



GIFFYGLYPH'S
DARKER DUNGEONS



5E

Create dangerous adventures for your D&D 5e
game with new rules options



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GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS



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GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

OUT BEYOND THE WALLS OF CIVILIZATION LIE unforgiving wilds and the ancient ruins of the long dead. Monsters, dungeons, danger, and death—life as an adventurer is a hard-won challenge, though not without reward. Treasure, fame, ancient artifacts, and forbidden knowledge—the greater the risk, the greater your prize.

Explore forgotten corners of the world and make new discoveries. Manage your resources and make the most of your skills to survive. Gain fame, fortune, and power in your grand adventures—or fall into ruin, despair, and madness like so many have before you.

Be smart, be careful, and be brave. Light your torch and tread wisely into *Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons*...

FEATURES

- Create **randomized characters** and **level 0 rookies**.
- A new and easy-to-use **inventory system**.
- Track hunger, thirst, and fatigue with **survival conditions**.
- Spread plague and sickness with **deadly diseases**.
- Add risk to spellcasting with **magical burnout**.
- Enhance long-distance travel with the **journey phase**.
- Drive characters mad with **stress and afflictions**.
- Give combat some bite with **wounds and injuries**.
- Transform combat with **active defense & initiative**.
- *And many more...*

ABOUT



Version 2.2

Created by Giffyglyph, September 2019



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CREDITS & INFLUENCES

Mental Stress: [Darkest Dungeon](#)
Inventory: [Matt Rundle's Anti-Hammerspace](#)
Weapon Notches: [James Young's Ten Foot Polemic](#)
Usage Die: [The Black Hack](#)
Journeys & Travel: [The Angry GM](#), [AiME](#)
Advice & Testing: [Td4damage](#), [a8bmiles](#), [ace_of_shovels](#), [Android117](#), [baronbadass1](#), [coldermoss](#), [darkstreetlights123](#), [Durins_cat](#), [EADreddit](#), [grit-glorry-games](#), [Necoya](#), [heimdall237](#), [LeVentNoir](#), [Spilled Ale Studios](#), [warwalkers](#), [zeemeerman2](#)

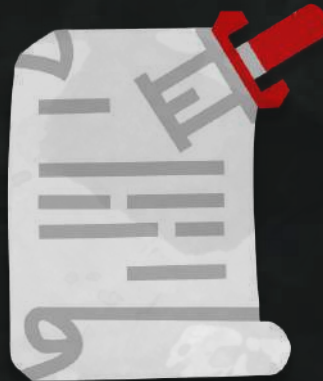
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SETTING UP

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS IS A MODULAR toolkit you can use to help add a little grit and danger to your D&D 5e games.

Rather than focus on new content (classes, monsters, spells, etc.), this supplement expands the underlying mechanics of 5e with some brand new systems to let you customize your game in whatever fashion you like. If players are tearing through your dungeons and monsters without fear, this toolkit might help to put some bite back into your adventures.

THEMES

There are 7 major themes that this supplement tries to address with a variety of new features and mechanics:

1. **Attrition:** Everything breaks, eventually. Characters gain wounds, lose limbs, and go mad from stress, while gear becomes chipped, damaged, and broken.
2. **Inventory:** A restricted inventory is an interesting inventory. Carrying just the right item can mean the difference between life and death—so choose wisely.
3. **Survival:** Everyone needs to eat, drink, and sleep. Basic survival is a core theme of many adventures where starvation and exhaustion are a genuine threat.
4. **Time:** It takes a long time to achieve something significant. The world evolves as weeks, months, and years pass by. Downtime is an important part of life.
5. **Travel:** The wilds are dark and dangerous, and long-distance travel is a core part of the adventure.
6. **Wealth:** Gold is important and everyone wants it. Wealth is the key to power—or at the very least, the key to a life of comfort.
7. **Agency:** Players drive the game forward—their actions, choices, and consequences determine what happens throughout the game.

HOW TO GET STARTED

It's easy to start using *Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons* in your D&D 5e game—just follow these 5 simple steps:

1. **Pick the features:** Decide which rules to include in your game. If you're modifying an already-active game, trying adding just one or two features at a time so players aren't too overwhelmed.
2. **Talk with your players:** Tell your players what you'll be doing and why. Some of the features in this supplement change the default 5e experience, so you should make sure that all players are aware of what you're changing and be comfortable with it.
3. **Experiment:** You might find some features don't fit with your particular game or setting after all. That's ok, not every rule works for everyone—swap features in and out as best suits your table, or change rules to create your own custom variant.
4. **Have fun:** Start playing. Enjoy your game!
5. **Feedback:** If you have a notable experience using this supplement in your game, I'd love to hear about it. Constructive feedback is greatly appreciated, so let me know how it worked out at your table. Thanks!

EVERY TABLE IS DIFFERENT

Giffyglyph's Darker Dungeons is a modular ruleset—tweak, replace, and cut out any bits you want. Don't like random character generation? Ignore it. Prefer your own initiative system? Keep it. Think inventory is too limited? Extend it.

These rules are written as I would run a game, but every table is different. Take whichever rules you think are good for your own game, leave the rest aside, and have fun.

~ Giffyglyph 2019

MODES OF PLAY

This supplement contains many features and tweaks, and not all are equal—some impact the game and tone more drastically than others.

For convenience, the rules have been grouped into three broad modes of play: *Radiant*, *Dark*, and *Astral*. Pick and choose the features that are the right fit for your own game and start playing.

MODE 1. RADIANT

Radiant features can be dropped into almost any 5e game without any significant tonal changes. These introduce small tweaks and changes with a focus on immersion and non-combat activities.

- **Ammunition Dice:** Track ammunition using abstract terms and *ammunition dice* instead of per-arrow.
- **Assistance:** Allow characters to assist each other with passive bonuses and prevent characters rerolling for multiple tries at the same task.
- **Cheat Fate:** Allow characters to escape certain death with rare and elusive fate points.
- **Degrees of Success:** Add a success-at-a-cost option for characters to make failed rolls more interesting.
- **Inventory Space:** Add a slot-based inventory system that focuses on item size and placement, not weight.
- **Knowledge Checks:** As the DM, roll character knowledge checks in secret to provide misinformation and misleads if they fail.
- **Long-distance Journeys:** Make long-distance travel more interesting with a *Journey phase* and travelling responsibilities.
- **Open Skill Checks:** Decouple skills from abilities, allowing any skill to be used with any relevant ability modifier for variety.
- **Potions, Flasks, & Oils:** Add new consumables for players to find and buy on their adventures.
- **Social Interaction:** Allow Intelligence and Wisdom to be used appropriately in social situations, enabling non-Charisma characters to contribute more.
- **Tools:** Make tools and proficiencies more valuable by granting additional bonuses.

MODE 2. DARK

Dark features make combat more dangerous and life generally harder for characters. Use these to darken the tone of your game or put more strain on resources.

- **Dangerous Magic:** Make magic a bigger risk for your casters with magical burnout and consequences.
- **Deadly Disease:** Make sickness and plague a serious threat with escalating diseases and contagion checks.
- **Death Saving Throws:** Make death a bigger risk with persistent death saving throw failures.
- **Item Quality:** Track the quality of items, affecting their value and how they are treated by NPCs.
- **Lingering Wounds:** Add persistent wounds to ensure falling to 0 hit points has a lasting impact.

- **Mortal Injuries:** Add mortal injuries to make players fear falling to 0 hit points from your big bads.
- **Rest & Downtime:** Add a more realistic time scale to your game by making a long rest take 1 whole week.
- **Stress & Afflictions:** Track the mental well-being of characters and any potential breakdowns.
- **Survival Conditions:** Track the physical state of characters to highlight resources like food and water.
- **Training:** Make characters pay gold and train with a mentor if they wish to level up.
- **Wear & Tear:** Track equipment damage and allow characters to repair and temper their gear.

MODE 3. ASTRAL

Astral features change core parts of the vanilla 5e experience. Use these if you want to modify some of the underlying mechanics of your game.

- **Active Defense:** Replace monster attack rolls with player defense rolls to make your players feel more active and engaged during combat.
- **Active Initiative:** Allow players to choose who acts next for more dynamic combat by replacing turn-based initiative with active initiative.
- **Active XP:** Reward players with XP for finding treasure and bringing it back to town.
- **Feature and Spell Changes:** Change some character features, skills, and spells to modify power levels to better support low power gameplay.
- **Intelligent Initiative:** Switch initiative to use INT instead of DEX to make intelligence more significant.
- **Race & Class Changes:** Tweak your races and classes with a variety of small updates for some improved balance and to better support the other modules in this supplement.
- **Random Character Generation:** Create characters randomly using a d100, 3d6, and random tables.
- **Rookie Characters:** Create classless rookie characters for a low-powered, dangerous adventure.

A DM wants to make a small tweak to their existing campaign and just replace the vanilla inventory system. They choose the *Inventory* module with the *Quickslot* variant—later switching to the *Containers* variant once everyone becomes more comfortable.

A second DM wants to make long-distance travel more involving in their game, and chooses the *Journey Phase* module. They also add in *Survival Conditions* to highlight the need for food and water. Later in the game, the DM references the *Deadly Disease* module when the party ends up in a foul, rat-infested sewer.

A third DM is creating a brand new Lovecraftian-themed campaign in the "West Marches" style. After talking it over with their group, they opt to use the entire ruleset. After a few sessions, the DM decides they miss rolling dice for monster attacks—they drop *Active Defense* and return to the vanilla mechanics.

PART 1

Your Character

1 Character Creation p6

Create randomised 1st-level characters.

2 Feature Changes p11

A variety of small changes and balance updates.

3 Rookie Characters p13

Run dangerous 0th-level adventures with rookies.

4 Racial Changes p16

Small updates to some racial features.

5 Class Changes p17

Small updates to some class features.





CHARACTER CREATION

BEFORE YOU CAN BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY INTO THE uncharted wilds, you'll need a character. D&D 5e characters are heroes, capable of great feats even at 1st-level—but we don't always get to choose who or what we are in life. Sometimes, we just have to roll the dice and see what happens.

This chapter introduces support for randomized characters and a variety of optional creation dials to help customize your game.

RANDOM CHARACTERS

With randomized characters, your core details are determined randomly by a d100. This can result in some unusual characters, but that's ok—flaws are fun.

To create a new and randomly-generated 1st-level character, take a d100 and follow these six simple steps.

STEP 1. RACE

First, determine your character's race by rolling a d100 and checking the *Character Races* table below.

CHARACTER RACE					
d100	Race	d100	Race	d100	Race
01	Aasimar	40-41	Goliath	93	Monstrous
02-04	Dragonborn	42	Half-Elf	94	Tabaxi
05-19	Dwarf	43	Half-Orc	95-98	Tiefling
20-29	Elf	44-50	Halfling	99	Triton
30-31	Firbolg	51-90	Human	00	Choose
32-33	Gith	91	Kenku	—	—
34-39	Gnome	92	Lizardfolk	—	—

Races are not weighted equally, so some—such as human—will be more common than others. The exact breakdown of this may depend on your campaign setting.

Some races have additional choices to make—ancestry, proficiencies, languages, etc. Pick these at random using the tables listed in *Appendix A* (p107).

SUBRACE

If your race also requires you to choose a subrace, roll on the *Character Subraces* table to determine the result.

CHARACTER SUBRACE				
Race	d100	Subrace	d100	Subrace
Aasimar	01-33	Fallen	68-00	Scourge
	34-67	Protector	—	—
Dwarf	01-45	Hill	91-00	Duergar
	46-90	Mountain	—	—
Elf	01-10	Drow	51-60	Sea
	11-20	Eladrin	61-70	Shadar-kai
	21-50	High	71-00	Wood
Gith	01-50	Githyanki	51-00	Githzerai
Gnome	01-45	Forest	91-00	Deep
	46-90	Rock	—	—
Halfling	01-50	Lightfoot	51-00	Stout
Monstrous	01-10	Bugbear	51-75	Kobold
	11-35	Goblin	76-90	Orc
	36-50	Hobgoblin	91-00	Yuan-ti
Tiefling	01-12	Asmodeus	57-67	Levistus
	13-23	Baalzebul	68-78	Mammon
	24-34	Dispater	79-89	Mephistopheles
	35-45	Fierna	90-00	Zariel
	46-56	Glasya	—	—

RACIAL OPTIONS

The racial options listed may not match your own campaign setting—modify the tables to best suit your own game.

STEP 2. BACKGROUND

Next, roll to see what your character used to do in the past. This was a career, occupation, or experience which left a profound mark on your character and helped shape them into the person they are today.

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

d100	Background	d100	Background
01-07	Acolyte	50-56	Noble
08-14	Charlatan	57-63	Outlander
15-21	Criminal	64-70	Sage
22-28	Entertainer	71-77	Sailor
29-35	Folk Hero	78-84	Soldier
36-42	Guild Artisan	85-91	Urchin
43-49	Hermit	92-00	Choose

You gain the proficiencies and languages from your background, but you do not gain any equipment or—importantly—any special background features.

If your background has additional choices to make (such as tool proficiencies, specialties, languages, businesses, etc.) then pick these at random.

CHARACTERISTICS

Once you know your background, randomly select a trait, ideal, bond, and flaw from the characteristics tables.

STEP 3. CLASS

Now you know what your character used to be, it's time to see what they have become. Roll on the *Character Class* table below to determine your initial class.

CHARACTER CLASS

d100	Class	d100	Class	d100	Class
01-08	Barbarian	41-48	Monk	81-88	Warlock
09-16	Bard	49-56	Paladin	89-96	Wizard
17-24	Cleric	57-64	Ranger	97-00	Choose
25-32	Druid	65-72	Rogue	—	—
33-40	Fighter	73-80	Sorcerer	—	—

You gain the features, skills and proficiencies of your class, but you do not gain any equipment from it.

Some classes require additional choices to be made—skills, tools, languages—so generate these randomly, rerolling any duplicates. If you are a spellcaster, *don't* roll for your spells—you may choose your starting cantrips and spells manually as per usual for your class.

CLASS SPECIALIZATIONS

If your class requires you to choose a specialization at 1st-level, roll on the *Class Specializations* table below.

CLASS SPECIALIZATIONS

Class	d100	Specialty	d100	Specialty
Cleric Domains	01-10	Forge	51-60	Nature
	11-20	Grave	61-70	Tempest
	21-30	Knowledge	71-80	Trickery
	31-40	Life	81-90	War
	41-50	Light	91-00	Choose
Fighter Fighting Styles	01-16	Archery	65-80	Protection
	17-32	Defense	81-96	Two-Weapon
	33-48	Dueling	97-00	Choose
	49-64	Great Weapon	—	—
Sorcerer Origins	01-19	Divine Soul	58-76	Storm Sorcery
	20-38	Draconic Blood	77-95	Wild Magic
	39-57	Shadow Magic	96-00	Choose
Warlock Patrons	01-19	Archfey	58-76	Great Old One
	20-38	Celestial	77-95	Hexblade
	39-57	Fiend	96-00	Choose

STEP 4. ABILITY SCORES

Now you've defined who your character is, it's time to see how capable they are. Follow the five steps below and randomly generate your ability scores:

- 1. Roll:** Roll 3d6 six times, once for each of your attributes in order: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and finally Charisma.
- 2. Reroll:** Reroll one attribute of your choice and pick the best result.
- 3. Swap:** After your reroll, you may then make one swap of any two attributes.
- 4. Racial:** Apply your racial bonuses as per normal.
- 5. Modifiers:** Finally, calculate your *Ability Modifiers*.

ABILITY SCORES AND MODIFIERS

Score	Modifier	Score	Modifier	Score	Modifier
01	-5	08-09	-1	16-17	+3
02-03	-4	10-11	+0	18-19	+4
04-05	-3	12-13	+1	20-21	+5
06-07	-2	14-15	+2	22-23	+6

Your character may have an unusual ability array, but that's ok. Learn how to make the best use of your strengths while protecting your weak spots.

3D6 AVERAGE ARRAY

Rolling 3d6 as described here should create an average ability array in the region of [13, 11, 11, 11, 10, 10].

Viridian, a tiefling bard, is generating his ability scores:

1. He rolls 3d6 six times to generate a basic array: [STR 14, DEX 13, CON 9, INT 8, WIS 10, CHA 5].
2. CHA 5 isn't good, especially for a bard, so he makes one reroll: CHA 15—*much* better.
3. Viridian then has a difficult choice to make: he doesn't want high STR, but does he swap it with CON or INT? Does he risk being frail or stupid? He chooses INT (a bard needs a decent vocabulary), swapping it with STR to make [STR 8, INT 14].
4. Viridian then adds his racial modifiers: +1 INT and +2 CHA to make [INT 15, CHA 17].
5. Finally, he calculates his total Ability Modifiers.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	10 (0)	17 (+3)

Viridian is quick-witted and a skilled charmer with a sly, lyrical flair. He hates any sort of manual labor and, while he loves a good drink, gets drunk very quickly.

STEP 5. CHARACTER DETAILS

Now you've established the outline of who your character is, you can start to flesh out some more personal details.

APPEARANCE & FAMILY

Use the tables below to determine the basic outlines of your age, appearance, distinguishing feature, and family background. You can decide the exact details yourself, or discover them organically during gameplay.

CHARACTER DETAILS

d100	Age	d100	Height
01-39	Young adult	01-05	Very short
40-74	Early middle-age	06-30	Short
75-91	Late middle-age	31-70	Average
92-97	Old	71-95	Tall
98-00	Very old	96-00	Very tall
d100	Weight	d100	Feature
01-05	Very thin	01-20	Scar
06-30	Thin	21-40	Tattoo
31-70	Average	41-60	Piercing
71-95	Fat	61-80	Birthmark
96-00	Very fat	81-00	Accent
d100	Family	d100	Raised By
01-05	None	01-40	Natural Parent(s)
06-30	Small	41-60	Close Family
31-70	Average	61-70	Adopted Parent(s)
71-95	Large	71-90	An institution
96-00	Disowned	91-00	Yourself

RACIAL VARIATIONS

These descriptions may mean very different things depending on your race, so bear that in mind—a *very short* elf is very short by elf standards, while a *large* halfling family is large by halfling standards.

MEMORIES

Roll on this table to generate a significant memory. For each memory, name a unique NPC, faction, or place—either create your own to add something new into the world, or use existing lore to help anchor your character to the campaign setting.

CHARACTER MEMORIES

d100	Memory	Description
01-20	Achievement	A goal you helped complete
21-40	Conflict	Someone opposed you
41-60	Friendship	A close bond forged or tested
61-80	Loss	Something precious was taken
81-00	Love	A love gained or lost

The older you are, the more significant memories you have—young adult (1), early middle-age (2), late middle-age (3), old (4), and very old (5).

MOTIVATION

Roll to see what your character's primary motivation in life is. This may explain why they became an adventurer, how they react to situations, or what their general goal is. You can choose exactly how this motivation manifests in your character's actions.

CHARACTER MOTIVATION

d100	Motivation	Description
01-06	Achievement	To become the best
07-12	Acquisition	To obtain possessions or wealth
13-18	Balance	To bring all things into harmony
19-24	Beneficence	To protect, heal, and mend
25-30	Creation	To build or make new
31-36	Discovery	To explore, uncover, and pioneer
37-42	Education	To inform, teach, or train
43-48	Hedonism	To enjoy all things sensuous
49-54	Liberation	To free the self and/or others
55-60	Nobility	To be virtuous, honest, and brave
61-66	Order	To organize and reduce chaos
67-73	Play	To have fun, to enjoy life
74-79	Power	To control and lead others
80-85	Recognition	To gain approval, status, or fame
86-91	Service	To follow a person or group
92-97	Understanding	To seek knowledge or wisdom
98-00	Choose	—

HABITS

Everyone has a habit of some sort that they may or may not be aware of—speaking too loud, constant fidgeting, collecting weird knickknacks, etc.

Roll on the *Character Habits* table below to see what habit your character has picked up during their life, or pick a notable habit of your own making.

CHARACTER HABITS			
d100	Habit	d100	Habit
01-03	Humming	52-54	Snacking
04-06	Dancing	55-57	Pacing
07-09	Sleepwalking	58-60	Counting
10-12	Facial tics	61-63	Snoring
13-15	Fingernail biting	64-66	Beard/hair stroking
16-18	Daydreaming	67-69	Nose picking
19-21	Talking in sleep	70-72	Apologizing
22-24	Whistling	73-75	Exaggeration
25-27	Name dropping	74-78	Superstitious
28-30	Constant grooming	79-81	Belching
31-33	Foot tapping	82-84	Repeating others
34-36	Lip biting/licking	85-87	Smelling things
37-39	Coin flipping	88-90	Teeth picking
40-42	Chewing	91-93	Swearing
43-45	Knuckle cracking	94-96	Telling secrets
46-48	Collects odd things	97-99	Repeating yourself
49-51	Singing	00	Choose

QUEST

There is something your character is seeking to accomplish in the short term, either through their own desires or because someone has compelled them to. Your quest may be tied to your *motivation* or one of your character's *significant memories*.

Roll on the *Character Quest* table to see what theme your initial quest takes. You can decide the exact details of your task with your DM.

CHARACTER QUEST		
d100	Quest	Description
01-10	Acquire	To take possession of a particular item
11-20	Craft	To create an item or art piece
21-30	Deliver	To bring something somewhere
31-40	Destroy	To destroy a precious object
41-50	Discover	To find a person, place, or thing
51-60	Explore	To map out a location
61-70	Justice	To apprehend someone
71-80	Learn	To gain specific knowledge
81-90	Meet	To find someone
91-00	Vengeance	To take revenge on someone

STEP 6. FEATURE TWEAKS

Some character features—such as languages, initiative, and darkvision—are modified with this supplement to better support a low-powered, darker tone.

Check the *Feature Changes* section to see if you need to update anything for your new character.

STEP 7. BUY EQUIPMENT

Now it's time to equip your character. You don't start with any notable equipment from your background or class—instead, you have an amount of gold determined by your 1st-level class.

Check the table below and make a roll to see how much gold you have. You can then spend this gold to buy any starting equipment and supplies.

STARTING WEALTH BY CLASS				
Class	Gold			
	Random	Low	Average	High
Barbarian	2d4 x 10	20	50	80
Bard	5d4 x 10	50	120	200
Cleric	5d4 x 10	50	120	200
Druid	2d4 x 10	20	50	80
Fighter	5d4 x 10	50	120	200
Monk	5d4	5	12	20
Paladin	5d4 x 10	50	120	200
Ranger	5d4 x 10	50	120	200
Rogue	4d4 x 10	40	100	160
Sorcerer	3d4 x 10	30	70	120
Warlock	4d4 x 10	40	100	160
Wizard	4d4 x 10	40	100	160

Your character may incur living costs during downtime, so you might want to keep some gold spare for expenses.

RANDOM VS. STATIC

The DM may nominate whether to use random rolls or static values for starting wealth. With static wealth, players gain the *average* gold for their class—unless it is a particularly low or high-wealth game.

STEP 8. TAKE A FATE POINT

Fate points allow your character to defy fate and cheat death, acting as a *second life* should you be caught unawares by a suddenly fatal action.

A new character starts with one fate point—a boon for reaching the heights of 1st-level. It's hard to get new fate points, so keep it safe and use it wisely.

STEP 9. VENTURE FORTH

Your character is now ready to begin their adventure. Join the rest of your party, prepare a journey into the untamed wilds, and face the *Darker Dungeons* below.

CREATION DIALS

If you don't want to use fully randomized characters in your game, or you want to change character creation in some small ways, try using some of these optional dials.

RACE, BACKGROUND, & CLASS

These options allow you to customize how players pick their race, background, and class. Use these to give your players varying control over the core of their character.

JUST ONE ROLL

The player must randomly generate one element: their race, background, or class. They may pick the remaining two elements manually as normal.

ONE FREE REROLL

After randomly generating their race, background, and class, the player may reroll one element of their choosing and keep the preferred result.

ONE FREE SELECTION

After randomly generating their race, background, and class, the player may drop one element of their choosing and replace it with a manual selection.

OPT-IN RANDOMIZER

Players may pick their race, background, and class manually. But if a player opts to randomly generate an element, they gain a reward—the more elements they choose to randomize, the bigger the final reward.

OPT-IN REWARDS

Randomized	Reward
One element	10 gp
Two elements	10 gp, 1 skill point
All three elements	10 gp, 1 skill point, 1 ability point

The skill point may be added to any skill of your choosing. The ability point may be added to any of your six abilities—though you cannot raise an ability score above 15 before applying racial modifiers.

ROLL TWICE, PICK ONCE

When a player rolls for their race, background, and class, they may roll twice and pick the preferred result.

RANDOMIZED MAGIC

This option randomizes the magic selection for spellcasters—a good option if you really want to mix things up in your game with some unusual combinations.

If you are a spellcaster—or have gained optional spells through your race or background—roll randomly to generate your starting cantrips and spell lists. After randomizing your spell collection, you may swap one cantrip for one of your choosing.

ABILITY ARRAYS

These options allow you to customize how players generate their ability arrays—useful if you want to change the average base power level of 1st-level characters.

HIGHER-POWERED ROLLS

Instead of rolling 3d6 for their ability score, the player may roll 4d6 and drop the lowest die value.

ROLL IN ANY ORDER

Instead of rolling their ability scores in order, the player may assign their scores in whichever order they wish.

SHARED PARTY ARRAY

At the start of the game, everyone helps to generate a shared ability array for the whole party.

Starting from the left of the DM and moving clockwise, each player rolls one 3d6 in turn until six numbers are generated—this becomes the starting ability array used by all 1st-level characters for the game.

STATIC ARRAYS

Instead of rolling for their ability scores, the player takes an array of values and assigns them manually to their abilities. The DM chooses the starting power level for the game: low (recommended) or standard.

- **Low power:** [15, 12, 11, 10, 9, 7] (18 points)
- **Standard power:** [15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8] (27 points)

FEATS

As an optional mechanic, feats are not active by default—and are not recommended for low-power games. But if you do want to include feats in your game, these options may help you to control their scope and influence.

THE BLACKLIST

Not all feats are equal. If you want to include feats in your game but exclude some of the more troublesome ones, apply a recommended blacklist such as:

Blacklist: Players may not take any of these feats.

- Crossbow Expert
- Great Weapon Master
- Lucky
- Polearm Master
- Resilient
- Sentinel
- Sharpshooter
- Spell Sniper

NO DUPLICATE FEATS

A feat can only be taken once across the entire party—once a feat is taken, it's locked until that character leaves the party, dies, or loses the feat by some other means.

RACIAL FEATS ONLY

Players may only take racial feats. If no appropriate or interesting feats are available for their race, you may reskin an existing feat or create a new feat to highlight an iconic racial power or aspect.

FEATURE CHANGES

SOME CHARACTER FEATURES ARE MODIFIED slightly in this supplement to better support a darker, more dangerous tone—or to include some minor rebalancing issues to a variety of powers, backgrounds, skills, races, classes, and spells.

This chapter introduces a variety of recommended feature changes that can be introduced to your game regardless of the character creation method.

COMMON

These common changes apply to all character types. Pick the modifiers that are suitable for your game and let your players know which changes they should expect.

ALIGNMENT

When deciding on your character alignment, ignore any racial alignment restrictions or suggestions—as a mortal creature, you get to choose your own particular morality.

BACKGROUND FEATURES

You do not gain any feature automatically from your background—such as *Discovery* or *Ship's Passage*.

You can try to emulate these effects in-game, however, by making the appropriate checks during downtime and your roleplaying scenes.

OUTLANDER: WANDERER

If you want to keep background features in your game, apply this change to the *Wanderer* feature.

You have advantage on Survival checks to guide, navigate, or forage in a favored terrain—choose one of the following: arctic, coast, desert, forest, grassland, mountain, swamp, or Underdark.

DARKVISION

True darkvision is a rare ability, found only in those living in the deepest, darkest places of the world. To make darkness a more important and threatening part of your game, apply these changes.

If you have the *Darkvision* racial character trait, replace it with the *Low-light Vision* trait:

LOW-LIGHT VISION

Race, Trait

For 30 ft around you, you can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You cannot see in darkness.

If you have the *Superior Darkvision* racial trait instead, replace it with:

DARKVISION

Race, Trait

For 30 ft around you, you can see in dim light as if it were bright light and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of grey. Beyond 30 ft, you cannot see in darkness.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY

If your new character has the *Sunlight Sensitivity* racial trait, you may choose to remove it by either:

- Removing your native *Darkvision* racial trait entirely so that you have only normal vision.
- Replacing your native *Superior Darkvision* racial trait with *Low-light Vision* (instead of *Darkvision* as above).

DARKVISION POWERS

If you gain Darkvision from sources other than your race (magic spells, magic items, class features, etc.), use the above definition of the trait but extend the range to whatever is specified by the new source—60 ft, 120 ft, etc.

INITIATIVE

Reaction speed is determined first-and-foremost by your thoughts—the faster you think, the faster you react.

Your initiative is no longer affected by your Dexterity—instead, use your Intelligence modifier.

TACTICAL WIT

If you are a *War Wizard*, your *Tactical Wit* class feature now grants a Dexterity bonus—not Intelligence.

This may also apply to other unique class features or item powers, so judge accordingly.

INSPIRATION

You can hold up to 3 inspiration points at once. You can spend inspiration to make an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check with advantage—though you must declare this *before* you make the roll.

GAINING INSPIRATION

You gain inspiration by acting in accordance with one of your characteristics in an *interesting* way for the game.

You cannot be "inspired" by the same characteristic multiple times in one game session, so keep it varied.

LANGUAGES

You can comprehend a maximum number of languages equal to 1 plus your Intelligence modifier (to a minimum of 1 language). If you have more languages than this—through class or racial features—choose which ones you wish to speak/read/write and discard the rest.

CHARACTER LANGUAGES

INT	Known Languages
-1 or lower	You have only a basic grasp of vocabulary in your primary language, and you are illiterate.
0	You can speak, read, and write your primary language with a decent range of vocabulary.
+1	You can speak, read, and write two languages.
+2	You can speak, read, and write three languages.
+3	You can speak, read, and write four languages.

All characters know how to speak *Common*, but they can't read or write *Common* without mastering it.

CODES AND COMMUNICATION

Some features allow your character to communicate with others using secret codes and cyphers—such as Thieves' Cant. These are not classed as languages and so don't count towards your language limit.

Viridian spent much of his youth nose-deep in poetry. As a tiefling, his primary language is *Infernal*. With INT +2, he is able to speak, read, and write in three languages: *Infernal*, *Common*, and *Elven*.

Chansi, meanwhile, never had much time for books. As a halfling, her primary language is *Halfling*. With INT -1, she can speak *Halfling* and *Common*, but cannot read or write either language.

SKILLS

These skills have been updated to provide a more even balance of utility and improve some lesser-picked skills.

ANIMAL HANDLING

Animal Handling now measures your ability to recall lore about animals (or creatures with the *Beast* keyword) and interact with them.

Roll Intelligence (Animal Handling) to recall some information about animals, or Wisdom (Animal Handling) to interact with animals.

NATURE

Nature no longer measures your knowledge of animals and beasts—that domain is now a part of the *Animal Handling* skill.

SPELLS

These changes update spells that may trivialize certain aspects of low-level adventuring and dungeon delving.

LIGHT

Light is now a concentration cantrip with the same level of brightness as a torch. The spell ends automatically if the light is moved too far away from the caster.

LIGHT

Evocation, Cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, M

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You touch one object that is no larger than 10 ft in any dimension. Until the spell ends, or your concentration breaks, or you move more than 120 ft away from the object, the object sheds bright light in a 20 ft radius and dim light for an additional 20 ft. The light can be colored as you like.

If you target an object held or worn by a hostile creature, that creature may make a Dexterity saving throw to avoid the spell.



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ROOKIE CHARACTERS

IF YOU WANT TO RUN A DANGEROUS AND LOW-powered adventure—or explore a time *before* your characters became notable heroes—use level 0 characters. These *rookies* have not yet mastered a class, relying entirely on their race, background, and wits to survive.

This chapter introduces rules to create and use rookie characters in your adventures.

Gavil hid, heart pounding, as the town burned. He couldn't fight goblins—he was just a butcher! But then he heard the girls screaming. Gavil grabbed his cleaver tight and charged out into the street...

CREATING A ROOKIE

Creating a new rookie character is easy: simply roll for a race, a background, a saving throw, and your ability scores—that's it, you're done. Rookies don't gain a class until they survive an adventure—or gain 150 XP—and reach 1st-level.

You gain all the skills, proficiencies, equipment, and wealth of your race and background combined—excluding the background feature. Roll for your characteristics and any other character details.

Your starting hit points, hit die, and armor/weapon proficiencies are determined by your background—check the *Rookie Details* table below for full details.

ROOKIE DETAILS

Background	Hit Points	Hit Die	Proficiency Bonus	Armor Proficiencies	Weapon Proficiencies	Variant: Starting Cantrips
Acolyte	3 + CON	1d4	+2	—	Simple	2 cleric or warlock
Charlatan	4 + CON	1d6	+2	Light	Simple	1 bard or sorcerer
Criminal	4 + CON	1d6	+2	Light, Medium	Simple	—
Entertainer	4 + CON	1d6	+2	Light	Simple	1 bard or wizard
Folk Hero	4 + CON	1d6	+2	Light	Simple, Martial	—
Guild Artisan	3 + CON	1d6	+2	Light	Simple	1 cleric or wizard
Hermit	3 + CON	1d4	+2	—	Simple	2 druid or wizard
Noble	4 + CON	1d6	+2	Light, Medium	Simple, Martial	—
Outlander	4 + CON	1d6	+2	Light	Simple, Martial	1 cleric or druid
Sage	3 + CON	1d4	+2	—	Simple	2 sorcerer or wizard
Sailor	5 + CON	1d8	+2	Light, Medium	Simple	—
Soldier	6 + CON	1d10	+2	All Armor, Shields	Simple, Martial	—
Urchin	3 + CON	1d4	+2	—	Simple	2 sorcerer or warlock

SAVING THROWS

Rookies are proficient in one random saving throw—roll on the *Saving Throw* table below to see which. You may do this before you assign your ability scores.

ROOKIE SAVING THROW

d6	Ability	d6	Ability	d6	Ability
1	Strength	3	Constitution	5	Wisdom
2	Dexterity	4	Intelligence	6	Charisma

At the start of a new *rookie* adventure, the player rolls for their race and background—they are Ulryn, a *drow elf hermit* with proficiency in Charisma saving throws. They then roll for their ability scores as normal.

Ulryn gains all the perks and equipment of her race and background (excluding the background feature), and starts with (3 + CON) hit points and one d4 hit die. Being a hermit, she has only 5 gp to spend on additional starting equipment. Life as a rookie is tough.

VARIANT: STARTING CANTRIPS

If you want to introduce some limited, low level magic into your adventure, use this *Starting Cantrips* variant.

Some backgrounds, through their limited training and experience, have access to one or two magical cantrips. If your rookie has starting cantrips, pick these at random—you may choose the class of magic before each selection. If your rookie has multiple cantrips, these can each be from a different class—an acolyte, for example, may have 1 cleric *and* 1 warlock cantrip.

DESTINY POINTS

Rookies are not completely helpless—they have a reserve of grit and determination to dig into, unlocking a burst of power and ability—these are called *destiny points*.

You start with 3 *destiny points*, regaining spent points after completing a long rest. You can spend a destiny point during your turn to do something improvised and extraordinary—use these as an opportunity to discover what class your rookie might grow into.

DM: You strike the mage fiercely, but he still stands.

Ulryn: Can I stun him as part of that attack?

DM: I don't know—is that your *destiny*?

Ulryn: I think Ulryn's master taught her many ways to incapacitate a man without killing him (offers a point).

DM: The mage staggers back, momentarily *stunned*, as your fist slams into his jaw (takes the destiny point).

You can only use one destiny point per turn. You can't use the same power more than once, so vary your heroics.

LEVELING UP

When your rookie levels up and reaches 1st-level, replace your core details (hit points, hit die, saving throws, and proficiencies) with those of your class as per normal.

As a keepsake, you may keep one notable feature from your time as a rookie. Choose one of the following:

- **Saving throw:** Replace one class saving throw (of your choosing) with your rookie saving throw.
- **Armor/weapon proficiency:** Keep one armor/weapon proficiency, obeying any prerequisites—you can't take *heavy armor proficiency* if your class doesn't already grant *medium armor proficiency*, for example.
- **Cantrip:** Keep one rookie cantrip (of your choosing) in addition to any others your class may grant.
- **Extra hit points:** Add your rookie hit point maximum (excluding CON) to your 1st-level hit point maximum.

MONSTERS & TRAPS

Rookies are very fragile without class abilities and gear to protect them. Monsters and traps will be a significant challenge for rookies, so aim to use only CR 0 and—on occasion—CR 1/8 challenges. Monsters and traps should deal around 1 damage per hit, allowing even the weakest rookie to survive a couple of unfortunate attacks.

GIFFYGLYPH'S MONSTER MAKER

If you want to easily create level-appropriate monsters for your rookies—or any other adventure—try *Giffyglyph's Monster Maker*, a supplement containing guides and templates to help build new monsters in seconds.

HOWLING SKELETON

Medium humanoid, Undead

Level -1 Striker

Minion (3 XP)

ARMOR CLASS	7	ATTACK BONUS	+1
HIT POINTS	3 (2)	DAMAGE	1
SPEED	30 ft	SPELL DCs	10, 7

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+1	+2	+0	+0	-1

SAVING THROWS Con -1, Dex/Str -3, Wis/Int/Cha -4

SKILLS Initiative -1, Perception -1, Stealth -1

NECROMAGE

Medium humanoid

Level 0 Controller

Standard (25 XP)

ARMOR CLASS	12	ATTACK BONUS	+2
HIT POINTS	16 (8)	DAMAGE	1
SPEED	30 ft	SPELL DCs	10, 7

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	-1	+2	+3	+0	+1

SAVING THROWS Int +3, Con/Str +1, Cha/Wis/Dex -1

SKILLS Initiative +2, Perception +1, Stealth +1

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Rookie adventures traditionally focus on common, everyday people being suddenly thrown into a dangerous situation and—with any luck—overcoming it.

If you're unsure what to run for your rookies, try using these adventure seeds to kickstart some ideas.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

d10	Adventure	d10	Adventure
1	A Village in Flames	6	The Descent
2	Dragon Heist	7	Witch of the West
3	Wings of Fury	8	Island of the Dead
4	The Mad Mage	9	Smile
5	Crimson Sacrifice	10	The Pighmen of Palicor

1. A VILLAGE IN FLAMES

You awaken in the night to the sound of screams—your small village is aflame and besieged by bloodthirsty bandits. Above the roar of the flames, you hear their leader laugh as villagers are cut down in the street.

These murderers won't let any villager escape with their lives. Will you grab whatever weapon you can find and defend what's left of your home?

2. DRAGON HEIST

It's been a bad harvest this year, and your poor village can't afford food for the coming winter. Rumors say that the red dragon Kalaxigor has flown south from her lair in the nearby mountain, leaving a vast horde of gold temporarily undefended.

A small fortune awaits anyone brave enough—or foolish enough—to venture into the dragons lair. Can you find the horde of gold before the dragon returns?

3. WINGS OF FURY

A frenzied griffin has been attacking farmers on the edge of the village—three have died in the last week alone, gored open by the creature's razor-sharp talons. The local lord has put out a sizable bounty for the beast's head—a small fortune for a simple civilian.

The beast is rumored to nest in the southern forest. Can you and your friends hunt down the griffin and bring back its head without losing your own?

4. THE MAD MAGE

Deep below the corrupt city of Vergheist, a mad mage performs experiments on living captives. You are one of these tortured prisoners, until an earthquake rocks the dungeon and tears the door of your cell free.

The mage's monstrous experiments—their prisons broken—now wander the halls hungrily. Can you navigate the dungeon and evade the mad mage long enough to reclaim your freedom?

5. CRIMSON SACRIFICE

Atop the blackstone ziggurat of Sultiss, yuan-ti cultists prepare a ritual sacrifice to their blood-thirsty gods. You are one of these unwilling sacrifices, kidnapped from the wild, frontier town of Drembala.

Only one hour remains until the midnight eclipse and the sacrifice begins. Can you find a way to break your bonds and escape the ziggurat of death?

6. THE DESCENT

You have uncovered a long-sealed tomb near your village—a tomb of unknown origin. After a few-too-many drinks in the local tavern, you and your friends decide to explore it in search of ancient riches.

But as you all step foot inside, the stone doors of the tomb seal shut behind you. Now, the only way ahead is down. Can you survive the dangers ahead?

7. WITCH OF THE WEST

The witch of the west has cursed your village with hellish, maddening nightmares. Everyone is terrified to sleep at night, for the witch feeds on the souls of those who die in their sleep—and her appetite is endless.

There are no convenient heroes around, so grab your weapons and brave the fetid swamps to the east. Can you find the witch before she kills you in your sleep?

8. ISLAND OF THE DEAD

A prison ship, caught in a ferocious storm near the dreaded Island of the Dead, capsizes with you on board. Beyond all hope, you are washed ashore with a handful of survivors. Far in the distance, you see a beached boat that may be the only way off this island.

But from all around, you hear the hungry moans of the walking dead. Can you survive long enough to repair the boat and sail out to sea?

9. SMILE

The town's children are going missing, lured into the sewers by a strange man with a clown's face. In your dreams, you see the clown-faced man standing over a field of silent, faceless children. They have no mouths and cannot scream.

Now, your sister has gone missing. Without hesitation, you and your friends descend into the sewers to find her. Can you rescue your sister from the smiling clown?

10. THE PIGHMEN OF PALICOR

You find yourself strapped to an operating table as the mad Butcher of Palicor prepares to turn you into one of his monstrous Pighmen. But a freak explosion sets you and the other prisoners free, tearing open a hole in the tower to the black forest beyond.

You flee into the forest—but the Pighmen have your scent, and they are hungry. Can you find a way to escape the horrifying Butcher and his warped creations?

RACIAL CHANGES

RACE IS A CORE PART OF YOUR CHARACTER'S IDENTITY. These racial features have been amended for balance and to better support survival mechanics.

DRAGONBORN

Breath Weapon: You may use your breath weapon as a *bonus action* instead of a full action. Alternatively, if you can attack multiple times during the *Attack* action, you may use your breath weapon as one of these attacks.

After you use your *Breath Weapon*, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

Kiris, a 5th-level dragonborn fighter, can attack twice with her *Attack* action thanks to *Extra Attack*. In one action, she makes one attack with her sword and then—as a second attack—unleashes her breath weapon.

HUMAN

Human Determination: If you are a *non-variant* human, you gain the *Human Determination* racial trait.

HUMAN DETERMINATION

Race (Human), Trait

You are filled with determination. If you fail an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can reroll one d20. You must keep the new result.

After you use *Human Determination*, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

HALFLING

Lucky: After you use *Lucky*, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest or you roll a natural 20 on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw.

LIZARDFOLK

Hungry Jaws: Replace your existing *Hungry Jaws* ability with the following trait.

HUNGRY JAWS

Race (Lizardfolk), Trait

As a bonus action, or as one attack during an *Attack* action, you can make a bite attack against an adjacent target. If the attack hits, it deals 1d6 + STR damage. If the target is a living, blooded creature, you also gain temporary hit points equal to the damage dealt. The damage increases to 2d6 + STR at 6th level, 3d6 + STR at 11th level, and 4d6 + STR at 16th level.

After you use *Hungry Jaws*, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

YUAN-TI PUREBLOOD

Magic Resistance: You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

Poison Resistance: (Replaces *Poison Immunity*) You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.



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CLASS CHANGES

ONLY THE BRAVEST—OR MOST FOOLHARDY—adventurer heads out into the wilds without adequate training, skills, and abilities.

This chapter introduces a number of class feature changes—some minor, and some not-so-minor—to resolve some common balance and theming issues. These changes are recommended but not mandatory—use the ones that best suit your game and setting.

BARBARIAN

Fierce and rage-driven warriors, barbarians thrive in the dangerous wilds of the world where almost any problem can be solved with a simple swing of an axe.

BERSERKER FRENZY

When your frenzied rage ends, you lose one unspent hit die. If you don't have any hit die remaining, you instead suffer one level of exhaustion.

Krazak felt the rage slipping away as the red mist of his frenzy lifted, taking a small measure of stamina with it. No matter—he still had plenty of strength yet to burn.

Around the dwarf lay five dead orcs—warriors of the Redtoof warband. Krazak cursed loudly.

"Weak," he snarled, kicking one body over forcefully with his boot. "Not even worth the rage."

A sudden horn blast broke the silence as, from over the hills, a horde of orcs started to charge at him.

Krazak grinned, greataxe in hand, as the frenzied rage burned in his blood once more. "Now this is more like it!" he roared happily.

DRUID

Shapeshifting agents of nature, druids channel ancient and primal powers in their quest to preserve balance—by force and with blood, if necessary.

WILD SHAPE

Starting at 2nd level, you gain access to the *Wild Shape* feature. This ability is subject to the following changes:

- **Attack Bonus / Ability DCs:** When in wild shape, calculate your attack bonus and any ability DCs using either your shape's proficiency bonus *or* your own—whichever is highest. You are proficient in whichever forms of attack the shape is proficient in.
- **Defenses / Damage:** Your wild shape's defenses and attack damage values are unchanged.
- **Hit Points:** When in wild shape, your hit point maximum is equal to either the shape's default *or* six times your druid level—whichever is highest.
- **0 Hit Points:** If you are reduced to 0 hit points whilst in a wild shape, you revert to your normal form and lose one unspent hit die *or* suffer a level of exhaustion if you have no hit dice remaining.
- **Multiattack:** You cannot use multiattack in your new form until you are a 5th-level druid (or higher).

Reynis is a 10th-level gnome druid with a proficiency bonus of +4. In a duel with the Boar King, she wild shapes into a CR 1/4 boar (proficiency bonus +2)

She updates the boar's attack bonus from +3 to +5, and its hit points from 11 to 60. She also updates the attack DC of its charge ability from DC 11 to DC 13.

WILD BESTIARY

As a druid, you can shapeshift into a number of different wild shapes—this collection is called your *wild bestiary*.

Your bestiary can hold a total number of shapes equal to your druid level. If you forget a shape from your bestiary, you will have to relearn it again.

LEARNING A NEW WILD SHAPE

To add a new shape to your bestiary (or replace an existing one), you must closely observe a live beast to study it. This requires 1 hour of focus per CR of the beast (minimum 1 hour), during which you develop a primal understanding of the creature's essence. If the beast is friendly, reduce the required time by half—but if it is acting hostile, double the time.

Interrupted Focus: If your efforts are significantly interrupted—the beast escapes, you fall asleep, a combat encounter begins, etc—you lose your focus and must start your observations again from the beginning.

GOING ON A WILD HUNT

To find a beast and master its wild shape, many druids begin a *wild hunt*. Depending on the beast, location, and the length of time required, you may need to make several skill checks during your wild hunt to see if you are successful in your efforts.

Skills (such as animal handling, insight, nature, stealth, and survival) and magic spells (such as Animal Friendship, Speak with Animals, and Locate Animals or Plants) will be of particular help during a wild hunt.

Reynis sat in silence as the giant elk drank from a clear pool below. She had been studying the beast for an hour, trying to master the essence of its wild shape.

A bird took flight nearby with a loud screech. The elk looked up, startled—Reynis could tell it was about to flee if she didn't do something quick...

FIGHTER

With a sixth-sense for combat, fighters are inextricably drawn to the heat of battle. Some fight for what they believe in—but for others, the fight is all that matters.

SECOND WIND

As you master your fighting skills, your ability to recover from battle is improved—*Second Wind* now restores more hit points as your fighter class level increases.

SECOND WIND

Level	Hit Points	Level	Hit Points
1st	1d10 + fighter level	10th	4d10 + fighter level
3rd	2d10 + fighter level	15th	5d10 + fighter level
7th	3d10 + fighter level	18th	6d10 + fighter level

CHOOSE YOUR OWN CHANGES

Every table is different. A class feature that causes trouble in one campaign might not be such an issue in another.

These changes help to resolve issues I've experienced, but if your game doesn't suffer from the same problems—or these changes don't suit your game—don't use them.

BATTLE MASTER MANEUVERS

Many fighters develop signature abilities—these battle masters use their maneuvers to control the battlefield.

DISARMING ATTACK

If you are adjacent to the target and have a free hand, you may catch the disarmed item as a free action.

EVASIVE FOOTWORK

This maneuver also allows you to dodge an attack with some evasive, reactive footwork.

When another creature attacks you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to expend one superiority die and roll it—add the number to your AC for that attack, potentially causing the attack to miss.

LUNGING ATTACK

When you take the Attack action on your turn, you can expend one superiority die to increase your reach with melee weapon attacks by 5ft until the end of your turn.

Once during your turn, if you hit a creature with a lunging attack, you may add the superiority die to the attack's damage roll.

RALLY

You grant more temporary hit points as you gain fighter class levels and become a more inspiring battle master.

RALLY

Level	Temp. Hit Points	Level	Temp. Hit Points
3rd	2d8 + fighter level	15th	5d10 + fighter level
7th	3d8 + fighter level	18th	6d12 + fighter level
10th	4d10 + fighter level	—	—

PARRY

When another creature attacks you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to attempt a parry. Expend one superiority die to add your Dexterity modifier to your AC for that attack, potentially causing the attack to miss you. Alternatively, if you are holding a shield, you may add your Strength modifier instead.

If the attack misses, you gain temporary hit points equal to the superiority die roll.

TRIP ATTACK

Your *Trip Attack* now requires a bonus action to use.

Gamble kicked out, knocking the dragonborn to the ground. "Stay down," growled the orc. "Final warning."

MONK

Masters of inner peace and martial arts, monks harness their mystical ki energy and forge a deeper connection with the universe itself.

WAY OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS

You have learned to become the still center of the turning wheel, bending the elements of nature to your will.

DISCIPLE OF THE ELEMENTS

When you choose this tradition at 3rd-level, you learn one elemental attunement and two elemental disciplines of your choice from the tables below.

You learn one additional attunement and two additional disciplines of your choice at 6th, 11th, and 17th level.

ELEMENTAL MASTERY

At 17th-level, you have mastered attunement with one of the elements. Choose one of the following masteries:

- **Avatar of Air** (Investiture of Wind)
- **Avatar of Earth** (Investiture of Stone)
- **Avatar of Fire** (Investiture of Flame)
- **Avatar of Water** (Investiture of Ice)

Once per long rest, as a free action, you may spend 6 ki points to invoke this avatar form.

ELEMENTAL ATTUNEMENTS

Name	Spell	Ki
Breath of the Wild	Gust	0
Heart of the Ocean	Shape Water	0
Monkey's Wise Craft	Mold Earth	0
Sleeping Dragon	Control Flames	0

ELEMENTAL DISCIPLINES: 3RD LEVEL

Name	Spell	Ki
Color of True Spirit	Absorb Elements	1
Dance of Autumn's Pass	Feather Fall	1
Fang of the Fire Snake	(As written)	1
Fist of Four Thunders	Thunderwave	1
Fist of Unbroken Air	(As written)	2
Flight of Winter's Tear	Ice Knife	1
Grace of Ages Past	Longstrider	1
Sky Storm Mantra	Zephyr Strike	1
Shape the Flowing River	(As written)	1
Stance of the Grasshopper	Jump	1
Sweeping Cinder Strike	Burning Hands	1
Tears of the Patient Mountain	Fog Cloud	1
Wake the Titan	Earth Tremor	1
Water Whip	(As written)	2

ELEMENTAL DISCIPLINES: 6TH LEVEL

Name	Spell	Ki
Center of the Turning Wheel	Warding Wind	2
Claw of the Phoenix	Flame Blade	2
Clench of the North Wind	Hold Person	2
Divine Warrior's Ascent	Levitate	2
Eye of a Thousand Agonies	Flaming Sphere	2
Gong of the Summit	Shatter	2
Hand of the Sleeping Titan	Maximilian's Earthen Grasp	2
Heart of the Phoenix	Continual Flame	2
Kiss of the Wild Dragon	Dragon's Breath	2
Red Hawk Lance	Aganazzar's Scorchers	2
Rush of the Gale Spirits	Gust of Wind	2
Three Days of Summer	Scorching Ray	2

ELEMENTAL DISCIPLINES: 11TH LEVEL

Name	Spell	Ki
Face of the Crushing Ocean	Tidal Wave	3
Fist of the Mad Titan	Erupting Earth	3
Flames of the Phoenix	Fireball	3
Flash Step	Thunder Step	3
Gift of A Thousand Summers	Water Breathing	3
Hand of Five Oceans	Wall of Water	3
Mist Stance	Gaseous Form	3
Nest of Watching Crane	Wind Wall	3
Ride the Wind	Fly	3
Royal Crown of Stars	Melf's Minute Meteors	3
Stance of the Slow Gecko	Water Walk	3
Wave of Shifting Sand	Wall of Sand	3
Wicked Sage's Spear	Lightning Bolt	3
Wrath of Heaven	Call Lightning	3

ELEMENTAL DISCIPLINES: 17TH LEVEL

Name	Spell	Ki
Bite of a Hundred Serpents	Storm Sphere	4
Breath of Timeless Winter	Cone of Cold	5
Black Pearl Grasp	Watery Sphere	4
Calm the Unbroken Sea	Control Water	4
Dark King's Judgement	Flame Strike	5
Embrace of the Phoenix	Fire Shield	4
Eternal Mountain Defense	Stoneskin	4
Mouth of the Ocean	Maelstrom	5
Path of Yellow Sand	Transmute Rock	5
River of Hungry Flame	Wall of Fire	4
Teeth of the Winter Moon	Ice Storm	4
Tempest Spiral	Control Winds	5
Wave of Rolling Earth	Wall of Stone	5
Wild Dragon's Embrace	Immolation	5

The ground shook beneath Ulryn's feet as the giant charged towards her. The drow monk smiled serenely.

"You step loud enough to wake the titans," she said, pressing a fist to the soil. A giant hand burst from the ground. "And they are not pleased to be up so early..."

PALADIN

Divine warriors who swear sacred oaths, paladins walk a path of righteousness. Shaped by their vows, these blessed champions can perform great—or terrible—acts.

SACRED OATH

Your oath is a sacred vow which separates you from any common knight—it is what makes you a paladin. At 1st-level, choose your oath and begin living by its tenets.

At 3rd-level, your commitment to your oath is an inspiration. You gain your oath features as per normal.

RANDOM CHARACTER GENERATION

If you are randomly generating your character, roll on the table below to see which oath you have sworn.

SACRED OATHS

d100	Oath	d100	Oath
01-19	Ancients	57-76	Redemption
20-38	Conquest	77-95	Vengeance
39-57	Devotion	96-00	Choose

SMITE

Starting at 2nd level, when you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack, you can spend a bonus action to expend one spell slot and smite your target. This deals extra damage and, in some cases, an additional effect.

During a long rest, you may select a number of smite powers equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1). These smite powers must be appropriate for your level and don't count towards your number of prepared spells.

PALADIN SMITES

Level	Smite	Min. Slot
2nd	Divine, Searing, Thunderous, Wrathful	1st
5th	Branding	2nd
9th	Blinding	3rd
13th	Staggering	4th
17th	Banishing	5th

Smites are now a paladin class feature—remove them from the paladin class spell lists. The only way to learn a smite is to become a paladin (or be granted them by a specific class feature).

Using a smite is not classed as casting a spell—smites can't be counterspelled nor altered by metamagic.

PALADIN SMITES

As a paladin, you have access to powerful smites with debilitating effects. Some of these now-versatile smites are subject to the following damage adjustments:

- **Blinding Smite:** Now deals 3d8 radiant damage, increasing by 1d8 for each spell slot above 3rd level to a maximum of 5d8.
- **Branding Smite:** Now deals 2d8 radiant damage, increasing by 1d8 for each spell slot above 2nd level to a maximum of 5d8.
- **Searing Smite:** Now deals 1d8 fire damage, increasing by 1d8 for each spell slot above 1st level to a maximum of 5d8.
The ongoing flames deal 1d8 fire damage. If the spell is cast using a 3rd/4th level slot, the flames deal 2d8 fire damage. If the spell is cast using a 5th level slot, the flames deal 3d8 fire damage.
- **Staggering Smite:** Now deals 4d8 psychic damage, increasing by 1d8 for each spell slot above 4th level to a maximum of 5d8.
- **Thunderous Smite:** Now deals 1d8 thunder damage, increasing by 1d8 for each spell slot above 1st level to a maximum of 5d8.
- **Wrathful Smite:** Now deals 1d8 thunder damage, increasing by 1d8 for each spell slot above 1st level to a maximum of 5d8.

Some smites require concentration to persist an effect (blinding smite, banishing smite, etc)—this is unchanged.

Truth felt his blade catch as it hit the invisible stalker.

"Now I've got you!" said the paladin victoriously.

Divine power poured into his sword, branding the stalker with a glowing, radiant, and clearly visible mark.

RANGER

On the outskirts of civilization, rangers learn how to survive in dark and dangerous places. If you're very lucky, they might just help to keep you alive too.

HUNTER'S MARK

At 2nd level, you gain the ability to mark a creature as your quarry. Add the *Hunter's Mark* spell to your known spell list as an *extra* spell. You may cast this as a 1st-level spell for free (no spell slot required) a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1).

You regain all expended uses of this feature when you finish a long rest. You may also cast this spell as normal per your spellcasting ability by spending a spell slot.

CLASS FEATURE

Hunter's Mark is now a class feature. Remove it from all class spell lists—the only way to learn *Hunter's Mark* is to become a ranger (or be granted it by a specific class feature, such as *Oath of Vengeance*).

FAVORED ENEMY

As a ranger, you specialize in hunting particular types of quarry. In addition to tracking, knowledge, and language advantages, your favored enemy also grants you a new spell—this is a special ability you have practiced in order to better hunt your enemy.

Check the *Favored Enemy* table below and add the spell to your known spell list. Treat it as a ranger spell for the purposes of spellcasting, and—if required—re flavor the spell's appearance to better suit your ranger's style.

FAVORED ENEMY	
Enemy	Spell
Aberrations	Detect Magic
Beasts	Ensnaring Strike
Constructs	Grease
Dragons	Heroism (must target self)
Elementals	Absorb Elements
Fey	Faerie Fire
Fiends	Bless (must target self)
Giants	Jump
Monstrosities	Healing Word (must target self)
Oozes	Detect Poison and Disease
Plants	Burning Hands
Undead	Guiding Bolt
Humanoids	Fog Cloud

"Well look at that," said Chansi as the shambling mound wrapped its vines around her leg. "I guess you picked up a new trick from the Elsewood?"

She grinned, holding out a hand. "Me too!" Burning flames burst from her palm, immolating the plant.

NATURAL EXPLORER

You are particularly familiar with the natural world, adept at traveling and surviving out in the wilds. At 2nd-level, choose two of the following traits. You may then choose two additional traits at 6th and 10th level.

A FOREST FRIEND

You gain the trust of a tiny animal friend. You both share a basic understanding, though the animal is still subject to its natural instincts. Your animal must be a tiny CR 0 beast, and (when relevant) it shares your pool of actions.

If your animal friend is reduced to 0 hit points, you can spend one hit die or suffer a level of exhaustion to reduce it to 1 hit point instead. If your animal friend leaves or dies, you can spend time during a long rest to try bonding with another creature from the surrounding environment. Depending on the situation, this may require animal handling checks.

Many Friends: You may take this trait multiple times, gaining an additional animal friend each time.

A LIGHT IN THE DARK

You know how to make your lighting supplies last a little longer in the dark. You may roll with advantage when crafting (or enhancing) simple candles or torches, and these crafted lights burn for twice as long as normal.

EXPERT TRACKER

While tracking other creatures, you also learn their exact number, their sizes, and roughly how long ago it was that they passed through the area.

I CAN SLEEP ANYWHERE

You have a good eye for a campsite. You may roll with advantage when trying to set up camp in the wilderness.

I KNOW THIS PLACE

When you make a knowledge check relating to the natural world, your proficiency bonus—if any—is doubled (unless you are already an expert in the relevant skill).

IN THE CORNER OF MY EYE

Even when you are engaged in another activity while traveling (such as foraging, navigating, or tracking), you remain alert to danger (as if you were scouting).

LIGHT SLEEPER

While asleep, you are still half-aware of what's happening around you. You have disadvantage on all Perception checks while sleeping.

MAKE A MEAL OUT OF ANYTHING

You may roll with advantage when attempting to cook a simple meal with basic or improvised ingredients.

NATURAL SENSE OF DIRECTION

When travelling outside, you may make navigation checks as if you had a map and compass.

SHORTCUT TO MUSHROOMS

When you forage, you find twice as much food or water as you normally would.

THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER PATH

Difficult terrain doesn't slow your group's travel during long journeys.

WALK SOFTLY AND CARRY A BIG BOW

If you are traveling alone, you can move stealthily at a normal pace.

PRIMEVAL AWARENESS

You can attune your ranger senses to determine if your quarry lurks nearby. Spend 1 minute in concentration to sense whether any of your favored enemies are present within 5 miles of you—you learn which of your enemies are in the area, as well as their general numbers, direction, and distance (in miles) from you.

You may use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

BEAST MASTER

Some rangers form a close friendship with an animal companion, fighting together on the battlefield. Your beast companion is subject to the following changes:

- **Command:** You can use your bonus action to verbally command your companion to act. If you fall unconscious or are otherwise indisposed, command the companion as if you were conscious.
- **0 Hit Points:** When your beast companion falls to 0 hit points, it gains the *Dying* condition (p77) as if it were a player character. Roll death saving throws for the companion when appropriate.
- **Hit Points:** Your companion's hit point maximum is equal to either its default or six times your ranger level—whichever is highest.

EXCEPTIONAL TRAINING

You can use a *free action* to verbally command your companion to Dash, Disengage, or Help.

SORCERER

As living vessels of raw magic, sorcerers seethe with arcane power. Because of their innate chaotic potential, sorcerers are known—and feared—throughout the land.

SPELLCASTING FOCUS

As a vessel of raw magic, you are your own spellcasting focus for sorcerer spells—you don't need an arcane focus or component pouch to cast sorcery.

SORCEROUS ORIGIN

Your sorcerous origin defines your power. At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th levels, choose one spell (appropriate for your level) from your sorcerous origin spell table—add it to your known spell list as an *extra* spell. Treat it as a sorcerer spell for your focus and spellcasting.

DIVINE SOUL

Level	Spell
1st	Bless / Guiding Bolt
3rd	Lesser Restoration / Spiritual Weapon
5th	Spirit Guardians / Mass Healing Word
7th	Death Ward / Guardian of Faith
9th	Greater Restoration / Mass Cure Wounds

DRACONIC BLOODLINE

Level	Spell
1st	Command / Chromatic Orb
3rd	Dragon's Breath / Hold Person
5th	Fear / Fly
7th	Dominate Beast / Elemental Bane
9th	Dominate Person / Hold Monster

SHADOW MAGIC

Level	Spell
1st	Arms of Hadar / Ray of Sickness
3rd	Shadow Blade / Darkness
5th	Hunger of Hadar / Vampiric Touch
7th	Blight / Evard's Black Tentacles
9th	Enervation / Negative Energy Flood

STORM SORCERY

Level	Spell
1st	Thunderwave / Witch Bolt
3rd	Gust of Wind / Shatter
5th	Call Lightning / Lightning Bolt
7th	Storm Sphere / Watery Sphere
9th	Cone of Cold / Control Winds

WILD SOUL

Level	Spell
1st	Chaos Bolt / Sleep
3rd	Blur / Mirror Image
5th	Blink / Counterspell
7th	Confusion / Polymorph
9th	Modify Memory / Synaptic Static

FONT OF MAGIC

At 2nd-level, your true nature reveals itself—you can now tap into your wellspring of sorcerous power.

SORCEROUS RECOVERY

You are a font of sorcerous power. Once per long rest, when you finish a short rest, you may recover all of your expended sorcery points.

FLEXIBLE CASTING

As a sorcerer, you can twist your sorcery into spellpower. You cannot create *new* spell slots, but you can recover *expended* spell slots by spending sorcery points.

You may recover multiple spell slots at the same time with a single bonus action, so long as you have enough sorcery points.

Clanda cursed aloud as the hobgoblin deflected her witch bolt. She felt a chill sweep through her body—the last of her spellpower was now gone.

The hobgoblin sneered in victory, pointing his hooked blade at her. "Out of spells already? Pathetic elf. What are you going to do now, witch?"

"Oh I'm no witch, you poor fool," laughed Clanda, raising a hand to the sky. "I'm a *sorceress*." She felt alive again as raw, sorcerous power suddenly blazed through her body, restoring her precious spellpower.

The hobgoblin ran. He did not get far.

METAMAGIC

As a sorcerer, you have the ability to twist your spells to suit your needs. Add the *Inversion* metamagic option to the list of available metamagics.

At 3rd level, you gain three metamagic options of your choice. You gain three additional options at both 10th and 17th level.

INVERSION

When you roll damage for a spell with an elemental effect, you can spend 1 sorcery point to invert the type of that damage. There are five known elemental pairings:

- Fire / Cold
- Radiant / Necrotic
- Lightning / Thunder
- Poison / Acid
- Psychic / Force

WARLOCK

Seekers of ancient—and often forbidden—knowledge, warlocks make a pact with an otherworldly being for the promise of power and reward.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

A warlock rarely stumbles into power by accident—they seek it out, against all wisdom and at great personal cost. With intellect, warlocks decipher eldritch runes, pierce the mortal veil, and bargain with otherworldly powers.

- **Spellcasting:** Your spellcasting ability for warlock spells is now *Intelligence*, not Charisma.
- **Saving Throws:** You gain proficiency in *Intelligence* saving throws, not Charisma.
- **Features:** Any warlock feature that relies on your Charisma modifier (Agonizing Blast, Lifedrinker, Cloak of Flies, etc) now uses your Intelligence modifier where appropriate.

Edgar opened the thick, black tome with trembling hands, cursing his own frailty—the sickness had come on suddenly, and his days were fast running out.

But after months of sacrifice and careful study—of people telling him he was mad—he finally *understood*. Edgar looked at the eldritch runes, written in blood. He knew the translations. Shaking, he spoke the words...

VARIANT: INTELLIGENCE & CHARISMA

This supplement strongly recommends changing warlocks from Charisma to Intelligence for a number of reason (limits multiclassing exploits, is more thematically appropriate, improves INT ability usage, etc).

However, if you wish to support CHA warlocks at your table for thematic reasons, then consider making INT an *optional* choice for your warlock players instead.

ELDRITCH BLAST

After sealing your eldritch bargain, your patron grants you a manifestation of their unfathomable power.

Starting at 1st-level, you are gifted the *Eldritch Blast* cantrip—add it to your list of known cantrips as an *extra* cantrip. As a direct manifestation of your patron's power, you may decide on the appearance of your eldritch blast.

This spell is now a dedicated warlock class feature and can be removed from all class spell lists—the only way to learn *Eldritch Blast* is to become a warlock (or be granted it by a specific class feature).

ELDRITCH SCALING

As a class feature, *Eldritch Blast* now scales with your warlock class level—not your character level.

ELDRITCH BLAST

Evocation, Cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

A beam of crackling energy streaks toward a creature within range. Make a ranged spell attack against the target. On a hit, the target takes 1d10 force damage.

The spell creates more beams as you gain more warlock class levels: two beams at 5th level, three beams at 11th level, and four beams at 17th level. You can direct the beams at the same target or at different ones. Make a separate attack roll for each beam.

PACT OF THE BLADE

At 3rd-level, you receive a gift from your otherworldly patron. If you choose Pact of the Blade, your patron's power and knowledge shapes you into a formidable and vicious warrior. You gain the *Blade Warrior* feature.

BLADE WARRIOR

You acquire power from your patron necessary to arm yourself for battle. Your patron gifts you with proficiency with medium armor, shields, and martial weapons.

You also gain the *Pact Weapon* feature, allowing you to create and summon an eldritch weapon.

The warlock sat alone in the dark room, listening to the endless whispers of his mind. A sudden demand burst through the cacophony with painful clarity: *CHOOSE*.

"Strength," whispered Edgar, "I choose strength."

The warlock clutched his head in sudden agony as aberrant knowledge seared his brain. When he awoke, hours later, a black knife glimmered in his hands. Edgar giggled madly in the dark...

PACT WEAPON

Feature, Warlock

As an action on your turn, you create a pact weapon in your empty hand. You can choose the form this melee weapon takes each time you create it, though it must be a form you are proficient with.

Eldritch Strike: When you attack with this weapon, you can use your warlock spellcasting ability modifier, instead of Strength or Dexterity, for the attack and damage rolls. This weapon counts as magical when overcoming resistances and immunity to nonmagical attacks and damage.

Ephemeral: This weapon disappears if it is more than 5 feet away from you for 1 minute or more, if you create another pact weapon, if you dismiss the weapon (no action required), or if you die.

Magic Weapons: You can transform one magic weapon into your pact weapon by performing a special ritual while you hold the weapon. You perform the ritual over the course of 1 hour, which can be done during a short rest. You can then dismiss the weapon, shunting it into an extradimensional space, and it appears whenever you create your pact weapon thereafter. You can't affect an artifact or a sentient weapon in this way.

The weapon ceases to be your pact weapon if you die, if you perform the 1-hour ritual on a different weapon, or if you use a 1-hour ritual to break your bond to it. The weapon appears at your feet if it is in the extradimensional space when the bond breaks.

Thirsting Blade: At 5th warlock class level, you can attack with your pact weapon twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

PATRONS

Otherworldly beings with unknowable motivations, patrons offer mortals a small taste of power in exchange for their service and unwavering loyalty.

Many a warlock has thought to cross their patron and renege on a bargain, only to pay a price in blood.

PATRON EXPANDED SPELLS

Your patron grants you access to an expanded set of spells. At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th levels, choose one spell (appropriate for your level) from your patron spell table—add it to your known spell list as an *extra* spell.

The elf screamed as the warlock spoke aloud the dissonant whispers of his mind. Edgar kept whispering even as she collapsed, blood dripping from her ears.

THE HEXBLADE

A patron from the Shadowfell grants you a powerful curse. Hexblade no longer has the *Hex Warrior* trait.

Alternative Naming To more accurately reflect the focus of this patron, you may wish to rename it—consider "Hexer", "Shade", or "Cursed".

INVOCATIONS

As your connection to your patron strengthens, you gain access to a greater pool of power—invocations. The following invocations have been rebalanced:

- **Bewitching Whispers, Dreadful Word, Minions of Chaos, Mire the Mind, Sculptor of Flesh, Sign of Ill Omen, Thief of Five Fates:** These spells may be cast without spending a warlock spell slot.
- **Repelling Blast:** You can trigger *Repelling Blast* only once during your turn.
- **Repelling Blast & Grasp of Hadar:** For every size category larger than you, the target moves 5 ft less. You cannot move a swarm with these invocations. If the target is grabbing anything, it may roll a Strength saving throw against your spell DC to avoid being moved or—if it chooses—pull the creature with it.
- **Thirsting Blade:** This invocation is now a core feature of *Pact Weapon* and can be removed.

SACRIFICIAL BARGAIN

At 1st-level, you gain the *Sacrificial Bargain* feature. With a sacrifice of health, your patron grants you power.

Once per short rest, when you cast a warlock spell of 1st-level or higher, you may spend a number of hit die equal to your warlock spell level to cast the spell without expending a spell slot.

If the spell can't be cast at a higher level, you may instead spend a number of hit die equal to the spell level.

Edgar cut his palm with the black knife, feeding his blood to the ever-hungry pact blade. His patron was pleased with the sacrifice—there would be a reward...

WIZARD

Scholars of arcane power, wizards shape the fabric of reality to their own careful design. With spellbook and staff, they experiment with the energies of magic.

ARCANE RECOVERY

As a practiced channeller of magical power, you have the ability to recover a measure of spell power. Your *Arcane Recovery* feature may be used once per long rest.

Bellamy yawned sleepily as she opened her spellbook and began recovering a small measure of spellpower...

PART 2

Equipment

6 Inventory Space p26

Manage your inventory with item slots.

7 Wear & Tear p32

Track item damage and decay with notches.

8 Ammunition p36

Track your arrows and bolts with ammunition die.

9 Potions p37

Drink magic consumables for magical effects.

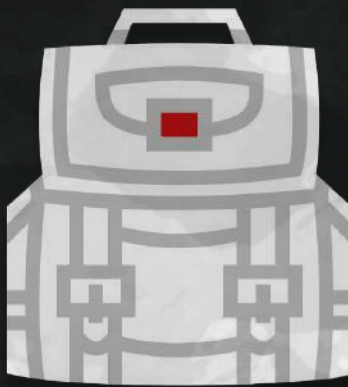
10 Flasks p40

Store multiple potions in small, handy flasks.

11 Oils p42

Enhance your gear with magical oils.





6

INVENTORY SPACE

IN A DARK AND DANGEROUS WORLD, HAVING THE right gear at the right time can make all the difference between life and death. Great emphasis is placed on your inventory—what you carry and where you carry it are important things to keep track of.

This chapter introduces new systems to help track and manage your inventory easily.

SLOT-BASED INVENTORY

Inventory is managed using *item slots*, not item weight. These abstract slots represent the combined storage capacity of your bags/belts/weapon sheaths/etc—the more item slots you have, the more items you can carry.

YOUR INVENTORY CAPACITY

To calculate your character's inventory capacity, first check your *character size*—the bigger you are, the more space you have about your person to carry items.

CHARACTER SIZE			
Size	Slots	Size	Slots
Tiny	9	Large	21
Small	15	Huge	27
Medium	18	Gargantuan	39

Next, check your character's strength—the stronger you are, the more items you can carry. You gain (or lose) a number of item slots equal to your STR modifier.

Finally, check the type of armor you are wearing. Armor is big and bulky—the bigger the armor, the less inventory space you have for other gear.

CHARACTER ARMOR

Armor	Slots	Armor	Slots
None	—	Medium	−6
Light	−3	Heavy	−9

Valiant, a human cleric, is a medium-sized creature (18 slots) with +2 STR (+2 slots) wearing heavy armor (−9 slots). He can carry 11 slots of additional gear.

Crackle, a kobold wizard, is a small creature (15 slots) with −1 STR (−1 slot) and no armor. She can carry up to 14 slots worth of equipment.

FOOD, WATER, & GOLD

In addition to item slots, your character can freely carry one ration box, one waterskin, and one purse. These don't occupy any slots and can store a small amount of basic supplies—food, water, and money.

- **Ration box:** Stores up to five basic food rations.
- **Waterskin:** Holds enough liquid for five drink rations.
- **Purse:** Holds up to 100 assorted coins.

While these extra containers don't occupy any item slots, they can still be affected by NPCs and monsters—stolen, damaged, destroyed, etc—so beware.

WORN ITEMS

Worn items, such as gloves, boots, hats, bracers, etc—with the exception of armor—don't occupy any inventory space until you unequip them and put them back into storage.

ENCUMBRANCE

If you find yourself carrying more than your inventory capacity allows, you are *encumbered*. While you are encumbered:

- You have disadvantage on all rolls.
- Your speed is halved
- You gain hunger, thirst, and fatigue at twice the rate.

INVENTORY INTERACTIONS

You must draw an item from your inventory before you can use it. During your turn, you may use your one free object interaction (PHB p190) with your inventory to:

- **Add/sheathe** one item (or collection of tiny items).
- **Remove/draw** one item (or collection of tiny items).

To make a second change to your inventory during the same turn, or to interact with another character's inventory, you must take the *Use an Object* action.

Krazak wants to draw out his axe and charge forward, bashing open a door in his way. To do this, he must use his free *object interaction* to grab the axe from his inventory, his movement to rush forward, and the *Use an Object* action to bash open the door.

Viridian, meanwhile, wants to draw both a sword and a healing potion from his bag on his turn. He draws the sword as his free *object interaction*, and uses his full action to take out the potion.

MAGICAL CONTAINERS

Some containers have magical—or otherwise enhanced—properties that change their capacity or durability:

- **Bag of Holding:** This magical creation works much like a normal bag, but can hold many more items. Equipping a *Bag of Holding* gains you +6 item slots.
- **Handy Haversack:** This magical bag acts like an improved *Bag of Holding*. Equipping a *Handy Haversack* gains you +12 item slots.
- **Portable Hole:** This magical object can be carried as a small item, occupying 1 item slot. When folded out, a *Portable Hole* acts as a separate bag with 18 slots.

A character can only equip one *Bag of Holding* or *Handy Haversack* at a time, and—while equipped with one—cannot store a *Portable Hole* in their expanded inventory without destroying both items (DMG p185).

In the ruins of the Arcane Sanctum, Valiant is fortunate enough to find a *Bag of Holding*—still intact after all these years. He replaces his ordinary leather bag with it, increasing his total inventory space by +6 slots.

ARMOR EXPERTISE

Wearing armor means that you can't carry as much, but there is a trade-off—you become more resistant to harm. If you are wearing medium or heavy armor—and you are appropriately proficient—you gain the following perk:

- **Medium Armor:** Reduce any bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage that you take from non-magical weapons by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down), to a minimum of 1.
- **Heavy Armor:** Reduce any bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage that you take from non-magical weapons by your proficiency bonus, to a minimum of 1.

This perk doesn't stack with any additional armor feats or bonuses you might gain—use the highest value.

ITEM SIZES

Item size is measured in *slots*, telling you just how much space an item requires in your inventory. Items generally fall into one of four sizes: tiny, small, medium, and large.

ITEM SIZES

Size	Description	Slots
Tiny	Very small (smaller than a hand); Can hold many in one hand.	0.2
Small	Short length (up to a handspan / 9 inches); Held comfortably with one hand.	1
Medium	Medium length (up to an arms-length / 2ft); Held with one hand.	2
Large	Long length (longer than an arm); Requires one or two hands to hold.	3

When categorizing an item, consider the overall size of it against the average person—don't worry too much about weight unless there's good reason to.

STACKING ITEMS

You can store up to 5 tiny items, 5 gemstones, or 100 assorted coins in a single item slot.

EXTRA-LARGE ITEMS

Some items may be extra-large—a big water barrel, a giant's sword, a stone boulder. When deciding the size of these items, use multiples of 3 slots—6, 9, 12, etc.

DM: Clanda, inside the chest you find 300 silver coins and a small marble carving of a horse.

Clanda: Brilliant. I'll pour it all into my bag.

DM: 300 coins will take up 3 slots, and the statue another 1 slot. What's your load?

Clanda: Damn it, 4 slots puts me way over my limit. Hey, dwarf—you have room, carry this for me.

Krazak: Sure thing, witch. *For a price.*

Clanda: Son of a...

ARMOR

Name	Armor Class (AC)	Cost	Size	Name	Armor Class (AC)	Cost	Size
Light, Padded	11 + DEX	5 gp	L, 3	Medium, Half Plate	15 + DEX (Max 2)	750 gp	XL, 6
Light, Leather	11 + DEX	10 gp	L, 3	Heavy, Ring Mail	14	30 gp	XXL, 9
Light, Studded Leather	12 + DEX	45 gp	L, 3	Heavy, Chain Mail	16	75 gp	XXL, 9
Medium, Hide	12 + DEX (Max 2)	10 gp	XL, 6	Heavy, Splint Mail	17	200 gp	XXL, 9
Medium, Chain Shirt	13 + DEX (Max 2)	50 gp	XL, 6	Heavy, Plate Mail	18	1,500 gp	XXL, 9
Medium, Scale Mail	14 + DEX (Max 2)	50 gp	XL, 6	Shield	+2	10 gp	M, 2
Medium, Breastplate	14 + DEX (Max 2)	400 gp	XL, 6	—	—	—	—

WEAPONS

Name	Damage	Cost	Size	Name	Damage	Cost	Size
Battleaxe	1d8 slashing	10 gp	L, 3	Longsword	1d8 slashing	15 gp	L, 3
Blowgun	1 piercing	10 gp	S, 1	Mace	1d6 bludgeoning	5 gp	M, 2
Club	1d4 bludgeoning	1 sp	M, 2	Maul	2d6 bludgeoning	10 gp	L, 3
Crossbow, Hand	1d6 piercing	75 gp	S, 1	Morningstar	1d8 piercing	15 gp	M, 2
Crossbow, Light	1d8 piercing	25 gp	M, 2	Net	—	1 gp	S, 1
Crossbow, Heavy	1d10 piercing	50 gp	L, 3	Pike	1d10 piercing	5 gp	L, 3
Dagger	1d4 piercing	2 gp	S, 1	Quarterstaff	1d6 bludgeoning	2 sp	L, 3
Dart	1d4 piercing	5 cp	T, 0.2	Rapier	1d8 piercing	25 gp	M, 2
Flail	1d8 bludgeoning	10 gp	M, 2	Scimitar	1d6 slashing	25 gp	M, 2
Glaive	1d10 slashing	20 gp	L, 3	Shortbow	1d6 piercing	25 gp	M, 2
Greataxe	1d12 slashing	30 gp	L, 3	Shortsword	1d6 piercing	10 gp	M, 2
Greatclub	1d8 bludgeoning	2 sp	L, 3	Sickle	1d4 slashing	1 gp	S, 1
Greatsword	2d6 slashing	50 gp	L, 3	Sling	1d4 bludgeoning	1 sp	S, 1
Halberd	1d10 slashing	20 gp	L, 3	Spear	1d6 piercing	1 gp	L, 3
Handaxe	1d6 slashing	5 gp	M, 2	Trident	1d6 piercing	5 gp	L, 3
Javelin (5)	1d6 piercing	5 sp	L, 3	War Pick	1d8 piercing	5 gp	M, 2
Lance	1d12 piercing	10 gp	L, 3	Warhammer	1d8 bludgeoning	15 gp	L, 3
Light Hammer	1d4 bludgeoning	2 gp	S, 1	Whip	1d4 slashing	2 gp	S, 1
Longbow	1d8 piercing	50 gp	L, 3	—	—	—	—

ANIMALS

Animal	Size	Speed	Cost	Capacity
Camel	Large	50ft	50 gp	24 slots
Donkey or Mule	Medium	40ft	8 gp	23 slots
Elephant	Huge	40ft	200 gp	33 slots
Horse, Draft	Large	50ft	50 gp	25 slots
Horse, Riding	Large	60ft	75 gp	24 slots
Mastiff	Medium	40ft	25 gp	19 slots
Pony	Medium	40ft	30 gp	20 slots
Warhorse	Large	60ft	400 gp	25 slots

EQUIPMENT PACKS

Pack	Cost	Total Size
Burglar's Pack	16 gp	17 slots
Diplomat's Pack	39 gp	9 slots
Dungeoneer's Pack	12 gp	22 slots
Entertainer's Pack	40 gp	11 slots
Explorer's Pack	10 gp	20 slots
Priest's Pack	19 gp	11 slots
Scholar's Pack	40 gp	5 slots

Note: 1 days-worth of rations = 2 rations

ADVENTURING GEAR

Name	Cost	Size	Name	Cost	Size	Name	Cost	Size
Abacus	2 gp	S, 1	Game, 3 Dragon Ante	1 gp	S, 1	Poison, Basic (vial)	100 gp	T, 0.2
Acid (vial)	25 gp	T, 0.2	Grappling Hook	2 gp	S, 1	Pole (10 ft)	5 cp	L, 3
Alchemist's Fire (flask)	50 gp	S, 1	Hammer	1 gp	S, 1	Pot, Iron	2 gp	S, 1
Ammo, Arrows (20)	1 gp	S, 1	Hammer, Sledge	2 gp	L, 3	Potion of Healing	50 gp	S, 1
Ammo, Bolts (20)	1 gp	S, 1	Holy Symbol, Amulet	5 gp	S, 1	Ram, Portable	4 gp	XL, 6
Ammo, Bullets (20)	4 cp	S, 1	Holy Symbol, Emblem	5 gp	S, 1	Ration (1)	1 sp	T, 0.2
Ammo, Needles (50)	1 gp	S, 1	Holy Symbol, Reliquary	5 gp	S, 1	Rope, Hempen (50 ft)	1 gp	S, 1
Antitoxin (vial)	50 gp	T, 0.2	Holy Water (flask)	25 gp	S, 1	Rope, Silk (50 ft)	10 gp	S, 1
Arcane Focus, Crystal	10 gp	S, 1	Hourglass	25 gp	S, 1	Scale, Merchant's	5 gp	S, 1
Arcane Focus, Orb	20 gp	S, 1	Hunting Trap	5 gp	S, 1	Sealing Wax	5 sp	T, 0.2
Arcane Focus, Rod	10 gp	S, 1	Ink	10 gp	T, 0.2	Shovel	2 gp	L, 3
Arcane Focus, Staff	5 gp	L, 3	Ink Pen	2 cp	T, 0.2	Signal Whistle	5 cp	T, 0.2
Arcane Focus, Wand	10 gp	S, 1	Instrument, Bagpipes	30 gp	L, 3	Signet Ring	5 gp	T, 0.2
Ball Bearings (1,000)	1 gp	S, 1	Instrument, Drum	6 gp	M, 2	Soap	2 cp	T, 0.2
Barrel	2 gp	XXL, 9	Instrument, Dulcimer	25 gp	L, 3	Spellbook	50 gp	S, 1
Bedroll	1 gp	M, 2	Instrument, Flute	2 gp	S, 1	Spikes, Iron (10)	1 gp	S, 1
Bell	1 gp	S, 1	Instrument, Horn	3 gp	M, 2	Spyglass	1,000 gp	S, 1
Blanket	5 sp	S, 1	Instrument, Lute	35 gp	M, 2	Tent, Two-person	2 gp	L, 3
Block & Tackle	1 gp	S, 1	Instrument, Lyre	30 gp	M, 2	Tinderbox	5 sp	S, 1
Book	25 gp	S, 1	Instrument, Pan Flute	12 gp	S, 1	Tools, Alchemist	50 gp	M, 2
Bottle, Glass	2 gp	S, 1	Instrument, Shawm	2 gp	M, 2	Tools, Brewer	20 gp	M, 2
Bucket	5 cp	M, 2	Instrument, Viol	30 gp	M, 2	Tools, Calligrapher	10 gp	S, 1
Caltrops (20)	1 gp	S, 1	Jug or Pitcher	2 cp	S, 1	Tools, Carpenter	8 gp	S, 1
Candle	1 cp	T, 0.2	Kit, Climbers	25 gp	S, 1	Tools, Cartographer	15 gp	S, 1
Case	1 gp	S, 1	Kit, Disguise	25 gp	S, 1	Tools, Cobbler	5 gp	S, 1
Chain (10 ft)	5 gp	S, 1	Kit, Forgery	15 gp	S, 1	Tools, Cook	1 gp	M, 2
Chalk (1 piece)	1 cp	T, 0.2	Kit, Healer's	5 gp	S, 1	Tools, Glassblower	30 gp	M, 2
Chest	5 gp	XL, 6	Kit, Mess	2 sp	S, 1	Tools, Jeweler	25 gp	S, 1
Clothes, Common	5 sp	S, 1	Kit, Poisoner's	50 gp	S, 1	Tools, Leatherworker	5 gp	M, 2
Clothes, Costume	5 gp	M, 2	Ladder (10 ft)	1 sp	L, 3	Tools, Mason	10 gp	M, 2
Clothes, Fine	15 gp	M, 2	Lamp	5 sp	S, 1	Tools, Navigator	25 gp	S, 1
Clothes, Traveler's	2 gp	S, 1	Lantern, Bullseye	10 gp	S, 1	Tools, Painter	10 gp	M, 2
Component Pouch	25 gp	S, 1	Lantern, Hooded	5 gp	S, 1	Tools, Potter	10 gp	M, 2
Crowbar	2 gp	M, 2	Lock	10 gp	S, 1	Tools, Smith	20 gp	M, 2
Druid Focus, Mistletoe	1 gp	S, 1	Magnifying Glass	100 gp	S, 1	Tools, Thieves	25 gp	S, 1
Druid Focus, Staff	5 gp	L, 3	Manacles	2 gp	S, 1	Tools, Tinker	50 gp	S, 1
Druid Focus, Totem	1 gp	S, 1	Mirror, Steel	5 gp	S, 1	Tools, Weaver	1 gp	M, 2
Druid Focus, Wand	10 gp	S, 1	Oil (flask)	1 sp	S, 1	Tools, Woodcarver	1 gp	S, 1
Fishing Tackle	1 gp	S, 1	Paper (1 sheet)	2 sp	T, 0.2	Torch	1 cp	S, 1
Flask or Tankard	2 cp	S, 1	Parchment (1 sheet)	1 sp	T, 0.2	Vial	1 gp	T, 0.2
Game, Cards	5 sp	S, 1	Perfume (vial)	5 gp	T, 0.2	Waterskin	2 sp	S, 1
Game, Dice	1 sp	S, 1	Pick, Miner's	2 gp	L, 3	Whetstone	1 cp	S, 1
Game, Dragonchess	1 gp	S, 1	Piton	5 cp	T, 0.2	—	—	—

TRANSPORTATION

Vehicles—mules, carts, ships, trains—store items in the same way as characters: using item slots. Vehicles generally come in four sizes—anything larger is assumed to have as many slots as it needs.

TRANSPORT CAPACITY

Size	Examples	Slots
Small	Mule, Horse, Donkey, Wheelbarrow	18
Medium	Cart (2 wheels), Chariot	32
Large	Wagon (4 wheels), Carriage, Boat	64
Huge	Ship	128

A vehicle's storage capacity may be divided into separate compartments. A mule, for example, may carry two 9-slot bags, while a cart has a single 32-slot space.

CHESTS, CRATES, & BARRELS

Some items can only safely be transported in bulk within storage containers—chests, crates, and barrels. These containers hold a number of slots equal to their size:

- A *small* chest fills 1 slot and holds 1 item slot.
- A *large* crate fills 3 slots and holds 3 item slots.
- An *xx-large* barrel fills 9 slots and holds 9 item slots.

EQUIPPING CHARACTERS

Here are two examples of new characters buying some starting equipment and stashing it in their inventory.

VALIANT, HUMAN CLERIC

Valiant, a human cleric with +2 STR, can hold 20 item slots of inventory. Rolling 15 on the *Starting Wealth* table, he starts with 150 gp to his name.

Expecting to be in the thick of battle, Valiant wants thick armor and a sturdy shield to keep danger at bay.

VALIANT'S INVENTORY

Type	Contents
Items (11)	War Pick (5 gp, 2 slots) Shield (10 gp, 2 slots) Healer's Kit (5 gp, 1 slot) Prayer Book (25 gp, 1 slot) Torch (1 cp, 1 slot) Bedroll (1 gp, 2 slots)
Worn (9)	Chain Mail (75 gp, 9 slots)
Ration Box	Basic Ration (5)
Waterskin	Clean Water (5)
Purse	28 gp, 9 sp, 9 cp (46 coins)

Wearing heavy armor cuts Valiant's inventory space down to 11 slots. He fills 9 slots with adventuring gear, leaving 2 slots for trinkets and treasures.

This leaves Valiant with 2 item slots and just under 29 gp to live on—enough for two weeks of a modest lifestyle.

KRAZAK, DWARF BARBARIAN

Krazak, a dwarf barbarian with +3 STR, has 21 item slots to fill with 60 gp. With *Unarmored Defense*, he doesn't need nor want any additional armor—except perhaps a shield for those cowardly archers. But he does have a weakness for weapons—the bigger, the better.

KRAZAK'S INVENTORY

Type	Contents
Items (21)	Handaxe (5 gp, 2 slots) Shield (10 gp, 2 slots) Greataxe (30 gp, 3 slots) Gaming Set, Dice (1 sp, 1 slot) Whetstone (1 cp, 1 slot) Chain (5 gp, 1 slot) Torch (1 cp, 1 slot) Cook's Utensils (1 gp, 2 slots)
Ration Box	Basic Ration (5)
Waterskin	Dwarven Ale (5)
Purse	9 gp, 9 sp, 8 cp (26 coins)

Of his 21 item slots, Krazak fills 13—plenty of room left over to store loot aplenty from the next wild adventure.

Spending half his gold on a beloved greataxe was a costly investment, but a barbarian is nothing without his weapons. Krazak is keen to put them to good use.

VARIANT: QUICKDRAW

If you want to make inventory access a little more restricting for your players, try using the *Quickdraw* variant rule.

Characters nominate any 3 items in their inventory as *quickdraw* items. Quickdraw items can be draw/removed from the inventory using a free *object interaction* as normal. However, any non-quickdraw item can only be accessed using a full action.

Krazak nominates his greataxe, handaxe, and shield as his 3 *quickdraw* items—he can take out these 3 items using a free *object interaction* as normal.

During a descent into the *Shadowed Maw*, the dwarf tries to take out a torch to light the way. As this isn't a quickdraw item, it takes Krazak a full action to dig out the torch from his bag.

A character may rearrange their inventory and change their quickdraw item selection during a short rest.

Viridian has a shortsword, dagger, and rope as his 3 quickdraw items. However, as hit points are running low across the party, Viridian swaps his quickdraw rope for a healing potion in the next short rest—just in case someone should need a quick restorative to hand.

◦ VARIANT: CONTAINERS ◦

If you want a more granular system of inventory management that puts more focus on item placement, then try using these variant rules for *Containers*.

Characters divide their total number of item slots into distinct containers—bags, belts, sheathes, etc—that they name, categorize, and place about their person. These containers describe where an item is on your character.

Viridian has 11 item slots in his inventory. He divides this into a 4-slot weapon sheath (for his war pick and shield), a 3-slot belt (for his healer's kit and torch), and a 4-slot bag (for his prayer book and bedroll).

CONTAINER CATEGORIES

Containers can be broadly separated into 4 categories. When creating your inventory containers, assign a category to each—you can mix and match categories however you like, or rename them to something more fitting to your character (purse, bandolier, backpack, etc).

Some containers can only hold items of a particular size, or require more time to retrieve an item—so pick the right containers to suit your needs.

- **Bag:** A bag holds items of any size. You can draw an item from a bag with a full action.
- **Belt:** A belt can hold only small and tiny items. You can draw an item from a belt with a free action.
- **Sheath:** A sheath holds weapons and shields. You can draw an item from a sheath with a free action.
- **Quiver:** A quiver stores bows, crossbows, arrows, quarrels, and javelins. You can draw an item from a quiver with a free action.

Krazak wants rapid access to his weapons—he puts them in a sheath so he can draw them as a free action.

His downtime equipment—cooking tools, gaming sets, whetstones, etc—is unlikely to be needed at sudden notice, and can be stashed safely away in a bag.

CHANGING CONTAINERS

Characters can change their containers for free during a long rest, providing they have access to basic supplies and commodities via a village, town, or city.

While in town, Viridian swaps out a 6-slot bag for a 4-slot bag and 2-slot belt to hold his healing potions.

EQUIPPING CHARACTERS

To demonstrate how containers work, here are two new characters who—after buying equipment—divide up their item slots into appropriate containers.

CHANSI, HALFLING RANGER

Chansi, a halfling ranger with -1 STR, can only carry 14 item slots due to her small size and strength—humans have it so *easy*. Rolling 12, she starts with 120 gp.

Some decent leather armor is a must when ranging through the wild forests—animals have sharp claws. Chansi favors the trap and shortbow, but carries a sword and dagger for times when her prey gets too close.

CHANSI'S INVENTORY

Cont.	Type	Contents
1	Quiver (3)	Shortbow (25 gp, 2 slot) Arrows (1 gp, 1 slot)
2	Sheath (3)	Shortsword (10 gp, 2 slots) Dagger (2 gp, 1 slots)
3	Bag (5)	Hunting Trap (5 gp, 2 slot) Rope (1 gp, 1 slot)
—	Worn (3)	Studded Leather (45 gp, 3 slots)
—	Ration Box	Basic Ration (5)
—	Waterskin	Clean Water (5)
—	Purse	31 gp (31 coins)

The armor was costly, but it's saved Chansi's life on more than one occasion—well worth the price, and there's plenty of work for a talented ranger nowadays anyway.

VIKAN, GOLIATH SORCERER

Vikan, a goliath sorcerer with -1 STR, can carry up to 20 item slots thanks to his *Powerful Build*—he might smash his head on a few ceilings, but being big does have its advantages. Rolling 6, he starts with 60 gp.

As a sorcerer, Vikan eschews armor—it gets in the way of his raw arcane energies. He carries a quarterstaff for some basic defense and a crossbow for hunting.

VIKAN'S INVENTORY

Cont.	Type	Contents
1	Sheath (3)	Quarterstaff (2 sp, 3 slots)
2	Quiver (3)	Light Crossbow (25 gp, 2 slots) Bolts (1 gp, 1 slot)
3	Belt (6)	Focus, Orb (20 gp, 1 slot) Gaming Set, Cards (5 sp, 1 slot) Lamp (5 sp, 1 slot) Oil (1 sp, 1 slot)
4	Bag (8)	Painter's Supplies (10 gp, 2 slots) Blanket (5 sp, 1 slot) Bedroll (1 gp, 2 slots)
—	Ration Box	Basic Ration (5)
—	Waterskin	Clean Water (5)
—	Purse	1 gp, 8 sp (9 coins)

A keen painter, Vikan carries painting supplies with him to capture inspirational scenes out in the wild. His art isn't going to win any awards just yet, but Vikan paints for the love of the craft and not the reward.



WEAR & TEAR

EVERYTHING DECAYS, GIVEN ENOUGH TIME. IT'S hard to keep your gear in good shape out in the wilds—swords chip, staves break, and armor dents. Nothing stays in perfect condition forever—especially given the rigors of day-to-day adventuring. Keep a good whetstone in your pack and a sharp sword in your hand to survive the dangers ahead.

This chapter introduces rules to help track wear and tear on your items, how damage affects your gear, and how to repair and temper your equipment to prevent future damage.

ITEM DEGRADATION

Items degrade with use, losing condition until they become useless. This is measured with *notches*—the more notches an item has, the more it has degraded.

Items gain notches through damage and critical failures, and must be repaired or otherwise restored using the correct skills, tools, and expertise to function properly again.

DAMAGING ITEMS

Any object that can suffer damage can become notched, reducing its functionality and quality—through scratches, chips, dents, and cracks.

Objects generally fall into one of four categories: weapons, armor, magic foci, and miscellaneous items.

ARMOR

Armor gains a notch when you are critically hit by an attack. Each armor notch reduces your total AC by 1.

If you are not wearing any armor and are critically hit by an attack, select a random item in your inventory—that item gains a new notch instead.

WEAPONS

Weapons—both melee and ranged—gain a notch when you critically fail an attack with them.

Each weapon notch reduces by one step the damage die you roll with that weapon (to a minimum of 1):

1d12 → 1d10 → 1d8 → 1d6 → 1d4 → 1

Some weapons roll multiple die for their damage—for example, greatswords rolling 2d6. In these cases, each notch reduces just one die at a time:

2d6 → 1d6 + 1d4 → 2d4 → 1d4 + 1 → 2 → 1

A weapon's damage cannot go below 1, but it can still gain additional notches. These must be repaired as normal to restore the weapon's damage dice.

SPELLCASTING FOCUS

A spellcasting focus—such as a bard's instrument or a cleric's symbol—gains a notch when you critically fail a spellcasting action whilst wielding it.

Each notch reduces your total spellcasting ability by 1 in any spellcasting action involving that focus—keep it in good condition to keep from future failures.

MAGIC FAILURES

Magic is wild and dangerous if not handled carefully. If you roll a critical fail while spellcasting and are *not* holding a spellcasting focus at the time, the power strikes out—a random item in your inventory gains a new notch.

If you hold a focus—whether it was used during the spell or not—it attracts the power and gains the notch instead.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

All other items gain a notch whenever appropriate, often when they take direct damage or are used in a failed skill check—such as rolling a natural 1 to disarm a trap with a set of thieves tools.

DM: The door to the basement is locked, Viridian. A heart is etched under the key hole.

Viridian: Locked? Against a bard and his lock picks? I don't think so... (rolls 1) oh *come on!*

DM: You feel one of the tools bend awkwardly in your hand. Your lockpicks take a notch of damage.

Each notch reduces the item's effectiveness by 1, adding a cumulative -1 penalty to any roll made using that item.

Using a lockpick with one notch, for example, will apply a -1 penalty to your lockpicking attempts.

SHATTERED GEAR

Everything falls apart eventually, given enough damage and time. Your items can break irreparably if they suffer too many notches, becoming useless scrap.

Most objects are *sturdy* enough to withstand a fair amount of punishment, but be careful with delicate items—any more than one single notch and they shatter.

ITEM FRAGILITY

Fragility	Description	Maximum Notches
Delicate	Thin glass, ceramics, complicated or tiny machinery	1
Sturdy	Wood, metal, well-made goods	10
Indestructible	Thick stone, strong metals	100+

DM: That's a critical failure on your spell attack, Clanda. Take a notch of damage.

Clanda: Damn, not holding my focus. That means my... (rolls for a random item) *delicate* potion of healing takes a second notch. Oh dear.

DM: Oh dear indeed. Your arcane power hits the already-chipped glass potion bottle—it shatters inside your bag, spilling the liquid everywhere.

Clanda: ...

SACRIFICING WEAPONS AND ARMOR

When you hit with an attack, you can shatter your weapon to roll its original un-notched damage die. Decide this before you roll your damage.

Likewise, you can sacrifice your armor when hit by an attack to reduce the damage taken by 3d4 for light armor, 3d8 for medium armor, and 3d12 for heavy armor—it falls apart irreparably in the process. You can decide this after damage is dealt.

REPAIRING ITEMS

Items can be repaired by an appropriate craftsman, costing 10% of the item price per notch. Depending on the item, this may require rare or expensive components.

Characters may, if they're proficient, also use relevant tools to perform basic repairs on their gear while out traveling—a whetstone to smooth out a notch, a sewing kit to patch up a robe, a hammer to tap out a dent.

Repairs of this kind generally require an hour, tools, and a successful Intelligence check. Failure, however, could result in creating a new notch if not careful.

MENDING

The *Mending* cantrip repairs broken items—a torn waterskin, a split bow, a torn page. Notches, however, represent only minor damage to an item—not a complete break—and cannot be removed with *Mending*.

You can, however, use *Mending* to restore an item that has *shattered* from too many notches. A restored item is usable again, but has the maximum number of notches—without repairs, it will break again with one more notch.

Clanda: After—finally—drying out my bag, I'll scoop together the remains of the bottle and cast *Mending*.

DM: Your magic fuses the glass fragments back together into a useable, delicate bottle—it's cracked with 1 notch, but it'll hold liquid again.

You can't use *Mending* to restore a weapon or armor you have sacrificed—that gear is far too ruined for your simple cantrip to have any effect on.

TEMPERING GEAR

With the right skills and the right materials, you can make your gear more resistant to wear and tear. This is called *tempering* and it reduces the number of notches your equipment takes from critical failures.

TEMPER QUALITIES

When you temper an item, you strengthen the material so that it can withstand more punishment and remain effective for longer—a tempered sword becomes harder to chip, and tempered armor harder to crack. The better the temper, the stronger your equipment.

There are three grades of temper, each more exclusive and expensive than the last: pure, royal, and astral.

TEMPERING GEAR

Quality	Rarity	Critical Failure
—	Common	Gains 1 notch
Pure Temper	Uncommon	Gains ½ (0.5) notch
Royal Temper	Rare	Gains ¼ (0.25) notch
Astral Temper	Mythic	Gains ⅙ (0.125) notch

WHY TEMPER GEAR?

At higher levels, martial classes can make multiple attacks per round—this means an increased likelihood of rolling a 1 and gaining a notch on their weapons.

Tempering allows characters to improve their equipment so that—even though they may roll more 1s on average—notches are less damaging to their equipment.

A tempered piece of equipment is less vulnerable to the effects of wear and tear. When you would gain 1 notch from a critical failure (such as when attacking or defending), you instead gain only a *fraction* of a notch—a half, a quarter, or an eighth, depending on the quality.

DM: The troll lumbers towards you with a loud roar, Krazak. What do you do?

Krazak: Hah, a dwarf fears no troll. I swing my greataxe in a powerful arc... (rolls 1) and miss. Great.

DM: Your axe cuts deep into the adjacent stone wall with a loud crack. It gains a notch of damage.

Krazak: Lucky I had this beauty *tempered* back in town, she only gains ½ notch.

APPLYING A TEMPER

To temper a piece of equipment, you need four things: time, facilities, materials, and skill. You won't usually be able to temper gear yourself—such work requires special training—so keep an eye out for trained craftsmen.

TEMPERING COSTS

Quality	Cost	Time	Tempered Value
Pure	Base Value x 2	3 days	Base Value x 3
Royal	Base Value x 4	1 week	Base Value x 6
Astral	Base Value x 8	2 weeks	Base Value x 12

CRAFTSMEN

It's relatively straightforward to find someone who can apply a pure temper (for a price, of course), but royal or astral tempering is *extremely* rare—you'll need to search far and wide for such legendary craftsmen.

RARE MATERIALS

Rare and unique equipment may require special materials for tempering—ore from ancient mines, red dragon scales, gems from a slaad's brain. Recovering these components may be an adventure in itself.

REPAIRING TEMPERED GEAR

As you temper equipment, its inherent value increases. But it also becomes more expensive to repair damage whilst maintaining the temper—make sure you have enough coin to look after your gear.

In the mines of Kazadorn, Krazak has his greataxe *Vengeance* tempered. Applying a pure temper costs 60 gp (30 x 2) and takes 3 days. After the temper is applied, the weapon is worth 90 gp (30 x 3) and any notches will cost 9 gp (10% of 90) to repair.

ITEM QUALITY

The quality of an item affects how people treat it. Lower quality items are more likely to have visual defects, such as dents and scratches, that mark how it's been used.

This doesn't affect the item's effectiveness, but it may change how NPCs react—a merchant will offer much less for damaged goods, and a noble may be offended to receive anything that appears second-hand. Sometimes, you might want your goods to have a few scratches—a fighter who wears pristine armor may look like they've never been in battle, drawing scorn and derision.

There are four grades of item quality:

- **Pristine:** Never been notched. This item looks, feels, and smells brand new.
- **Worn:** Has had only one notch at a time. This item has one main defect that indicates use.
- **Well-Worn:** Has had two or three notches at one time. This item shows heavy signs of use.
- **Scarred:** Has had four or more notches at one time. This item looks shabby and in poor condition.

RESALE VALUE

The quality of an item impacts how much a merchant may offer you for it—lower quality means lower prices.

RESALE VALUE

Quality	Resale Value	Quality	Resale Value
Pristine	75%	Well-Worn	25%
Worn	50%	Scarred	10%

RESTORING ITEMS

Item quality can be restored by an appropriate craftsman. This usually requires 1 week per grade, though rare or delicate items may take longer.

ITEM RESTORATION

Quality	Cost
Worn to Pristine	50%
Well-Worn to Worn	30%
Scarred to Well-Worn	10%

Magic items are much more difficult to restore than mundane items—you may need to find an elite artisan or some especially rare materials to finish the restoration.

VARIANT DIALS

Wear & Tear is a flexible game mechanic that can be adjusted to suit a variety of settings and gameplay styles. If you want to customize the experience, consider using some of these variant dials.

BASIC WEAR & TEAR

If you want to include a simplified version of item decay in your game, use *object conditions*. These lightweight conditions replace notches, tempering, and qualities.

OBJECT CONDITIONS

Any object that can suffer damage (such as weapons, armor, magic foci, and other items) may track its state with three *object conditions*: fine, damaged, and broken.

- **Fine:** This object works as intended.
- **Damaged:** This object has taken some noticeable damage—a crack, a bend, a tear, etc—but can still be used without penalty.
- **Broken:** This object has been broken and can't be used again until it is properly repaired.

Unlike notches, object conditions don't affect the utility of your gear until they are broken—a damaged sword still cuts well, but a broken sword must be repaired.

DAMAGING OBJECTS

Objects take damage whenever they are mishandled or otherwise treated poorly—such as by being critical hit or fumbled with.

Critically Hit: If you are critically hit by an attack, one of your items must take damage. You may choose either your armor or an object you are holding—if you're not wearing armor or holding anything, a random item in your inventory takes a level of damage instead.

Fumbled: If you critically fail with an object during an ability check, you fumble and the object takes a level of damage. Attack rolls and saving throws don't cause a fumble, even if you roll a natural 1.

DM: The orc swings a greatsword at you, Valiant. It's.. (rolls 20) a critical hit, 20 points of slashing damage.

Valiant: Ouch! Looks like my gear is taking some damage from that. I'll choose... my shield—I tried to block the attack with it and the sword cut deep, tearing a large crack in the shield. It's *damaged* now.

REPAIRING OBJECTS

You can repair an object if you have the appropriate tools and knowledge. Repairs generally require an hour, tools, and a successful Intelligence check—after which you may improve the condition of the object by 1 tier.

Mending: You can use *Mending* to repair a broken object (if you have enough pieces). An object mended in this way is restored to a *damaged* condition.

VARIANT: THICKER ARMOR

If you want to add some more durability to your armored characters, extend the number of object conditions for heavier armor types:

- **Medium Armor:** Fine, Damaged (1/2), Broken.
- **Heavy Armor:** Fine, Damaged (1/2/3), Broken.

TEMPERLESS NOTCHES

If you want to use notches in your game but without the need for tempers, then consider this *temperless notches* variant to change how notches are gained.

CRITICAL HITS

If you are critically hit by an attack, one of your items must gain a notch. Apply a notch to either your armor or an item you are holding (such as a weapon, shield, or spellcasting foci)—you may choose the object.

If you're not wearing armor or holding anything, a random item in your inventory gains a notch instead.

FUMBLES

If you critically fail with an object during an ability check, you fumble and the object gains a notch. Attack rolls and saving throws don't cause you to fumble.

DESTRUCTIVE ATTACKS

To add some variety to your monster actions, consider giving them destructive attacks that specifically damage equipment in addition to—or in place of—hit points.

RED ORC Level 4 Striker
Medium humanoid (orc) Standard (275 XP)

ARMOR CLASS 11 **ATTACK BONUS** +6
HIT POINTS 45 (23) **DAMAGE** 10
SPEED 30 ft **SPELL DCs** 14, 11

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+2	+3	+0	+1	+1

SAVING THROWS Str +4, Con/Dex +1, Wis/Cha/Int -1
SKILLS Initiative +2, Perception +2, Stealth +2

ACTIONS

Beserker Punch (*common*)

Melee 5 ft: +6 vs AC. *Hit:* 10 bludgeoning damage.

Sunder (*recharge 5/6*)

Melee 5 ft: +6 vs AC. *Hit:* 10 slashing damage and the target's armor suffers 1 notch.

GIFFYGLYPH'S MONSTER MAKER

For more ideas about monsters and monstrous attacks, try *Giffyglyph's Monster Maker*—a supplement full of guides and templates to help build dangerous monsters.



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AMMUNITION

SOME WEAPONS AND ITEMS REQUIRE AMMUNITION of some kind—arrows, darts, stones, bolts, bullets, etc. But in the heat of battle, with chaos all around, it's not always clear exactly how much ammo you have left in your quiver.

This chapter introduces *ammunition dice* as a means of tracking ammunition supplies.

THE AMMUNITION DIE

Instead of tracking each individual shot, take a d12—this is your *Ammunition die*. Roll it whenever you take a shot: if you roll a 1 or 2, the die gets one size smaller:

d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4 → 1

If you're down to one piece of ammunition and you use it, that's it—you've used the last piece, so remove the ammunition completely from your inventory.

Most ammunition types will usually start with (and have a maximum size of) a d12 *ammunition die*—this represents a full stack of arrows/bolts/bullets/etc.

DM: The ghoulish grab hold of you tight, Viridian, moaning as it prepares to bite. What do you do?

Viridian: Chansi, need a little help here!

Chansi: Yea kinda running low on arrows though, ammunition die is down to a d4—

Viridian: TAKE THE DAMN SHOT, CHANSI!

Chansi: *Fine*, I'll shoot at the ghoulish. That's... (rolls 15) 15 to hit. And... (rolls 1) damn, a 1 for ammunition. Down to my last arrow. You're *welcome*, Viridian.

AVERAGE USES PER DIE SIZE

Die Size	Remaining Uses (Average)	Die Size	Remaining Uses (Average)
d20	30	d8	9
d12	20	d6	5
d10	14	d4	2

AMMUNITION STACKS

If you're carrying multiple stacks of any one type of ammunition, prioritize the smallest stack first—always roll the smallest ammunition die per ammo type.

SPECIAL AMMO

If your ammunition is rare or has limited uses—fire arrows, magic bolts, lighting bullets, etc—don't use an ammunition die. Track each shot as you use them.

REPLENISHING AMMUNITION

To increase your *ammunition die* you can recover ammo from the environment, buy a new stack, or pay a small percentage of the total cost to increase your die by one step based on the *maximum* die size for that ammo type

For example, to replenish a stack of arrows (max size d12) from d8 to d10 would cost 20 cp (20% of 1 gp).

REPLENISHING AMMUNITION

Maximum Die	Cost per Size Increase	Maximum Die	Cost per Size Increase
d20	16%	d8	33%
d12	20%	d6	50%
d10	25%	d4	100%

POTIONS

MAGIC PERMEATES THE WORLD—IT'S IN THE AIR you breathe, the food you eat, and the liquids you drink. Through carefully preparation, this magic can be harnessed to create powerful consumables that help—or hinder—your adventures.

This chapter introduces some changes to consumable potions and how to interact with them.

MAGICAL POTIONS

A potion is a magically-infused liquid that, when consumed, can bestow an effect on your character—restoring health, damage resistance, strength, etc.

Potions can vary greatly in appearance, texture, and taste depending on their recipe and maker—roll on the tables below to randomly generate your potion details.

POTION DESCRIPTION

d12	Texture	Color	Taste/Smell
1	Thin	Blue	Citrus
2	Thick	Red	Sweet
3	Bubbly	Yellow	Sour
4	Fizzy	Silver	Bitter
5	Jelly	Gold	Salty
6	Chunky	Purple	Savory
7	Watery	Orange	Spicy
8	Oily	Green	Foul
9	Slimy	Brown	Delicious
10	Crunchy	Black	Sickening
11	Chewy	White	Tangy
12	Moving	Teal	Familiar

DRINKING POTIONS

Drinking a potion requires you to spend a bonus action. Alternatively, to feed a potion to someone else, you must spend an action. You must have at least one free hand to perform either of these actions.

VARIANT: TOXICITY

If you want to make drinking potions more of a risk in your campaign, consider using this *Toxicity* variant.

You may drink one potion per long rest without issue. For every additional potion, you risk suffering toxicity—after you consume the potion, roll a d6 on the *Potion Toxicity* table below to see if you suffer any side-effect.

POTION TOXICITY

d6	Side-effect
1	Gain a level of exhaustion.
2-3	Lose a hit die, or gain a level of exhaustion if you have no remaining hit die.
4-6	No side-effect.

IDENTIFYING POTIONS

Not all magic potions look alike—even a simple healing potion can vary wildly in appearance depending on who made it and which recipe was used.

During a short rest, you can attempt to identify any unidentified potions by making an *Arcana* knowledge check with an alchemist's kit—one per potion. Base the DC against each potion's rarity.

Success: You learn the true name of the potion.

Fail: You know if the potion is at least safe to drink.

Critical Fail (10 or more): You (unknowingly) learn a false or misleading name of the potion.

POTION IDENTIFICATION DC

Rarity	DC	Rarity	DC	Rarity	DC
Common	10	Rare	20	Legendary	30
Uncommon	15	Very rare	25	—	—

While exploring the Nightglade, Chansi finds an unidentified potion—which the DM knows to be a rare *Potion of Heroism*. During the next short rest, she attempts to identify it with her alchemist's kit—rolling 13 against a secret DC of 20.

She doesn't discover exactly what it is, but she at least learns that it's not poisonous to drink.

IDENTIFY SPELLS

You can learn the true name of any potion using the *Identify* spell (or similar magics).

CONSUMABLES

An adventurer can always find room for a potion or two. If your campaign setting allows it, you may loot, buy, or craft some of these special potions for your adventures.

POTION OF HEALING

Healing potions are an adventurer's best friend, bringing many a hero back from certain death.

When you drink a healing potion, don't roll a d4—instead, roll the same die as your most common hit die. If you don't have a hit die value for any reason, roll a d4.

POTION OF HEALING

Item, Potion, Consumable

This red potion feels strangely warm to the touch. It tastes of cinnamon and orange.

You recover some hit points when you drink this potion—the better the quality, the more hit points you are able to restore.

QUALITIES

Type	Rarity	Recovery	Cost
Lesser	Common	2 [hit die] + 2	50 gp
Greater	Uncommon	4 [hit die] + 4	150 gp
Superior	Rare	6 [hit die] + 8	450 gp
Supreme	Very rare	8 [hit die] + 16	1,350 gp

Krazak, a barbarian, drinks a lesser healing potion with his bonus action. Using his hit die value (d12), he rolls 2d12 + 4 to see how many hit points he recovers.

MULTICLASSED CHARACTERS

If you are multiclassed and have hit dice of varying sizes, use the hit die value of whichever class you have the most levels in. On a tie, choose the highest.

Viridian, a 3rd-level Bard / 1st-level Fighter, has 3d8 and 1d10 hit dice. When he drinks a lesser healing potion, he uses his most common hit die size—d8.

POTION OF STAMINA

Stamina potions grant a small burst of energy to those suffering from exhaustion—a potential life-saver on long, dangerous journeys far from a safe resting place.

When you drink a stamina potion, you can ignore a small amount of exhaustion for one hour. This energy boost is short-lived, however, and your exhaustion returns in full strength once the potion wears off—make sure you're not in a dangerous position when it does.

POTION OF STAMINA

Item, Potion, Consumable

This cold, black potion tastes strongly of old coffee and sour milk. It fizzes when shaken.

You may ignore some exhaustion for one hour when you drink this potion—the better the quality, the more exhaustion you can ignore. When the potion wears off, your exhaustion returns.

QUALITIES

Type	Rarity	Effect (1 hour)	Cost
Lesser	Common	−1 exhaustion	50 gp
Greater	Uncommon	−2 exhaustion	150 gp
Superior	Rare	−4 exhaustion	450 gp
Supreme	Very rare	Ignore all exhaustion	1,350 gp

Chansi is suffering from two levels of exhaustion, causing disadvantage on ability checks *and* halving her speed—not good when being chased by dire wolves.

As a bonus action, she drinks a lesser stamina potion. For the next hour, she can ignore one level of exhaustion—her total exhaustion drops from 2 to 1, removing the half-speed penalty. She can now—just barely—keep ahead of the howling wolves.

When the potion wears off after one hour, her total level of exhaustion goes back up to 2.

EXHAUSTION LIMITS

Your total level of exhaustion cannot go lower than 0, nor higher than 6, as per normal.

POTION OF RECOVERY

Hit dice are highly prized by adventurers—the more you have, the faster you can recover from lasting harm.

When you drink a recovery potion, you regain a number of expended hit dice. If you have different hit dice sizes—such as from multiclassing—you may choose which expended dice you recover.

POTION OF RECOVERY

Item, Potion, Consumable

This watery, green potion smells of freshly cut grass. If left in natural sunlight, it spoils after one hour.

You instantly recover a number of expended hit dice when you drink this potion—the better the quality, the more hit dice you recover. You may choose which of your hit dice are restored.

QUALITIES

Type	Rarity	Effect	Cost
Lesser	Common	Recover 2 hit die	50 gp
Greater	Uncommon	Recover 4 hit dice	150 gp
Superior	Rare	Recover 6 hit dice	450 gp
Supreme	Very rare	Recover 8 hit dice	1,350 gp

POTION OF LUCK

Sometimes, the only thing standing between life and death is one lucky roll of the dice. With a luck potion, you can twist fortune in your favor—a precious boon for adventurers and gamblers alike.

When you drink a luck potion, you instantly gain 3 points of inspiration. You can't exceed your maximum number of inspiration points in this way.

POTION OF LUCK

Item, Potion, Consumable

This golden potion tastes like metal and sticks to your teeth for an hour, giving them a slightly golden sheen.

When you drink this potion, you instantly gain 3 points of inspiration (up to your maximum).

Viridian sat down at the card table and grinned. "Deal me in, gentlemen. I'm feeling *extra* lucky today."

The thugs stared at him in dumbfounded silence, until one leaned forward with a grin of his own.

"Nice teeth, *goldie*," said Fander with a knowing sneer. "Been drinkin' some liquid luck, 'ave we?"

Viridian stopped grinning—damn it, he'd been careless. "Uh... would you believe that they're natural?"

"Nope," said Fander curtly. Chairs scraped loudly as the thugs stood up, fists clenched in anticipation...

POTION OF SPELLPOWER

Spellpower potions infuse your body with a sudden burst of magical power—but at the cost of some stamina.

When you drink a spellpower potion, you may spend one hit die to regain an expended spell slot of your choosing. If you don't have any hit dice, you may instead gain a level of exhaustion.

POTION OF SPELLPOWER

Item, Potion, Consumable

This glowing, blue potion glistens with tiny crystalline fragments. It tastes of lightning and glass.

When you drink this potion, you may expend one hit die and regain one expended spell slot of your choosing—the better the quality, the higher the maximum spell slot level.

QUALITIES

Type	Rarity	Max. Spell Slot	Cost
Lesser	Common	1st-level	50 gp
Greater	Uncommon	2nd-level	150 gp
Superior	Rare	3rd-level	450 gp
Supreme	Very rare	5th-level	1,350 gp

POTION OF RESTORATION

In a desperate pinch, when all seems lost, a potion of restoration can turn the tide. These legendary potions are said to contain fragments of compressed time, allowing your body to recover some instant power.

When you drink a restoration potion, you may spend one hit die—or, if you don't have any, gain a level of exhaustion—to recover one expended racial or class feature of your choosing. This feature must normally recharge during a short or long rest.

POTION OF RESTORATION

Item, Potion, Consumable

This potion glistens with a myriad of rainbow colors. When you hold it, the flow of time feels strange.

When you drink this potion, you may expend one hit die—or, if you don't have any, gain a level of exhaustion—to regain one expended racial or class of your choosing.

Reynis was exhausted. She had burned through her wild shapes already, and yet undead horde was relentless. Her druidic power was all gone. Or was it...?

Reynis quickly drank her restoration potion, and—as time compressed around her for one split second—instantly felt her wild shape power be restored anew.



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FLASKS

POTIONS ARE AN ADVENTURER'S BEST FRIEND, BUT it's not always sensible—or realistic—to carry a few dozen potions at once. When you need to carry a lot of potion in a little container, use a flask.

This chapter introduces potion flasks and rules on how to use them in your campaign.

MAGICAL FLASKS

A flask is a small, magically-infused bottle (or other container) that can safely hold a large—but *uncertain*—amount of consumable potion (or other liquid).

Unlike potions, which typically come in single-use vials, it's always hard to tell *exactly* how much liquid remains inside a flask—you never quite know how many uses you'll get before it's all gone.

FLASK APPEARANCE

d12	Material	Color	Style/Design
1	Fragile Glass	Blue	Human
2	Reinforced Glass	Red	Dwarven
3	Wood	Yellow	Elven
4	Porcelain	Silver	Orcish
5	Bone	Gold	Draconic
6	Clay	Purple	Undead
7	Leather	Orange	Celestial
8	Stone	Green	Aberrant
9	Resin	Brown	Elemental
10	Metal	Black	Fiendish
11	Dragonscale	White	Gnomish
12	Plant	Teal	Monstrous

THE FLASK DIE

Instead of tracking individual drinks, flask quantity is measured with a die—d8, d10, d12, etc. This is your *Flask* die—roll it whenever you take a drink from the flask: if you roll a 1 or 2, the die gets one size smaller:

d20 → d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4 → 0

Once you roll a 1 or 2 on a d4, that's it—the flask is now completely empty until you can find a way to refill it.

DM: The wizard's lightning bolt hits you for 11 points of damage, Clanda. What do you do?

Clanda: Damn it, I'm bloodied. Can't risk another hit like that—I'll take a drink from my *flask of healing* as a bonus action and get... 7 hit points back.

DM: Great, now roll your flask die.

Clanda: Flask quantity is d4, so I roll a d4 and get... (rolls 1) damn—looks like that was the last of the flask.

AVERAGE USES & COSTS

Quantity	Remaining Uses (Average)	Cost to Buy
d20	30	22 x [base potion cost]
d12	20	15 x [base potion cost]
d10	14	10 x [base potion cost]
d8	9	6 x [base potion cost]
d6	5	3 x [base potion cost]
d4	2	1 x [base potion cost]

WHY DID MY FLASK DECREASE?

- You drank too much.
- You spilled some as you were drinking.
- You overestimated how much was in there to begin with.

SPLITTING FLASKS

Magic fades quickly from any liquid leaving the flask. If you pour the contents of a flask into another container—such as a potion vial, a cup, or a different flask—the magic fades within one round, becoming useless if not consumed during that time.

GETTING A FLASK

There are three common ways to gain a flask: find one on your adventures, buy one from a merchant, or—if you have the right tools and training—create one.

TREASURE & REWARDS

You may find a flask on your adventures—in the ruins of a wizard's tower, on the corpse of a dead explorer, in the locked chest of a rich merchant—or be awarded one as a reward for some heroic deed. Flasks found as treasure will usually have a d4 or d6 quantity.

BUYING A FLASK

Flasks are an uncommon item that, depending on your setting, may not be easily available. If you can find a vendor selling flasks, an empty flask is a small item that costs 5 gp.

The cost of a partially-filled flask will depend on its quantity and contents—see the *Average Uses & Costs* table for an exact breakdown.

Valiant wants to buy a *flask of healing* with d6 quantity. One *potion of healing* normally costs 50 gp, so the flask will cost him 150 gp (3 x 50).

FLASK OF HEALING

Item, Uncommon, Potion, Consumable

This flask contains d6 drinks of *healing* potion. When you take a drink, roll a flask die—if you roll a 1 or 2, the flask quantity gets one size smaller.

CREATING A FLASK

If you are proficient with both the Arcana skill *and* a set of appropriate artisan's tools (glassblower, smith, woodcarver, or potter), you can attempt to create a new, empty flask during a long rest.

Creating a flask costs 5 gp of materials and requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) skill check—on a failure, the flask shatters and is rendered useless.

FILLING YOUR FLASK

If you have an empty flask and are proficient with an alchemist's kit, you can fill an empty flask yourself by combining together potions of the same type and pouring them safely into the flask. This can be done during a short or long rest.

If you don't have the requisite tools or experience, you'll need to find a trained alchemist to perform this service—pouring any ill-prepared potions into a flask will spoil the mixture, nullifying any magical properties.

FLASK REFILL

Potions Used	Flask Quantity	Potions Used	Flask Quantity
1	d4	10	d10
3	d6	15	d12
6	d8	22	d20

REFILLING YOUR FLASK

Potions are volatile and don't like to be mixed. If you pour any potion—even one of the same kind—into a partially-filled flask, the contents immediately spoil and lose all magical properties.

VARIANT: MIXING POTIONS

If you want to include some variety when mixing potions in flasks, roll a d20 on the table below. This roll should be done in secret—the player does not notice any change without first making a successful identifying action.

MIXING POTIONS

d20	Effect
1-5	The contents lose their original properties and become a <i>potion of poison</i> .
6-16	The contents are spoiled and lose all magical properties.
17-19	No change in the contents.
20	The contents lose their original properties and gain the effect of the newly-added liquid.

VARIANT: TOPPING UP

If you are proficient with an alchemist's kit, you can top-up a partially-filled flask during a short or long rest if you have enough potions. As a proficient alchemist, this does not risk spoiling the contents of the flask.

TOPPING UP

Flask Quantity	Potions Needed	Flask Quantity	Potions Needed
d4 → d6	+2	d10 → d12	+5
d6 → d8	+3	d12 → d20	+7
d8 → d10	+4	—	—



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OILS

BEFORE CHARGING IN TO BATTLE, TAKE A MOMENT to research your enemy. Discover their strengths and weaknesses, and exploit their vulnerabilities as best you can to ensure success—with the right equipment, even the mightiest monsters can be slain.

This chapter introduces magical oils and ways you can use them to enhance your weapons and armor.

MAGICAL OILS

Oils are magically-infused ointments that can coat weapons and armor to produce a temporary magical effect—resistances, additional damage, etc. Oils last for one hour, creating an effect until they naturally evaporate or are otherwise cleaned off. A coated weapon or armor counts as magical for the duration of the effect.

In the Spiteful Halls, Krazak fights the dangerous Flame King—a fire elemental vulnerable to cold damage.

Luckily, Krazak came prepared. The dwarf spends a bonus action to pour some *Oil of Frost* over his greataxe. As the oil coats the weapon, it gains the *cold* damage type.

APPLYING AN OIL

You can spend a bonus action to apply an oil to a weapon, piece of armor, or stack of ammunition within reach. You must have at least one free hand to do this. You cannot apply an oil to anything held by an unwilling, conscious target.

An item—whether weapon, armor, or ammunition—can only benefit from one oil at a time. When you apply an oil, it replaces any currently active oil on the item.

CREATING OILS

If you are proficient with both Arcana *and* an alchemist's kit, you can attempt to create an oil during a long rest.

The main component of a magical oil is gemstone dust—you need an amount of dust equal to 80% of the value of the oil you wish to create. Each oil draws its power from a different type of gemstone:

OIL COMPONENTS

Oil	Dust	Oil	Dust
Accuracy	Pearl	Nightmares	Amethyst
Blessing	Diamond	Power	Garnet
Corruption	Emerald	Resilience	Aquamarine
Decay	Onyx	Speed	Jet
Energy	Topaz	Spite	Peridot
Flameheart	Ruby	Thunderstrike	Alexandrite
Frost	Sapphire	—	—

Once you have your gemstone dust, you must make an Intelligence (Arcana) check using your alchemist's kit to see if you successfully create the oil—the DC depends on the rarity of the intended oil: uncommon (DC 10), rare (DC 15), or very rare (20). If you fail, the components are lost in the attempt.

During a long rest, Clanda wants to create some *Oil of Decay*. After buying 120 gp of onyx dust, she rolls a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check with her alchemist's kit to try and prepare the uncommon oil.

ELEMENTAL OILS

Name	Effect on Weapons	Effect on Armor	Rarity	Cost
Oil of Blessing	Deal <i>Radiant</i> damage	Gain <i>Necrotic</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Blessing (Greater)	Deal <i>Radiant</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Necrotic</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Blessing (Superior)	Deal <i>Radiant</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Necrotic</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Corruption	Deal <i>Poison</i> damage	Gain <i>Acid</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Corruption (Greater)	Deal <i>Poison</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Acid</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Corruption (Superior)	Deal <i>Poison</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Acid</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Decay	Deal <i>Necrotic</i> damage	Gain <i>Radiant</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Decay (Greater)	Deal <i>Necrotic</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Radiant</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Decay (Superior)	Deal <i>Necrotic</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Radiant</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Energy	Deal <i>Lightning</i> damage	Gain <i>Thunder</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Energy (Greater)	Deal <i>Lightning</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Thunder</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Energy (Superior)	Deal <i>Lightning</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Thunder</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Flameheart	Deal <i>Fire</i> damage	Gain <i>Cold</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Flameheart (Greater)	Deal <i>Fire</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Cold</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Flameheart (Superior)	Deal <i>Fire</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Cold</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Frost	Deal <i>Cold</i> damage	Gain <i>Fire</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Frost (Greater)	Deal <i>Cold</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Fire</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Frost (Superior)	Deal <i>Cold</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Fire</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Nightmares	Deal <i>Psychic</i> damage	Gain <i>Force</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Nightmares (Greater)	Deal <i>Psychic</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Force</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Nightmares (Superior)	Deal <i>Psychic</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Force</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Resilience	Deal <i>Force</i> damage	Gain <i>Psychic</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Resilience (Greater)	Deal <i>Force</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Psychic</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Resilience (Superior)	Deal <i>Force</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Psychic</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Spite	Deal <i>Acid</i> damage	Gain <i>Poison</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Spite (Greater)	Deal <i>Acid</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Poison</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Spite (Superior)	Deal <i>Acid</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Poison</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Thunderstrike	Deal <i>Thunder</i> damage	Gain <i>Lightning</i> resistance (50%)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Thunderstrike (Greater)	Deal <i>Thunder</i> damage +1	Gain <i>Lightning</i> resistance (75%)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Thunderstrike (Superior)	Deal <i>Thunder</i> damage +1d4	Gain <i>Lightning</i> immunity	Very rare	2,400 gp

ENHANCEMENT OILS

Name	Effect on Weapons	Effect on Armor	Rarity	Cost
Oil of Accuracy	Gain +1 to hit	Gain +1 AC	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Accuracy (Greater)	Gain +2 to hit	Gain +2 AC	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Accuracy (Superior)	Gain +3 to hit	Gain +3 AC	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Power	Deal +1 damage	Reduce damage taken by 1 (min. 1)	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Power (Greater)	Deal +2 damage	Reduce damage taken by 2 (min. 1)	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Power (Superior)	Deal +3 damage	Reduce damage taken by 3 (min. 1)	Very rare	2,400 gp
Oil of Speed	Gain +1 opportunity attack per round	Increase max speed by +5 ft	Uncommon	150 gp
Oil of Speed (Greater)	Gain +2 opportunity attacks per round	Increase max speed by +10 ft	Rare	600 gp
Oil of Speed (Superior)	Gain +3 opportunity attacks per round	Increase max speed by +20 ft	Very rare	2,400 gp

PART 3

Taking Action

12 Taking Action p45

Tweaks and additions to a variety of action types.

13 Active Defense p47

Change combat with player-owned defense rolls.

14 Active Initiative p49

A dynamic, communication-driven initiative order.

15 Degrees of Success p51

Track the scale of player success and failure.

16 Active XP p53

Gain experience by recovering lost treasures.

17 Dangerous Magic p56

Add risk to your magic with magical burnout.





12

TAKING ACTION

IT'S TIME TO ACT. YOU WANT TO CHARGE ACROSS THE rickety bridge? Climb the crumbling wall? Kick down the old door? Great, now make a roll to see if you succeed.

This chapter sets out some changes to rolling mechanics with untyped skill bonuses, broader social interaction, and other minor additions.

OPEN SKILLS

With *Open Skills*, your skills are no longer tied to a single ability—instead, you may apply your skill bonus to any ability check that feels appropriate.

When you are taking an action, try to consider which ability and skill pairing is the best fit for your situation. You may only use one ability and one skill per check.

DM: Valiant, a guard blocks the door with his spear. "You ain't going in there," he says bluntly.

Valiant: Do I recognize the guard?

DM: No, but you do recognize the symbol on his necklace—the scales of Kelemvor, Lord of the Dead.

Valiant: He follows my god? Perfect. "Not often I meet one of His agents," I say, showing my necklace and symbol. "How long have you served Him?"

DM: The guard smiles at you. "Oh since I were a boy. My old man was a gravedigger—knew the rites, taught me the words. Done right by me so far, has the Lord."

Valiant: I'll ask a few more questions, talk a little faith—see if I can get this guy on my side and let me pass.

DM: If you're trying to get him to like you, that'll be a DC 15 Charisma check. You can add Religion to that.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

There is more to social interaction than just charisma—intelligence and wisdom are just as important, and each has their own role to play in conversation.

When interacting with an NPC, the context of your action determines which ability you are using: smarts (intelligence), feelings (wisdom), or presence (charisma).

- **Intelligence:** You're trying to be clever. Debate, reason, negotiate, lie, manipulate, wit, and threaten.
- **Wisdom:** You're trying to soothe or connect feelings. Rapport, empathize, calm, discretion, and tact.
- **Charisma:** You're trying to be likeable or dominating. Charm, bluff, banter, incite, command, and intimidate.

Here we see Clanda, sitting with her friends in a village tavern, overhear an ill-informed farmer.

DM: The farmer says "I 'eard that if yous eat a frog on a full moon, yous get to jump high like a frog".

Clanda: This *stupid* peasant. "There is *no* way that is true," I tell him. Angrily.

DM: "Yea it is, I 'eard it from those boys over at the Grange farm. The moon magic turns you into one o' them lick-oh-tropes." The farmer is resolute in his belief—it's going to be *very hard* to change his mind.

Clanda: Hold my beer, guys—I'm going to talk some brains back into this fool. Ok farm boy, let's start off with some basic pronunciation...

DM: Ok, roll a DC 25 Intelligence check. As you're attempting to change his mind, add Persuasion.

HELP

If you take the *Help* action to grant advantage to an ally, you get to roll one of the two d20 during the attempt.

Your ally adds their normal bonuses as if they had rolled the die themselves.

DM: The owlbear screeches as the two of you surround it. Viridian, Krazak—what do you do?

Viridian: This guy looks pretty wild. I'll *help* distract the beast, Krazak, while you—

Krazak: Hit it with the axe?

Viridian: Hit it with the axe. Ok I'll make a feint to the left (rolls 18)...

Krazak: And I'll swing the axe to the right (rolls 6)...

DM: Thanks to Viridian's feint, Krazak's axe bites deep into the owlbear. Roll your damage, Krazak.

TEAMWORK

You can't roll multiple attempts for the same action—recalling a piece of knowledge, sweet-talking the castle guard, pushing a heavy boulder aside. But you can work together with your allies to make that one attempt as successful as possible.

Anyone with a relevant skill or background may help you attempt something—the first person grants you advantage (per the *Help* action), and every additional person grants you a +1 bonus. If the roll fails, however, everyone involved is liable for the consequences.

INITIATIVE

Reaction speed is determined first-and-foremost by your thoughts—the faster you can think, the faster your brain can tell your body to act.

When rolling for initiative, do not add your Dexterity modifier—instead, add your Intelligence modifier. Break ties first with Dexterity, then Wisdom.

TACTICAL WIT

If you are a *War Wizard*, your *Tactical Wit* class feature now grants a Dexterity bonus—not Intelligence.

This may also apply to other unique class features or item powers, so judge accordingly.

IMPROVING INTELLIGENCE

Dexterity is a very influential stat in vanilla 5e, determining attack rolls, damage, initiative bonuses, and (by far) the most common saving throw.

Moving initiative rolls from DEX to INT is a small tweak that helps to rebalance the abilities, curbing the dominion of Dexterity whilst expanding the utility of the weakest ability—Intelligence—in a way that impacts all characters equally.

TOOLS

A tool helps you do something you couldn't otherwise do—pick a lock, craft an item, forge a document. Some tools are basic enough to provide basic use without training—cook's utensils, painter's supplies, dice games. Most, however, require proficiency to use properly.

If you are proficient with a tool, add your proficiency bonus to any ability check made with it. If you are proficient with both a tool and a skill—for example, an instrument with Performance, cook's utensils with Survival, a healer's kit with Medicine—you may add your proficiency bonus *and* make your roll with advantage.

DM: The crowd are getting restless.

Viridian: This could get ugly... Everyone likes music, right? I'll play a song, see if I can calm everyone down before anyone does something stupid.

DM: You want to sooth the rowdy crowd with music? Ok, that'll be a DC 20 Wisdom check.

Viridian: I'm proficient in Performance, and I'll use my lyre—I'm proficient with that as well.

DM: Perfect. Make the roll with Advantage.

KNOWLEDGE CHECKS

Knowledge is a valuable resource, and can sometimes mean the difference between life or death. Players shouldn't be able to tell if their information is false by knowing that they rolled a low number on the check.

The DM always rolls knowledge checks—including perception and insight checks—in secret on behalf of the player, and then reveals knowledge accordingly. If it's a failure, give the character some misleading information—the larger the failure, the greater the mislead.

DM: The creature lumbers out of the shadows, stretching out a rotten vine. You recognize it as a shambling mound, Chansi—what do you do?

Chansi: I've spent a long of time out in the wilds—do I know what their weakness is?

DM: Let's see... (rolls 3 in secret—a failure). You remember notes from an old almanac. Apparently lightning is *very* bad for mounds and their senses.

Chansi: Perfect! And I have four lightning arrows left. I shoot one immediately at the mound (rolls 19).

DM: A clear hit. The arrow strikes the mound and a burst of lightning erupts... to no effect. The mound advances on you, unfazed.

Chansi: ...*What?*

Viridian: That's some good memory you have there, Chansi. Real effective.

Chansi: Shut. Up. Viridian.



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ACTIVE DEFENSE

IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE, ADVENTURERS DON'T STAND around waiting to be hit by the enemy—they take defense into their own hands by dodging, blocking, and parrying attacks. Don't sit and watch your enemy throw an attack—roll to see how well you avoid it.

This chapter introduces *defense rolls* and *saving attacks*, putting defense back into player control.

DEFENSE ROLLS

Whenever the DM would normally make an attack roll against a player character, that player instead makes a *defense roll* to see if they can avoid the attack—dodge, duck, dip, dive, and dodge your way to success.

Roll a d20 and add your full AC—this your defense roll. The opposing DC is 22 plus the attacker's normal attack bonus.

Defense Roll: d20 + your AC
DC: attacker's attack bonus + 22

If your defense roll equals or beats the DC, you successfully avoid the attack. If you fail, the attack hits.

If your attacker has advantage on their attack, you instead apply disadvantage to your defense roll—and vice versa if your attacker has disadvantage.

CRITICALS

If your defense roll comes up as a natural 1, it's a critical fail—you are critically hit by the attack. Roll a natural 20 and it's a critical success—you defend with style.

If your attacker would normally score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20, then the attack is a critical hit on a 1 or 2, and so forth.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Here we see Valiant, Sarien, and Clanda being attacked by three orcs. Where the DM would normally be rolling attack rolls for the monster, the players make defense rolls to avoid the incoming attacks.

DM: The three orcs rush forward, rage in their eyes. Two of them hack at you with their greataxes, Valiant, while the third stabs at Sarien with a javelin.

Valiant: I raise my shield to block. What's the DC?

DM: DC 27 (22 + orc attack bonus (+5)).

Valiant: Here goes... (rolls 30 (13 + AC 17)) I bash the first attack aside with my shield, and... (rolls 22) damn, I get caught by the second.

DM: The second axe catches your arm painfully—take 9 points of damage.

Valiant: That hurts—a bad cut.

Sarien: I've got your back, Valiant. Let me just dodge this javelin first... (rolls natural 1) oh that's bad.

DM: You stumble right into the path of the javelin, Sarien, which stabs you right in the shoulder. Take 12 points of damage.

Valiant: Great job, Sarien, good dodge there.

Sarien: On my next turn, I throttle Valiant.

STATIC DAMAGE

Instead of rolling for damage, anything controlled by the DM—NPCs, monsters, traps, environmental effects—may deal static damage according to its average value. If the attack is a critical hit, double the damage.

PORTENT

If you are a divination wizard, it's easy to use your *Portent* ability with *Active Defense*.

If you give a portent result to someone making a *defense roll* they may use either the normal value or the d20-inverse value (calculated as 21 - portent value).

Emwyn, a divination wizard, has a portent result of 3 remaining. When he is attacked by an orc, Emwyn must make a defense roll. He chooses to use his portent instead of rolling, as takes the *inverse* value of 18 (21 - 3)—Emwyn's defense result is 17 + his AC.

SAVING ATTACKS

Whenever the DM would normally roll a saving throw, the player instead makes a *saving attack* to see if they can overcome the target's defenses.

When you make a saving attack, roll a d20 and add your normal spell save DC. The opposing DC is 22 plus the target's saving throw bonus. If the spell would affect multiple targets, make a separate attack roll for each—but roll the damage only once for all targets.

Saving Attack Roll: d20 + your spell save DC
DC: target's saving throw bonus + 22

If your saving attack equals or beats the DC, you successfully land the attack. If you fail, the attack misses or is blocked by the target.

If your target has advantage on their saving throw, apply disadvantage to your saving attack instead—and vice versa if your target has disadvantage.

CRITICALS

Per normal rules, *saving attack* spells cannot critically hit nor critically miss.

VARIANT: MASSIVE DAMAGE

If you want to add the potential for some massive damage spikes to your game, allow *saving attack* spells to deal critical damage.

On a critical hit, roll all of the attack's damage dice twice. On a critical fail, however, the spell has no effect at all—even if it would normally cause an effect on a miss.

Clanda: Let's see if this myconid can take a fireball.
DM: Ok Clanda, roll your saving attack.
Clanda: Piece of cake... (rolls 20) now *that's* more like it! Poor myconid, critically hit with a 3rd-level fireball? That'll be 16d6, please. I *love* my job.

Apply this rule to both players and monsters for fairness—if players can crit more often, so too can the monsters.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

At the end of the DM's turn, it's Clanda's time to shine. Where the DM would normally roll saving throws for the orcs to avoid *Acid Splash*, Clanda instead makes a *saving attack* and rolls to hit each orc.

She only rolls the spell damage once—no matter the number of targets—rolling extra only when she lands a critical hit per the *massive damage* variant rule.

DM: Ok Clanda, it's your turn next. Valiant's under attack and Sarien's stumbling about—what do you do?
Clanda: Ugh, I hate orcs. It's time to even the odds. I cast *Acid Splash* at the two orcs attacking Valiant.
Valiant: You're throwing *acid* at me?
Clanda: Hush, it'll be *fine*. What's the DC?
DM: DC 23 (22 + orc dexterity saving throw (+1)).
Clanda: Ok, I hurl this orb of acid... (rolls 23 (10 + SDC 13)) It barely hits the first, scorching him for... (rolls 2) hmm, not very much.
DM: The orc snarls with irritation as a few drops of acid catch on his thick leather armor.
Clanda: The second... (rolls natural 20) critical hit! Some acid splashes on the orc's face, causing... (rolls 6 extra critical damage) great, 8 points of acid damage!
DM: The orc roars in pain and falls to the ground, clutching at his face as the flesh melts away.
Valiant: Gross.
Clanda: Do I hear a thank you? Manners, Valiant.

VARIANT: SMALL DEFENSE

If you prefer to deal with smaller modifiers, use this *Small Defense* variant and reduce the +22 attack bonus for defense rolls and saving attacks to something more inline with other common modifiers.

DEFENSE ROLLS

When you make a defense roll, roll a d20 and add your AC - 10. The opposing DC is 12 plus the attacker's normal attack bonus.

Defense Roll: d20 + (your AC - 10)
DC: attacker's attack bonus + 12

SAVING ATTACKS

When you make a saving attack, roll a d20 and add your normal spell save DC - 8. The opposing DC is 14 plus the target's saving throw bonus.

Saving Attack Roll: d20 + (your spell save DC - 8)
DC: target's saving throw bonus + 14



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ACTIVE INITIATIVE

COMBAT ISN'T POLITE AND MONSTERS DON'T LIKE to wait in line to take their turn—the flow of battle is always dynamic and unpredictable. Work with your allies to support each other, chain together powers and tactics, and exploit weak points as one well-oiled team of adventurers.

This chapter introduces the *Active Initiative* system, allowing players to choose who acts next in the round.

THE DYNAMIC ROUND

With *Active Initiative*, there is no pre-determined order of initiative. Instead, once a person has finished their turn, they get to choose who goes next—another player, group of monsters, or environmental hazard.

A basic round follows four simple steps:

1. **Who goes first?:** Decide who triggered the scene and acted first. Did you throw the first punch?
2. **Take turns:** Take your turn. Once you've finished your actions, you get to pick who goes next.
3. **End the round:** Once everyone's finished their turn, end the round and clear up any expired effects.
4. **Start a new round:** If there's still conflict, the last person to act gets to decide who starts the new round.

WHY USE ACTIVE INITIATIVE?

There are four main benefits of switching to *Active Initiative*:

1. **Better teamwork:** Players can work together more easily to chain their actions together into big combo-moves.
2. **More communication:** Players talk more to each other.
3. **More attentive players:** Players are actively watching what's happening for opportunities to jump in and act.
4. **It's easy:** No dice or math—just say who goes next.

STEP 1. WHO GOES FIRST?

The first step is to figure out who acted first and triggered the scene. Most times it will be obvious which character started things—someone throws the first punch, or steps on the trap, or casts a spell.

DM: You're surrounded, Valiant. The hobgoblin sneers at you. "Throw down your weapon, cleric, and maybe we'll only cut off one hand."

Valiant: Pft, I haven't forgotten last time—never trust a hobgoblin. I raise my shield and charge.

DM: You're triggering the fight, Valiant—you have the first turn.

If it's not obvious who acted first, you can determine this randomly by rolling for initiative—whoever rolls highest goes first. After that first turn is complete, switch to dynamic turn ordering as described here.

STEP 2. TAKE TURNS

Take your turn as normal. Once you've finished your actions, you get to pick who goes next—this can be any other character, creature, hazard, or group of monsters that hasn't acted yet in the current round.

Interrupting: Anyone who took damage during your turn can steal the initiative from you at the end of your turn (see *Interrupting*), so be careful who you attack.

DELAYING

You cannot pass or delay once your turn begins, but you can ready an action. This doesn't change your turn order—if your triggered action is the last act in a turn, you don't get to choose the next person to act.

MONSTER GROUPS

To prevent a routine side-vs-side combat or scene, make sure to create a variety of taggable groups. Avoid using large groups of monsters—break them up and aim for 1 taggable monster or group per player at the start of a scene.

STEP 3. END THE ROUND

Once all characters and creatures have finished their turn, end the round as normal and clear up any expired effects—spells, powers, timers, etc.

EFFECT DURATION

Effects that last a specific duration of rounds tick down at the end of each round. Once a duration reaches 0, the effect has ended and can be removed.

Any effects that would expire at the start or end of your turn are unchanged, expiring as normal.

Valiant casts *Bless*—a concentration spell that lasts for 1 minute (10 rounds). At the end of each round, the remaining duration simply decreases by 1 round.

Clanda, meanwhile, uses *Shield* to deflect an attack. This spell ends whenever she takes her next turn.

STEP 4. START A NEW ROUND

If there's still conflict to resolve, start a new round. The last person to act in the current round decides who starts the new round—they cannot pick themselves.

INTERRUPTING

If you haven't taken your turn yet this round, you have a chance to *steal* the initiative and take the next turn—even if you were not nominated. This is called an *interrupt*. There are two main ways in which you can do this:

1. You can spend an *Inspiration Point* to interrupt.
2. If you took damage during the last turn, you can choose to interrupt for free.

If you choose to interrupt, you must do so before the next person starts their turn. You can't interrupt if you've already acted this round, and you can't interrupt an ally.

MONSTER INTERRUPT POINTS

Each scene, the DM gets one free *Interrupt Point* per player. The DM may spend one of these points to steal the initiative, but can only use one point per round.

INTERRUPTS & INSPIRATION

Interrupt Points exist to give the DM a power similar to player *Inspiration Points*. But if *Inspiration* is not a common feature in your game—or players aren't spending their points to make interrupts—don't give the DM any *Interrupt Points*.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Here's an example of how to use *Active Initiative* in a basic round of combat—Chansi, Valiant, and Clanda are fighting a hobgoblin and four goblins. With three players, the DM has three *Interrupt Points* for this scene.

Chansi makes an attack, but draws attention to herself in the process. She then passes over to Valiant.

DM: The hobgoblin roars an order out to the goblins and they spring forward. Chansi, you've got the highest initiative—what do you do?

Chansi: I fire an arrow at the hobgoblin... (rolls 11) oof, that's a bad start.

DM: Your arrow misses by a wide margin. The hobgoblin shouts, and three of the goblins look at you.

Chansi: That doesn't sound good. Valiant, might need you to draw some attention here...

Valiant: I'm on it. I move forward and strike at the nearest goblin with my war pick (rolls 16).

DM: The goblin curses aloud as you hit it. How much damage does it take?

Valiant: 6 points. Then with my *War Priest initiative*, I swing round to hit another goblin (rolls 17).

DM: Another hit—the goblin screeches as it takes...?

Valiant: 7 points of damage. Now that should get their attention.

Having finished his turn, Valiant prepares to pass over to Clanda. The DM, however, chooses to *interrupt* with one of the monsters.

As the goblins took damage during Valiant's turn, they could interrupt for free. However, the DM spends an *Interrupt Point* to allow the hobgoblin to act instead.

Valiant: Ok Clanda, you're up next.

Clanda: Perfect. I—

DM: Before you can act, Clanda, the hobgoblin interrupts (*spends an Interrupt Point*) and leaps forward towards Valiant. He swings his longsword in a fierce two-handed arc and hits, dealing 6 damage.

Valiant: Ouch.

DM: And with the goblins around you, Valiant, the hobgoblin's attack is even more dangerous thanks to *Martial Advantage*—take another 7 points of damage.

Valiant: Son of a...

DM: The hobgoblin laughs coldly, licking the blood from its blade. "You have my attention, little cleric," he sneers. The goblins begin to move—

Clanda: I think not (*spends an Inspiration Point to Interrupt*). Enough of this nonsense. Don't move, Valiant, unless you want this *Fireball* in your face...

DEGREES OF SUCCESS

SOMETIMES, DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS, WE don't always win. But not all failures are equal—sometimes we mess up a little, and sometimes we mess up catastrophically. Sometimes, we even have a chance to prevent failure—at a small, extra cost.

This chapter introduces *degrees of success*, allowing you to judge the scale of success and failure accordingly.

SUCCESS & FAILURE

When you attempt an action that has a chance of failure, compare your result to the DC and check the list below to see just how well you did.

- **Critical Success:** You succeeded by 10 or more on a skill check, or rolled a natural 20 on an attack. Things have gone perfectly. You achieve your goal and something else happens in your favor.
- **Success:** You achieve your goal.
- **Minor Failure or Success at a Cost:** You failed by 1, 2, or 3. You can choose to succeed, but something bad also happens as a consequence.
- **Failure:** You failed by 4 or more. Something bad happens—you take damage, gain Stress, lose a hit die, a Condition worsens, etc.
- **Critical Failure:** You failed by 10 or more on a skill check, or rolled a natural 1 on an attack. It's all gone badly for you and you suffer a second consequence in addition to the normal failure effects—you take extra damage, lose a hit die, drop an item, etc.

Krazak is critically hit by an enemy. He first takes damage for failing to dodge, then *additional* damage (the crit damage) for critically failing—two consequences total.

BOONS

When a character succeeds, something good happens and they get what they wanted.

Here are some example boons that you might apply when a character succeeds in their efforts—one boon for a success, and two for a critical success.

BOONS

d20	Boon
1	You restore some hit points
2	You gain a hit die
3	You find some extra gold
4	You gain a favor from an ally
5	You regain a spell slot
6	You deal extra damage
7	You heal some mental stress
8	You may spend a hit die to recover some hit points
9	You may switch places with a nearby ally
10	You can move to an advantageous position
11	You learn a piece of rare information
12	You (temporarily) lose one level of exhaustion
13	A magic item regains one charge
14	The locals hear about your achievement
15	You apply a condition to your enemy
16	A god notices your achievement
17	A condition improves
18	You gain advantage to your next roll
19	Your enemies are intimidated by you
20	You move your enemy

CONSEQUENCES

When a character fails an action, something bad happens. Here are some consequences you might apply when a character fails a roll—one consequence for a failure, and two for a critical failure.

CONSEQUENCES	
d20	Consequence
1	You or an ally take damage
2	An enemy reacts and takes an action
3	You gain some mental stress
4	Take a notch on your weapon/armor/item
5	You lose an item
6	One of your conditions worsens
7	Your torch goes out
8	An NPC becomes hostile to you
9	You lose some gold
10	You learn some misinformation
11	Your enemy becomes enraged
12	You gain the attention of the local guards
13	You drop your weapon
14	You stop and fall prone
15	You are poisoned or diseased
16	You are imprisoned
17	A crowd turns against you
18	A higher authority learns of your misdoings
19	A god punishes you
20	You lose some ammunition or hit dice

SUCCESS AT A COST

When you fail by a narrow margin, you can choose to instead succeed at a cost. You get what you want, but something bad happens to you as a consequence.

This may require some negotiation with the DM—if you can't both agree on the cost, you can't succeed. Check the *Offerings* table below for some inspiration.

OFFERINGS	
d10	Offering
1	25% or 50% of your total hit points
2	One or more hit dice
3	One or more spell slots
4	An item gains a notch
5	You gain a condition
6	You gain the attention of the enemy
7	You are moved into a disadvantageous position
8	You lose an item
9	Gain a level of exhaustion
10	Lose some gold

EXAMPLES OF PLAY

Here are two examples of using degrees of success—one to demonstrate *Success at a Cost* and how negotiation works, and another to show critical failure in action.

Chansi is trapped on a collapsing ledge over a dark abyss. Luckily, her friends have thrown down a rope for her to climb to safety.

DM: The ground is crumbling beneath your feet, Chansi. There's a rope hanging ahead, over the abyss.

Chansi: I leap out and grab hold of it.

DM: Ok, that's a DC 15 Strength check.

Chansi: I should be able to use Athletics for this, so that's... (rolls 14) augh, so close!

DM: Very close indeed, the rope barely slips past your fingers. You have a chance to *Succeed at a Cost*...

Chansi: Damn, I can't fall into the abyss. Perhaps... something falls out of my bag as I grab hold? Those old mushrooms I picked up earlier maybe?

DM: It has to be something precious to you.

Chansi: Ah. Well I was really hoping to use this healing potion later...

DM: Perfect. For a moment you fall, barely catching the rope at the last second with your other hand. But as you hang, you hear a small rip from your bag and your healing potion tumbles into the abyss below.

Chansi: Augh, I really needed that potion...

Viridian has bluffed his way into a meeting with a local lord, hoping to convince the lord to lend his support to the defense of a nearby village.

DM: Lord Erasius looks at you coldly, Viridian. "And why should I trust you, stranger?"

Viridian: Hmm. I want to convince Erasius that I'm nobility with access to the king. If Erasius will support us, I can put in a few words to boost his reputation.

DM: Ok, that's a tricky lie. You haven't had time to prepare this, so it's an off-the-cuff bluff—make a DC 25 Charisma check.

Viridian: Can I use History with this?

DM: Yes, you know enough about the local lands to throw around a few names.

Viridian: Great. That's... (rolls 13) not good.

DM: No, it isn't—it's a critical failure. Erasius can see right through your lies, and—as a second consequence—he's *extremely* offended. "You come into my home and dare lie right to my face? Perhaps some time in our dungeons will extract the truth from you. Guards!"

Viridian: Son of a...



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ACTIVE XP

EXPERIENCE IS THE KEY TO POWER—WITH IT, YOU can discover new abilities and reach higher peaks of strength. But you don't gain experience staying in your comfort zone—the only way to grow is to push beyond your limits and brave the countless dangers of the world.

With *Active XP*, you don't gain experience for just killing monsters—instead, you gain experience by being active in one of three fields: discovery, recovery, and adversity.

- Discovery:** Explore the world, meet new people, and uncover secrets—hidden dungeons, ancient cults, legendary monsters. You gain more experience the rarer and more valuable your discovery.
- Recovery:** Recover treasure and valuables from uncivilized, monstrous, or abandoned areas—gemstones from an ancient tomb, a dragon's hoard, a hidden chest of jewels.
You gain 10 XP per gold piece (1 XP per silver piece) of recovered treasure, making this the most efficient means of gaining experience.
- Adversity:** Face danger and survive perilous situations—recover from near death, challenge a red dragon, defeat a horde of orcs. The bigger the danger, the bigger your experience—if you survive.

The best way for a character to grow is to be active and go out adventuring in the wilds, exploring the great unknown. The bigger the risk, the bigger the reward.

TREASURE-CENTRIC REWARDS

Active XP encourages players to hunt for rare treasures, and is best suited to a particular style of game—namely, campaigns that focus on exploration and treasure-hunting.

ADVANCEMENT

With *Active XP*, don't use the standard 5e leveling table—instead, use the *Character Advancement* table listed below. This details the amount of experience a character needs to gain per level before they can level up.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Level	XP	Level	XP	Level	XP
0-1	150	7-8	2,260	14-15	23,810
1-2	300	8-9	3,160	15-16	33,330
2-3	420	9-10	4,430	16-17	46,660
3-4	590	10-11	6,200	17-18	65,330
4-5	820	11-12	8,680	18-19	91,460
5-6	1,150	12-13	12,150	19-20	128,050
6-7	1,610	13-14	17,010	—	—

SPENDING EXPERIENCE

Once you've gained experience points, you can spend them to level up. If you are using the *Training* rules (p104) in your game, spend the experience after you have completed your training time.

Valiant, a level 1 cleric, returns to Darrowmore with 250 XP and a rare, golden goblet worth 10 GP. He donates the goblet to his church and gains 100 XP.

Now at 350 XP, Valiant has enough experience to level up. After a week of training, he spends 300 XP to ascend to level 2—leaving 50 XP remaining.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

The DM is responsible for awarding XP to players. These guides will help determine the amount of XP a character should be awarded for their in-game actions.

DISCOVERY & ADVERSITY XP

Discovery and adversity rewards depend on two main factors: the *Challenge Level* of the area, and the *Relative Difficulty* experienced by the party. Follow the three steps below to determine the XP reward.

STEP 1. CHALLENGE LEVEL (CL)

First, you must decide the *Challenge Level*—this is the minimum level characters are expected to be in this particular area or adventure. A higher CL implies more dangerous monsters, traps, and challenges.

Most civilized areas—villages, towns, and cities—will be CL0. It's no challenge to live in a sanctuary.

XP PER CHALLENGE LEVEL

CL	XP	CL	XP	CL	XP
0	1	7	23	14	238
1	3	8	32	15	333
2	4	9	44	16	467
3	6	10	62	17	653
4	8	11	87	18	915
5	12	12	122	19	1,280
6	16	13	170	20	1,790

The *Challenge Level* should be straightforward to determine for the DM—base it on the average level of the adventure or current area being explored.

STEP 2. RELATIVE DIFFICULTY (RD)

Next, choose the *Relative Difficulty*—this describes how dangerous or difficult the event was for the party. Did they lose precious resources, or barely break a sweat?

A challenge is more rewarding the harder it is to overcome—trivial encounters are not rewarding at all.

RELATIVE DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS

Difficulty	Modifier	Description
Trivial	x 0	The PCs were far overpowered
Easy	x 0.5	The task was no trouble at all
Normal	x 1	The task proved to be a minor inconvenience or obstacle
Hard	x 2	The party lost some precious resources and had a hard time
Extreme	x 4	The party lost nearly all their resources, or someone died
Insane	x 8	The PCs were underpowered and survived against all odds

RATE OF EXPERIENCE

Characters are generally expected to have around three adventures per level. In a treasure-focused campaign, 75% of the total XP should come from treasure rewards and the remaining 25% from discovery/adversity rewards.

For a faster or slower leveling experience, raise or lower the default XP rewards for each Challenge Level. You may also consider changing the 75%/25% ratios of XP if your game is less focused on treasure hunts.

When choosing the *Relative Difficulty*, refer to the number of resources the party spent in the process. Hit points, hit dice, spell slots, valuable items, wealth—the more resources lost, the higher the relative difficulty.

STEP 3. CALCULATE XP

Once you know the *Challenge Level* and the *Relative Difficulty*, you can calculate the experience gained as:

Character XP: Challenge Level x Relative Difficulty

Party XP: Character XP x Party Size

Listed below are some examples to demonstrate this in action. First, we see Chansi use her lockpicking skills to avoid a potentially lethal fight.

Chansi is currently exploring the *Vault of Sorrow*, an area designed for level 3 characters. To hide from a patrol of skeletons, she quietly unpicks a locked door and slips out of sight—avoiding a dangerous fight.

The DM decides to award her some adversity XP for the effort. As the CL is 3 (6 XP) and the lock was of normal (x1) difficulty, Chansi receives 6 XP.

Next, Valiant and Clanda discover the entrance to a secret dungeon they have long been searching for—the *Shattered Underhall*—and survive a battle against its dangerous guardians.

Following a map through the *Nightless Forest*, a dangerous area for level 5 characters, Valiant and Clanda finally uncover a long-hidden entrance to the *Shattered Underhall*.

The DM awards some discovery XP. As the CL is 5 (12 XP) and they had a hard (x2) time finding the entrance, Valiant and Clanda each receive 24 XP.

Later, deep within the Underhall, Valiant and Clanda fight a near-fatal battle against its guardians—the *Court of Lies*. Though victorious, they spent many resources and almost died in the process.

The DM awards some adversity XP for the battle. The *Shattered Underhall* is CL 5 (12 XP) and they nearly died fighting an extreme (x4) battle against the Court, so Valiant and Clanda each receive 48 XP.

RECOVERY XP

Characters gain experience by recovering lost treasures and bringing them back to civilization, gaining 10 XP per gp of treasure—precious gems, priceless art, rare jewelry.

The amount of treasure found on an adventure—be it in a dungeon, a dragons horde, or a vampire's vault—depends on two factors: the *Challenge Level* of the area, and the *Threat Rating* of the treasure's guardians.

STEP 1. CHALLENGE LEVEL (CL)

First, determine the *Challenge Level* of the area—this establishes the base amount of treasure (for one player) that should be found throughout the adventure.

TREASURE PER CHALLENGE LEVEL					
CL	GP	CL	GP	CL	GP
0	0	7	56	14	592
1	7	8	78	15	828
2	10	9	110	16	1,160
3	15	10	154	17	1,624
4	20	11	215	18	2,274
5	28	12	302	19	3,185
6	40	13	422	20	4,456

The higher the CL, the bigger the danger—but the more treasure you are likely to find.

STEP 2. THREAT RATING (TR)

Next, determine the *Threat Rating* of the treasure's guardians. If there's no threat, there's no treasure—someone else will have looted it long before you arrive.

THREAT RATINGS		
Threat	Modifier	Description
None	x 0	A handful of weak opponents
Low	x 0.5	A band of badly organized foes
Average	x 1	A small force with one or more notable leaders
High	x 2	A well-armed force with several tiers of leadership
Extreme	x 4	A large force with formidable strength and influence
Legendary	x 8	A legendary monster such as a dragon, a beholder, or a lich.

You'll need to find and face the biggest threats if you want to recover the rarest treasures—so be brave.

MAGIC ITEMS & GOLD

Magic items and currency (copper, silver, or gold pieces) do not count as treasure, so don't include their value in your treasure-to-XP calculations.

STEP 3. CALCULATE TREASURE

Once you know the *Challenge Level* and *Threat Rating*, you can calculate the amount of treasure to be recovered throughout the adventure:

Treasure: Challenge Level x Threat Rating
Hoard: Individual Treasure x Party Size

Listed below are some examples to demonstrate this in action. First, we see an outline for a simple level 1 adventure—the *Tomb of the Bone Prince*.

The DM is building an adventure for level 1 characters, with a CL of 1 (7 gp) and an average (x1) threat rating—meaning that characters should each find around 7 gp of treasure in the adventure, not including any random silver or gold.

The DM scatters the treasure across 7 encounters:

- 1. Encounter:** The Bone Sentinels.
- 2. Encounter:** The False Prince. Rewards a 1 gp treasure per person (some carved bone dice).
- 3. Challenge:** A secret passageway to the undertomb.
- 4. Encounter:** Madrigor, the Blind Cleric. Rewards a 1 gp treasure per person (a golden chalice).
- 5. Challenge:** A collapsing ceiling and a locked door.
- 6. Encounter:** The Bone Prince and his Retinue.
- 7. Encounter:** The Amalgam King. Rewards a treasure hoard worth 5 gp per person (well-cut rubies).

Here, we see Valiant and Chansi return to town from a recent adventure with some recovered treasure in hand.

After a brief expedition into the *Rat's Nest*, Chansi returns to Darrowmore carrying a jade figurine she reckons is worth 12 gp. She sells it to a local collector, exchanging the figurine for 12 gp and 120 XP.

Valiant also found treasure during the expedition—a rare book of holy scripture worth 12 gp. He donates the book to his local church, gaining 0 gp and 120 XP.

The experience gained from any treasure returned to civilization is split equally across everyone who helped obtain it. This include helpers, followers, and henchmen.

Stealing or hiding treasure from the rest of the party won't grant you any additional XP—once you exchange it for XP, everyone gets an equal cut.

While the group wasn't looking, Clanda palmed an extra ruby from the treasure pile. On returning to town, she sells it to gain 7 gp and 70 XP. Clanda keeps the gold but shares the XP with the rest of the party.



DANGEROUS MAGIC

MAGIC IS A POWERFUL FORCE THAT CAN rewrite fundamental laws of reality—turn ice into fire, restore life to the dead, teleport across great distances in a heartbeat. Magic can grant unimaginable power, but is not without risk even too the well-trained and experienced—channeling such raw energies can be dangerous to the unprepared.

This chapter introduces rules to make magic a little more dangerous and unpredictable for spellcasters.

MAGICAL BURNOUT

Sometimes, the flow of magic goes against you. It's hard to shape, it's too chaotic, it's too powerful—whatever the reason, some magic energy lashes out during your spellcasting attempt and causes you some harm.

This is called *burnout* and it can happen to any caster, whether arcane or divine. Magic is dangerous work, and the slightest distraction can be catastrophic.

TRIGGERING BURNOUT

If you are a spellcaster, take a d12—this is your *Burnout* die. Whenever you attempt to cast a magic spell, roll the Burnout die; on a 1 or 2, the power is overwhelming and you trigger a burnout event—two things happen to you:

1. YOUR BURNOUT DIE GETS SMALLER

Your burnout die starts as a d12, but each time you suffer burnout the die becomes one size smaller.

1d12 → 1d10 → 1d8 → 1d6 → 1d4

As your die shrinks it becomes increasingly more likely that you will trigger further burnout—so be careful.

2. YOU SUFFER A CONSEQUENCE

If your spell is 1st-level or higher, roll a d100 and check the *Burnout Consequences* table to see what effect your burnout has. Consequences become increasingly more severe the higher your spell level, so beware.

Clanda: Ok, these myconids are *really* starting to annoy me now. Good thing I've been saving this *Fireball* for a special occasion...

DM: As you channel your arcane power, you feel the weave pulling away. Roll your burnout die, Clanda.

Clanda: Easy, still on a fresh d12... (rolls 1) or not, damn. So that's a 3rd-level burnout with a... (rolls 46) *hurt* consequence, ouch.

DM: Some of the raw arcane energy arcs lances out from your spell. Shrink your burnout die one step to d10 and take 6 hit points of damage.

Clanda: Fine. I'll channel that anger back into the spell—these myconids are going to *burn*.

If a consequence doesn't fully apply to you, or doesn't make sense for the situation, pick one that does. Alternatively, the DM may—at their discretion—pick a consequence specifically for you.

BURNOUT IS NOT A FAILURE

Suffering burnout doesn't mean your spellcasting failed—it just means you were hurt somehow during the attempt.

Roll to attack and resolve any hits or misses as per normal for your magic spell—apply your burnout consequences after you've finished resolving your spell effects.

BURNOUT CONSEQUENCES

d100	Consequence	d100	Consequence
1-5	Drained: Lose (spell level) hit dice.	95	Gifted: Regain this spell slot.
6-15	Reduced: Lose (spell level / 2) hit dice.	96	Renewed: Regain (spell level) hit dice.
16-40	Shocked: Lose (spell level x 4) hit points.	97	Healed: Gain (spell level x 4) hit points.
41-88	Hurt: Lose (spell level x 2) hit points.	98	Protected: Gain (spell level x 4) temporary hit points.
89-93	Blackout: Disadvantage on casting for (spell level) rounds.	99	Energized: Advantage on casting for (spell level) rounds.
94	Immolated: Shrink the burnout die to d4.	100	Restored: Reset the burnout die to d12.

RECOVERING FROM BURNOUT

Once a burnout die shrinks, it remains that size until you take a recovery action. There are four primary means of recovering from burnout:

1. **Spend a hit die:** You can spend a hit die during a short rest to grow your burnout die by one step. You don't gain any healing from hit die spent in this way.
2. **Get a good sleep:** If you get a good night's sleep, your burnout die grows by one step. Sleeping in a place of magical power (such as an arcane leyline or divine temple) may increase your die by larger amounts.
3. **Take a long rest:** Once you complete a long rest, your burnout die is fully restored to d12.
4. **Consume a restorative:** Some special consumables—magic, crafted, or otherwise—may help restore your burnout die when ingested.

Clanda: Ok, that's the myconids burnt to a crisp. Let's take a short rest, I need to recover some burnout. I'll drink some of Chansi's special arcane tea—

Chansi: No you won't, you finished that yesterday.

Clanda: Blast. In that case, I'll spend a hit die to channel some power and get this d10 back up to d12.

YOUR BURNOUT RISK

The likelihood of experiencing burnout depends on the size of your die—the larger the die, the safer you are. Try to keep your die as large as possible for the best chance at avoiding burnout consequences.

BURNOUT RISK

Die Size	Risk	Die Size	Risk
d12	16%	d6	33%
d10	20%	d4	50%
d8	25%	—	—

ROLL ONCE PER SPELL

You only roll the *Burnout* die once per spell, regardless of the number of spell targets. Burnout is also unaffected by any advantage/disadvantage you may have on your action.

SAFE MAGIC

Not all magical abilities put your body at harm's risk—these innate or controlled *safe magics* don't require a burnout roll when used:

- **Class Features:** Effects gained through certain class features—such as *Channel Divinity* and *Lay on Hands*.
- **Racial Features:** Spells gained through a racial ability—such as the tiefling's *Infernal Legacy*.
- **Magic Items:** These channel their own energies.
- **Rituals:** A ritual safely controls the flow of magical energy with complicated sigils and glyphs.

WHY DID I BURN OUT?

Magic is a fickle thing, even in the hands of the well-trained. If you want an explanation for your burnout, roll a d20 and check the *Burnout Reasons* table below—or choose your own reason if you prefer.

BURNOUT REASONS

d20	Reason
1	You mispronounced a key syllable.
2	You said the words in the wrong order.
3	You sneezed.
4	You wrote a glyph incorrectly.
5	You used a low quality spell component.
6	You didn't move your hands in the proper motion.
7	You got distracted by a sudden movement.
8	The weave is wild and unpredictable.
9	Your god is angry with you.
10	Your god gave you too much power at once.
11	Your god is busy with celestial matters.
12	An opposing god is interfering with the power.
13	A nearby ley-line is warping the flow of magic.
14	Another caster is disrupting your control.
15	Your patron is testing you.
16	Your patron wants your attention.
17	Your patron doesn't understand your mortal frailty.
18	The winds of magic are against you.
19	A magic item you are wearing reacts badly.
20	Magical energy is scarce in this region.

REGIONAL MAGIC

Magical power is not equal in all places. Perhaps you're in a temple or a wizard's tower, where the flow of magic has been tamed? Or you're near an arcane vortex or an elemental gate, where magic is wild and hard to control?

These environmental effects can impact your ability to cast spells and change how likely you are to suffer from magical burnout.

At the DM's discretion, add a regional modifier (-3 to +3) to the size of your normal burnout die. Grow the die to prevent burnout, and shrink it to encourage burnout.

REGIONAL MODIFIERS

Modifier	Severity	Description
+3	Serene	The flow of magic is abundant, predictable, and easy to harness.
+2	Calm	The flow of magic is rich.
+1	Stable	The flow of magic is reliable.
+0	Normal	—
-1	Unstable	The flow of magic is erratic.
-2	Wild	The flow of magic is intense and hard to control or shape.
-3	Chaotic	The flow of magic is raw, unpredictable, and dangerous.

These regional effects can be as small or as large as you like—a few feet, a room, a building, a few miles, a kingdom, or even a whole continent.

DM: Pushing through the thick wood, you see an old stone building with a ruined spire in the distance. You feel the *calming* power of holy ground.

Valiant: Finally, Unity Spire. I'll let Viridian know I've found it with a *Sending* spell.

DM: Ok, make your burnout check.

Valiant: No problem. Should be rolling d8, but this calm power pushes it back up two sizes to d12. Great.

Here we see Clanda approach a vortex of wild magic, making her more likely to burnout when spellcasting.

DM: As you approach the arcane portal, Clanda, you can feel raw magical energies pouring through it. The sensation is almost overwhelming as waves of *chaotic* energy rush past you.

Clanda: I don't like the look of this... I'll try casting *Dispel Magic* on that portal.

Chansi: How close are you to burning out?

Clanda: Should be rolling d10, but all this chaotic magic pushes it down three sizes to d4. 50% chance to burnout—could *hurt*...

BURNOUT DIE SIZE LIMITS

Your burnout die cannot grow larger than your maximum limit (a d12 by default) or smaller than a d4—regardless of modifiers, effects, or consumables.

THEMED LOCATIONS

You can limit a regional burnout modifier to a specific type of magic. Perhaps the wizard's tower grants a +1 modifier to only arcane magic, while the abyssal temple grants a -2 modifier to only divine magic?

Use modifiers to add some flavor to key or iconic locations, but try not to go overboard—regional modifiers should be uncommon, and casters should generally have a chance to research this information beforehand.

DM: As you enter the school, Clanda, you feel an immediate shift in the weave. Many decades of teaching *Evocation* magic here has warped and shaped the flow of power unnaturally.

Clanda: Making it easier to cast *Evocation* spells?

DM: Exactly. The flow is *serene* (+3) for *Evocation* magic, but *wild* (-2) for all other magic types.

CONSUMABLES

If your campaign setting allows it, you may be able to find, buy, craft, and consume a variety of potions, elixirs, foods, and drinks to help manage magical burnout.

MAGEBLOOD POTION

Item, Potion, Consumable

This blue potion glows with a faint light when shaken. It tastes of iron and spoils quickly once exposed to air.

You recover magical burnout when you drink this potion—the better the quality, the more you recover.

QUALITIES

Type	Rarity	Recovery	Cost
Lesser	Common	+1 size	25 gp
Greater	Uncommon	+2 size	75 gp
Superior	Rare	+3 size	225 gp
Supreme	Very rare	+4 size	675 gp

ELIXIR OF INNER PEACE

Item, Potion, Consumable

This pink elixir feels strangely warm to the touch. It tastes of cherry and rose water.

When you drink this potion, you may roll your burnout die with advantage for one hour.

VARIANT DIALS

Magical Burnout is a flexible game mechanic that can be adjusted to suit a variety of settings and gameplay styles. If you want to customize the experience, consider using some of these variant dials.

SAFE CANTRIPS

Reduce your maximum burnout die size one step (from d12 to d10, by default). Cantrips are now classed as *safe magic*—you only roll your burnout die when you cast a spell of 1st-level or higher.

Clanda: That's one excellent *Acid Splash*, if I do say so myself. Now let's see if it triggered any burnout.

DM: No need—as a 0th-level spell, your safe cantrip doesn't strain your body with wild magic power.

Clanda: *Even better.*

WILD ZONES

You may want to use *Magical Burnout* for just a short time in your campaign—to add theming to a particular region or adventuring site, for example. This can be accomplished with *wild zones*.

CREATING A WILD ZONE

Burnout is only active in certain areas—called *wild zones*. Outside of these zones, magic functions as per normal and burnout is not a threat to magic casters.

A wild zone can be anything—a room, a dungeon, a kingdom, etc—so add them to your game as best suits your setting. Use them to add memorable features to your dungeons and adventure hubs.

Krazak and Clanda approach the *Void Sanctum*, an ancient dungeon protected with anti-magic seals and sigils. The Void Sanctum is a *wild zone*—within its walls, players are at risk of magical burnout.

LEAVING A WILD ZONE

If you leave a wild zone, your burnout remains—your die doesn't reset until you complete a long rest (or perform another form of recovery action, such as spending hit dice or acquiring consumables).

GETTING STARTED WITH BURNOUT

If you want to try using magical burnout in your games—or slowly introduce it to your spellcasting players—*safe cantrips* and *wild zones* are a good way to test the rules without drastically overhauling the tone of your campaign.

SPELLCASTER RANKS

Spellcasters vary in their dedication to the magical arts, coming in three basic ranks—full casters, half casters, and third casters. The more dedicated the spellcaster, the more burnout they can endure.

Your maximum burnout die now depends on your spellcasting rank—check the *Spellcasting Ranks* table below to see what your new maximum is.

SPELLCASTER RANKS

Rank	Burnout Die	Examples
Full	d12	Bard, Cleric, Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard.
Half	d10	Ranger, Paladin.
Third	d8	Eldritch Knight, Arcane Trickster.

Note that for the purposes of spellcasting ranks and burnout, warlocks count as a full caster.

Clanda, a high elf sorceress, is a full caster—her maximum burnout die is a d12. Truth, a drow paladin, is a half caster—his maximum burnout die is a d10.

MULTICLASSED CHARACTERS

If you are multiclassed, use the maximum burnout die of whichever caster class you have the most levels in. In the case of a tie, use the largest.

CUSTOM CONSEQUENCES

Burnout consequences can come in many different forms, and—depending on your game—you may wish to customize the *Burnout Consequences* table to make burnout more severe or less punishing.

If your game features *Stress*, *Survival Conditions*, and *Wear & Tear*, consider the variant table below. These consequences create a different tone and focus on hurting your stress, your equipment, and your supplies—the bigger the spell, the bigger the damage inflicted.

CUSTOM CONSEQUENCES

d100	Minor (SL 1-2)	Moderate (SL 3-4)	Major (SL 5-6)	Monstrous (SL 7-9)
01-45	Gain minor Stress	Gain moderate Stress	Gain major Stress	Gain monstrous Stress
46-70	An item gains 1 notch	An item gains 2 notches	An item gains 4 notches	An item gains 8 notches
71-80	Gain 1 hunger	Gain 2 hunger	Gain 4 hunger	Gain 6 hunger
81-90	Gain 1 thirst	Gain 2 thirst	Gain 4 thirst	Gain 6 thirst
91-00	Gain 1 fatigue	Gain 2 fatigue	Gain 4 fatigue	Gain 6 fatigue

PART 4

Exploration

18 Making a Journey p61

Take long-distance travels with the Journey phase.

19 Light & Shadow p67

What can you see in the dark places of the world?





18

MAKING A JOURNEY

THE WILDS ARE A DANGEROUS PLACE AND TRAVEL is rarely straightforward outside city walls. Many adventurers have lost their way in dark forests. Many more have died from lack of food, or water, or protection from bandits and monsters—the world is not forgiving to the unprepared traveler.

This chapter introduces the journey phase to make travel a more integral part of the adventure.

THE JOURNEY PHASE

If you wish to make a long journey, there are three basic steps to follow: plan your route and gather supplies, travel the distance, and arrive at your destination.

STEP 1: PLAN

The first step in making a long journey is planning—you need to decide where you're going, how you're getting there, and who you're travelling with.

1. **Pick the destination:** First, pick your destination. This could be a dungeon, city, or other landmark.
2. **Choose your route:** Next, you need to decide which route you'll take. The length of your route is measured not in miles but in *days* (assuming an average walking speed of 15 miles per day).
3. **Gather supplies:** Finally, gather any supplies, vehicles, and equipment needed for the journey.

Valiant, Chansi, and Clanda are trying to reach Westwall Tower. That's about 45 miles away, so the journey should take roughly 3 days at a normal walking pace—assuming fair weather and no surprises.

TRAVELLING AT NIGHT

This chapter assumes you will be making a standard journey during the day. On rare occasions, however, you might want to travel in the dead of night.

When travelling at night, use the same process described in this chapter but simply shift the phase of the day accordingly to suit your schedule. Keep in mind that some checks might be much more difficult at night.

STEP 2: TRAVEL

Now it's time to gather everyone and head out on your journey. The average day is broken up into six parts—dawn, morning, noon, afternoon, dusk, and night—so run through these in sequence for each day of travel.

DAWN

Sunlight crests the horizon. It's time to wake up, eat some breakfast to prepare for the day ahead, and pack up camp.

- **Check the weather:** The weather can have a drastic impact on your travel plans, especially if you're not prepared. You may want to avoid travel completely during heavy rains, storms, and snows.
- **Assign roles:** Decide who is going to be today's guide, forager, scout, and lookout. A character can only assume one role at a time, so pick wisely.
- **Set pace:** Decide what pace you'll be travelling at today—slow, medium, or fast. A slower pace makes it easier to succeed at your roles, but also means that the journey takes longer to complete.
- **Eat breakfast:** Eat some food and drink some water to build up your energy for the travel ahead.
- **Pack up camp:** Put out any cooking fires, strap on your gear, and pack up your camp.

MORNING

The sun rises and the day becomes warmer. Begin the first half of today's travelling.

NOON

The sun is at its peak. Take a short break, sit in the shade, and rest your feet.

AFTERNOON

The sun descends and the temperature cools. Press on to finish the second half of today's travel while you still have some natural light.

DUSK

The sun sinks beneath the horizon and the sky darkens. It's time to set up camp for the night, eat, and reflect on today's travel.

- **Make camp:** Take off your gear and set up camp.
- **Lookout duty:** The lookout takes charge of camp defense and security for the night. While on lookout, a character can only eat and sleep—they don't have time to do or join in with anything else.
- **Guide:** The guide makes a guidance check to see if you managed to stay on the right path.
- **Forage:** The forager makes a foraging check to see if they gathered any food or water supplies throughout the day's travel.
- **Eat dinner:** Eat some food and drink some water.

NIGHT

The night is dark and full of terrors, an unwelcoming to travelers. Travel is very difficult and it's easy to get lost, so get some sleep and recover your energy for tomorrow.

Waking on the second day of their journey, Valiant, Chansi, and Clanda assign roles as they eat: Valiant to guide, Chansi to scout, and Clanda to keep lookout at night. They don't appoint a forager, but that's fine—there's enough rations for a couple of days yet.

The morning is uneventful, and at noon they stop for a short rest and a small drink—it's becoming very warm now thanks to a cloudless sky.

During the afternoon, they find an old peddler sitting on the side of the road—he's suffering from some mild heatstroke. Chansi offers him some water—the peddler gratefully gives them a freshly caught rabbit in exchange—and they continue on.

As dusk settles, they set up camp for the night. Clanda prepares a few *Alarm* spells around the perimeter, Chansi cooks the rabbit meat for everyone to eat, and Valiant checks their progress on his map. Everything seems on track.

Tomorrow they might have to think about foraging for fresh water to top up their supplies—especially if it's as warm as today was.

STEP 3: ARRIVE

After enough days of travel have passed—and assuming you didn't lose your way—you'll arrive at your destination.

VARIANT: STRESS

If you are using the *Stress* rules, check the *Journey Arrival* table to see how much Stress you heal upon reaching your destination.

JOURNEY ARRIVAL

Travel Time	Stress	Travel Time	Stress
Up to 1 day	-1	Up to 1 month	-4 (1d6)
Up to 1 week	-2 (1d4)	Up to 1 year	-8 (1d6 + 4)

After 5 days of travel—a sudden and fierce thunderstorm forcing them to lose 2 days progress—Valiant, Chansi, and Clanda finally make it to Westwall Tower. Relieved, they each restore 2 points of Stress.

ROLES

There are four core responsibilities when travelling: guide, forager, scout, and lookout. A person can only lead or assist one role per day if they wish, and any role not taken will automatically fail any related rolls.

A role can have only one leader, but any number of helpers. The leader makes the roll, the first helper grants advantage, and subsequent helpers grant a +1 bonus.

THE GUIDE

The guide makes sure everyone is heading in the right direction. If the guide fails, you'll get lost and the journey will take longer.

If you are the guide, roll Intelligence on the *Guidance* table at the end of the day to see if you were able to stay on track. Cartography tools, maps, and the *Survival* skill will help you be a better guide.

Success: The party is on track. Subtract today's progress from the remaining travel time.

Failure: You veered off course and lost your way. Add 0.5 day to the remaining travel time.

GUIDANCE

DC	Terrain
5	Wide open plains; Clear landmarks; Obvious pathway.
10	Tall landmarks; Small hills.
15	Light rain or mist; Woods and hills.
20	Moonlight night; Heavy rain or mist; Forest with no clear pathway or markings.
25	Fog; Thick and obscure forest; Mountains.
30	Clouded night; Impossibly thick fog; A shifting maze; Magically treacherous terrain.

THE FORAGER

The forager finds food and water for the travelling party. If the forager fails, you'll run out of essential supplies long before the journey reaches its destination—so make sure to pack plentiful supplies before you embark if you don't have a skilled forager.

If you are the forager, roll *Wisdom* on the *Foraging* table at the end of the day to see how much food and water you were able to hunt throughout the day. Hunting equipment and the *Survival* skill will help you forage.

Success: You recover 2d4 rations-worth of food and water—you can divide this however you like.

Failure: You were unable to find anything.

FORAGING

DC	Terrain
5	Lush and verdant forest; Food and water are everywhere.
10	Forest; Coast; Abundant food and clean water.
15	Thin woodland and greenwood. Food must be actively hunted and water is harder to find.
20	Dry, open plains; Very little food or clean water.
25	Desert and barren or polluted land; Food is extremely rare and water may need treatment.
30	Toxic or corrupted deadlands; Food is inedible and water sources are poisoned.

DM: Chansi, roll a Foraging check to see if you found anything. You're in thin woodland, so it's DC 15.

Chansi: Ok... (rolls 18) perfect. Today I found... (rolls 4) 4 supplies. We're a bit low on water right now, so let's say I found 3 water rations and 1 food ration.

THE SCOUT

The scout ranges ahead during the day's travel and keeps an eye out for dangers. If the scout fails, you may be ambushed by enemies and other hazards.

If you are the scout, you're responsible for making any perception checks during the day to spot incoming risks and dangers—the DM will notify you of anything worth rolling for. A spyglass will help you scout better.

Success: You noticed the threat and were able to warn the party in time. You have a chance to avoid the threat entirely, or encounter it at your own pace.

Failure: You failed to spot the danger in time and the party are surprised.

TRAVELLING PACE

Travel Pace	Speed	Distance	Guide	Forage	Scout	Hide Tracks
Slow	0.6 days	10 miles	Advantage	Normal	Advantage	Advantage
Medium	1 day	15 miles	Normal	Disadvantage	Normal	Normal
Fast	1.4 days	20 miles	Disadvantage	None	Disadvantage	Disadvantage

THE LOOKOUT

The lookout protects the camp at night. If the lookout fails, you risk being attacked while you sleep.

If you are the lookout, you're responsible for making perception checks during the night to spot incoming threats—the DM will notify you of anything worth rolling for. The lookout cannot join in any camp activities beyond eating and sleeping, so make sure that whoever takes the lookout shift won't be needed for anything else.

You can set traps and alarms around the camp—dry twigs, tripwires, the *Alarm* ritual—to help you detect intruders a little better.

Success: You were able to rouse the party in time to prevent being ambushed.

Failure: You failed to spot the danger in time and the party are surprised.

TRAVELLING PACE

The speed at which you travel can have a significant impact on your role. There are three main paces: slow, normal, and fast. Check the *Travelling Pace* table to see exactly how you're affected by the pace you choose.

WALKING

The average character has a walking speed of about 3 miles per hour, and can travel—comfortably—around 15 miles per day. This takes into account the many rest breaks, pauses, and distractions a character will need during the day—especially those that carry heavy gear and armor. Walking long-distance is surprisingly hard work, and a long march in full plate armor is a sure way to strain muscles and hurt yourself.

HORSEBACK

The average horse walks at much the same pace as a character: 3 miles per hour. While they can gallop much faster, they can only do so on flat ground for very short periods—horses overheat very quickly.

On horseback, a character can comfortably travel 20 miles per day without injuring the horse or becoming too saddle-sore. Anything more arduous requires knowledge and experience of *Animal Handling*.

The main benefit of travelling on horseback is the carrying capacity—a horse can carry much more than a character for much longer without complaint. Horses need plenty to eat and drink, however—2 food and water rations a day—so make sure you bring enough supplies to keep your animals in good shape.

ENCOUNTERS

During a journey, the DM is responsible for generating any potential encounters and discoveries the party may face on the way. For each day of travel, do the following:

1. **Decide the danger level:** Choose how dangerous today's journey will be. This determines how many encounters the party are likely to face during travel.
2. **Set the encounter times:** Decide when each encounter will happen during the day.
3. **Generate the encounters:** Build the encounters using your own encounter generators.
4. **Roll for any discoveries:** See if the party will spot anything unexpected on their travel, like a hidden cave or a secret chest.

STEP 1: DANGER LEVEL

First, check the *Terrain Danger* table to determine the danger level of the surrounding terrain. This indicates how many encounters a party is likely to face today—the greater the danger, the more encounters.

TERRAIN DANGER LEVEL

Danger	Encounters
Safe and civilised; A village, a barren desert, a well-defended plain.	1
Dangerous frontier; A wild forest, a treacherous swamp, a disturbed graveyard.	2
Enemy territory; A monster's lair, an enemy camp, a haunted wood.	3
Heavily populated hostile territory; An enemy settlement, a mind-flayer city, a kobold nest.	4
Lethal and actively hunted; A plane of madness, a god's domain, a layer of hell.	5

Characters can learn about the danger level of a region through research to help inform their journey plans—gathering rumors, reading histories, collecting maps.

STEP 2: ENCOUNTER TIMES

Second, you need to see when exactly the party might have an encounter today. Roll 1d6 for each of the six phases of the day: dawn, morning, noon, afternoon, dusk, and night. If the number is equal to or lower than the danger level, there is a chance of an encounter.

The party are passing through a shrouded wood with a danger level of 2. The DM secretly rolls 6d6 and generates a result of [2, 6, 2, 3, 6, 1]—the party will encounter something at dawn, noon, and night.

Alternatively, if you do not have access to dice, take the average number of encounters listed in the *Danger Level* table and decide for yourself when the encounters occur.

STEP 3: GENERATE ENCOUNTERS

Now it's time to generate specific encounters. There are four broad categories of encounter: character, social, skill, and combat. Pick a variety, or roll on the *Encounter Type* table to choose one at random.

Character: One of the party members gets a moment to shine. Ask a question about their character—if the answer is interesting or adds something to the world (or the player is at least trying), they gain Inspiration.

DM: While you're all travelling in the afternoon, conversation turns to family. Clanda, tell us a good memory you have of your parents.

Social: The party meets one or more people that they can talk or engage with—a wandering merchant, a troupe of entertainers, a hostile soldier.

Skill: An obstacle hinders the party that must be overcome through use of their skills—a wheel breaks on their wagon, a wounded person lies unconscious beside the path, they anger a nest of wasps.

Combat: Enemies attack the party, forcing them to flee or defend themselves—a group of bandits, a wild pack of wolves, a hungry dragon.

ENCOUNTER TYPE

d6	Type
1	Character: Ask a player an interesting or fun question about their character.
2	Social (Friendly): A pleasant encounter with some friendly NPCs.
3	Social (Hostile): Some NPCs are hostile to the party and could lead to harm.
4	Skill Challenge: Something happens that requires multiple skill checks to overcome.
5	Combat (Non-committal): The party is attacked, but the enemies will flee easily.
6	Combat (Aggressive): The party is attacked and the enemies will fight to near death.

Once you know the type of the encounter, generate the exact details using your preferred encounter tables.

STEP 4: GENERATE A DISCOVERY

Finally, roll a d6 to see if the party spot something interesting that might be worth investigating further.

DISCOVERIES

d6	Result
1-4	Nothing
5	Spot a discovery in the morning.
6	Spot a discovery in the afternoon.

ENCOUNTER SEEDS

If you're unsure what to do for an encounter, try using these encounter seeds to kickstart some ideas.

CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS

d100	Encounter
01-02	A bad memory of your family
03-04	A good memory of your family
05-06	A faction you strongly agree with
07-08	A faction you strongly disagree with
09-10	A game you like to play
11-12	A happy moment from your childhood
13-14	A monster you don't believe is real
15-16	A person you are afraid of
17-18	A person you couldn't save
19-20	A person you hate
21-22	A person you love
23-24	A person you respect
25-26	A person you want to meet
27-28	A place you would love to visit
29-30	A sad moment from your childhood
31-32	A time you embarrassed yourself
33-34	A time you got away with something
35-36	A time you got a sibling into trouble
37-38	A time you got really drunk
39-40	A time you hurt someone
41-42	A time you made something
43-44	A time you were afraid
45-46	A time you were heroic
47-48	A time you were powerless
49-50	A time you were proud of someone
51-52	A time you were smarter than everyone else
53-54	Are you a dog person or a cat person?
55-56	Are you closer to your mother or your father?
57-58	Food that you think is disgusting
59-60	Something that happened on your last birthday
61-62	Something you are ashamed of
63-64	Something you are proud of doing
65-66	Something you would love to do
67-68	The best dinner you've ever had
69-70	The best gift you ever received
71-72	The funniest thing you've ever seen
73-74	What are you looking forward to?
75-76	What would you do if you were king?
77-78	What would you do with a million gold pieces?
79-80	Where are your family now?
81-82	Who or what would you die for?

CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS (CONT)

d100	Encounter
83-84	Who was your first kiss?
85-86	Why are you with the party?
87-88	Why would the party fall apart without you?
89-90	Your favorite story
91-92	Your favorite thing about your hometown
93-94	Your favorite way to relax
95-96	Your greatest achievement
97-98	Your greatest fear
99-00	Your last nightmare

FRIENDLY SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

d100	Encounter
01-05	A wandering peddler offers you a look at his wares
06-10	An old cleric is repairing a small shrine recently damaged by someone or something
11-15	A wandering bard shares stories about the locals
16-20	A drunken giant is trying to mend a bridge he has broken, but is having trouble with the work
21-25	An old woman needs your help to get an unusual pet down from a tree
26-30	A naked bard asks you for some spare clothes
31-35	You find someone passed out and wounded
36-40	Two drunk goliaths are wrestling any challengers
41-45	A wizard asks if you can help him test a new spell
46-50	Two groups of people need your help to settle a bet
51-55	You find a small child, lost and alone
56-60	Three dwarves challenge the biggest party member to a drinking competition
61-65	Two clerics are arguing about who is the best god
66-70	A hungry beggar offers you a secret for some food
71-75	A guard is training some new recruits and asks you to help demonstrate a few moves
76-80	A dying man asks you to help end his pain
81-85	A silent monk offers you some food for a story
86-90	A bard is trying to write a song but is having trouble with the words and asks you for advice
91-95	A wagon has overturned and the owner needs help
96-00	A kobold challenges you to a game of riddles

HOSTILE SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

d100	Encounter
01-05	A group of racist thugs has an issue with one of your party members because of their appearance
06-10	Three guards call you to halt, holding a wanted poster that looks a lot like one of your party
11-15	Some highwaymen demand your money or your life
16-20	Two groups of people are brawling near an overturned cart, each blaming the other

HOSTILE SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS (CONT)

d100	Encounter
21-25	A giant blocks your path with a makeshift toll gate, demanding an unusual payment
26-30	A group of drunk soldiers approach and demand you offer some tribute to the king's men
31-35	A person is tied to a stake and surrounded by a silent mob holding torches, led by a fierce cleric
36-40	A loud zealot preaching to a mob accuses you of dark heresy against their god
41-45	A barbarian, delirious with a berserker rage, thinks you are a foul monster to kill
46-50	A petty nobleman accuses you of not showing the proper due respect and demands satisfaction
51-55	You stumble across a dead body and a person holding a bloody knife, who says "It wasn't me!"
56-60	Someone fleeing from a dozen pursuers begs you for protection against harm
61-65	An old woman with a knife and foul breath asks you to pay tribute to her god
66-70	Three men eating around a campfire offer you some food, but it's not animal meat they're cooking...
71-75	A ghost stands in the middle of the road, wailing
76-80	A group of hooded cultists emerge, loudly proclaiming that you are the chosen one
81-85	A bard is playing beautiful music to a crowd, but all who listen are quickly under her thrall
86-90	A wild sorcerer seeks to test a spell on you
91-95	A paladin accuses you of performing evil acts and demands you pay for your sins with blood
96-00	A furious druid has someone trapped in vines and intends to kill them for desecrating the grove

SKILL CHALLENGES

d100	Skill Challenge
01-10	A broken wagon blocks the way and must be repaired, overturned, or bypassed
11-20	A rowdy mob that must be calmed or evaded before they turn on you or some other victim
21-30	An overwhelmingly large pack of hungry, wild animals that must be outrun
31-40	There is an unfamiliar split in the path and the correct direction must be determined
41-50	A glade of flesh-eating plants that must be escaped before they can paralyze you
51-60	A broken bridge across a ravine that must be fixed or overcome to progress
61-70	A sudden, terrible storm that requires shelter to be found and constructed fast
71-80	A band of highwaymen that must be intimidated or out-smarted before things turn ugly
81-90	A magical illusion blocks the way and must be disabled or bypassed to progress
91-00	Recent weather has destroyed some notable landmarks and the path must be rediscovered

DISCOVERIES

d100	Discovery
01-02	An old and ruined tower
03-04	A burned out home
05-06	A howling cavern
07-08	A small, tightly locked chest
09-10	A statue of a good deity
11-12	A statue of an evil deity
13-14	A circle of stone pillars
15-16	A giant tree with far-reaching roots
17-18	A ruined temple to an unknown god
19-20	A cracked, stone fountain filled with a green ooze
21-22	A strange pillar carved with bloody runes
23-24	A strange, twisted tree
25-26	An abandoned wagon and the signs of battle
27-28	A small, unlocked hut with a warm hearth
29-30	A locked door in the side of a hill
31-32	A chilling cemetery
33-34	A locked door in the side of a hill
35-36	An abandoned ruin of a castle
37-38	A wrecked, half-buried pirate ship
39-40	A set of steps leading down into a crypt
41-42	A strange plant with an alluring scent
43-44	A rusted cauldron still warm to the touch
45-46	A tiny door in the foot of a tree
47-48	A beautiful glade with delicious-looking fruit
49-50	A sealed, metal coffin
51-52	A twisted pillar with an evil, carved face
53-54	A book on a bloody altar
55-56	A sword impaled in a monstrous stone statue
57-58	A map pinned to a tree with a black knife
59-60	A blood-red stone embedded in a twisted tree
61-62	A skeleton holding a small, red book
63-64	A hole in the ground where singing can be heard
65-66	A monument to an ancient battle
67-68	A giant skeleton of a long-dead gargantuan creature
69-70	A boarded-up house with ghostly wails
71-72	A stone archway covered in eldritch runes
73-74	A pool of sweet, red water
75-76	A glade of trees that ooze black sap
77-78	A collection of life-like humanoid stone statues
79-80	A secret wishing pool
81-82	A sleeping dragon
83-84	A half-buried chest surrounded by skeletons
85-86	7 rotating pillars of segmented red stone
87-88	A tree that burns with unnatural green fire
89-90	The ruins of a magical experiment gone wrong
91-00	Reroll



19

LIGHT & SHADOW

DANGER HIDES IN DARKNESS. A MONSTER, lurking in the night, pounces as you stumble in the dark. A trap, hidden in the gloom of an unlit dungeon, clicks underfoot ominously. A way out of a deadly maze goes unseen in shadow. A seasoned adventurer soon learns not to travel without a set of dry torches—or a precious lantern—close to hand.

This chapter introduces *light levels* and rules to help you track light more easily in your campaign.

USING LIGHT

If you want to make players afraid of the dark—but don't want the overhead of tracking distances—use *light levels* to help determine what your party can and can't see.

To start using lighting and light levels in your games, simply follow these three steps:

1. **Pick a lighting level:** When the players enter a distinct area—such as a room, dungeon, or overworld—describe the initial level of available light. Is it darkest, dark, dim, bright, or brightest?
2. **Add light sources:** Add up any light bonuses from torches, lanterns, and any other equipment or effects that might be creating light in the area.
3. **Apply light conditions:** Once you know the total level of light in the area, apply any lighting conditions to your affected characters.

Valiant and Clanda are travelling through a cramped, *dark* dungeon. Valiant is carrying a torch (small, +1 light), while Clanda is casting a *Light* (small, +1 light) spell. With two small light sources, the *dark* chamber is now bathed in *bright* light.

TYPES OF VISION

To help instill a fear of the dark, it's important that characters don't have easy access to *Darkvision*. To that effect, these rules recommend the following changes:

- **Low-light Vision:** If you have the *Darkvision* racial trait, replace it with *Low-light Vision*.
- **Darkvision:** If you have the *Superior Darkvision* racial trait, replace it with *Darkvision*.
- **Brightvision:** If you have neither low-light vision nor *darkvision*, you are assumed to have *Brightvision*.

Darkvision gained from other sources—such as items, spells, effects, etc—remains unchanged.

Clanda, a high elf sorceress, replaces her *Darkvision* racial trait with low-light vision. She can see in twilight, but has trouble in darkness or with overly-bright light.

Truth, a drow elf paladin of Sune, replaces his *Superior Darkvision* with *darkvision*. He can see in the dark—unless it is total darkness—but is easily blinded by brightest light. Drow eyes are not fond of the sun.

Valiant, however—a human cleric of Kelemvor—has *brightvision* and needs bright light to see clearly.

ABSTRACT VS SIMULATION

For simplicity and speed, these rules track light with abstract terms—no distances—to keep things moving during play.

However, if distance is particularly relevant in your story—or you're using automated tools to track vision without significant overhead—you may find the original 5e rules for lighting and light sources more suitable.

LIGHTING LEVELS

Light can be measured in five categories of increasing intensity: darkest, dark, dim, bright, and brightest.

When your players enter a notable region—such as a room, dungeon, or overworld—describe the level of light. Don't worry about precise distances at this point—simply apply the same lighting to the entire area of interest.

LIGHT LEVELS

Level	Light	Description
0	Darkest	No light at all—total darkness, a windowless basement, an unlit dungeon.
1	Dark	Very faint light—moonlight and starlight, outdoors at midnight, a small candelabra in a room.
2	Dim	Fading light—thick stormcloud, heavy fog, a room with weak lights.
3	Bright	Clear and visible—a cloudy or overcast day, a room with many lights.
4	Brightest	Excessive light—clear light all around, a sunny day, a noble's ballroom party.

DARKEST LIGHT

In places where there is no light whatsoever, it is *darkest*—total darkness, a sealed and windowless room, an unlit underground dungeon, a zone of magical darkness, etc.

While the lighting is darkest, you gain the *Blinded* condition—even if you have darkvision (there is no light for your eyes to reflect and magnify).

BLINDED Condition

- You can't see.
- You automatically fail ability checks that require sight.
- Attack rolls against you have advantage *if* your opponent can see you.
- Your attack rolls have disadvantage.
- You can't cast spells or use effects that require you to see the target.
- You can't actively target creatures that have hidden from you (such as with a *Hide* action).
- Your speed is halved.

LIGHTING LEVEL CONDITIONS

Lighting Level	Brightvision	Low-light Vision	Darkvision
Darkest	Blinded	Blinded	Blinded
Dark	Blinded	Blinded	Partially Blinded
Dim	Partially Blinded	—	—
Bright	—	—	—
Brightest	—	(Variant) Partially Blinded	(Variant) Blinded

DARK LIGHT

In places where there is a faint glimmer of light, it is *dark*—a graveyard at midnight, a dungeon with faintly glowing lichen, a room lit by a rusted candelabra.

While the lighting is dark, you are *Blinded*—unless you have darkvision, in which case you gain the *Partially Blinded* condition instead.

DIM LIGHT

In places where the light is faded or murky, it is *dim*—a misty forest, the twilight after a setting sun, a volcanic lair with glowing lava, a burning fireplace in a room, etc.

While the lighting is dim, you gain the *Partially Blinded* condition—unless you have darkvision or low-light vision, in which case you can see normally.

PARTIALLY BLINDED Condition

- You have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

BRIGHT LIGHT

In places where the light is abundant and visible, it is *bright*—a clear day, a properly-lit room, a sinister tomb with two huge and flaming braziers.

When the lighting is bright, you can see normally.

BRIGHTEST LIGHT

In places where the light is excessive and practically dazzling, it is *brightest*—a clear and sunny day, the solar room of a sun god's temple, a dungeon illuminated by a raging, white-hot fire elemental, etc.

When the lighting is brightest, you can see normally.

VARIANT: DAZZLINGLY BRIGHT

If you want to add some more flavor to darkvision and low-light, consider this *Dazzlingly Bright* variant rule.

If you have low-light vision or darkvision, you find it uncomfortable to be in brightest light. If you have low-light vision, you gain the *Partially Blinded* condition—if you have darkvision, you are *Blinded* instead.

Some items, potions, and gear may help you to better control your eyesight and visibility. Find an artisan to craft a pair of tinted glasses if you find brightest light a common problem for your character.

REVISING "BLINDED"

These rules introduce minor updates to the "Blinded" condition (such as halving speed) to make it a more significant—and dangerous—threat to characters.

However, you can continue to use the original rules for "Blinded" if you prefer—it might make the darkness a little less threatening, but it won't break *Light & Shadow*.

LIGHT SOURCES

Light sources come in many forms—candles, torches, magical spells, fire elementals, etc. Each source has a power category to reflect the amount of light it produces—tiny, small, medium, large, huge, and gargantuan.

Typically, the bigger the source the more light it can put out—though power and intensity may also be a factor. Use the *Light Sources* table below to determine how much light a particular item (or creature) should emit.

LIGHT SOURCES

Power	Light	Examples
Tiny	+0.2	Candle.
Small	+1	Torch, Lantern (hood down), Flare.
Medium	+2	Lantern (hood up), Fireplace.
Large	+4	Brazier, Glass chandelier.
Huge	+8	Raging fire elemental.
Gargantuan	+16	Burning building.

Once you know the strength of each significant light source in an area, add them to the lighting level to find out just how bright it is.

COMMON EQUIPMENT

A seasoned adventurer knows that there are three common, everyday ways to create a light in the dark: candles, torches, and lanterns.

Most of the lighting equipment used by adventurers will fall into one of these three categories—for other bespoke items, use the *Light Sources* table as a guide.

CANDLES

Candles produce very little light on their own, but they are cheap and easy to make. They produce little smoke and so can be used comfortably indoors.

TORCHES

Torches produce a small amount of light. Like candles, torches are cheap and relatively easy to make—but they produce a lot of smoke and ash as they burn. Avoid using a torch in an enclosed space whenever possible.

LANTERN

Lanterns burn brighter than the average torch, and—with the right fuel—for much longer. They produce little smoke and can be used comfortably indoors, but can be very fragile—take care not to drop a lantern.

CANDLE

Item (tiny), Light (tiny), Common

This candle emits a *tiny* (+0.2) amount of light for up to 1 hour. You can snuff out a burning candle with an object interaction. Each time this candle is snuffed out, deduct 15 minutes from its remaining burn time.

Dropped: If the candle is carelessly dropped, thrown, or knocked over, roll a d6:

- **1-3:** The candle breaks and can't be used again.
- **4-5:** The candle is snuffed out.
- **6:** The candle remains lit.

TORCH

Item (small), Light (small), Common

This torch emits a *small* (+1) amount of light for up to 1 hour. You can extinguish a burning torch with a bonus action. Each time this torch is extinguished, deduct 15 minutes from the remaining burn time.

If the ground is soft enough, you can spend an action to plant a torch without extinguishing it.

Residue: This common torch produces smoke, ash, and a noticeable smell as it burns.

Dropped: If the torch is carelessly dropped, thrown, or knocked over, roll a d6:

- **1:** The torch breaks and can't be used again.
- **2-3:** The torch is extinguished.
- **4-6:** The torch remains lit.

LANTERN

Item (small), Light (medium), Common

This lantern emits a *medium* (+2) amount of light for up to 6 hours. You can extinguish a burning lantern with an action. Each time the lantern is extinguished, deduct 15 minutes from the remaining burn time.

You can spend an action to place a lantern carefully on the ground without extinguishing it.

Fuel: This common lantern requires oil as fuel.

Hooded: If your lantern has a hood, you can close it to reduce the light emitted to small (+1) or none (+0).

Dropped: If the lantern is carelessly dropped, thrown, or knocked over, roll a d6:

- **1-2:** The lantern is extinguished and loses d3 hours of fuel.
- **3-4:** The lantern is extinguished.
- **5-6:** The lantern remains lit.

LIGHTING SPELLS

Spell	Level	Source	Power	Light	Other Changes
Continual Flame	2nd	PHB	Small	+1	Now has a maximum duration of 8 hours.
Control Flames	Cantrip	XGtE	—	—	Now requires <i>Concentration</i> .
Create Bonfire	Cantrip	XGtE	Small	+1	—
Dancing Lights	Cantrip	PHB	Small	+1	You can create up to 5 tiny (candle-like) lights or 1 small (torch-like) light.
Dawn	5th	XGtE	Large	+4	—
Daylight	3rd	PHB	Medium	+2	Now requires <i>Concentration</i> .
Faerie Fire	1st	PHB	Small	+1	—
Flame Blade	2nd	PHB	Small	+1	—
Flame Shield	4th	PHB	Medium	+2	—
Flaming Sphere	2nd	PHB	Small	+1	—
Investiture of Flame	6th	XGtE	Large	+4	—
Light	Cantrip	PHB	Small	+1	Now requires <i>Concentration</i> .
Produce Flame	Cantrip	PHB	Small	+1	Now requires <i>Concentration</i> .
Wall of Fire	4th	PHB	Medium	+2	—
Wall of Light	5th	XGtE	Large	+4	—

SPELLS & EFFECTS

Some magical spells and effects are known to create light—whether intentionally or as a side-effect. Use the *Light Sources* table as a guide to assign light values to these effects as appropriate.

COMMON SPELLS

The *Lighting Spells* table (shown above) lists some of the most common spells and their associated lighting effects.

Some spells have also been adjusted for balance purposes—use these changes to help ensure that lighting equipment (candles, torches, and lanterns) remains an important part of adventuring in your games.

ENVIRONMENTAL LIGHT

Some environmental features can emit light—lava, glowing crystals, spectral cave moss, etc. You can account for these light sources separately (using the *Light Sources* table to determine their strength) or fold them into the base lighting level for the area.

DM: As you step into the *Ashen Crown*, searing heat threatens to overwhelm you. Glowing lava (+2 light) fills the chamber with a warm, *dim* light.

Clanda: Dim light? So with my *Light* spell (+1 light) and Valiant's torch (+1 light), is it now *brightest*?

DM: Yes, everything is brightly illuminated right now.

Clanda: Excellent. I might as well stop casting *Light* then if you're good to keep holding that torch, Valiant?

Valiant: Actually I—

Clanda: *Great*, I knew you wouldn't mind.

Valiant: ...

SPELL REVISIONS

These rules introduce minor changes to certain spells (such as by adding *Concentration*) so that they require more effort from your spellcasters—if *Light* has no significant cost then candles/torches/lanterns quickly become redundant.

However, you can continue to use the original spells if you prefer—it will de-emphasize the need for players to carry lighting equipment, but it won't break the game.

CREATURES

Some creatures, whether as part of their nature or through ongoing effects, can act as light sources—burning fire elementals, radiant clerics of a sun god, undead skeletons covered in necrotic darkflame.

Assign these particular creatures a light value to track how they affect their surroundings.

The nightdrake roars, scratching angrily at the ground. With a hiss, it's black scales start to absorb daylight (-2 light), turning the bright grove *dark*...

ITEMS AND GEAR

You may find that some special pieces of equipment, often magical in nature, can sometimes act as a light source—a shining sunblade, a suit of gleaming starsprite armor, a gemstone headlamp, etc.

Assign these items a light value as appropriate to track how they affect their surroundings.

You feel the sunblade hum in your hand as it starts to glow, casting a *small* light around you (+1 light).

ROOM SCALES

Not all rooms are the same size, and a larger room naturally requires more light to fill it—a single torch won't make a dent in a gargantuan cavern.

A *room scale* changes the amount of light you need to move up one lighting level. In a *medium* sized room you need +1 light to go from dark to dim light—but in a *huge* room you need +4 light to make the same change.

ROOM SCALES

Room Scale	Light Needed per Level	Da	D	Di	B	Br
Tiny	x 0.25	0	0.25	0.5	0.75	1
Small	x 0.5	0	0.5	1	1.5	2
Medium	x 1	0	1	2	3	4
Large	x 2	0	2	4	6	8
Huge	x 4	0	4	8	12	16
Gargantuan	x 8	0	8	16	24	32

Room scales are a good way to add some variety to your regions and encourage the use of large/huge/gargantuan lights during adventures.

It can be difficult for players to fill huge/gargantuan spaces with enough light using just candles, torches, and lanterns—especially if they are caught off guard—so try to make sure there are some fun, environmental lighting features that players can interact with.

DM: As you push it, Valiant, the door slowly opens with a grinding creak. Beyond, you notice the walls spreading out into a *large*, dark room.

Valiant: What can I see in the room?

DM: Your torch (+1 light) isn't strong enough to fill the large space—you'll need another light source if you want to fill the dark room with dim light.

THE TWILIGHT RELIQUARY

To demonstrate how you can use light levels and room scales in your adventures, this section will lay out an example dungeon—the *Twilight Reliquary*.

DEFAULT ROOMS

The *Twilight Reliquary* is an underground dungeon constructed long ago to house the bones of an ancient shadow dragon—Despair. It creates a permanent gloom over the land above. Many adventurers have tried to brave its dark depths, but few—if any—have returned.

By default, the Reliquary is in total darkness (0 light) with medium room sizes (1 light needed per level). Adventurers need to create at least +2 light to get visibility up from darkest to dim light.

THE BONEWALL

In a *small* room, stone shelves hold rows of human bones. Looking carefully, you can see veins of black necrotic energy running throughout the bones—you think that it might be a bad idea to disturb them.

The Bonewall is a small room (0.5 light needed per level) in darkest light (0 light). Adventurers need only +1 light to get visibility from darkest to dim light.

THE SEAT OF PRAYER

One *large* room appears to have been dedicated to prayer of some kind—carvings in the stone walls indicate humans worshipping a gargantuan shadow dragon.

Two candelabra stand either side of a stone lectern, upon which rests a black leather book. Black candles burn with a sinister, purple light (+1 light each) in this large, dark room.

The Seat of Prayer is a large room (2 light needed per level) in dark light (2 light from the candelabra). Adventurers need to create another +2 light to get visibility up from dark to dim light.

THE SHADOW THRONE

At the heart of the Reliquary lies the *Shadow Throne*, the final resting place of Despair. This is a *huge* room. At one end, Despair's gargantuan skeleton lies curled around a huge, darkstone throne.

Two braziers stand on either side of the room's entrance. They are currently unlit, but a perceptive adventurer may deduce that they will each emit a huge amount of light (+4 light each) when set ablaze.

The Shadow Throne is a huge room (4 light needed per level) in total darkness (0 light). Adventurers need to create at least +8 light to get visibility up from darkest to dim light.

DARKLIGHT BRAZIER

Feature (large), Light (huge)

This black metal brazier is filled with some kind of dark wood. When set ablaze, it burns with a large purple flame (+4 light) that is cold to touch.

KEEP THINGS SIMPLE

It can be tempting to use room scales often in your dungeons, but try not to overcomplicate things for your players—or yourself. Establish a baseline lighting condition for your region, and reserve room modifiers for your major centerpieces and named rooms.

ITEMS & CONSUMABLES

Across your adventures, you may be able to buy, craft, or loot special items that can help control how your character reacts to certain lighting levels—special lanterns, tinted glasses to diminish light, potions to see in the dark, etc.

When delving into the dark places of the world, make sure equip to yourself with adequate lighting supplies for your journey—to be stuck underground with no light and darksighted monsters all around is a surefire recipe for death and disaster.

FLARE

Item (small), Light (medium), Uncommon

This flare emits a *medium* (+2) amount of light for up to 1 hour. Once lit, a flare cannot be extinguished unless it is doused in water—at which point, the flare is ruined and cannot be lit again.

DARKSIGHT GOGGLES

Item (small), Rare, Wearable

These magical goggles—set with crystal lenses—amplify light and help you to see in the dark.

Sight Beyond Sight: When worn, these goggles grant you darkvision.

Fragile: These goggles are fragile and easily cracked, so be careful not to drop or injure them.

DARKSTONE SHARD

Item (small), Rare

A shard of darkstone taken from the Shadowfell. This small, bloodthirsty stone absorbs light from the surroundings, creating pockets of darkness. Thieves and rogues are known to prize these shards.

Light Eater: Once per long rest, you can spend a bonus action to activate the darkstone with a drop of blood. For 1 hour, the stone absorbs light and darkens the surrounding area (-1 light).

Overheat: If left exposed to bright light for longer than 1 hour, the darkstone cracks and turns to dust.

HELLFIRE TORCH

Item (small), Light (medium), Uncommon

This specially-treated torch burns twice as bright and twice as hot as normal, producing a *medium* (+2) amount of light. However, the torch will burn for only 30 minutes before it turns to ash.

LESSER SUNBLADE

Item, Rare, Weapon (longsword)

This magical sword, crafted by the elves of Sindoril, hums with a small amount of radiant energy that can be used to create light. A favored weapon of undead hunters who must brave the depths below.

Radiant Power: This blade has 6 charges of radiant power, and regains 1d3 expended charges at dawn.

A Light in the Dark: If you are holding the sword, you can spend a bonus action and one charge to emit a glowing white light (+1 light) from the blade. The glow persists until dismissed or 1 hour has passed. You can dismiss the effect as a bonus action (while holding the sword).

POTION OF CATS EYE

Item (tiny), Potion, Consumable

This white potion turns clear for a few seconds when you shake it. It tastes of smoke and lemons.

You gain darkvision when you drink this potion—the better the quality, the longer the ability lasts for.

QUALITIES

Type	Rarity	Duration	Cost
Lesser	Common	1 hour	50 gp
Greater	Uncommon	2 hours	150 gp
Superior	Rare	4 hours	450 gp
Supreme	Very rare	8 hours	1,350 gp

SOLAR LANTERN

Item (medium), Light (large), Rare

This solar lantern burns through oil three times as fast as normal, but produces a *large* (+4) amount of light.

TINTED GLASSES

Item (small), Uncommon, Wearable

These tinted glasses of gnomish design make everything look a little less bright—perfect if you have darkvision and need some protection against the glare of intense daylight.

Looking Good: When worn, these glasses reduce your effective light level by 1. However, you also gain the *Partially Blinded* condition while wearing these.

Fragile: These glasses are fragile and easily cracked, so be careful not to drop or injure them.

PART 5

Life & Death

20 Wounds & Injuries p74

Gain lingering wounds and injuries at 0 hp.

21 Death & Resurrection p77

Persistent death saves and revised resurrection.

22 Cheating Fate p79

Cheat death with rare fate points.

23 Deadly Disease p80

Plague your world with contagious diseases.

24 Survival Conditions p86

Track hunger, thirst, and fatigue on your travels.

25 Stress & Afflictions p89

Manage your mental stress levels.



WOUNDS & INJURIES

AN ADVENTURER WITHOUT A SCAR IS EITHER VERY good, very lucky, or very new to the profession—trap-ridden dungeons, rabid monsters, and sharp weapons are notoriously bad for your health. Some adventurers are lucky enough to retire with just a few injuries to show for their career. Many, however, die from injury long before retirement.

This chapter sets out options for character health, lingering wounds, permanent injuries, and prosthetics.

BLOODIED

Your health is your most precious resource and, as an adventurer, keeping hold of it is not an easy task. A character is considered *bloodied* when they have lost half of their hit points—when bloodied, they have taken a small cut or bruise.

Some monsters may react differently to you when you are bloodied—becoming frenzied or blood-thirsty—while others may have an easier time detecting you by scent.

DM: The wolf bites you fiercely, Sarien, causing 7 points of damage.

Sarien: Gah, I'm *bloodied* now.

DM: With the scent of fresh blood in the air, all three wolves turn and look at Sarien hungrily...

HEALING WHEN BLOODIED

If you are bloodied, it's a little harder to recover your stamina. While bloodied, you must use a bandage or other first-aid material in order to spend any hit dice and recover hit points when resting. Make sure to keep an eye on your medical supplies.

LINGERING WOUNDS

When you fall to 0 hit points, you've taken significant damage and gain an open, lingering wound somewhere on your body. Roll on the *Lingering Wounds* table to see which part of you was wounded—or pick one based on the type of damage you suffered.

LINGERING WOUNDS

d10	Area	d10	Area
1	An arm	6	Your back
2	A leg	7	Your head
3	A hand	8	Your face
4	A foot	9	Your chest
5	Your stomach	10	Your buttocks

DM: The orc's axe slashes you, Viridian, and you take 9 points of damage.

Viridian: Urk, that's not good—I'm at 0 hit points. Before I black out, I notice... (rolls 9) blood dripping from a wound to my chest. Great.

Clanda: At least it wasn't your butt this time.

Viridian: Yea. *Lucky me.*

EXHAUSTION

Each time you gain an open wound, you also gain a level of *exhaustion*. This exhaustion is permanent for as long as your wound is open and untreated.

You gain exhaustion for each open wound, so watch out—exhaustion effects stack up fast.

EXHAUSTION EFFECTS

Level	Effect
1	Disadvantage on Ability Checks
2	Speed halved
3	Disadvantage on Attack rolls and Saving Throws
4	Hit point maximum halved
5	Speed reduced to 0
6	Death

When Viridian gains his new chest wound, he also gains a level of exhaustion. After the battle, Chansi patches him up and treats the wound to remove the exhaustion penalty.

TREATING WOUNDS

A wound hinders you while it's untreated, making life difficult with exhaustion. You can treat a wound during a short rest with first-aid knowledge and supplies—make a first-aid check (DC 10) to patch up the wound.

A treated wound remains on your character—though it no longer causes exhaustion. A wound will only heal properly during a long rest or with magical healing.

HEALING WOUNDS

Wounds heal naturally over time. At the end of a long rest, you may check to see if each of your wounds will heal—make a DC 15 Constitution check for each wound.

Some downtime activities, such as resting, may allow you to roll the check with advantage.

MAGICAL HEALING

You may use magical effects to heal a wound. You do not gain any hit points from the magic in doing this, however—all of the spell's power is used on your wound.

REOPENING WOUNDS

If you are critically hit during combat, your treated wounds may reopen. When taking critical damage, roll a d20 for each treated wound you have:

REOPENED WOUNDS

d20	Effect
1	The wound reopens and you lose a hit die
2-8	The wound reopens
9-20	The wound remains closed

When a wound reopens, it starts applying exhaustion again—you'll need to treat the wound to remove this.

Any *untreated* wound fails automatically (as if you had rolled a 1), causing you to lose a hit die—so try to keep your wounds bandaged at all times.

DM: The werewolf's razor sharp claws slash at you Viridian with a critical hit—take 14 points of damage.

Viridian: Ouch. Better check if my treated chest wound is ok... (rolls 1) damn it, it reopens *and* I lose a hit die. This hurts...

DM: Those claws have ripped open your bandages, Viridian, and blood pours from your chest wound. You start to feel exhausted again from the open wound.

Viridian: Great. Can this day get any worse?

DM: The werewolf slashes at you again. Critical hit.

Viridian: ...

VARIANT: SIMPLE WOUNDS

If you want a quick way to make falling to 0 hit points more significant, then use this *Simple Wounds* variant.

When you fall to 0 hit points, gain a level of exhaustion. This exhaustion can be removed in the normal means (through rest/spells/etc).

PERMANENT INJURIES

Some monsters are especially deadly, destructive, and vicious—when they hit, they hit hard enough to break bones and sever limbs. Dragons, giants, ogres—if it's huge, its attacks are usually extremely violent.

If you are reduced to 0 hit points by a *violent* attack, you suffer a debilitating *Permanent Injury*. Roll to see which injury you suffer—reroll any nonsensical result.

PERMANENT INJURIES

d10	Injury	Treatment
1	Lose an arm	Prosthesis (arm)
2	Lose a leg	Prosthesis (leg)
3	Lose a hand	Prosthesis (hand)
4	Lose a foot	Prosthesis (foot)
5	Lose an eye	Prosthesis (eye)
6	Lose a toe	Medical aid (DC 15)
7	Lose a finger	Medical aid (DC 15)
8	Gain a horrific, scarring wound	Medical aid (DC 20)
9	Gain an internal injury	Medical aid (DC 20)
10	Lose half your teeth	Medical aid (DC 20)

When you gain an injury, you also gain a level of exhaustion. As with lingering wounds, this exhaustion is permanent until you treat the injury in some fashion.

INJURY EFFECTS

The exact consequences of an injury may vary wildly from game to game and character to character.

If a character gains an injury, make sure to have a brief discussion between player and DM to establish any notable in-game effects beyond the exhaustion increase.

DM: The *violent* dragon shows you no mercy, Sarien, as it bites down. Sharp teeth spear into you painfully for 19 points of damage.

Sarien: Damn it, I'm at 0 hit points... (rolls 1).

DM: You hear a sickening snap as the dragon's teeth bite into your shoulder, scraping bone. The pain is overwhelming. As its huge head snaps back, you feel a sharp pull and hear a loud, wet tearing sound. Through the pain, you realize you can't move your left arm. You can't even see your left arm. It's gone.

Sarien: What. The Hell.

DM: The last thing you see before you black out, Sarien, is the dragon throw your arm up into the air and—with a snap—swallow it. "Deliciousssss..."

VIOLENT MONSTERS & ATTACKS

When you are adding the *vicious* keyword to a monster or attack, make sure to telegraph this to your players clearly in advance—they should know they risk serious injury before they charge in.

DM: You see the orc warlord ahead, yelling orders to the goblin soldiers. He hasn't seen you yet, but he looks extremely *vicious*.

Krazak: Vicious? Sounds like a challenge. I charge—

Valiant: NO YOU DON'T. Plan first, charge later—I'm not paying to put *another* leg on you.

TREATING INJURIES

Once you gain an injury, it remains active on your character causing exhaustion until treated. There are three main ways to treat an injury:

- **Prosthetics:** Wear a prosthetic device to replace a missing body part.
- **Medical Aid:** Receive medical attention—even surgery—to close up major damage and internal bleeding. This can only be done during a long rest when you are in a safe place—a village, town, or city.
- **Magic:** Injuries can be reversed with the *Greater Restoration* spell (or something of equivalent power).

Once an injury has been treated, the exhaustion is lifted and your character can act normally again.

GAMEPLAY OVER REALISM

Injuries should be important events, but they shouldn't make a character unplayable forever. Use them to create short bursts of drama in your game, but avoid penalizing a character for too long.

Once an injury is treated—whether by prosthesis, surgery, or magic—don't apply any more penalties unless it's especially relevant to the story.

PROSTHETICS

A prosthesis is a device that replaces a missing body part—such as an arm, leg, or eye—to treat an injury. You can find—or commission—basic prosthetic devices in almost any settlement from appropriate craftsmen and healers.

FALSE LEG

Prosthesis, Leg (Medium), Common

A wooden leg with a secret compartment that can hold a small item. Wearing this treats a *missing leg* injury.

GLASS EYE

Prosthesis, Eye, Common

A glass orb made to look like a tabaxi eye. Wearing this treats a *missing eye* injury.

MAGICAL PROSTHETICS

You may find prosthetics have been augmented with magic in some fashion, granting them extra properties. These are much rarer in the world—and far more expensive. This kind of prosthetic is often only gained through a quest reward or a favor from a powerful NPC.

ARM OF LIVING BARK

Prosthesis, Arm (Medium), Rare

A prosthetic arm crafted from living wood. It has a tendency to reach towards bright sunlight when the owner is not concentrating. Wearing this treats a *missing arm* injury.

Nature's Grasp: Once per short rest, you may use a free action to stretch out the vines in your arm and extend your reach by 5ft until the end of your turn.

FOOT OF CLOUD WALKING

Prosthesis, Foot (Medium), Rare

A prosthetic foot inscribed with an air enchantment. Wearing this treats a *missing foot* injury.

Cloudwalk: Once per short rest, you may jump twice as far or twice as high as you normally would.

HAND OF STATIC

Prosthesis, Hand (Medium), Rare

A prosthetic hand inscribed with arcane glyphs and sigils. Wearing this treats a *missing hand* injury.

Static Shock: Once per short rest, when you make a successful melee attack, you may use a free action to add 2d6 lightning damage to your damage.



21

DEATH & RESURRECTION

THERE ARE ONLY TWO CERTAINTIES IN LIFE: DEATH and taxes. Throughout their career, adventurers face danger and destruction at every turn—and sometimes, not everyone is lucky enough to make it back to town alive.

This chapter sets out the *Dying* condition, persistent death saves, funerals, and revised rules for resurrection.

DYING

In falling to 0 hit points, you gain the *Dying* condition. This condition ends if you regain any hit points.

DYING Condition

- You drop whatever you're holding and fall prone.
- You can't move, take actions, or use reactions.
- You're aware of what's happening 15 ft around you.
- You can speak a maximum of *two* words per round.
- Attack rolls against you have advantage.
- You automatically fail STR/DEX saving throws.
- You must make a *death saving throw* at the start of your turn. If you fail three times, you die.

DM: The drow's hooked blade tears into you, Krazak, dealing 13 points of slashing damage.

Krazak: Down to 0 hp—damn, I'm *dying* here.

DM: Ravna looms over you with a sadistic smile.

"Any last words, dwarf, before I send you to the grave?"

Krazak: Screw. You.

DM: "Two words well spent," sneers Ravna.

DEATH SAVING THROWS

When you are dying, you must make a death saving throw at the start of your turn—if you fail three death saving throws, you die. Roll a d20 and check the table below to see what happens to you:

DEATH SAVING THROW

d20	Outcome
01	You fail two death saving throws.
02-09	You fail one death saving throw.
10-19	No change.
20	You regain 1 hit point.

PERSISTENT SAVES

Death saving throws don't reset after a short rest—instead, you recover one failed death saving throw after completing a long rest. Take care to rest properly.

TAKING DAMAGE

If you are hit by any damaging attack whilst dying, you automatically fail a death saving throw. Critical damage, likewise, cause you to fail one death saving throw.

If you take any damage whilst at 0 hit points and stable, you regain the *Dying* condition.

LIMITED AWARENESS

Whilst dying, you have very limited awareness and capacity to speak—you are too busy struggling to remain conscious.

Choose your two words each round carefully, and avoid table-talk whenever possible.

DEATH

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, your best just isn't good enough—all things come to an end, and your character is unfortunately no exception.

But with any luck, you fought a good fight and left the world a little less dark than when you first joined it.

YOUR FUNERAL

A corpse shouldn't be left out in the open to be torn apart by birds and wild dogs—a hero deserves a hero's send-off.

If your adventuring party are able to recover your body, bury it, and throw an appropriately lavish funeral, they may buy a share of the unspent experience you had when you died—10 XP per gold spent on your funeral.

Though victorious against the drow pirate Ravna Ry'len, Krazak suffered a mortal wound and died with 460 unspent XP.

The surviving party members carry his body back to town, where they spend 46 gp on a lavish funeral—plenty of beer, food, and fire. The next day, they each take a share of Krazak's 460 XP.

VARIANT: MILESTONES

If you are using a *Milestone* leveling system, then consider this variant instead.

If your adventuring party are able to recover your body, bury it, and throw an appropriately lavish funeral (at least 50 gp for each of your character levels), they each gain one favor from you from beyond the grave.

READING OF THE WILL

You can leave a will behind to confirm who the heirs to your property are. This can be arranged in retrospect with your DM *after* the character's death if necessary. The reading of the will usually takes place at your funeral, or before the introduction of a new character.

This might be the last opportunity for your character to say any final words, so make the most of it.

DM: A gruff, dwarven priest approaches you all after the funeral, bearing Krazak's last known will.

Clanda: A will? Let me see that. "In the unlikely event of my death, I, Krazak the Undefeated, leave 50 gp to the church to fix that damn leaky roof. Valiant, you need all the help you can get: take my ring of protection. Viridian, you're weak as a kitten: take my amulet of health. Everything else goes to my brother, Gundren."

Valiant: Krazak had a brother? Huh, he never said. What else does it say?

Clanda: "Kill Clanda".

Viridian: Ah Krazak, ever the charmer.

A NEW BEGINNING

Once you've added your character's name to the graveyard, it's time to start anew with a fresh character or an elevated NPC/henchman.

There are a variety of ways to determine your starting level and wealth—choose the method that fits your game.

STARTING LEVEL

- **Same Level:** Start at the same level as your old character.
- **One Behind:** Start one level lower than your old character.
- **Accelerated 1st-Level:** Start at level 1. You gain XP at twice the normal rate until you catch up to the rest of the party.

STARTING WEALTH

- **Inheritance:** Inherit gold and starting items from your old character—whatever was passed on in your will. Your new character should be known or related to your old character in some fashion.
- **Fresh Start:** Start with the same amount of gold and magic items as the poorest active character.

RESURRECTION

Sometimes, death is not the end. Magic is a powerful force, and with it even the dead can rise again.

Such spells are not without cost, however, and resurrection spells require the *rarest* of components—diamonds of a particular cut, rarity, and quality. These diamonds cannot be bought on the open market—finding one may be a whole adventure in itself.

RESURRECTION SPELLS

Spell	Level	Time Limit	Component
Revivify	3rd	1 minute	Pristine diamond
Raise Dead	5th	10 days	Royal diamond
Reincarnate	5th	10 days	Mystic oils
Resurrection	7th	100 years	Perfect diamond
True Resurrection	9th	200 years	Astral diamond

Death has a price, however—a character that has been dead for longer than a day will lose any unspent experience points when they are resurrected.

REINCARNATE

The *Reincarnate* spell is unique in that it requires only mystic oils. Unlike rare diamonds, these oils *can* be bought or crafted during downtime—at a significant cost.

VARIANT: NO RESURRECTIONS

If you want to add a sense of finality to death, use this *No Resurrections* variant rule.

The souls of the dead, once passed beyond the veil, can never return to the mortal plane. Resurrection spells of any kind—including *wishes*—have no effect.



22

CHEATING FATE

EVEN IN THE FACE OF CERTAIN DEATH, SOME LUCKY adventurers manage to find a way to cheat fate and live to fight another day.

This chapter introduces fate points for players and how to use them in your game.

FATE POINTS

Fate allows your character to survive what would otherwise be a certain death. If you would suffer a killing blow or fail your last death saving throw, you may instead spend a *fate point* to cheat death in some fashion.

Perhaps you were knocked unconscious, or the scorpion's poison wasn't strong enough to finish you off, or it was just a flesh wound? Discuss with your DM exactly how it is you managed to survive your ordeal.

DM: You lie unconscious and dying, Viridian, but the orc is without mercy—she stabs down with her spear. Lose a death saving throw.

Viridian: Oh no, that was my last one...

Chansi: You're dead? For *real*?

Viridian: Yea—or I would be if I didn't have one last *fate point* to use. Perhaps the spear *missed* me?

DM: Fate is in your favor. The spear wouldn't miss given its proximity, but let's say it missed your vital organs. Everyone thinks you're dead, and you remain unconscious *but alive* for the rest of the scene.

Viridian: Unconscious and alive sounds good to me.

Fate points help to give your players a little more durability. New characters begin with one fate point, and may hold no more than three at one time.

SPENDING FATE

When you spend a fate point, you (usually) cannot act for the rest of the scene—everyone, friend and foe alike, thinks you're dead or otherwise not worth any attention. But you are immune to any further damage during the rest of the scene, regardless of whatever else happens around your unconscious body.

At the end of the scene—or whenever appropriate—you regain consciousness with 1 hit point. You also recover any failed death saving throws.

GAINING FATE

Fate points are *extremely* rare. New characters start with one fate point—their reward for becoming an adventurer in the first place.

But beyond this, additional points can only be gained by facing—and defeating—the most dangerous monsters in your world. Dragons, liches, beholders—these *fated* monsters are significant threats to the party.

Fate smiles on those who brave the darkest of these *optional* dangers and survive.

DM: You hear that the black dragon Kaladax has laid waste to Mellowford and taken residence in the wreckage of the town.

Clanda: Is he a *fated* dragon?

DM: Kaladax is a major power, and certainly *fated*.

Viridian: Could be worth investigating—I don't like being *fate-less* now, myself...

A *fated* monster rewards only 1 fate point in total when defeated—the players must decide who among them is lucky enough to take it.



23

DEADLY DISEASE

THE WORLD, FOR ALL ITS OCCASIONAL BEAUTY, IS A filthy place. Monsters are not the only threat to your survival—plague and disease stalk the land, destroying villages and decimating cities. Sometimes the greatest threat isn't the wild dragon—it's the small child with a bad cough.

This chapter provides rules on catching and treating contagious diseases, and a selection to use in your game.

WHAT IS A DISEASE?

A disease is some form of ongoing sickness that causes harm to your character and, potentially, spreads to those around you—such as flu, chickenpox, or plague.

Diseases become more severe over time, progressing through 4 stages—so try to stay healthy.

INFLUENZA
Disease, Common

Touch, Air · DC 10
⌚ 2 days

A harmless cough and a slight fever can quickly turn into something much more serious without bed rest.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	You have a bad headache and a runny nose. You have -2 INT, and -2 WIS.
2	Your entire body aches and your throat is sore. You have -2 STR, -2 DEX, and -2 CHA.
3	You have a terrible fever and hallucinations. You cannot move under your own power.
4	Your internal organs fail and, after slipping into a coma, you die within a few hours.

Cured You have an annoying cough for one week and occasional light-headedness.

CONTRACTING DISEASE

Adventuring is not a clean business. Filthy sewers, rabid animals, rusty swords—there are countless ways in which a person might contract a debilitating disease.

There are three basic steps to follow when dealing with disease: contact, incubation, and first symptoms.

STEP 1. CONTACT

First, your character needs to come into contact with an active disease. There are four ways this might happen:

- **Direct Contact:** You touch an infected person or diseased fluid—such as blood, sweat, or pus.
- **Indirect Contact:** You touch something that has been contaminated with a diseased substance or fluid—a doorknob, a shared bed, a knife.
- **Bites:** Something bites you—a fly, a tick, a leech—and injects the disease directly into your body.
- **Consumption:** You eat or drink something that's been contaminated—foul water, moldy bread, rotten meat.

DM: As you lean over the corpse to unclasp the necklace, Viridian, the zombie's stomach bursts with a sickening pop. Roll a Dexterity saving throw.

Viridian: Son of a... (rolls 3) damn zombies.

DM: Black ichor and pus splatter you in thick, wet clumps. You nearly gag from the smell of rotten flesh.

Viridian: Gross. This can't be good.

Once your character has come into contact with a contagious disease, there is a chance of infection—the incubation period automatically begins.

STEP 2. INCUBATION

All diseases have an incubation period—a period of time where, infected or not, you display no symptoms. At this stage, you have no idea if you're actually infected yet—all you can do is wait and hope for the best.

STEP 3. INFECTION

Once the initial incubation period has passed, it's time to see if your character was infected and starts displaying any symptoms. Make a Constitution saving throw against the DC of the disease—this is called an *Infection* check:

Success: You are not infected.

Failure: The disease has infected your body and you begin to display the first symptoms.

DM: During your week in town, Viridian, you notice you've developed a small cough. It's inoffensive, but persistent. Make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw.

Viridian: Damn it... (rolls 8).

DM: One morning, as you wake from a particularly fierce cough, you notice some thick green phlegm in your handkerchief. It smells foul.

Viridian: The flu? *Again?* Every. Time.

WOUNDS AND MULTIPLE EXPOSURE

If you had any open wounds when you were exposed to the disease, or you were exposed multiple times, it's more likely you were infected—make your *Infection* check with disadvantage.

LIVING WITH DISEASE

Once your disease starts to display symptoms, the battle begins. A runny nose, a splitting headache, a bad cough—manage your pain as best you can while you fight back.

ESCALATION

Periodically, your disease will try to attack your body and spread further. Each time the incubation period passes, make a Constitution saving throw to see if your disease changes—this is called an *Escalation* check:

Success: Your symptoms have peaked. Your disease improves by one step and goes into decline.

Failure: Your disease worsens by one step.

DM: After another week of illness, Viridian, you feel your symptoms begin to change. Roll a DC 10 Constitution saving throw.

Viridian: Fingers crossed... (rolls 18) *finally*.

DM: Your fever has broken at last, and you think you're over the worst of it now. Your flu is in decline.

Viridian: Great. Now who can I cough on...

DEGREES OF SUCCESS

If you are using the *Degrees of Success* rules, these options will allow a critical success or failure to impact the speed at which the disease spreads through your body.

- **Critical Success:** Your disease improves by one step, goes into decline, and your next *Escalation* check happens in half the normal time.
- **Success:** Your disease improves by one step and it goes into decline.
- **Success at a Cost:** You can sacrifice a precious resource to help your immune system succeed—a healing potion, hit dice, a spell, a scroll.
- **Failure:** Your disease worsens by one step.
- **Critical Failure:** Your disease worsens by one step and accelerates—your next *Escalation* check happens in half the normal time.

FIRST-AID & BED REST

If you are treated with the appropriate first-aid, medicine, or bed rest during your illness, you can make your next *Escalation* check with advantage.

DECLINE

Once your symptoms have peaked and gone into decline, you automatically succeed every subsequent *Escalation* check until the disease finally leaves your system.

RELAPSE

If you come into contact with the disease again, you risk a relapse. Your illness stops its decline—make your next saving throw as normal to see if your disease escalates.

RECOVERY

You have managed to recover from your disease—well done. But some diseases may leave a lasting effect on your body—marks, scars, weakness—and you may also still be contagious to others at this point, so be careful.

SPREADING DISEASE

Most diseases are highly contagious—once you have one, it's very easy to pass it on to someone else. There are two main ways you can pass on a disease while you are contagious: by touch and through air.

TOUCH

Your blood, sweat, and spit are rife with sickness. Anyone who makes physical contact with you while you are contagious risks infection. Things you touch with your bare skin—door handles, cutlery, tools—also become contaminated and remain so for an hour.

To avoid making accidental contact when touching someone who is diseased—for example, when administering first aid—make a DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom saving throw. Wearing gloves, medical robes, and other protective gear can help defend against contamination—make your check with advantage.

AIR

As you breathe, cough, and sneeze, the air around you becomes thick with sickness. Anyone that comes within 5ft of you is at risk of infection. Additionally, if you spend an hour in an enclosed room, it becomes contaminated and remains so until an hour after you leave—proper ventilation and thorough cleaning can help prevent this.

By wearing a face mask, you can minimize the spread of your airborne sickness by trapping coughs and spittle. However, wearing a basic mask or holding your breathe offers no protection against infection—disease is still able to infect you via your eyes and skin.

DM: The guard blocks you at the door to the lord's chambers, Clanda. "Sorry ma'am, Lord Marin has ordered us not to let anyone in. Personal matters."

Clanda: Ugh, I don't have time for this. I cast *Friends* and order him to let me pass.

DM: The guard pulls a hasty salute, his resolve temporarily weakened by your magic—"Yes ma'am, at once". He opens the door and you step forward into the lord's dark chambers.

Clanda: Why is it so dark in here?

DM: The curtains are drawn, and the air is thick and sickly. Lying in bed, coughing wetly, is Lord Marin. He opens one red eye. "You... should not... be in here."

Clanda: Oh you *stupid* lord, why didn't you say you were sick! I'll open the windows quickly to air out the room. If I fall ill, I swear I'll murder him.

BECOMING CONTAGIOUS

You are contagious once your hit points are below a certain threshold—this represents you bleeding slightly, or breathing harder, or sweating more. The more severe the spread of your disease, the more of a risk you become to other people.

When you take damage, check the *Spreading Disease* table to see if you become contagious or not.

BECOMING CONTAGIOUS

Severity	Contagious
Stage 1	Less than 25% hit points remain
Stage 2	Less than 50% hit points remain
Stage 3	Less than 75% hit points remain
Stage 4	Always contagious

DEATH

If you die from a disease, your corpse becomes a breeding ground for your sickness. Your body remains contagious for the next week.

This goes for any corpse, so be careful of touching the dead—you never know what disease they may carry.

DIAGNOSIS

When you contract a disease, it's not always obvious what you have from the first symptoms alone. Many diseases share similar symptoms at the beginning—headaches, fevers, rashes—so you may want to get your sickness diagnosed to prevent any nasty surprises.

To make a diagnosis, roll a Wisdom or Intelligence check against the rarity of the disease. You must be trained in *Medicine*. A *Healer's Kit* will also prove useful, granting advantage on your diagnosis attempt.

DIAGNOSING DISEASE

Rarity	DC	Description
Common	10	A frequent occurrence
Rare	20	Sporadic with sudden outbreaks
Mythic	30	A unique or magical sickness

MAGICAL HEALING

Magic is a great tool for healing the body, but it is not infallible—the body is a complicated, delicate machine. When you use magic to remove a disease, the sickness is not immediately purged but instead goes into decline.

MAGIC STRENGTH

Not all magic is powerful enough to fight every disease. When using a spell or effect to treat sickness, compare the spell level to the disease DC to see if it will work.

MAGIC STRENGTH

Spell Level	Max DC	Examples
0-5	15	Lesser Restoration, Lay on Hands
6-8	25	Heal
9	30	Mass Heal

MAGICAL IMMUNITY

Some class features may grant immunity to diseases—such as a paladin's *Divine Health*. In these cases, your immunity is not absolute—the resistance depends on the level of the effect (class level, item level, spell level, etc.).

MAGICAL IMMUNITY

Level	Immunity
01-05	Diseases up to DC 15
06-10	Diseases up to DC 20
11-15	Diseases up to DC 25
16-20	All diseases

DISEASE COMPENDIUM

There are many diseases out in the world—some a mild inconvenience, some an almost-certain death sentence.

This section details a number of example diseases, and includes guidance on creating your vile illnesses.

CREATING A DISEASE

If you want to surprise your players with a sickness unique to your world, follow these steps to brew your own horrific disease:

STEP 1: RARITY

First, decide how well-known the disease is in your world—common, rare, or mythic. The more common the sickness, the easier it is to make a correct diagnosis.

STEP 2: DC

Next, decide how contagious the disease is. The higher the DC, the harder it is to resist the disease—use a small DC if you want characters to recover quickly.

When deciding on the DC, consider any rare items that your characters might need to hunt for to overcome their sickness—rare flowers from the Fetid Swamp, crushed dragonbone from the Ancient Graveyard, or a horse's heart from the Yellowgrass Plains.

DISEASE DC

Description	DC
Easy to recover from, most people will only be ill for a short time before they fight it off.	05 / 10
These diseases hang around for a while, and most people will need to consider bed rest or some medicine to help them get better.	15 / 20
These diseases are almost impossible to recover from. Most people have no chance at stopping this sickness and can only accept their fate if no actual cure is possible.	25 / 30

STEP 3: INCUBATION

Now choose how long the disease takes to escalate in severity. The longer the period, the longer it will be before any first symptoms start to show and the longer it will be a problem.

STEP 4: TRANSMISSION

Next, pick how your disease is transmitted. Usually this is through touch or air, but there may be other triggers.

The DM is creating a mythic, magical disease that spreads through sound—*resonant flux*. This unusual disease is transmitted through audio waves whenever an infected person says the word "symphony".

STEP 5: STAGES

Now it's time to decide on the specific effects of your disease. Every disease has 4 stages, each increasing in severity. Describe the physical effects, and assign a mechanical penalty of some kind.

Effects are cumulative, so be careful not to assign too many effects at each step. At the same time, avoid having stages with no mechanical effect.

These are some effects you might like to consider:

- -1/-2 to an ability modifier.
- Fall into a coma, or death.
- Reduced movement, or total paralysis.
- Advantage or disadvantage on certain rolls.
- Halve your speed.
- Vulnerability to certain damage.
- Lose some or all of your hit dice.
- Gain a level of exhaustion.

STEP 6: CURE

Finally, decide on any lingering effects on recovery from the disease—scars, weakness, immunity, etc. This is a good way to leave a lasting mark on characters and NPCs—even recovery has a price.

DISEASES

Name	Description	Rarity	DC	Inc.	Transmission
Bubonic Plague	Horrible buboes spread across the body	Rare	25	1 day	Touch
Chickenpox	Tiny, itchy spots spread across the body	Common	20	2 days	Touch, Air
Cholera	Diarrhea and dehydration	Common	10	1 day	Touch (excrement)
Diphtheria	A bad throat infection that can permanently scar the skin	Rare	15	3 days	Touch, Air
Dysentery	Stomach cramps and vomiting	Common	20	1 day	Touch (excrement)
Influenza	Fatigue, headaches, and fever	Common	10	2 days	Touch, Air
Smallpox	Large, pus-filled spots cover the body	Rare	15	4 days	Touch, Air
Stonescale	The skin turns grey and cracked, and the mind turns feral	Mythic	30	4 weeks	Touch
Syphilis	A persistent fever that eventually attacks the mind	Common	20	4 weeks	Touch (sore)
Tapeworm	A parasite that feeds inside the body causing weight loss	Common	15	1 week	Touch (excrement)
Typhoid Fever	A bad fever and diarrhea	Common	15	1 week	Touch (excrement)
Whooping Cough	Coughing fits violent enough to break bone	Common	15	1 week	Air

BUBONIC PLAGUE

Touch · DC 25

Disease, Rare

⌚ 1 day

Often mistaken for influenza at first, swollen buboes fast begin to mark the body. Without immediate aid, this disease is almost certainly a death sentence.

EFFECTS**Stage Effect**

- | Stage | Effect |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Your body aches and you have a slight fever. You have -2 to all ability modifiers. |
| 2 | Painful buboes appear around your arm, groin, and neck. You have disadvantage on all rolls. |
| 3 | Your fever burns extremely hot and you can't stop sweating. You fall into a coma. |
| 4 | Your internal organs fail and you die. |

Cured Your body is scarred by the buboes.

CHICKENPOX

Touch, Air · DC 20

Disease, Common

⌚ 2 days

Tiny, itchy spots that spread across your entire body. Very contagious, but not usually life-threatening.

EFFECTS**Stage Effect**

- | Stage | Effect |
|-------|---|
| 1 | You have a slight fever and feel weak. You have -2 STR and -2 DEX. |
| 2 | You have noticeable pox marks across your body. You have disadvantage on all social checks. |
| 3 | You are covered in itchy spots. You have disadvantage on concentration checks. |
| 4 | Your fever is burning hot. You have disadvantage on all rolls. |

Cured You have a few small scars from the pox. You are permanently immune to chickenpox.

CHOLERA

Touch (excrement) · DC 10

Disease, Common

⌚ 1 day

One drink of bad water and you'll be curled up by the toilet for a week—or die from dehydration.

EFFECTS**Stage Effect**

- | Stage | Effect |
|-------|---|
| 1 | You feel sick and nauseous, and eating food causes you to vomit. -2 DEX and -2 WIS. |
| 2 | You have diarrhea. -2 STR, -2 CHA, and you gain thirst at twice the normal rate. |
| 3 | You have lost noticeable weight. You are dehydrated and have disadvantage on all rolls. |
| 4 | Your body goes into shock from severe dehydration, and you die. |

Cured You can't eat rich food for the next week without being sick.

DIPHThERIA

Touch, Air · DC 15

Disease, Rare

⌚ 3 days

A nasty infection of the throat that can cause permanent scarring if it penetrates the skin.

EFFECTS**Stage Effect**

- | Stage | Effect |
|-------|--|
| 1 | You have a sore throat and headache. You have -2 CHA and disadvantage on concentration checks. |
| 2 | You have swollen glands in your neck and it's very painful to swallow. You have -2 STR and -2 DEX. |
| 3 | Large, painful ulcers appear on your skin. You have -2 CON and disadvantage on social checks. |
| 4 | Pus-filled blisters appear on your legs, hands, and feet. You have disadvantage on all rolls. |

Cured You have a few noticeable, permanent scars from your skin ulcers.

DYSENTERY

Touch (excrement) · DC 20

Disease, Common

⌚ 1 day

Easy to catch and painful to endure, one sip of dirty water can be enough to ruin your whole week.

EFFECTS**Stage Effect**

- | Stage | Effect |
|-------|---|
| 1 | You suffer painful stomach cramps. You have disadvantage on all saving throws. |
| 2 | You have a mighty need to use the restroom. You have -2 to all ability modifiers. |
| 3 | You can't keep any food down. You gain thirst and fatigue at twice the normal rate. |
| 4 | Your body is too weak to stand. Your speed is reduced to 0. |

Cured You can't eat rich food during the next week without being sick.

INFLUENZA

Touch, Air · DC 10

Disease, Common

⌚ 2 days

A harmless cough and a slight fever can quickly turn into something much more serious without bed rest.

EFFECTS**Stage Effect**

- | Stage | Effect |
|-------|--|
| 1 | You have a bad headache and a runny nose. You have -2 INT, and -2 WIS. |
| 2 | Your entire body aches and your throat is sore. You have -2 STR, -2 DEX, and -2 CHA. |
| 3 | You have a terrible fever and hallucinations. You cannot move under your own power. |
| 4 | Your internal organs fail and, after slipping into a coma, you die within a few hours. |

Cured You have an annoying cough for one week and occasional light-headedness.

SMALLPOX Touch, Air · DC 15
Disease, Rare ⌚ 4 days

Tiny spots that quickly become large, painful blisters across your entire body, leaving you with pox scars.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	You have a slight fever and feel weak. You have -2 STR and -2 DEX.
2	You have a persistent headache and flat, red spots on your face, hands, and forearms. You have -2 INT, -2 WIS, and -2 CON.
3	Your spots become large, painful, pus-filled blisters. You have disadvantage on all rolls.
4	Your fever is extremely hot. You fall into a coma.
Cured	You have severe scars from the pox. You are immune to smallpox for 10 years.

TAPEWORM Touch (excrement) · DC 15
Disease, Common ⌚ 1 week

Tiny parasites that hide away in rotten meat and excrement. Watch what you eat.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	You always seem to be hungry. You gain hunger at twice the normal rate.
2	You have lost a significant amount of weight. You have -2 CON and -2 STR.
3	You suffer from terrible headaches and some memory loss. You have -2 INT and -2 WIS.
4	The parasites have reached your brain. You fall into a coma and die.
Cured	You have a fragile stomach and painful cramps for one week.

STONESCALE Touch · DC 30
Disease, Mythic ⌚ 4 weeks

As your skin turns grey and cracked, your mind decays to that of a wild animal. Kill them before they kill you.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	The skin around your eyes turns noticeably grey. You have disadvantage on social checks.
2	Your skin is grey and cracked. Movement is painful. You have -2 to all ability modifiers.
3	You become very forgetful and increasingly aggressive. You have advantage on all STR rolls, and disadvantage on all INT, WIS, and CHA rolls.
4	You have lost your mind and become a wild beast.
Cured	Your skin is permanently marked with stonscale. You are immune to stonscale.

TYPHOID FEVER Touch (excrement) · DC 15
Disease, Common ⌚ 1 week

Sometimes it's better to go thirsty than take a drink of filthy water. Don't risk it—boil it.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	You have a fever, a headache, and frequent nosebleeds. You have -2 to all modifiers.
2	Red spots appear on your skin and you are easily exhausted. You gain fatigue at twice the rate.
3	Your stomach hurts and you suffer frequent diarrhea. You gain thirst at twice the rate and have disadvantage to all social checks.
4	Your fever is burning hot and you are delirious. You cannot move or act on your own power.
Cured	You feel fragile for the next week.

SYPHILIS Touch (sore) · DC 20
Disease, Common ⌚ 4 weeks

The flesh is weak. Let your guard down for one night and you might still be paying for it years later.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	A highly-contagious sore opens near your lips or groin. You have disadvantage on social checks.
2	A rash appears on your hands and feet, and you have a fever. You have -2 DEX and -2 CON.
3	More sores appear on your body, and you are easily exhausted. You have -2 STR and gain fatigue at twice the normal rate.
4	You have lost noticeable weight and your mind is fuzzy. You have -2 INT, -2 WIS, and -2 CHA.
Cured	You still carry the disease and can infect others.

WHOOPING COUGH Air · DC 15
Disease, Common ⌚ 1 week

Fits of violent coughing followed by a 'whooping' inhale of breathe—and sometimes, broken ribs.

EFFECTS

Stage	Effect
1	You have a mild cough and disadvantage on concentration checks.
2	You cough in loud, uncontrollable fits with a gasping inhale. You have -2 STR and -2 DEX.
3	Your coughing fits are violent enough to cause vomiting. You have disadvantage on all rolls.
4	Your cough is so violent you have broken some of your ribs. You have 0 hit dice and cannot move without immense pain.
Cured	You have an annoying cough for the next week.



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SURVIVAL CONDITIONS

CHARACTERS DON'T EXIST IN A BUBBLE; THEY affect and are affected by their surroundings—going without sleep makes you tired, failing to eat makes you hungry, not drinking makes you thirsty. With *survival conditions*, players track the physical state of their character. It's hard, thirsty work being an adventurer—do you have the resources to survive?

This chapter introduces several survival conditions and examples of how to use them in your game.

YOUR CONDITIONS

With *survival conditions*, players keep track of three basic physical states that can affect their character's general performance: hunger, thirst, and fatigue.

- **Hunger:** Few things burn through calories as fast as adventuring, so keep some snacks in your pocket.
- **Thirst:** Adventure, travel, and combat are thirsty work. Keep a waterskin close by to avoid dehydration.
- **Fatigue:** It takes a keen mind to watch out for danger, so get regular sleep to stay alert and aware.

These basic conditions worsen naturally throughout the day, becoming more severe and eventually leading to increasing levels of exhaustion if left untreated. Depending on the situation, this can be a real problem for your character:

Viridian has been travelling through the Emerald Rift for two days, chased by the relentless Witch of Gloamgard. His supplies are running low, and he hasn't been able to rest easily in the haunted woods.

The bard is ravenous (5 hunger), parched (3 thirst), and barely awake (6 fatigue)—he has +2 exhaustion from his conditions, cutting his speed in half. Unless Viridian can find food fast for some quick energy, the dreaded Witch will be right on his heels.

Keep an eye on your conditions, using your supplies to manage them as best you can—eat food to stave off hunger, drink water to quench your thirst, and get some sleep to remove your fatigue.

SURVIVAL CONDITIONS

Stage	Hunger	Thirst	Fatigue	Temperature	Effect	Stamina DC
0	Stuffed	Quenched	Energized	Perfect	-1 Exhaustion	—
1	Well-fed	Refreshed	Well-rested	Comfortable	—	5
2	Ok	Ok	Ok	Ok	—	10
3	Peckish	Parched	Tired	Noticeable	—	15
4	Hungry	Thirsty	Sleepy	Uncomfortable	—	20
5	Ravenous	Dry	Very sleepy	Overwhelming	+1 Exhaustion	25
6	Starving	Dehydrated	Barely awake	Unbearable	+1 Exhaustion	30

USING SURVIVAL CONDITIONS

Survival conditions can be a fun, easy way to immerse players in the fiction of your campaign, but they only have an impact if resources—like food and water—are restricted.

If your characters have easy access to food and water, or time is not an issue, or survival is simply not an important theme in your game, conditions won't have much impact.

GAINING A CONDITION

Characters gain hunger, thirst, and fatigue in four primary ways whilst adventuring: through the natural passage of time, by falling to 0 hit points, through failure consequences, and by suffering certain monster attacks.

TIME OF DAY

As the day progresses, characters become more hungry, thirsty, and tired. Conditions worsen at dawn, noon, and dusk—the specific effects are listed in the table below.

HUNGER, THIRST & FATIGUE

Time	Hunger	Thirst	Fatigue
Dawn	+1	+1	—
Noon	—	—	+1
Dusk	+1	+1	+1

Across a normal, uneventful day, a character will gain +2 hunger, +2 thirst, and +2 fatigue—this means a character needs 2 rations of food, 2 rations of water, and a good night's sleep each day to stay in good form.

During the adventure, the DM—or whoever else is keeping track of time—announces the changes in character conditions when appropriate.

DM: It's been a long afternoon, but *dusk* approaches. Everyone gains +1 hunger, +1 thirst, and +1 fatigue.

FALLING TO 0 HP

Nearing death is an exhausting shock to the body. If you fall to 0 hit points for any reason—including shapeshifted forms such as *Wild Shape*—you gain +1 fatigue.

DM: The orc clubs you for 9 hit points, Sarien.

Sarien: Ouch, that knocks me unconscious.

DM: Bad luck. Gain +1 fatigue.

Sarien: Damn it. If I survive this, I'm gonna need the longest sleep tonight...

CONSEQUENCES

You may gain survival conditions as a consequence of failing an action, at your DM's discretion—or, if using the *Degrees of Success* rules, offer to gain a condition and succeed at a cost.

DM: To cross the pit requires a simple jump, Clanda—roll a DC 10 Athletics check.

Clanda: Ok.. (rolls 9) augh, so close!

DM: You clear the jump with a stumble, noticing a rumble in your stomach as you land. Gain +1 hunger.

MONSTER ATTACKS

Monster and environmental effects can drain characters of their stamina and resources. As DM, add condition modifiers to some of your existing monster attacks and traps—or add brand new condition-causing powers.

- A fire elemental burns the air around you with a blast of searing heat: you gain +1 *thirst*.
- A green ooze wraps around your arm and sucks the nutrients from your flesh: you gain +1 *hunger*.
- An eldritch mage whispers a cacophonous verse and commands you to sleep: you gain +1 *fatigue*.

IMPROVING YOUR CONDITION

Whenever appropriate, your character can attempt to improve their physical condition in a manner that makes sense. Some of the most common actions are:

- **Eat a ration of food:** −1 hunger per ration. Better quality food may relieve more hunger per ration.
- **Drink a ration of water:** −1 thirst per ration. Better quality water may relieve more thirst per ration.
- **Get a good night's sleep:** (undisturbed) −3 fatigue. A disturbed night's sleep grants only −1 fatigue.

DM: You rise at dawn, Valiant, your stomach growling. Gain +1 hunger and +1 thirst.

Valiant: I'll eat one of my rations (−1 hunger) and take a swig from my waterskin (−1 thirst)—that should keep me going till nightfall.

EXHAUSTION

The worse your condition, the more exhausted your character will become. Whenever a condition reaches stage 5 or 6, it generates +1 exhaustion—for a maximum of +3 exhaustion across all conditions.

Valiant is ravenous (5 hunger), dry (5 thirst), and barely awake (6 fatigue)—he has +3 exhaustion from his unfortunate conditions.

Unable to find food, he later finds himself starving (6 hunger). His exhaustion remains at +3.

Once a condition has begun to cause exhaustion, that exhaustion remains on your character until the condition is sufficiently improved.

RELIEVING EXHAUSTION

A condition stops causing exhaustion once it has been improved to stage 4 or higher. After the next short rest, update the character's exhaustion counters.

Valiant finds a cache of food supplies. He immediately eats 3 rations-worth, healing 3 hunger and improving his overall condition to *Peckish*.

His *Hunger* condition continues to add +1 exhaustion until he takes a short rest, at which point his total exhaustion drops from +3 to +2.

STAMINA CHECK

It's hard work being an adventurer—battles to fight, ropes to climb, rivers to swim—and such activity can be draining to those without the proper constitution.

After a particularly strenuous event, the DM can ask you to make a *Stamina check* (Constitution saving throw) against the DC of your best condition. A failure means that your stamina was tapped during the event—roll a d6 to see which condition worsens.

STAMINA CHECK

d6	Outcome	d6	Outcome	d6	Outcome
1-2	+1 Hunger	3-4	+1 Thirst	5-6	+1 Fatigue

DM: The last goblin drops his dagger and flees into the night. Well done, everyone. Now roll a Stamina check.

Valiant: 14. I didn't break a sweat.

Sarien: 9. That's what I get for skipping breakfast... (rolls 6) +1 fatigue. Getting *sleepy* here.

Clanda: 7. Damn, not enough. I gain... (rolls 4) +1 thirst. Great, and my waterskin's dry already. Has anyone got a drink? I'm feeling pretty *thirsty* right now.

VARIANT: TEMPERATURE

If you want to give a mechanical environmental effects, add the *Temperature* survival condition to your game.

With the *Temperature* condition, characters must keep an eye out for the weather and make sure to keep their body temperature in check to avoid suffering from exhaustion.

USING TEMPERATURE

The *Temperature* condition works best in games that feature a lot of exploration in harsh climates with unpredictable or unforgiving weather patterns—a scorching desert, a frozen mountain pass, a temperamental jungle.

GAINING TEMPERATURE

Your body temperature is affected primarily by the weather and environment. The DM describes the baseline temperature when appropriate—often when you enter or research a new region, dungeon, or lair:

DM: It's starting to rain outside and, as you step out, an *uncomfortably* cold wind blows past. You think it might even become *unbearably* cold outside tonight.

HOT OR COLD

The temperature conditions apply to both hot and cold climates—it could be *unbearably cold* in the arctic wastes, or *unbearably hot* in the arid desert.

TIME OF DAY

Temperatures change throughout the day as the sun rises and sets. Check the table below to see how the baseline temperature might be affected by your climate.

CLIMATE TEMPERATURE CHANGE

Time	Hot	Moderate	Cold
Morning	+1	—	+1
Afternoon	+2	-1	—
Evening	+1	—	+1
Night	—	+1	+2

MONSTER EFFECTS

Some monsters can affect the surrounding temperature by their sheer presence, producing scorching heat or chilling winds.

DM: Frozen winds surround the *King of Frost*—it is unbearably cold around him. If you end your turn adjacent to him, you'll suffer the chill...

IMPROVING YOUR TEMPERATURE

Whenever appropriate, your character can improve their temperature in a manner that makes sense. Some of the most common actions are:

- **Appropriate clothing:** Thick furs and cloaks will help protect you from the cold, while thin fabrics will help cool you in the heat.
- **Find shelter:** Sometimes you have to take a break and rest. Build a shelter to keep warm against a freezing wind, or provide shade against a scorching sun.
- **Cast spells:** Some spells and abilities may provide you with a burst of much-needed warmth or cold.
- **Racial abilities:** Some races are naturally resilient against cold or heat. These innate characteristics will help protect you against certain temperatures.



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STRESS & AFFLICTIONS

THE ADVENTURING LIFE IS NOT AN EASY ONE. Moving from town to town, delving into dark dungeons and hunting dangerous monsters for perhaps a few gold coins, is not a safe—or sane—way to make a living.

This chapter introduces mechanics to track a character's stress level, and the lingering consequences on their adventuring career.

STRESS

Stress is a measure of pressure on a character's mental state, representing a build-up of negative emotions such as anger, fear, frustration, and irritation. Too much Stress is bad for your mental health and, if not treated carefully, can lead to detrimental Afflictions—or even death.

Characters can suffer up to 40 points of Stress before they reach breaking point. To prevent this, they'll need to find ways to relax and recover during downtime.

GAINING STRESS

Stress is gained through danger, hardship, and adversity—suffering a critical hit from an enemy, hearing an unearthly moan from a dark room, sleeping rough in the cold rain, watching an ally die. Anything that threatens the mental well-being of your character can inflict Stress.

When choosing how much Stress to inflict, decide how significant the event is to the character—is it minor, moderate, major, or monstrous? The more emotionally significant, the higher the amount of Stress.

The more an event conflicts with the nature of your character, the greater the Stress you'll suffer—a bard may be more embarrassed to ruin a performance than a wizard, while a lawful paladin is more hurt by a broken oath than a lawless rogue.

GAINING STRESS

Category	Stress	Description
Minor	+1	A small frustration, worry, or irritant: missing an attack, falling down, hearing a noise in the dark.
Moderate	+2 (1d4)	You've made a critical error or something is seriously at risk: being caught lying, learning that the villain has escaped, being outnumbered.
Major	+4 (1d6)	Something devastating to your character or their beliefs: breaking an oath, falling to 0 hp, finding a heap of fresh corpses.
Monstrous	+8 (1d6 + 4)	Something incomprehensible or world-shattering: meeting a god, being betrayed by your closest friend, watching a loved one die.

CONSEQUENTIAL STRESS

You can gain Stress as a direct consequence of failing an action—missing an attack, breaking a lockpick, being caught in the middle of a lie. The DM will usually notify you before your attempt that this is a risk.

Here we see Chansi attempt to pick a lock, becoming stressed when she fails.

Chansi: Ok, let's see what's in this chest. I want to pick the lock on this thing—what's the DC?

DM: It's a secure metal chest, so DC 20.

Chansi: Easy. Lemme just... (rolls 15) ugh, fail.

DM: You hear the pins clicking in the lock, Chansi, but you can't understand why they're not setting. It's a frustrating failure for you—gain 1 point of Stress.

STRESS AS A CONSEQUENCE

Whether through consequence or an explicit Stress check, a character should gain Stress *only* as a consequence for failing a roll of some kind—such as an attack roll, a defense roll, a skill check, or a Stress check.

STRESS CHECK

In cases where the environment or situation provokes an emotional response—standing before a dragon, entering a decrepit tomb, hearing a terrifying sound—you may be asked to pass a Stress check (Wisdom saving throw) to avoid gaining some Stress.

In this example, Viridian comes across a pile of rotting corpses and must pass a Stress check to keep his composure and avoid gaining Stress.

DM: You smell something foul, Viridian. Behind the wooden door, you can hear a faint buzzing sound.

Viridian: I open the door cautiously.

DM: Your torchlight illuminates a grisly scene—a dozen rotting corpses hidden in a small pantry, covered in a thick swarm of fat flies. The putrid stench of rotting flesh threatens to overwhelm you. Make a Stress check, DC 20.

Viridian: I'm... (rolls 22) phew, ok.

DM: Horrifying though this, you manage to retain your composure. Perhaps this isn't the first time you've seen a heap of rotting corpses?

Here, Valiant returns to town to find he has been betrayed by a trusted mentor and his sister is in grave peril. His world is turned upside down, so he faces an almost impossible Stress check.

DM: Fire rages through the town. You hear a scream, Valiant, coming from the church. What do you do?

Valiant: Does it sound like Zelya?

DM: It does, yes.

Valiant: I throw my shield aside and run ahead through the burning streets, leaving the others behind.

DM: As you pass through the arch, you see Zelya at the foot of the church steps, lying face down in a pool of blood. She isn't moving. Atop the steps stands Bishop Vendicus, a mad grin on his face and a bloodied dagger in his hands. "She's with the Grey King now, boy, He calls her to His hungry throne."

Valiant: Gods damn it Vendicus, we trusted you!

DM: Your sister lies dying, and your mentor has betrayed you, Valiant. Make a Stress check, DC 30.

Valiant: That... (rolls 22) bastard.

DM: Your mind reels from this horrific turnabout, Valiant—gain 8 points of Stress.

SNAPPING

Too much Stress can be unhealthy for your character, causing long-term problems. When your character gains 20, 30, and 35 points of Stress for the first time after a long rest, they *snap* and develop a mental Affliction.

DM: In a very surprising turn of events, Krazak failed to smash open the chest with his headbutt. Krazak, you gain 1 point of Stress.

Krazak: These gods damned elven boxes. I'm up to 20 now—I've *snapped*. Time for a new Affliction...

BREAKING POINT

When a character gains 40 points of Stress, they hit breaking point. In this state, your character is reckless, dangerous, and *extremely* vulnerable.

If you are hit by a damaging attack while at breaking point, your character suffers a fatal heart attack. You fall to 0 hit points, fail any remaining death saving throws, and die immediately.

DM: The dragon lashes out at you, Clanda, swinging its huge tail. Make a defense roll, DC 32.

Clanda: I... (rolls natural 1) ouch, take a critical hit.

DM: The dragon's tail slams into you without mercy. Take 26 points of damage, one notch on your armor, and 2 points of Stress.

Clanda: Damn, that puts me at 40 Stress.

DM: Your heart is pounding, Clanda, and it's hard to breathe. You're not sure you can take another hit...

STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

These are some example situations that might trigger Stress. Some characters may respond more strongly than others depending on their background—a fighter may be less stressed about being outnumbered in battle, while a necromancer might not react to the sight of a dead body.

- Badly failing an attack or skill check
- Hearing an unearthly roar from the dark
- Embarrassing yourself in front of someone
- Falling over or being knocked down
- Being disarmed or disabled
- Critically failing an attack or skill check
- Seeing a heap of mutilated corpses
- Facing a huge or formidable enemy
- Being caught lying
- Being surrounded, outnumbered, or out-flanked
- Being critically hit by an attack
- Seeing an ally die
- Accidentally hurting a friend
- Seeing the corpse of a loved one
- Seeing a hideous abomination
- Breaking an oath
- Being betrayed by an ally

HEALING STRESS

Stress is healed through success and relaxation—disarming a trap, defeating a formidable opponent, carousing in town, sleeping in a warm bed. Anything that helps your character feel better can heal Stress.

The amount healed depends on the significance to your character. The more it aligns with your character's personality, the more you heal (at the DM's discretion)—rogues benefit more than mages from lockpicking, while clerics benefit more than fighters from prayer.

HEALING STRESS		
Category	Stress	Description
Minor	-1	A small success or bit of good news: disarming a trap, playing a song, relaxing with your friends.
Moderate	-2 (1d4)	A critical success or special achievement: eating a well-cooked meal, finding a hoard of treasure, repairing something important.
Major	-4 (1d6)	You've beaten the odds and gained a major victory: defeating a dangerous enemy, saving an ally from death, completing a work of art.
Majestic	-8 (1d6 + 4)	You've achieved a long-term goal or done something thought near impossible: bringing a friend back from death, finishing a masterpiece, receiving praise from your deity.

Here we see Clanda attempt to disarm a magical trap with her arcane training, healing Stress in the process. As a sorceress disarming a *magical* trap, she heals a moderate amount of Stress instead of a minor amount.

DM: The runes are glowing brighter, and you feel static building in the air. If you don't act quick, Clanda, this trap will explode.

Clanda: Pfft, this is amateur work—dwarven runes are so basic. I'll try to dispel the binding rune to disarm the trap harmlessly.

Valiant: Uh, are you sure about that? Last time—

Clanda: Hush now, I'm working.

DM: Ok, that'll be a DC 20 Wisdom check. You can use Arcana with this.

Clanda: See I told you, Valiant... (rolls 24) I got this.

DM: You manage to locate the binding rune and, with a careful words, draw the magic out of it. With a harmless spark, the runic trap shatters. Clanda, you heal 2 points of Stress—everyone else heals 1.

Clanda: Excellent. You're welcome, everyone.

It is much harder to heal Stress than it is to gain it, so you'll need to be proactive in treating your Stress level before it becomes insurmountable. Rest when you can, and try not to over-exert yourself.

DOWNTIME

While out travelling, a good time to heal Stress is during downtime and through sleep. Here, Sarien takes advantage of his downtime during a night's rest to meditate and clear his mind.

DM: Ok, camp's been set up for the night. What do you all do for the next few hours?

Sarien: I spend a couple of hours meditating.

DM: Ok—it's been an easy day, so make a DC 10 Wisdom check.

Sarien: No problem... (rolls 17).

DM: You're able to calm your mind and organize your thoughts, Sarien. Heal 2 points of Stress.

TAKING A LONG REST

When you complete a long rest in a sanctuary, such as a village, town, or city, you heal all stress. Reduce your Stress level to 0.

Returning to the town of Darrowmore, Valiant takes a long rest and begins a week of training. Once the week is over, he reduces his Stress to 0.

CALM EMOTIONS

When you are affected by the *Calm Emotions* spell—or other similar magic spells and effects—you heal a moderate amount of Stress.

STRESS RELIEF

These are some things a character might do to reduce their stress levels. Not everyone will recover in the same way—an introvert may unwind best on their own with a good book and some hot tea, while an extrovert may want to throw a raucous and extravagant party to blow off steam.

- Disarming a trap
- Defeating a dangerous enemy
- Eating a hot, well-cooked meal
- Making people laugh with a joke
- Listening to a bard perform a song
- Carousing in a rowdy tavern
- Picking a lock
- Sleeping in a warm, comfortable bed
- Praying to your deity
- Finding a chest of treasure
- Arriving somewhere safely after a long journey
- Spending time with family and friends
- Learning a new skill
- Engaging in a hobby
- Playing with a pet
- Rolling dice and playing some games
- Fulfilling an oath or promise
- Protecting an ally from harm
- Meditating and resting
- Making a discovery

AFFLICTIONS

An *Affliction* is a stress-induced mental issue suffered by a character when they gain too much Stress. Afflictions affect your character's abilities and can only be cured during downtime.

When you gain 20, 30, and 35 Stress for the first time after a long rest, roll on the *Afflictions* table to see which new mental Affliction you develop. If you roll a duplicate, roll again until you get a new result.

AFFLICTIONS

d100	Affliction	Modifier
01-06	Fearful	Disadvantage on WIS checks & saves
07-12	Lethargic	+1 exhaustion until removed
13-18	Masochistic	Disadvantage on CON checks & saves
19-24	Irrational	Disadvantage on INT checks & saves
25-30	Paranoid	Speed is halved
31-36	Selfish	Disadvantage on CHA checks & saves
37-42	Panic	Disadvantage on DEX checks & saves
43-48	Hopelessness	Disadvantage on STR checks & saves
49-54	Mania	Disadvantage on attack rolls
55-60	Anxiety	Disadvantage on Stress checks
61-66	Hypochondria	Hit point maximum is halved
67-72	Narcissistic	Disadvantage on ability checks
73-77	Powerful	+2 to all damage rolls
78-82	Focused	+2 to all attack rolls
83-87	Stalwart	+2 AC
88-91	Acute	Advantage on INT checks & saves
92-96	Perceptive	Advantage on WIS checks & saves
97-00	Courageous	Advantage on CHA checks & saves

DM: Sarien, you hear a sickly moan from the shadows. Make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw to see if you can keep your composure.

Sarien: Sure. (rolls 6) Damn, not enough.

DM: Gain 1 point of Stress, Sarien.

Sarien: That pushes me over 20—looks like I'm feeling pretty... (rolls 41) panicked. How *appropriate*.

CURING AFFLICTIONS

Afflictions don't go away on their own—your character must dedicate time to treating their mental state. During a long rest, your character can attempt to treat one of their Afflictions in an appropriate fashion—carousing, praying, resting, meditating, etc.

Spend some gold to roll a d20 to make an Affliction Removal attempt. Some downtime activities, such as resting, may allow you to roll with advantage—bear this in mind if your Afflictions are proving hard to clear, before you become overwhelmed by them.

AFFLICTION REMOVAL

d20	Result
01	Critical Failure: You fail to cure your Affliction, gaining a new one in the process.
02-09	Failure: You fail to cure your Affliction.
10-19	Success: You cured your Affliction.
20	Critical Success: In a moment of clarity, you cleared yourself of all Afflictions and Stress.

You can only make one Affliction Removal attempt per in-game week, so make the best of it.

COSTS

As you gain in experience, it becomes harder to reset your mental state—the things you have seen and experienced have had a lasting impact. It costs more to remove an Affliction the higher your level as you must seek more elite and exotic outlets.

AFFLICTION REMOVAL COSTS

Level	Gold	Level	Gold	Level	Gold
1	5	8	42	15	432
2	7	9	58	16	604
3	9	10	81	17	845
4	12	11	113	18	1,183
5	16	12	158	19	1,656
6	22	13	221	20	2,318
7	30	14	309	—	—

GREATER RESTORATION

The *Greater Restoration* spell may be used to let you make an Affliction Removal attempt outside of a long rest. This counts as your once-per-week removal attempt.

From levels 1-10, you may roll your *Affliction Removal* check with advantage when using Greater Restoration. From levels 11-20 however, roll with disadvantage.

MENTAL BREAKDOWN

If your character gains more than 3 Afflictions, they suffer a complete mental breakdown—your character falls catatonic and must be committed into care or die.

A character who has had a breakdown can no longer be played—treat them as if they have retired.

RECOVERY

If a character is placed in good care, there is a rare chance they may eventually recover from their breakdown. For each month of proper care, they may roll an *Affliction Removal* attempt with disadvantage. A month after they have removed all Afflictions, they recover their senses and can be active again.

Each time a character recovers from a breakdown, their minimum Stress increases by 10.

ITEMS & CONSUMABLES

Across your adventures, you may be able to buy, craft, or loot special items that can help manage stress—magic gear, soothing teas, precious potions, etc. Below are some example items you might find in your campaign:

SOOTHING STONES

Item (small), Common

A pair of small, stone balls engraved with dwarven runes. They make a soothing sound when held and rotated in the palm of one hand.

Relaxing Sound: During camp, if you successfully *Relax in Solitude*, you heal an additional +1 Stress.

ELIXIR OF SANITY

Item, Potion, Consumable

This thick purple elixir looks almost alive. When you stare at it, you get the feeling you're being watched.

When you drink this elixir, you may roll any Stress checks with advantage for one hour.

RING OF CLARITY

Item (small), Rare

This fine silver ring, forged by the drow monks of Elgin Orsul, is set with a tiny astral topaz.

Clear Mind: When you wear this ring, increase your maximum stress by +8.

BOOK OF SERMONS

Item (small), Common

A cheap but illustrated book of inspiring sermons.

Sermon: During camp, you can attempt to read a sermon from the book. If you successfully *Tell a Story*, you heal an additional +1 Stress.

GREENLEAF TEA

Item (small), Common

A packet of halfling tea leaves. One packet contains enough leaves for five separate brews.

Delicious Tea: During camp, you can attempt to brew a pot of tea. If you successfully *Brew Drinks*, each person who drinks heals an additional +1 Stress.

VARIANT DIALS

Stress & Afflictions is a flexible game mechanic that can be adjusted to suit a variety of settings and gameplay styles. If you want to customize the experience for your game, consider using some of these variant dials.

ONE SNAP

If you want to make afflictions a little rarer in your game—or prevent rapid escalation once a character reaches 50% stress—consider this *One Snap* variant.

The first time you gain 50% or more Stress after a long rest, you snap and develop a mental Affliction. You can only snap once per long rest, though you still risk hitting your breaking point if you reach 100% Stress.

INSANITY ZONES

You may want to use *Stress & Afflictions* for just a short time in your campaign—to add theming to a particular region or adventuring site, for example. You can achieve this with *insanity zones*.

CREATING AN INSANITY ZONE

Stress is only gained in certain areas—*insanity zones*. Outside of these zones, characters don't gain stress—though they still suffer the effect of any lasting afflictions.

An insanity zone can be anything—a room, a dungeon, a kingdom, etc—so add them to your game as best suits your setting. Use them to add memorable features to your dungeons and adventure hubs.

Chansi and Viridian approach the *Tomb of Eldritch Horror*, an ancient dungeon corrupted by aberrant powers. The tomb is an *insanity zone*—within its walls, players risk gaining stress.

LEAVING AN INSANITY ZONE

If you leave an insanity zone, your stress and afflictions remain until you complete a long rest (or perform another form of recovery action, such as spending hit dice or acquiring consumables).

TEMPORARY VIRTUES

Some afflictions—such as Powerful and Focused—can be a benefit to your character. With this *Temporary Virtues* variant, these effects become short-lived.

If you develop a beneficial affliction, it is automatically cured without cost at the end of your next long rest.

RESTFUL RECOVERY

If you are running an episodic game and need to drastically limit the running scope of stress and afflictions, consider using this *Restful Recovery* variant.

When you complete a long rest in a sanctuary, you automatically recover all stress and cure all afflictions.

GETTING STARTED WITH STRESS

If you want to try using *Stress & Afflictions* in your games without significantly overhauling the tone of your campaign, consider starting with the *monstrous attacks*, *insanity zones*, and *one snap* variants.

These dials can limit the scope of the stress mechanic and help you to slowly introduce the rules to your players.

STRESSFUL ATTACKS

Characters commonly gain stress whenever they fail significant actions. But if you want to disconnect Stress from abstract failure, consider instead attaching stress to monsters and traps with *Stressful Attacks*.

Give your monsters and traps attacks that deal stress damage instead of—or in addition to—hit point damage. These stressful attacks can be a very effective way to add flavor to your aberrant and psychic monsters—especially those that use fear and intimidation powers.

GIBBERING HORROR

Medium aberration, neutral

Level 5 Supporter
Standard (450 XP)

ARMOR CLASS 14 **ATTACK BONUS** +5
HIT POINTS 45 (23) **DAMAGE** 8
SPEED 30 ft **SPELL DCs** 13, 10

STR +3	DEX +1	CON +4	INT +0	WIS +2	CHA +1
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SAVING THROWS Con +6, Str/Wis +3, Dex/Cha/Int +0
SKILLS Initiative +5, Perception +2, Stealth +2
IMMUNITIES Prone
SENSES Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

ACTIONS

Bite (common)

Melee 5 ft: +5 vs AC. Hit: 8 piercing damage.

Mad Gibbering (common)

Melee 5 ft: DC 13 vs Wisdom. Hit: The target gains +2 (1d4) points of Stress.

SCREAMING SKULL

Trap, Area Attack

When a visible creature steps within 5 ft of the skull, it unleashes a piercing scream that chills the heart of everyone within 15 ft. Then, it shatters.

- **Attack:** DC 15 vs Intelligence.
- **Hit:** The target gains +2 (1d4) points of Stress.

GIFFYGLYPH'S MONSTER MAKER

For more advice on creating monsters and attacks, try *Giffyglyph's Monster Maker*—a supplement with guides and templates to help build new monsters in seconds.

LEVELING STRESS

As you gain power and knowledge, your ability to handle stress also improves. With *Leveling Stress*, your stress limits and snapping points are influenced by your character level and intelligence modifier.

Calculate your maximum stress and snapping points as follows, rounding down when necessary:

Maximum Stress: 20 + level + (4 × INT)

First Snap: 50%

Second Snap: 75%

Third Snap: 87.5%

MINIMUM STRESS

Your baseline maximum stress as calculated here cannot go below 16, regardless of your intelligence modifier.

GAINING STRESS

When using this variant, be mindful of how much Stress you deal to low-level characters. A 1st-level character with −1 INT has only 17 maximum stress and snaps at 8/12/14 points of stress—a very short fuse indeed.

Try to limit yourself to minor and moderate stress checks where appropriate at lower levels, and reserve major/monstrous for the most extreme of situations at higher tiers of gameplay.

LIGHT & SHADOW

If you are using the *Light & Shadow* rules (p67) and want to make visibility an even bigger threat to your players, then consider this variant.

If you are blinded, you are vulnerable to stress—you gain twice the amount of stress as you normal would.

INDEFINITE MADNESS

If you don't want characters in your game to die outright when they are at breaking point, consider afflicting them with *Indefinite Madness* instead.

If you are hit by a damaging attack while at breaking point (100% Stress), you fall unconscious. No amount of jostling or damage can wake you.

After 2d4 hours, you awaken with an indefinite madness—roll on the *Indefinite Madness* table (DMG p260) to see what you are afflicted with.

SLOW RECOVERY

If you want to make it harder for characters to recover from Stress, then consider this *Slow Recovery* variant.

Anytime you would heal Stress, reduce the amount healed by half (don't round this halved amount).

Valiant heals a minor (1) amount of Stress. Because of *Slow Recovery* he instead heals only 0.5 Stress.

PART 6

Rest & Downtime

26 Short Rest p96

Get your breath back with a short rest.

27 Long Rest p101

Take a long rest and catch up with some downtime.

28 Leveling Up p104

Train with a mentor to unlock your full potential.





26

SHORT REST

ADVENTURERS NEED TO REST AT SOME POINT, IF only to catch their breath between action, treat wounds, and prepare for upcoming dangers.

This chapter defines the short rest period, some basic activities you might undertake while resting, and how to set up camp for an overnight rest.

TAKING A SHORT REST

A short rest is a period of downtime, at least 1 hour long, in which characters sit down to perform a few basic tasks—such as eating, drinking, and treating wounds.

During a short rest you can spend hit dice, bind any injuries, and consume some essential supplies—but anything more intensive will require you to settle down and set up camp for a longer stay.

DM: Your blade slices through the dire wolf. With a pained howl, the other wolves turn and flee into the dark forest.

Valiant: That was a close one. You ok, Viridian?

Viridian: Took a few bad hits there. We should take a rest soon so I can heal up before we reach *Blightmere*.

Clanda: Much as it pains me to say, the bard's right—I need to bandage up this bite wound.

Valiant: Alright, we still have sunlight to burn. Let's find a safe spot to rest in for an hour.

BASIC ACTIVITIES

During your short rest, whilst you're catching your breath, you can perform some basic activities. Complicated tasks may require you to set up camp first.

RECOVER HIT POINTS

Spend your hit dice to recover some lost hit points. If the *Bloodied* condition (p74) is in effect and you have lost half of your hit points, you will need to use a first-aid kit—or similar supplies—to spend any hit dice.

REGAIN CLASS/RACIAL FEATURES

Some classes and races regain powers after a short rest is completed—monk ki, warlock spell slots, dragonborn breath weapon, etc. Check your character sheet to see which features you recover.

EAT & DRINK

If *Survival Conditions* (p86) are in effect, you can use this time to eat some food and drink to satiate your hunger or thirst. In addition, if you are suffering from exhaustion caused by one of your conditions, you can remove it if your condition is sufficiently improved.

RECOVER MAGICAL BURNOUT

If you are suffering from *Magical Burnout* (p56), you can spend some hit dice to recover and—hopefully—prevent any dangerous burnout consequences in future.

CHANGE INVENTORY QUICKSLOTS

If the *Quickdraw* inventory rules (p30) are in effect, you can change your three selected quickdraw items.

TREAT WOUNDS

If you are suffering from any *lingering wounds* (p74), you can treat them if you have sufficient first-aid resources.

RESEARCH/INVESTIGATE

Research, read, or investigate something within reach—such as an encrypted book, a strangely carved monolith, or an unidentified magic item.

SETTING UP CAMP

If you decide to rest for a prolonged period of time—or need to perform some complicated tasks—it's time to set up camp. Find a secure site, start a campfire, pitch your tents, and secure any animals, vehicles, or cargo.

There are five basic steps to follow when trying to set up camp:

1. **Make Camp:** Make *Camping* checks to see how well you set up camp—the more successes you have, the nicer your camp site is.
2. **Nominate the Lookout:** The lookout is in charge of camp defense, keeping watch for any threats.
3. **Perform Camp Activities:** Each party member (who is not on lookout duty) can perform one primary camp-related activity in addition to any other basic short rest activities.
4. **Sleep:** Try to get some rest for a few hours.
5. **Pack Up:** Pack up camp and prepare to move on.

MAKING CAMP

To make camp, each party member must roll a *Camping* check—a Strength/Intelligence/Wisdom (Survival) ability check—against a target DC (see the *Camping DC* table) as they each try to help set up the campsite.

The more successes the party has, the more thoroughly they prepare the final campsite—making it easier to defend, rest, and perform other camp activities.

CAMPING CHECK DC

DC	Description
10	Safe, dry land is easy to find / the weather is clear.
15	A campsite requires effort to find / there's bad weather—rain, light snow, heavy fog, etc.
20	It's hard to find a safe campsite / the weather is terrible—heavy rain, a fierce storm, a howling wind.

CAMPING RESULTS

Failures	Description
0	A perfect campsite. Activity checks are DC 5.
1	A decent campsite with one glaring flaw. Activity checks are DC 10.
2 or more	A shoddy campsite just barely fit for purpose. Activity checks are DC 15.

CAMPING EQUIPMENT

It's hard to set up camp if you're relying on nature alone to provide you with shelter and comfort. If you don't have any appropriate camping equipment—such as a bedroll or tent—roll your *Camping* check with disadvantage.

Some equipment, such as a two-person tent, may count as camping gear for multiple people—if they're willing to share.

The four adventurers start to set up camp. With clear skies and a sheltered forest, the camping DC is only 10. Between them, they have two bedrolls and a two-person tent—enough camping gear for all four.

Valiant rolls 13, Chansi 17, Viridian 11, and Clanda 7. The camp is prepared with one setback—a weak campfire. Any camp activities will have a base DC 10.

VARIANT: ALTERNATE SKILLS

If you want to support skills other than *Survival* when making camp, consider this *Alternate Skills* variant.

Depending on your character and background, you may use another skill instead of *Survival*—if appropriate—when making your *Camping* check. For example:

- **Athletics:** You help by moving something heavy to clear space for the camp.
- **Nature:** You help by finding good wood—and other natural fuel—for the campfire.
- **Animal Handling:** You help by checking the site isn't in the territory of any dangerous, wild animals.

At least one *Camping* check must be made using the *Survival* skill, and any alternate skills can only be used by one party member—so choose who rolls which skill.

THE LOOKOUT

It's a great risk to set up camp without appointing someone to watch out for any would-be intruders. A lookout is in charge of camp security and keeps an eye out for potential threats.

If you are the lookout, roll an *Intelligence* (Survival) check to see how well you secure the camp against potential dangers. If you have any tools, equipment, or magic that might help—traps, bells, the *Alarm* spell—you may roll your check with advantage.

Success: You noted some weak spots in the camp's defense and secured them.

Failure: You made a bad job of securing the camp. You have disadvantage on perception checks against any would-be intruders while camping.

Clanda: I'll take lookout tonight—I owe Viridian one.

DM: You all made a decent camp site, so make a lookout check against DC 10 to set the defenses.

Clanda: I'll set a few *Alarm* spells around the perimeter, that should help.

DM: It does—make your roll with advantage.

Clanda: Simple... (rolls 8 and 17). See—nothing's getting past me tonight.

FOCUS

Being on lookout takes a good deal of focus. If you are on lookout, you cannot join in with any camp activities besides eating, drinking, and sleeping.

CAMP ACTIVITIES

While camping, you can perform one primary activity (in addition to the normal basic activities) before you sleep. Below are listed some example activities—if an activity is not covered here, discuss it with your DM.

- Cook food
- Brew drinks
- Play music
- Tell a story
- Repair an item
- Craft an item
- Play a game
- Relax in solitude

COOK FOOD

If you know how to cook and have the right supplies, you can prepare a meal for the group. This requires use of a campfire and cooking tools. Expend one use of your cooking supplies to attempt one of the following actions:

- **Create rations:** You slow-cook and preserve some fresh ingredients—usually meat or grains—to create 1d4 + 1 new, basic food rations that can be preserved.
- **Stretch rations:** You thin out some basic rations into a simple meal, feeding two people for each ration you cook. If cooked successfully, everyone who eats gains 1d4 + 1 hit points (max. once per day).
- **Cook a hot meal:** You cook a hot meal for everyone, using one ration—or ration substitute—per person. If cooked successfully, everyone who eats the hot meal regains 1 spent hit die (max. once per day).

Before you serve the meal, roll a Wisdom (Survival) check to see how well you prepared everything. Meals spoil after an hour, losing any restorative properties.

Success: The meal is well made.

Failure: You spoiled the meal and wasted the ingredients—no one can eat your cooking.

BREW DRINKS

If you know how to brew drinks and have the right supplies, you can prepare some for the group. This requires a campfire and brewer's kit. Expend one use of your brewing supplies to try one of the following actions:

- **Create rations:** You distill some impure water overnight to create 1d4 + 1 new, drinkable rations.
- **Brew a balm:** With a few herbs you turn some basic water rations into a delicious, soothing drink—one ration per two drinks. Everyone who drinks a fresh balm gains 1d4 + 1 hit points (max. once per day).
- **Brew a restorative:** You turn some basic water rations into a tasty, hot drink using one ration per drink. Everyone who drinks a fresh restorative regains 1 spent hit die (max. once per day).

Before you serve the drinks, roll a Wisdom (Survival) check to see how well you prepared everything. Your brews lose their restorative properties after an hour.

Success: The drinks are well made.

Failure: You spoiled the brew and wasted the ingredients—no one can stomach your drinks.

REGAINING HIT DICE

Some activities—such as eating a hot meal or drinking a restorative—allow you to regain spent hit dice. These activities stack with each other: if you eat a hot meal, drink a restorative, and get a good night's sleep, you regain 3 spent hit dice in total.

PLAY MUSIC

If you know how to play an instrument, you can attempt to play some music for the group. Roll a Dexterity (Performance) check to see how well you play.

Success: You perform well and inspire one of your allies. Choose a party member other than yourself or the lookout—that character gains a point of inspiration.

Failure: You made an embarrassing mistake.

TELL A STORY

Everyone likes to hear a good story. If you are proficient in Arcana, History, or Religion—or are carrying an interesting book—you can attempt to tell a captivating story to the group. Roll a Charisma (Performance) check.

Success: Your story is well told and inspires an ally.

Choose a party member other than yourself or the lookout—that character gains a point of inspiration.

Failure: You made an embarrassing mistake.

REPAIR AN ITEM

If you're proficient with certain tools, you may perform basic repairs on damaged equipment—sharpening a blunt sword, sewing up a torn robe, hammering out some dented armor. You can try to remove one notch from an item with a successful Intelligence (Tool) check.

Success: You successfully remove one notch.

Failure: You were unable to make the repairs.

CRAFT AN ITEM

You can spend time crafting simple items—bandages, salves, arrows—if you have the right materials and tools. Roll the appropriate check for your specific craft.

Success: You successfully craft your item.

Failure: You were unable to craft the item.

PLAY A GAME

If you have a gaming set and know the rules, you can play a game to unwind. Anyone can join in—so long as they're not occupied with another activity—but at least one person playing must be proficient in the rules.

Everyone who plays can roll an Intelligence (Game) ability check—the highest roll wins.

Winner: You feel inspired—gain a point of inspiration.

Loser: You lost the game.

RELAX IN SOLITUDE

If you prefer to spend some time alone—reading a book, meditating, painting—you can do so. Roll a Wisdom ability check to see if you are able to unwind.

Success: You feel inspired by your seclusion—gain a point of inspiration.

Failure: You couldn't relax as something—or someone—was irritating you too much.

DM: Your campsite is reasonably prepared (one failure)—activities will be DC 10. What do you each do before sleep?

Clanda: Looks like I'm on lookout tonight, so I'll start setting few *Alarm* spells around the perimeter. If you set them off again, Viridian, I'm going to *burn* you.

Chansi: I'll cook up a hot meal—we should eat this rabbit meat before it spoils. Should be enough for all four of us, and easy to make a stew (rolls 17).

DM: Soon you have a bubbling pot of hot stew going, Chansi. It smells delicious, and everyone regains one spent hit die.

Viridian: Great, I'm starving. I'll get my lute out, play a little background music for us (rolls 11).

DM: Your songs are a fine accompaniment to the food, Viridian—who do you inspire?

Viridian: How about Clanda?

Clanda: Pff, I'm too busy being on lookout to listen to your amateur fumbblings.

Viridian: *Fine*, witch. I play one of Chansi's favorites while she cooks; she gains inspiration.

Chansi: Play *The Wizard's Staff*, I love that song.

Valiant: Meanwhile, I'll make a few bandages from that old shirt—we're running low on supplies in the healer's kit (rolls 18).

DM: You tear the shirt into three usable bandages.

GETTING SOME SLEEP

Sometimes the best way to clear your mind is to shut it down for a while—rest is the best medicine. When you attempt to sleep, make a sleeping check (Constitution saving throw) against the *Camping Activity DC*—if you are sleeping in a bedroll or tent, you can make the roll with advantage.

Success: Your sleep was undisturbed. Regain 1 spent hit die (max. once per day).

Failure: You couldn't sleep well, waking up tired.

After their activities, the four adventurers make sleeping checks against the camping activity DC (10). As each has a bedroll or tent, they roll with advantage.

Valiant, Chansi, and Viridian both roll above 10—they sleep undisturbed and, once awake, regain 1 spent hit die. Clanda, however, rolls only a 7—she has a frustrating, restless night half-awake in the forest.

TRANCE

Some races don't sleep as others do—instead, they fall into a meditative state known as a *Trance*. While in this state, your character is semi-conscious. You have disadvantage on all Perception rolls, and make a sleeping check as normal.

WEARING ARMOR

Armor, while great for defense, can be uncomfortable to rest in. If you choose to keep your armor on while you sleep, roll your sleeping check with disadvantage.

THE LOOKOUT

While the lookout is on active guard duty, they can still make a sleeping check—assume that they have a quick nap whilst the other party members are still awake.

The lookout rolls their sleeping check with disadvantage, however—it's hard to feel completely refreshed after a night on watch.

PACKING UP

When you decide to move on, it's time to pack up camp—put out your campfire, strap on your gear, and get back to the adventure. This may take a little time, depending on the size and permanency of your camp.

AMBUSHED!

A warm campfire and the smell of delicious, hot food can attract attention out in the dark wilds—from cruel bandits, to hungry bears, to bloodthirsty cultists. If you let your guard down, you might find both your sleep and your life cut surprisingly short.

If an intruder approaches, the lookout rolls a Wisdom (Perception) check against the intruder's Stealth:

Success: The lookout is able to detect the intruders and, if they choose to, rouse the party with enough time for people to don light armor.

Failure: The lookout—and the rest of the party—are caught off-guard and surprised.

DM: Valiant, Chansi, and Viridian are asleep. The forest is silent around you, Clanda, as you stand guard for the night. Silent, except...

Clanda: Except...(rolls 18).

DM: Except you hear a deep, low growl and the sound of something large pushing through the woods. A bear, perhaps. And it's coming right for you.

Clanda: Damn it, Chansi, I knew that stew would attract attention. I shake everyone awake, *fast*.

FALSE ALERTS

Out in the dark, it's easy to worry about every shadowed movement and every distant noise—a cracked twig, a far-off howl, a whisper on the wind.

Occasionally, the DM may ask the lookout to make a Wisdom (Perception) roll to detect a false alarm:

Success: The lookout realizes that it's just a false alarm and doesn't rouse the party.

Failure: The lookout thinks danger approaches and wakes the party unnecessarily. Their sleep is disturbed for the rest of the night.

DM: As you stand watch for the night, Viridian, you hear a noise in the distance. For a moment, it sounds like laughter. Roll perception.

Viridian: Eugh, these spooky woods...(rolls 8).

DM: The laughter grows louder. What do you do?

Viridian: Uuuuuuh I wake everyone up of course—I'm not fighting this thing alone.

DM: You shake everyone awake. After a tense minute, Clanda realizes what the sound is—it's just a barred owl calling out in the night, nothing more.

Clanda: *Are you kidding me, Viridian.*

USEFUL MAGIC SPELLS

Magic can be a great help to travelers crossing the dangerous wilds of the world, providing light, heat, and supplies when needed the most.

Below are some spells that may prove useful during your time in camp and some of their potential benefits:

ALARM

When used to protect the camp, this spell grants the lookout advantage on any perception checks made to detect intruders.

CREATE BONFIRE

This spell can be used to generate 1 automatic success when setting up camp, assuming there is flammable material around with which to build a long-term fire.

CREATE FOOD & WATER

One use of this spell can heal 3 hunger and 3 thirst from up to 15 creatures. As a magical consumable, a creature gains this benefit only once per day.

CREATE OR DESTROY WATER

One use of this spell can fill up to 5 waterskins (a total of 25 water rations). For each spell slot above 1st-level, you can fill another 5 waterskins.

GOODBERRY

A goodberry heals 1 hit point and 1 hunger when eaten. As a magical consumable, a creature gains this benefit only once per day.

HEROES' FEAST

One use of this spell can heal 6 hunger and 6 thirst from up to 12 creatures. As a magical consumable, a creature gains this benefit only once per day.

LEOMUND'S TINY HUT

When used to protect the camp, this spell grants the lookout an automatic success on their activity checks in addition to its other benefits.

MORDENKAINEN'S FAITHFUL HOUND

The hound grants you advantage on any perception checks made to detect intruders.

VARIANT: CONDITIONS

If you are using the *Survival Conditions* rules (p86), some of these camping activities can provide additional benefits and improve certain character conditions:

- **Eating:** If you eat a hot meal, you heal 2 hunger.
- **Drinking:** If you drink a restorative, you heal 2 thirst.
- **Sleeping:** If you sleep undisturbed, you heal 3 fatigue.

Viridian eats a portion of a hot meal cooked by Chansi. He regains one spent hit die *and* heals 2 hunger.

VARIANT: STRESS

The adventuring life is a stressful business, but a little downtime around a roaring fire can help you to unwind.

If you are using the *Stress* rules (p89), camp activities can affect your Stress levels. When you make a camping activity check, the following also applies to your result:

- **Success:** You heal a minor amount of Stress.
- **Failure:** You gain a minor amount of Stress.

Valiant tries to create some bandages from an old shirt. He rolls 18—a success. He gains 3 bandages *and* heals a minor amount of Stress.

Some camp activities—such as those listed below—have additional Stress-related effects depending on whether you succeed or fail.

COOK FOOD / BREW DRINKS

If you successfully cook a meal (stretched rations / hot meal) or brew some drinks (balm / restorative), you heal a minor amount of Stress from everyone you serve.

BE THE LOOKOUT

If you successfully secure the camp, you heal a minor amount of Stress from everyone. If you fail, however, everyone instead gains a minor amount of Stress.

In addition, if an intruder slips past your guard during the night, you gain a moderate amount of Stress.

PLAY MUSIC / TELL A STORY

If you perform well, you heal a minor amount of Stress from everyone that is listening to you perform.

PLAY A GAME

If you win a game, you heal a moderate amount of Stress. If you lose (or tie), you heal a minor amount.

SLEEPING

If you get some undisturbed sleep, you heal a major amount of Stress. If your sleep is restless, broken, or interrupted by an intruder, you instead gain a moderate amount of Stress.



27

LONG REST

EVENTUALLY, EVERYONE WANTS TO COME HOME—home is where the heart is. A place to put your feet up, reflect on your recent adventures, and prepare for adventures yet to come.

This chapter defines the long rest period and activities you might pursue during your downtime.

TAKING A LONG REST

A long rest is a period of extended downtime, at least 1 week long, in which your character performs downtime activities and pursues their own interests. This is your life between adventures—a chance to slow down, explore the setting, and mingle with NPCs in *relative* safety.

Follow these 6 steps for each week of rest:

1. **Sell loot:** Trade in any loot and treasure—gemstones, paintings, fine goblets—gained on your adventures and gain gold and experience.
2. **Choose lifestyle:** Choose your quality of lifestyle for the week—wretched, squalid, poor, modest, comfortable, wealthy, or aristocratic. You'll usually need to pay for this upfront.
3. **Choose primary activity:** Choose your primary downtime activity and pay any relevant costs.
4. **Hear rumors:** While resting, your adventuring party learns of three rumors. Some of these rumors may be false, or only *mostly* true—you'll have to investigate further to see for yourself.
5. **Perform secondary activities:** You can do 2 other small, secondary activities during your week—meet someone, go shopping, relieve some stress, etc.
6. **Settle up:** It's the end of the week—gain the result of your primary activity (level up, wages, information, etc) and check to see if your wounds and Afflictions recover. If you have any outstanding debts, settle up.

SANCTUARY

To begin a long rest, you must be in a sanctuary of some kind—such as a village, town, or city. Sleeping outside in the wilds or by a dungeon isn't restful enough for a full recovery.

Viridian, Valiant, and Clanda finally reach the gates of Darrowmore. They're looking forward to a well-earned rest and plan to stay in town for one week.

Between them, they carry 45 gp of recently-recovered treasure from the Elsewood—this rewards each of them with 150 XP (450 XP total).

They all choose a *comfortable* lifestyle for the week ahead while they pursue their own activities in town: Valiant does some charity work at his church, Clanda begins training for her next level up, and Viridian tries to sell a sort-of-cursed magic item.

1. SELL LOOT

If you found any valuables on your adventure—precious gemstones, golden goblets, fine paintings—you can sell them at the start of your long rest.

Some valuables may be too exotic for the average merchant to buy—magic items, archaeological tablets, cursed rings—and you'll need to spend your week searching for a suitable buyer.

Viridian has a cursed and *not-entirely-lawful* dagger he wishes to get rid of—for a small profit. He must spend a week looking for a buyer *on the quiet*.

LIFESTYLE QUALITIES

Lifestyle	Cost per Week (GP)	Maximum Hit Points	Starting Hit Dice	Hunger	Thirst	Fatigue
Wretched	0	50%	0	Starving	Dehydrated	Barely awake
Squalid	0.5	50%	25%	Ravenous	Dry	Very sleepy
Poor	1.5	75%	50%	Hungry	Thirsty	Sleepy
Modest	8	100%	75%	Peckish	Parched	Tired
Comfortable	15	100%	100%	Ok	Ok	Ok
Wealthy	30	110%	100%	Well-fed	Refreshed	Well-rested
Aristocratic	70+	120%	100%	Stuffed	Quenched	Energised

2. CHOOSE YOUR LIFESTYLE

Your lifestyle determines the level of comfort you live in during your week and the types of people you'll be surrounded by—if you aim to meet nobles and other aristocrats, you'll need to support an expensive lifestyle.

The *Lifestyle Conditions* table shows the lifestyle cost for an adventurer in gold pieces per week, and the condition it leaves you in at the end of the week.

After a long trek through the wild Elsewood, Clanda decides she wants to relax in *wealthy* comfort—a soft bed, a hot bath, and a servant to bring fine food and pour finer wine.

She finds the most expensive inn in town, pours 30 gold pieces on the bar, and spends the week sipping wine and reading books in peace.

RENTING VS OWNED PROPERTY

The lifestyle costs above assume that you are renting your living quarters—inns and taverns, while convenient for travelers, are not cheap. But sometimes a character comes to own property that offers a particular lifestyle—a *poor* farmhouse, a *modest* hut, an *aristocratic* mansion—either by buying one, building one, inheriting one, or being rewarded with one.

If you own the property you're staying in, the cost for that lifestyle quality is halved—however, you still pay the full expense for any other lifestyle.

Viridian has inherited a small but *modest* house from a dead relative. To live a modest lifestyle, Viridian now needs to pay only 50% of the normal cost each week—a total of 4 gp per week—if he uses the house.

If he wanted to live a different quality of life—for example, *wealthy* or *aristocratic*—he would still need to pay the full amount for that lifestyle each week.

If you own property, you must pay 50% of the lifestyle cost to maintain it each week—whether you use it or not. If you rent it out to other occupants, it generates an income of equivalent value instead.

Viridian must pay 4gp each week to maintain his *modest* house, whether he uses it or not. As he prefers to live in *comfortable* finery, Viridian rents out the house to a small family and it now provides an income of 4gp each week—a small offset to his 15-gp-a-week *comfortable* lifestyle costs.

MAXIMUM HIT POINTS & HIT DICE

Your lifestyle has a major impact on your physical health. Once you complete a long rest, update your maximum hit points and starting hit dice to match your lifestyle.

At the end of her week of *wealthy* rest, Clanda updates her conditions and increases her maximum hit points to 110% of the normal, unmodified amount.

3. PICK A PRIMARY ACTIVITY

During your long rest, you'll have time to pursue a primary interest. This is the main focus of your week and something you spend roughly half of each day on, leaving a quarter-day for sleep and a quarter for miscellaneous activity—shopping, eating, basic socializing, etc.

You only have time to perform one primary activity per week. Choose one from the suggestions below, or discuss one with your DM.

- Work for Coin
- Work for Renown
- Spread Rumors
- Find a Rare Merchant
- Sell an Exotic Item
- Craft an Item
- Learn a Tool
- Research
- Training
- Carouse & Socialise
- Rest & Relaxation
- Volunteer Work
- Criminal Activity
- Run a Business
- Perform a Service
- Learn a Language

ACTIVITIES

Specific rules and advice for some primary activities are covered in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (p128-131) and *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (p123-134).

ACTIVITY COMPLICATIONS

Your activity has a small chance of generating a complication that may make life more difficult—hurting yourself working, offending a lord while carousing, damaging a priceless book while researching.

At the end of each week, roll a d10—on a 1, something unfortunate happens as a result of your activities.

While trying to sell his cursed dagger, Viridian rolls a 1 on the *Complication* check. He attracts some unwanted attention—a religious merchant who threatens to report the tiefling to the guards. Unless, that is, Viridian performs a small service to the church and recovers a recently stolen sacred book...

4. HEAR THREE RUMORS

During a long rest, the party picks up three interesting rumors as they go about their business—adventure hooks, plot developments, or even misinformation. This is a good opportunity to flesh out the world and show some reactions to the party's past adventures.

During their week in Darrowmore, the party learns of three rumors around town:

1. An old cleric stole a necromantic tome and disappeared into the *Marrowmaw*.
2. A griffin was seen flying a few miles south of town.
3. Three heroes recently left to purge a nearby mimic nest—none have returned.

5. TWO SECONDARY ACTIVITIES

A secondary activity is something that only takes a short amount of time to do, from a few hours to a whole day.

During a week of long rest, you have enough spare time to do two secondary activities. Choose them from the suggestions below, or discuss one with your DM:

- **Meet Someone:** Arrange or attend a meeting with a person, group, or faction in town.
- **Trade Gear:** Buy and sell some mundane gear and equipment from merchants around town.
- **Investigate Rumor:** Spend some time investigating a rumor to see if it's actually true.
- **Update Financial Commitments:** If you have any financial commitments—investments, properties, business, etc—you can spend some time making basic changes to them.

Viridian wants to do some minor work on his *modest* home to—eventually—upgrade it to a *comfortable* lifestyle quality. He spends one secondary activity looking for craftsmen to fix the leaking roof.

6. SETTLE UP

At the end of your week, settle up your debts and reap any rewards from your primary activity. Check to see if any of your long-term wounds or injuries have healed, and start preparing for your next adventure.

Viridian, Chansi, and Clanda begin to wrap up their affairs in town. There's a big reward out for the return of the necromantic tome, and so—after hunting down some leads on the old cleric and the dangerous Marrowmaw—the three prepare to leave Darrowmore for their next wild adventure.

VARIANT: STRESS

If you are using the *Stress* rules, completing a long rest automatically resets your Stress level to 0. You may also pay gold to make an *Affliction Removal* check if you have not already rolled one this week.

RANDOM RUMORS

If you need some ideas for rumors about town, roll on the table below or use your own rumor generator.

RANDOM RUMORS

d100	Rumor
01-07	Some wierdo's stealing tombstones from the graveyard. The dead won't like that.
08-14	There's been a lot of crows around town lately. They ain't fond at all of clerics, I tells you.
15-21	A young kid went missing while playing out by the well. Best stay away from that well, it's cursed.
22-28	There's something evil buried beneath this town, and it's taken all my teeth!
29-35	Two travelers went missing one night, and Old Man Mergo's got two new scarecrows in his field...
36-42	The new neighbors are friendly, but a little weird. Y'know, I've never seen them out in the sun.
43-49	A warlock turned me into a newt! ...I got better.
50-56	Guards arrested a man the other night for trying to kill his wife. Mad fool thinks she's a changeling...
57-63	The local lord's birthday is coming up soon and there's gonna be a huge party—invite only.
64-70	There's a giant spider out in the woods. Weird thing is, they say she's guarding a little boy...
71-77	I don't know what the butcher's putting in his new sausages, but they're delicious. I can't stop eating.
78-84	One of the guards was found dead in his bed the other day. He had this awful grin on his face...
85-91	That farmer's kid that got bit by the wolf—you reckon he's gonna turn at the moon?.
92-98	I don't trust that new priest, always licking his lips.



28

LEVELING UP

YOUR CHARACTER GAINS EXPERIENCE BY BEING AN active force—making new discoveries, overcoming great obstacles, and helping to change the world (for good or for ill). With enough experience, your character can open up pathways to greater power, knowledge, and influence.

Such power comes at a cost, however, requiring time and effort to unlock. This chapter sets out rules for training and mentors.

TRAINING

Once you've gained enough experience, you can begin training to improve your abilities and unlock new heights of power. Through experimentation with your new-found knowledge—practicing new techniques, developing new spells, channeling new power—you can spend your experience points to gain a level.

But training is not easy or cheap. In addition to the experience, you'll also need:

1. **A mentor:** someone to help guide you in your craft—an old druid, a drunken monk, a retired fighter.
2. **Facilities:** a place in which to practice your skills—a training ground, a wizard's tower, a druid's grove.
3. **Gold:** coin to pay for your training expenses—research books, exotic components, hirelings, new tools, special weapons, extra facilities.

TIME IS MONEY, FRIEND

Using these training costs will naturally slow down the pace of your game world—it will take a character a minimum of 100 weeks and 41,743 gp to train from level 1 to level 20.

Make sure your campaign setting can accommodate this pace so that your characters have enough downtime to train.

TRAINING COSTS

To see how long you need to train per level, and how much it will cost you, check the *Training Time & Costs* table below. These costs don't cover your regular living expenses—you'll need to cover those separately, so make sure to keep enough coin spare.

TRAINING TIME & COSTS

Level	Total Weeks	GP per Week	Level	Total Weeks	GP per Week
0-1	1	10	10-11	5	94
1-2	1	15	11-12	6	115
2-3	1	20	12-13	6	165
3-4	2	15	13-14	7	202
4-5	2	20	14-15	7	295
5-6	3	25	15-16	8	370
6-7	3	35	16-17	8	536
7-8	4	37	17-18	9	687
8-9	4	55	18-19	9	990
9-10	5	64	19-20	10	1,280

You don't have to complete your training in one unbroken block—you can pause it to go adventuring and resume your training again from where you left off once you have some free time.

LEVELING UP

Once you've finished your training, you gain a level and all its features. Don't use the fixed value for your new hit points—roll this using the appropriate die. You may choose your other leveling perks as usual.

Valiant returns to Darrowmore with enough XP to being leveling up to 4th-level—a process that will cost him 30 gp and take 2 full weeks to complete.

After completing two weeks of study with Bishop Vendicus at Unity Spire, Valiant—now 4th-level—joins Clanda and Chansi on an expedition to the *Deepmarsh*.

VARIANT: FASTER TRAINING

If your campaign moves at a faster pace, use the *Faster Training* variant and reduce the training time requirement from weeks to days. The gold costings, likewise, are changed from per week to per day.

With this variant, training from 3rd-level to 4th-level takes 2 days instead of 2 weeks—but still costs the character a total of 30 gp to complete.

MENTORS

A mentor is someone who helps your character to grow and develop. While they may not be as powerful or influential as you, they have both expertise and insight that can help unlock your character's true potential.

GETTING A MENTOR

First, you must find a mentor. This is usually an NPC related to your class in some fashion—often old or retired adventurers looking to pass on their wisdom to a new generation (or whoever has coin to spare). Asking around town is a good start, though some mentors may live in dangerous or inaccessible areas.

Once you have found someone, you then need to convince them that you should be trained. This may not always be straight-forward—mentors are NPCs and, like all NPCs, they have wants and needs:

- Magister Ilirio has had his spellbook stolen by the Thieves Guild—he needs it returned.
- Prell's wife lies ill with a mysterious sickness—Prell wants her wife cured before she can focus on training.
- Ilmarin doesn't like strangers, and doesn't like you.

Whatever the reason, you'll need to find a way to get this NPC on your side before they will become a mentor.

DM: The old bard sits alone at the bar, hunched over an empty mug. What do you do?

Viridian: I join him at the bar, excited. "Damarast Vermost, you're a legend in these parts!"

DM: The old man looks aside at you and nods. "Once," he says quietly, "in ages past".

Viridian: I need your help, old man. I can't make sense of the songs in my head—I need your wisdom.

DM: The bard looks down at his hands, both crippled with age. "I can't. I gave up that life a long time ago."

MENTOR LEVEL LIMITATIONS

As a DM, you may decide that a mentor can only train a character up to a particular level—beyond this, a new, more experienced mentor will have to be found.

This is a good way to motivate characters to travel around your world. But be clear when a mentor has level restrictions—characters should have a chance to find a replacement.

MENTOR RESPONSES

If you're unsure how a mentor may respond to a character's request for training, roll on the *Mentor Responses* table to see if they refuse and for what reason.

MENTOR RESPONSES

d12	Response
01-06	Yes, I will train you.
07	No, I'm far too busy with something.
08	No, you must first prove yourself.
09	No, I gave that up a long time ago...
10	No, I don't trust you.
11	No, my secrets are my own.
12	No, I can't without my equipment.

If an NPC refuses to mentor a character, there may be an opportunity to change their mind. Depending on the circumstances, this could require a social skill challenge, a combat, a bribe, or an adventure to resolve.

ABSENT MENTORS

Sometimes, a mentor is not around when you need them—they might be travelling out of town, or pre-occupied with important business, or sick, or even dead. Like all NPCs, mentors have lives to lead. You can't train without a mentor, so keep an eye on their schedule.

VARIANT: LOCATIONS

If your campaign setting doesn't put a particular focus on NPCs, mentors may not be suitable for your game—consider using *locations* instead.

Like mentors, locations allow characters to train and level up—and as places in the world, they can be the setting of small adventures or quest hooks.

The small town of West Drenvil features an old, disused mage tower. Though in disrepair, the tower itself has a few basic facilities and spellbooks—enough for any wizard or sorcerer to use in their training as they level up from 2nd-level to 5th-level.

Rumor has it that a dangerous wraith haunts the old tower—a wraith that will need to be dealt with first before any serious study can begin.

APPENDICIES

The Extras

A Random Tables p107

A collection of random tables.

B FAQ p111

Frequently asked questions.

C Sheets & Trackers p114

Character sheets, trackers, and reference pages.

D What Next? p131

Find other Giffyglyph material and supplements.





A

RANDOM TABLES

PROFICIENCIES

ARTISAN'S TOOLS

01-05	Alchemist's suppl...
06-10	Brewer's supplies
11-15	Calligrapher's sup...
16-20	Carpenter's tools
21-25	Cartographer's to...
26-30	Cobbler's tools
31-35	Cook's utensils
36-40	Glassblower's tools
41-45	Jeweler's tools
46-50	Leatherworker tools
51-55	Mason's tools
56-60	Painter's tools
61-65	Potter's tools
66-70	Smith's tools
71-75	Tinker's tools
76-80	Weaver's tools
81-85	Woodcarver's tools

GAMING SET

01-25	Dice
26-50	Dragonchess
51-75	Playing cards
76-00	Three-Dragon Ante

LANGUAGE, BASIC

01-12	Common
13-24	Dwarvish
25-36	Elvish
37-48	Giant
49-60	Gnomish
61-72	Goblin
73-84	Halfling
85-96	Orc

LANGUAGE, EXOTIC

01-12	Abyssal
13-24	Celestial
25-36	Draconic
37-48	Deep Speech
49-60	Infernal
61-72	Primordial
73-84	Sylvan
85-96	Undercommon

INSTRUMENT

01-10	Bagpipes
11-20	Drum
21-30	Dulcimer
31-40	Flute

INSTRUMENT (C)

41-50	Lute
51-60	Lyre
61-70	Horn
71-80	Pan Flute
81-90	Shawm
91-00	Viol

SKILLS

01-05	Acrobatics
06-10	Animal Handling
11-15	Arcana
16-20	Athletics
21-25	Deception
26-30	History
31-35	Insight
36-40	Intimidation
41-45	Investigation
46-50	Medicine
51-55	Nature
56-60	Perception
61-65	Performance
66-70	Persuasion
71-75	Religion
76-80	Sleight of Hand
81-85	Stealth
86-90	Survival

FEATURES

FAVOURLED ENEMY

01-07	Aberrations
08-14	Beasts
15-21	Celestials
22-28	Constructs
29-35	Dragons
36-42	Elementals
43-49	Fey
50-56	Fiends
57-63	Giants
64-70	Humanoids
71-77	Monstrosities
78-84	Oozes
85-91	Plants
92-98	Undead

NATURAL EXPLORER

01-12	Arctic
13-24	Coast
25-36	Desert
37-48	Forest
49-60	Grassland
61-72	Mountain
73-84	Swamp
85-96	Underdark

DRACONIC ANCESTRY

01-10	Black
11-20	Blue
21-30	Brass
31-40	Bronze
41-50	Copper
51-60	Gold
61-70	Green
71-80	Red
81-90	Silver
91-00	White

DWARVEN TOOLS

01-33	Smith's tools
34-66	Brewer's supplies
67-99	Mason's tools

CLASS SKILLS

BARBARIAN

01-16	Animal Handling
17-32	Athletics
33-48	Intimidation
49-64	Nature
65-80	Perception
81-96	Survival

CLERIC

01-20	History
21-40	Insight
41-60	Medicine
61-80	Persuasion
81-00	Religion

CLERIC, KNOWLEDGE

01-25	Arcana
26-50	History
51-75	Nature
76-00	Religion

CLERIC, NATURE

01-33	Animal Handling
34-66	Nature
67-99	Survival

DRUID

01-12	Arcana
13-24	Animal Handling
25-36	Insight
37-48	Medicine
49-60	Nature
61-72	Perception
73-84	Religion
85-96	Survival

FIGHTER

01-12	Acrobatics
13-24	Animal Handling
25-36	Athletics
37-48	History
49-60	Insight
61-72	Intimidation
73-84	Perception
85-96	Survival

MONK

01-16	Acrobatics
17-32	Athletics
33-48	History
49-64	Insight
65-80	Religion
81-96	Stealth

PALADIN

01-16	Athletics
17-32	Insight
33-48	Intimidation
49-64	Medicine
65-80	Persuasion
81-96	Religion

RANGER

01-12	Animal Handling
13-24	Athletics
25-36	Insight
37-48	Investigation
49-60	Nature
61-72	Perception
73-84	Stealth
85-96	Survival

ROGUE

01-09	Acrobatics
10-18	Athletics
19-27	Deception
28-36	Insight
37-45	Intimidation
46-54	Investigation
55-63	Perception
64-72	Performance
73-81	Persuasion
82-90	Sleight of Hand
91-99	Stealth

SORCERER

01-16	Arcana
17-32	Deception
33-48	Insight
49-64	Intimidation
65-80	Persuasion
81-96	Religion

WARLOCK

01-14	Arcana
15-28	Deception
29-42	History
43-56	Intimidation
57-70	Investigation
71-84	Nature
85-98	Religion

WIZARD

01-16	Arcana
17-32	History
33-48	Insight
49-64	Investigation
65-80	Medicine
81-96	Religion

SPELLS

BARD, CANTRIPS

01-08	Blade Ward
09-16	Dancing Lights
17-24	Friends
25-32	Light

BARD, CANTRIPS (C)

33-40	Mage Hand
41-48	Mending
49-56	Message
57-64	Minor Illusion
65-72	Prestidigitation
73-80	Thunderclap
81-88	True Strike
89-96	Vicious Mockery

BARD, 1ST LEVEL

01-04	Animal Friendship
05-08	Bane
09-12	Charm Person
13-16	Comprehend Lan...
17-20	Cure Wounds
21-24	Detect Magic
25-28	Disguise Self
29-32	Dissonant Whispers
33-36	Earth Tremor
37-40	Faerie Fire
41-44	Feather Fall
45-48	Healing Word
49-52	Heroism
53-56	Identify
57-60	Illusory Script
61-64	Longstrider
65-68	Silent Image
69-72	Sleep
73-76	Speak with Animals
77-80	Tasha's Hideous L...
81-84	Thunderwave
85-88	Unseen Servant

CLERIC, CANTRIPS

01-11	Guidance
12-22	Light
23-33	Mending
34-44	Resistance
45-55	Sacred Flame
56-66	Spare the Dying
67-77	Thaumaturgy
78-88	Toll the Dead
89-99	Word of Radiance

CLERIC, 1ST LEVEL

01-06	Bane
07-12	Bless
13-18	Ceremony
19-24	Command
25-30	Create or Destroy ...
31-36	Cure Wounds
37-42	Detect Evil & Good
43-48	Detect Magic
49-54	Detect Poison & ...
55-60	Guiding Bolt
61-66	Healing Word
67-72	Inflict Wounds
73-78	Protection from E...
79-84	Purify Food & Drink
85-90	Sanctuary
91-96	Shield of Faith

DRUID, CANTRIPS

01-05	Control Flames
06-10	Create Bonfire
11-15	Druidcraft
16-20	Frostbite
21-25	Guidance
26-30	Gust
31-35	Infestation
36-40	Magic Stone
41-45	Mending
46-50	Mold Earth
51-55	Poison Spray
56-60	Primal Savagery
61-65	Produce Flame
66-70	Resistance
71-75	Shape Water
76-80	Shillelagh
81-85	Thorn Whip
86-90	Thunderclap

DRUID, 1ST LEVEL

01-04	Absorb Elements
05-08	Animal Friendship
09-12	Beast Bond
13-16	Charm Person
17-20	Create or Destroy ...
21-24	Cure Wounds
25-28	Detect Magic

DRUID, 1ST LEVEL (C)

29-32	Detect Poison & ...
33-36	Earth Tremor
37-40	Entangle
41-44	Faerie Fire
45-48	Fog Cloud
49-52	Goodberry
53-56	Healing Word
57-60	Ice Knife
61-64	Jump
65-68	Longstrider
69-72	Purify Food & Drink
73-76	Snare
77-80	Speak with Animals
81-84	Thunderwave

PALADIN, 1ST LEVEL

01-06	Bless
07-12	Ceremony
13-18	Command
19-24	Compelled Duel
25-30	Cure Wounds
31-36	Detect Evil & Good
37-42	Detect Magic
43-48	Detect Poison & ...
49-54	Divine Favour
55-60	Heroism
61-66	Protection from E...
67-72	Purify Food & Drink
73-78	Searing Smite
79-84	Shield of Faith
85-90	Thunderous Smite
91-96	Wrathful Smite

RANGER, 1ST LEVEL

01-05	Absorb Elements
06-10	Alarm
11-15	Animal Friendship
16-20	Beast Bond
21-25	Cure Wounds
26-30	Detect Magic
31-35	Detect Poison & ...
36-40	Ensaring Strike
41-45	Fog Cloud
46-50	Goodberry
51-55	Hail of Thorns
56-60	Hunter's Mark

RANGER, 1ST LEVEL (C)

61-65	Jump
66-70	Longstrider
71-75	Snare
76-80	Speak with Animals
81-85	Zephyr Strike

SORCERER, CANTRIPS

01-04	Acid Splash
05-08	Blade Ward
09-12	Chill Touch
13-16	Control Flames
17-20	Create Bonfire
21-24	Dancing Lights
25-28	Fire Bolt
29-32	Friends
33-36	Frostbite
37-40	Gust
41-44	Infestation
45-48	Light
49-52	Mage Hand
53-56	Mending
57-60	Message
61-64	Minor Illusion
65-68	Mold Earth
69-72	Poison Spray
73-76	Prestidigitation
77-80	Ray of Frost
81-84	Shape Water
85-88	Shocking Grasp
89-92	True Strike
93-96	Thunderclap

SORCERER, 1ST LEVEL

01-04	Absorb Elements
05-08	Burning Hands
09-12	Catapult
13-16	Charm Person
17-20	Chaos Bolt
21-24	Chromatic Orb
25-28	Color Spray
29-32	Comprehend Lan...
33-36	Detect Magic
37-40	Disguise Self
41-44	Earth Tremor
45-48	Expeditious Retreat

SORCERER, 1ST LEVEL (C)

49-52	False Life
53-56	Feather Fall
57-60	Fog Cloud
61-64	Ice Knife
65-68	Jump
69-72	Mage Armor
73-76	Magic Missile
77-80	Ray of Sickness
81-84	Shield
85-88	Silent Image
89-92	Sleep
93-96	Thunderwave
97-00	Witch Bolt

WARLOCK, CANTRIPS

01-06	Blade Ward
07-12	Chill Touch
13-18	Create Bonfire
19-24	Eldritch Blast
25-30	Friends
31-36	Frostbite
37-42	Infestation
43-48	Mage Hand
49-54	Magic Stone
55-60	Minor Illusion
61-66	Poison Spray
67-72	Prestidigitation
73-78	Thunderclap
79-84	Toll the Dead
85-90	True Strike

WARLOCK, 1ST LEVEL

01-08	Armor of Agathys
09-16	Arms of Hadar
17-24	Charm Person
25-32	Comprehend Lan...
33-40	Cause Fear
41-48	Expeditious Retreat
49-56	Hellish Rebuke
57-64	Hex
65-72	Illusory Script
73-80	Protection from E...
81-88	Unseen Servant
89-96	Witch Bolt

WIZARD, CANTRIPS

01-04	Acid Splash
05-08	Blade Ward
09-12	Chill Touch
13-16	Control Flames
17-20	Create Bonfire
21-24	Dancing Lights
25-28	Fire Bolt
29-32	Friends
33-36	Frostbite
37-40	Gust
41-44	Infestation
45-48	Light
49-52	Mage Hand
53-56	Mending
57-60	Message
61-64	Minor Illusion
65-68	Mold Earth
69-72	Poison Spray
73-76	Prestidigitation
77-80	Ray of Frost
81-84	Shape Water
85-88	Shocking Grasp
89-92	Thunderclap
93-96	Toll the Dead
97-00	True Strike

WIZARD, 1ST LEVEL

01-02	Absorb Elements
03-04	Alarm
05-06	Burning Hands
07-08	Catapult
09-10	Cause Fear
11-12	Charm Person
13-14	Chromatic Orb
15-16	Color Spray
17-18	Comprehend Lan...
19-20	Detect Magic
21-22	Disguise Self
23-24	Earth Tremor
25-26	Expeditious Retreat
27-28	False Life
29-30	Feather Fall
31-32	Find Familiar
33-34	Fog Cloud
35-36	Grease
37-38	Ice Knife

WIZARD, 1ST LEVEL (C)

39-40	Identify
41-42	Illusory Script
43-44	Jump
45-46	Mage Armor
47-48	Magic Missile
49-50	Protection from E...
51-52	Ray of Sickness
53-54	Shield
55-56	Silent Image
57-58	Sleep
59-60	Snare
61-62	Tasha's Hideous L...
63-64	Tenser's Floating ...
65-66	Thunderwave
67-68	Unseen Servant
69-70	Witch Bolt

WILD SHAPE

CR 0

01-04	Baboon
05-08	Badger
09-12	Bat
13-16	Cat
17-20	Crab
21-24	Cranium Rat
25-28	Deer
29-32	Eagle
33-36	Frog
37-40	Giant Fire Beetle
41-44	Goat
45-48	Hawk
49-52	Hyena
53-56	Jackal
57-60	Lizard
61-64	Octopus
65-68	Owl
69-72	Quipper
73-76	Rat
77-80	Raven
81-84	Scorpion
85-88	Sea Horse
89-92	Spider
93-96	Vulture
97-00	Weasel

CR 1/8

01-09	Blood Hawk
10-18	Camel
19-27	Flying Snake
28-36	Giant Crab
37-45	Giant Rat
46-54	Giant Weasel
55-63	Mastiff
64-72	Mule
73-81	Poisonous Snake
82-90	Pony
91-99	Stirge

CR 1/4

01-05	Axe Beak
06-10	Boar
11-15	Constrictor Snake
16-20	Cow
21-25	Dimetrodon
26-30	Draft Horse
31-35	Elk
36-40	Giant Badger
41-45	Giant Bat
46-50	Giant Frog
51-55	Giant Lizard
56-60	Giant Owl
61-65	Giant Poisonous ...
66-70	Giant Wolf Spider
71-75	Hadrosaurus
76-80	Panther
81-85	Pteranodon
86-90	Riding Horse
91-95	Velociraptor
96-00	Wolf

CR 1/2

01-12	Ape
13-24	Black Bear
25-36	Crocodile
37-48	Giant Goat
49-60	Giant Sea Horse
61-72	Giant Wasp
73-84	Reef Shark
85-96	Warhorse

CR 1

01-09	Brown Bear
10-18	Deinonychus
19-27	Dire Wolf
28-36	Giant Eagle
37-45	Giant Hyena
46-54	Giant Octopus
55-63	Giant Spider
64-72	Giant Toad
73-81	Giant Vulture
82-90	Lion
91-99	Tiger

CR 2

01-09	Allosaurus
10-18	Aurochs
19-27	Giant Boar
28-36	Giant Constrictor ...
37-45	Giant Elk
46-54	Hunter Shark
55-63	Plesiosaurus
64-72	Polar Bear
73-81	Rhinoceros
82-90	Quetzalcoatlus
91-99	Saber-toothed Tiger

CR 3

01-33	Ankylosaurus
34-66	Giant Scorpion
67-99	Killer Whale

CR 4

01-50	Elephant
51-00	Stegosaurus

CR 5

01-25	Brontosaurus
26-50	Giant Crocodile
51-75	Giant Shark
76-00	Triceratops

CR 6

01-00	Mammoth
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**B**

FAQ

THIS SECTION LISTS SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED questions regarding *Darker Dungeons*. If your question isn't answered here, do contact me.

IS THIS OFFICIAL MATERIAL?

No. This an unofficial compilation of house-rules for D&D 5e—rules that can be used to supplement material found in the *PHB* and *DMG*.

WHY MAKE THIS?

I enjoy D&D, but—like all DM's—I like to run games *my* way. That means focusing on themes of exploration, danger, survival, and player-driven adventure. I think vanilla 5e is weak in some of these areas, so I've added features over time to expand on these themes.

I wrote this handbook to compile all my house rules together in one place—it means I can get my rules peer-reviewed, and it helps players understand exactly the type of game I like to run so that there's no confusion.

WHY NOT PLAY/MOD SOMETHING ELSE?

My group plays 5e predominantly, so it's easier to modify a system we're already enjoying. This way, we can also dip into all the other 5e homebrew lying around. Plus, I enjoy doing this kind of thing.

THERE ARE A LOT OF CHANGES...

There's a lot here, but you don't have to use it all at once—take whichever bits work best for your table and leave the rest. Consider trying out just a couple of features at a time if you're unsure.

Note: While I've tried to write *Darker Dungeons* features to be modular, this hasn't always been possible. I'm in the process of decoupling these, but keep an eye out for interlink between modules you do/don't select.

RANDOM CHARACTERS?

I find random character generation exciting—I like not knowing what the character is until I've finished unwrapping it. There's no optimizing or strategizing, just roll a complete person and try to keep them alive.

A fun by-product is that this ends up creating a much wider variety of characters at the table, as it prevents players falling into familiar tropes. Goliath barbarian? Hmm. Goliath wizard? Now you have my attention.

BUT I MIGHT GET BAD STATS...

Sure you might. But it's much more likely that you won't. Live a little—roll and play the hand you're dealt. If it's a bad hand, play *smarter* and go the distance.

Note: This is something the group should agree on *before* anyone rolls for character stats. Maybe you all agree to use the result, no takebacks? Or maybe you all agree to reroll if anyone gets under X total points? Whatever the case, everyone should agree on the rules *before* rolls are made.

BUT I HATE RANDOM GENERATION...

If you hate the idea of random generation, absolutely don't use it at your table. Or try randomizing only small parts of character creation—race and class, for example, but not your ability scores.

You don't always have to randomize a whole character—sometimes, just randomizing one aspect can be a fun exercise in itself.

BUT THIS METHOD IS STUPID BECAUSE OF X...

This is how *I* would randomly create a character, but feel free to use your own variants. Want to use 4d6? Want to roll class before background? Want to roll twice for race and pick between the two? Go ahead and do whatever's best for your table.

WHAT ARE USAGE DICE?

Some features use a mechanic known as *Usage Dice* (taken from the [Black Hack](#) rpg). Whenever you use a limited consumable (such as ammunition), you roll a usage die—if your roll is a 1 or 2 then the usage die shrinks one step. When you roll a 1 or 2 on a d4, the item is all used up.

d20 → d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4 → 0

The larger the starting usage die, the more uses you'll get out of an item before it expires. The *Usage Dice* table shows the average number of times you can expect to roll a usage die before it's down to the very last use.

USAGE DICE			
Starting Size	Average Uses	Starting Size	Average Uses
d20	30	d8	9
d12	20	d6	5
d10	14	d4	2

WHY USE ACTIVE DEFENSE?

Instead of rolling attacks against the players, I like letting players roll to defend because:

- 1. I don't care about dice:** I'm a lazy DM and I like to shunt more responsibility onto players when possible. Players love rolling dice, so it's a win/win for me.
- 2. It's easy:** There's no complicated math or monster changes—just a static +22 modifier on the DM's side.
- 3. It keeps players engaged:** It makes players pay more attention to what's going on and keeps them engaged—they're not passively watching the DM roll five attacks, they're actively trying to avoid being hit. This ends up being much more dramatic for everyone.
- 4. Improves player agency:** It puts a character's fate in their own hands. If a character gets critically hit, I don't have to feel bad because *they did the roll*.
- 5. It's fast:** It doesn't slow the round down and you can quickly attack multiple characters at once.
- 6. Players don't change any numbers:** There's no need to change any numbers by default on a character sheet—AC and spellcasting DC stay exactly the same.

Active Defense has worked out well at my table, and I definitely recommend trying it out at least once.

IS THE MATH CORRECT?

I use a static +22 modifier and not the +11/-8 modifiers found in the original [Unearthed Arcana](#) article. This is because the UA article is *wrong* and actually makes the players far more likely to succeed in their attacks.

As an example, let's run through a scenario where Clanda is attacking an orc using *Acid Orb*. Clanda has a spellcasting DC of 13 and the orc has a Dexterity saving throw bonus of 1.

Traditionally:

- The orc needs to roll 12 or more (*45% chance*) to save against spellcasting DC 13.
- Clanda's chance to succeed: 55%.

With UA's +11/-8:

- The orc's saving throw becomes 12 ($1 + 11$).
- Clanda's spellcasting DC becomes 5 ($13 - 8$).
- Clanda needs to roll 7 or more (*70% chance*) to hit a saving throw of 12.
- Clanda's chance to succeed: 70%.

But, with a static +22:

- The orc's saving throw becomes 23 ($1 + 22$).
- Clanda's spellcasting DC remains 13.
- Clanda needs to roll 10 or more (*55% chance*) to hit a saving throw of 23.
- Clanda's chance to succeed: 55%.

As we can see, the UA modifiers make Clanda 15% more likely to succeed vs the RAW rules, whereas the static +22 retains the same chance of success.

BUT I LIKE TO ROLL ATTACKS...

That's fine. If you prefer the traditional system, stick with it—I'm not going to come in and take away your DM dice.

WHY USE ACTIVE INITIATIVE?

Instead of the standard turn-order/queue-based initiative, I like to use *Active Initiative* for four main reasons:

- 1. Better teamwork:** Players can work together to chain their actions into big combo-attacks, using more elaborate tactics than they can do under standard initiative tracking.
- 2. More communication:** Players talk more when they have a clear opportunity to work together. More communication makes for a better game, IME.
- 3. More attentive players:** Players aren't stuck waiting for their turn to come up, they're actively watching for opportunities to jump in and act.
- 4. It's easy:** No dice or math—just say who goes next.

This has worked out well at my table—but it's not for everyone. Some people prefer the familiarity of turn-based initiative, and that's ok.

DOES THIS GIVE PLAYERS AN ADVANTAGE?

Yes, players have a slight edge because it's easier to chain actions together. But in my experience that's a good thing—players *should* be rewarded for working together, and it means the DM can risk using even more dangerous monsters.

WHEN DO I GET MY TURN?

You get your turn when you win the initiative, someone passes over to you, you spend an inspiration point to interrupt, or you take damage and then interrupt.

WHY USE WEEK-LONG RESTS?

Changing long rests from 8 hours to a week is one of the simplest—yet most effective—ways of changing the tone of your game.

1. **Fighters:** Fighters are now much more valuable to a party. High-level magic becomes a precious resource, so having a fighter around with *Second Wind* is extremely useful. Fighters should be great at fighting, and a week-long rest period helps highlight this.
2. **Resources:** Equipment is now much more important. Healing spells are rare—and casters can't change their prepared spells quickly—so characters really need to think about healing kits, potions, tools, supplies, etc.
3. **Risk:** Combat is now always a risk. Even the smallest fight has a chance of draining valuable supplies—hit dice, spell slots, food and water, etc. Combat has real consequences that can't be instantly recovered after a single night's sleep.
4. **Drama:** Long-distance travel now has drama. Characters need to plan ahead so that their resources and spell-slots can last the whole trip, there and back again—you can't just burn through all your powerful spells in one day, sleep outside the dungeon to recover, then charge in fully-loaded.
5. **Time:** World-pacing is much more realistic. Being forced to spend a week recovering gives the world time to react to what the characters are doing—NPCs and the world in general have an opportunity to change and develop.
6. **Investment:** Players become naturally invested in the world. When recovery is hard, players start to think about the landscape—they'll hunt for shortcuts, chase rare teleportation circles, and spend time building strongholds out in the wilds so they have a place to rest without having to trek all the way back to town.
7. **Rituals:** Rituals are now *important*—when spell-slots are hard to recover, rituals are an extremely valuable means of casting magic out in the wild without burning important resources.

I highly recommend that, if you change only *one thing* for your game, you change the long rest period. It's the smallest change with the biggest impact.

DOESN'T THIS PENALIZE X CLASS?

No, because we're not changing the expected number of encounters per adventure—the DM should still aim for the normal 6-8 encounters per long rest as mentioned in the *DMG* (p84).

Changing the long-rest period means there is a longer recovery period at the end of an adventure, and that players have to more careful with their resources over the 8 encounters to ensure they don't run out too early—but it does *not* mean characters with long-rest abilities are unfairly handicapped.

IS THERE A COMPROMISE?

If your players just aren't comfortable with a week-long rest, or you want to keep your game timeline moving at a brisk pace, try using *Safe Long Rests* instead.

Safe Long Rests: To take an 8-hour long rest, you must be in a sanctuary of some kind—such as a village, town, or city. Sleeping outside in the wilds isn't restful enough for your character to recharge their abilities.

DID YOU CHANGE THE ART?

Yes, as of v1.6. Unfortunately, I didn't own the artwork that I was using before and it wasn't viable to keep using that art in the long-term. Instead, I'm now trying to finalize a consistent look that I can apply to all my work.

In the future I may look into commissioning custom artwork, but it's good to have a general style that doesn't depend on artwork—it means I can iterate on documents a little faster, which is a big help to me.

DID YOU USE HOMEBREWERY?

No—this document was created using my own custom HTML/CSS/JS framework, not Homebrewery or GM Binder. Unfortunately, that means I (currently) don't have any common markdown to share for you to use in your own Homebrewery posts.

CAN I COPY BITS OF THIS?

Feel free to reference parts of this handbook in your own free homebrew if you like, with appropriate credit. However, please don't replicate it wholesale, or include my work in any for-sale variant.

CAN I BUY A PRINTED VERSION?

Not at the moment, no. I'm currently looking into this as a few people have requested a print copy. In the meantime, this project (and most of my other work) is released on *Pay-What-You-Want* terms.

If this supplement has helped out your game and you'd like to support my work:

- **Patreon:** [Become a Patron](https://patreon.com/giffyglyph) (patreon.com/giffyglyph) to support this and my other projects.
- **Ko-fi:** My [Ko-fi page](https://ko-fi.com/giffyglyph) (ko-fi.com/giffyglyph) is always open to kind, one-off donations.
- **Spread the Word:** If you've enjoyed my work, a tweet/like/review/etc would be much appreciated.



CONTACT ME

Thanks for reading this! If you have any questions or feedback, you can DM me at [/u/giffyglyph](https://t.me/giffyglyph) or [@giffyglyph](https://twitter.com/giffyglyph), email me at giffyglyph@gmail.com, or follow my other assorted works at www.giffyglyph.com. Thanks for reading!



SHEETS & TRACKERS

THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS A VARIETY OF CHARACTER sheet templates, trackers, and reference pages to help you use this supplement in your campaign.

CHARACTER SHEETS

Included with this supplement is a new 4-page character sheet which contains trackers for some features—such as fate, lingering wounds, stress, and survival conditions.

- **Page 1:** Your character's core details. This page includes space for you to write in some unique skills or limited class features/resources—spell points, rages, wild shapes, etc.
- **Page 2:** Your character's personality and equipment. This page includes blocks and trackers to help you manage your inventory and gear—including support for ammunition die and inventory slots.
- **Page 3:** Your character's condition and status. This page contains some exclusive *Darker Dungeons* features—wounds/injuries, stress, and survival conditions—as well as exhaustion and condition trackers. This page is optional, depending on your campaign rules.
- **Page 4:** Your character's magic spells. This page is only required if you are a spell caster.

EQUIPMENT TRACKER

A full page equipment tracker for players that need a little extra space. Use this to expand your existing inventory or to track equipment stored somewhere else.

Alternatively, if you prefer to track your equipment using a Diablo-style grid layout, use the two grid-focused equipment sheets with the included sheet of cut-out tiles.

SPELLBOOK

A full page spellbook with space for more details of your spell collection. Use this sheet if you want to write out your spell powers in greater detail.

TIME TRACKER

Use the *Time Tracker* calendar pages to keep a log of your adventures and exploits. Included are three pages: a day tracker, a week tracker, and a month tracker.

These calendars assume a simple 24-hour daily cycle and may require modification if your campaign world runs on a different clock.

JOURNEY TRACKER

If you're taking a long journey, use the *Journey Tracker* to keep a neat record of what happened on the way.

QUICK REFERENCE

The *Quick Reference* compresses many of the core rules in this supplement into a handy three-page resource. Use this if you want to keep a rules shortcut close to hand.

CAMPAIGN COMPATIBILITY

These sheets have been created with the *Darker Dungeons* ruleset in mind, but you may find them suitable for other games and campaigns—even those that don't use any of this supplement's features. Mix-and-match these sheets as best suits your own particular game.

APPEARANCE

MEMORIES

Age _____
 Height _____
 Weight _____
 Distinguishing Feature _____
 Motivation _____
 Habit _____

DETAILS

FAMILY

PERSONAL QUEST

PERSONALITY TRAITS

IDEALS

BONDS

FLAWS

ADDITIONAL NOTES

NAME _____

5 4 3 2 1

ITEM CHARGES

NAME _____

20 12 10 8 6 4 1

USAGE & AMMUNITION DIE

RATIONS

COPPER

WATERSKIN

SILVER

INVENTORY SLOTS

GOLD

EQUIPMENT							
SLOT	ITEM	QUANTITY	NOTCHES	SLOT	ITEM	QUANTITY	NOTCHES
1				16			
2				17			
3				18			
4				19			
5				20			
6				21			
7				22			
8				23			
9				24			
10				25			
11				26			
12				27			
13				28			
14				29			
15				30			

APPEARANCE

MEMORIES

Age _____
 Height _____
 Weight _____
 Distinguishing Feature _____
 Motivation _____
 Habit _____

DETAILS

FAMILY

PERSONAL QUEST

ADDITIONAL NOTES

PERSONALITY TRAITS

IDEALS

BONDS

FLAWS

NAME	5	4	3	2	1
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○

ITEM CHARGES

NAME	20	12	10	8	6	4	1
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

USAGE & AMMUNITION DIE

RATIONS (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

COPPER (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

WATERSKIN (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

SILVER (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

INVENTORY SLOTS (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

GOLD (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

EQUIPMENT

1	1	1	1	3
1	1	1	1	3
2	2	2	2	3
				3
2	2	4	6	
3	3	6	9	

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

CALENDAR: DAYS



Day:

TIME OF DAY	HOUR	EVENTS	XP & REWARDS
Night	0-1		
	1-2		
	2-3		
	3-4		
	4-5		
Dawn	5-6		
Morning	6-7		
	7-8		
	8-9		
	9-10		
	10-11		
Noon	11-12		
	12-13		
Afternoon	13-14		
	14-15		
	15-16		
	16-17		
	17-18		
Dusk	18-19		
Night	19-20		
	20-21		
	21-22		
	22-23		
	23-24		

Day:

TIME OF DAY	HOUR	EVENTS	XP & REWARDS
Night	0-1		
	1-2		
	2-3		
	3-4		
	4-5		
Dawn	5-6		
Morning	6-7		
	7-8		
	8-9		
	9-10		
	10-11		
Noon	11-12		
	12-13		
Afternoon	13-14		
	14-15		
	15-16		
	16-17		
	17-18		
Dusk	18-19		
Night	19-20		
	20-21		
	21-22		
	22-23		
	23-24		

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

CALENDAR: WEEK



Week:

DAY	HOUR	EVENTS	XP & REWARDS
	0-4		
	4-8		
	8-12		
	12-16		
	16-20		
	20-24		
	0-4		
	4-8		
	8-12		
	12-16		
	16-20		
	20-24		
	0-4		
	4-8		
	8-12		
	12-16		
	16-20		
	20-24		
	0-4		
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	20-24		
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	8-12		
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	20-24		
	0-4		
	4-8		
	8-12		
	12-16		
	16-20		
	20-24		

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ADDITIONAL NOTES

GIFFYGLYPH'S DARKER DUNGEONS

JOURNEY TRACKER



FROM TO DAY GUIDE DC FORAGE DC

TIME OF DAY	DANGER	ROLL	EVENT	DISCOVERY	GUIDE	FORAGER	SCOUT	LOOKOUT	CONDITIONS
Dawn									+1 hunger & thirst
Morning									
Noon									+1 fatigue
Afternoon									
Dusk									+1 hunger, thirst, & fatigue
Night									

FROM TO DAY GUIDE DC FORAGE DC

TIME OF DAY	DANGER	ROLL	EVENT	DISCOVERY	GUIDE	FORAGER	SCOUT	LOOKOUT	CONDITIONS
Dawn									+1 hunger & thirst
Morning									
Noon									+1 fatigue
Afternoon									
Dusk									+1 hunger, thirst, & fatigue
Night									

FROM TO DAY GUIDE DC FORAGE DC

TIME OF DAY	DANGER	ROLL	EVENT	DISCOVERY	GUIDE	FORAGER	SCOUT	LOOKOUT	CONDITIONS
Dawn									+1 hunger & thirst
Morning									
Noon									+1 fatigue
Afternoon									
Dusk									+1 hunger, thirst, & fatigue
Night									

FROM TO DAY GUIDE DC FORAGE DC

TIME OF DAY	DANGER	ROLL	EVENT	DISCOVERY	GUIDE	FORAGER	SCOUT	LOOKOUT	CONDITIONS
Dawn									+1 hunger & thirst
Morning									
Noon									+1 fatigue
Afternoon									
Dusk									+1 hunger, thirst, & fatigue
Night									

ADDITIONAL NOTES

QUICK REFERENCE

LOW-LIGHT & DARKVISION p11

If you have the Darkvision racial character trait, replace it with the Low-light Vision trait. If you have the Superior Darkvision racial trait, replace it with Darkvision.

Low-light Vision: For 30 ft around you, you can see in dim light as if it were bright light. You cannot see in darkness.

Darkvision: For 30 ft around you, you can see in dim light as if it were bright light and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of grey. Beyond 30 ft, you cannot see in darkness.

INITIATIVE p12

When calculating initiative, use your Intelligence modifier instead of your Dexterity.

Tactical Wit: As a War Wizard, add your DEX modifier as a bonus to initiative, not INT.

KNOWN LANGUAGES p12

INT Known Languages

-1 or You have only a basic grasp of vocabulary lower in your primary language, and you are illiterate.

0 You can speak, read, and write your primary language with a decent range of vocabulary.

+1 You can speak, read, and write two languages.

+2 You can speak, read, and write three languages.

+3 You can speak, read, and write four languages.

SKILL CHANGES p12

Animal Handling: Animal handling now measures your ability to recall lore about animals (or creatures with the Beast keyword) and interact with them.

Roll Intelligence (Animal Handling) to recall some information about animals, or Wisdom (Animal Handling) to interact with animals.

Nature: Nature no longer measures your knowledge of animals and beasts—that domain is now a part of the Animal Handling skill.

INVENTORY: SLOTS p26

You carry items in slots, with each item occupying 1 or more slots. Your capacity depends on your size, strength, and armor.

INVENTORY: SIZE p26

Size	Slots	Size	Slots
Tiny	9	Large	21
Small	15	Huge	27
Medium	18	Gargantuan	39

INVENTORY: STRENGTH p26

You gain (or lose) a number of item slots equal to your STR modifier.

INVENTORY: ARMOR p26

Armor	Slots	Armor	Slots
None	+0	Medium	-6
Light	-3	Heavy	-9

FOOD, WATER, & GOLD p26

You can freely carry one ration box, one waterskin, and one coin purse. These don't occupy any inventory slots.

ARMOR EXPERTISE p27

If you are wearing medium or heavy armor—and you are appropriately proficient—you gain a perk:

Medium Armor: Reduce any bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage that you take from non-magical weapons by half your proficiency bonus (rounded down), to a minimum of 1.

Heavy Armor: Reduce any bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage that you take from non-magical weapons by your proficiency bonus, to a minimum of 1.

ITEM SIZES p27

Size	Description	Slots
Tiny	Smaller than a hand; Can hold many in one hand.	0.2
Small	Up to a handspan / 9 inches long; Held comfortably with one hand.	1
Medium	Up to an arms-length / 2ft long; Held with one hand.	2
Large	Longer than an arm; Requires one or two hands to hold.	3

VARIANT: QUICKDRAW p30

Characters nominate 3 items in their inventory as quickdraw items. Quickdraw items can be draw/removed from the inventory using a free object interaction. Non-quickdraw items can only be accessed using a full action.

A character may change their quickdraw item selection during a short rest.

VARIANT: CONTAINERS p31

Characters divide their total number of item slots into distinct containers that they name, categorize, and place about their person.

CONTAINER CATEGORIES p31

Type	Description
Bag	Holds any items. Draw an item with an action.
Belt	Holds small and tiny items. Draw an item with a free action.
Sheath	Holds weapons and shields. Draw an item with a free action.
Quiver	Stores bows, crossbows, arrows, bolts, and javelins. Draw an item with a free action.

ITEM DEGRADATION p32

Category Effect

Weapon Gains a notch when you critically fail an attack. Each notch reduces the damage die you roll by one step.

Armor Gains a notch when you are critically hit. Each notch reduces your AC by 1.

Focus Gains a notch when you critically fail to cast a spell while holding it. Each notch reduces your spellcasting ability by 1.

Item Gains a notch whenever appropriate—often when it takes direct damage or is used in a failed skill check. Each notch reduces effectiveness by 1.

SHATTERED GEAR p33

Fragility	Description	Maximum Notches
Delicate	Thin glass, ceramics, complicated or tiny machinery	1
Sturdy	Wood, metal, well constructed goods	10
Indestructible	Thick stone, strong metals	100+

SACRIFICING GEAR p33

When you hit with an attack, you can shatter your weapon to roll its original un-notched damage die. Decide this before you roll damage.

You can sacrifice your armor when hit by an attack to reduce the damage taken by 3d4 (light), 3d8 (medium), and 3d12 (heavy)—it falls apart in the process. Decide this after damage is dealt.

MENDING p33

You can use Mending to restore an item that has shattered from too many notches. A restored item is usable again, but has the maximum number of notches—without repairs, it will break again with one more notch.

TEMPER QUALITIES p33

Quality	Rarity	Critical Failure
—	Common	Gains 1 notch
Pure Temper	Uncommon	Gains ½ (0.5) notch
Royal Temper	Rare	Gains ¼ (0.25) notch
Astral Temper	Mythic	Gains ⅛ (0.125) notch

ITEM QUALITY p34

Quality Description

Pristine	Never been notched. This item looks, feels, and smells brand new.
Worn	Has had only one notch at a time. This item has one main defect.
Well-worn	Has had two notches at one time. This item shows heavy signs of use.
Scarred	Has had four or more notches at one time. This item looks shabby and in poor condition.

RESALE VALUE p34

Quality	Value	Quality	Value
Pristine	75%	Well-Worn	25%
Worn	50%	Scarred	10%

ITEM RESTORATION p34

Quality	Cost
Worn to Pristine	50%
Well-Worn to Worn	30%
Scarred to Well-Worn	10%

AMMUNITION p36

Roll your *Ammunition die* whenever you take a shot: if you roll a 1 or 2, your ammunition die gets one size smaller.

If you're down to one piece of ammunition and you use it, that's it—it's gone. Replenish your ammunition to increase the size of your die.

OPEN SKILLS p45

Skills are not tied to a single ability. You may add your skill bonus to any appropriate ability check.

SOCIAL INTERACTION p45

The context of your social interaction determines which ability you are using: smarts (intelligence), feelings (wisdom), and presence (charisma).

- **Intelligence:** You're trying to be clever. Debate, reason, negotiate, lie, manipulate, and wit.
- **Wisdom:** You're trying to soothe or connect feelings. Rapport, empathize, calm, discretion, judgement, and tact.
- **Charisma:** You're trying to be likeable or dominating. Charm, bluff, banter, incite, command, and intimidate.

HELP p46

When you use the Help action, you roll one of the two d20 dice. Add your ally's modifiers as normal.

TOOLS p46

Add your proficiency bonus to any ability check made with a proficient tool. If you are proficient with both a tool and a skill, add your proficiency bonus *and* make your roll with advantage.

ACTIVE DEFENSE p47

The DM doesn't make attack rolls—instead, the players make defense rolls. Roll d20 + your AC vs the monster's attack bonus + 22. If your defense equals or beats the DC, your character avoids the attack. If you fail, the attack hits you.

Advantage: If the attacker has advantage, you have disadvantage on the defense roll—and vice versa if they have disadvantage.

Criticals: If the defense roll comes up as a natural 1, the attack critically hits you.

ACTIVE INITIATIVE p49

1. **Who goes first?:** Decide who acts first, usually by rolling initiative—the highest roll goes first.
2. **Take turns:** Take your turn. Once you've finished, pick who goes next. This can be anyone that hasn't acted yet, friend or foe.
3. **End the round:** Once everyone's acted, end the round and clear up any expired effects—spells, powers, timers, etc.
4. **Start a new round:** The last person to act gets to decide who starts the new round—it can't be themselves unless they have no alternative.

No delays: You cannot pass or delay once your turn begins, but you can ready an action.

Interrupt: If you took damage or you spend an inspiration point, you can choose to interrupt and take your turn once the current turn has finished.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS p51

- **Critical Success:** You succeeded by 10 or more on a skill check, or rolled a natural 20 on an attack. Something great happens to you.
- **Success:** You achieve your goal.
- **Minor Failure or Success at a Cost:** You failed by 1, 2, or 3. You can choose to succeed, but something very bad also happens as a consequence—negotiate with the DM.
- **Failure:** You failed by 4 or more.
- **Critical Failure:** You failed by 10 or more on a skill check, or rolled a natural 1 on an attack. Something awful happens to you.

ACTIVE XP p53

You gain experience points for three main activities: making discoveries, overcoming adversity, and recovering lost treasures.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT p53

Level	Experience	Level	Experience
0-1	150	10-11	6,200
1-2	300	11-12	8,680
2-3	420	12-13	12,150
3-4	590	13-14	17,010
4-5	820	14-15	23,810
5-6	1,150	15-16	33,330
6-7	1,610	16-17	46,660
7-8	2,260	17-18	65,330
8-9	3,160	18-19	91,460
9-10	4,430	19-20	128,050

MAGIC BURNOUT p56

Roll your *Burnout die* whenever you cast a magic spell: if you roll a 1 or 2, you trigger a burnout consequence and your burnout die also gets one size smaller. Recover from burnout by:

- **Spending a hit die:** +1 burnout die size.
- **Getting a good sleep:** +1 burnout die size.
- **Taking a long rest:** Reset burnout die to d12.

BURNOUT CONSEQUENCES p56

d100	Consequence
1-5	Drained: Lose (spell level) hit dice.
6-15	Reduced: Lose (spell level / 2) hit dice.
16-40	Shocked: Lose (spell level x 4) hit points.
41-88	Hurt: Lose (spell level x 2) hit points.
89-93	Blackout: Disadvantage on casting for (spell level) rounds.
94	Immolated: Shrink the burnout die to d4.
95	Gifted: Regain this spell slot.
96	Renewed: Regain (spell level) hit dice.
97	Healed: Gain (spell level x 4) hit points.
98	Protected: Gain (spell level x 4) temporary hit points.
99	Energized: Advantage on casting for (spell level) rounds.
100	Restored: Reset the burnout die to d12.

THE JOURNEY PHASE p61

1. **Choose your destination:** Pick a place.
2. **Choose your route:** Decide on the path you'll take. Measure your route in days of travel.
3. **Gather supplies:** Collect together any supplies, mounts, and equipment.
4. **Embark:** Head out on your journey. Each day:
 - **Assign roles:** Assign a guide, scout, forager, and lookout. A character cannot share roles.
 - **Travel:** Travel through the six phases of the day: dawn, morning, noon, afternoon, dusk, and night. Handle any encounters or discoveries you might make.
5. **Arrive:** Reach your destination.

GUIDANCE p62

DC Terrain
5 Wide open plains; Clear landmarks; Obvious pathway.
10 Tall landmarks; Small hills.
15 Light rain or mist; Woods and hills.
20 Moonlight night; Heavy rain or mist; Forest with no clear pathway or markings.
25 Fog; Thick and obscure forest; Mountains.
30 Clouded night; Impossibly thick fog; A shifting maze; Magically treacherous terrain.

FORAGING p63

DC Terrain

- 5 Lush, verdant forest; Food/water everywhere.
- 10 Forest; Coast; Abundant food, clean water.
- 15 Thin woodland and greenwood. Food must be hunted and water is hard to find.
- 20 Dry, open plains; little food or clean water.
- 25 Desert and barren or polluted land; Food is extremely rare and water needs treatment.
- 30 Toxic or corrupted deadlands; Food is inedible and water sources are poisoned.

BLOODIED p74

You are bloodied when you are at 50% hp or lower. While bloodied, you must use a bandage to spend any hit dice.

WOUNDS & INJURIES p74

When you fall to 0 hit points, you gain a wound. Roll a d10 to see where you are wounded. Open wounds apply a level of exhaustion.

Treatment: Treat a wound with first-aid knowledge and medical supplies. A treated wound causes no exhaustion.

Healing: At the end of a long rest, check to see if each of your wounds heal up—make a DC 15 Constitution check for each wound.

Critical Hits: When critically hit by an attack, check each of your wounds: roll a d20 to see if the wound reopens.

Injuries: If you fall to 0 from a *Violent* attack, roll for a permanent injury instead of a wound.

LINGERING WOUNDS p74

d10 Area	d10 Area
1 An arm	6 Your back
2 A leg	7 Your head
3 A hand	8 Your face
4 A foot	9 Your chest
5 Your stomach	10 Your buttocks

PERMANENT INJURIES p75

d10 Injury	Treatment
1 Lose an arm	Prosthesis (arm)
2 Lose a leg	Prosthesis (leg)
3 Lose a hand	Prosthesis (hand)
4 Lose a foot	Prosthesis (foot)
5 Lose an eye	Prosthesis (eye)
6 Lose a toe	Medical aid (DC 15)
7 Lose a finger	Medical aid (DC 15)
8 A horrific wound	Medical aid (DC 20)
9 An internal injury	Medical aid (DC 20)
10 Lose half your teeth	Medical aid (DC 20)

DYING p77

When you fall to 0 hit points, you gain the *Dying* condition:

- You drop what you're holding and fall prone.
- You can't move, take actions, or use reactions.
- You're aware of what's happening 15 ft around.
- You can speak a maximum of 2 words per round.
- Attack rolls against you have advantage.
- You automatically fail STR/DEX saving throws.
- You must make a death saving throw at the start of your turn. If you fail three times, you die.

PERSISTENT DEATH SAVES p77

If you fail three death saving throws, you die. Saves don't reset after a short rest—you recover one failed save after completing a long rest.

DEATH SAVING THROW p77

d20 Outcome

01	You fail two death saving throws.
02-09	You fail one death saving throw.
10-19	No change.
20	You regain 1 hit point and stabilize.

CHEATING FATE p79

If you would suffer a killing blow or fail your last death saving throw, you may instead spend a fate point to cheat death in some fashion.

BECOMING CONTAGIOUS p82

Severity Contagious

Stage 1	Less than 25% hit points remain
Stage 2	Less than 50% hit points remain
Stage 3	Less than 75% hit points remain
Stage 4	Always contagious

SURVIVAL CONDITIONS p86

Conditions track your physical state and can cause exhaustion. There are three conditions to track: hunger, thirst, and fatigue (and an optional fourth, temperature).

SURVIVAL CONDITION TRACKS p86

Hunger	Thirst	Exhaustion	DC
Stuffed	Quenched	-1	—
Well-fed	Refreshed	—	5
Ok	Ok	—	10
Peckish	Parched	—	15
Hungry	Thirsty	—	20
Ravenous	Dry	+1	25
Starving	Dehydrated	+1	30

Fatigue	Temperature	Exhaustion	DC
Energised	Perfect	-1	—
Well-rested	Comfortable	—	5
Ok	Ok	—	10
Tired	Noticeable	—	15
Sleepy	Uncomfortable	—	20
Very sleepy	Overwhelming	+1	25
Barely awake	Unbearable	+1	30

HUNGER, THIRST & FATIGUE p87

Time	Hunger	Thirst	Fatigue
Dawn	+1	+1	—
Noon	—	—	+1
Dusk	+1	+1	+1

STAMINA CHECK p88

d6	Result
1-2	Gain +1 hunger
3-4	Gain +1 thirst
5-6	Gain +1 fatigue

STRESS p89

Stress is a measure of pressure on a character's mental state—too much is unhealthy and can lead to Afflictions and even death.

Snapping: When you take 20, 30, and 35 points of Stress for the first time after a long rest, you snap and develop a mental Affliction.

Breaking Point: When you take 40 points of Stress, you reach breaking point—if hit by a damaging attack, you die.

Sanctuary: When you complete a long rest in a sanctuary—village, town, city—your Stress is reduced to 0.

GAINING STRESS p89

Category Stress Description

Minor	+1	A small frustration or worry.
Moderate	+2	You've made a critical error or put something at risk.
Major	+4	Something devastating to your character or beliefs.
Monstrous	+8	An incomprehensible thing.

RELIEVING STRESS p91

Category Stress Description

Minor	-1	A small success.
Moderate	-2	A critical success.
Major	-4	You've beaten the odds and gained a significant victory.
Majestic	-8	You've done something near impossible.

AFFLICTIONS p92

d100 Affliction

01-06	Fearful: Disadv on WIS checks & saves
07-12	Lethargic: +1 exhaustion until removed
13-18	Masochistic: Disadv on CON checks & saves
19-24	Irrational: Disadv on INT checks & saves
25-30	Paranoid: Speed is halved
31-36	Selfish: Disadv on CHA checks & saves
37-42	Panic: Disadv on DEX checks & saves
43-48	Hopelessness: Disadv on STR checks & saves
49-54	Mania: Disadv on attack rolls
55-60	Anxiety: Disadv on Stress checks
61-66	Hypochondria: Hit point max is halved
67-72	Narcissistic: Disadv on ability checks
73-77	Powerful: +2 to all damage rolls
78-82	Focused: +2 to all attack rolls
83-87	Stalwart: +2 AC
88-91	Acute: Adv on INT checks & saves
92-96	Perceptive: Adv on WIS checks & saves
97-00	Courageous: Adv on CHA checks & saves

CURING AFFLICTIONS p92

During a long rest, you can attempt to cure an Affliction. Pay the cost and roll a d20. Some downtime activities grant you advantage.

AFFLICTION REMOVAL p92

d20 Result

01	Critical Failure: You fail to cure your Affliction and gain a new one.
02-09	Failure: Your Affliction remains.
10-19	Success: You cured your Affliction.
20	Critical Success: You clear yourself of all Afflictions and Stress.

AFFLICTION REMOVAL COSTS p92

Level	Gold	Level	Gold	Level	Gold
1	5	8	42	15	432
2	7	9	58	16	604
3	9	10	81	17	845
4	12	11	113	18	1,183
5	16	12	158	19	1,656
6	22	13	221	20	2,318
7	30	14	309	—	—

MENTAL BREAKDOWN p92

If you gain more than 3 Afflictions, you suffer a complete breakdown. The character can no longer be played—they retire, go insane, or die.

GREATER RESTORATION p92

Greater Restoration allows you to try an Affliction Removal outside of a long rest. This counts as your once-per-week removal attempt.

From levels 1-10, roll the Affliction Removal check with advantage with Greater Restoration. From levels 11-20, roll with disadvantage.

MAKING CAMP p96

- Build your campsite:** Making camping checks to set up your camp. The more successes, the better the camp.
- Appoint a lookout:** This person is in charge of security and perception checks.
- Pick one primary activity:** If you're not on lookout, you can do one primary activity.
- Sleep:** Get some rest.
- Pack up:** Get your stuff together and move on.

CAMPING CHECK DC p97

DC Description

10	Safe, dry land is easy to find / the weather is clear.
15	A campsite requires effort to find / there's bad weather—rain, light snow, heavy fog, etc.
20	It's hard to find a safe campsite / the weather is terrible—heavy rain, a fierce storm, a howling wind.

CAMPING RESULTS p97

FailuresDescription

0	A perfect campsite. Activity checks are DC 5.
1	A decent campsite with one glaring flaw. Activity checks are DC 10.
2 or more	A shoddy campsite just barely fit for purpose. Activity checks are DC 15.

LONG REST p101

A long rest requires a full week of downtime in a sanctuary—village, town, or city. For each week:

- Sell loot:** Trade in treasure for GP and XP.
- Choose lifestyle:** Choose your quality of lifestyle for the week.
- Choose primary activity:** Choose one primary downtime activity and pay any relevant costs.
- Hear rumors:** While resting, your adventuring party learns of three rumors.
- Perform secondary activities:** You can do two small, secondary activities during your week.
- Settle up:** It's the end of the week—complete your primary activity and check your wounds.

TRAINING p104

To level up, you must spend time training. You need three things: a mentor, facilities, and gold.

TRAINING COSTS p104

Level	Weeks	GP	Level	Weeks	GP
1	—	—	11	5	94
2	1	15	12	6	115
3	1	20	13	6	165
4	2	15	14	7	202
5	2	20	15	7	295
6	3	25	16	8	370
7	3	35	17	8	536
8	4	37	18	9	687
9	4	55	19	9	990
10	5	64	20	10	1,280



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