

Welcome to Stonetop

What is this?

Stonetop is a campaign playset for *Dungeon World*. It focuses the game around a small, isolated town and sets the PCs up as the heroes of that town. It's less about murderhobos looting tombs and more about PCs fighting on behalf of their homes.

Why?

I've found that *Dungeon World* played as-written can easily end up with disjointed, somewhat gonzo game worlds. Which is awesome. But it's not always what you're looking for.

I've also found that the standard rules encourage (or just assume) a fair amount of wandering and rootlessness. The PCs are often outsiders. They have some ties to each other but not necessarily to the wider world. If things get bad, they have the option to walk away and let the world burn. Sometimes, you find yourself asking why these misfits trust each other at all.

The pacing of *Dungeon World* can also be rather intense. After all, part of the GM's agenda is to fill the character's lives with adventure. You might get some downtime when you undertake a journey, but often you're just go-go-going. I've had games of *Dungeon World* where the characters went from level 1 to level 7 in about three weeks of in-game time!

Stonetop is an attempt to slow the pace down and to give the characters some roots. It's the kind of setting where months, even years might pass between adventures. Where heroes might retire and raise families. Where their children might become heroes themselves.

What does it do differently?

First and foremost, play is centered on the character's home town, the village of Stonetop. The class playbooks are all unique to the setting. Each one is designed to be tied directly to the village by bonds of blood, loyalty, friendship, and duty.

The village of Stonetop itself has a playbook, with stats based on the Steading rules from *Dungeon World* and moves for mobilizing and managing the village's resources and generating threats and opportunities for the town's heroes to deal with. The *Stonetop* playbook also has a set of improvements that can be achieved in play.

The village and the region are somewhat pre-defined. You'll find maps and almanacs for the nearby regions, steadings, dungeon starters, and some notable NPCs, monsters, and treasures, but there are still plenty of blanks to fill in during play. Many of the details—such as historical events, the most pressing threats, and even the nature of the gods—are specifically determined by the playbooks and choices made by the players.

There are some other minor tweaks to the standard rules, including:

- ⊙ Slower character advancement
- ⊙ A resource management mini-game for the steading itself
- ⊙ Follower and exploration rules from *The Perilous Wilds*
- ⊙ A different take on the Aid/Interfere moves and bonds, which incorporates bonds between PCs and NPCs
- ⊙ A setting-specific gear list, reflecting Iron Age technology
- ⊙ Rules for outfitting before adventures based on the prosperity and current fortunes of the village

What else is special about the setting?

All the characters are humans. Fantastic peoples are heard of but mysterious. No one on in living memory has actually met one of the bronze-skinned *ustrina*. The Forest Folk haven't been seen in a decade. The horrid little *crinwin* plague the village but no one really knows what they want.

There is no government, no empire, no kings or queens—at least, not around here. The village is on its own, with only a handful of neighboring steadings. Far to the south are more civilized lands, but they have little interest in this northern backwater—for now, at least.

The village is built on ancient, giant-sized ruins of the Makers, and other ruins dot the landscape. Magic is not easy, or common, or predictable. Or safe. The past lies buried all around, but it rests unquietly.

Why play Stonetop?

Because maybe you want to be a local hero instead of some wandering murderhobo. Because you want to build a place up rather than burn it down.

Because there's a world full of mystery out there, and buried secrets—who knows what you might find?

Because the world is darkening, like the sky before a late-summer storm. And these are good people here in Stonetop, your kith and kin.

If you don't step up to protect them, who will?

—Jeremy

