

OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

RETRO ADVENTURE GAME



Core Rules

EARLY RELEASE PDF

Gavin here with a few notes on this PDF. This is a pre-release PDF for Kickstarter backers and pre-order customers.

- ▶ Some artwork is present, but you'll see many grey boxes where more art is to come.
- ▶ The text itself is finished and complete.
- ▶ Over the coming months, I'll periodically update the PDFs with the latest artwork. You'll get a notification that a file in your library at DriveThruRPG has been updated, and will be able to download the new version.

Proofreading Feedback

When you're reading this book or using it in your games, if you notice anything that seems wrong, *please let me know!* I won't be sending the books off to the printers until September-ish, so there's plenty of time for any remaining sneaky errors to be fixed. The following points are especially of interest:

- ▶ **Typos:** Obviously, I've run the text through a spell checker, but typos can still sneak in.
- ▶ **Layout errors:** Wrong page references? Erroneous or inconsistent formatting?
- ▶ **Unclear wording:** I've put great effort (with the help of many proofreaders!) into making the rules easy to understand, but who knows, maybe new sets of eyes on the text will notice something that could be made clearer.
- ▶ **Rules accuracy:** For those readers who are familiar with the 1980s B/X rules, please keep an eye out! Our aim is for the content of this book to be a direct clone of the original B/X rules—except where noted in the Author's Notes document. If you spot anything that rings alarm bells, please let me know.

Change Log

As successive versions of this PDF are published, I'm keeping a record of what's changed between versions. *You can view it [here online](#).*

Contact

These are the best ways to get in touch:

- ▶ **Kickstarter message:** <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/necroticgnome/old-school-essentials>
- ▶ **Email:** summon@necroticgnome.com
- ▶ **MeWe:** https://mewe.com/join/necrotic_gnome

If you're getting in touch with feedback about the books, please note in your message which book you're referring to, along with the page number (if applicable).

Enjoy!

I wish you all much enjoyment with these PDFs in the interim, before the books are finalised.

OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

RETRO ADVENTURE GAME

Core Rules

pre-release v0.8

Lords of Creation

Extra special thanks go out to the following beings of deific magnificence,
whose generosity helped this game to manifest:

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS GAME

What is *Old-School Essentials*?

- ▶ A role-playing game of *fantastic adventure*, where players work together to overcome fearsome monsters, sinister plots, and deadly traps in search of wealth, power, and glory.
- ▶ An *old-school* role-playing game, styled after the beloved games of the 1970s and 1980s.
- ▶ A relatively *rules-light* game, where the rules are kept simple in order to let imagination and fast-paced action take the spotlight.
- ▶ A *streamlined* rules set, with the books carefully structured for maximum usability during play.
- ▶ A *modular* game that can be easily expanded for play in many different fantastic genres and game worlds.

New to Role-Playing Games?

This book explains the rules of the game in an easy to learn way. The rules, however, do not demonstrate how a role-playing game (RPG) actually works in practice. Some recommendations for those who have no experience whatsoever of RPGs:

- ▶ By far the easiest way to learn what RPGs are about and how they work is to simply *dive in and play*! If you have friends who already play, just ask to join them for a game or two.
- ▶ The next best way to learn is to *watch other people* playing. There are many live streams and YouTube channels online.

Thanks

To the fearless proofreaders who have helped make this game shine: Adam Boulderstone, Alistair Caunt, Caleb Collins, Chuck Glisson, Noah Green, Keith Hann, Ian Helmke, Michael Julius, Frederick Münch, Eric Nieudan, Ray Otus, Alexander Parker, Glenn Robinson, Stuart A. Roe, Tim Scott, Thorin Thompson, Perttu Vedenoja.

New to Old-School Games?

Newer RPGs (i.e. post-2000) tend to work from a different set of design principles and have somewhat different play expectations than old-school games. Players who are familiar with newer RPGs but not with the old-school style of play may find the following documents useful (both can be found online):

- ▶ *Principia Apocrypha*, by Ben Milton, Steven Lumpkin, and David Perry.
- ▶ *Quick Primer for Old School Gaming*, by Matthew Finch.

A Note on Rulings

In an old-school game such as *Old-School Essentials*, the rules are not intended to cover all possible eventualities. The referee must be ready to apply judgement to resolve any unexpected situations which arise.

TERMINOLOGY

Dice Rolling Notation

Similar to many other RPGs, *Old-School Essentials* uses a plethora of weirdly shaped dice, each referred to by the number of sides it has:

- ▶ **d4:** A four-sided die.
- ▶ **d6:** A normal six-sided die.
- ▶ **d8:** An eight-sided die.
- ▶ **d10:** A ten-sided die.
- ▶ **d12:** A twelve-sided die.
- ▶ **d20:** A twenty-sided die.

Multi-Dice Rolls

In situations where multiple dice should be rolled and the results summed, the number of dice is noted before the “d”. For example, “3d6” indicates that three six-sided dice should be rolled and the results added together.

Modifiers

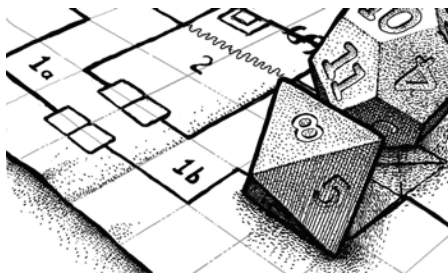
Flat modifiers to the roll are applied after the results of all dice have been summed. For example, “3d6+2” indicates that three six-sided dice should be rolled and the results added together, then 2 added.

Percentile Rolls (d100)

A hundred-sided die (d100, sometimes noted as d%) can be mimicked using two d10s: the first treated as “tens” and the second treated as “ones”. For example, a roll of 2 and 3 would be 23. If two 0s are rolled, the result counts as 100.

X-in-6 Rolls

Some rules specify an X-in-6 chance of success (e.g. 2-in-6, 3-in-6, etc.). This indicates that 1d6 should be rolled, and the result compared against the specified chance. If the roll is less than or equal to the chance of success, the check succeeds.



Basic Game Terminology

Referee

Also known as the *Game Master*. The person who designs the game world and runs game sessions for the other players, arbitrating the rules and determining the reactions of people and creatures encountered.

Players

Every other participant in the game. Each player usually runs a single character.

Player Character (PC)

The imagined character played by a player.

Party

The group of PCs who go on adventures together.

Adventure

A series of one or more game sessions during which the party explores a specific location or engages with a particular plot.

Campaign

A series of adventures, usually involving a consistent set of PCs and a consistent game world.

Non-Player Character (NPC)

Any other character encountered by the PCs during the game. All NPCs are played by the referee.

Monster

Any creature encountered by the party during an adventure. All monsters are played by the referee.

ADVENTURE GAMING

The rules in this book provide a solid and flexible basis for running adventure games in many different fantastic settings. The following elements are fundamental.

Peril and Adventure

Players take on the role of people who are drawn to confront danger, in search of wealth, ancient secrets, and wonder. These bold individuals are known as *adventurers*, and are the focus of the game.

The danger and reward of adventure is most commonly found in two types of locations: *wilderness* and *dungeons*.

Wilderness

Accursed forests, toxic wastelands, rotting swamps, the depths of the ocean, the uncharted reaches of space. Any outdoor space where peril and adventure can be met is classified as wilderness.

Dungeons

Forsaken ruins, primal caverns, subterranean cities, accursed tombs, derelict vessels. Any indoor or subterranean space where peril and adventure can be met is classified as a dungeon.

Genre Rules

Old-School Essentials has its roots in the fantasy genre, and the rules described in this book retain some of the flavour of that genre. However, it is important to note that these fantasy elements are meant as motivating examples to illustrate the action of the core rules. The rules for a specific campaign or genre may modify, replace, or remove any of these elements.

The Fantastic

The rules assume a setting where PCs come into contact with the fantastic, otherworldly, weird, and wonderful.

Treasure

Hoardings of long-forgotten gold, artefacts of alien technology, fabled objects of great magical power. The promise of attaining treasures such as these—either for their fabulous material value, or for their fantastic powers—is the lure that pulls many an adventurer into perilous realms.

Monsters

Terrible creatures older than time, fearsome mythical beasts, chimeric biological experiments, tribes of beast-like half-men, invasive alien species, beings from strange dimensions. Such inhuman creatures lurk in the wilderness and in dungeons, guarding wondrous treasures.

Magic

Forbidden practices of dark sorcery, rituals to invoke the gods, monsters summoned from weird dimensions, sites of eldritch power, objects bound with occult energies. Magic may be a tool wielded by player characters (or their enemies!), or may be a lost and forgotten art that is encountered only in the ancient places of the world. Of course, though some settings might not feature magic per se, sufficiently advanced technology may be indistinguishable from magic.

Sentient Species

Fairies malevolent and kind, dwarves in subterranean kingdoms, humanoids from other worlds, mutants twisted by exposure to toxic environments. While humans are typically the most widespread species in the game, other humanoids of equal (or perhaps greater!) intelligence may exist. Intelligent species that are available as player characters are termed *demihumans*.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Old-School Essentials is split into a set of books, known as **rules modules**, allowing the game to be tailored to different settings, genres, and styles of play.

Rules Modules

Core Rules (This Book)

Contains the core rules of the game that are common to all settings, genres, and styles of play. All players need access to a copy of this book. Each player may want their own copy, or a group may share one or more copies among themselves.

Genre Rules

Contains the game rules specific to a setting or genre of fiction in which the games take place. A genre rules book typically describes the classes of adventurers that can be played, and provides lists of weapons, armour, vehicles, services, and strongholds that may be purchased. All players need access to a copy of the genre rules book that the group is using.

Spells

Lists the spells that can be cast by character classes in the corresponding genre rules book. Only players with a spell casting character need access to a book of spells.

Monsters

Lists adversaries and monstrosities that may be encountered during adventures in a particular setting or genre. Only the referee needs access to a book of monsters.

Treasures

Lists wondrous and precious items that may be found during adventures in a particular setting or genre. Only the referee needs access to a book of treasures.

House Rules

None of the rules presented in this book (or other *Old-School Essentials* rules modules) are to be taken as “gospel”. If the players and referee wish, any rule may be expanded, altered, or removed. Such tweaks to the rules are known as **house rules**—every group will end up with their own unique way of playing, tailored to their particular tastes.

That said, the rules have been carefully designed and very thoroughly battle tested. Many groups will be perfectly happy with the rules as written.

Beginning players: Are advised to play with the rules as written for some time, before starting to change anything.

Mix and Match

With the rules of the game split up into separate modules, it is easy to swap out individual elements, replacing them with alternatives. In this way, different settings and genres may be combined. For example, a group may wish to use a book of classic fantasy genre rules along with a book of alien technology treasures, lending a science-fantasy feel to the game.

Multiple rules modules of the same type may also be used together. For example, a book of classic fantasy monsters might be augmented with a book of lost world monsters, for a campaign set around a dinosaur-infested jungle that time forgot.

As the core rules do not assume the use of any specific rules modules of the other types, all may be combined freely.

Roll Your Own

In addition to using the rules modules published in the *Old-School Essentials* product line, groups may wish to create their own rules modules, tailoring the game to their own needs.

COMPATIBILITY

The old-school gaming scene is sitting on a secret: a huge number of games, despite having different brand names on their covers, are highly compatible! This cross-compatibility between many games means that a great wealth of adventures, campaign settings, and rules supplements can be used with *Old-School Essentials*.

The Basic/Expert Rules

Old-School Essentials is 100% compatible with the 1981 edition of the world's most popular fantasy RPG, commonly known as the Basic/Expert edition (B/X for short). Any material published for the Basic/Expert rules can be used directly with *Old-School Essentials*. Decades of adventure are at your fingertips!

Heritage

The material presented in this book represents a 100% faithful restatement of the core rules of the classic Basic/Expert game.

It is worth noting that *errors* in the original Basic/Expert rules have not been slavishly reproduced—an effort has been made to correct obvious mistakes.

With the aim of increasing the playability of the game, areas of ambiguity or contradiction in the Basic/Expert core rules have also been clarified in *Old-School Essentials*, while attempting to cleave as closely as possible to the apparent intent of the original rules.

For those with a passion for rules archaeology, a document detailing the clarifications that were made can be downloaded from necroticgnome.com.

Other Basic/Expert Games

Over the last decade, a large number of old-school adventure games have been published, many of which—like *Old-School Essentials*—are also closely compatible with the Basic/Expert rules. Material published for any game that is designed to be compatible with the Basic/Expert rules is easy to use with *Old-School Essentials*.

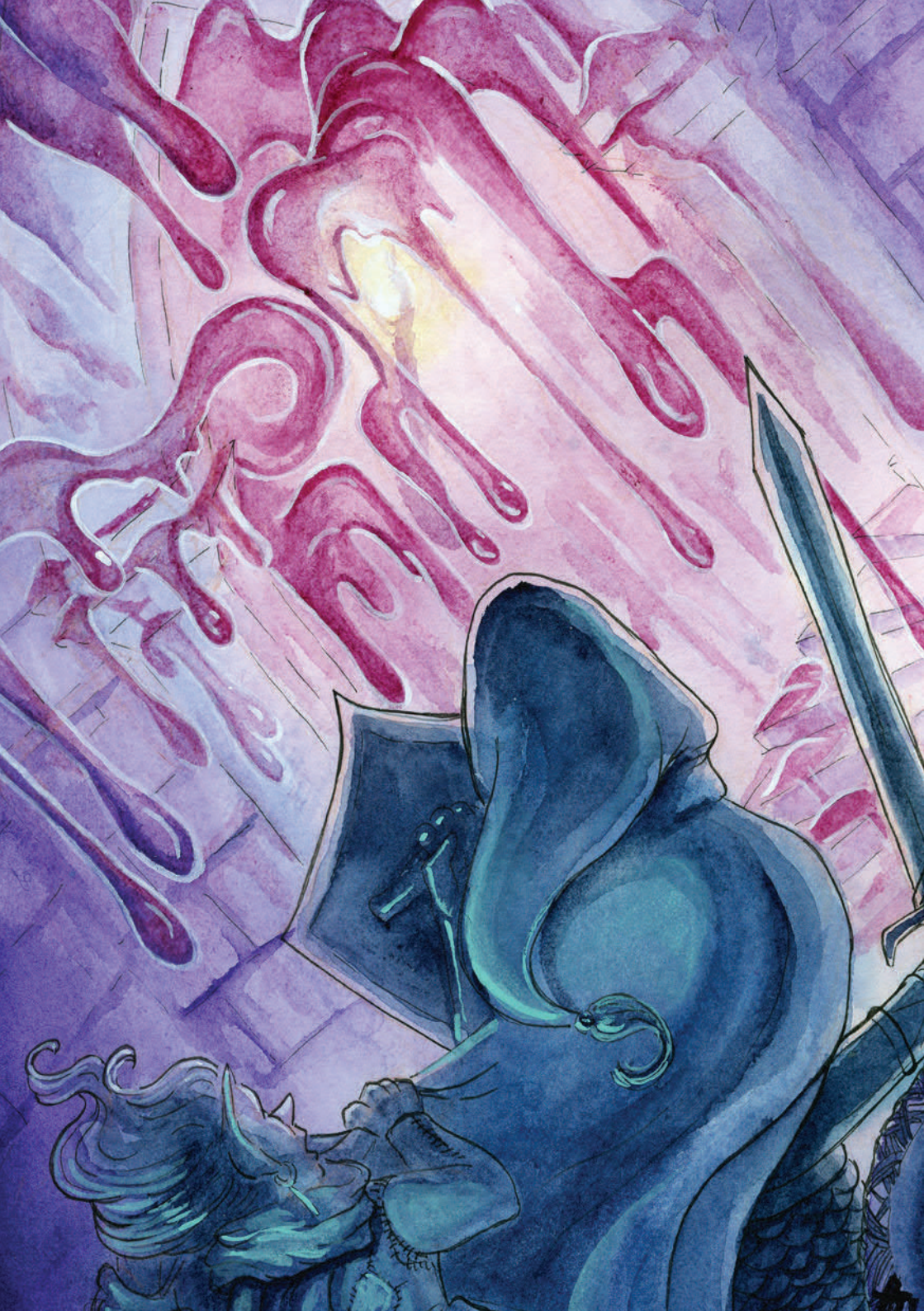
Other Editions

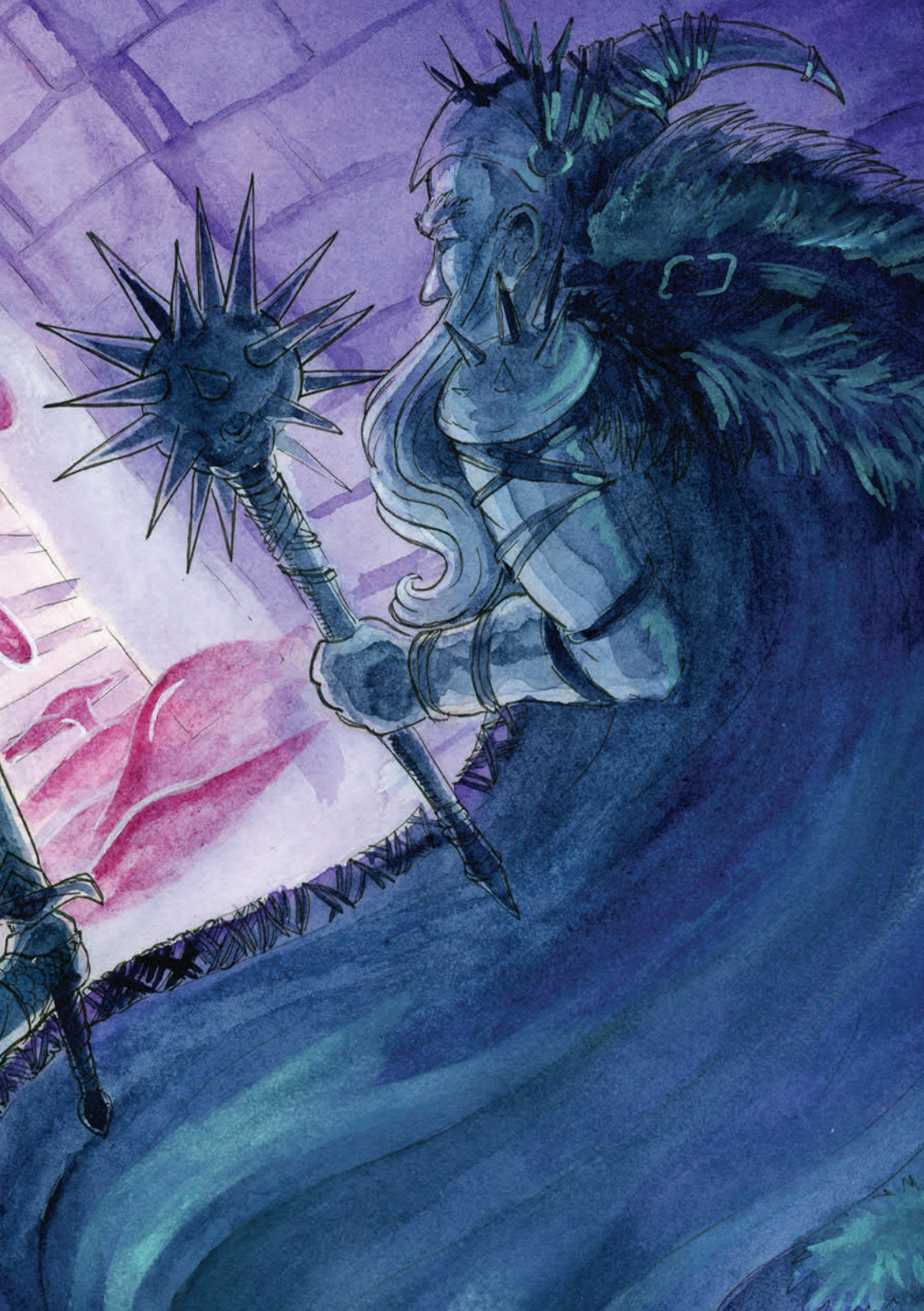
Additionally, material published for all 20th century editions of the world's most popular fantasy RPG (for example, the classic Advanced edition from the 1970s) is also largely compatible with *Old-School Essentials*.

The rules of other editions do differ somewhat from the Basic/Expert rules, so some amount of adaptation work may be required in order to use these materials with *Old-School Essentials*. This is not recommended for beginning players, but for those who are familiar with the rules, such adaptation is not complicated.

Adaptation Guidelines

Concrete guidelines are beyond the scope of this introduction. However, a guide to adapting other, similar rules sets for use with this one is available as a free download from necroticgnome.com for those who want more information on this topic.





PLAYER CHARACTERS

GAME STATISTICS

Player characters are described, in game terms, by a set of statistics that define their abilities, strengths, and weaknesses in the game world.

Ability Scores

The basic, physical and mental strengths and weaknesses of the character. There are 6 ability scores: *Strength* (abbreviated STR), *Intelligence* (INT), *Wisdom* (WIS), *Dexterity* (DEX), *Constitution* (CON), and *Charisma* (CHA). A character is ranked in each ability score by a number between 3–18. (3 being the worst score possible and 18 the best.)

Class

An adventuring profession to which the character belongs. A character's class defines their main abilities. (Classes are detailed in the genre rules books in the *Old-School Essentials* line.)

Race

Unless a demihuman class is selected, the character is assumed to be human.

Level

The character's experience as an adventurer is denoted by their experience level. Characters typically start play at 1st level (the lowest level of adventurer), and can increase in level through successful adventuring. As a character goes up in level, they gain more powerful abilities, as defined by their class.

Experience Points (XP)

The character's advancement in the game is tracked by the accumulation of experience points. Experience points are awarded by the referee after a successful adventure. When the character has accumulated a certain number of experience points, the character's level increases. Each class specifies the number of experience points required to achieve each experience level.

Prime Requisite

The ability score (or scores) that are the most important to the character's class. The character's score in these abilities can affect the rate at which the character accumulates experience points.

Alignment

The character (and every other creature in the game world) is aligned with one of three cosmic principles: Law, Neutrality, or Chaos (see *Alignment*, p16). This alignment determines how certain magic influences the character, and should be used by the player as a guideline for role-playing the character.

Hit Points (hp)

The character's ability to avoid dying. The character has a *maximum hit point total*, and a *current hit point total*, which are tracked separately. When a character is harmed, their current hit point total is reduced. If this number reaches 0, the character is dead! Rest or healing can restore lost hit points (see p24), but never above the character's maximum hit point total (this is only increased when the character increases in level).

Hit Dice (HD)

The number of dice used to determine the character's maximum hit point total. The character's class determines the type of dice rolled (i.e. d4, d6, d8), and the character's level determines the number of dice rolled. (Some classes also grant a flat bonus to hit points at certain levels, instead of or in addition to an extra HD.)

Armour Class (AC)

The character's ability to avoid damage in combat. Armour Class is determined by the character's Dexterity score, and by the armour they wear. Lower AC scores are better, so a bonus to AC decreases the character's AC score and a penalty increases the AC score.

Attack Roll "to Hit AC 0" (THAC0)

The character's ability to hit foes in combat, determined by their class and level. Lower THAC0 scores are better. See *Combat*, p40 for full details on attacking.

Saving Throw Values

The character's ability to avoid being affected by certain types of dangerous or detrimental effects. There are five saving throw categories: death (or poison), wands, paralysis (or petrification), breath attacks, spells (or magic rods or staves). The character's saving throw values are determined by class and level.

Movement Rate

The speed at which the character can move when exploring, travelling, or during combat. Every character has a *base movement rate* and an *encounter movement rate* (noted in parentheses). The encounter movement rate is one third of the base movement rate. The default movement rate for characters is 120' (40')—a base movement rate of 120' and an encounter movement rate of 40'.

Class Abilities

Finally, the character's class denotes a set of special abilities that the character may use. These include the ability to use certain types of armour and weapons, and the ability to speak one or more languages.

Ascending AC (Optional Rule)

Some groups are more familiar with an Armour Class system where higher scores are better. This system is known as *Ascending Armour Class* (abbreviated AAC) and works as follows:

- **Armour Class:** When using AAC, higher scores are better. Bonuses to Armour Class increase the AAC score and penalties decrease it.
- **Attack rolls:** Instead of referring to an attack matrix (see *Attack Matrix by THAC0*, p44), attack rolls involve the use of an attack bonus which is added to the d20 attack roll (see *Combat*, p40).
- **AAC scores:** AC scores for monsters and equipment are followed by the equivalent AAC in square brackets.
- **Attack bonuses:** THAC0 scores for monsters and classes are followed by the equivalent attack bonus in square brackets.

Note: Using Ascending Armour Class results in very slightly different attack probabilities than when using the traditional approach of descending AC with an attack matrix.

CREATING A CHARACTER

To create a character, you'll first need a character sheet—a sheet of paper on which to record all information about the new character.

A selection of different character sheet PDFs is available at necroticgnome.com. These may be downloaded and printed for use in your games.

1. Roll Ability Scores

Roll 3d6 for each of your character's ability scores: Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma. See *Ability Scores*, p14.

Sub-Par Characters

If you roll a character with very poor ability scores—for example an 8 or less in every score or an extremely low rating in one ability—the referee may allow you to discard the character and start again.

2. Choose a Class

Select one of the classes available (see the list of classes in the genre rules book), bearing in mind the minimum ability score requirements of some classes.

3. Adjust Ability Scores

If you wish, you may raise the prime requisite(s) of your character by lowering other (non-prime requisite) ability scores. For every two points by which an ability score is reduced, one point may be added to a prime requisite. The following restrictions apply:

- ▶ Only Intelligence, Strength, and Wisdom may be lowered in this way.
- ▶ No score may be lowered below 9.
- ▶ Some character classes may have additional constraints.

4. Note Ability Score Modifiers

Now that your character's ability scores are fixed, make a note of any associated bonuses or penalties, consulting the tables overleaf.

5. Note Attack Values

The level progression chart for your character's class lists your THAC0 score. This indicates your chance of hitting opponents in combat, as determined by the *Attack Matrix by THAC0*, p44.

For quick reference, it is convenient to look up the values in the attack matrix row corresponding to your THAC0 and record them on your character sheet. 1st level characters have a THAC0 of 19 [0], resulting in the attack values shown below.

1st Level PC Attack Values

Attack Roll	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
AC Hit	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

6. Note Saving Throws and Class Abilities

Record any special abilities possessed by your character as a result of their class, as well as your character's saving throws. If your character has a spell book, ask your referee which spells are recorded in it. The referee may allow you to choose.

7. Roll Hit Points

Determine your character's hit points by rolling the die type appropriate to the chosen class. Modifiers for high or low Constitution apply (see *Ability Scores*, p14). Your character always starts with at least 1 hit point, regardless of CON modifier.

Re-Rolling 1s and 2s (Optional Rule)

If your roll for hit points comes up 1 or 2 (before applying any CON modifier), the referee may allow you to re-roll. This is in order to increase the survivability of 1st level PCs.

8. Choose Alignment

Decide whether your character is Lawful, Neutral, or Chaotic (see *Alignment*, p16) and note this on your character sheet.

CR04: W 59mm H 25mm

9. Note Known Languages

Your character's class determines their native languages. This always includes the common tongue and the character's alignment language—see *Languages*, p16. Characters with high INT may also choose additional languages from the list of languages available in the setting.

10. Buy Equipment

Your character starts play with $3d6 \times 10$ gold pieces (see *Wealth*, p17). You may spend as much of this money as you wish to equip your character for adventure, consulting the equipment lists in the genre rules book.

Remember: Your chosen class may restrict your use of some equipment (e.g. weapons and armour).

11. Note Armour Class

Your character's Armour Class is determined by two factors:

- **Armour:** The armour worn determines your character's base AC. See the equipment list in the genre rules book.
- **Dexterity:** See *Ability Scores*, p14.

Unarmoured AC

If your character has no armour, their base AC is 9 [10].

12. Note Level and XP

Your character begins play at 1st level with 0 XP.

13. Name Character

Finally, choose a name for your character. You are now ready for adventure!

ABILITY SCORES

A character's score in each ability determines whether they have any bonuses or penalties associated with various actions in the game. The tables opposite list the modifiers associated with each ability score, with the effects described below.

Strength (STR)

Brawn, muscle, and physical power.

- **Melee:** Is applied to attack and damage rolls with melee weapons.
- **Open doors:** The chance of success with attempts to force open a stuck door (see *p28*).

Intelligence (INT)

Learning, memory, and reasoning.

- **Spoken languages:** Denotes the number of languages the character can speak.
- **Literacy:** Indicates the character's ability to read and write their native languages.

Wisdom (WIS)

Willpower, common sense, perception, and intuition.

- **Magic saves:** Is applied to saving throws (see *p25*) versus magical effects. This does not normally include saves against breath attacks, but may apply to any other saving throw category.

Dexterity (DEX)

Agility, reflexes, speed, and balance.

- **AC:** Modifies the character's AC (a bonus lowers AC, a penalty raises it).
- **Missile:** Applied to attack rolls (but not damage rolls) with ranged weapons.
- **Initiative:** Modifies the character's initiative roll, if the optional rule for individual initiative is used (see

Combat, p40).

Constitution (CON)

Health, stamina, and endurance.

- **Hit points:** Applies when rolling a character's hit points (i.e. at 1st level and every time a level is gained thereafter). A character always gains at least 1 hit point per Hit Die, regardless of CON modifier.

Charisma (CHA)

Force of personality, persuasiveness, personal magnetism, physical attractiveness, and ability to lead.

- **NPC reactions:** Applies when hiring retainers and when interacting with monsters.
- **Max # of retainers:** Determines the number of retainers a character may have at any one time.
- **Retainer loyalty:** Determines retainers' loyalty to the character.

Prime Requisite

Each character class has one or more prime requisites—ability scores of special importance to that class' function. A character's score in their prime requisites affects how quickly the character gains experience points.

Characters with a single prime requisite use the table to the right. The modifiers for classes with multiple prime requisites are noted in the class description.

- **XP modifier:** Is applied to all experience points awarded to the character, unless otherwise noted in the description of the class.

Strength Modifiers

STR	Melee	Open Doors
3	-3	1-in-6
4-5	-2	1-in-6
6-8	-1	1-in-6
9-12	None	2-in-6
13-15	+1	3-in-6
16-17	+2	4-in-6
18	+3	5-in-6



Intelligence Modifiers

INT	Spoken Languages	Literacy
3	Native (broken speech)	Illiterate
4-5	Native	Illiterate
6-8	Native	Basic
9-12	Native	Literate
13-15	Native + 1 additional	Literate
16-17	Native + 2 additional	Literate
18	Native + 3 additional	Literate

Wisdom Modifiers

WIS	Magic Saves
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	None
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

Dexterity Modifiers

DEX	AC	Missile	Initiative
3	-3	-3	-2
4-5	-2	-2	-1
6-8	-1	-1	-1
9-12	None	None	None
13-15	+1	+1	+1
16-17	+2	+2	+1
18	+3	+3	+2

Constitution Modifiers

CON	Hit Points
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	None
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

Charisma Modifiers

CHA	NPC Reactions	Retainers	
		Max #	Loyalty
3	-2	1	4
4-5	-1	2	5
6-8	-1	3	6
9-12	None	4	7
13-15	+1	5	8
16-17	+1	6	9
18	+2	7	10

Prime Requisite Modifiers

Prime Requisite	XP Modifier
3-5	-20%
6-8	-10%
9-12	None
13-15	+5%
16-18	+10%

ALIGNMENT

All beings, whether PCs, NPCs, or monsters, adhere to one of three philosophies or spheres of behaviour, known as alignments. These spheres are Law, Neutrality, and Chaos. A player must choose one of these paths when creating a character.

Law: Lawful beings believe in truth and justice. To this end, they will follow laws and believe all things must adhere to order. Lawful beings also believe in sacrifice to a greater good and will choose the good of a larger group over the good of an individual.

Neutrality: Neutral beings believe in a balance between the ideas of Law and Chaos and, in their actions, tend to do what will serve themselves. They might commit good or evil acts in order to further their own ends and generally will not put others' needs ahead of their own.

Chaos: Chaotic beings are in direct opposition to Law. These beings should seldom be trusted, for they tend to act in "evil" ways and are utterly selfish. Chaotic characters believe in chance and that there is no innate order to life.

Revealing Alignment

The player must inform the referee of their character's alignment, but does not have to tell other players.

Role-Playing Alignment

When determining the character's actions, players should do their best to adhere to their chosen alignment. The referee will take note when a character's behaviour deviates too much from the norm of the chosen alignment, and may assign a new alignment more appropriate to actual character actions. Deviation

from alignment may also be penalised, as the referee sees fit.

LANGUAGES

The native languages spoken by a player character are determined by the character's class. These typically include the common tongue and an alignment language. Characters with high INT may learn additional languages (see *Ability Scores*, p14).

The Common Tongue

The common tongue (sometimes simply called *Common*) is a language which is widespread among intelligent species. All player character races—as well as many monsters—are able to speak Common.

In some settings, the referee may rule that different cultures in the campaign world have different languages, in which case a particular language must be chosen instead of Common.

Alignment Languages

All intelligent beings know a secret, unwritten language of gestures, signs, and code words associated with their alignment. This secret language allows beings of the same alignment to communicate. Beings of another alignment will recognise when an alignment language is being used, but will not understand. It is not possible to learn another alignment language except by changing alignment, in which case the former language is forgotten.

Other Languages

Many demihuman and intelligent monster species have their own language, which player characters may be able to learn. The exact languages that are spoken depend on the setting, as determined by the referee.

Coin Conversion Rates

	1 pp	1 gp	1 ep	1 sp	1 cp
Value in pp	1	1/5	1/10	1/50	1/500
Value in gp	5	1	1/2	1/10	1/100
Value in ep	10	2	1	1/5	1/50
Value in sp	50	10	5	1	1/10
Value in cp	500	100	50	10	1

EXPERIENCE

All characters who make it through an adventure alive receive experience points (XP), awarded by the referee (see *p68*). XP is gained from two sources: treasure recovered and monsters defeated.

Prime Requisite Modifiers

Characters receive an XP bonus or penalty based on their score in their class' prime requisites (see *Ability Scores, p14*). This modifier is applied to the grand total XP a particular character receives at the end of an adventure.

Levelling Up

When a character gains enough XP to reach the next experience level, the player should consult the description of the character's class and note any improvements in saving throws, attack probabilities, spells per day, and other class abilities. If the character's Hit Dice increase, a new Hit Die of the specified type should be rolled and the result added to the character's maximum hit point total.

Maximum XP in One Session

Characters cannot advance more than one level in one session. Any additional XP that would take a character two or more levels above their current level are lost, leaving the character at 1 XP below the total for the next level.

WEALTH

Characters inevitably accumulate wealth from the spoils of their adventures. Treasure may take many forms, but often the most useful form of treasure is money.

Money

The most common coin is the gold piece (gp). Coins made of other metals—platinum (pp), electrum (ep), silver (sp), and copper (cp)—are also used. The conversion rates of coins are shown above.

Money in Different Settings

The core rules use a gold piece-based standard, but a specific setting may use an alternative form of currency.

Starting Money

PCs begin play with $3d6 \times 10$ gold pieces.

Inheritance

Faced with the possibility of character death, players may wish to create a will for their characters, to leave wealth behind for an heir. If the referee allows this, the following stipulations apply:

- **Tax:** Any treasure left as an inheritance will be taxed at 10%.
- **Heir:** A character's heir must be a new 1st level character.
- **Once only:** A player may only leave a character inheritance once.

DOMAINS

When characters have amassed sufficient wealth, they will often wish to construct a base or stronghold and possibly found a domain.

The rules for this depend on the setting, and are described in the genre rules book. Some character classes may have special rules governing when and how they may construct strongholds, also detailed in the genre rules book.



HIRELINGS

Hirelings are NPCs hired by a character to perform certain services. The types of hirelings available depend on the setting, and are described in the genre rules book.

Hirelings and Adventuring

Hirelings do not accompany characters on adventures. (Characters may hire NPCs to join them on adventures, but these are treated separately. See *Retainers*, p46.)

Types of Hirelings

Hirelings are divided into two types:

- **Mercenaries:** Hired soldiers who will guard, patrol, and otherwise serve in wilderness settings, but only as part of a larger force, not an adventuring party.
- **Specialists:** Hired individuals who have a particular trade or who have special knowledge. These individuals are usually hired for a specific task.

Locating Hirelings

Hirelings can be located by posting notices of help wanted. The response will depend on the availability of suitable hirelings in the area and the offer made.





ADVENTURING

PARTY ORGANISATION

Size: The ideal size of a group is between 6 and 8 characters—large enough to confront the challenges of the adventure, while not so large as to be disorganised. If not enough PCs are present, the players may wish to hire retainers (see *p46*).

Classes: It is wise for a party to consist of a mix of characters of different adventuring classes. Combat-focused characters are essential for protecting the group from danger, while other classes each have magic or other special abilities which are useful for handling different situations that may arise in an adventure.

Level: As new PCs join play, the experience levels of the characters in the party may diverge. It is recommended that characters more than four levels apart should adventure separately, as challenges and rewards suitable to characters of greatly different experience levels do not match.

Marching Order

Before starting an adventure, the players should determine the normal arrangement of their PCs when exploring. This is known as the party's *marching order*. For example, players may decide to move in a two-column formation, with well-armoured characters in front, weaker characters in the middle, and a rear guard. The group may define different standard marching orders for common situations (e.g. standard exploration, combat, opening doors, searching, etc.).

The Caller

If the players wish to, they may nominate one of their number as the spokesperson of the group, known as the caller. This player is responsible for informing the referee about the actions and movements of the party as a whole. Delegating this role to one player—rather than having each player informing the referee about their PC's individual actions—can speed up play.

The caller's character usually takes on the role of party leader, and should thus have a high Charisma score and be located near to the front of the party.

The Mapper

One player should create a map of the areas being explored, based on the referee's descriptions. Details such as monsters or traps encountered, clues to puzzles, or possibly interesting unexplored areas may be noted on the map as it is drawn.

Dividing Treasure

The spoils of an adventure may be divided between surviving characters in whatever way the players agree on.

Non-magical treasure: Is typically divided evenly between player characters.

Magic items: The players must decide which character keeps each item. One method for doing this is for each player to roll a die and compare the results. The highest rolling player gets to pick a magic item first, the second highest rolling player gets the next pick, and so on.



TIME, WEIGHT, MOVEMENT

Tracking Time

When an adventure is under way, the referee should keep track of the time that elapses in the imagined world, known as *game time*. This is distinct from *real time*: what may take the players and referee mere seconds to describe may take PCs hours or even days to complete.

For example, when characters are exploring a dungeon, the referee tracks the number of turns that have elapsed; when characters are exploring the wilderness, the number of days elapsed is tracked.

The referee must adjudicate what may be accomplished in a given period of time.

Resources

As game time passes, the referee should pay attention to resources that the party consumes. For example: food, water, fuel for light sources, durations of spells or magical effects, etc.

Tracking Movement

As player characters explore the imagined world, the referee should keep track of their location on a prepared map. The map is usually kept secret from the players, who must rely on the referee's descriptions of the areas they explore.

To determine how long it takes for characters to move from one area to the next, the referee should refer to the characters' movement rates.

Group Movement Rate

An adventuring party will usually want to stay together. The movement rate of the party as a whole is determined by the speed of the slowest member.

Measurements

Time: Rounds and Turns

Aside from everyday time increments (minutes, hours, days, and so on), the following special units are used in the game.

Turns: 10 minutes of game time. There are 6 turns in an hour. Time is measured in turns when exploring dungeons (see *Dungeon Adventuring*, p28).

Rounds: 10 seconds of game time. There are 60 rounds in a turn. Time is measured in rounds during encounters, especially in combat (see *Encounters*, p34 and *Combat*, p40).

Distance: Inches, Feet, Yards, Miles

Staying true to its origins, this game uses imperial or customary US units. Distances are measured in inches (notated with a " "), feet (notated with a ' '), yards, and miles.

Distance Conversions

- ▶ 1 foot = 12 inches
- ▶ 1 yard = 3 feet
- ▶ 1 mile = 1,760 yards = 5,280 feet

Weight: Coins

Weight measures typically come into play only when discussing how much characters can carry (see *Encumbrance*, opposite). As coins are the most common form of treasure found by adventurers, all weights are measured in coins. (Ten coins are equivalent to one pound.)



Encumbrance (Optional Rule)

Some groups may wish to use a system to track the amount of gear and treasure a character can carry—and how this affects their movement rate.

Tracking Encumbrance

Encumbrance is a measure of both the weight and bulk a character is carrying.

Treasure: The encumbrance of treasure carried by a character should be tracked. The encumbrance of common items of treasure is shown in the table below. The referee should decide the weight of other forms of treasure.

Equipment: Two options for tracking the encumbrance of characters' equipment are presented to the right. The same system should be applied to all characters.

Maximum load: The maximum load any character can carry is 1,600 coins of weight. Characters carrying more than this cannot move.

Treasure Encumbrance in Coins

Treasure	Weight in Coins
Coin (any type)	1
Gem	1
Jewellery (1 piece)	10
Potion	10
Rod	20
Scroll	1
Staff	40
Wand	10



Option 1: Basic Encumbrance

Treasure: The weight of treasure carried is tracked for the purpose of maximum load, as described above.

Equipment: The weight of armour, weapons, and adventuring gear is not tracked and does not count towards a character's maximum load.

Movement rate: Is determined by the type of armour the character is wearing and whether they are carrying a significant amount of treasure (at the referee's discretion). The actual weight of the treasure carried does not affect movement rate.

Basic Encumbrance

Armour Worn	Movement Rate	
	Without Treasure	Carrying Treasure
Unarmoured	120' (40')	90' (30')
Light armour	90' (30')	60' (20')
Heavy armour	60' (20')	30' (10')

Option 2: Detailed Encumbrance

Treasure: The weight of coins and other treasure carried is tracked.

Equipment: The weight of the character's armour and weapons is also tracked (the weight of these items is listed in the genre rules book). Miscellaneous adventuring gear (backpack, spikes, sacks, etc.) may be counted as 80 coins of weight.

Movement rate: The character's movement rate is based on the total weight of all significant items carried, including treasure, weapons, and armour.

Detailed Encumbrance

Encumbrance	Movement Rate
Up to 400 coins	120' (40')
Up to 600 coins	90' (30')
Up to 800 coins	60' (20')
Up to 1,600 coins	30' (10')



CHECKS, DAMAGE, SAVES

Ability Checks

The referee may use a character's ability scores to determine the character's chance of succeeding at various challenging tasks.

Rolling an ability check: The player rolls 1d20 and, if the result is less than or equal to the ability, the check succeeds. If the roll is greater than the ability, the check fails.

Modifiers: Bonuses or penalties to the roll may be applied, depending on the difficulty of the task. A modifier of -4 would be a relatively easy ability check, and a $+4$ would be very difficult.

1s and 20s: An unmodified roll of 1 should be treated as a success and a 20 treated as a failure.

Damage and Healing

All characters and monsters have a hit point total, which represents their ability to avoid death. Many attack forms, including attacks with weapons in combat, subtract hit points from this pool.

Death

A character or monster reduced to 0 hit points or less is killed.

Destruction of Items

If a character is killed by a destructive spell or special attack (e.g. a *lightning bolt* spell or a dragon's breath), their equipment is assumed to be destroyed.

Destruction of Magic Items

Magic items on a character who is killed by a destructive spell or special attack may be allowed a chance to survive, as follows:

- **Save:** For each item, a saving throw may be made, using the character's saving throw values.
- **Bonuses:** Items that grant a bonus in combat (e.g. magical weapons and armour) may also apply this bonus to the saving throw.

Healing

Natural: For each full day of complete rest, a character or monster recovers 1d3 hit points. If the rest is interrupted, the character or monster will not heal that day.

Magical: Healing may also occur through magic, such as potions or spells. This kind of healing is instantaneous. Magical healing and natural healing can be combined.

Saving Throws

All characters and monsters can make saving throws to avoid the full effects of certain magical or special attacks.

Categories

There are five saving throw categories, used in the following situations:

- ▶ **Death or Poison:** When targeted by a death ray or exposed to poison.
- ▶ **Wands:** When targeted by an effect from a magical wand.
- ▶ **Paralysis or Petrification:** When targeted by an effect that paralyzes or turns to stone.
- ▶ **Breath Attacks:** When targeted by the breath of a dragon (or other monster with a breath attack).
- ▶ **Spells, Rods, or Staves:** When targeted by a baneful spell or an effect from a magical rod or staff.

When to Roll a Saving Throw

The appropriate saving throw to make and the effects of a success or failure are indicated in the description of the spell, monster attack, or adventure scenario.

Saving Throw Tables

Characters: Each character class has its own table denoting the saving throw values of characters of each experience level.

Monsters: Most monsters use the saving throw table on *p44*. Some monsters' descriptions may note that they use the table for a specific character class.

Saving Throws in Different Genres

Genre rules books may specify additional situations that require saving throws, and which saving throw category should be used. For example, a genre rules book may specify that exposure to radiation requires a save versus spells.

Rolling a Saving Throw

When affected by a spell or attack form which requires a saving throw, the player or referee must roll 1d20 and compare the result to the appropriate saving throw value:

- ▶ **Greater or equal:** A result that is greater than or equal to the saving throw value is a success.
- ▶ **Lower:** A result of less than the saving throw value is a failure.

Successful Saves

Damaging effects: A successful save against an effect that causes damage means that the damage is halved.

Other effects: A successful saving throw against an effect that does not cause damage means the effect has been entirely avoided or negated.

Saving Throws Versus Poison

Failure: A failed save against poison is usually fatal.

Damage: If a poisonous attack also inflicts damage, the damage is not affected by the success or failure of the saving throw.



HAZARDS AND CHALLENGES

Climbing

When characters are climbing in a difficult or tense situation, the referee may require an ability check against Dexterity.

Sheer Surfaces

Very steep or sheer surfaces are normally impossible to climb without specialised equipment. Some characters may have class abilities which allow them to attempt to climb such surfaces unaided.

Darkness

Characters will usually want to bring a source of light with them on underground expeditions. Typical light sources enable normal vision within a 30' radius.

Infravision

All non-human monsters and many demihuman races have a special kind of vision that allows them to see in the dark. This is called infravision.

Heat tones: Characters who have infravision can see the heat energy that radiates off of living things. Generally, living things will be visible as bright tones, while cool items are grey and very cold objects are black.

Reading: It is not possible to read in the dark with infravision, because fine detail cannot be perceived.

Range: Infravision works within a limited range (60' for monsters, unless specified otherwise in a monster's description).

Disruption: Infravision only functions in darkness. Visible light (normal or magical) and large heat sources will disrupt it.

Light and Surprise

Characters or monsters that carry a light in a dark environment are usually unable to surprise opponents (see *Encounters*, p34), because the light gives their presence away.

Falling

Falling from a height onto a hard surface inflicts 1d6 damage per 10' fallen.

Losing Direction

Characters can confidently follow trails, roads, and other well-known landmarks without fear of becoming lost. Likewise, travelling with a reliable guide prevents becoming lost. However, when travelling through untracked, open regions, it is easy to lose direction.

The chance of the party becoming lost depends on the type of terrain being explored (see *Wilderness Adventuring*, p30 and *Waterborne Adventuring*, p32).

Effects of Being Lost

If the party becomes lost, the referee will decide which direction they are actually travelling in. One option is to pick a direction only slightly off course. For example, if the group intended to go south, they are actually headed southwest or west.

It may take some time for a lost party to realise that it is moving in the wrong direction.

Starvation

If characters go for a full day or more without food or water, the referee may begin to apply penalties to attack rolls and movement rate, require more frequent rests, or even begin to deduct hit points (in extreme cases).

Swimming

Movement rate: Characters move at half their normal movement rate when swimming.

Who can swim: It is assumed that every character knows how to swim, unless there is some obvious reason why a character could not have learned.

Drowning

The circumstances in which drowning is a risk—as well as the chance of drowning—are judged by the referee.

Example circumstances: Swimming in treacherous water conditions, swimming while wearing armour or carrying heavy or awkward items, fighting in water.

Example chances of drowning: A character swimming in rough waters while wearing heavy armour and carrying a heavy load may have a 99% probability of drowning. A character in the same waters but wearing light armour and carrying a light load may only have a 10% probability of drowning.

Wandering Monsters

Besides the monsters specifically placed in certain regions of a dungeon or wilderness, PCs may randomly encounter monsters on the move between areas. These are known as wandering monsters.

See *Dungeon Adventuring*, p28, *Wilderness Adventuring*, p30, and *Waterborne Adventuring*, p32 for specific details.

Frequency: The referee should roll periodically to determine whether a wandering monster is encountered. The frequency of checks depends on the type of area being explored.



Chance: When a wandering monster check is made, the chance of a random encounter is usually 1-in-6. This chance may vary, depending on the type of area being explored (e.g. dungeon region or level, type of wilderness terrain).

Monster type: Each area should have its own table of wandering monsters, which the referee rolls on when an encounter takes place.

Noise or light: If the party is making a lot of noise or carrying bright light sources in a dark environment, the referee may increase the chance of wandering monsters being encountered.

Hiding: If the party rests quietly in an out-of-the-way location, the referee may decrease the chance of wandering monsters being encountered.

DUNGEON ADVENTURING

Sequence of Play Per Turn

1. **Wandering monsters:** The referee makes checks as applicable.
2. **Actions:** The party decides what action to take (e.g. moving, searching, listening, entering rooms).
3. **Description:** The referee describes what happens. If monsters are encountered, follow the procedure described in *Encounters*, p34.
4. **End of turn:** The referee updates time records, with special attention to light sources, spell durations, and the party's need to rest.

Doors

Dungeons often have many doors, some secret and others obvious. Many are locked and many are stuck.

Locked Doors

Locks may be picked by a character proficient with lock picks or opened by magic.

Stuck Doors

Forcing: The chance of forcing open a stuck door depends on the character's Strength (see *Ability Scores*, p14).

Surprise: A failed attempt to force open a door eliminates any possibility of surprise (see *Encounters*, p34) that the party may have against any monsters on the other side of the door.

Monsters: Note that monsters resident to the dungeon are often able to pass through stuck doors unhindered.



Secret Doors

Secret doors can only be spotted if characters are specifically looking for them. See *Searching*.

Doors Swinging Shut

Doors opened by adventurers (by whatever means) are likely to swing shut after they pass. To prevent this, doors may be held open using iron spikes or other wedges.

Monsters and Doors

Monsters that live in the dungeon can usually open doors, unless they are blocked, magically closed, or wedged shut with spikes.

Listening at Doors

Chance of success: PCs have a 1-in-6 chance of detecting subtle sounds beyond a door. (Some types of adventurers may have an increased chance of success.)

Referee rolls: The referee should always roll for the character listening so that the player never knows if the roll failed or if there simply is no sound behind the door.

One chance: This attempt may only be made one time at any door by a character.

Silent monsters: Some monsters, such as undead, do not make any noise.

Movement

Exploring the unknown: When exploring unknown areas of a dungeon, characters can move their *movement rate in feet per turn*. This (very slow!) rate of movement takes account for the fact that PCs are exploring, watching their footing, mapping, and trying to be quiet and avoid obstacles.

In familiar areas: When PCs are moving through dungeon areas with which they are familiar, the referee may allow them to move at a faster rate. For example, the referee might allow PCs to move at three times their base movement rate per turn, when moving through familiar areas.

Resting

Frequency of rest: Characters must rest for one turn every hour.

Penalty for not resting: If characters press on without resting, they suffer a penalty of -1 to hit and damage rolls until they have rested for one turn.

Searching

Dungeons often include hidden features such as secret doors and traps. Adventurers can spot these by searching.

Area: The player must declare the particular 10' × 10' area to be searched.

Time: Searching takes one turn.

Chance of success: If a character is searching in the right location, there is a base 1-in-6 chance of finding a secret door or room trap. (Some types of adventurers may have an increased chance.)

Referee rolls: The referee should always roll for the character searching, so that the player never knows if the roll failed or if there are simply no hidden features in the area searched.

One chance: Each character can only make one attempt to search an area.

Traps

There are two kinds of traps:

► **Treasure traps:** Small traps placed on an item, to prevent it being tampered with or stolen (e.g. a poison needle on a chest or lock).

► **Room traps:** Large traps that are designed to affect anyone who enters a certain area (e.g. a pit that opens in the floor when walked over).

Triggering Traps

Each trap is triggered by a specific action (e.g. opening a door or walking over a particular area).

Chance of triggering: Every time a character makes an action that could trigger a trap, there is a 2-in-6 chance of the trap being sprung.

Trap damage: Damage inflicted by a triggered trap is usually automatic, without an attack roll.

Monsters: Monsters may be able to bypass traps without risk, if the referee wishes.

Searching for Traps

Room traps: Adventurers may choose to search a 10' × 10' area for room traps. If the search succeeds, the trap is discovered. See *Searching*.

Treasure traps: Most adventurers do not have the requisite knowledge of subtle mechanisms to locate small traps such as poisoned needles. (Some types of adventurers may have this ability, as noted in their class description.)

Wandering Monsters

Frequency: A check is typically rolled once every two turns.

Chance: The typical chance of encountering a wandering monster is 1-in-6.

Distance: Wandering monsters are encountered 2d6 × 10 feet away, moving in the direction of the party.

WILDERNESS ADVENTURING

Sequence of Play Per Day

1. **Decide course:** The players decide on their course of travel for the day.
2. **Losing direction:** The referee determines whether the party gets lost.
3. **Wandering monsters:** The referee makes checks as applicable.
4. **Description:** The referee describes the terrain passed through and any sites of interest that the party comes across, asking players for their actions, as required. If monsters are encountered, follow the procedure described in *Encounters*, p34.
5. **End of day:** The referee updates time records, with special attention to rations, spell durations, and the party's need to rest.

Distance and Measurement

Ranges and movement rates: Are measured in yards, instead of feet. This means that ranges and movement rates are tripled.

Areas: Of spell effects, breath weapons, etc. are still measured in feet.

Flying

Miles per day: The distance a creature can fly in a day is *double the distance it can travel overland*. For example, a creature with a movement rate of 120' could travel 24 miles in a day overland, but could fly 48 miles in a day.

Terrain: Does not affect air travel.

Flying Mounts

In general, a winged beast may carry riders or other burdens based on its HD:

- ▶ **3 HD creatures:** May carry a being about half the size of an adult human.
- ▶ **6 HD creatures:** May carry an adult human.
- ▶ **12 HD creatures:** May carry a large animal like a horse.
- ▶ **24 HD creatures:** May carry a very large animal like an elephant.

Foraging

Foraging for herbs, fruits, nuts, etc. can be performed alongside normal movement (see *Overland Travel*). The party has a 1-in-6 chance per day of finding enough food for 1d6 human-sized beings.

Hunting

Hunting must be engaged in as the sole activity for a day—no travelling or resting is possible. When hunting, there is a 1-in-6 chance of encountering animals which may be suitable for eating (if they can be caught!). This is in addition to the normal chance of random encounters (see *Wandering Monsters*).



Losing Direction

At the start of each day of travel, the referee will roll to determine if the group loses direction. The probability depends on the terrain being traversed:

- **Clear, grasslands:** 1-in-6.
- **Barren lands, hills, mountains, woods:** 2-in-6.
- **Desert, jungle, swamp:** 3-in-6.

Effects: See *Losing Direction*, p26.

Overland Travel

Miles per day: The number of miles a character can travel in a day is determined by *dividing its base movement rate by five*. For example, a character whose base movement rate is 120' could travel up to 24 miles in a day.

Terrain Modifiers

Some types of terrain modify the speed at which characters can travel:

- **Broken lands, desert, forest, hills:** 33% slower.
- **Jungle, mountains, swamp:** 50% slower.
- **Maintained roads:** 50% faster.

Forced March

If characters need to travel further in a day, they may engage in a forced march.

Speed increase: The distance travelled is increased by 50%. For example, a character that can normally travel 24 miles in a day could travel 36 miles.

Rest: After a forced march, characters must rest for a full day.

Resting

Frequency of rest: Characters must rest for one day per six days of travel.

Penalty for not resting: If characters press on without resting, they suffer a penalty of -1 to hit and damage rolls until they have rested for one full day.

Surprise

Surrounded: If a party is surprised by three or more monsters, the monsters may have moved to encircle the party.

Visibility

Characters can usually see for three miles around them, in open terrain. This range may sometimes be reduced (e.g. in overgrown terrain such as a forest) or increased (e.g. looking out from the top of a mountain).

Wandering Monsters

Frequency: A check is typically rolled once per day, but the referee may choose to make more checks: up to three or four per day.

Chance: The chance of encountering a wandering monster depends on the terrain being explored (see below).

Distance: Wandering monsters are encountered $4d6 \times 10$ yards away. If either side is surprised (see *Encounters*, p34), this is reduced to $1d4 \times 10$ yards.

Chance by Terrain

- **City, clear, grasslands, settled lands:** 1-in-6.
- **Aerial, barren, desert, forest, hills:** 2-in-6.
- **Jungle, mountains, swamp:** 3-in-6.

WATERBORNE ADVENTURING

Sequence of Play Per Day

1. **Decide course:** The players decide on their course of travel for the day.
2. **Losing direction:** The referee determines whether the party gets lost.
3. **Weather:** The referee determines the *Wind Conditions*.
4. **Wandering monsters:** The referee makes checks as applicable.
5. **Description:** The referee describes the regions passed through and any sites of interest that the party comes across, asking players for their actions, as required. If monsters are encountered, follow the procedure described in *Encounters*, p34.
6. **End of day:** The referee updates time records, with special attention to rations, spell durations, and the crew's need to rest.

Distance and Measurement

Ranges and movement rates: Are measured in yards, instead of feet. This means that ranges and movement rates are tripled.

Areas: Of spell effects, breath weapons, etc. are still measured in feet.

Losing Direction

With a navigator aboard: The chance of getting lost is 2-in-6.

Without a navigator aboard: The chance of getting lost is 2-in-6 within sight of land, and 100% otherwise.

Effects: See *Losing Direction*, p26.



Surprise

Aquatic monsters are usually not surprised by ships. Special circumstances (e.g. thick fog) may alter this.

Travel on the Water

Miles per day: The number of miles a creature or vessel can travel in a day is determined by *dividing its base movement rate by five*. For example, a vessel with a base movement rate of 360' could travel up to 72 miles in a day.

Modifiers

The distance travelled in a day may be affected by the prevailing water and weather conditions:

- **River travel:** Water currents may increase (when moving downstream) or decrease (when moving upstream) the distance travelled by 1d6+6 miles per day.
- **Sea travel:** The movement rate of sailing vessels is affected by the prevailing wind conditions. See *Wind Conditions*.

Visibility

Land: On a clear day, land can be spotted at a distance of 24 miles. This may be reduced based on light and weather conditions.

Ships: May be sighted and identified at 300 yards on a clear day or as little as 40 yards in dense fog.

Variable Wind Conditions

2d6	Wind	Effect
2	No wind	Sailing impossible. Movement by oar at $\frac{1}{3}$ rate (due to fatigue).
3	Faint breeze	Sailing movement rate reduced to $\frac{1}{3}$ normal.
4	Gentle breeze	Sailing movement rate reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ normal.
5	Moderate breeze	Sailing movement rate reduced to $\frac{2}{3}$ normal.
6–8	Fresh breeze	Normal sailing movement rate.
9	Strong breeze	Sailing movement rate increased by $\frac{1}{3}$.
10	High wind	Sailing movement rate increased by $\frac{1}{2}$.
11	Near gale	Sailing movement rate doubled. See <i>Near Gales</i> .
12	Gale or storm	Sailing movement rate tripled. See <i>Gales and Storms</i> .

Wandering Monsters

Frequency: A check is typically rolled once per day, but the referee may choose to make more checks: up to 3 or 4 a day.

Chance: The chance of encountering a wandering monster is 2-in-6 on oceans or rivers, 3-in-6 in swamps.

Distance: Wandering monsters are encountered 4d6 × 10 yards away. If either side is surprised (see *Encounters*, p34), this is reduced to 1d4 × 10 yards.

Location: Aquatic encounters may occur either on the open water or on land, if the party docks at some point during the day.

Wind Conditions

Wind conditions at sea affect the rate at which a sailing vessel can travel. Extreme winds can also make travel hazardous. The referee should check the wind conditions at the start of each day, rolling 2d6:

- ▶ **2:** No wind; sailing is not possible.
- ▶ **3–11:** Normal sailing is possible.
- ▶ **12:** Gale or storm; sailing vessels' speed tripled (see *Gales and Storms*).

Variable Wind Conditions (Optional Rule)

Groups who prefer a slightly more detailed system of sea travel may use the table above, which adds extra detail to the daily 2d6 wind conditions roll.

Near Gales

Seaworthy vessels: Have a 10% chance of taking on water.

Unseaworthy vessels: Have a 20% chance of taking on water.

Effect of taking on water: The ship's movement rate is reduced by one third until repaired at a dock.

Gales and Storms

Seaworthy vessels: Sailing vessels can attempt to move with the wind to avoid damage. This is handled as follows:

- ▶ The vessel travels at three times its normal speed in a randomly determined direction. (The referee may roll 1d6, with 1 indicating the intended direction of travel, 2 indicating 60° to the right, 3 indicating 120° to the right, and so on.)
- ▶ If the ship encounters land during this travel, there is a 75% chance of it wrecking against the shore.

Unseaworthy vessels:

- ▶ There is an 80% chance of the vessel being overrun with water and sinking.
- ▶ If the vessel is in sight of land when the gale hits, it may attempt to beach. If the shore is relatively clear of physical dangers (rocks, cliffs, etc.), this is automatically successful; otherwise there is a 2-in-6 chance of finding a safe harbour to weather the storm.

ENCOUNTERS

An encounter begins when the characters stumble onto a monster, either because the referee has planned an encounter in the area the PCs are exploring or because a random die roll indicates an encounter (see *Wandering Monsters*, p27).

Encounter Sequence

1. **Encounter distance:** The referee determines how far away the monsters are from the PCs.
2. **Surprise:** The referee rolls for surprise, if applicable.
3. **Initiative:** Any sides that are not surprised roll initiative to determine who acts first.
4. **Actions:** Any sides that are not surprised decide how they will respond to the encounter. The encounter is played out accordingly.
5. **Conclusion:** One turn has passed.

Encounter Distance

The situation in which the encounter occurs often determines how far away the monster is. If there is uncertainty, the encounter distance may be determined randomly:

- ▶ **Dungeon:** $2d6 \times 10$ feet.
- ▶ **Wilderness:** $4d6 \times 10$ yards.
- ▶ **Waterborne:** $4d6 \times 10$ yards.

Surprise

When to Check

A check for surprise is made for any side that is not expecting the encounter. For example, if a monster is waiting quietly for an approaching party that is making a lot of noise, the monster would not have a chance to be surprised, but the party would.

Surprise Checks

Each side that is not already aware of the other's presence rolls 1d6.

Monsters: The referee rolls for monsters.

PCs: One player rolls for the adventuring party as a whole.

Results: A result of 1 or 2 means the side is surprised.

Effects of Surprise

Both sides surprised: There is simply a momentary confusion—neither side has any advantage.

One side surprised: The side that is not surprised gains a one round advantage. The surprised side cannot act that round.

Initiative

(See *Combat*, p40 for full details.)

Roll 1d6: For each side, at the start of each round.

Winner: The side with the highest roll acts first. Other sides act in order from highest to lowest roll.

Ties: Either both sides may roll again, or actions on both sides may be resolved simultaneously.

Actions

Player Character Actions

The players decide how they will act.

Monster Actions

The referee determines monsters' reaction to the party. Sometimes, circumstances make it obvious how a monster will react. Otherwise, the referee may roll on the table below to determine how a monster reacts to the party.

Charisma: If one specific character attempts to speak with the monsters, that character's NPC reactions modifier due to CHA is used to modify the monster reaction roll (see *Ability Scores*, p14).

Monster Reaction Roll

2d6	Result
2 or less	Hostile, attacks
3–5	Unfriendly, may attack
6–8	Neutral, uncertain
9–11	Indifferent, uninterested
12 or more	Friendly, helpful

Common Actions

Any action is possible in an encounter, but the following are common:

- **Combat:** If one side attacks, casts spells, or makes tactical movement, begin tracking time in rounds, following the combat procedure (p40).
- **Evasion:** If one side decides to flee, the other may decide to pursue. See *Evasion*.
- **Parley:** PCs may attempt to communicate with monsters. Opening an encounter in this way can influence the monsters' behaviour (see *Monster Actions*). If both sides decide to talk, the negotiation may be role-played.

Movement

Encounter movement rate: During encounters, a character can move up to one third of their base movement rate per round in feet (in the dungeon) or yards (in the wilderness). For example, a character whose base movement rate is 120' could move 40' per round during a dungeon encounter.

Maximum duration: Characters may move at this rate for at most 60 rounds (one turn).

Evasion

If one side wishes to avoid an encounter, it may attempt to flee. This is called *evasion* and is only possible *before combat has begun*. When a side decides to attempt an evasion, the opposing side must decide whether or not to pursue.

Players: May decide freely whether they wish to pursue fleeing monsters.

Monsters: The referee must decide whether monsters pursue fleeing PCs. (A low roll on the Monster Reactions table may be taken to indicate that the monster will pursue.)

No pursuit: If the opposing side decides to let the other side flee, then the evasion automatically succeeds; the encounter is avoided.

Pursuit: If the opposing side gives chase, the chance of the evasion succeeding depends on the environment being explored. See *Evasion and Pursuit*, p36.

Conclusion

An encounter is assumed to take at least one full turn to complete, including time to rest, regroup, clean weapons, bind wounds, and so on, afterwards.

EVASION AND PURSUIT

In the Dungeon

Evasion

Compare the two sides' movement rates:

► **Fleeing side faster:** The evasion automatically succeeds, unless the fleeing side is forced to stop.

► **Fleeing side not faster:** A pursuit occurs.

Pursuit

Time: Is measured in rounds (see *Time, Weight, Movement*, p22).

Running: Each side is assumed to be running at full speed (see below).

Line of sight: Most monsters will not continue a pursuit if the characters get out of the monster's range of vision.

Dropping treasure: If the monsters enjoy treasure, there is a 3-in-6 probability that they will stop pursuit to collect any treasure the characters drop.

Dropping food: Hungry or less intelligent monsters may stop pursuit if characters drop food (3-in-6 chance).

Obstacles: Burning oil or other obstacles may also slow or stop a pursuit.

Running

Movement rate: During a pursuit, characters run at their full movement rate in feet per round.

Mapping: Is not possible while running.

Exhaustion: Characters become exhausted after running for 30 rounds.

Effects of exhaustion: A -2 penalty to attacks, damage, and Armour Class.

Resting: The penalties for exhaustion last until characters have rested for three full turns.

In the Wilderness

Evasion

The chance of evasion is a percentile roll. If the percentile evasion roll fails, a pursuit occurs. Surprise (see *Encounters*, p34) determines the chance of evasion:

► **No surprise:** If neither side is surprised, the chance of evasion is determined by the relative size of the two groups. (The chances are in favour of the smaller group, as larger groups cannot move as fast or as quietly.) The table to the right indicates the base chance of evasion, and the modifiers that may apply.

► **Surprised side:** May generally not evade. The referee may rule that environmental conditions give a small chance of evasion even when surprised (as above). For example, dense woodland may give a surprised side a 10% chance of evasion.

► **Surprising side:** If one side has surprised the other, the side with surprise may evade automatically—the surprised side is not even aware that the encounter occurred.

Pursuit

The following procedure is followed, day by day, until the pursuit is over:

1. The fleeing side moves in a random direction, determined by the referee (no mapping is possible).
2. If the pursuing side's movement rate is greater than that of the fleeing side, there is a 50% chance of it catching up. If the roll succeeds, the fleeing side has been caught; the pursuit is over. Otherwise, continue to step 3.
3. The fleeing side must decide whether to continue fleeing. If it decides to continue, it may make another evasion attempt (see above). If the attempt to evade fails, return to step 1. If the fleeing group decides to stop fleeing, it is caught (the pursuit ends).

Wilderness Evasion Base Chance

Fleeing Group Size	Chance of Evasion by Number of Pursuers		
1–4	1 pursuer: 50%	2–3 pursuers: 70%	4+ pursuers: 90%
5–12	1–3 pursuers: 35%	4–8 pursuers: 50%	9+ pursuers: 70%
13–24	1–6 pursuers: 25%	7–16 pursuers: 35%	17+ pursuers: 50%
25+	1–10 pursuers: 10%	11–30 pursuers: 25%	31+ pursuers: 35%

Wilderness Evasion Modifiers

One side twice as fast: If the pursuing side's movement rate is double that of the other, the chance of evasion is decreased by 25%. If the fleeing side's movement rate is double that of the other, the chance of evasion is increased by 25%.

Environment: The referee may modify the probabilities based on the conditions and environment. For example, in a densely wooded area, the chance of evasion may be increased by 25%.

Minimum chance: The chance of escape is always at least 5%.



Waterborne

Evasion

The chance of evasion is determined by the difference between the two sides' movement rates, listed in the table below.

Success: If the evasion roll succeeds, the pursuers cannot attempt to catch up with the fleeing side until the next day—and then only if a random encounter roll indicates an encounter.

Failure: If the evasion roll fails, a pursuit occurs.

Pursuit

Time: Is measured in rounds (see *Time, Weight, Movement*, p22).

Initial distance: The two sides begin a pursuit at normal encounter distance (see *Waterborne Adventuring*, p32).

Closing in: The distance between the two sides decreases by the difference between their two movement rates each round (a minimum of 30' per round).

Waterborne Evasion

Fleeing Side's Movement Rate	Chance of Evasion
Faster than pursuer	80%
0'–30' per round slower than pursuer	50%
31'–60' per round slower than pursuer	40%
61'–90' per round slower than pursuer	35%
91'–120' per round slower than pursuer	25%
121'+ per round slower than pursuer	10%





COMBAT

Combat Sequence Per Round

1. **Declare spells and retreats**
2. **Initiative:** Each side rolls 1d6.
3. **Winning side acts:**
 - a. **Monster morale**
 - b. **Movement**
 - c. **Missile attacks**
 - d. **Spell casting**
 - e. **Melee attacks**
4. **Other sides act:** In initiative order.

Declare Spells and Retreats

Characters who wish to *cast a spell* or *move when in melee* must declare this. Other actions need not be declared.

Initiative

Roll 1d6: For each side, at the start of each round.

Winner: The side with the highest roll acts first. Other sides act in order from highest to lowest roll.

Ties: Either both sides may roll again, or actions on both sides may be resolved simultaneously. (This means that both sides may inflict deadly blows on each other!)

Slow Weapons

Characters attacking with two-handed melee weapons (and some missile weapons—as indicated in the equipment description) always act last in the round, as if they had lost initiative.

Individual Initiative (Optional Rule)

Instead of an initiative roll per side, a roll may be made for each individual involved in a battle, modified by DEX (see *Ability Scores*, p14). The referee may determine an initiative modifier for monsters that are very fast or slow, instead of applying a DEX modifier.

Monster Morale (Optional Rule)

See *Morale*, p43.

Movement

Outside of Melee

Movement rate: A character can move up to their encounter movement rate each round.

Maximum duration: Characters may move at this rate for at most 60 rounds.

In Melee

When in melee with a foe, only the following forms of movement are possible:

► **Fighting withdrawal:** The character moves backwards at up to half their encounter movement rate. There must be a clear path for this movement.

► **Retreat:** The character turns and flees from melee, moving up to their full encounter movement rate. This round: the character may not attack; the opponent gains a +2 bonus to all attacks against the character and ignores any AC bonus due to the character's shield (if applicable).

Missile Attacks

Are possible when opponents are more than 5' from one another. See *Attacking*.

Range Modifiers

All missile weapons have ranges, noted in the equipment lists.

Short range: +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Medium range: No bonuses or penalties.

Long range: -1 penalty to attack rolls.

Beyond long range: Attack not possible.

Targets Behind Cover

Complete cover: The target cannot be hit.

Partial cover: The referee may apply attack penalties of between -1 and -4 (e.g. a small table might incur a -1 penalty; dense woods might incur a -4 penalty).

Spell Casting

Freedom: The character must be able to speak and move their hands. A spell caster cannot cast spells if gagged, bound, or in an area of magical silence.

Sole action: When casting a spell, no other actions may be taken in the round.

No movement: The caster cannot move and cast a spell in the same round.

Line of sight: Unless noted in a spell's description, the intended target (a specific monster, character, object, or area of effect) must be visible to the caster.

Disrupting Spells

If a spell caster loses initiative and is successfully attacked or fails a saving throw before their turn, the spell being cast is disrupted and fails. It is removed from the caster's memory as if it had been cast.

Melee Attacks

Are possible when opponents are 5' or less from each other. See *Attacking*.

Other Sides Act

Repeat steps 3a to 3e for each side, in order of initiative (highest first).

Attacking

Natural 1s and 20s

Attack rolls of 20 always hit. Attack rolls of 1 always miss.

Invulnerabilities

Some monsters are immune to certain attacks. In this case, even if an attack hits, damage is not rolled.

Attacks Per Round

PCs normally attack once per round. Some monsters have multiple attacks.

Attacking and Moving

Movement and attacking may be combined in the same round.

Attack Rolls

1. **Roll 1d20**
2. **Apply modifiers:** STR for melee; DEX, range, cover for missile attacks.
3. **Determine hit AC:** Look up the result in the attack matrix row for the attacker's THAC0 (see *p44*). This indicates the AC score that the attack hits.
4. **Result:** If the hit AC is equal to or lower than the opponent's AC, the attack hits. Referee rolls for damage.

Ascending Armour Class (Optional Rule)

Groups using the optional rule for Ascending AC (see *p11*) should use the following attack procedure instead.

1. **Roll 1d20**
2. **Apply modifiers:** STR for melee; DEX, range, cover for missile attacks.
3. **Determine hit AC:** Add the character's attack bonus to the attack roll. The result is the ascending AC score that the attack hits.
4. **Result:** If the hit AAC is equal to or higher than the opponent's AAC, the attack hits. Referee rolls for damage.

Rolling for Damage

PC attacks: Inflict 1d6 damage. Damage of melee attacks is modified by STR.

Monster attacks: Deal the damage indicated in the monster's description.

Minimum damage: An attack which hits always deals at least one point of damage, even when damage modifiers reduce the number rolled to 0 or less.

Death: A character or monster reduced to 0 hit points or less is killed.

Variable Weapon Damage (Optional Rule)

Some groups may prefer different weapons to inflict different amounts of damage. In this case, PC attacks inflict the damage indicated for the weapon in the equipment lists.

OTHER COMBAT ISSUES

Attacking from Behind

AC bonuses from shields are negated.

Blindness

A blind character is unable to attack.

Bombing

Flying creatures may pick up rocks or other objects and drop them from above.

Altitude: At most 300'.

Chance to hit: 16 or higher on 1d20.

Affected area and damage: Depend on the size of the bomb—larger creatures can carry larger bombs. For example, a bomb from a flying creature able to carry a human might inflict 2d6 damage to all creatures hit in a 10' × 10' area.

Invulnerabilities (Optional Rule)

Some monsters can only be harmed by magical or silver weapons. The referee may allow such monsters to also be harmed by attacks from:

- ▶ Another invulnerable monster.
- ▶ A monster with 5 HD or greater.

Paralysed Opponents

Helpless opponents, such as those magically paralysed or frozen, can be automatically hit in melee. Only a roll for damage is required.

Spacing

The referee should judge how many attackers can strike at a single opponent, bearing in mind the size of the opponent and the available space around it.

10' passage: Normally at most 2–3 characters can fight side-by-side in a 10' wide passageway.

Subduing (Optional Rule)

Characters that wish to subdue an intelligent opponent must announce that they are attacking without the intent to kill.

Blunt blows: Only bludgeoning attacks may be made. Bladed melee weapons may be employed to deal blunt blows with the flat of the blade.

Subdual damage: Combat and damage are calculated normally, noting subdual damage separately to actual damage.

Effect at 0hp: An intelligent character or monster that reaches 0 hit points due to subdual damage will surrender, realising that its opponent could have killed it.

Unarmed Attacks

Attack rolls: Unarmed combat is handled the same as melee combat.

Damage: Unarmed attacks inflict 1d2 damage, modified by STR.

Unstable Surfaces

Characters on an unstable surface, such as a ship in rough seas or riding a flying animal, are affected as follows:

- ▶ **Missile attacks:** Suffer a –4 penalty.
- ▶ **Spells:** Cannot be cast.
- ▶ **Magic items:** Can be used normally.

Note that magical means of flight (e.g. a magic broom, carpet, or the *fly* spell) generally do not count as unstable.

Water

When fighting in or beneath water:

- ▶ **Penalties:** Attack and damage rolls should be penalised.
- ▶ **Missile weapons:** Usually do not work at all.

MORALE

(OPTIONAL RULE)

In combat, the referee decides whether monsters or NPCs surrender or run away. The following system may be utilised.

Morale Rating

Monsters have a listing for morale, rated from 2 to 12, which represents how likely they are to fight or flee.

A score of 2: Means the monster never fights (unless absolutely cornered).

A score of 12: Means the monster will fight until killed.

Morale Checks

The referee rolls 2d6 and compares the result against the monster's morale score:

► **Higher than morale score:** The monster will surrender or attempt to flee.

► **Equal to or lower than morale score:** The monster will continue to fight.

Two successes: If a monster makes two successful morale checks in an encounter, it will fight until killed, with no further checks necessary.

When to Check Morale

The referee usually makes a morale check for monsters under two conditions:

First death: The first time one of their number is killed in battle.

Side half incapacitated: When half the monsters have been killed or otherwise incapacitated.

Situational Adjustments

The referee may decide to apply bonuses or penalties— between -2 to $+2$ —to morale, depending on the circumstances. For example, the side that is losing or winning might receive a penalty or bonus to morale of -1 or $+1$, respectively.

Scores of 2 or 12: Adjustments are never applied to monsters with a morale of 2 or 12.

Mercenary Morale

Mercenaries (see *Hirelings*, p18) have a morale rating and check morale in exactly the same way as monsters.

Morale rating: Determined solely by the type of troops, see below. The CHA of the hiring character has no influence.

Modifiers: The morale score of a group of mercenaries may be modified based on working conditions, at the referee's discretion. If mercenaries from the group are being killed frequently or subjected to other abuses, morale will be low. If the mercenaries are enjoying riches and excitement, it might be higher.

Mercenary Morale

Troop Type	Morale
Untrained, militia	6
Barbarian horde	7
Trained warriors	8
Mounted	+1
Elite troops	+1
Fanatics, berserkers	+2

Retainer Morale

Retainers signed up to work as adventurers, so are not frightened off at the first sign of danger. Retainers do not make morale checks in combat, but a loyalty check may be required in extreme peril (see *Retainers*, p46).

COMBAT TABLES

These tables list the attack probabilities for all monsters and characters and the saving throw values used by monsters and normal humans.

PC and NPC Saving Throws

PCs and classed NPCs use the saving throw tables for their character class, listed in the genre rules book.

Attack Matrix by THACO

THACO	Attack Roll to Hit AC												
	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
20 [-1]	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
19 [0]	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
18 [+1]	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9
17 [+2]	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
16 [+3]	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
15 [+4]	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
14 [+5]	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
13 [+6]	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
12 [+7]	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
11 [+8]	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
10 [+9]	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2
9 [+10]	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2
8 [+11]	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2
7 [+12]	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2
6 [+13]	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
5 [+14]	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Monster Saving Throws

Hit Dice	Death	Wands	Paralysis	Breath	Spells
Normal Human	14	15	16	17	18
1-3	12	13	14	15	16
4-6	10	11	12	13	14
7-9	8	9	10	10	12
10-12	6	7	8	8	10
13-15	4	5	6	5	8
16-18	2	3	4	3	6
19-21	2	2	2	2	4
22 or more	2	2	2	2	2

Monster THAC0 by Hit Dice

Hit Dice	THAC0
Normal Human	20 [-1]
Up to 1	19 [0]
1+ to 2	18 [+1]
2+ to 3	17 [+2]
3+ to 4	16 [+3]
4+ to 5	15 [+4]
5+ to 6	14 [+5]
6+ to 7	13 [+6]
7+ to 9	12 [+7]
9+ to 11	11 [+8]
11+ to 13	10 [+9]
13+ to 15	9 [+10]
15+ to 17	8 [+11]
17+ to 19	7 [+12]
19+ to 21	6 [+13]
21+ or more	5 [+14]

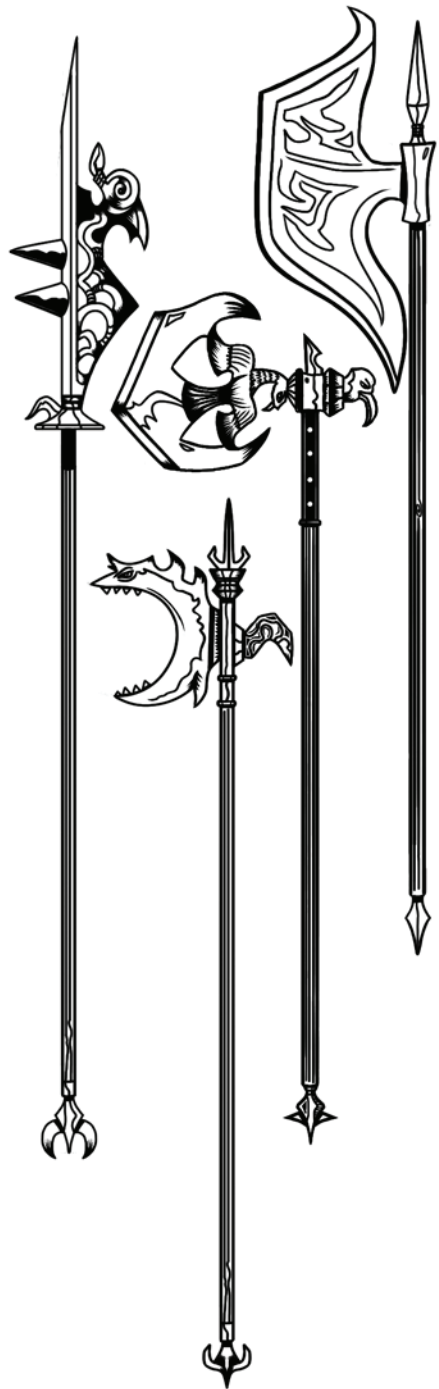
Normal Humans

All humans who are not a member of an adventuring class are classified as *normal humans*. They are treated as having less than 1 Hit Die, and have their own saving throw and attack probabilities.

Attack Rolls Using THAC0 (Optional Rule)

Instead of referring to the attack matrix, attacks may be resolved using THAC0 directly. A THAC0 score denotes the attack roll required to hit AC 0. The attack roll required to hit opponents of other AC scores can be calculated by subtracting the target AC from the THAC0. For example, a character with a THAC0 of 19 could hit an opponent with AC 5 on a roll of 14 or greater ($19 - 5 = 14$).

Note: Using THAC0 to resolve attack rolls results in very slightly different attack probabilities than when using the traditional approach of referring to the attack matrix.



RETAINERS

Retainers are NPCs that are hired by characters to accompany them on an adventure. (NPCs hired for non-adventuring tasks are treated as hirelings, see *p18*.)

Limit per PC: Each character is limited to a finite number of retainers, which is indicated by the character's Charisma score (see *Ability Scores, p14*).

Duties: Retainers are not mindless slaves and, although they will usually share the party's risks, they will not willingly act as battle fodder. If abused in any way, retainers will typically warn others of this and the PCs will soon find it difficult to hire other retainers.

Class and Level

Retainers can be of any class (including normal humans of level 0), but must be of equal or lower level to the hiring PC.

Recruitment

Retainers may be located by frequenting drinking establishments or by paying to post notices of help wanted.

Applicants are recruited through negotiation, with the referee playing the roles of the NPCs a character attempts to hire. The PC should explain what the job entails and the wages paid.

Wages and Upkeep

The referee should determine the rate of pay desired by potential retainers, taking the following factors into account:

- **Skill level:** More experienced retainers will want a higher rate of pay, whereas those employed for unskilled tasks will have lower demands.
- **Competition:** Retainers may accept lower rates of pay if there are many applicants, but may demand higher rates if there is little competition for the job.

Standard Rate

Retainers will usually want a guaranteed fee (per day or per adventure) and a share of treasure recovered (at very least a half share). For example: a fee of 1gp per day plus a half share of treasure.

Upkeep

The hiring PC must also pay for the retainer's daily upkeep (food and lodgings) and for any new adventuring gear, weapons, or mounts the retainer requires.

Shares of Treasure

Fractional shares of treasure are calculated by dividing the treasure by the total number of shares. For example, a party consisting of 5 PCs (who receive full shares) plus one retainer (who is paid a half share) discover 2,750gp of treasure. The total is divided by 5.5 (five full shares plus one half share): 500gp. Thus, each PC gains 500gp and the retainer gains 250gp.

Applicant Reactions

Once an offer is made, the referee determines the potential retainer's reaction by rolling 2d6 on the table below, modified as follows:

- **Charisma:** The roll is modified by the hiring character's NPC reactions modifier due to CHA (see *Ability Scores*, p14).
- **Generosity:** The referee may apply a bonus or penalty, depending on the attractiveness of the deal (+1 or +2 for generous offers, -1 or -2 for poor offers).
- **Reputation:** A penalty of -1 or -2 may be applied, if the hiring PC has a bad reputation.

Retainer Hiring Reactions

2d6	Result
2 or less	Ill will
3-5	Offer refused
6-8	Roll again
9-11	Offer accepted
12 or more	Offer accepted, +1 loyalty

Ill will: A -1 penalty applies to further hiring reaction rolls while recruiting in the same town or area.



Experience

Although retainers are played by the referee, they acquire experience in the same way PCs do, can advance in level, and are affected by all of the same class rules as PCs.

XP penalty: Because retainers follow instructions when on an adventure, thus not directly engaging in problem solving, XP they receive is penalised by -50%.

Normal humans: When a normal human (i.e. a retainer of level 0 with no character class) gains XP, they must choose an adventuring character class.

Loyalty

Retainers have a loyalty rating, determined by the hiring character's CHA (see *Ability Scores*, p14). This rating may be adjusted at the referee's discretion:

- **Bonuses:** A retainer's loyalty may be increased if the PC has been particularly good to the retainer (e.g. has repeatedly given additional treasure).
- **Penalties:** A retainer's loyalty may be reduced if the PC has been cruel or contrary to their word.

Loyalty Checks

To make a loyalty check, the referee rolls 2d6 and, if the result is lower than or equal to the retainer's loyalty rating, accounting for any adjustments, the roll has succeeded.

When to Check Loyalty

Loyalty checks are made in two circumstances:

- **Peril:** Each time the retainer is exposed to a particularly perilous situation. If the roll fails, the retainer will likely flee.
- **After an adventure:** If the roll fails, the retainer will not work for the PC again.

VEHICLES

When travelling long distances, characters sometimes make use of vehicles, for example a ship to travel on the high seas. Details on specific types of vehicles are found in the genre rules book. This section provides the basic rules for dealing with vehicles in general.

Game Statistics

Hull Points (hp)

The vehicle's structural integrity and ability to keep moving when damaged. Analogous to a character's hit points. A vehicle that reaches 0 hull points is destroyed.

Armour Class (AC)

The vehicle's ability to resist damage from attacks.

Movement Rate

The speed at which the vehicle can move. Every vehicle has a *base movement rate* and an *encounter movement rate* (noted in parentheses). The encounter movement rate is one third of the base movement rate.

Cargo Capacity

The maximum load the vehicle can carry, measured in coins (see *Time, Weight, Movement*, p22).

Required Crew

The number of people or animals (e.g. sailors, oarsmen, horses) required for the vehicle's normal operation.

Passengers or Mercenaries

Some vehicles have extra space aboard specifically intended to carry passengers or mercenaries (of any type, see *Hirelings*, p18) in addition to the normal crew. If a vehicle's description does not mention this space for passengers, it is assumed to only have space for the crew—the referee may rule that cargo hold space could be converted into additional living quarters.

Seaworthiness

Water vessels are divided into two categories, each behaving differently under different wind conditions (see *Wind Conditions*, p33). Seaworthy vessels are suitable for use on the high seas, away from coastal waters. Unseaworthy vessels are restricted to rivers, lakes, or coastal waters.

Damaging Vehicles

In combat, attacks and damage may be directed at vehicles in addition to characters and monsters.

Normal attacks: Unless noted in a vehicle's description, attacks with normal weapons (e.g. bows, swords, etc.) do not inflict hull damage.

Magical attacks: Damaging spells or magical attacks inflict one point of hull damage per five points of normal hit point damage the attack does.

Giant monsters: Can damage vehicles, inflicting one point of hull damage per five points of normal hit point damage the attack does.

Mounted weaponry: Some vehicles carry mounted weaponry specifically designed for vehicle-to-vehicle combat. Such weapons inflict hull damage directly. The rules for attacking with such weapons are provided in the genre rules book, as appropriate.

Effects of Hull Damage

When a vehicle loses hull points, its movement rate is also affected. This may be due to structural damage influencing how the vehicle moves or, in the case of water vessels, due to taking on water.

Movement rate reduction: For every 10% a vehicle is reduced from its maximum hull points, its movement rate is reduced by an equal percentage. For example, if a vehicle loses 20% of its hull points, its movement rate is reduced by 20%.

Destruction

If a vehicle is reduced to 0 hull points:

- ▶ It will lose its structural integrity in 1d10 rounds (e.g. a water vessel sinks).
- ▶ Any mounted weaponry is no longer functional.

Repairs

In a workshop: Vehicle damage can be repaired by experienced technicians working in a suitable workshop or dock.

In the field: A vehicle's crew can repair up to half of any damage sustained. Remaining damage can only be repaired in a suitable workshop or dock.

Time: It takes five crew-members one turn to repair one hull point. This task requires full attention, so any crew involved in repair cannot take any other action during a turn repairing a vessel.

Boarding

When the occupants of a vehicle wish to board another vehicle, the two vehicles must be brought alongside one another.

Mutual boarding intent: If the occupants of both vehicles wish to board one another, their mutual intent makes the action succeed with no chance of failure.

Forceful boarding: If the occupants of one vehicle wish to forcefully board the other vehicle, there is a 2-in-6 chance of being able to successfully manoeuvre the vehicle into a boarding position. The two vehicles may then be clamped together with grappling hooks.

Boarding characters: Characters who are in the act of boarding another vehicle suffer a penalty of -2 to attack rolls and Armour Class for one round.

Rowed Water Vessels

Rowing Encounter Speeds

Some rowed vessels may have an increased encounter movement rate. This represents the great effort on the part of the oarsmen that may be exerted during combat. Such speeds cannot be maintained for long periods, thus the per turn and per day movement rates of such vessels are much slower.

Reduced Oarsmen

Having less than the required number of oarsmen reduces a vessel's speed.

Movement rate reduction: For every 10% reduction in the available rowing crew, the vessel's rowing speed is reduced by an equal percentage. For example, if 10% of the oarsmen are being used to repair hull damage, the vessel moves at 90% of its normal speed (i.e. 10% slower than normal).

MAGIC

SPELLS

Some character classes have the ability to memorize and cast magical spells. A spell consists of a pattern of magical energy memorized in a character's mind. When a spell is cast, the spell is erased from the character's mind until it is memorized again.

Arcane and divine magic: Spells are either granted by a deity or higher power (*divine magic*) or learned by esoteric study (*arcane magic*).

Spell list: The character's class determines which spells they can cast. Each class has an associated list of spells.

Spells in memory: The character's level determines how many spells they can memorize at one time.

Reversible spells: Some spells are reversible; this is indicated in each spell's description.

Memorizing Spells

Rest and time requirements: A spellcaster can memorize new spells after an uninterrupted night's sleep. It takes one hour to memorize all spells the character is capable of memorizing.

Duplicate spells: A character may memorize the same spell more than once, as long as they are capable of memorizing more than one spell of the given level.

Casting Spells

A memorized spell may be cast by precisely replicating the required set of hand gestures and mystical, spoken words.

Once only: When a spell is cast, knowledge of the spell is erased from the mind of the caster, until it is memorized again.

Freedom: The character must be able to speak and move their hands. A spellcaster cannot cast spells if gagged, bound, or in an area of magical silence.

Line of sight: Unless noted in a spell's description, the intended target (a specific monster, character, object, or area of effect) must be visible to the caster.

Spell Effects

Selecting targets: Some spells affect multiple targets, either by area or by Hit Dice total. If the spell description does not specify how targets are selected, the referee must decide whether they are selected randomly, by the caster, etc.

Concentration: Some spells specify that the caster must concentrate in order to maintain the magical effect. The referee must decide which actions break concentration. For example, the referee may rule that the caster may not engage in combat, cast other spells, or move at greater than half speed while concentrating on a spell.

Cumulative effects: Multiple spells cannot be used to increase the same ability (e.g. bonuses to attack rolls, AC, damage rolls, saving throws, etc.). Spells that affect different abilities can be combined. Spells can be combined with the effects of magical items.

Arcane Magic

Memorizing Spells

Arcane spell casters memorize spells from spell books (see overleaf) and are thus limited to choosing from the spells in their spell book, which must be at hand.

Reversing Spells

The normal or reversed form of a spell must be selected when the spell is memorized. An arcane spell caster may memorize both forms of a spell, if the character is able to memorize more than one spell of the given level.



Divine Magic

Memorizing Spells

Divine spell casters memorize spells through prayer to their gods. When praying for spells, divine spell casters may choose any spells in their class' spell list that they are of high enough level to cast.

Reversing Spells

Divine spell casters can cast the reversed version of a spell by speaking the words and performing the gestures backwards when it is cast.

Deity Disfavour

Divine spell casters must be faithful to the tenets of their alignment, clergy, and religion. If the character ever falls from favour with their deity, penalties (determined by the referee) may be imposed. These may include penalties to attack (-1), a reduction in spells, or being sent on a perilous quest. In order to regain favour, the character must perform some great deed for their deity (as determined by the referee), for example: donating magic items or gold, constructing a temple, converting many people to the religion, vanquishing a powerful enemy of the deity, etc.

Spells and Deity Alignment

A divine spell caster may draw disfavour from their deity when casting spells (or their reversed versions) whose effects go against the deity's alignment:

- **Lawful characters:** Will only use reversed spells in dire circumstances.
- **Chaotic characters:** Will usually use reversed spells, only using the normal versions of spells to benefit allies of their religion.
- **Neutral characters:** Will favour either normal or reversed spells, depending on the deity served (no deity favours both reversed and normal spells).

SPELL BOOKS

Arcane spell casters record the spells that they know in a spell book.

Number of spells: A character's spell book contains exactly the number of spells that the character is capable of memorizing (as determined by the character's class and level).

Beginning Spells

Arcane spell casters begin play with as many spells in their spell book as they are able to memorize. The referee may choose these spells or may allow the player to select.

Adding Spells

When arcane spell casters gain a level, they can increase the selection of spells in their spell book, bringing it in line with the number of spells the character can memorize. This is possible in two ways:

► **Mentoring:** The character may consult an arcane guild or mentor to learn new spells. This process takes about a week of game time. The spells a character learns in this way are determined by the referee, who may decide to let the player choose.

► **Research:** It is also possible to add spells to a spell book by means of *Magical Research*.

Lost Spell Books

An arcane spell caster can rewrite the spells in a lost or destroyed spell book:

► **Cost:** The cost is 1 week of game time and 1,000 gp for each spell level. For instance, rewriting two first level spells and one 2nd level spell will take 4 weeks and 4,000 gp.

► **Sole activity:** This activity requires complete concentration. The character may not engage in any other activity for the required period.

Captured Spell Books

Each arcane spell caster's spell books are written so that only the owner is able to read the spells without the use of magic.



MAGICAL RESEARCH

Many spell casting character classes can also perform research into new spells, magic items, and other magical effects, as noted in the class description. This requires time, monetary outlay, and sometimes rare and unusual ingredients. Success in any magical research is not guaranteed—see *Chance of Failure*.

Creating New Spells

The player should describe in detail the spell they wish to create and the effects it has. The referee will then decide if the spell can be created and, if so, what the spell level will be.

Restrictions

The character must be capable of casting spells of the level the new spell will be.

Cost and Time

Researching a new spell takes two weeks per spell level and 1,000gp per spell level.

Creating Magic Items

The player should describe in detail the item that they wish to construct and the effects it has. The referee will decide whether this is possible and, if so, what kinds of materials are required.

Restrictions

Divine spell casters: May only create items usable by their class.

Arcane spell casters: May create any item except those that may only be used by divine spell casters.

Materials

Creating magic items often requires rare components such as expensive gems or ingredients from rare animals or monsters. Often, adventures will be required just to acquire these materials.

Chance of Failure

There is a minimum probability of 15% that any magical research endeavour fails. If the research fails, the money and time invested are lost.

Cost and Time

Duplicating spell effects: Many magic items duplicate the effects of a spell, generally costing one week of game time and 500 gp per level of the mimicked spell.

Multi-use items: If the item created can replicate a spell effect multiple times (for example a wand with charges), the cost in time and money is multiplied by the number of uses.

Other items: Some magic items do not mimic spell effects precisely and for these the referee will have to use discretion. The more powerful the item, the more difficult it should be to construct. As a general rule, items should cost from 10,000 to 100,000 gp and from 1 month to 1 year of game time to complete. Some examples are: 20 arrows +1 (10,000gp, 1 month), plate mail +1 (10,000gp, 6 months), crystal ball (30,000gp, 6 months).

Other Magical Research

Characters that are able to research spells or magic items may also attempt to research other kinds of magical effects for which a magic item or spell is not appropriate. For example, a character may wish to sanctify a holy site, or create magical traps, constructs, or portals.

As with magic item creation, the referee decides the time and cost of the research. The following may also be required:

- ▶ The casting of certain, specific spells.
- ▶ Rare ingredients.
- ▶ In some cases, it may also be necessary to periodically repeat the ritual to renew the magical effect.

MONSTERS

GAME STATISTICS

Monster listings specify the following statistics.

Armour Class (AC)

The monster's ability to avoid damage in combat.

Ascending AC: The optional AAC score is listed afterwards in square brackets.

Hit Dice (HD)

The number of d8s rolled to determine an individual's hit points.

Asterisks: One or more asterisks after the HD number indicate the number of special abilities the monster has, for the purpose of XP calculation.

Modifiers: Modifiers to the HD (e.g. +3, -1) are applied to the hit point total after rolling the specified number of d8s.

Fractional Hit Dice: Some monsters are listed as having less than one HD, either as $\frac{1}{2}$ (roll 1d4) or as a fixed number of hit points.

Average hit points: The average hit point value is listed in parentheses.

Attacks Usable Per Round (Att)

The attacks that the monster can use each round, with the inflicted damage in parentheses. (Note that monsters' attack and damage rolls are not modified by STR or DEX, unless specified.)

Alternative attack routines: Square brackets are used to distinguish between alternative attack routines that a monster may choose from.

Saving Throw Values (SV)

The monster's saving throw values:

- ▶ **D:** Death/poison.
- ▶ **W:** Wands.
- ▶ **P:** Paralysis/petrification.
- ▶ **B:** Breath attacks.
- ▶ **S:** Spells/rods/staves.

Save as HD: The HD at which the monster saves is listed in parentheses (with NH indicating that it saves as a normal human). This is not always equal to the monster's HD rating—unintelligent monsters typically save at half their HD rating; magical monsters may save at a higher HD rating.

Attack Roll "to Hit AC 0" (THACO)

The monster's ability to hit foes in combat, determined by its Hit Dice (see *Monster THACO by Hit Dice*, p45).

Attack bonus: The monster's attack bonus (required when using the optional rule for Ascending AC) is listed afterwards in square brackets.

Movement Rate (MV)

The speed at which the monster can move. Every monster has a *base movement rate* and an *encounter movement rate* (noted in parentheses, one third of the base movement rate).

Modes of movement: If the monster has multiple modes of movement (e.g. walking, flying, climbing), they are listed individually, separated by slashes.

Morale Rating (ML)

The monster's likelihood to persist in battle. See *Morale*, p43.

Alignment (AL)

The monster's affiliation to Law, Neutrality, or Chaos. If "any" is listed, the referee may roll randomly or choose the creature's alignment.

XP Award (XP)

Pre-calculated XP award for defeating the monster.

Number Appearing (NA)

Listed as two values, the second in parentheses.

Zeros: If the first value is a zero, monsters of this type are not usually encountered in dungeons. If the second value is a zero, monsters of this type are not usually encountered in the wilderness and do not usually have lairs.

Usage: The use of these values depends on the situation in which monsters are encountered:

- ▶ **Wandering monsters in a dungeon:** The first value determines the number of monsters encountered roaming in a dungeon level equal to their HD. If the monster is encountered on a level greater than its HD, the number appearing may be increased; if encountered on a level less than its HD, the number appearing should be reduced.
- ▶ **Monster lair in a dungeon:** The second value lists the number of monsters found in a lair in a dungeon.
- ▶ **Wandering monsters in the wilderness:** The second value indicates the number of monsters encountered roaming in the wilderness.
- ▶ **Monster lair in the wilderness:** The second value multiplied by 5 indicates the number of monsters found in a lair in the wilderness.

Treasure Type (TT)

The letter code used to determine the amount and type of treasure possessed by the monster(s) (see *Treasure Types*, p70). The letters listed are used as follows:

- ▶ **A to O:** Indicate a hoard: the sum wealth of a large monster or a community of smaller monsters, usually hidden in the lair. For monsters with a lair encounter size (see *Number Appearing*) of greater than 1d4, the amount of treasure in the hoard may be reduced, if the number of monsters is below average.
- ▶ **P to V:** If listed for an intelligent monster, indicate treasure carried by individuals (P to T) or a group (U, V). If listed for an unintelligent monster, indicate treasure from the bodies of its victims.

GENERAL NOTES

Infravision

All non-human monsters have infravision (see *Darkness*, p26). Unless specified in a monster's description, this allows monsters to see in the dark up to 60'.

Languages

20% of intelligent monsters speak Common (see *Languages*, p16), unless the monster description states otherwise. Many intelligent monster species also have their own tongue.

Persons

Some spells or magical effects only affect creatures classified as "persons". This includes all humans and demihumans, as well as humanoid monsters of up to 4+1 HD. The referee must decide which types of monsters count as persons.

RUNNING ADVENTURES

THE REFEREE'S ROLE

Facilitator of Fun and Adventure

The referee should bring to life exciting adventures for the enjoyment of the group.

Preparation: Before the game begins, the adventure should be planned out and required maps drawn. Advice on adventure design is found later in this section.

Improvisation: In spite of the referee's preparation, it is impossible to predict every possible player action. Players will come up with ideas that the referee has not even considered. It is thus important for the referee to remain flexible, and to roll with any unexpected turns the adventure might take!

Procedures: This book provides procedures for many common adventuring situations. These exist in order to aid the referee in running the game. However, the referee should feel free to adapt and add to these procedures during play, in order to keep the game moving.

Balance: The referee must maintain a fun balance of risk and reward.

Neutral Judge

The referee must remain neutral in all things—neither on the side of the players nor against them.

Non-competitive: The game is not a competition, with the players attempting to defeat the referee, or vice versa.

Fairness: The rules of the game should be applied equally to player characters, monsters, and NPCs.

Arbiter of Rules

The referee must decide when and how to apply the rules of the game.

Rulings: The rules of the game—including descriptions of magic items, spells, or monsters' special abilities—do not cover all possible scenarios, so the referee must be ready to apply judgement to resolve any unexpected situations which arise.

Resolving actions: When a player wishes to do something not covered by a standard rule, the referee must consider how to determine the outcome. Sometimes, the situation can be dealt with simply by deciding what would happen. Sometimes, the referee may require the player to make an ability check (see *p24*) or a saving throw (see *p25*) to determine what happens. Other times, the referee may judge the likelihood of the action succeeding (e.g. expressed as a percentage or X-in-6 chance), tell the player the chances, and let them decide whether to take the risk or not.

Disagreements: The players may not always agree with the referee's application of the rules of the game. When this happens, the group should (briefly!) discuss the point of disagreement and come to a decision. The referee is always the final arbiter in such cases, and should ensure that the game does not get bogged down in long discussions about the rules.

Randomness: The referee should make judicious use of die rolls, random tables, etc. While these can add an element of fun and unpredictability to the game, overuse of randomness can also spoil an adventure by derailing it too much.

HANDLING PCs

Rate of Advancement

Each group will have its own preferences as to how quickly player characters gain experience points and increase in level.

Standard: After three to four adventures, it is normal for at least one PC to have reached 2nd level. If this has not happened, the referee may wish to increase the amount of treasure. If, on the other hand, most PCs have reached 3rd level in this time-frame, the referee might place less treasure or make monsters tougher.

Fast: For groups who prefer a game where characters advance quickly, the referee should place large treasure hoards. These should, however, be guarded by appropriately challenging monsters.

Slow: For groups who prefer the game to focus on character development rather than high risk, the rate of advancement and the danger presented by monsters may be reduced.

Character Knowledge

Attention must be paid to the distinction between what a player knows and what their PC knows. Players may at times act on information that their PC could not know. The referee may occasionally need to remind players of this, and may even need to forbid certain actions.

Grudges

Player characters may, through the course of play, naturally develop grudges or rivalries. This is especially a possibility when characters of opposite alignments adventure together. This is a natural and fun part of good role-playing. However, the referee should ensure that such grudges do not dominate play and spoil the adventure for others.

CR17: W 59mm H 54mm

Maintaining Challenge

It is important that the referee keep the game challenging, even when player characters have reached high levels and amassed great wealth and power.

Magical research: Spell-casting characters may attempt to create new spells and magic items. When this happens, the referee should pay very careful attention to game balance. Magic that is permanent, may be used without limit, does not allow a saving throw, or that increases in power with level can easily become imbalanced. If in doubt, one option is to allow a new spell or item to be tested for a period, under the proviso that it may need to be altered if it proves to imbalance play.

Special abilities: Players may sometimes try to find ways to gain special abilities and powers beyond their characters' normal class abilities. The referee should be very careful when allowing this, as it can lead to imbalance. The guidelines for magical research, above, should be used.

Excess wealth: If the level of PC wealth has gotten out of hand, the referee may wish to find ways to take excess money away from characters. This should always be done in such a way as to present the player with a choice, for example: pay a local tax or become an outlaw?

RUNNING THE GAME

Describing the Unknown

When describing what player characters experience during an adventure, the referee should be careful to keep an air of mystery. The best way of achieving this is to only describe what characters see, hear, smell, and so on, without providing the players any additional information.

Monsters: Should be described, rather than referred to by name. Players will come to recognise different types of monsters by their descriptions and behaviours.

Surprise attacks: When characters are attacked by surprise, the referee should simply describe the attack itself, rather than giving players the complete description of the attacking monster. For example, a character may just see a clawed hand reaching out of the shadows. Only in subsequent combat rounds should a more detailed description of the monster be provided.

Monster and NPC game stats: The game statistics (e.g. hit points, level) of a monster or NPCs should never be revealed to players. In combat, the referee should describe the effects of damage on a monster, rather than telling the players how many hit points it has remaining.

Magic items: Should be described, rather than referred to by name. Only by experimentation can players find out what powers a magic item has (and indeed whether an item is magical at all!).

Describing Explored Areas

The usual procedure is for the players to draw maps of areas being explored, based on the referee's descriptions.

Squares: One way to speed up mapping is to specify dimensions (e.g. the width and length of rooms in a dungeon) in terms of map squares, rather than in feet. Of course, the referee and the players must agree on the size of one map square.

Known areas: Sometimes, characters may already know the shape of an area being explored. In this case, the referee may draw the parts of the map which are already known.

Complex areas: In the case of extremely complicated areas, the referee may draw directly on the players' map. This is not generally to be encouraged, however, as this does not help the players to improve their own mapping skills.

Using Miniatures

Some groups like to use miniatures along with a gridded tabletop surface to track exploration and combat.

Play surface: The most convenient type of surface is something on which maps can be drawn with erasable pens. The surface should be gridded for ease of tracking the movements of characters.

Scale: The typical scale used is 1" on the play surface = 5' in the game world (or 5 yards for outdoor encounters).

Miniatures: Many different miniature figures are available to purchase from many different companies. Alternatively, simple tokens like dice or beads can be used.

MONSTERS AND NPCs

The referee is responsible for deciding how monsters and NPCs react when encountered, but also what schemes and tactics they follow when the PCs are elsewhere.

Intelligence and Tactics

When deciding how a monster or NPC acts, the referee should bear its level of intelligence in mind. Intelligent monsters might use any of the following tactics.

Traps and stealth: Monsters which are cunning but not physically powerful might lay traps or ambushes, and may favour attacking PCs from a distance with missile weapons.

Guards: Monsters may make use of guards or pets to weaken PCs or to protect important escape routes.

Magic items: Monsters will use any magic items in their lair to thwart the PCs.

Learning and preparation: If PCs encounter but do not defeat monsters, the monsters will learn from the experience and prepare for a repeat attack. They may build defensive structures, call for reinforcements, move their base of operations, and so on.

Adaptation: Monsters may copy or adapt tactics successfully used by PCs, and may plan specific counter-manoeuvres.



Teamwork

When designing encounters, the referee should bear in mind that—like player characters—monsters and NPCs will join forces in order to increase their chance of survival.

Combined forces: Monsters skilled in melee, missile attacks, and magic may join forces.

Leaders: May have special abilities, maximum hit points, or additional Hit Dice.

Motivation

The same as player characters, intelligent monsters and NPCs have their own interests and motivations.

Role-playing: The referee should consider the monster's reaction to negotiations with PCs, bearing in mind its alignment and personality. Monsters should not always cooperate with PCs' wishes!

Allies: Monsters and NPCs may be encountered with friends, minions, or retainers. These will come to the aid of the monster, or may avenge it, if it is defeated.

ADVENTURE SCENARIOS

The first step in designing an adventure of any kind is to decide on the type of scenario. This is the hook that draws the player characters to the adventure site, and provides a background theme that the referee can use to tie the location together. The scenario drives the referee's choices of specific traps, treasures, and monsters to be placed in the location. The following examples may be used for inspiration.

1. Banishing Ancient Evil

An evil presence (e.g. a monster or NPC) must be banished or destroyed. It may have been dormant for many years, and have only recently been awakened (perhaps as a result of another party's meddling).

2. Clearing Ruins

Settlers plan to move into an abandoned settlement or stronghold. Before they arrive, the PCs need to scout the area and clear out any monsters or other dangers that inhabit the place. The ruins need not be in a remote area—they could even be within (or beneath) a major settlement.



3. Contacting a Lost Civilisation

The PCs discover a long-lost race in a fantastic location. They may have once been human, but are now adapted to their strange environment. For example, they may have reverted to bestial behaviour, or may be adapted to subterranean life, with pale skin and infravision.

4. Escaping from Captivity

The PCs have been taken prisoner by an enemy, and begin the adventure in captivity, possibly with a grisly fate awaiting them in the near future. They must regain their freedom.

5. Exploring Unknown Territory

An NPC hires the party to explore and map an unknown region. This may be a previously uncharted area, or may be a recent alteration to a familiar region (e.g. a magic castle may appear in an empty plain).

6. Performing a Quest

A deity or powerful NPC (e.g. a king) sends the PCs on a quest. This may involve recovering holy or magical items.

7. Rescuing Captives

Important NPCs have been kidnapped by bandits, wicked monsters, or an evil wizard. The PCs attempt to rescue the prisoners, either seeking a reward, or because of a personal connection with the unfortunate captives. It is also possible that the PCs may be hired as bodyguards to NPCs who are negotiating with the kidnappers.

8. Scouting an Enemy Outpost

An invasion is looming (or in progress)! The PCs are tasked with infiltrating an outpost of the enemy, gathering intelligence as to their plans, strengths, and weaknesses, and (if possible) destroying them.

9. Seeking a Magical Doorway

A gateway exists that allows magical travel (either one-way or bidirectional) between distant locations or even other worlds. The PCs may be tasked with locating a lost portal, or closing a portal used by enemies. The portal may also be the only means of travel to a fantastic destination that the PCs must visit.

10. Visiting a Sacred Site

In order to consult with an oracle, remove a curse, or find a holy relic, the PCs must journey to a sacred site (e.g. a shrine or temple). The exact location of the site is usually a matter of conjecture.

F1.5: W 306m

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DESIGNING A DUNGEON

1. Choose Setting

Decide on the basic form and structure of the dungeon, and begin to consider ideas for the main rooms or areas. The following table may be used.

Dungeon Setting

d6 Setting

- 1 Crypt or tomb complex
- 2 Natural caverns
- 3 Settlement (e.g. stronghold, city)
- 4 Subterranean delving (e.g. mine)
- 5 Temple
- 6 Tower or fortification

2. Choose Monsters

Based on the selected adventure scenario and dungeon setting, decide what types of monsters inhabit the dungeon, choosing from any monster books that are available, creating new monsters specially for the dungeon, or tailoring standard monsters to the location.

3. Map the Dungeon

Overall shape: The structure of the rooms and connecting passages will be determined by the dungeon setting (e.g. rough cavern walls; carefully laid-out defensive structures; etc.).

Mapping scale: Typically, dungeon maps are drawn on graph paper, with a scale of 10' per square. (Larger or smaller scales may be used, as appropriate.)

Numbering: Give each area (e.g. room or cave) of the dungeon a number, so that the area on the map can easily be cross-referenced with the description of its contents (see step 4).

4. Stock the Dungeon

Make notes describing each numbered area from the map. Monsters or areas that play an important role in the adventure should be noted first. Areas of less importance may then be stocked, using the guidelines to the right, as desired.

- Monsters (including the possibility of patrols in the area), traps, tricks, treasures, or special magical effects that are present should be noted.
- Additional, descriptive details for each area may also be noted: furnishings, everyday items, smells, sounds, lights, etc.

Dungeon Levels

Dungeons often consist of a series of deeper and deeper floors—known as *levels*—accessible by stairways, trap doors, chutes, pits, etc. PCs enter the 1st level of a dungeon initially, and may discover entrances to deeper levels.

Danger and Reward

Generally, the level of danger and the amount of treasure in a dungeon should be suitable to the level of the PCs.

It is usual for lower levels of the dungeon to have greater risks and rewards. Normally, 1 HD monsters live in the 1st level of a dungeon, 2 HD monsters in the 2nd level, and so on.

Unguarded Treasure

Treasure is usually guarded by monsters or traps, but sometimes an unguarded cache of loot may be found. The following guidelines should be borne in mind:

- When designing dungeons for experienced players, the referee should consider placing only very few completely unguarded treasures.
- The referee may wish to not place any unguarded treasures in the 9th or deeper dungeon levels.

Random Room Stocking

Random Dungeon Room Contents

d6	Contents	Chance of Treasure
1–2	Empty	1-in-6
3–4	Monster	3-in-6
5	Special	None
6	Trap	2-in-6

► **Monsters:** May be selected by hand or rolled on an encounter table.

► **Specials:** Weird or magical features of an area, including tricks or puzzles.

► **Traps:** If treasure is present, the trap may be set so that it is triggered when the treasure is tampered with (a *treasure trap*). Otherwise, the trap may be triggered by simply entering the room or a certain area of it (a *room trap*).

► **Treasure:** If a monster is in the room, roll the treasure type indicated in its description. Otherwise, the treasure depends on the dungeon level.

Example Room Traps

1. **Falling block:** Inflicts 1d10 damage (save vs petrification to avoid).
2. **Gas:** Poisonous gas fills the room (save vs poison or die).
3. **Mist:** Harmless; looks like poison gas.
4. **Pit:** Opens up beneath characters' feet, inflicting falling damage on any who fall in (see *Falling*, p26).
5. **Scything blade:** Swings from the ceiling, attacking for 1d8 damage.
6. **Slide:** Opens up beneath characters' feet, sending them to a lower level.

Example Treasure Traps

1. **Darts:** 1d6 spring-loaded darts fire at the character, doing 1d4 damage each.
2. **Flash of light:** Causes blindness for 1d8 turns (save versus spells).
3. **Hidden monster:** e.g. a snake. Released when the treasure is disturbed.

4. **Illusion:** Typically of a monster. The monster has AC 9 and vanishes if hit in combat. Its attacks do not inflict real damage: a PC who appears to die just falls unconscious for 1d4 turns.
5. **Spray:** A mysterious liquid covers the character; monsters are attracted to the smell. The chance of wandering monsters is doubled for 1d6 hours.
6. **Sprung needle:** A needle coated with poison jabs out (save vs poison or die).

Example Specials

1. **Alarms:** Entry alarm that attracts nearby guardians.
2. **Animating objects:** Inanimate objects that attack if disturbed.
3. **Falling blocks:** Stone block falls to prevent passage.
4. **Illusions:** Illusionary passages, doors, or stairways.
5. **Shifting architecture:** Doors lock; room rotates, rises, or falls.
6. **Strange waters:** Pool or fountain with weird, magical effects.
7. **Teleports:** Magical portal or teleporter to another area of the dungeon.
8. **Trapdoors:** Leading to a hidden area.
9. **Voices:** Walls or architectural features speak or moan (e.g. a talking statue).

Treasure

Level 1: 1d6 × 100sp; 50%: 1d6 × 10gp; 5%: 1d6 gems; 2%: 1d6 pieces of jewellery; 2%: 1 magic item.

Level 2–3: 1d12 × 100sp; 50%: 1d6 × 100gp; 10%: 1d6 gems; 5%: 1d6 pieces of jewellery; 8%: 1 magic item.

Level 4–5: 1d6 × 1,000sp; 1d6 × 200gp; 20%: 1d6 gems; 10%: 1d6 pieces of jewellery; 10%: 1 magic item.

Level 6–7: 1d6 × 2,000sp; 1d6 × 500gp; 30%: 1d6 gems; 15%: 1d6 pieces of jewellery; 15%: 1 magic item.

Level 8–9: 1d6 × 5,000sp; 1d6 × 1,000gp; 40%: 1d12 gems; 20%: 1d12 pieces of jewellery; 20%: 1 magic item.

DESIGNING A WILDERNESS

1. Choose Setting

Basic geography: Decide on the basic geography and climate of the region to be described: whether it primarily consists of mountains, forest, desert, etc. The size of the region should also be determined.

Milieu: At this stage, the nature of the milieu being detailed should also be considered: the general level of technology, availability of magic, presence of different monsters and intelligent races, and so on.

New campaigns: When starting a new campaign, it is recommended to begin by detailing a small, self-contained area that can be expanded upon over time.

2. Map the Region

Major terrain features: Using graph or hex paper, create a map of the wilderness area, marking on the major terrain features such as mountain ranges, rivers, seas, lakes, islands, forests, swamps, and so on. Real world maps may serve as inspiration as to the natural structure and relationship of terrain features.

Scale: Typically, a large scale map (24 miles per hex) is drawn first, followed by smaller scale maps (6 miles per hex) of certain areas, adding more detail.

3. Locate Human Realms

Mark the areas that are controlled by humans, bearing in mind the needs of human civilisation (rivers, farmland, etc.).

Government: Also note the ruler of each human-controlled area: a petty lord, a mighty king, a league of merchants, etc.

Base town (see step 5): Is typically placed in one of these regions.

4. Locate Non-Human Realms

Mark regions that are controlled by other intelligent species that exist in the setting (e.g. demihumans, monstrous races, and so on), taking their preferred environment and lifestyle into account.

Nomads: Some intelligent species may keep domains with well-defined boundaries, while others may move around—hunting or raiding—within a more vaguely defined area.

Monsters: The territories of significant, non-intelligent monsters may also be marked on the map at this stage.

5. Place the Base Town

Locate a base town for player characters on the map, typically close to a river or road, near the centre of the map. This is where play will begin. The guidelines to the right may be used to help flesh out the base town.

6. Place Dungeons

Place one or more dungeons on the map, somewhere in the vicinity of the base town.

Distance: Dungeons are normally located around a day's journey from the base town—close enough that travel between the town and the dungeon is convenient, but not so close that the town is plagued by monsters from the dungeon.

7. Create Regional Encounter Tables

Standard tables: The standard encounter tables from a monster book may be suited to some areas of the campaign map.

Custom tables: For other areas, the referee may prefer to create new tables, with a selection of monsters customised to the area. Special encounter tables should take account of the intelligent and monstrous species marked on the map.

DESIGNING A BASE TOWN

1. Determine Size

Decide how large the base town is and roughly how many inhabitants it has. The size of settlements generally depends on the level of technology available in the setting. For medieval or similar settings, the following may be used as a guide:

Town Size	Inhabitants
Village	50–999
Small Town	1,000–4,999
Large Town	5,000–14,999
City	15,000+



2. Note Services

Make some notes on the presence of the following services that adventurers may require:

- **Black market:** For selling treasure and contacting thieves or smugglers.
- **Guard:** A town militia or police force to keep the peace and protect the town. It may be useful to note whether the guards are open to bribery, and how frequently they patrol various areas of the town.
- **Healing:** Some means for characters to cure their wounds (and possibly more advanced services such as curing diseases or even raising the dead). In settings where magical healing exists, such services may be available at a temple, church, or shrine.
- **Lodgings:** Inns or rooms to rent.
- **Rumours:** Places where notices are posted and gossip spreads.

3. Detail Ruler

Decide how the town is ruled: whether by a local sheriff or mayor appointed by a lord, an elected council, a confederacy of merchants, etc. It is also possible that a high-level NPC adventurer (with attendant guards and magic) may rule the town.

4. Detail Other NPCs

Other important NPCs in the town should be noted, especially those associated with one of the services mentioned above, or those who might wish to hire the PCs to undertake missions.

5. Create Rumours

A few local rumours may be noted, to provide hooks for the player characters to start exploring the local area, and possibly find their way to one of the placed dungeons.

AWARDING XP

All characters who return from an adventure alive receive experience points (XP). XP is gained from two sources: treasure recovered and monsters defeated.

Recovered Treasure

Non-magical treasure: Characters gain 1 XP per 1 gold piece (gp) value of the treasure.

Magical treasure: Does not grant XP.

Defeated Monsters

All monsters defeated by the party (i.e. slain, outsmarted, captured, scared away, etc.) grant XP based on how powerful they are. See the table to the right.

Base XP: The XP value of a monster is determined by its Hit Dice. Monsters whose Hit Dice are notated as a number of dice plus a fixed hit point bonus (e.g. 4+2) are treated as more powerful and are listed separately in the table. For example, a monster with 2 HD is worth 20 XP, but a monster with 2+2 HD is worth 25 XP.

Bonus XP / ability: A monster's XP value is increased for each special ability it has. Special abilities are indicated by asterisks following the monster's HD rating.

Higher HD monsters: For each HD above 21, add a cumulative 250 XP to the Base and Bonus amounts.

Extraordinary peril bonus: A monster defeated under especially dangerous circumstances may be treated as one Hit Dice category higher on the table.

XP Awards for Defeated Monsters

Monster HD	Base XP	Bonus XP / Ability
Less than 1	5	1
1	10	3
1+	15	4
2	20	5
2+	25	10
3	35	15
3+	50	25
4	75	50
4+	125	75
5	175	125
5+	225	175
6	275	225
6+	350	300
7–7+	450	400
8–8+	650	550
9–10+	900	700
11–12+	1,100	800
13–16+	1,350	950
17–20+	2,000	1,150
21–21+	2,500	2,000

Division of Experience

The XP awards for treasures recovered and monsters defeated are totalled and divided evenly between all characters who survived the adventure—this includes retainers (see *p46*).

Awarded XP is always divided evenly, irrespective of how the players decide to divide the treasure.

Bonuses and Penalties

The referee may optionally grant XP bonuses to players who did particularly well. Likewise, players who did not do their share of the work may be penalized.

TREASURES

PLACING TREASURE

There are two methods of deciding what treasure is in the possession of monsters: rolling randomly or referee choice.

Rolling Randomly

Monster listings note which treasure type is present in the creature's lair and which it may carry on its person. Each treasure type (see overleaf) lists one or more types of coins or items that may be found in the hoard. For each item in the list:

1. If a percentage value is given, first roll d100 to see whether this item is present in the hoard.
2. If a range of values is given (e.g. $1d6 \times 1,000cp$, or $6d6$ gems), roll the specified dice to determine the quantity of this item that is present in the hoard.
3. For gems, jewellery, and magic items, the procedures for determining the value and properties of the items in the hoard are found in later sections.

Manual Adjustments

If the value of the randomly generated treasure is significantly above or below the average value of the treasure type, the referee may adjust the results manually.

Referee Choice

The referee may wish to choose treasures appropriate to the monsters and the PC party. As treasure is the main source of XP (see *Awarding Experience*)—usually accounting for $\frac{3}{4}$ or more of the total XP earned—the referee should carefully consider treasure placement:

1. Consider the size of the adventuring party, the levels of the characters, and the XP they need to go up in level.
2. Decide how many experience points the treasure hoard should provide, if the party successfully acquires it.
3. Place treasures whose total value matches the determined XP total.

Balance of Reward Versus Danger

When using this approach, the referee should ensure that the treasure is guarded by sufficiently powerful monsters. Adventurers should have to earn this reward!

ITEMS OF VALUE

Common treasures: The treasure tables (see overleaf) describe methods for generating hoards of coins, gems, jewellery, and magic items.

Unusual treasures: Adventures may also include valuable items of other kinds, whose worth may not always be obvious:

- **Artwork:** Paintings, statuary.
- **Books:** Rare tomes or scrolls.
- **Foodstuffs:** Spices, valuable wines.
- **Furnishings:** Rugs, tapestries.
- **Utensils:** Silver cutlery, unusual kitchen or laboratory implements.
- **Valuables:** Furs, ivory, ores, silks.

Value and Weight

For each unusual item placed, the referee should note its value (in gold pieces) and (if using the optional rules for *Encumbrance*, p23) its weight.

TREASURE TYPES

Average Values

The average value of each treasure type is listed alongside the letter code. These values sum the average results of gems, jewellery, and all types of coins. Magic items that the treasure type may indicate are not counted toward the average value, as magic items do not have fixed sale values.

Hoard: A-O

These treasure types indicate the sum wealth of a large monster or a community of smaller monsters. Such hoards are usually hidden in the monsters' lair.

Small lairs: Monster listings note the number of individuals found in a lair. If the number rolled is below average and the lair encounter size is at least 1d4, the amount of treasure in the hoard may be reduced accordingly.

Type A (18,000gp average)

- ▶ 25%: 1d6 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 30%: 1d6 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 20%: 1d4 × 1,000ep.
- ▶ 35%: 2d6 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ 25%: 1d2 × 1,000pp.
- ▶ 50%: 6d6 gems.
- ▶ 50%: 6d6 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 30%: 3 magic items.

Type B (2,000gp average)

- ▶ 50%: 1d8 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 25%: 1d6 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 25%: 1d4 × 1,000ep.
- ▶ 25%: 1d3 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ 25%: 1d6 gems.
- ▶ 25%: 1d6 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 10%: 1 magic sword, armour, or weapon.

Type C (1,000gp average)

- ▶ 20%: 1d12 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 30%: 1d4 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 10%: 1d4 × 1,000ep.
- ▶ 25%: 1d4 gems.
- ▶ 25%: 1d4 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 10%: 2 magic items.

Type D (3,900gp average)

- ▶ 10%: 1d8 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 15%: 1d12 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 60%: 1d6 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ 30%: 1d8 gems.
- ▶ 30%: 1d8 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 15%: 2 magic items, plus 1 potion.

Type E (2,300gp average)

- ▶ 5%: 1d10 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 30%: 1d12 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 25%: 1d4 × 1,000ep.
- ▶ 25%: 1d8 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ 10%: 1d10 gems.
- ▶ 10%: 1d10 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 25%: 3 magic items, plus 1 scroll.

Type F (7,700gp average)

- ▶ 10%: 2d10 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 20%: 1d8 × 1,000ep.
- ▶ 45%: 1d12 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ 30%: 1d3 × 1,000pp.
- ▶ 20%: 2d12 gems.
- ▶ 10%: 1d12 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 30%: 3 magic items (not weapons), plus 1 potion, plus 1 scroll.

Type G (23,000gp average)

- ▶ 50%: 1d4 × 10,000gp.
- ▶ 50%: 1d6 × 1,000pp.
- ▶ 25%: 3d6 gems.
- ▶ 25%: 1d10 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 35%: 4 magic items, plus 1 scroll.

Coin Conversion Rates

1pp = 5gp

1gp = 2ep

1gp = 10sp

1gp = 100cp

Type H (60,000gp average)

- ▶ 25%: 3d8 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 50%: 1d100 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 50%: 1d4 × 10,000ep.
- ▶ 50%: 1d6 × 10,000gp.
- ▶ 25%: 5d4 × 1,000pp.
- ▶ 50%: 1d100 gems.
- ▶ 50%: 1d4 × 10 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 15%: 4 magic items, plus 1 potion, plus 1 scroll.

Type I (11,000gp average)

- ▶ 30%: 1d8 × 1,000pp.
- ▶ 50%: 2d6 gems.
- ▶ 50%: 2d6 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 15%: 1 magic item.

Type J (25gp average)

- ▶ 25%: 1d4 × 1,000cp.
- ▶ 10%: 1d3 × 1,000sp.

Type K (180gp average)

- ▶ 30%: 1d6 × 1,000sp.
- ▶ 10%: 1d2 × 1,000ep.

Type L (240gp average)

- ▶ 50%: 1d4 gems.

Type M (50,000gp average)

- ▶ 40%: 2d4 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ 50%: 5d6 × 1,000pp.
- ▶ 55%: 5d4 gems.
- ▶ 45%: 2d6 pieces of jewellery.

Type N (0gp average)

- ▶ 40%: 2d4 potions.

Type O (0gp average)

- ▶ 50%: 1d4 scrolls.

Alternative Treasures

For genres or settings where precious metal coinage is not in common use, the referee may replace gold pieces etc. with currency of equivalent value. The same goes for gems and jewellery, which may be replaced with other kinds of valuable substances or decorative objects.

Individual Treasure: P–T

Intelligent monsters: Each individual carries this much treasure.

Unintelligent monsters: The treasure is loot from the bodies of the monsters' victims.

Type P (0.1gp average)

- ▶ 3d8cp.

Type Q (1gp average)

- ▶ 3d6sp.

Type R (3gp average)

- ▶ 2d6ep.

Type S (5gp average)

- ▶ 2d4gp.

Type T (17gp average)

- ▶ 1d6pp.

Group Treasure: U–V

Intelligent monsters: The group carries this much treasure between them.

Unintelligent monsters: The treasure is loot from the bodies of the monsters' victims.

Type U (160gp average)

- ▶ 10%: 1d100cp.
- ▶ 10%: 1d100sp.
- ▶ 5%: 1d100gp.
- ▶ 5%: 1d4 gems.
- ▶ 5%: 1d4 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 2%: 1 magic item.

Type V (330gp average)

- ▶ 10%: 1d100sp.
- ▶ 5%: 1d100ep.
- ▶ 10%: 1d100gp.
- ▶ 5%: 1d100pp.
- ▶ 10%: 1d4 gems.
- ▶ 10%: 1d4 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ 5%: 1 magic item.

MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items are usually classified according to one of the categories listed below. General information about each category of magic item is provided in the following pages. Specific details on individual magic items are found in the genre-specific treasures book that is in use.

- ▶ **Armour and shields:** Grant protective benefits to the user.
- ▶ **Miscellaneous items:** Enchanted items that do not fit into any other category.
- ▶ **Potions:** Magical liquids stored in glass vials.
- ▶ **Rings:** Plain or bejewelled rings that place an enchantment about the wearer.
- ▶ **Rods / staves / wands:** Magical lengths of wood, metal, crystal, etc. Used by spell casters to unleash magical effects.
- ▶ **Scrolls and maps:** Aged sheets of parchment or paper which contain magical script or instructions leading to a treasure hoard. Note that while treasure maps are (usually) not magical, they are rolled on the magic items table.
- ▶ **Swords:** Grant bonuses to hit and damage in combat. May also be enchanted with additional powers.
- ▶ **Weapons:** All enchanted weapons other than swords. Grant bonuses to hit and damage in combat. May also be enchanted with additional powers.

Alternative Magic Item Categories

The referee may decide that a certain category of magic items does not exist in the campaign, or may wish to create additional magic item categories. In some settings, magic items may actually be artefacts of high technology. In such cases, the table of magic item types (see right) should be adapted.

Rolling Magic Items

When a treasure type indicates that a magic item is present, the following procedure is used to determine its nature:

- ▶ **Specific type of item:** If the treasure type indicates a specific type of magic item (e.g. 3 potions), roll on the table for that type of item (found in the genre-specific treasure book).
- ▶ **Type of item not specified:** Otherwise, first roll on the table below to determine the type of the item, then roll on the table for that type (found in the genre-specific treasure book).

Basic and Expert Magic Items

Separate probabilities are listed in the table for Basic and Expert level characters (i.e. characters of 1st to 3rd level, and characters of 4th level or higher). The Basic probabilities are listed in the B column, and the Expert probabilities in the X column.

It is recommended that the probabilities appropriate to the group's experience level be used. Alternatively, if the referee prefers to have an even distribution of magic items, irrespective of player character level, the Expert probabilities may always be used.

Magic Item Type

B: d%	X: d%	Type of Item
1–10	1–10	Armour or Shield
11–15	11–15	Misc. Item
16–40	16–35	Potion
41–45	36–40	Ring
46–50	41–45	Rod / Staff / Wand
51–70	46–75	Scroll or Map
71–90	76–95	Sword
91–00	96–00	Weapon

Identifying Magic Items

Testing: The most common way of identifying magic items is by trial and error—sipping a potion, donning a suit of armour, using a weapon in battle, etc.

Retainers: Players may wish to use retainers as “guinea pigs” to test magic items of unknown properties. Retainers may agree to do this, but only if allowed to keep the item in question.

By magic: High-level NPC magic-users may also be able to identify magic items. They will always require payment or a service in kind. The process takes time: possibly several weeks.

Using Magic Items

Appropriate use: In order to be effective, a magic item must be used, held, or worn after the normal fashion.

Concentration: To activate an item’s magic, the user must concentrate on its effect. When using a magic item in this way, the character cannot take any other actions.

Items that are always active: The following items do not require concentration, and are always active: magic weapons, armour, and protective items (e.g. rings of protection).

Actions per round: A magic item’s effect can normally be used only once per round, unless its description notes otherwise.

Wishes

Some magic items grant *wishes*, the powerful ability for a character to change the nature of reality in any conceivable way that they desire. Wishes are generally regarded as the most powerful magic in the game, and have the potential to greatly upset the balance of play, if not handled carefully by the referee.

Adjudication Guidelines

Wording: The player and referee must pay great attention to the precise wording of a wish.

Fundamental changes: A wish that would alter some fundamental aspect of the game or the campaign world will have no effect. For example, a wish that altered the abilities of all monsters of a particular type would fail.

Greedy wishes: A wish that the referee judges to be unreasonable or overly greedy may come to pass, but with its intent twisted in some way. For example, a wish for a very powerful magic item may cause the item to appear, but in the possession of a dangerous enemy.

Wishing for more wishes: This will result in an infinite time loop, putting the character out of play.

Example Wishes

Some examples of reasonable wishes:

- Wishing for a weapon to help fight magical monsters. The wish may grant a +1 sword that vanishes when the combat ends.
- Wishing that a monster had not attacked. The wish may place the characters back in time and change the reaction of the monster.
- Wishing that a deadly blow had not occurred. The affected character may return to life, wounded but not dead.

ARMOUR AND SHIELDS

Usage: Per normal class restrictions.

Cursed Armour and Shields

AC penalty: Some types of cursed armour specify an Armour Class penalty. This modifier worsens the wearer's Armour Class score. For example, a cursed suit of chainmail -1 grants a base Armour Class of 6 [13], one point worse than the AC 5 [14] of non-magical chainmail.

AC 9 [10]: Some types of cursed armour give the wearer a base Armour Class of 9 [10] (before modifiers due to Dexterity).

Testing: All types of tests indicate that a cursed shield or suit of armour is enchanted with a +1 bonus. It is only when the armour is used in deadly combat that the curse is revealed.

Removing: Once a cursed shield or suit of armour has been used, the character comes under the curse and is not able to discard the item. It can only be removed with magic.

Enchanted Armour and Shields

AC bonus: Enchanted armour and shields specify a protective bonus that improves the wearer's Armour Class score. For example, a suit of chainmail +1 grants a base Armour Class of 4 [15], one point better than the AC 5 [14] of non-magical chainmail.

Weight: When using option 2 of the encumbrance rules (see *Encumbrance*, p23), the enchanted armour's encumbrance value is 50% less than that of normal armour.

GEMS AND JEWELLERY

Gems

The value of each gem in a treasure hoard is determined by the following table:

Gem Values

d20	Gem Value
1-4	10gp
5-9	50gp
10-15	100gp
16-19	500gp
20	1,000gp

Jewellery

Each piece of jewellery indicated by a treasure type is worth $3d6 \times 100gp$ (or more, if the referee wishes, for characters above 3rd level).

Damaged Jewellery

Rough treatment of jewellery (e.g. crushing, intense heat or fire, lightning) can damage it, reducing its value by 50%.

Combining Values

When a treasure type indicates the presence of multiple gems or pieces of jewellery, the referee may combine the values, as desired. For example, a roll of five 50gp value gems may be placed as a single 250gp gem, a 100gp gem and three 50gp gems, or any other combination.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Usage: All characters (unless noted).

Activating: Unless an item's description states otherwise, it may be used any number of times per day and is activated by concentration.

POTIONS

Usage: All characters (unless noted).

Identifying: A potion may be identified by sipping a small amount. It is difficult to identify potions purely by smell or taste, as even potions with the same effect are not alike.

Drinking: Drinking a full dose of a potion takes one round, and brings on the magical effect for 1d6+6 turns. The referee should roll for and track this duration, and not tell the player how long the potion will last for.

Mixing Potions

Drinking a potion while already under the effects of another potion is dangerous:

- **Sickness:** The character is completely disabled for 3 turns, due to sickness.
- **Cancellation:** The effects of both potions are cancelled.

This rule does not apply to potions with instantaneous or permanent duration.

RINGS

Usage: All characters (unless noted).

Activating: A ring's magical effect is activated by placing it on a finger or thumb. Unless noted otherwise, a magical ring's effect is continuously active and ends if the ring is removed.

Multiple rings: A character can wear two magic rings—one on each hand. If more are worn, their magical effects do not function.

Cursed rings: Cannot be “deactivated” by wearing more magical rings.

RODS, STAVES, WANDS

Charges

Rods, staves, and wands have a limited number of uses, called “charges”.

Number of charges: The number of charges in an item when discovered is determined by the referee, and depends on the type of the item. It is not possible for characters to discover the number of charges in an item.

Usage: Each use of the item takes one round and consumes one charge.

Consuming the last charge: The item loses its magical potency.

Recharging: Is not possible.

Rods

Usage: All characters (unless noted).

Dimensions: Thin, 3' long.

Charges: Unless noted, magic rods contain 1d10 charges when found.

Staves

Usage: Spell casters. Some staves may only be used by either arcane or divine spell casters (this is noted in the item's description).

Dimensions: 2" thick, 6' long.

Charges: Unless noted, magic staves contain 3d10 charges when found.

Wands

Usage: Arcane spell casters.

Dimensions: Thin, 1½' long.

Charges: Unless noted, magic wands contain 2d10 charges when found.

SCROLLS AND MAPS

Scrolls are aged sheets of parchment or paper on which magical words have been written by a high-level spell caster.

One use only: When a scroll is read, the words disappear.

Light: A scroll can only be used if there is enough light to read by.

Cursed Scrolls

Usage: All characters (unless noted).

Activation: Merely looking at the baneful script on the scroll curses the character. The referee should determine the nature of the curse (see examples below).

Removing: A curse can be removed by magic, or (at the referee's option) by performing a special quest.

Example Curses

- ▶ **Transformation:** The reader changes into a harmless creature (e.g. a frog).
- ▶ **Summoning:** A wandering monster appears next to the reader and attacks (gaining surprise). The monster is of equal level to the reader.
- ▶ **Lost item:** A magic item in the reader's possession vanishes. The referee may select the item or choose it at random.
- ▶ **Energy drain:** The reader permanently loses one experience level (or Hit Die). This incurs a loss of one Hit Die of hit points, as well as all other benefits due to the lost level (e.g. spells, saving throws, etc.). A character's XP is reduced to halfway between the former and new levels. A person who loses all levels dies.
- ▶ **Ability score re-roll:** The player must re-roll the character's prime requisite.
- ▶ **Slow healing:** The reader's healing capacity is reduced. Natural healing takes double the normal amount of time, and healing spells only cure half the normal number of hit points.

Maps

Usage: All characters (unless noted).

A map that indicates the route to a valuable treasure, located in a dungeon or wilderness.

Interpreting: Treasure maps may not always be easy to interpret: a map may be incomplete, worded in riddles, or written in an obscure language.

Preparing in advance: The referee should prepare treasure maps in advance.

Treasures

The following list of treasure map types may be used to determine the nature of the treasure that a map leads to.

- ▶ **I:** 1 magic item.
- ▶ **II:** 1d6 × 10 gems and 2d10 pieces of jewellery.
- ▶ **III:** 2 magic items.
- ▶ **IV:** 3 magic items (no swords).
- ▶ **V:** 3 magic items and 1 potion.
- ▶ **VI:** 3 magic items, 1 scroll, 1 potion.
- ▶ **VII:** 5d6 gems and 2 magic items.
- ▶ **VIII:** Hoard worth 1d4 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ **IX:** Hoard worth 5d6 × 1,000gp.
- ▶ **X:** Hoard worth 5d6 × 1,000gp and 1 magic item.
- ▶ **XI:** Hoard worth 5d6 × 1,000gp and 5d6 gems.
- ▶ **XII:** Hoard worth 6d6 × 1,000gp.

Hoard Value

For treasure hoards with a listed gold piece value, the referee may choose what type of treasure is in the hoard. (For example, it may be coins, but could also consist of valuable art objects or jewels.)

Guardians

The treasure is normally guarded by enchantments, traps, or monsters (e.g. a monster from the dungeon encounter tables of levels 5–6, or higher).

Protection Scrolls

Usage: All characters (unless noted).
(Written in non-magical languages—usually Common.)

Activation: Reading the script aloud conjures a circle of protection against a specific type of monster or energy.

Area of protection: When used, conjures a 10' radius circle of protection around the reader. If the reader moves, the circle of protection follows them.

Protection against monsters: For scrolls of protection against monsters, the circle does not prevent affected monsters from using magic or missile attacks against those within it. If anyone within the circle attacks an affected monster in melee, the circle is broken.

Spell Scrolls

Usage: Spell casters.

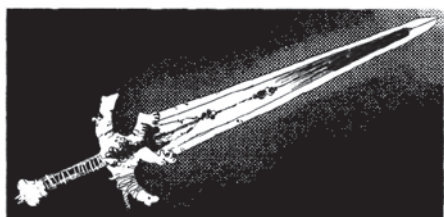
Type of magic: 1-in-4 scrolls contain divine spells; the rest contain arcane spells.

Activation: Reading the script aloud conjures the effect of a specific spell. Only arcane spell casters can use scrolls of arcane spells. Only divine spell casters can use scrolls of divine spells.

Arcane spell scrolls: Are written in magical script that can only be read by magic.

Divine spell scrolls: Are written in normal languages (usually Common), but can only be used by divine spell casters.

Scrolls of multiple spells: If a scroll contains multiple spells, only the spell cast disappears from the scroll.



Spells on a Scroll

The referee may choose the spells or may roll for them randomly. The table below may be used to select the level of each spell on a scroll. (The table lists separate probabilities for Basic and Expert level characters. See *Basic and Expert Magic Items*, p72.)

Random Scroll Spell Level

		Spell Level	
B: d6	X: d%	Arcane	Divine
1–3	1–25	1st	1st
4–5	26–50	2nd	2nd
6	51–70	3rd	3rd
	71–85	4th	4th
	86–95	5th	5th
	96–00	6th	5th

SWORDS AND WEAPONS

Usage: Per normal class restrictions.

Cursed Swords and Weapons

Penalty: Cursed weapons specify a penalty that is applied to both attack rolls and damage rolls made with the weapon.

Discarding: Once the weapon has been used in combat, the character comes under the curse and is not able to discard the item. In fact, they will favour the weapon and use it whenever possible. The curse can only be removed with magic.

Enchanted Swords and Weapons

Bonus: Enchanted weapons specify a bonus that is applied to both attack rolls and damage rolls made with the weapon.

Bonus vs creature type: Some weapons have a special bonus when used against a certain type of creature.

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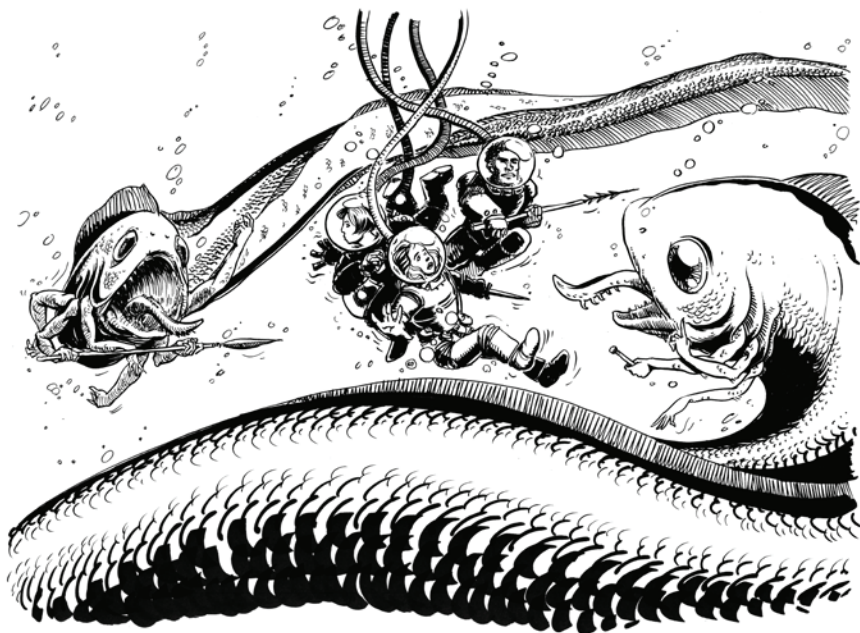
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