

Old-School Rules Monster Modifiers



By Charles Rice

Old-School Rules: Monster Modifiers

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Monster Modifiers

Welcome to Old School Rules: Monster Modifiers! In this small tome, we're here to help the harried Dungeon Master on the go. You need interesting encounters; you need to keep your players guessing. Monster Modifiers will help you with both! Modify monsters to make that next goblin camp something your players weren't expecting. I mean, who would expect a three-headed goblin champion, right? To round things out, we're going to give you random tables for those times when you have little preparation time and want to add some spice to an encounter. But wait, there's more! We're also going to give you three new spells, to allow enemy magic-users to alter their minions on the fly.

About XP Modifiers

Each category of modifiers has a % modifier to XP. This is a less exact method of upping a monster's XP to reflect the added challenge of its modifiers. If you have the time, you should modify the XP using the standard tables. While improvising an encounter, these percentages are a quick and dirty way to accomplish the same task.

Die Roll	Modifiers
1-50	Minor Modifier
51-75	Moderate Modifier
76-90	Major Modifier
91-100	Roll Twice

Minor Modifiers Die Roll	Modifier
1-10	Embalmed
11-20	Fast
21-30	High Pain Threshold
31-40	Large
41-50	Quick
51-60	Strong Willed
61-70	Thick Boned
71-80	Thick Skinned
81-90	Unsettling
91-100	Woodland

Moderate Modifiers Die Roll	Modifier
1-6	Alpha
7-12	Charger
13-19	Cold-Blooded
20-25	Cunning
26-31	Fierce
32-38	Hot-Blooded
39-44	Hulking
45-50	Leader
51-57	Lightning Reflexes
58-63	Mage
64-69	Man-Eating

70-76	Savage
77-82	Two-Headed
83-88	Spiritual
89-94	Strong Immune System
95-100	Vicious

Major Modifiers Die Roll	Modifier
1-7	Chosen
8-14	Colossal
15-21	Disgusting
22-28	Fire Breathing
29-35	Fire Infused
36-42	General
43-50	Genius
51-57	Gifted
58-64	Magic Resistant
65-71	Shadow Lord
72-78	Summoner
79-85	Terrifying
86-93	Three-Headed
94-100	War Leader

Minor Modifiers (+20% XP Value)

Embalmed (Undead Only)

+2 HP per die.

Fast

+30 ft. movement per round.

High Pain Threshold

-2 damage from slashing or piercing weapons

Large

Lowest hit die changed to max.

Quick

+2 AC (not when flanked or surprised).
Cannot be thick boned or thick skinned.

Strong Willed

+2 saves vs. mind-affecting magic.

Thick Boned

-2 damage from blunt weapons.

Thick Skinned

+2 AC.

Unsettling

Opponents must save vs. fear or be -2 to hit;
-1 penalty per 3 HD to saving throw (-1 at 1-3 HD, -2 at 4-6, etc.).

Woodland

90% resistance to charm and sleep.

Moderate Modifiers (+35% XP Value)

Alpha

Creatures of their type within 30 ft. gain +2 to attack, damage, and saving throws.

Charger

+60 ft. movement; +2 to hit and damage on a charge; charge attacks inflict 1d6 damage, or the creature's normal melee damage, whichever is higher.

Cold Blooded

+2 saves vs. cold; cold damage reduced by -2 per die.

Cunning

+3 6-sided HD; abilities of a 3rd level Thief.

Fierce

+3 10-sided HD; has weapon specialization if allowed to Fighters in the campaign.

Hot Blooded

+2 saves vs. fire; fire damage reduced by -2 per die.

Hulking

+2 HD

Leader

2 Large (as the Minor Modifier) followers of their type.

Lightning Reflexes

+2 Initiative

Mage

+3 4-sided HD; casts spells as a 3rd level Magic-User; minimum Int of 13 (could affect tactics and capabilities of a monster in other ways).

Man-Eating

+2 damage to bite attacks; if creature doesn't have a bite attack, treat as Savage.

Savage

+2 damage to bite attacks; gains a 1d4 bite attack if creature does not normally have one.

Spiritual

+3 HD; casts spells as a 3rd level Cleric.

Strong Immune System

+4 bonus to all saving throws.

Two-Headed

Surprised only on a 1; creature gains a second bite attack if it possesses one.

Vicious

+2 weapon damage; fights to the death, never failing morale.

Major Modifiers (+50% XP Value)

Chosen

+6 HD; casts spells as a 6th level cleric; can be combined with Spiritual for maximum +9 HD and spell use of 9th level Cleric

Colossal

+6 HD

Disgusting

Save vs. poison or be nauseated 1-4 rounds; -1 penalty per 3 HD to saving throw (-1 at 1-3 HD, -2 at 4-6, etc.); nauseated creatures can move at one-half speed but cannot attack or cast spells.

Fire Breathing

Fire breath attack of 1d4 per level, save vs. Breath Weapon for one-half damage; if creature already has a fire attack, +2 damage per die.

Fire Infused

Immune to fire; inflicts +2 melee damage from fire.

General

+6 10-sided HD; has double weapon specialization if allowed to Fighters in the campaign; can be combined with Fierce for a total of +9 10-sided HD.

Genius

+6 4-sided HD; casts spells as a 6th level Magic-User; minimum Int of 16 (could affect tactics and capabilities of a monster in other ways); can be combined with Mage for a total of +9 4-sided HD and spell use as a 9th level Magic-User.

Gifted

Creature has any two of the following: Cunning, Fierce, Mage, or Spiritual with all benefits.

Magic Resistant

5% magic resistance per hit die.

Shadow Lord

+6 6-sided HD, abilities of a 6th level Thief; can be combined with Cunning.

Summoner

Creature has spell-like ability to summon monsters; if 1-3 HD *Monster Summoning I*; if 4-6 HD *Monster Summoning II*, and so forth.

Terrifying

Opponents must save vs. fear or flee away from the creature by the fastest and best-known route for 1d4 rounds, dropping any held weapons (including wands and staves but not shields); -1 penalty per 3 HD to saving throw (-1 at 1-3 HD, -2 at 4-6, etc.).

If creature possesses both this modifier and Unsettling, opponents flee on a failed save, and are otherwise unsettled.

Three-headed

Creature cannot be surprised except by invisible opponents; creature gains two additional bite attacks if it has one.

War Leader

8 Large, or 4 Hulking followers, as the Minor and Moderate modifiers, respectively.

New Spells

All monster modifiers can be permanently applied to a creature with the *Polymorph Other* spell, assuming it survives the casting. These lower spells allow modifiers to be temporarily placed on a creature. This has the advantage of allowing a transmuter to respond to changing battlefield conditions, and also carries no risk the transformation will kill a valued minion.

Transmogrify, Lesser

Arcane Transmutation/Alteration

Level: Magic-User 2

Range: 5 ft./level

Duration: 5 rounds/level

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Components: V,S
Casting Time: 2 segments
Saving Throw: Negates (no save if willing)

This spell partially transforms a target for a short period of time. Unwilling subjects receive a saving throw vs. polymorph to resist this spell; willing subjects do not require a saving throw.

The target of this spell receives one Minor Modifier of the caster's choice.

Transmogrify

Arcane Transmutation/Alteration

Level: Magic-User 3
Range: 5 ft./level
Duration: 10 rounds/level
Area of Effect: 1-4 creatures
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: Negates (no save if willing)

This spell partially transforms a target for a short period of time. Unwilling subjects receive a saving throw vs. polymorph to resist this spell; willing subjects do not require a saving throw.

The target of this spell receives one Moderate Modifier of the caster's choice.

Alternately, this spell can either grant a Minor Modifier to 1-4 creatures, or grant a single creature 2 Minor Modifiers of the caster's choice.

Transmogrify, Greater

Arcane Transmutation/Alteration

Level: Magic-User 4
Range: 5 ft./level
Duration: 1 turn/level

Area of Effect: 1-4 creatures

Components: V,S
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: Negates (no save if willing)

This spell partially transforms a target for a short period of time. Unwilling subjects receive a saving throw vs. polymorph to resist this spell; willing subjects do not require a saving throw.

The target of this spell receives one Major Modifier of the caster's choice.

Alternately, this spell can either grant a Moderate Modifier to 1-4 creatures, or grant a single creature 2 Moderate Modifiers of the caster's choice.

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