

The Game

The Forests of Faera is a lightweight roleplaying game in which players embark on short, fantastical adventures. All you need to get started are some pencils, a few sheets of paper, some dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20), your imagination and a quest! You can play by yourself, but the most fun can be had when a Game Master (GM) guides you and a few of your friends through an adventure together.

The game is a conversation between the players and the GM; The GM tells the players what they see and hear in the world around them, and the players explain what their characters are thinking, feeling and doing. Players roll dice when attempting anything risky which creates tension and excitement for everyone around the table. Regardless of how the dice land, the narrative will always evolve in some interesting way.

Cascading Dice

The Forests of Faera uses cascading dice - dice that change size when certain events happen during gameplay. When such an event occurs, the die is *upgraded* or *downgraded* to the next die in this cascading chain:

d20 ~ d12 ~ d10 ~ d8 ~ d6 ~ d4

Creatures & Abilities

From towering giants to faeries no bigger than a thumbnail, all creatures in Faera have three abilities which grant them **bonuses** when trying risky things: **mind**, **body** and **spirit**.

The brave adventurers that journey into the forests use abilities freely but watch their **composure** and **enchantment** closely, for pushing either past its limit will result in the adventurer getting **distressed**, unable to continue their adventure. If all adventurers become distressed at the same time, the adventure falls apart and you fail your quest. Fear not, though - many skills and tools can revive a distressed creature. Your companions have some... right?

Credits & Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Jacqui, Oliver, Saul, u/Giffyglyph and u/FsNStrider for their invaluable feedback throughout development.

Inspiration:

- [Dungeons & Dragons 5e](#)
- [Dungeon World](#)
- [The Black Hack](#) (specifically, its Usage Dice)
- Matt Colville (in general, but particularly his YouTube video [Your First Adventure, Running the Game #1](#))
- John Four's article [5 Room Dungeons](#)
- u/bbbioshock's post [Composure: Why I Banned The Phrase 'Hit Points' and I Think You Should Too](#)

The Delian Tomb

GM (read aloud): *You have promised Jago, owner of the Green Dragon Inn, to rescue his kid, Samry, from goblin kidnapers. You've been tracking them through the forest for the past day.*

Part 1: The entrance to some kind of tomb - guarded by a **pair of goblins**, its massive stone doors smashed in. A goblin patrol arrives if the adventurers wait and watch instead of rushing in.

Part 2: A goblin bivouac. **Four or five goblins** nest here, alert or asleep depending on how stealthy the party was. The patrol from Part 1 arrives mid-fight if it wasn't dealt with earlier. A bas relief on the wall depicts knights fighting chaos, and an oath: *"I, THEMIS ALEXA II, SWEAR THE DELIAN OATH: TO SERVE LAW, BATTLE CHAOS AND STRIVE TO KEEP THE LORE OF THE DELIAN ORDER SECRET."*

Part 3: A hallway with a **pressure plate** and **scythe trap**. Ow!

Part 4: A shrine room. The towering statue of a knight looks down on an altar, incense burns around the room. A scuffed-up goat bleats sadly from a tiny cage. A **goblin shaman** chants some kind of ritual atop the altar and a **hulking ogre** stands guard below. If an adventurer becomes distressed here, the ogre bellows *"LEAVE, AND YOUR FRIEND LIVES."* (It is tradition in these parts to ransom distressed creatures.)

Part 5: The goat's collar has a name scribed into it: Samry! The altar hides a secret door and has an inscription: *"If you are to keep this, you must first give it to me."* If the riddle is solved (*your word*), the door opens to a crypt housing six sarcophagi. If disturbed, **undead** awaken and attack the party. If someone solved the riddle or pledged the Delian Oath, however, the spirit of Themis appears and gifts her magic sword, *Themistopóloi*.

Mind is a measure of your common sense, intelligence, spellcasting ability and wisdom. It is used in tasks such as tracking animals, detecting traps or discerning true intent.

Body is a measure of your balance, natural athleticism, physical agility and poise. It is used in tasks such as lifting heavy objects, climbing a wall or swimming against a river.

Spirit is a measure of your ambition, confidence, empathy, leadership and willpower. It is used in tasks such as praying to a deity, intimidating a guard, tricking a creature or inspiring others.

Composure is a measure of the physical ability and mental willpower you need to continue an activity. It is gradually whittled away as you explore Faera and is tracked using a cascading die called a **composure die**.

Enchantment is a measure of how deeply you have succumbed to the forests' charms. It is gradually increased as you draw on wild magics to weave spells and is tracked using a cascading die called an **enchantment die**.

The Forests of Faera

You are a proud citizen of Faera – a land filled with powerful magics, extraordinary creatures and enchanted forests.

Gather your equipment and step out into the world, for an adventure is about to unfold!

Creating Your Character

The most courageous and adventurous creatures of Faera travel the land in search of coin, power and purpose - you are one of these creatures. Follow these steps to create your character.

1. Choose a species for your character: **Centaur, Desert Elf, Treekind, Faun, Goblin, Harpy, Ogre-ish** or **Seafolk**.
2. Choose an attitude for your character: **Brave, Cool, Fierce, Gracious, Humble, Naïve, Patient** or **Wild**.
3. Choose a role for your character: **Alchemist, Bard, Knight, Monk, Ranger, Shaman, Thief** or **Warden**.
4. Choose a rune from the list in the *Weaving A Spell* section below to guide how you weave spells.
5. Give your character a **snappy adventurer's name**, like Alizabeth Shieldheart or something.

You start with a **d12 composure die**, a **d4 enchantment die** and **ability bonuses** of +2, +1 and -1.

Assign the +2 and +1 bonuses to abilities you want your character to be good at, and the -1 to their weakest ability.

Your gear includes: An adventurer's kit (5 uses); some snacks enjoyed by your **species**; a weapon that suits your **attitude**; and a tool of your trade, to go with your **role**. *When introducing your character, tell us about your gear!*

Your adventurer's kit contains useful mundane items such as rope, chalk, poles, spikes, etc. When you rummage through it for some useful mundane item, you find what you need and mark off a use.

Weaving A Spell

All creatures of Faera have an attunement to the ancient magics of the forests. By drawing on this power to weave a spell, you call on the forests for aid, risking enchantment for terrific powers.

Runes guide the ways you can weave spells. You can weave almost any spell you can think of if a rune could make it possible. As you learn more runes, you acquire more ways to weave spells.

When you learn a new rune, choose one of the following:

Debilitating, Delayed, Disruptive, Elemental, Forceful, Illusory, Messy, Piercing, Precise, Subtle

Advantage & Disadvantage

Sometimes your roll is modified by special situations called **advantage** or **disadvantage**. When you have either, you roll *two dice*, taking the higher number if you have advantage or the lower if you have disadvantage.

Attempting A Challenge

When you attempt something risky, roll a die to see how you go. The GM will tell you how difficult the task is and establish some consequences in case you fail. Choose how you would like to approach the challenge:

- *If you use your abilities*, describe how (pick an ability), roll your composure die and add your ability bonus.
- *If you weave a spell*, describe it (pick a rune) and roll both your composure and enchantment dice. Your composure die cannot be downgraded when weaving a spell.

If the sum of your roll is equal to or higher than the difficulty, your action or spell works flawlessly! Otherwise, something goes wrong - your GM will tell you how.

Helping Each Other Out

When one of your companions attempts something risky, you can choose to help them if you are in a position to do so, granting them advantage on their roll. Describe how you help them out.

This is a great way to increase their chances of success but be aware that both of you may have to deal with any consequences!

Variant Rule: Creature Composure

Use this variant rule to make creatures tougher to defeat.

When you challenge a creature, roll against the creature's composure die. The GM will tell you what composure die the creature has and the player to your left rolls it for the creature. Reduce a creature's composure below a d4 to defeat it.

If the result of *your* roll is equal to or higher than the result of the *creature's* roll, you best them - downgrade their composure die. Otherwise, the creature bests you! Your GM will say how.

Losing Composure & Becoming Enchanted

When you roll 1-2 on a composure die, you lose composure. Downgrade your composure die. If you roll 1-2 on a d4 composure die, you reach your mental, physical and emotional limits, becoming distressed.

When you roll the highest number on an enchantment die, you gain enchantment. Upgrade your enchantment die and learn a new rune. If you roll a 12 on a d12 enchantment die, you become totally enchanted by the forests, becoming distressed.

Distressed creatures cannot act or continue their adventure.

Reviving A Distressed Creature

You can revive a distressed creature if you have the means to. Rummage through your gear - perhaps you have just the thing!

If they have no composure, *upgrade* their composure die twice. If they are enchanted, *downgrade* their enchantment die once.

Creating A Quest

All adventurers need a quest to go on! Follow this simple guide to create your own or see [The Delian Tomb](#) to jump right in.

Part 1: Entrance and Guardian

The reason why the quest hasn't been completed yet or why these adventurers are the only ones who can help. A guardian or challenge at the start is good justification for this, establishes mood and theme, sets up early action to capture player interest and energises the session. Dress it up with care!

Part 2: Puzzle or Roleplaying Challenge

The adventurers are victorious over Part 1 - present them a trial that cannot be solved with steel. Make this a puzzle/skill-based/roleplaying encounter if possible, planting clues in Part 1 about potential solutions. This ties the two together, keeps problem solvers happy and changes gameplay up with variety. If Part 1 was a puzzle, have a fight here instead.

Part 3: Trick, Trap or Setback

Build tension for the quest using a trick, trap or setback. Put some doubt in the players' minds, weaken them or create a build-up to a dramatic struggle in Part 4.

Part 4: Climax, Big Battle or Conflict

The big show, the final combat, the capstone conflict of the quest. Use all the tactics you can summon as GM to make this encounter memorable and entertaining! Consider starting or ending with roleplay (perhaps the villain monologues, or coughs out a few last words on their dying breath) or having the battle resolved in unusual ways (such as a wager or a duel).

Part 5: Reward, Revelation or Plot Twist

Change the players' bragging to "We came, we saw, we slipped on a banana peel." This doesn't always have to represent a complication or point of failure, but it can. It also doesn't have to be a location - it could simply be a twist, revealed in Part 4. Let your creativity shine and make it memorable! If they haven't got their reward yet, give it to them now, perhaps alongside motivation for the next quest.

Example Challenges

| Challenge | Obstacle Difficulty | Creature Composure |
|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Trivial | Bend a Spoon (3) | Kobold (d4) |
| Simple | Haggle Prices (5) | Goblin (d6) |
| Average | Leap a Chasm (7) | Orc (d8) |
| Tough | Resist Torture (9) | Ogre (d10) |
| Fiendish | Scale a Cliff (11) | Giant (d12) |
| Herculean | Scare a Griffon (13) | Dragon (d20) |