprise you, because their backs are to you and they are obviously intent on their argument. However, gnolls have a special ability; a +6 SV to sniff out their opponents. In this case I'll rule that they might have caught your scent before you opened the door, and managed to get back on guard quick enough to avoid surprise. The roll is 17+, +2 for their level (2 HD monsters) and +6 for the special ability bonus; they need to roll a 9 [rolls 11, so scores 19] neither party is surprised, so nobody gets a free round. Roll for initiative. [each side rolls 1d6, players score 5, gnolls score 3]. The adventurers go first.

Bob: Okay, [he looks at the position of the pieces on the game board] one of the gnolls is directly between Brokus and another gnoll. That means line of sight is blocked, and he could only get a maximum of 2 gnolls with his hold person spell?

Adam: Right. Note that even though they are monsters, since gnolls are humanoid, the hold person spell can affect them.

Bob: If Brokus first runs 6 squares to the middle of one of the side walls, could he target them all?

Adam: [Looks at the board from that angle] Yes, they would all be in line of sight; no one of them would be blocking the others.

Bob: Brokus does so and casts his spell. It affects 1-4 gnolls, [rolls 1d4] 2.

Adam: That will affect a maximum of 2 gnolls. Each saves on a 17, +2 for level, so needs a 15. One scores an 18 and is unaffected, the other scores a 7 and is paralyzed for the rest of the combat, so he is out of action.

Clint: Cool! Now it's Clagar's turn. He charges the nearest non-paralyzed gnoll and swings his sword. Since the gnoll is AC 14, and I'm a level 4 fighter [+4] with an 18 STR [+3], I'll need a 7 to hit. [Rolls 10] got him. Now I roll for damage [1d8 for a sword, +3 for 18 STR], rolled a 2, +3 is 5.

Adam: The gnoll is wounded, he gives a hyena-like yowl and blood spurts from his jaw. He swings at Clagar with his scimitar, he's trying to hit your AC 17, and he gets a +2 for his level, rolls a 14, barely misses, otherwise he'd have done 1d10 damage.

Bob: Brokus will close in on the same gnoll [he is less than 12 squares away] and attack. Needs a 14, +2 for a 4th level priest, +1 for STR 13, needs an 11, scores a 13, hits. Mace does 1d6 +1 for STR 13, scores 7!

Adam: The gnoll is at -3 hit points, he drops dead. Since they are now at less than 50% of their original numbers, (even though one is only paralyzed) the remaining gnoll needs to check morale. That's an unmodified roll of 9, and [checking the monster table] gnolls get no bonus or penalty to it. [Rolls 5] the gnoll screams and tries to run. Since he's running past you both, you'll each get a free attack...

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